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Solitude and Imagination: Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Propertius

Kachuck, Aaron

Princeton, NJ : Princeton University

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SOLITUDE AND IMAGINATION: CICERO, VIRGIL, HORACE, PROPERTIUS

Aaron Joseph Kachuck

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Solitude and Imagination: Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Propertius, argues that solitude—as gesture, posture, and provocation—was central to how writers of the late Roman Republic and early Principate characterized the purpose of literary work, and addressed the relationship of art to society, pleasure to utility, poetry to politics, and private meditations to the theater of public life. Evolving representations of solitude interacted, this thesis shows, with contemporary changes in the world of politics, in the material conditions of the book-trade, and in the social status of the poet. But literature was also a force that helped authors problematize social values, uses, and contexts, and in ways that the sociological turn of classical literary criticism has underemphasized. Building on the recent aesthetic turn in classical scholarship, and what has been called the affective turn in literary studies, this thesis demonstrates that the particular character of literature in Rome's "Cultural Revolution" is better appraised by moving interpretation from the vocabulary of strategy, craft, and design, and towards a more sustained engagement with the language, and implications, of struggle, confusion, and mood. In doing so, this thesis critiques common models of literary periodization, re-analyzes the relationship between Roman literature and its social contexts, and challenges large-scale European intellectual histories of individuality, subjectivity, and private life. In sum, this thesis, in arguing that reading for solitude means learning new ways of reading, presents an innovative, richly contextualized, and insistently internalist, reading of literature in the ages of Cicero and Virgil, and suggests new models for the interpretation of classical and pre-modern literature in the classical tradition more broadly.

After a conceptual introduction to solitude as literary theme, philosophical dialectic, and historiographic problem, this thesis presents in-depth case studies organized by author. The first

looks to late rhetorical and philosophical treatises of Cicero (esp. *Brutus, Orator, De Amicitia*), and the following three chapters present new interpretations of the total *oeuvres* of Virgil, Horace, and Propertius. The epilogue looks at solitude and imagination from the perspective of the reader in classical and late antiquity.

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SOLITUDE AND IMAGINATION

Introduction

1. Introduction: The Dual Significance of Solitude

2. What Solitude Is OR *Quid hoc sit quod Solitudo nominatur*

3. The Dialectic of Solitude

3a. Solitude as Social Capital

3b. Literary Solitude and its Historical Contexts

4. The Aesthetic Turn

5. Chapter Summaries

SOLITUDE AND IMAGINATION

I. Introduction: The Dual Significance of Solitude

> "Next, with the rising of the Lyre, there floats forth from Ocean the shape of the tortoise-shell, which under the fingers of its heir gave forth sound only after death; once with it did Orpheus, Oeagrus' son, impart sleep to waves, feeling to rocks, hearing to trees, tears to Pluto, and finally a limit to death. Hence will come endowments of voice and tuneful strings, hence pipes of different shapes which prattle melodiously, and whatever is moved to utterance by touch of hand or force of breath. The child of the Lyre will grant beguiling songs at the banquet (*ille dabit cantus inter convivia dulcis*), his voice adding mellowness to the wine and holding the night in thrall. Indeed, even when harassed by cares, he will rehearse some secret strain (*secreta…carmina*), tuning his voice to a stealthy hum; and, alone (*solus et ipse*), he will ever burst into a song which can charm no ears but his own (*suas semper cantabit ad aures*). Such are the ordinances of the Lyre, which, at the rising of Libra's twenty-sixth degree, will direct its prongs to the stars."[1]

[1] trans. Goold (with modifications), Manilius, *Astronomica* 5:324-338 *Nunc surgente Lyra testudinis enatat undis / forma per heredem tantum post fata sonantis, / qua quondam somnumque fretis Oeagrius Orpheus / et sensus scopulis et silvis addidit aures / et Diti lacrimas et morti denique finem. / hinc venient vocis dotes chordaeque sonantis / garrulaque in modulos diversa tibia forma / et quodcumque manu loquitur flatuque movetur. / ille dabit cantus inter convivia dulcis / mulcebitque sono Bacchum noctemque tenebit. / quin etiam curas inter secreta movebit / carmina furtivo modulatus murmure vocem, / solus et ipse suas semper cantabit ad aures, / sic dictante Lyra, cum pars vicesima sexta / Chelarum surget, quae cornua ducet ad astra.*

These verses from Manilius exemplify what Octavio Paz, writing of Mexico's cultural and literary character, has called "the dual significance of solitude"—a break with one world (solitude) and an attempt to create another (imagination).[2] Manilius' Orpheus, consummate poet, sang for crowded feasts, but sang, as well, for, by, and of himself. Manilius' astronomical poem may be at the margins of the Latin literary canon, and Orpheus a figure out of legend: the purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate how the dual significance of solitude that this story adumbrates—as inspiration, provocation, sorrow, and delight—can help us understand how a series of writers from the late Roman Republic and early Principate—Cicero, Virgil, Horace, and Propertius—wrestled with new and old ideas about the nature and purpose of the literary work; about the relationship of art to society, of pleasure to utility, of poetry to politics, of private meditations to the theater of public life; and about what it might mean, in their own age, to live and work as a thinker, a writer, and an individual. Literature is a product and producer of social worlds, and there is no question that changing representations and uses of solitude in Latin works of this period interacted, in important ways, with contemporary changes in the world of politics, in the material conditions of the book-trade, and in the social status of the poet. But literature is also a force that resists the pressure of social values, uses, and contexts, and, in withdrawing from one world, seeks to create worlds of its own imagining; the figure of solitude, as we shall see, invites writers to attempt to do just that, even as it functions, paradoxically, and dialectically, as a form of social action in and of itself. Reading for solitude, both as a theme and as a literary mode, can help us enter into, delight in, struggle with, and inhabit, as best we can, a series of

[2] "El doble significado de la soledad—ruptura con un mundo y tentativa por crear otro…" (Paz 1972:184)

invitations into imagined worlds whose dense verbal and ideological textures have had so immense an influence on the European literary tradition.

This introduction is divided into three sections: I. What Solitude Is, II. The Dialectic of Solitude, and III. The Aesthetic Turn. The first explains the critical vocabulary and stakes of the thesis; the second looks at the dialectical tensions between aesthetic autonomy and social capital, and explains why solitude proved so rich a theme in the historic and literary contexts of the 1st century BCE; the third shows how the dialectic of solitude represents a distinctly literary paradox, in ways that guide us to new ways of reading classical Latin literature and that invite us to reconsider certain assumptions about literary periodization. In conclusion, I briefly summarize the individual chapters of the thesis.

II. What Solitude Is *OR Quid hoc sit quod Solitudo nominatur*

The Romans had no word to correspond precisely to our modern English use of "solitude," nor did they have a strict equivalent for our word, "imagination." *Imaginatio*, for the Romans, tended to restrict itself to the visualization of actual "images," and *solitudo*, in workaday use, to "deserted, empty, uncultivated" places, or, at a pinch, to a state of relative material deprivation; though someone who called himself *solus* might have been sad, it would be very difficult to use *solus*-forms to construct, for the Romans, the kind of emotional scripts that have been assembled by students of ancient emotions.[3] But what makes the use of these two terms particularly tricky

[3] On the range of Roman uses of *solitudo*, see the Appendix following Introduction. On "emotional scripts" for the ancient world, see Kaster 2005; for a range of approaches to ancient

for the interpretation of Roman literature is that the image of the "artist imagining in isolation" has, since the Romantic period, been indispensable to how we describe what constitutes literature.[4] The Romantics did not, we know, inherit this image and these terms, or the aesthetic and political ideologies they represented— they had to craft them, wrestle with them, and defend them against alternative, and older, categories and genres of thought.[5] And they did so as interested historical actors, their literary interventions and self-representations both the products and producers of changing social conditions, and always in competition with other forms of work. Their terms, then, were tied up with their ideology and their times.

Using these terms as a way to enter into the literary interventions of Cicero, Virgil, Horace, and Propertius, then, requires explanation, and one of the purposes of this introduction will be to justify, explain, and delimit the use of these terms for the study of the literature of 1st century BCE Rome. I will begin with the more tangible questions of society, and move, from there, to the matter of literature.

First, as is well known, daily life in the world of the late Roman republic did not allow for very many opportunities to enjoy solitude (or, at least, happy solitude) in any sustained sense, certainly not as we would understand it. Much of life was lived outdoors; life's basic necessities, and certainly its niceties, required regular human interaction; anybody who was anybody,

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emotions, see the edited volume of Chaniotis and Ducrey 2013, and the growing list of contributions to OUP's *Emotions of the Past* series, edited by Robert Kaster and David Konstan.

[4] On the Romantic "artist in isolation," see Kermode 1957:3-36.

[5] On the history of loneliness (and solitude) in the 16th-19th centuries, see Worsley 2014. On the historical contexts of romantic aesthetic ideologies, see McGann 1985, Liu 1989.

certainly anybody who read and wrote the kind of material we will be studying, was embedded in vast, complex, interwoven, and ubiquitous familial and political networks; and, lest we forget, such people as could read and write were also, and always, attended by slaves.[6] Horace, even when dining or rusticating "alone" often represents himself as solitary…because he is accompanied by only "a few" slaves: "Pre-modern society," we are reminded, "abounded in these invisible men."[7] And even for someone as wealthy as Seneca the Younger, who, as he describes in one of his letters to Lucilius, could afford to sequester himself for study, there could be no escape from all of the crash and din of ancient life, in his case, the bath downstairs, replete with grunting, wheezy, pummeling men at the gym, with hollers and yells at the arrest of a pickpocket, or, what is worst, with the yawp of someone who enjoys splashing or singing while he bathes.

Even when it came to literature, the experience of literary activity as a solitary affair—i.e. reading and writing—was, although far less rare than has often been thought, still the exception

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[6] On ancient slaves and Roman literature, see Fitzgerald 2000. For a comparative approach to ancient and modern slavery, see Patterson 1985.

[7] Webb 2007:xi, who points us to G.K. Chesterton's "The Invisible Man," in which Father Brown explains his theory of the "mentally invisible man": "Have you ever noticed this--that people never answer what you say? They answer what you mean--or what they think you mean. Suppose one lady says to another in a country house, 'Is anybody staying with you?' the lady doesn't answer 'Yes; the butler, the three footmen, the parlourmaid, and so on,' though the parlourmaid may be in the room, or the butler behind her chair. She says 'There is nobody staying with us,' meaning nobody of the sort you mean."

rather than the rule.[8] Literature, itself, was often disseminated through public readings, "reading" itself often meant "listening" to a slave or friend recite from a scroll that, it goes without saying, could be *read* in quite the same way, or in the same lugubrious postures, as we, happy beneficiaries of the Aldine octavo, may bend open our light paperbacks. As for the production of written material, the comparatively clean ease of word processors, typewriters, graphite, ball-point pens, and even plume and ink, make it rather easy to forget that, in ages of papyrus, parchment, and ground ink, composition was not the same as actually setting down words in writing: literature, like letters, was, among the Romans of our period, often written out with the help of a *scriptor librarius*, a slave responsible for taking dictation and reading out material: a Cicero had his Tiro, a Virgil his Eros. The exception proves the rule: Quintilian needed to underline the importance of having a secret space, ideally indoors, kept empty of everyone else, even one's *scriptor librarius*, because the kinds of things the orator needs to do there as part of his creative process--"waving the hand, twisting up one's face, sometimes hitting one's own head or side" and, in a more colorful poeticism, even "attacking the escritoire, with a soupçon of chomped nails"--all of these things, says Quintilian, "are ridiculous except when we are alone (*ridicula sunt, nis cum soli sumus*),"[9] thus suggesting what our own intuitions might have foreseen, that not all Romans took their slaves' presence completely for granted.

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[8] Parker 2009.

[9] Quint. 10.3.21 *Tum illa, quae altiorem animi motum sequuntur quaeque ipsa animum quodammodo concitant, quorum est iactare manum, torquere vultum, frontem et latus interim obiurgare, quaeque Persius notat, cum leviter dicendi genus significat 'nec pluteum,' inquit, 'caedit nec demorsos sapit ungues,' etiam ridicula sunt, nisi cum soli sumus.* Note that

This is not to say, however, that Romans could not make the anti-social tendencies of the poet a subject for praise, or, more often, censure: Horace, for example, can lovingly, describe how "the whole chorus of writers loves the woods and flees the city,"[10] but can also take aim at those who, like Euripides,[11] take their anti-social behavior a step too far: "Because Democritus thought genius more charmed than art, and excluded sane poets from Helicon, a good number of them no longer cares to trim either their nails or their beard—they seek out secret places, and avoid the baths."[12] As Brink put it (*ad loc.*): "both cleanliness and sociability are in point." And Manilius, the astronomical poet with whose tale of Orpheus we began, could describe himself as a solitary astronaut uplifted and alone among his muses (2.136-144):

> "This is the theme I should wish with breath inspired to carry to the stars. Not in the crowd nor for the crowd (*nec in turba nec turbae)* shall I compose my song, but alone (*sed solus*), as though borne round an empty circuit I were freely driving my car with none to cross my path or steer a course beside me over a common route (*nec per iter socios commune regentibus actus)*, I shall sing it for the skies to hear, while the

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Quintilian's insistence on a solitary workspace provides a crucial predecessor and intertext for the introduction and premise of Augustine's *Soliloquia*, often taken to be an ideological, or at least rhetorical, innovation of the late antique Christian period.

[10] Horace, *Ep*. 2.2.77 *scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus et fugit urbes.*

[11] According to legend (Aul. Gell. *NA* 15.20), Euripides composed his plays in a "foul and frightening cave on the isle of Salamis."

[12] Horace, *AP* 295-8 *ingenium misera quia fortunatius arte / credit et excludit sanos Helicone poetas / Democritus, bona pars non ungues ponere curat, / non barbam, secreta petit loca, balnea vitat.*

> stars marvel and the firmament rejoices in the song of its bard——or (*vel*) for those to whom the stars have not grudged knowledge of themselves and their sacred motions, the smallest crowd on earth."[13]

"Not in the crowd nor for the crowd, but alone among the stars and for the skies I will sing…*or* for the smallest crowd"— the "right crowd," Manilius goes on to explain, "the fewest and the best," is, very much like Cicero's *pauci tamen boni*, "few but good," made up of those who can have the time and ability to understand his works (hence, wealthy) and who do not care about wealth (hence, we can surmise, very wealthy), with, for ideal reader, Tiberius, grand dedicatee of Manilius' book. As these surreptitious slides show, both poetry and *class*, we might say, are in point. Which is to say that we have to be careful to recognize that being "alone" for a Roman aristocratic could just as often mean being "alone" with the right kind of people as mean being "alone" by oneself. And being "alone" in the right kind of place, with the right kind of people, was as much about a particular form of self-representation as it was part of an ethical, philosophical, or certainly aesthetic program. It is to solitude as a form of representation, and part of the vocabulary of poetic self-presentation and self-fashioning, that we now turn.

III. The Dialectic of Solitude

[13] Trans. Goold, with mod.; Manilius, *Astronomica* 2.136-144 *Haec ego divino cupiam cum ad sidera flatu / ferre, nec in turba nec turbae carmina condam / sed solus, vacuo veluti vectatus in orbe / liber agam currus non occursantibus ullis / nec per iter socios commune regentibus actus, / sed caelo noscenda canam, mirantibus astris / et gaudente sui mundo per carmina vatis, / vel quibus illa sacros non invidere meatus / notitiamque sui, minima est quae turba per orbem.*

The “dual significance” of solitude describes how an author may withdraw from one world, and create, in this space of contraction and through this action of withdrawal, a new world of imagination. But speaking of solitude as a form of representation reminds us that any attempt to divide the contextual and the individual, or the material from the spiritual, will fall into certain predictable conceptual binds: withdrawing from society in order to create literary worlds not only predicates works of imagination on a prior social state, but also, and invariably, shares the author’s solitude, and the worlds of imagination it makes possible, with other people. When Horace, in one of his *Satires*, says of his model Lucilius, that "he entrusted his secrets to books as if to trusted friends…so that the whole life of this old man lies open, as if painted on a votive tablet," he alludes to precisely this paradox: even when the work of literature means choosing living with one's books instead of with one’s friends—a model of what we today might call “companionate writing”—this turning of one's life into a book also makes one all the more into a figure fully accessible to other people.[14] In this sense, one can be, as W.H. Auden puts it, "In solitude, for company."[15]

To the "dual significance" of solitude we must, therefore, add to our conceptual vocabulary what Octavio Paz called the "dialectic of solitude," or, in Toynbee's words, "the twofold motion of withdrawal-and-return."[16] We are familiar with how this works in Romantic terms: William

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[14] Horace, *Satires* 2.1.30-4 *ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim / credebat libris, neque si mala cesserat, usquam / decurrens alio, neque si bene; quo fit, ut omnis / votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella / vita senis. sequor hunc, Lucanus an Apulus anceps.*

[15] “Horae Canonica: Lauds,” published in *The Shield of Achilles* (1955).

[16] Paz 1972:185, Toynbee 1974:217-229, with numerous historical parallels.

Wordsworth can embrace truth and humanity more closely than the scientist, because the imaginary daffodils that "“flash upon that inward eye / which is the bliss of solitude"[17] enable him, with his unique poetic constitution, to turn his solitude into a social good, singing, as he explains in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* “a song in which all human beings join with him."

The rhetoric of solitude in Roman society, like that in the Romantic period, was a posture achieved with some difficulty, and with a variety of ends and qualities, all of them implicated in the tension that characterizes the paradox of performed solitude. The challenges that this dialectic poses to the literature of solitude can be broadly divided into two interlocked categories: the historical and the literary. We will begin with the historical side of the issue: we will begin (IIIa: “Solitude as Social Capital”) with the ways in which the dialectic of of solitude addresses and unsettles the question of literature's relationship to other forms of political action ("the solitary is always political," we might say), and then turn (IIIb: “Literary Solitude and its Historical Contexts”) to speculation as to what made the 1st century BCE particularly amenable to the development of solitude as a literary theme. Following this, we will turn to more strictly literary and formal aspects of the dialectic of solitude (IV. “The Aesthetic Turn”), and explore how it worries literature's relationship, as an act of personal and verbal imagination, to social presence (i.e. "Who's there?" "Nobody").

IIIa. Solitude as Social Capital

Solitude is, paradoxically, but naturally enough, often a social practice, and an important source of social capital. Shamans, "ascetic stars" like stylites or desert saints, and lawmakers--

[17] Wordsworth, “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud.”

think Moses on the mountain, Lycurgus on the seas, or Numa in the Egerian grove--all stand to gain a great deal of political prestige, metaphysical aura, and the impression of magical power from solitude that is ostentatious, in the literal sense of that word: "stretched out to view," "visible," "displayed," "performed."[18] Similarly, aesthetic detachment from society can, as Adorno thought, be an act with significant social ramifications.[19] So solitude can be the source of the power that a writer wields over social groups, hence the popularity of "poet-ordination" scenes (*Dichterweihen*) that show the poet gain his powers alone, or alone with a god: Hesiod on Helicon, Caedmon in his barn, or, in a more clear encapsulation of the paradox of solitary inspiration, the bard Phemius saving himself from Odysseus' sword through a timely reminder: "I am self-taught, and the god has inspired me with all kinds of songs."[20] Wordsworth's advertisement of his inspired solitude, as we saw, was adjunct to his claim to speak for all of humanity. An ancient literary *topos*, and one predictably enough found often at the beginnings and ends of works, has the poet, similarly, declare that he is the "first" to have brought down

[18] On the symbiosis of holy men and communities, see Brown 1971.

[19] See Feldherr 2000:218 for discussion of the oral presupposition of texts, instantiated in a chilling epitaph (*Anth. Lat*. 721): *Vivere post obitum vatem vis nosse, viator? / Quod legis, ecce loquor; vox tua nempte mea est*, "Do you want proof that a poet lives after death, wayfarer? What you are reading,—look!—I am saying; your voice is mine." See also Lowrie 2009:23 for the "metaphorical orality" of silent reading.

[20] Homer, *Odyssey* 22:344-9 αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν οἵμας / παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν.

from Helicon, or Olympus, or the stars, his poetic gift for mortals, his triumphal descent predicated on his prior solitary, and unprecedented, ascent.

But the social reflex of solitude can be even more directly political: when Cicero, for example, writes repeatedly to his political allies to let them know how "alone" and "isolated" he is, he is doing so in order to remind them that he *should not* be alone, and is only relegated to such straits, far from friends, forum, and senate, as a result of the betrayal of Rome's traditional political customs by those with more power than virtue. In the case of the Roman poets of the 1st century BCE, the fact that poetry became a realm for non-senatorial professionals combined with the stresses of intense social turmoil to help provoke the creation of a new kind of artistic identity; this new identity was the *vates*, or "sacred poet," who was defined, in large part, by the sense that he was separate from both the common dregs of society and, as well, from the aristocratic patrons who supported them but could not, or rather, would not, bind them down.[21] Hence, in part, the interest of the biographical tradition in acts of coquettish, and all too formalized, resistance put up by poets to the imperial will: Horace gracefully refusing the post of private secretary to the first citizen of Rome, Virgil's reluctance to send his *Aeneid* along while still inchoate. Hence, as well, the frequency with which poets declared their absolute inability to sing the song of empire, with each refusal functioning simultaneously as an act of glorification, and an advertisement of imperial liberality, magnanimity, and secure grandeur. The political currency of the *vates* as moral spokesperson for his age and its regimes depends, in no small

[21] On the *vates* figure, see Newman 1967. In Ch. 3, I show how Horace's first *Ode* provides an example of the poet's removal, not only, as commonly supposed, from the vulgar crowd, but from his patrons as well.

measure, on his relative isolation from the normal world of social and economic interactions: as Juvenal's retrospective and idealizing criticism puts it, the poets who should be "desirous of the woods,"[22] are no longer truly poets when they "no longer think it shameful to become town-criers, and Clio, starving, has left behind the empty vales of Aganippe, and moved into the market-stalls."[23]

For all of that, of course, Cicero, even in his darkest days, never gave up on his extensive correspondence, and, with the exception of some long walks among the rocks and rills, the shores and woods of Astura (at which we shall more carefully look in chapter I), was never, in anything approaching a monastic or ascetic sense, alone; and Virgil, even as he created worlds of poetry that abounded in lonely characters and deserted places, seems to have lived as part of a community of poets, philosophers, and other men of letters. But the theme of solitude in literature is not the preserve of hermits: rather, it plays a role similar to what scholarship of the renaissance has seen as the value of the idea of the solitary scholar's study: "images of solitary thought and individual, self-sufficient cultural production" played, for these poets, a crucial role "in the production of the self as a complex articulation of representations, material divisions, and

[22] Juv. *Sat*. 7.58-59 *cupidus siluarum aptusque bibendis / fontibus Aonidum.*

[23] Juv. *Sat*. 7.5-7 *nec foedum alii nec turpe putarent/ praecones fieri, cum desertis Aganippes / uallibus esuriens migraret in atria Clio*; the context there only confirms, however, the dialectical nature of their withdrawal, for the problem Juvenal addresses is the damage that lack of financial support causes to poetry.

social arrangements."[24] Solitude was, and remains, good to think with, even when it is not a material condition of life.

We can say of the role of solitude in Roman literature what one can say, with the help of Cicero's denigrations and Horace's protestations, of literature at Rome more generally: it was "always being, as it were, written against the grain, at odds with the national character, legislated against, misunderstood by the public…"[25] Solitude is not, for Romans, the nation-and-national defining one-word condition that *soledad* was for Paz's Mexicans, or what *saudade*, a Portuguese word derived from Latin *solitudo* and combining both loneliness and bittersweet longing, continues to represent for the Lusophone world.[26] But it is precisely the sense that solitude was,

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[24] Algazi 2012; on the "Invisible Technician" in early modern intellectual culture, see Steven Shapin, "'The Mind is its Own Place': Science and Solitude in Seventeenth-Century England," *Science in Context* 4 (1990): 191-218.

[25] Feeney 2002:187; cf. Roman 2014:13. On the place of the writer in Rome, see Boes 1990; Narducci 1989 1997; Griffin and Barnes 1989; Habinek 1994, Fantham 1996. On Roman avoidance of the appearance of "intellectualism," see Zanker 1995:199-200, Horsfall 1993:59-60, 63-4, Gruen 1990 and 1992. See Cicero, *De Finibus* 1.71-2 on poetry and music as being of "no concrete use, entertainment being wholly childish (*nulla solida utilitas omnisque puerilis est delectatio*)." On Horace and poetry, see Ch. 3.

[26] For Portuguese *saudade*, see, for example, Eduardo Lourenço's 1972 *O Labirinto da Saudade.* If asked to define the particular Roman virtue, one suspects most Romans in Cicero's circle might have said *virtus*, or, perhaps, *officium*. On the "social scripts" of various emotional words and their role in the system of Roman social values, see Kaster 2005.

for Romans, a provocative anomaly foreign to right-thinking common sense, that made it for the poets, and makes it for us as interpreters, so useful a way to worry the purposes of literature.[27] The removal from social bounds and contexts provided by images of solitude was, for the poets, a way not only to idealize themselves, but, as we shall see, a way for them to critique their own practices--to misunderstand, criminalize, and prosecute the tense oddity of the cultural position that they inhabited.

IIIb. Literary Solitude and its Historical Contexts

The dialectic of solitude should demand, ideally, not only that we look to how solitude serves social goals, but, as well, to how social goals help bring about particular rhetorics of solitude. In this case, that means asking what specific contexts might have helped give rise and prominence to the *solitudo imaginaria* in Roman literary culture in general, and in the 1st century BCE in particular. Matters of literary history cannot be settled in so brief a span--and, if skeptics like David Perkins are right, in any sized span at all![28]--but they provide essential context that help enrich, fill out, and complicate the interpretations in the chapters that follow.

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[27] On poets' lack of common sense, see, i.a., Horace *Sat*. 2.7.17 *aut insanit homo aut versus facit* ("Either this man's going crazy…or writing poetry"), and 1.3.63-6 (esp. 66 *communi sensu plane caret*).

[28] Perkins 1992—he should know, as the previous author of the now-canonical 2-volume, 1300 page history of modern poetry.

According to some critics, Roman culture was, for all of its moral and political focus, well-suited to the idea of a literary of the imagination that advertised itself as in some way distinct from society. Romans were, it is true, accustomed to the particular kind of imaginative projections we call legal fictions, from the virtual aerial *templum* involved in taking auspices, to the *Columna Bellica* on the Campus Martius that stood in for the hostile territory into which Rome's fetial priests would hurl their pointed declarations of war.[29] And Romans were, it is also true, always aware that their literature, like their gods, architecture, and theater, was always already Greek, always, therefore, an act of translation and adaptation of something foreign, and foreign in a way that combined respect for cultivation with sense of profound difference: Romans were accustomed, we should remember, to watching Greek plays translated into Latin words and Roman social contexts but set in Greek cities! Further, it has been thought that the Roman adaptation of Greek genres implied a desocialization of literature: whereas Greek lyric poets, the argument goes, sang their songs for an immediate social audience, Roman poets inherited only the form, but not the communal context, of their predecessors, thus making their works more clearly an act of imagination and projection.[30]

This kind of a approach is very welcome to Romanists, of course, because it reverses the longstanding Romantic canard that denigrates mechanical Roman imitation in order to raise the flag of colorful Greek ingenuity. It is an exaggeration, and, like all exaggerations, useful less as a delineation of exact space than as signpost about where we might look next. In this instance, I

[29] On the column, see Ov. *Fast*. vi. 205-9; Serv. *Aen*. ix. 52; Fest. 33; on the origin of the fetial rite, see Livy 1.32.

[30] Williams 1968:37.

believe that there are three particular social and cultural contexts that repeatedly take near-center stage in the chapters that follow, as contributors to the prevalence of the *solitaria imaginaria* as a way for authors to construe their relationship to their works, their worlds, and their readers. I present these three contexts--1) Private life, 2) Literary Careers, and 3) Books--less as evidence than as a form of local colors, as they are the colors that will repeatedly recur in each of this thesis' four studies.

Historians of culture have demonstrated how the civil wars and the broad social upheaval they entailed helped to make the 1st century BCE a red-letter period in history of European private life.[31] Both the forces of discord (civil war) and order (principate) in these troubles times made it attractive for those with the means to do so to seek out activities that might take the place of the kind of political action that, though perhaps more than usually dangerous since the assassination of Gracchus, had, over the course of the 1st century BCE, gotten far more dangerous, and then irrelevant, than ever before. In the case of Rome's economic elite, the desire to get away combined with a massive increase in upper-class wealth and landholding to encourage those who could to retreat, as often as possible, to countryside villas, or, if need be, to confine oneself, when in the city, to private *atria*.[32] Augustus' *Syracuse* or τεχνόφυον (laboratory, or workshop), the thought-cave--secret (*secreto*), impermeable (*sine interpellatione*), high-up (*edito*), self-contained and detached and single-occupancy (*singularis*) is only the most

[31] Veyne 2015 with bibl.

[32] Wallace-Hadrill 1994, Riggsby 1998 (with useful caveats about broader conceptual applicability of private-public spatial distinctions for the interpretation of culture and life in the early principate).

prominent of the spaces of private retreat, in this case inside the city, that became a cultural norm in this period, and a precedent for the periods to come.[33]

The social and class pressures of the late 2nd and early 1st century BCE have, in conjunction with Rome's traditional interest in public autobiographical representations (i.e. *laudatio funebris*, *commentarii*, etc.), been made responsible for the intense "interest in the individual" evinced by writers of this period.[34] For Michèle Lowrie, the transformation of socially embedded literary genres from Greece into private aesthetic forms in Rome helped explained why "it is with the Romans--Cicero, Lucilius, Horace even, portraiture certainly—that we first get the sense of idiosyncratic individuals, as opposed to the universalizing individuality of the Greeks."[35] As we have seen, Horace can describe Lucilius as having exposed the secrets of his life to posterity by making his life the subject of his poetry and his poetry the substitute for his life. Still, there is a world of difference between what we can make out of Lucilius' autobiographical impulse and what we can hear in that first and finest example of what Roland Barthes called, with relation to Montaigne and Proust, *la vie écrite*, "the written-out life." This kind of "written-out" life would answer best, not to the *vita descripta* of Lucilius, but to the life of that master of self-creation and auto-citation, Marcus Tullius Cicero, whose publication and circulation of his own speeches, works of philosophy and politics, and, for the first time in literary history, "private" letters, put

[33] On Augustus' *Syracuse* and its place in the Augustan cultural program, Gowers 2010.

[34] Williams 1968, ch. 7.

[35] Lowrie 2009:248.

the particularities, peculiarities, heroisms, and foibles of his life on public display.[36] By reading Cicero's works, one can enter into Cicero's life, and, as Ciceronian ideology would always like us to believe, enter into the life, too, of the Republic in its ideal functioning form: if you cannot have a senate, the argument goes, you can, at least, have the life-as-text of a consummate senator.

The example of Cicero's "written life" may have played a role in inspiring what seems to have been the development, across the literary aisle, of the idea of the "poetic career" as a self-contained whole, a development whose starting-point has been often described, by scholars of poetic career-criticism, to Virgil.[37] As Lawrence Lipking has put it, Virgil's "master creation was the sense of an inevitable destiny: his life as a poet,"[38] and such a way as to set a pattern of poetic promotion, the so-called *rota Virgiliani*, for poets in his wake, with structured staging from the pastoral through didactic to epic. As Joseph Farrell has pointed out, there was nothing more natural than that poets should craft for themselves a *cursus* that resembled the traditional political career, reflecting what they might have themselves had had they chosen a "public" life, and in any case reflecting the careers that their patrons and sponsors would have easily recognized from

[36] On Cicero's self-commemoration within the late Roman Republican "society of the text", see Roman Stroup 2010:3ff and 2014:71ff.

[37] For "career criticism," see Lipking 1981, Cheney and de Armas 2002, Hardie and Moore 2010. On biographical treatment of the ancient poets, see Lefkowitz 1981 and Graziosi 2002.

[38] Lipking 1981:77; Klinger 1930 remains essential reading for "the unity of Virgil's life's-work."

their own worlds.[39] One result of this development is that it invited treating a poet's entire life's-work as a self-contained whole, an invitation that, as we shall see, poets like Virgil, Horace, and Propertius readily used to link together the various parts of their *ouevres*.[40] This heightened sense of continuity across works, and of an author's close relationship to his own past works, had the effect of increasing self-referentiality, and the sense that, in reading a poet's work, one was entering into a fictional world of the poet's own fashioning.

The building-blocks for these literary careers were books, and one of the more remarkable literary innovations of the late 1st century BCE is, beginning with Virgil's *Eclogues*, the ambition to treat a book of poetry, even when not governed by a single matter, story, character, or even genre, into a a single, organic, collected, organized, and self-referential unit. What is striking is not the idea of the structured book itself, which had what we now know to have been a pre-Virgilian history;[41] what seems innovative, rather, is "the large scale, the opulence of production,

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[39] Farrell 2002.

[40] For Virgilian intratextuality, see Farrell 2002 and Oliensis 2004, and Ch. 2. It is plausible that this development is linked to what Tony Woodman (2002:57) has seen as the operative force in Horace's relationship to the Greek poet Alcaeus (and, to a lesser, but stranger, extent, Sappho): Horace does not only imitate "merely metres or lines or poems of Alcaeus, but a whole poet." For the notion that one can "discern an author's character" from his works, see Demetrius, *Eloc*. 227.

[41] The New Posidippus is central to recent revisions of book history, on which, see Gutzwiller 2005; on its Latin impact, see Hutchinson 2008:90-108. The Gallus papyrus has also had a major

and the expansion beyond the literary."[42] Of course it is the poets, in particular, who avail themselves of new conceptual possibilities, with Horace's *Satires* and *Epodes* making a habit out of what had been Virgil's leap.[43] Although it is best to avoid drawing too sharp a line between Catullus and the so-called Augustan poets, and although the structure of the Catullun *libellus* is far from a settled question, most people would agree that with Virgil's works we begin to see, perhaps for the first time, the sense that a book of disparate poems has been composed and recomposed so that, in the words of one scholar, "the design of individual poems had become, to some extent, subordinate to the design of the book."[44] We have seen, if briefly, how Lucilius provided Horace with a model of companionate writing; what the idea of the composite book as organic entity suggested was the possibility of "companionate reading," the idea that poetry--by oneself or by someone else--could become the companion of one's solitude. This is a model that we shall see throughout our work, and that will be the subject of our conclusion.

Now, the sense that increasingly book-based Latin poetry generated a literature more disembodied, autonomous, and comparatively context free has long had purchase on classical scholarship; typical, in this respect, is Eduard Fraenkel's claim that "when the book had become the normal means for the transmission of poems, the emancipation of poetry from the conditions

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impact on these studies, on which, see R.D. Anderson, Nisbet, Parsons 1979; cf. Hutchinson 2008:24.

[42] Hutchinson 2008:30.

[43] On the *Eclogues* and Horace's early works, see Hutchinson 2008:29, with bibl.

[44] Clausen 1994:xxi.

of the life of a definite society was complete."[45] Though we should be wary of exaggerating the differences between oral and written literature, particularly as a way of differentiating Greek from Roman culture, the Romans did, as Michèle Lowrie's subtle treatment has exposed, celebrate writing's ability to abstract a writer from his immediate surroundings.[46]

All of these developments contributed to what has been called the growing sense of the autonomy of the Roman poets--the sense that they were, socially, a rule to themselves, and that their works were, aesthetically, distinct from immediate political goals and the immediate social world. As Luke Roman has recently underlined, the sense was the product of careful construction on the part of 1st century BCE writers, whose "autonomist discourse" and "strategies of self-representation" helped them design poetic personae that would better allow them to attain socio-political legitimacy, safety, and standing in Rome's marketplace of ideas.[47] Similarly, Michèle Lowrie has shown us how part of the "face-work" of writers of this period involved playing the social immediacy of song against the aesthetic immortality of the written: "each modality," Lowrie concludes, "has its political advantages."[48] The works of Roman and Lowrie are

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[45] Fraenkel 1957:41.

[46] Lowrie 2009; at p. 144 n. 6, she cites the work of Brian Breed (2006) on the textuality of the *Eclogues* as "a welcome embrace of reading and writing as 'an encounter with the humanity of others."

[47] Roman 2014:14-15.

[48] Lowrie 2009:382; "face-work" is an old term in sociological studies, deriving from the early work of Erving Goffman (1955, 1967), and was usefully applied by Oliensis 1998 to Horace's self-fashioning "rhetoric of authority."

exemplary in in the way that they take up the gains of the sociological turn in Roman cultural studies--its nuanced models of patronage,[49] literacy,[50] socio-cultural change,[51] book-culture,[52] and the relationship between literature and other cultural spheres[53]--to show how Roman writers of the 1st century BCE are a model case for how a traditional literary system can evolve itself through dialectical interactions with a time of extreme political upheaval and social reorganization.[54]

IV. The Aesthetic Turn

But the dialectic of solitude goes both ways: just as no amount of idealist abstraction can escape reinterpretation as material strategy, so no amount of material detail--patronage, book-trade, social standing--can efface the literary ends of literature, its own internal dynamics, tensions, and struggles with meaning. There is no question that we must be attuned to how much poets stood to gain from their autonomous discourse. We must also, however, attend to how much they stood to lose, how much their postures of solitude, adopted for any number of

[49] i.a. Gold 1982; Saller 1982; Wallace-Hadrill 1989; White 1993; Konstan 1995. Bourdieu's turn towards literary production in the 1980's and 1990's (particularly *Les Règles de l'art* (1990)) provides a useful correlate and, often, source for these new histories.

[50] e.g. Johnson and Parker 2009.

[51] e.g. Zanker 1988, Habinek and Schiesaro 1997, Wallace-Hadrill 2009.

[52] e.g. Hutchinson 2008.

[53] Feeney 1998.

[54] Varying a formula of Leslie Kurke 2007:145.

reasons, interacted, in both helpful and hindering ways, with their other projects of self-representation. For example, in the case of Manilius' constellation of the Lyre, we need to ask, what is the relationship between the Orpheus who sings sweet songs to crowds and the Orpheus who sings sad songs by himself? The Lyre rises, with Libra, at the autumnal equinox, as the nights grow longer than the day--Orpheus, then, can both spend longer with his feasters by detaining the night, but do these long nights not also invite a prolongation of his solitary cares, of the kind that, as we shall see, force the elegiac lover Propertius, "now, for the first time, alone, to know long nights, forced, and, myself, to be a heavy weight for my own ears."[55] The hardest part of literary criticism is its demand that we treat both the convivial and solitary forms of singing as representing, to equal degrees, the ultimate and intermediate, genuine and instrumental, numinal and phemomenal, *personae* of singer, poet, or writer.

But the dialectic of solitude reaches far more pervasively, and involves itself far more inextricably, into the literature of solitude, for it reaches into the act of speech itself. In Manilius' representation of the solitary Orpheus' song, for example, we are bedeviled by a formal problem that is not trivial: how, we might ask, do we know that Orpheus sang songs all by himself? Somebody, of course, must have talked, whether truly or falsely, whether Orpheus himself or some other witness. If we know *that* he sang songs, but do not know the songs that he sang, are they still, in any real sense, songs of unmitigated solitude? Or are they, rather, to butcher Auden's phrase, "solitudes, for company?" Any which way, if we know about a solitude, if

[55] Prop. *Elegies* 1.12.13-4 *nunc primum longas solus cognoscere noctes / cogor et ipse meis auribus esse gravis;* cf. Prop. *Eleg*. 3.25.1 [24.21].

someone represents themselves as solitary to us, then *we* are already inside of their solitude, then their solitude is already non-solitary.[56]

The dialectic of solitude, then, in addition to representing a tension between formal and material ends, is also a kind of paradox of language. It is a paradox that is expressed most explicitly in the Latin corpus by the Neronian satirist Persius, who, as he begins his first poem, claims to his imaginary and objecting interlocutor that the audience for his poetry will be "either two people, or nobody."[57] We can paraphrase: "If I, Persius, am truly speaking, and you, the interlocutor, are truly listening, and someone, a reader, is truly reading, then I am speaking to two; but what if I am not speaking, you are not listening, and nobody is reading? What if," as Persius later goes on, "the 'you' poetry addresses is really 'whoever you are, you whom I've made just now in order to speak opposite me?'"[58] As Persius texts emphasizes, when you are writing, you are always writing *to someone* (at the very least, to a future "you"), with all writing taking the form of a kind of apostrophe. This is the problematic aspect of speech-acts that Barthes called the inaccessibility of writing at the zero-degree, and what Antoine Compagnon has described as "the impossibility of any literature of the first person" by which "the literary

[56] I borrow this formulation from Petrarch's phrase, "I want a non-solitary solitude" on which, see Ch. 1.

[57] Persius, *Sat*. 1.1-3 *O curas hominum! o quantum est in rebus inane! / 'quis leget haec?' min tu istud ais? nemo hercule. 'nemo?' / uel duo uel nemo.*

[58] Persius, *Sat*. 1.44-48 *quisquis es, o modo quem ex aduerso dicere feci, / non ego cum scribo, si forte quid aptius exit, / quando haec rara auis est, si quid tamen aptius exit, / laudari metuam.*

enunciation inevitably destroys the authenticity of the form itself."[59] As Pascal put it, "A thought has escaped me. I wanted to write it down. I write instead, that it has escaped me."[60] Pascal's "thought," like an author's "solitude," is inaccessible, inexpressible, and not subject to acquisition even by the author himself, let alone by any reader. For Maurice Blanchot, the serio-comic duality of solitude is at the very heart of the "literature of oneself":

> "A writer who writes 'I am alone' or, like Rimbaud, 'I am actually from beyond the grave' can seem somewhat comical. It is comical to take note of one's solitude in addressing oneself to a reader, and by means that prevent the man from being alone. The word alone is as general as the word bread. As soon as one utters it, one makes present everything that it excludes. These aporias of language are rarely taken seriously."[61]

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[59] Antoine Compagnon, "L'impossibilité de toute littérature à la première personne éclate, selon Blanchot, dans l'écriture du malheur, du spleen, dont l'énoncé littéraire détruit inévitablement l'authenticité par sa forme même." (Annuaire du Collège de France 2008-2009, Résumé des cours et travaux 109e année, http://annuaire-cdf.revues.org/200?lang=en)

[60] "Pensée échappée, je la voulais écrire; j'écris, au lieu, qu'elle m'est échappée." (Pascal, *Pensées* 370)

[61] "Un écrivain qui écrit «Je suis seul» ou comme Rimbaud: «Je suis réelement d'outre-tombe» peut se juger assez comique. Il est comique de prendre conscience de sa solitude en s'adressant à un lecteur et par des moyens qui empêchent l'homme d'être seul. Le mot seul est aussi général que le mot pain. Dès qu'on le prononce, on se rend présent tout ce qu'il exclut. Ces aporis du langage sont rarement prises au sérieux." (*Faux Pas,* 1943, p. 1)

But, we might say to Blanchot, if to write "I am alone" can be described as comical in a formal sense, it certainly is not always so in its totality: I doubt very much that people would laugh if they discovered the words "I am alone" scrawled on a solitary confinement cell: it is the phenomenon, the feeling, the representation, of solitude, the work that solitude does for and within a text, an ideology, a philosophy, rather than its present or future actuality, that is relevant to our emotional response and interpretive stance. In this sense, although the literary expression of solitude will always be dialectical and, in its way, paradoxical, the fact that it can describe a feeling or tone or mood, rather than an objective statement of fact, means that it is paradoxical in a different way from the so-called Cretan or Liar's paradox ("This statement is a lie"), or from the have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too quality of someone who, for example, quietly publicizes the fact that he has made an anonymous donation.

The most interesting artistic expressions of solitude actively engage with this paradox of feeling and fact, with the sense that "art always constitutes company"[62]--not only does a poem of solitude bring the reader together with the poet who created it, but it brings the reader together with itself, makes itself my companion in the reader's solitude. But art is, after all, just art, and, as much as it can assuage solitude, it can also make it more acute. As a result, the best works of solitude are not wholly works of sentiment, sadness, or consolation, but works about what Samuel Beckett called "the solitude that cannot quicken to loneliness and the loneliness that cannot lapse into solitude."[63] Indeed, the best works of solitude, and the subjects of this study are

[62] Ricks 2002:262.

[63] Beckett to Thomas MacGreevy on August 14th, 1937, on the paintings of Jack Yeats, quoted in Knowlson 1996:247-8.

among them, show both the powers and imperfections of the imagination, and brings the full experience of solitude together with a sense that all expressions of solitude are, as well, social acts: Cicero does just that when he frames his praise of friendship with the death of the friend; Horace does just that in his oscillations between the public to a solitary posture that always comes back to mark, with ironic force, the inescapable paradox of this dynamic; and Virgil does just that when, in opening his tenth and final *Eclogue*, he reassures his nymph Arethusa that "we do not sing to the deaf: the trees answer all,"[64] I, as reader/hearer, know that Virgil and his nymph sing *for me*, and know, as well, that, even if I respond, I cannot respond *to them*; this is true even if, like Horace in the *Epodes*, they insist on that I say something: "Give your response!"[65] The situation of the tenth *Eclogue* as a whole models, on a large scale, the elegiac premise of the story the poem relates, and the problem of literary solitude more broadly construed: Gallus is singing to his absent beloved Lycoris, and, even though she cannot hear him, Virgil and Arethusa can hear him without being able to reach him.

As we investigate the role of the representation of solitude in the various texts of our study, we will have to be constantly alive to the tension between solitude and the nature of writing itself, particularly so in a literary tradition, like that of ancient Rome, where the addressee played such a ubiquitous structuring role in a variety of literary genres. There is a dramatic irony at work when Propertius, in his first elegy, represents himself as suffering in his solitude, but does

[64] Virg. *E.* 10.8 *Non canimus surdis: respondent omnia silvae.*

[65] Hor. *Epodes* 7.13-4 *furorne caecos an rapit vis acrior / an culpa? responsum date.*

so in a poem that he addresses to his friend and patron, Tullus.[66] As we shall see, Propertius later plays on this irony by giving us a lament of an elegist who believes himself to be suffering in solitude, but turns out to be not so very alone, his complaints transmitted to us by the beloved's door, forced to endure the excluded lovers' night-long songs. The form of this is that frequent gag in Roman comedy—and a convention beloved by the Elizabethan stage—the overheard soliloquy: somebody who thinks he is alone, and speaking only to himself, is, in fact, speaking to someone else who is hidden on, or just off, stage. In all of these cases, even if nobody onstage is there to listen to a soliloquy, the larger dramatic (or readerly, or performative) irony of solitude was not lost on ancient playwrights, and it was not lost on ancient poets —even if nobody *within* the work is represented as listening to the solitary speaker's words, these words' status as a *work* that we are reading or hearing means that we can never actually encounter another person in that person's solitude.[67] We never encounter solitude at the zero-degree, and, in poetry, this is as true of poems that address other humans as of poems that address gods, lyres, wineskins, or the poet's own self.

Reading for solitude means attending to the way a text plays with all of these levels, and means, in particular, attending to the way that a text resists being populated by others, taking time, before contextualizing, to experience the many sides of the writer's solitude. "Bees," wrote

[66] Though, evidently, a friend who, even though an "old friend," does not seem to know anything about Propertius' origins; cf. Propertius, *Elegies* 1.22, and Ch. 4.

[67] For a sophisticated model of our (and others') "overreading" of the Latin poets through a variety of levels of reception, see Oliensis 1998:154-197.

Varro, "are not of a solitary nature, as eagles are, but are like human beings"[68]--bees, that is, are, like humans in Aristotle's terms, "social animals." Knowing this, we cannot miss the paradox that, when Virgil's *Georgics* explores how bees resemble human communities, it does so by relating a tragic story of dubious outcome in which one single, solitary man, Aristaeus, must make restitution for his crime of rendering another man, Orpheus, tragically single and solitary. Some humans, we might say to Varro, are, or like to represent themselves as, more like eagles than like bees. The poet, so goes a frequent *topos* of the Greek anthology, is a "lover of solitude" (ἐρημοφίλας), who, for the sake of this love, is saved from the trappers' nets.[69] Something similar happens, as we shall see, to a poet like Horace as he wanders alone through vast wildernesses singing, all the while, his love of his sweet Lalage.[70] For the lucky blackbird and happy Horace, solitude is a joyful condition, but the poet's solitude could also, according to Aristotle, be melancholic: "All geniuses," he wrote, "are melancholic," thus resembling the mythical figure Bellerophon, "He who, sorrowful, in the Aleïan plain, lamenting, wandered--he, himself, eating his own heart, avoiding the traces of men."[71] Exploring the role of solitude and imagination in Latin literature requires us to take the internal tensions of solitude seriously, by treating these contradictions of love and melancholy, freedom and imprisonment, these "aporias of language" and dialectics as something worthy of investigation, and not solely as a form of the poet's socio-political "face."

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[68] Varro, DRR 3.16 *hae apes non sunt solitaria natura, ut aquilae, sed ut homines.*

[69] *A.P.* 9.396 (Paulus Silentarius); cf. *A.P.* 9.343 (Archias), *A.P.* 9.76 (Antipater of Sidon).

[70] Horace, *Odes* 1.22, on which, see Ch. 2; for the trope, see, also, Propertius, *Elegies* 3.16.

[71] cf. Homer, *Il.* 6.155-203 (esp. 6.201); see introduction to Ch. 1.

Exploring the theme of solitude in Roman literature along these lines will require a variety of reading methods. At times, it will mean re-reading the surfaces of works in order to find solitude where it has been missed, either through too narrow a view of Roman society, or through too strong a faith in the limitations imposed by social norms on the writer's imaginative capacities. At other times, it will mean reading texts antithetically, against their rhetorical grain, by shedding light on how images of solitude lead arguments, stories, and scenes astray. In all instances, it will require a vocabulary that the Romans, as we have seen, did not have. No Roman philosopher ever, so far as we know, theorized solitude in any explicit way: Augustine's *Soliloquia* and *Secretum* are, in the Augustan period, still far in the future; we have to wait a millennium for the appearance of Petarch's *De Vita Solitaria*, long, still for Montaigne's "backshop of our mind, wholly own, wholly free, wherein to settle our true freedom our principal retreat and solitude,"[72] and, even then, it will not be until the Romantic period that "that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude"[73] becomes what we may, at last, describe as the preeminent, and ostensible, matter and manner of poetry.

But the weakness of critical distance can be, as well, a source of strength, if it allows us to interrogate both our own critical concepts along fresh lines, and, what is more directly the

[72] Montaigne, *De la Solitude*: "Il se faut réserver une arrière-boutique, toute nôtre, toute franche, en laquelle nous établissions notre vraie liberté et principale retraite et solitude." On the cultural resonance of Montaigne's "backshop" with contemporary European architectural designs, see Hollander 2002:179; on the social contexts of Montaigne's solitary self-representations, see Hoffman 1988:24.

[73] William Wordsworth, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (1804).

purpose of this thesis, to draw out, describe, and react to aesthetic and ideological aspects of ancient texts that exceeded their contemporary critical vocabularies, and to do so by drawing, not on critical formulas that we impose on literary texts, but on the texts themselves and their representations of what it means to engage in literary activity.[74] Throughout, we shall be interested in how Roman writers represented themselves, their characters, their subjects, and their work as, in some form and to some degree, divided from social contexts of reception or impact. For the Romans, *imaginatio* meant images; in this study, "imagination" will include images but also the literary spaces, mental projections, and fictions that the authors of our study evoked, often in a way tinged with the thrill, and doubt, of a dream: "Do we believe it," asks one of Virgil's characters of her visions, "or do lovers fashion (*fingunt*) their own dreams for themselves?"[75] It is the construction of imagined worlds in solitary spaces, and the role that solitude played in the structures and most evocative images of the philosophies, poems, and books of the late Roman Republic and early Principate, that is the focus of this thesis' study.

Reading for solitude in Roman literature will often mean attending not only to questions of fact--how are solitary spaces or individuals represented within a text, how does an author construe his own relationship to possible audiences--but, as well, to questions of tone, mood, and, to borrow a term from the ancient rhetoricians, *color*, "the cast or complexion" of a passage,

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[74] On the uses and limitations of ancient literary criticism, see Feeney 2006; on the interpretation of an ancient work of literature by way of its own self-representations, see Ford 1992.

[75] Vir. *E*. 8.108 *Credimus an qui amant ipsi sibi somnia fingunt*. On the context of this line in Virgil's *Eclogues*, see Ch. 2. For a model for how to navigate the relationship between Latin *fingo* and modern "fiction" and "illusion," see Feldherr 2010:9-10.

text, or *oeuvre*. The relationship between what one sees as the "tone" of a text and the individual interpretations of parts of that text are always going to be caught in a form of the hermeneutic circle: in the case of solitude, once you decide that educated Romans, as highly social beings with highly developed training in rhetoric and generic decorum, could *not*, from an historic perspective, have an interest in the problem of solitude, then all apparent engagements of solitude disappear from the scene, and any attempt to interpret them risks being seen as anachronistic. This is part of a much broader phenomenon: once one has an idea of what a text means or can mean, then no increase in the number of allusions to or intertexts intersecting with other texts can, in and of itself, change that idea, for the existence of a textual connection cannot determine what that connection means. The attempt to give a new *feel* to a work of literature will always, therefore, take the form of a *Vade Mecum*, an invitation to walk, for some miles, in a different reading's shoes.

No doubt, some readers may find this thesis' concentration on solitude as a theme of study, and the literary nature of the readings that it advances, anachronistically Christian, early modern, romantic, or post-romantic. The fear of "reading (post-)romantically" is, as a perusal of most handbooks of classical study in English, French, and German makes clear, very strong in classical literary scholarship—and justifiably so. This fear, however, can, as the readings offered in this thesis will demonstrate, be based on an essentializing view of the stages and development of literary history, in a way that does not do justice to the complexity of the works under analysis. There is, it seems, not a single period in European history whose scholars have not arrogated to their own epoch the invention of solitude, the individual subject, the autonomous author, and, in the most recent salvo in these transhistorical culture wars, the "lover of

literature."[76] In recent years, the majority of scholars of classical literature have, for good reasons, stepped away from this fight, and ceded most of these concepts, and the literary reflexes that they make possible, to later periods.[77] This thesis shows that both histories that reserve and histories that deny these concepts to their own periods are, in equal measure, in need of nuancing. Most of all, I hope to show that we need to be very careful not to make literary interpretation dependent on the majority social will of those near to whom an author wrote: the possible implications of a line of Virgil's *Aeneid* are not limited to those that 100, 20, 10, or even 1 man drawn from the Roman street might have found convincing. Where does that leave us as interpreters of texts, alone with nothing but one another and our imaginations to go on? With a problem, no doubt—but it is precisely the problem that the dialectic of solitude helps us explore.

The most important impediment to the study of solitude and imagination in Roman literature does not derive from the different configurations of social life that we earlier explained; instead, it derives from the assumption, judgement, or prejudice, depending on how you see

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[76] The history of subjectivity is a massive field of study and debate across multiple disciplines. Representative examples include de Libera 2007 and 2015 (general and medieval), Lynch 2015 (18th century), Taylor 1989 (general and 19th century).

[77] The fullest discussion of ancient notions of selfhood, and review of the historiography of the subject, is Gill 2006, on the "structured self in Hellenistic and Roman thought." When thinking about the structured self and the Latin poets, it is best to recall the thick irony of Horace's assertion to his bailiff: "You know I am always consistent with myself" (*me constare mihi scis*—*Epist*. 1.1416)—this from the same poet who, at the end of the very next poem (1.15.42-6), claims that, when poor, he praises modest living, and, when rich, lauds the luxurious lifestyle!

things, that the Romans as a whole--including their writers--belonged to a class of people for whom society was reality, and who would have agreed with Aristotle, and Francis Bacon, that "Whatsoever is delighted by solitude is either a wild beast or a god."[78] In classical scholarship, examples of the solitary individual and his literary or philosophical imagination tend to be treated, if they are not entirely ignored, as exceptional cases that confirm the rule.[79]

We must think of Romans, we are often told, in the context of the "Mediterranean man," who experiences "shame" rather than "guilt" because he is externally rather than internally constituted. We are told that he cannot, as we do, value solitude, because "Mediterranean man did--and does--both fear and detest it."[80] One problem, though is that, even if these characterizations were in some way useful as a way to describe a population *in general*, it would not necessarily apply to individual cases, and the study of literature, unlike the study of culture, is the study of individual cases. Another problem, and one of greater moment, is that these stereotypes tend to be, like intellectual history's sundry essentialized "minds"—Arab, Oriental, medieval, Jewish—false, and far from disinterested.[81]

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[78] Francis Bacon, *On Friendship*; cf. Aristotle, *Politics* 1.2, 1253a.

[79] For example, Leslie Kurke (2007:158) says of Sappho that, "one has the feeling that no sociological account does justice to the power of her lyric "I"; even in fragments (and in translation) it is hard to resist the compelling lyric subjectivity that seems to infuse Sappho's poetry."

[80] Green 1982:417.

[81] See discussion in Purcell and Horden 2000:461-529; for the post-colonial critique of the guilt-shame distinction, see Said 1978:48-49.

Equally often, we are told that we must recall that Romans lived before the invention of solitude, or the "modern" subject, or the autonomous individual, which were discovered by, say, Christianity (from Jesus to Saint Paul to Augustine of Hippo), or by humanist self-explorations (from Petrarch to Montaigne), or by Romantic poetry, philosophy, and art (from Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Alastor* to Hegel's *Phenomenology* to Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer*). As Roland Barthes summarizes: "Classical language conveys euphoria because it is a language immediately social. There is no classical genre or work that does not presuppose collective consumption, as if it itself had been spoken."[82] What would be fairer to say is that we call periods or works "classical" when we would like to read them for their clear intelligibility and cohesion with social contexts, and we call periods or works "romantic" when we would like to read them against the social and philosophical grain of their time.[83]

This thesis attempts, in short, to enlarge the circle of literary interpretation in such a way as to allow for broader views on the forms of writing, reading, and interpretation in texts produced over the course of what has been called Rome's "Cultural Revolution."[84] It is not predicated on a dissolving of historic perspective: indeed, it is, emphatically, and by design, organized as a series

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[82] Barthes 2002:I.99 (*Le Degré Zéro de l'Ecriture*). See, also, Renato Poggioli (1975) on the poetics of solitude in the Renaissance (and not in antiquity), on which, see Chapter 2: *Solus in Silvis*.

[83] Distinctions made between modern "literary" culture and pre-modern "rhetorical" culture suffer from the same inflexibility, and do a disservice both to modern literature and pre-modern rhetoric; *pace* Lynch 2015, cf. Ross 1998:226-301.

[84] Wallace-Hadrill 2009.

of authors who wrote in fairly close temporal and spatial proximity towards one another, and who were responding to a set of related historical constraints and opportunities in ways that have not been sounded in the critical literature. As recent edited volumes by Philip Hardie have demonstrated, there is much work to be done in showing how Roman writers forged their aesthetic through a constant exercise of push and pull with the forces of the paradoxical, the marvelous, the irrational and the inhuman.[85] Picking up on the recent aesthetic turn in classical studies,[86] and what has been called the affective, or emotional, turn in literary studies,[87] my work moves away from the vocabulary of strategy, craft, and design and towards the language of struggle, confusion, and mood.[88]

V. Chapter Summaries

This thesis is made up of a series of in-depth case studies organized roughly chronologically by author: first, the late rhetorical and philosophical treatises of Cicero; then, the

[85] Hardie 2009b, 2015.

[86] This is what Rebecca Langlands has recently called "an alternative tide that is pushing back against such culturally embedded criticism, and urging us to turn anew towards the aesthetic," with reference, specifically, to Day 2013 (*Lucan and the Sublime*) and Roman 2014. The aesthetic turn is well developed in Greek studies, on which, see Ford 2002, Porter 2010 and Halliwell 2011. Charles Martindale (2005) called for an equivalent turn in Latin literary studies.

[87] On the emotional turn in literary studies, see Rita Felski's 2008 manifesto-monograph, *Uses of Literature*.

[88] On "mood" in literary studies, see Hans lrich Gumbrecht's 2011 *Stimmungen Lesen.*

ouevres of Virgil, Horace, and Propertius. It is followed by a short epilogue that turns to the reader's experience of solitude and imagination.

Chapter 1. *Cum Solitudine Loqui*: Solitude and Desire in Cicero's Late Works

The first chapter looks to Cicero, one of the reigning intellects of the late Roman Republic. "The Orator," wrote Cicero, "cannot be eloquent without a massive audience (*orator sine multitudine audiente eloquens esse non possit--De Orat.* 2.338). And yet, towards the end of his life, Cicero's works began to theorize an oratory that was explicitly "deserted" and "orphaned" of the social contexts from which it derived and in which it had flourished. Cicero's late works, I show, react to the dissolution of the forum and the social world that it represented by seeing oratory, like poetry, as the product and producer of not only social communities but, as well, of books, muses, and individuals. I begin by laying out Cicero's use of solitude in his philosophic works and his letters. I then turn to show how his late works on rhetoric use the problem of solitude to explore oratory's problematic current and future status in between public and private models of reception. I then show how these ideas crystallize in even more extreme, and more existentially potent, form in Cicero's treatise on friendship (*De Amicitia*), where Cicero sets out to laud friendship as second only to virtue itself; but, by setting his elegy of friendship as the eulogy of a dead friend (Laelius on Scipio), Cicero ends up calling into question the reality of friendship as a social, rather than internal or philosophical, concept. It is not, I show, that Cicero gives up on public action, but, rather, that he develops ideas that explore, and are conducive to, a solitary model of philosophical and literary expression, and in ways that provide a model, and contrast, for the studies of the Roman poets in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2. *Solus in silvis*: Virgil's Solitary Worlds

Virgil's *oeuvre* typifies the dynamics of solitude and imagination that characterize this period's literature. The figures that Virgil's poem presents tend to begin and end in psychological, sometimes physical, isolation, and they are presented against backgrounds often empty, spare, and characterized, like the narration itself, by uncertainty. But it is not only Virgil's worlds, but also his works--their structure, their metaliterary reflections, their intimations--that involve the poet in a continuous and extended struggle with the solitary imagination. I focus first on the *Eclogues*, and show how, contrary to a long tradition of humanistic interpretation, they individually and together, as a book, ask what it means to write bucolic in a world already post-bucolic, and to see in the poet's ability to create new worlds not only the power to beguile others, but also to beguile the poet himself, encircling him, for better and worse, in a solitary fiction of his own making. I then show how these reflections can help inform a series of major debates over the structure and themes of Virgil's later works, the *Georgics* (with special attention to the poet's triumph in Book III, Orpheus and Eurydice in Book IV, and the poem's *envoi*) and the *Aeneid* (with special attention given to the poem's key junctures, Books I, VI, and XII).

Chapter 3. *In Vacuo Theatro:* Horace and the Oscillations of Solitude

This chapter is a study of Horace's oscillations between retreat and social approach. Though scholarship has often interpreted Horace's works as thematizing the distance between the vulgar public and the aristocratic coterie, I suggest that the idea of the wholly solitary poet--alone in body and/or spirit--is equally if not more important to his total poetic production. The chapter proceeds more or less chronologically, beginning with the first book of *Satires*: although its surface teems with people and things, it also imagines itself as scene and product into a world

wholly of and for the poet himself, away from not only the public, but even, and crucially, his friends and patrons. Solitude is, I show, an important, perhaps the ideal, ethical mode of these poems. I then turn to the *Odes*, and show how Horace's lyrics take up solitude as an aesthic mode through a series of self-sequestering gestures: the idea of the poet's and the poem's solitude is built, I shoow, into the structure of the *Odes* as a whole, with the later-published fourth book of *Odes* serving as *ex post facto* commentary on the (im)possibility of lyric enclosure. In conclusion, I turn towards Horace's reassessment of the relationship of solitude and imagination in his last works, the *Epistles to Florus* and *Augustus*, and the *Ars Poetica*. The *Epistle to Florus*, Horace's apology for not writing poetry, presents a story, the Argive Noble, that, although meant as an attack on the solitary imagination, turns out to be inappropriate to its context and its end, suggesting that Horace's internal war against solitude was far from over, and closer to being an essential aspect of his poetry than a passing, or generically bound, mode. I then show how Horace reworked this material in his *Ars Poetica*, in such a way as to, as ever, maintain the dialectic of solitude and sociality as ambiguous provocation.

Chapter 4. "His *Cynthia's* Tomb": Propertian Elegy, Solitude and Soliloquy

Throughout his four books of *Elegies*, Propertius engages in what was perhaps already but would after him become the standard elegiac practice of depicting the lover in situations of isolation: the solitary poet complains of the fires of his unreciprocated love sometimes to the absent beloved or friend, but just as often to the trees, skies, waters, and rocks. The mixture of address to a beloved or a friend with a description of the poet's simultaneous solitude would make Propertius natural case study for the interplay of solitude and the imagination, as a wealth of constructivist studies on the double-nature of the *scripta puella* as both "the beloved girl

written about" and "the beloved girl written into being," has already made clear.[89] But not only is absence a significant image of Propertius' poetry,[90] it is the central structuring figure of his works and his conception of love poetry as being the singing of the already-departed beloved: the result is, I believe, a powerful meditation on the twin opportunities and dangers posed by the relationship of solitude to love and imagination.[91] This chapter begins with a study of the Milanion motif in *Elegies* 1.1 and 1.16-20, then follows the seems of solitude that run through the structural and thematic poles of Propertius' book, before coming to the problem of elegy as soliloquy articulated by Propertius' last poem, the Cornelia elegy (4.11).

Epilogue: A Reader Runs Through It

The thesis as a whole has focused on the uses of solitude and imagination for writers. In the epilogue, I turn to the question of the reader's experience of solitude.

[89] Foremost are the studies of Warden 1980, Kennedy 1993, Miller 2003, Johnson 2009.

[90] Papanghelis 1987.

[91] *pace* Naumann 1968:157-68 and Papanghelis 1987:15-16.

CHAPTER 1

Cum solitudine loqui: Solitude and Desire in Cicero's Late Works

1. Introduction

2. *Conloquio alterius non egeret*: Solitude Between Cicero's *De Re Publica* and *De Officiis*

3. "In the forum, solitude…": Cicero's *Brutus*

4. "How do you say 'friendship' without "friend?": Cicero's *De Amicitia*

5. *Desiderium* and Poetry

Cum solitudine loqui: Solitude and Desire in Cicero's Late Works

I. Introduction

> Thus it comes about that there are other souls who, in distress, seek out solitary places (*solitudines*), as Homer said of Bellerophon: "He who, sorrowful, in the Aleïan plain, lamenting, wandered, he, himself, eating his own heart, avoiding the traces of men."[92] And Niobe is, I imagine, represented in stone because of her everlasting silence in sorrow[93]…And there are others whom, in their sadness, it often pleases to speak with the solitude itself (*cum ipsa solitudine loqui*), like that nurse in Ennius' Medea: "The desire has taken hold of sorrowful me, now, To speak forth (*proloqui*) to the heaven and earth of Medea's sorrows."[94]

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[92] cf. Homer, *Il.* 6.155-203 (esp. 6.201); Pindar, *O.* 13.87–90; *I.* 7.44; Apoll. *Bib*. 2.3.2; Ovid, *Met.* 9.646.

[93] cf. Homer, *Iliad* 24.617.

[94] Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 3.63-64 *Ex hoc evenit, ut in animi doloribus alii solitudines captent, ut ait Homerus de Bellerophonte: 'Qui miser in campis maerens errabat Aleis / Ipse suum cor edens, hominum vestigia vitans'; et Nioba fingitur lapidea propter aeternum, credo, in luctu silentium…Sunt autem alii, quos in luctu cum ipsa solitudine loqui saepe delectat, ut illa apud Ennium nutrix: 'Cupido cepit miseram nunc me proloqui Caelo atque terrae Medeai miserias.'*

According to the third book of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* (of 45 BCE), Aeschines charged his *bête noir* Demosthenes with callous disregard for natural piety. Demosthenes, it turns out, had, with his daughter's ashes but one week cold, recommenced his thanksgiving offerings to the gods: "The first, the only child," declaimed Aeschines, "that ever called him by the gentle name of father."[95] But what Demosthenes seems to have understood that Aeschines did not—or, to make best use of the scandal, had to dissimulate—was the lesson of Cicero's book: distress (*aegritudo*), being a social construct, can and should be escaped through clear thinking. Demosthenes' ability to move on with life's duties contrasts, in Cicero's telling, with that doleful cast of solitude-seeking characters who, in their grief, avoid people, keep silent, or, if they speak, speak not with men but with "the solitude itself." These lamenters do so, the text's teacher-figure insists, because they believe that such actions are ratified and required by duty (*quasi officii iudicio*); if this were true, then grief would be *mere* artifice. The fact that grief is such a constructed artifice--that it is a matter "not of nature but of opinion"[96]--can be deduced, Cicero's text argues, from the empirical observation that grief can be put aside, that someone in mourning can repent his cheerful outbursts; hence, grief is voluntary (*totum illud voluntarium*), a custom, and a social practice, rather than a true and real feeling to be respected, explored, and engaged. Solitude, according to Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, is part and parcel of the

[95] *Tusc. Disp*. 3.63; cf. Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 77 ἑβδόμην δ᾽ ἡμέραν τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῷ τετελευτηκυίας, πρὶν πενθῆσαι καὶ τὰ νομιζόμενα ποιῆσαι, στεφανωσάμενος καὶ λευκὴν ἐσθῆτα λαβὼν ἐβουθύτει καὶ παρενόμει, τὴν μόνην ὁ δείλαιος καὶ πρώτην αὐτὸν πατέρα προσειποῦσαν ἀπολέσας.

[96] Cic. *Tusc. Disp*. 71 *non natura, sed in opinione esse aegritudinem.*

rhetorical, social, and political strategies of grief that people can use, control, and deply in order to satisfy and achieve definite ends; their apparently involuntary pain is, in fact, a voluntary and ordered decision, their seeming irrationality all too easily, and rationally, explained. Solitude is, we might say, in a dialectical relationship with social contexts.

But there is something strange about reading these words in Cicero's ink, for, to the list of Bellerophon, Niobe, and Medea's nurse, readers of Cicero, or those who just listened to the gossip among Cicero's elite circles, might easily have added Cicero himself, who, in 45 BCE, succumbed to (or, to use the terms of the *Tusculan Disputations*, "chose") grief following the January death-in-childbirth of his daughter Tullia: "I have lost the one thing that held me together," wrote Cicero to Atticus from lonely Astura, "so I seek out solitudes (*solitudines sequor*)."[97] For there, at Astura (modern Torre Astura), Cicero began to characterize his life, in his epistolary self-descriptions to Atticus, in the terms of what the 4th century CE Ausonius would describe, no doubt after Cicero, as *anxia Bellerophontis*:[98] seeking out solitudes, speaking with himself, the wilderness, and his books.

Cicero's self-representation of himself in states of solitude could, and did, serve a variety of Cicero's social strategies, even in their apparent excesses: if the Republic were truly dying, what

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[97] Cic. *Ad Att*. 12.23 (SB 262). Shackleton-Bailey's *solitudines* is justified by manuscript authority and, as he points out, because "the plural, 'lonely places,' makes a better contrast to *isto* (=*Romam*) than the singular, 'solitude.'" On solitude in Cicero's letters more generally, see below.

[98] Ausonius, *Epist*. 10.189-92, uses the term to describe his erstwhile friend-turned-Christian hermit, Paulinus of Nola.

right-feeling Roman, Cicero might have demanded, could *not* retreat into mournful solitude? But these states of solitude were also sites for Cicero's exploration of a productive tension that one finds diffused across generic lines in his late works.[99] In this chapter, I show that Cicero's irrepressibly social orientation did not preclude, but, rather, made more acute, the developments of ideas, genres, and forms of expression that were in productive, creative, but ultimately, and interestingly, irreconcilable, tension with Cicero's social contexts and political goals. There is, we might say, a tipping point beyond which increasingly ostentatious postures of personal solitude, of historical and formal alternatives to the normal social contexts of oratory, and of philosophical substitutions of "friendship" for actual friends, allowed Cicero to explore, and to help his readers wrestle with, the possibility of aesthetic and ideological worlds other than those commonly dreamt of by and for this most Roman of Roman thinkers. Through a study of the rhetoric of solitude in the writings of Cicero's late period--in Cicero's letters from Astura; in the audience-less oratory imagined by the post-political world of the *Brutus* and *Orator* (46 BCE)*;* and, finally, in the friendless friendship of his essay on friendship, the *Laelius de Amicitia* (44 BCE)[100]--I show how Cicero's late works confronted the challenge of writing social genres as solitary arts, while always reminding their readers (and Cicero himself) of their paradoxical

[99] On using generic difference to heighten, rather than, erase tension, with specific attention to Cato's embrace of false belief at the conclusion of Cicero's *De Senectute* (85), and Horace's adaptation of this embrace, see Ch. 3 (Horace).

[100] Throughout this chapter, I will refer to this work interchangeably as *Laelius* (*Lael.*) and *De Amicitia* (*De amic.*).

status as material intended for circulation, and geared, as was never far from Cicero's mind, towards the ends of political restoration.

To say that solitude was an important, even crucial, theme in Cicero's late works, is not, then, to say that this solitude could not, itself, be put to social uses; indeed, there is no question that speaking of and from solitude and self-sequestration (*secessus*) could serve certain definite political ends in the years following Caesar's victorious return to Rome in September of 47 BCE, all the more so following the dictator's irregular and grandiose quadruple triumph in the following year.[101] Although the senate was not, as Cicero pointedly put it, extinct, nor the courts wholly closed, the game had changed, and Cicero developed methods for maintaining his status in the evolving situation.[102] Cicero, recent scholarship has emphasized, was, indeed, a thoroughly social creature (Gildenhard 2011) who engaged in a relentless campaign of self-fashioning (Dugan 2005), and who could, and did, put his philosophy, including its frequent rhetoric of retreat and solitude, to definite, and clearly instrumental, political use (Baraz 2012). "The political," we are told, "ends up permeating everything he [Cicero] does," and his gestures towards non-political ends (i.e. *solitudo, otium, vita contemplativa*) do not "alter the basic

[101] On Caesar's triumph of 46 BCE, see Weinstock 1971:76-79. Roman 2014 shows how gestures of autonomy, a concept, as we have seen in the Introduction, that is related to solitude, can, paradoxically, help increase a poet's apparent social potency; Roman's work focuses on 1st person poetic genres, however, and so does not look, broadly speaking, at Cicero's corpus.

[102] Cicero, *De Off.* 3.2 *exstincto enim senatu deletisque iudiciis*; Cicero touched on the "extinction" of the senate with some regularity, cf. *De off*. 2.2-3, *Phil*. 2.51.

motivations behind his project," for they are but "momentary flirtations with an alternative in times of political difficulties" and "a glimpse of an alternative path [but] no more than that."[103]

But demonstrating what Cicero expected solitude to do for him does not exhaust what solitude might be seen to do within Cicero's works, nor is it clear that our interests should extend only to Cicero's "basic motivations," to what we think he thought he was doing, or to what he would, if asked, declare "on the record" to be, or have been, his official intentions. Sometimes a slip in the "wrong" direction can be just as interesting as the "basic motivation" itself. So, to these "externalist" instrumental accounts of Cicero's postures, must be added a more sophisticated "internalist" and textual interpretation that can attend more closely to the ideological struggles within Cicero's own works.[104] Attending to the paradoxes and contradictions generated by gestures of solitude in Cicero's works will reveal certain fault-lines in Cicero's thinking, and will help reveal more general societal fault-lines and anxieties that the study of Roman religion, and Roman society, have often overlooked. Solitude is, as we have seen in the Introduction, an orientation and a form of rhetoric as much as a social reality: the fact that a Petrarch**,** Montaigne**,** or Thoreau did not spend his days in solitary confinement does not vitiate the innovative character of the ideas that they represented and explored. Similarly, to affirm that Cicero was always politically engaged and ambitious only sharpens the awkward fact

[103] Baraz 2012:70.

[104] For "internalist" vs. "externalist" models, see Hankins 1991:I.16-17, with regard to Renaissance learning (specifically, of Plato), and the importance of putting these into, not only socio-political, but, also, intellectual contexts, which, as should be noted, is slightly different from my more restrictive literary program here.

of his simultaneous exploration of, and insistence upon, certain ideas and philosophies that had solitude at their center.

Solitude was never, it needs emphasizing, Cicero's sole, and rarely his primary, theme, but it is one that introduces difficulties and jagged edges that interpretation should work to understand, rather than reconcile and smooth out. One scholar who knew this all too well was Petrarch, for whom Cicero had, at one point, represented the ideal of contemplative, detached, and philosophical retreat. But that was before Petrarch discovered, in 1345 Verona, a manuscript of Cicero's long-lost letters to Atticus (and Quintus, Brutus, and *Octavian), which showed clearly that Cicero the *philosophe* had always, also, been Cicero the man of wheeling-dealing action: "O soul *always* restless and anxious (*O inquiete semper atque anxie*)," wrote Petrarch in a letter to Cicero, "Or perhaps you'd recognize your own words, 'O headlong and calamitous old man,' what did you hope to achieve from all of those fights and wasteful feuds? Why do you abandon that leisure (*otium*) that would have been appropriate to your age, your philosophical profession, your fortune?"[105] Petrarch's image of a cloistered Cicero was, clearly, not adequate to Cicero's life and works, not even to those works to which Petrarch already had access; it is equally clear that Petrarch crafted, for himself, an image of Cicero that would be of use in the humanist's own ongoing process of antiquity-themed self-fashioning. But Petrarch's crisis of

[105] Petrarch, *Familiarium Rerum Libri* 24.3. On the impact of Cicero's letters on Petrarch, and on the humanist movement more broadly, see Eden 2012, esp. pp. 49-72. The letter to Octavian was not by Cicero—but the words of Cicero that Petrarch throws in Cicero's face—*o preceps et calimitose senex*—do derive from that letter. On what Petrarch's letters to Cicero can teach modern classicsts about interpretation, see Hinds 2005.

conscience, his sense and gesture of shock or surprise (even if feigned, or exaggerated, for effect) is useful in that it invites us, not to undo the loss of innocence symbolized by the rediscovery of Cicero's socio-political context, but to try and recapture those solitary and socially rebellious aspects of Cicero's thought that close and engaged readers like Petrarch found so powerful.[106] It is an exercise that will, in turn, improve our own sense of those broader contexts and their complexity.

II. *Conloquio alterius non egeret*: Solitude Between *De Re Publica* and *De Officiis*

> "[We should consider no man as happy as] the man who can say of himself what Cato the Elder says that my grandfather Scipio used to say, that "he never got more done than when he was doing nothing (*numquam se plus agere quam nihil cum ageret*), that he was never less alone than when he was alone (*numquam minus solum esse quam cum solus esset*)."[107]

> "My dear son Marcus, Cato wrote that his contemporary Publius Scipio, the first to be surnamed Africanus, was in the habit of saying that he was never less at leisure than when he was at leisure, nor ever less alone, than when he was alone (*nec minus solum quam cum solus esset*).[108] A wonderful saying! And one worthy

[106] For general reflections on how Renaissance and early modern texts and scholarship can help illuminate new approaches to classical texts, see De Smet 2001.

[107] Cic. *De re publica* 1.27 *est hic fortunatus putandus…qui denique, ut Africanum avum meum scribit Cato solitum esse dicere, possit idem de se praedicare, numquam se plus agere quam nihil cum ageret, numquam minus solum esse quam cum solus esset.*

[108] A proverb with a long history: Edward Gibbon said of himself in his 1796 *Memoir*, "I might say with truth that I was never less alone than when by myself. My sole complaint, which I

of such a great and wise man, to declare that, even in leisure (*otio*), he thought about work (*neg-otiis*), and that, in solitude, he had the habit of speaking with himself (*solitudine secum loqui solitum*), so that not only did he never stop working, but, sometimes, he had no need of conversation with another person (*interdum conloquio alterius non egeret*). These two conditions—leisure and solitude (*otium et solitudo*)—that cause languor in others, only spurred him on. I wish I could truthfully say the same thing of myself, but if, by imitation, I can approach such excellence but weakly, in desire, at least, I approach it as nearly as I may. For I am kept from both public business and from my legal practice by impious force of arms, and, because of this, I lead a life of leisure, and, having left the city behind, wandering through the countryside, I am very often alone (*saepe soli sumus*)…For now that the senate has been abolished and the courts closed (*exstincto enim senatu deletisque iudiciis*), what is there, in keeping with my dignity, that I can do in either the senate-house or in the forum (*aut in curia aut in foro*)?"[109]

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piously suppressed, arose from the kind restraint imposed on the freedom of my time." (Gibbon 1991:112) Gibbon's "sole complaint" may pick up on the frequent *solus/solus* collocation in Latin. For the history of Africanus' phrase as a motto in classical to modern literature, the series of posts by various authors, all titled "Never Less Alone Than When Alone," in *Modern Language Notes* Feb. 1909; April 1909; Nov. 1909; Jan. 1910; March 1910; Nov. 1911; Feb. 1919; and Nov. 1919. See Gross 1980:127-137; Cook 1909 assembles a small, but useful, host of earlier English examples, but his neglect of the replication in *De Re Publica* causes him to slightly misrepresent the chain of transmission.

[109] Cicero, *De Off.* 3.1-2 *P. Scipionem, Marce fili, eum, qui primus Africanus appellatus est, dicere solitum scripsit Cato, qui fuit eius fere aequalis, numquam se minus otiosum esse, quam cum otiosus, nec minus solum, quam cum solus esset. Magnifica vero vox et magno viro ac sapiente digna; quae declarat illum et in otio de negotiis cogitare et in solitudine secum loqui solitum, ut neque cessaret umquam et interdum conloquio alterius non egeret. Ita duae res, quae*

The practice of politics with dignity is no longer possible in what Cicero describes as Rome's radically corroded circumstances: "I am," Cicero wrote, "often alone." But not happily alone, for nothing, in Cicero's mind, could measure up to the importance of political activity. Cicero's philosophical works during this period, even his Platonism, were not, we know, purely linguistic or contemplative affairs, but deeply implicated in his own constantly evolving political programs.[110] But, even if Cicero was never wholly convinced that anything could take the place of politics, solitude played a role more active than a once-off day-dream or evanescent diversion in his intellectual life; it was, not a fling, but a long-standing affair, an enticement and conceptual challenge that he had toyed with throughout his life, and one that became particularly important towards his life's end.

Cicero's two renditions of Scipio's solitude provide an ideal entry into the nature of this challenge and its staying power through various stages of his life. Between six and ten years separate these two Scipionic citations, the first from Cicero's *De Re Publica* (54-50 BCE), the second from his *De Officiis* (44 BCE); one of history's poignant accidents is that, as a result, the

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languorem adferunt ceteris, illum acuebant, otium et solitudo. Vellem nobis hoc idem vere dicere liceret, sed si minus imitatione tantam ingenii praestantiam consequi possumus, voluntate certe proxime accedimus. Nam et a re publica forensibusque negotiis armis impiis vique prohibiti otium persequimur et ob eam causam urbe relicta rura peragrantes saepe soli sumus…Extincto enim senatu deletisque iudiciis quid est, quod dignum nobis aut in curia aut in foro agere possimus?

[110] Baraz 2012; cf. Stull 2011 (on the political-rhetorical uses of Platonism in the earlier *De oratore*).

solitude of Scipio Africanus, conqueror of Carthage and vanquisher of Hannibal, makes a prominent appearance in both the first and last books of Cicero's philosophical project.[111] Both versions are emphatic in styling Africanus as the kind of person who could keep his solitude to himself.[112] The second version is equally emphatic that, try as he might, this kind of solitary solitude was something that Cicero found very hard to emulate.

Petrarch, as so often, perfectly captured this aspect of Ciceronian solitude in his own personal reformulation: *volo solitudinem non solam*, "I want a non-solitary solitude."[113] Scipio Africanus' conjunction of *otium* (leisure) and *solitudo* (solitude) in the context of *De Officiis* means, according to Petrarch, that solitude, for Cicero, and for Petrarch himself, must mean being-with-others--for what, Petrarch might ask, is leisurely about being alone? "The ultimate

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[111] I will expand on the implications of Cicero's use of Africanus' solitude in a separate study on "*Solitudo*: Another Scipionic Theme." The way in which citations of Africanus bound Cicero's philosophical corpus was noted *en passant* by Gross 1980:122; the demonstration of Baraz 2012, that the prefaces to Cicero's philosophical works show that he saw them as a single and unified project, can add increased resonance to this symmetry.

[112] Throughout this chapter, I will use Africanus to refer to Scipio Maior (236-183 BCE), and Aemilianus to refer to his adopted grandson (185/4-129 BCE), who also earned the sobriquet of *Africanus* after his defeat of Carthage in the third Punic War. For general treatment of Scipio Africanus Maior, see Scullard 1970; of Scipio Aemilianus, see Astin 1967. On the *Scipiones* more generally, see Etcheto 2012.

[113] Petrarch, *De vita solitaria*, 2.14ff.

'place' of solitude," one Petrarchan scholar has put it, "is the friend,"[114] and one might say the same thing of Cicero. So, in the *De finibus* (45 BCE), Cicero can, on the one hand, judge that "solitude and the life without friends (*solitudo et vita sine amicis*) is filled with snares and fear"[115] and that "nobody would wish to live a life in total solitude, even if provided with an abundance of pleasures,"[116] and, on the other hand, can rejoice in the fact that, now that he has come into the grounds of the Academy together with his interlocutors, "we have the solitude (*solitudo erat ea*) that we so desire."[117] There is, therefore, a split sense to solitude: it can imply both total isolation of the self, and, as well, sequestration of the self and one's intimates from the company of undesirable others. Scipio's solitude could, it seems, mean both at the same time, and it was the solitary solitude that Cicero found most difficult as a model for his own life.

But there is good reason to hear some irony in Cicero's self-abasing comparison of his own solitary habits with those of Africanus. Cicero, for example, claims that Africanus, in his solitude, did not commit any of his thoughts to writing because he had sufficient strength (*tantum*

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[114] Maggi 2009:191.

[115] Cic. *De finibus* 1.20.66 *nam cum solitudo et vita sine amicis insidiarum et metus plena sit, ratio ipsa monet amicitias comparare, quibus partis confirmatur animus et a spe pariendarum voluptatum seiungi non potest.*

[116] Cic. *De finibus* 3.20.65 *quodque nemo in summa solitudine vitam agere velit ne cum infinita quidem voluptatum abundantia, facile intellegitur nos ad coniunctionem congregationem que hominum et ad naturalem communitatem esse natos.*

[117] Cic. *De finibus* 5.1.1 *cum autem venissemus in Academiae non sine causa nobilitata spatia, solitudo erat ea, quam volueramus.*

roboris) to make do without any supplement. As a result, however, there are no extant "monuments of his genius committed to writing (*nulla…eius ingenii monumenta mandata litteris*), no product of his leisure (*nullum opus otii*), no gift out of his solitude (*nullum solitudinis munus*)." Cicero, by contrast, says of himself, that, "in order to pull myself out of my solitude through silent thought (*ut cogitatione tacita a solitudine abstrahamur*), I turn all of my zeal and care to the writing of this work."[118] Andrew Dyck has noted that Cicero may be "simply carrying the comparison of himself with Scipio to the latter's advantage to its (absurd) conclusion,"[119] and Yelena Baraz has suggested that the presumed context of this citation in Cato's own work--Friedrich Leo thought it would have come in the preface to the *Origines*, to be contrasted with Cato's judgement that a public man's private life should be as subject to public account as his

[118] Here, of course, is a kind of a model for literature as the abolition of solitude, but it is not entirely clear exactly in what sense: talking silently to oneself in one's thought is solitary, and so Cicero decides to write…which is not? It is not, of course, because he is making his solitude yield a gift, boon, and tribute (*munus*) that he can leave to his son, to his friends, to posterity. But what of the silence (*tacita*)? Might writing be an escape from silence because one *dictates* what one writes, either to oneself as one goes, or to one's *scriptor librarius*? Might writing also be an escape from silence, more figuratively, because it means creating a voice that can be given to others who will read the text, or perhaps creating voices within the text that can be ascribed to others (i.e. in literary dialogues)?

[119] *ad De off*. 3.1-4.

public life[120]--would imply that Cicero is siding, implicitly, with Cato against Scipio.[121] The irony becomes sharper, we might add, in light of the work's title: when Cicero praises Scipio's active but product-less solitude (*nullum solitudinis munus*), we should hear in *munus* not only a "gift" or "product" but, also, what Festus, the late antique lexicographer, had in mind: *munus significat officium*, "*Munus* (gift) means duty."[122] The result is that only Cicero's solitude, and not Scipio's, could produce this very book *On Duties* that would "remain" (*extat*) for posterity (here, for Cicero's son, *Marce fili*, the addressee), with Cicero's own purported lack of moral fiber (*roboris*) resulting in longstanding benefits for others.[123] Or, in the words of his letter to Atticus in October of 44 BCE: "There will be something to show for this long peregrination of mine."[124]

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[120] Leo 1913:269; the line of Cato is cited by Cicero in *Planc* 66 *clarorum virorum atque magnorum non minus oti quam negoti rationem extare oportere*.

[121] Baraz 2012:221.

[122] Paul. ex Fest. p. 140 Müll. *munus significat officium, cum dicitur quis munere fungi. Item donum quod officii causa datur*. Within the *De off.*, Cicero does use *munus* as a synonym for *officium*, as at *De off*. 1.15, 16, 124, and *passim* in books 2 and 3.

[123] *Pace* Lemoine 1991:355, for whom Cicero's claim represents a "tacit admission" of Cicero's inadequacy—if anything, the admission is obvious, and what is tacit, but importantly palpable, is Cicero's concomitant sense of pride and accomplishment.

[124] Cic. *Ad att*. 15.13a *exstabit opera peregrinationis huius*. There is no question that Cicero hoped the *De officiis* would have a positive effect on the future of the state, and some evidence that he thought that it had already done so: in a letter to Atticus (July 44 BCE), Cicero writes that

And yet, even if the "basic motivation" of Cicero's citation of Scipio is self-aggrandizing, and meant to solidify, stabilize, and justify the goals and structures of Cicero's moral project, Cicero's language is excessive to his argument. Scipio's "talking to himself," for example, is the kind of practice that Cicero classed among the highest virtues of the *Tusculan Disputations* (45 BCE): just as the blind can take pleasure in sound, so too the deaf may take pleasure in speaking to themselves, "for he who is able to speak with himself (*secum loqui*), will not miss the conversation of another person (*sermonem alterius non requiret—Tusc*. 5.117)."[125] There is a

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"Quintus *fils* [Cicero's nephew] has been with me for several days…So completely changed is he (*commutatus est totus*)—by certain writings of mine that I have in have had in hand (*scriptis meis quibsudam quae in manibus habebam*) and the frequency of my lecturing and my lessons—that he will in the future be, with regard to politics, exactly what he would hope him to be." (Cic. *Ad fam*. 16.5) These writings are, as Shackelton-Baily points out (*ad loc.*), likely to be Cicero's (non-extant) *De gloria*, and, what we have in our hands, the *De officiis*.

[125] This "speaking with himself" is, to be sure, an odd phrase: one hopes that there was irony involved in the odd decision of the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (4.55) to give, as an example of appropriate characterization in *sermocinatio* (dialogues, debates, discourses), the case of a wise man (sapiens) talking to himself: "He thinks that the all dangers must be braved for the sake of the Republic, and he will often say to himself (*saepe ipse secum loquitur)*, 'Not for myself alone, but also, and much more so, for my fatherland was I born.'" When people talk to themselves, it is generally because they are an actor plotting something offstage, or a king or tyrant plotting something in their enclosed chamber. On Augustus' *Syracusion* and the history of secret or private spaces in Roman architecture, see the Introduction, and Gowers 2010.

great amount of verbal overlap between this formula from the *Tusculan Disputations* and the praise of Scipio's solitude as found in the *De Officiis*--though not, however, as found in the *De Re Publica*, where the mention is much briefer. In fact, the description of Africanus as found in the *De Officiis* both develops out of, and should be colored by, the rhetoric of solitude that Cicero developed in the works and letters that he produced, most especially, during the years 46-44 BCE. During this period, Cicero rises to the challenge described in Aristotle's diagnosis of what makes solitude so hard: "Now a solitary man has a hard life, for it is not easy to keep up continuous activity by oneself."[126] In some ways, Cicero, as we will see, had never been, we might say, "busier than when unemployed, less alone than when alone."

Cicero's political and personal life provide essential background for the changing importance and valence of Scipio's solitude, and solitude more generally, that we can detect between the earlier and later renditions. The first blow was of a political kind: Caesar's victory. Not that it turned Cicero into a recluse or a hermit—far from it! Indeed, as Elisabeth Rawson puts it, "Cicero's social life went on," and with a bang. His letters from the period paint us some of the most scintillating portraits of his social life that we possess: on one occasion, he describes to L. Papirius Paetus something like “a day in the life of a country gentleman,” replete with visits from the gloomy *boni*, streams of visitors, a retreat to books and study interrupted only by those

[126] Arist. *Nic. Eth.* 1170a5 *μονώτῃ μὲν οὖν χαλεπὸς ὁ βίος· οὐ γὰρ ῥᾴδιον καθ' αὑτὸν ἐνεργεῖν συνεχῶς.*

who want him to teach them what he can, and the standard complement of bodily pleasures (washing, walking, eating).[127]

But one hears here, as well, the language of retreat, from the public to the increasingly private, a retreat symbolized by an attention to "literature" (*litterae*). Throughout the letters of this period, although there are dinner-parties and return-dinner-parties, there is a recurrent turn towards books as friends, and towards bookish friendships: a Republic of letters (in both the sense of books and networks of correspondence) will have to take the place, Cicero repeatedly and to obvious ends reminds his friends, of what is now, in Cicero's eyes, a defunct Republic of laws. Cicero uses the language of substitution explicitly in the preface to his later *De Divinatione*: "In my books I gave my senatorial opinion (*sententiam dicebamus*), I spoke to the Assembly (*contionabamur*); I considered philosophy to be my substitute (*substitutam*) for my work on behalf of the Republic."[128] The language of "substitution" here is primarily that of subrogation (say, of public office), but its other legal coloring, "the appointment of a secondary or alternate heir," hints at the more bitter, unexpressed, side of this formula: it may be that philosophy, and not the Republic, will be the ultimate beneficiary of Cicero's final fruits. But throughout these years, the substitution of *litterae* for politics means not only substituting *litterae* for the Republic, but creating a new Republic of *litterae*, meaning both "literature (i.e.

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[127] *Ad fam*. 9.20; the intensely social nature, and end, of the "ideal" day that Cicero paints here contrasts with what we will see in Horace's ideal day in *Satires* 1.6, on which, see Chapter 3.

[128] Cic. *De div*. 2.7 *In libris enim sententiam dicebamus, contionabamur, philosophiam nobis pro rei publicae procuratione substitutam putabamus.* On substitution, see, also, Butler 2002:110-11 and Baraz 2012:70, 78, 150.

philosophy)" and, quite, literally, "letters." In one particularly striking formulation, Cicero rewrites his own history of politics as, at its heart, a literary pursuit: "Those things [*litterae*] that once led me into the courtroom and the senate (*in iudicia atque in curiam deducebant*), now amuse me at home (*oblectant domi*)."[129] On the one hand, politics are here reaffirmed by Cicero's language: books had once been, Cicero implies, his clients, accompanying him in honorable procession while he made his political rounds, whereas, now, they entertain him at home. But to make books into Cicero's public clients and private pleasures, as the agents of both his *dignitas* and his *otium*, is to give literature impressive staying power as the true constant in Cicero's life. It has always been about *litterae*, it turns out, even when, in a reverse of Ovid's formulation, it came out as pleadings and laws. Now, however, under the new dispensation, Cicero can ostentatiously transfer his attention from politics, for better and much worse, to *litterae* for *litterae*'s sake.

The conjunction of the two (books and friendship) is clearest in a letter that Cicero wrote to the great antiquarian scholar, Marcus Terentius Varro, in 46 BCE: "You must know that, since I have come back to the city, I have been reconciled to my old friends—that is, my books…They forgive me, they recall our old intimacy, and they call you wiser for having stuck with them…Therefore, whether at your villa in Tusculum or Cumae, as long as we are together, I

[129] Cicero, *Orator* 148 *Quae quidem me antea in iudicia atque in curiam deducebant, nunc oblectant domi*. Note the clever pun on *oblectant* (>ob-lacto, "to allure") and the implied action of *litterae*, "reading" (*lectus*); perhaps, too, *domi* makes us think of the *lectus* (bed/couch) where Cicero now spends his time, instead of on the senate's benches.

shall, without fail, endeavor to make it the place that seems most agreeable to the both of us."[130] This is not the same logic we saw at work in Horace's description of Lucilius's substitution of books *for* friends (*Sat*. 2.1):[131] here, books *and* friends are the substitute for the loss of the political realm. And it is particularly the friendship of Varro: as Peter Wiseman has pointed out, Cicero's repeated use of the first-person plural shows the pair's intimacy (in Cicero's eyes), that "here, surely, are two men who saw eye to eye on everything important in life, literature, and politics."[132]

Cicero writes to Varro, in April of 46 BCE (*Ad fam*. 9.3), that, by continuing in their respective scholarly labors, they will prevent their *cessatio*, their "inactivity" in public life, whether "by ourselves or with one another (*nostra nobiscum aut inter nos cessatio*)," from being reviled (*vituperatur*); besides, he goes on, as a result of opportunity, need, or desperation, "our studies (*artes nostrae*) seem, somehow, to produce a fruit more fertile (*uberiores fructus*) now

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[130] Cic. *Ad fam*. 9.1 *scito enim me, posteaquam in urbem venerim, redisse cum veteribus amicis, id est cum libris nostris, in gratiam…Ignoscunt mihi, revocant in consuetudinem pristinam teque, quod in ea permanseris, sapientiorem quam me dicunt fuisse…Quamobrem, sive in Tusculano sive in Cumano ad te placebit sive, quod minime velim, Romae, dummodo simul simus, perficiam profecto, ut id utrique nostrum commodissimum esse videatur.*

[131] On Lucilius in Hor. *Sat*. 2.1, see Introduction.

[132] Wiseman 2009:109; on Cicero and Varro more generally, see the entire chapter, "Cicero and Varro," in Wiseman 2009:99-129.

than once they did (*nunc…quam olim*)."[133] Behind this language, I am certain, there is a battle of metaphors: *cessatio* means not only a pause, but, in agricultural terms, the fallow period in a cycle of crop rotation[134]: Cicero and Varro's lives are not, first of all, like that of other animals or humans (the "barbarians" he derides in the letter) in that their vitality will, like the earth laying fallow, return richer than before (*uberiores fructus*), but are unlike the earth in that they produce, even in their fallow time, a crop richer than ever they had previously produced. It is, in this letter, all about the "us" (lit. "our with-ourselves-and-among-ourselves cessation," *nostra nobiscum aut inter nos cessatio*); no doubt, one of the purposes of Cicero's letters is to emphasize that two cessationists are better than one, and Cicero's grouping of his scholarly endeavors with those of Varro has the obvious advantage of making Cicero out to be something, now, of a full-time scholar himself. "But why these words to you, who have them "home-grown"—*fromage à*

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[133] Shackleton Bailey translates *nostra nobiscum aut inter nos* as "whether by ourselves or in one another's company," which S-B prefers, citing examples from Seneca, to "a distinction between living together and joining in the same pursuits." I believe the phrase may have Platonic resonance to the idea of the world being a folding into and of itself, as in Cicero's translation of Plato's *Timaeus*, *ut et ipsae secum et inter se ex commissura, quae e regione esset, iungerentur* (Cicero, *Tim*. 24). Cicero and Varro become, so to speak, worlds to themselves in their retreat from a life of public action. Compare with Augustine, *De Immortalitate Animae* 4.6 *nos ipsi nobiscum ratiocinantes* (a variation, in turn, on the opening of *Soliloquia* I).

[134] Columella, *DRR* 2.1 [Human fertility peaks then falls for good] *at e contrario seu sponte seu quolibet casu destituta humus, cum est repetita cultu, magno fenore cessationis colono respondet.*

Neufchâtel (γλαῦκ' εἰς Ἀθήνας)! Only, of course, so you will write back to me, and hope for my coming: so do just that."[135]

So, even under Caesar, in a time when, according to his own estimate, the courts were closed and the senate irrelevant, life had to go on: as Cicero wrote in a letter to L. Papirius Paetus in the same year, "I have mourned for my country more deeply and longer than any mother for her only son."[136] They were words that Cicero might come to regret, for the coming year forced him to mourn not only for the *patria*, but also for the daughter, Tullia, whom he loved, in one of fate's sadly perfect inversions, as fiercely as any "mother for her only son."

Cicero's frequent laments for the lost republic are a useful reminder that the pleasure of recounting and reading life's delectable goings-on is, during this period, always shadowed by the fact that "social life" and its pleasures (Roman *otium*) remain a pale stand-in for what had been and should, Cicero thinks, rightfully be the true center of the his life: the *dignitas* of public life. As Cicero had put it some years prior, the ideal life was one of *otium cum dignitate*, a life that allowed for both private pleasures and public honor. What was one to do when *dignitas*, as traditionally construed, was no longer a viable goal?

One result was Cicero's development of a new way of speaking about solitude, giving it, for the first time in his works, pride of place as both a source of pain and the best of cures.[137]

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[135] Cic. *Ad fam*. 9.3 *Sed quid ego nunc haec ad te, cuius domi nascuntur, γλαῦκ' εἰς Ἀθήνας? nihil scilicet nisi ut rescriberes aliquid, me exspectares. sic igitur facies.*

[136] Cic. *Ad fam*. 9.20 *Patriam eluxi iam et gravius et diutius, quam ulla mater unicum filium.*

[137] In what follows, I focus on the letters numbered by Shackelton Bailey as *Ad att*. 250-287, which include a range of letters from the older enumeration, *Ad att*. 12.13-13.46.

After Tullia's death in childbirth in January of 45 BCE, Cicero passed a long, and, judging from his later recollections, tear-filled month in Atticus' house in Rome. So as no longer to inflict himself on Atticus' company (or so he later makes out), Cicero headed to his house in Astura (modern Torre Astura)--"There is, here, an idyllic place (*locus amoenus*)--and right in the sea itself--and which can be seen from Antium and Circeus."[138] Beautiful, then, but isolating as well: "The solitude (*solitudo*) goads me less than the urban multitude (*quam ista celebritas*). You, alone, I miss (*te unum desidero*), but I am busy with my studies (*litteris*) with no more difficulty than were I at home."[139] Cicero "seeks out solitudes,"[140] and and will seek out no company (*humanitate*) because "solitude and retreat (*solitudo et recessus*) are the province that I have been assigned."[141]

Cicero wants to be alone, then, but to be alone with Atticus, in a non-solitary solitude: "I have done something that, I imagine, nobody has ever done before me—I consoled myself through literature[142]…solitude helps me some (*solitudo aliquid adiuvat*), but it would be of much more use if, nevertheless (*tamen*), you were here with me."[143] This period of self-declaredly

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[138] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.19 (SB 257).

[139] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.14 (SB 250).

[140] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.23.1 (SB 262) *itaque solitudinem sequor*.

[141] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.26.2 (SB 265) *sed mihi solitudo et recessus provincia est.*

[142] *per litteras*; perhaps, "through letters," on which, and for the possibility that the *Consolatio* was in the form of a letter, see SB *ad* 12.14.3 (SB 251).

[143] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.14 (SB 251); SB translates *tamen* as "paradoxically," and notes (*ad loc.*) that Cicero "is conscious of the paradox."

innovative isolation spanned two months, and reached its end, on May 15, 45 BCE, with Cicero writing to Atticus that he had finally decided to leave Astura, and return, for the first time since Tullia's death, to his villa at Tusculum: “For either,” he writes, “I must keep away from the villa forever—for my grief will stay the same, even if, perhaps, more concealed—or I have to be indifferent as to whether I leave now or in ten years. In truth, the reminder of grief there will be no greater than that by which I am affected both day and night. 'Is, then,' you might ask, ‘literature no help (*nihil litterae*)?’ In this case, I’m afraid, it’s the opposite, for, without it, I’d be hardier: in a cultivated mind, nothing is coarse (*agreste*), nothing unsocial (*inhumanum*).”[144]

That word, *inhumanum* can connote not only the cruel and the barbarous, but also the isolated and socially unattached: learning is a constant course of *humanitas*, and gives its adherent no practice for the psychological solitude of mourning; here, though, paradoxically, literature's humanizing function is precisely the problem, as it is precisely a tough and "inhuman" edge that Cicero believes he needs in order to overcome adversity. In this situation, Atticus himself would be better than bookish solitude, which are, though good, admittedly imperfect to the consolatory task: "Nothing," he writes, "has, until now, been as suitable (*aptius*) as this solitude (*hac solitudine*);" solitude, here, means, as the end of the letter makes clear, "writing and

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[144] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.46 (SB 287) *Vincam, opinor, animum et Lanuvio pergam in Tusculanum. aut enim mihi in perpetuum fundo illo carendum est (nam dolor idem manebit, tantum modo oc<cul>tius) aut nescio quid intersit utrum illuc nunc veniam an ad decem annos. neque enim ista maior admonitio quam quibus adsidue conficior et dies et noctes. 'quid ergo?' inquies, 'nihil litterae?' in hac quidem re vereor ne etiam contra; nam essem fortasse durior. exculto enim animo nihil agreste, nihil inhumanum est.*

books" (*scriptio et litterae*) which, he writes, "distract me (*obturbant*), but do not lighten the pain (*non leniunt*)."[145] But reading and writing is also Cicero's way of being with others in the absence of others: "In this solitude (*in hoc solitudine*)," Cicero writes to Atticus, "I have no conversation with any people (*careo omnium colloquio*); in the morning, I hide myself in a forest—dense and thorny—and don't come out till evening. After you, I have no better friend than solitude (*secundum te nihil est mihi amicus solitudine*): in solitude (*in ea*) all of my conversation is with books (*mihi omnis sermo est cum litteris*)."[146] Scipio Africanus can speak with himself in his solitude (*solitudine secum loqui--De Off*. 3.1) and has no need for the conversation of another person; Cicero, here, as in the *De Officiis*, engages in his solitary conversations through and with the company, not of himself, but of his books and letters. The world of letters becomes a substitute, here, for the world of men.

In the *De Officiis*, the solitude of Cicero's political situation is contrasted with his philosophy: "All of philosophy, my dear son, Cicero, is fruit-bearing and fruitful (*frugifera et fructuosa*), nor is any part of it uncultivated or empty (*inculta ac deserta*)…"[147] Cicero's language, here, not only recalls the vitalist metaphors we have already seen in his letters to Varro, but also continues with their correlation of philosophy and solitude: *desertum* is regularly

[145] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.16 (SB 253).

[146] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.15 (SB 252).

[147] Cic. *De off*. 3.5 *Sed cum tota philosophia, mi Cicero, frugifera et fructuosa nec ulla pars eius inculta ac deserta sit, tum nullus feracior in ea locus est nec uberior, quam de officiis, a quibus constanter honesteque vivendi praecepta ducuntur.*

paired with, and can serve as a synonym for, *solitudo*.[148] Because no philosophical debate is a desert (i.e. uninhabited by other positions taken by previous philosophers), no one engaged in philosophy is ever, truly, alone, particular those philosophers, like Cicero, who bravely take up that most crowded field of philosophy, ethics and moral duties.

But Cicero's language of solitude during his last years opens up wider, more agonized, vacillations than scholarship has usually allowed. No doubt this language contributed in a variety of ways to Cicero's socio-political program; but this new rhetoric possesses, as we have seen and will see in more depth, its own internal logic as well, and one with implications for literature to follow: given the state of our knowledge of the early Latin elegiac tradition and of Gallus in particular, it is difficult for us to judge whether Cicero's self-abduction into solitary and literary woods picks up a Roman elegiac trope, or whether Roman elegy picks up on something resembling Ciceronian solitude. Either way, it is a posture that bears a striking resemblance to many of Virgil's pastor-singers in the *Eclogues* and, as we shall see, to the lover-singer of Propertius' poetry, and emphasizes, not only how song can fill solitude, but, as well, how song or literature can create as much as lighten the sense of solitude as oppressive.

In what follows, I show how attending to the tensions of solitude, the difficulties of its rhetoric and its various slips, can help enrich our reading of three works in which its challenge to the socio-political is most evident: in Cicero's late works on oratory (*Brutus* and *Orator*, of 46 BCE) and on friendship (*De Amicitia*, of 44 BCE). Uniquely among Cicero's works, the *Brutus* and *De Amicitia* are set, ostentatiously, after, rather than before, a death of major political

[148] i.e. Cic. *Verr*. 2.4.51, 2.5.67.

importance:[149] the *Brutus* begins after the death of Hortensius and the world of political rhetoric that he epitomized, while *De Amicitia* is an elegy not only of Scipio Aemilianus and the now-defunct expectations of political friendship that he represented, but, also, of the possibility of friendship *tout court*.[150] Even these gestures, of course, serve definite social ends: sharing memory through writing helps Cicero and his friends, a small and cultivated coterie, shore collective ideas against the ruins of Rome's dire times. But these works go further than the coterie in their speculations, and the pendulum swing that they observe and enact is wider than often supposed. These works are, I hope to show, in large part elegiac, and they wrestle with the meaning of genuine loss. They confront, collectively, a single, fundamental question: "What does it mean, after loss, to continue to try and play inherently social themes--oratory, friendship, love--in a solitary key?" I treat the works in their chronological sequence, beginning with the rhetorical works, and concluding with Cicero's *De Amicitia*.

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[149] Compare with the *De Re Publica*, which is set, according to the normal dramatic method of Cicero (and Plato), just prior to the death of its main character, Scipio Aemelianus. Ingo Gildenhard (2007:34) has justifiably termed this tendency Cicero's "Phaedo mode;" cf. Cameron 1967:259.

[150] Cic. *Lael*. 3 *paucis deibus post mortem Africani*. The *De Amicitia* does, however, precede the death of another of its central characters: Scaevola, as Combès notes (1971:xxii-xxiii), seems to have died a year after the time when he supposedly recounted his father-in-law Laelius' discourse on friendship to Cicero. Scaevola deaths (plural) are, as we will see, very important to the structure of the work as a whole.

III. "In the forum, solitude…"[151] : Cicero's *Brutus*

> "We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry. Unlike the rhetoricians, who get a confident voice from remembering the crowd they have won or may win, we sing amid our uncertainty…" (Yeats, *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*, 1917)

Yeats' contrast--of rhetoric's gregarious extroversion, its "quarrel with others," with rhetoric's melancholic, hesitant, and inward-looking inversion, poetry--is one to which Cicero might have, with certain caveats, subscribed; as we shall see, Yeats' terms themselves are foreshadowed by certain terms developed in Cicero's late works. But Cicero also explores, in his late rhetorical treatises, the *Brutus* and the *Orator*, a twist on this formulation, by imagining oratory itself as an art that, under the influence of uncertain times, has become, if not a song of uncertainty, then, at the very least, an important ground for the "quarrel with ourselves." Knowing that these same years would lead up to Cicero's oratorical *tours de force*, the *Philippics*, does not lessen, but, rather, tightens, the paradoxes of solitude and society that Cicero's theoretical works explore; as we shall see, they are paradoxes that will be pulled even more tautly in Cicero's later work, *On Friendship*, with which I will conclude this chapter.

Cicero's struggle with solitude did not, as we have seen, emerge *ex ovo* following the death of Tullia and Cicero's retreat to lonely Asturia; indeed, it was a problem that Cicero faced, albeit in less personal terms, in that time when Caesar's autocracy was still in its early stages, and when Cicero returned, once more, to a project he had begun in an earlier period of withdrawal from public life, to his work on oratory. Where the earlier Roman world of the *De Oratore* still

[151] Cicero, *Brutus* 227 *in foro solitudo…*

seemed to assume, as Elaine Fantham has concluded, that Rome's "present troubles would sooner or later come to an end,"[152] Cicero's later works--the landmark history of oratory in the *Brutus*, and the *imago* of the ideal never-has-been and never-will-be orator of the *Orator,* both from 46 BCE--wrestle more deliberately with the challenge of a Rome grown colder, darker, and increasingly desolate. What will oratory mean, these dialogues ask, after the death of the republic, the closing of the courts, and the emptying out of the forum? What does oratory look like when it must be reconceived, even if only (one vainly hoped) temporarily, as, not a potent public tool but a private, or even solitary, verbal art?

There is, scholars agree, a strong strain of idealism that runs through both of these later works. But scholars have taken different views of what the idealism of these works implies, with Rathofer (1986), Dugan (2005), and Fox (2007) representing the three basic positions of, respectively, political triumph, textual triumph, and ambiguous indeterminacy. For Rathofer (1986), the *Brutus* and *Orator* stress the total victory of Cicero's rhetorical *auctoritas* as the glorious culmination of Rome's historical march and of the *translatio imperii* that made Rome the *caput mundi*, Cicero the *caput oratorum*. On the opposite end, Dugan, emphasizing both the rhetorical history and the intricacies of the frame narrative, sees Cicero's late texts as happily conceding socio-political defeat, but vaunting what Dugan elsewhere calls Cicero's "textual triumph" (Dugan 2005:71) and "the cultural importance of Cicero's programme of textual self-fashioning" (Dugan 2005:74); the historical ironies of the *Brutus*--a history of oratory written when oratory cannot be practiced; repeated gestures towards the fictional frame of the dialogue itself--only further contribute, writes Dugan, to the sense that these "creations of Cicero's pen"

[152] Fantham 2004:310.

represent the orator-philosopher's lasting victory over context and time.[153] Where Rathofer and Dugan both emphasize the victory of one side over the other in the contest between politics and retreat, Fox (2007:177ff.) sees the works as equally caught between self-aggrandizement and regret, as admitting the "full-scale defeat of rhetoric" (Fox 2007:182) in its contest with arms (*arma…sumpta--Brutus* 8) with great sadness that is not mitigated by, but rather exists alongside a literary irony whose final effects are, in Fox's analysis, indeterminate, filled with "lament" but also "considerable humour," combining pessimism with optimism in a way that prevents "clear synthesis." (Fox 2007:207-8)

Each of these positions captures important aspects of this complex work, and its complex author: as we know from Cicero's letters, he is a man able to vaunt, cringe, haver, cry, whisper, and boast…and all in the space of a single afternoon! And the joining of lamentation and humor that Fox underlines corresponds with the stylistic goal that Cicero sets for ideal oratory, in its ability to supersede poetry, and satisfy Cicero's twist on the final dream of Plato's *Symposium*, of being able to please as "a comic actor in tragedies, and a tragic actor in comedies."[154] My

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[153] Dugan's view has a long history, beginning with Seneca the Elder, whose seventh *Suasoria* (cited at Dugan 2005:73) contains Silo Pompeius' claim that the works of Cicero could never be destroyed, since they are already "celebrated over the entire world." (Sen. Mai. *Suas*. 7.11 *cuius scripta per totum orbem terrarum celebrarentur*)

[154] Cicero is speaking about oratorical performance, and so it is natural for him to speak of "tragic actors" rather than "tragedians." See Cic. *Orat*. 109 *Histriones eos vidimus…et comoedum in tragoediis et tragoedum in comoediis admodum placere vidimus: ego non elaborem*? cf. Plato, *Sym*. 223d προσαναγκάζειν τὸν Σωκράτη ὁμολογεῖν αὐτοὺς τοῦ αὐτοῦ

purpose is not so much to support one or another of them, but to reimagine the problem by concentrating on certain looming specters--death, solitude, and Plato--that render more acute the basic problem that these works insistently raise: "What is oratory without the forum?" In what follow, I show, first, how the problem of solitude is central to the structure and argument of the *Brutus*, and, second, how this problem becomes more intensely realized in Cicero's essay, written two years later, on friendship.[155]

Cicero's *Brutus* unfolds under the shadows of death and of Plato, and these twin specters are emblems for the work's struggle with oratory as an art that has lost, not only its practitioners, but, also, its audience. These two shadows are cast, respectively, by the work's external, opening frame, with which I will begin, and by the work's internal, dramatic frame, within which unfolds the work's action, to which I will soon come.

The work begins with an act of departure, and bad news:

> When I had left (*decedens*) Cilicia and come to Rhodes, word was brought to me of the death of Hortensius--I suffered from more sadness in my soul than most people seemed to think.[156]

ἀνδρὸς εἶναι κωμῳδίαν καὶ τραγῳδίαν ἐπίστασθαι ποιεῖν, καὶ τὸν τέχνῃ τραγῳδοποιὸν ὄντα <καὶ> κωμῳδοποιὸν εἶναι.

[155] My work on the *Brutus* is most indebted to Gowing 2000 and Stroup 2003, both of whom, in different ways and to different ends, concentrate on the elegiac function of the *Brutus*; on their works, see below.

[156] Cic. *Brut*. 1 *Cum e Cilicia decedens Rhodum venissem et eo mihi de Q. Hortensi morte esset adlatum, opinione omnium maiorem animo cepi dolorem.*

Cicero's Cilician sojourn had not been his idea: his political opponents had used a variety of legal means to make Cicero governor of the province, in an effort to get him out of the city, and--much the same thing in Cicero's case--out of politics as a whole. Cilicia is, for Cicero, the site of politics gone wrong. Rhodes, on the other hand, is the island where Cicero, under the tutelage of Apollonius Molon (*Brutus* 316), had grown into the philosopher and (philosophical) rhetorician that Rome, and Rome's world, so desperately needed.[157] What a fitting way to begin a work that will describe the departure of oratory itself from the world of depraved politics into the safe orphanage of words and ideas!

The impetus, or image, of this latter departure is the death of Quintus Hortensius Hortalus, the opening mystery of the work being, as the first sentence suggests, why it is, as Cicero writes, that "I suffered from more sadness in my soul than most people seemed to think."[158] The reason for the surprise is not far to seek: Hortensius had been Cicero's (first) major rhetorical opponent. But he had also been much more than that: he had been Cicero's friend, and now he was gone; the whole of the work takes place under the auspices of the "departed friend" (*amico amisso*).[159] Cicero had much, he says, to mourn in this loss, both personally (their "habitual enjoyment" of one another's company) and politically (their "collaboration in handling

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[157] See Fantham 2004:96.

[158] Cic. *Brut*. 1 *opinione omnium maiorem animo cepi dolorem*. On death as a standard aspect of Hellenistic dedications, and one taken up by Roman authors, see Stroup 2003 n. 9.

[159] This phrase's rhyme, assonance, and play of long and short vowels (*amîcô âmissô*), contributes to its function as a moving, and elegiac, emblem.

public affairs").[160] Romans, we know, did not much care for excessive mourning--hence, the public relations problem presented by Cicero's reaction, a year later, to the death of Tullia. But even in the case of Hortensius, Cicero suggests that his mourning was excessive enough to occasion comment, and require apology: "If, regarding less serious arts, (*leviorum artium*) history records that famous poets have manifested grief for the death of fellow poets, how much more must I have felt the death of one with whom rivalry was more glorious than to have been quite without rival."[161] If poets ("lighter artists") can mourn for the death of great poets, then how much for the more should orators--who are, as it were, poets with power, principle, purpose, and weight (*graviorum artium--Brut*. 331)--mourn for the death of great orators?[162]

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[160] Cicero, *Brut*. 1 *nam et amico amisso cum consuetudine iucunda tum multorum officiorum coniunctione me privatum videbam…*

[161] trans. Hendrickson 1962, Cic. *Brut*. 3 *Etenim si in leviorum artium studio memoriae proditum est poetas nobilis poetarum aequalium morte doluisse, quo tandem animo eius interitum ferre debui, cum quo certare erat gloriosius quam omnino adversarium non habere?* The reference seems to be, as Douglas indicates *ad loc*., to Sophocles' mourning for the dead Euripides (*Vita Eur*.).

[162] The comparison of oratory with poetry is, obviously, invidious, but it also raises a question of the distance, and proximity, of poetry to oratory that will grow increasingly ambiguous, and troubling, as the work unfolds. Douglas (*ad Brut*. 3) claims that Cicero "genuinely felt that these things [poetry] were inferior in status to oratory," and adduces *Brut*. 70, *fin*. 5.7, *sen*. 50, *de or*. 1.212, and Tac. *Dial*. 10.5.

And, despite certain opening feints to the contrary, it is as an orator, and not as a friend or a man or an augur, that Hortensius will here be mourned; this is one of the reasons why Cicero believes that we should not so much pity Hortensius for his death as pity ourselves, who must endure life in a time when great orators are no longer sought, nor allowed to thrive: "If Hortensius yet lived, he would likely pine, together with all good and worthy citizens, and would feel a sadness (*dolorem*) that could be shared with none, or few, when he saw the Forum of the Roman people, once the theater of his genius (*theatrum illius ingeni*), of his learned voice, is fit for Roman and Greek ears, despoiled and orphaned (*spoliatum atque orbatum*)."[163] This sentence ends on a daring construction--a kind of *abusio*, or katachresis, or *enallage*, depending on your terms-[164]-that consolidates a number of key terms: Hortensius' *vox*, his "learned voice," are, first, spoils carried off as spoils, not in order to build a theater (à la Pompey, say), but, rather, in order to deprive Rome of the "theater" that truly matters, the theater of Hortensius' genius, the Forum.[165] This isn't the first time that the Forum has been deprived in this way--as Cicero will

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[163] Cicero, *Brut*. 6 *Etenim si viveret Q. Hortensius, cetera fortasse desideraret una cum reliquis bonis et fortibus civibus, hunc autem aut praeter ceteros aut cum paucis sustineret dolorem, cum forum populi Romani, quod fuisset quasi theatrum illius ingeni, voce erudita et Romanis Graecisque auribus digna spoliatum atque orbatum videret.*

[164] cf. Cic. *Orator* 93-94.

[165] Pompey's theater was Rome's first, and at that time, only stone theater, funded from the *spolia* of that general's triumphs. Construction on the theater (and portico) began in 61 BCE, and the dedication took place in 55 BCE. On Pompeius' theater and its political contexts, see Frézoulis 1983, Gros 1987.

write later in the dialogue, the dictator Sulla "was more praised because there was, when it came to orators (*quod erat ab oratoribus*), a kind of solitude (*quaedam…solitudo*) in the forum (*quaedam in foro solitudo*)."[166] *Solitudo*, "the empty space" of the forum, takes the place of its more frequent ally-word, *desertum,* and replaces what Cicero had said was the "spoliation and deprivation" (*spoliatum atque orbatum*) of the forum in the work's prologue. So Hortensius' *vox* is imagined as the spoils of war, but it is also conceived, as this sentence comes to a close, as a parent, so that its loss causes the Forum to be left "deprived" (*orbatum*), a personification that will, as we shall see, be taken up in even more poignant, and Platonic, form by the *Brutus*' conclusion.[167]

Whether the deprivation is conjugal or parental, though, the focus is, for now, securely on the world of affairs: Hortensius' death means that he did not have to experience the changing socio-political conditions that would make his rhetoric irrelevant, and they have done to Cicero's

[166] Cic. *Brutus* 227 *hoc etiam magis probabatur, quod erat ab oratoribus quaedam in foro solitudo***.** There is perhaps some irony in the enclosed word-order here.

[167] The "deprivation" of the Forum is an ambiguous image, for the Latin word *orbatus* can imply both widowhood and, as seems to be more clearly the case at the work's end, orphanage. Here, towards the work's opening, it describes the state of the forum under Caesar; at the work's end, it turns out that the orphaning of the forum is a metonymy for the orphaning of something rather more ephemeral, but much more divine, rhetoric, or *eloquentia*, itself.

own oratorical skills, now superannuated, Cicero complains, by Rome's recourse to civil arms.[168] Amidst these, "our greatest and heaviest cares (*in maxumis nostris gravissimisque curis)*," Cicero's only joy (*iucunda sane fuit*) was, he writes, the "memory and recollection" (*memoria et recordatio*) of orators past, whose lives were passed, in fortune and prosperity, in a time when the orator, and not the general, was still sought as guide to the city.[169] These nostalgic memories were, Cicero goes on, the recent subject of his conversation (*nuper ex sermone*), a series of recollections shored against the ruin of Cicero's time, the history of rhetoric that is now to follow.

And follow it will, but not before a second (and lengthy) preface, together with a second setting, intervenes (*Brutus* 10-24): once upon a time, Cicero writes, he was strolling up and down his colonnade (*in xysto*), taking his leisure at home (*otiosus domi*), when he was joined by his close friends Marcus Brutus and Titus Pomponius Atticus. After a proliferation of mutual commiseration for the state's sad state, compliments on one another's accomplishments, gratitude for gifts past, promises of gifts future, and, at long last, in this time when "eloquence has gone mute" (*eloquentia obmutuit--Brut*. 22), a subject for conversation is proposed, that subject that

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[168] Cic. *Brut*. 8 *tum arma sunt ea sumpta.* The interest in a death well-timed to miss political troubles is a Ciceronian *topos* that Cicero had applied, earlier, to the figure of Crassus in *De Oratore* 3.1-9.

[169] Cic. *Brut.* 9 *Itaque ei mihi videntur fortunate beateque vixisse cum in ceteris civitatibus tum maxume in nostra, quibus cum auctoritate rerumque gestarum gloria tum etiam sapientiae laude perfrui licuit. quorum memoria et recordatio in maxumis nostris gravissimisque curis iucunda sane fuit, cum in eam nuper ex sermone quodam incidissemus.*

Cicero and Atticus had only begun to discuss (*inchoavisti*), some time prior in Tusculum: the when's (*quando*), the who's (*qui*), and the what-kind's (*quales*) of oratorical history.[170]

Because this story will take some time to tell--if memory is a balm for lost joy, then it's best to prolong recollection as long as possible--Cicero recommends that the three of them sit down (*sedentes, si videtur, agamus--Brut*. 24), and it is here, at long last, that this work's otherwise vague setting attains a crucial geographical and ideological specificity:

> Since this idea pleased them, we then sat in the lawn (*in pratulo*) up against the statue of Plato (*propter Platonis statuam*).
>
> *Cum idem placuisset illis, tum in pratulo propter Platonis statuam consedimus.* (Cic. *Brut*. 24)

Plato's pride of place in the setting dovetails with the role he is said to have played in this work's origins. The *Brutus* claims to have been the result of a scholarly chain reaction initiated by Cicero's *De Re Publica*, Cicero's reworking of Plato's classic text. Now, although Cicero is writing the *Brutus* most immediately out of gratitude for Brutus' letter of consolation (probably his *De virtute*), the *Brutus* in fact responds most directly to, and derives much of its structure, data, and inspiration from, Atticus' landmark work of scholarship, the *Liber Annalis*, a formalized scheme of Roman history. That work, in turn, was, as Atticus tells Cicero, "impelled and inspired" (*impulsi atque incensi*) by Cicero's own *De Re Publica*![171] Plato, and Cicero as the

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[170] Cic. *Brut*. 20 *quando esse coepissent, qui etiam et quales fuissent.*

[171] Cic. *Brut*. 19 *eisque nosmet ipsi ad rerum nostrarum memoriam comprehendendam impulsi atque incensi sumus. sed illa, cum poteris; atque ut possis, rogo.*

Roman Plato, is where this work has its distant beginning. Plato is essential to this work's gestation, and crucial, too, as we shall see, to its purposes.

The Platonic lawn of the *Brutus* is also a continuation of the Platonic setting of Cicero's *De oratore*, the first in of his major rhetorical works, written in 55 BCE. That earlier work had begun with Scaevola leading the crowd in Socrates' footsteps:

> "Why should not we, Crassus, imitate Socrates in the Phaedrus of Plato (*in Phaedro Platonis)*? For this plane-tree (*haec tua platanus*) of yours has put me in mind of it, which diffuses its spreading boughs to overshade this place, not less widely than that did whose covert Socrates sought, and which seems to me to have grown not so much from the rivulet which is described (*ipsa acula quae describitur*), as from the language of Plato (*quam Platonis oratione crevisse*)…" Then they all, said Cotta, sat down on the seats that were under the plane-tree (*sub platano*). (Cicero, *De oratore* 28-9, trans. J.S. Watson)[172]

[172] Cicero, *De oratore* 28-9 *"cur non imitamur, Crasse, Socratem illum, qui est in Phaedro Platonis? Nam me haec tua platanus admonuit, quae non minus ad opacandum hunc locum patulis est diffusa ramis, quam illa, cuius umbram secutus est Socrates, quae mihi videtur non tam ipsa acula, quae describitur, quam Platonis oratione crevisse, et quod ille durissimis pedibus fecit, ut se abiceret in herba atque ita [illa], quae philosophi divinitus ferunt esse dicta, loqueretur, id meis pedibus certe concedi est aequius." Tum Crassum "immo vero commodius etiam"; pulvinosque poposcisse et omnis in eis sedibus, quae erant sub platano, consedisse dicebat.*

Plato is essential both to the form (dialogue) and the content (philosophy vs. rhetoric) of Cicero's *De oratore*, as Elaine Fantham has extensively demonstrated.[173] Cicero's relationship to Plato involves questions of fictionality, textuality, and the nature, and uses, of language. Given this Platonic background, it is very important that Scaevola, in setting the scene, draws his group's attention, and ours, to the question of fictionality: the plane tree (*platanus*) that he points out seems less the product of nature than of artifice, growing less out of the rivulet than of Cicero's *oratio*. As Scaevola notes, in an aside, the rivulet itself is the product, as far as we are concerned, of *oratio* rather than *natura*, for it is that "rivulet that is described" (*ipsa acula quae describitur*)--it is a rivulet, that is, made of words, not of water, and the tree that rises from it will be, as well, a thing of words. The whole scene, as Cicero draws it, is fiction from canopy to roots.

This is important, because the dialogue's historical setting, and well-known Roman characters, are often taken as contributing to the sense that the work is embedded in a highly socialized and politicized, hence anti-fictional, setting. But Cicero's text is, if anything, even more heavy-handedly fictional than that of Plato. For the dialogue of the *De oratore* arises, we are told, out of words (*oratio*) and description (*quae describitur*); it is, therefore, fitting that word-play, and towards serious ends, is at the heart of the passage's operation, and in a way that

[173] On the "challenge of Plato" in Cicero's *De oratore* (specifically regarding "constructing the dialogue"), see Fantham 2004:49-77. Fantham attributes the higher "level of fictionality" in Plato's dialogue (vis-a-vis Cicero's) to the fact that, although Cicero had to design a "sympathetic creation rather than the reconstruction of a systematic discussion held in Crassus' Tusculan retreat," the fact that Cicero had few real philosophical opponents meant that he had, says Fantham, "less need or motive than Plato had to fabricate." (Fantham 2004:54)

goes back to Plato's text. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, the title character, Phaedrus, sets the scene, of their dialogue and our text, by asking Socrates, "Do you see that very tall plane tree (ὁρᾷς οὖν ἐκείνην τὴν ὑψηλοτάτην πλάτανον--Plato, *Phaedrus* 229a)?"[174] Further, but only for those of us who have an eye and stomach, as did many Greeks and Romans—to Quintilian's chagrin—for folk etymologies, we may take up Phaedrus' command "look" (ὁρᾷς) and see not only a plane-tree (*platanus,* πλάτανον), which derives from the word 'wide' (πλατύς), but also at another word derived from this root, the name of our author himself, Plato/Πλάτων, so-named because of his wide shoulders.[175] Read with or without this etymological lens, the whole scene is established as an invitation to linguistic hyper-attention, and to the meta-textual possibilities, and anxieties, of fictionality. Such anxiety is particularly appropriate to this dialogue, in which the central argument--philosophy cannot be done through writing--is formally, and radically, undercut, or rather overshadowed, by the fact that the *Phaedrus* itself is a written work.[176]

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[174] For Socrates' further praise of the plane tree, in terms that Cicero will take up in *De oratore*, see Plato, *Phaedrus* 230b.

[175] On hatred of etymology, see Quintilian *Inst. Or*. 1.6.28-38; on etymology in ancient texts, see Ahl 1985: 17-63.

[176] The importance of etymologies to Plato's *Phaedrus* is suggested by the opening words of Plato's rebuttal to Phaedrus' recitation of Lysias' speech, where Plato etymologizes the "tuneful (*λίγειαι*) Muses," at *Phaedrus* 237a *ἄγετε δή, ὦ Μοῦσαι, εἴτε δι᾽ ᾠδῆς εἶδος λίγειαι, εἴτε διὰ γένος μουσικὸν τὸ Λιγύων ταύτην ἔσχετ᾽ ἐπωνυμίαν.* Socrates goes on to etymologize ἔρως>ἐρρωμενως ῥωσθεῖσα and ῥώμης, which Harvey Yunis has noted is unlike the etymological doctrine ennumerated in the previuos lines (238a4), "since the etymology concerns only the name of the

If the setting of Plato's *Phaedrus* addresses the question of fictionality, then the settings of Cicero's *De Oratore* and *Brutus* go one step further.[177] Not only do they introduce the problem of fiction at second degree, but they also make the point explicit: for Scaevola, the *platanus* is nothing more or less than the *oratio Platonis*, which means, as we have seen, not only "what Plato says," but, rather more definitely, "how you say 'Plato'." Cicero's *Brutus* not only picks up the Platonic setting of the *De oratore*, but also its word-plays and concomitant interest in fictionality: the little lawn on which Cicero, Atticus, and Brutus are to hold their conversation, is a *pratulum*, from *pratum (*'meadow/broad field'), so-called because it is a wide open space, and cognate with Greek, πλατύς, with predictable l/r alternation. In the *De oratore*, the *platanus* rose up out of the *oratio* of Plato, and, in the *Brutus,* the statue of Plato rises up from the Platonic field. The Platonic landscape, in Cicero's usage, is not made of land, but of Plato's words; it, too, is an idea, an imagined form, of nature, rather than nature itself. In both the earlier and the later cases, the *locus* of oratorical discussion is made one with the *imago* under which the discussion takes place. This is not only very tricky for the uses of the *ars memoriae* (which likes to keep

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appetite itself and does not link the name of the appetite and the affected person*,"* but very much like those found in Socrates' palinode, where the etymology "reveals a layer of meaning about the activity in question (244b6-d5n.)." Note that the conclusion of Socrates' first speech is onomaniacal: πολυώνυμον…ἐπωνυμίαν ὀνομαζόμενον…ὀνόματα…ἐπωνυμίαν; and, of course, at long last, "the name is…love" *(ἔρως ἐκλήθη--Plato, Phaedrus 238a-c)*. See also *Phaedrus* 244b, 249e, 251c and 255c. In a more general way, Plato's *Cratylus* is evidence of Plato's extensive interest in etymologies, particularly onomastic ones.

[177] *pace* Fantham 2004:54.

locus and *imago* distinct), but an invitation to anxiety about the fictionality of what is being described--is there anything in all of this scene that is not the product of description? Is there anything here but Cicero or Plato, whom, Atticus says to Cicero in another of Cicero's late dialogues, "You admire, revere above all others, and love above all others?"[178] Are there only the ideas of things here, rather than things themselves? This is a possibility raised immediately by the *De oratore*, and it is one that haunts the *Brutus* whenever it contemplates the current state of oratory and its possible instantiations.[179]

That being said, there is no question that the *Brutus* is interested, first and foremost, in presenting an oratorical history of Rome, and that this project is inextricably tied up with Cicero's own political goals, and attempts at clarifying (and, of course, glorifying) his own role as the apogee and *telos* of that history. Tracing the "series of ages," *ordo aetatum* leads Cicero, completely contrary to his own plans (he writes), to speak, at last, of himself; getting there involves relating a large amount of biographical and rhetorical information about a very long series of Roman politician-orators. My point is not to contest that historical presentation, socio-political gain, and the *copia* of rhetorical thick-description are important official goals of Cicero's work; instead, I hope to draw attention to the way the *Brutus*, against its ostensible argumentative grain, opens the door to oratory conceived as an asocial, even anti-social, art. Although I do not know how all of these rhetorical hiccups came about--whether as part of an

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[178] Cic. *De leg*. 1.15 *Platonem illum tuum, quem tu admiraris, quem omnibus anteponis, quem maxime diligis;* that entire dialogue is, of course, named after, and modeled in important ways, on Plato's *Laws*. On the sources of Cicero's *De leg.*, see Dyck 2004:12-14.

[179] It is a favorite Ciceronian issue: see, for example, *De legibus*.

explicit program, of hasty craftsmanship, or of distracting preoccupations--I hope to show that they contribute to themes of solitude very important to Cicero in the last years of his life.

Solitude's challenge to oratory arises most clearly when Cicero wonders whether oratory is best judged by public approbation or by some other more private or more abstract yardstick. If oratory is an *ars*, a technical skill that can be judged formally rather than by its influence, then one is already very close to imagining rhetoric as existing independently of the forum. This becomes a more explicit concern of the *Brutus* as it moves deeper into its historical task. After a long train of history that takes us from the Pisistratic (6th century BCE) Athens (*Brutus* 26), to the "all but perfect" Demosthenes (*prope perfectum--Brutus* 45), thence to "our [i.e. Roman] orators" (*ad nostros--Brutus* 52) at the founding of the *Republic* by Lucius Brutus, and then, after many a description, up to the time of Gaius Cotta and Public Sulpicius (*Brutus* 184), what we would call the 1st century BCE, Cicero's history pauses for the first of its important digressions.[180] It comes about, in this case, because of Cicero's remark that Cotta and Sulpicius were first-rate orators, "in my judgement and in the judgement of the public (*meo iudicio tum omnium--Brut*. 183)." Cicero's phrasing puzzles Atticus, who asks whether Cicero thinks that the "judgement of the crowd (*vulgi*) and the judgement of the connoisseurs (*intellegentium*) always coincide." Cicero's response, which he warns might not gain universal consent (*fortasse quod non omnes probent*), is

[180] Note that there had been a very brief *digressio* right at the start of the historical narration, which concerned the rhetoric of philosophers rather than politicians (*Brutus* 31 *quibus digressi sumus*), hence not, strictly speaking, the concern of Cicero's discourse.

that, as is well known, the orator must aim at three goals: "teaching, delighting, and moving."[181] Although it is only the expert who can say precisely how an orator failed at one or more of these goals, it is up to "assent of the vulgar (*vulgi assensu*) and the approbation of the people (*populari approbatione--Brut*. 185)" that an orator rises or falls. Indeed, when it comes to deciding whether an orator is good (*bonus*) or supreme (*summus*), there can be "no dissension between the learned and the people" (*non…doctis hominibus cum populo dissensio--Brut*. 185), for it is only by the combined "judgement of the vulgar and the learned" (*vulgi iudicio et doctorum--Brut*. 186) that such a prize can be earned.

Cicero illustrates the unique case of oratory by contrasting it with the arts, drawing first on music (Antigenidas the flautist and his student--*Brutus* 187), and then on poetry and philosophy (Antimachus the poet and Plato--*Brutus* 191-2); that the two are meant to be taken together is suggested by their synthesis in the concluding image of the people as, as it were, the orator's flute. Each of these stories is complex on its own, and, taken together, raise important questions for, not the work's official purpose, but of all of the unofficial gestures that this work includes.

We will take each of these stories in its turn, and will begin, like Cicero, with the flautist:

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[181] Cicero's first formulation of what Douglas calls the "Three Functions" (Douglas, *Brutus* xxxv) appears in the *De Oratore* (2.115, 121, 128. They are 1) *Movere/inflammare/concitare* 2) *Conciliare/delectare* 3) *docere/prbare*. In the *Brutus*, they appear at 185, 187-8, 198, 276, 279, and 322. Douglas approves of, without giving full support to, the idea that Cicero's Three Functions owe something to Aristotle's three forms of appeal: argument (*logos*), emotion (*pathê*), and character (*êthê*).

> So although Antigenidas[182], the flautist (*tibicen*), might say to his pupil, who was somewhat coldly received by the public (*sane frigenti ad populum*), "Sing for me, and the Muses (*mihi cane et Musis*)," so I might say to my friend Brutus, when he's speaking (as so frequently he does) to the multitude (*apud multitudinem*), "Sing to me and the people (*mihi cane et populo*), my Brutus," that those who hear him may hear the effect of his eloquence, and I may understand how this eloquence is achieved."[183]

The basic point is clear: whereas the orator must orient his performance to the expert (to be understood) and to the public (to be heard), the musician must orient his playing to the expert (to be understood) and to the Muses--but are the Muses the ones doing the hearing? As unusual as this implied comparison is the etymological and intertextual oddness of Antigenidas' and Cicero's formula: *mihi cane et Musis/populo*.[184]

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[182] Douglas points to the presence of, perhaps, two famous flute-players named Antigenidas, one from around 400 BCE, the other in Alexander's day, though von Jan in *RE* 1.2400 claims accounts have confused one person. If I had to choose one of the split Antigenidas to go with, if split they are, the one who flourished circa 400 BCE would make a cleaner association with Antimachus (*Brutus* 191) some few sections later. This same story is used by Val. Max 3.7, Symmachus *epp*. 9.115, and differently by Dio Chrys. 78.18.

[183] Cicero, *Brut*. 187 *qua re tibicen Antigenidas dixerit discipulo sane frigenti ad populum: 'mihi cane et Musis'; ego huic Bruto dicenti, ut solet, apud multitudinem: 'mihi cane et populo, mi Brute', dixerim, ut qui audient quid efficiatur, ego etiam cur id efficiatur intellegam.*

[184] For those etymologically inclined, the words themselves suggest a possible Ciceronian *jeu d'esprit*: the simplest answer of the flute-student (*tibicen*) to the command of *mihi cane* ("play for me") would be, "I play for you," *tibi cano*, suggesting a linguistically false, but sonically true,

Intertextually, "play for me and the Muses" (*mihi cane et Musis*) has particularly rich resonances: if rewritten in Greek, it would have resembled the opening invocatory lines of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey.*[185] Going to the Greek is particularly justified in this case not only because Antigenidas is Greek--and so, if this story was proverbial, it is likely that it included Greek elements, or was, itself, originally in Greek--but because we have evidence of what it might have looked like: Suetonius, in order to prove that Tiberius had a good reputation for military prowess, gives us a note that Augustus wrote to Tiberius, in which he wrote, with the bilingualism typical of his correspondence, "Hail, most joyful Tiberius, and with good fortune wage war, *en commandant l'armée pour moi et pour les Muses* (ἐμοὶ καὶ ταῖς †μουισασαιστ

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etymology for *tibicen*: the *tibicen* (flute-player) is the one who plays, essentially, just "for you" (*tibi*), rather than for the people as a whole. Flute-playing might be taken, then, as, etymologically, made to order for private audiences. In fact, the word derives from *tibia* (shin-bone)+*cano* (play/sing); note that Festus (p. 366 Müll.) explains the architectural term *tibicines* (pillars, supports, props) by reference to the fact that, just as props support a building, so the flute supports the singer, an aspect of flute-playing that seems to be absent from the relationship of Antigenidas to his *discipulus*.

[185] *Il*. 1.1 Μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ ***;*** Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε*, Od*. 1.1, 10 Μοῦσα**…**εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν; note the resemblance between Antigenidas' words and Latin translations of the *Odyssey*'s first line: Livius Andronicus' *Virum mihi Camena insece versutum* (*Od*. 1), or Horace's *Dic mihi Musa* (*AP* 141).

στρατηγῶν)."[186] In fact, one of the closest antecedents for the structure of Antigenidas' instruction in this Ciceronian context, and for the coordination of expert judging and divine hearing, of critic and muses, derives from Aristophanes' *Frogs*, where the god Dionysus, assigned as judge of a musical contest in the underworld, begins the contest with the following invocation (ll. 871-4): "Come now, let someone bring forth incense and fire, so that I can pray before the show of wits, to judge this contest (ἀγῶνα κρῖναι) most 'musically' (μουσικώτατα): and you [o Chorus] sing some song to the Muses (ὑμεῖς δὲ ταῖς Μούσαις τι μέλος ὑπάσατε)." As in the case of Cicero, there is the judge (Dionysus) and there are the Muses, who are present, as Aristophanes' chorus goes on to sing, to "look down (αἳ καθορᾶτε) upon the subtle-speaking clever wits of phrase-forging men (ἀνδρῶν γνωμοτύπων)," and whom the chorus commands to "come forth as observers" (ἔλθετ᾽ ἐποψόμεναι) of poetic power (δύναμιν). In Aristophanes, Dionysus judges (κρῖναι), while the Muses are there to look down upon (καθορᾶτε) and over-see (ἐποψόμεναι) the proceedings; in Cicero, Antegenidas and Cicero are there to judge, and the muses and the people are there to listen.

Of course, the correspondence is not perfect, for the Muses can be thought of as both musical teachers and musical auditors, and, rather more obviously, whereas the two experts and the people can be seen, the Muses must be either imagined *tout court* or imagined into proximate cult symbols (i.e. statues, shrines, temples). We can express this in another, more familiar, formulation: if music is played in the woods and nobody hears it, then music was still played,

[186] Suet. *Tib*. 21 *Vale, iucundissime Tiberi, et feliciter rem gere, ἐμοὶ καὶ ταῖς †μουισασαιστ στρατηγῶν. iucundissime et ita sim felix, uir fortissime et dux νομιμώτατε, uale*. My thanks to Bob Kaster for this reference.

because the Muses were there to hear it;[187] the same, however, can not be said for oratory, which always, Cicero emphasizes, needs an actual, a human, a visible, audience, which is justified and prompted not by some transcendent presence, but by the all-too-human barometers of its effects. However the particulars are conceived, the musician's independence from popularity is in striking contrast with the dependence of the orator on being heard by a public, and the bigger, perhaps, the better. The Muses make music meaningful everywhere and anywhere; the importance of the *populus* to rhetoric means that oratory can only be practiced, and only truly exist, in public contexts. Whereas, then, the *populus* is irrelevant to music, oratory, it seems, is an essentially social practice.

In principle, oratory's social dependence would not be a problem, but the setting of the *Brutus* makes it very problematic indeed. For this dialogue takes place, not only far from the forum, but in a time when the practice of true oratory has, as the prologue made clear, been barred from forum and courts, and where its greatest practitioners, the *magister* and the *discipulus*, Cicero and Brutus, have taken refuge, with the greatest critic of the age, Atticus, in the refuge of private friendship and historical memories in a Platonic lawn crowned by a Platonic statue. The "Platonic problem" of this dialogue, and of the later dialogue *Orator*, is tied to the problematic status of oratory as a genre in flux, and challenged by difficult questions: Can oratory, a public art of the forum, exist in the absence of public and forum? Can oratory become, like music, independent of the people? Can oratory be replaced by works about oratory, its history (*Brutus*) and its nature (*Orator*)? In a time when orators are no longer sought, are there still left delights as high as these?

[187] For music in the woods, see Ch. 2, on Virgil's tenth *Eclogue*.

The picture, then, is already quite complex, but, before returning us *à nos moutons*--the succession of past orators--Cicero further tightens the theoretical screws, and heightens the dramatic irony, by telling yet another story about the orator's relationship to his public. The story concerns two people, the poet Antimachus, and the figure under whose shadow this whole discourse takes place, the philosopher Plato:

> Cicero: "Demosthenes could never have said what is reported of the famous poet (*clarum poetam*) Antimachus. When reading that long and well-known poem of his before an assembled audience (*convocatis auditoribus*), in the very midst of his reading all his listeners left him (*reliquissent*) but Plato. "I shall go on reading," he said, "just the same; for me Plato alone (*Plato enim mihi unus*) is as good as a hundred thousand (*instar est centum milium*)."[188] And quite right; for a poem full of obscure allusions (*poema…reconditum*) can from its nature only win the approbation of the few; an oration meant for a general public (*oratio popularis*) must aim to win the assent of the throng (*assensum vulgi debet movere*). If Demosthenes on the other hand had held only Plato (*hunc Platonem unem auditorem haberet*), and was deserted by the rest (*relictus a ceteris*), he could not have uttered a single word. And you, Brutus? Could you have done a thing if the whole assembly, as it once did with Curio, had deserted you (*si te…contio reliquisset*)?"
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> Brutus: "I confess frankly to you (*ut me tibi indicem*)," he replied, "that even in cases where I am only concerned with a bench of judges and not with the people, even so, if I am abandoned by the circle of listeners (*tamen si a corona relictus sim*), I am quite unable to speak."[189]

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[188] Cicero had used this a variation on this phrase at an earlier period: *Cato ille noster qui mihi unus est pro centum milibus* (*Ad Att*. 2.5.1).

[189] Cicero, *Brut*. 191-2 *nec enim posset idem Demosthenes dicere, quod dixisse Antimachum clarum poetam ferunt: qui cum convocatis auditoribus legeret eis magnum illud, quod novistis,*

Clearly, Antimachus has had the opportunity to learn the lesson the flautist taught to his student: those who do the Muses' work do not need the multitude. Antimachus is in some ways a surprising example of the figure who is a critical success but a popular flop.[190] For Antimachus,

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volumen suum et eum legentem omnes praeter Platonem reliquissent, 'legam' inquit 'nihilo minus: Plato enim mihi unus instar est centum milium'. et recte: poema enim reconditum paucorum adprobationem, oratio popularis adsensum volgi debet movere. at si eundem hunc Platonem unum auditorem haberet Demosthenes, cum esset relictus a ceteris, verbum facere non posset. 192 *quid tu, Brute? possesne, si te ut Curionem quondam contio reliquisset? Ego vero, inquit ille, ut me tibi indicem, in eis etiam causis, in quibus omnis res nobis cum iudicibus est, non cum populo, tamen si a corona relictus sim, non queam dicere.*

[190] On Antimachus of Clarus (the poet more often known as Antimachus of Colophon), see the edition and commentary of Matthews 1996. Antimachus was the author of the epic *Thebaid* and the elegiac lament of his lover's death, the *Lyde*, what Callimachus called the *pachu gramma* (F. 398; cf. Hermesianax, fr. 7,41-46; Plut. Mor. 106b for the work as consolation of the loss of Lyde). Ovid refers to Antimachus as the "Clarian bard" (*Nec tantum Clario est Lyde dilecta poetae—Tristia* 1.6.1-4) The split nature of his poetic achievement and reputation makes his use in the example here slightly confused: Catullus could see him as overly popular and, contrary to Callimachean precepts, overwrought, *at populus tumido gaudeat Antimacho* (Catullus 95.10), but he seems also to have sought for a certain obscurity in his language, which established him as something of a forerunner of the Hellenistic *doctus poeta*, which would have led figures like Calvus, and more especially Helvius Cinna, to have seen him as a useful predecessor. We might

the "famous poet" largely known for his massive *Thebaid*,[191] seems to have come in for a great deal of criticism for being, not too scholarly, but too popular: Callimachus thought his work was "fat and not clear" (παχὺ γράμμα καὶ οὐ τορόν- 398Pfeiffer); Catullus mocked the windy and bloated productions of Antimachus, "in whom let the vulgar rejoice,"[192] and packed them in with the voluminous vapidities of Volusius, fit for the parchment-cover for *pesce al cortoccio*, under and against the refined and long-worked, masterpiece of dense compression, the *Smyrna* of Helvius Cinna;[193] and the critic and rhetorician Quintilian, writing in the late 1st CE, found that Antimachus, although he possessed some degree of strength, gravity, and eloquence, completely lacked…"any kind of art" (*omnino arte deficitur*)."[194]

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see some humor in Antimachus, *clarus poeta*, being known especially for a poetic style that could be described, in Cicero's coming lines, as *reconditum*.

[191] Probably the work alluded to, though, as Douglas points out (*ad loc.*), the reference could also be to the large *Lyde*, a work that Callimachus seems to have called "fat and not clear." (398Pfeiffer)

[192] Catullus 95.10 *at populus tumido gaudeat Antimacho.*

[193] On "fish in parchment paper," see Thomson 1997 *ad loc*.; on this and the large context of the materiality of poetry and poetry-books, Feeney 2012:33.

[194] Quintilian 10.1.53 *Contra in Antimacho vis et gravitas et minime vulgare eloquendi genus habet laudem. Sed quamvis ei secundas fere grammaticorum consensus deferat, et adfectibus et iucunditate et dispositione et omnino arte deficitur, ut plane manifesto appareat quanto sit aliud proximum esse, aliud secundum.*

In Cicero's story, by contrast, Antimachus is the picture of artistic independence, wholly liberated from the need to please, or even address, a public: "Plato alone" (*Plato…unus*) is enough for him, and makes up for the emptying out of the audience, for the comparative solitude of the speaking-space as the poet is "deserted" (*relictus*) by his hearers. Demosthenes could not have handled this kind of abandonment, and Brutus confesses that neither could he: "If I am abandoned by the circle of listeners (*tamen si a corona relictus sim*), I am quite unable to speak." As was the case with Antigenidas, there is a meaningful wordplay at work here: Brutus cannot speak if he loses his *corona* (Latin for the "ring" of people around a speaker), which contrasts with the case of Antimachus who, even when he loses his ring of spectators (*corona*) cannot lose his poetic voice or poetic success, which, in Latin, would also be his *corona*, the laurel crown celebrating a poet's renown,[195] hence the proleptic irony of Antimachus being called *clarus poeta*, a poet "famous" even when nobody listens to him.[196]

Nor are the Muses of the Antigenidas story very far to seek here: although Antimachus is satisfied with "Plato alone," there is a sense, in the *Brutus*, that, where Plato treads, the gods follow close behind. When discussing Greek style earlier in the dialogue, Cicero had fixed on Plato as history's single greatest prose-stylist: "Who," Cicero had asked, "is richer in composition

[195] Cf. Lucr. 1.119 *perenni fronde corona*.

[196] One could, perhaps, see the orator's audience-dependent *corona* (=ring of auditors) as contrasted with the poet's audience-autonomous *corona* (=garland), which needs only the poet and his muses, a possibility that lends increased resonance to the emphasis on garlands in Horace's *Odes* (on which, see Chapter 3 on the *Odes*, and Oliensis 1998:104).

that Plato? For, as the philosophers say, thus Jupiter would speak, if he were to speak Greek."[197] Conceiving of Jupiter as the Latin Plato is rather self-serving, in this context, insofar as Cicero is, in human terms, *actually* the Latin Plato, the philosopher's adaptor, translator, and, no doubt so Cicero thought, improver. Such an association is particularly relevant in a work such as the *Brutus*, which, as we have seen, sees Cicero's Platonic *De Re Publica* as at its causal origins. Does this, then, make Cicero into a kind of Jupiter, and, hence, ideal audience for any and all Latin speech?[198] Performing poetry for Plato alone is, at any rate, a performance for the gods, or for Plato as a kind of divine muse of ideal style.

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[197] Cic. *Brut*. 121 *Quis enim uberior in dicendo Platone? Iovem sic [ut] aiunt philosophi, si Graece loquatur, loqui.*

[198] Douglas (*ad loc.*) usefully compares with Plutarch's *Cic*. 24, which has Cicero claim that Jove would speak like Plato "if he were to make use of speech," (εἰ λόγῳ χρῆσθαι πέφυκεν), but the loss of the element of Greco-Latin translation should not go unnoticed, nor should the typically Hellenocentric implication of the idea ("to speak"="to speak Greek"). Similar is the version of Dion. Hal. *Dem*. 23 ἤδη δέ τινων ἤκουσα ἐγὼ λεγόντων, ὡς, εἰ καὶ παρὰ θεοῖς διάλεκτός ἐστιν, ᾗ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων κέχρηται γένος, οὐκ ἄλλως ὁ βασιλεὺς ὢν αὐτῶν διαλέγεται θεὸς ἢ ὡς Πλάτων, "I have even heard it said, that if the gods speak in the same language as men, the king of the gods can only speak in the language of Plato" (trans. Loeb). Here, the attribution to Cicero is lost, and the generalizing has gone even further: if gods spoke the same language as men, then the king of the gods must speak like Plato. For Cicero's other tributes to the Platonic style, see *De or*. 1.47, *Or*. 62.

Why poetry should have an independence denied to oratory is explained, Cicero goes on, by an analogy inspired by the earlier case, that of Antigenidas the flautist, and synthesizing it with that of Antimachus:

> Cicero: "Yes," I said, "that is inevitably the case. Thus, for example, if the wind instrument when blown upon (*tibiae inflatae*) does not respond with sound, the musician (*tibicen*) knows that the instrument must be discarded, and so in like manner the popular ear is for the orator a kind of instrument (*sic oratori populi aures tamquam tibiae sunt*); if it refuses to accept the breath blown into it…there is no use urging him (*agitandi finis faciendus est*)."[199]

The return to the flute-player (*tibicen*) had been aurally anticipated by Brutus' response to Cicero's question (***tibi*** *indi**cem***), and now allows a modification of the correspondences established by the Antigenidas proverb: the *populus* is the flute of the orator, and just as a flute-player can't make music out of a broken or absent flute or a harpist without a harp,[200] so an orator cannot make oratory out of a non-responsive audience, cannot make oratory at all without an audience as normally construed: human and present.

This is all well and good in principle, but what does it mean to articulate as a fundamental principle the orator's non-Platonic dependence on an audience, in the midst of a work that takes

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[199] Cicero, *Brut*. 192 *Ita se, inquam, res habet. ut, si tibiae inflatae non referant sonum, abiciendas eas sibi tibicen putet, sic oratori populi aures tamquam tibiae sunt; eae si inflatum non recipiunt aut si auditor omnino tamquam equus non facit, agitandi finis faciendus est.*

[200] Cic. *Brut*. 200 *intellegit oratorem in ea causa non adesse qui possit animis iudicum admovere orationem tamquam fidibus manum*.

as point of departure, and frequently reminds us, that oratory has, in Cicero's present world, and quite possibly in Roman worlds to come, no audience larger than those suggested by the stories of Antimachus, who sings only for Plato "as good as a hundred thousand," and of the flautist, whose frigid playing detained only Antigenidas and the Muses? The comparison of the audienceless orator to a frigid and fluteless musician was, indeed, one that Cicero had put into explicitly practical terms in a letter to Brutus: "Plainly, Brutus, I have already gone cold (*frigeo*); for the senate was my *instrument de musique* (*ὄργανον*), and it has already come apart."[201]

As we know, Cicero would soon regain his oratorical "heat," but the fact that Cicero did return to political oratory doesn't make his explorations of non-political oratory any less important. What, Cicero's text wants to know, is an orator without an audience to do? If oratory does not have an audience, then what, exactly, is it good for? Because the question of audience will always be connected with the question of public utility and social good, the first step in justifying an audienceless oratory is to make its value independent of ostensible social impact, at least as construed in traditional and quantitative forms. An opportunity for such a liberation (or autonomization, in the terms of Roman 2014), arises through the comparison of rhetoric to war, specifically, the triumphs of Julius Caesar:[202]

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[201] Cicero, *Ad fam*. 11.14.1 *plane iam, Brute, frigeo; ὄργανον enim erat meum senatus; id iam est dissolutum.*

[202] Douglas may be right in pointing to the fact that L. Crassus, “like Cicero, was refused a triumph for minor successes (*inv*. 2.3, *Pis*. 62, Ascon. P. 14 Cl.).” Earlier in the passage, Cicero had said that orators make the most useful commanders on minor campaigns, though admits that on large campaigns, having a general as leader would be more beneficial.

"'But the general is more *useful* (*prodest*) [than the orator]!' Who would deny it? And yes…I would rather have written one speech of Lucius Crassus on behalf of Marcus Curius than to have won two castle-taking triumphs. 'But it helped the state more to have taken the Ligurian castle than to have defended Marcus Curius' case!' Of course: but it also helped the Athenians more to have well-roofed homes than to have that most beautiful ivory statue (*signum ex ebore pulcherrimum*) of Minerva; and yet, even so, I would rather be Phidias than the best roof-tiler in town, and that's why we should weigh (*ponderandum est*) not only how much someone helps (*quantum quisque prosit*), but what kind of help they offer (*sed quanti quisque sit*)…[203]

Cicero would rather be an orator than a general, rather a sculptor than a roofer: the important point is that Phidias the sculptor is great (and, by analogic intimation, greater than Caesar), not because he was of the most help to the largest number of most Athenians, but because he created the most beautiful single thing (*pulcherrimum*), a statue (*signum*) of Minerva. The example is ideally chosen, both because Phidias is the prototypical *auteur*, but also because Minerva is the

[203] Cic. *Brut*. 256-7 '*at prodest plus imperator.' quis negat? sed tam en—non metuo ne mihi adclametis; est autem quod sentias dicendi liber locus—malim mihi L. Crassi unam pro M'. Curio dictionem quam castellanos triumphos duo. 'at plus interfuit rei publicae castellum capi Ligurum quam bene defendi causam M'.Curi'. [257] Credo; sed Atheniensium quoque plus interfuit firma tecta in domiciliis habere quam Minervae signum ex ebore pulcherrimum; tamen ego me Phidiam esse mallem quam vel optumum fabrum tignuarium. quare non quantum quisque prosit, sed quanti quisque sit ponderandum est; praesertim cum pauci pingere egregie possint aut fingere, operarii autem aut baiuli deesse non possint.*

ideal epitome of art, wisdom, philosophy, poetry, complexity (*daedala*), and elegance.[204] Oratory denies and surpasses the grandeur of the general, in this example, because of its quality, not its quantitative reach; because of its beauty, not its usefulness; because of what it is, not how many people it touches. The irony of this is, of course, that oratory ends up looking a great deal like the figures of Antimachus the poet and Antigenidas' flute-player. Perhaps it is no surprise that, when Valerius Maximus retails his own version of the Antigenidas fable, he combines it with a note about how Accius refused (an earlier) Caesar his due: when Caesar visited the *collegium poetarum*, Accius the poet did not, as was customary, rise in respect, "not," Valerius writes, "because he was forgetful of Caesar's majesty, but because he believed himself to be his superior in the comparison of their shared studies. Because of this, there was no crime of insolence, since it was contests of books, and not *imagines*, that were being waged."[205] Although Accius does not put his poetry above Caesar's social status, his insistence that everything be judged within its own sphere works, like the other stories, to give artistic genres their own autonomous spheres in

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[204] Minerva was, of course, famously armed as well, and Cicero's analogical use of Minerva as the triumphant inverse of Caesarian triumphs turns her *signa* (military standards) into *signa* (artistic symbols); for a useful combination of these two sides of Minerva, see Festus' definition: *Minerva dicta, quod bene moneat. Hanc enim pagani pro sapientiā ponebant; Cornificius vero, quod fingatur pingaturque minitans armis, eandem dictam putat*, Paul. ex Fest. p. 123 Müll.

[205] Val. Max. *Mem*. 3.7.11 *is Iulio Caesari amplissimo ac florentissimo uiro in conlegium poetarum uenienti numquam adsurrexit, non maiestatis eius inmemor, sed quod in conparatione communium studiorum aliquanto se superiorem esse confideret. quapropter insolentiae crimine caruit, quia ibi uoluminum, non imaginum certamina exercebantur.*

which they are to be weighed and valued, in such a way as to make them independent of, perhaps superior to, standard markers of utility, power, and social impact. They also suggest a story rather more at odds with itself than the "full-scale defeat of rhetoric" that has detected in this work: Cicero's "wrestling with the dilemma of the orator" never comes to any neat end.[206]

As a foundational foray into literary history, the *Brutus* as a whole is one of the possible forms that an audience-independent approach to oratory might take: if you cannot do oratory in the present, you can still immerse yourself in the oratory of the past; if you cannot deliver speeches, you can still write the history of speech. But even this oratorical history will not escape the heavy ironies of Cicero's structure, for, as the dialogue comes to its end, one of its speakers, Atticus, recalling Plato's shadow, accuses Cicero of employing the Socratic irony that one finds in the works of Plato, Xenophon, and Aeschines.[207] To justify this charge, Atticus adduces Cicero's apparent lack of sensible discrimination between orators of high and low quality, and Cicero's insistence on judging orators as "good" even if they were "good" only in relation to their own times. Such a process, Atticus implies, imperils the work's historical credibility: although such irony may have a place in philosophical works, "in a history (*sed in historia*), which has been your task throughout this exchange (*in omni sermone*), in expounding such a history of the kind and identity of orators, consider for yourself, I pray, whether such an irony would be as

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[206] *pace* Fox 2007:182; cf. 115-118.

[207] This Aeschines is Aeschines the Socratic, who wrote in dialogue form, on which, see Diog. Laert. 2.61, and Demetr. *De eloc*. 297. Douglas (*ad loc.*) finds the inclusion of Xenophon odd ("Socratic irony is not a feature of the Xenophontic Socrates"), but cf. post-Straussian reflections of David Johnson 2005.

reprehensible (*tam reprehendenda*) as in judicial testimony."[208] Indeed, Atticus goes on, irony, while not bad in itself, has its proper time and place, for the form of Cicero's disquisition would, Atticus says, "be a beautiful bit of irony, if we were joking around (*bella ironia si iocaremur*), but if were are speaking seriously (*sin adeveramus*), see to it that we are as scrupulous as we would be if were speaking under oath."[209] Irony, Cicero elsewhere explains, is what the Greeks call "dissimulation,"[210] close kin to the Greek verb for "stringing things together" (εἴρω), making and masking connections to make things appear as they are not, or disappear as they are. And although Cicero goes on to deny that there is irony in his choice of orators, or in his description of their parts and worth--"lest you consider me an *ironiste* [εἴρωνα]"[211]--and reemphasizes the seriousness of his purpose, he cannot help but conclude his apology with a final ironic twist:

> [Cicero]: Therefore, I should wish not to be thought an *ironiste* [εἴρωνα]--even if [Scipio] Africanus [Aemilianus] was quite an *ironiste* himself, as Gaius Fannius relates in his history.

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[208] Cic. *Brut*. 292 *sed in historia, qua tu es usus in omni sermone, cum qualis quisque orator fuisset exponeres, vide quaeso, inquit, ne tam reprehendenda sit ironia quam in testimonio.*

[209] Cicero, *Brut*. 293 *bella ironia, si iocaremur; sin adseveramus, vide ne religio nobis tam adhibenda sit quam si testimonium diceremus.*

[210] Cic. *Ac*. 2, 5, 15 *ea dissimulatio, quam Graeci* ειρωνείαν *vocant.*

[211] Cic. *Brut*. 298 *nec in hoc eirona me duxeris esse*. NB: although the word "*eirona*" is Greek, it is often printed in Latin letters; nevertheless, it has a recognizable Greek form (*pace* the earlier form used earlier by Atticus, *ironia*), which happens to be important to this context, on which, see below.

> [Atticus]: As you wish, but I wouldn't have thought such a quality shared by Africanus and Socrates to have been strange in *you*.
>
> [Brutus]: Let's talk about these things later: for now (he said, looking at me), will you unpack for us those ancient speeches that you mentioned?[212]

It is not that the historical irony in Atticus' charge is denied by the *Brutus*, but that *Brutus*' Brutus calls to defer the subject in favor of attention to "ancient speeches" (*orationes…veteres*); and, in the end, it is Cicero himself who, after denying his presentation's ironic purpose, decides to praise Aemilianus as, precisely, an ironist, which in turn leads Atticus to find this kind of irony wholly innate (lit. "not borrowed" or "foreign," *non alienum*) to Cicero's own sensibilities.[213]

The important point is that Cicero's *Brutus* wants to call attention to this kind of a problem, precisely in order to raise the issue of the work's genre, and motive. What, precisely, is this work for? Is its purpose to affirm an actual history of Roman orators, "who they were and of what kind?" Or is its purpose to create an ideal construct, a story truer than history, one that could serve to console losses all too personal (Hortensius) and all too political (the Republic)? It is also the problem posed by Plato's statue: is this a history that involves real people, or only ideal

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[212] Cic. *Brut*. 299-300 *quare eirona me, ne si Africanus quidem fuit, ut ait in historia sua C. Fannius, existumari velim. Ut voles, inquit Atticus. ego enim non alienum a te putabam quod et in Africano fuisset et in Socrate.* 300 *Tum Brutus: de isto postea; sed tu, inquit me intuens, orationes nobis veteres explicabis?*

[213] cf. Dugan 2005:208, “Cicero does not provide either a strong or detailed refutation of this accusation."

constructs of people as they might be, not orators as they were but as they might have been? In terms of Cicero's own hypotheticals, is the *Brutus* a work performed in a crowded theater of dead Roman orators, or in a theater empty save for the imagined muses, perhaps including the fictionalized Atticus and Brutus, that Cicero invokes?

The possibility that history can be presented, and generically undermined, by rhetorical or philosophical irony, is linked, as we have seen, to the possibility that oratory can be conceived as a solitary art, a possibility that becomes explicit as the work comes to its final close, where we are left, at last, in silence, far from the forum's madding crowd. For as Cicero's history comes to the speakers' own distressed time, a sense of defeat is not far to seek: "Thus the voice of Hortensius was extinguished by his death, mine by the Republic's."[214] The phrase's balance is beautiful and forlorn, leading Brutus to asks Cicero to speak "I pray you, more propitiously" (*melius, quaeso, ominare--Brut*. 328). Brutus' request provokes Cicero into launching the work's peroration, whose central image--keen, predictable, but no less sad for having been foreshadowed--gives only vague comfort to the work's reiterated anxieties:

> "But since we, Brutus, after the death of Hortensius, that illustrious orator, are left behind as the guardians of an orphan Oratory (*orbae eloquentiae quasi tutores relicti*), let us keep her on house arrest (*domi teneamus eam saeptam*), on bail [lit. "in free custody," *liberali custodia*], and let us keep away ignorant and presumptuous suitors, and let us protect her chastely as a full-grown virgin, and as far as we are able, protect her from lovers' advances."[215]

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[214] Cic. *Brut*. 328.

[215] Cic. *Brut*. 330 *Nos autem, Brute, quoniam post Hortensi clarissimi oratoris mortem orbae eloquentiae quasi tutores relicti sumus, domi teneamus eam saeptam liberali custodia et hos*

For Alain Gowing (2000:58), the domestication of *Eloquentia* suggests, along with the dialogue's general funereal context, the role played by *imagines*, "wax images" of a family's deceased, in the entry-chamber of aristocratic homes: now that "eloquence has gone mute" (*eloquentia obmutuit*) or, as Stroup handily translates (2003:129), preserving the *figura etymologica*, "Speech stopped speaking," all that one can have is the memory of the dead, the *laudatio funebris* that keeps alive its image in death. Sarah Stroup has built on this association to emphasize not only the figure's nostalgia, but also what she claims is Cicero's hope that, in the future, a textualized, rather than politicized, form of eloquence can be a "blueprint" and "strategy" for creating a new economy of oratorical circulation that, independent of the forum's chaos, can, in the context of "private, authoritative, and definitely *controllable* social exchange" "transcend the bounds of space and time."[216]

I agree with the broad strokes of this story--indeed, oratory *would* come to occupy an important role in the still public but less overtly political context of education and theatrical display. I am less certain, however, that this transformation of oratory into what Stroup calls "a moveable property" provides, after Eloquence's silence, for an "alternative venue for her voice." First, the closing image itself presents some sinister overtones that should militate against our sense that the close of this dialogue turns us to visions of an cheery post-political "new

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ignotos atque impudentis procos repudiemus tueamurque ut adultam virginem caste et ab amatorum impetu quantum possumus prohibeamus.

[216] Stroup 2003:137, 139-40. Stroup 2003 is essential reading on the question of Roman practices of literary personification more generally.

economy" of free textual circulation.[217] *Eloquentia* is not only being kept at home--she is under house arrest, "locked up, penned in, enclosed" (*saeptam*). She is being held there on bail (*liberali custodia*, lit. "free custody"), though for what past or future crime we are not made explicitly aware, although political upheaval of any kind tends to make all speech suspect, any *carmen* into *crimen et error*. A grown virgin (*adulta virgo*), she has been grounded so that she can be kept clean of low-life lovers until one greater man--with perhaps the future Brutus playing the role of Odysseus returned--espouse her and restore her to her blissful, public seat, the seat she had abandoned after the death of her parents, Hortensius and the Forum. But if Eloquence is locked up and unheard, then she closely resembles the music and poetry that, we already know, is supposed to be completely different from Eloquence, which is and must be played, we are repeatedly told, on its natural instruments, the organ of the senate, the flute of the body politic. To say otherwise, to insist on the benefits of enforced limitation and coerced enclosure, is to add a new kind of heart to this mystery, to make of eloquence something that it had not been: a solitary art.

Let us say, though, that we accept that this imprisonment, though outwardly paradoxical ("liberally locked up," *saeptam…liberali custodia*), is justified by its ends: still, there remains the question as to whether the result of this imprisonment will be, as Stroup imagined, the succession of the controlled, private, richness of an aristocratic textual community on the heels of oratory's rout from rostrum and *curio*. In part, this is, of course, right: instead of writing speeches, Cicero

[217] The comparison of oratory to a young woman is not unprecedented in Cicero's works, and Douglas *ad loc. Or*. 64, and *Ad fam*. 3.2.3 *tanta penuria est in omni vel honoris vel aetatis gradu ut tam orba civitas tales tutores complecti debeat*.

writes a dialogue with himself and his friends for characters; dedicates it to one of his friends; addresses it to one of those friends; and speaks directly, at a number of points about the circulation of oratorical texts for judgement and consideration among friends.

But the exchange is not as even as all that, nor the future as happily rosy, and the sad supplement of what remains can best be dramatized by looking to a letter that Cicero sent Atticus not long, it seems, after finishing the *Brutus*. Atticus had urged Cicero to write an assembly speech (*contio)* that Brutus might deliver as his own; Brutus, however, preferred his own material, in a way, Cicero explains, that is only natural.

> "Allow me to give you *une règle universelle* (καθολικὸν θεώρημα)…There has never been a poet or orator who has judged someone else better than himself. This applies even to bad ones, so what can you expect of Brutus, brilliant and learned? I experienced this personally, and recently, in the matter of the edict. I'd written it at your request: I liked mine, but Brutus liked his (*meum mihi placebat, illi suum*). Indeed, when I was led, more or less by his request, to write something for him about the best style of oratory, he wrote not only to me but also to you to say that he didn't agree with my preference. So please, I say, let every one write whatever he writes for himself (*sibi quemque scribere*): "His own bride for each man, and for me mine; his own love for each man, and for me mine ('*suam quoique sponsam, mihi meam; suum quoique amorem, mihi meum*.')[218]

[218] Cicero, *Ad att*. 14.20.3 *quod me hortaris ut scriptam contionem mittam, accipe a me, mi Attice,* καθολικὸν θεώρημα *earum rerum in quibus satis exercitati sumus. nemo umquam neque poeta neque orator fuit qui quemquam meliorem quam se arbitraretur. hoc etiam malis contingit; quid tu Bruto putas et ingenioso et erudito? de quo etiam experti sumus nuper in edicto. scripseram rogatu tuo. meum mihi placebat, illi suum. quin etiam cum ipsius precibus paene adductus scripsissem ad eum de optimo genere dicendi, non modo mihi sed etiam tibi*

Cicero is quoting from Atilius, a bad poet with good advice:[219] write for yourself, not for others; a text, like a woman, can only be married to one man, can only be loved by one man, at a time. But if Cicero's Atilian "universal rule" is right, if every man has his own bride and love, if Brutus himself will not share a bride and love with Cicero, then what hope is there for them to share, together, the charge of the shut-up virgin, Eloquence? One of the anxieties that the *Brutus* reflexively revisits is the possibility that this new oratory is one that can be shared, not only with fewer people, but, perhaps, with no people at all, save for Plato and the Muses. The dialogue's central purpose of turning oratory into history, and then its repeated ironic twist on history and dialogue as fictional forms, conspire to suggest an image of oratory as not only private but, also, solitary. This isn't what the dialogue says, but it's what this dialogue worries about from beginning to end. And for good reason: a year after Cicero pictured Eloquence as "an adult virgin," he would picture her as an "old maid" that was quickly approaching oblivion: "oratory is

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scripsit sibi illud quod mihi placeret non probari. qua re sine, quaeso, sibi quemque scribere. 'suam quoique sponsam, mihi meam; suum quoique amorem, mihi meum.'

[219] Cicero calls Atilius a *poeta durrisimus* (*Ad att*. 14.20.3) and, at *de Fin*. 1.2, Cicero calls him, regarding his translation of Sophocles' *Electra*, a *ferreus poeta*. The sense that *de amore non disputandum* is as old as Sappho, whose sixteenth fragment seems to begin: "Some think a troop of horses, other of infantry, others of ships, to be the best thing on the black earth: I say it is whatever one loves." (ο]ἰ μὲν ἰππήων στρότον οἰ δὲ πέσδων / οἰ δὲ νάων φαῖσ' ἐπ[ὶ] γᾶν μέλαι[ν]αν / ἔ]μμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὅτ- / [ ]τω τις ἔραται·)

aging, and, soon, will come to nothing."[220] There, in the *Tusculan Disputations*, the senescence of oratory marked the birth of Roman philosophy[221] (*philosophia nascatur Latinis*); here, in the *Brutus*, such a replacement is a spurned twinkle in Cicero's eyes, and one with which he would hardly happy.

By the end of the *Brutus,* we have the sense that the history of oratory will not solve the problem of oratory as Cicero had conceived it: Hortensius' death, the empty forum, and Plato's specter cause insurmountable difficulties to oratory as Cicero might have hoped it to be. In writing the *Brutus*, Cicero longs for what has already passed, and what, perhaps, never was; the *Brutus* is, as we have seen, too Platonic for in its own historic good. In some ways, the idealism and formalism of the *Orator*--its emphasis on the perfect, rather than historical, orator; its approach to rhetorical language as a formal, rather than historical or phenomenological, system of sounds and rhythm--constitute one way to construe oratory in such a way as to escape the paradox of social demands posed by the *Brutus*' terms. In the *Orator*, freed from the ostensible limitations of history, Cicero can describe his project, explicitly, as a work of artistic fiction (*fingendo*) and forming (*informabo*) of unrealized ideals (*qualis fortasse nemo fuit--7*). And just as the *Brutus* had been governed by the solitary statue of Plato (*propter Platonis statuam*--24) and the logic of Phidias' most beautiful, most useless, statue of Minerva (*signum ex ebore*

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[220] Cic. *Tusc. Disp*. 2.1.5 *Atque oratorum quidem laus ita ducta ab humili venit ad summum, ut iam, quod natura fert in omnibus fere rebus, senescat brevique tempore ad nihilum ventura videatur, philosophia nascatur Latinis quidem litteris ex his temporibus, eamque nos adiuvemus nosque ipsos redargui refellique patiamur.*

[221] Cic. *Tusc. Disp*. 2.1.

pulcherrimum--257), so too the *Orator* is governed by a most beautiful Platonic and Phidian statue of Cicero's own sculpting, as he declares (*statuo*)[222] the anti-mimetic Platonic credo that "there is nothing, of any kind, that is so beautiful that something more beautiful should not exist from which that beauty was copied (like the image of a face), the kind of beauty that can be grasped by neither eyes nor ears, but which we embrace only in thought (*cogitatione*) and imagination (*mente*)."[223] So, one-upping the *Brutus*' implicit comparison, Phidias' Minerva may be as beautiful and perfect a thing as we can imagine seeing with our eyes, but there is, Cicero affirms, a Minerva of even greater beauty that we, and Phidias, can only imagine (*cogitare*) and contemplate (*contemplabatur*) in our minds.

The embrace of Platonism in the *Orator* means, conceptually, leaving behind not only history, but, as well, the future. So, in the *Brutus*, Brutus can ask, "Will he ever exist, or does he already exist, that perfect orator whom you expect?" To which Cicero can respond: "I don't know

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[222] *Statuo* means both to erect an object and, by extension, to raise, or affirm, an idea.

[223] Cic. *Orator* 8-9 *Sed ego sic statuo, nihil esse in ullo genere tam pulchrum, quo non pulchrius id sit unde illud ut ex ore aliquo quasi imago exprimatur; quod neque oculis neque auribus neque ullo sensu percipi potest, cogitatione tantum et mente complectimur. Itaque et Phidiae simulacris, quibus nihil in illo genere perfectius videmus, et eis picturis quas nominavi cogitare tamen possumus pulchriora; [9] nec vero ille artifex cum faceret Iovis formam aut Minervae, contemplabatur aliquem e quo similitudinem duceret, sed ipsius in mente insidebat species pulchritudinis eximia quaedam, quam intuens in eaque defixus ad illius similitudinem artem et manum dirigebat.*

(*nescio*)."[224] But Cicero's passing historical skepticism in the *Brutus* becomes the starting point of the entire theoretical discussion of oratory in the later *Orator*:

> You will say, "There never was such a man (*nemo is…umquam fuit*)." I grant it (*Ne fuerit*); for I am arguing for my ideal, not what I have actually seen, and I return to the Platonic Idea (*Platonis…formam*) of which I had spoken; though we do not see it, still it is possible to grasp it with the mind (*animo*). For it is not an eloquent *person* whom I seek, nor anything subject to death and decay (*quicquam mortale et caducum*), but that absolute quality, the possession of which makes a man eloquent. And this is nothing but abstract eloquence (*ipsa eloquentia*), which we can behold only with the mind's eye (*mentis oculis videre*).[225]

What Cicero seeks in the *Orator* is not a person, but the idea of a person; the oratory we are intested in here is, at last, nothing other than oratory itself (*nihil est aliud nisi eloquentia ipsa*), a Platonic tautology whose self-directedness challenges the dream of an oratorical, political, or even textual community that so many have seen in Cicero's late works. Cicero allows none of the forms of community that he canvasses to go untouched by the threats leveled by the series of silences he explores--the silence of Hortensius, of the forum, and of Cicero himself (*me tacente*--

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[224] Cicero, *Brutus* 162 *Erit, inquit [M.] Brutus, aut iam est iste quem exspectas? Nescio, inquam.*

[225] trans. Hendrickson, Cic. *Orat*. 100-101 *Nemo is, inquies, umquam fuit. Ne fuerit.* 101 *Ego enim quid desiderem, non quid viderim disputo redeoque ad illam Platonis de qua dixeram rei formam et speciem, quam etsi non cernimus, tamen animo tenere possumus. Non enim eloquentem quaero neque quicquam mortale et caducum, sed illud ipsum, cuius qui sit compos, sit eloquens; quod nihil est aliud nisi eloquentia ipsa, quam nullis nisi mentis oculis videre possumus.*

Brut. 330). This does not mean that these dreams are not real, but those dreams' importance to Cicero does not, on the other hand, efface Cicero's very real, very solitary, anxieties. As Atticus puts it: *haec germana ironia est*, "all of this is genuine irony," (*Brut*. 296) or, to read Atticus' judgement in Cicero's terms, *haec germana dissimulatio est*, "all of this has been a true deception."[226]

Cicero's *Brutus*, as we have seen, wrestles with what it might mean to conceive of oratory as an art increasingly private and, in the last instance, solitary, but although its focus was on oratory and oratory's public function, it began from a much more intimate pain: the loss of a friend (*amico amisso*). Had it taken a different turn, the *Brutus* itself might have explored, not the history of oratory that goes down to the lives of Cicero and his dead friend, but, instead, the very idea of friendship itself, and what it means to lose a friend to death. It was a theme that Cicero would return to two years later, after, as we have seen, a series of personal misfortunes. For, in the year following the authorship of the *Brutus*, Cicero, as we have seen, suffered the death of his daughter Tullia, and, in lonely Astura, developed a complex language of solitude to describe both his personal and political grief. In the year following that death, some time in early 44 BCE, Cicero would take up the thread that the *Brutus*' opening had left hanging, and in such a way as to tighten the paradox of society and solitude posed by the *Brutus*' relationship to oratory.

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[226] *Germanus* was a favorite Ciceronian word. It is used for similaryl paradoxical effect (and given a splash of subtle *figura etymologia*) when Cicero is describing how he has two *patria*, Rome and Arpinum, the latter of which he describes as the *germana patria* of himself and his brother": Cic. *Leg*. 2.3 [re: Arpinum] *Quia, si uerum dicimus, haec est mea et huius fratris mei germana patria.*

For the question of Cicero's essay on friendship, the *De Amicitia*, will be, "What does friendship mean after the death of the friend? Is there such a thing as friendless friendship?" It is to that question, and that text, that we now turn.

IV. *De Amicitia*: "How do you say 'friendship' without "friend?"

> "The range of *amicitia* is vast. From the constant intimacy and goodwill of virtuous or at least of like-minded men to the courtesy that etiquette normally enjoined on gentlemen, it covers every degree of genuinely or overtly amicable relation." (Brunt 1988:381)

Amicitia, the term we usually translate into English as "friendship," could mean a great many things in classical Rome, from political alliance to social obligation, from the patronage of individuals to the clientship of nations,[227] and from the involuntary adhesion of one plant to another (say, a vine to an elm)[228] to the elective affinities of personal affection, or, as we would put it, friendship. In the late Republic, it was a mechanism that was not only *under* threat, but one that was itself a form of threat to the traditional social order: as Laelius puts the question to Gaius Blossius, who had said he would do anything on behalf of his friend, the late Republic agitator Tiberius Gracchus: "[You would do anything?] Even if he should want you to put fire to the Capitol?"[229] These were very real questions in Cicero's day. As Thomas Habinek has reminded us, even the "inward turn" of Cicero's friendship serves very particular goals of

[227] On which, see Gruen 1986:54-95 and Brunt 1988:382-442.

[228] cf. Pliny, *NH* 16.17.29.

[229] *Lael*. 37 *Etiamne si te in Capitolium faces ferre vellet*?

Cicero's political platform: by calling on the friend "to resist, rather than to anticipate, the *existimatio* of society," by insisting that a true friend must engage in active, and candid, criticism of his friend's actions, Cicero's essay assumes, and predisposes readers to assume, the existence, as Habinek puts it, of "an abstract standard of virtue" that prioritizes an idea (say, the Republic) ahead of the duties one might feel *amicitia*-bound to perform on behalf of a particular, living friend (say, a Gracchus, a Caesar, or an Antonius).[230] *Amicitia* was a political problem of the first order, and getting it right was, for Cicero, a crucial part of restoring what he took to be traditional, and virtuous, social order.

But *amicitia* was also, as Cicero's work makes clear, not all about gain, profit, and power, and, between those scholars who see *amicitia* as primarily a formal system of socio-political obligations[231] and those who see it applying to relations of greater intimacy,[232] Peter Brunt's definition is the standard-bearer for more capacious, friendship-friendly, historians and critics.[233] It is not, however, capacious enough for the wide semantic swings of *amicitia* in Cicero's *On Friendship*, for, in this treatise, written in late 44 BCE, *amicitia* comes to extend, in strange eruptions from the text's ostensible philosophical and political purposes, not only to genuine and amicable relations with others, but to a genuine and amicable relationship with one's own self--Cicero's *On Friendship*, that is, admits, even if through a backdoor, the possibility of friendship

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[230] Habinek 1990.

[231] i.e. Syme 1939:157, Taylor 1949:7-8, Peachin 2001:7.

[232] i.e. Konstan 1997, Brunt 1988:351-381.

[233] Baraz 2012:152 rightly sees a more "inclusive model" as more productive for the study of Roman society, and the *De Amicitia*.

without friends. As Eleanor Leach has emphasized, the *De Amicitia* is driven by *memoria* (memory) and *desiderium* (human longing), or, as Leach phrases it, "absence and desire," and it constantly skirts the edges of the Africanus problem: what does it mean someone to be "alone in seclusion" (*solus in secreto*), to be happy, sometimes, perhaps often or always, "to speak with himself" (*secum loqui*) and not others?

The work's tangled opening lays the groundwork for a conception of friendship as a non-social phenomenon, as the product of memory (*memoria*) and human longing (*desiderium*) that, sprung from a love of human virtue (but not necessarily humans themselves), can be enacted by and for oneself: or, as Scipio put it, one can be least alone when most alone.[234]

> *Q. Mucius augur multa narrare de C. Laelio socero suo memoriter et iucunde solebat…*
>
> "Quintus Mucius [Scaevola] Augur used often to speak from memory and with joy about Gaius Laelius his father-in-law…"

We are, we recall, in late 44 BCE, and Cicero, now 62, is writing this treatise "On Friendship" for his dear friend Atticus (also around 65 years old) a treatise based on a discourse that Cicero, in his own late teens (in 89 BCE), had heard the octogenarian Scaevola recount about an extended discourse on friendship that Scaevola himself had, in his own middle age (40 years old,

[234] Leach has called it a "Chinese box introduction" that "highlights the deliberateness with which Cicero has fixed the moment of his dialogue." (Leach 1993:5) Baraz 2012:198-204 addresses *De Amicitia* and its preface, but skips over the first paragraph, beginning its analysis with *Lael*. 2-3.

in 129 BCE), heard his father-in-law Laelius (then in his old age) give regarding his own friendship with the recently deceased Publius Scipio. Cicero admits that the transmission has not been flawless. Scaevola, Cicero writes, "related to us the conversation about friendship that Laelius had had with him (*exposuit nobis sermonem Laeli de amicitia habitum ab illo secum…*) and with his other son-in-law Gaius Fannius, Marcus' son, a few days after the death of Africanus," and we have, there, the title of Cicero's work: *sermonem Laeli de amicitia.* All of this had to be done by memory, of course, because Romans, including orators, could be less than assiduous, especially in the republic's earlier days, in writing things down, which had posed a problem for Cicero when he set out to write the history of Roman oratory (*Brut*. 91ff.). Laelius was a writer (and one whose oratorical style meant that his force was undiminished when read instead of heard—Cic. *Brut*. 94), but Scaevola, rather than seeking actively to spread his learning to students and readers, seems to have been a teacher-by-request, as Cicero explains in the *Brutus*, "But I [Cicero] gave my self over to the study of civil law under Quintus Scaevola, the son of Publius, who, although he did not give himself over to teaching, nevertheless, by responding to questioners, taught those who were eager to listen."[235] (Cic. *Brut*. 306)

But Cicero also tells us that, although he did make a repeated effort to "commend to my memory his sayings" (*dicta memoriae mandabam--De amic*. 1), he, in fact, only set down in his memory "the main points of discussion" (*eiue disputationis sententias*), which Cicero has, he writes, "in this book related in my own fashion (*sententias…quas in hoc libro exposui arbitratu*

[235] Cic. *Brut*. 306 *Ego autem iuris civilis studio multum operae dabam Q. Scaevolae P. f., qui quamquam nemini <se> ad docendum dabat, tamen consulentibus respondendo studiosos audiendi docebat.*

meo--De amic. 3). There are, then, two *Laelii de Amicitia* posited by Cicero's preface: that of Laelius and his faithful repetition of Scaevola's discourse; and, and a second (or, third) degree of remove, that of Cicero "in his own fashion." Cicero's *Laelius on Friendship* is, it turns out, an adaptation of Laelius/Scaevola's *Laelius on Friendship*, which is why it is not otiose for Cicero to dwell on his decision to keep Laelius as this work's primary speaker:

> "Thus, since we've learned from our ancestors that the friendship of Gaius Laelius and Publius Scipio was extremely noteworthy, the persona of Laelius seemed to me appropriate for presenting those ideas about friendship that Scaevola had recalled being treated by Laelius himself." (*Am*. 4)[236]

Clearly, putting one's own words into somebody else's mouth might merit an explanation, and Cicero had done just that in his preface to the close cousin to *Laelius on Friendship*, the *Cato on Old Age* published earlier in 44 BCE, before the Ides of March.

> "The entire conversation I have attributed (*tribuimus*)…to Marcus Cato, so that the speech will have greater authority; and I represent (*facimus*) Laelius and Scipio with him at his house, in awe that Cato bears old age so lightly, and I represent him responding to them; and if he seems to dispute rather more bookishly (*eruditius*) than he used to in his books, let it be attributed to the Greek literature, of which, it is know, he

[236] *sic cum accepissemus a patribus maxime memorabilem C. Laeli et P. Scipionis familiaritatem fuisse, idonea mihi Laeli persona visa est quae de amicitia ea ipsa dissereret quae disputata ab eo meminisset Scaevola.*

was studious in his old age. But why should I say more? From now on, the conversation of Cato will unfold all of my thinking about old age (*omnem de senectute sententiam*)."[237]

In that earlier work, Cicero made no bones about "Cato" being a mouthpiece for his own ideas, brought on merely, and openly, for the sake of adding "authority" (*auctoritas*) to what Cicero has written.[238] There is a sense in which using the figure of "Cato" helps give the admittedly fictional nature of Cicero's discourse a patina of history, and historical authority: even if we know that Cato did not say what Cicero has him say, imagining Cato saying it brings the discourse more directly in line with the Roman historical and political imagination. In *Laelius on Friendship*, the case is more ambiguous: the "ideas" (*sententiae*) are supposedly those of Laelius as transmitted by Scaevola, but, because Cicero only took down the "ideas" of the original *Laelius on Friendship*, what we get is Cicero's *Laelius on Friendship*. And Cicero's "fashion," we

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[237] Cic. *Sen.* 3 *omnem autem sermonem tribuimus non Tithono ut Aristo Cius (parum enim esset auctoritatis in fabula), sed M. Catoni seni, quo maiorem auctoritatem haberet oratio; apud quem Laelium et Scipionem facimus admirantes quod is tam facile senectutem ferat, eisque eum respondentem. qui si eruditius videbitur disputare quam consuevit ipse in suis libris, attribuito litteris Graecis quarum constat eum perstudiosum fuisse in senectute. sed quid opus est plura? iam enim ipsius Catonis sermo explicabit nostram omnem de senectute sententiam.*

[238] Gildenhard separates treatises like *Cato Maior*, *Laelius de Amicitia*, the *De oratore* and the *De re publica*, set in a venerable ancient past among characters with traditional authority, from those, like the *Tusculan Disputation*, that feature anonymous, docile, or weak interlocutors: "In Rome," Gildenhard sums up, "it mattered who was speaking." (Gildenhard 2007:22)

discover, entails, in this dialogue, a particularly direct form of dramatic presence that he embodies here more directly than he had previously done:

> "I have led them on to stage as if they themselves were speaking, so that no "I said" and "he said" should frequently be interposed, and so that it should seem as though this conversation were in fact held face-to-face (*ut tamquam a praesentibus coram*) with those present."[239]

There is a great deal in the *quasi* and the *tamquam*, these various expression for "as if": though these figures are not with us, this dialogue form makes it more possible to feel *as if* they were there before us, having conversations before us, with us, and, perhaps, for us. The absent presence of these figures is the conceit of fiction and drama, but one of the questions that Cicero's essay explores is whether this face-to-face seeming (*coram…videretur*) is also a powerful kind of being. This is, as Laelius puts it later in the dialogue, the work's "harder" point to grasp:

> "He who beholds a true friend, it is as if (*tamquam*) he beholds a kind of image of himself (*exemplar aliquod…sui*); so that those who are not here, *are* here; those empty-handed, have much; the weak are strong, and, what is more difficult to say, the dead live—so much do friends' honor, memory, and longing follow them (*tantus eos honos, memoria, desiderium, prosequitur amicorum*)."[240]

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[239] Cic. *Lael*. 3 *quasi enim ipsos induxi loquentes, ne 'inquam' et 'inquit' saepius interponeretur, atque ut tamquam a praesentibus coram haberi sermo videretur.*

[240] Cic. *Lael*. 23 *Verum enim amicum qui intuetur, tamquam exemplar aliquod intuetur sui. Quocirca et absentes adsunt et egentes abundant et imbecilli valent et, quod difficilius dictu est, mortui vivunt—tantus eos honos, memoria, desiderium, prosequitur amicorum*.

Partially, this is related to a belief that the life of the soul survives that of the body: "I do not agree," says Laelius, "with those who have recently begun to teach that souls die together with bodies, and that everything is effaced by death."[241] In the *De Senectute*, Cato had considered belief in the immortality of the soul to be, even if a fiction, a useful fiction that he would not want to lose: "If in this I err," said Cicero's Cato, "I gladly err and do not want this error, in which I delight, to be torn away from me (*extorqueri*) while I live."[242] Or, as Cicero had said in his own voice, "I prefer to err with Plato than to think true things with *them*." Here, too, there is some doubt about man's future being: if there is a life after death, Scipio is among the blessed (and experiencing all the joys of which he had premonitions in his vision of his grandfather Scipio Africanus in Cicero's *De re publica*), and if there is not, then Scipio feels nothing at all, and there is no reason to be sad on his behalf.

Far more important than the continued reality of the life of the dead person, is the continued reality of our memory of, and longing for, that person's life. Those two actions—memory and desire—help us not only to know what is good, but also what is good within us, for, beholding the true friend, you see, Laelius says, an *exemplar*, an ideal image, of yourself; or, as

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[241] *Lael*. 13 *Neque enim assentior eis qui haec nuper disserere coeperunt, cum corporibus simul animos interire atque omnia morte deleri*.

[242] Cic. *Cat*. 85 *Quod si in hoc erro, qui animos hominum immortalis esse credam, libenter erro nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo…*

Cicero had put it in the last line of the preface's dedication to Atticus, "Reading all of this discussion of Laelius about friendship, you will recognize *yourself*."[243]

But we must return to Quintus Mucius Scaevola the Augur, who supposedly related this discourse to Cicero. Cicero had been personally introduced to this Scaevola by his father, he writes, when he had reached the age of maturity (*sumpta virili toga*), and had been instructed never to leave the old man's side (*a senis latere numquam discederem—Lael*. 1). Cicero learned a great deal from him, including the discourse we are about to hear, but before we get to that, Cicero sidetracks: Scaevola died, at which point (*quo morte*) Cicero took himself over to another Scaevola, the *Pontifex* (priest), "who excelled all of our city in genius and in justice…but of him, another time (*sed de hoc alias*)—now, I return to [Scaevola] the Augur (*nunc redeo ad augurem—Lael*. 1)." This aside serves many possible functions: it is proof of Cicero's urbanity (he knows lots of important people, and studied under at least two Scaevolae); it advertises some future work of Cicero's that will focus on Scaevola the Pontifex; and, to paraphrase Habinek's comment on the essay's more general emphasis on scholarly transmission, it shows that Cicero's work "adheres to Roman, as opposed to Greek, standards of discourse," thus lending homegrown, traditional, and elite credentials to a subject that could otherwise be dismissed as too abstractly philosophical. But given what is to come it does more than this, for it gives one model, a very traditional Roman model, for transmission of friendship: when one person dies, you just move on to another member of that family. The glide is fast and easy: *quo morte me…contuli*, "at his death I betook myself" from one Scaevola to the next: nothing could be

[243] *Lael*. 5 *ab his sermo oritur, respondet Laelius, cuius tota disputatio est de amicitia; quam legens te ipse cognosces*.

smoother than this act of moving on. But is substitution really that easy? When someone important to you dies, is it really so very easy to move on?[244]

Many readers have detected "dark shadows" overhanging this work's bright pictures of ideal friendship: the strange circumstances of Scipio's death (possibly assassination), the references to high-profile ruptures of friendship and political alliance in more recent years (Publius Sulpicius and Quintus Pompeius, in 88 BCE), the assumption, throughout the practical portions of the treatise, that friendships, though ideally eternal, do not, in this our vulgar world, last forever.[245] Lorraine Smith Pangle has argued that the incoherence that she has detected in Laelius' argumentation—real friendships is not the result of need, but friendship is among the greatest of things, and the greatest of things in Laelius' life are political, therefore friendship must entail political activity (i.e. helping one's friend, and hindering that friend's enemies), therefore real friendship involves mutual assistance and, hence, need—that this incoherence is an indication that "Laelius does not fully understand his own heart."[246] For Pangle, this serves to emphasize the superiority of Scipio Aemilianus himself, as represented in *De Re Publica*, to Laelius, in that Scipio's position seems more consistent in that he "finds friendship less essential, and is more inclined to stress the pleasures of communing with himself."[247] Yet, while it is true

[244] On the structural uses of substitutability in the opening of Cicero's *Cato de Senectute*, see Baraz 2012:175.

[245] The dark shadows cast by socio-historical conditions are the subject of Leach 1993, Pangle 2008:105-122.

[246] Pangle 2008:117-119.

[247] Cic. *Rep*. 6.15-16.

that Laelius' position is not philosophically consistent, neither, it should be emphasized, is Scipio's in the *De Re Publica*: both the beginning and end of that dialogue draw attention to the paradox involved in simultaneously taking a star's-eye view of the universe—Scipio inhabits but a *punctum* of miniscule space and Rome's, and Scipio's, glory can spread only to a small fragment of the world's population—and emphasizing that there is nothing sweeter, better, or more essential to one's worldly and eternal glory than working on behalf of that very same, all-too-miniscule, Rome. As Scipio Aemilianus puts the problem at the beginning of his discourse in the *Republic*:

> "And what can one consider excellent in human affairs, who has beheld this kingdom of the gods; or long-lasting, who has understood what is eternal; or glorious, who has seen how small is the earth, firstly, as a whole, then, that part of it that humans inhabit, and whatever part of it we have for ourselves, as unknown as one can be to the majority of nations—can we have any hope, then, that our name should fly and wander widely?"[248]

Cicero owes his formulation here to Plato's *Republic*, and, in particular, what is known as the "Allegory of the Cave"—"Do not be surprised," Socrates says, "that those who have arrived here [to the heights of light and knowledge] have no desire to engage (πράττειν) in human affairs, but

[248] Cic. *De Rep*. 1.26 *quid porro aut praeclarum putet in rebus humanis, qui haec deorum regna perspexerit, aut diuturnum, qui cognoverit quid sit aeternum, aut gloriosum, qui viderit quam parva sit terra, primum universa, deinde ea pars eius quam homines incolant, quamque nos in exigua eius parte adfixi, plurimis ignotissimi gentibus, speremus tamen nostrum nomen volitare et vagari latissime?*

their souls always feel the desire to go higher (ἄνω)."[249] The paradoxes of Laelius' speech are not to be wholly ascribed, then, to this lesser survivor's inability to think like a proper philosopher (though that may, indeed, be intended as an aspect of his characterization), but are evident because this essay ruptures and slips reflect its inheritance of an ancient quarrel that has no honest end—between the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*, between Plato's ghost and Aristotle's skeleton.

Is it best, then, to act or to contemplate? In Laelius' discourse, this is a constant tension, visible in his anxious oscillations between his declarations that he is speaking to perfect and not to vulgar friendships, and his insistence, contrariwise, that he is speaking to friendships as they are found in the world and not as they are found in the philosopher's realms.[250] The closer you move to the philosophers' friendship, the less one needs friends to bring it into being. Cicero is

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[249] Plato, *Rep*. 517c *ἴθι τοίνυν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, καὶ τόδε συνοιήθητι καὶ μὴ θαυμάσῃς ὅτι οἱ ἐνταῦθα ἐλθόντες οὐκ ἐθέλουσιν τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πράττειν, ἀλλ' ἄνω ἀεὶ ἐπείγονται αὐτῶν αἱ ψυχαὶ διατρίβειν.* As a problem in Latin literature, the *locus classicus* is the question that Virgil's Aeneas puts to the shade of his father Anchises in the underworld, *Aen*. 6.719-21 *o pater, anne aliquas ad caelum hinc ire putandum est / sublimis animas iterumque ad tarda reverti* / *corpora? quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido?*

[250] Recall Cicero's jab at Cato the Younger: "He spoke as though he lived in the Republic of Plato rather than in the sewer of Romulus" (*dicit enim tamquam in Platonis πολιτείᾳ, non tamquam in Romuli faece, sententiam—Ad att*. 2.1.8). This is an aspect of the rebuke level by Cicero the practical skeptic against Cato the rigid Stoic, on which, see Cicero, *Pro Mur*. 61-66, Plutarch's record of Cato's response (*Cato the Younger* 21.5).

innovative in making this paradox so important an aspect of his work's structure, but he did not invent it, and its broad outlines are already represented, as so often, in the works of Aristotle. "Whatsover is delighted by solitude is either a wild beast or a god," wrote Aristotle, for, as is well known, the human is a political animal, and the solitary (i.e. non-political) person is, therefore, inhuman.[251] Yet, as so often, Aristotle's position is not quite so simple, and the odd structure of the *Nicomachean Ethics* shows how. For nine of its ten books, that treatise upholds the primacy of social virtues and the ultimate excellence of what the Romans would come to call the *vita activa*, the life of political and social action; the eighth and ninth books represent the culmination of this social trajectory by turning to "friendship" (φιλία) as the necessary (and, in argumentative, final) condition for happy flourishing (εὐδαιμονία).

But this emphasis on friendship as a necessary condition for flourishing doesn't necessarily sit naturally with Aristotle's commitment to self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια): if a man of true excellence (καλὸς κἀγαθός) is complete in and of himself, what need could he have of friendship? Aristotle manages to heighten the paradox by underlining that one of the most notable differences between the good and the bad man is that "the good man desires his own company (συνδιάγειν τε ὁ τοιοῦτος ἑαυτῷ βούλεται); for he enjoys being by himself, since he has agreeable memories of the past, and good hopes for the future, which are pleasant too; also his mind is stored with subjects for contemplation,"[252] whereas "bad men constantly seek the

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[251] Aristotle, *Politics* 1.2, 1253a; trans. Francis Bacon, *On Friendship.*

[252] Arist. *Nic. Eth*. 1166a24-6 *συνδιάγειν τε ὁ τοιοῦτος ἑαυτῷ βούλεται· ἡδέως γὰρ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ· τῶν τε γὰρ πεπραγμένων ἐπιτερπεῖς αἱ μνῆμαι, καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἐλπίδες ἀγαθαί, αἱ τοιαῦται δ' ἡδεῖαι.*

society of others and shun their own company..."[253] Bad men shun solitude, then, and good men adore it—Aristotle does try and solve it, but decides to leave for later the important question of whether a man can be a friend to himself (πρὸς αὐτὸν δὲ πότερον ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστι φιλία, ἀφείσθω ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος): "there would seem to be friendship as long as there are two or more, from what went before, and because the extreme case of friendship is equated to that which one has for oneself."[254]

Cicero's *De Amicitia* supplements Aristotle's treatment of friendship by setting his account of friendship as, dramatically, posterior to the friend's life, and, conceptually, independent of the friend's existence, and much of this has to do with what has been seen to be the work's political agenda: setting up *virtus*, capitalized and hypostacized "Virtue," as a bulwark against the risk that *amicitia* might lead the Roman republic itself straight off the rails. For Cicero's essay overplays its hand, and the introduction of an abstract value as obligatory personal check on social obligation, generates argumentative excesses that, even they do not "deconstruct" the discourse of Roman friendship, do, as Eleanor Leach has shown, make clear the tensions

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[253] Arist. *Nic. Eth*. 1166b13-14 *ζητοῦσί τε οἱ μοχθηροὶ μεθ' ὧν συνημερεύσουσιν, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ φεύγουσιν.*

[254] Arist. Nic. Eth. 1166a33-1166b2 *πρὸς αὐτὸν δὲ πότερον ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστι φιλία, ἀφείσθω ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος· δόξειε δ' ἀνταύτη εἶναι φιλία, ᾗ ἐστὶ δύο ἢ πλείω, ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων, καὶ ὅτι ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς φιλίας τῇ πρὸς αὑτὸν ὁμοιοῦται.* One suspects that it was, in part, the remainder of this discussion and the differal of this paradox that helped drive the turn towards philosophical contemplation, and opposed to practicla action, in the tenth and final book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

involved in "the structure and consistency of Cicero's argument."[255] For *De Amicitia* could have been, with justice, called the *De Amicitia Virtuteque*, "Of Friendship and Virtue," a possibility adumbrated by the work's last sentence--"And so I exhort you," the work concludes, "Espouse virtue (*virtutem locetis*), without which friendship cannot exist, as if, virtue excepted, you thought nothing than friendship fairer."[256] The power of friendship (*vis amicitiae*) in this essay is one of contraction: "From the infinite society of human kind…this thing is so contracted (*ita contracta res est*) and so led down into narrow spaces (*adducta in angustum*), that every relationship of kindness (*caritas*) comes together either between two or between very few people."[257] As we will see, however, the question, and an anxious one at that, is whether this contraction can proceed even further—from the few to the two to the solitary person alone with his memories, images, and fictions.

Whenever the question is put explicitly, of course, Cicero's answer is, unequivocally, no: "Who can have a 'livable life,' (*vita vitalis*) as Ennius says, who does not take joy in the reciprocal kindness of a friend (*amici mutua benevolentia*)?"[258] So far, the point is clear: that life

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[255] Leach 1993:4.

[256] Cic. *De amic*. 104 *Vos autem hortor ut ita virtutem locetis, sine qua amicitia esse non potest, ut ea excepta nihil amicitia praestabilius putetis.*

[257] *Lael*. 20 *Quanta autem vis amicitiae sit, ex hoc intellegi maxime potest, quod ex infinita societate generis humani, quam conciliavit ipsa natura, ita contracta res est et adducta in angustum ut omnis caritas aut inter duos aut inter paucos iungeretur.*

[258] *Lael*. 22 *Principio qui potest esse vita 'vitalis', ut ait Ennius, quae non in amici mutua benevolentia conquiescit?*

is not life that is not shared with others, and to live alone, is not to live at all. But Laelius goes on: "What is sweeter than to have someone with whom you can dare to discuss everything, *as if with yourself* (*sic loqui ut tecum*)?"[259] And Laelius' arguments, of course, militate against repeatedly this against the possibility of an *amicitia* as a "solitary virtue" (*solitaria virtus—Lael*. 83): "They would seem to take the sun from the world, those who take friendship away from life, than which we have, of the immortal gods, nothing better, nothing happier."[260] We need friendship not only for social, economic, or political gain, but because, as the etymology *amicitia>amor* (i.e. "amiable>amorous") suggests (*Lael*. 26), there is an essential human need to love and be loved: "What is so absurd as to delight in inanimate things—like honor, glory, building, clothing, bodily ornament—and not to delight in the spirit endowed with virtue, in that which one can love (*amare*) and, if I may (*ut ita dicam*), be loved back (*redamare*)?"[261] Besides, virtue itself cannot be achieved, Laelius says, without friendship: "Friendship has been given to us by nature to be the helpmate of virtues, not the companion of vices, so that, since virtue, when

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[259] *Lael*. 22 *Quid dulcius quam habere quicum omnia audeas sic loqui ut tecum?*

[260] *Lael*. 47 *Solem enim e mundo tollere videntur, qui amicitiam e vita tollunt, qua nihil a dis inmortalibus melius habemus, nihil iucundius.* There is possibly a linguistic irony involved in saying that the person who has no friends (i.e. is *solus*) takes away the sun *solem*) from the world.

[261] *Lael*. 49; *redamare* seems to be a neologism (hence, Laelius' *ut ita dicam*), translating the Greek *ἀντιφιλεῖν,* for which, see Plato *Ly*. 212d; Theoc. 12.16, 23.6; Aristotle *NE* 1157b30. *Amare/Redamare* is brought forth, this time without the neologism, by Laelius at his speech's end as *quos diligamus et a quibus diligamur* (*Lael*. 102).

solitary, cannot reach the its highest degree of excellence, but conjoined and associated with another, can." *Societas*, "society," he concludes, is a necessary condition of the "blessed life" (*beata vita—Lael*. 84).

Friendship is, Cicero claims, ubiquitous, and insinuates itself, imperceptibly, perhaps, but inevitably, (*serpit—Lael* 87) into everyone's life, even into the lives of those who, like Timon of Athens, "flee and hate the society (*congressus*) of other"— even the misanthrope need someone to whom, at the very least, he can "spew hatred's poison" (*evomat virus acerbitatis—Lael*. 87). Indeed, Cicero concludes, "Nature loves nothing solitary, and always leans against some kind of prop (*semperque ad aliquod tamquam adminiculum adnititur—Lael*. 88). Cicero helps illustrate the point with two thought-experiments, the first his own, the second derived from the long-lived fourth-century BCE Pythagorean polymath, Archytas of Tarentum. As we will see, both serve his purpose well, but also lead back into what Leach has called "a self-undermining strain of argument that runs through the discourse." The two experiments are roughly equivalent, and complementary:

1. "If some god were to remove us from the hustle-bustle (*ex frequentia*) of people and relocate us somewhere in a place of solitude (*solitudine*), and were to supply us, there, with an abundant supply of all those things that nature requires (*quas natura desiderat*), but were also to take away the possibility of seeing any human at all (*hominis omnino aspiciendi potestatem eriperet*)—who would be so iron-hearted as to bear that life, or from whom solitude (*solitudo*) would not remove the enjoyment of all pleasures (*fructum voluptatum omnium*)?" (*Lael*. 87)

2. "If someone were to ascend to heaven, and there perceive the nature of the world and the beauty of the stars, all of his wonder (*admirationem*) would be pleasureless (*insuavem*); but it would be most joyful (*iucundissima*) if he had someone to whom he might describe it (*si aliquem cui narraret habuisset*)." (*Lael*. 88)[262]

The two stories are not the same, and the example drawn from Archytas is not included, as has been suggested, only in order to get another Greek philosopher into Cicero's works-cited.[263] Whereas the first thought experiment focuses on human needs (*quas natura desiderat*), the second focuses on the higher, contemplative joys (*iucundissima*) that transcend necessity. Agains, the first example focuses on the relationship of *solitudo* to *voluptas*—gustatory, corporeal, pleasure—the second, on that between *solitudo* and the more philosophical experience

[262] Note that, in the year prior, Cicero had already set up the basic structure of this claim that even an abundance of life's good things could not make good a solitary life; cf. *De finibus* 1.20.66 (with specific mention of *amici*), 3.20.65.

[263] Powell *ad loc*. We should note, as well, that the example drawn from Archytas also draws us back, as this dialogue so often does, to the work that, in its dramatic setting, preceded Scipio's death: the *De Re Publica*. There, Aemelianus had been in almost exactly the position as Archytas' star-gazer: "From on high, a place filled with stars" (*de excelso et pleno stellarum*—6.11)," there, "admiring (*admirans*) these things, I turned my eyes, nevertheless, repeatedly to the earth." (*Haec ego admirans referebam tamen oculos ad terram identidem*—6.19) Scipio Aemilianus, there, had his adoptive grandfather and namesake, Scipio Africanus, as guide and colleague for this vision.

of *admiratio*—spiritual, intellectual, wonder. Taken together, the two examples mean to emphasize that life's joys, whether they be of the mundane or celestial variety, are no joys if they cannot be shared with friends.

But before we move on, we must note something odd: although both thought experiments insist on the impossibility of happiness in the absence of others, they frame the social imperative not in the terms of mutual reciprocity elsewhere employed by this treatise—to love and be loved (*amare et redamare*, *diligimus et diligimur*)—but, rather, in the one-sided, externally oriented, unequivocally active terms of "seeing a human" (*hominis aspiciendi*) and of "having someone to whom one could *narrate*" (*si aliquem cui narraret habuisset*). We need other people, we conclude from these examples, so that we can look at them, and tell them how happy we are. The picture is a narcissist's delight[264], not because, as in Ovid's case, Laelius cannot see beauty

[264] It is also one that Horace, as we will see in Chapater 3, will later put to elaborate use in one of his most famous poems, the Lalage ode (*C.* 1.22): there, in a thought experiment of his own, the poet claims that, even were he to be relocated "underneath the chariot of the too-close sun, in a land unfit for dwellings, I will love sweet-smiling Lalage, sweet-speaking Lalage." (*pone sub curru nimium propinqui / solis in terra domibus negata: / dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo, / dulce loquentem*—Hor. *C.* 1.22.21-4) Lalage need not be present to be characterized sweet-speaking (it is a state that derives directly from her name, "The Babbler"), and everything else in the poem emphasizes that Horace's protection from harm derives not from Lalage's actual presence, but from the fact that he sings "My Lalage" (*dum meam canto Lalagem—C.* 1.22.10). Such a connection should not be surprising: Horace's relationship with Cicero, and with the *De Amicitia* and the *Brutus* in particular, was rich and sustained.

outside of himself, but because the one figure that grasped that self-projected beauty is, now, only a projection of memory and desire.

The "bad turn" that this line of thinking takes is related to the initial formulation that Laelius gave to friendship's importance, and it is a formulation whose form we have seen, now, repeatedly in Cicero's work and in the Scipionic legend—nothing is sweeter, Laelius says, than to have someone with whom you dare to speak "as if with yourself" (*sic loqui ut tecum--Lael*. 22). But if all you want to do is to talk "as if to yourself," then why not just talk, like Scipio Africanus, like the philosophical deaf man of the *Tusculan Disputations*, to yourself? Why not talk, like Bellerophon, Medea's nurse, or Cicero, to the solitude itself? We should also compare this phrase with one from the *De Amicitia*'s companion piece, the *Cato Maior de Senectute* ("On Old Age"), where Cato spoke of one of the joys of old age being that, free from sexual desires, one can is able "to be with oneself (*secum esse*), and with oneself, as the saying goes, to live (*secumque ut dicitur vivere*—Cic. *De sen.* 49)."[265] That the "proverb" that Cicero quotes (*ut dicitur*) may be of his own making fits with Cicero's habit of self-citation; here, the context is the *Tusculan Disputations*, written the year prior (in 45 BCE), where Cicero wrote, following Plato, that "The entire life of philosophers (*vita philosophorum*) is, as the saying goes, a preparation for death (*commentatio mortis*). For what else is it that we do when we call our mind away from pleasure (that is the body), from family affairs (that is, the handmaiden and servant of the body), from the Republic, from all business, what, I say, are we then to do except to call our spirit to itself (*animum ad se ipsum advocamus*), force it to be by itself (*secum esse cogimus*) and, as

[265] It is possible that the "saying" (*ut dicitur*) refers back to Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* (written the year prior, in 45 BCE).

much as possible, lead it away from the body (*maximeque a corpore adbucimus—Tusc. Disp*. 1.74-5)."[266] But Cato's notion relates only to old age, that represented in the *Tusculan Disputations* to the limited case of spiritual contemplation: what happens, though, when the notion is expanded into more general use?

This is related to a general tension in the construal of the friend as "another self" (*alter idem*). As Laelius explains, friendship is at its most beautiful (*pulcherrima*) when it "is sought through itself, for itself" (*per se et propter se expetita*); in this, it resembles self-love: "For every person loves himself (*ipse enim se quisque diligit*), not so as to acquire a prize of his love, but because every person loves himself; if this same feeling is not transferred to friendship, a true friend is never found; for the true friend is one who is as if (*tamquam*) another self (*alter idem*)." (*Lael*. 80)[267] Again, it is the "as if" (*tamquam*) that draws attention to the problem: if the friend is a mirror of the self, or we love the friend because we love ourselves, then why not skip the "middle man" and stick with the essential quality itself, that is, the self itself? One way to read this passage, as many have done, is that solitude does not exist precisely because of the existence of friends, and that true friends never abandon you, even when they are not there; but a corollary

[266] The phrase " to be with oneself" does become quite common in Latin, for which, see Powell *ad Cato de Senec*. 49; the idea in *Tusc*. *Disp*. may, as Powell notes, in turn reflect the language of Plato, *Phaedo* 65-6.

[267] According to *De Officiis* (1.50), the idea of the friend as "another self" has Pythagorean precedent. Cicero used it often: *De fin*. 2.81; *Att*. 3.15.4; 4.1.7; *ad Fam*. 2.15.4; 7.5.1; 13.1.5), and in *Laelius* three times at *Laelius* 80, 81, 92. For theories of resemblance, see *Laelius* 27, 50, 80.

problem with this formulation of the present absent friend, and one that we have seen Cicero's essay repeatedly draws out, is the possibility that friendship can exist even without the presence of others. It is no accident that the double-edged logic of this formulation is similar to that which drove the long debate in ancient philosophy, then in textual scholarship, then again in deconstructionist philosophy, over the productively misread line of Aristotle, "O friends, there is no friend."[268]

Cicero's treatise never articulates this tension, but it seems to feel it deeply, giving it prominence at the work's beginning and at its end. Partially, this is the product of the premise: Laelius is explaining how he goes on living after the death of Scipio, how he consoles himself over the loss of his closest friend. It is the tension between mourning and consolation that sets Laelius' discourse in motion, for Laelius' sons-in-law, Scaevola and Fannius, both want to know how Laelius bears the death of his friend Scipio Aemilianus: one the one hand, he seems to be handling it very well (*moderate*), but, given his strong sense of "fellow-feeling" (*humanitatis tuae*) it is not possible that Laelius is not moved (*commoveri*) by his loss.[269] Laelius' first reference to Scipio's death affirm that his sense of longing and loss is strong: "If I were to deny

[268] The citation is from Dio. Laert. 5.1.21, quoted by Montaigne (*De l'amitié*), corrected by Casaubon (so that it reads "He who has [many] friends, has no friends"), and is the formulaic starting and re-starting point for Derrida's 1994 *Politique de l'amitié*. On the phrase's role in the scholarship on ancient friendship, see Craig Williams 2012:17-18.

[269] *Lael*. 8 *Quaerunt quidem, C. Laeli, multi, ut est a Fannio dictum, sed ego id respondeo, quod animum adverti, te dolorem, quem acceperis cum summi viri tum amicissimi morte, ferre moderate nec potuisse non commoveri nec fuisse id humanitatis tuae…*

that I am moved by longing for Scipio (*Scipionis desiderio me moveri*), the wise men (*sapientes*) would have to judge whether I did well; but, surely, I would be lying. For I am moved, being deprived of such a friend, such as, I judge, never will again be, and as I am able to confirm, never was before."[270] Laelius knows that, according to received philosophical (read: Greek) wisdom, he is not supposed to be moved—but moved he surely is. He knows that Scipio suffers nothing, and so he should not be sad; yet he is sad, and, if not for Scipio, then for himself. Is this, then, love, or self-love? A similar problem is posed by the form of consolation itself: the less that the death of the friend "matters," the less the life of the friend matters too—all that counts, in the end, is the idea of friendship, is friendship as an abstract virtue, process, mode, and script. Indeed, by the end of the treatise, we find that the title of the essay should be read literally: it is not an essay "about friends," but about "friendship," an abstract category that can make do without the existence of actual friends.

The problem of *amicitia* as a *virtus* perhaps independent of any particular social entailment comes to a head at the work's conclusion, where the *De Amicitia* turns itself into a work less about the social reality of friends than about the philosophical ideality of friendship, less about friendship, even, than about the joys of memory, imagination, and narration: as we have seen, this is where the treatise began,[271] and it is also where is ends.[272] For as Laelius' discourse comes

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[270] *Lael*. 10 *Ego si Scipionis desiderio me moveri negem, quam id recte faciam, viderint sapientes; sed certe mentiar. Moveor enim tali amico orbatus qualis, ut arbitror, nemo umquam erit, ut confirmare possum, nemo certe fuit.*

[271] *De amic*. 1: *Quintus Mucius augur multa* ***narrare*** *de Gaeio Laelio socero suo* ***memoriter et iucunde*** *solebat*; *dicta* ***memoriae*** *mandabam; De amic*. 2: *tum* ***memini; meministi*** *enim*

to an end, we find that not only is Laelius' sense of bereavement not total, but that there is also a sense in which it may not exist at all, as if, in another contemporary Roman's terms, "death is nothing to us, and does not matter a whit!"[273] Here is Laelius' formulation, in all of its glorious contradictions:

> But because human affairs are fragile and fleeting, we must also seek out people to love, and by whom we may be loved—when kindness and benevolence are removed, from life is removed all joy. And, in truth, although Scipio has been suddenly removed from me, nonetheless, he lives, and he will always live (*vivet tamen semperque vivet*), for I loved that man's Virtue (*virtutem enim amavi illius viri*), and that has not died; it hovers not only before my eyes—before me, who have always had it in my hands—but it will also be, for future people, brilliant and clear. No one will take up things great in spirit or hope, who will not have his memory and *imago* set up before him.[274]

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profecto, Attice; De amic. 3: *eiues disputationis sententias* ***memoriae*** *mandavi; De Amic*. 4: *maxime* ***memorabilem*** *Gai Laeli et Publi Scipionis familiaritatem; ab eo* ***meminisset*** *Scaevola.*

[272] *De amic*. 102 *versatur ante oculos; qui sibi non illius* ***memoriam*** *atque* ***imaginem*** *proponendum putet*; *De amic*. 104: *Quarum rerum* ***recordatio*** *et* ***memoria***; *sed nec illa exstincta sunt, alunturque potius et augentur* ***cogitatione et memoria mea***.

[273] Lucr. *DRN* 3.830.

[274] Cic. *Lael*. 102 *Sed quoniam res humanae fragiles caducaeque sunt, semper aliqui anquirendi sunt quos diligamus et a quibus diligamur; caritate enim benevolentiaque sublata omnis est e vita sublata iucunditas. Mihi quidem Scipio, quamquam est subito ereptus, vivit tamen semperque vivet; virtutem enim amavi illius viri, quae exstincta non est; nec mihi soli versatur ante oculos, qui illam semper in manibus habui, sed etiam posteris erit clara et insignis. Nemo*

Laelius' phrasing recalls what Cicero had said to Atticus the year before: "solitude helps me some, but it would be more use if, nevertheless (*tamen*), you were with me."[275] In Laelius' case, just like Cicero's letter, the *tamen* underlines the sense of paradox: "He, nevertheless (*tamen*), lives, and will always live. For I loved his virtue (*virtutem enim amavi illius viri*)," Laelius explains, "and that is not dead…" It is when we reach this formulation that we come to understand not only what is strong, but also what is tragically strange, about the *subito forte* arrival of *Virtus* at the beginning of the discourse's conclusion: Laelius realizes that he has allowed his discourse to degenerate (*defluxit*) into a discussion of "trivial friendships" (*leves amicitias*), and decides that they should "return to our initial ideas, and bring an end, somehow, to those as well."[276] What immediately follows (*Lael*. 100) is the work's crescendoing peroration:

> "Virtue! Virtue, I say, Gaius Fannius, and you, Quintus Mucius, both joins and safeguards friendship!"
>
> *Virtus, Virtus, inquam, C. Fanni, et tu, Q. Muci, et conciliat amicitias et conservat.*

Virtus is not only, as has been suggested, Scipio's "good qualities," but something both more shockingly universal and more colorfully particular. For *virtus* is not only what makes the world

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umquam animo aut spe maiora suscipiet, qui sibi non illius memoriam atque imaginem proponendam putet.

[275] Cic. *Ad att*. 12.14 (SB 251) *solitudo aliquid adiuvat, sed multo plus proficeret, si tu tamen interesses*.

[276] Cic. *De amic*. 100 *Quam ob rem ad illa prima redeamus eaque ipsa concludamus aliquando.*

go round and friendships come about, but is to Scipio what wisdom is to Laelius: the essential quality, the metonymy, of the man. Though we do not know precisely when or on what occasion, Scipio, at some point after 133 BCE, seems to have built a Temple to *Virtus* before the Colline Gate.[277] Just as the work's preface focused, repeatedly, almost obsessively, on an insistence that Laelius truly was *Sapiens* (Wise)—the very first line affirms that Scaevola never neglected to call Laelius *Sapiens*—so the ending will look to Scipio's *virtus*. The two go naturally together, of course, as in these lines that Horace writes about Laelius and Scipio's mutual friend, the satirist Lucilius:

> He [Lucilius] seized on the "best men," and the people tribe by tribe, kind only to virtue and her friends. Indeed, when the virtue of Scipio[278] and the wisdom of gentle Laelius remove themselves from the public stage (*a volgo et scaena*) and into seclusion (*in secreta*), they used to mess around with him [Lucilius] and, shirts unbuttoned, and play, while the vegetables were being boiled down.

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[277] On the temple, see Plut. *fort. Rom*. 5; on the debate over the authenticity of the tradition, and on *virtus* more broadly at Rome and among the Scipiones, see Weinstock 1971:231 n. 2. Much of the confusion (but also, of course, the basic data itself) derives from Plutarch's contradictory (or complex) testimony regarding the temple's (first) construction and various iterations, at *fort. Rom*. 5 and 10. For some further details, see D. Palombi *LTUR* V.206 s.v. *Virtus, Aedes*. On religion in the so-called "Scipionic Circle," see Rawson 1991:80-101.

[278] Literally, *Scipiades*, "son of Scipio" or "member of the Scipionic family," a word form necessiated by meter (the oblique cases of "*Scipio"* cannot occur in Latin hexameter), but that still doesn't answer the logically prior question: why not just use the nominative, which, in both the case of Scipio and Laelius, would have been metrically acceptable?

atqui

primores populi arripuit populumque tributim,

scilicet uni aequus virtuti atque eius amicis. 70

quin ubi se a volgo et scaena in secreta remorant

virtus Scipiadae et mitis sapientia Laeli,

nugari cum illo et discincti ludere, donec

decoqueretur holus, soliti.(Hor. *Sat*. 2.1.71-4)[279]

I have already demonstrated, in the Introduction, the extent to which Horace's poem desocializes Lucilius by having him "entrust his secrets to books as if they were his loyal friends," thereby textualizing the world and persona of the satirist. In this later part of the poem, at which we also glanced, but whose meaning, in the context of the *De Amicitia*, is more complex, Lucilius plays not with men, but with the ideas that define them, not with vegetables, but with vegetable purée, the decocted essence of the vegetable's form: so perfect a definition of ethical satire in the Horatian mode could, perhaps, be hardly imagined.[280] Horace is, no doubt, building on ideas developed throughout Cicero's work, and particularly in the *De Amicitia*, and those debts deserve a study of their own; for now, it is important, looking back, to read emphatically that *Virtus* is the idea of the man Scipio, and not the man Scipio himself, and that is why it will, forever, abide. This is the problem of memory as the creation of desire, history as an act of fiction. This is the problem we have seen raised explicitly by the framing of Cicero's *On Old*

[279] On the puns on *virtus* and *sapientia* in Horace's text, see the Introduction, and Freudenburg 2001:102.

[280] On "decoction" and Latin satire, see Gowers 1994.

Age; implicitly, in the *Brutus*, by Atticus' challenge to that work's latent irony; and suggestively, elegiacally, in the lost friend of Cicero's *On Friendship*.

There is no question that the survival of Scipio's virtue (*quae exstincta non est*) is meant to serve as an unwavering substitute for, as Cicero will later put it in the *De Officiis*, the "extinction" of the senate (*exstincto enim senatu—De off*. 3.2), the same extinction that has forced Cicero himself into solitude. But there is another, a darker, a more difficult, side to this recourse to the abstract, the absolute, and the eternal, for turning Scipio into something that can be held in Laelius' hands--an image, a text, a fetish--dehumanizes Scipio and replaces the friend with the idea of the friend, so that the text, at last, approaches the freedom of the great Scipio Africanus himself, who, although only sometimes (*interdum*), had no need for another person in his conversation. Scipio Aemilianus, it bears recalling, was also said, and twice by Cicero, to "have always had in his hands," "to have never put away from his hands,"[281] Xenophon's *Cyropaedeia*, "that first and most successful *Bildungsroman*," explains Elizabeth Rawson, "which the Romans of the republic took with extraordinary seriousness as a Mirror for Princes."[282] Scipio had the book of Xenophon with the image of Cyrus, Laelius had in his turn the *virtus* and *imago* of Scipio, and now all that Cicero may have (or Atticus) is the idea of friendship, and not a friend, a text on friendship, and not on friends. Laelius has Scipio's "Virtue," nothing less than Cicero's *De Amicitia* itself--what need has he of Scipio? To draw attention to the work's textualization is not only to show Cicero's strength and absolute control of his genre, but to draw attention to a fault-line, a source of tension and ambiguity, in the works of

[281] *Tusc.* 2.62 *semper in manibus habebat*; *ad Quin. fr.* 1.1.23 *de manibus ponere non solebat*.

[282] Rawson 1991:86.

Cicero's last years. There is not only strength, but also weakness, in the conclusion of the *Tusculan Disputations* and its praise of the deaf: "For he who is able to speak with himself (*secum loqui*), does not require the conversation of another person (*sermonem alterius non requiret—Tusc*. 5.117)."

V. *Desiderium* and Poetry

The Roman concept of solitude is, as I noted in the Introduction, nothing like the Portuguese concept of *saudade*, in describing, not the defining and self-declaredly natural condition of a people or a person, but, rather, an aberrant trait that, though living on the edges, will not be effaced. But Cicero's *De Amicitia* is, we have seen, born of something like *saudade*, for it is the result, and expression, of Laelius' (and Cicero's) *desiderium*, a feeling of "longing" that Cicero elsewhere translates as "the desire to see that which is no longer present."[283] Cicero might owe this translation of *desiderium*, in part, to Plato's *Cratylus*, where Socrates distinguishes between "intense desire" (ἵμερος)--which he derives from the rush (ἰέμενος) of a

[283] Cic. *Tusc*. 4.21 *ut ... desiderium sit libido eius qui nondum assit, videndi.* Maurizio Bettini has usefully translated *desiderium*, clearly after Cicero, as the sense of "regret for the loss of a beloved person." Bettini, Portrait of the Lover, 9; Bettini notes, in this context, that desiderium (Greek πόθος) is at the origin of the art of painting in the story of Butades, the potter of Sicyon, who traced on a wall the shadow of his daughter's departed lover, creating a portrait that remianed in Corinth's Nymphaeum until Lucius Mummius' sack of that city; as a result, Bettini goes on to write, desiderium "could proudly claim to have invented the very art of creating images: any kind of image."

stream (ῥοῦς) of impulsive force--and, in the Greek equivalent of *desiderium*, "yearning" (πόθος)--which Plato derives from "that which is elsewhere" (ἄλλοθί που), being the pull towards that which is absent (ἀπογενομένου), as opposed to that which is at hand (ὅταν παρῇ).[284] As the *Panegyric for Messala* has it, when all possessions are gone "now only *desiderium* remains, and care is renewed" by memory (*memor*) and sorrow (*dolor*).[285] Sometimes Cicero's own *desiderium* could be of the mundane kind, a longing for that which he does not currently, but might soon be able, to have: "I yearn for (*desidero*) the grove, forum, city, home, you."[286] But sometimes, as we have seen, in reaction to losses that cannot be made good, or that bring into question the goodness of that which had been lost, Cicero's yearning turns itself towards lost, impossible, or avowedly imagined dreams (*Brutus* and *Orator*) or it turns itself into and around the self in its own unshared solitude of projections and infinite desire.

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[284] Plato, *Cratylus* 419e-420a ἀλλὰ μὴν ‘ἵμερός’ γε τῷ μάλιστα ἕλκοντι τὴν ψυχὴν ῥῷ ἐπωνομάσθη: ὅτι γὰρ ἰέμενος ῥεῖ καὶ ἐφιέμενος τῶν πραγμάτων, καὶ οὕτω δὴ ἐπισπᾷ σφόδρα τὴν ψυχὴν διὰ τὴν ἕσιν τῆς ῥοῆς, ἀπὸ ταύτης οὖν πάσης τῆς δυνάμεως ‘ἵμερος’ ἐκλήθη. καὶ μὴν ‘πόθος’ αὖ καλεῖται σημαίνων οὐ τοῦ παρόντος εἶναι ἱμέρου τε καὶ ῥεύματος ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἄλλοθί που ὄντος καὶ ἀπόντος, ὅθεν ‘πόθος’ ἐπωνόμασται ὃς τότε, ὅταν παρῇ οὗ τις ἐφίετο, ‘ἵμερος’ ἐκαλεῖτο: ἀπογενομένου δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς οὗτος ‘πόθος’ ἐκλήθη.

[285] *Paneg. in Mess*. 188, 93-94 *nam mihi cum magnis opibus doma alta niteret…nunc desiderium superest: nam cura novatur, / cum memor ante actos semper dolor admonet annos*; cf. Cic. *Lael*. 23 *tantus eos (i. mortuos) honos, memoria, desiderium prosequitur amicorum,* for discussion on which, see above.

[286] Cic. *Att*. 5.15 *lucem, forum, urbem, domum, vos desidero.*

It is true that this kind of yearning never became the sole interest of Cicero's works, interests, and intellectual program: always and again, we see, he seems to have returned, as we have known since Petrarch's day, to matters of contemporary, political, and social importance. Cicero never ceased wanting to make, not only things of beauty, like Phidias' statue, but also things of great use to others, like the spurned roof-tiles of the *Brutus*. But the uses of solitude--as a gesture, provocation, thought-experiment, dream, and fear--were broad, deep, and sustained in Cicero's late works. They were also, as we shall see, harbingers of developments to come in the sphere that Cicero identified as wholly suited to solitude, and with which Cicero played a frequent game of alternating identification and distance: poetry. So when Cicero, early on in his career, is defending Archias the poet *qua* poet, the emphasis is on Archias' dependence on nature and the gods, and his concomitant independence from society,[287] with pride of place and emphasis going to the poet's affinity for the solitude of empty spaces (*solitudines*):

> Let it then, judges, be sacred to you, the most humane humans (*humanissimos homines*), this title of "Poet" that no barbaric region ever failed to respect. Rocks and deserts (*solitudines*) reply to his voice, and savage beasts, at his song, turn around and stand struck: shall we, trained in the highest arts, not be moved by the voice of the poets?[288]

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[287] Cic. *Pro Archia* 18 *poetam natura ipsa valere, et mentis viribus excitari, et quasi divino quodam spiritu inflari. Qua re suo iure noster ille Ennius sanctos appellat poetas, quod quasi deorum aliquo dono atque munere commendati nobis esse videantur.*

[288] Cic. *Pro Archia* 19 *Sit igitur, iudices, sanctum apud vos, humanissimos homines, hoc poetae nomen, quod nulla umquam barbaria violavit. Saxa et solitudines voci repondent, bestiae saepe*

In part, Cicero is playing on the well-worn *topos* of the poet's powers savage nature, producing an *a fortiori* argument for respecting the poet: "if savage beasts, lands, and peoples respect the poet, then these Roman judges, most humane of humans, should reverence him all the more profoundly." But there is another sense, and one which we will see explored by each of the poets of our study, that poets, in the later formulation of Tacitus' Maternus, "must make a retreat into woods and groves, that is, into solitude."[289] The *solitudo* is an inhuman place, and one of the special powers of the poet is that he can go, safely, through such inhuman places and, in doing so, be of some service to the most humane of humans; the paradox, and the implicit tension, of this situation is that, in order to be of use to others, the poet must forsake the company of all but himself, must turn from the voices of others to the echoes of his own voice carried back by the wilderness and its rocks.

Cicero, we have seen, felt all too often the desire to take up this poetic urge, to imitate Bellerophon and "seek out solitary places," or, like Ennius' Medea, "to speak with the solitude itself," or, like Cato's Africanus, "to hold conversation with himself." The paradox of an all too human poet in an all too inhuman world is one shared by Cicero, who, in his late works, began to imagine what it might mean for him, for anyone, to be the maker of his own world in his own

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immanes cantu flectuntur atque consistunt: nos, instituti rebus optimis, non poetarum voce moveamur?

[289] Tac. *Dial*. 9 *adice quod poetis, si modo dignum aliquid elaborare et efficere velint, relinquenda conversatio amicorum et iucunditas urbis, deserenda cetera officia, utque ipsi dicunt, in nemora et lucos, id est in solitudinem secedendum est.*

mind, to converse with his own echoes, and have no need of others. It was a paradox that would be at the very heart of the poetry written in the decades following Cicero's death, beginning with the works of Virgil, and their all too echoing, all too empty, worlds. It is to those worlds that we now turn.

CHAPTER 2

Solus in silvis: Virgil's Solitary Worlds

1. Introduction

2. Society, Solitude and the *Eclogues*

3. Solitude-Speaking Muse: The *First Eclogue*

4. Pastoral Re-Citations: The Fifth *Eclogue*

5. Pastoral Self-Fashioning: The Eighth *Eclogue*

6. Pastoral Erasures: The Tenth *Eclogue*

7. Vacuum in orbem: The *Georgics*

8. *Sola sub nocte*: The *Aeneid*

Solus in silvis: Virgil's Solitary Worlds

ἀγρονόμαν μέλπεις μοῦσαν ἐρημολάλον.[290]

I. Introduction

Virgil's worlds are lonely worlds. When his first book of poetry, the *Eclogues*, begins, the pastoral world is already in the rear-view mirror; when the book comes to an end, the pastor-poet is left alone with his longing and the figures of his dreams; and, in between, comes a series of poems depicting worlds where art has failed to sustain community and attempted, with more or less success, to replace pastoral community with an imagination equal to shepherds' desires. His second book, the *Georgics*, is a study in isolation's fruits and pains, and ends in unfulfilled desire that finally rewrites itself as the product of the banished, and silenced, voice of the *Eclogues*. In the *Aeneid*, a series of thwarted relations combines with a literary architecture of recursive doubt to produce an epic that is lonely shadows from beginning to end. Throughout his works, Virgil wrestled with the idea of the poet as an isolated imagination trying, impossibly, to fill worlds of empty silence with populated sound.

This does not leave Virgil's works without purpose: if Aeneas the Sibyl can be said to have "gone darkling under a lonely sky through shadow,"[291] their "lonely sky" can also be described

[290] "You sing the country-dwelling, Muse, solitude-speaking." (Meleager, 13.2 G.-P. (=*AP* 7.196), the poet to a cicada)

[291] V. *A*. 6.268 *ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram*, on which, see below.

by what A.D. Nuttall, in his study of solipsistic fear in modern philosophy and literature, called "a common sky," under which they move, together in their loneliness, to the ends of epic and empire.[292] It does, however, make these purposes very hard to read or settle, to a degree far more pronounced, and far more integral to the structure of his works and his life's work as a whole, than in the case of Cicero. As a result, reading for Virgil's solitary imagination means, as well, engaging with the models of the poetic career and poetic book surveyed in the Introduction. In this chapter, I show how Virgil's *Eclogues* developed the use of a set of literary devices to express and effect this wrestling—ambiguity, metafiction, and book-based metastructure chief among them--and how the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid* took them up on increasingly large scales. His lifelong engagement with these issues would, as later chapters show, prove an important resource for poets in his wake.

Concentrating on solitude and the solitary imagination is not new to Virgilian studies--in fact, it was a major interest of that early form of literary interpretation, ancient biographies of the poet. There is no doubt that most of this material derived from interpretation of the poetry itself, but this is what makes them interesting: they are forms of veiled literary criticism, and they care a great deal about Virgil as a retreating poet.[293] According to the Suetonian life (*Vita Suetonii vulgo donatiana*, *VSD*), Virgil was anything but a socialite. His body was not, the tradition tells

[292] Nuttall 1974; for the themes of "epic and empire" in Virgilian and post-Virgilina epic, see Quint 1983.

[293] On the fictionality of *Vita* traditions, see Lefkowitz 1981. Correspondence can range from the literal to the conceptual, and their readings themselves can, as a result, reward sustained attention. For a recent application of the insight to Homeric *vita* traditions, see Graziosi 2002.

us, of the nicest model: though his poetry was, in Horace's words, "gentle and droll," (*Sat*. 1.10.44) he himself was "large in person and stature, with a swarthy complexion, the face of a peasant, and uneven health, for he suffered very much from pain in his stomach, throat, and head; indeed, he often spat up blood."[294] As for his personal habits, the ancient biographical tradition is consistent in depicting a man who tried to avoid what Horace would call, "the smoke, the show, the rumble of Rome." (*Odes* 3.29.12) In general, the tradition seems to take a special pleasure in juxtaposing Virgil's connections with Rome's figures of power with his penchant for retreat.[295] So we are told that Virgil owned a home on the Esquiline hill in Rome, conveniently next to the home and luxurious gardens of his patron Maecenas, but that the poet preferred to be "in retreat (*successu*) in Campania or Sicily." Further, when at Rome, "which he visited very rarely," if he were noticed in public, "he would seek refuge (*subterfugeret*) in the nearest house from those who followed him (*sectantis*) and pointed him out (*demonstrantisque*)." (*VSD* 11)

In Campania, Virgil seems to have lived as part of the Epicurean garden of Philodemus and Siro in the Bay of Naples, a group that seems likely to have included the poet Varius Rufus, the critic Quintilius Varus, and Virgil's later literary executor and editor, Plotius Tucca. In the eyes of the Suetonian life, this itself was a form of retreat (*seccessus*), and the poet's geographic distance from Rome goes together with the story that Virgil repeatedly disappointed Augustus' wish to have the *Aeneid* more quickly in hand, complete, and, in the last instance, extant.

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[294] *VSD* 8 trans. Putnam/Ziolkowski. The physical description of Virgil, in particular his "rustic face" must be involved in the circulation of fact and fiction, with the second *Eclogue* as prime suspect (*E*. 2.56 *rusticus es Corydon* > *facie rusticana*).

[295] Tarrant 1997:169.

But the Suetonian life has Virgil's desire for *secessus* impel him much farther afield than Campania: Virgil, the biographer says, in order to put the finishing touch (*summam manum*) to the *Aeneid*, "decided to retire (*secedere*) to Greece and Asia." (*VSD* 35) Interestingly, *secessus* is also how the Suetonian life concludes its treatment of the poet's life before moving onto a discussion of the *Eclogues*. Asconius Pedianus, well known to classicists for his commentaries on Cicero's speeches, wrote as well, according to the ancient biographies, a work "Against Virgil's Detractors," which related how certain critics accused the poet of lifting material wholesale from Homer, to which Virgil gave the now-famous response that "it is easier to steal the club of Hercules than a line from Homer." Judging from the end of the Suetonian life, however, despite Virgil's strong retort, the poet, stung, decided "to retire" (*secedere*) in order "to trim everything to the satisfaction of his ill-wishers" (*ut omnia ad satietatem malevolorum decideret*). This final *secessus* led to Virgil's death, as he fell sick while *en route* to Asia and her wise men, overcome by sunstroke, a weak constitution, and bad luck. The desire for *secessus*, for separation, retreat, and withdrawal, then, characterizes Virgil's life in the "Life" as much as it does the implicit causes of his death.[296]

[296] It seems likely that the "poet murdered by criticism" motif played a part in Asconius Pedianus' framing of this story, and perhaps, incidentally, or accidentally, to Suetonius' re-relating of it. Something like this may be behind the "poison" (*φάρμακον*) that kills the poet Bion in the *Lament for Bion* (109ff.), prepared by "a savage (ἀνήμερος) man." The theme becomes central to the early modern and romantic tradition of what Poggioli has called the Pastoral of Lament. In the English tradition, a key example is Percy Byshe Shelley's 1821 lament for the death of John Keats, *Adonaïs*, stanzas 36-37 specifically blaming the poet's death on the "deaf

These biographical interests show that solitude was a concern of the earliest responses to Virgil's poetry, but, like contemporary accounts of ancient poetic economies (patron-client relationships, censorship, modes of aristocratic distinction), they can only point us in possible directions, not exhaust our imaginative paths. Whether Virgil himself was a wallflower or a Neapolitan rager is neither answerable nor, for the purposes of interpretation, dispositive. In this chapter, I follow but one path that these stories invite: the connection between solitude and imagination in Virgil's works taken as a whole, from the first of the *Eclogues* to the last line of the *Aeneid*.

This approach is distinct from, but complementary to, historicized readings of Virgil's poetic autonomy, as well as approaching solitude as a part of the represented world of Virgil's poetry. Luke Roman has helped us see how Augustan poets made increasingly concerted efforts to assert a rhetoric of poetic production autonomous of the socio-political and economic pressure of patrons; as such, on this view, every ostensible confession of inability or subservience is "part of an autonomist strategy for poetic self-representation that ultimately works to enhance the status of the elite poet rather than undermine it."[297] But autonomy has its own dark doppelganger: being a law unto oneself implies, as well, being all unto oneself, a solitary isolate. Hence those moments that seem to represent poetic strength also represent its shadowed departure from all things human: so Silenus' song in the sixth *Eclogue*, though it is the symbol of

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and viperous murderer," "nameless worm" and "noteless blot," here the anonymous critic of the *Quarterly Review* (whom we now know to have been John Wilson Croker), who so disliked Keats' *Endymion*.

[297] Roman 2014:119.

song's power to project its own world through what Gerard Genette has called the "the author's metalepsis," also, wordlessly, smoothly, and surrealistically, leaves behind its world and poetic frame of men and soars straight into the twilit sky:[298] "he sings--the impact valleys carry his songs to the stars--until Vesper commands the flock to gather and be counted, and goes forth to an unwilling sky."[299] Song, here, dissolves into evening, and evening, as we shall see, is anything but an uncomplicated good or bad in Virgil's poetic world.

The larger part of this chapter is devoted to showing how the *Eclogues* book is structured as an extended meditation on, or struggle, with the solitary imagination. After a survey of *Eclogues* criticism and the surface representations of solitude and society in those poems, I move through selected poems of the book in order. I first show how the emptying out of the pastoral landscape is adumbrated (all too literally) by the first *Eclogue*'s inauguration of a post-bucolic bucolic, post-dramatic drama, and post-social pastoral society. I then turn to Virgil's fifth *Eclogue*, the book's midpoint, whose ending's plot-twist extends a solipsistic doubt across poem-lines, further depopulating Virgil's pastoral worlds. From there, I show how the metapoetic presentation of the solitary imagination is most baldly formulated in the eighth *Eclogue*, where song's greatest power becomes its greatest weakness: though the poem begins by asserting song's influence over nature, it ends by raising the possibility that love is the product of the song of love, the beloved the product of the singer's dreamt fiction. Virgil's tenth *Eclogue*, the book's closing poem, brings together these various strands to imagine a vacant pastoral world

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[298] See Genette 1980:234-6; on the sixth *Eclogue*, with bibl., see Breed 2006:224.

[299] *E*. 6.84-6 *Ille canit (pulsae referunt ad sidera ualles), / cogere donec ovis stabulis numerumque referre / iussit et invito processit Vesper Olympo*.

characterized by solitude, desire, and song. At the chapter's end, I suggest ways in which reading for the solitary imagination in the *Eclogues* can provide new insight into some of the most contested debates over the themes and structures of the *Georgics* and *Aeneid*.

II. Society, Solitude and the *Eclogues*

Emphasis on the sympathetic humanism of Virgil's *Eclogues* has meant that the importance of solitude to its imaginary worlds has been frequently underplayed or interpreted away. Renato Poggioli is emblematic in seeing pre-Renaissance bucolic (and, indeed, poetry) as essentially social:

> "Contrary to one's expectations, bucolic poetry was not predestined to sing the praises of solitude. It was only toward the end of its long historical life that the pastoral fulfilled what may well be the most congenial of its many tasks. The theme of solitude is almost totally absent from Theocritus' Idylls and Vergil's Eclogues…" (Poggioli 1975:182)

Recent humanistic responses to Virgil's *Bucolica* seem to agree. For Paul Alpers, pastoral shows that being is being with others, that "pastoral convening" brings about, and presupposes, a strong "sense of community." (Alpers 1997: 226, 1996:82-7) For Brian Breed, the *Eclogues* reacts against pastoral orality in imagining how writing, free from the constraints of time and space, might foster a circle of engagement "expandable to include readers in many circumstances and in

many time periods."[300] All of these scholars agree that the *Eclogues* invite readers "to involve themselves with the voices and the humanity of others through reading," (Breed 2006:158) and would agree with Poggioli that Virgil's poems are not examples of the pastoral of the solitary self.[301] Taking a wider angle, Philip Hardie saw Virgil, in the oral "plenitude" of the *Eclogues*, as the first to make "a pathos of presence and absence central to the pastoral experience." (Hardie 2002:20) Reacting to this plenitude, Hubbard saw voice as becoming "communal property" (Hardie 1998:124), which Breed took to imply a questioning of "the sure connection between voice and a source in a singular speaker (Breed 2006:14).

But, for all its apparent vocal abundance, Virgil's *Eclogues* dramatize not presence, but the problem of presence, and, in staging dramas of absence, inaugurate a poetic struggle with solitude. Poggioli is partially right: these poems do no not praise solitude (Poggioli 1975:187)—but they do wrestle with it. The landscape of Virgilian pastoral is not, as one has commentator put it, "always inhabited,"[302] if by this he means inhabited by more than one person—it is far

[300] Michèle Lowrie praised Breed's book because it made the *Eclogues'* representation of reading and writing into "an encounter with the humanity of others." (Lowrie 2009:144; Breed 2006:27)

[301] Literary critics Allen Grossman and Mark Halliday (1992:9) describe this position well: poetry, on this view, possesses "the function of making persons present to one another in that special sense in which they are *acknowledgeable* and therefore capable of love and mutual interest in one another's safety."

[302] Coleman *ad E*. 1.1.

emptier than many have thought.[303] Solitude as a possibility, or a necessity, of pastoral and poetic activity is a central concern to the *Eclogues*, and is often most evident in Virgil's departures from the script he had inherited in the *Idylls* of Theocritus and the post-Theocritean pastoral tradition. The result is a bucolic collection much more conflicted, and far less social, than many critics have allowed. Mark Payne has demonstrated how Theocritus turned to the *Idylls* as a space for exploring fictionality; one of the things that this chapter shows is how Virgil found, in pastoral, a way to explore the problems of communicability, originality, community, and the self.

Insisting on the problem of the solitary imagination of the *Eclogues* seems counterintuitive because, on the surface, so many of its poems seem to teem with people who sit, come, and go, together, in song. My argument is not that the *Eclogues* consistently represent solitude and empty landscapes, but that the solitary imagination is the book's central problem, and that this is so even when, as we will see, especially when, the book is at its most apparently social. It is important, therefore, to be clear on how the *Eclogues "*does" society at its best.

[303] Richard Jenkyns has noted, in Lucretius, a "landscape of lovely loneliness" whose note of "romantic solitude is hardly to be heard in the *Eclogues*, except the last of them." (Jenkyns 1998:280) In fact, the *Eclogues*, and not just the tenth, are characterized by loneliness; it is, however, not often, or not purely, lovely. The earliest extent poem-of-nature completely uninhabited by even a first-person voice seems to be the late antique Tiberianus' *Amnis ibat* (though how one construes as identifies *euntem* (l. 19) makes a large difference).

The *Eclogues*' idealizing of reciprocal social engagement is at its clearest in the monologic fourth *Eclogue*, which prophecies a golden age when cattle will not fear lion, and the earth will voluntarily give forth its bounty. The cause of all of this joy is a young boy (*E.* 4.15-7):

> *ille deum uitam accipiet diuisque uidebit*
> *permixtos heroas et ipse uidebitur illis,*
> *pacatumque reget patriis uirtutibus orbem.*
>
> "He will take up the life of the gods, and will heroes mixed together with gods, and he will be seen by them: he will rule a world made peaceful through his native virtues."

Videbit…et…videbitur, "he will see and be seen": future world peace is made to depend, emphatically (***ipse*** *videbitur* ***illis***), on visual reciprocity. The other ingredient is the thorough amalgam, the *permixtio*, of gods and men (*divuisque**…permixtos** heroas*), for the golden age is a time of blended abundance: "to you, young boy, the earth will pour out first gifts without work--wide-wandering ivy and bacca berries, elephant ear mixed with acanthus (***mixta****que ridenti colocasia fundet acantho--E.* 4.60-3)." The poem moves smoothly back and forward in time, then concludes with the blessed event itself, the birth of the child, where these themes come, conceptually, together:

> *Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem*
> *(Matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses)*
> *Incipe, parve puer: cui non risere parentes,*
> *Nec deus hunc mensa, dea nec dignata cubili est.*

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62 qui *Quint*. ix 3· 8: cui *PRw , Seru . , Quintiliani codd. (corr. Politianus)* parenti *Schrader*: parentes *codd*.

Begin, small child, to recognize your mother with a laugh--ten months have brought long hardship to your mother). Begin, small child: he for whom his parents do not laugh deserves neither god at table, nor goddess in bed. (*E*. 4.60-63)

This new gold world where mortals mix easily with gods is predicated on laughter, and not just any laughter, but mixed laughter: first the child laughs at the mother, then the parents laugh at the child, so that everybody is laughing all together, with the whole scene initiated by the boy's ability to "see" his mother and "know" her (*cognoscere*). These four lines also enact the poem's desire for increase, as the fair creatures multiply: first the boy and his mother, then *any* child and its parents, until, finally, optimistically mixing mortal with divine, a god's table and a goddess' bed.[304] The circle of engagement, the scene of abundance, is on the move and growing here: the

[304] This should put paid to the textual debate over these lines, which concerns who, exactly, is doing the laughter in *E*. 4.62 *cui non risere parentes*. All the MSS and Servius give this reading, but Quintilian has ***qui*** *non risere parentes*, making the child the subject, the parents the object, of the verb, so that this line can recapitulate *E*. 4.60, where the child laughed at the mother. A mistaken insistence that *risere*+acc. can only mean derision, together with a desire to create symmetry between *E*. 4.60 and 62, bolsters a conjecture that changes *parentes* to *parenti*, "parents" to "parent," therefore keeping the number of players the same. Clausen (*ad E*. 4.62) adds that there is nothing particularly miraculous in a parent smiling at a newborn child. But none of this is necessary: *risere*+acc. need not be derisive (cf. Ottaviano 2013 *ad E*. 4.62), there

god's table indicates a jocund abundance of replenished consumption, the goddess' bed a jocund abundance that promises that the circle will only get wider and more golden.

Many *Eclogues* seem to fulfill the fourth poem's desire for a world of mutual recognition and social abundance. On a formal level, most of the *Eclogues* are constructed as the exchange of song between people: one person sings, and another responds. Sometimes this is in competition (3, 7), sometimes not (1, 9); sometimes there is the quick trade of short stanzas, or even a single line (1, 3, 7, 9), sometimes the exchange of whole songs (5, 8). Of the four poems that remain, three involve a staged scene of dramatic monologue (2, 6, 10). Many of the *Eclogues* also feature scenes of collective gathering and movement. The first *Eclogue* ends with the possibility, past or present, of Tityrus and Meliboeus enjoying, together, the pleasures of agricultural bounty. The third poem begins with the herders Menalcas and Damoetas, who are joined, fortuitously, by Palaemon, and beckons them to a singing match with the book's most pastoral lines, "Speak, since we are sitting together in soft grass, and now every field, now every tree is big with buds, the woods put on leaves--now's the year most beautiful." (*E.* 3.55-7) In the ninth *Eclogue*, the inversion proves the rule, so that, although pastoral coming-together is precluded by the world's violent upheavals, there is still the consolation, in the present and future times of the poem, of

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is no need to keep the number of characters low, and the whole point is that both are laughing at the same time. The whole scene is one characterized by growing abundance, and the mention of the “goddess’ bed” at the last line promises that the abundance will not stop growing. If it were possible to show that the alternation of /c/ and /q/ in this period also could create an ambiguity of /cui/ and /qui/, then it would allow this one line to represent both sides of the laughter. Barring that, the last four lines already achieves the same effect over a wider canvass.

going together in song, which Lycidas paints as a dark, but still communally shared, double to Palaemon's happy season-setting: "now every wide water is quiet, and look, all breaths of windy murmur have died; here's the midpoint of our road; for the tomb of Bianor's appeared. Here, where farmers strip dense fronds, here, Moeris--let us sing. Here, leave your goats, and yes, we'll go into the city. Or if we fear that night might first gather rain, then let us at least, while walking, sing--that way, the road hurts less. And so that we can walk and sing, I'll lighten your load." (*E*. 9.47-64) This ideal of resting, coming, and going in song, all convene in the fifth poem, often taken to be the book's hinge, and which opens, like so many of these poems, by taking us *in medias res*: "Why not, Mopsus?--since the two of us have come together, both skilled, you at playing light flutes, me at singing songs, why not sit together among the elms mixed up with hazel?…And now, my young friend, no more talk: we've arrived inside the cave." (*E*. 5.1-3; 19)

But the social richness of the *Eclogues*' pastoral scene is undercut early and often, and, although this book's profoundest struggles with the solitary imagination take place within and under the text, there are also a number of instances where it lies more obviously plotted on the texts' surface.

On the whole, the characters of the *Eclogues* are lonely people who do a great deal of talking, often to unimpressive, or no, effect. Some figures begin with a loneliness they seem unlikely to shake. In the second *Eclogue*, Corydon, the country bumpkin whose love the urbane Alexis does not return, was in the habit of coming, we are told, "again and again among the dense beech trees, their shadowy tops, and here, all alone (*solus*), would toss off unplanned

words to the mountains and woods with useless zeal."[305] The model for this figure is the lovelorn Cyclops of Theocritus' eleventh *Idyll*, but, as has been noted, whereas the Cyclops seems likely to achieve some cure for his love-sickness, "Virgil leaves no doubt that his endeavors were in vain…"[306] Not only vain, but to be vainly reiterated: Corydon, it is clear, is and will remain alone, and his retreat to the woods, "alone," turns out to bring him no closer to an escape from his solitude.[307]

Gallus of the tenth *Eclogue* is caught in a similar situation of solitary longing for his far-wandering Lycoris. He imagines his beloved "far from home" (*procul a patria*) as she looks, "without me, all alone (*me sine sola vides*), on the Alpine snow and the freezing of the Rhine." (*E*. 10.46-8) Gallus has chosen his surroundings to great effect: he has laid himself out "under a lonely cliff" (*sola sub rupe*--*E*. 10.14), making his surroundings match and accentuate his theme. Gallus is a lonely man under a lonely rock dreaming about his lonely girl in a lonely land. Like Corydon, Gallus is, in this sense, a figure not only out of pastoral, but out of elegy as well: as we will explore in our fourth Chapter on Propertius, the solitude of the lover-poet was an elegiac theme of long-standing. But as Theocritus' *Idylls* show, elegy did not have a monopoly on lonely

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[305] Note that *veniebat* ("he would come") and *ibi* ("here") both imply that the singer of this poem is in the woods himself, or that we are to think of ourselves as already within those woods.

[306] Du Quesnay 1979:48; see this piece *passim* on Virgilian *imitatio* of Theocritean material.

[307] On the danger of lonely places, see Ovid, *Remedia* (579ff.), *"quisquis amas, loca sola nocent, loca sola caveto,"* and see Du Quesnay 1979:48. Compare also with Propertius 1.18. It is suggestive that, as Du Quesnay points out, Virgil's *solus* seems to adapt Theocritus' word αὐτός (*Id*. 11.14), so that to be "alone," is, for Corydon, just to be very much what he is.

lovers: from the beginning, one imagines, these genres engaged in creative appropriation of one anothers' themes.

We will address more directly the possibility that elegiac solitude added something particular to Virgilian pastoral in our discussion of Gallus' position in *Eclogue* 10; for now, though, we will keep with the more direct effects of language and scene, starting with Gallus' "lonely rock." This phrase is what a case of what gets called transferred epithet, in this case reworking an evocative moment from the preceding ninth *Eclogue*, where Lycidas and Moeris, lamenting in a land of withered and shattered trees (*veteres iam fracta cacumina fagos--E*. 9.9), try to recover shreds of song left behind by the absent master-singer Menalcas; at one point, Lycidas asks Moeris about "that song that I heard you singing all alone under the clear night sky (*pura solum sub nocte canentem--E.* 9.44)? I recall the meters--if only I could grasp the words (*numeros memini si verba tenerem*)."[308] The song that Moeris sang and Lycidas (over)heard was Moeris' address to the stars, where the master-singer-shepherd Daphnis, now deceased, has his new home. The Latin word *solus*, "alone," here is richly ambidextrous: Moeris was "alone" because he has lost Daphnis to the stars, but also because he, alone, sang this song. And just as Meliboeus of the first *Eclogue* will sing no more songs, Moeris, too, has lost his songs: "Time takes all, even life…now all my songs are forgotten, even the voice itself has left Moeris (*nunc*

[308] Virgil later combined the expressions of *A*. 9.44 and *A*. 10.14, at that point in his wanderings where, heading into the underworld, Aeneas and the Sibyl are said to have "gone, darkling, under a lonely, night, through the shadow" (*ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram—A.* 6.268). Since Conte (see Conte 2007, esp. pp 58-122), this has been the *locus classicus* for *enallagê* as the signature Viriglian style (and center-piece of his stylistic *kakozelia*).

oblita mihi tot carmina, vox quoque Moerim / iam fugit ipsa--E. 9.51-4). Because the whole movement of the ninth *Eclogue* is from the country into the city, this penultimate poem leaves the pastoral world as empty as the one in which Gallus finds himself at book's end.

When it comes to solitude, the *Eclogues* book reaps what it sows, with the lonely concluding poem (*E.* 10) mirroring the tragic opening poem (*E.* 1). In the first *Eclogue*, Meliboeus, exiled from pastoral, done with bucolic song--"I will sing no songs" (*carmina nulla canam--E.* 1.77)--departs alone with his goats to place very far away, very foreign, very un-pastoral. Although Tityrus is allowed to remain in pastoral lands, it is not clear that any pastors remain with whom he could engage in pastoral song: the godlike boy who gives and takes away land is in far-away Rome; the "barbarous soldier" who possesses Meliboeus' land is not likely to be much of a singer[309], let alone much of a friend; Amaryllis is merely an echoing extension of Tityrus' own voice[310]; and the only other singer other than birds, the bees, and trees is the faceless tree-trimmer: "here, beneath the high rock (*alta sub rupe*) the pruner of trees will sing to the winds (*canet frondator ad auras--E.* 1.56)." Meliboeus' evocation of the singing tree-trimmer has been compared to a figure from a similar scene in Theocritus,[311] but it is more a study in contrast than similitude, and in a way that emphasizes the social emptiness of Virgil's pastoral scene. In the eighth *Idyll* of the Theocritean corpus, Menalcas claims he would prefer nothing, not the gold of Croesus nor speed exceeding storm-winds, to "sitting beneath this rock, having

[309] Recall that *barbarus* means, not only a "cruel, harsh, savage" person, but also someone who cannot speak the common tongues (i.e. Greek, and, sometimes, Latin).

[310] On which, see below.

[311] Clausen *ad loc.*

you beside me, beautiful pasture-mate, gazing on the Sicilian sea." (8.55-6) Menalcas' partner Daphnis replies that love (*πόθος*) is a condition as natural to humans (and Zeus) as wood's fear of storms, water's of drought, beast's of nets, and bird's of snares. But, by contrast, Virgil's *frondator* sings his song not to Tityrus or Amaryllis, but to the winds (*ad auras*), among the echoing trees and birds ceaselessly sighing. There is no hint of any relationship between this *frondator* and Tityrus. The song of the tree-trimmer is a vision of solitary imagination, of Virgilian pastoral, and fits the description that Meliboeus gives of his own dispossessed idyll: "I will not after this see you, me laid out in the green cave, you hanging from the thorny rock, from afar."[312] Where the vision of Theocritus was communal, that of Meliboeus is solitary: of Tityrus, alone, like Gallus, under the rock face, looking out at animals from afar, listening to a *frondator* alone with his airs, winds, birds, rocks, and trees.[313] It is precisely the motif of solitary song that animates Virgil's *Eclogues* from beginning to end.

These scenes of solitude are visible on the surface of the *Eclogues*' plots, but the more radical and sustained engagement with the solitary imagination is in the poems' smaller, but more explosive, gestures. These gestures wrestle with the possibility, alternating between certainty and doubt, that the multitudes that appear on the poem's surface may be nothing less or more than the

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[312] *non ego vos posthac viridi proiectus in antro / dumosa pendere procul de rupe videbo—E*. 1.75-76.

[313] Whereas the tenth *Eclogue*'s Gallus, as we will see in greater depth below, sings to the trees, the *frondator* of the first *Eclogue* sings to the winds, which makes sense, given that the job of the *frondator* is to decrease tree-cover, thereby increasing the amount of visible air. The nexus of air-*frondator*-trees is, in fact, comparable to that of shade-*Amaryllis*-trees.

product of a single imagining mind, and perhaps not even that. These gestures conspire to create the impression that, in the worlds of the *Eclogues*, song, far from being a cure for loneliness, is its strongest ally. The end result is an emptying out of the pastoral scene, a radical reduction of pastoral voices, and a strong contrast to the poems' ostensible valorization of response, reciprocity, and community. In what follows, I look first at the way the fifth and eighth *Eclogues* close with big-reveals that provoke revisionary readings of the pastoral world as emptier, pastoral presences less certain, than at first appears to be the case. I then show how these anxieties take their cues from the first *Eclogue*'s surreal drama, culminate in the solitary imagination that is at the center of the tenth *Eclogue*, and have a crucial continued impact on the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*. Though I will quote extensively, it will be useful to have a copy of the poems at hand.

III. Solitude-Speaking Muse: The First *Eclogue*

> ποῖα οὖν δεινὰ ἢ ποῖα οἰκτρὰ φαίνεται τῶν συμπιπτόντων, λάβωμεν. ἀνάγκη δὴ ἢ φίλων εἶναι πρὸς ἀλλήλους τὰς τοιαύτας πράξεις ἢ ἐχθρῶν ἢ μηδετέρων. ἂν μὲν οὖν ἐχθρὸς ἐχθρόν, οὐδὲν ἐλεεινὸν οὔτε ποιῶν οὔτε μέλλων, πλὴν κατ᾽ αὐτὸ τὸ πάθος: οὐδ᾽ ἂν μηδετέρως ἔχοντες. (Aristot. Poet. 1453b)
>
> Let us take up, then, what kinds of things seem horrible, or what kind piteous. In a deed of this description the parties must be either friends, or enemies, or indifferent to one another. If an enemy does it to an enemy, there is nothing to move us to pity in his action or intention, except the suffering itself. It is the same when two people are indifferent to one another.

Aristotle's *Poetics* thought tragedy could provoke pity only by showing a friend hurting a friend, and not, say, a fight between enemies or the plainly indifferent. If Aristotle had been able to open Virgil's *Eclogues*, though, he might have reconsidered this restriction, for the first *Eclogue* is, truly, a tragedy of indifferents.[314] Read with the hindsight of the happy dreams to come in the fourth *Eclogue*, we see that we are worlds away from the reciprocated vision and laughter that Sibylline imagination might project.

The first *Eclogue* is, indeed, "the beginning of the end."[315] When the *Eclogues* book opens, the pasture is already foreclosed, and we are in a world where the isolation and banishment of man and song is, already, a *fait accompli*. Most approaches, taking their cues from the poem's ostensible plot, see the threat to Virgilian pastoral as emanating from outside of the pastoral world: as Luke Roman puts it, "the imminence of pastoral closure [by extra-pastoral, urban, military, forces] is disquietingly present from the very beginning."[316] But, as I suggested vis-a-vis the eighth and fifth *Eclogues*, the greatest danger to pastoral community comes from within: autonomy may be, as Luke Roman has it, a sought-after pastoral prize, but acquiring it entails accepting a poison pill of alienation, isolation, and solitude.

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[314] A useful comparison can be drawn with Rainer Maria Rilke's words on "the love that consists in this: that two solitudes protect and border and greet each other." (Letter to Mr. Kappus, May 14, 1904) The first *Eclogue* is, by comparison, the tragedy that occurs when two solitudes border but cannot truly greet or protect.

[315] Theodorakopoulos 1997:162.

[316] Roman 2014:115.

These poems' roll into solitary shadows begins with the book's first speech, a speech that, as we will see, undoes the work of the title itself. When Virgil wrote his first book, he did not title it *Eclogues*—this word, meaning "selection," "first-fruits," and "excerpt," corresponds to the Greek-derived *anthologia* (flower-collection), and was used, from the 1st century CE on, to refer to a single poem as part of a collection, and seems to have been useful for titling poems from this book when published independently from their fellows, occasionally, though surely not always, for the purposes of performance.[317] Instead, the title that you likely saw or heard when first unrolling this scroll, the first of Virgil's published works, was…*Bucolica.*[318] Bucolicizing was what the Sicilian singer-shepherds of the 3rd century BCE Alexandrian poet Theocritus were doing when they sang their pastoral songs[319]; the muses of Greek pastoral were always the bucolic muses, from Theocritus' refrains down to the select collection of bucolic verse made by the 1st century BCE Alexander of Tarsus, who boasted of his poem-herding prowess:

βουκολικαὶ Μοῖσαι σποράδες ποκά, νῦν δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι
ἐντὶ μιᾶς μάνδρας, ἐντὶ μιᾶς ἀγέλας.

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[317] Horsfall 1995:27-8; Clausen 1994:xx n. 23.

[318] E.g. in the titles of the capital MSS: MS G: P. VERGILI MARONIS BVCOLICA EXPLICIT; MS M: P. VERGILI MARONIS BVCOLICON LIBER EXPLICIT; MS P: BVCOLICON; MS R: VERGILI MARONIS BVCOLICA EXPLIC. FELICITER.

[319] e.g. Theocritus, *Idyll* 7.36 *βουκολιασδώμεσθα,* on which, see Hunter 1999:5-8, Payne 2007:129.

"The bucolic Muses were once scattered, but now are all together in one fold, in one flock."[320]

Alexander's metaphor (Muses are a herd) stems from the fact that the term *Bucolica* derives, as Servius explains, from "those who guard the cows" (*Bucolica, ut ferunt, dicta sunt a custodibus boum, id est ἀπὸ τῶν βουκόλων—Buc. Pro*.), making Alexander the herder of herders.

The content of Virgil's first poem makes puts the title of his first book on edge. Although the first poem does not have the word *Bucolica*, it does have something close: the work's first speaker, its title character, Meliboeus. Meliboeus, as we know, as bilingual Virgil would have known, is Greek for "care for cows," making him synonymous with *Bucolica*, which means cow-herding in Greek, but also, we can now add, cow-caring in Latin (*bôs* + *colo*).[321] This Latinizing is germane because Meliboeus, the all too timeless, all too Greek pastor, is in an all too Roman, and contemporary, situation: he has been exiled from his lands, and, as we will learn, Rome and its boy-god are somehow involved, though the chains of blame—unlike those of praise—are kept decorously veiled.

Though the details are in the future when the poem begins, the facts are stated up front: in the poem's first lines, lines as programmatic and densely articulated as the proems to the later *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*, we find that *Bucolica* is over before it gets going:[322]

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[320] *AP* 9.205; trans. Clausen 1994:xx.

[321] Compare the other shepherding name "Alphesiboeus," which has more directly mercantile associations,

[322] For bibliography, see Van Sickle 2000, who is responding to two programmatic readings of *Ecl*. 1, by Cairns (1999:289) and Hubbard (1998:49-50). Van Sickle focuses on working out the valences of ideologically competitive intertexts drawn from Cicero, Lucretius, Theocritus, Plato,

Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi

siluestrem tenui Musam meditaris auena;

nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arua.

nos patriam fugimus; tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra

formosam resonare doces Amaryllida siluas.

You, Tityrus, lie under the canopy of a spreading beech,

Wooing the woodland Muse on slender reed,

But we are leaving our country's bounds and sweet fields.

We are outcasts from our country; you, Tityrus, at ease beneath the shade,

Teach the woods to re-echo "fair Amaryllis." (trans. Fairclough/Goold 1999)

There is an emphasis here on dichotomies, with the plentiful activities of Tityrus—reposing in a shade luxuriously drawn, pliant, elastic, drawn-out, fulsome; meditating freely on the wooded muse in a world of fine objects, finer music, and, finest of all, the song of "lovely Amaryllis" echoed by the trees—opposed to Meliboeus, who does one thing, but a big thing—he flees, for he is banished. Nothing more need be said nor can be said to specify what this means: *fugio* (flight, banishment, exile) has no end, limit, bound, because it transgress all ends, limits, bounds; it requires, and receives, here, no accompaniment or elaboration.[323]

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and Homer, in order to get at the specific importance of Meliboeus' oaten straw (*tenuis avena*). For a reading of E. 1.5 as programmatic in itself, see Clauss 1997.

[323] In truth, of course, many Romans suffered and survived exile; on which, for the Republican period, see Kelly 2006.

On most readings, the first *Eclogue* lacks the sympathetic fellow-feeling that founds human flourishing in the fourth *Eclogue*; the mutual commiserations of fellow-sufferers of pastoral exile in the ninth *Eclogue*; or the intense interpersonal longing that is at the center of the tenth *Eclogue*. In other *Eclogues*, characters have conversations: they respond to what other people say, and, if a point is misunderstood, they quickly clarify. In the first *Eclogue*, the two characters, Meliboeus and Tityrus, seem rather to speak to themselves than to one another, creating a series of intertwined soliloquies rather than dramatic dialogue. The result is a drama of non-encounter, less like mimesis than what we might call, in a modern formulation, a drama of alienation, in which characters "all offer themselves up and are lost."[324]

The problem begins with the first speech, where Meliboeus does the work of two speakers. Compare Meliboeus' opening lines with this rather typical exchange from a flyting, amoeboean, poem, the seventh *Eclogue (*ll. 53-60):[325]

CORYDON

Stant et iuniperi et castaneae hirsutae;
strata iacent passim sua quaeque sub arbore poma;
omnia nunc rident: at, si formosus Alexis
montibus his abeat, uideas et flumina sicca.

THYRSIS

Aret ager; uitio moriens sitit aeris herba;

[324] Bertol Brecht, in his 1949 *Organum* (p. 74). For further discussion, see Jameson 1998, Thomson 2006.

[325] For a detailed treatment of this set of poems, see Karakasis 2011.

Liber pampineas inuidit collibus umbras:

Phyllidis aduentu nostrae nemus omne uirebit,

Iuppiter et laeto descendet plurimus imbri.

CORYDON

Here stand junipers and hairy chestnuts; strewn beneath each tree lies its fruit—now all things smile. But if beautiful Alexis left these hills, you'd see the very rivers dry.

THYRSIS

The field is dry, the grass, dying from taint of the air, is parched, Bacchus begrudges vine-shade to these hills. The whole forest will be green at the coming of our Phyllis, and Jupiter will descend most fully with happy rain.

Corydon and Thyrsis each make a speech that heads in one direction and makes one point, so that they form, together, a clear contrast, but also, we might say, a true exchange. The first *Eclogue* might have proceeded along similar lines: Meliboeus might have praised Tityrus' great fortune, and Tityrus might have lamented Meliboeus' tragic exile. Instead, Meliboeus does the work of both praise and lament, in marked contrast, as we shall see, to Tityrus' exclusive focus on his own future happiness.

Further, Meliboeus' opening lines are a model for how prosperity and misfortune can abut without touching, therefore a model, too, for what turns out to be the non-drama of Meliboeus and Tityrus. Much of this hinges on the relationship of what the Greek-aware reader knows to be Theocritean material against what Virgil added to the pastoral mix. Meliboeus' opening lines have, in fact, been called "one of the most famous surprises in ancient literature," not on

historical, but generic, grounds:[326] the first two lines seem to imitate the form and content of the opening of what we call Theocritus' first *Idyll*,[327] but the lines that follow, lines 3-4, do not. Whereas the framing Theocritean lines of praise evoke what Thomas Rosenmeyer (1969) has called the Theocritean "pleasance," a place of beauty, joy, and security, the enclosed lines that Virgil has added are filled with a sense of sadness, pain, and exile unfamiliar to the Theocritean original.

This can be seen easily seen by removing the Virgilian suppletion from the Theocritean material and making them into consecutive statements:

Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi
siluestrem tenui Musam meditaris auena: *[tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra]*
formosam resonare doces Amaryllida siluas.

nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arva
nos patriam fugimus.

You, Tityrus, laid out under the canopy of a spreading beech,
Will meditate the forest Muse on slender reed, [you, Tityrus, pliant under shade]

[326] Hunter 2006:290. For a sense of the difference between the language of "shock and surprise" in Classical studies and critical developments in other literary fields, see the chapter on "Shock" in the literary manifesto of Rita Felski (2008), where she describes how these words and concepts might be restored as aesthetic, rather than merely *pro forma*, aspects of interpretation.

[327] The numbering of Theocritus' poems in their original form or forms, or in the form or forms in which Virgil read them, is anything but clear.

Teach the woods to resonate Amaryllis. (trans. Fairclough/Goold 1999)

We are leaving our country's boundaries and sweet fields.

We are outcasts from our country.

Laid out like this, we can recognize both the lines of lament and the lines of praise as each having, separately, the recognizable rhetorical form of the *epiphonema*, defined by Quintilian as "a final attestation of something previously narrated or proved."[328] The result is shortening, concentration, and intensification.

On the side of praise, what was said in the first two lines in twelve words is said in ten in the second part, in five if we exclude the transitional phrase *tu Tityre lentus in umbra*. The "resonating woods" combines both the figure of the trees and the sylvan muse; the "shade" is a swift physicalization of the periphrastic expression "under the canopy of a spreading beech;" and the "meditation" of the first part intensifies into the more active "instruction" of the second. Amaryllis herself participates in this in important ways as a "speaking name": Amaryllis, from Greek *ἀμαρύσσω,* "to shine, or shimmer,"[329] already contains, in its insinuation of half-light, the necessary presence of some shade, and, more exactly, the shade provided by the tree-cover.

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[328] His example: 'So hard it was to found the Roman nation,'" (Quint., *Inst*. 8.5.11) the end of the proem to the *Aeneid*. There are other rhetorical terms that we might use for the revised stanza's construction—*epaxegesis* (commentary on what was previously said), *exargasia* (repetition of the same idea in different words), or *epitasis* (intensification)—but although each would color the stanza differently, all draw attention to the process of intensification.

[329] Compare this with another pastoral name, *Aegle*, meaning "blinding light."

On the side of lament, we find a similar pattern: what was stated first in a whole line is restated in a half-line; whereas we first flee the "bounds" of the homeland, we next flee the "homeland" itself; where the first statement possessed a tautological, pleonastic fullness—what *patria* could not be called *dulcia arva*?—the second tightens into brutal economy. This, together with the first line's delayed verb, imbues the initial statement with nostalgia, longing, and meditated feeling, from which we must depart (*linquimus*); in the second, by contrast, we have fatalistic finality: "we flee the homeland."[330]

That being said, there are ways in which these lines of joy and lament interact, just not in ways that are any help to their characters: they are externally visible, not internally felt, aspects of the poem's structure that we, but not the characters themselves, can appreciate—fate as dramatic irony. First, there is the structure: what we have called the beginning of the fourth line's compression of the third line—"we flee the fatherland"—in fact does double duty, both compressing what it follows, and motivating what it precedes: "we flee the fatherland—you, Tityrus, pliant in the shade." Modern punctuation hides how subtly this is done: there is a great difference between a caesura and a period. Second, and this was perhaps intended only for the more technically minded reader trained in practices of Epicurean euphony, the praise and lament

[330] Virgil may have inherited the conjunction, "depart the sweet [something]" (*linquo*+*dulcis*) from Lucretius— *dulcia linquebant labentis lumina vitae* (DRN 5.989=3.542). He liked it enough to reuse it to strong effect in the third book of the *Aeneid*, where, when the Trojans ill-advisedly decide to settle on Crete instead of moving towards Italy, begin to suffer from plague: *linquebant dulcis animas aut aegra trahebant / corpora* (*A*. 3.140-1). Ironically, their refusal to persevere in their flight from sweet lands (à la Meliboeus) causes them to lose their sweet lives.

is abetted by interpenetration on the level of sound.[331] It has been noted, for example, that the first line, beyond replicating the jingle of Theocritus' first line, also imitates, in its alternation of /U/ and /I/ sounds, the sound of the pastoral flute itself (Cucchiarelli *ad E.* 1.1).[332] But one also

[331] When Virgil was writing the *Eclogues*, he was living in the Bay of Naples in the Epicurean community that included Siro and Philodemus. The latter of these two, Philodemus, had come to Rome from Gadara, and wrote an extended treatment of poetics which, though it is difficult to piece together its own philosophy, definitely treated at great length the challenge posed by the so-called *euphonists*, who believed (or at least argued) that poetry had nothing to do with content, and everything to do with sound. Though this is need not have been Virgil's own philosophy—it's very hard to believe it could have been--it is probable that such arguments may have had an influence on Virgil's thinking, and that the opening of Virgil's *Eclogues* reflects if not a side in the debate, at least the idea of the debate itself. For Philodemus on these theories, see Obbink (ed.) 1995 *passim*, but esp. Asmis, "Epicurean Poetics."

[332] For an extension of reading for the sound to the second line, see Alpers on how it "tunes" to /M/: "Where Theocritus' lines, as has often been noted, imitate the sound of the reed-pipe [Rosenmeyer 152-3], the *m*-sounds of Virgil's phrase seem "pure" verbal music, Tennysonian if you will. But again the effect is not left vague, for it is given substance by line 5, where sylvan music is defined as the echo of human song. We now see the three elements attuned the letter *m* in distinct relations to each other: you teach (*meditaris*) the woods (*silverstram*) to echo Amaryllis (*musam*)." (Alpers 1979:75) But is the "m" of *sylvestram* actually an "m" in the same way as the others, or only the same letter, but pronounced as a nasalization, and if they are connected then does the problem of the oral and the written come up here immediately?

sees (or, rather, hears) that, with one exception, every vowel of the Latin alphabet is represented in the first two lines, for most of the letters in both their long and short forms. The exception, of course, is /O/, whose absence will turn to strong presence in the (anaphoric) repetition of *nos-nos, "*we, we," in the poem's sad center. Once out of that and into the transition, we leave /O/ behind (*tu Tityre lentus in umbra*), thus reproducing the sound scape of the stanza's opening, as it also reproduces its address (*Tityre tu tu Tityre*). The last line of Meliboeus' whole stanza, however, makes /O/ a very strong presence: *formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas*. And, looking and listening ahead to the next stanza, we hear it trumpeting Tityrus and his *entrée pompeuse*: *O Meliboee deus nobis haec otia fecit*. Finally, the tittering of the opening--imitative of Theocritus' matching lines--and the play of /O/ sounds in this stanza draw attention to the sound, and for listening one is rewarded by what Clausen has called, at the stanza's end, the echo effect of /IL/ in *formosum resonare doces Amaryllida silvas* ("You teach the woods to echo 'Fair Amaryllis'"), where the trees' echoing of Amaryllis is here matched with the echo effect of *AmarYLlida sILvas*.[333]

[333] It is an effect to which Virgil would frequently return; for example, *E.* 2.13 *ardenti resonant arbusta* and then *G.* 1.486 *per noctem resonare lupis ululantibus urbes* (which he notes is "rhythmically identical" with our line), *G.* 2.328 *avia tum resonant avibus virgulta canoris*). He also points us to Norden on *A.* 6.204. Also, "for this figure of sound V. is indebted to Catullus, 11.3-4 *litus ut longe resonante Eoa / tenditur unda*—a passage that worked powerfully upon his auditory imagination; cf. *G.* 1.358-9: *aut resonantia longe / litora misceri et nemorum increbrescere murmur*. See 6.84n." (Clausen *ad* 1.50) I might add that an extra "echo effect," and with vowel + /L/ would be a side benefit of reading *acalânthida dumi*, as would the

In both of these cases, Meliboeus' pain and Tityrus' joy interpenetrate at formal levels that are seen, or heard, only from outside the text, but do not play a part in their drama, appreciable only on the other side of the poetic proscenium.[334] Their worlds cohere, but only textually, linguistically, formally, their unity a trick of language and as an abstraction. Is this, then, a social, or a solitary, scene?

Though it has not been often put in these terms, this problem of solitude has been at the center of scholarly debates over the opening *Eclogue*'s generic profile: is it lyric, people have wanted to know, or is it drama?[335] These are modern terms, of course, and what we're after is not, after all, generic distinctions, but poetic understanding: what is this poem *getting at*? Do

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wonderful sound correspondence between *acalânthida/Amaryllida*. One might also think of another of Virgil's echoing passages, where shade is made dense by *ilicibus crebris* (*G*. 3.334).

[334] A more extreme, and necessarily speculative, case would be the FONS acrostic that has been argued for by Clauss 1997. The situation would be related, narratologically, to what Alison Sharrock (2009:175) has termed the "comic echo" effect in Plautine drama, where characters repeat phrases that, having been spoken when they were offstage, they could not possibly have heard. I would only add to Clauss' arguments that a) the acrostic may be prepared, sonically, by ***nos*** *patriae* ***f****inis inis*, then the anaphoric ***nos*** *patriam* ***f****ugimus,* with NOSF as anagram for FONS, and b) the flow of this fountain begins with Meliboeus' re-linquishment of his homeland (*linquimus>linquo~liqueo*), a motif of liquid leave-taking that will be repeated, fittngly, at the beginning of *Eclogue* 10.

[335] See Alpers 1979:65ff. (against drama), Perkell 2008 (for drama), with bibl.

these characters speak to one another, or to themselves? Putting the problem in the terms of solitude can, I think, help us clarify some of these questions.

Until the last stanza, most scholars agree, without reservation, that, while Meliboeus laments his own fate and celebrates that of Tityrus, Tityrus focuses entirely on his own happy future.[336] Miscommunication, is, of course, at the heart of realistic drama, but the problem, here, is that the obvious and increasingly stark disjunctions don't seem to bother either speaker. Not that this couldn't be explained away: for Perkell (2008), dreamy Meliboeus is so absorbed by his fantasy that he doesn't attend to Tityrus' answers; and Tityrus is, until the end, made temporarily narcissistic by his luck. Even as Alpers (1979) argued that the poem as a whole cannot be understood dramatically, he does so, as we shall see, only in order to excise the last stanza--up

[336] For example, when Meliboeus finishes his opening stanza, which begins by describing Tityrus' happiness, then turns towards the pain and sadness of Meliboeus' pending exile, and ends, once again, with the theme of Tityrus' joy, Tityrus responds by cheerily expanding on just how happy he is, and just what an excellent god has gotten him where he is, responding, as it were, to only the frame of Meliboeus' speech. Similarly, when Meliboeus asks Tityrus to say more about his saving god, and to whom he now offers cult, Tityrus responds not with the god's identity but with a hymn to the greatness of the city of Rome. And when Meliboeus slips into a flight of poetic fantasizing (13 lines) over Tityrus' long-term happiness, Tityrus can respond only by referring, once again, to how much he owes to this god. Meliboeus responds with a long speech (15 lines) detailing, in what for Latin pastoral is extreme terms, the difficulties of his situation: he is exiled to the farther of foreign lands, his lands in the hands of a cruel conqueror, and his flock forever destined to graze on poor grass.

until then, he sees Meliboeus as sad and sympathetic, Tityrus as self-absorbed and indifferent. In either case, drama, in large part, prevails.[337]

A great deal hangs, in this poem as in so many of Virgil's poems, on the text's final lines. For once Meliboeus has bade farewell to his sweet fields, his goat-perched rocks, and, finally, his songs—"I will sing no songs," (*carmina nulla canam—E*. 1.77)—Tityrus notes the nightfall, and concludes the poem:

> *Hic tamen hanc mecum poteras requiescere noctem*
> *fronde super viridi. sunt nobis mitia poma,*
> *castaneae molles et pressi copia lactis,*
> *et iam summa procul villarum culmina fumant*
> *maioresque cadunt altis de montibus umbrae.*
>
> Here, even this night, you could (*poteras*) rest alongside me on a leaf-green bed--I have ripe apples, soft chestnuts, and plenty of cheese. Already the high tops of houses smoke, and larger shadows fall from the high mountains. (*E*. 1.79-83)

What hangs on the end in fact hangs on one word: *poteras,* "you might (have)." Is it--on the model of Ovid, *Met*. 1.621, Horace *Satires* 2.1.16, or Theocritus' Cyclops to Galatea (*Id*.

[337] There is, in any event, a fair amount of ancient evidence that attests to staged performances of the *Eclogues*, whatever precisely that means. For this, see Donat. *Vit. Verg*. 26, Serv. ad *Ecl*. 6.11; see Steinmetz 1968, Van Sickle 1986:17-23. Tac. *Dial*. 13.2 has *auditis in theatro Vergili versibus*, though *Eclogues* are not there named. Currie 1976 on *Ecl*. 3 draws comparisons with comedy and mime.

11.44)—a polite invitation ("you surely could rest this night with me")?[338] Or is it, rather, an unreal condition ("you could have rested this night with me")?[339] In fact, it is both of these at the same time, less like an ambidextrous juggling act that an inexpressible, but all too Virgilian, fruitless compassion, and late. The ambiguity of this invitation makes the first *Eclogue* a story where what might have been remains an abstraction, as uncertain in its force as the relationship of Meliboeus and Tityrus itself.

But it is not exactly a happy abstraction, in a way that makes of the poem's adjacent solitudes an ethical challenge: the juxtaposition of happy and sad, or rather, the sandwiching of the sad by the happy, is not morally neutral. In both Meliboeus' opening speech and in the structure of the poem as a whole, Tityrus' pleasance surrounds Meliboeus' sorrow[340], and it is unchanged by the sorrow that it encases. How can we judge a situation where joy does not change when it finds sorrow? Can pleasure and pain be innocently adjacent? Or must the existence of the sad center alter what surrounds it? The repetitive, unchanging pleasance is this poem's small-scale and large-scale refrain insofar as it punctuates the text and neglects to change. In the eighth *Eclogue*, as we've seen, Virgil uses what may be an ironic refrain to end that poem—after Alphesiboea introduces the doubt that what she thinks she says may be what she is projecting, the refrain doubles down on the deception/reality by announcing Daphnis'

[338] So Clausen *ad loc*.

[339] So Coleman *ad loc*.

[340] Perkell 2008:123 notes how Tityrus' joy begins and ends the poem.

approach.[341] Coming to the end of the first *Eclogue*, readers have felt called upon to decide between this is a case of lyric symbolism or dramatic cruelty. The twin nature of *poteras* means that it is both of these, but the fact that it cannot be decided means that it is also, in a way, beside the point: as the eighth *Eclogue* has it, we make of this poem what we bring to it.

And this is the essential point: Meliboeus and Tityrus, so different in fate and fortune, are servants of the same solitude-seeking Muse. Although Meliboeus will leave in silence—*carmina nulla canam*, "I will sing no more songs," he says towards the poem's end—and Tityrus will stay and bid trees to sing, both will be drawing on the same solitary muse. What of Tityrus' Amaryllis? Amaryllis is not really there: look for her, and she vanishes, like the patron of the eighth *Eclogue*, into description, reference, imagination, or, least and most of all, the matter of song. In the first *Eclogue*, Tityrus and Amaryllis exist for one another as the products of song bounced off the trees, their intermediary muse. We recall, when the poem began, that Meliboeus said of Tityrus, "you will teach the woods to re-echo 'Fair Amaryllis' (*formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas*)." Where Amaryllis is in all of this is irrelevant: it is the song of Amaryllis that Tityrus will get, and give. Later in the poem, we find that Tityrus had, at a low point in his past life, gone to Rome to see if he might remedy his troubles; while he was gone, Meliboeus had, he claims, listened on, in wonder, to Amaryllis' laments:

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[341] A keen student of Virgil's *Eclogues* from late antiquity, the author of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, similarly ends his poem on spring's fertile joy by emphasizing his own sad silence, before turning, once more, and ironically, self-punishingly, to the refrain: "tomorrow will love who never loved, whoever has loved tomorrow will love" (*cras amet qui numquam amavit, quique amavit cras amet*).

Mirabar quid maesta deos, Amarylli, vocares,

cui pendere sua patereris in arbore poma.

Tityrus hinc aberat. ipsae te, Tityre, pinus,

ipsi te fontes, ipsa haec arbusta vocabant.

I wondered why, so sad, Amaryllis, you called on the gods; for whom you allowed apples to dangle from their tree—Tityrus was not here! O Tityrus, to you the pines themselves, to you the fountains, and these shrubs, called out. (E. 1.36-9)

These lines are very important, and very easy to misconstrue: they do not show how "the sympathy of nature" is a "fundamental assumption of pastoral[342]." Instead, they give away the pastoral "sympathy" game: the "calling" of the pines, fountains, shrubs (*vocabant*) answers the "calling" of Amaryllis (*vocares*) in so structurally perfect a way precisely because the call of the trees is nothing else but the call of Amaryllis. Similarly, for Tityrus, Amaryllis is nothing but the song-title, "Fair Amaryllis," that he teaches the woods to echo: this is his supreme pleasure, not Amaryllis herself. In this poem, Tityrus is never with Amaryllis: her "possession" of him, like Galatea's before her, the passage of which is so swift and fluid ("But now Amaryllis has me, Galatea left me") is abstract and intangible, a play of mental desires. The solitary state implied by Virgil's "forest muse" (*silvestrem musam*) is not a wholesale Virgilian invention, but, rather, the inheritor of a particular tradition of Hellenistic pastoral. As Marco Fantuzzi has shown, poets like Bion and Meleager, about equidistant in time between Theocritus and Virgil, departed from

[342] Clausen *ad loc*.

Theocritus' example and made the pastoral life and the life of love mutually exclusive.[343] Its most typical, and condensed, expression is the poem of Meleager—first century BCE poet and the editor of the *Garland*, a collection of Greek epigrams from which I have drawn this chapter's epigraph: it is one of the most important sources, in the sense of starting-points, for Virgil's lonely *Eclogues*:

> Ἀχήεις τέττιξ, δροσεραῖς σταγόνεσσι μεθυσθεὶς
> ἀγρονόμαν μέλπεις μοῦσαν ἐρημολάλον·
> ἄκρα δ' ἐφεζόμενος πετάλοις πριονώδεσι κώλοις
> αἰθίοπι κλάζεις χρωτὶ μέλισμα λύρας.
> ἀλλά, φίλος, φθέγγου τι νέον δενδρώδεσι Νύμφαις
> παίγνιον, ἀντῳδὸν Πανὶ κρέκων κέλαδον,
> ὄφρα φυγὼν τὸν Ἔρωτα μεσημβρινὸν ὕπνον ἀγρεύσω
> ἐνθάδ' ὑπὸ σκιερῇ κεκλιμένος πλατάνῳ.
>
> You're twittering, Cicada, drunk on dewy drops: you play the rural solitude-speaking Muse. Seated high on leave petals with serried legs on sunbaked skin you strike the lyre's song.
>
> But now, my friend, utter something new to the forest-nymphs, a playful thing, strum a loud song back to Pan, so that, escaping high-noon love, I might catch sleep, here, leaning, under the shady plane. (*AP* 7.196)

In the first half, the solitary cicada plays solitude-speaking music (whatever precisely that means); in the second half, the cicada's music is found inadequate to the task of curing love-sickness, so the poet, spread out in shade, requests a song to the "forest-nymphs." There are a

[343] Fantuzzi and Hunter 2005:177; Sens 2006:164.

number of verbal parallels between this poem and the opening of Virgil's first *Eclogue*, some of which have been noted, some of which have been passed over. Not only does *patulae recubans tub tegmine fagi*<ὑπὸ σκιερῇ κεκλιμένος πλατάνῳ, but also <ἐφεζόμενος πετάλοις πριονώδεσι κώλοις; not only *silvestrem tenui Musam meditaris avena*<ἀγρονόμαν μέλπεις μοῦσαν, but also < φθέγγου τι νέον δενδρώδεσι Νύμφαις / παίγνιον[344]; τέττιξ sounds a great deal like *Tityrus*; and the centrality of echoing resonance to the first *Eclogue* might recommend hearing "echo" in the opening word, Ἀχήεις, "you twitter."

In fact, the aspect of Meleager's poem most relevant to spirit of Virgilian verse, from the beginning of the first *Eclogue* to the end of the last *Aeneid*, is what seems to have been Meleager's neologism: "you sing, Cicada, the rural *solitude-speaking* Muse (μοῦσαν ἐρημολάλον)." What is this "ἐρημολάλος/*erêmolalos*" muse? This is the only appearance of the word in extant texts, but analogies with other forms suggests multiple possibilities. Cicadas, we learn from Aelian (*NA* 1.20), though the most talkative (λαλίστατοι) of creatures, go quiet "when the agora is full;" it is only when the sun goes down that they let forth their loud sound (κέλαδον). ἐρημολάλος, then, means that this cicada speaks only in solitary places, those deserted by other men.[345] But cicadas, in Aelian's description, come as a group, and, indeed, cicadas travel in hordes: in this poem, the cicada is alone, so is in a solitude even more solitary than that sought out for the normal cicadas' song. Her "muse of solitude" is more profoundly so than usual. The cicada, too, is not only a figure inside of pastoral song, but a metonymy for the pastoral singer, and, insofar as the pastoral singer brings the pastoral world into being through

[344] Gutzwiller 1998:320–1, Fantuzzi and Hunter 2005:178.

[345] But if cicadas buzz loud in the empty agora and nobody's there to hear…

his fiction, the ἐρημολάλος muse is also the muse who makes love acutest at its vanishing. Finally, just as Euripides can have Hecabe lament that Andromache is now a "mother city-bereft" (ἐρημόπολις μάτηρ—*Troades* 603), so too the muse of this solitary cicada is a muse bereft of speech, a muse gone silent: hence, this cicada twitters, tunes, and strikes his lyre, but the second half has to make a special request for, specifically, vocalized song (φθέγγου).

Virgil's first *Eclogue* combines the two impulses of this poem's halves, fusing the "wood-nymphs" and the "solitude-speaking muse" into its own "forest muse" (*silvestrem musam*), the true, and characteristic, emblem of Virgilian, as opposed to Theocritean, pastoral. One of the easiest ways Virgil has of differentiating himself from Theocritus is, in fact, by way of his trees. We can compare, for example, Daphnis' (dying) self-description in *Idyll* 1 and Mopsus' design for the dead Daphnis' epitaph in *Eclogue* 5:

> Δάφνις ἐγὼν ὅδε τῆνος ὁ τὰς βόας ὧδε νομεύων,
> Δάφνις ὁ τὼς ταύρως καὶ πόρτιας ὧδε ποτίσδων.
>
> I am Daphnis, who herds the cattle, Daphnis who waters the bulls and cows. (Th. *Id*. 1.120-1)
>
> *Daphnis ego in silvis hinc usque ad sidera notus,*
> *formosi pecoris custos formosior ipse.*
>
> I am Daphnis in the woods, from here to the stars famous, guard of the beautiful herd, more beautiful myself. (*E*. 5.44)

"I am Daphnis who herds" becomes, in Virgil, "I am Daphnis in the Woods." Not only that, Daphnis becomes, in his woods, the author of his own typical bucolic song: Tityrus sings "lovely

Amaryllis," Corydon will rave with "lovely Alexis," but Daphnis himself sings the song of both "lovely herd, lovelier Daphnis." His ability to be *Daphnis in silvis* both after his apotheosis and among the stars suggests, as if we needed the hint, that his sylvan scene is more figurative than literal. In the sixth *Eclogue*, writing Syracusan verse means not being embarrassed to "inhabit the woods (*neque erubuit siluas habitare—E*. 6.2), and Corydon encourages Alexis to join him on the grounds that "even the gods have inhabited the woods (*habitarunt…silvas*), and Trojan Paris. Let Pallas take care of the cities that she founded; let the woods please us more than anything else (*nobis placeant ante omnia silvae—E*. 2.60-2)." Indeed, there is a great deal more to Virgilian woods than their timber, and in the fourth *Eclogue*, the woods are the matter of pastoral: ″Sicilian Muses, let us sing things somewhat larger. Coppice and the humble tamarisk don't please everyone--if we sing woods, let them be woods worthy of a consul (*si canimus silvas, silvae sint consule signae*)." It is not only that the juxtaposition of muses and woods suggests the combination of art and matter[346]--by way of the ancient equation woods>timber>matter, Greek ὕλη--but that the woods, here, become emblematic of the particular matter of Virgilian bucolic, and its forest muse.

[346] Cuchiarelli comments that "*Le Muse e le selve rappresentano il binomio di arte e materia"* (*ad* E. 4.1-3). I might have put it less definitively than that (i.e. might shy away from the kind of direct substitutions suggested by a word like "represents"). For the woods as poetic matter (especially older poetic material), see the foundational discussion of *itur in antiquam silvam* at Hinds 1998:14ff.

But the goal of Virgilian characters is not to be alone in Virgilian pastoral's lonely woods, but to be joined by others. Often, though, this is not to be, as with the second *Eclogue*'s rustic Corydon:

> *Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin,*
> *delicias domini, nec quid speraret habebat.*
> *tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, fagos*
> *adsidue veniebat. ibi haec incondita solus*
> *montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani:*
>
> The shepherd Corydon burned for beautiful Alexis, delight of his master, and didn't have what he hoped. All he could do was come often among trees—and the shady boughs—close-set; there he'd toss of these malformed songs, alone in the mountains and trees, with a zeal that was…pointless. (*E*. 2.1-5)

Corydon addresses his song to Alexis, but sings to the trees. In this sense, his song, "Fair Alexis" (*formosum…Alexin*) is very much like Tityrus' song, "Fair Amaryllis" (*formosam…Amaryllida*): these are songs sung *as if* but not actually *to* the object of affection, who becomes, through this song, the construct of the song itself. This explains the opening of Corydon's song: "O cruel Alexis, you care nothing for my songs (*o crudelis Alexi nihil mea carmina curas*)." Just as the book's putative title, *Bucolica*, was undone by the first lines of the first poem where Meliboeus (aka, *Bucolica*) goes into exile, so, too, the title of Corydon's song, "Fair Alexis," is, if not undone, then at least troubled by its own opening words: "Cruel Alexis." In the *Eclogues*, as we've seen, nothing stops something, like Tityrus' last lines, from being both beautiful, and, quite possibly, cruel. The nature of Alexis' cruelty is also enlightening: Alexis doesn't *care,* and his carelessness is, specifically, for what somebody else, in this case Corydon, is singing, saying,

or, in a form of the word crucial to the eighth *Eclogue*, ensorcelling.[347] And, in the end, all that Corydon really wants is to be able to sing with somebody else, and not only to the trees: "Together with me, as one, in the trees, you will imitate Pan in singing (*mecum una in silvis imitabere Pana candendo*—E. 2.31)." In Corydon we have the failure of the pastoral dream: instead of *mecum una in silvis* it is only, ever, *solus in silvis*.

In the first *Eclogue*, as in many of the *Eclogues* to follow, we come against a troubling possibility, that of the solitary person speaking poems to the trees—which also means, in the book's own generic terms, singing Virgilian pastoral to Virgilian pastoral—by oneself, with all other activities either peripheral or the creation of one's own mind. It wasn't just the solitary forest Muse that Virgil took up from Meleager, but also the sobering lesson of the lonely cicada: the poet of this kind of pastoral song must strike out his song, like the cicada, on his own sun-burnt limbs, and not on anyone else's limbs. Considering the biographical tradition's insistence on Virgil's own exile, we might think that there could be no more cicada-like thing to do than for Virgil to strike his first poems out on his own life's body, that is, on his own exile and recuperation, on both Meliboeus *and* Tityrus. Indeed, the first *Eclogue* presents both Tityrus' song and Meliboeus' non-song as the products of solitary imagination, because, in the end, this poem presents only one possibility in two guises: either you sing no more songs, or you sing songs that only the trees will hear. Either way, you are always *solus in silvis*.

IV. Pastoral Re-Citations: The Fifth *Eclogue*

[347] Denis Feeney recounted to me *per litteras* that Robin Nisbet noted, in his lectures, that the name Alexis involved a pun on Greek ἀλέγω.

When we turn to the fifth *Eclogue*, we find the solitude of the individual figure in an individual poem theoretically amplified and applied strongly, even somewhat heavy-handedly, across poem-lines to the *Eclogues* book as a whole. In the fifth *Eclogue*, Mopsus and the older Menalcas, "one good at playing the flute, the other good at singing," come and sit together in an idyllic cavern to sing, in turn, the death of the mythic pastoral singer Daphnis, and his apotheosized life after death. After the conclusion of their song, there is an exchange, first of pleasantries, then of gifts:[348]

MENALCAS:

Hac te nos fragili donabimus ante cicuta:
haec nos 'Formosum Corydon ardebat Alexin,'
haec eadem docuit 'Cuium pecus? an Meliboei?'

MOPSUS:

At tu sume pedum, quod, me cum saepe rogaret,
non tulit Antigenes (et erat tum dignus amari),
formosum paribus nodis atque aere, Menalca.

MENALCAS

I endow you first with this fragile reed:
This taught us "Corydon loved beautiful Alexis,"
And also taught me "Whose cattle? Meliboeus', perhaps?"

[348] For a satiric take on Augustan poets' habit of mutual back-patting, see Horace, *Epistles* 2.2.97ff.

MOPSUS

But you take this staff, which, though he often asked me for it,

Antigenes never got (though he was then worth loving)--

It's beautiful with equal knots, Menalcas, and with bronze. (*E.* 5.85-90)

Menalcas offers to Mopsus something (*haec*), a pipe, it seems, with a delicate reed (*fragili cicuta*), which taught him certain things: first, *Formosum Corydon ardebat Alexin*, then *Cuium pecus? an Meliboei*?[349]. In return, Mopsus offers Menalcas a *pedum*, an otherwise unattested word that the ancient commentaries claim refers to a shepherd's crook, but that, with all of these words for poetry flying around, might make us think of poetic "feet" as well. The "equal knots" (*paribus nodis*) that grace the crook are, according, to Servius, a reference to natural beauty (therefore complementary to the artificial beauty of the bronze), but they are also fitting symbols for the particular challenge of interpreting difficult, beautiful, poems. The knots are, on the one hand, what Romans might call "the most joyful knot of friendship" (*amabilissimum nodum amicitiae*--Cic. *Lael*. 14.51) between Mopsus and Menalcas; and they resemble the "three knots in three colors," (*tribus nodis ternos…colores*)," the threefold "chains of love" *Veneris…vincula*' that, in the eighth *Eclogue*, tie together Alphesiboea, Amaryllis, and Daphnis, and that, here, in the fifth *Eclogue*, bind the triangular love of Mopsus, Menalcas, and the dead (and/or resurrected) Daphnis. But, on the other hand, with this moment of the poem we have arrived, as

[349] For the *cicuta* as pipe or flute, see Lucr. 5.1382; Verg. *E*. 2.36, 5.85; Calp. *Ecl*. 7.12. For hemlock, see Pliny 25.13.95; Cato *RR* 27.2; Lucr. 5.897; Hor. 2.1.56, *Ep*. 2.2.53. And as thing drunk by Socrates, see Pers. 4.1: *magister sorbitio tollit quem dira cicutae*, and for the coldness see Pers. 5.145.

Caelius once wrote to Cicero, "at a difficult knot (*in difficilem nodum*);"[350] at a "knot and delay" (*nodumque moramque--Aen*. 10.428) of interpretation; and at a metapoetic *terra incognita* where we seem to have to try to "untie our soul from the knots of wrong belief" (*religionum animum nodis exsolvere*--Lucr. 4.7).

The problem of interpretation posed by the end of the fifth *Eclogue* is deciding what to do when the character of one poem in a collection seems to lay claim, or challenge certain other *a priori* claims, to other poems of the same collection: the words that Menalcas claims he learned from the flute are the first lines, the titles, of what the *Eclogues* book presents as the second and third *Eclogues*. Is this book the product of its own characters? What is the relationship between this book's internal and external references?

To raise these questions, the fifth *Eclogue* makes use of the device of the late-revealed narrator, whereby a small gesture can pack a large revisionary punch, and is no stranger to Latin poetry of this period. Horace's second *Epode*, for example, published in the late 30's BCE and familiar with Virgil's *Eclogues* and likely his *Georgics*, begins as a hymn to the joyous attractions of rural living—"Happy is he who far from business troubles, like the ancient race of men, may work his native fields with his own oxen, free from every usury (*solutus omni* ***faenore***)"[351]—but, after praising a future of mooing cows, hoary holm oaks, and soporific rills for sixty-six lines, unveils, in the sixty-seventh, its revisionary big-reveal:

haec ubi locutus faenerator Alfius,

[350] Cael. ap. Cic. *Fam*. 8, 11, 1

[351] Hor. *I*. 2.1-4 *Beatus ille qui procul negotiis, / ut prisca gens mortalium, / paterna rura bubus exercet suis / solutus omni faenore*.

iam iam futurus rusticus,

omnem redegit idibus pecuniam,

quaerit kalendis ponere.

When Alfius the Usurer, always "becoming rustic," had spoken these words, he asked back his money on the Ides, and sought to put it out on the Kalends. (Horace, *I*. 2.67-70)

All those "clustring Grapes with purple spread," "the Wind, that Whistles through the sprays," "these feasts of happy Swains," are the daydreams of…a money-lender. For readers of English poetry, this could be called the "Lycidas effect," after that 1637 poem of Milton in which English's most famous pastoral description is followed by its most famous pastoral escape-clause: "Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills." The result, in Milton as in Horace as in Virgil, is that we are asked to reread everything that came before the reascription. Some editors foreclose the possibility of experiencing this bait-and-switch by quite literally rewriting the poem: all its takes is a small swipe of the pen to deform a poem with the help of a quotation mark before the poem's first word.[352] But this will not do: the revisionary invitation of the ending of the poem is a function of the poem itself, so that the poem as a whole is not exhausted by being known. Each reading must struggle in its own way to preserve the known unknown of the poem's re-ascription. As with the dialectic of solitude, this invitation to re-read will always

[352] On the difficulties that "quotation marks" play in the editing and interpretation of Latin poetry, see Feeney 2011, pp. 57-59 on this poem.

be a form of literary fiction, and it is an important one.[353] This scene that Horace's poem describes is one of bursting abundance, and the ending allows for, requires, a process of continual interpretive abundance.[354] The crucial point is that this technique is not only what a commentator on the *Epodes* has called "a specialized form of undercutting or bathos,"[355] because the doubt that it raises is very easily generalizable: if this poem that we thought was in one voice was, we are now to believe, in some other voice, then how can we trust that second voice to be the be-all and end-all of vocal reassignment? If not in this poem, then in some later poem, perhaps? The real problem is not this technique's capacity to undercut, but, rather, its tendency to overcut.[356]

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[353] As Fraenkel (1957:60) critic has put it vis-à-vis Horace's second *Epode*, mainting this fiction is necessary to experiencing "the impression which it [the poem] makes upon us as a whole, and not to allow the balance to be completely upset by what has been called 'the Heinesque surprise at the close.'"

[354] Note that the word for usurer, *faenerator*, derives, according to Varro (ap. *Gell*. 16.12.7, and ap. *Non*. 54.5), from *faenus*, 'interest,' which itself derives from *fetus*, because "as if birthed from money it produces and gives increase." Interest is a process by which money multiplies unwatched, and the abundant fertility of this *fetus* is something that is always in the process of "becoming," *iam iam futurus* something other than it is. No doubt *futurus* is an etymological play on *faenus>fetus*, through, i.a., *futuo*, "to have sex with a female."

[355] Watson *ad* Hor. *I*. 2 *intro*.

[356] The basic problem is that any erosion of confidence in the clarity of communication, or the integrity of the subject, introduces a potentially infinite regression of doubt. This is what Stanley

It was a tendency that Horace could easily have picked up from Virgil's fifth *Eclogue*, which asks us to reflect what the effect of this kind of overcutting is across poem-lines, particularly as concerns the relationship of the poet to his characters, and his characters to one another after the bursting of what, in modern critical terms, we might call these characters' "reality effect."[357] What makes the case even more intertwined is that, although Menalcas claims that the flute taught him the second and third *Eclogues*, Menalcas is himself one of the characters in the third *Eclogue*. That poem presents two characters, Damoetas and Menalcas, who, after exchanging insults, decide to hold an impromptu slinging contest, choosing the fortuitously present Palaemon as judge. The third *Eclogue* is often paired, thematically and structurally, with the seventh, in which Meliboeus and Corydon match verses, with Daphnis as judge, and Meliboeus as recounter of the scene. And yet, for reasons that scholarship has long attempted to nail down or invent,[358] where the seventh *Eclogue* ends, according to Meliboeus, in victory for Corydon, the third *Eclogue* concludes with Palaemon's confessed inability to declare a victor: "It is not for us to judge between these claims: you both deserve the calf, and so does anyone who fears sweet or suffers sour loves. Close up the rivers, boys; the grass has drunk enough." (*E*.

Fish has described as the "sequence of entailments" that follows the removal of "connection between observable features and the specifications of meaning"--"there is," he concludes, "no place to stop…entailment, contradiction, grammaticality itself, all become variable and contingent as presupposition." (Fish 1989:2)

[357] Barthes 1968.

[358] See Henderson 1998 for what is at stake in this debate, and for a discussion of how the impulses behind it can lead interpretation astray.

3.108-11) John Henderson (Henderson 1999:146-609) has demonstrated how important it is not to take the rules of their singing game as a given--the *Eclogues* are, he reminds us, the first book of Latin pastoral, the third *Eclogue* the first Latin *amoebean* pastoral, that is, which features a singing contest of short, alternating verses—and what we really need to do is "get into the 'ring' alongside these competitors, and follow the rhetoric of their sallies…" As Henderson points out, any work that we do on this poem, any judgments we make, entails entering into the scenario of the poem and into its game, serving, with or as Palaemon, as judge.

But the fifth *Eclogue* is not content with its own internal logic, and attempts to appropriate *Eclogue* 3 into its own game: there is, then, both an *Eclogue* 3 before its reapproriation by *Eclogue* 5, and the *Eclogue* 3 of the fifth *Eclogue*. And this raises certain questions: if Menalcas in *Eclogue* 5 learned the song of Menalcas, Damoetas, and Palaemon from his flute, then was there ever a singing contest at all? What difference does it make to re-read the earlier poem as recorded by an interested party? After the fifth *Eclogue*, the third *Eclogue* may no longer be a mimetic scene that opens up, out of the pastoral blue, into casual repartee, but a poem produced by the voice of another poem. Not only do Virgil's poems engage with the problems of allusion and intertext posed by the (re)writing of Theocritean adaptations, but, with the fifth *Eclogue*, they push at a more difficult question: even what seems like a Virgilian adaptation might be somebody else's words, so that, to vary a formula, "the words that Virgil uses have always been used before."[359]

In *Eclogue* 5, the poet turns whole poems, and their poets, into somebody else's fictions. Or, perhaps, nobody else's fictions—it is not, for Menalcas, the poet who teaches, but the

[359] Adapting Hinds 1998:1.

impersonal, inhuman, pipe.[360] The fifth *Eclogue* suggests something radical: song, its settings, and its singers, are nothing more, or less, than the product of the instrument, and idea, of song itself. So just as Menalcas' presence in *Eclogue* 3 ties one knot for us to admire or unravel—or, rather, admire in its unraveling—the presence of the pipe in *Eclogue* 2 ties another. In that earlier poem, the rustic Corydon, who has been trying to impress the all-too-urbane Alexis with all manner of inducement, turns to praising his own musical prowess:

> *est mihi disparibus septem compacta cicutis*
> *fistula, Damoetas dono mihi quam dedit olim,*
> *et dixit moriens: 'te nunc habet ista secundum';*
> *dixit Damoetas, invidit stultus Amyntas.*
>
> I have a pipe, made up of seven varied hemlock stalks,
> Which Damoetas once gave to me as a gift,
> And he said to me, as he was dying, "It has you now for successor,"
> Damoetas said--the idiot Amyntas watched enviously. (*E*. 2.36-39)

As we have seen, Virgil's departures from Theocritus are generally important indicators of his distinctive poetic ambitions and anxieties. Corydon is, broadly speaking, a reworking of Theocritus' eleventh *Idyll*, where the Cyclops expresses his fruitless love for the sea-nymph

[360] I use the term "pipe" interchangeably all relatives of the pan-pipe, Greek σῦριγξ: Virgil uses the term *fistula* in the nominative singular (E. 3.22, 25; 7.24; 8.33; 10.34), and for oblique cases has *auena* (1.2, 10.51), *calamus* (1.10, 2.34, 5.2, 48; 6.69), *cicuta* (5.85), *harundo* (6.8), and *stipula* (3.27); cf. Clausen *ad* E. 2.37 *'fistula*.'

Galatea; but for the gift of the flute and Damoetas' part in it, we have to turn to another Theocritean poem, the eighth *Idyll*, in which two singers, Daphnis and Damoetas, impersonate, one after another, the Cyclops' love for Galatea. After they each have a go at the theme, it's time to exchange presents:

> Τόσσ' εἰπὼν τὸν Δάφνιν ὁ Δαμοίτας ἐφίλησε·
> χὠ μὲν τῷ σύριγγ', ὃ δὲ τῷ καλὸν αὐλὸν ἔδωκεν.
> αὔλει Δαμοίτας, σύρισδε δὲ Δάφνις ὁ βούτας·
> ὠρχεῦντ' ἐν μαλακᾷ ταὶ πόρτιες αὐτίκα ποίᾳ.
> νίκη μὲν οὐδάλλος, ἀνήσσατοι δ' ἐγένοντο.
>
> With these words Damoetas kissed Daphnis, and the former gave the latter a pipe (σύριγγ'), and the latter gave the former a beautiful flute (αὐλὸν). Damoetas flutes, and Daphnis the cowherd pipes, and, right away, the cows danced on the soft grace: the victory went to neither—each stood out unvanquished." (Th. *Id*. 6.42-6)[361]

Here, as elsewhere in Theocritus (*Idyll* 8, for example), pipes are just another form of pastoral currency, like the goats, cups, and cattle that one can use as stakes for a song-slinging match. But in the second and fifth *Eclogues*, the pipe has a power to bestow pastoral succession, and to teach, or embody, pastoral itself. Further, the transfer of the pipe is, in Virgil, directly connected to absence and death: in the second *Eclogue*, the gift of Damoetas is like what we shall see is the gift of Damon in Virgil's eighth *Eclogue*, the *extremum…munus morientis*, "the gift of a dying

[361] On the metapoetics of this scene, see Payne 2007:98ff.

man," spoken in his *extrema…hora*, his "dying hour." (*E*. 8.60, 20)[362] In the second *Eclogue*, the gift comes from Damoetas as he dies (and, since Damoetas and pipe-giver comes from Theocritus, it comes, too, from Theocritus' text as it itself passes away), and in the fifth *Eclogue*, Menalcas' gift of the flute to Mopsus comes to wrap up their songs on the death and celestial life of the now-absent Daphnis (the other figure in Theocritus' flute-pipe gift exchange in *Id*. 6).

Song cannot bring Alexis to Corydon—it can only bring him more song; song may not be able to bring Daphnis to Alphesiboea—it can only bring him more song; in *Eclogue* 5, we can now ask, "Is Daphnis really resurrected, or is his resurrection only the product, or rather the projection, of song?" There is no way to cut the knot at the center of the *Eclogues*, because the "knot and delay" that we find there is the *Eclogues*' true center. Many scholars have tried to contain the chaos of the *Eclogues*: for Christine Perkell, despite all of the contradictions, Virgil is always the one spinning the dialectical wheel, and therefore, "grander in vision," transcends his individual characters[363]; and, for Raymond Kania (2012), there is to the entire *Eclogues* book a fictional coherence that makes for one, total, and cleanly contained world.[364] I, too, have the sense that, in the end, there is only ever Virgil, but that this is never, for Virgil, enough.

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[362] Compare with Philetas' flute of Pan at Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 2.32-7. Du Quesnay 1979:60 claims that Virgil and Longus likely share a Hellenistic source, perhaps Philitas of Cos.

[363] Perkell 2008:123, on *E*. 1. For the use of the dialectic for Virgil, Perkell quotes Patterson 1987:6: "Virgil bequeathed to us…a dialectical structure, an ancient poetics no less elliptical than those of Plato and Aristotle…"

[364] I agree with Richard Jenkyns (1998:155) that it seems more accurate to speak of pastoral worlds, rather than a single pastoral world.

V. Pastoral Self-Fashioning: The Eighth *Eclogue*

The fifth *Eclogue* raises a significant doubt regarding all claims of poetic coherence and the nature of social community in and through song. It also, as we have seen, spreads a metafictional instability not only across the lines of individual poems, but over into the title page itself. In the eighth *Eclogue*, Virgil twists these instabilities around the possibility that love, and its visions of human contact, is, itself, a dream.

The eighth *Eclogue* opens with a potent, insistently pastoral, muse: *Pastorum musam Damonis et Alphesiboei…Damonis musam dicemus et Alphesiboei*: "Of the pastors' Muse, Damon's and Alpheiboeus'…Of Damon's Muse I'll sing, and Alphesiboeus'." This muse grabs nature's ears: cows forget to chew, reclusive cats prick up their ears, and "changed rivers hold back their flows." But this isn't an inert case of the too-vaunted "pathetic fallacy" of pastoral poetry—no singer in Theocritus' *Idylls* has this kind of Orpheus-like sway over the world while still alive[365]. The power Virgil gives to pastoral song is new, and pointed, but who is this muse of unprecedented power, and what, besides the adoration of the beech trees, can she bestow? The answer to the first question is tragic—she is the muse of solitude, desire, and doubt—and the answer to the second unsettling—she can give you trees, animals, rivers, but not a lover, and if a lover, then what may be a virtual, imaginary, unreal lover; a projection of desire; an artificial,

[365] cf. Clausen *ad E*. 8.2-4, who compares with Silenus' "Orphean power" at *E*. 6.27-30. The power of singers over nature in Theocritus and his Greek successors (Moschus, Bion) seems to be at its strongest after a poet's death, when the forest's trees, rills, spirits, and creatures come out to mourn.

empty, and lonely dream. This muse, "Damon's muse, and Alphesiboes'," cannot take the lover out of the lover's self.[366]

But to be taken out of oneself, and accepted by someone else, is what the singers of this *Eclogue*, and so many other *Eclogues*, want: the friendship, presence, love of another person. The eighth *Eclogue* has three apparent scenes of desire, one for each speaker: the first is the poet who addresses his absent "you," the second and third are that poet's subjects—Damon, who desires Nysa; and Alphesiboeus, who desires Daphnis through a female persona (whom I call, in the absence of any other indication of the speaker's name, Alphesiboea). Recognizing that the poem presents three—not two, not one—scenes of (unrequited) desire is crucial to clearing up, or forestalling, the difficulties critics have sometimes had with this poem's overall structure, in particular, its dedication. It is not only the identity of the mystery "you"-dedicatee that has puzzled them—is it Pollio? is it Octavian?—but its mere presence, and position, in the poem: these lines (E. 8.6-13), we are told, are "in a sense, extraneous to the poem; were they to be removed, their absence would not be felt."[367] We could push this policy further, back to the poem's first five lines: the poem could have done without either the preamble or the dedication, and started, like other *Eclogues*, *in medias res*, with the night's shade just departed, the dew at its

[366] For a different view of this poem, see Alpers 1979:107, who sees it ending "on a note of hope," and Karakasis 2011:128ff., who sees the poem's multiple parts as part of a large-scale enactment of *recusatio*. Karakasis 2011:128ff. follows Schmidt 1987:206 in construing the poem itself as the object of dedication.

[367] Clausen *ad*. *E.* 8, *Introduction*, p. 233.

sweetest, and Damon leaning on his smooth olive staff: "their absence," we could say, "would not be felt."

In fact, unnoticed absence is precisely the eighth *Eclogue*'s point: Damon does not matter to Nysa, Alphesiboea does not matter to Daphnis, the poet may not matter to his "you." Further, these people do not really matter to one another: the poet does not say how he knows Damon and Alphesiboeus, and Damon and Alphesiboeus do not even acknowledge one another's presence. In other *Eclogues*, Virgil sets the scene to make sense of how, why, when, and where his characters meet for their song-exchange. In the eighth *Eclogue*, their relationship to one another is artificial, nominal, baldly imposed: we are told that they are in competition (*certantis*—8.3) and that Alpheiboeus "responded" to Damon (*responderit*—8.63) but this is told, not shown, claimed, not justified. We have no idea here, as we do in other *Eclogues*, what the stakes are in this so-called interaction. We suspect, in fact, that there is no interaction, properly speaking, at all. Even before we arrive at this poem's penultimate line of self-doubt—"Do we believe? Or do lovers make their own dreams?" (*Credimus? an qui amant ipsi sibi somnia fingunt*)—there is a sense that the various parts and persons of this poem come up against one another without quite touching, the sleepy figment of one lover, destroyed, or deceived, by, in the *Eclogues*' phrase, "unreciprocated love" (*indigno amore*).[368]

It is precisely this sense that presence is an abstraction, or a creative imposition, that connects the eighth *Eclogue*'s dedication-scene to the songs of the muse of Damon and Alphesiboeus:

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[368] *E.* 8.18 [Damon singing] *coniugis* ***indigno*** *Nysae deceptus* ***amore***; cf. 10.10 ***indigno*** *cum Gallus* ***amore*** *peribat*.

Tu mihi seu magni superas iam saxa Timaui,

siue oram Illyrici legis aequoris, en erit umquam

ille dies, mihi cum liceat tua dicere facta?

En erit, ut liceat totum mihi ferre per orbem

sola Sophocleo tua carmina digna coturno?

A te principium; tibi desinet: accipe iussis

carmina coepta tuis, atque hanc sine tempora circum

inter uictricis hederam tibi serpere laurus. (*E*. 8.6-13)

"You, who surmount the rocks of Timavus, or skirt the shore of the Illyrian sea, when will that day ever come when I may sing your deeds? Oh when will I be able to bear through the whole world your songs, the only ones worth Sophocles' boot? You are my begin-all, my end-all: accept songs begun on your orders, and allow this ivy to wrap in between the victorious laurel round your head."

Wherever, whoever, whenever this precise person precisely is—and all of this is left mysterious, and has proved an inviting mystery for scholarship—this person is not *here*. After the first few words, we expect that dealing with this absence, or reversing it, will be at the center of this dedication and its prayer. It might have been, and the first few words lead us to believe that it might be, a traditional kind of "come hither" (*dexter ades*) prayer. But the poet speaks not to invite his friend, but to praise him, and in some day long, perhaps impossibly long, in the future. The fact that the poet omits a "come hither" may be due to less to "the stress of strong excitement,"[369] as has been suggested, than to this poem's central anxiety over song, desire, and

[369] Clausen *ad E*. 8.6.

presence: the poet does not want this man, but, in a twist of the classic phrase, a "subjective correlative" of this man. In the end, it is all *carmina*, and nothing but *carmina*.

It is clever to say that desire is desire for desire; but, for the muse of Damon and Alphesiboeus, desire is life, death, and doubt, and it is not only that song cannot help, but that song itself is the problem. Damon has loved Nysa since, as a child, he guided her and her mother to pick apples: "As soon as I saw you I died, and a dangerous lunacy took me (*ut vidi, ut perii, ut me malus abstulit error*)." But nothing since then has turned out right, for now, "Nysa is given to Mopsus: what can we lovers not hope for (*Mopso Nysa datur: quid non speremus amantes*)?" For Damon, the god of love—cruel, savage, hard as flint—is the god that failed, but, like the Orpheus of some legends, instead of finding another god, Damon loses all hope in the world and desire for life:

Nunc et ovis ultro fugiat lupus; aurea durae
mala ferant quercus, narcisso floreat alnus,
pinguia corticibus sudent electra myricae,
certent et cycnis ululae, sit Tityrus Orpheus, 55
Orpheus in silvis, inter delphinas Arion.
Incipe Maenalios mecum, mea tibia, versus.

Now let the wolf fly from the sheep of its own accord, hard oak bear golden apples, the alder tree bear narcissus flowers, the tamarisk weep rich amber from its bark; let owls challenge swans, and let Tityrus be Orpheus, Orpheus in the woods, Arion among dolphins.

Take up with me, my flute, Maenolian songs.

There is a limit to lover's hopes, and this hopelessness leads to a long series of jussive calls for the world to go topsy-turvy. This list of traditional *adynata*, "impossibilities," is relatively standard, except that its conclusion comes as a surprise: who is this Tityrus, and why is it such an impossibility for him to be an Orpheus on land, and an Arion in the sea? The poet of this poem has described the entirety of this poem's effect on nature as Orphic, we should recall, so the idea of a second Orpheus is already, as it were, a possibility in this poem. But in this poem, words generate natural, though not human, reality:

> *Omnia vel medium fiat mare. Vivite, silvae:*
> *praeceps aerii specula de montis in undas*
> *deferar; extremum hoc munus morientis habeto.* 60
> *Desine Maenalios, iam desine, tibia, versus."*

> Or let all become mid-sea! Fare-well woods! Headfirst from the lookout of this airy mountain, into the waves, I'll throw myself: let this be a final gift from me as I die.[370]
> Cease, now cease, my flute, Maenolian songs.

Just before this, mention of Orpheus in the woods was natural, since Damon was, we recall, in the woods that survive all human passings: "Mount Maenalus always has its talkative groves and speaking pines (*Maenalus argutumque nemus pinosque loquentis / semper habet*)." But mention

[370] *Habeto* is ambiguous: is it second or third person future active imperative? Both? In either case, to whom? Whatever the case, it is a gift to someone who is not paying attention (Nysa/Mopsus), or to something that in normal terms cannot (the mountain Maenalus), so that, in the end, it is all in Damon's head.

of Orpheus leads, by a process of inversion (land to water), to the famous story of Arion, inventor of the dithyramb, Dionysian devotee, and pirate prey saved from watery death by dolphins. Orpheus sang to his trees, Arion to his dolphins, but talk of dolphins leads, by torrential slippery slope, to the deluge of the midgard (*medium*) made water. Dislocations and relocations here are swift, and we need to follow closely. This poem's proem had underlined the connection between water and change: it is a course-transforming-stream (*mutata suos…flumina cursus*)[371] that stops its flow at wonder at this "muse of Damon and Alphesiboeus." The end of Damon's song insists on the concrete, or, rather, fluid reality of this turn-of-speech wonder: the river that stopped in its tracks to hear this poem has burst its banks and swallowed Damon's world and his song.[372] Now everything is covered in water, and all that remains are the trees and the mountaintop: *après le déluge, la montagne*. Damon is on the *specula* of the mountain: this is the mountain's highest spot, its look-out-point[373], but it is also this poem's forlorn hope, with

[371] On the peculiarities of this construction, see Clausen *ad E.* 8.4.

[372] Theocritus' first *Idyll* on the death of Daphnis is the master-text for Damon's song, and the relevance of water to the way in which Damon's world changes utterly, beautiful, fatally, before him is good justification for thinking that there is something to the idea that Virgil took Theocritus' word ἔναλλα ('changed,' *Id*. 1.134) and "othered" it, not at all by accident or misreading or misunderstanding, into what we have as a textual variant ἐνάλια, "into the sea." cf. Gow *ad* Th. *Id*. 1.134.

[373] cf. Varr. *DLL* 6.82: *specula, de quo prospicimus.*

specula's alternate meaning of "slight hope."[374] The *dum amo spero* theme sounded by Damon (*E.* 8.26) comes to its end with Damon's leap from the point of small hope into the waves.[375] In dying in this way, Damon draws on the death of Theocritus' Daphnis, whom the eddy swallowed (ἔκλυσε δίνα τὸν Μοίσας φίλον ἄνδρα--Th. *Id*. 1.140-1), but with different effect: when Damon dies, he is no longer in a land of workaday mountains and their rills, but in a changed world where *speculae* are the last places of refuge as the waters climb, effacing everything and everyone except the rocky spire and its trees. It is a world changed by words, Damon's words, and so Damon dies in a death by water of his own rhetorical making.

Damon's song done, the *Eclogue* moves us quickly on:

Haec Damon. Vos, quae responderit Alphesiboeus,
dicite, Pierides: non omnia possumus omnes.

Effer aquam, et molli cinge haec altaria uitta,
uerbenasque adole pinguis et mascula tura,
coniugis ut magicis sanos auertere sacris
experiar sensus: nihil hic nisi carmina desunt.
Ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnin.
Carmina uel caelo possunt deducere lunam;

[374] See, *i.a.* Plaut. *Pers*. 2.5.9, *Cas*. 2.4.27, *Rud*. 3.3.3; Cic. *Clu*. 26.72, *Fam*. 2.16.5. Forms of *spes* recur with some small regularity in the *Eclogues*: *E*. 1.15, 1.32, 2.2, 6.18, 8.26.

[375] Cf. John Dowland's "Flow my Tears": "From the highest spire of contentment / My fortune is thrown; / And fear and grief and pain for my deserts, for my deserts / Are my hopes, since hope is gone."

caminibus Circe socios mutauit Vlixi; *70*

frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis.

Ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnin.

Thus Damon. But you—what Alphesiboeus responded—tell me, Pieriean muses. We cannot all do everything.

Bear out water, and crown these altars with soft wool, and burn rich herbs and manly incense, so that I can try to change my lover's senses with magic rites. Nothing's missing now but songs.

Guide him from the city to my house, my songs, guide Daphnis.

Songs can drawn down the moon from the sky. Circe transformed Ulysses' crew with songs. The cold snake in the garden is burst open by singing.

Guide him from the city to my house, my songs, guide Daphnis.

Alphesiboes' song has, as undertext, Theocritus' second *Idyll*, in which the lovelorn witch Simaetha tries, with the help of her assistant Thestylis, to bewitch the object of her obsessive but non-reciprocating affection, Delphis. Alphesiboeus does not introduce himself, nor does the speaker, beyond telling us that he, like Damon, is a *pastor* (*E*. 8.1 *pastorum*). But Damon, we know, sang his song while leaning on a smooth olive branch, amid the sweet dew of approaching dawn: how did Alphesiboeus sing his? We don't know this because Alphesiboeus jumps into his song just as swiftly as Simaetha jumped into her *Idyll*, just as swiftly as Alpheiboeus' speaker jumps into hers. But amid all of this ritual hustle-bustle, we are left in ignorance about one key question: who's speaking? Theocritus' speaker names herself twice (*Id*. 2.101,114), the speaker of Alphesiboeus' song never. Alphesiboes is speaking, and seems to be speaking as a woman, so

we can call the speaker Alphesiboea, as long as we remember that this is shorthand for "that probably female voice whose Theocritean/Simaethan song Alphesiboeus sings."[376]

This onomastic omission is crucial, not incidental, to the eighth *Eclogue*'s program, because one of the poem's guiding interest is the problem of others: can I bring another person close to me? can I do so through song? is it the song that creates the other person? is there an other person at all? The interposition of this poem's dedication to an unnamed "you" in between the announcement of the poem's subject and Damon's song has generated, we recall, a good deal of debate that is, in its way, beside the point: the speaker is less interested in the other person than in song about the other person, more interested in the meta-object than the object itself. The confusion between speaker and object becomes even more fluid with the transition between the songs of Damon and Alphesiboeus. It has not bothered readers, but it should: who speaks the second half of line 8.63, *non omnia possumus omnes*, "we cannot all do everything?" The universal *communis opinio* makes sense, of course: the poet has asked for help from the muses because he can't do everything on his own. It was, we are told, a proverbial expression.[377] But

[376] We think it likely that the speaker is a woman because the beloved is a man, Theocritean love-magic seems to be a female specialty, and the speaker expresses the desire to "change the senses of *coniugis* with magic rites." *Coniunx* does mean marriage, consort, spouse, but it can have a more flexible meaning that extends to concubinage or more casual arrangements, particularly in this poem: just because Damon calls Nysa his *coniunx* does not mean that they are married. So does the fact that Alphesiboeus' song calls Delphis a *coniunx* necessarily mean that the speaker of this song is a woman?

[377] See Clausen *ad loc*.

there are reasons to think the situation is more complex: when Alphesiboeus' song begins, the speaker is asking someone, it seems a servant, to perform all sorts of tasks necessary to the magical rites she is about to perform, and that need her music. The other person will supply the ritual actions, Alphesiboea will supply the spells: "nothing's missing now but songs (*nihil hic nisi carmina desunt*)." Alphesiboea, that is, cannot do everything on her own, and cannot do her part, the song, without the help of her assistant. The fluidity of this half-line, its double-applicability to both the poem's speaker and Alphesiboeus, is confirmed by what may be its Theocritean precedent, "everything is done by trying (*πείρᾳ θην πάντα τελεῖται*),"[378] which we might see bubble up in Alphesiboea's claim, a couple lines later, that she will "try (*experiar*) to change my lover's senses with magic rites." And when the speaker of the poem asks for help from the muses and gets, in response, a poem of Theocritus, we recall that "we cannot all do everything" also means that this text is reliant on another text, this speaker's voice on another preceding voice. All of this muddying of vocal lines has the effect of calling attention to this poem's artificiality, to the sense that it and all of its characters, including the mysterious dedicatee, are so many figments of the poet's mind. This does not mean that we reassign "we cannot all do everything" from one character to another, but that we remain alive to the the way the various parts of this poem tend to flow into one another.

After all of this poem's hymns to poetry's power—from the opening's suggestion of its subjugation of nature, to Alphesiboea's addition of power over the moon and human mutations—the ending of Alphesiboeus' song, and of the poem, asks us to wonder whether poetry's powers of figmentation may be not only for the self, but entirely of it:

[378] Th. *Id*. 15.62. See Clausen *ad E*. 8.63, with Gow *ad* Th. *Id*. 5.38.

Ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnin.

Fer cineres, Amarylli, foras, riuoque fluenti

transque caput iace, nec respexeris. His ego Daphnin

adgrediar; nihil ille deos, nil carmina curat.

Ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnin.

Aspice: corripuit tremulis altaria flammis

sponte sua, dum ferre moror, cinis ipse. Bonum sit!

Nescio quid certe est, et Hylax in limine latrat.

Credimus? an qui amant ipsi sibi somnia fingunt?

Parcite, ab urbe uenit, iam parcite, carmina, Daphnis."

Guide from the city to my house, oh my songs, guide Daphnis.

Bear out the ashes, Amaryllis, and throw them over your head into the flowing stream. Don't look back! With these I will attack Daphnis. He doesn't care at all about the gods, at all about songs.

Guide from the city to my house, oh my songs, guide Daphnis.

Look! The ash has grabbed the altar with flames, unasked, while I delay to carry it forward! Let it be a good omen! Surely it is, and Hylax barks in the threshold. Do I believe it? Or do lovers fashion dreams for themselves?

Cease, from the town he comes, now cease, my songs, comes Daphnis.

The last two lines of this poem, a Virgilian innovation on the Theocritean sub-text, present *in nuce* a dilemma that the entire poem has prepared: did Alphesiboea's song bring forth the beloved Daphnis, or is Daphnis (in his being and in his coming) the product of Alphesiboea's love, and its song? Latin, unlike Greek, does not have an optative, a "wishing," mood, but the question here is whether the wish put in the subjunctive--*bonum sit*, "let it be a good omen!"--

generates, in the lines that follow, a classic case of wish-fulfillment: you hope that something will be the case, and your hope figures its own fulfillment, *in your own mind*.[379]

Of course, it is tiresome to refute the solipsist's skepticism: better, perhaps, to ignore it or deny it through brute assertion, as the refrain does here.[380] The point is banal—we bewitch ourselves into loving the person we love—but it is not a benign banality, because, far from counterdicting poetry's power to bring a person closer to the object of desire, this banality suggests that being close to another person is not only the product of fiction, but a fiction itself. The penultimate line's question builds on a similar line in Lucretius, who, after showing how Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphianassa displays the cruel results of religious belief, complains to his student Memmius that "You, too, will yourself at some point desire to leave me, overcome by the terrifying words of the poet-priests (*vatum*). Indeed, how many dreams are they able to fashion for you (*quippe etenim quam multa tibi iam* ***fingere*** *possunt* ***somnia*****)** that can overturn the principles of life and confuse all of your fortunes with fear!" Clausen is half-right when he writes that Lucretius "is speaking of seers who invent terrifying fantasies for others, Virgil of lovers who invent their own fantasies of happiness." (Clausen *ad* E. 8.108) In fact, Virgil's line casts itself much further, with the universalizing possibility hidden in plain sound: "Do I believe? Or do lovers fashion their own dreams (*s-****omnia*** *fingunt*)?" If lovers fashion their own *somnia*

[379] Menalcas' song in the fifth *Eclogue* featured a similar wish, implying, perhaps, a similar kind of wish-fulfillment vis-à-vis the supposedly catasterized Daphnis, at *E*. 5.66-5 *"Deus, deus ille, Menalca!" / Sis bonus o felixque tuis!* "'A god, a god is he, Menalcas!' O may you be an omen good and lucky to your friends!"

[380] For refutations of solipsism in literature and philosophy, see Nuttall 1974:246-291.

("dreams"), then there is the possibility that they are fashioning their own *omnia* ("everything"), a word that, as we have seen, is one of this poem's key-words, and crucial to the blurring of vocal lines between speakers. The question applies to the dream that seems to save Alphesiboea as much as it does to the sequence of visions that seem to kill Damon. In both cases, these Muses are not, as Hesiod had it, of one mind (*κούρας ὁμόφρονας—Th*. 60) but of one's *own* mind.[381]

Far from leaving us with a cheery ending,[382] this poem's conclusion suggests that love, and the lover's refrain, is a fantasy that we continually repeat; that the approach of the beloved is a projection; and that the object of desire is merely the creation of desire itself. In this sense, there is a consistency between the fact that the refrains to the songs of Damon and Alphesiboeus both address themselves not to people but to song (*Maenalios…versus*) or the instrument of song (*mea tibia*), and the fact that, as we have seen, the poet of the *Eclogue* is less interested in the "you" whom he addresses than in the poetic creations for which the "you" serves as the begin-all and end-all theme.[383] There is no way for the addressee of this poem ever to arrive, nor would it

[381] For the figure of the Muses of One Mind throughout Greek literature and philosophy, see Trimpi 1983.

[382] So Clausen 1994:239 n. 27, comparing the seeming success of the magic at the end of *E*. 8 with Simaetha's ineffective magic, and the "sad ending of Damon's song."

[383] One reader who seems to have intuitively grasped the connection between the dedication of the eighth *Eclogue* and the end of Alphesiboeus' song is Ausonius, who uses the penultimate line of the *Eclogue* in its entirety to end a letter that he sends to his newly reclusive, and ascetically Christian, friend, Paulinus of Nola. Throughout this letter (Ep. 27), Ausonius laments that Paulinus has, in his newly ascetic devotion to the Christian faith (*genitor natusque dei*—Ep.

matter if he did: in the world of the eighth *Eclogue*, it could always be nothing more, or less, than a loving dreamer's fictions. And this pastoral world emptied of others and authors, and the product of dreams, is problematic because it is not enough—the dying Damon, the self-deceived Alphesiboea, the mourning Mopsus or self-consoling Menalcas, all try, and fail, to reckon with

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27.113), kept himself so far away from Ausonius and the civilized world. At the letter's end, he switches tack from lamentation to prayer: *set cur tam maesto sero tristia carmina versu / et non in meliora animus se vota propinquat?* His prayer is that Paulinus should come his way: *Adcurre, o nostrum decus, o mea maxima cura*! (Ep. 27.119) He anticipates that day when a messenger will break into his ears with the news that *Ecce tuus Paulinus adest*, and he imagines the whole sequence of approaches that Paulinus will take: "now he leaves the snowy towns of Spain, now reaches the fields of Tarbellae, now approaches the homesteads of Hebromagus, now enters his brother's domains hard by, now glides down stream, and now is in sight: now the prow is being swung out into the stream: now he has passed the thronged entrance of his home-port, outstrips the whole host of folk who hurry to meet him, and passing his own doors now, even now beats at thine." It is a virtuosic movement, and it ends with the knocking on Ausonius' doors: *iam iam tua limina pulsat*. The scene has the urgency, immediacy and effortless traversal of geography characteristic of a dream, and, indeed, it has been a dream: *Credimus an qui amant ipsi sibi somnia fingunt*. This is how the letter ends, but, of course, we know the answer: Paulinus is not at the door, nor was he anywhere close to the door. Indeed, as soon as writing that letter, Paulinus wrote another, and the next letter in the collected epistles of Ausonius bears the title, *Ad eundem Pontium Paulinum epistula subinde scripta*, "to the same Pontius Paulinus, a letter written just after the preceding."

the overriding concern of the *Eclogues* book as a whole: can solitude, bereavement, and desire be remedied through imagination? Would the solitary imagination be any better than solitude? This question, so important to the *Eclogues* book from the start, is the central challenge of its final poem.

VI. Pastoral Erasures: The Tenth *Eclogue*

It is fitting that no *Eclogue* is more alone in the woods than the tenth, and final, *Eclogue*. This is the second time that Virgil has modeled an entire song on Daphnis' death song in Theocritus' first *Idyll*. The first was Damon's death-song, sung in the (unnamed) first-person in the eighth *Eclogue*,[384] but the situation is now different: unlike Damon's and Daphnis' song, both of which were set in a narrative frame of a social occasion, of people exchanging songs in the way that some of the *Eclogues* have played out, the tenth *Eclogue* is an empty, lonely poem filled with the desire for presence, but the shadowed reality of solitude among the trees. The tenth *Eclogue* has been made out to be a generic battleground, with elegy and pastoral as the combatants: as we have seen, however, the unsatisfied and solitary desires one usually associates with elegy have been an essential ingredient in Virgil's pastoral from the very beginning of the *Eclogues*. What reading for elegiac incursion to this poetry misses is that the problem with Virgilian pastoral is that elegy is always already inside of it: the greatest threat to pastoral comes not, therefore, from without, but from within, and, in particular, from the fact that instead of staging pastoral as a chorus of fellow-shepherd singers--a chorus that does not exist, except in

[384] By contrast, in Theocritus' song of Daphnis, the singer first names himself, right after the opening refrain: Θύρσις ὅδ' ὡξ Αἴτνας, καὶ Θύρσιδος ἁδέα φωνά. (Th. *Id*. 1.65)

the imagination's longing--we have a solitary meditation among the trees. It may be that Virgilian pastoral enacts what Luke Roman has called the "humble domain of liberty and ease" and "an autonomous literary sphere that resists the incursions of alien genres and discourses," but Virgil's tenth *Eclogue* also shows the dark side of autonomy: the "solitude-speaking muse" (μοῦσα ἐρημολάλος).

Virgil's solitary muse is a muse of the trees (*silvestris Musa*), and she is party to the tenth *Eclogue* from its beginning:

> *Extremum hunc, Arethusa, mihi concede laborem:*
> *pauca meo Gallo, sed quae legat ipsa Lycoris,*
> *carmina sunt dicenda; neget quis carmina Gallo?*
> *sic tibi, cum fluctus subterlabere Sicanos,*
> *Doris amara suam non intermisceat undam,*
> *incipe: sollicitos Galli dicamus amores,*
> *dum tenera attondent simae uirgulta capellae.*
> *non canimus surdis, respondent omnia siluae.*

> This last labor, Arethusa, concede to me. A few—for my Gallus, but such as Lycoris might read—a few songs must be sung—who would deny songs to Gallus? When you flow beneath Sicanian waves, so may bitter Doris not mix her water with you, begin: let's sing the worried loves of Gallus, while the flat-nosed nanny goats shear soft briers. We don't sing to the deaf: the woods answer all.

The standard view of these opening closing lines—that they are a typical example of pastoral convening, community, sociality[385]—seems accurate from the treeline's edge, but inadequate in the more indistinct light of this poem's shadowed forests. In this prologue, our attention is drawn to the speaker and three possible others: Arethusa, Gallus, and Lycoris. The songs to be sung (by "me" and by Arethusa) are to be "songs to/for Gallus, but such as Lycoris herself might read." Gallus is Gaius Cornelius Gallus, politician, adventurer, and poet, who was quite possibly the founder of the Roman elegiac tradition, but who definitely did write four books called the *Amores*, centered on his ladylove, Lycoris.[386] Just over half of this poem will be given over to the voice of Gallus,[387] who has turned to pastoral poetry to salve his heart, broken by Lycoris' failure to return his love. Gallus the name of both a person and an author-persona, but Lycoris is only a mask: she is the name for Gallus' mistress, Volumnia, in his poetry, which suggested to one

[385] "Virgil always thinks of shepherds as existing in a human community" and that "the importance of community in Virgilian pastoral is apparent in *Eclogue* 10. Virgil begins by addressing the nymph Arethusa…" (Alpers 1979:125, 127) Notice the change from "human community" to "community": one has to make this change, but it is important to be clear about why this must be.

[386] See Ross 1975 for Gallus' impact on Roman poetry and an attempt to use extant texts of other poets to reverse-engineer Gallus' lost corpus. For recent bibl. on Gallus and love elegy, see Raymond, "Caius Cornelius Gallus: 'The Inventor of Latin Love Elegy,'" in Thorsen 2013.

[387] As character and, perhaps, as author: Servius' comment, on *E*. 10.46 that "these, however, are all verses of Gallus, taken over from his poems," has generated a bonanza of contentious criticism; see Clausen 1994:291ff.

scholar that "Virgil inscribes even the reception of his text by an ideal reader within the parameters set by the fictions of Gallus' poetry."[388] But this raises a small puzzle: if Virgil is speaking about Lycoris and not Valumnia, then is he also speaking about "Gallus" rather than Gallus?[389] Virgil owes this confusion to a particular pastoral genealogy, beginning with Hermesianax of Colophon's elegiac *Leontion*,[390] which, in order to demonstrate love's power over artists, depicts Homer as having fallen in love with Penelope, Hesiod with Eoia. The later pastoral poem, *Epitaphium Bionis*, to which Virgil's *Eclogues* owe a great deal, then inverted this, so that the nymph Galatea, whom pastoral since Theocritus (*Id*. 11) had enlisted as the Cyclops' reluctant beloved, comes to mourn the death of the poet who (re-)wrote her into being (*EB* 58ff.):

> κλαίει καὶ Γαλάτεια τὸ σὸν μέλος, ἄν ποκ' ἔτερπες
>
> ἐζομέναν μετὰ σεῖο παρ' ἀιόνεσσι θαλάσσας·

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[388] Cf. Ross 1975:18. Lycoris as reader is key to Breed's entire project (2006:133). But although Lycoris may be the "ideal reader" (she certainly is the projected, or target, reader), it is not clear from these lines or Breed's reading of them how they assert this to be equal to the oral. It is, in fact, only one way to interpret the force of *sed quae*.

[389] And there is, of course, the added complication that Volumnia's stage-name was Cytheris, with Lycoris providing an exact metrical equivalent, a standard practice of subterfuge among the elegiac poets; cf. Apuleius, *Ap*. 10.

[390] For more on him, his part on the *bios* tradition, and bibl., see Peter Bing, "The Bios-tradition and Poet's Lives in Hellenistic Poetry," in: R.M Rosen, J. Farrell (ed.), *Nomodeiktes*. *Greek Studies in Honor of M. Ostwald*, 1993, 619-31.

οὐ γὰρ ἴσον Κύκλωπι μελίσδεο. τὸν μὲν ἔφευγεν

ἁ καλὰ Γαλάτεια, σὲ δ' ἄδιον ἔβλεπεν ἄλμας,

καὶ νῦν λασαμένα τῶ κύματος ἐν ψαμάθοισιν

ἕζετ' ἐρημαίαισι, βόας δ' ἔτι σεῖο νομεύει.

ἄρχετε Σικελικαί, τῶ πένθεος ἄρχετε, Μοῖσαι.

For thee sweet Galatea drops the tear,

And thy dear song regrets, which sitting near

She fondly listed; ever did she flee

The Cyclops and his songs--but ah! more dear

Thy song and sight than her own native sea;

On the deserted sands the nymph without her fee

Sicilian Muses! now begin the doleful song. (trans. George Chapman)

All of these confusions are quite germane to standard elegiac practice: elegiac fiction seems regularly to make use of the ambiguities of character generated by the use of pseudonyms in order to create slippery movements between the fictional and the real, so that, as we found with the eighth and fifth *Eclogues*, it is question-begging and irrelevant to speak of being inside or outside the "fictions" of a given poet.[391]

But regardless of how fictive a Gallus we may have, or how imagined a Lycoris, the prologue leaves us with a problem: these songs by the poet and Arethusa for Gallus—later reading material for Lycoris—are not heard by them, or by anyone, except the trees: *non*

[391] My thanks to Leon Grek for this formulation.

canimus surdis, respondent omnia silvae, "we do not sing to the deaf, the trees answer all."[392] It is only here, then, at the beginning of the last *Eclogue*, that we come openly to the problem raised implicitly by the drama of the first *Eclogue*, where we wondered why Tityrus sang not *to* Amaryllis, but *of* Amaryllis, awaiting not his beloved's answering voice, but the resonating echo of his own. For some readers, it is the "reading Lycoris" who provides the solution: once you get over idolizing oral communication, you can see that this text celebrates the potential of textual communication to connect people.[393] But because Lycoris is not only a fiction (as in *Eclogue* 8), but a textually-fixated fiction of another of the poet's fictional fictions (as in *Eclogue* 5), we are far, here, from the consolations of the communal, and much closer to a sense of its impossibility.

Like the opening of *Eclogue* 1, the solitude of this poem's opening, and this book's close, is made most acute in its vanishing, here accentuated by another figure that is a *praesens absens* in perpetual flux—the nymphs Arethusa. When the poem begins, she is there; when it ends, she seems to have been absorbed by the poet's personal voice (*mihi*). Her departure was not unforeseeable, for Arethusa is not a being like other beings, for she is being only insofar as it slides into being-with-others. As a river, of course, her "being" is constituted both by position

[392] Unlike Desport 1952:37, who argues that *disperdere carmen* (*E*. 3.27) refers to songs "wasted" because sung in a place that will not echo, I do not believe that this echoing is sufficient for Virgil's pastoral singers, or Virgil's pastoral persona, whose desire is, explicitly, for something other, or more, than the "trees."

[393] For Breed (2006:133), this line is in alignment with "the pastoral ideal of song as performance and a responsive landscape as the sign of the presence of voice…"

and by movement, and this poem's movement towards extremity, Arethusa's *extremus labor*, constitutes her rebirth as herself within the generalizing otherness of the sea:

> *sic tibi, cum fluctus subterlabere Sicanos,*
> *Doris amara suam non intermisceat undam,*
> *incipe.*
>
> "As for you, when you flow beneath the Sicanian waves, so may bitter Doris not intermix its water [with you], begin."—*E.* 10.4-5

Commentators point us to the ninth *Eclogue*, where Lycidas says, similarly,

> *sic tua Cyrneas fugiant examina taxos,*
> *sic cytiso pastae distendant ubera uaccae,*
> *incipe.*
>
> "So may your swarm escape Corsica's yews, so may the udders of your cows, swollen with clover, hang heavy—begin."[394]—*E.* 9.30-2

As Nisbet and Hubbard remark vis-a-vis a seemingly aberrant usage in Horace (*ad C.* 1.3.1), "normally the boon proposed in the *sic* clause is a *quid pro quo* which is to operate on the

[394] Cf. Clausen *ad loc.*; Cuchiarelli *ad loc*.

fulfillment of the speaker's own request."[395] Arethusa must sing with the poet, or she will dissolve into the sea. Commentators (e.g. Coleman, Clausen, Cucchiarelli) like to add references to Alpheus here, mostly in connection with treatment of the Arethusa-Alpheus story in the *Aeneid* (3.694-6, which follows Pindar *N*. 1.1-4 in an account of pursuit less violent than that found, for example, in Ovid *Met*. 5.572-641), but Alpheus is incidental to this scene, or rather, the poet supplants Alpheus' usual role. This poem is driven by Arethusa's fear of mixing, her *migmophobia*, and while *mignumi-miscere* might imply sexual union and therefore a fear of loss of self through fusion with another river (Alpheus), the fear here is even more primal--what Arethusa is afraid of is her own mother, *Doris amara*, "Bitter Doris," wife to Nereus and mother to Arethusa (Hes. *Th*. 240, cf. Coleman *ad E.* 10.5). The name here is not just a metonymy for the sea[396], and Cucchiarelli points to the etymological derivation of *mare* from *amara.*[397] Etymology gives few guides to Arethusa's name, but we might hear in its Virgilian use the

[395] Clausen calls this a "form of oath or asseveration frequent in Augustan poetry" (Clausen ad *E*. 9.30-2), and directs us to Catullus 17.5-7. We should note the similarities between these two poems: Virgil's poem is "about" Gallus, but begins with a wish (or threat) for sea-travel, therefore being what was called a propempticon, a poem of sending-off. Nisbet and Hubbard pont out that the poem imitated by Virgil's tenth Eclogue and by Propertius 1.8 may have been a propempticon—certainly, *C*. 1.3 is, and, as we have seen, so is Virgil's Eclogue 10.

[396] Cf. Coleman *ad loc*.

[397] Isid. *Orig*. 13.14.1 *proprie autem mare appelatum eo quod aquae eius amarae sint*; substituting *mare* for Doris makes for a classic *figura etymologica* of *mare Amara*; the fact that it does not scan does not mean that the association was not suggestive.

Greek *ἀρειά*, "menaces, threats," so that Arethusa is here she who would be threatened. Hence, the poet's threat to Arethusa fulfills her destiny, victimizes one who is always the victim of pursuit.

Arethusa must do something for the poet or be absorbed by the sea: the poet-linked threat of the sea goes together with fear of Homer the oceanic poet, or, at the very least, the poet of non-pastoral waters. In the *Epitaphium Bionis* (76-7), for example, Homer drinks next to Bion: "both beloved of a water-spring, for the one drank at Pegasus' fountain, the other took his drink from Arethusa." In that poem, pastoral must prove itself against epic, but both the *Epitaphium Bionis* and Virgil's tenth *Eclogue* unite in positioning themselves against other kinds of pastoral. In *Eclogue* 10, the generic tensions at stake are not only those between elegy and pastoral[398], but also those of generic geographies, that is, whether one land or another owns a genre.[399] In this case, which land, genre, and poet may own, control, and command Arethusa?

And here we need to specify the nature of the poet's threat. Arethusa seems already to have been liquefied, but she does not yet seem to have left Arcadia for Sicily. But if Arethusa is metonymic for Syracuse, Syracuse for Sicily, and Sicily for pastoral, then to catch Arethusa prior to her movement under the Sicanian Sea is also to arrest the movement of pastoral towards Sicily--but to what end? Borrowing language from the theology of the crucifixion, Cuchiarelli notes (*ad E*. 10.4), lyrically, that Arethusa's crossing of the sea is "an action that, in reality,

[398] Conte 1986:100-29.

[399] On Virgilian geopolitics and geopoetics, see Dominik, chp. 5, in Dominik/Garthwaite/Roche (eds.) 2009. On the generic tensions and particularly *Eclogue* 10, see Conte 1986:100-129, "An Interpretation of the Tenth Eclogue."

repeats itself infinitely."[400] Arethusa is left always crossing the sea, so this poem is always delivering its veiled threat; our poet is always imagining Gallus as he pines for Lycoris, and so our poem, in the end, goes nowhere, constituted by Virgil's growing love but without any change to its basic, non-reciprocal, economy. This poem's desire and love, like Corydon's in the second *Eclogue*, has no chance of ever being satisfied.

This is not to say that the characters of this poem see love and desire as stagnating: far from it, they believe that their love is constantly growing. So Gallus sings, wishing to join in the music of the pastoral Sicilian reed (*Siculi…auena*):

> *Certum est in siluis inter spelaea ferarum*
> *malle pati tenerisque meos incidere Amores*
> *arboribus: crescent illae, crescetis, Amores.*
>
> It's certain—in the woods, and among the dens of wild beasts, I'd prefer to endure and inscribe by loves in the trees; they will grow, and you will grow with them, my loves.

Gallus' carving of his loves—both his emotions (*amores*) and the poetry they produce (*Amores*)—into trees is not an activity new to pastoral, but his hopes that his loves will grow present something of a problem: words inscribed in trees do not grow with time, either larger or higher, but, instead, stay precisely where and how they have been carved. In turn, the love that the tenth *Eclogue*'s poet has for Gallus grows, he says, by the hour

> *Gallo, cuius amor tantum mihi crescit in horas,*

[400] *"Un'azion, che, in realtà, si ripete all'infinito*."

quantum uere nouo uiridis se subicit alnus.

"For Gallus, for whom my love grows as much by the hour as the green alder shoots up in the new spring."

But just as Gallus never reaches Lycoris, the poet—his growing love, his song, his written poem—never reaches Gallus: the surrender is not, in the end, to the love of the beloved (*amor*), but, as in the eighth *Eclogue*, to the poet's song of love. The textual self-awareness of this poem does not invent, but rather intensifies, Virgil's wrestling with the solitary imagination.

The tenth *Eclogue* is not, then, only about the death-agonies of the elegiac poet Gallus, but also about the death-in-life longings of the Virgilian pastoral poet. That is why the exasperated resignation of Gallus towards his speech's end—*ipsae rursus* ***concedite silvae***, "Once more, oh *woods*, *concede*"—matches the poet's opening invocation to Arethusa and her trees—*Arethusa, mihi* ***concede*** *laborem…respondent omnia* ***silvae***, "Arethusa, to me, *concede* a labor…the *woods* answer all." The shadows that end this poem have little to do with the welcome respite from the highnoon sun that Tityrus and so many other pastoral figures enjoy; they are much closer to the death-shades that end the *Aeneid*. Here, though, the shades are not fatal to humans, but, rather, to singers and their song:

surgamus: solet esse gravis cantantibus umbra,
iuniperi gravis umbra; nocent et frugibus umbrae.
ite domum saturae, venit Hesperus, ite capellae.

Let us rise: shade is harmful for singers, the shade of the juniper is harmful; and the shades hurt fruits, too. Go home, my satisfied ones—the evening-star comes—go, my goats.

It is a situation, indeed, harmful to singers and their fruits, the kind of situation that makes poets—like Meliboeus in the first *Eclogue*, Moeris in the ninth—go silent.

The dark underside of this poem's end is, in fact, audible in the fatal overtones of its first sounding: the "last labor" (***extremum****…laborem*) that the poet requests of Arethusa recalls the beginning and ending of Damon's song in the eighth *Eclogue*, where Damon, "deceived in love" says to the star Lucifer and the gods, that, although they have been no help to him in his cause, "nevertheless, I speak to you, dying, in my final moment (***extrema*** *moriens tamen adloquor hora--E*. 8.20). When Damon comes to his song's (and life's) end, he hails the woods (*vivite silvae*), before hurling himself from mountaintop to a watery grave, with his last words his testementary gift: "let this be my final gift as I die" (***extremum*** *hoc munus morientis habeto*). The importance of Damon's testamentary speech to the opening of the tenth *Eclogue* is confirmed by its reappearance towards the last poem's end, as Gallus winds down his own speech: "concede to me, again, you trees," (*ipsae rursus concedite**,** silvae—E*. 10.63), Gallus says, for none of his labors can overcome love:

> *Iam neque Hamadryades rursus nec carmina nobis*
> *ipsa placent; ipsae rursus concedite, siluae.*
> *Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,*
> *nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,*
> *Sithoniasque niues hiemis subeamus aquosae,*
> *nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo,*
> *Aethiopum uersemus ouis sub sidere Cancri.*
> *Omnia uincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori." (E. 10.62-69)*

> Now, again, neither Hamadryads nor songs can please me; once more, woods, give in! For our labors cannot change Love, not if, in the middle of freezings, we drink the Hebrus river, or endure the Sithonian snows of winter water, not if, while the dying bark dries on the high elm we turn Ethiopian's sheep under the star of Cancer. Lover conquers all: let us give in to love."

The geographical and climatic extremes that Gallus describes derive from standard rhetorical practices, and resembles Meliboeus' description, in the first *Eclogue*, of how exile will take "some to the thirsty Africans, some to Scythia and the rapid Oaxes of Crete, and to the Britons, divided from the rest of the world" (*E.* 1.64-66). But whereas Meliboeus' configuration of types has no exact precedent, Gallus' do, in the song of Simichidas in Theocritus' seventh *Idyll*:

> εἴης δ' Ἠδωνῶν μὲν ἐν ὤρεσι χείματι μέσσῳ
> Ἔβρον πὰρ ποταμὸν τετραμμένος ἐγγύθεν Ἄρκτω,
> ἐν δὲ θέρει πυμάτοισι παρ' Αἰθιόπεσσι νομεύοις
> πέτρᾳ ὕπο Βλεμύων, ὅθεν οὐκέτι Νεῖλος ὁρατός.
>
> In the middle of winter may you be in the Edonians' mountains, turned towards the river Hebrus close to the Arctic pole; and in the summer, among the far-off Ethiopians, may you heard under the Blemyan rock, far beyond the early spring of the Nile. (Th. *Id*. 7.111-114)

There is, however, one important, and puzzling, Virgilian addition: what are we do to with the drying, dying, bark of the elm tree (*cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo*)? One nineteenth century commentator found the phrase image of the "drying, dying bark" (*moriens…liber aret*) "a somewhat extravagant expression," and suggested changing the text from *liber aret* (the bark

burns) to *aret Lîber*—"Dying Bacchus [i.e. the grapevine] dries on the high elm"—pointing us to a parallel wet-dry dichotomy from a verse already cited, Thyrsis' response to Corydon in the seventh *Eclogue*:[401]

> THYRSIS
>
> ***Aret** ager; uitio **moriens** sitit aeris herba;*
>
> ***Liber** pampineas inuidit collibus umbras:*
>
> *Phyllidis aduentu nostrae nemus omne uirebit,*
>
> *Iuppiter et laeto descendet plurimus imbri.*
>
> THYRSIS
>
> The field is dry, the grass, dying from taint of the air, is parched, Bacchus begrudges vine-shade to these hills. The whole forest will be green at the coming of our Phyllis, and Jupiter will descend most fully with happy rain. (*E*. 7.57-61)

As attractive is it would be to see, as that commentator did not, behind this "dying vine," an allusion to the Orphic legend's death of Bacchus at the end of the *Eclogues*—a possibility prepared by this book's numerous assimilations of Orphic powers to the Roman and pastoral *vates*—there is no reason for this change. As has been noted, the drying bark contrasts with the tender, soft, and pliant trees (*tenerisque…arboribus—E.* 10.53-4) in which Gallus dreamed of writing his *Amores*: as the dream that this writing could either satisfy or abate his desires withers, so too, at his speech's (and, in a way, life's) end, his tree-writing withers, dries, burns, and,

[401] Conington *ad E*. 10.67; cf. Housman *ad* Man. *Astr*. 3.662.

finally, dies away.[402] The connection between these two moments reminds us that *liber* means both bark and, by extension, book. This poem's trees are not, in the end, the reliable, or live, listeners that the opening of the poem, and the *Eclogues* book as a whole, had led us to expect.

Concentrating on the closing image of Gallus' carbonized writing material makes it hard to accept all of the talk of perfection that has circled around the *Eclogues*. Clausen represents a broad trend when he writes that "The *Liber Bucolicorum* is one of the few perfect books[403]: each *Eclogue* is enhanced somehow by its position—this effect was achieved, I have no doubt, by a certain amount of rewriting; and, taken together, the ten have an additional beauty and sense."[404] Brian Breed, similarly, uses the presupposition of "the perfection of the *Eclogues* as a book" to require of it an "audience of readers…of a particularly attentive and engaged sort," and adds later that "To the degree that a book can be perfect, Virgil's *Eclogues* have defined perfection" by way of their "formal polish, symmetry, and, above all else, a dominant impression of unity achieved through the coordination of apparently disparate parts."[405] Breed does an excellent job showing how the *Eclogues* thematize writing, and textuality, alongside and, sometimes, above the oral, and his sense of this work's perfection is driven by his desire to establish the humanistic triumph of the textual. The book brings together disparate parts in perfect harmony, just as Virgilian pastoral brings together writers, readers, and figures of the imagination into a global,

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[402] cf. Coleman *ad loc.*

[403] Clausen, 1972:193.

[404] Clausen 1964:193; cf. Quinn 1972:193. For the history of the Roman book, see Winsbury 2009.

[405] Breed 2006:334; 360 n. 1

virtual, community. The tight connection between formal perfection and social harmony is made most explicit by Paul Alpers:

> "The very writing of an eclogue-book, as some commentators call it, is thoroughly characteristic of Virgil's mode of pastoral. Theocritus' Idylls are a heterogeneous collection…Virgil reduced this heterogeneity to order and relative homogeneity…in just the way that Virgil's shepherds are 'at one' with each other and their world." (Alpers 1979:136)

But this is all far too hopeful: there has been too much talk of the *Eclogues*' perfection.[406] The *Eclogues* were, it seems, a major innovation in literary organization of book-poetry, but they also end with the image of the dying book. When Gallus gives in to love, he gives in to the *Amor* written on a material that will not endure.[407]

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[406] I agree, broadly, with Alessandro Barchiesi's take: "Today, when we revisit some of the bibliography, the whole approach sounds intolerably idealizing and even fetishistic. The perfect book, to me at least, sounds like the equivalent of avant-garde painting in the art market of, let us say, New York, soon after World War II. That geometric perfection is reminiscent of Mondrian and his rise: those readers want from Propertius and Horace the ancient counterpart to abstract art, concentration on structure as a statement of avant-garde." (Barchiesi 2005:320) Barchiesi adds, in the footnote: "The favourite text of the 'perfect book' approach has been the *Bucolics*, for a long time a favourite area for the New Critics."

[407] Though the fact of the matter is purely adventitious, there is a possible resonance in the suggestion, by Suetonius, that Virgil's *scriptor librarius*, his dictation-taking slave, was, according to Suetonius, named *Eros* (Greek for *Amor*), the same *Eros* who, also according to

Those who require a perfect gem will find it, but the *Eclogues* are not sanguine about this quest's chances of success: "Do we believe it? Or do lovers make up their own dreams?" In the ninth *Eclogue,* Lycidas recalls a fragment of song he'd overheard someone recite—the absent Menalcas, or perhaps the mourning Moeris—while bringing Amaryllis to "our delights," which turns out to be, quite naturally, an idealized version of what the beginning of the *Eclogues* book might have been:

> *"Tityre, dum redeo (breuis est via) pasce capellas;*
> *et potum pastas age, Tityre, et inter agendum*
> *occursare capro (cornu ferit ille) caveto."* (E. 9.23-5)
>
> Tityrus, until I return—the road is short—feed the goats, and drive them to water once they've grazed, and, Tityrus, be careful not to go up against the he-goat, for he strikes with his horn.

This is pastoral as it should be, and the *Bucolics* as they should have begun, with Meliboeus going away on a short day-trip (*brevis est via*), leaving Tityrus to mind the goats, with a light-humored warning as he leaves. But Virgil's *Bucolica* is not perfect, but, as we have seen, always already imperfect; it is fitting, therefore that Moeris' response to Lycidas emphasizes just this problem:

> *Immo haec quae Varo, necdum perfecta, canebat:*

Suetonius (*VSD* 34), told Virgil how to complete two half-lines off the cuff (*A* 6.164, 165); in this sense, giving into "Love" means, in composing Virgil's poetry, giving into poetry, text, and memory. Compare Pliny the Younger 5.3.7.

"Vare, tuom nomen, superet modo Mantua nobis,

Mantua uae miserae nimium uicina Cremonae,

cantantes sublime ferent ad sidera cycni." (E. 9.26-9)

No, these lines that he sang to Varus, not yet perfected: "Varus, your name—if only Mantua remain for us, Mantua, too close, alas, to sad Cremona—singing swans will bear high to the stars.

Those songs were imperfect, and, as the poem ends, it is not time for song at all: "No more song, my boy" says Moeris in this closing line, "and let us attend to what is pressing. Songs far better, when he has come, we will sing" (*carmina tum melius, cum venerit ipse, canemus*—E. 9.67) Virgil's *Eclogues* is not the perfect book, but the book as imperfection. From beginning to end, it is *necdum perfecta*: just as Meliboeus' exile in the first *Eclogue* served to end bucolic before *Bucolica* got going, the tenth *Eclogue*'s image of Gallus' dying trees, his perishing book, serves to end the idea of the poetry book just as what may be the first "book" of poetry comes to its end. The *Eclogues* shows how the problem of the death of the book is coterminous with its birth. Not only, as Cicero has it, is "nothing simultaneously invented and perfected" (*nihil est enim simul et inventum et perfectum—Brutus* 71), but nothing is, in the world of the *Eclogues*, ever convincingly perfect. When the tenth *Eclogue* ends, the book of *Eclogues* is not, as Clausen put it, "complete," but, rather, profoundly incomplete.[408]

[408] Clausen 1994:xxvi, with reference to the way that *E.* 10.77 *ite domum saturae venit Hespserus ite capellae* answers *E.* 1.74 *ite meae, felix quondam pecus, ite capellae*.

VII. *Vacuum in orbem*: The *Georgics*

The fundamental anxieties of Virgil's *Eclogues*—that there is no pastoral community, that there is only the individual's lonely imagination of pastoral community, and that what you have imagined may not, in the end, suffice—are also at the heart of Virgil's later works. I begin with the *Georgics*, and then move to the *Aeneid*.

In the *Georgics*, the poet creates a world that, though abounding in plants, animals, rocks, and weather, is poor in talking laughing, crying, singing, even working people; such people as do exist are filled with longings. Take away the formal addresses to Maecenas[409] and the grand addresses to Caesar, and put aside the didactic apostrophes to anonymous "farmers," and one is left with very few figures indeed. Compared to the agricultural treatises on which it draws, there are few references to individuals, and, famously, few (or no) references to slaves.[410] And unlike Hesiod's *Works and Days*, whose disparate digressions, stories, and lits of proverbs are united by the tense relationship between the poet and his brother Perses and an orientation trained on practical agricultural and social advice, Virgil's *Georgics* stray much more broadly into the

[409] Famously with a certain arithmetic design, with Maecenas mentioned at *G.* 1.2, 2.41, 3.41, and 4.2. For a review of criticism of scholarship on Virgil's mathematical designs, with a focus on the *Eclogues*, see Rudd 1976:119-44

[410] For the relationship of Virgil's *Georgics* to agricultural realia and broader agronomic literature, see Spurr 1986 in Hardie (ed.) 1999:1-24; for a list of passages where slaves have been detected as implicit, and relationships with Varro and Columella, see *ibid*. 23 n. 46.

realms of imaginiative projection.[411] By contrast, Horace's second *Epode*, an urban usurer's bucolic dream-fantasy that is both pastoral (*Eclogues*) and agricultural (*Georgics*) in orientation, ends its wish-fulfilment speech with the dream of seeing crowds of oxen, sheep and, in the speech's crowning moment, slaves: *positosque vernas, ditis examen domus / circum renidentis Laris*, "the home-born slaves, crowd of a wealthy house, placed around the shining Lares." Even when Virgil describes the triumph he foresees himself leading to the temple he will have built, with Caesar at its center, the scene, for all of its suggestion of crowds, is surprisingly empty of people. Instead of a teeming *turba hominum* we get clean abstracts like "all of Greece" (*cuncta…Graecia*) and "solemn parades" (*sollemnis…pompas*). Even when we have a reference to a theater, we have the stage (*scaena*) and the curtains (*intexti…Britanni*), but no audience.

The point is not that *Georgics* excludes people, but that its people are kept in relative isolation, to a lesser extent from the world that they inhabit, to a greater, almost absolute, extent from one another. Once the pleasantries, prayers, and dedications are done with and Virgil turns to the matter at hand, he begins with the birth of the natural world--"In the new spring, when cold water flows from the white mountains" (*vere novo, gelidus canis cum montibus umor / liquitur*--*G*. 1.43)[412]--and the laws that govern man's place in it:

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[411] The relationship between scenes of society and postures of solitude in Hesiod and in Virgil's *Georgics* deserves closer investigation; my thanks to Denis Feeney for pointing me in this direction.

[412] Compare the first verb of the *Georgic*'s post-dedication line, *liquitur* (*G*. 1.43) with Meliboeus' first verb of self-description, *linquimus* (*E*. 1.3). See below on the importance of the *Eclogues*, particularly the first and tenth, to the structure of the *Georgics*.

continuo has leges aeternaque foedera certis

imposuit natura locis, quo tempore primum

Deucalion vacuum lapides iactavit in orbem,

unde homines nati, durum genus.

Straightaway nature imposed these laws and eternal covenants on determined places, in which time, for the first time, Deucalion threw rocks in the empty world, from which men were born--a hard race.

The figure of Deucalion trying to populate an world emptied by the deluge is an apt description of Virgil's place in the *Georgics*: the world of this poem is very empty, indeed, and what people do appear experience lives as hard, and unyielding, as rocks. There is the farmer, for example, who, some time in the future, will dig up the giant bones of past mortals, and wonder at them, alone, not in the company of his awestruck fellows (*G*. 1.493-497)—there is no fellowship of farmers, here, but a single person coming into contact with the dead, and violent, past. And, of the work's richest human portraits, Aristaeus has relations only with nymphs and gods, Orpheus with a wife irreversibly dead. The strength of the impression these figures make is due, in no small part, to the comparative human emptiness of their stage.[413] The *Georgics*, like Lucretius' *On the Nature of Things*, is a poem for, but not about, humans.[414]

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[413] As Richard Jenkyns (1999:285) has put it, the *Georgics* are "less austere" than Lucretius, but "Orpheus, Eurydice, Aristaeus, and the gardener of Tarentum gain some of their poignancy as individual human beings who break into a poem that has hitherto done without them."

[414] For a groundbreaking and sustained treatment of the importance of Lucretius to Virgil's *Georgics*, and in particular the difficulties involved in, and ambiguities generated, by Virgil's

Like the *Eclogues*, the *Georgics* meditate on the possibilities, and hardships, of the solitary imagination, particularly at it approaches its end. The *Georgic*'s story of Orpheus is a story of Orpheus in the kind of pastoral landscape I've shown characterizes the *Eclogues*. Eurydice dies, in this story, from a danger familiar to the *Eclogues*, the snake hiding in the grass[415]. Following her death, the chorus of Dryads fills with highest mountains with cries, and the entire world mourns, from north to south. Following their pastoral tears, Orpheus takes up a deeply pastoral (i.e. *Eclogic*) posture of mourning, on an instrument foreign to bucolic poetry's more humble registers:

> *ipse cava solans aegrum testudine amorem*
> *te, dulcis coniunx, te solo in litore secum,*
> *te veniente die, te decedente canebat*. (*G*. 4.464-6)
>
> He consoling his lovesickness with a hollow turtleshell, you, sweet wife, you on the solitary shore, by himself, you, at the day's coming, you at its fall, he would sing.

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attempts to break free from Lucretius's philosophy and poetry, see Gale 2000. See also Hardie 2009, chps. 2 ("Virgilian and Horatian Didactic") and 5 ("Lucretian Visions in Virgil"), and *passim*, with bibl.

[415] Compare *G*. 4.458-9 *hydrum moritura puella / servantem ripas alta non vidit in herba* with *E*. 3.92-5, where Damoetas warns that *latet anguis in herba*, and Menalcas counters that it is important *non bene ripae / creditur*; also, with *E*. 8.71, where *frigidus in pratis anguis, cantando rumpitur anguis*: here, though, the master of song was not around to "burst the snake."

Like Corydon of the second *Eclogue*, Orpheus consoles himself (***sol****ans*) by being alone, with himself (*secum*), in a lonely place (*solo in litore*), singing of an absent beloved. Though on the shore (like Corydon's predecessor, the Theocritean Cyclops), and not in tree-covered cavern, he sings his song through the mini-cavern of his hollowed-out turtle-shell—just as Eurydice died and give Orpheus his song's theme, the turtle died and gave him his song's sound.[416] Like Moeris in the ninth *Eclogue*—who recalled how he "often, as a youth, set down the sun with singing" (*saepe ego longos / cantando puerum memini me condere soles—E*. 9.51-2)—Orpheus sings night and day. All of this, however, is only preparation for the truly *Eclogic* pastoral turn that Orpheus takes after the second, irreversible, death of Eurydice. I quote at length because the passage so powerfully, and pervasively, exemplifies the themes I've canvassed in the *Eclogues*:

> *Septem illum totos perhibent ex ordine menses*
> ***rupe sub aëria deserti*** *ad Strymonis undam*
> *flesse sibi et gelidis haec evolvisse* ***sub antris***
> *mulcentem tigres et agentem carmine quercus;* *510*
> *qualis populea maerens philomela* ***sub umbra***

[416] The connection between the death of the turtle and the life of song is made explicit by the anonymous poem cited by C. Caesius Bassus in his *De Metris* (fr. 250 Hollis): *O qui chelyn canoram plectro regis Italo / Rutilos recide crines habitumque cape viri / Ciconiarum Rufus iste conditor, / hic e duobus elegantior Plancis / suffragiorum puncta non tulit septem: / ciconiarum populus ultus est mortem.* Hollis directs attention to Pacuvius, Antiope 6W: *Quadrupés tardigrada agréstis humilis áspera, / Breui cápite, ceruice ánguina, aspectú truci, / Euíscerata inánima cum animalí sono.*

amissos queritur fetus, quos durus arator

observans nido implumes detraxit; at illa

flet noctem ramoque sedens miserabile carmen

integrat et ***maestis late loca questibus implet****.*

Nulla Venus, non ulli animum flexere hymenaei.

Solus *Hyperboreas glacies Tanaimque nivalem*

arvaque Riphaeis numquam ***viduata*** *pruinis*

lustrabat raptam Eurydicen atque inrita Ditis

dona querens; spretae Ciconum quo munere matres

inter sacra deum nocturnique orgia Bacchi

discerptum latos iuvenem sparsere per agros.

Tum quoque marmorea caput a cervice revulsum

gurgite cum medio portans Oeagrius Hebrus

volveret, Eurydicen ***vox ipsa et frigida lingua***

ah miseram Eurydicen! ***anima fugiente vocabat****:*

Eurydicen toto ***referebant*** *flumine ripae". (G. 4.507-527)*

For sev'n continu'd Months, if Fame say true,

The wretched Swain his Sorrows did renew;

By *Strymon*'s freezing Streams he sate alone,

The Rocks were mov'd to pity with his Moan:

Trees bent their Heads to hear him sing his Wrongs,

Fierce Tigers couch'd around, and loll'd their fawning Tongues.

So, close in Poplar Shades, her Children gone,

The Mother Nightengable laments alone:

Whose Nest some prying Churl had found, and thence,

By Stealth, convey'd th' unfeather'd Innocence.

But she supplies the Night with mournful Strains,

And melancholy Musick fills the Plains.

Sad *Orpheus* thus his tedious Hours employs,

Averse from *Venus*, and from nuptial Joys.

Alone he tempts the frozen Floods, alone

Th' unhappy Climes, where Spring was never known:

He mourn'd his wretched Wife, in vain restor'd,

And *Pluto*'s unavailing Boon deplor'd.

The *Thracian* Matrons, who the Youth accus'd

Of Love disdain'd, and Marriage Rites refus'd,

With Furies, and Nocturnal *Orgies* fir'd,

At length, against his sacrd Life conspir'd.

Whom ev'n the savage Beasts had spar'd, they kill'd,

And strew'd his mangled Limbs about the Field.

Then, when his Head, from his fair Shoulders torn,

Wash'd by the Waters, was on *Hebrus* born;

Ev'n then his trembling Tongue invok'd his Bride;

With his last Voice, *Eurydice*, he cry'd.

Eurydice, the Rocks and River-banks reply'd. (trans. John Dryden, 1697)

Servius claimed, on two occasions (*ad E.* 10.1, *G.* 4.1), that the second half of the fourth book of *Georgics* had once contained the *laudes Galli*, but that these had been replaced by the Orpheus fable after Gallus' political disgrace, break with Octavian, and death.[417] As has been noted,

[417] There is an extensive literature related to this question; for an overview of the main issues, see Coleman 1962, Jacobson 1984. Horsfall 1995:14 is likely correct in thinking the *Vita*'s interest in this has a great deal to do with their bewilderment at the presence of a mythological *fabula* in a didactic, agricultural poem (pointing us to Serv. 3.1.118.8, 12 Thilo Hagen).

however, the Orpheus fable, as it currently stands, bears strong resemblance to, if not Gallus himself—the almost total loss of his poetry means we can only speculate—then certainly to Virgil's Gallus[418] in the tenth (and sixth) *Eclogue.*[419] But, as we've seen, those aspects that Orpheus shares with Gallus are not surprise intrusions into the world of the *Eclogues* by the elegiac genre, but, rather, essential characteristics of Virgilian pastoral itself, the solitary imagination chief among them. Orpheus' voice, like Moeris', has gone silent (*G*. 4.525 *vox ipsa et frigida lingua*, *E*. 9.53 *vox quoque Moerim / iam fugit ipsa*);[420] like Moeris, his spirit has fled (*G*. 4.526 *anima fugiente*, *E*. 9.51 *omnia fert aetas, animum quoque*), and, like Meliboeus of the first *Eclogue*, his departing song (*G*. 4.526 *fugiente*, E. 1.4 *fugimus*) is a song of lament, and of going silent. Eurydice is gone, and all he can do is sing her song, receiving, in response, only the echo of what he had already sung.

As we approach the end of the *Georgics*, we begin to sense that this four-book poem has been sung, like the tenth *Eclogue*, to the listening *silvae*, that is, to the *Eclogues* themselves. We'd had earlier hints in this direction. Two examples suffice: the beginning of the first book contained the phrase *cura boum*, a Latin translations, as we've seen, of the first speaker of the

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[418] Among many other possible examples, Oprheus, like Gallus, bemoans his absent beloved under a high, lonely rock (*G*. 4.508 *rupe sub aerie*, *E*. 10.56 *alta sub rupe canet, E*. 10.14 *sola sub rupe*).

[419] Compare, for example, *G*. 4.517 with *E*. 10.48 (Lycoris) and *E*. 2.4 (Corydon).

[420] Note also that the *ripae* give back Orpheus' last words (*referebant*, *G*. 5.527), and Moeris hopes that Menalacas will serve a similar purpose (E. 9.55 *sed tamen ista satis referet tibi saepe Menalcas*.)

first *Eclogue*, Meliboeus; and the dramatic end of the first book—*aut puteis manare cruor cessauit, et altae / per noctem resonare lupis ululantibus urbes* (G. 1.485-6)—is dark cousin to Tityrus' woods that echo Amaryllis, the shadows that fall more generously at the end of the first *Eclogue*, and the wolves that curse Moeris into silence in the ninth. It is at the end of the *Georgics*, however, that the connection between it and the *Eclogues* becomes inescapably explicit (*G*. 4.559-566):

Haec super arvorum cultu pecorumque canebam
et super arboribus, Caesar dum magnus ad altum
fulminat Euphraten bello victorque volentis
per populos dat iura viamque adfectat Olympo.

illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat
Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis oti,
carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque iuventa,
Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.

These songs about the cultivation of fields, and of cows, I sang, and about the trees, while Caesar the Great thunders by the deep Euphrates in war, and, the victor, gives laws to a willing people, and makes his way to Olympus.

In that same time, sweet Parthenope nourished me as I flowered in the exertions of private leisure, I who played the songs of the shepherds, and, boldly daring in my youth, Tityrus, I sang you under the shade of a spreading beech.

There are many striking things about this ending, not least of which is that the last line rewrites the first line of the *Eclogues*. The biographical tradition has it that Virgil's immense and immediate popularity encouraged a bumper crop of works written in Virgil's name, but not by Virgil himself, and that the end of the *Georgics* was intended as a kind of autograph authenticating these books as Virgil's own (*VSD* 48). In fact, the end of the *Georgics* is a reascription as provocative as the end of the fifth *Eclogue*, in that it invites us to end our reading of the *Georgics* by opening up a new reading of the *Eclogues* themselves.[421] We are invited, that is, into a loop as repetitive, cyclical, and absorbed as any of the *Eclogues*' echo chambers, with one difference: we know, now, that we are inside of a repetition because we've been here before, because, after the end of the *Georgics*, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* that will follow will be governed not by the figure of the poet who is singing (like the *Aeneid*'s "*cano*"—I sing) or the opening of the *Georgics*' figure of the poet who will begin to sing (*canere incipiam*), but by the poet who has already sung (*cecini*—"I sang").

In the last lines of the *Georgics*, Virgil puts on all of the first *Eclogue*'s masks: like Tityrus, he is allowed to remain in a "sweet" place (*G*. 4.563 *dulcis…Parthenope, E*. 1.4 *dulcia…arva*) where he can flower (*G*. 4.564 *florentem*) like pastoral hedge-rows flower (*E*. 1.54 *florem depasta*) to his own and others' advantage through poetic pastoral play (*G*. 4.565 *carmina qui lusi pastorum*, *E*. 1.10 *ludere quae vellem calamo…agresti*); like the boy-god of Rome, he is a

[421] Could this have been how the cyclic epic tradition became truly cyclical? We do not have enough material to know precisely how the Greek cyclic tradition circled back on itself—the material that we do have suggests that it constantly moved forward, from one song to the next. Is Virgil showing us something about a lost past, or marking his innovation upon it?

young man brave enough to tell older people what to do (*G*. 4.565 *audaxque iuventa, E*. 1.42-5 *hic illum iuvenem…'pascite ut ante boves, pueri, submittte tauros*'), that is, older people like Tityrus, already an aged man (*E*. 1.28 *candidior postquam tondenti barba cadebat*, *E*. 1.46 *Fortunate senex*); and, like Meliboeus, he sings Meliboeus' words: "Tityrus, I sang you under the shade of a spreading beech" (*Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmina fagi*). But in the last line, Virgil writes himself, explicitly, into the voice of Meliboeus, the figure of exile,[422] and just as the *Georgics* opened with an "speaking-name" allusion to Meliboeus (*cura boum*), they now end not only under the sign of but in the voice of Meliboeus himself. Caesar, here, like the patron of the eighth *Eclogue*, is elsewhere, and is thundering away: Virgil sings, and he sings, not to us, not to his friends, not even to Caesar, but to and of the first *Eclogue*, as Tityrus to Meliboeus, lucky in his luxury, as Meliboeus to Tityrus, always already exiled, and filling an empty world, inadequately, like Orpheus, with the products of his own silent-singing, solitude-speaking lyre.

[422] This is, perhaps, part of the productive (non-)fiction of the biographical tradition of Virgil's own victimization at the hands of the triumviral proscriptions. In the first reading of the first lines of the first *Eclogue*, it might have been possible, even if only for a few moments, to make this association: if there was no indication of the speaker-name in the original text, then would we know the first speaker to be Meliboeus until Tityrus named him so? Would the *Eclogues* so frequently follow this kind of naming protocol (first line has the addressee's name) if it did not serve to identify who was speaking with whom? For an instant, perhaps, Virgil was Meliboeus; now, after we know better, we find out that we can unlearn what we had learned. The re-ascription of voices practiced by the fifth *Eclogue* was, we can say, a potential opened at the work's beginning.

The totality of what was, prior to or in the absence of the *Aeneid*, the Virgilian *oeuvre*, is itself an echo-chamber writ large, and this is as significant a feature of Virgil's poetry as the looping beginning and end of *Finnegan's Wake* are for Joyce's aspirations. At the end of the *Georgics*, the poem's singer is alone with his songs and with the memory of the songs that he has already sung, and with the characters that he has created by those songs. Caesar and Virgil at the end of the *Georgics* are unconnected except by non-adjacent simultaneity: "great Caesar thunders unto the deep Euphrates" and at the same time (*dum*) as Virgil has been singing his songs (*canebam*). But the two do not touch: they have as little to do with one another as any other characters in this poem, as little to do with one another, we can now say, as Meliboeus and Tityrus. They share the same time, but not the same place, are simultaneous but non-adjacent. Like the song of Meleager's cicada, this is a song plucked out by the poet on his own *corpus*, and sung, as well, to that corpus itself: there may be nothing, in the end, to poetry, but silent, self-directed, song.

VIII. *Sola sub nocte*: The *Aeneid*

At first glance, the *Aeneid* looks like a departure from meditations on the solitary imagination, but, although the epic teems with human characters, names, societies, and cities, the portrait of social life that emerges is sad and disjointed--*sunt lacrimae rerum*, "there is," says the *Aeneid*, "a tearfulness of being"[423]--and the larger structure of the epic is repeatedly undercut, as

[423] There is a risk in this kind of formulation, one that Philip Hardie has identified as a predominant, and problematic, mode of Virgilian criticism focused on the "paradoxical": "The

in the case of the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, by gestures that refer us to the isolation of the imagining artist.

Much of the work's sadness derives from the sense that social relations, in the *Aeneid*, are emptied of their relationality: like Meliboeus and Tityrus, they do not, quite, connect. In particular, of being with others: conversations are rare, ineffectual, too late begun and too soon ended, so that the whole of the poem is characterized, as W.R. Johnson wrote, by "isolated anxiety, bad solitude."[424] So-called optimistic and pessimistic readers may disagree over whether the poem's sad solitudes are justified by the ends of imperial stability, or whether history's proud progress is proved false and hollow by its costs, but they all tend to feel a need to wrestle with this work's sadness: it is an irreducible element of the poem. Those who are most thickly described are sacrificed, Dido by her own hand, Turnus, in so many ways Aeneas' dark double, by Aeneas himself. Other characters are mere ciphers: "divine" or "loyal Achates" is little more than a set of epithets, and Aeneas addresses only one sentence--short, dark, shadowed by its own fatal history--to his son Ascanius, on whom the poem founds its notions of filial piety and

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recipe for this kind of reading is as follows: first find a paradoxical expression in Virgil and then apply it as a motto for the preferred interpretation." (Hardie 2009:106)

[424] Johnson 1979:179; he calls this "a Vergilian hallmark." His take is a departure from that of Richard Heinze, who tried to explain away the *Aeneid*'s terse, infrequent conversation as part of Virgil's foreshortened and dense epic technique. For the prevalence of summary and *precis* in Virgil as compared with Homer, see Heinze 1993:288=1914:359. For the brevity of speech, Heinze 1993:315ff.=1914:404ff.

imperial descent.[425] On the whole, Aeneas and those he loves--alive or dead, they are all phantoms--are compelled to wander side by side but never mingle, in waking dreams that have more shadow than light, more doubt than certainty.[426] There is, indeed, a sad solitude to the poem that keeps Aeneas' exchanges clipped, short, and, to use one of the poem's favorite words, *"inanes*"--empty, void, lifeless, imagined.[427]

It is a typical Virgilian tragedy that, aside from the immense and conflicted case of Dido, the most notable exception to this rule, the friendship of Nisus and Euryalus, is subject to the self-doubt raised by Alphesiboeus' song in the eighth *Eclogue.* The Trojan bosom-buddies are

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[425] *A*. 12.435-440; cf. Sophocles*, Ajax* 550-1, and discussion of the connection at Lyne 1987:8, 152-3, 191ff., 205-6, Panoussi 2000, and Seider 2013:166.

[426] Yet, although the word *solus* occurs around 80 times through Virgil's corpus, it is never directly attached to Aeneas by himself. As Luciano Lenas notes (*E.V.* sv. *solus*): *È singolare che, in un poema il cui protagonista è isolato nella 'irrimediabile solitudine'* (La Penna 1966:lix) *fatalmente, derivnte dalla sua 'Führerrolle"* (Lieberg 1971, 176), *il nome di Enea non figuri mai accompagnato dall'epiteto solus, o da unus o altri 'sinonimi' (secretus, incomitatus, remotus, nullo comite)."* On Aeneas' solitude, see Lieberg 176ff., and n. 66; cf. Feeney 1983 *passim*.

[427] As its name implies, Denis Feeney's early article on "The Taciturnity of Aeneas" (1983) provides a haunting commentary on this poem's evocation of a thwarted sociality characterized by loneliness and isolation: the poem dramatizes, Feeney finds, a "frustration of speech" by which "any hope of solace or reconciliation is denied," foregrounding an epic hero who "distant from his men…moves in solitude through a world which yields him no intimacy or comfort…His conversations are stifled, unconsummated." (Feeney 1983:210, 215)

volunteering for a night-time look-and-hack-about in the Italian camp; both are on fire to go ahead with the plan, but Nisus asks his friend a penetrating question: "Do the gods put this love in our hearts, Euryalus, or is each man's dire love his god?" (*dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt / Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?—A*. 9.184-5)[428] We know from the case of Dido, no less from that of Turnus, that this is a real problem in this poem: how much is what you think you love the product of your own desires, or of someone else's desires? How can you tell the difference? The problem, like the scene of Nisus and Euryalus as a whole, has good pedigree in Homer and the Homeric scholarly (especially allegorical) tradition, and the question embodies a general concern, in the epic tradition and its interpreters, over the nature of divine intervention and what has been called the "double motivation" (simultaneously human and divine) of epic epistemology.[429] But the doubt that it encapsulates is pure Virgil.

It is also the kind of doubt--the same kind so frequently employed throughout the *Eclogues*--that Virgil draws out at key structural points in the *Aeneid*--the beginning, the middle, and the end--in a way that suggests that the project of exploring, and wrestling with, the solitary imagination did not end with Virgil's *Georgics*. Though a full account of the *Aeneid*'s struggle with "sad solitude" would take an entire chapter or book, an account of certain structural insecurities gives the outlines of the problem.

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[428] Hardie (1994 *ad A*. 9.184-5) notes the dilemma's Homeric pedigree in *Od*. 4.712-3, "I do not know whether some god aroused him, or whether his own heart was moved to go to Pylos"), then points the way through various post-Homeric allegories and epics that raise the question of the relationship of human to divine intervention.

[429] Hardie 1994 *ad A*. 9.184-5; Feeney 1991.

The real struggle of Virgil's last poem, from beginning to end, is that between Aeneas and the *Aeneid*. This begins with the poem's opening lines:

> *Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris*
> *Italiam fato profugus Laviniaque venit*
> *litora, multum ille et terris iactatus et alto*
> *vi superum, saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram;*
> *multa quoque et bello passus, dum conderet urbem,*
> *inferretque deos Latio, genus unde Latinum*
> *Albanique patres atque altae moenia Romae.*
>
> Arms and the man I sing, who first from Troy's shores to Italy, driven by fate, and to Lavinian beaches came—much tossed on land and sea, through the violence of the gods, on account of the unforgetting wrath of savage Juno, and much he endured in war, until he founded a city, and brought his gods to Latium, from whence the Latin line, and the Alban ancestors, and the walls of high Rome.

Just as the figure of exile began the *Eclogues*, and the figure of the *Eclogues*' Virgilian exile ended the *Georgics*, the *Aeneid*, too, will begin with a figure in flight from, and because of, his fate (*fato profugus*). Like those poems, as well, the figure of the author is interposed, if ever so subtly, into the figure of exile and poetry. Just as we can connect the end of the *Georgics* to the beginning of the *Eclogues*, we can do the same between the end of the *Georgics* and the beginning of the *Aeneid*:

> *[carmina **qui** lusi pastorum audaxque iuventa,*
> *Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi]*
> *Arma virumque cano, Troiae **qui primus** ab oris*

Italiam, fato profugus, Laviniaque…

"I, who (qui) played the songs of the shepherds, and, as a foolhardy youth, sang you, Tityrus, under the cover of spreading beech--arms and the man I sing, who first from Trojan shores to Italy, forced by fate, and to Lavinian shores…"

The attractions of this kind of a re-writing, of a supplementary opening, existed in antiquity as well, as evidenced by the lines that some claimed opened the poem:[430]

*Ille ego **qui** quondam gracili modulatus avena*
carmen et egressus silvis vicina coegi
ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono,
gratum opus agricolis, at nunc horrentia Martis
arma virumque cano…

"I am he who, having once played his song on a slender reed, emerging from the woods forced the neighboring fields to serve the farmer, no matter how greedy, a work dear to farmers, and now the bristling arms of Mars I sing, and the man…"

But nothing need be added to the opening lines to put the poet into them: unlike Homer, who opened his poems by asking (or ordering) the Muse to sing something to him (the "rage of Achilles" in the *Iliad*, the "versatile man" in the *Odyssey*), Virgil opens his poem by singing in

[430] *Ille ego qui* also reflects a desire to normalize epic openings (demonstrative, pronoun, relative pronoun). The question of those lines' authenticity has been much discussed; see Ziolkowsi and Putnam 2008:22-5 for bibl.

his own voice: *arma virumque* ***cano, "***arms and the man I sing." After this strong, non-Homeric first person assertion,[431] we come quickly to *qui primus*, "who first," a phrase that caused Servius to raise objections to the *Aeneid*'s first lines--Aeneas was not, in fact, the first to arrive from Troy to Italy, as Antenor, another Trojan, had arrived in Italy, and built a settlement there, before Aeneas' arrival, as both mytho-historical tradition and Virgil's own poem (*A*. 1.242-253) agree to have been the case.[432] This particular objection may, as Austin comments, be "pedantry," but Virgil's use of *primus* is justified not only by a purposeful ignoring of "the tradition in the interest of his high theme," but also because *primus,* beyond heightening the mood, participates in a syntactic *ainigma* that implicates the title character in the title author. For the *primus* here is a covert example of what has come to be known as the *primus*-motif in Latin literature, whereby Roman poets make a habit of claiming that they are, not the inventors of a kind of poetry, but the first to bring it to Rome, Italy, and Latin.[433] Virgil had employed the motif on a previous occasion, leading into the (people-less) scene of triumph at the temple of Caesar: "I am the first

[431] Though non-Homeric, the first person epic opening is far from unprecedented: compare, for example, the openings of the *Ilias Parva*, Apollonius of Rhode's *Argonautica*, and the putative opening, filled with personal anxieties over belatedness, of Chorelius of Samos' *Persica*.

[432] For a sustained treatment of these opening lines, and with specific attention to their thematization of the written vs. the oral, see Lowrie 2009:1-22.

[433] Crucial examples include Lucretius 1.117, Virgil, *G*. 3.10-11, Propertius 3.1.3-4; Hor. *Epist*. 1.19.23-4, *C.* 3.30.10-4. For the motif, see Volk 2002:114, Wimmel 1960: index s.v. *'primus*-Motiv'; Hinds 1998:52-63.

(*primus ego*), if but enough of life remains, who will, in returning, lead, with me, the Muses from the Aeonian peak."

Both Virgil and Aeneas can be called, each in his own way, *primus*, just as both are responsible for effecting the *translatio imperii* that brings all good things to Rome. There is no question that Homeric precedent leads us to expect the second half of the epic's first line to continue the characterization of the heroic subject; nor is there a question, after we reach the verb *venit*, "he came," that the sentence as a whole refers to Aeneas; rather, I am suggesting that the Virgilian innovation in this line--the first-person verb *cano*, "I sing", juxtaposed with the relative phrase *qui primus*, "who first," and following the first-person interventions of the *Georgics*' close--allows us to imagine Virgil into the interstices of this poem, a poet fixated on exile speaking of an exiled man.[434] It was precisely this aspect of the phrase's polysemy that Ovid took up in his summary of Virgil's *Aeneid*: *ille tuae felix Aeneidos auctor / contulit in Tyrios arma*

[434] The first sentence is what is known as a cleft sentence: it has both a main clause and a dependent clause, but could be restated as a simple sentence. This construction lays the groundwork for that will be exploited by the division of the direct object, “arms and the man,” or just “the man,” from the relative pronoun (“who,” *qui*). Meanwhile, the first-person verb that divides the two, “I sing,” can attract the relative pronoun, attaching it to itself. Hence the difference between the case here and what we find at *E*. 8.22-4, where there the nominative, *Maenalus*, is far from, and the direct object, *Panaque*, directly adjacent to, the relative pronoun (*qui primus*) by which it (that is, he, the god Pan) is modified. It is not surprise, then, that Quintilian, in his *Institutions of Oratory* (11.3.35-6), used these lines to show how one had to read aloud in a particular way in order to preempt such ambiguities.

virumque toros (*Tristia* 2.533-4) "He, that happy author of the *Aeneid*, conveyed the arms and the man to Tyrian beds." Just as much as Aeneas bore Trojan gods to Italian shores, Virgil bore Aeneas, and his arms, into his wanderings.

There is a way in which all fiction can be characterized by this trait, formally speaking, but the *Aeneid* makes it a key structuring theme: the tension between Aeneas and the *Aeneid* is, like that between Tityrus and Meliboeus, characterized by contrasting praise of what the future will bring and lament for the sadness that already is. For while the opening desire of the poem is directed towards future life and civilization generated through force of arms--*dum conderet urbem*--the initial desire of the poet's hero Aeneas is directed towards the death that he should have met in the past, and motivated by the sense that he exists in a world in which he should longer exist. This can be described as the tension between the *Aeneid*'s life-wish and Aeneas' death-wish, and the two projects are not so much irreconcilable as plotted on parallel paths:[435] Aeneas will constantly die to himself as a man (*virum*) of desires, loves, regrets, doubts, and inexplicable hesitations, in order for the *Aeneid*'s destructive and constructive ambitions (*condere* in both senses) to be efficaciously effected (*arma*). Both projects are also structured in such a way as to suggest that, as in the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, we can never be sure that this poem's projects and people are not anything more or less than the hollow images of unfulfilled desire.[436]

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[435] This can be described, as David Quint has done, as a generic tension between epic's forward movement towards a historic goal, and romance's constantly arrested, diverted, and self-circling progress.

[436] cf. *A*. 6.293 *cava sub imagine formae.*

When Aeneas enters the poem, buffeted by tempestuous winds, he is in a world that is not his own, and he is, though surrounded by people, very much alone, his thoughts directed not against those still alive with him in the storm, or the futures charted by the poem's opening, but to those already dead: "O three times, four times blessed, whoever chanced to meet death before his fathers' eyes, under the walls of high Troy!" (*A*. 1.94-101)

'O terque quaterque beati,
quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub moenibus altis
contigit oppetere! O Danaum fortissime gentis
Tydide! Mene Iliacis occumbere campis
non potuisse, tuaque animam hanc effundere dextra,
saevus ubi Aeacidae telo iacet Hector, ubi ingens
Sarpedon, ubi tot Simois correpta sub undis
scuta virum galeasque et fortia corpora volvit?'

"O three and four time happy, to whom it chanced to died before the faces of their fathers, under the tall walls of Troy! O Diomedes strongest of the race of Greeks! Was it not possible for me to die on Trojan fields, to pour out my life at your right hand, there where savage Hector lies on account of Achilles' spear, where great Sarpedon lies, where the Simois sweeps beneath its waves so many snatched shields, helmets, and the brave bodies of men."

Aeneas' first speech answers the poet's opening: whereas the poem's opening lines celebrate departure from Troy (*Troiae qui primus ab oris*), Aeneas' formulaic alteration of the phrase emphasizes his desire to have stayed in Troy, (*Troiae sub moenibus altis*); *primus* is replaced by new numbers, *terque quaterque*, primacy (*primus*) by happiness (*beati*); the celebration of

leaving Troy's shores (***Troiae****…ab* ***oris***) is, through a wordplay, replaced by the wish to have died before the father's faces and the Trojan walls (***ora*** *patrum* ***Troiae*** *sub moenibus altis*); and the end of Aeneas' first speech recalls the beginning of the poet's preamble, with *scuta virum* being the first of many plays on the opening motif, *arma virumque*: here, though, we have the "arms of men" but not the men themselves, who are, in Aeneas' speech, merely *fortia corpora*, "brave bodies," so much human weight to be swept and turned about by the river.

If the establishment of Rome is the initial desire of the poem and is a desire advanced, fulfilled, and frustrated by Aeneas' wars in the poem's second half (books 7-12), then the initial desire of Aeneas, to face death before Anchises' eyes (*contigit oppetere ante ora patrum*), is advanced, fulfilled, and frustrated at the poem's halfway point, where Aeneas, newly arrived on Italy's "ever-receding shores,"[437] descends into the underworld to speak with the spirit of his dead father. Aeneas, having gone through the forests primeval of Cumae, and entered into the dark and forested land of the dead, does meet his father, but no sooner does this scene of fulfillment come to its end than Virgil brings to bear the same kinds of doubts that he introduced into the end of the fifth *Eclogue*, the eighth *Eclogue*, the *Eclogues* as a whole by way of its ending, and the *Georgics* by way of their looping path back through the *Eclogues*. For when Aeneas leaves the underworld, he comes, famously, to two gates, one of horn, which gives an easy exit to true dreams, the other, through which, though shimmering, perfect, with its white ivory, "the dead spirits send forth false dreams towards the sky" (*sed falsa ad caelum mittunt*

[437] *A*. 6.61 *iam tandem Italiae fugientis prendimus oras;* cf. *A*. 3.495 *arva…Ausoniae semper cedentia retro / quaerenda.*

insomnia Manes--*A*. 6.896). Anchises' father sends his son--"and, together with him, the Sibyl" (*unaque Sibyllam*)--through the gate of ivory, the gate of false dreams.

The reversal enacted by the ivory gate of false dreams is prepared, structurally, by reversals at similarly important points in the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, and, locally, by the sixth book's characterization of Aeneas' underworld journey as one of shadowy dreams.[438] There are all kinds of debates over what precisely the Gates of Dreams mean for book 6 and for the *Aeneid*, but one must agree with Nicholas Horsfall (*ad A*. 6.893-6) that "the careful, dispassionate reader of these verses feels repeatedly challenged, even thwarted."[439] As was the case with the *Eclogues*, however, the introduction of epistemological doubt into a narrative brings with it a chaos that is not, and should not be, contained with speed and ease: it is in its nature and purpose to spread. Just as Aeneas satisfies his opening wish--to be justified in the sight of his father, through his death before his father's eyes--we must ask whether the whole underworld has been not so much a world through which Aeneas has passed, as a world that has passed through, and from, storm-tossed Aeneas himself.

The seeds of these false dreams had, in fact, been planted just as soon as Aeneas entered the underworld, a hazy world shadowed by the *Eclogues'* solitary, shaded, woods:

Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram

[438] For bibl. on the debate over whether Aeneas' katabasis if a dream journey or not, see Horsfall *ad* A. 6, p. 615, who also points to important ancient precedents for dream-*Katabasis*, including, i.a., Ennius' *Epicharmus, Varia*, fr. 45 V; Plutarch. *Mor*. 590A on the universe revealed in the cave of Trophonius; and, of course, the myth of Er, in Plato's *Republic* 614B.

[439] For full bibliography, see Horsfall 2013 *ad A*. 6.893-6.

perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna:
quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna *270*
est iter in silvis, ubi caelum condidit umbra
Iuppiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem.
---
tum consanguineus Leti Sopor et mala mentis
Gaudia, mortiferumque adverso in limine Bellum,
ferreique Eumenidum thalami et Discordia demens *280*
vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis.
in medio ramos annosaque bracchia pandit
ulmus opaca, ingens, quam sedem Somnia vulgo
vana tenere ferunt, foliisque sub omnibus haerent. (A. 6.268-284)

They were going dark, under a lonely night, through the shadow, through the empty houses of Dis, and the void realms: as by an uncertain moon, in its grudging light, one travels in woods, where Jupiter buries the sky in shade, and black night steals color from the world.

And Death's brother, Sleep, and joys, dangerous to the mind, and death-bearing in the opposite door, and the Furies' iron cells, and insane Discord twining her snaky hair with bloody ribbons. In the middle, an elm--dark, giant--spreads its boughs and aged arms, where they say empty dreams (*somnia…/ vana*) have their seat, and they cling under every leaf.

Just as Aeneas will exit the underworld through the gate of false dreams, so he enters it by way of the tree of empty dreams: as a result, Aeneas' path through the underworld is darkly

circular.[440] It is not surprising that the first of these cited lines--*ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram*, "they go, dark, under a lonely night through the shadow"--became, as far back as Servius and as recently as Gian Biagio Conte, the *locus classicus* for the stylistic device seen as most typically Virgilian: *hypallage*, or, the "transferred epithet."[441] The effect achieved is clarified by comparing the "darkness from within" of Virgil's figures with the "darkness from without" found in Homer's prelude to Odysseus' dialogue with the dead:[442]

> ἡ δ' ἐς πείραθ' ἵκανε βαθυρρόου Ὠκεανοῖο.
> ἔνθα δὲ Κιμμερίων ἀνδρῶν δῆμός τε πόλις τε,
> ἠέρι καὶ νεφέλῃ κεκαλυμμένοι· οὐδέ ποτ' αὐτοὺς
> Ἠέλιος φαέθων καταδέρκεται ἀκτίνεσσιν,
> οὔθ' ὁπότ' ἂν στείχῃσι πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα,
> οὔθ' ὅτ' ἂν ἂψ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν προτράπηται,
> ἀλλ' ἐπὶ νὺξ ὀλοὴ τέταται δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι.

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[440] Horsfall *ad A*. 6.893-6 notes this, while finding "a circular route uncongenial, intolerable, even, to readers who find (as I do) a strong element of linear progress in Aen.'s journey, from darkness to light, from Troy to the Campus Martius, from Priam to Marcellus, from Plato to *mos maiorum*." As usual, how one feels about an individual passage's or textual affiliations depends on how one feels about the text as a whole, but this is especially true at moments of potential structural flipping, as at Virgil's midpoints and endings.

[441] See Servius *ad A*. 1.392, and at *A*. 2.387; for occurrences of hypallage as a figure in Virgil, see the list at Conte 2007:120 n. 89.

[442] On Virgil's "subjective style," see Otis 1963, Conte 2007.

> She [Odysseus' boat] came to the boundary of deep-flowing Ocean: here is the people and city of the Kimmerian men, wrapped all around in mist and cloud. Never does Sun, shining, look down on them with his rays, not when he climbs to the suny sky, not when, to earth, from heaven, he again turns back--but deadly night spreads over miserable mortals. (*Od*. 11.14-19)

Homer's situation is straightforward, and normal: the Kimmerians are miserable because the sun does not shine on them, because they are covered in clouds that make, for them, a constant, and destructive, night. By contrast, in Virgil's underworld the relation of human to natural gloom is less a question of sight than of feeling: the interlocked figure, with its adjectives exchanged, presents not lonely people in a dark world, but dark people in a world made lonely by their own obscurity. Just as light, in ancient physiognomy, radiates from a person's eyes into the world he sees, so too could darkness: in Virgil's description, Aeneas and the Sibyl are made to be the sources of their own solitary, isolating, night.

The experience of entering the "empty houses of Dis and the void realms" is compared, not unnaturally, to the experience of entering a forest,[443] in this case, a metaphor, or, rather, memory, drawn from life: before entering Dis, Aeneas had made a "journey into the forest primeval, the deep lairs of wild beasts," (*A*. 6.179) and, "He, himself, turns these things over in his own sad heart (*ipse suo tristi cum corde*), looking out on the immense wood (*aspectans silvam immensam--A*. 6.184-5). The difference is that the woods of Dis are the woods of visions, and,

[443] The term *vacuum nemus*, though not used by Virgil, is frequent in Augustan poetry, and may be a Gallan commonplace.

significantly, of sleep: in the forecourt of Dis is an elm tree, dark, like night itself[444]. Then Virgil's text gets complicated, switching from indirect, to direct, reportage:

quam sedem Somnia vulgo

vana tenere ferunt, foliisque sub omnibus haerent.

First, "*they say*, commonly, that empty dreams have their seat" in this tree; next, "under all of the leaves they [the empty dreams] *hang*." Between the indirect and the direct speech, between the accusative-infinitive and the indicative constructions, is where we, with Aeneas, enter into the shade of the dark elm of empty dreams, those "delicate lives without body…under the hollow image of form" (*tenuis sine corpore vitas…cava sub imagine formae*) which, had he not been warned, Aeneas would have attacked, fruitlessly cleaving the shadows with iron (*inruat et frustra ferro diverberet umbras--A*. 6.292-4). It also points to an epistemological doubt that derives from the interpenetration of what is the case and what we believe the case to be, which is the central theme of Aeneas' dialogues with the dead. So, when Aeneas is wandering among the shades of the dead, Dido "was wandering in a large forest (*errabat silva in magna*),

quam Troius heros

ut primum iuxta stetit agnovitque per umbras

[444] cf. *A*. 4.123 *diffugient comites et* ***nocte*** *tegentur* ***opaca***. I agree completely with Horsfall (2013:642) that "Aeneid 6 is not an eschatological programme, but a poetic construct, set not in some real Cumae, the beloved goal of the poet's Sunday excursions, but in the gloomy, scream-filled caverns of Virgil's imagination."

obscuram, qualem primo qui surgere mense

aut videt aut vidisse putat per nubila lunam… (*A*. 6.451-4)

"whom the Trojan hero as he first stood nearby and recognized, through the shades, obscure in the way that on the first of the month one sees, or seems to see, rising through the clouds, the moon…"

What is the difference between Aeneas seeing and thinking he sees? Here, more than anywhere, one thinks not only of the question of Nisus, but, with even more cause, of that of Alphesiboeus: "Do we believe it? Or do lovers fashion their own dreams?" Just as the *Eclogues*, we have shown, together with the *Georgics* take place under the aegis of exiled Meliboeus, so the forested dream-visions at the heart of the *Aeneid* are guided by the obscure light of the "uncertain moon" (*incertam lunam--A*. 6.270).[445] The etymological play on Dido's name here reminds us that she is one embodiment of this principle: *Dido* is related to the Punic (Semitic) root for "wandering," and the conceptual connection of "wandering" with the "moon" is made explicit in the song of Iopas at Dido's banquet (*A*. 1.742 *errantem lunam*, "the wandering moon").[446] Dido is,

[445] On Aeneas' incomplete vision here, see Reed 2007:175.

[446] On non-Latin etymological wordplay in Virgil, see Bartelink 1965:85-91; on Punic wordplay in Virgil, with emphasis on Dido, see Hexter 1992:348 with nn.; before suggesting a link between Dido's Semitic etymologies and elegy, O'Hara 1996:110 gives the following set of "interlinked examples" involving Dido in Punic wordplay:

1. *G. 1.337, Mercury is wandering: quos ignis caelo Cyllenius erret in orbis.* Servius says *erret* is appropriate because planets>Grk. *Planê*, to "wander"

etymologically, related to the NDD-root meaning wanderer, but she is just as importantly related to the DUD root, meaning "agitated," and, importantly, "in love." But Dido is only a single (though crucial) embodiment of a locus of ideas, the anguish of uncertain love, that characterizes the largescale structural anxieties of the *Aeneid*, and Virgil's work as a whole: what you love best may be only what you think you love best, the hollow image of a dream.

For it is not only Aeneas' opening wish that is disturbed by the workings of Virgil's uncertain dreams, but that of the poet, and his poem, as well, with effects that reach not only backward, to Books I-VI, but, also, forward, to Books VII-XII. The second half of the epic is, in fact, bounded by dream imagery. When the seventh book begins, Virgil announces that "a bigger story is being born through me--I am stirring a greater work (*A*. 7.44-5 *maior rerum mihi nascitur ordo, / maius opus* ***moveo***)." But the true engine of the book's second half is revved by the dread goddess Juno, who, having exhausted other options for thwarting the Trojans and

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2. *A*. 1.742, *errantem lunam* in song of Iopas, Dido's banquet
3. *A*. 4.211, Dido is *femina, quae nostris errans in finibus*. Pease notes that in *Etym. Magn*.and in Timaeus "Dido" connected to Grk. *Planê* or *planêtis*.
4. *A*. 4.68 Dido wanders the city: *uritur infelix Dido totaque* ***vagatur / urbe furens, qualis coniecta cerva sagitta***.
5. In her death-throes (O'Hara 1996:153) Dido looks up *oculis errantibus* (4.691)
6. *A*. 6.450-54, Dido wanders the underworld: *inter quas Phoenissa recens a vulnere* ***Dido / errabat*** *silva in magna; quam Troius heros / ut primum iuxta stetit agnovitque per umbras / obscuram, qualem primo qui surgere mense / aut videt aut vidisse putat per nubila* ***lunam.***

rescuing the Italians, declares, "If I cannot sway the gods above, I will stir the Acheron (*A*. 7.312 *flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta* ***movebo***)." Just as Juno's appeal to Neptune generated the chain of events that took us from Books 1-VI, so it is her appeal to the powers of the underworld that will generate what follows. The Acheron is the underworld's stream of pain, and represents the forces of death; also, though, as Freud knew, the power of dreams, false and frightening, of fiery visions and dark nightmares.[447] Juno calls on Allecto, whose first act is to enrage Amata, mother of Lavinia, would-be mother-in-law to Turnus; from Amata, she turns to the city's other women: "rumor flies, and the same fire (*ardor*) drives all of the mothers, enflamed with furies, to seek out new dwellings,"[448] which they find "amid trees, amid the wastelands of beasts" (*inter silvas, inter deserta ferarum--A*. 7.404-5). Allecto moves quickly from one *ardor* to another: the next stop is "Ardea, called that by our ancestors, and even now the great name of Ardea remains, although its fortune is past" (*locus Ardea quondam / dictus avis et nunc magnum manet Ardea nomen / sed fortuna fuit*…).[449] One need not wait for hundreds of lines to pass, and for the uprising of Italy, to see the word association of "burning Ardea" confirmed, for the end result, and purpose, of Allecto's visit to Ardea, is to "fire up" Turnus' rage against Aeneas: *talibus*

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[447] This verse (*A*. 7.312) is the epigraph of Freud's *Die Traumdeutung* ("Interpretation of Dreams"), published in 1899 but dated to 1900 to better advertise its revolutionary importance.

[448] *A*. 7.392-3 *fama volat, furiisque accensas pectore matres / idem omnis simul ardor agit nova quaerere tecta.*

[449] O'Hara suggests, following Servius, that the *magnum…nomen* of *Ardea* may be a play on *arduus*, "high," and also, on the *ardea* bird (with *avîs-avis*). See, *pace*, Horsfall *ad A*. 7.411-2.

Allecto dictis exarsit in iras, "With such words Allecto burned him into rages." (*A*. 7.445)[450] This she achieves by appearing to Turnus when he is in the midst of taking hold of his tranquil, silent, sleep, in the black night (*iam mediam nigra carpebat nocte quietam*, *A*. 7.413-4); having exchanged her hellish appearance for that of a old priestess of Juno, Allecto "offers herself to the young man, before his eyes."[451] She appears "before his eyes," but, as with Aeneas' visions of Hector (*A*. 2.270) and the Penates (*A*. 3.150-1), this does not mean that his eyes are actually open. Turnus' exchange with Allecto is surreal precisely because it is impossible to differentiate dreaming from waking visions. Once she is finished talking, however, Allecto murders sleep:

> *sic effata facem iuveni coniecit et atro*
> *lumine fumantis fixit sub pectore taedas.*
> *olli somnum ingens rumpit pavor, ossaque et artus*
> *perfundit toto proruptus corpore sudor.*
>
> Thus having spoken, she hurls her firebrand at the young man, and fixes her torches, fuming with black light, under his chest. Enormous terror tears his sleep, and sweat, bursting out, suffuses bones and limbs over all his body. (*A*. 7.456-9)

[450] O'Hara 1996:190 suggests that *A*. 7.623-31 may be an example of Virgil connecting *Ardea* and *ardens* ("burning").

[451] On the oddness of *carpebat*, see Horsfall (*ad A*. 7.414) compares *G*. 3.435, *A*. 4.522, 555, and sees the implication as "that of a deep, steady plunge into slumber," with Homeric precedent. See Feeney 1991:170 on the problem of determining where, exactly, Turnus wakes (cf. *A*. 7.458).

Turnus enters the *Aeneid*, asleep; interrupted by troubling dreams; transformed, in his bed, into a creature of bones and limbs, of rage, sweat, fear, and fire. Looking back from Nisus' question, we can ask of the *ardor* of Amata, Turnus, the Italians, and the whole of the second half of the epic: is every *ardor* only the product of dreamt desire and fear?

From dreams was Turnus made, and by dreams he will be undone: after all the diplomacy, travel, battle, and oratory of books 7-12 have exhausted themselves, Aeneas and Turnus are finally locked in the fatal combat that will found Italy by founding a furious sword in the maddened Italian's breast, and we come to the poem's last full-fledged simile:[452]

> *ac velut in somnis, oculos ubi languida pressit*
> *nocte quies, nequiquam avidos extendere cursus*
> *velle videmur et in mediis conatibus aegri* *910*
> *succidimus; non lingua valet, non corpore notae*
> *sufficiunt vires nec vox aut verba sequuntur:*
> *sic Turno…*
>
> As in dreams, when languid quiet presses the eyes with night, vainly we seem to want to keep on running, and, in the middle of our efforts exhausted, we give up--the tongue is powerless, the body's familiar strength is not enough, neither voice nor words follow--thus Turnus… (*A*. 12.908-13)

[452] Though compare the quick simile at *A*. 12.921-3.

Last similes, like first similes, are important:[453] it is no accident that the Italian adventure that begins when Allecto's nightmare breaks the "quiet in the night" (*nocte quietem--A*. 7.414), ends when *Dea Dira*, the "dread goddess," causes Turnus to collapse as one disturbed in the "quiet in the night" (*nocte quies--A*. 12.909).[454] The last simile itself is based on a late simile in Homer's *Iliad*, which, fittingly, describes the final confrontation of Achilles and Hector:

> ὡς δ' ἐν ὀνείρῳ οὐ δύναται φεύγοντα διώκειν·
> οὔτ' ἄρ' ὃ τὸν δύναται ὑποφεύγειν οὔθ' ὃ διώκειν·
> ὣς ὃ τὸν οὐ δύνατο μάρψαι ποσίν, οὐδ' ὃς ἀλύξαι.
> πῶς δέ κεν Ἕκτωρ…
>
> As in a dream, one is not able to pursue the one running away; neither can this one escape, nor this one pursue, so this one could not take hold of him in his speed, nor the other escape--how then could Hector…[455] (*Il*. 22.199-201)

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[453] Denis Feeney spoke on "First Similes in Epic" for his Presidential Address at the 2013 APA Plenary Session, and at the July 10th, 1988 Triennial Meeting of the Roman and Hellenic Societies at Oxford.

[454] Richard Tarrant notes *ad A*. 12.909 that the verse "might echo" *A*. 7.414.

[455] The terms of this simile resemble the introductory lines on the race of Hector and Achilles, at *Il*. 22.158ff.: "It was a great man who fled (ἔφευγε), a greater man who pursued (δίωκε) him rapidly, since there was no feast animal, no ox-hide they fought for, for these are the prized given men for running. But they ran for the life of Hector, breaker of horses."

As so often, the differences are telling: Homer's dream is impersonal, and does not belong to either Achilles or Hector; is interested in both Hector and Achilles, and keeps them both in sight; is focused on the actual ability, or inability, to escape or pursue; is, theoretically, like the epic cycle itself, never-ending. By contrast, Virgil's dream is subjective and personal; is interested in only Turnus the pursued, and his internal surreal experience of mortal reality, rather than the fact of escape itself (Aeneas and Turnus are not, at this point, unlike Achilles and Hector, involved in flight); and is terminal, ending in exhaustion, sadness, failure, and collapse.[456] Also, of course, in silence: like Meliboeus, who will "sing no more songs;" like Lycidas, who has forgotten Menalcas' words; and like Moeris, who "lost all songs, whom the voice itself already fled," the end of the nightmare emphasizes not the lost race or vigor, but, instead, the *lingua, vox, verba*, "tongue, voice, words."

The change from Homer's impersonal description to the first-person plurals in Virgil's dream--*velle videmur*, "we seem to desire," *succidimus*, "we collapse"--may owe something to Lucretius[457] and provoke identification with Turnus, but it also, in conjunction with the dream's

[456] Comparison of these similes is almost a perfect test-case for Virgil's "subjective" vs. Homer's "objective" style; Auerbach's comparison of Homer and Genesis provides the key terms of this debate.

[457] Lucretius, *DRN* 4.455-7, re: a deep sleep, *tum vigilare tamen nobis et membra movere / nostra videmur et in noctis caligene caeca / cernere censemus solem*. Tarrant notes (*ad A*. 12.910) that "the substitution of *velle* for *nostra* produces both alliteration and greater stress on frustrated desire," and also points us to a parallel at Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* 2.541-2,

focus on speech and silence, associates Turnus, and Turnus' dream experience, with the poet. This is why the final failure of articulation in Virgil's final dream, also his final similitude, echoes that image of artistic failure that had opened the sixth book: Aeneas, setting first foot on Italian shores, comes to the groves and golden roofs of Apollo's temple, a temple that Daedalus had decorated with images that immortalize his own Cretan adventures and his winged escape, but which he could not use to make famous his dead son, Icarus, "for you, too, Icarus, would have had a large part in such a work, if only pain had allowed it--twice Daedalus had tried (*conatus*) to depict Icarus' fall (*casus*) in gold, twice his fatherly hands fell in failure (*cecidere*--*A*. 6.30-32)."[458] The matching deaths and expressive insufficiencies that bound the second half of the *Aeneid*, and, in truth, the *Aeneid* as a whole, are part of the epic's widely noted insistence on the human sacrifices necessary for the sake of empire, contained in a formula spoken by Neptune to Venus, *unum pro multis dabitur caput*, "one head will be given for the sake of the many." (*A*. 5.815).[459] Excerpted in this way, it seems as though Virgil was interested in asserting a metaphysics of imperial justification, a way of making good on loss. That this is only a small part of Virgil's program, however, is clear when the formula's context is restored:

> *unus erit tantum amissum quem gurgite quaeres;*
> *unum pro multis dabitur caput.'*

"as when one wanders far from his native land, as we men often wander in our travails," on which, see Hunter 1993:137-8.

[458] *A*. 6.30-32 *tu quoque magnam / partem opere in tanto, sineret dolor, Icare, haberes. / bis conatus erat casus effingere in auro, / bis patriae cecidere manus.*

[459] See Hardie 1993:3-10.

> "One there will but one who, lost, you will seek in the sea; one head will be given for the sake of the many." (*A*. 5.813-5)

The second line's impersonal, passive form models the utilitarian logic of sacrifice; the first line's personal, second-person, concerned, active form, on the other hand, models the typically Virgilian, typically impossible, longing to make good on what is irrecoverably lost. There is one person whom you will seek, and that person will already be lost in the sea. It is Neptune speaking these words to Venus, but it is not Venus who will seek for this absent one: that lot falls to Aeneas, who, like the deprived singers of the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, is always already looking for what is irremediably lost. Certainly the logic of sacrifice leaves something to be desired, as does the line that represents it: *unum pro multis dabitur caput* is one of the *Aeneid*'s incomplete lines, and is as good an example as any of how these "imperfect lines" (*versus imperfectos*--*VSD* 41) play a crucial role in Virgil's view of poetry and life as, in the words of the ninth *Eclogue*, *necdum perfecta*, "not yet made perfect."[460] The many attempts after Virgil's

[460] The Suetonian life claims that Varius published Virgil's text, on Augustus' orders, and collected it lightly (*summatim emandata*), leaving the half-lines (*versus imperfectos* according to *VSD* 41) incomplete. On Virgil's completion of half-lines, see *VSD* 33 and Horsfall 1995:19, 23-24, 296ff. Sparrow 1931 argued that the unfinished lines may have been left that way intentionally by notes that *et oratorie ibi finiuit, ubi vis argumenti constitit*. Horsfall suggests an exciteingly enticing, but ultimately unprovable, hypothesis: “Such unfinished verses indicate a narrative or dramatic pause and mark, with their alteration of the rhythm, a change of scene or the end of a rhetorical development, the effect must have been greater in the standard means of

death to fill out these imperfect lines is exactly Virgil's point: there is always a desire to fill out an absence. One of the lessons of Virgil's ivory gates is that perfection is suspect: though the gate of ivory "shines, perfected with white elephant," it is also, or precisely because of this, the gate through which the Fates "send out false dreams to the skies."[461] The mistake of these perfecters is to think that the absence can be made good: in our bereaved state, we cannot "make good" on absence, except by making our own goods and gods, so many empty figments of our false and shadowy dreams: "like smoke mingling with thin air, it vanishes afar, and does not see him grasping vainly at shadows, wanting to say so much more."[462] Despite the weight of biographical evidence attesting to the "unfinished" state of Virgil's *Aeneid*, one might speculate as to whether these stories might have arisen as creative apologies, justifications, and explanations for an unprecedented Virgilian oddity: it is not that these lines are imperfect, but that the poem, as a whole, represents imperfection and insufficiency.[463]

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performance of Vergil--aloud. We might therefore be reluctant to exclude the possibility that in a final revision the poet too might saved at least some of the hemistichs: an unprecedented and unimitated deviation from the epic tradition." (Horsfall 1993:296)

[461] *A*. 6.895-6 *altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto, / sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia Manes*. For *perfecta*, cf. *A*. 5.267, 9.263, Sil.12.403, Reineke, TLL 10.1367.21f..

[462] Of Persophone and Orpheus (*G*. 4.499-502): *ceu fumus in auras / commixtus tenuis fugit diversa, neque illum / prensantem nequiquam umbras et multa volentem / dicere praeterea vidit*.

[463] We could call this the "Virgil error" along the lines of Christine Froula's formula, "the Pound error," to explain how the "unfinished" state of the *Cantos* is crucial to their interpretation, on which, see *To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Pound's Cantos*, Yale 1985.

"As in a dream, exhausted, we fall…" When Turnus falls, we--Virgil, Aeneas, *Aeneid*, the reader--fall as well, into, and under, shadows always growing more profound.

> *hoc dicens ferrum adverso sub pectore condit* 950
> *fervidus; ast illi solvuntur frigore membra*
> *vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras.*
>
> Thus saying, Aeneas, burning, buried his sword in the enemy's chest; his limbs dissolved in cold fright, and his life, with a groan, fled indignant beneath the shadows. (*A*. 12.950-2)

These, the poem's last lines, are among Virgil's densest. They return us, in particular, to the poem's opening, as the foundation of Rome (*dum conderet urbem*) is metonymized, reversed, colored, realized, by the plunging (*condit*) of a sword;[464] the "arms and the man" of the first line (*arma virumque*) turns into a man using his arms against another man (*ferrum adverso*)[465]; and the shivering, dissolved limbs of Aeneas become the shivering dissolved limbs of someone else. All of Virgil's poems are structured as rings within rings, and the end of Turnus is no exception: the end of Turnus begins with the end of Camilla:

> *tum frigida toto*
> *paulatim exsoluit se corpore, lentaque colla*
> *et captum leto posuit caput, arma relinquens,*

[464] On *condere* throughout the *Aeneid*, see James 1995; the elegiac tone of loss and nostalgia at *E*. 9.52 must also be relevant.

[465] Perhaps, too, a pun on *ferrum*/*virum*?

uitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras. (*A*. 11.828-31)

> Then, cold, she loosened herself, piece by piece, from her whole body; her languid neck and her head captured by death, letting go of her arms, and her life, with a groan, fled indignant under the shades.

Camilla's death is deeply recursive, recalling the beginning of the *Aeneid* (*arma>arma*; *virumque>colla…caput*), and, also, the *Eclogues* in its flowing and fleeing (*A*. 11.830-1 *relinquens…fugit>E*. 1.3-4 *linquimus…fugimus*), and its movement towards what has been called the closural effect of shadows (*E*. 1.83, 10.75-6). Just as the case of Meliboeus was one in which the end preceded the beginning, so to Camilla's death is the beginning of this poem's end: it is only after being informed of Camilla's death (*A*. 11.896-915) that Turnus comes out from the woods (*Turnum in silvis*) to rush, maddened (*furens*), towards the main battlefield, and sees "savage Aeneas in arms" (*et saevum Aenean agnovit Turnus in armis--A*. 11.911). Though nightfall will delay the fight, the final battle is already, in its way, begun. Turnus' indignant flight from life is related to other indignant deaths, to dying Damon, "deceived by the unreturned love (*indigno…amore*) of his partner Nysa," (*E*. 8.18-20) and to dying Gallus, who "perished from unreturned love" (*indigno…amore--E*. 10.9-10). Like Meliboeus, like Aeneas, he must flee, and through shadows. Like so many Virgilian figures, he fights shadows with shadows: the "Pallas, Pallas" that immolates, murders, and punishes Turnus is, implicitly, an *umbra* itself--a dead and empty dream--called up to justify, and fuel, Aeneas' hot fury. But Pallas is already dead, nothing more than an emblem or a boiling image, and the whole scene is cast under the shadow of dark dreams and thwarted fulfillment.

Tityrus and Meliboeus, Virgil and Gallus, Orpheus and Eurydice, Aeneas and Dido, Anchises, Turnus: Virgil's figments will not be taken out of their solitude, but into shadows that

make both song and song's silence. Incensed Aeneas' threat to Turnus is, in this way, a model for Virgil's incendiary threat to the *Aeneid*, leading to the story that made Virgil the first in a proud tradition of artists who have tried to burn their own masterpieces:[466] when Varius refused the request, Virgil tried, unsuccessfully, to burn the scroll-boxes (*scrinia*) himself (*crematurus ipse*).[467] We've seen how the *Eclogues*, likely a major innovation in the history of the poetry book, ends with the image of the arid and burning book, and with an emphasis on the

[466] Plato provides something of a model for the wholesale destruction of one's own poetry, though only in a figural sense, since his burning takes place not at the moment of physical death but when Plato is reborn as a philosopher. Diogenes Laertius relates that as Plato was about to contend for the prize in tragedy, he heard Socrates lecturing and immediately consigned his poems (*ta poiemata*) to the flames, saying, "*Hêphaiste, promol' hôde: Platôn nu ti seio chatizei*," "Come hither, Hephaestus, Plato now has need of you!" (Dio. Lae. 3.5) See also Dio. Lae. 3.17 on Plato and the Mimes of Sophron; also, 3.5 on Socrates' vision of the cygnet-as-Plato (and compare Apuleius, *De Platone*, p. 64 Goldb.). Since the biographical tradition held that Virgil's trip to the East was in part for the purposes of the study of philosophy, it is possible that there the story of Virgil burning the Aeneid is meant to suggest a conversaion narrative similar to that of Plato.

[467] *VDS* 39-40: *Egerat cum Vario, priusquam Italia decederet, ut si quid sibi accidisset, Aeneida combureret; [a]t is ita facturum se pernegarat. Igitur in extrema valetudine assidue scrinia desideravit, crematurus ipse; verum nemine offerente, nihil quidem nominatim de ea cavit. [40] Ceterum eidem Vario ac simul Tuccae scripta sua sub ea conditione legavit, ne quid ederent, quod non a se editum esset.*

insufficiency of poetry both written and oral, precisely because poetry is always only a figment of the poet's own imagination, and provides the poet, in the end, with no access to the reciprocal love that he so desires[468]. We've seen, too, how the *Georgics* resembles the headless Orpheus in being a song sung by someone already departed, and already deprived. The Virgilian book is already imperfect, already alone, just as Meliboeus, when the first *Eclogue* begins and when it ends, is already in his dreamy solitude.[469] It is not that Virgil could not escape Meliboeus and Tityrus, but that he could never stop struggling with the challenge to social and poetic fulfillment that they, and the *Eclogues* as a whole, embodied.

[468] Hermann Broch's German expressionist masterpiece, *Der Tod des Vergil* (1936), makes Virgil's sense of a failure stem from a sense of moral and empathetic underachievement--"*Voilà,"* wrote Maurice Blanchot, "*une pensée moderne*." (*L'instant de me mort* 143)

[469] Here, I lean on the opinion of Jacques Perret, (1961 *Virgile: Les Bucoliques*), who thought that at the end of the first *Eclogue*, Meliboeus had already left without saying goodbye when Tityrus addressed the final lines to his now-absent friend, a view of that particular drama that coheres very well with the just-too-late communications in the *Aeneid* as presented by Feeney 1983.

CHAPTER 3

In Vacuo Theatro: Horace and the Oscillations of Solitude

1. Introduction

2. *Magna civitas, magna solitudo:* Horace, *Satires* I

3. *Et vacuum nemus*: Horace, *Odes* 1.1, 3.1, 2.20, and 3.4

4. "Or on the pavements grey": Epistles 1.11

5. An Argive for Florus: *Epistles* 2.2

6. Correcting the Argive: The *Ars Poetica*

In Vacuo Theatro: Horace and the Oscillations of Solitude

TU QUI SECURA SPATIATUS MENTE VIATOR[470]

I. Introduction

No one will leave Horace alone—least of all Horace himself. Scholarship has long oscillated between an emphasis on the Venusian poet's public and private faces, resulting in a stark dichotomy: is the "real" Horace the private poet (La Penna) or the public bard (Fraenkel)?[471] This split rehearses a debate that Horace held, repeatedly, with himself: "At Rome," his slave Davus tells him, "you like the country; when you're playing the countryman, you praise the far-off city to the stars."[472] Elsewhere, Horace admits that he's a poverty-praising Stoic when he's poor, and a slick connoisseur when he's well off (*E*. 1.15.42-6, *C*. 3.29.49-56). He is, like Aristippus, willing to adjust himself "to any style, rank, or condition."[473] In recent years, Horace's inconsistencies have proved a valuable resource for scholarship, as it has taken fuller account of this "two-formed poet" (*biformis…vates—C*. 2.20.2-3) by keeping these two aspects in constant tension, thereby characterizing the poet by the tension between two poles: on one side, the public, on the other, the coterie.[474]

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[470] CIL 1.1732.1: "You rambling wanderer with carefree spirit."

[471] For a review of 20th century scholarship, see Harrison 1995.

[472] *S*. 2.7.28-9 *Romae rus optas; absentem rusticus urbem / tollis ad astra levis.*

[473] *E*. 1.17.23 *omnis Aristippum decuit color et status et res*.

[474] Citroni 1995:271-375, Oliensis 1998:6, McNeill 2001:36-57 on Horace's audience as being empire-wide. Denis Feeney has usefully summarized the findings of this group, noting that

But there exists, beyond these two poles, a further pole whose position exerts a strong pressure on Horace's center of balance. This is the pole of Horace as his own sole audience, as a person and poet moving towards, speaking from, anxious about, solitude.[475] Since literary interpretation proceeds most often by positing dichotomies, explicating the tensions between them, and teasing out the ambiguities, and supplements, that their coexistence leaves behind as remainder, how we choose and where we place our poles is very important. In this chapter, I show how reading for the solitary Horace requires us not only to reread a number of Horatian poems that a long history of scholarship has normalized and socialized, but also to reconstrue the tensions that animate Horace's work as a whole. Genre complicates this picture: Horace the hexametrician (*Satires, Epistles*) tends to stand in harsh judgment on the kind of poetry, and self-described lyric lifestyle, that Horace the author of the *Odes* tends to pursue. But these generic tensions heighten, rather than lessen, the personal and poetic tensions involved: they invite us not to use the contradiction to cancel out the tension, but to ratchet up the tension by showing the ways in which they play themselves against one another.[476] Speaking from solitude has, for

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Horace's "construction of a small familiar group of properly appreciative readers is always in tension with his apprehension of another, far larger, group of readers who are strangers. The idea of these two extremes is important for him…because it gives shape to his incompatibly simultaneous lust for fame and loathing for vulgarization." (Feeney 2009:17)

[475] Adumbrated by Feeney 2002.

[476] In construing the slip towards solitude as a gesture across Horace's varied genres, I am indebted to the work of Aby Warburg, who used the term *Pathosformel*, "an emotionally charged visual trope," (Becker 2013) to describe the reproducible, transhistorical gestures found, and

Horace, both ethical and aesthetic dimensions, for both good and for bad, and Horace's poetry is ever alive to solitude's dialectical challenge, by which every confession of isolation is, itself, a form of public speech. It is precisely this enduring tension that makes solitude so fundamental a theme and vehicle of Horace's *oeuvre*.

This chapter proceeds, broadly speaking, chronologically. Horace's richly social *Satires* open up, in their interstices, places of personal retreat and meanderings of or towards solitude; Horace's *Odes*, though often sympotic and almost always written ostensibly for another person, stress, across multiple lyric categories (autobiographical, amatory, political), the (higher) value of being alone with one's self, one's thoughts, and one's gods; Horace's later *Epistle to Florus* and the *Ars Poetica* both demonstrate a strong hostility towards poetry, particularly, lyric, as the product of solitude or solitary wandering, but do so in such a way as to exhibit, in denial, the devotion to solitude's riches earlier found in the *Satires* and the *Odes*. From the beginning of his career to its end, I conclude, Horace wrote his solitude as both seductive invitation and dangerous compulsion, a tension exemplified by the *Epistle to Florus*' story of the Noble Argive, and the way this story is (insufficiently) corrected, bowdlerized, and socialized by what may have been Horace's last lines of poetry, the *Ars Poetica*'s story of the Mad Poet.

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evoked, in artwork both in and outside the European tradition. Though I believe Horace's "slip towards solitude" to be both transhistorical (in the sense of archetypal for particular human experiences) and deeply traditional (in the sense of its impact on a broad, especially Renaissance, tradition of writing the private sphere), this chapter focuses on its historical embedment in Horace's life and his part in his contemporary poetic scene.

This chapter's insistence on the importance of solitude is new, but it is also an extension of ideas already widely held about Horace as retreating poetic coquette. Throughout his opus, Horace was repeatedly, emphatically, and loudly reluctant to write on command, even, especially, for his friends. Following his first publication, the first book of *Satires*, Horace never misses an opportunity to remind Maecenas, Augustus, other friends, and the public that he has *already* written something, and that he does not want to, should not have to, write anything more. The tone is set in the *Epodes*: "Darling Maecenas, you kill me constantly by *asking*:[477] it is a god, a god, that prohibits undertaken iambics, the already promised verse."[478] Horace is always harassed back into verse: in Horace's first epistle, Maecenas again forces the poet back into the ring (*iterum antiquo includere ludo—E.* 1.1.3) as if he were an old gladiator, already freed, but recalled to the fight. In his first ode following his return to lyric, in *C.* 4.1, Horace is forced back

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[477] *Occidis saepe rogando*, "you kill me constantly by asking." As my translation shows, I take *saepe* (always) with both *occidis* (you kill) and *rogando* (by asking): the iteration of both the requests and the harm that Horace claims he suffers, is what is at issue. *Inceptos, olim promissum carmen, iambos* has the so-called "bucolic scheme," and suggests, together with *saepe*, that Horace is taking issue not only with the specific case but with the more general notion of "promised verse." See also White 1993 *passim*. The importance of "middles" in this poem is highlighted by the placement of the phrase "lead it to the umblical" (*ad umbilicum adducere—* 1.14.8) at the center of this poem (line 8 out of 16).

[478] *I.* 14.5 *candide Maecenas, occidis saepe rogando.* Note the sonic balance of *Ma**ae**cenas…s**ae**pe,* and the prevalence of hard c's: ***c**andide Mae**c**enas o**cc**idis*. Maecenas is, here, the "always beautiful" and the "always killing."

into the wars of love, and lyric, by Venus herself (*intermissa Venus diu / rursus bella moves*?). According to the Suetonian biography, Horace's later epistle to Augustus (*E*. 2.1) was written in response to the emperor's complaints that the poet had avoided addressing a poem to Augustus out of fear for what this association with the emperor might do for posterity's judgment of Horace (*an vereris ne apud posteros infame tibi sit*).

As lyric poet, Horace is known as a master of recusal. Any number of his standard rhetorical forms, from the *priamel* to the *praeteritio* to, of course, the *recusatio* itself, allow Horace to decline to say what is ostensibly requested. Even if nobody were to ask Horace for anything in particular, one imagines that his poetic posture would require him to invent a requirer, whether that would be "Caesar who can coerce" or Maecenas, who kills by constant requests, or Venus, who won't let Horace's heart alone.[479] So that, while Virgil has been construed as the retreating poet, Horace has construed himself as the recusing poet: another Suetonian story has it that Augustus, desiring to hand Horace the office of private secretary (*epistolarum… officium*), wrote to Maecenas that he used to write letters for himself, but now, "busy and sick, I want to abduct our Horace from you. He will come (*veniet*), therefore, from that parasitic table of yours to my royal one, and he will help me write my letters." Augustus' words are not commands (jussive subjunctives) but predictions (futures), with the understanding that what Caesar predicts comes true. Horace gives the lie to this, however, and refuses the

[479] *S*. 1.3.4 *Caesar qui cogere posset*. Compare Horace's formulation with its darker cousin, Asinius Pollio's neat claim, "It is not easy to write against him who can proscribe" (*non est enim facile in eum scribere qui potest proscribere*—Macr. *Sat*. 2.4.21). See Richlin 1999:205 on the pun *scribere/proscribere*.

abduction-by-invitation, a refusal happily without punitive consequence—"But Augustus was not enraged at *Horace's recusing* (*ac ne recusanti quidem…suscensuit*)." Perhaps, having read Horace's poetry, Suetonius' Augustus knew that recusal is just what Horace *does*.

I have described how Horace could be described, both by himself and by others, as the declining, recusing, poet, but there is another way that Horace characterizes his movement from the public to the private: "Now I grow nimble, and dive into an ocean of politics—I'm the strict sentry and servant of true virtue. But then I quietly slip back (*furtim relabor*) into the rules of Aristippus, and try to bend the world to me, not me to the world."[480] Horace, here, is the backsliding poet, who slips towards solitude in creating a world that bends towards himself, a world that is, therefore, wholly of himself.[481] It's one thing to see what Horace's poetry portrays, another to decide what it means and what it does. Many readers have seen this gesture as an aspect of Horace's lifelong project of building a brand, "Horace the Hard-to-Get": you want Horace, but you can't have Horace, or at least not all of him.[482] This study essays a different, but complementary, tack: how does the slip towards solitude work against and for Horace's other

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[480] *E.* 1.1.16-19 *Nunc agilis fio et mersor ciuilibus undis, / uirtutis uerae custos rigidusque satelles; / nunc in Aristippi furtim praecepta relabor / et mihi res, non me rebus subiungere conor.*

[481] This need not imply, of course, active political subversion. The point is well made by La Penna: self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*) is an "internal liberty" (*libertà interiore*), which "does not prevent the alliance with conformity." (*non evita l'alleanza col conformismo*) (La Penna 1963:174)

[482] E.g. Oliensis 1998, Roman 2014.

programmatic goals, and in a variety of literary genres and works written over the course of a lifetime? I shall argue that the slip towards solitude—not only towards the soft consolations of the cultivated coterie, but also the diversions and severities of what Horace would come to call antisocial (lit. "inhuman") Muse—[483]was a hallmark of Horace's poetry and his lyric persona. Although this condition was a prerequisite for Horace's lyric voices, and, to a lesser extent, his satiric voice as well, it was not always a happy condition, and Horace's epistolary self-commentary in his later *Epistles* will take aim at this particular aspect of Horace's poetic past. Horace is not only a perceptive, but also a harsh, self-critic. His criticisms are not only the indispensable word-shuffling, phrase-sharpening reviews Horace once expected from Quintilius Varus; rather, they are attacks on, and attempts to know, himself. Whether his harshness is the result of biographical, generic, or philosophical pressures—inevitably, it is a combination of all of these—we can see the late Horace struggling with the apparent contradiction that, while there is a part of Horace as poet that feels most human in solitude of the lyric desert, there is another that looks on it as the most inhuman, and least sane, form of life.

II. *Magna civitas, magna solitudo*: Horace, *Satires I*

Horace's first book of *Satires*, published in 35 BCE, is a social book. Even before entering its throbbing city-scenes and travelogues, its Latin title, *Sermones*, "Conversations," suggests a multi-voiced vibrancy and informality highlighted by the work's opening shocker (*S.* 1.1.1-3):

> *Qui fit, Maecenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem*
> *seu ratio dederit seu fors obiecerit, illa*

[483] *E.* 1.18.47 *inhumanae senium…Camenae*.

contentus vivat, laudet diversa sequentis?

> "How comes it, Maecenas, that no man living is content with the lot which either his choice has given him, or chance has thrown in his way, but each has praise for those who follow other paths?" (trans. Fairclough)[484]

This opening question shows how the *Satires* concern, to a large degree, a basic problem of urban proximity: how does one live so closely alongside others, and do so in happy contentment, without looking too often and longingly into other people's yards? But these poems, dense as the cities they imagine and describe, not only want to fix people's problems, but also see people as the problem itself. Behind their urbane tones and urban scenes, and in the last poem's revelation that what had seemed to be conversations were in fact a series of private dictated monologues, we see the beginnings of what we will come to know as truly Horatian colors: the *Satires* is a social book constantly imagining itself into isolation.

The program is set by the book's first poem, which, having surveyed the two faces of avarice (misery and profligacy), ends by coming full circle: "I return to where I set out (*illuc,*

[484] Freudenburg (2001:21) calls this "blunt and minimal, the least elaborate dedication in all Latin literature." Standard English translations, "How come" or "How comes it," do not quite match the surprising forcefulness of Horace's first published words, which might seem to give an impression closer to "What gives, Maecenas?" For the philosophical background of the opening question, see Gowers *ad S.* 1.1.1.

unde abii, redeo),[485] that nobody, being greedy, approves of himself (*se probat*)[486].” Self-approval is hard in life because the existence of other people engenders envy; it is harder in the satirist's city, it seems, because people are everywhere to be seen. But the *Satires* want you to be happy with yourself, and not worry about what other people think--their goal is to get others out of your mind, and the poem's structure shows one way in which you can do this: just as much as you should make yourself whole by looking towards yourself, so too Horace's first *Satire* makes itself whole by returning from where it set out, by coming full circle.

Even in the first *Satire*, however, the self-sustaining circle must come to an end, and the poem concludes (*S.* 1.1.117-120):

> *inde fit ut raro qui se vixisse beatum*
> *dicat et exacto contentus tempore vita*
> *cedat uti conviva satur, reperire queamus.*
> *iam satis est…*
>
> “Thus it comes that seldom can we find one who says he has had a happy life, and who, when his time is sped, will quit life in contentment, like a guest who has had his fill. ‘Well, ’tis enough.’” (trans. Fairclough, with mod.)[487]

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[485] Gowers *ad S.* 1.1.108 writes that this exploits “an old analogy between *sermo* and journeying (cf. 3.38 *illuc praeuvertamur*, 6.45 *nunc ad me redeo*, see *S.* 5 introductory essay).

[486] *S.* 1.1.108-9; this line is the most vexed, textually, of the *Satires*; on the debate, see Gowers *ad loc*.

[487] I have appropriated what is often, and plausibly, taken as the beginning of the next line (*iam satis est*), as an internal quotation giving an example of what a *conviva satur* might say. The

The saddest thing in life is not that the party ends, but that the party goes on and you have to leave: the key to happiness as a social being is, according to the first *Satire*, the ability to retire contented from the social scene. But the first *Satire* still accepts, in principal, the centrality, or at least the inescapability, of the social scene itself, the equation of "living" as "living with others"--hence, the closing image of the *convivium*.[488] The image of the contented diner is essentially a social one—he is a *con-viva* because he is eating at a *con-vivium* with fellow diners—so that when a man grows tired of Rome he grows tired of life, and it is time to go. The social is the thing: once you have had enough of it, you must avoid diminishing returns and deterioration of your principal by a leave-taking into oblivion, or, as the fifth Satire has it, "the end of a long

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connection between the two lines is strong, given the collocation of *satur-satis* (which, as Gowers points out *ad S.* 1.1.120, points to the close of Virgil's *Eclogues*). The phrase *iam satis (est)* is a favorite of Horace's, and serves as the frantic cry for someone to stop backing up their vehicle at *S.* 1.5.12-13: read the urgency of that moment into ours, and you get a closing of this poem as surprising as its opening *qui fit*. The self-complete circle of Horace and Maecenas' reciprocal praise later accomplished by the first Ode (C. 1.1) is, ironic set against the idea of a collection of poetry, followed by the second poem which begins, *iam satis*… (C. 1.2.1).

[488] cf. Cato in Cicero's *De senectute* 45: *Bene enim maiores accubitionem epularem amicorum, quia vitae coniunctionem haberet, convivium nominaverunt, melius quam Graeci, qui hoc idem tum compotationem, tum concenationem vocant, ut, quod in eo genere minimum est, id maxime probare videantur.*

story and a long journey."[489] In that poem, then, the social is both a problem and the only thing that really counts.

But the first book of *Satires* has another way of looking at the problem of society: if society is a problem, then solitude, or the solitary imagination, is a possible solution. The freedom of the solitary imagination, and its ability to create worlds and populate them with imaginary figures, is not only a product of Horace's lyric corpus, but adumbrated in numerous important ways by the *Satires*, a fact all the more surprising in works that seem so resolutely social. The second *Satire* shows this process *in nuce*, as Horace's diatribe against adultery finds solace, at last, in sexual encounters completely divorced from the social realm, and that can best be described as the projections of the poet's imaginative fantasies. The fourth *Satire* shows how the poems that describe these imaginative projections are meant to "return to where they set out," that is, posit as their internal audience the poet himself. And, having established this book's interest in self-directed imaginative vision, I show how the book's paired "walking poems" (8 and 9, 5 and 6) illustrate how Horace's engagement with the problem of the social is not exhausted by his much-vaunted gesture of retreating from the vulgar crowds towards a choice coterie, but includes as well, and crucially, the possibility of retreat into a space, or path, more resolutely personal, private, and personally imaginative.

The second *Satire* begins with a rush of lowlifes to the scene: "The guild of go-go girls[490], mountebanks, beggars, mimes, clowns, that whole species" mourn the death of generous

[489] *S.* 1.5.104 *longae finis chartaeque viaeque est*.

Tigellius, the "singer."[491] After continuing the theme of the first *Satire* in its rebuke of both miserly and profligate extremism, the poem turns to sex, and how danger lies on every side: adultery is just too dangerous ("one time, someone sheared off a man's testicles and randy cock—'That's the law,' everyone said…(*accidit, ut quidam testis caudamque salacem / demeteret ferro. 'iure' omnes—S.* 1.2.45-6), and spells ruin for your purse and reputation. What you need for sex, advises Horace, is a generic, cheap, and nameless nobody with no ties to society except the ones your imagination gives her: "She must be fair and straight, and just good-looking enough so that she won't want to seem taller or fairer than nature's arranged. When she puts my leg over hers[492], she's an Ilia and an Egeria: I call her whatever I want…"

The choice here is between adultery with the highborn and sex with a nobody, and though the possibility of libertine love (that is, sex with a *libertina*, "freedwoman") is raised only to be mysteriously dropped (*S.* 1.2.47-9), the possibility of marriage itself is never raised.[493] In the

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[490] Translation of Gowers *ad* 2.1.1-2, with etymological note on *abbuba* as Syrian flute>flute girls, with sexual connotations important to the larger, sexual portion of the poem following the more general introduction.

[491] *S.* 1.2.1-2 *Ambubaiarum collegia, pharmacopolae, / mendici, mimae, balatrones, hoc genus omne…*

[492] As Gowers points out, "matching left flank to the speaker's right one would make him 'lucky.'" (Gowers *ad S.* 1.2.125-6)

[493] It is relevant, therefore, that, despite his later socio-agricultural protest against the process by which "the bachelor plane tree has expelled the elm," (*platanusque caelebs / evincet ulmos*—C. 2.15.4-5) and his close participation with a regime that interposed itself deep between the

second *Satire*, only a woman who remains a socially unattached blank slate will do for sex: Horace calls his girl "Ilia and Egeria" or "whatever name I want" (*do nomen quodlibet illi—S.* 1.2.126) because she is not a socially embedded women, but a woman of his social projection. The "filthy" and "obscene detail"[494] from the Suetonian "Life of Horace," is relevant: "Horace is said to have been extravagant when it came to sex: he is said to have had prostitutes so positioned in his mirror-covered bedroom, that wherever he looked, an image of sex would be returned to him."[495] As with my use of material from the Virgilian life as a pointer towards interpretation, it is beside the point for my purposes whether this line, which has "perplexed and disturbed classists for centuries,"[496] is historical[497] or fictional[498]: the story of Horace's mirrors is

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marriage sheets in matters of sexual and familial morality, Horace was, to his dying day, always to remain a "bachelor on the Kalends of March" (*Martis caelebs…Kalendis*—C. 3.8.1).

[494] Fraenkel 1957:21 and n. 3.

[495] *ad res Venerias intemperantior traditur; nam speculato cubiculo scorta dicitur habuisse disposita, ut quocumque respexisset ibi ei imago coitus referretur* (p. 119 Rostagni)

[496] Anderson 1982:57.

[497] Unlike many details in Lives of the Poets, this story has no exact source in Horace's works. Emily Gowers thinks (2012:4) the anecdote "a fantasy inspired by the frank discussion of sex in *S.* 1.2," comparable with the common grave (*commune sepulcrum*) of playboy and parasite at H. *Sat*. 1.8.10ff. But the cases are not strictly equivalent: though Satires 1.2 does obsess over appearances and the importance of "seeing the whole package," it never refers to mirrors or even any voyeuristic, or exhibitionist, accounts of sex itself. Others have seen it as less than pure coincidence that the anecdote resembles a peroration against immodesty in Seneca's *Natural*

broadly interesting because it reflects an impression of Horace's persona shared by many readers—his obsessive, unflinching, and unsparing self-regard—[499]and is relevant to the second *Satire* because, just as Horace ends that poem not with a girl, but with the idea, his idea, of a girl,

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Questions (1.16), in which a certain Hostius Quadrata covers his bedroom with distorted mirrors so as to both increase the apparent of all sexual organs involved in his orgies, and to have a 3-dimensional experience of sex that includes a vision of his own backside, genitals, and irrumating face (cf. Google-Glass). It has been suspected that either Suetonius himself or some later interpolator confused "Hostius" for "Horatius" and, building on the image of the libidinous Horace found in such poems as *Satire* 1.2, pinned this story on our poet. But it is not surprising to find an anecdote of this kind—sexual, private, obscene—in Suetonius' works, which often highlight (as noted by Rostagni 119-120) "the abnormality and the vices of grand personages." Further, the way in which the anecdote is framed as having its sources in rumor and gossip (the impersonal passives *traditur*, *dicitur*) is typical not only of Suetonius in general, but of his treatment of certain elements in Horace's life in particular (as, for example, the idea that his father was a green-grocer). Finally, while both stories involve sex and mirrors, the one-sentence anecdote in Horace shares little vocabulary with the very long description in Seneca, and none of Seneca's interest in visual magnification.

[498] For creative receptions of Horace as a libertine, see *Les exiles de la cour d'Auguste* (1672, Marie-Catherine Desjardins), *Poète courtesan ou les intrigues d'Horace à la cour d'Auguste* (1705, anonymous), *Les amours d'Horace* (Pierre-Joseph de la Pimpie-Solignac, 1728); cf. Edmunds 2010:348.

[499] For Horace's "mirror-game" in his *Epistles*, see Cuchiarelli 2010.

the *Vita* sees Horace fixating not on the girl in front of him or the sex that he is having with her, but with the *imago coitus,* the meta-sex, that his mirrors make possible.

Where the second *Satire* points us to social interactions as the product of projective imagination, the fourth *Satire*, the first programmatic poem of the book, suggests that an audience (or, *the* audience) for these projections is the poet himself. The Neronian poet Persius is thought to be the Latin solitary satirist *par excellence*--indeed, his first poem begins, "O human cares! How much inanity is there in life!--But who's going to read this?--Are you talking to me? Nobody, surely.--Nobody?--Two or nobody."[500] But just as Persius' much-vaunted multivocal script, with its unmarked entrances and equally surprising exits, seems an expansion of practices the later poet picked up from Horace (in particular, *S.* 2.3),[501] so too was the posture, or gesture, of writing and reciting poetry unread, and scarcely heard: "Nobody," says Horace in the fourth *Satire*, "reads my writings, and I fear to recite them to the public."[502] Admittedly, the formulation admits a ready, and all too facile, irony: as soon as you read this poem, this poem is read, and the statement is rendered false. But this objection does not just make this into a quick joke, or render its solitary posture inert. The posture itself remains a part of this poem's "truth," and its speaker's "character," because it insists repeatedly, every time that we reread it, that, as listeners, we don't count, that we are not hearing what we think we are hearing, or if we are, that we couldn't matter less to the poet himself. The poetry is not for us, who read or hear it, except as over-readers and

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[500] Pers. *Sat*. 1.1-3 *O curas hominum! o quantum est in rebus inane! / quis leget haec? min tu istud ais? nemo hercule. nemo? / vel duo vel nemo*.

[501] On which, see Kirk Freudenburg's forthcoming commentary on Horace, *Satires* 2.

[502] *S.* 1.4.23-4 *cum mea nemo / scripta legat volgo recitare timentis.*

over-hearers. And unlike the epistolary and lyric poems addressed to particular people but, in Ellen Oliensis' terms, "overheard" by us, it is not clear who this internal addressee is meant to be: in fact, there are suggestions that it is, precisely, nobody at all--nobody, that is, except the poet himself.

But that must wait for the fourth *Satire*'s end. First things first: Horace claims that nobody reads his writings, then that he refuses to recite to the *volgus*. This leaves an interesting hole, however: nobody reads, but it is only the *volgus* to whom he fears to recite--what about recitations to the non-*volgus*, that is, to Rome's jet set? Horace comes to them later in the poem, where he explains that he is harmless, and not to be confused with hit-and-run satirists like Caprius or Sulcius (*S.* 1.4.70-7):

cur metuas me? 70
nulla taberna meos habeat neque pila libellos,
quis manus insudet volgi Hermogenisque Tigelli,
nec recito cuiquam nisi amicis idque coactus,
non ubivis coramve quibuslibet. in medio qui
scripta foro recitent, sunt multi quique lavantes: 75
suave locus voci resonat conclusus. inanis
hoc iuvat, haud illud quaerentis, num sine sensu,
tempore num faciant alieno.

"Why should you fear me (*cur metuas me*)? I want no stall or pillar to have my little works, so that the hands fo the crowd—and Hermogenes and Tigellius—may sweat over them. Nor do I recite them to any save my friends, and the only when pressed—not anywhere or before any hearers. Many there are who

> recite their writings in the middle of the Forum, or in the baths.[503] How pleasantly the vaulted space echoes the voice! That delights the frivolous, who never ask themselves this, whether what they do is in bad taste or out of season." (trans. Fairclough)

But, we might ask, with whom is Horace speaking? It is in the nature of a cynic diatribe to address its reader directly, but as this poem comes to a close, it is suggested that the recipient of these tirades is Horace himself. As a Roman satirist, Horace is the student, and improver, of Lucilius, but, as this poem develops, Horace claims that he is, as a satirist, more genuinely the product of his own father, who gave him constant and careful moral instruction: "Don't you see how badly the son of Albius lives? How poor Baius is?…Don't be like Scetanus!"[504] His father's instruction made him healthy (*sanus*), free from things that spell trouble (*perniciem…ferunt*), save for some "minor faults that you might excuse" (*mediocribus et quis / ignoscas vitiis teneor*--*S.* 1.4.130). These "minor faults" turn out to be what Horace does in his free time (*quid datur oti*--*S.* 1.4.137): *illudo chartis*, "I play with my papers," i.e. write poetry!

Horace admits that it is possible, perhaps to be hoped for, that "long life, an honest friend, and self-counsel may remove me more fully from these vices."[505] Note the progression: time, friend, self-counsel. But who is this friend? Horace goes on: "For when my couch welcomes me,

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[503] On recitations in bathhouses, see Martial 3.44.12-3, cf. Gowers *ad* 1.4.74-5, 23.

[504] *S.* 1.4.109ff.

[505] *S.* 1.4.131-3 *fortassis et istinc / largiter abstulerit longa aetas, liber amicus, / consilium proprium*.

or my walk-and-thinkery,[506] *I* am always there for *me*: '*This* is the better way; if I do *this*, I'll live better; *this* way, I'll impress my friends; *somebody* didn't do *that* very nicely--is it possible that *I* could ever do something as imprudent as *him*?' This is what I debate with myself, my lips shut tight (*haec ego mecum / compressis agito labris*)." (*S.* 1.4.133-138) *Agito* means both to consider and to converse: here, Horace is engaging in agitated dialogue, heated *sermo*, with himself. That his lips are shut explains why earlier we (again, ironically) read (or heard) that his poetry is neither read nor heard. Further, it turns out that the *liber amicus*, the "honest friend" that Horace needed can, by osmosis, join with *consilium proprium*, self-counsel, and be re-rendered as the gesture that opens this self-conversation, "I am always there for me," *neque…desum mihi.* External friends can be absent (*absentem…amicum--S.* 1.4.81)[507], but Horace can never be absent to Horace, and can be the best friend to himself.[508]

The relationship of Horace to his poetry quickly oscillates in the fourth *Satire*: he has some vices, but they are moderate ones. It is possible that time and self-counsel will help him keep away from even these; when he has free time, he writes poetry—but poetry is, emphatically, *one of Horace's vices*, that is, one of those things that he hopes time, self-counsel, and philosophical self-*sermones* will help ameliorate. Recall that it is Horace who hopes to cure himself of poetry.

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[506] The *porticus*, a collonade in the aristocratic Roman house, bore important associations with philosophical study and meditation.

[507] Cf. Gowers *ad S.* 1.4.134.

[508] Horace as "friend to himself" later becomes a frequent Horatian topic, i.e. *E.* 1.18.107 *et mihi vivam*; *E.* 1.18.101 *quid te tibi reddat amicum*; *C.* 4.7.20 *amico animo*; *E.* 1.17.11-12 *pauloque benignius ipsum / te tractare voles*.

This is important, because it is a pattern that will return again and again in his works, particularly when we turn, at this chapter's end, to the later *Epistles*: what Catullus felt about his beloved (and problematic) girl Lesbia can perfectly describe Horace's general approach to poetry:

> *Odi et amo. quare id faciam, fortasse requiris?*
>
> *nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.*

> "I love and I hate. Why, you ask?
>
> I don't know. But I feel it. And suffer."

This kind of love-hate relationship with poetry—a perennial interest, as we shall see, of Horace's non-lyric poems (*Satires, Epistles*)—runs particularly deeply in what immediately follows in Horace's fourth *Satire*, for Horace no sooner introduces his poetry-as-vice than he turns violently, menacingly, on whoever might take his poetry from him; that is, on whoever might treat poetry as a vice; that is, on himself! "And if *you* are unwilling to concede this poetic vice to me [*cui si concedere nolis*], a big gang of poets will come, they'll be my back-up (for we outnumber you by far), and, like the Jews, we'll force you into this pack (*in hanc concedere turbam*)." (*S.* 1.4.139-143*fin*.) This poem offers no examples for who this crowd of poets might be--in fact, the only acceptable living poet that this poem has offered is Horace himself.[509]

[509] In this sense, I very much appreciate the suggestion of Katz 2007 that Horace's later self-description as *dux reget examen* (*E.* 1.19.23) is a calque on the Greek *Archi-lochos*, "battalion-leader." (cf. Gowers *ad S.* 1.8.141-2) For a different reading of the poem's sequence of addressees, see Gowers *ad S.* 1.4.139-143.

Commentators can point to what this might mean--Rome's *collegium poetarum*, for example, or the poets canvassed in the tenth *Satire*--but these are not figures at play in this poem. Indeed, the good poets of this poem are, other than Horace, all dead, and they are the poets who headline the work--"Eupolis and Cratinus and Aristophanes--POETS[510]--(*Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae*) and all the other masters of Old Comedy." The first line presents a series of three Old Comic poets, followed by the word *poetae*. The effect is both epic and pedantic: the three names read like a heroic assembly, but they also read like a lexical catalogue, "*Eupolis, Cratinus, Aristophanes*--poets." Are these the *turba poetarum* of the poem's close? Is Horace among them?

The fourth *Satire* repeatedly plays a game of yes/no with Horace's poetic credentials: "Come close and listen up for my answer. First, I exempt myself from the list of those I might call *poets*."[511] Commentators have noted the ways in which the syntactic and sonic complexity of this line results in a reaffirmation of Horace's inclusion, rather than exclusion, from the number of the poets.[512] That would be fine if the question of whether doing poetry is good or bad wasn't so central an issue to the poem's close. Poetry is, in this poem, written by Horace for the correction of others, but actually written by Horace for himself; written for other people, but actually to be recited silently; a vice that hopefully will go away, but also one that Horace and

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[510] Gowers *ad S.* 1.4.1 points out that *poeta* occurs at 1.4.39, 42, 62, "always in final position," and at 1.4.141 "emphatically before the caesura." She also notes that the opening trio makes a ring composition with the *turba poetarum* of the poem's close.

[511] *S.* 1.4.37-40 *primum ego me illorum, dederim quibus esse poetas, / excerpam numero*.

[512] Anderson 1963b:12-13=1982:24-5 on elision. cf. Freudenburg 1993:147-67.

his dead poet's society will force you to accept. The contradictions in this poem are the point of this poem: what we see in the fourth *Satire* is an argument by the self, with the self, for the self.

The processes I've explored in the second and fourth *Satires*, substitution of imagination for society and Satire as a conversation with the self, come together most powerfully in Horace's paired walking poems, 8 and 9, and 5 and 6. Timothy O'Sullivan (2011) has given us a robust account of the social performativity of walking in Roman culture that has shown Horace's imagined solitary walks to be, O'Sullivan (2011:7) puts it, "the exception that proves rule." But where O'Sullivan sees Horace's solitude as standing in contrast only to the vulgar public, I show how it emphasizes, from the first book of *Satires* on, a more complete separation from people as a whole, including the aristocratic set that Horace so often, so assiduously, and so delicately courts. But Horace's evasions are more conflicted, more radical, and more textual than has been allowed. In his second book of *Satires*, Horace, in a famous definition-by-apposition, refers to his "Satires and his Pedestrian Muse."[513] (*S*. 2.6.17) *Pedestris* does mean prosaic (*C*. 2.12.9) as opposed to lyric, plain as opposed to emotional (*AP* 95), and "crawling through the dust" (*sermones…repentis per humum—E*. 2.1.251) as opposed to lyric flight (i.a. *C*. 1.1, 2.20); but it also means, literally, "to walk," and Horace's first book of *Satires*' four "walking poems" (5, 6, 8, 9) offer many ways to be, and not be, a happy pedestrian. Two of these poems (8, 5) seem to uphold the common view of Horace as choosing an aristocratic coterie over the vulgar masses—the beginning of Horace's third book of *Odes*, "I hate the vulgar masses, and keep them away" (*Odi profanum volgus et arceo)* could be a rallying cry for this view—but one of them (9) hints

[513] Title of Freudenburg 1993 is *The Walking Muse*, which Morgan 2010, *Musa Pedestris*, oddly (purposely and humorously? see Katz 2011) does not cite.

at, and another of them affirms (6) a preference not for aristocratic company, but for solitary thought and anonymity.

The eighth *Satire* is primarily a picture of urban gentrification achieved through vicarious, and vulgar, violence against the offensive and dangerous classes. *Virtus est vitium fugere*, "Virtue means fleeing Vice," (*E.* 1.1.40) Horace says in his later *Epistles*, and the progression towards walking with the only right person (oneself) begins with keeping away from the wrong kind of people. The eighth and ninth *Satire* work in tandem to show how hard this can be in Rome's urban environment. The eighth poem is spoken by the agent of this gentrification, Priapus, the lowest of divine types who is, as is typically the case, used by the upper classes in their attack against the lowest of human types, in this case, dead slaves and suspect women (i.e. witches). This poem's particular Priapus statue stands on the Esquiline Hill, guarding what we may take to be the *novi horti*, the fresh gardens established by Maecenas[514]: "One can live now on a healthy Esquiline and traipse on the sunny city-wall, where people use to look with sad eyes at land malformed with white bones (*nunc licet Esquiliis habitare salubribus atque / Aggere in aprico spatiari, quo modo tristes / albis informem spectabant ossibus agrum*—*S.* 1.8.14-6). The Esquiline had been a potter's field, so the white bones that once "deformed" the landscape are the "thrown off cadavers" (*eiecta cadavera*) that had been carried here by a fellow-slave (*conservus*).[515] The removal of these bones from sight, either through exhumation or, more likely, just covering them with new ground and structures, allows one both to "inhabit" the hill

[514] On which, see Haüber 1990, Bodel 2000, and Welch 2001.

[515] This service of the *con-servus* in death is the direct opposite of the type I canvassed earlier, the *con-viva*, the aristocratic friend with whom one lives and dines.

(*habitare*), which is not necessarily to live there but, as the next phrase in apposition suggests, "to stroll (*spatiari*) at leisure on the sun-drenched earthwork." These people walk with wide strides—the verb *spatior* derives from the word for space, and so refers to a space-filling, or space-traversing, walk—so that their mobile expansiveness contrasts with the cramped quarters (*angustis…cellis*—*S.* 1.8.8) of the poor, who don't get out much until they are hurled out onto this common grave (*commune sepulchrum*).[516] The sight, but not the fact, of this pauper's grave used to make strollers sad, but now they can walk along in sunny, charming, peace. But the danger to these reclaimed walkways can't be overcome so easily, and the larger part of Priapus' speech focuses on his own unceasing fight against the "thieves and beasts that are used to vexing this place," and, even more troublesome, the witches: "I myself have seen Canidia walk (*vadere*) with her black robe tucked up, with bare feet, ululating with the elder Sagana."[517] Canidia is the wrong kind of walker (*vadere*), the kind whose presence would spoil the daytime stroll of the right kind of citizenry in their wide-gaited rambles (*spatiari*).

The eighth *Satire* paints, then, three images: a frightening picture of the Esquiline in its non-salubrious past; a lovely picture of the tanning *spatior*/*viator* who now enjoys the clean and healthy Esquiline by day; and a by turns horrifying and ludicrous account of the nightly war of attrition between Priapus, vulgar tool of the nobility, and the even more vulgar witching underclass. The bottom line is that the Esquiline, and the city of Rome by extension, even if not

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[516] It is "common" both insofar as it is vile, and because it holds both the truly poor (slaves), and the effectually poor (misers like Nomentanus, cf. *S.* 1.8.11).

[517] *S.* 1.8.23-5 *vidi egomet nigra succinctam vadere palla / Canidiam, pedibus nudis passoque capillo, / cum Sagana maiore ululantem*.

entirely safe by night, should be safe by day for those who want to stride carelessly and confidently under the sun.

But the satire that follows, Horace's ninth, suggests that the task of urban cleansing is not yet finished. The ninth satire begins with Horace recounting how "I was walking, by chance, along the *Via Sacra*, as is my fashion, thinking up my bagatelles and totally intent on them." In addition to the paradoxical, hence perhaps disingenuous, combination of chance and purpose (*forte*/*mos*), the act as a whole hides a larger social contradiction, since it was along the *Via Sacra* that those seeking political visibility might walk on their ostentatious way into the forum.[518] But Horace, here, in another if not paradox then at least self-deprecating joke, is wholly absorbed in *nugae*--nothings, trifles, trivialities, that is, poetry[519]. Horace is versifying while he walks, but the streets do not long stay safe, even in the daytime: "Someone known to me only by name accosted me, snatching my hand, 'What's up, ol' buddy ol' pal (*Quid agis, dulcissime rerum*?—*S.* 1.9.4)'" This *loquax* and would-be *parvenu* wants in on Horace's upper-class connections to Maecenas.[520] Despite the poet's best efforts, the pest can't be shaken from his cause, even with threats of sickness, legal action, and repeated, clear signs that his company is not appreciated. It is clearly important that the *loquax* represents Horace's doppleganger, and that the shots that Horace casts at this hanger-on function as both a shaking-off of Horace's own

[518] See Gowers *ad S.* 1.9.2, who fleshes out how various terms, including *meditans*, participate in the political nexus.

[519] Cf. Catullus 1.4

[520] Ferriss-Hill 2011 identifies the chatterbox as representing Lucilius, and *Satire* 1.9, as a result, as primarily a poem about Horace's relationship with his predecessor.

past as a social-climber, and a reemphasis of his social-climbing past.[521] The turning of the satiric sword inward continues when yet another chance encounter takes place: Horace's friend, the comic poet Aristius Fuscus, "stumbles on Horace" (*occurit*) in a way that suggests his arrival should match, and correct, the *loquax* who "ran into Horace" (*accurit*) at the poem's beginning (*S.* 1.9.3). Horace's entreaties and Fuscus' demurrals replicate Horace's encounter with the *loquax*, making Horace into his own worst pest[522]. Fuscus refuses to help, claiming that he has to observe the Jews' "thirtieth Sabbath." In the *Epistles*, Horace will later claim that he is "not bound to swear by any philosopher's precepts" (*nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri--E.* 1.1.14), and in this *Satire*, Horace claims that, as for him, "I have no superstition! (*Nulla mihi…religio est--S.* 1.9.70-1)" Fuscus replies: "Ah, but I do: I am somewhat weaker than you, being one of the many. Sorry about that--talk soon!"[523] In the fourth *Satire*, the "mob of Jews" was the set of imaginary poets that Horace used to push back against Comstockery. Here, Fuscus is, but Horace is not, *unus multorum*, "one of the many," who are forced to join the mob. Hence, Fuscus will not save Horace. But Fuscus no sooner leaves the scene than the *loquax*'s legal adversary pops on to the scene and all hell breaks loose: the *loquax* is hauled off to court, his adversary hollers at Horace (*magna / inclamat voce--S.* 1.9.75) to testify against the *loquax*, Horace "offers the ear" (*oppono auriculam*) to signal his acquiescence, there is "shouting from

[521] For the mutual implication of Horace and his chatterbox doppleganger, see Henderson 1993=1999. See, similarly, Epodes 4 and 6.

[522] On which, see Henderson 1993:85=1999:224.

[523] *S.* 1.9.71-2 *At mi--sum paulo infirmior, unus / multorum. ignosces--alias loquar...*

both directions, total hullabaloo (*clamor utrimque, undique concursus*). *Thus* did Apollo save me! (*sic me servavit Apollo*).

Though the ninth *Satire*, from start to finish, has taken place in Rome's Times Square, in the *Via Sacra* that leads from the Capitoline hill right down through the Forum, it's only now that the Roman crowds come in not only to focus, but into existence, at least as far as the poem is concerned.[524] When the ninth *Satire* began, Horace had, in the terms of *Satire* 4, ears only for himself and his silent self-mutterings. Two lines in, the poet was interrupted by the *loquax* who unflaggingly bent Horace's ear. Aristius Fuscus comes and goes without restoring Horace to himself, but the comic poet no sooner departs than the *loquax*'s legal adversary comes hollering into the poem and Horace "lends him his ear." This is a legal formula indicating a willingness to testify,[525] but it is also *an ear*, which, in the context of a poem all about whose voice you have to hear, yourself or someone else's, means that it is potentially just an ear, but also an ear that hears. That this is so is confirmed by what follows: Horace gives his ear to the Forum and its laws, and the cry of the Forum fills his ears (*clamor utrimque*), both of them, from each side (*undique*). The pairing of *clamor* and *concursus* does, it has been noted, have precedent,[526] but there is an important innovation introduced here by way of syntax and figure: the attack, coming from both sides and from all around, is matched by enclosing, chiastic word-order across the line-break, *clamor utrimque, / undique concursus*. Further, a cognate of *concursus* was the (Ciceronian)

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[524] cf. McGann 1973:62-3

[525] cf. Gowers *ad S.* 1.9.77

[526] Cic. *Att.* 1.16.1 *clamor concursusque*; Livy 1.48.2 *clamor…et concursus populi*; cf. Gowers *ad S.* 1.9.78.

Latin term for a particular rhetorical effect, *concursio*, whereby the ending of one phrase is repeated to emphatically begin the next:[527] Horace's adjacent phrases "run into" one another, and, in this case, run over the intervening line break.[528] It is true, then, that Horace has, by poem's end, been saved from a certain kind of "occurrence," but only at the cost of a total subjugation to the "concurrence" of the street, the abdication of his ear, the non-resumption of his poetic "trifling", and the blinkered view that allowed him to be in the Forum but not of it.[529] This suggests that there is good reason to repunctuate, and revoice, the poem's final line--not, "And this is how Apollo saved me," but something more like, "So this is how Apollo saves me?" With this, the pair of walking poems 8 and 9 come to a close, suggesting that the desire to wander and wonder in a Rome free of interrupting sights and sounds, sub-social or social, is not to be readily realized.

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[527] Equivalent to Greek συμπλοκή, cf. Cic. *de Or.* 3.54.206, Quint. 9.1.33 (quoting the Cic.), Auct. Her. 4.14.20 (*traductio*).

[528] The use of *curro*, "running," related words at the two turning points of this story justifies especially close attention to its use at the poem's end. *Utrimque* and *undique* are not, it must be said, the same word, but are, as they say, close enough for cacophony. Finally, the participation of *concursus* in this *concursio* running over the line-break is matched by the larger-scale but less clean-cut *concursio* that bridges the end of Satire 9 and the seemingly authentic beginning of Satire 10 (ll. 1-2 if 1-8 spurious, ll. 9-10 otherwise): *nempe incomposito dixi pede* ***currere*** *versus / Lucili*.). This seems as good a reason as any (and there are many good stylistic reasons) for obelizing *S.* 1.10.1-8; cf. Gowers *ad S.* 1.10.1*-8*.

[529] The possessive force suggested by *unus multorum* is important here. cf. Gowers 2012:282.

A different story emerges, however, in the earlier pair, *Satires* 5 and 6. I do not intend to tarry long on the fifth *Satire*, but my reading of the sixth depends on its predecessor for context. Horace's fifth *Satire*, the journey from Rome to Brundusium, shows what travel looks like in exalted poetic and political company, but amid the grotesque inconveniences and squalid human culture that they must traverse and mock in passing. Horace's travel is not hassle-free: shortly after departure, Horace is suffering from stomach pains, and having to watch queasily and unhappily (*haud animo aequo*) from the sidelines as his companions chow down (*cenantis…comites*); soon thereafter, his eyes begin to bother him; both maladies combine to keep him from playing ball with Maecenas; and, stood up by a girl who was supposed to visit his room, Horace, having stayed up late, experiences "dreams with an unclean vision" that "stain his nightrobe and his turned-up belly (*tum immundo somnia visu / nocturnam vestem maculant ventremque supinum*--*S.* 1.5.84-5). There are obvious omissions in this poem: Horace is in the company of politicans on a political mission, but political issues don't explicitly come up. Horace is also in the company of poets, the finest poets of his time, presented in a line-filling assembly that harks back to the Old Comic poets of the fourth *Satire* (*Plotius et Varius Sinuessae Vergiliusque* (*S.* 1.5.40), "Plotius, Varius, and Virgil at Sinuessa"). Horace rejoices in having these poets around--"Oh what embraces! Oh what joys there were! While in my right mind, I'd never compare anything with a happy friend! (*o qui complexus et gaudia quanta fuerunt! / nil ego contulerim iucundo sanus amico*--*S.* 1.5.43-4)"--but there don't seem to be discussions of poetry. When Maecenas heads to his ball playing, Horace demurs on account of his bad eyes, but instead of Virgil and Horace getting together to versify, they go straight to sleep (*lusum it Maecenas, dormitum ego Vergiliusque*--*S.* 1.5.48).

If there is very little discussion of poetry in the fifth *Satire*, there is also very little of Horace's internal reflections:[530] Horace begins the poem in company and stays most of the poem in company, and when we get him alone he is either sick, begrudging, unhappy, or self-befouled. Indeed, the poem leaves very little room at all for Horace's "private mental space,"[531] but, rather, foregrounds the foreground. Though Horace does not involve himself with the trip's possible political mission, and concentrates, instead, on the domestic affairs, trivial activities, and small sights of the voyage, this provides a "private mental space" only in the sense of "activities done in private," not, as we might have expected, the emotions, reactions, reflections, desires, and, yes, dreams that Horace experienced en route.[532] Horace not only fails to follow the advice of the second *Satire* and choose the right kind of girl, but he also construes what results not as a failure of imagination, but of (the sleeping) imagination as failure. And when the group-travel comes to an end, the poem, too, comes to an end at the same time: "Brundusium is the end of a long story and a long journey (*Brundisium longae finis chartaeque viaeque est*--*S.* 1.5.104). The journey is

[530] There are generic pressures at work here, see Gowers 2012:183 on possible candidates for the genre of Roman travel-writing. But rephrasing the question in terms of genre doesn't remove the question's force, so much as push it one step back: why include a non-judgmental, non-interior, book of travel-writing in a book of *Satires* that so often gives us Horace's, or other character's, interiors? Unless, that is, spilling your guts means "spilling your guts."

[531] The phrase is Luke Roman's (2014:95); I take a different view of this poem from his.

[532] Horace's wet dream is itself a symbol for how this poem gives only the grotesque surface effect, not the mental image itself, which must be inferred (though, in this case, perhaps relatively easy to imagine—cf. Horace and the mirrors).

always collective, and the journey is also coterminous with the poem itself. The poem does not reach out of its temporal frame to tell us, for example, what happened prior to the journey or what will happen after it. In this sense, its position vis-à-vis society resembles that which we saw in the first *Satire*: the social is the real, and everything outside of it is the unreal, and the unwritten. Traveling alongside Maecenas, and with one's fellow poets, is the name of the game.

If the fifth *Satire* is a sizzling surface-oriented social account of who, what, where, when, then the sixth *Satire* that follows is the backstory that tells us how the "Horace and Maecenas" show came about. The fifth *Satire* was all about people from start to finish, and it seems, when the sixth *Satire* begins, that it will be the earlier poem's natural successor. It is that, of course, but only, and crucially, for almost exactly the length of the fifth *Satire* itself; but at line 103, the sixth *Satire*, in an unexpected swerve, becomes an anti-*Iter Brundusium*, and a prime Horatian example of what the English call "French leave," and the French call *filer à l'anglaise*: leaving the party without saying goodbye.[533]

The sixth *Satire* as a whole aims to counter the charge, elsewhere faced more directly, that Horace gained his social position by being a parasitical Rastignac, who, in the words of scandal-seeking Suetonius, "insinuated" himself first to Maecenas, then Augustus.[534] Relying on

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[533] The flight from Nasidienus' feast that ends the second book of *Satires* is a horse of a different, less subtle, color.

[534] Suet. *Vita Horatii* 1 *ac primo Maecenati, mox Augusto insinuatus*. Although Fraenkel is himself guilty of taking Horace's self-descriptions as matters of historical fact—he thinks, for example, that *Epistles* 1 really does demonstrate Horace's bitter sense that the *Odes* was a popular failure (Fraenkel 1957:308, 339; cf. Brink 1963:182)—he is spot on with his warning

Suetonius for evidence of Horace's social life puts us, historically, as far afield as taking Horace's calibrated self-descriptions as biographical evidence: what interests us here, rather, is the terms on which Horace's entry into elite circles was presented. In this poem, the presentation takes us back to the poet's childhood, when his father, purportedly a freedman, chose to have his son educated, not alongside the stocky children of stocky centurions in backwater Apulia, but in Rome itself. It was an investment in the son's future that came at great expense: "Whoever saw my clothes and slave attendants--it's just what *one does* in the big city--would have bet the tab was paid from some time-polished fortune."[535] So Horace's father, in a swindler's play right out of Oskar Schindler's book, played the big rich man where that game can be most cheaply played, with a schoolboy. And, to protect his investment, the father never leaves the son's side, even when at school: "He himself, most incorruptible tutor of all, made the rounds of my teachers with

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that we must be careful about how we use the evidence of Suetonius, who often "puts on the facts his own interpretation, the interpretation of a man living at the court of Hadrian" (Fraenkel 1957:15-16). See a useful discussion of Fraenkel's treatment of this story at Martindale 1993:11ff. Though Horace gives the impression that he began life at a very low social station, this seems to be if not a lie, then a very inexact truth, on which, see Armstrong 2010.

[535] Hor. *S.* 1.6.78-80 *vestem servosque sequentis, / in magno ut populo, siqui vidisset, avita / ex re praeberi sumptus mihi crederet illos.* Henry (*Aeneidea*, *ad* 1.152-60) helpfully explains the phrase *in magno ut populo*: "Neither…in a *concio*, or great popular assembly…nor…in a chance-collected crowd or concourse…but in a people inhabiting a great city, such as Rome or Athens—a people great in the sense in which the Romans and Athenians were great."

me."[536] His six-syllable, superlative labeling of his father as "incorruptible" (*incorruptissimus*) must refer to the double-duty of the Roman *custos* as the guardian of both Roman morals and the Latin language,[537] but also, of course, to the fact that this was one tutor who, unlike the treacherous bought slaves of the ninth *Satire* (*S*. 9.57), couldn't, even occasionally, be paid to look the other way. No, Horace's father was always around: around his teachers (*circum doctores*) and around him too, pointing out what he should or should not do, whom he should avoid or emulate. Horace's father hovers as his omnipresent guide to life.

All of this talk of Horace's father is meant as natural prelude to Horace's introduction to Maecenas, who becomes, in his way, Horace's second father, finishing the work that the "freedman" had started, and securing Horace his connections with the highest classes at Rome--a far cry from what might have been expected from one who had begun with Horace's middling (though by no means base) background. Through all of this, Horace shows himself to be virtuous, humble, and wholly free of rank ambition. What position he has he owes to the exertions of his father and the respect of Maecenas, with Horace as passive and grateful recipient of their gracious beneficences. It is this feature that makes this poem, as Emily Gowers has put it, a paramount example of what Ellen Oliensis has described as this poet's "defense-work." (Gowers 2012:214) Where the previous poem showed Horace and Maecenas in one another's company but never in direct interaction, this poem returns the poet, it has been said, to "face-to-face dialogue with his patron," with the intention of deflecting all "accusations of pushiness, self-

[536] Hor. *S*. 1.6.81-2 *ipse mihi custos incorruptissimus omnis / circum doctores aderat*.

[537] On the semantic range of *custos*, see Kaster 1988:17-18; cf. Feeney 2002:173, drawing out the twin roles of moral and stylistic correction at *Ep*. 2.1.3 *emendes*.

promotion, and parasitism in the various stages of his emergence from anonymity, before fashioning an innocuous existence for himself as a new kind of 'nobody.'" (Gowers 2012:214)[538] This is completely right, except for the fact that Horace's slip into being a nobody in his own nowhereland is not at all innocuous, but is, instead, an alternative to the many kinds of social presence, high and low, that populate Horace's *Satires*. It is the kind of alternative with which the ninth *Satire* began, but to which it could not return; that the eighth *Satire* shows slowly developing through sundry urban innovations; that the second *Satire* recommends as part of the ideal sexual regime; and that the first and fifth *Satires* completely preclude by dint of their relentless social alignment.

The surprising reveal of the sixth *Satire* is that this poem, which for 100+ lines had focused on how being well watched-over (by his father) and then well-regarded (by Maecenas) had helped lift Horace out of the rural kind of company (i.e. beefy centurions) and into the urbane kind of company (Maecenas and Co.) by being well-watched (by his father) and then well regarded (by Maecenas), ends by painting Horace's ideal day as a day liberated from other people, as a day of solitary sleeping, eating, strolling, walking, reading, anointing, and lollygagging at home (*domesticus otior--S.* 1.6.128). It could have been otherwise: the first 103

[538] In addition to pointing to the connections between *S.* 1.6 and 1.5, Gowers depicts *S.* 1.6 as "a kind of proem in the middle [that] then recaps *Satires* 1.1 and the poet's presumption in speaking to the great man: not *Qui fit, Maecenas* ("How come, Maecenas"), as Sat. 1.1 'naively' began, but *Non quia, Maecenas* ("Despite, Maecenas"). This is a far more indirect, even paranoid form of entry, as Horace confronts the envy of the detractors…" (Gowers 2009:47) I think Gowers must be entirely right about this.

lines of this poem describing Horace's entrance into society could have been balanced by the 103 line journey in Maecenas' company described in the fifth *Satire*.[539] But the fifth *Satire*'s kind of crowded travel is exactly the kind that Horace in the sixth *Satire* wants to avoid. Indeed, he avoids the political life because, if he took it up (*S.* 1.6.100-103):

> *nam mihi continuo maior quaerenda foret res*
> *atque salutandi plures, ducendus et unus*
> *et comes alter, uti ne solus rusve peregreve*
> *exirem…*
>
> "For at once I should have to enlarge my means, to welcome more callers, to take one or two in my company, so as not to go abroad or into the country alone (*solus exirem*)."[540] (trans. Fairclough)

In this passage, two is as much a crowd as three: Horace wants neither one friend, nor two, to accompany him on his countryside walks. He wants to go it alone. What is most striking about this image of Horace's ideal day is that it excludes the social presences that this poem, and other poems in the book, had spent so much care building up: it features no family, no poets, and no

[539] *S.* 5 is 104 lines, but the penultimate line is fully end-stopped, preparing for the last line as an expanded *FINIS*—"Brundisium was the end (*finis*) of a long story and a long road" (*S.* 1.5.104).

[540] Gowers, noting the contrast established between *S.* 5 and Horace's solo journey in *S.* 6, plausibly suggests that *S.* 1.6.103 *exirem* answers *S.* 1.5.1 *egressum*.

Maecenas.[541] As Luke Roman (2014:101-2) writes, when this poem ends, Horace is "solitary, autarkic;" but whereas Roman sees Maecenas as physically out of this scene but not out of Horace's life, I see the fact of Maecenas' absence from this poem's conclusion as very important, as a game-changer.

Earlier in the poem, Horace acted as though he could be nothing but deeply grateful for having his father in constant custodial attendance of him as he made his rounds from teacher to teacher--now, Horace goes round the entire city with few attendants or, ideally, none.[542] It is his freedom to wander alone that characterizes the "exquisite still life" that is his self-portrait (*S.* 1.6.111-131):[543]

quacumque libido est,
incedo solus, percontor quanti holus ac far,
fallacem circum vespertinumque pererro
saepe forum, adsisto divinis, inde domum me
ad porri et ciceris refero laganique catinum; 115
cena ministratur pueris tribus et lapis albus
pocula cum cyatho duo sustinet, adstat echinus
vilis, cum patera guttus, Campana supellex.

[541] Luke Roman, comparing Horace's self-revelations in *S.* 1.6 with those of Novius in *S.* 1.1, notes that "Horace's crucial scene of self-depiction, however, occurs in a highly private setting." (Roman 2014:104)

[542] For the contrast between Horace's solitary walking at *S.* 1.6.112 and well-attended walks to school at 1.6.78-82, see McGann 1973:61.

[543] Fraenkel 1957:104.

deinde eo dormitum, non sollicitus, mihi quod cras
surgendum sit mane, obeundus Marsya, qui se
voltum ferre negat Noviorum posse minoris.
ad quartam iaceo; post hanc vagor aut ego lecto
aut scripto quod me tacitum iuvet unguor olivo,
non quo fraudatis inmundus Natta lucernis.
ast ubi me fessum sol acrior ire lavatum
admonuit, fugio campum lusumque trigonem.
pransus non avide, quantum interpellet inani
ventre diem durare, domesticus otior. haec est
vita solutorum misera ambitione gravique;
his me consolor victurum suavius ac si
quaestor avus pater atque meus patruusque fuisset.

Wherever my desire leads, I march out alone (*quacumque libido est / incedo solus*). I ask the price of lettuce, and flour, and towards evening I often wander round (*pererro*) the crooked circus and Forum; I attend the fortune-tellers; from there I get myself home to a meal of leeks and peas and hot-cakes. My dinner is served by three slaves, and a white stone platter holds the two cups with a ladle; nearby stands a cheap salt-cellar, a Campanian jug and saucer. Then I go to sleep, not worrying that tomorrow I have to get up early and pass before Marsyas, who says he can't bear the face of young Novius. I stay in bed until brunch (*ad quartum*). After that, I roam (*vagor*). Or, after reading or writing something to please me in my quiet mood (*quod me tacitum iuvet*), I anoint myself with oil, and not with the kind that dirty Natta uses from stolen lamps. But when a stronger sun advises me, in my fatigue, to go to the baths, I flee the Campus Martius and trigo-ball. Lunching lightly, as much as will call a halt to an all-day fast, I while away my day at home (*domesticus otior*). This is the life of those liberated from miserable and heavy ambition; with

these, I console (*consolor*)[544] myself that I shall live more sweetly like this than if my grandfather, father, or uncle had all been high officials (*quaestor*).

As with Horace's other poems, the closing solitude of the sixth *Satire* has been underemphasized by scholarship. For Rudd, the poem ends by showing that Horace "preferred to live a quiet, relaxed life, enjoying his friends and realizing his creative talents" (Rudd 1981:51). Where are these friends? Earlier in the poem, it is true, Horace says it was all due to his father "if I live in a way dear to my friends" (*si et vivo carus amicis—S.* 1.6.70), but when it comes to painting his perfect day, he does not include "his friends" but only himself, occasional contacts with strangers, and the ministrations of not-even-truly-there slaves (and only three, at that).[545] It is not only that he is here "free of ambition" (*ambitione soluti—S.* 1.6.129), but that he is free from society as well. W.R. Johnson has spoken of Horace's "hunger for freedom," (Johnson 1993:32) but whereas Johnson sees this desire as being shaped by his father's suffering and need, in the sixth satire it seems to be more driven by his father's constant attentions, and by the attentions of

[544] Gowers sees *consolor* at *S.* 1.6.130 as potentially a pun, given the context, on *consul.* Tentatively, I might suggest that we also see in it a pun on *solus*, taken together with *sol acrior* 125, *sollicitus* 119, and *solutorum* 129, all *sol-* words that follow the programmatic opening of this closing section: *quacumque libido est, / incedo solus*.

[545] As Oliensis (1998:35) puts it, Horace is here "playing the part of a nobody among nobodies," with regard both to the slaves and the lower-class people he meets in his ramble. But for Oliensis, Horace's intention is more exclusively trained on differentiating himself from social climbers, rather than on a more positive conception of solitude. As for the slaves, Gowers is right that "the emphasis here is on an unlikely solitude." (Gowers *ad S.* 1.6.112)

all of the world. Emily Gowers is, therefore, much closer to the mark when she speaks of the ending of the poem as showing Horace as having achieved a form of the Epicurean goal of *ataraxia*, the trouble-free life, "days of strolling, swimming, snacking, reading and loafing about at home." (Gowers 2009:59)

But Horace's day does not, strictly speaking, represent *ataraxia* in its fullest sense; rather, it is what the Epicureans would have called *kinetic* (rather than *katastematic*) pleasure. If this is an Epicurean picture, it is one of a different color. Hence, also, the often missed fact that the poem's end is *friendless*, in contrast to Epicurean philosophy's frequent emphasis on fellowship.[546] It is not only, as Gowers puts it, that "this statement of allegiance to freedom, insouciance and boundlessness is Epicureanism in its most open-ended, satire-friendly form," (Gowers 2009:59) but that it is also Epicureanism at its most solitary, anti-social, and friendless.[547] And this flight

[546] The paradoxical co-necessity of friendship and solitude among the Epicureans is well stated by La Penna: "*L'epicureismo valorizzò fortemente l'amicizia; ma il saggio raggiunge benissimo l'atarassia nella solitudine.*" (La Penna 1963:43)

[547] Gowers (*ad S.* 1.6.116-8), citing Hudson 1989:82, calls this "the only example in Roman satire of contented solitary dining." As Courtney puts it (*ad* Juv. *Sat*. 1.135), the wicked "patron is accused of μονοσιτία or μονοφαγία, a severe reproach (cf. 13.46) among the social Greeks and Romans…" For the dark associations in Roman writings with solitary dining, in particular with the figure of the tyrant, see Braund 1996. The image of the patron dining *secreto* (apart, alone, hidden away) represented the height of hateful decadence and a social world gone topsy-turvy for Juvenal's first *Satire* (1.135), with Courtney *ad loc*., who notes key words (*tantum ipse* 136,

from others is also a flight from satire, for Horace's ideal day keeps him from "passing before Marsyas," a reference to the statue of the satyr Marsyas: this is a flight from satire not only through the frequent ancient homonym (*satura*<*satyros*), but also because Marsyas is typically satiric in his eagerness to challenge another poet (in Marsyas' case, Apollo) in music-making.[548] Horace, in his ideal state, will not compete with other poets, but will do what he does on his own time, and on his own: the post-satiric Horace of the sixth *Satire* is already, that is, the retreating Horace more commonly known from the lyric poems.

The sixth *Satire*'s movement from society to solitude is a model for the same movement, writ large, over the course of the book as a whole, culminating in the tenth and closing *Satire*'s retrospective reinscription of Horace's conversations (*sermones*) into a little book (*libellum*) of conversations (*Sermones*), and restaging of his collective creative space into a compositional isolation made up of himself, his book, and the cipher of a dictating scribe. The tenth *Satire* as a whole focuses, like the fourth *Satire*, on critique of Lucilius, but whereas that earlier poem had looked to the social outcomes of good, or bad, satire, his view is now entirely on style;[549] his interest is not in how to do things with words, but on how to make a thing out of words, a *res* out

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una 138, *sibi* 140) relevant to showing the striking and surprising quality of Horace's own self-presentation as the happily solitary diner.

[548] On which, see, *i.a.*, Liv. 38.13.6, and Ovid, *Fasti* 6.705. On the statue of Marsyas, see also Martial 2.64.8; Sen. *De ben*. 6.32.1; Juv. 9.2.

[549] *S.* 4 had adduced an interest in stylistic criticism, but the bulk of it is delayed until here, cf. *S.* 1.4.63.

of *verba*.[550] Between the fourth and tenth *Satire*, there is also a shift from the ancient to the modern, from the poets of old comedy to the contemporary poetic scene, with Horace despising the judgment of proletarians and poetasters, and wanting only the approbation of the best (*S.* 1.10.81-92):

Plotius et Varius, Maecenas Vergiliusque,
Valgius et probet haec Octavius optimus atque
Fuscus et haec utinam Viscorum laudet uterque
ambitione relegata. te dicere possum,
Pollio, te, Messalla, tuo cum fratre, simulque 85
vos, Bibule et Servi, simul his te, candide Furni,
conpluris alios, doctos ego quos et amicos
prudens praetereo, quibus haec, sint qualiacumque,
adridere velim, doliturus, si placeant spe
deterius nostra. Demetri, teque, Tigelli, 90
discipularum inter iubeo plorare cathedras.
i, puer, atque meo citus haec subscribe libello.

Plotius and Varius, Maecenas and Virgil, and Valgius: let him commend these poems (*haec*); and noble Octavius and Fuscus and both of the Viscus brothers: let him praise these poems (*haec*)! With all ambition left behind, I can praise you, Pollio, you, Messala, together with your brother, and at the same time you, Bibulus and Servius, and, together with them, you, honest Furnius, and many other beside, the learned friends whom I prudently omit, and in whose eyes I should like these poems, of whatever quality they should be, to find favor, and would be grieved if they should please less than I'd hoped. Demetrius, and

[550] This varies the useful formulation of Emily Gowers (2012:205), that the tenth *Satire* is interested in "*verba,* not *res*."

> you, Tigellus, I bid you bawl between the students' armchairs. Go, boy, and quickly subscribe this to the bottom of my little book.

Denis Feeney has highlighted Horace's later-life loneliness by noting that this gang of fellow poets is absent from Horace's *Epistle to Augustus* because, by the time of that poem, they were already dead, leaving Horace to himself; but already here, at the end of the tenth *Satire*, when all of these poets, writers, and readers are still alive, they are made to be present in this poem only in the way that the abstract, virtual, and long-dead literary *turba* of the fourth *Satire* was present, as an idea in and projection of Horace's head and art. Horace's literary crowd is not, in the tenth *Satire*, only a part of Horace's life, but a part, more essentially, of his style; they are an imagined community whose presence is requested but for the purpose of praise *after the fact*—because, of course, as the last line reminds us, these "conversations" are a written affair.

The last line's insistent re-inscription of the *Satires* as written, as opposed to conversational, material means that Horace doesn't even need to be present in order to be praised--neither, of course, do the praisers themselves, whose praise is presupposed, and generated, for the poems by the poems themselves. As in Virgil's *Eclogues*, the jussives do all of the work of creation required. And, as with the *Eclogues*, the fifth and tenth poems are the ones that most actively point to their written nature, albeit within a developmental scheme: when the tenth *Satire* ends, the *chartae*, or loose-leaf papers that have popped up throughout the *Satires* (*S.* 1.4.139, 1.5.104, *S.* 1.10.4; cf. *S.* 1.4.36) have, in Emily Gower's expression, been bound "into a self-respecting poetry book."[551] Though the tenth *Satire* begins with an oral premise (*dixi*, "I said,"--*S.* 1.10.1), the early reference to *chartae* (*S.* 1.10.4) gives textual color, and the final line

[551] Gowers *ad S.* 1.10 intro.

seals the book-deal: *i, puer, atque meo citus haec subscribe libello*, "Go, boy, and quickly subscribe this to the bottom of my little book." (*S.* 1.10.92) The effect is similar to that of the fifth *Eclogue*, similar, too, to what Horace will achieve in more obviously startling fashion in his second *Epode*: you might have thought that you were listening to Horace's conversations with other people, but, instead, you are listening to his multi-vocal monologues, accompanied only by the absent presence of a servile, silent, and non-responsive dictaphone.[552]

The issue that we have been exploring in the *Satires* is not how these texts were *really* produced, or, indeed, performed, but, rather, the dramatic form that they are given: instead of having, for premise, the social context of, say, Horace's delivery of his *Satires* to and among his friends, in the pleasure gardens of villas, or the side-nooks of fine urban homes, Horace is alone with his book and his slave. Like Virgil's *Eclogues*, the *Satires* is a *libellus* that, among its other projects, models, and constructs, the world of the poet's solitary imagination[553], and in such a way as to make the satiric city both a very private world, and the poet's solitude very much an urban affair. All of Horace's friends are simultaneously the inventions and, paradoxically, the inventors of this private space, every "you" hopelessly interwoven with a kind of "me." It is no surprise, then, that when Horace, in the sixth *Satire*, took up Lucilius' tag, "and now let's get back to *you*," (*nunc ad **te** redeo*—Lucil. 1227) he completely inverted it, turning it towards

[552] *S.* 6 makes clear that being "alone" is not a state altered by the presence of even a couple slaves; on which, see the Introduction.

[553] cf. Roman 2014:121: "The poetry books examined so far in this chapter [H.'s *Satires*, V.'s *Eclogues*] are coterminous with distinctive poetic 'worlds.' The poet's slender *libellus*, in each case, embodied the narrow, autarkik domain of his poetic world/genre."

himself: "and now let's get back to *me*, born to a freedman father" (*nunc ad **me** redeo libertino patre natum—S.* 1.6.45).[554] For in the formulation of the sixth *Satire*, as in the interstices of the *Satires* book as a whole, the internal contradictions of solitude are not only a negation of the wrong kind of company, but an affirmation of a particular way of being, and the premise for the *Satires* themselves.

III. *Et vacuum nemus*: *Odes* 1.1, 3.1, 2.20, and 3.4

Horace's complex game of hide-and-seek with society in the *Satires* may be something he shares with famously flamboyant, and private, Maecenas,[555] but this is to occlude the fact that Horace's solitude in the *Satires*, pointedly, tends not to include Maecenas himself. That is what makes his ideal day solitary, and it is in that solitude that he is able, as he says, to "return to myself." In the *Epistles*, language of the "return to the self" is emblematic of solitude's benefits: *Epistles* 1.16.1 opens, "Oh bailiff of my woods and the small field that returns me to myself" (*vilice siluarum et mihi me reddentis agelli*); and, as we have already seen in the Introduction, in the eighteenth epistle, Horace advises his friend Lollius that, in order to live well, one must "read and constantly question the learned people" about "what diminishes cares, what returns you as a friend to yourself" (*quid te tibi reddat amicum—E.* 1.18.101). This in turn leads into a knowledge of the greater virtues, the ability to discern "what truly calms you: whether honors and dear profit, or rather the secret journey (*secretum iter*) and the path of unnoticed life (*fallentis semita vitae*)."

[554] On this, see Fraenkel 1957:103.

[555] On which, see Gowers 2012:216.

But the withdrawal to solitude that was an ethical mode in Horace's hexametric poems, gives way, in the *Odes*, to a clearer formulation of what we have called the "dual significance" of solitude: the withdrawal from one world, and the creation of another. The world made possible by the retreat of the sixth *Satire*, and evoked by the social seclusion that closes his epistle to Lollius, "the cold river Digentia, which Mendela drinks, the countryside wrinkled with cold," is the world of Horace's lyric poetry. Horace's *Satires* give the background for the conditions under which Horace's later works will be written: they give us the story of Horace's entrance into the circle of Maecenas, and of the ethical and literary modes that govern that circle. And it is in the sixth satire that we see the carving out of a space apart that resembles what Oliensis has called the "lyric enclosure."[556] For Horace's lyric poetry will bill itself as the product of a self-sequestration that resembles the self-seclusion enacted by the sixth satire's close.

Lyric's self-referentiality is also the lyric poet's repeated reference to himself: or, as Horace of the *Satires* put it, "And now I return to myself" (*nunc ad me redeo*). In the case of the *Odes*, returning to oneself often means getting away from others. The first *Ode* exemplifies this trait, and sets the tone for the book.[557] After listing the many possible paths of human life, the poet comes finally (or perhaps again) to his own case: "Ivy, prize of learned brows, sets me among the high gods. The cold grove and the light chorus of the Nymphs and Satyrs keeps me

[556] Oliensis 1998:102ff. The term has affinities with the vocabulary (particularly that of Rosenemeyer) of the pastoral "pleasance."

[557] On this poem's programmatic significance, and its relationship to changes in book-culture, see now Eidinow 2009.

separate from the people…"[558] But just how far does Horace's conception of "the people" extend? Horace claims he needs the help of Maecenas to become enlisted among the ranks of the lyric bards, but, once this happens, it seems as though the poet will leave him too: "I will strike the stars with my sublime head." (*sublimi feriam sidera vertice*--C. 1.1.36) Nisbet and Hubbard connect Horace's separation from the people here with his rejection of the vulgar crowd at the beginning of the third book of Odes, "I hate the profane crowd, and avoid it!" (*odi profanum vulgus et arceo*--*C.* 3.1.1) They also point towards its affinites with Callimachean aesthetics, with a line from Catullus ("And let the people enjoy bloated Antimachus," *at populus tumido gaudeat Antimacho*, 95) and with Ausonius' clear imitation while praising Bordeaux, "The ridges of Bordeux, the rivers at their three-fold convergence, keep me separate from the popular swarm" (*me iuga Burdigalae, trino me flumina coetu / secernunt turbis popularibus*--Aus. Epist. to Paulinus of Nola, 25:90-1).

But looking to these comparisons only helps to reinforce how open-ended was Horace's own formulation: whereas these other poets keep themselves away from the vulgar, Horace goes on, in his description of hoped-for apotheosis, to dramatize his self-removal from even the refined. Just as the first book of *Satires* ended with Horace alone, not with his aristocratic friends, but with his book and his slave-boy (*puer*), so, too, the first book of *Odes* ends with Horace alone with his garlands (representing, after Meleager, completed poetic cycles) and his wine-serving slave-boy (*puer*). The end of the second book of *Odes* (*C.* 2.20) repeats the movement of the first poem of book 1 (*C.* 1.1): Horace addresses his "beloved Maecenas"

[558] *C.* 1.1.29-32 *Me doctarum hederae praemia frontium / dis miscent superis, me gelidum nemus / Nympharumque leues cum Satyris chori / secernunt populo.*

(*dilecte Maecenas—C*. 2.20.7) and sees himself leaving behind the earth and its cities (*neque in terris morabor / longius invidiaque maior / urbis relinquam--C*. 2.20.3-5), but leaving behind, as well, the Roman world in order to become known to strange and foreign lands, the Bosphorus and, further off, the Hyperborean plains. And when lyric Horace gets closest to another person, it turns out to be, similarly, only a mark of prior departure. So in his poem to his dear friend Septimius (*C*. 2.6), he invites his friend to join him at Tibur/Tivoli, for "This corner of the earth beyond all others laughs for me," (*Ille terrarum mihi praeter omnis / angulus ridet*), and already in this line we hear the sounds that will make for the synthesis of Horace, Tibur, and his friend, ***Ille te****-rrarum* ***mihi*** ("It-you-me"), to be instantiated in the last stanza, where "This place, and the blessed hills, beckons you with me" (***Ille te mecum*** *locus et beatae / postulant arces*). Place-you-me: it's as close as it gets, but it turns out, of course, that it is only for the poet's death-scene, as the poem closes: "Here you will sprinkle with a promised tear the warm ash of the dead poet, your friend" (*ibi tu calentem / debita sparges lacrima fauillam / vatis amici*).

The problem of poetic isolation takes center stage in Horace's extended lyric autobiography at the heart of the Roman Odes (*C*. 3.4).[559] This Ode opens with an invocation of Queen Calliope: "Descend from heaven and come, sing a long song with the pipe, or if you prefer, with only your clear voice, or with the strings and lyre of Phoebus."

auditis? an me ludit amabilis	Do you all hear? Or does a lovely insanity
insania? audire et uideor pios	play with me? I seem to hear, and to
errare per lucos, amoenae	wander through pious woods, which

[559] On Horace's autobiographical poetry, see Horsfall 1998:45-6.

quos et aquae subeunt et aurae. pleasing waters and winds stealthily enter.

(*C*. 3.4.5-8)

These imagined woods are filled with echoes: *audit**is**...amabil**is**; pi**os**...per luc**os**...qu**os**; amoen**ae**...et aqu**ae**...et aur**ae***. Horace here is the one who "errs" (*errare*) his way into “lovely insanity” (*amabilis insania*), delighted with the songs that he, but not we, can hear. Horace in this Roman Ode does not know if we hear what he hears, but he does know what he "seems" to himself to hear, what he "seems" to himself to experience. We do not, as it turns out, hear what he hears, but this doesn't bother Horace, because what he's doing here is entering into a vision, a kind of waking dream (which will then, in turn, contain a dream within a dream, sleep within the sleep).[560] There is a hazy, dreamlike quality to the unfolding of the story this poem tells (and to

[560] There is a debate about who is addressed by the *auditis*. N-R says that, “with a dramatic touch (N-H vol. 1, pp. 310f.) H asks his audience to confirm that they too can hear the descending Muse…Ps. Acro thought the question was addressed to the Muses collectively but if the passage is to cohere, *auditis* must govern the same object as *audire* in the next line.” I don't think we need to decide either way, but I am grateful for N-R's comparanda of "similar uncertainty" at Soph. *OC* 316 “Is it so? Or is it not so? The knowledge wanders (*planâ*)” and Keats’ *Ode to a Nightingale* 80 ‘Do I wake or sleep?’ On the motif in general, see Highet 1949:637f. I would add that the question in *C*. 3.4 is related to the question at the end of Virgil's eighth *Eclogue*: '*Credimus? an qui amant ipsi sibi somnia fingunt?*' The question is whether we see something that is there, that can therefore be shared with others, or whether it is something that we have made for ourselves. We can divide our taxonomies of these visions between things that we want to be seeing and things we don't want to be seeing (or indifferent cases, perhaps--but then why

its syntax), which, it turns out, is one of Horace as an infant (or, perhaps, one that turns Horace, before our very eyes, into an infant).

Me fabulosae Volture in Apulo
nutricis extra limina Pulliae 10
ludo fatigatumque somno
fronde noua puerum palumbes
texere, mirum quod foret omnibus
quicumque celsae nidum Aceruntiae
saltusque Bantinos et aruum
pingue tenent humilis Forenti, 15
ut tuto ab atris corpore uiperis
dormirem et ursis, ut premerer sacra
lauroque conlataque myrto,
non sine dis animosus infans. 20

"Me, the fabulous ones--it was on Apulia's Mt. Vulture, beyond the threshold of my nurse Pullia--me, tired of play and sleep,[561] with fresh fronds, the fabulous doves clothed me, a little boy, and a wonder it would be

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are you seeing it if not from fear or desire?). Compare Horace *C*. 3.27.38 of Europa on Crete *'vigilansne ploro / turpe commissum, an vitiis carentem / ludit imago / vana, quae porta fugiens eburna / somnium ducit?*" One final note: these Horatian moments would seem to be required comparanda for any attempt to interpret Virgil's gates of dreams.

[561] N-R point out that there are antecedents for this expression ("tired of play and sleep") at Hom. *Il*. 10.98, *Od*. 6.2 "by sleep and toil worn out." They also note that "in view of the importance of Pindar for this ode, it seems significant that similar phrases are used about him in two separate

> to all those who hold the nest of high Aceruntia and the Bantinian groves and the field of low-lying Forens, that, with body safe from black serpents, I should sleep, safe too from bears, that I should be pressed in with sacred laurel and with bestowed myrtle, an infant not uninspired by the gods." (*C*. 3.4.9-20)

Horace has played enough and slept enough:[562] now is the time to err with the Muses, and it means leaving behind the nurse's house[563]. This is precisely opposed, of course, to the advice

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sources: see Paus. 9.23.2 (when fed by bees) *kopos kai hupnos…katelambanen*, also *vita Pindari* p. 1 Drachmann *hupo pollou kamatou eis hupnon kanechthênai*. Horace's expression is more striking; it is a paradox that both play and sleep can be tiring." (N-R *ad* C. 3.4.11 'ludo fatigatumque somno') But what Horace wants are *somnia* and not *somnus*, "dreams" and not "sleep."

[562] cf. *E*. 2.2.214-5 *lusisti satis dormisti satis atque bibisti, / tempus abire tibi est…*

[563] Note that there is considerable textual debate over 3.4.10 'nutricis extra <limen Aupliae>. MSS divide between *limen Apuliae* and *limina Pulliae*. I find none of the arguments convincing. That the /a/ in Apulia can never be short does not seem dispositive in a case that might have been an exception to this, and it seems that in a dream-setting as fluid as this there is little point to insisting that *extra limen Apuliae* would contradict *Vulture in Apulo* and *limina*, which, N-R claim, "in the context of a straying child [sic!]…can only mean the threshold of a house." Nor do I much care for Baehrens' *limina pergulae* (commended by N-R, and which Housman first recommended then decided against). Bentley thought Horace's nursemaid "Pullia" would be too obscure a personage for this august poem, but, as Fraenkel points out (274), Horace in this very same poem points to obscure place names (3.4.14-16). N-R remain unconvinced by this, pointing

Horace will give to Lollius in the eighteenth epistle, where pleasing one's patron means joining in with the *ludi*. The connection is not drawn at random: there, Lollius is urged, "Get up! Put aside the severities of the inhuman Muse" (*surge et inhumanae senium depone Camenae--E*. 1.18.47). In the *Odes*, Horace does get up, but gets up (like Horace the *rara avis* of *Ode* 2.20) a little too high for other humans to follow (*C*. 3.4.21-8):

Vester Camenae, vester in arduos	Yours, Camenae, yours I am raised into
tollor Sabinos,[564] *seu mihi frigidum*	Sabine heights: whether cold Praeneste,
Praeneste seu Tibur supinum	or sloping Tibur, or clear-skies Baiae
seu liquidae placuere Baiae.	pleases.
uestris amicum fontibus et choris	
non me Philippis uersa acies retro,	As friend to your fountains and choruses,
deuota non extinxit arbor	neither routed battle-line at Philippi, nor
nec Sicula Palinurus unda.	that cursed tree could extinguish me, nor
	Palinurus with Sicilian wave.[565]

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out that those place names were "all in the public domain." However one decides this, it does not affect my present argument.

[564] Housman (*Classical Papers* 2.613 and 658) did take *arduos Sabinos* as "Sabine people," but, as N-R points out, *arduos* is served better by an understood *agros*, and therefore to be taken as "the Sabine countryside" (cf. Liv. 1.45.4 *bos in Sabinis nata…dicitur*)

[565] These two stanzas are tightly tied syntactically: note the balance of *seu…seu…seu* and *non…non…non*.

Horace leaves behind humans, but is not without the gods (*non sine dis animosus infans*), and this is what keeps him safe from all harm. This is what makes this poem of a piece with a wide number of odes about Horace's invincibility as poet, notably in *C*. 1.22 (*Integer vitae*), which we will look at next, and *C*. 1.26, where Horace can say that, as "friend to the muses," he can cast off sadness and fear, ostensibly addressing his friend Lamia, but really looking towards the Muses, "Oh you who rejoice in the perfect fountains" (*O quae **fontibus integris** gaudes*).[566] In that poem, the friendship that counts is the one with the Muses, and not with other humans.

It is only the relationship with the Muses that gives Horace the lyric poet his sense of complete serenity, a fact that is equally important to those poems in which Horace turns his lyric voice to the subjects of love as to those in which he directs himself to politics. How this works can be demonstrated by way of two odes: *Integer vitae* (*C*. 1.22) and *Quo me Bacche* (*C*. 3.25).

The dialectic of solitude, as we saw with Virgil's *Eclogues*, is not weakened, but made more acute, by its intermixture with love poetry. For Horace, even the strongest social experiences can be reconstrued by Horatian lyric as forms of imaginative solitude. The so-called "Lalage Ode" (*C*. 1.22) is emblematic:

Integer vitae scelerisque purus	Who is whole in life and free of sin
non eget Mauris iaculis neque arcu	Doesn't need the Maurians' missiles,
non venenatis grauida sagittis,	Or the bow or case weighed down,

[566] Note the related word-set: 1.26 '*Musis amicus…o quae fontibus integris gaudes,*' 3.4.25 '*vestris amicum fontibus'* 1.22 '*Integer vitae*.' Note, too, that these "untouched fountains" are at exact center of this three-stanza poem.

Fusce, pharaetra,

siue per Syrtis iter aestuosas
siue facturus per inhospitalem
Caucasum uel quae loca fabulosus
lambit Hydaspes.

Namque me silua lupus in Sabina,
dum meam canto Lalagem et ultra
terminum curis uagor expeditis,
fugit inermem,

quale portentum neque militaris
Daunias latis alit aesculetis
nec Iubae tellus generat, leonum
arida nutrix.

Pone me pigris ubi nulla campis
arbor aestiua recreatur aura,
quod latus mundi nebulae malusque
Iuppiter urget;

pone sub curru nimium propinqui
solis in terra domibus negata:
dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,

My dark friend, Fuscus, with toxic darts,

Whether he makes his trip
Through dog-dayed Syrtes
Or Caucausus, hating visitors,
Or lands famous Hydaspes licks.

You know, a wolf met me in Sabine woods,
Me singing Lalage and wandering
Past the bounds, cares put aside,
And fled me—me! unarmed!

Such a monster Daunius militant
Doesn't raise in oaky Aesculum,
Nor Juba's land give birth,
Dry nurse of lions.

So place me where no tree's revived
By summer winds in languid fields,
The side of the world that clouds
And Bad Jove press.

Put me under the car of the too-close
Sun in a land not meant for living;
Sweet laughing Lalage I'll love,

dulce loquentem. Sweet speaking Lalage.

Like so many Horatian odes, *Integer vitae* (*C*. 1.22) opens with a philosophical tag and in a third-person abstraction that carries through the first two generalizing stanzas. *Integritas* is, as Robert Kaster has shown, a richly important Roman virtue (see "Being 'Wholly' Roman," epilogue to Kaster 2005:138-148); for Horace, it could be this too, as when he urges Xanthias from Phocis to reveal the name of his love, claiming that "Her arms and her face and her rounded calves, I praise in perfect purity,"[567] (*integer laudo*). It looks, then, as though we're in a good Roman moment, with good Roman friends who, armed strong in honesty, joined closed in friendship, can go to the world's farthest climes, its most exotic and un-Roman places, and have no need of foreign trickeries or bows that kill too comfortably from afar. A Roman ethics prevails.[568]

But, like so many Horatian odes, this poem ends rather far from where it started. Looking at the last stanza without considering, for now, what comes in between, we see that the third person generalities of the opening adage have been applied to the case of the speaker, and that the speaker is willing to be placed in something very much like "summery Syrtis," a place "too close to the sun in a land not meant for living," and we expect this to be because, as should have been reemphasized, the poet's life is full of integrity, and completely free from sin. Instead, we

[567] *C*. 2.4.21-2 *bracchia et voltum teretesque suras / integer laudo*

[568] The debts to Catullus 11 (*Furi et Aureli comites Catulli*) are obvious. But Catullus' poem has no equivalent to the turn towards Lalage, nor does it show the poet saved by love and song—quite the opposite, in fact.

find that what keeps the poet safe are not any qualities normally associated with Roman (or Hellenistic) ethics, but rather love, and it is a love that stretches into the future:

> *Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,*
>
> *Dulce loquentem.*
>
> Sweet laughing Lalage I'll love,
>
> Sweet speaking Lalage.

Lalage is, here, the hypostasized beloved, immortalized in sweet laughter and sweet talk, with the final line's anaphora, *dulce loquentem*, achieving a hymnic lilt.[569]

The wolf meets Horace in this poem when Horace is wandering (*vagor*), carelessly and far, lost in song. Horace's "vagrancy" here is close cousin to the various "wandering" words of which Horace is fond, and which we've canvassed in the *Epistles* and in other *Odes*. But how did the poem stray this far, this carelessly, past the point of return, *et ultra terminum curis uagor expeditis*? We can start with Lalage, which, "in fact a rarely attested name," (N-H *ad* 22.10) is related to Greek *λαλαγέω*, "to chatter," and first appears just after we've moved from the philosophical to the personal, and to the wolf that we meet in a Sabine wood. As Eduard Fraenkel noted, *namque* (22.9) introduces what Romans would easily have recognized as an *exemplum*, and what should have been, as he puts it, "occupied by the account of some adventure of a hero." Now, wolves, being "common in ancient Italy," as Nisbet and Hubbard explain (*ad* 22.9), are, for Fraenkel, so much a part of what the normal experience of daily Sabine wood-

[569] See Oliensis 1998:110.

walking must have been that Horace's recounting of his wolf encounter, and his mythic amplification of the wolf's proportions, must have "contained an element of parody."[570] This allows him to conclude that, despite the heavy gnomic phrase with which we began, we are being warned, here, "not to take the accident too seriously." (Fraenkel 1957:186) Similarly, David West speaks of the ode as "full of genial exaggerations," and sees a "decisive proof of the cheerful interpretation" in the person of Horace's addressee here, Aristius Fuscus, with whom Horace had represented himself in urban antics in the earlier *Satires* (1.9). But Fraenkel, wary of exaggerating the parodic playfulness, and charting his accustomed course of subtle moderation, connects the poet-lover's sense of safety with other poems where Horace suggests that wherever he goes he is safe, in the care of his loving and friendly muses.

Everyone's playing it safe here, but we can wring lilies from the acorns, starting with the wolf. As we know from Virgil's *Eclogues*, it can be very bad news for a poet to meet a wolf, especially when the wolf sees the poet before the poet sees the wolf (Vir. *E*. 9.51-4):

> Time takes all, and takes the soul too. Often
>
> I, as a boy, in song, I recall, put down long suns:

[570] On Horace's Sabine woods, see *C*. 3.16.29 "trees of a few acres" *silva iugerum / paucorum* and *S*. 2.6.3 "a little bit of foliage" (*paulum silvae*). Horace addresses his bailiff at *E*. 1.14.1 as "bailiff of the trees (*vilice silvarum*)," and comments on the specific foliage, plum trees, oaks, cornel trees, and holm-oaks, at *E*. 1.16.9. Nisbet and Hubbard comment ecologically *ad C*. 1.22.9: "But here he is clearly referring to wilder forest outside his own estate. The area must have been far more wooded than it is now; the face of Italy has been changed by the depredations of men and goats."

Now I have forgtten so many songs, even voice itself

Has now fled Moeris, for the wolves saw Moeris first.[571]

But what of this wolf? Clausen helps us with the context, pointing to Pliny's *Natural History*, where it is explained that "in Italy it is likewise thought that it is dangerous to be seen by wolves, and that if they see a man before he sees them, they remove his voice for a short time."[572] Virgil needn't have gone farther afield than the text always, for the *Eclogues*, to hand, Theocritus' *Idylls*, in one of which one shepherd says to another, "Won't you say something? Have you seen a wolf?"[573] There is more at stake in Virgil's lament than in Theocritus' witty tag. Horace's encounter with this wolf in the Sabine woods, read with Virgil's rather than Theocritus' text, might have threatened to end our poem in its tracks, and turned our poet silent[574]. Horace was spared Moeris' fate, perhaps through the protection afforded by his song-as-charm: *dum canto Lalagen*. It's rather good fortune that the subject of Horace's song is maid Lalage, whose name

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[571] Vir. *E*. 9.51-4 *Omnia fert aetas, animum quoque; saepe ego longos / cantando puerum memini me condere soles: / nunc oblita mihi tot carmina, uox quoque Moerim / iam fugit ipsa: lupi Moerim uidere priores.*

[572] Pliny, *NH* 8.80 *In Italia quoque creditur luporum visus esse noxius vocemque homini quem priores contemplentur adimere ad praesens*.

[573] Th. *Id*. 14.22 *οὐ φθεγξῇ; λύκον εἴδες;*

[574] Though we should note the irony in Vergil's Moeris saying that he has gone silent while chanting his hexameters. See also the ironies of *boukoliazdomestha* in Theocritus 7, where one poets says, "Let us bucolicize" some ways into a poem that one might have rightly thought to have been bucolic and bucolicizing from the start.

means speech, so that Horace is protected from speechlessness because he is hymning Speech herself. Protected by what is quite literally his metapoem, a song about a song, Horace goes on his way and the wolf must flee, reminding us that in the *Eclogues*, a rather different circumstance prevails, with Moeris and Menalcas land-deprived, and Meliboeus of the first *Eclogue* lamenting that he must flee: *nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arva, / nos patriam fugimus, "*we the fatherland's bounds now leave, the sweet fields. We flee our fatherland."

But where Meliboeus found only misery and trouble beyond his natural boundaries, Horace can go anywhere, *ultra terminum* (*C*. 1.22.10-11), across the boundaries of poetic line and domestic stomping grounds.[575] Protected from the silence of the wolf, the poet singing his Lalage can be happy wherever he is, whether in the freezing caps or the boiling meridian, and can be happy even against cloud-gathering Jupiter, and Jupiter's mean spirits.[576] For our poet is never too hot, and never too cold. For him, the temperature's always just right, always quite seasonable, and if we had to choose a season for his inner state, we would name it, of course, spring. Unlike Icarus, the poet could be all too close to the sun (*sub curru nimium propinqui solis*), in a place where no other man might live, and even there would be unthreatened and unhurt and, we may guess, still singing his Lalage. But the poem does not end with the poet singing Lalage, but with the poet's declaration that it is Lalage whom he will love (*Lalagen amabo*). Song is just love here: loving Lalage means singing love of Lalage. Singing and loving the beloved are, of course, essential to the makeup of elegiac love poets like Propertius and

[575] My thanks to Denis Feeney for pointing me towards the enjambment.

[576] On the *topos* of the "poet" (rather than, say, "lover") safe from harm, see Lowrie 1997:285; cf. N-H *ad*. *C*. 1.22.

Tibullus, and there is a way in which the person sung and the song become one and the same, so that we have trouble deciding sometimes whether Propertius means *Cynthia* or Cynthia, just as here one has trouble deciding whether Horace is singing *Lalage* or Lalage. Horace is singing both, of course, and loving both, and it is precisely this interchangeability of loving and singing, of object of love and subject of song, that drives this ode, as it drives so much of Latin love elegy.

The identity of the poem's addressee, Aristius Fuscus, is relevant to this theme. We last saw him in the ninth satire, where Horace had been walking alone on the Sacred Road, as was his way, meditating his poetic playthings, totally "in the zone" (*Ibam forte via sacra, sicut meus est mos, / nescio quid meditans nugarum, totus in illis*--1.9.1-2). But then comes the chatterbox! Horace tries hard to get away but none of the usual strategies work: "I'm visiting sick friends who are very far away,"--*I like walking*--"Shouldn't you go see your mother? Some other family?"--*I've laid them all to rest*. At long last, he runs into his old friend (*mihi carus*--*S.* 1.9.61), his blood-brother (*paene gemelli*--*E.* 1.10.3) Fuscus, who, according to Porphyrion (*ad* 1.10.3) was himself a poet, but of comedies, and was, according to Horace, a great appreciator of Horace's poetry (together with Asinius Pollio, at *S.* 1.10.83). Horace's assaulting admirer in the ninth satire puts an end to the meandering poet's verse, play, and thought in the same way that the wolf might have threatened to turn the Lalage Ode's poet silent in his own tuneful wanderings. Fuscus of *Satire* 1.9 does not save him, because it is not a human who will serve as the condition for solitude and poetry, but a god, in the case of the satire, Apollo. But in the world of the Lalage Ode, it is nothing external that saves Horace, but Horace himself: it is Horace's love of Lalage, and not Lalage's love for him, that saves the poet, since, in this poem's particular

lyric universe, Horace's love of the girl, not the girl's love of Horace, is what constitutes the saving grace.

For we do not hear Horace's song of Lalage, and we do not see Lalage. Horace is not with the girl, and we are not with the song. It is, rather, the ideas of the girl and the song, which is to say the Muse as paradigm for both, that is the poet's true protector, what allows the poet to ward off all evils and construct a moveable home sufficient, sacred, and happy in itself, and protected against all comers.[577] This poem doesn't give us a community of song, or the song itself, or its melody, or even a potted summary of what it might be about: it is a love song sung not to the beloved, and not even to us, but to the wilderness. It is relevant that Lalage does not mean only "speech," but took on connotations of the speech, especially, of the birds and insects that mark the *locus amoenus*, and to spring.[578] Given the rich allusivity of Lalage's name, we might hear in

[577] The Stoic philosophers (see Cicero, *Paradoxa Stoicorum* 5.34) had offered something like this, saying that "Only the wise man is free," and here poetry seems to suggest that song itself, and love, might provide an equivalent or substitute for such freedom from external constraint (even, and this would appeal to Epicureans as well, from fear of *malus Iuppiter* and the divine host).

[578] For λαλαγεῖν and the *locus amoenus*, see Theocritus, *Id*. 5.48, 7.139. If Horace had looked to the Greek anthology, he could have found λαλαγέιν being associated with the coming of spring (in the mouth of a swallow), in the epigram by Leonidas (*AP* 10.1):

Ὁ πλόος ὡραῖος· καὶ γὰρ λαλαγεῦσα χελιδὼν

ἤδη μέμβλωκεν χὠ χαρίεις ζέφυρος·

it as well the possibility that poetry allows us to hear the way in which the earth (*γῆ*) speaks (*λάλει*), which means that the land without inhabitants (*terra domibus negata*) supplies, with the Muse, all the lyric fellowship that Horace might need.[579] The empty landscape and its speaking muse is also a look back to the line from Meleager's poem that served as epigram to the first chapter, and was an important source for Virgil's first *Eclogue*: "you sing the country-dwelling Muse, solitude-speaking" (*ἀγρονόμαν μέλπεις μοῦσαν ἐρημο**λάλον***[580]). Lalage is, in so many ways, this solitary muse, and, as in Virgil's tenth *Eclogue*, there is no worry about singing to the deaf: the *solitudo* answers all.

λειμῶνες δ' ἀνθεῦσι, σεσίγηκεν δὲ θάλασσα
κύμασι καὶ τρηχεῖ πνεύματι βρασσομένη.
ἀγκύρας ἀνέλοιο καὶ ἐκλύσαιο γύαια,
ναυτίλε, καὶ πλώοις πᾶσαν ἐφεὶς ὀθόνην.
ταῦθ' ὁ Πρίηπος ἐγὼν ἐπιτέλλομαι, ὁ λιμενίτας,
ὤνθρωφ', ὡς πλώοις πᾶσαν ἐπ' ἐμπορίην.

Cicero's letters may pick up on this epigram (or a more general tradition), when Cicero writes to Atticus: "The *lalegizing* one is already here, and my spirit is on fire [to go somewhere], but where or how is entirely unclear" (***λαλαγεῦσα*** *iam adest et animus ardet, neque stat quicquam, quo et qua*--Cic. *Att*. 10.2).

[579] My thanks to Richard Hutchins for suggesting this etymology.

[580] Meleager, 13.2 G.-P. (=*AP* 7.196), the poet to a cicada.

One expects such things of love poetry, but does not expect them, perhaps, of poetry: it is one thing to leave behind the world, an entirely different matter to abandon or forget Augustus, semi-divine embodiment of Rome itself. In Horace's ode to Bacchus (*C*. 3.25), lyric solitude comes face-to-face with the political need to keep certain people, particularly Caesar, on the scene:[581]

Quo me, Bacche, rapis tui	Where, Bacchus, do you snatch me, full of you? To
plenum? quae nemora aut quos agor in specus	what groves, what caves am I driven, swift with new
velox mente nova? quibus	mind? In what caves shall I be heard, meditating the
antris egregii Caesaris audiar	eternal glory of extraordinary Caesar,
aeternum meditans decus	to set it amid the stars and in Jove's council? I shall
stellis inserere et consilio Iovis?	sing something amazing, fresh, till now not spoken
dicam insigne, recens, adhuc	by any other mouth, just as on rock-ridges
indictum ore alio. non secus in iugis	
exsomnis stupet Euhias	the sleepless Bacchant gapes, looking out on
Hebrum prospiciens et nive candidam	Hebrus, Thrace white with snow, Rhodope washed
Thracen ac pede barbaro	by foreign foot, as for me, off the path,
lustratam Rhodopen, ut mihi devio	

[581] On this poem's relationship to Horace's other "Dionysian" poems, see Schiesaro 2009. The phrase "Bacchic poetics" itself, which provides the title for Schiesaro's works, is derived from a comment by Don Fowler (2002:148) on Schiesaro's inaugural lecture at KCL, Dec. 1, 1992 (acc. to Schiesaro 2009:61 n. 1).

ripas et vacuum nemus	it gives me pleasure to wonder at the streams and
mirari libet. o Naiadum potens	the empty forest. O master of Naiads, of Bacchants
Baccharumque valentium	that can flip high ash-trees with bare hands,
proceras manibus vertere fraxinos,	
nil parvum aut humili modo,	nothing trifling or in a humble way, nothing mortal
nil mortale loquar. dulce periculum est,	will I speak. It is a sweet danger! o Lenaeus! to
o Lenaee, sequi deum	follow the god! binding head with green vine.
cingentem viridi tempora pampino.	

No other ode begins like this. There are others, of course, that begin with questions similarly direct (*C.* 2.17 "Why do you tire me with your laments?" *Cur me querellis exanimas tuis?*'; *C.* 4.1 ″Do you renew, Venus, long-interrupted wars" *Intermissa, Venus, diu rursus bella moues*), and there is the similar question in the seventh *Epode* ("To where, to where, are you all rushing to ruin?" *Quo quo scelesti ruitis*), but none approaches this Bacchic ode's opening in its motion.[582] The poet here is not reporting on Bacchic activity that he sees near or around him, as in another ode addressed to Bacchus, which Horace opens, in best reporter fashion, "I saw Bacchus in remote rocks teaching songs--believe me, people of future times (*Bacchum in remotis*

[582] For Horatian poems beginning with a short insistent question, see *S.* 2.4 (*Unde et quo Catius?*), *I.* 12 (*Quid tibi vis, mulier nigris dignissima barris*). There are a number of poems that begin with questions: *C.* 1.5, 1.9, 1.12, 1.24, 1.31; 3.7, 3.20; I. 5, 6, 9; *E.* 1.1, 1.4, 1.11; *AP* 1; S. 1.1, 2.8.

carmina rupibus / vidi docentem--credite posteri)." There, Horace is concerned with whether his story will be believed, and every emphasis if placed on this being reportage.[583] That poem ends up inside of its reportage, as Horace comes to inhabit the memory of the epiphany, addressing the god in prayer, forgetting, too, posterity, which had been the ode's original audience, and moving on to the god *Liber*, or Dionysus, himself as addressee (and insistently--note the repetitions of "you" in the second half of that poem). But this poem begins already inside of the epiphany, or rather, with the epiphany inside.

The poem begins with the poet whirled about by the power of Bacchus--the poet wants to know where he is being taken. But it turns out that the force is not external but internal: the god impels Horace from the outside (*Bacche, rapis*), but Bacchus is also inside of Horace (*tui plenum*). The second sentence repeats this ambiguity: is Horace "being led" into the groves and caves by something outside of himself, as the passive verb *agor* ("I am led") might suggest, or rather by some force already inside of him, as the second half of the question, *velox mente nova*, "swift with a new mind," makes likely? It is the same question of agency posed by Nisus' question to Euryalus, in the ninth book of the *Aeneid*, "Do the gods put this passion in our hearts, Euryalus, or is each man's savage desire his own god?" (*dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt / Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?*--*A*. 9.184-5) It is also the anxiety posed by the end of Virgil's eighth *Eclogue*, where the speaker, praying for Daphnis' return, believes she sees something, "and Hylax barks in the door. Should I believe? Or do those who love fashion,

[583] This poem, too, though, could be analyzed as a slipping from reportage to experience, an entry into the lyric mindset, as Horace moves more into the mode of his prayer to Liber—he enters inside of the memory.

themselves, their own dreams (*et Hylax in limine latrat. / Credimus? an qui amant ipsi sibi somnia fingunt*?--*E*. 8.108)."[584]

So we begin in motion, whirled about with the poet and by Dionysus, but know already that we are being whirled about by the poet and with Dionysus as well. The paradox that applies to Horace applies to us as readers, and just as Horace is full of Dionysus (*tui plenum*), we also suspect that he might be full, too, of the forests through which he is impelled, swift within the confines of his own mind. At this point, however, it is only a suspicion, and the question is put on hold for a more unexpected interruption: the arrival of Caesar. "In what caves shall I be heard, meditating Caesar's eternal glory, to set it amid the stars and the councils of Jove? I shall sing something grand, fresh, not yet spoken by another mouth…" So arrives this poem's iteration of Horace's frequent *Fort-Da* with swift Caesar, who arrives fast and late, leaves fast and early. His arrival is a surprise, but his disappearance is a bigger one. Not all readers have seen it this way, and, in an effort to iron out the differences between the poem's first and second halves, to bring this erring back into line, they have missed how this poem shows Horace's slip towards solitude.

While it would be wrong to say of this poem, in an inversion of the Athenian proverb, that this poem has "nothing to do with Augustus," it would be closer to the truth than what is usually said, that it has everything to do with him. Commentators have by and large been discomfited by the discrepancy between this poem's two halves; consequently, they have tried to bring them closer together by introducing Augustus, from its opening passage, into its otherwise emptied end. The commentary of Porphyrion (2nd-3rd cents. CE) set the tone for such readings: the poem, it claims, "is seen to signify allegorically that his spirit is not sufficient for the praises of Augustus

[584] See Chapter 2, on *Eclogue* 8.

unless aided by way of the gifts of Bacchus (for he himself is a musical god)." (*videtur allegoricos significare non sufficere spiritum suum laudibus Augusti nisi Liberi munere (nam et ipse musicus deus est) adiuvetur*) Or, to put it in modern terms, "the whole poem is about the difficulty, and danger, of political poetry." (Williams 1968:70) On this view, Horace's return to song, "nothing trifling or in a humble way, nothing mortal will I speak" (*nil parvum aut humili modo, nil mortale loquar*) must refer back to the stellification of Caesar that "had not been spoken by another mouth (*indictum ore alio*)."

But Caesar's absence from the second half is a telling one, as telling as the fact that the poem's end trains all of its attention on the erring, whirling poet himself and the god Dionysus.[585] Writing on *Ode* 3.4, Oliensis (1998:135) claimed that "Soon after Caesar enters the poem, everything changes;" what is remarkable in *Ode* 3.25, by contrast, is that Caesar's entrance changes very little at all. All methods for wedding the beginning and ending of this poem involve, in some way, populating the end of the poem's empty space with a Caesar who has merely come and gone: these scholars will not let Horace take center-stage by himself. Most readers do so on the level of interpretation, but Bentley did so, typically, ingeniously, through a small emendation at poem's end. For him, Horace's cry, "It is a sweet danger--oh Lenaee!--to follow a god" (*dulce periculum est / O Lenaee sequi deum—C.* 3.25.19) presents an objectionable otiose quality brought out by his paraphrase of the line as "it is sweet, oh Bacchus, to follow Bacchus" (*dulce est, o Bacche, sequi Bacchum*); by adding one letter and slightly rearranging vowels (*deum>ducem*, "god">"leader") Bentley reintroduces Augustus to the stage:

[585] See Oliensis 1998:130 on the poet's self-separation from politics and the *princeps*.

"it is sweet, Lenaee, to follow this leader!"[586] Nisbet and Rudd find the received manuscript reading "less tautological" than Bentley suggests, and see *deum* as implying Bacchus' superhuman powers, hence it is, for Horace, a sweet danger "to follow your divinity." Bentley is right that there is a troubling *geminatio* here, but wrong about what to do with it: this poem that begins with the ambiguity of double-agency and double-action ends with them as well. At the beginning, we asked whether Horace was being seized or seizing himself, whether Horace was being led or leading himself. Is the god behind Horace? Or inside him? At poem's end, Horace is following this god, but even then the picture is not simple, because the last line presents an action whose agent cannot, should not, be determined. "After some hesitation we have concluded," write Nisbet and Rudd (*ad C.* 3.25.20), "that *cingentem* [crowning] refers not to the god but the poet (thus Heinze)." But the opening's confusion precludes certainty: we do not know, any more than Horace, whether there is any Dionysus here outside of Horace himself, for as much as Horace inhabits a solitary space, it is the solitary space that inhabits him. We can't say, at poem's end, whether it would make any difference whether it were Horace or Dionysus wreathing Dionysus or Horace, or, indeed, whether for Horace "to follow the god" means anything but "to follow the god inside of him."

The site of this movement towards solitude is the metaphor at *Ode* 3.25's center: "not unlike a Maenad…so I off the path" (*non secus Euhias…ut mihi* ***devio***). This is where Horace begins to stray, and it's something we're familiar with at this point. In the fourth Roman ode, we saw Horace wandering "beyond the thresh-hold of my nurse Pullia" (*nutricis extra limina*

[586] Though he does not mention it, Bentley's suggestion creates something of a jingle, depending on your taste jarring or pleasant, between the beginnings and ends of this phrase: *dulce-duce*.

Pulliae--*C*. 3.4.10); in the Lalage, ode, we were with him as he wandered "beyond the boundary, with care set aside" (*ultra / terminum curis vagor expeditis*--*C*. 1.22.10-11). David West (2009:209), sensitive as usual to the subtleties of setting, notes the differences between the "worlds" experienced by the Maenad and Horace. But what we have here is a vision as doubled as the agents and actions of the poem's opening: Horace experiences his pleasant world of river banks and the empty wood as if he were the Maenad looking out from the ridges of Mount Haemus across the Thracian plains, the snowbound Hebrus, and Rhodope with its wild dancers, hence his wonder: *mirari libet*, "it is a pleasure to wonder at." Lyric as space for the self is a space, also, for wonder. And the lyric mode allows us to enter into the wonder of another person, see the world through their wonder-seeing eyes: in this case, we no sooner know of the sleepless Maenad on the ridges than look at the world through her eyes, *prospiciens*, "as she looks out." We see her, and see through her, because we are both behind her and inside of her.[587] Still,

[587] It is a figure that has a great deal in common with an image that has served as emblem for modern romanticism, and stock image for the sublime: Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog* (German: *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer*--1818, now in the Kunsthalle, Hamburg). Friedrich's Wanderer stands on mountainous ridges, looking out on rushing lowlands, far mountains held by snow, the whole of it dancing before him in trembling, whirling fog, clouds, light, and shadow. But the Wanderer himself does not dance or jump: he strikes a contemplative posture, one leg in front of the other, statuesque, his body still and planted, his jacket hanging elegantly, his limbs and cane articulated. He could as easily be standing in court, or after a hunt, or in a French garden at tea. The Wanderer, here, is not inside of the landscape he admires: he is in front of it, and all that we see of it can be seen, by him, too:

Horace is not in fact the Maenad: as Frank Kermode put it, "*as* and *is* are not really one."[588] But this poem is not the same for having looked out through the Maenad's eyes, and suddenly there is nothing to sing here but the song that had opened this song, the Bacchic song that does not let the poet know where he stands, that does not let him stand anywhere for very long at all, but insists, rather, that poetic, or Bacchic, coronation is contingent on the "sweet danger" of, perpetually, following the god off the path, *ut mihi devio*.

What unites the three *Odes* that I've examined in depth here--3.4 (*Descende caelo*), 1.22 (*Integer vitae*), and 3.25 (*Quo me Bacche*)--is the sense that lyric poetry produces a space and experience that inspires intimations of autonomy, isolation, and self-enclosure. Before turning away from the *Odes*, or rather, to the judgement of the world of the *Odes* in the context of

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the fact that we only see his back encourages us to see ourselves in this scene, and to think of the landscape, itself, as part of the scene that we imagine, together, with him. He is still because he is not his landscape: the landscape is, we must say, inside of him. And the title suggests that Friedrich's wanderer is involved in metaphoric activity as creative, and self-displacing, as Horace himself: instead of being in the mountains, the wanderer conceives of himself, or is conceived of by Friedrich, as looking out upon the sea, in this case, "the sea of fog" (*über dem Neblemeer*); or, as Bullatus might put it, "looking from afar, from land, at raging Neptune" (*Neptunum procul e terra spectare furentem*--E. 1.11.10).

[588] Kermode cites this as the wisdom of Sartre, and as in agreement with Wallace Stevens' notion of poetry being "in the intricate evasions of as." ("Solitary Confinement," in *Pieces of My Mind*, p. 41)

Horace's later epistles, I would like to briefly suggest ways in which the invitation into lyric solitude is built into the very structure of the *Odes* as a collection.

Horace's first three books of *Odes*, taken as a single unit,[589] constitute, as Philip Hardie wrote, an "enduring and self-sufficient monument," but it is also a monument in movement, specifically, circular movement.[590] No doubt, Horace learned some of his circling technique from Virgil, who, as we have seen, used it to marked effect in the coordination of his later books to the *Eclogues* and to themselves. Both poets, one imagines, were responding to new opportunities, and pressures, offered by the possibility, explored in the Introduction, of the collected poetry book itself as a single, unitary artifact. *Odes* 1.1 and 3.30, in this sense, although generally known as "book-ends" of the collection, can be seen, rather, as part of a lyric loop, a recursive *da capo al fine*. For one, the two poems are in the same meter, the so-called First Asclepiad used continuously (*κατὰ στίχον*) without the division into stanzes more frequently found in the *Odes*. They are the only poems in *Odes* 1-3 to use this meter, and they correspond in important ways: where the first poem claims that Horace's poetic apotheosis will happen if Maecenas adds him to the lists of the great Greek lyricists, the final poem takes Horace's deification as triumphant Greek poet and Roman bard as a *fait accompli.* The closing image of the book, taking up a

[589] The first three books are generally thought to have been published as a single oeuvre; for a review of scholarship and a revision of this view, see Hutchinson 2008:131-161.

[590] Hardie 1997:140 n. 9, showing how Horace followed the Ennian pattern not only in this, but also in the extra, fourth book that he added to his edifice, on which, also, see Hardie 1993:120-39.

gesture already familiar from *Odes* 3.25 (*Quo me Bacche*), is that of a garland set on the poet's head:[591]

> *Sume superbiam*
> *quaesitam meritis et mihi Delphica*
> *lauro cinge uolens, Melpomene, comam.* (C. 3.30.14-16)
>
> "Take up a pride gained by merits, and with Delphic laurel willingly ring, Melpomene, my hair."

Where *C*. 3.30 had opened with the implanting, rectangular, finished and done solidity of monumental ribbon-cutting--"I have finished a monument more lasting than bronze" (*Exegi monumentum aere perennius*--the ending suggests material that is softer (hair, *comam*), and a far gentler set of gestures: circling, ringing, wreathing, encompassing the poet with the Delphic laurel, which is to say, with poetry itself.[592] Ring around my poetry, the last line suggests, and

[591] The garland is set, more specifically, on his hair. Nisbet and Rudd point out (*ad* C. 3.30.15-6) that we should think not of the poet's thinning grey hair, as it is described in other poems (C. 3.14.25, 3.19.25), "but rather as the idealized locks of the poetic *victor*." On the closural function of hair, see Oliensis 1998:104 n. 3.

[592] Given that *C.* 1.1 ended with a hope that the poet would "strike the stars with his head" (*sublimi feriam sidera vertice*—l. 36), and C. 2.20 ended the second book with the poet launching outward as a bird "through the liquid air" (*per liquidum aethera*—l. 2), is it possible for us to hear a pun in *aere perennius* that makes Horace's poetry both "longer lasting than

ring it around my hair, *comam*, with that final "m" providing a welcoming link with the initial "m" of the collection, *Maecenas*. There are, indeed, "those whom it pleases to gather Olympic dust from the course" (*sunt quos* ***curriculo*** *pulverem Olympicum / collegisse iuvat*--*C*. 1.1.3-4): in the case of the *Odes* as a whole, this is the course of Horace's poetry. Complete the three-book work of poetic apotheosis, the two poems together suggest, and you may begin again, all in order to crown Horace, once again, with the garland of his own poetry, with the circular movement itself ensuring that his work will endure even longer than the linear movement of the mounting priestess that he makes its term in the poem.

That there is no exit, in the large-scale structure of the first three books, from the lyric circle that the first three books constructs, is proved by the anxiety that it caused Horace in his lyric future: when he writes his fourth book, he begins with the sense that ringing his head with florets gives him no pleasures (*nec vincire novis tempora floribus*), and starts up his own last book of lyrics with the end of Virgil's epic, the dream of eternal chase and equally eternal, intangible, and silent futility (*C*. 4.1.33-40):[593]

Sed cur heu, Ligurine, cur
manat rara meas lacrima per genas?
Cur facunda parum decoro 35
inter uerba cadit lingua silentio?

---

bronze," and, in a typically Horatian undercutting play, also, "longer lasting than air," a possibility bolstered by subsequent references to rain and to the wind Aquilo?

[593] Horace's fourth book of *Odes* is, in this and many other ways, one of the first true "continuators" of Virgil's epic, taking up where it left off.

Nocturnis ego somniis
iam captum teneo, iam uolucrem sequor
te per gramina Martii
campi, te per aquas, dure, uolubilis. 40

But oh why, Ligurinus, why do unaccustomed tears flow down my cheeks? Why does my once-talkative tongue fall among its words with indecorous silence? In nighttime dreams I now hold you captured, now follow you flying through the grass of the Campus Martius, you through swiftly whirling, cruel one, through the waves.

The lyric circle is not, it seems, to be easily re-entered, is always just beyond reach, and, if gained, is only an imagined victory, hence the backwards-forwards construction of these phrases: "I now hold you, I now follow you as you fly…"[594] It is striking that when Horace returns to the encircling monumental meter of *Odes* 1.1 and 3.30, he ends it with an image of encircling vines, but they lead not to circles, but to what is, even if a good exit, still an exit (*C*. 4.8.29-34):

Sic Iouis interest
optatis epulis impiger Hercules,
clarum Tyndaridae sidus ab infimis
quassas eripiunt aequoribus rates,
ornatus uiridi tempora pampino
Liber uota bonos ducit ad exitus.

[594] Richard Thomas puts it very well (*ad* C. 4.1.38): "the hysteron-proteron construction brings out the elusive nature of Ligurinus;" it is also, we might add, an invitation to consider what it means to (constantly) re-start lyric.

> Thus tireless Hercules sits among the desired feasts of Jove; the bright star of the Tyndaraean twins rescues battered boats from the waters; Liber, decorating the temples of his head with green vines, leads prayers forth to a good exit.

We have come, with this poem, and with the fourth book of *Odes* more generally, into a different world, and it is one that is profoundly intertwined with the anxiety over poetry that is at the heart of Horace's later, and last, poetic productions: the *Epistles* to Florus and Augustus, and the *Ars Poetica*. In the fourth book of *Odes*, the lyric enclosure will no longer last forever, and the lyric meter of no exit becomes one that looks forward to its own completion, and knows that it has exceeded normal lyric bounds: it is no accident that *Odes* 4.8 is the only poem in Horace's lyric corpus to violate so-called Meineke's law--or, we might say, "observation"--that the lines of Horace's lyric poems are all, save this one, divisible by four.[595] This poem is, indeed, as Richard Thomas put it, an important "meta-poem of the collection," both because its strange form and strangely absent object of praise collaborate to communicate "the precarious marriage of lyric and propaganda" (Thomas), but, just as importantly, because it is a comment on the difficulty of moving beyond the circle of lyric completion.[596]

IV. "Or on the pavements grey": *Epistles* 1.11

[595] As Richard Thomas notes (*ad* C. 4.8.33), the fact that *ornatus viridi tempora pampino* is "suspiciously close" to 3.25.20 *cingentem viridi tempora pampino* has made it a "candidate for removal" in order to help make *C*. 4.8 accord with Meineke's Law.

[596] Thomas *ad* Hor. *C*. 4, p. 186.

The lyric poet, we have seen, retreats in order to build his lyric world, within which he may inhabit uninhabited spaces, and be always in company when most alone. Space is no obstacle to Horace's roving lyric eye: so, in the Dionysus ode, we can rush with the poet through different forms of space, and, in a particularly famous ode (*C*. 1.9), we are invited into a smooth and imaginative slide from the wintry snow-peaks of Soracte to the hearth-warmed servant-served room, then, in a further act of quick contraction, from the open urban spaces of spring time--"now the [Martian] Field, now the piazzas, and the smooth whisper under night are to be sought out at the appointed hour" (*nunc et campus et areae / lenesque sub noctem susurri / composita repetantur hora*--C. 1.9.18-20)--to the playful coquette in the corner.[597] The space-leaping power of lyric in this sense rivals what Horace will later say of that drama whose playwright, seemingly able to walk a tightrope line, can, "like a wizard, place me now in Thebes, now Athens" (*ille per extentum funem mihi posse videtur ire…ut magus, et modo me Thebis, modo ponet Athenis--E*. 2.1.210-11, 213). Lyric is, in this very extenuated sense, drama by oneself, and for oneself—and for, as well, with solitude's dialectical tension, all those who join Horace by handling, and entering into, the worlds of his lyric books.

But when Horace moves out of the world of the *Odes*, however, he has to question what it means to live lyrically within the compass of the normal, non-lyric, world: what do you do with the poetry of retreat when you are not, yourself, in retreat? One alternative, and one that the

[597] The poem's first word invites us to visualize the mountain (*vides*), and it is not until the eighth line, end of the second Alciac stanza that we are asked to re-anlayze our experience of the poem—from the mountain and its rivers to the request for more wood on the fire—through eyes of Horace's Greek-named friend, or slave, Thaliarchus.

Epistles will explore, is the possibility of a retreat *within oneself*. In what follows, we will briefly look at how Horace describes the positive contours of such an internal retret in his epistle to Bullatus (*E*. 1.11), and then turn, in a more extended treatment, to the poet's critique of such a retreat, and of its implication in the dual significance of solitude, in his later *Epistles*.

In Horace's eleventh *Epistle*, the poet's younger friend Bullatus, despising sea and roads (*odio maris atque viarum--E*. 1.11.6),[598] daydreams of Lebedus: "You know Lebedus," Bullatus writes Horace, "what it's like: more forsaken than Gabii[599] or Fidenae; still, I'd like to live there, forgetting my friends and by them forgotten, to watch Neptune raging, far off, from the land." (*scis Lebedus quid sit: Gabiis desertior atque / Fidenis vicus; tamen illic vivere vellem / oblitusque meorum obliviscendus et illis / Neptunum procul e terra spectare furentem?-E*.

[598] For this kind of fatigue in the *Odes* with a comparable consequent desire for isolation, see *C*. 2.6.7-8 about the retirement home in Tibur, *sit meae sedes utinam senectae, / sit modus lasso maris et viarum / militiaeque*. I discuss this poem briefly above.

[599] Gabii and Fidenae were bywords for ruined cities, as in Anchises' description of Italy's future to Aeneas in the underworld: "They will build Nomentum, Gabii, and Fidenae's city: Collatia's hill-forts, Pometii and the Fort of Inus, and Bola, and Cora. These will then be lands, that are now lands without names." (*hi tibi Nomentum et Gabios urbemque Fidenam, / hi Collatinas imponent montibus arces, / Pometios Castrumque Inui Bolamque Coramque; / haec tum nomina erunt, nunc sunt sine nomine terrae*—Virgil, *A*. 6.773-776) Ironically, of course, Gabii was, in Virgil's day, more truly a name without a land, a nominal memory.

1.11.7-10)[600] Bullatus' "forgetting/forgotten" ideal is related to the central Epicurean tenet, "Live unnoticed!" (*λάθε βιώσας*) An Epicurean context is obvious, too, from Horace's, and Bullatus', play with Lucretius' formulation, at the beginning of his second book: "A pleasure: when the winds whirl the surface of the great sea, to watch, from land, somebody else's travail" (*Suave, mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis / e terra magnum alterius spectare laborem--DRN* 2.1-2).

But no Epicurean would ever wish to forget his friends, or be forgotten by them. Bullatus' image is deeply anti-Epicurean, and emphasizes solitude in a way that Lucretius does not, and could not: Lucretius' sea is part of his approach to achieving worry-free living (*ἀταραξία*), where Bullatus' attention, as the broad and contained line 10 suggests, is trained on the desire for social isolation. Bullatus would be left alone with his sea-side meditations; described as such, he picks up Bullatus' situations picks up on what immediately follows Lucretius' image of the wild sea: "nothing is sweeter than to hold the serene temples, fortressed by the wise, from where you may survey other men and see them wandering here and there, searching for the road of a solitary life,

[600] What is the connection between *desertior* and *solitudo*? The words become very attached to one another among the Christian authors, for whom *solitudo deserti* becomes a common phrase, beginning, it seems, with Origen. But in Seneca's *Medea*, the sorceress describes herself as *clade miseranda obruta, expulsa supplex sola deserta* (207), and the words are there juxtaposed. In Petronius' *Satyricon*, Eumolpus, in his epic oration, the stripping of the environment for luxurious gluttony, sings that "the waters of Phasis are now deprived of birds, and on the muted shore the winds alone (*solae…aurae*) breath on the deserted boughs," (*Sat*. 119) with *solae desertis* juxtaposed. But obviously, the person who is *desertus* is also *solus*.

competing in talent, contending in nobility, struggling through nights and dates with highest toil, to rise to highest wealth and the height of power."[601] For Lucretius, it is the sad non-Epicureans who suffer from, and in, their unenlightened life of dispersed wandering (*palantis…vitae*). The serene temple (*templa serena—DRN* 2.8) that the Epicurean inhabits is one that he notionally inhabits with all other Epicureans, as part of their philosophical fellowship. Bullatius' takes the "serene citadel," and turns it solitary.

Horace, of course, rejects the specifics of Bullatus' plan, but not its central notion: "forgetting friends, by them forgot." For Horace, though, one achieves this not by possessing "a place overlooking the wide-spread sea" (*non locus effusi late maris arbiter--E*. 1.11.26), since "he who crosses the sea changes his sky, not himself" (*caelum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currant--E*. 1.11.27). Solitude is still the goal, but it can be sought wherever you are: "What you seek is here, is at Ulubrae, as long as you don't lack a level spirit" (*quod petis hic est, / est Ulubris, animus si te non deficit aequus--E*. 1.11.29-30). "Level spirit" (*aequus animus*) is how Lucretius renders the key Epicurean term *ἀταραξία,* but this is no Epicurean moment, precisely because it is empty of friends. It is appealing to compare the sea, which Bullatus earlier

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[601] *sed nihil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere*
edita doctrina sapientum templa serena,
despicere unde queas alios passimque videre
errare atque viam palantis quaerere vitae,
certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
noctes atque dies niti praestante labore
ad summas emergere opes rerumque potiri. (*DRN* 2.7-13)

described as the *aequor*, with the level, *aequus*, spirit that Horace sees as the necessary, and sufficient, source of solitary satisfaction.[602]

Solitary equanimity is the deserted seascape that, Horace implies, you can bring with you wherever you go, even, perhaps to the city: the song of solitude is what you hear in your deep heart's core when, on Rome's dirty pavements, you duck and cover as "a hot and hasty contractor rushes by with mules and porters; a giant crane twists now a rock, now a beam; a sad funeral competes with huge wagons; here a rabid dog runs away, here rushes a muddy sow." (*festinat calidus mulis gerulisque redemptor, / torquet nunc lapidem, nunc ingens machina tignum, / tristia robustis luctantur funera plaustris, / hac rabiosa fugit canis, hac lutulenta ruit sus--E*. 2.2.72-5)[603] But the retreat is not only to the rarified refuge of high friends, but, rather, to a place of personal retreat.[604] Indeed, Bullatus' proposal is fairly extreme, and reminds us of the sixth

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[602] Perhaps Horace was picking up on Lucretius' own knowing use of *aequor* as both sea and the model for the healthy and level spirit observing it Lucr. *DRN* 2.1-2 *Suave, mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis / e terra magnum alterius spectare laborem*.

[603] Which is why, of course, Horace's excuse to Florus in that poem for not writing poetry—that he is in the dirty, noisy city—just will not do. Gordon Williams describes this scene as having "the lively caustic vigour of Hogarth." (Williams 1968:657) It is also connected with a similar scene, also involving funerals, in *S.* 1.6.42-4 *at hic, si plaustra ducenta / concurrantque foro tria funera magna, sonabit / cornua quod vincatque tubas*.

[604] The idea of aristocratic refuge is strongly represented in scholarship. As one example, Niall Rudd has accurately described one part of Horace's departure from society, commenting, vis-a-vis the sermonizing of *S.* 1.1-4, "which for good humour, lightness of touch, and absence of

Satire: Bullatus wants to be forgotten not only by what we might call the wrong sort of people, but by the right sort of people, too: *oblitus…meorum obliviscendus et illis*, "forgetting my friends, and by them forgot." Elsewhere in Horace's works, to forget things Roman is to land in some trouble. So, in the fifth of the Roman odes, Horace rebukes the soldiers of Crassus who have grown old in the colors of a foreign kingdom, "having forgotten the sacred shields, his name, toga, and the eternal Vesta, even as Jove and the city Rome still stand." (*anciliorum et nominis et togae / oblitus aeternaeque Vestae, / incolumi Iove et urbe Roma?--C*. 3.5.10-12) The eleventh epistle raises the possibility that one need not, always, have Rome completely in one's thoughts, that one can join Horace in his lyric repose as one "uniquely unworried about which king of the Arctic's chill shores spreads fear, about what terrifies Tiridates" (*quis sub Arcto / rex gelidae metuatur orae / quid Tiridaten terreat, unice / securus—C*. 1.26.3-6). Horace's response to Bullatius suggests that forgetting, and the solitude that it enables, is an internal state, and that wild, deserted, landscapes, unfit for other humans, are landscapes to which the mind retreats in order to achieve that solitude.

But how does the retreat into the lyric solitude—withdrawal, as in the *Satires*, into one's own internal imaginings—actually play out in the lived experience of a socially active Roman man? A socially involved poet such as Horace? We've already seen the troubles that Horace as Satirist faced when attempting his getaway: it was difficult, it was always harassed, but it was, in

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priggishness have never been surpassed," but then adds that Horace turned away from active politics and Rome's social economy in order to "withdraw from the rat-race and live quietly with one's friends." (Rudd 1981:1) As we saw in the *Satires*, this is only half-true: it is even less the case in the *Odes* and *Epistles*.

and of itself, not necessarily a bad idea, certainly not in any to be feared. In the later *Epistles*, however, we see a new form of engagement with solitude.

V. An Argive for Florus: *Epistles* 2.2

One of the abiding tensions of the later *Epistles*--to Augustus (2.1), Florus (2.2), and the Pisones (*Ars Poetica*), all of them written in the last decade of Horace's life--is that of the solitary imagination and the role that it should or should not play in society, and, in particular, in the poet's relationship to society.[605] There is, certainly, a powerful biographical element to this: when Horace wrote his tenth *Satire*, his earth abounded with lordly men and noble companions; now, in his old age, Horace, like the emperor himself, was alone.[606] But it is also a tension that, as we have seen, has been at the heart of Horace's poetry from the very start, a tension that existed, as we have seen, in spaces both crowded and empty: is poetry, ideally, an activity that is social--in production, utility, performance--or anti-social, governed by, as Horace put it in one of his *Epistles*, an "inhuman muse" that tends towards isolation and eccentricity? Should someone write poetry at all? If so, what kind, and to what ends?

The problem of poetry, and, in particular, the solitary imagination, comes to the tipping point in the *Epistle to Florus*, which is, essentially, a grand act of refusal to write poetry: "What is the point of warning you that I won't write," says Horace to nagging Florus, "if you won't stop harassing me about not writing? And besides," Horace continues, "on top of that, you complain that I won't send you expected poems--a liar!" (*quereris super hoc etiam quod / expectata tibi*

[605] For more on the dating of these poems, see below.

[606] Feeney 2002.

non mittam carmina mendax--E. 2.2.24-5)[607] But who is the liar here? Horace in the eyes of Florus, for not sending expected verse? Or Florus in the eyes of Horace, for making a claim on that which is not owed? Horace compares himself to a soldier of Lucullus, who has already risked his neck and made his fortune: why should he do so again? And now that Horace has some small amount of wealth, why should he not rest?

The poem as a whole is an assertion of freedom: from Florus, poetry, and society. It is divided into two parts. The first explains why Horace need not, cannot, and should not write poetry at this stage in his life, and combines this with a mixed message that paradoxically endorses poetry's potential splendors while simultaneously warning that the poetic career is tortuous and makes you the laughingstock of your city, the embarrassment of your family, a burden for your friends and dependents. The second recommends continual self-improvement, particularly the fight against avarice, through the study of philosophy; it concludes by urging those not up to the philosophical task to end their own lives as soon as possible: "you've played enough, eaten enough, and had enough to drink: it's time for you to go…" (*lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti: / tempus abire tibi est--E*. 2.2.214-5).[608]

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[607] Note the similarity between the *expectata carmina* here and the *promissum carmen* at *I*. 1.14.7.

[608] Given that the poem as a whole is a programmatic rejection of poetic production, and in favor of philosophical contemplation and moral self-improvement, there is perhaps a hint in *edisti* (from *edo*=to eat) of its close cousin, *êdo*=to publish, with the taste for this prepared by the metapoetic word *lusisti*, "to play" (*ludere*) being a common "term of art." Finally, *bibisti*, insofar as the celebratory, decadent context of the first part of the verse and the general context suggests

Rejection of poetry, endorsement of philosophy: this should be a simple enough task, and one that Horace had demonstrated with admirable economy in his first *Epistle* (*E*. 1.1). But, between this poem's two parts there comes a strange story that is among the most challenging, odd, and underappreciated self-portraits of the Horatian corpus, the story of the Argive man. In the logic of the poem's argument, this story should have served as a hinge to justify, dramatize, epitomize the poem's, and Horace's, climactic turn from poetry towards the true life (*verae…vitae—E*. 2.2.144) offered by philosophy; this, it does not do.

When we come to the Argive tale, Horace has already offered, against requests to write poetry, his "don't have to" and his "can't," and is now in the midst of his "wouldn't want to anyway," on the grounds that, although poets naturally love whatever they write, being a true

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that this means drinking alcohol, might also be an attack on the poetic persona, which Horace associated with wine-drinkers and not the *aquae potoribus*, the "water-drinkers": "'The Forum and Libo's well I commend to teetotalers. I forbid them to sing.' As soon as I declared this, poets have not ceased to compete by night in wine, to stink by day." ('*Forum putealque Libonis / mandabo siccis, adimam cantare seueris.' / haec simul edixi, non cessuere poetae / nocturno certare mero, putere diurno*. —*E*. 1.19.8-11) When did Horace "declare" his law against teetotaling poets? Could this be, rather than reportage, a reference to a line that the character "Horace" might have said in the *Symposium* written by Maecenas, in which Horace, Virgil, and Maecenas discussed the benefits of wine? The source of Maecenas' *Symposium* is Servius *ad Aen*. 8.310 *hoc etiam Maecenas in symposio, ubi Vergilius et Horatius interfuerunt, cum ex persona Messalae de vi vini loqueretur, ita: "ut idem umor ministrat faciles oculos, pulchriora reddit omnia et dulcis iuventae reducit bona."*

poet means suffering, means twisting oneself, torturously, into a variety of roles, means repeatedly turning the corrector's knife against oneself. And then comes the poem's odd hinge:

Praetulerim scriptor delirus inersque uideri,
dum mea delectent mala me uel denique fallant,
quam sapere et ringi. [?*]*
Fuit haud ignobilis Argis,
qui se credebat miros audire tragoedos
in uacuo laetus sessor plausorque theatro, *130*
cetera qui uitae seruaret munia recto
more, bonus sane uicinus, amabilis hospes,
comis in uxorem, posset qui ignoscere seruis
et signo laeso non insanire lagoenae,
posset qui rupem et puteum uitare patentem. *135*
Hic ubi cognatorum opibus curisque refectus
expulit elleboro morbum bilemque meraco
et redit ad sese: 'Pol, me occidistis, amici,
non seruastis' ait, 'cui sic extorta uoluptas
et demptus per uim mentis gratissimus error.' *140*

[*Should*] I prefer to be seen as an errant writer and artless,
As long as my bad poetry pleased me, or just escaped my notice,
Rather than think sensibly, and snarl. [*?*]
There was once a noble Argive
Who believed that he heard wondrous tragedians
While he sat, happy, applauding, in the empty theater,
Who, in other respects, discharged his duties in the "correct fashion"—

Certainly a good neighbor, pleasant host,

Kind to his wife; the kind of man who could forgive his slaves

And not go crazy at a flask's seal that broke,

Who could avoid cliffs and an open well.

But when through the resources and cares of his family he, remade,

Expelled the sickness and bile with pure hellebore,

And returned to himself: “By Pollux! You have killed me, friends,

Not saved me,” he said, “from whom thus pleasure has been twisted,

And removed by force is the sweetest error of my mind.”

It is a strange story: amusing, cruel, and inexplicable. With regard to what comes before and what follows, the question it answers and the answer it provokes, it is both excessive and inapposite. As transition from the desire to deny poetry to the need to embrace moral philosophy, it is curiously non-illustrative. The tale sticks out in the poem as both a *non sequitur* and a *non sequendus*, neither following nor followed. But it is exactly this oddness, this irreducible excess and agrammaticality in the poem's argumentative syntax, that makes it so interesting an illustration of, and vehicle for, Horace’s dialectic of solitude and sociality.[609]

[609] As Kirk Freudenburg put it regarding the "Horace goes Hollywood" effect of the opening of *E.* 1.1 (*lyrica=ludicra*), "The image has a rough edge to it that readers must work to ignore. But ignoring it may be the wrong tack to take." (Freudenburg 2002:125) I borrow the term “agrammaticality” from Michael Riffaterre, but I differ from him viewing such moments more as invitations into a dynamic, less as wrenches in the poetic machinery that, alone, authorize intertextual intervention. For an influential critique of this terminology, see de Man 1986:33.

Taken together with the opposition elsewhere constructed between grounded hexameters and breezy lyric, the logical slip of the Argive story raises doubts about the value, and safety, of the errant and fugitive, fleeting and excessive, flight of lyric.[610] The Argive, as a figure of "most beautiful error" (*gratissimus error*—E. 2.2.140), is, I will show, a case of a lyric man in a prosaic world.[611] The family's rejection of the Argive's private world of art is also a story of Horace's struggle, as older, wiser, epistolary and moral poet with lyric, so that our critical wrestling with Horace's Argive man entails an engagement with Horace's career-long, and genre-spanning, dialectic of solitude and sociality. In what follows, I show how the satiric posture of social retreat and the lyric gesture of self-sequestration is put awkwardly on trial by the *Epistle to Florus*, and then demonstrate how Horace's attempts to "correct" the error of the Argive tale at the end of his last work, the *Ars Poetica*, end, unsurprisingly, with an ambiguous provocation of its own, allowing the dialectic of solitude to continue spinning its wheel.

Many readings of the *Epistle to Florus* have in misunderstood the role of solitude and imagination as axiological tensions in Horace's work; as a result, they have worked hard to

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[610] Steele Commager (1962) speaks of Horace's "world of art," Ellen Oliensis (1998:102) of Horace's "lyric enclosure." Both terms are useful descriptions for aspects of Horace's poetics, but it is important to note that they are static terms that conceive of poetry as a secure and grounded place, subject at times to assault by aggressive, hostile, and mobile external forces. This is sometimes the case, but Horace's conception of poetry, particularly lyric poetry, can often be construed, by contrast, as mobile, under threat by the forces of stasis and containment.

[611] His case, brief as it is, has strong affinities in form with stories like that of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* or the Mennochio of Carlo Ginzberg's *Cheese and the Worms*.

smooth out the rough edges that make the *Epistle to Florus* a particularly difficult poem.[612] These normalizing readings tend to impose a similar logic upon the poem: a) The story of the

[612] A few examples suffice to give an impression of the scholarly trend. Niall Rudd subtitles the story of the Noble Argive as, "Genuine poetry calls for self-criticism; it does not allow comfortable illusions." Similarly, Charles Brink sub-titles this section "Creative Illusion," and concludes that the story's "irony is apparent from the very un-Horatian content," that content being the idea that one might "prefer enjoyable illusions to saddening knowledge (of my shortcomings)." (Brink III.348) Kilpatrick agreed with Brink, arguing that the *scriptor delirus inersque* cannot be "a choice for himself [Horace] as either artist or critic. That is the picture of the narcissistic poet we have just rejected…The point of the parable is that even the most normal people can suffer from someone's eccentricity to the point where friends and relatives will take a hand in their cure." (Kilpatrick 1990:24) William Anderson counts the Argive fable as one of the three places in the Epistles where "Horace describes playfully (but with serious intent) the desperate state of the poet who insanely trusts to mere inspiration and will not be saved from his madness." (Anderson 1974:53 in Galinsky 1974, juxtaposing the Argive fable with the *Vesanus Poeta* of the *Ars poetica* and the rebellious book at *E*. 1.20.16) Anderson treats the sentence that introduces this episode (*praetulerim* etc.) as ironic, and summarizes: "he [Horace] tells the story of a somewhat dotty old Greek who had a number of harmless delusions that made him happy…And that story is supposed to prove the advantages of being insane. The recurrence of this same sequence in the *Ars poetica* in a context where Horace clearly chooses to be sane confirms the irony of this anecdote. As he says, the beginning, the very source of writing poetry

Argive man expresses a message contrary to the poem's ostensible logic, b) The poem's ostensible logic is commonsensical and accords with what we take to be aristocratic Roman attitudes to social eccentricity, therefore, c) The story, must, therefore be ironic. There are times when this would a reasonable *modus operandi*; here, however, it depends on a supposition surreptitiously slipped in between (b) and (c), and that is the assumption that Horace must always express a simple doctrine, rather than embody a complex tension. In the case of this story, that complex tension concerns the solitary imagination, and the poem's larger logic founders on precisely that imagination's provocation: must a person always be *of* the crowd, must a poet always write *for* the crowd, can things that only a single person may hear or experience be permitted in poetry—in life?

Part of the question here is, it is clear, about generic tensions, for the family's response to the Argive's self-isolation is emblematic of the judgment leveled by Horace as epistolary poet against Horace as lyric poet. The terms that are used to describe the Argive man recall a number of features we have seen to be characteristic of Horace's lyric self-representations. In in his epiphany of a childhood memoery, he seemed to hear and see what we could only imagine, as a "pleasant insanity" allowed the poet to "wander through the woods" and feel the waters and winds; in the Bacchus ode, Horace had wheeled through the woods and "marveled at streems and the empty forest." Numerous key words of the Argive's experience—*miros, credebat…audire, in vacuo…theatro, laetus, amabilis, redit ad sese, mentis gratissimus error*—invite us to consider the Argive man, a good citizen and yet also happily insane, auditor of wonders heard by him

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properly, is the capacity to use one's reason: *scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons* (*A.P.* 309)." (Anderson 1974:53)

alone, sitting, erring, applauding, in a place with no people, as a very Horatian type, tensely combining both sides of Horace's alternating portraits.

Contemporaries who had been keeping up with their Horace would have been familiar with this tension between his epistolary and lyric priorities. In Horace's very first epistolary poem, he had announced that he has put away "verses and other trivialities" (*versus et cetera ludicra pono—E*. 1.1.10). The stance was one he was to repeat throughout the epistolary corpus, and has pride of place in the *Epistle to Florus*, where the slave-for-sale in that poem's initial hypothetical story is precisely a sympotic, hence lyric, poet, such as "will sing, albeit without learning,[613] but sweetly, to you as you drink" (*quin etiam canet indoctum, sed dulce bibenti—E*. 2.2.9). The recitation of lyric poetry is work fit for a slave (albeit a learned one), better avoided by free men with better things to do. One thinks of Cicero's comment, reported by Seneca the Younger, that "If he were to be able to repeat his life, he wouldn't have time for reading the lyric poets [i.e. the canon of nine]."[614]

It would have made sense, then, in generic terms, for Horace to have used this story to justify the coercive force of common-sense over the dangerous eccentricity of lyric erring, to have repeated, in an inverted key, his earlier satiric warning against haters of poetry: "If you refuse to concede this to me, a great band of right-thinkers will come and assist me—for we are

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[613] One can imagine that Horace, in his philosophical stance, can call lyric itself "unlearned" insofar as it takes the wrong kind of learning as its subject, Alcaeus rather than Socrates. In *E.* 1.2, Homer is valuable precisely insofar as he is a better philosophical teacher than Chrysippus.

[614] Sen. *Ep. Mor*. 49.5 *Negat Cicero, si duplicetur sibi aetas, habiturum se tempus quo legat lyricos*.

much more numerous by far—and we, like the Jews, will force you to join our crowd!"[615] The problem, however, is that Horace not only misses chances to use the story in this way—he seems to go out of his way to frustrate this end. The story's hiccup stems from two interconnected causes: first, while the Argive man is clearly mad, he is not *mad enough*, especially in comparison with his traditional and Horatian compeers; and, second, the Argive's madness, inwardly rather than outwardly directed, makes him, not the oppressive *writer* that this poem's logic demanded, but, instead, an individual imagination enjoying an experience that he *cannot* share with others. What is the world supposed to do with such a figure, someone who lives among the people but is not entirely *of* them?

As early as the Twelve Tables, the Romans had made provisions for the imposition of involuntary custodial care on the insane by their family: "If a man is raving mad (*furiosus*), rightful authority over his person and chattel shall belong to his agnates or to his clansmen."[616] No doubt Horace's teacher, "Flogging" Orbilius, had whipped this law, together with the rest of

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[615] Hor. *S.* 1.4.140-3 *cui si concedere nolis, /multa poetarum veniat manus, auxilio quae / sit mihi—nam multo plures sumus—, ac veluti te / Iudaei cogemus in hanc concedere turbam;* on which, see above.

[616] *Tabula* 5 *Si furiosus escit, adgnatum gentiliumque in eo pecuniaque eius potestas esto.* On madness in ancient medicine and society, see Harris 2013; on early Roman law, see Flach 1994, esp. 109-207.

the tables, into the poet's memory.[617] This isn't the place to go into the exact legality of the family's actions; it is enough to note that there is a fair amount of space, in Latin, between the "raving mad" (*furiosus*) of the law and the sweet, harmless, and lovely insanity of the Argive man.[618]

The narration is emphatic: in every other aspect of his life, the Argive is the perfect gentleman, and eminently clubbable. The list puts first things first: he carries out his civic duties (*munia*); he is good to the upstanding male members of the community, as neighbor and as host; he is pleasant with his wife, and, last but not least, even dereliction of duty does not provoke him into anger against his slaves, or material objects that fail to perform their tasks. But not only is he no harm to others, he also poses no threat to himself: he will not fall into a well, and he will not hurl himself over a cliff, for he is able, we are told, "to avoid" such things (*posset…vitare*). He has one eccentricity, but it does not go, as moral philosophers put it, beyond his own nose: it has no impact on anyone else, and has no impact, even, on his own basic welfare.

Importantly, everything that Horace says of the Argive man reverses the conditions of insanity mocked and pitied elsewhere by Horace, particularly (though not exclusively) in his satiric hat: there was the man who "among sane people could be called more insane than Labeo"

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[617] Cicero (*Leg*. 2.23.59) speaks of Roman schoolchildren memorizing the Twelve Tables, see Cicero; on Horace and the law of "bad songs/spells" in the Twelve Tables (in *Satires* 2.1), see Ferriss-Hill 2015:99-101 with bibl.

[618] By contrast, the "Mad Poet" of the *Ars Poetica* will be explicitly labeld as "raving" (*ecce furit*), on which, see below.

when he nailed his slaves to a cross for eating the leftover fish and cold sauce;[619] there were the madmen (as the philosopher Stertinus recounted to keep the suicidal Damasippus from jumping) whose insane *error* requires their mistress, mother, sister, cousins, father, and wife all to shout "Here's a *giant* ditch! There's an *enormous* rock! Be careful!";[620] there was Democritus, who was so absent-minded and lost in thought (*dum peregre est animus*) that he allowed his herds to destroy his fields;[621] and, as we shall see when we come to comparing this story with the *Ars Poetica*, there is the case of the suicidal Empedocles and the mad, suicidal, homicidal poet-turned-animal that concludes that final poem.

But is not, we might ask, his anti-social behavior, and his habit for audio hallucinations, reason enough to help him, willy-nilly, to his hellebore cure? Here, too, Horace had any number of traditional story types, and ones that he himself had elsewhere employed, that would have made this case far simpler.[622]

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[619] *S.* 1.3.80 *si quis eum servum, patinam qui tollere iussus / semesos piscis tepidumque ligurrierit ius, / in cruce suffigat, Labeone* ***insanior inter / sanos*** *dicatur*.

[620] *S.* 2.3.57-9 *clamet amica / mater, honesta soror cum cognatis, pater, uxor: / 'hic fossa est ingens, hic rupes maxima: serva!'*

[621] *E.* 1.12.12-13 *Miramur, si Democriti pecus edit agellos / cultaque, dum peregre est animus sine corpore uelox…*

[622] Horace seems to invite us to comparison with other stories by what we may think of, in Stephen Hinds' terms, as an "intertextual flag," in describing the Argive man as *haud ignobilis*, "hardly ignoble>hardly unknown."

On the Greek side, the Argive's closest kin share with the Argive the fact that their delirium was, for them "the happiest time of their lives (ἐκεῖνον αὐτῷ τὸν χρόνον ἥδιστα)," and that they were no harm to themselves or to others.[623] But in these stories, the deliriants, cured either passively or by agents unknown, recall the pleasures of delirium wistfully, but without any real sense of pain or the provocation of a rebuke. he man from Argos, by contrast, rounds on his self-styled healers and characterizes their "therapy" as extortion, violence, theft, and murder. The man from Argos does not accept his cure with the good humor of his Greek peers, who seem to accept recovery as a painful necessity, and can look back on their period of abnormality as merely a pleasing, but necessarily passing, phase of life. Quite the contrary: we catch the Argive at the moment when some essential aspect of his life, a most essential and beautiful part of his existence, has been wrung, as if physically--in fact physically--from his body.[624]

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[623] Examples include the man of Abydos who, like the Argive, applauded in an empty theater before recovering (without intervention) (ps.-Aristotle, *De mirabilibus auscultationibus*, 832b (31)); Demaratus, student of Timaeus the Locrian, who enjoyed a period of mute delirium before recovering (unaided) (ps.-Aristotle*, De mirabilibus auscultationibus*, 847a (178)); the wine-seller of Tarentum who "went crazy by night but sold wine by day" but never lost the key to his cellar, as much as people tried to get their hands on it (ps.-Aristotle, *De mirabilibus auscultationibus*, 832b (31)); and Thrasyllus of Aexone whom a physician cured of the "strange new form of madness" that caused him to think all the ships in the Piraeus harbor his own (Ael. *VH.* 4.25).

[624] Note, by contrast, that, when Richard Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* adapts material from this poem, he makes clear the wicked consequences that are sure to follow from the Argive man's isolation: such figures "are in paradise for the time, and cannot well endure to be

For the Latin side, we need go no further, for illustration of this aspect of Horace, than to the "strange and unforgettable caricatures" of Horace's poetry itself.[625] A typical figure of this set is the "the Athenian recluse" found earlier in the epistle to Florus, whom Horace enlists to bolster the case for why he cannot possibly write poetry in Rome (*E*. 2.2.77-86):

> "There was a genius who, having taken himself away to empty Athens (*sibi quod vacuas desumpsit Athenas*), gave over seven years to studies and grew old in bookish cares (*libris et curis*): he leaves[626] (*exit*) his house more silent than a statue and causes the whole people to shake with laughter. So should I, here, in

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interrupt…He may thus continue peradventure many years by reason of a strong tempreature, or some mixture of business, which may divert his cogitations: but at the last *laesa imaginatio*, his phantasy is crazed, and now habituated to such toys, cannot but work still like a fate, the scene alters upon a sudden, fear and sorrow supplant those pleasing thoughts, suspicion, discontent, and perpetual anxiety succeed in their places." (2604-2606; cf. 1558-1562) No doubt some such script might have been available to Horace and his readers—what is important, however, is what Horace includes (a large amount of mitigating material) and excludes (any indication that these dangerous consequences are soon or ever to follow).

[625] The phrase is that of Brink *ad* 2.2.81, III.312, who, though, too closely links the case of the Argive man to these other cases.

[626] *Exit* can be either present or, although rarely, perfect tense, an ambiguity I believe adds to both the immediacy and the paradigmatic importance of the scene as forms of Horatian self-projection. Note, though, that the following verb, "shake" (*quatit*) is unambiguously present tense.

> the midst of reality's waves and urban tempests, think it dignified to weave words meant to move the sound of the lyre?"[627]

But the Argive did not "give himself" to the theater as did this Athenian scholar who sacrificed (seven!) years of his life to learning and worrying—he did *everything* expected of an upstanding citizen, and only side-lined, as it were, as an eccentric. But perhaps we are meant to look through this Athenian figure to the earlier story of which it seems to be a reworking (*S.* 1.1.64-67):

> "Like a certain sordid and wealthy man in Athens, who, it is recalled, made it a habit to scorn the voices of the people, and would say, "The people hiss at me, but I applaud myself at home (*at mihi plaudo / ipse domi*), while I contemplate my money in its chest (*nummos contemplor in arca*)."[628]

The *Satire*'s figure of the miser has obvious affinities not only with the Athenian wise man, but also, looking farther forward, to the Noble Argive: they both, for one, applaud (*S.* 1.1.66 *plaudo* > *E.* 2.2.130) in a space empty of other people (*S.* 1.1.67 *ipse domi…contemplor in arca* > *E.* 2.2.130 *in vacuo…theatro*).[629] But the differences are striking, and important: whereas the

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[627] *E.* 2.2.77-86 *Ingenium, sibi quod uacuas desumpsit Athenas / et studiis annos septem dedit insenuitque / libris et curis, statua taciturnius exit / plerumque et risu populum quatit: hic ego, rerum / fluctibus in mediis et tempestatibus urbis, / uerba lyrae motura sonum conectere digner?*

[628] *S.* 1.1.64-67 *ut quidam memoratur Athenis / sordidus ac dives, populi contemnere voces / sic solitus: 'populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo / ipse domi, simul ac nummos contemplor in arca.'*

[629] My thanks to Leon Grek for highlighting the relevance of Horace's Athenian miser. The connections between section about the miser of *S.* 1.1 and the Argive are rather extensive, as in

Athenian miser applauds himself, the Argive applauds what he takes to be others; and whereas the Athenian miser does so in his own home and from a love of money, the Argive does so in what he takes to be a public space and out of love for art.[630]

It is not necessarily a bad thing, in Horace's world, to be separate from the crowd—"sometimes the crowd sees right, sometimes they go astray" (*interdum volgus rectum videt, est ubi peccat*, *E*. 2.1.63)—so the problem is not popular disapproval *per se*: rather, it is that the judgment of the Athenian man as "sordid" has some merit, insofar as he has what could only be described as a religious veneration (*contemplor in arca*) for his money. Later, in the *Ars Poetica*, Roman love for money is seen as diametrically opposed to, and as excluding, the Greek genius for art: "To the Greeks, genius, (*Grais ingenium*) to the Greeks the Muse gave the ability to speak with robust eloquence, and they were greedy for nothing but praise. Roman children learn their long division, and how to split a pound weight into a hundred parts…Once this fixation on money (*cura peculi*), this rust has stained the spirit, can we hope that poetry will be fashioned fit

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the following passage from shortly after the miser's introduction: 1.1.84-5 *non* ***uxor salvum*** *te vult, non* ***filius****; omnes /* ***vicini*** *oereunt, noti, pueri atque puellae. /* ***miraris*** *cum tu argento post omnia ponas?*

[630] Ps.-Acro engages in his habitual practice of naming unnamed figures (later, as we will see, the Argive will be called Lycos), identifying the Athenian miser as Timon of Athens (cf. Cic. *Tusc*. 4.25, 27). Emily Gowers *ad* S. 1.1.64-5 notes that Timon was a "Cynic type," which both points to Horace's anti-cynicism ("as a conciliatory satirist he is concerned with treading carefully in society"—*ad* S. 1.1.65-6) and a theatrical, specifically comical, identification of the character (*ad* S. 1.1.67).

to be wiped with cedar oil, preserved in polished cypress?" (*AP* 323-332)[631] The problem for the Athenian scholar is that the Athenian people seem not to have gotten this message. Even in Athens, as Brink summarizes, a University town, one cannot escape being mocked, derided, and condemned by the people for living a life of thought--"How then can large Rome be conducive to writing poetry?" (Brink *ad* 2.2.81, III.312)

The question of "writing poetry" should, ideally, have played a central, or at least supporting, role in the story of the Argive man, but it does not. Just prior to the Argive anecdote, Horace had advised writers that, even though they all take joy in what they have written and in the act of writing itself (*gaudent scribentes*), they must, simply must, be harsh censors of their own work. Horace is here countering the rampant mania for writing that has hit Rome, with everyone, no matter their level of skill, not only composing but also forcing their works on other people, a form of violence perhaps even more to be feared, in the aristocratic universe, than the torture of one's slaves![632] But the Argive is not a writer, nor he is, in modern terms, a narcissist:

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[631] *AP* 323-332 *Grais ingenium, Grais dedit ore rotundo / Musa loqui, praeter laudem nullius auaris; / Romani pueri longis rationibus assem / discunt in partis centum diducere. "Dicat / filius Albini: si de quincunce remota est / uncia, quid superat?. . . Poteras dixisse. — Triens. — Eu! / Rem poteris seruare tuam. Redit uncia, quid fit?" / Semis". An, haec animos aerugo et cura peculi / cum semel imbuerit, speramus carmina fingi / posse linenda cedro et leui seruanda cupresso?*

[632] Brink puts the idea in the larger context of this and other poems, commenting (*ad E* .2.2.106) that "the enjoyment of writing (verse: *scribere* as *scriptor*, cf. 77n.), however badly, is taken up at 127 *dum mea delectent mala*, 139 *extorta voluptas*, 140 *gratissimus error*; cf. the amateurs

for though we know his illusions to be creative, that is, the creation of his own mind, this does not characterize his own experience of them--for him, they are "heard wonders," and they exist for him alone. They do not spur him, as far as we know, to missionary ambitions: they are the product, and pleasure, of a solitary imagination.

The Argive man, who "hears" rather than "sees" tragedy, is, for all of his insanity, still, in the terms Horace lays out in the *Epistle to Augustus*, the right kind of play-goer—he is an *auditor* rather than a *spectator*. This distinguishes him from all social strata at Rome, for, although the poor are always, Horace assumes, moved by spectacle, their bad taste has spread to the more refined classes: "Truly, all the pleasure even of the knights has moved from the ear to the uncertain eyes, and to vain pleasures."[633] Instead of training their attention on the "clever conjunctions" of the poets, their dense allusions, complex morals, inventive stories, and creative hypallages, they are captives to their visual curiosity, obsessed with catching the latest cross of panther and camel, shackled king, or paraded white elephant. These things "wheel about" or "transform" (*convertit*) the eyes of the crowd, but we could also say that they transform the crowds themselves by way of their eyes, that they make the crowd into nothing but eyes, slaves

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above *Ep*. 2.1.108-9 *calet uno / scribendi studio (populus*) and 117 *scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim*." (Brink III.329) Brink's note makes Horace all too consistent, not only across the poem's possible argumentative gap--"there is no overt connexion" (Brink III.328) between the "censor" passage and the "Argive" passage--but also, broadly, between the two later epistles, 2.1 (to Augustus) and 2.2 (to Florus).

[633] *E*. 2.1.186-7 *verum equitis quoque iam migravit ab aure voluptas / omnis ad incertos oculos et gaudia vana.*

to spectacle. He goes on: "And the writers?--one could just as easily think of them telling their story to a deaf donkey!"[634] Not so the Argive man: for him, the pleasure is in the hearing, or in the believing to hear, which, when it comes to the phenomenology of sensation, amounts to the same thing.

Further, the Argive's experience of the empty theater converts the theater, itself, into terms amenable to private Horatian poetry, in its refusal of both the actual theater and the theater of public life. In the *Epistle to Augustus*, Horace's disgust with the theater and its audience moves him to discuss, next, those writers "who prefer to entrust themselves to the reader…" (*E*. 2.1.214-5) In earlier epistles, Horace had claimed that this spurning of the stage had earned him some enmities. The penultimate poem to the first book of *Epistles*, for example, saw Horace explaining why he had become the object of popular and critical hatred: "It shames me," says Horace to his interlocutor, "to publicly recite material unfit for the crowded theater (*spissis indigna theatris / scripta*) and to add weight to trifles," to which the accusing interlocutor responds, "You mock us and you save your writings for the ears of Jove (or, perhaps, Augustus): you are confident that you, alone, (*fidis…te solum*) distill poetic honey, "stunning" for yourself (*tibi pulcher*)." (*E*.

[634] The expression was proverbial, and Horace borrows his tag from Terence (*surdo fabellam narrare*--Ter. *Heaut*. 222), and a Greek saying spoke of the man who told his story to a donkey, "but the donkey only shook his ears!" The donkey has ears, but only for shaking, not for listening. The Roman audience, too, has ears but does not hear. But Horace's audience has mouths, and speaks too much; eyes, and sees too much.

1.19.41-45)[635] When the interlocutor intimates, in cutting jest, that Horace claims for himself a special relationship with Jupiter, he alludes to the famous divine proximity of Scipio Africanus, vanquisher of Carthage, champion of Rome, whose frequent and solitary visits to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus fed myths of his divine filiation. And the interlocutor is certainly right to suspect Horace of some mockery, though, with typical grace, Horace maintains plausible deniability. Is Horace being humble, demurring from public recital because he believes his poetic material itself to be "unfit" (*indigna*)? Or snide in suggesting that exposing his writings to others' ears would be throwing pearls to swine, cheapening both himself and his writings in the process? The ambiguity is possible because we cannot be sure who or what are the trifles in Horace's second phrase: the poems, or the usual theatrical fare and its loud, loutish, and adoring audience?

The Argive, then, represents, in so many ways, a double for Horace in his capacity as withdrawing lyric poet, not in his public capacity as disseminator of his texts, but, instead, in his solitary capacity as private enjoyer of his own worlds of art. If the Argive man errs, he does so less in the manner of mad philosophers, and far more after the fashion of (Cicero's rendition of) that most respectable of statesmen, Cato the Elder, who, as we have seen, declares his right to err for the sake of self-consolation: "If in this [the belief in the immortal soul] I err, I gladly err, and

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[635] *'Spissis indigna theatris / scripta pudet recitare et nugis addere pondus,' / si dixi: 'Rides' ait, 'et Iouis auribus ista / seruas; fidis enim manare poetica mella / te solum, tibi pulcher.'* Note that *pulcher* (beautiful) seems here to have the same derisory effect as at *Ars Poetica* 428, where the self-deluding poet will cry out "Beautiful, well done, just right!" (*clamabit enim 'Pulchre, bene, recte'*). The same point is made, with more concentrated venom, by Persius at S. 1.49ff.

do not want this error, in which I delight, to be torn away from me (*extorqueri*) while I live."[636] The shared language between Horace's Argive and Cicero's Cato is, one imagines, no accident.

But here is the final twist: although this insistence on legitimate erring puts the Argive story in conflict with its immediate rhetorical context, it ultimately ends up serving the larger purpose of the *Epistle to Florus*, which affirms Horace's right to deviate, to err, as he chooses. The poem as a whole is, like so many Horatian productions, an act of grand deviation, or, etymologically speaking, deliriousness: what begins as an epistle to Florus, ends as an epistle to Horace. This should not surprise students of Horatian poetry—it is always about Horace, and Horace's first book of epistles has been read productively as setting up interlocutors as so many mirrors to Horace's ethical project of self-knowledge and improvement.[637] After the opening, Florus does not return to the poem. The advice that Horace gives at the poem's end--if you won't morally improve yourself, you might as well give the world up or be mocked and struck by those of an "age more appropriate for lasciviousness"-[638]-is emphatically inappropriate to Florus' case,

[636] Cic. *Cat*. 85 *Quod si in hoc erro, qui animos hominum immortalis esse credam, libenter erro nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo…*

[637] Cucchiarelli 2010; La Penna (1963:174) sees Horace as cultivating a "*Me*-Stil" of poetry, a phrase I find very compelling—and also, itself, a play on the often cited *Du-Stil* of hymnic expression, cf. Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, 1913 (repr. 1956 Darmstadt):149ff.

[638] *E*. 2.2.215-216 *tempus abire tibi est, ne potum largius aequo / rideat et pulset lasciua decentius aetas.*

who is exactly the kind of young man fit for socio-sexual play;[639] it is, however, exactly right for himself. Hence there is no rough transition when, opening the poem's philosophical portion, Horace is clear that his ethical advice is counsel for himself, much as his story of the Argive man seems obviously aimed at his own lyric alter-ego. It is how he prevents himself from relapsing to his addiction to youthfulness, wonder, and play, to "words modulated to the Latin lyre."

To keep himself sober, to keep from being laughed at by the city, abused by strangers, humored by friends, tortured internally by the poet's self-twisting and self-inflicted red-ink wounds, he has a mantra: "Because of this (*quocirca*), I talk with myself, and meditate in silence…" (*quocirca mecum loquor haec tacitusque recordor--E*. 2.2.145) The second half of this poem is a philosophical proscription: "recite this, repeat as needed," and the poem's end emphasizes that if you're unwilling to undertake the cure, you might as well just give up now and die. The second portion's proffered cure and concluding threat, and the first portion's many excuses for not writing poetry, are all fuel for Horace's strongest objections to the return to poetry, to the lyric enclosure: there is a price to be paid, internally and externally, for the solitary imagination and its deviation from social norms.

This is rather different from the usual line taken on Horace's retreat from the crowds, and one also drawn out from Horace, that the contrast is between public recital to the crowds and private recital to the refined classes, or, as Horace put it in the *Satires*, "I don't recite to anyone except to friends, and then when coerced." (*S*. 1.4.73) But there are three, not two, options

[639] It strikes me that *decentius* ("more appropriate") might pun on the poetic path that must be rejected, *decentius*>*dec**a**nto*, "to sing."

possible in the continuum of theater to lyric: the public, the private, and the solitary. It is this last option, the theater of the self, that concerns us here.

VI. Correcting the Argive: The *Ars Poetica*

At the end of the *Ars Poetica*, the work that seems to have turned out to be Horace's last published poem, Horace returns to the scene of his earlier Argive slip, to hide its traces and smooth its hitches. The *Ars Poetica* is, as is well known, a very difficult poem: it opens by attacking hybrid images and, by an *ut pictura poesis* inference, hybrid poems, but then proceeds to deliver a poem heavily mixed in composition, jarring in its transitions, and confusing in its intensions. In fact, the *Ars*, Horace's last work, begins by recalling the last simile of the last book of Virgil's *Aeneid*: now that I've told you about this hybrid image,

> *Credite, Pisones, isti tabulae fore librum*
> *persimilem, cuius, uelut aegri somnia, uanae*
> *fingentur species, ut nec pes nec caput uni*
> *reddatur formae.* (*AP* 6-9)
>
> "Pisones, believe me that a book would be just like this canvas, from which, as the dreams of a sick man, empty images would be invented, so that neither foot nor head would agree with the form"

Horace will allow a certain poetic freedom, he goes on to say, but it is construed, as it had been in the *Satires*, as a kind of fault (*veniam*--*AP* 11). Poets, we recall from the *Satires*, have a great number of faults. One of these was their tendency to go to the bathtubs and recite even as they bathed: "how sweetly the enclosed place resonates with the poet's voice! This pleases the trifling

people, who hardly ask whether what they do is tasteless or badly timed." (*S.* 1.4.73-7)[640] In the *Ars*, there would likely be an equal distate for wanton bath-tub reciters if they had come up, but there is also an attack on those who don't go to the bath at all: "ever since Democritus excluded sane poets from Helicon, a fair number of them don't care to pare their fingernails or beards, they seek out isolated spots (*secreta petit loca*), and avoid the bath (*balnea vita--AP* 296-8). Damned if you do and damned if you don't!

This is fitting because the *Ars Poetica*, like the best of Horace, is a work divided against itself: at the same time as its opening polemic rejects hybrid forms and so much of its matter is devoted to the clarification of generic divisions and propriety, it has a chimerical form that admits of strange and oblique divagations. What is more, those passages that resist easy integration into the text's main argument tend to involve the less social and rationalistic, and more solitary and frenzied, face of the poet and his work. It is the work of a recurrent sinner enacting his sinful recurrence, but also one aware that there might be a limit to how long this can work. As the man-who-cried-wolf tale in the first book of Epistles has it, the one who fakes a broken leg is a *planus*, "a cheat",[641] and is in for a surprise when people ignore his cries for help: "'Believe me, I'm not playing! Cruel people, hand me a ladder!' "Find a foreigner!" The hoarse neighbors cry back.' (*E.* 1.17.52ff.) This kind of recurrence, and its fatal end, is precisely what is at stake in the work's final, revisionary story:

ut mala quem scabies aut morbus regius urget

[640] On recitations in bathhouses, see Martial 3.44.12-3, cf. Gowers *ad S.* 1.4.74-5, 23.

[641] No doubt Romans would have appreciated that this particular word is modeled on the Greek *πλάνος*.

aut fanaticus error et iracunda Diana,
vesanum tetigisse timent fugiuntque poetam
qui sapiunt, agitant pueri incautique sequuntur.
hic, dum sublimis versus ructatur et errat,
si veluti merulis intentus decidit auceps
in puteum foveamve, licet 'succurrite' longum
clamet, 'io cives', non sit qui tollere curet.
si curet quis opem ferre et demittere funem,
'qui scis, an prudens huc se deiecerit atque
servari nolit?' dicam Siculique poetae
narrabo interitum. 'deus inmortalis haberi
dum cupit Empedocles, ardentem frigidus Aetnam
insiluit. sit ius liceatque perire poetis:
invitum qui servat, idem facit occidenti.
nec semel hoc fecit nec, si retractus erit, iam
fiet homo et ponet famosae mortis amorem.
nec satis adparet, cur versus factitet, utrum
minxerit in patrios cineres an triste bidental
moverit incestus: certe furit ac velut ursus,
obiectos caveae valuit si frangere clatros,
indoctum doctumque fugat recitator acerbus;
quem vero arripuit, tenet occiditque legendo,
non missura cutem nisi plena cruoris hirudo.'

Like one whom awful scabies or the "royal disease" afflicts, or insane error, or crazy-making Diana, those who think straight fear to touch, and flee, the Mad Poet (*vesanum tetigisse timent fugiuntque poetam / qui sapiunt*); boys harass him, and thoughtlessly follow him. And here, while he, sublime, burps out his poetry

and wonders, like a bird-catcher intent on blackbirds, falls down into a well or a pit, and even if he yells as far as he can, "Help me, o Citizens!" there won't be anyone who will care to lift him out.[642] If someone should desire to give him help, and throw him a rope, "What do you know," I would say (*dicam*), "but that he in right mind threw himself in there (*prudens huc se deiecerit*), and doesn't want to be saved?" And I will narrate (*narrabo*) the death of the Sicilian poet.[643] When Empedocles wanted to be considered a god, he leapt (*insiluit*), coldly rational, into blazing Aetna. Let it be legal! Allow poets to die! Whom one saves against his will, as good as kills him. This isn't the first time he's done this, and if he should be pulled up, he won't become a human and put away his love for a famous death. Beyond this, it isn't clear how he came to make verses, whether he urinated on his father's ashes, or disturbed, impurely, a hallowed spot struck by lightening. Surely he rages, and like a bear (*certe furit, ac velut ursu*s), and if he is strong enough to break the opposing bars of his cage (*obiectos caueae valuit si frangere clatros*), he puts to flight unlearned and learned alike, a savage reciter! And truly, whom he catches, he holds and kills by his reading, not letting go of the skin until filled with blood--a leech! (*hirudo*)—*AP* 453-476

Certe furit, "Surely, he rages!"—here, at last, we have the raving man that the *Twelve Tables* allow one's family, without question, to submit to involuntary treatment. The *Ars Poetica* comes to its strange close once it has corrected the fundamental, and central, incoherence, the glorious

[642] Given what follows, it is tempting to think that the *sit* of this phrase is subjunctive not just because taken with *licet clamet*, but also that, given what follows, it would remain a subjunctive, but a jussive subjunctive, even if independent: the point of what follows is to stress that even if someone should try to help, Horace would urge them not to.

[643] Note the change from *dicam*, which could be subjunctive with the hypothetical story to the future tense of *narrabo*, thus suggesting an ambiguity in the form of *dicam*, which can be either subjunctive or future. Is Horace sure that this situation is wholly hypothetical? As the story shows, it is a story both future and past, and it is, as well, his own story.

contradiction, of the *Epistle to Florus,* which, instead of defending the choice of philosophy over poetry, had provided, in the story of the Noble Argive, a demonstration of how cruelty and misrepresentation go hand in hand with the repression of poetry as the product of the solitary imagination. The *Ars* attempts to correct Horace's earlier "slip" or "error" through the story of the Mad Poet (*Vesanus Poeta*), the story that Horace "should" have told at the center of the *Epistle to Florus* in order to underline the importance, and difficulty, of giving and taking correction. For the story of the Mad Poet gives exactly what the earlier epistle (*E*. 2.2) needed to show: the image of the poet as a pushy, showy, crass, crazy, self-harming, other-threatening, scriptomaniac. Comparing the Argive with the *Vesanus* shows how the latter supplies what the former lacked:

- The Argive was an auditor; the *Vesanus* a poet.
- We grieved with the Argive as he mourned his family's theft of the "sweetest error of his mind" (*menti gratissimus* ***error***); the *Vesanus* errs (*errat*), but the sublimity (*sublimis*) of his figure is pilloried by having him "belch poems" as he wanders (*dum sublimis versus ructatur et* ***errat***). This "erring" itself picks up the introduction to the story, which compared poetic frenzy to the "lun-acy" associated with the moon (*fanaticus* ***error*** *et iracunda Diana*).
- The Argive was *haud ignobilis*, a well-respected man of social standing; the *Vesanus* is to be feared and avoided.
- The Argive is pleasant to family, friends, and domestics; the *Vesanus* can be expected to have gotten his verse-making powers (*cur versus factitet*—note that *factito* is a derisive glancing blow) by urinating on his father's ashes or, a true blasphemer (*incestus*),

disturbing a consecrated lightning-struck spot, thus violating the claims of both family and community.

- The Argive is no danger to anyone; the *Vesanus* "rages" (*furit*) and like a bear forces himself on frightened, fleeing listeners, and, if he catches up with one of the people in flight, he becomes like a leech (*hirudo*), and won't let go until he drunk his fill of blood (*nisi plena cruoris*).
- The Argive is no danger to himself, can avoid a rock or an open well (*rupen et puteum vitare patentem*); the *Vesanus* actually falls into a well (*puteum*)!
- The Argive is needlessly "cured" and it leaves him unhappy, "for you have killed me, friends, not saved me" (*me* ***occidistis****, amici, / non* ***servastis***); but no one will cure the *Vesanus*, nor should they, Horace advises, because "who saves a man against his will as good as kills him" (*invitum qui* ***servat****, idem facit* ***occidenti***).
- The Argive was human, all-too-human; the *Vesanus* is not even human, nor, pulled out from the well, can he be expected to become one and put away his death-drive, his desire for a celebrated death (*nec, si retractus erit, iam / fiet homo et ponet famosae mortis amorem*).

In sum, the Argive lacks the violence, death drive, and even the scriptomania of the *Vesanus*, and it is precisely these missing aspects that would have made the Mad Poet the perfectly consistent hinge for the epistle to Florus, and would have led seamlessly into the conclusion that the way to

a "true life" is not poetry, but philosophy. One could speak of the relationship of the Argive story to the rest of the epistle as that of the inadvertent slip, the *Vesanus* story as its correction.[644]

[644] Assessing the *AP* as a "correction" to the epistle to Florus has some possible relevance to questions of chronology (dramatic, compositional and/or publicational). It is a (common) mistake to use difference to assert a diachronic scheme—perhaps we could call this fallacy the *disputat hoc ergo propter hoc*—but in this case there is an internal cue that might at least invite pause. In the *AP*, Horace warns that poets should submit their work to critical ears, but also, that material should be "held back into the ninth year, inside poetic parchments: because it's possible to destroy what you haven't yet published, but the voice, sent out, can never return." (*nonumque prematur in annum , / membranis intus poetis: delere licebit / quod non edideris; nescit vox missa reverti—AP* 388-90) Though 19 BCE was the traditional date for the epistle to Florus, there has been a great deal of recent argumentation on behalf of the two later epistles, together with the *Ars Poetica*, coming together around 12 or 11 BCE. I am very sympathetic to the attractions of this redating, insofar as it sets the epistles to Augustus and to Florus "as a diptych in which the two poems are foils for each other," (Feeney 2009:32) or, as Ellen Olineis put it, "complementary counterparts." (Oliensis 1998:8 n. 14) But the way in which the finale of the *AP* supplies the "corrected" formulation of the Argive story in the Epistle to Florus, it is tempting to see this as a hint towards a chronology that places them at nine years distance that the *AP* recommends for reworking of material. This has the advantage of cohering with the traditional dating of the poems. Alternatively, of course, even without accepting this traditional chronology for authorship or publication, one could still see it as an important part of the dramatic chronology internal to the poems themselves. Either way, establishing the "inner timeline" of

The situation is, however, slightly, typically, more complex, for the story of the Mad Poet has its own extraneous slips; it is not smoothed, planed, *simplex et unum*. The source of its complexity is the disjunction between what is and what is perceived. The story itself begins, cruelly, with the parodic portrayal of the "sublime" poet wandering and burping his poems. It is a parody of the wide-rambling poet figure one can see throughout the *Odes*, as, for example, in the wide-rambling Horace who proceeds safely through wilderness singing his sweet-smiling and sweet-speaking Lalage (*C*. 1.22).[645] The lyric poet should wander and sing in safety, but this poet, intent on his poems, falls, like Thales the philosopher (Plato, *Theaetetus* 174a), into a well. The story tells us that the Poet fell into the well, that he was the victim of an inadvertent slip. Nobody wants to help the raving poet—even if a bystander did decide to lend the poet a hand, Horace would, he says, do his best to dissuade such misguided charity. The Poet, Horace would says, is not the victim of an accidental slip, but of what we, today, might call a Freudian slip, an error that reveals the truth within—in this case, the poet's death drive. Through a combination of insinuations and insidious comparison, Horace rewrites the poet's fall into the well as a suicide. To catch the subtle twists of this presentation, we must follow the text line by line.

Horace plays a game of sleight of hand in the narration of the Mad Poet's story: we saw, or thought we saw, the poet absentmindedly fall into the well and cry out for help, but Horace

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these late epistolary poems helps us see how they interact with one another. For further argumentation of the later dating, see Lefèvre 1988:354-9, Harrison 2008, Freudenburg 2002:37, 54 on' E. 2.1 and 2.2 as a 'diptych'—though, with *AP*, perhaps better construed as a 'triptych.'

[645] Compare *dum sublimis versus ructatur et errat* with *dum meam canto Lalagem et ultra / terminum curis vagor expeditis, / fugit inermem—C*. 1.22.10-12

convinces us not to believe our eyes. "Who knows," says Horace, "but that he threw himself in on purpose and doesn't want to be saved (*qui scis, an prudens huc se deiecerit atque / servari nolit*?—AP 462-3)?"[646] But we saw him fall accidentally, and we know that he cried out for help. "Let me tell you a story," says Horace, "about the death of the Sicilian poet. When Empedocles wanted to be thought a god, he leapt, cool-reasoned, into burning Aetna." Ah, so not only did this poet throw himself prudently into trouble, but he coolly leapt into his own frying pan! And that is because he wanted to die—"Let it be right to allow poets to perish," says Horace. Translators and commentators get this wrong when they translate *perire* here as "to destroy themselves," because the point is a more general one: all poets have a death drive, all death experiences to which they are subject are at the least self-willed and at the most self-realized, and it is precisely the generality of this condition that allows Horace's next line to have its insidious force: "Who saves a man against his will, as good as kills him." (*invitum qui servat, idem facit occidenti*—AP 467) How do we know it is against the poet's will, given that the poet himself has asked to be saved? Because Horace has told us so, and now comes the knock-out: "This isn't the first time he's done it," says Horace," nor, if he should be lifted out of there, would he suddenly become a real human being, and put away his love for a fabulous death." (*nec*

[646] This reworks Horace's words regarding the flight of his first book of epistles from his library towards public consumption: "Who would labor to save someone who didn't want to be saved?" (*quis enim invitum servare laboret*—E. 1.20.16; nb. the reference in the previous line to the donkey falling into the "rocks" (*rupes*) and the verbal link between the "non-obediant donkey" (*male* ***parentem*** *…asellum*) and the "open well" of the Argive story (*posset qui* ***rupem*** *et puteum vitare* ***patentem***—*E*. 2.2.135).

semel hoc fecit, nec, si retractus erit, iam / fiet homo et ponet famosae mortis amorem—AP 468-9) But Horace is not yet done with his assassination of the poet's character, and the undermining of his credibility.

Horace's case does not end with proving that saving the poet would be pointless—in fact, it would be dangerous. Horace begins by intimating that the poet might be sub-human, and ends by assuming, then comfortably asserting from within that assumption, that the Poet is a truly dangerous creature: "It is not clear why he writes poetry, whether he urinated on his father's ashes, or disturbed the shrine on a lightning-struck spot." Yes, who knows but that he may have done these blasphemous things? Do you know that he didn't? Can you prove that he didn't? And wouldn't it make sense that poetry, and poetry's death drive, would derive from, or at least accompany, some truly horrifying moral degeneracy? And now, once Horace has convinced us that this poet-beast, like all poet-beasts, both desires its own death and makes war against the spirits of the dead and against the gods (the lightning-god no less!), we find that it is implacable, too, in its violence towards us, the real humans with the real lives: "Truly he rages! And like a bear, if he is strong enough to break the confining bars of his *cavea*, he puts to flight both unlearned and learned, a savage reciter; and you can be sure that if he catches one of them, he grabs hold of him and kills him with his reading—never to let go of the skin until filled with blood, the leech!" (*certe furit, ac velut ursus, / obiectos caveae valuit si frangere clatros, / indoctum doctumque fugat recitator acerbus; quem vero arripuit, tenet occiditque legendo, / non missura cutem, nisi plena cruoris, hirudo—AP* 472-6) A semantic slide smooths the metaphor's associative smear: the *cavea* (=cage) in which the bear is held and observed becomes the *cavea* (=stage) from which the bear, "savage reciter," breaks free to chase off the "unlearned and learned."

We slide, here, between the bear and the poet, but both are in front of audiences, both are in the theater, and that is because Horace wants us to collapse the metaphor and see them as indistinguishable: the poet reciting in the theater *is actually a violent beast*, actually a bear, and, at the last moment, actually a leech. The poet is explicitly inhuman, and he cannot be made human by our actions. The poet is beyond saving, and should not be saved, because he poses a mortal danger to everyone else. And it is in this way that we slide between the *vesanus poeta* and the Argive man, for we have not yet come to fully understand why it is that the family and friends of the Argive got together to cure this spotlessly virtuous, wholly harmless man of solitary reverie.

It is here that the question of narrative perspective, or what the narratologists call "focalization," becomes key. Is the poet of the *Ars* really crazy, suicidal, inhuman, and beastly? Or is this what people (and Horace there) can, and do, make the poet out to be? In fact, the episode is ambiguous on this point, for it opens, we should remind ourselves, not as an impersonal description of the poet, but with a characterization of how others relate to the poet: "As one whom scabies or the royal disease afflicts, or the frenzied reverie and enraging Diana, those who think sensibly are afraid to touch, and flee, the insane poet: children mock him, and, being rash, pursue him." (*ut mala quem scabies aut morbus regius urget / aut fanaticus error et iracunda Diana, / vesanum tetigisse timent fugientque poetam / qui sapiunt; agitant pueri incautique sequuntur—AP* 454) "Those who think sensibly" (*qui sapiunt*) are the ones who do this. This quality of right-knowing is the Latin *sapientia*, which means anything from practical wisdom to *σοφία* or *φιλοσοφία*, that is, philosophy. Now we have to recall how the Argive episode was introduced: "[*Should*] I prefer be regarded as a delirious poet who enjoys his own works, rather than think sensibly (*sapere*) and growl (*ringi*).[*?*]" From a poet's perspective,

those who "think sensibly" are the ones who growl; from the perspective of those who think sensibly, as in the *Ars Poetica*, the poet is a blood-sucking bear. From a poet's perspective, being "cured" of one's private enjoyment of poetry is like having all of the blood sucked out of you. From the public's perspective, it is the poet who wants to do this to his audience.

There is a part of Horace that demands to be normalized, another part that refuses it just as strongly. Why did the Argive's family set out to normalize their upright visionary? Viewed through the lens of the *Ars Poetica*, there is no such thing as a safe isolate. You cannot let a person be alone, because the solitary person is dangerous.[647] But our Argive, as we have seen, was not a lonely man—in fact, he was immensely, acceptably, clubbably social. Only in one small part of his life did he remove himself from his social world and enter into his world of art. And that was one part too many.

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[647] This adds resonance to the suggestion by ps.-Acron that the name of the Argive was Lycas. It is a common enough name for the Peloponnese, but it has a special significance on that peninsula as well, associated as it is with the infamous werewolf cults (lycanthropy) of Arcadia. Lycanthropy seems to have been related to male rites of passage; its conceit is that the man alone in the wilderness is, or temporarily becomes, a wolf. In the Latin context, it makes sense that one who spends too much time alone in the woods, the *lucus*, should turn wolf, Greek *lycos* (Lat. *lupus*). If the Argive is the wolf-man, then the civilized syllogism is tight, and justifies the community's therapeutic or punitive preemption: the lone man is the lone wolf; the lone wolf is dangerous; the lone man is dangerous. One doubts that this was an act of creative interpretation on the part of ps.-Acron: much likelier that the commentator had access to what he took to be comparable versions of this story.

For Horace of the *Ars*, when a poet slips, it is because he meant to. The Argive man slipped, but was corrected by his family; the story of the Argive man slips away from the plot of the *Epistle to Florus*, and is retrospectively corrected by the story of the Mad Poet that crowns the *Ars Poetica*. But that story itself is hardly a satisfying stopping-point: Ellen Oliensis has convincingly shown that the monstrous bear-leech poet both "deforms" the end of the *Ars Poetica* and perfectly answers, or rather repeats, its opening, which denounced "deviance within the person of the inept painter" who creates grotesque composite-images. The finale "thus repeats the trajectory of the monstrous painting, moving from top to bottom, from head to tail-end, from human to animal, from *humano* to *hirudo*, its mocking echo. We are left to make of this monstrous design what we can…" (Oliensis 1998:216) Horace suffers from precisely the repetition-compulsion and death drive that he has described as the condition of the *Vesanus Poeta*, which itself had been brought in order to correct both the figure of the Argive himself and, more crucially, the poet Horace's incorrect inclusion of the story of the Argive at the heart of his rejection of lyric poetry in his *Epistle to Florus* (*E*. 2.2).

What we find, then, is that the whole of this complex sequence and network has been a kind of cruel and searching act of autobiography, or, as Borges put it in his Epilogue to *El Hecador*, "A man sets out to draw the world…A short time before dying, he discovers that the patient labyrinth of lines traces the image of his own face."[648] When Horace describes this "sublime" (*sublimis*) poet meandering and belching out his lyrics, he parodies his own self-heroizing self-portrait in the first of the *Odes*, where Horace hoped that, with Maecenas' assent,

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[648] *"Un hombre se propone la tarea de dibujar el mundo…Poco antes de morir, descubre qu ese paciente laberinto de líneas traza la imagen de su cara*."

he might join the ranks of the lyric bards and “strike the stars with my sublime head” (***sublimi*** *feriam sidera vertice—C.* 1.1.36). Horace is precisely the poet who keeps on slipping up, keeps on getting derailed, keeps on constructing chimeras, wandering past the point where he should, leaving behind the royal road for the pathless and devious wilds, and finding himself, when he should be among friends, very much by himself and on his own. Horace is the poet who should not be saved, whom he urges others not to save, because he knows that he cannot be helped, that he has both the death drive and that which turns the death drive into a productive, rather than terminal, force, the repetition drive. If you combine the repetition drive with the death drive, then you get the figure of the *vesanus poeta*: “he’s done it before and he’ll do it again.” Had Horace written yet another poem, I think it’s fairly certain he would have “done it again.” He could never just “get it right.” There is, I think, more here than what is typically understood by “Horatian irony.” It is not just a witticism, or a clever lability, but a more fundamental tension, and it is this fundamental tension that, I believe, continually drives interest in Horace and other Augustan poets, even, especially, among those critics who work hardest to iron these difficulties out. In the end, then, I find myself in agreement with W.R. Johnson's description of Soracte, Bandusia, and Digentia, "those pictures of serenity," as "the product of an immense turbulence, outside him and inside him," as part of a "permanence of discontent" (Johnson 1993:112 n. 17; cf. Gagliardi 73-4), rather than what Anderson has described as Horace's "graceful resignation to age" (51) or Armstrong's emphasis on the harmony, convergence, and completion of Horace's later poetry (122, 133, 155).

Indeed, the dialectic of solitude and sociality, of freedom and constraint, was always an integral aspect of Horace's poetry, and remained at its center up through the last words he published. Its staying power as dialectic for his work is explained by the fact that it was produced

as much, if not more, from internal as from external pressures. Lyric as space for the self was a space, too, for wonder. Wonder was not an uncontroversial good for Roman men of letters--*nihil admirari*, said a major school of philosophical thought, "be amazed at nothing." To be amazed, to look out at the world with solitary, lyric eyes and be seen to inhabit one's own world of lyric, was both a pleasure, and a problem, for Horace; or, as Horace put it more succinctly in his ode to Bacchus, it was "a sweet danger" (*dulce periculum*). And it was one that Horace gladly, painfully, never stopped taking.

CHAPTER 4

"His *Cynthia's* Tomb": Propertian Elegy, Solitude and Soliloquy

1. Introduction

2. Propertius: Solitude and the City

3. Elegies of Absence: Greek and Latin Backgrounds

4. The Milanion Inversions: *Elegies* 1.1 and 1.3

5. Portrait of the Poet as a Failed Milanion: *Elegies* 1.16-1.19

6. Between *Elegies* I and *Elegies* IV

7. The Elusive Girl: *Elegies* IV

8. Propertius's Tomb: *Elegy* 4.11

9. "His *Cynthia'*s Tomb"

"His *Cynthia's* Tomb": Propertian Elegy, Solitude and Soliloquy

I. Introduction

nunc primum longas solus cognoscere noctes
cogor et ipse meis auribus esse gravis.
felix, qui potuit praesenti flere puellae
(non nihil aspersus gaudet Amor lacrimis)

"Now for the first time I am forced to face long nights alone
And to become a nuisance for my own ears.
Happy the man who can weep in his sweetheart's presence
(Love takes great joy in being sprinkled with tears)."[649]

The elegiac poet Propertius would not have called his enforced nightlong conversations with himself "soliloquies," in Latin, *soliloquia*. We know this because it was Augustine of Hippo who, early in his career as bishop, coined the word *soliloquia,* and not without apologies for its novelty and ugliness: "a new name (*novo*), it is true, and perhaps harsh (*duro nomine*), but fitting enough for what I'm hoping to set forth." And what Augustine wanted to set forth with this new terms was the *Soliloquia* (386/7 CE), record of dialogues that he had held with what may, or may not, have been himself:

[649] trans. Goold, Prop. *Eleg*. 1.12.13-16.

> As I had been long revolving with myself matters many and various, and had been for many days sedulously inquiring both concerning myself and my chief good…suddenly, some one addresses me, whether I myself, or some other one, within me or without (*sive alius quis extrinsecus, sive intrinsecus*), I know not: for this very thing is what I chiefly toil to know.[650]

As a matter, then, of temporary convenience, Augustine decides to call this external-or-internal voice *Ratio*, "Reason," which proceeds to convince Augustine, first, that his memory is too weak permanently to safeguard whatever revelations this dialogue produces; second, that Augustine is too sick to write himself; and third, that Augustine should, as a result, pray to God for better health so that he may gain strength enough to write for himself. In writing up his thoughts, Augustine is forced to forego the convenience of a *scriptor librarius*, a secretary for taking dictation, "for these matters require absolute solitude (*solitudinem meram desiderant*)"—hence the neologism: "because we are speaking with ourselves alone (*quae quoniam cum solis nobis*

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[650] Aug. *Solil*. 1.1 *Volventi mihi multa ac varia mecum diu, ac per multos dies sedulo quaerenti memetipsum ac bonum meum, quidve mali evitandum esset; ait mihi subito, sive ego ipse, sive alius quis extrinsecus, sive intrinsecus, nescio: nam hoc ipsum est quod magnopere scire molior. R. Ecce, fac re invenisse aliquid; cui commendabis, ut pergas ad alia? A. Memoriae scilicet. R. Tantane illa est ut excogitata omnia bene servet? A. Difficile est, imo non potest. R. Ergo scribendum est. Sed quid agis, quod valetudo tua scribendi laborem recusat? Nec ista dictari debent; nam solitudinem meram desiderant. A. Verum dicis. Itaque prorsus nescio quid agam. R. Ora salutem et auxilium quo ad concupita pervenias, et hoc ipsum litteris manda, ut prole tua fias animosior. Deinde quod invenis paucis conclusiunculis breviter collige. Nec modo cures invitationem turbae legentium; paucis ista sat erunt civibus tuis. A. Ita faciam.*

loquimur), I wish these discourses (*sermocinationes*) to be called 'Soliloquies' (*Soliloquia*)."[651] You may recall, of course, that this is exactly the advice that Quintilian had given to would be orators, but here they have been translated from the terms of practical to the terms of spiritual exercise.[652] Augustine's soliloquies are the fruit of solitude, and can be produced and recorded only by maintaining that solitude; but they are not, as later use might suggest, exclusively the speech of a single voice. Instead, the Augustine soliloquy is part of a process by which one strives to know (*scire molior*) whether the voices that one hears and writes are, in Augustine's terms, "intrinsic" or "extrinsic" to the ostensibly solitary thinker.

There is a great deal that is novel in Augustine's terms and his ideas, but four centuries before Augustine invented the word, the works of the elegiac poet Propertius, who wrote during the early years of the Augustan principate, represented a sustained attempt, albeit to radically different ends, to understand and express the provocation of soliloquy *avant la lettre*. We have already seen, in the preceding chapters on Cicero, Virgil, and Horace, that although the Romans did not, before Augustine, have a word that could express "speaking with oneself," they did have a variety of ways to express, deride, desire, and depict a person's, and particularly a thinker, writer, or poet's, conversation with himself or, relatedly, the solitary places in which he finds

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[651] Aug. *Solil*. 2.7 *R. Ridiculum est si te pudet, quasi non ob idipsum elegerimus hujusmodi sermocinationes: quae quoniam cum solis nobis loquimur, Soliloquia vocari et inscribi volo; novo quidem et fortasse duro nomine, sed ad rem demonstrandam satis idoneo.*

[652] Quint. 10.3.21; see Introduction.

himself.[653] The problem of being a thinker in solitude is, in many ways, the problem that Augustine explores through the soliloquy: what is the status of speech that depicts itself as spoken to oneself? But that solitude that was an ideological aberration in Cicero's thought, and a recourse in times of practical desperation; that was an implicit interest in Virgil, an image behind the text; and that was an indispensable pole in Horace's exuberant oscillations between extravagant sociality and equally extravagant introversion and retreat; was, for Propertius, the single most important image, theme, problem, and structural tension of his poetry. What, Propertius repeatedly forces us to ask, are we to make of the poet's solitude? What, his poetry demands, are we to do with the inevitable dialectical tension that is brought about by the inevitably social quality of the representation of solitude, of the tension between the poet's beloved as the matter of his imagination, the poet's imagination as his beloved, and the poet himself as his beloved's imagination?

To illustrate the role that solitude and soliloquy played as problems of Propertius' work, I begin with a brief overview of the representation and language of society and solitude in Propertius' poetry, and an equally brief introduction to Propertius' Greek and Latin predecessors in the uses of what I have called "elegy as a poetry of absence." I then turn to a close reading of what I will call the "Milanion motif" in Propertius' *Monobiblos* (1.1, 17-22), and show how that opening *exemplum* makes the problem of solitude—its dual significance and dialectical implication with society—one of the fundamental problems of Propertian elegy. I conclude by

[653] On soliloquies in western literature, see Orth 2000. On soliloquies in ancient dramatic genres, see Walsh 1990; Fusillo 1985; Walde 2001b:175-184. On Propertian speech, see Lefèvre 1977; Warden 1980:90; Benediktson 1989:18-51.

demonstrating how this problem of solitude was reanalyzed, over the course of Propertius' later works, into the problem of soliloquy, reaching its ambiguous fulfillment in Propertius' final poem, the Cornelia elegy (4.11).

One cannot write on Propertius without saying something, however brief, about the text. The *Elegies* of Propertius are, famously, sites of editorial contention, and understandably so: in addition to the multiple small-scale errors that riddle this text whose earliest MSS come to us so late in the game of transmission, the poems themselves often leap, loop, and leave behind the order of presentation one normally expects to find in poetry of this period. As a result, the experience of reading Propertius is, moreso than with any other classical Latin text, a test of our reading philosophies, ideologies, and approaches. In the terms of solitude, one might also say that reading Propertius is, more exactly, a test of our ability to handle formal, ideological, textual, or aesthetic isolates in our literary canons, for we must decide whether we are going to let Propertius be different from the poets with which he keeps company, or whether, alternatively, we are going to emend words, add couplets, transpose lines and even whole poems, in order to make him cohere.[654] If I am right that Propertius' poetry is animated, to an unusually

[654] The arguments (Hubbard 1974, Heyworth 2007) for normalizing the text of Propertius come down to the desire 1) to make the poet's poetry match the (generally *obiter dicta*) descriptions of the poet given by certain readers in antiquity, and 2) to make the poet like other Roman poets. Richard Thomas (2011b) has argued against these justifications that 1) ancient literary is not to be relied upon for judgement of our poets, 2) logical coherence is in the eye of the beholder, and radical editing and transposition that aims to create the text that we wish to have before us is inevitably "hazardous in the extreme," and 3) the seeming chaos is, in fact, the result of all-too-

high degree, by the dialectic of solitude, then this would help make sense of at least some level of syntactic, imagistic, and argumentative "difficulty" in Propertius' works, and give some context to their resistance to standard textual, moral, or aesthetic interpretation.[655] That would not, however, be a textual argument in any accepted sense, and I have eschewed, for the most part, textual questions. That being said, I have chosen, by and large, to focus on less controversial passages of Propertius' text; I have cited all Propertian passages from Fedeli (2006)

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respectable generic borrowing, insofar as, at least in certain cases (he uses 3.7 as his primary example), the apparent incoherence of Propertius' text seems to have stemmed from the poet's affinity for epigrams and the meandering logic of ancient epigrammatic collections.

[655] Radical editors of Propertius' text are among the best-informed critics and richest close-readers of Propertius' poetry, but my sympathies are, quite obviuosly, with the conservationists. I have always thought that editing Propertius to make him cohere with the judgements of Ovid ("tender" and "seductive"—*Ars* 3.333-8, *Tr*. 2.465, 5.1.17), Martial ("witty/elegant/humorosly elegant"—14.189), and, regarding Propertius' putative descendent Paullus Propertius Blaesus, Pliny the Younger ("polished, sensuous, delightful, and clearly written"—6.15.1), is as little justified as would be editing Shakespeare in order to make him cohere with Ben Jonson's judgement that Shakespeare "was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions." (*Timber*, *or Discoveries*, 1630) It is a happy irony that this note of Jonson's may, through one of its protestations, contributed to the corruption of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. For an aesthetic philosophy of non-intellegibility in the ancient world, see Janko 2000:361 on Heracleodorus, who argued, writes Philodemus (P. Herc 1676), "on behalf of unclarity."

and have noted, where applicable, moments at which alternative readings might make for different interpretations.[656]

II. Propertius: Solitude and the City

Of all of the writers that we have studied, Propertius is the clearest example of what we have called the dual significance and dialectic of solitude: this poet who, in this chapter's epigraph, describes himself as "forced to face long nights alone and to become a nuisance for my own ears," is also a poet who never ceases addressing other people, and never ceases finding the home of other people, the city of Rome, an object of fixed fascination. Indeed, one might have expected the poetics of solitude to find a more natural home, say, in the works of Tibullus, Propertius' contemporary elegiac counterpart: "For I become prayerful," writes the aspiring country-boy (*rusticus*), "whether a tree-stock, solitary in the fields, or an old stone at the cross-roads, carries flowery wreaths."[657] Even though the purely rustic scene represents an ideal to which Tibullus aspires rather than one he already wholly inhabits, it is still a place where he can

[656] I have benefited at every stage of this process from the close attention to poetic, metrical, and textual problems in Propertius' text and textual history by Heyworth 2007a and 2007b. On the history of textual scholarship of Propertius, see Fedeli 2006b:3-21. For a comprehensive treatment of the poet's corpus see Syndikus 2010; the monographs of Boucher 1965 and Hubbard 1974 are still invaluable resources. For all translations of Propertius, I owe a debt of gratitude to the Loeb of G.P. Goold (revised edition, 1999), and have noted passages in which I have altered his translation.

[657] Tib. 1.1.11-2 *Nam veneror seu stipes habet desertus in agris / seu vetus in trvio florida serta*.

actually *be*, celebrating the *Ambarvalia*, a country festival, and hymning "the country and the country's gods."[658]

Propertius, by contrast, is, and it cannot be said often enough, an urban poet: even before the city of Rome becomes the ostensible theme of his poetry in Book 4, one gets the sense that Propertius will never leave the city: why, he asks, would you ever want to go even as far Praeneste, or, even as far as Lanuvium, when you can get your fill of promenades, temples, and art in Rome itself, particularly now, when "Apollo's golden portico has been opened by might Caesar."[659] Others go abroad for trade, war, and philosophy, and Cynthia goes on holiday—Propertius stays in the city, and only goes abroad in his dreams, all the while imagining what it would be like to be shipwrecked (1.18), in lonely forests (1.19), happily hunting in the empty countryside (2.19), swimming with Cynthia and dolphins in the Ionian sea (2.26a), sailing to the far reaches of the world with Cynthia (2.26c), getting poetically inspired in Apollo's Heliconian bower (3.3), or playing the cultural tourist in Athens (3.21). Though his poetry is filled with myths, places, and sites, one gets the impression that these may have been, quite often, the images and impressions absorbed from close observation of painted bedroom walls.[660] Recall, by

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[658] Tib. 2.1.37-8 *rura cano rurisque deos*.

[659] 2.31.1-2 *QVAERIS, cur veniam tibi tardior? aurea Phoebi / porticus a magno Caesare aperta fuit.*

[660] As Stephen Harrison (2013:144-5) notes: it is not only that Propertius' poetry is, as Apollo (3.3.19-20) advises the poet, the "literature of the boudoir," but also that elegy is a literature of the interior not only metaphorically, but in the very literal sense of its links with wall-painting. On mythological wall painting, see Wallace-Hadrill 1994:149-160.

contrast, that, even in his oh-so-urban *Satires*, Horace took leave of the city for his journey to Brundusium (*Satire* 1.5)—but, save for one (very important, very ambiguous) visit to his homeland of "Perugia, grave of our countrymen who fell in the day's of Italy's agonies," Propertius remains city-bound. As one recent monograph sums him up: he is "a Latin lover in ancient Rome."[661]

Propertius' city is a city that is filled with people, for better and worse. On the male side, there are patrons (Tullius and Maecenas), bands of slaves, good friends, false friends, live friends, dead friends, poet friends, wingmen friends, dog-in-the-manger friends, and friends who combine most or all of these traits. Worst and most ubiquitous are the anonymous hordes of men who, Propertius is always sure, are trying to steal Cynthia away from him: "Who sees you, sins."[662] The result is a pervasive paranoia: "When alone, I am even jealous of my shadows, a thing without substance, and oft I foolishly tremble with a baseless fear!"[663] Stealing girls away from other people is, for Propertius, a universal rule of human behavior: "Nobody is unwilling to take advantage of an absent lover."[664] The main advantage of the countryside, in this respect, is the absence of peccadillo-prone urban hot-spots: "Out there, no shows will be able to bring about your seduction, nor temples, commonest cause of your straying."[665]

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[661] W.R. Johnson 2009.

[662] 2.21.1 *qui videt, is peccat*.

[663] trans. Goold, 2.34.19-20 *ipse meas solus quod nil est, aemulor umbras, / stultus, quod stulto saepe timore tremo.*

[664] trans. Goold with modifications, 2.19.32 *absenti nemo non nocuisse velit*.

[665] 2.19.9-10 *illic te nulli poterunt corrumpere ludi, / fanaque peccatis plurima causa tuis.*

On the female side, although Propertius often proclaims the ideals of the love-till-death link between one man (him) and one woman (Cynthia)—"Cynthia was my first, Cynthia will be my last"[666]—the city provides any number of alternative opportunities, a fact not lost on Cynthia, who, when we first meet her, is accusing Propertius of coming to her only when "expelled from someone else's closed doors."[667] Later incarnations (or revelations?) of Propertius justify Cynthia's nervousness: "You know," Propertius writes to his friend Demophoon, "that of late many girls all charmed me equally…My feet pace no street in vain. Alas, the theatre was created all too much for my destruction!"[668] Other girls are everywhere: at one point, Cynthia wants Propertius to buy her "ivory dice and glittering trumpery from the Sacred Way,"[669] which bothers the poet, less for its expense, than for the shame of being made "the plaything of a deceitful mistress." Evidently, Propertius goes straight to the Sacred Way, at Rome's center, because he then turns his mind to what really turns him on: "one who comes forth free and unveiled, and is not inhibited by any fear of guardians; who oft treads the Sacred Way in shabby

[666] Prop. 1.12.20 *Cynthia prima fuit, Cynthia finis erit.*

[667] 1.3.36 *alterius clausis expulit e foribus?*

[668] trans. Goold, 3.22.1-4 *Scis here mi multas pariter placuisse puellas; / scis mihi, Demophoon, multa venire mala. / nulla meis frustra lustrantur compita plantis; / o nimis exitio nata theatra meo.*

[669] 2.23.13-14 *et cupit interdum talos me poscere eburnos, / quaeque nitent Sacra vilia dona Via*.

sandals; and brooks no delay, if anyone wishes to date her"[670]—one of the advantages of being in the city, of course, is the ready availability of prostitutes, what Propertius, with programmatic (i.e. Callimachean) poetic white-washing, calls "sweetness sought from the common trough."[671]

Finally, the city itself comes to life. The Persians have an ancient saying that "Walls have mice and the mice have ears," and, in Propertius' poetry, when the poet thinks he is speaking alone to a door, the door is not only listening, but is happy to relate his soliloquies to others (1.16). And when the poet indulges his frequent habit of drunken streetside nightcrawling, he is reminded that Rome is home, not only to "crowds" of men, women, and writers, but is home, as well, to fantastical crowds of naked boys who, threatening sexual assault (*quorum lascivior unus*), turn out to be mini-gods of love dispatched by Propertius' jealous mistress.

It is not surprise that the social side of this purportedly subjective genre has provoked some of the richest work in recent Propertian scholarship. Scholars have, in the last few decades, helped us see that understanding Latin love elegy, and particularly Propertian elegy, means understanding the role that this poetry played in a wide variety of social contexts, including changing Roman constructions of the dichotomy of public and private life, of sexuality and reproduction, of the place of the woman in (elite vs. non-elite) society, of social order in a time of largescale political realignments, and of the increased centralization of power and culture that concentrated attention on, both the city of Rome itself, and on Italy as a larger, and miraculous,

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[670] trans. Goold; 2.23.13-16 *contra, reiecto quae libera vadit amictu, / custodum et nullo saepta timore, placet? / cui saepe immundo Sacra conteritur Via socco, / nec sinit esse moram, si quis adire velit.*

[671] 2.23.2 *ipsa petita lacu nunc mihi dulcis aquast*.

territorial whole: "This place gave you birth, Tullus," Propertius says to his friend and erstwhile patron Tullus, "this is your sweetest home, here is honour to seek, worthy of your people. Here are citizens for your oratory: here is ample hope of offspring, and the fitting love of a future wife."[672] Propertius' complex interweaving, here, of the language of his poetry and of gratitude for patronage reminds us to be on the look-out for what Ellen Oliensis (1997) has shown to be the ambiguous parallels and disrupted homologies that elegy draws between the beloved and the patron. It is also a useful reminder that Propertius' sometime focus on his beloved does not exclude the rich personification of others as well: elegy's penchant for narrative, writes Kathleen McCarthy, allows it to create a "storyworld" in which the emphasis on first-person address, and the expression of a speaker's feelings, is also able to "give weight (and a sense of reality) to the others who inhabit this world."[673]

But what Propertius gives he also takes away, and the gift of presence, weight, and reality that he bestows on his beloved, on other characters, and even on himself, is countered by images, scenes, and gestures of solitudes experienced, imagined, and planned. In part, this is a natural result of the premise of elegiac love, involving, as it does, the often-thwarted desire of a man for a woman. Any drama of (non-)reciprocated love will, necessarily, involve scenes where one or more of the parties involved will be alone, or will want to be alone with the other, and will complain, often alone, about the social, spatial, or mortal obstacles to their loves' fulfillment.

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[672] 3.22.39-42 *haec tibi, Tulle, parens, haec est pulcherrima sedes, / hic tibi pro digna gente petendus honos, / hic tibi ad eloquium cives, hic ampla nepotum / spes et venturae coniugis aptus amor.*

[673] McCarthy 2010:153 (with article focused on Prop. 3.6); see also McCarthy 1998.

Everywhere in Propertius' texts, there are people, places, and things that are, for better and worse, alone. In terms of vocabulary, in the *Monobiblos* alone, we have "deserted and empty" (*desert-, vac-*) shores (1.3.2, 1.8.5), heart (1.10.30) waves (1.15.10), bed-chambers (1.15.18), halcyons-birds (1.17.2), places (1.18.1), woods (1.18.2), rocks (1.18.32) trees (1.19.36); we have "lonely" (*sol-*) caves (1.1.11), rocks (1.18.4), ship-wrecked and spurned lovers (1.18.30); and we have a "singular" (*un-*) man (1.2.26), grace (1.2.29), and girl (1.10.29). Whole poems are set in solitary, non-responsive, or funereal scenes: in the *Monobiblos* alone, a train of such solitude-themed poems brings the book to a close, putting foreword an excluded lover before a seemingly deaf (but actually very painfully attentive) door (1.16); a poet-lover alone with waves speaking, alone, to lonely birds (1.17); a poet-lover alone in solitary groves and listening to the echoes cast back by lonely and deserted rocks (1.18); a poet imagining himself into death (1.19); Hylas snatched away by the nymphs amid solitary trees (1.20); a speaking grave (1.21); a poet speaking as a man from a land of graves (1.22). When we come, at the end of this chapter, to discuss the epitaphic Cornelia elegy that concludes Propertius' fourth book, we will see that the gathering of these poems of solitude and soliloquy at book's end is far from accidental.

In Latin erotic elegy, the language of solitude, desertion, emptiness, and wilderness converge, and can be used to describe both places, people, and a persons' internal states: so Tibullus can say, to his beloved, "you are my crowd in solitary places;"[674] so Ovid can advise the younger to "beware lonely places, lonely places hurt!";[675] so, in Propertius' second book, the only

[674] Tib. 3.19.12 *in solis tu mihi turba locis.*

[675] Ovid *Rem*. 579 *quisquis amas, loca sola nocent*. *loca sola caveto!* Hardie 2007 and Beasom 2013 show how these "solitary places" that Ovid advises avoiding refer not only to actual

reason why Propertius accepts Cynthia's departure for the country from the city is that, there, "you will be alone (*sola eris*), and you, Cynthia, will see the deserted mountains (*solos…montes*)"--even there, however, amid the "lonely trees" (*solae…silvae*), Propertius has fears, caused no doubt by the echoing trees, that Cynthia's name will continue to ring out and attract competition: "no one is unwilling to hurt someone absent."[676] These echoing trees and stones, as we will recognize from our study of Virgil's *Eclogues* (especially the tenth *Eclogue* on Gallus), are clear examples of Propertius' penchant for playing, at least in his mind, the role of the anxious pastoralist. The difference is that, whereas, for the *Eclogues*, the city is always a long way down the road, looming on the horizon of voyage and thought, for Propertius' *Elegies*, the countryside seems often to be the result of a cityside dream. We've seen such dreams before, and on in particular sticks out: Horace's Alfius the Usurer (*Epode* 2) had a paradisiacal image of rustic life that had very little to do with what life in the country would actually be like. In Propertius, by contrast, what begins as a happy pastoral dreamland becomes, predictably, home to the same anxieties Propertius has had from the very beginning: that someone, even there, will take advantage of even the slightest absence, that the world is waiting to steal Cynthia away from him.

Solitude is not only an occasional condition of the poet and his world in Propertius' elegies, but is, rather, so central a characteristic that one gets the impression, in the terms of Christine Walde, "that in Propertius' elegies only with the *puella* absent or in conflict is the poet-lover able

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"solitary places," but, importantly, to *topoi,* "literary type-scenes," of solitary places, as unhelpful in the causes of courtship.

[676] For other examples of *solus* used for places, see Fedeli *ad* Prop. 1.18.4 *sola queant saxa*.

to invent and narrate images of his love." (Walde 2008:123) It is true, as we have seen, that Propertius tends (almost exclusively) to stick with the city and its crowds, but a specter of idiosyncrasy haunts his text as well. One way to put this is in terms of dramatic irony, "the secret," writes Philip Hardie, "that Latin love elegy constantly murmurs into a ditch, like Midas' servant, that the subjectivity of the lover is a discursive construct, and the lover a stagey role-player."[677] Indeed, the "staging" of solitude—how can you come to know something that someone says in secret?—is a heated question in Propertius' text, and one that he can confront with a combination of fantasy and flagrant evasion: talking doors (1.16), echoing trees and rocks (1.18), the substitutability of text for author (3.23), and the evocative, traditional role of the epitaph as a voice from the dead (2.21, 4.11). These various fantasies of absent communication point us to a crucial aspect of Propertius' poetry—its evocation of what Margaret Hubbard (1974:31) has called "a love that does not depend on presence." Calypso, as imagined by Propertius, is, for Hubbard, a perfect emblem for this kind of love (1.15.9-16):

At non sic Ithaci digressu mota Calypso
desertis olim fleverat aequoribus:
multos illa dies incomptis maesta capillis
sederat, iniusto multa locuta salo.
et quamvis numquam post haec visura, dolebat
illa tamen, longae conscia laetitiae.

"Not thus was Calypso affected by the Ithacan's departure, when in ages past she wept to the lonely waves (*desertis…aequoribus*): for many days she sat disconsolately with unkempt tresses uttering many a

[677] Hardie 2002b:6; cf. Sharrock 2002 on Ovid's *Amores*, *Ars Amatoria*, and *Remedia Amoris*.

complaint to the unjust sea, and although she was never to see him again, yet she still felt pain when she recalled their long happiness together." (trans. Goold)

Motivated only by a memory of past joy to cry out endlessly to non-responsive waters for a beloved who will never again be seen: this is one of the fundamental types of Propertius' elegiac love.[678] No doubt, one of the reasons Propertius likes this image so much, and one of the purposes it serves in the rhetoric of the poem in which it appears, is the poet's frequent fear of romantic competition: Calypso, abandoned on a beach and doing nothing but crying for him in his absence, is the ideal lover of Propertius because her eternal isolation means that no one else is likely to steal away her sad affection for her absent beloved. Even if he is not *there*, she still, he knows, love, and cries for, *him*.

But Propertius' evocation of this image, and his use of similar images throughout his work, is not only about its immediate practical effects; instead, it derives from and suggests a sense that Propertian elegiac love, like Calypso's lament, is moved to song by departure, desire, absence, and, as we shall see, the most permanent of absences and most permanent basis for longing,

[678] As so often, we need to attend very carefully to Propertius' language: the "lonely waves (*desertis…aequoribus)* to which Calypso cries are parallel to the "unjust sea" (*iniusto…salo*) to which she speaks, with the punning contrast of *aequus* (meaning both "sea" and "fair") and *iniustus* both heightening the drama and, more specifically, specifying the fact that the sea is cruel precisely because it does not compassionately reciprocate Calypso's complaints. Note, too, how, because Calypso is not figuratively "moved" (*non sic…mota*) in the same way as Cynthia, she stopped moving all too literally, and spent her countless days of suffering disconsolate and immobile (*multos illa dies…sederat*).

death. The dialectic of literary solitude, as we have seen, means that there is no way, in Hardie's dramatic metaphor, to decide, once and for all, whether Propertius casts solitude as an enclosed fiction on the crowded stage of society, or whether, on the other hand, he casts society itself as so many fictions on the empty stage of the poet's solitary dreams. The tension between these two alternatives, as we shall see, is at the very center of Propertius' poetic project.

III. Elegies of Absence: Greek and Latin Backgrounds

Propertius did not invent a genre out of whole cloth when he made desire for an absent beloved a key theme of his elegiac verse. Whether or not the Greek word "elegy" derived, as certain scholars in late antiquity believed, from the ritual lament ἔ ἔ λέγειν ('to say "woe", "woe"'),[679] and whatever the long history of the broader relationship between elegiac meter, epitaph, and the genre of elegiac poetry,[680] the erotic elegists that Propertius had to hand included several Greek and Latin poets--Antimachus of Colophon, Parthenius of Nicea, C. Licinius Calvus, and C. Valerius Catullus--who seem to have written poems and books of poetry, that had, for premise or frame, the poet's mourning for the dead. The extent to which these poets' works were subjective or objective in tone, autobiographical or fictional in content, rhetorical or

[679] i.a. Marius Plotius Sacerdos, Gramm. lat. 4.509.31 Keil, Porph. ad Hor. Carm. 1.33.2 and Suda E 774); on etymological interpretations of "elegy" as word and genre, see West 1971:8. Note that Didymus, an Alexandrian contemporay of Horace, suggested as an etymology εὖ λέγειν, "to speak well" (see Orion Etymologicum 58.7 Sturz). On the etymological debate in general, see West 1971:8.

[680] On Roman elegy and epitaph, see Ramsby 2007.

self-oriented in motivation, continues to be the subject of intense (and ultimately unresolvable) debate. But the general outline of this particular sub-genre is fairly clear, and is worth very quickly reviewing for the light that it throws on Propertius' own framing of the problem of absence and death in his own poetry.[681]

The first poet whom we know to have used the death of the beloved as the premise for a multi-book work of elegy is Antimachus of Colophon, whom we have already met in Cicero's *Brutus* as one singularly unbothered by the fact that his listeners had abandoned him: "I shall read not a bit the less: for me Plato alone (*Plato enim mihi unus*) is as good as a hundred thousand."[682] This Antimachus was known not only as the poet of an epic *Thebaid* that enjoyed wide popularity into the Roman imperial period,[683] but also of the two-book *Lyde*, which,

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[681] On the "subjective-objective" debate, see Lightfoot 1999:71-2 (with particular reference to Parthenius), Thorsen 2013 with bibl. The debate itself begins with the landmark article of Felix Jacoby (1905, "Zur Entstehung der römischen Elegie").

[682] Cicero, *Brut*. 191 *'legam' inquit 'nihilo minus: Plato enim mihi unus instar est centum milium'*. Antimachus' elegiac work may not be unconnected to the language of "one worth a million," precisely the kind of language one finds in erotic elegy.

[683] According to Dio Cassius, the emperor Hadrian so esteemed Antimachus over Homer (on account of the emperor's supposed jealousy of Homer's greatness), that he tried to have Homer's works suppressed (Dio 69.4.6). Hadrian's *Catachanna* (on which, see Fronto, *To Marcus* 2.11) may have been modeled on Antimachus' verse. See, also, *Hist. Aug*. *Hadr*. 15.

according to the later elegiac poet Hermesianax and to Plutarch, the poet wrote to console himself after the death of his wife, Lyde (Hermesianax, *Leontion*, fr. 7.41-6):[684]

> Antimachus, for Lydian Lyde struck
> With passion, trod beside Pactolus' stream;
> . . . and when she died, laid her beneath dry earth
> Lamenting, and departing (from . . .?) came
> To Colophon's hill; and holy books with tears
> He filled, when he had ceased from all his grief.[685]

In this account, the death of the beloved causes Antimachus to depart--from we know not exactly where, the text being corrupt--and go "to Colophon's hill," where, presumably, he could be alone with himself, his sadness, and, as we discover, his books.[686] These books, in turn, provide him

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[684] On the plural books, Hollis 2006:103 n. 28. For Alexandrian debates over the quality of the *Lyde*, see Asclepiades, *Anth. Pal.* 9.63=Antimachus test. 13 Matthews, and Posidippus, *Anth. Pal.* 12.168 = Ant. test. 14; against: Callimachus fr. 398Pf.=Ant. test. 15A. The *Lyde* is frs. 67-97 Matthews.

[685] trans. Lightfoot; Λυδῆς δ' Ἀντίμαχος Λυδηίδος ἐκ μὲν ἔρωτος / πληγεὶς Πακτωλοῦ ῥεῦμ' ἐπέβη ποταμοῦ· / †δαρδανη δὲ θανοῦσαν ὑπὸ ξηρὴν θέτο γαῖαν / κλαίων, αιζαον† δ' ἦλθεν ἀποπρολιπὼν / ἄκρην ἐς Κολοφῶνα, γόων δ' ἐνεπλήσατο βίβλους / ἱράς, ἐκ παντὸς παυσάμενος καμάτου.

[686] There may be a small paradox hinted at by Hermesianax's lines as transmitted: Antimachus filled his books with tears (or laments, γόων), only "when he had ceased from all his grief": is the poetry of lament, then, the spontaneolus overflow of a powerful feeling such as grief, or it,

with human company of a helpful and imaginary kind: according to Plutarch Antimachus, in the *Lyde*, "enumerated the misfortunes of the heroes, and thus lessened his own grief through others' pains."[687] The *Lyde*, then, is Antimachus' *Schadenfreude* cure.[688] What we do not know, and it is

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instead, that grief's subsequent rearticulation, "an emotion recollected in tranquility?" Much depends here on how one reads καμάτου, which can mean anything from "grief" to "toil and labor." For Hollis (2006:103), the implication is that Antimachus abandoned "the grand style of epic in favor of more intimate elegy," thus "ceasing" from his epic toils; Hollis points out that this is the pattern of Propertius' poems to Ponticus (1.7, 1.9) and Lynceus (2.34)."

[687] Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 106b-c Ἐχρήσατο δὲ τῇ τοιαύτῃ ἀγωγῇ καὶ Ἀντίμαχος ὁ ποιητής. ἀποθανούσης γὰρ τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτῷ Λύδης, πρὸς ἣν φιλοστόργως εἶχε, παραμύθιον τῆς λύπης αὐτῷ ἐποίησε τὴν ἐλεγείαν τὴν καλουμένην Λύδην, ἐξαριθμησάμενος τὰς ἡρωικὰς συμφοράς, τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις κακοῖς ἐλάττω τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ποιῶν λύπην. ὥστε καταφανὲς εἶναι ὅτι ὁ παραμυθούμενος τὸν λελυπημένον καὶ δεικνύων κοινὸν καὶ πολλῶν τὸ συμβεβηκὸς καὶ τῶν καὶ ἑτέροις συμβεβηκότων ἔλαττον τὴν δόξαν τοῦ λελυπημένου μεθίστησι καὶ τοιαύτην τινὰ ποιεῖ πίστιν αὐτῷ, ὅτι ἔλαττον ἢ ἡλίκον ᾤετο τὸ συμβεβηκός ἐστιν.

[688] When seen in an elegiac context, the parable of Antimachus and Plato takes on new meaning: one of the fundamental assumptions of romantic elegy, particularly at Rome, is its stress of "one" man in love with "one" girl, hence the proliferation one sees in Propertius of words like *unus* and *solus*--Cynthia being "first and last" (*Cynthia prima fuit, Cynthia finis erit*) is, of course, part of the monopolizing and universalizing formula. Plato is "alone worth a hundred thousand" for Antimachus; to Propertius, "You, Cynthia, you, alone, are my house, alone, my parents (*tu mihi sola domus, tu, Cynthia, sola parentes*--Prop. 1.11.23)

a mystery that plays an important role in debates over the history of elegiac "subjectivity," is the extent to which Antimachus' *Lyde* introduced the figure of the poet and his departed beloved, not only in the "frame" passages of the book--beginnings and ends of each of the two books, for example--but also within the books themselves. The *communis opinio* seems to suggest that the so-called "subjective" elements were restricted to these frames, but this is fundamentally a guess.

Far closer to Propertius in time, and, via the Roman poet Gallus, in influence, is the poet-scholar Parthenius, who wrote a three-book *Arete* as "epikedeion [dirge] of Arete, an encomium for his wife Arete."[689] We have only a few small fragments of this collection, together with scholiastic notes, one of which explains that the reason why the poet was "stricken with sorrow (-ημένος ἄζῃ)" was that he was "steeped in sadness on account the absence of Arete (λύπῃ διὰ τὴν ἀπουσίαν τῆς Ἀρήτης)." We cannot tell where, in the poem, this fell, which means that we do not know whether or not the conspicuously first-person mode of lament was restricted to the frame.[690] What we do know, however, is that Parthenius named the collection as a whole after his own dead wife.

One of the immediate inheritors of Parthenius' form of elegiac lament seems to have been C. Licinius Calvus, who wrote a poem, according to Propertius some Catullan hints, that lamented the death of his beloved, Quintilia. We do not know much of this poem beyond a few lines (fr. 26-28 Hollis), but, as has been argued, Propertius' language makes it likely that the piece was of significant length and high quality.[691] In that same generation of poets, Catullus

[689] Suda π 664 Ἀρήτης ἐπικήδειον, τῆς γαμετῆς Ἀρήτης ἐγκώμιον.

[690] cf. Lightfoot 1999:71-2 for useful circumspection.

[691] See Prop. 2.34.89-90, Catullus 96, Hollis 68-71.

wrote what now stands as the first elegiac poem of his multiform collection (poem 65) as a lament for the death of his brother, and it is a lament that has no end: "But surely I will always love you, always sing sad songs for your death."[692] Catullus' mourning of his brother can erupt into his poetry, as in his long poem for Allius (68b), where discussion of Laodamia's loss of her husband Protesilaus and the fields of Troy leads the poet to thoughts of the "miserable death" of his brother: "Oh alas the joyful light of my brother--stolen away! Our whole house is buried, as one, with you, and with you, as one, all of our joys perish."[693] Catullus' final graveside lament for his brother (C. 101) stands as one of the most powerful examples of the elegy of lament in the Latin corpus.[694]

As with so many literary trends of the Augustan period, Catullus was an important forerunner of Propertius' poetry, and it serves little purpose to overstate the divide between the neoteric poet and his obviously devoted poetic followers. But there are important differences, and one of them has to do with structure: Propertius' individual books, and series of books, use myths and postures of solitude as an organizing principle in such a way as to suggest that, if

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[692] Catullus, *C*. 65.11-12 *at certe semper amabo, / semper maesta tua carmina morte canam*. Catullus' *semper canam*, "I always sing," picks up, as Bessone 2013:45-6 notes, on the Greek word for nightingale, ἀηδών, and its purported derivation from ἀεὶ ἀείδω, "I always sing."

[693] Catullus, *C*. 68b.91-5 *quaene etiam nostro letum miserabile fratri / attulit. Hei misero frater adempte mihi, / hei misero fratri iucundum lumen ademptum, / tecum una tota est nostra sepulta domus, / omnia tecum una perierunt gaudia nostra.* On this poem, see Feeney 1992:33-4.

[694] On Catullus 101, and its links to Roman literature and ritual of lament, see Feldherr 2000.

Cynthia is the "beginning and end" for Propertius as lover,[695] the problem of solitude and soliloquy is the beginning and end for Propertius as poet. For certain readers, no doubt, Propertius' structure might have contributed to what has been called the poet's "autobiographical construction of the myth of oneself."[696] But in Propertius' works, I shall argue, we see as much the filling in as the emptying out of the poet's self. At the center of Propertius' work, we find, not loneliness (Solmsen 1962:84), and not death (Papanghelis 1987), but, rather, a persistent, dynamic, confusing, and colorful clash of self-displacements that pivot around the rhetoric of the solitudes of the imagining poet, of his imagining people, and of his imagined worlds.

IV. The Milanion Inversions: *Elegies* 1.1 and 1.3

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.
tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus
et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus,
donec me docuit castas odisse puellas
improbus, et nullo vivere consilio.
et mihi iam toto furor hic non deficit anno,
cum tamen adversos cogor habere deos.

"Cynthia first with her eyes caught miserable me, me touched, before, by no desires. It was then that love cast down my eyes of stubborn pride, and trod my head beneath his feet, until the villain had taught me to

[695] 1.12.20 *Cynthia prima fuit, Cynthia finis erit*.

[696] Bessone 2013:42-3.

hate chaste girls, and to live with no prudence. And, as for me, for a whole year this insanity has not ceased, while I am forced to have the gods against me." (trans. Goold, with alterations)

The problem of absence begins in Propertius' first poem, and is tied up with the mystery that opens and drives the first poem, and first book, forward: why is the poet, captured by eyes and touched by desires, so sad (*miserum*)? *Cepit*, "caught," gives us one generic answer: the poet is sad because he, the "soft lover-poet", has been impressed by a "hard mistress" into the "soldiery of love." One of the few lines that we possess of Propertius' elegiac predecessor, Gallus, for example, refers to the "sadness (*tristia*)" caused by the bad behavior (*nequitia*) of the poet's lover, Lycoris.[697] But, while we do not know what the first line of Gallus' *Amores* might have been, we do know that Propertius' first elegy puts misery at the center of its first line, and we know, as well, that Propertius' opening lines add the poet's "misery" to their reworking of an epigram by Meleager (*Anth. Pal*. 12.101.1-6):

Τόν με Πόθοις ἄτρωτον ὑπὸ στέρνοισι Μυΐσκος
ὄμμασι τοξεύσας τοῦτ' ἐβόησεν ἔπος·
"Τὸν θρασὺν εἶλον ἐγώ· τὸ δ' ἐπ' ὀφρύσι κεῖνο φρύαγμα
σκηπτροφόρου σοφίας ἠνίδε ποσσὶ πατῶ."
τῷ δ', ὅσον ἀμπνεύσας, τόδ' ἔφην· "Φίλε κοῦρε, τί θαμβεῖς;
καὐτὸν ἀπ' Οὐλύμπου Ζῆνα καθεῖλεν Ἔρως."

"Myiscus, shooting me, whom the Loves could not wound, under the breast with his eyes, shouted out thus: "It is I who have struck him down, the overbold, and see how I tread underfoot the arrogance of sceptred

[697] On Gallus' elegies, see Raymond 2013, with bibl.

wisdom that sat on his brow." But I, just gathering breath enough, said to him, "Dear boy, why art thou astonished? Love brought down Zeus himself from Olympus." (trans. Paton)

As has been noted (Fedeli *ad* 1.1.1-4, 4), Propertius' opening lines seem to combine this poem by Meleager with a motif from the poetry of Parthenius (fr. 9 Martini) in which "Love plundered, treading with both [feet] (ἀμφοτέροις ἐπιβὰς Ἅρπυς ἐληΐσατο)." Parthenius' Ἅρπυς may be, as Hesychius suggests, an Aeologic form of Ἔρως, but it also gives us hints of Greek ἁρπάζω, "to quickly seize and capture," that Propertius may pick up in his opening-line *cepit*, his "capture" (as opposed to Meleagrean transfixion) by love's ocular arrows.[698]

But as important as this fusion is Propertius' striking innovation on Meleager's poetic plot: the highlighting of the poet's misery. This, too, represents a form of textual fusion: *miser* had been a favorite word of Catullus, and had opened his complaint to himself about the passing of love's bright suns and Lesbia's affections: "Miserable Catullus (*Miser Catulle*), stop being foolish / and admit it's over."[699] That poem of Catullus has an intricate structure, with two major

[698] Although Meleager's epigram closes with Love's "destructive capture" (καθεῖλεν) of Zeus, the emphasis is more on the fact that love "draws Zeus down" from Olympus. It is striking that the first clear use of Greek ἁρπάζω to refer to romantic ravishment appears to be Plutarch's life of Antony, in which Cleopatra in said to have "captured (ἥρπασεν) Antony;" it is tempting to consider that Plutarch's depiction of Antony and Cleopatra may build not only on the elegiac character of their love (and the Roman story of their love), but also on the specific vocabulary of Greek, and perhaps Latin, erotic elegy.

[699] trans. Zukofsky (*Anew* 1946), Catullus 8.1-2 *Miser Catulle, desinas ineptire, / et quod vides perisse perditum ducas.*

parts: in the first, Catullus convinces himself to get over his loss of Lesbia ("Miserable Catullus, stop being foolish…Show some spunk, stand up and take it"), and, in the second, Catullus uses his new-found inner gumption to address and roundly reject Lesbia ("So long, girl. Catullus can take it"), only for us to get the sense, with the poem's last line ("Come on Catullus, you can take it") that the poet is always and ever, in this poem, speaking bravely, not to his spurning beloved, but, instead, to his wavering self. This kind of structure may be common to the literature of complaint and self-consolation, but what is notable about the work of Propertius is the way that it makes the problem of speaking to absent figures so crucial a feature of its poetic world.

Indeed, as Propertius' opening poem continues, a source of his sadness begins to emerge with greater clarity than the normal generic models we've explored might suggest: love has taught him to love only a certain (naughty) kind of girl,[700] and to live without "prudence (*consilio*),"[701] thereby turning him crazy (*furor*) and putting him, perforce, in opposition to the gods themselves (*adversos cogor habere deos*).[702] But instead of directly describing what this insanity entails in his own life, Propertius turns, as he will so often do, to myth, and to a myth

[700] For the extensive debate over the text and meaning of this line, see Fedeli *ad loc.*

[701] The Latin word *consilio* means prudence and wisdom, but, also, the contexts and persons by which prudent advice can be shared with someone; we shall see, Propertius represents himself as, not only crazy (*furor*—7), but also as so isolated from society that he is unable to receive any advice that will be of use to him.

[702] On "force" (*cogor*) as internal, rather than external, compulsion, see Fedeli *ad* 1.7.8, who sees it as having neoteric roots.

that makes clear that Propertius' sadness is the sadness of speaking, ineffectually, to oneself, the sadness of impotent soliloquy and sad solitude (1.1.9-18):

Milanion nullos fugiendo, Tulle, labores
saevitiam durae contudit Iasidos.
nam modo Partheniis amens errabat in antris,
ibat et hirsutas ille videre feras;
ille etiam Hylaei percussus vulnere rami
saucius Arcadiis rupibus ingemuit.
ergo velocem potuit domuisse puellam:
tantum in amore preces et bene facta valent.
in me tardus Amor non [n]ullas cogitat artis
nec meminit notas, ut prius, ire vias.

"It was, friend Tullus, by fleeing no travails that Milanion pierced the cruelty of hard Atalanta. For, now, mad, he wandered in Parthenian glens, and, now, he would often go to look on shaggy beasts. He, struck by Hylaeus' club, wounded, he groaned to the Arcadian rocks. Thus he was able to tame the swift girl: such power have prayers and good service in love! For me, love thinks up no stratagems, nor remembers to walk, as before, known paths." (trans. Goold, with alterations)

"No broad way is appointed for the race to the Muses,"[703] Propertius will later write, and, indeed, his poems will often choose a lesser-known (or newly minted) version of a myth instead of a story-path better trod by poets and mythographers. In the case of this "daughter of Iasi(u)s," the most common version of the story sets the girl in Boeotia and recounts how a certain

[703] trans. Goold, 3.1.14 *non datur ad Musas currere lata via.*

Hippomenes wins the hand of Atalanta by besting her in a life-or-death foot-race. Although Propertius may allude to this myth in the story's conclusion ("thus he was able to conquer the *swift girl*), for the story itself, Propertius instead picks up on an Arcadian alternative, wherein, as we hear from other sources, Milanion seems to have won over Atalanta after being injured by a centaur (Hylaeus) who, in some version in company with another centaur (Rhoeteus), made an attempt to rape Atalanta in the Arcadian hills.[704] Propertius' version is low on standard story-elements and rich in strange images: instead of going to the hills to hunt—in Ovid's version (*Ars Amatoria* 2.185-196), the quarry is wild boar—Milanion wanders in a crazed daze (*amens…errabat*) and goes around, not hunting, but staring at (*videre*), wild beasts until, very suddenly, and for reasons unknown, he is wounded by Hylaeus and proceeds to complain to the rocks, thereby…winning over his girl. We can, of course, supply Propertius' story with all kinds of story-details borrowed from other authors, but attending to what Propertius includes and leaves out is crucial to understanding the role that this story will play as a type-scene throughout the *Monobiblos*, and, indeed, throughout Propertius' oeuvre.

What is most striking, or at least ambiguous, in this anecdote is the mysterious principle of causation, the missing link, that lies behind the "therefore" (*ergo*) of its close. Milanion wandered, suffered, cried out…and then won his girl—but how? In another poem, in a passage that served as this chapter's epigraph, Propertius will formulate the issue in clearer terms (1.12.13-16):

nunc primum longas solus cognoscere noctes

[704] The Milanion exemplum has been often discussed; important treatments include Ross 1975: 61–5, Cairns (1974b), Allen (1950); see, also, Fedeli *ad* 1.1.9.

cogor et ipse meis auribus esse gravis.

felix, qui potuit praesenti flere puellae

(non nihil aspersis gaudet Amor lacrimis).

Now, for the first time, I am forced to face long nights alone, and to become a nuisance to my own ears. Happy the man who can weep in his sweetheart's presence (Love takes great joy in being sprinkled with tears)…(trans. Goold)[705]

Nunc primum…solus: "now, for the first time, alone," Propertius writes, and, given Propertius' many temporal slides, we have no way of knowing where this fits in the grand chronology (if such a thing exists) of his character. There are, in this later poem, two kinds of courtship: 1) the fruitlessness of sad soliloquizing, and 2) the fruitfulness of tearful face-to-face lament. Propertius, at the beginning of his first poem had described himself as "forced" (*cogor*) to endure "opposing gods" (*adversos deos*), and had explained his problem to Tullus by comparing himself, through the choppy logic of exemplary association, to Milanion's solitary love; here, in 1.12, the poet, addressing Cynthia, is not *with* Cynthia, but is, instead, alone (*solus*), forced (*cogor*) to bear the long nights and, in the absence of having his prayers answered by the gods,

[705] Propertius took up the *felix, qui* formula (in imitation of Virgil's *Georgics*) to define elegiac ambitions by way of Virgil's *Eclogues*: 2.34b.71-74. What has not, however, been noted, is that Propertius redefines the *Eclogues*, in its totality, as a tool of love: when he wonders that "ten apples are able to corrupt girls" (*utque decem possint corrumpere mala puellas*) he is departing from Virgil's script not out of bad counting or textual ignorance, but in order to bring attention to the number of the *Eclogue* poems (10).

must make do with saying his prayers for himself,[706] and with envying the joy of those who could cry--like Milanion, *qui potuit*--"to a present girl," brought to love, it seems, by tears.

But it is precisely the "presence" of the girl, so crucial an element of the first, and happy issue, of this later poem that is missing in the Milanion *exemplum*, and for a very important reason: Milanion represents victory under conditions that are far more difficult than those Propertius later outlines, for he represents the success story of a man who wins his girl through tears, even when she may not be there. Margaret Hubbard (1974:34) posed this challenge, this "taking literally" of the "sentimentalities of love poetry," in the form of a question: "What if it were really true that addresses to an absent mistress had some purpose?" This question, which will be fully literalized and materialized in poems which we will come to analyze (1.16-19, 2.13b, and 4.11), is, as well, the question posed by Propertius' first poem, and its first *exemplum*. Milanion did not cry out to Atalanta, but to the rocks; in fact, Atalanta is both unnamed and her role in this story unscripted. We do not have any indication, it needs restating, that Atalanta is even present at this scene: it is just Milanion, hairy beasts, and Hylaeus' spear. Milanion's

[706] Propertius' purported leave-taking from love elegy at the end of his penultimate book of poetry has Propertius saying farewell to erotic furor in favor of clear reason, directly as the result of Jupiter's deafness to his erotic prayers: 3.24.19-20 *Mens bona, si qua dea es[t], tua me in sacraria dono! / exciderant surdo tot mea vota Iovi*. The idea that elegy is for the deaf is central, as we shall see, to Propertius' final poem, esp. 4.11.3-4 *te licet orantem fuscae deus audiat aulae: / nempe tuas lacrimas litora surda bibent*.

laments are to the mountain and its rocks.[707] The only hint that we get at what this groaning is meant to achieves comes from the anecdote's conclusion: *tantum in amore preces et bene facta valent*. This kind of *tantum*-cap to a prologue is one we are familar with from Virgil's *Aeneid* (1.11 *tantaene animis caelestibus irae*?, followed by 1.33 *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*), and in the poetry of Propertius will serve as a similarly programmatic assertion—indeed, the whole of Propertius' corpus will be, in many ways, a working out of what, precisely, "prayers and good deeds" will entails, and what one can expect, if anything, from them.[708] Now, there is one way of reading Milanion's "prayers and deeds" by way of other versions of the story, that allows us to expand "good deeds" (*bene facta*) to, as in Ovid's poem, the carrying of hunting nets, or, with Fedeli (*ad* 1.1.16), the crying on or to the rocks as a form of direct entreaty, face-to-face, with Atalanta. But Propertius' narrative is so telescoped that it allows for the possibility that, even in Atalanta's absence, Milanion's groans to rocks in mountain caves might somehow

[707] I will not enter into the large debate over the relationship of Propertius' poetry to Callimachus' story of Acontius and Cydippe. On the general question of Hellenistic influence on Roman poetry, see Hunter 2006, esp. 7-41; on Acontius as a model for Latin elegy: Cairns (1969); Rosen-Farrell (1986); Barchiesi (1993); Heinze (1919), with psychologizing approach; on the double-sided subjectivity of the Aetia cf. Puelma (1982) esp. 229; for a more open and dynamic model of the relationship between Greek and Latin languages and literatures, see Hinds forthcoming project on *Latin Literature's Resonance in Other Languages and Traditions*.

[708] On Propertius' *exempla* as the "reflection" of the lover-poet (as opposed to validating tool or rhetorical ornament), see Dunn 1985.

amount, as if by magic, actually by magic, to “prayers and deeds” that have the power to win over a girl’s love.

In this sense, Milanion's amatory success, achieved through "prayers and good deeds" runs directly contrary to the experience of Catullus, who, in his seventy-sixth poem, found that his "good deeds" (*benefacta*) and "faith" (*fidem*) brought him only the joys that were no joys of unreciprocated love (*ingrato…amore*): "I do not any longer desire that she should love me, or, because it is impossible, that she should desire to be chaste--I want to be healthy, and to put aside this loathsome disease. O gods, give me this in exchange for my piety!"[709] Propertius' unhealthy soul[710] need all the help it can gets, in part because he cannot put away the sense that he *should* be able to equal the wish-fulilment represented by Milanion's achievement, and one of the main tensions of Propertius' poetry will be, as we shall see, its sense that love such as Milanion's is impossible, but so is escaping the hope that it make be realizable.

Milanion's role in the first poem is difficult to interpret, both because the syntactic and argumentative links between his *exemplum* and its surroundings are few and choppy enough to have inspired *lacuna*-supplying editors, but, as well, because Milanion is asked to play two very different parts: he is both an aspirational (Greek) model and a denigrated foil for Propertius' (Roman) elegiac aspirations.

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[709] Catullus 76:23-26 *non iam illud quaero, contra me ut diligat illa, / aut, quod non potis est, esse pudica velit: / ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum. / o di, reddite mi hoc pro pietate mea.*

[710] 1.1.26 *non sani pectoris.*

As a model, Milanion is a creature of pastoral fantasy, and one that works out even better than any Virgilian, and most Theocritean, pastorals suggest: his is a world where the solitary pastoral poet, succeeds in winning his absent beloved's affections. It is precisely the kind of consoling myth that one might have expected, as we have seen, in the elegiac poetry of Parthenius and his Latin inheritor, Calvus. Parthenius' poetry, we have already seen, may have been an active contributor to Propertius' opening, and so it is perhaps no mere geographic indication when Propertius says that Milanion "once upon a time, mad, wandered in Parthenius' caves (*nam modo Partheniis amens errabat in antris*). There is little question that this means that Milanion was wandering on Mount Parthenion, which forms the border between Arcadia and the Argolid; it was here that the god Pan, according to Herodotean legend (6.106-5), appeared to Philippides (περὶ τὸ Παρθένιον ὄρος τὸ ὑπὲρ Τεγέης—Her. 6.105), whose quick foot-work cost him his life but gave victory to the Athenians. Clearly, this is a place that rewards speed, an arena that will be poorly served by Propertius and his *tardus Amor*, his "slow love."

It is not only the setting here that is Greek, but the vocabulary, and markedly so: *antrum* for cave had only been a recent neoteric addition to Latin poetic vocabulary.[711] For Fedeli (*ad* 1.1.11), the image of Milanion wandering through "caverns" (*antrum* as *spelunca*) was "truly ridiculous," and, adducing Propertius use at 4.4.3 of *antrum* for *convallis* (hillworks, or a valley surrounded by hills on all sides), prefers to see Milanion as wandering through "the gorges of Parthenion." But the ridiculousness of the image, and its emphasis on isolation and enclosure, is precisely the point: in the very next poem of Propertius' book, the poet will attempt to convince his beloved (or, as he calls her, his "life," *vita*), to give up cosmetics and finery on the grounds

[711] See Norden *ad* Vir. *Aen*. 6.119.

that "the strawberry-tree grows more beautiful in lonely caves (*solis antris*)."[712] The surprising efficacy of Milanion's prayers is paradoxical precisely because he is a suffering lover who "wanders through caves" and "moans to their rocks," rather than, as might be thought more normal, wandering through hills and moaning to Atalanta. And, given the importance of Parthenius to the elegy's opening, it is hard not to hear the poet Parthenius in these very Greek, very solitary, caverns on Mt. Parthenion, for Parthenius, as we have seen, also had to address himself to a girl who was not present, to his dead wife *Arête*. There is, of course, an important contrast: Parthenius could not bring his wife back from her fatal absence, but Milanion can elicit the love of Atalanta even in her absence, and he does so, in part, through *preces*, prayers.[713] The strong possibility that Propertius' Milanion *exemplum* derives from Gallus (perhaps mediated by Virgil's representation of Gallus in the tenth *Eclogue*), makes it all the more likely that we are in the midst of a triple window-allusion that travels through Virgil, Gallus, and back onto Parthenius.[714]

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[712] Prop. 1.2.11 *surgat et in solis formosior arbutus antris*. It is tempting to hear, in Propertius' *vita*, the coterminous nature of Propertius' lady and his "life" as a poet; but note that Propertius makes broad use of the word to refer to Cynthia, for citations of which, see Fedeli *ad loc*.).

[713] For *preces* as standard erotic tool, see Catullus 50.18; Lygd. 4.76; Ovid. *Am*. 1.6.61; 2.2.66; *Ars* 1.710; cf. Fedeli 1980 *ad* 1.1.16.

[714] Note that Virgil's Gallus looks forward to hunting round *Parthenios…saltus (*V. *E.* 10.57; cf. Clausen p. 189-91 and *ad loc*.). On Gallus and the Milanion *exemplum*, see Ross 1975:31, 63, 65, 85, 90-1, Sharrock 2000:268-9; Janan 2001:38-9; and Miller 2002:89.

It pays, then, to attend to Greek backgrounds and words in this opening poem of Propertius, and *preces* presents the same opportunity and demand: for the Greek equivalent of *precor*, "to pray," is ἀράομαι, which, like Latin *precor*, covers a range of meanings from "to request and entreat" to "to pray, to bless, and to curse." This Greek word, ἀράομαι, is closely related to, and perhaps the origin of, the name of Parthenius' beloved, *Arête*.[715] Milanion achieves what Propertius could not: his "prayers" win him his beloved, absent though she may be. Trinacty's recent demonstration that Ennius' *Medea* was a key intertext for the opening of Propertius' first poem only increases our sense that "loneliness and fear of the loss of the beloved," so crucial a theme to Medea's anger in Ennius' version, was also a crucial element to Propertius' opening poem.[716] For Richardson (*ad loc.*), the subject of this first poem is "the poet's loneliness in a private world," one that is hedged about by fears of "the intrusion of strangers and the loss of the beloved." The poem is also beset by a further fear: that the beloved is already lost, that the poet is already too late for a love that will prove too swift to be caught.

But Milanion is also a foil for Propertius' poetry, insofar as Propertius cannot win his beloved as Milanion is said to have won Atalanta. In large part, this is because Propertius' poetry

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[715] There is a possible play on this derivation of the name as early as Homer, where the rare (but not unique) Homeric verb λιτανεύω is used to describe Odysseus' entreaties upon first meeting the Phaeacian queen, *Arête* (Hom *Od*. 7.145 *θαύμαζον δ'* ὀρόωντες. ὁ *δ'* ἐλλιτάνευεν Ὀδυσσεύς.

[716] For the importance of Ennius' *Medea* to Prop. 1.1, see Trinacty 2010; Trinacty's suggested intertext with Ennius' *Medea*, and implications for Propertius' programmatic goals, are appealing even if one does not accept that this requires a particular textual choice at 1.1.24 (for the Medea-connection, Trinacty favors *Cytaeines* over Heyworth's Thessaly-inflicted *Cytinaeis*).

refuses the easy consolations of wish-fulfilment, or the facile refuge of solitude as a form of uncompromised poetic power. Propertius is, for one, never actually as alone as Milanion seems to have been, a fact of being a poet to which Propertius draws immediate attention: it is striking that Propertius introduces his *exemplum* of the solitary Milanion by making his first direct address to the poem's addressee and patron, Tulllus.[717] As crazy as Propertius may be, as unlike his friends in situation and obsession, he still expects this first poem, removed from the hearing of his beloved, to be heard by another person.[718]

The story of Milanion is not, then, a consolatory balm for Propertius' desperation; instead, it makes his grief all the more acute. For the *exemplum* of crazy Milanion (*amens*) is supposed to explain not only Propertius' frenzy (*furor*),[719] but also to answer the larger question with which the poem began: if mad Milanion grows happy with amatory and poetic success, why should delirious Propertius, by contrast, remain sad? More specifically, if Milanion can succeed in love by roaming in caves and groaning to rocks, then why can't Propertius? Parthenius did not have

[717] On Tullus, see above; it is notable that Tullus is the addressee of both the first and last poems of this book (1.1, 1.22)—making him, as well, Propertius' "first and last"—in addition to being the addressee of 1.6 and 1.14.

[718] Unlike, as we have seen in the Introduction, the *Satires* of Persius, whose programmatic first poem outlines a theory of "secret self-communication" in which the addressee becomes, himself, a projection of the poet's rhetoric and imagination. As we shall see, Propertius' later poems in this book and in future books will unsettle the calm conviction of the opening poem that it is intended for a real, human, present audience.

[719] See citations at TLL 6.1631.74 for *furor* as *cupiditas, amor* and *libido*.

the same problem, for his wife, *Arête*, was already dead, making his problem that of Orpheus, a problem that, as we shall see, Propertius will address at length only in his fourth book; for now, though, the challenge that Propertius' poetry will aim to address is what one is to do when a hostile, distant, or absent beloved is, as it were, as good as dead.[720] Luke Roman (2014:122-3) has articulated one of the aspects of the problem of social identity posed by the Milanion episode: compared with Milanion, Propertius' labors "are programmatically endless and strategically achieve nothing. Unlike the favours (*bene facta*) that oblige a return in relations of friendship among freeborn Romans, Propertius' continual, non-voluntary labour without recompense defines his status as slave of love." (Roman 2014:122-3) This is certainly true, but the problem is also more specific than this: Propertius' labors are not only "continual" and "non-voluntary," but they are also labors endured for a mistress who may not even be present, or, what is more, may not even exist.

Margaret Hubbard (1974:25) noted that Propertius' first book "is unlike many Augustan collections in being a very private one." This is not to say, however, as we have seen, that Propertius is alone in the world of the *Monobiblos*: in the very first poem, the poet addresses Tullus, witches, and friends, and, in the poems that follow, he addresses two poets (Bassus, the iambist, and Ponticus, who writes mythological epic), one or several people named Gallus, and, of course, Cynthia herself. For Hubbard (1974:25), these figures are "exploited to give a social context to and a further clarification of Propertius' love for Cynthia."

[720] To put the question very roughly, the broad progression of Propertius' relation to this question seems to be an emphasis on the beloved's absence (Book 1), on the poet's death (Book 2), on the beloved's fictionality (Book 3), and on the beloved's death (Book 4).

Recent scholarship, however, has given us reason to question the usefulness of any of these other male figures for creating a solid baseline of "social context." From the get-go, of course, Propertius addresses his *amici* as being wholly, and happily, distant from Propertius and his love-frenzy: all of his *amici* belong together as a group that can live and love in happiness,[721] distant from Propertius, whom love has given over to "bitter nights" (*noctes…amaras*).[722] There is "all of you" (*vos*) and there is me (*nam me*), with the sense of danger to the friends preserved by Propertius' reference to, not "my" but to "our Venus" (*nostra Venus*), with Latin's first-person plural usefully ambiguous between the plural and the "royal" singular. But Propertius' friends are distant not only because their situation is so unlike that of the poet—in this sense, they are foils for his own pathologically sad love-life—but they also give off the scent, as it were, of being fictions in themselves: Bassus and Ponticus are not necessarily names or even pseudonyms for contemporary writers of Propertius the writer's acquaintance, but seem to be, instead, recognizably fictional type-names that represent genres of poetry (Bassus=iambic; Ponticus=mythological epic), rather than individual poets.[723] Add to this the lability of the figure

[721] Prop. 1.1.1 *vos remanete, quibus facili deus annuit aure, / sitis et in tuto semper amore pares*.

[722] Propertius may be playing on the *parabils atque facilis Venus* (Horace, *Satires* 1.2.119) by his collocation of *facili…amore pares…nostra Venus….vacuus…Amor* (Prop. 1.1.31-34). He is definitely playing on *amare/amaras*, "love and bitterness," a word-play with which Latin can express the Sapphic idea of love that is bitter-sweet (*γλυκύπικρον*).

[723] cf. Heslin 2011, who shows how Propertius' fictional name-play interacted with similar play in Horace, and how Ovid continued the fun, in ways that have confused biographical scholarship.

of Gallus in the *Monobiblos* (1.5, 1.10, 1.13, 1.20)[724] and you begin to have a world that has created its own society, and whose society is, almost entirely, of the order of fiction. Comparing the high degree of ambiguity and fictionality in Propertius' constellation of figures with Catullus' cast of characters, and you begin to have a sense of how very odd is the social world that Propertius invents for his poems.[725]

Propertius is always playing with reality and projection, and it is important, in this respect, to recall that Cynthia is not represented as present in Propertius' first elegy; instead, Propertius addresses himself to the man who may have been his patron (Tullus) and, following that, to witches and to (male) friends.[726] As recent feminist critiques have noted, Cynthia becomes, as a result of these various triangulations, less an independent individual character, and more the product of the shared fantasies, gazes, constructions, and, in René Girard's terms, "mimetic desires," of Propertius' male friend-group.[727] The importance of the male gaze to Roman erotic

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[724] "What is important for the moment is to recognize both the centrality of Gallus to the *Monobiblos* and the inability to define a stable identity for him." (Miller 2002:68) For Janan, the Gallus poems "refuse to hang together or hang separately." (Janan 2001:33-4) On the problem of Gallus more generally, see Cairns 2006, ch. 3.

[725] My thanks to Denis Feeney for this insight.

[726] On Propertius and questions of patronage, see Heyworth 2007c, on the character of Tullus himself, see Cairns 2006:35-69.

[727] See, especially, Wyke 1987:47-9 and 1989; Sharrock 2000:263-72. On mimetic desires, see Girard 1961; on the usefulness of the concept of Girardian "mimetic desire" and classical pastoral poetry, see Payne 2007:18-19.

elegy, and to Propertius' poetry more particularly, cannot be overemphasized, and, indeed, Propertius' second poem also leaves Cynthia, as speaker, wholly out of the picture, constituting a blazon of the ornaments, make-up, and clothing that Cynthia should not, according to the poet, think about wearing.

The deliberate highlighting of the fictionality of personhood in Propertius' first few poems goes together with the world of deception, magic, and moonlight evoked by Propertius' witches (1.1.20-3):

> *at vos, deductae quibus est fallacia lunae*
> *et labor in magicis sacra piare focis,*
> *en agedum dominae mentem convertite nostrae,*
> *et facite illa meo palleat ore magis!*
>
> "But you, whose practice it is to lure the Moon down from the sky and to propitiate spirits over the magic fire, come, alter the heart of my mistress, and see that she turn paler than this cheek of mine." (trans. Goold)

Witches are commonly associated with "tricks" in Roman poetry,[728] but the trick of the drawn-down moon is associated, here, specifically with Propertius' hope, modeled perhaps on the amatory magic suggested by Theocritus' second *Idyll* or Virgil's eighth *Eclogue* or, going further back, Sappho's encounter with Aphrodite, that the witches turn his obsession with Cynthia into

[728] cf. Cairns 1974:99-102. Milanion should be recalled here as well: in most versions of the story of the courtship of Atalanta, she is bested in a foot-race through a deceptive ruse involving the dropping of apples.

Cynthia's obsession for him. Drawing the pale, white face of the moon into the reflection of a bucket of water is a form of sympathetic magic for the whitening of Cynthia's face, but it is also a way of seeing the hoped-for pallor of Cynthia's face in the water-bucket itself, perhaps with the help of Cynthia's nominal association with Apollo *Cynthius*, and hinted affinities with Apollo's sister, the moon-goddess Artemis. Drawing down the moon into a bucket of water is, in this sense, a way of drawing the face of the lunar beloved, and it is one that must be achieved through a combination of deceptions (*fallacia*) and songs (*carminibus*).

When we have our first real encounter with Cynthia in the first book's third poem, we find out that Propertius' prayer—that Cynthia longs as he is longs—may not have been without effect. In Propertius' opening poem, the poet was alone, and could not follow Milanion's "familar paths" in using his groans to win over the too quick, too absent, beloved; but now, in this third poem, it is Cynthia who has been crying alone, to herself.

When we come upon Cynthia, she is decidedly, mythologically, solitary in her sleep: she is like Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus' ship and "languid on deserted shores" (*languida desertis Cnosia litoribus*); like Andromeda in her first sleep; like an exhausted Bacchant on the grassy banks of the Apidanus. To this scene Propertius arrives, slightly drunk "but not yet having wholly lost his senses,"[729] and proceeds to play out an erotic script with a sleeping Cynthia: he touches up her hair, gives her fruit that instantly slides out of her lap, and sighs at her slightest movement with the fear that someone in her dreams is forcing her, "against her will, to be his." Cynthia need not do anything, at least not anything consciously, for Propertius to wheel through his fantasies and fears, but Propertius would still prefer if Cynthia would awake, so that she

[729] 1.3.11 *nondum etiam sensus deperditus omnis…*

could curl her own hair, accept her lover's proffered gifts, and sigh with him rather than with the ghost-lover of her dream. But Cynthia's sleep survives Propertius' furtive clowning, at least until a new protagonist intervenes whose advent shows that Propertius' prayer to the witches has paid off, for Cynthia sleeps only "until the moon (*luna*)—rushing in through (*praecurrens*) the opposite window—the moon (*luna*)—diligent with its lingering (*moraturis*) lights—opened, with light beams, her peacefully shut eyes (*ocellos*)."[730] But Cynthia's response is not what Propertius might have desired: curses will have curses, and Cynthia, in her first appearance, takes over from the first poem's Propertius the mask of the failed Milanion (1.3.35-46):

tandem *te nostro referens iniuria lecto*
alterius clausis expulit e foribus?
namque ubi longa meae consumpsti tempora noctis,
languidus exactis, ei mihi, sideribus?
o utinam talis producas, improbe, noctes,
me miseram *qualis semper habere iubes!*
nam modo purpureo fallebam stamine somnum,
rursus et Orpheae carmine, fessa, lyrae;
interdum leviter ***mecum deserta*** *querebar*
externo longas saepe in amore moras:
dum me iucundis ***lapsam*** *Sopor impulit alis.*
illa fuit lacrimis ultima cura meis.

[730] 1.3.31 *donec diversas praecurrens luna fenestras, / luna moraturis sedula luminibus, / compositos levibus radiis patefecit ocellos.*

> "At last! Has another's scorn then brought you to my bed, expelling you from doors closed in your face? For where have you spent the long hours of the night which was due to me, you who come--miserable me!--exhausted, when the stars are driven from the sky? Oh, may you spend nights like these, you villain, such as you are always compelling me to endure! For now I was beguiling sleep by spinning crimson thread, and now in my weariness by music of Orpheus' lyre; and sometimes, all forlorn, I softly complained to myself that in unmarried love waiting is often long: till Sleep with soothing wings overcame my fallen body. That was my weeping's last concern." (trans. Goold with alterations)

Mythological *exempla*, as we know, can model, suggest, inspire, reflect, and invent reality: when we first saw Cynthia, we saw her through the lens of Ariadne "deserted shores," and, when the moon finally wakes her from her sleep, we learn that she, too, had been deserted and alone (*deserta*) throughout the night.[731] No sooner do we approach Cynthia than we gain, as Philip Hardie puts it (2005:293), "imaginary access to another age, the *formosi temporis aetas* (1.4.7)," with the thrice repeated mythological similes of 1.3 (*qualis…qualis…qualis*) reversing the thrice-repeated mythological exempla (in the negative) of 1.2 (*non sic…non…nec*). But the book's second poem only described what Cynthia was not, without quite putting her before our eyes; it is in the book's third poem that Propertius finally arrives at Cynthia herself. But, as in the first poem, the poet arrives too late, too slow: as Cynthia puts it in her first words, Propertius comes "at last" (*tandem*), and it is only the light of the comparatively swift-moving moon (*praecurrens*) that can wake Cynthia up.

And when she appears, she seizes reality for herself--and not just any reality, but the reality of the poet as he had presented himself in his first poem. There Propertius, here Cynthia, is "sad"

[731] For *desertus=solus*, TLL 5.1.684, 56 cites Acc. *Trag*. 413 R.3 *exul inter hostis, exspes expers desertus vagus…*

(1.1.1 *me miserum* 1.3.40 *me miseram*), "fallen" (1.1.25 *lapsum*>1.3.45 *lapsam*), forced to complain in solitude (1.1.14 *Arcadiis rupibus ingemuit*>1.3.43 *mecum deserta querebar*), compelled to turn to song as a remedy (1.1.24 *carminibus*>1.3.42 *Ophaeae carmine…lyrae*), opressed by long nights (1.1.33 *in me nostra Venus noctes exercet amaras*>1.3.37 *longa…tempora noctis*), and drawn towards nocturnal deceptions (1.1.19 *fallacia lunae*>1.3.41 *fallebam…somnum*). Just as Milanion won his love by crying out in the wilderness in a way that Propertius could not imitate, so, too, Cynthia's songs on the orphic lyre echo Orpheus' lonely exertions to command not only the trees and beasts to follow his lead, but for his dead wife, as well, to be returned to him in life. And, just as Propertius had prayed to the moon-drawing witches that they visit his fate upon Cynthia, now, here, Cynthia, awakened by the moon, prays for a similar reversal of fortunes upon Propertius, in particular, that his nights should grow as long as hers (*o utinam talis producas improbe noctes*--1.3.39-40). Here, it is Cynthia, and not Milanion or the poet, who is forced to complain to herself (1.3.43 *mecum…querebar*), and the wickedness of that love that Propertius had complained oppressed him (*improbus*) is, in Cynthia's eyes, a characteristic of the poet himself (*improbe*).

Propertius' poems frustrate linear chronology, despite the best efforts of romanticizing critics,[732] so we cannot know whether the deserted Cynthia's curse of sad and solitary nights against Propertius precedes or follows the wounded Propertius' curse of lunar pallor against Cynthia. But the fact that the first appearances of both Propertius and Cynthia emphasize this same quality suggests that such questions of priority are not the point: in Propertius elegy, lovers

[732] By romanticizing, I mean the effort to novelize, and turn into more or less linear love-narrative, Propertius' diverse poems; notable examples include Benda 1928 and Padula 1871.

and beloveds are creatures that are always at the crossroads of solitary projection and confrontation with reality, their ineffectual soliloquizing complaints for beloves that come too late, or not at all, always in tension with the all-too-real presence that they seize for themselves out of whatever material is to hand. They are, we can say, powerful expressions of the dialectic of solitude.

V. Portrait of the Poet as a Failed Milanion: *Elegies* 1.16-1.19

The importance, the centrality, of this theme to the *Monobiblos*'s interests is suggested by the fact that it is predominant not only at the book's beginning but throughout the book, reaching its highest pitch of intensiy and focus as the book comes to a close. For Friedrich Solmsen's phrase (1962:74), in poems 1.16-19, we see how "to be *solus* and in solitude has become the essence of Propertius' life."[733] Or rather, we might say, a part of his life, the other part being the desire to communicate these solitudes to others. But we shall return to this idea soon. For now, we should note that the temporal confusions raised by the mutually implicating curses of 1.1 and 1.3 may be very much to the point here: as Christine Walde (2008:133) has argued, the temporal dimension of 1.18 (and, more generally, 1.16-1.19) is "at an interstice, at one decisive point in a longer 'frozen' process" in which "the narrator (and with him the reader) will never break through to Cynthia or achieve perfect communication with her. He (and we) will have to make do with

[733] Walde 2008 takes up Solmsen's essential grouping in order to draw attention to Propertius' use of narrative time

approximate images of her alone."[734] Indeed, the solitude of the poet, to which Enk and Rothstein's commentaries long ago drew regular attention, and which is at the center of Solmsen's and Walde's articles, must be viewed as the fulfillment, albeit belated, of an expectation that had been generated by the book's programmatic first poem, for it is in these three poems, and the three poems that follow them, that Propertius fills out his portrait of the elegiac poet as a failed Milanion.[735]

The first of this closural group, 1.16, literalizes, and in paradoxical fashion, the lament of the "excluded lover"--perfect for the reading material, as Propertius desires, of the sympathetic "neglected lover"[736]--who, locked out of his beloved's home, is left to sing laments that, as

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[734] Walde attempts to sketch a brief taxonomy of solitary forms of speech, differentiating between monologues, interior monologues, and what Walde sees as more appropriate to characterize 1.16-18, soliloquies, insofar as they have "no intended outreach to other people and no intended audience. Though perhaps directed in imagination to another person or persons, these speech acts are highly self-reflective. Should there happen to be an eavesdropper, he/she is not necessarily configured as an intended audience for the speech—although certainly there are elegiac soliloquies where the speaker counts on being heard." (Walde 2008:124)

[735] It is this theme of loneliness, and its connection to the programmatic Milanion motif, that turn 1.16-1.19 into a connected sequence, and speak against the guarded nature of Richardson's claim (1977:194) that "the three form a little sequence and gain by being read together, though they are otherwise unrelated."

[736] 1.7.13 *me legat assidue post haec neglectus amator*.

Propertius will later put it, "are known only to silent doors."[737] The paradox, of course, is that this door, although it remains unremittingly non-responsive to the excluded lover, is, alongside Pyramus and Thisbe's wall, "the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse." Indeed, the poem opens with the door's complaint, and in typically elegiac terms: the door is not what once he was (1.16.1 *quae fueram…nunc ego,* cf. 1.12.1 *olim gratus eram*, 1.12.11 *non sum ego qui fueram*), is forced now into complaints (1.16.6 *queror*), and is coerced into tears amidst the complaints of others (1.16.13 *haec inter gravibus cogor deflere querelis*), all language typical of the elegiac lover.[738] So the door speaks--16 lines at the poem's beginning, 4 lines at its end--but it does not speak to the poet whom it excludes. A failed Milanion, this excluded lover declaims prayers (*preces*) that are returned to him only by the echoing of what he takes to be inanimate objects[739], coming up against a silent world: "Why are you silent with me?" (1.16.18 *quid mihi…taces*), the poet asks, complaining that "You alone (*sola*), never pitying (*miserata*) human pains respond mutual words (*mutua*) on your silent hinges," (1.16.26 *respondes tacitis mutua cardinibus*) with the clear suggestion that there is no difference between echoing the poet's own words (*mutua*)

[737] 1.18.24 *quae solum tacitis cognita sunt foribus.*

[738] Compare with Horace's amatory 3.9.1 *Donec gratus eram tibi* (with Nisbet and Rudd *ad loc*.) and Ov. *Am*. 2.19.30 *quod licet, ingratum est*, with McKeown *ad loc*.

[739] 1.16.19-20 *cur numquam reserata meos admittis amores, / nescia furtivas reddere mota preces,* "Why, closed up, do you never admit my loves [or, "love-songs"], unknowingly moved to echo back my furtive prayers?"

and being mute.[740] We know that the door hears the poet's complaints, but we also know that this means little to the poet: the door can speak to us, but not the poet, and, besides, the poet wants his songs to reach, not the door, but his beloved. Instead, the poet believes (wrongly, as it turns out), that "my words fall on the nocturnal west-wind" (1.16.34 *at mea nocturno verba cadunt Zephyro*), as he bears forth his "owed vows" (*debita vota*), not in triumph to his beloved, but in defeat to her door.

This poem's conceit builds on the urban *paraklausithyron*, or "locked out of a door," motif,[741] but, by framing the poem as the door's recollection, allows Propertius to create a model of elegy that, through dramatic means, preserves the absolute solitude of the lover's experience, while still providing a method by which this painful soliloquy can be communicated to us--through the offices, and voice, of the speaking (silent) door. The silent door is also a model for the poetic listener or reader, whose presence guarantees that literary solitude is never as solitary as it represents itself as being: the trick of poetic solitude, as we have seen, is that it always

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[740] For "mutual response" in its normal sense, see Cic. *Fam*. 5.7.2 *mutue respondetur,* and Cic. *Fam*. 4.2.4 *mutue respondisse.* The word *sola* here refers primarily to the fact that it is "only" the door that keeps the lover from his beloved, but the repetition (1.16.25 *tu sola*, 1.16.35 *tu sola*) brings attention to the word, and helps call attention to the poet's own solitude.

[741] Key examples include Theocritus *Id*. 2.118-128, with allusions at Theocr. 6.32-3; see, also, the Grenfell Fragment (*CA* pp. 177-179); cf. Hunter 1999:256-7, and, on the Greek motif more generally, Copley 1956:1-27. On the personified "door of the house" in Catullus 67, with broader reflections on the role of the "speaking/listening door" in Latin literature more generally, see Wray 2001:139-140.

figures itself as both solitary and communicated, and it is this awareness of its own contradictory nature that prevents the strong poem of solitude from sliding precipitously towards sentimenality. Here, the ironizing of sentiment is heightened not only by the magic nature of the conceit, but by the setting itself: the poet who thinks he is alone is in the middle of Rome, out on the street, in front of a door that is as Roman as it gets, having "of old stood open to welcome splendid triumphs, a door famous for Tarpeian Chastity."[742] Here, as so often, Propertian elegy allows us to alternate between viewing the world through the subjective solitude of the poet, or of seeing the solitude of the poet from the perspective of the objective sociality of the world.[743]

In the poems that follow (1.17-18), Propertius leaves behind the role of the objectivizing frame played by Cynthia's door, and takes us into harsher and more austere solitudes than the urban scene of 1.16. Yet, although they lose the obvious audience-frame of 1.16, they are still interested in the nature of audience and the possibility of communicating poems spoken in extra-urban solitude. Both 1.17 and 1.18 take place in deserted places, the first by (or, as some readers less think, in) the sea and addressed to halcyons, the second in the woods and addressed to its

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[742] 1.16.1-2 *quae fueram magnis olim patefacta triumphis, / ianua Tarpeiae nota pudicitiae*…

[743] And here, as ever, the very Roman context itself is subject to direct ironization, with the door "famous for Tarpeian chastity" alluding to a far-from-chaste element in Rome's history, an episode that would later be the subject of 4.4. It is no surprise that this unstable image has provoked correction on the part of editors (i.e. *ianua Patriciae vota Pudicitae* Goold).

On Propertius' ironization of traditional Roman elements, see below on 4.1.

silent and empty places and winds, to the lonely stones and the solitary trees. We will begin with 1.17:

> *Et merito, quoniam potui fugisse puellam,*
> *nunc ego desertas alloquor alcyonas,*
> *nec mihi Cassiope solito visura carinam*
> *omniaque ingrato litore vota cadunt.*
> *quin etiam absenti prosunt tibi, Cynthia, venti:*
> *aspice, quam saevas increpat aura minas*. (1.17.1-6)

> "Yes, and deservedly, for I had the gall to run away from my sweetheart, do I now address my lament to the solitary kingfishers. Nor is Cassiope's haven destined to behold my ship arrive with me safe and sound, but all my vows are wasted on the heartless coast. Even though you are not here, Cynthia, the winds are taking your side: see what fierce threats the gale is muttering!" (trans. Goold with modifications)

The first line of this poem puts us in mind of Propertius' first poem where Milanion, though seemingly not fast enough to catch Atalanta on foot, was able (*potuit*), through his prayers and wounded laments to the rocks, "to tame the fast girl" (*velocem…domuisse puellam*--1.1.15); here, the poet, whose love in the opening poem was, by contrast, too slow (*tardus amor*--1.1.17) to snare his girl, is, it seems, fast enough, if not to catch his girl, then at least to flee her (*potui fugisse puellam*); Propertius' flight (*fugisse*) contrasts with Milanion's "fleeing of no labors" (*nullas fugiendo laboras*), and sound-patterns and line-position associate Propertius' hatred of chaste girls (*odisse puellas*) in the first poem with his flight from this one girl here (*fugisse puellam*). Because Propertius must speak to halcyon birds that are solitary (*desertas*), we can assume that he is alone. The halcyon birds, or, kingfishers, were, according to Aristotle, “the

most rarely seen of all birds, seen only around the time of the setting of the Pleiads and the winter solstice."[744] For Homer, halcyons were the quintessential birds of woe (πολυπενθέος), associated by mythology with the undying (and all too fatal) and lamenting (κλαῖεν) love of Alcyone and Ceyx;[745] in Virgil's *Georgics*, the halcyons are heard, but not seen, and are heard only by way of what the evening shore may echo;[746] and, elsewhere in Propertius' poetry, halcyons are associated with the wild sea[747] and with the kind of mourning and complaints that would be inappropriate on Cynthia's birthday.[748] Halcyon birds are, then, images of night, and, when visible to humans, signs that it is the darkest and longest night of the year. Propertius, then, is very much alone, and just as the excluded lover's words fall (*cadunt*) on an thankless wind, so,

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[744] Aristotle, *Hist. Anim*. 542b4-6 Ἡ *δ' ἀλκυὼν τίκτει περὶ τροπὰς τὰς χειμερινάς. Διὸ καὶ καλοῦνται,* ὅταν εὐδιειναὶ *γένωνται αἱ τροπαί…*

[745] Homer, *Iliad* 9.561-5 *τὴν δὲ τότ' ἐν μεγάροισι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ / Ἀλκυόνην καλέεσκον ἐπώνυμον, οὕνεκ' ἄρ' αὐτῆς / μήτηρ ἀλκυόνος πολυπενθέος οἶτον ἔχουσα / κλαῖεν ὅ μιν ἑκάεργος ἀνήρπασε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.* For which myth, see Hesiod, *Catalogue* fr. 15; Apollodorus 1.7.3-4; Hyginus, *Fab*. 65; and Ovid, *Met*. 11.410-748. On the halcyon in Greek poetry, see Gutzwiller 1992.

[746] Virgil, *G.* 3.335-338 *tum tenuis dare rursus aquas et pascere rursus / solis ad occasum, cum frigidus aera Vesper / temperat, et saltus reficit iam roscida luna, / litoraque alcyonen resonant, acalanthida dumi.*

[747] 3.7.61 *ah miser alcyonum scopulis affligar acutis!*

[748] 3.10.9-10 *alcyonum positis requiescant ora querelis; / increpet absumptum nec sua mater Ityn.*

here, too, the speaker's prayers fall (*vota cadunt*) on a nonresponsive shore. Propertius is here in the position of his earlier portrait of Calypso, who, waiting, similarly, on the shore, is never again to see (*visura*) the boat that might bring her beloved closer to her;[749] simultaneously, Propertius is in the position of Homer's Odysseus, stranded on the abandoned shore for having abandoned Calypso and her blessed isle.[750]

And yet, even given the poem's representation of Propertius' despairing solitude, even though Cynthia is as absent from her lover as one can be this side of death, the winds obey her will, and make her, in some strange way, present; the paradox of Cynthia's "present absence" is underlined by a sharp verbal juxtaposition: *quin etiam absenti prosunt tibi, Cynthia, venti*, "And yet, though you are absent, the winds serve (lit. "are present for") you, Cynthia," thundering their threats.[751] As Solmsen sums up (1962:80), this is a perfect example of how "solitude as conceived in Book 1 is always a condition in which Cynthia is present in his thoughts and has a strong hold on his emotions." If it is, indeed, good to cry for a present girl, Propertius is, here, in the worst of all worlds: the poet is crying, his girl absent, to solitary halcyons, but is still subject to his girl's wrath! Cynthia, in her absence, can inflict pain, but cannot be won over. As a result, this poem, far from being the "delicate, a dreamy insubstantial tissue" that some critics have seen,[752] is an embodiment of the failed paradigm presented in Propertius' first elegy. In that first

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[749] 1.15.15-16 *et quamvis numquam post haec visura, dolebat / illa tamen, longae conscia laetitiae.*

[750] My thanks to Andrew Felhderr for this insight.

[751] *Increpo* has, perhaps, a Callimachean flavor: *Aetia*: *In Telch* 20 *βροντᾶν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός.*

[752] Richardson *ad* 1.17 intro.

poem, Propertius' friends (*amici*) tried, too late (*serum*), to call back their already fallen friend;[753] here, Propertius will be saved only if the downswing of felling love (*labens amor*) has touched the waters of the daughters of ocean—then and only then, will they have pity on who shares, with them, their tamed shores (*mansuetis socio parcite litoribus*--1.17.28).[754] But these daughters of ocean are as distant from the poet as his friends, his witches, and his beloved, and as labile, fleeting, and mysterious as the listening trees and muses that were sole audience to Virgil's final *Eclogue* and the solitary laments of Gallus.

The audience of the echoing trees that plays so important a role in Virgil's *Eclogues*, and that may have been central to Gallus' own poetry, is the premise of the next poem in Propertius' *Monobiblos*, poem 1.18, in which the poet finds himself lost in silent and lonely woods (1.18.1-8):

Haec certe deserta loca et taciturna querenti,
et vacuum Zephyri possidet aura nemus.
hic licet occultos proferre impune dolores,
si modo sola queant saxa tenere fidem.
unde tuos primum repetam, mea Cynthia, fastus?
quod mihi das flendi, Cynthia, principium?
qui modo felices inter numerabar amantis,
nunc in amore tuo cogor habere notam.

[753] 1.1.25-6 *au vos, qui sero lapsum revocatis, amici* / *quqerite non sani pectoris auxilia.*

[754] Note the parallel addresses: 1.1.19 *at vos* [witches], 1.1.25 *aut vos…amici* > 1.17.25 *at vos, aequorae formosa Doride natae*.

> "This at least is a lonely spot that will keep silent about my grievances, and the zephyr's breath holds sway over the empty grove. Here I can freely pour forth my secret anguish, unless the lonely rocks fail to keep faith. At what point, my Cynthia, shall I begin the story of your proud disdain? What, Cynthia, was the initial cause o my tears? I, who lately was reckoned among happy lovers, must now wear a mark of shame in the register of love." (trans. Goold)

Here, as in 1.17, there are numerous allusions to Propertius' opening poem (*primum, fastus, cogor*). In 1.17, recall, the poet was far enough away from his beloved that he could not reach her with his tears, but such that she could still reach him with his wrath. In 1.18, at last, without doubt (*certe*), Propertius has finally found a place where he can lament in solitary safety (*occultos proferre impune dolores*). The lonely places (*deserta loca*) and rocks (*sola…saxa*)[755] will be silent in the face of his complaints (*taciturna…querenti*) and will, he hope, stay loyally quiet (*queant…tenere fidem*).[756] There are numerous connections between this poem and Virgil's *Eclogues* (esp. 2 (Corydon) and 10 (Gallus)), and it is with regard to this poem that the question of the relevance of Callimachus' story of Acontius, and that lover-boy's solitary lament in a deserted location, rages most fiercely.[757] Like those lovers, the poet's beloved is the subject of

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[755] *Sola* here, as so often, does double-duty, meaning both "if only," and, adjectivally, "the lonely rocks," a possibility emphasized by the poem's last line: *nec **deserta** tuo nomina **saxa** vacent.*

[756] For "loyalty" and "silence," cf. Hor. *C*. 3.2.25-6 *Est et fideli tuta silentio / merces.*

[757] On sources and the debate, see Fedeli *ad* 1.18 *passim*, and Cairns 1969 and above. One of the most important parallels for the basic structure of this poem and its rhetorical premise is, in fact, not in Callimachus but, as Fedeli notes (*ad* 1.18.5) in Theocritus' *Idylls,* 2.64-5 Νῦν δὴ μώνα ἐοῖσα πόθεν τὸν ἔρωτα δακρύσω; / ἐκ τίνος ἄρξωμαι; ("Now, then, that I am alone, from where

both echoing song and tree-chiseled text: "Oh how often my words echo under the delicate trees, and CYNTHIA is written on your bark!" But, unlike those lovers, this poet does not want his beloved, or anyone, to hear his complaints: he is grateful, when the poem begins, that at last he has discovered a place that will quietly keep his confidence. The irony, of course, is that we know when the poem starts that Propertius' secret is out, that his solitude is not as absolute as he makes it out to be, for we are always there with him. For Rothstein, this poem's solitude makes it seem "almost modern" and "Romantic," insofar as it is, he writes, "an escape into solitude."[758] What we might say in return is that what makes it seem to very modern, and, perhaps, Romantic, is that its joyfully strained awareness of its twin debts to the rhetorical and the solitary, the sense

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shall I begin lamenting my love? With whom should I begin?"), with solitude followed by rhetorical questions (2 for Propertius, 3 for Theocritus).

[758] "…ein beinahe Modernes, unserer Romantik verwandtes Empfinden herrscht in dieser Elegie…eine Flucht in die Einsamkeit." (Rothstein 1920-4: 175) It is not a surprise, in this sense, that this poem proved valuable to Petrarch's construction of the solitary lover in his 35th Sonnet, "Solo et pensoso i piú deserti campi," a poem that seems to have borrowed some of its language and rhyme-patterns from the Ennian verses, cited by Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations,* on the *anxia Bellerophontis,* a disease that, as we saw in the introduction and in our discussion of Cicero, combined solitude, melancholy, and madness. Though note La Penna's cautions (1977:254-66) regarding the difficulties involved in drawing comparisons between Propertius and Petrarch. On sonnet 35, see Wilkins 1951:295; the most important parallels are *deserti campi>deserta loca*, and *aspre vie>inculto tramite.*

that it is a self-contradictory construct that is, for all of its artificiality, none the less, and perhaps all the more, moving.[759]

The tensions caused by solitude as the poem's theme become all the more clear when one looks at the structuring role solitude is made to play in this poem by way of the mechanism, one of Propertius' specialties, that matches the end of a poem to its beginning (1.18.26-32):[760]

> *pro quo divini fontes, et frigida rupes*
> *et datur inculto tramite dura quies;*
> *et quodumque meae possunt narrare querelae,*
> *cogor ad argutas dicere solus avis.*
> *sed qualiscumque es, resonent mihi 'Cynthia' silvae,*
> *nec deserta tuo nomine saxa vacent.*
>
> "My reward for this is divine fountains, cold rock, and comfortless repose in the trails of the wilderness. And all that my dissatisfaction can express I am forced to utter in solitude to the twittering birds. Yet, whatever you are, let the woods echo to my song of 'Cynthia,' let the lonely rocks reverberate with your name!" (trans. Goold, with alterations)

Although symmetrical, the beginning and end of this poem are not the same; in fact, the major structural tension of the poem is drawn between their differences. When the poem begins, the poet likes these deserted places because they will not betray his complaints, because they will be

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[759] Compare, for example, the matched interplay of "loneliness" and "solitude," and "solitude" and "company" in Wordsworth's *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*.

[760] Shackleton-Bailey 1952:18 lists all of the poems that exhibit this feature.

"silent" about what he says. At the poem's end, that same deserted location, with its "hard silence on the untrod path," will be far from silent: both trees and solitary rocks "will echo, for me, 'Cynthia,' whoever you are." *Sed qualiscumque es*...whatever, however, wherever, Cynthia may be is of no particular concern: Propertius has her name. *Resonent mihi*…Propertius' elegiac laments, and the name of the beloved, are, it seems, not for the ears of Cynthia, not for the beloved, but for Propertius himself.[761] Propertius, at this poem's end, hears echoes from trees and rocks as a byproduct of the fact that he is "forced (*cogor*) to speak, alone (*solus*), to the shrill-sounding birds."[762] These birds, of course, draw us back to the beginning of 1.17, where, "Now, I address the lonely halcyons"--very little it seems, has changed. In the end, the woods are empty (*vacuum nemus*), but they are not empty of Propertius' laments (*nec…vacent*): there is nothing, here, but Propertius, speaking, alone, to himself. This seeming defeat can be spun into triumph, of course: gramatically, "they echo back *to me*" can, in Latin, shade into "they echo *for my benefit*"—the so-called "dative of advantage;" conceptually, for Walde, "in this narcissistic, monadic cosmos" we see a victory over space and time, "a setting free of words and idea, no longer only his, as a means of transgressing individuality," so that "alongside Cynthia he [Propertius] too has become a literary personae." (Walde 2008:133) Or one might say that solitude provides a poetic *topos* that allows the poet to craft a poem of which he is particularly

[761] Note how the closing line's *nec deserta* almost but not exactly echoes the opening's *haec deserta*.

[762] On *argutas*—is it "talkative" or "shrill-sounding"?—see Fedeli *ad loc*. It is, of course, both: the irony is that it is only the birds, here, who can speak to him (with shrill cries), or Propertius himself via the woods and rocks, but never Cynthia.

proud, and that he is able to figure himself listening to *ad infinitum* through the echoes of his solitary surroundings, blessed by the "holy fountains" of poetry that are his boon in exchange (*pro quo*) for his solitude.[763]

But this kind of solitude has, as we have so often seen, a more problematic side, with autonomy's advances tracked, at every step, by the specters of loneliness, isolation, and death. And it is death, the death of the poet, that the next poem, 1.19, takes as its theme. In 1.19, Propertius imagines what it would like to be dead, thus laying the groundwork for what, as Papenghelis has demonstrated, will be a major motif, if not the central theme, of Propertius second book of poetry.[764] Poem 1.19 is the not the first of Propertius' meditations on his own death, but it is the first to ask the possibility, and image, of the poet's death to serve as its premise.[765] Propertius will not, he says, fear "sad death-spirits" or the funeral pyre, just so long

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[763] Compare with Horace's frequent indiciations, in Book IV of the *Odes*, that one of the great pleasures of his late life is his ability to listen to others sing his *Carmen Saeculare* back to him.

[764] "If, as on metrical grounds seems probable, it is of late composition within the Monobiblos [*nb:* it has only one non-disyllabic pentameter ending in 4, *exsequiis*], it shows the poet already in the grip of a fascinating obsession to which much of Book 2 bears testimony." (Papanghelis 1987:18) Cairns 2006:213 finds it likely, on the basis of shared qualities with Ovid and certain questions of diction and meter, suggest that 1.19 in general, and the Protesilaus *exemplum* in particular, was modelled on a poem by Gallus.

[765] cf. 1.17.19-24 *illic si qua meum sepelissent fata dolorem, / ultimus et posito staret amore lapis, / illa meo caros donasset funere crinis, / molliter et tenera poneret ossa rosa; / illa meum extremo clamasset pulvere nomen, / ut mihi non ullo pondere terra foret*. Note how the *illic* of

as "my funeral does not lack your love, Cynthia (*tuo…amore*)" and "my ash-dust should be empty, with love forgotten (*ut meus oblito pulvis amore vacet*)."[766] To explain how this will work, how "great love crosses even the shores of death," Propertius brings foreword an *exemplum*, that of Protesilaus and Laodamia, that gives, at long last, an answer, however strange, to the question posed by the first poem and its invidious comparison of the poet's failures in love to Milanion's success: in order to become Milanion and reach the absent beloved, Propertius must die (1.19.7-12):[767]

illic Phylacides iucundae coniugis heros
non potuit caecis immemor esse locis,
sed cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis

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that imagined death scene is picked up repeatedly by the imagined underworld that is the scene of 1.19.7 *illic Pyhlacides,* 1.19.11 *illic quidquid ero, semper tua dicar imago*, 1.19.13 *illic formosae*.

[766] 1.19.3 *sed ne forte tuo careat mihi funus amore, / hic timor est ipsis durior exsequiis. / non adeo leviter nostris puer haesit ocellis, / ut meus oblito pulvis amore vacet*.

[767] One need not, with Otis (1965:10-15) believe 1.1 to be a "structural correspondent" of 1.19 in order to see that they are in productive "contradiction" and "contrapuntal" difference; *pace* Papanghelis 1987:11 n. 5. This is especially the case if the witches of 1.1 are Thessalian, thus matching the Thessalian shade of Protesilaus.

Thessalus[768] *antiquam venerat umbra domum.*

illic quidquid ero, semper tua dicar imago:

traicit et fati litora magnus amor.

"There, in the regions of darkness, the scion of Phylacus could not forget his lovely wife, but, yearning to touch with unreal hands his heart's delight, came, a ghost, to Thessaly, to his ancient home. There, whatever I shall be, I shall always be called the shade that belongs to you: the might of love crosses even the shores of death." (trans. Goold)

The "hero" of this story, the "scion of Phylacus," is Protesilaus, first to land and first to die on the shores of Troy; following his death, he reappeared, but briefly, to his wife, who, in her longing and mourning, designed an image of her husband with which she could speak, until, through the machinations of her father, the image was destroyed, and Laodamia, out of desperation, killed herself.[769]

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[768] The MSS give *Thessalis*, but, although there is something attractive in the gender-bending possibilities of Protesilaus' ineffectual shade, Fedeli's reasoning seems fundamentally sound, that the *Thessalis umbra* would leave *cupidus* without an effective referent.

[769] I have presented, here, an amalgamated version of multiple texts; on the legend in general, see Lieberg 1962:209ff and Fedeli *ad* 1.19.7-10. The story of the woman who consoles herself with imagined conversations with her beloved, and of the men who fatally tear this fantastical consolation away from her, is one with a rich literary heritage from antiquity onward, from [Ps.-]Quintilian's tenth *Declamatio Maior*--in which a mother meets nightly with her dead son until her seances are ended by her husband and the magicians under his employ--to Boccaccio's story of Lisabetta of Messina and Keat's *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*, in which separating a grieving

What is remarkable in Propertius' image, however, is that, whereas the story often focuses on Laodamia's passion for her late husband, here our attention is wholly on the dead Protesilaus' desire for his still-living husband, and Propertius' desire, even in death, to always be the *imago*, "the image, portrait, shadow," of Cynthia. Indeed, the story of Protesilaus itself had been treated numerous times, from Homer through Euripides (now lost) to, most immediately important, Catullus' own poem of lament; but whereas, as Lyne has noted in the single most important treatment of this poem this *exemplum* (1998:208-10), Homer's account (*Il*. 2.695-702) leaves Protesilaus' wife "poised perhaps on the brink of tragedy" and the climax of Catullus' version (68b:85, 105-7) focuses on "the imminent suicide of Laodamia, death for love," Propertius' version maintains a "grim internal struggle" revealed by the way that "the myth seeks to project belief, but betrays doubt." The doubt to which Lyne alludes is raised by the off-notes of the presentation: whereas Homer's Protesilaus came as a human being to Laodamia, Propertius' comes as a spirit (*umbra*), and one whose carnal "desire to take hold of his joys" is frustrated by the fact that he has only "false hands."[770] Protesilaus could not forget, but could not again attain,

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woman from the magical and fertile head of her dead beloved sentences her, too, to a tragic death. Common to these stories is that an individual's fantasy is removed, supposedly for that person's own good, but, as it turns out, with tragic or fatal conclusions. In this sense, this story type has obvious affinities with the the tale of the Argive man in Horace's Epistles, discussed in Ch. 3.

[770] For the *topos* of the dead spirit as an 'image,' a 'vision,' in Greek, an εἴδωλον, see, i.a., Hom. *Il*. 23.99, *Od*. 11.204, Virg. *A*. 5.740, 6.700; Ovid, *Fasti* 5.476; Sen. *Troad*. 460, and of course Propertius 4.7.

the object of his affection, his "pleasing wife."[771] When this book of poetry had begun, Propertius spoke of how he was miserable (*me miserum*) because he had been "touched for the first time by desires" (*contactum nullis ante cupidinibus*); here, Protesilaus is "desirous to touch his joys," but cannot, any more than Propertius the anti-Milanion of the first, achieve this end in his state of perpetual shadowy distance.[772]

What Protesilaus' distant shadow can achieve, however, is what the conclusion of the story suggests: "Here, whatever I will be, I will always be called your *imago*: for a great love traverses the shores of even of death." Not touch, then, but talk; not "joys" but an "image." Now it may be true that there is something very grand, and innovative, in Propertius' death-traversing love: as Fedeli notes (1980:40), this notion seems to have no parallel in Catullus, and we have no evidence that it was a part of the work of Gallus or, even, of the mourning Calvus.[773] But it is also the case that Protesilaus' crossing of the boundary of death is a) wholly ineffectual, and b) restricted to Laodamia and Cynthia's possession, or, rather, enunciation (*dicar*) of the *imago* of

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[771] On *iucundus* used to describe Laodamia, Williams 1968:769 points to the unique Virgilian example (*Aen*. 6.363, where Palinurus prays to Aeneas *per caeli iucundum lumen et auras* to bury him), claiming that *iucundus* "is a highly subjective word, normally inappropriate to the objective description of epic narrative, but perfectly suited to the emotional speech of a man who gives expression to a deep personal feeling."

[772] *Cupidus…attingere gaudia* deserves our attention: as Fedeli notes (*ad loc*.), it is the first extant example of *cupidus* + inf. (cf. *TLL* 4.1426.72).

[773] Much depends, however, on how one interprets the conclusion of Propertius 2.34, and Calvus fr. 16 Morel *forsitan hoc etiam gaudeat ipsa cinis*.

the poet. As Propertius notes, his *imago* will be called hers "here" (*illic*), among the spirits, but what good is such a death-image to the beloved? Is this all that the beloved can expect from the immortal staying power of the poet-lover? Of course, it is precisely the disappointment of this future image that makes the highly practical "gather ye rosebuds" conclusion of the piece so rhetorically effective and predictable: "Wherefore, while it is possible, let us love and be glad together: no love, of any duration, is ever long enough."[774]

And it is precisely this escape clause, this final twist full-of-hope, that shows how right is Papanghelis' conclusion that the idea of love as fundamentally and only born of death, and, hence, the idea of our own explorations, of elegiac love as a form, ultimately, of soliloquy, is not yet fully realized in Propertius' first book of poetry--though, we might add, that one of the particularities of Propertian poetry is the fact that it *never* allows soliloquy to escape its implication in the complexity of discourse and community.

The three poems that follow 1.19 continue to embody this tension: they show a fascination with death and solitary places, but do not make death coterminous with love. So 1.20 shows Hylas lost to the spirits of solitary spots, with Hercules left only with the echoes of his beloved's name among the farthest mountains; 1.21 involves someone either dead (epitaph) or dying (*mandata*) giving instructions for what is to be told to his loved ones about his resting place; and 1.22 locates Propertius' origins in the *funera* of his homeland.[775] Although Propertius' poetry was

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[774] 1.19.25-6 *quaere, dum licet, inter nos laetemur amantes: / non satis est ullo tempore longus amor*. On the importance of Propertius' "wherefore," see Lyne 1996:

[775] For the echoing of the Milanion motif in 1.21, see Nethercut 1983:1825; for the echoing of the Milanion motif in both 1.21 and 1.22, see Davis 1971:213: "The loss of Cynthia's love,

a poetry of absence from its very first lines, it is only in the books that follow that Propertius would take up, more extensively, the challenge of Milanion as reflected in the dead *imago* of Laodamia.

VI. Between *Elegies* I and *Elegies* IV

Soliloquy is never solitary in Propertius' poetry, but after the first book of *Elegies* the confrontation between the public and private faces becomes more overt, the dialectic more heated. But this process, which will culminate in Propertius' final poem (4.11), begins increasingly to take center-stage in his second book, through a process we can see at work in Propertius' funereal *mandata* to Cynthia:

> tu tamen amisso non numquam flebis amico:
>
> fas est praeteritos semper amare viros.
>
> testis, cui niveum quondam percussit Adonin
>
> venantem Idalio vertice durus aper;
>
> illis formosus iacuisse[776] paludibus, illuc

---

which the poet depicts in book 1, finds its literary analogue in the loss of this *propinquus*, Gallus, in the poet's more distant past." For a discussion of how 1.21-2 mirror themes from throughout the *Monobiblos*, see Miller 2004:69-70.

[776] I prefer Fedeli's reading of *formosus iacuisse* ("the beautiful boy laid himself out") over *formosum lavisse* ("[You, Venus, are said to have] washed the beautiful boy"), not only because it maintains our simultaneous fixation on the erotic death and the erotic lament, but because it helps us physicalize the "laying out in death" suggested by Propertius' hoped-for epitaph: *qui*

diceris effusa tu, Venus, isse coma.

sed frustra mutos revocabis, Cynthia, Manes:

nam mea quid potuerunt ossa minuta loqui? (Prop. 2.13b.51-58)

"Yet you will sometimes weep for the friend you have lost; it is a duty to love for ever a mate who is dead and gone. Be she my witness, whose snow-white Adonis, as he hunted upon Idaean peaks, was struck down by a cruel boar. In waters there is Venus said to have laved her beauteous lover, there to have gone about with disheveled hair. But in vain, Cynthia, will you call back my silent shade: for what answer shall my crumbled bones be able to make?" (trans. Goold)

The jingling alliterations of the opening line--*tu tamen* and *non numquam*--help strength the strikingly alliterative hyperbaton of the rhyming and alliterating *amisso…amico* ("missing…friend"), thus emphasizing the distance that separates the lover from his beloved.[777]

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nunc iacet horrida pulvis / unius hic quondam servus amoris erat. Prop. 2.13b.35-6; critics have puzzled over why Propertius claims he wants an epitaph of two versus (*duo versus*—2.13b.35) and then gives us two lines that do not make up any standard metrically recognizable couplet. Butler and Barber (1933 *ad loc.*) think some standard phrase like *siste viator iter* would have supplied the empty space, but Houghton (2013:358) believes it says something about the inadequacy of written memorials: "Propertius may be pointing implicitly to the impossibility of its usurping the function of an autonomous memorial." The end of the poem, as I read it, recommends combining the two approaches of Butler/Barber and Houghton: the *minuta ossa* of Propertius' death cannot be expected to do all of the talking, so somebody, perhaps Cynthia, is going to have to make this tomb speak if they want it to end up as verse.

[777] Cf. *amico amisso* in Cicero, *Brutus* 1; see Ch. 1.

There is to be nobody at Propertius' imagined funeral but Cynthia and Propertius' books:[778] "Enough, what is mine is big enough (*sat mea sat magna est*)—if my three little books were my funeral train (*pompa*), books I will bring as largest gifts for Persephone."[779] The diminutive of book (*libellus*) is common enough in Propertius, but here it packs a punch: three "little" books will be "big enough" (*sat magna*) for Propertius' funeral train, and will be the "largest gifts"

[778] Note that Propertius revisits this theme at 3.16.23ff. For the theme of death in Propertius' poetry, see Papanghelis 1987 and the listing of key passages in Wimmel 1960:14. Propertius first imagines his own death at Prop. 1.17, but, as we shall see, something like this is already suggested by the contrast that Propertius draws between his own case and that of Milanion in the first elegy of the *Monobiblos*.

[779] Prop. 2.13b.25 *sat mea sat magna est, si tres sint pompa libelli, / quos ego Persephonae maxima dona feram*. The temporal complexities of these lines make for a plethora of MS possibilities and critical conjectures. In defense of the received reading, Shackleton Bailey (1967:89) adduces Sil. 6.122 *sat tibi sat magna et totum vulgata per orbem*. For a close analysis of the rich intertextual background of this poem, see Papanghelis 1987:50-79 and Fantuzzi 2002:240-5; in general on this poem see Cairns 1972:91; La Penna 1977:160-165; Boucher 1980:381-2; Murgia 2000:157-68. Propertius' reference to these "three books," together with what has been seen as the overly large size of what we now possess as the Book 2 of Propertius' poetry, has caused a number of scholars from Lachmann on to divide Book 2 into two books; Butrica 1996 provides the strongest refutation of this possibility.

(*maxima dona*) for death's goddess, Persephone.[780] Death amplifies books: "I shall have, doubtless, a boom after my funeral," Propertius will later write, "seeing that long standing increases all things."[781] In this case, Propertius' death turns small books into a big ceremony (even in the absence of other mourners), and descending into the underworld turns small books and a large ceremony into the largest of gifts.[782] Cynthia, meanwhile, is supposed to follow the bookish procession, and is meant to "not tire of crying out my name," "placing last kisses on cold lips," and inscribing an epitaph that she is meant, when her own death arrives, to come to be buried with him, a fate which she should, Propertius intimates, pray comes sooner rather than later: "Death," asked the long-lived Nestor, "why do you come to me so late?"[783] Books, here, are meant to replace Propertius' presence until they can be, at last, and forever, together in

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[780] As Fedeli points out (*ad* 2.13b.19-22), the opening of this poem concerns the funeral procession that leads to the placing of the corpse on the *lectus funebris*—I think it very likely that the possible of hearing "*lectio funebris"* appealed very much to Propertius' ear.

[781] Pound, *Homage*, after 3.1.22-3 *post obitum duplici faenore reddet Honos; / omnia post obitum fingit maiora vetustas.*

[782] cf. Prop. 3.1.21 *at mihi quod vivo detraxerit invida turba, / post obitum duplici faenore reddet Honos; / omnia post obitum fingit maiora vetustas; maius ab exsequiis nomen in ora venit*. Pound: "I shall have, doubtless, a boom after my funeral, / Seeing that long standing increases all things / regardless of quality."

[783] Prop. 2.13b.50 *diceret [Nestor] o mors, cur mihi sera venis*; recall that Propertius expresses his admiration, and envy, of the "Happy law of the East," (Prop. 3.13.15-16) referring to the Indian practice of *Sati*, or "widow-burning."

death—and they, and the relationship with Cynthia that they construct and entail, are meant to take the place of all of the other mourners (family, friends, other poets) who one might expect at a normal funerary procession.

At Propertius' funeral, Adonis arrives as a darker version of the Milanion motif: he is a hunter who is wounded in the mountains or hills, but, unlike Milanion, he dies and must therefore be mourned; in this poem, as in so many others in Books 1-3 of his works, Propertius imagines that what it means to be a failed Milanion is to be a dead Milanion, thus making the best out of a painful situation: in death, at least, at last, he hopes, Cynthia will pay Propertius the attention that he so desired in his life. There are a number of subtle slides in these lines: Cynthia will "sometimes" (*non…numquam*) cry for her "lost friend" (*amisso…amico*),[784] but the pentameter turns universal in time and application—one "must" or "should" or "can"—Latin *fas* covers everything from requirement to duty to permission—"always love" (*semper amare*) departed men (*praeteritos…viros*).[785] The broader range of this eternal love--for all men, not

[784] A standard expression we have already seen at Cic. *Brut*. 1 *amico amisso* for Hortensius.

[785] The succession of a future then imperative verb (here, future and implied command) is a favorite of Propertius, as at 1.11.27, 2.15.49, 3.8.5 (Fedeli *ad* 2.13b.51-2). Shackleton Bailey (1956:91) defends the use of *fas est* by reference to Virg. *Aen*. 1.77 *mihi iussa capessere fas est* and other examples. Goold's translation elides the transition from the particular (*amico*) to the universal (*viros*): "Yet you will sometimes weep for the friend you have lost; it is a duty to love for ever a mate who is dead and gone." Richardson notes the oddness of Propertius' phrasing: "the use of the participle with an animate substantive in the sense of 'past' or 'who have passed

only for him--makes for an easier transition to the once-upon-a-time (*quondam*) Venus-exemplum which is, strictly speaking, unnecessary to the plot: from sometimes mourning and always loving (ll. 51-2) one could easily have moved directly to the futility of one kind of loving lament, the desire to "call back" spirits that, because they are mute (*mutos*), because they are "my shrunk bones" (*ossa minuta*), cannot speak.

As Fedeli notes (*ad* 2.13b.57-8), the situation described here strongly recalls that of Catullus before the mute ashes of his brother, except that, here, it is the poet who is dead.[786] And this makes all the difference to the poem's many odd features, beginning with its temporal slips. At first, we are in a hypothetical situation of the poet imagining his future death, and so it makes sense for Propertius to imagine Cynthia, at that future time, mourning his death: "But in vain *you will summon back* (*revocabis*) my mute spirits (*mutos…manes*)." In the pentameter, Propertius has imagined himself into his own death, and, so, is looking on his death as already accomplished: "For what *were they able* to say (*potuerunt…loqui*), my shrunk bones?" Now, the perfect tense can also connote a generic condition, making the point that, although Cynthia calls on Propertius' "spirits" (*manes*), those spirits will have to remain mute (*mutos*), because all that is left of Propertius is, not "spirits" but, instead, "shrunk bones," (*ossa minuta*) which makes us think here not only about the bones as small (*minuta*), but as made small by the diminutions of

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away' is without parallel in classical Latin; however cf. Festus 21.19L *abitionem antiqui dicebant mortem*.

[786] Consider the verbal connection between Catullus 101.4 *et mutam nequiquam alloquerer cinerem* and the *mutos…manes* of Prop. 2.13b.57. For Catullus 101 and its relationship to Roman literature and ritual of mourning, see Feldherr 2000.

death and decay: “a person, a body, reduced to nothing but bones.”[787] The amplification of Propertius’ books with which the funeral procession began (*book, bigger, biggest*) is balanced by the gradual diminution of Propertius from poet, to epitaph, to the voiceless “bits of bone” (Richardson *ad loc*.) that funeral fires leave behind.

But the fundamental assumption behind this whole puzzling couplet has to do with what is, in fact, what Propertius expects to be the essence of Cynthia’s prayer: to “call back” (*revoco*) the dead is to ask them to “call back” to you, an assumption presupposed by the order of the line, which emphasizes, first, the vanity of the exercise (*frustra*), and, then, specifies that this vanity concerns the lasting “silence” (*mutos*) of the dead. Now, when this verb, *revocare*, had first appeared in Propertius' poetry, in the first poem of the *Monobiblos*, it was in the context of Propertius' claim that his friends (*amici*) are calling back "too late one who has already fallen;" but, here, Cynthia's "calling back" means, together with the reference to the poet's "mute spirits," not a calling back, but a calling to call back. Virgil’s Orpheus, when he failed to bring Eurydice back to life, departs “grasping vainly at shadows, desiring to say so many things” (*prensantem nequiquam umbras et multa volentem / dicere*—Vir., *G*. 4.501);[788] here, Cynthia’s problem is, not that she cannot speak *to* the dead Propertius, but that she cannot speak *with* Propertius, that Propertius cannot speak back to her. Her laments to Propertius’ ashes will be of the order of soliloquy, for his ashes will be, already, dead and mute.

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[787] For a static (i.e. essentialist, rather than process-oriented) use of *ossa…minuta*, see Lucretius, *DRN* 1.834-6, where Lucretius illustrates Anaxagoras’ theory of homoeomeria, whereby, supposedly, bones derived from “small bones” (*minutis / ossibus*).

[788] cf. Virg., *Aen*. 4.390-1 *linquens multa metu cunctantem et multa parantem / dicere.*

His ashes will be silent…but what of his books? Propertius' poems, we have seen, enact the dialectic of solitude by looping constantly back into themselves, and by twisting every assertion of poetic solitude into a vague question—in this case, the speechless "reduced bones" (*ossa minuta*), those with which Cynthia can vainly attempt conversation, are in clear contrast wth the big/bigger/biggest books that Propertius offered as a "gift to Persephone," a tribute to the dead. In his next book, Propertius will envies the "happy law for the buriel of husbands in the orient" (i.e. *sati*), whereby a man's wives are burned, with him, on his funeral pyre;[789] in our poem in book 2, does he mean for his books to go down with him to his grave, hence, depriving Cynthia of his great books and leaving her only his reduced ashes?[790] But of course we, who read these poems, have these books, and so are left in a position superior to that of Cynthia, able to communicate not only with Propertius' silent ashes but, as well, with the books, gift not only to Persophone but to us, as well.

The problem of speaking with the dead is, we have seen, one of the ways that the Laodamia motif had built on the problem of absence that had been so important to Propertius' opening Milanion *exemplum*. It is only one among many tropes on which Propertius focuses attention, but it is one, I have been arguing, that reveals something particularly important about Propertius' engagement with his larger poetic project. Nowhere is this clearer, and more strangely seen, than in Propertius' fourth book of poetry, in particular in that book's final poem, which, through an act of grand retrojection and self-reference, suggests that the problem

[789] 3.13.15-22.

[790] If this is suggested, it might play a role in how we speak of Virgil's "burning of his books," on which, see Ch. 2.

speaking in solitude, of soliloquy, are an essential element of Propertius' poetic persona. It is to the fourth book of Propertius' poetry, and the way that it sets the stage for the poet's final poem, that we now turn.

The Elusive Girl: *Elegies* IV

Propertius' problems, and poetry, began, we recall, with eyes: "Cynthia was the first to catch miserable me with her eyes;" by the time that Propertius begins his fourth book, he has already lost the books of love poetry whose ability to seduce girls in the poet's absence makes the love elegist himself otiose.[791] This loss and substitution also serve to instrumentalize the poet's misery (3.23.19 *me miserum*<1.1.1 *me miserum*), in a way that Ovid might have found inspiring: the poet's works will serve, not the poetic or amatory *furor* of a love-obssesed man or of a "solitary girl" who reads while "awaiting her lover,"[792] but, instead, as the "account book" (*rationem*) of a money-hungry businessman, whose concern is not with the "long nights" of soft love, but with the "harsh day-business-books" (*duras ephemeridas*).[793] If ever there was a time to quit love, it was then, and so, without further ado, Cynthia's beauty is deemed "false," "made haughty by *my* eyes" and not her own, turned into a beauty by Propertius' praise and not by what

[791] 3.23.5-6 *illae iam sine me norant placare puellas / et quaedam sine me verba diserta loqui*.

[792] 3.3.19-20 *ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus, / quem legat exspectans sola puella virum*.

[793] 3.23.19-20 *me miserum, his aliquis rationem scribit avarus / et ponit duras inter ephemeridas!*

she herself was, "so that love thought you to be what you were not."[794] The grand experiment to become a Milanion has failed, for the poet's cries fell, in the end, on deaf ears: "All of my vows fell dead on deaf Jove!"[795] Therefore, farewell Cynthia: "These curses my fatal page has sung to you: learn to fear the end of your form!"[796]

And so, when Propertius begins his next poem, and his fourth poetry book, he turns attention from the form of Cynthia, and redirects his eyes, and ours, towards Rome: its fortresses and walls, its "sacred rites and days and ancient place-names."[797] The poet is our tour-guide: "Whatever you see (*vides*) here, guest, where vastest Rome is, before Phyrgian Aeneas was hill and grass."[798] And so Propertius attempts to redirect the elegiac oral fixation from love to history, edifice, politics, and origins--as he had once promised, "The primitive ages sang Venus, the last sings of a tumult, and I also will sing war when this matter of a girl is exhausted."[799] Even before this redirection is frustrated by divine intervention, we have a sense that Propertius will not long be able to keep his eyes on wars and walls, at least not in any traditional sense:

optima nutricum nostris lupa Martia rebus,

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[794] 3.24.6 *ut, quod non esses, esse putaret amor.*

[795] 3.24.20 *exciderant surdo tot mea vota Iovi*.

[796] 3.24.37-8 *has tibi fatalis cecinit mea pagina diras: / eventum formae disce timere tuae*.

[797] 4.1.69 *sacra diesque canam et cognomina prisca locorum*.

[798] 4.1.1-2 *Hoc quodcumque vides, hospes, qua maxima Roma est / ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit.*

[799] Pound, *Homage V*, after 2.10.7-8 *aetas prima canat Veneres, extrema tumultus: / bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est.*

qualia creuerunt moenia lacte tuo!

moenia namque pio coner disponere versu:

ei mihi, quod nostro est parvus in ore sonu!

sed tamen exiguo quodcumque e pectore rivi

fluxerit, hoc patriae serviet omne meae.

"She-wolf of Mars, best of nurses for our fortunes, what walls have sprung from your milk! For I would fain lay out those walls in duteous verse: ah me, that a voice so feeble sits upon my lips! But still, whatever the stream that gushes from my puny breast, the whole of it shall be given to the service of my country." (trans. Goold)

As so often, Propertius' penchant for concretization makes for some striking, and odd, metaphors. It is common, in myth and poetry, to speak of walls arising with the help of Amphion's lyre,[800] less common to speak of them surging up from milk, even the milk of the "Martian she-wolf." The reference begins, deceptively, normally enough, addressing "the best of nurses for our fortunes, the she-wolf of Mars." The she-wolf nursed Romulus, Romulus founded Rome, so the she-wolf was Rome's nursemaid (*nutricum*). But then it turns out that Propertius has something rather more direct in mind: *qualia creverunt moenia lacte tuo!*, "what walls have sprung from your milk!" This is poetic because it skips a step of causation:[801] instead of the milk feeding Romulus and Romulus building the walls, it is the milk itself that builds the walls. We

[800] 1.9.10 *aut Amphioniae moenia flere lyrae.*

[801] As Shackleton-Bailey's *Propertiana* repeatedly emphasizes, Propertius's work is characterized by skips in logical sequence; those who more aggressively emend and transpose Propertius' text see things, obviously, in a different light.

think, then, that we're back to familiar territory: Propertius wants, like Amphion, to lay out walls "in pious verse," using *disponere*, "to lay out," a verb that can be used of construction and of poetic ennumeration. What follows is the usual exclamation of modesty, the Augustan *recusatio*--"ah me, that a voice so feeble sits on my lips!"--with the poet presenting himself as too feeble, for such a grand exercise, thus setting Propertius free to switch to other tasks.

All of this is traditional enough, but what follows picks up, in strange ways, the early metaphor of wall-building milk: *sed tamen exiguo quodcumque e pectore rivi / fluxerit, hoc patriae serviet omne meae*. Propertius may have a *parvus…sonus* on his lips, and a "thin breast" (*exiguo…e pectore*), but whatever stream should flow forth from that "thin breast" will be of use to his homeland: is this poetry for building poetic walls, or milk for building the city walls, or, in the fantastical combination suggested, milk for building poetic walls? Although what follows turns to traditional ground and re-emphasizes Propertius' desire to sing Roman aetiologies, the focus on looking at the walls, the call that someone should "esteem those walls by my genius" leads us back to the milky images from before. In the end, the city Propertius represents, and to which he is guide, is a city made of his own genius: "Let whoever looks at the fortresses rising from the valleys judge the walls by my genius!" We are in a space here even more uniquely Propertian, and solitary, than the bookish funeral mandated in Book 2, and close to the "poet-made-muse" of Book 3, where the poet scripts, for himself, his own triumph and triumphal parade.[802]

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[802] 3.1.9-12 *quo me Fama levat terra sublimis, et a me / nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis, / et mecum in curru parvi vectantur Amores, / scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas.* It is a striking phrase, and perfectly represents Propertius' uniquely solitary sense of artistic production

It is not clear whether there is irony, perversity, humor, or irrepressible oddness here, but any way you have it, we are well prepared for the turn against Roman aetiologies represented by what follows, which reminds Propertius that he is not meant to sing songs like these, that "Apollo sings against him" (*aversus cantat Apollo*), and that Propertius' elegiac lyre is not meant for such tasks. In the end, Apollo turns out to be in league with Propertius' girl, whom the poet can neither escape nor, in a continuation of the Milanion paradigm established by Propertius' first poem, attain (4.1.139-140):

> *nam tibi victricis quascumque labore parasti*
>
> *eludet palmas una puella tuas.*
>
> For whatever victories you win by your toil, one girl will mock your triumphs. (trans. Goold)

The image of love-poetry as an unending pursuit of the beloved, we have already seen, the motivating force behind the reopening of Horace's lyric vein as he begins his fourth book of *Odes*: "in nocturnal dreams, now, I hold you captured, now I chase you through the lawns of the Campus Martius, cruel one, through wheeling waters."[803] The idea of the life of love as a life of endless pursuit is a *topos* of Greek and Latin literature: Callimachus' 31st epigram represents the

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and audience. It is no surprise, then, that 3.1.9-10 *et a me nata* has annoyed critics and translators: Lachmann emended to *nota* (based on MS ς variant), and it is often read (i.e. by Galinsky 1998:276) metonymically, with "Musa" as "style of poetry."

[803] 4.1.37-40 *nocturnis ego somniis / iam captum teneo, iam volucrem sequor / te per gramina Martii / campi, te per aquas, dure, volubilis.*

poet lover as resembling the hunter on the hills one who "pursues what flees from it, but what lies ready it passes by,"[804] a passage that Horace went on to adapt in his *Satires,*[805] Ovid in his *Amores*.[806] Propertius' last book, like his first book, reflects precisely this problem of the pursuit of love, but does so by fusing, alternating, and opposing images and scenes of dreams and desire with those of history, wars, and death, in an extended book-length fulfillment of Catullus' provocative juxtaposition of his first elegiac poem, the lament for his dead brother with his adaptation of Callimachus' "Lock of Berenice."

It is also a book in which the voices of women are more pronounced than ever before in Propertius' work, and more closely associated with death.[807] Arethusa's "letter" to her soldiering

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[804] Callimachus, *Epigram* 31 Ὠγρευτής, Ἐπίκυδες, ἐν οὔρεσι πάντα λαγωόν / διφᾷ καὶ πάσης ἴχνια δορκαλίδος / στίβῃ καὶ νιφετῷ κεχρημένος· ἢν δέ τις εἴπῃ / ‘τῆ, τόδε βέβληται θηρίον’, οὐκ ἔλαβεν. / χοὐμὸς ἔρως τοιόσδε· τὰ μὲν φεύγοντα διώκειν / οἶδε, τὰ δ' ἐν μέσσῳ κείμενα παρπέταται.

[805] Horace, *Sat*. 1.2.105-8 *leporem venator ut alta / in nive sectetur, positum sic tangere nolit, / cantat et adponit 'meus est amor huic similis; nam / transvolat in medio posita et fugientia captat.'*

[806] *Amores* 2.9.9-10 *Venator sequitur fugientia, capta relinquit / semper et inventa ulteriora petit*.

[807] Propertius had given speeches to Cynthia at 1.3 and 3.6, but Book 4 represents a drastic increase in frequency and duration (4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.11). Margaret Hubbard (1974:137) may be right in speculating that Propertius might have been inspired, here, by Ovid’s *Heroides*, and that both poets might have learned a great deal from Dido’s extended monologue in *Aeneid* 4.

husband (4.3) hints at death, not only by referring to itself as *mandata*, which carries hints of a Roman's "final wishes," but also by calling attention to her "dying hand"[808] which, together with the her tears, may have muddled certain letters.[809] The fundamental anxiety behind Arethusa's letter is a rearticulation of the anxiety that was at the heart of the *Monobiblos*: "These *mandata* Arethusa sends to *her* Lycotas--if you can be *mine* when you are so very absent."[810] Can a man be yours when he is not there? Can a girl? Following upon the theme of love and death, Tarpeia, in the poem following, gives her speech of longing and desire just before going to her own death; the bawd Acanthis' speech (4.5), as Margaret Hubbard noted, seems to be the imagined speech of

[808] As Hutchinson usefully points out (*ad loc.*), the sense of "last wishes" is apparent to the reader who looks at Propertius' other poems, including 3.6.37 (message to Cynthia), 3.7.55 (prayer and last wish) 3.16.7 (order in letter from Cynthia), 4.7.71 (Cynthia's very last request). The "dying" hand does not mean, as Hutchinson emphasizes, just "fainting;" for the expression, see Ov. *Met*. 5.84 *humum moribundo vertice pulsat*; Luc. 4.560 *moriente manu*; Sil. 10.199.

[809] It is appealing to think that the missing *haec* at the beginning of the poem, supplied by all editors, may be an example of a "part missing in your reading, a smear made by my tears" (*si qua tamen tibi lecturo pars oblita derit, / haec erit e lacrimis facta litura meis*—4.3.3-4). Even if this is, as is likely the case, an unsurprising elision of the article in the MSS, the play between *litura/littera* provides a useful way for thinking about the confusion of Propertius' text.

[810] 4.3.1-2 *[Haec] Arethusa suo mittit mandata Lycotae, / cum totiens absis, si potes esse meus*.

one already dead;[811] and, in the book's most famous poem, Cynthia herself, now dead, visits the sleeping Propertius in a dream that she insists is no figment of the poet's imagination (4.7.87-96):

'nec tu sperne piis venientia somnia portis:
cum pia venerunt somnia, pondus habent.
nocte vagae ferimur, nox clausas liberat umbras,
errat et abiecta Cerberus ipse sera.
luce iubent leges Lethaea ad stagna reverti:
nos vehimur, vectum nauta recensit onus.
nunc te possideant aliae: mox sola tenebo:
mecum eris et mixtis ossibus ossa teram.'
haec postquam querula mecum sub lite peregit,
inter complexus excidit umbra meos.

"Spurn not the dreams that come through the Righteous Gate; when righteous dreams come, they have the weight of truth. By night we drift abroad, night frees imprisoned shades, and even Cerberus casts aside his chains, and strays. At dawn the law compels us to return to Lethe's waters: we board, the ferryman counts the cargo boarded. Other women may possess you now: soon I alone shall hold you: with me you will be, and my bones shall press yours in close entwining." "When she had thus brought to an end her querulous indictment, the apparition vanished, baffling my embrace." (trans. Goold)

[811] Hubbard 1974:141: "The logic of the structure here is not a dramatic one it is not Acanthis and the poet who are in dialogue, but the poet is in dialogue with himself, assuring himself that his experience out-attests her."

Cynthia's ghost ends her speech by reassuring Propertius that she is a true, substantial, dream, one with *pondus, "*weight"--recall that, in Virgil's underworld, we are reminded that Aeneas is himself not yet a shade because he weighs down Charon's boat[812]--and reassures him that she "alone" will have him, and that, in death, they will be made one. Whether true or not, the dream's substance lasts only as long as the vision itself, and Cynthia's shade cannot survive Propertius' touch, or attempted embrace: *inter complexus excidit umbra meos*. But are we meant to think of Cynthia as a "true ghost" here, as a confirmation of that theory, as the first line of the poem confidently concludes, that "There are such things as ghosts"?[813] Certainly, the fact that the following poem features a Cynthia very much alive makes for a lively paradox, and suggests, as Papanghelis (1987:196) points out, an arrangement that was, perhaps, "not in the best humanitarian taste."[814] Cynthia, it turns out, dead a poem ago, has "just last night"[815] gone off to Lanuvium for religious rites or romantic trysts, and so Propertius decides to host a *ménage à*

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[812] Vir. *A*. 6.412-414 *simul accipit alueo / ingentem Aenean. gemuit sub pondere cumba / sutilis et multam accepit rimosa paludem.*

[813] 4.7.1-2 *Sunt aliquid Manes: letum non omnia finit, / luridaque evictos effugit umbra rogos*. If Pascal 1916:30-4 is right that Prop. 4.7 is a fantasy based on Calvus' *Quintilia*, then the literary and imaginative aspects of Cynthia's return from the grave are even more clear.

[814] For views on juxtaposition, see Warden 1980:80-1, Papanghelis 1987:196 n. 123, and Hutchinson *ad* 4.8 intro and *passim*. The two poems must be taken together: if Cynthia is Iliadic, then Cynthia's invasion in 4.8 is like Odysseus (Hubbard 1974:152-3 and Evans 1971:51-3). For the debts owed by both poems to mime traditions, see McKeown 1979:74-5).

[815] 4.8.1 *Disce quid Esquilias hac nocte fugarit aquosas, / cum vicina novis turba cucurrit agris*.

trois with two women gifted with poetically significant names (Phyllis and Teia) and proclivities appropriate to what the poet has in mind.[816] Even as the girls perform their entertaining striptease, Propertius cannot stop thinking about Cynthia: "they sang to a deaf man, they showed their naked breasts to a blind man: woe is me, I was completely at the gates of Lanuvium."[817] There is, I believe, a suggestion of fantasy, or day-dreaming, in these lines, with the hint of an implication that the scene of violence that follows—Cynthia bursts in, exacts vengeance on the Phyllis and Teia, and dictates humiliating terms to Propertius--is as much the product of Propertius' imagination as anything else in his poetry.

Or, of course, as little: recall that in Propertius' third elegy, the poet had come across the sleeping Cynthia, whom he idealized, mythologized, and cast in his imaginary one-sided romance, only for this happy scene to be cast into chaos by the waking Cynthia, who takes charge of the poem, of Propertius' posture as victim, and even of the poet's role as musician—Cynthia, now, is the one who plays Orpheus' lyre. So does Propertius resurrect Cynthia as he wishes, or does Cynthia burst into Propertius' life as she wishes? "You all ask," Propertius had opened his second book of poetry, "how it comes that I write so many love poems…It's not Calliope, nor Apollo who sings these things—that girl makes my genius!"[818]

Now, to some critics, Propertius' willingness to kill and resurrect Cynthia at will, and to give voice to multiple female figures in the fourth book, is a mark of his now increasingly

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[816] 4.8.29-32; on the names, see Hutchinson *ad* 4.8.29 and 31.

[817] 4.8.47-8 *cantabant surdo, nudabant pectora caeco: / Lanuvii ad portas, ei mihi, totus eram.*

[818] 2.1.1-4 *quaeritis unde mihi totiens scribantur amores, / unde meus veniat mollis in ora liber. / non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo: / ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*.

confident poetic powers. For Butrica (1996:153), for example, Horos' prediction that Propertius would see day or night and cry at Cynthia's whim,[819] is belied by the sense that "thanks to the power of poetry, she [Cynthia] lives or dies according to his." Heyworth and Morwood (2011:243) see a triumphant kind of glee in Propertius' constructivism: the poet "can kill her [Cynthia] off and he can bring her back to life again" because, in the end, "Cynthia is the poet's construction."

But Propertius' poetry is always sliding between ultimate power and powerlessness, between the sense that he is writing and ruling Cynthia and that Cynthia is writing and ruling him. It is in the last of Propertius' poems that the logic of this problem is carried to one of its possible ends, and in such a way as to match, carry forward, and develop the problems of Milanion and Protesilaus that had proved such rich paradigms throughout Propertius' works. It is to that final poem, the so-called "Queen of Elegies," that we now turn.

Propertius's Tomb: *Elegy* 4.11

Of Propertius' last elegy, one is tempted, at first view, to paraphrase what Blake said of Wordsworth's preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*: "I do not know who wrote this poem; it is very

[819] 4.1.143-4 *illius arbitrio noctem lucemque videbis, / gutta quoque ex oculis non nisi iussa cadet*.

mischievous, and directly contrary to Propertius' own practice."[820] The Cornelia elegy is difficult because it is *sui generis*, spoken by a woman who embodies Roman *virtus*, *memoria*, *pietas*, *mos maiorum, leges*--she is, we can say, everything that Propertius, as elegiac lover, is not. With its talk of wives and husbands, families and triumphs, children and ancestors, the last of Propertius' elegy seems a refusal of Propertian elegy as we have come to know it.

Propertius' final poem comes not to praise elegy, but to bury it, with all of the reversible irony that such a posture entails—the Cornelia's elegy (4.11), I will argue, serves as an epitaph for Propertian poetry and the program for a poetry of absence posed throughout Propertius' work. It was not enough for Propertius to kill off (4.7) and resurrect (4.8) Cynthia; in his last poem, Propertius destablizes the premise that made Cynthia possible, affirming that the poetry of love and desire may be nothing other than a kind of secret soliloquy, held in the private margins of a person's life. What it means for the dead to be able to speak to the living, and, inversely, for the living to speak to the dead, is the theme of Propertius' last poem, in which elegy as the poetry of absence is allowed to continue only as a poetry of soliloquy, no less dialogic for being completely solitary, and no less important, perhaps, for being completely private.

The poem as a whole is not a soliloquy, at least not ostensibly so; instead, it takes the form of an apostrophe--encompassing extended consolation, legal *apologia*, and self-praise--by the dead Cornelia, presented to the gods of the underworld, Cornelia's dead ancestors, her still-grieiving husband, Paullus Aemilius Lepidus (*cos. suff.* 34), and the couple's children. Cornelia

[820] Blake wrote his words in the margins of his copy of Wordsworth's *Essay Supplementary to the Preface*; for the broader context of Blake's relationship to Wordsworth and Blake's marginal notes to this text, see Gilchrist 1998 (1907):365.

begins the poem, and ends it, with no narrative frame; this isn't the first time that Propertius had given an entire poem to another voice--previously, there had been the Cynthia's Door (1.16), Gallus' epitaph (2.21), Horos' rebuke (if 4.1b is treated separately), Vertumnus' self-description (4.2), and Arethusa's letter to her husband (4.3, if you count the first line as her address-line)--but, as captsone and leavetaking for Propertius' fourth book of poetry (and for three books of poetry together, if we are to believe Butrica), the Cornelia elegy presents unique problems of interpretation.

Propertius resembles the Augustan poets we have seen in their tendency to use the ends of poems or books as invitations to reanalyze what had come before: so Virgil with the harmful shadows of his tenth *Eclogue*, the Orphic close to the *Georgics*, and Aeneas' anger in the *Aeneid*; so Horace with the end of the second *Epode*, the slave-address at the end of the tenth *Satire*, the dynamic circling monumentality of the *Odes*, and the monstrous hybrid "exit pursued by leach-bear"conclusion of the *Ars Poetica*. In the case of Propertius' elegies, the last poem is an invitation to reanalyze elegy from two perspectives: that of the public face of Rome, and that of the entirely private face of soliloquy. It is a combination that Propertius had already experimented with at the end of his first book, where, as we have seen, Propertius grouped poems spoken about and in solitude, concluding, at last, with a turn towards "Roman discord" (*Discordia Romana*). Nothing was left, in 1.20, of Hercules' beloved Hylas but the echoes carried by the wind, and the book comes to a close with (a) Gallus' epitaph and the Perugine tombs, graveyard of Italy in times of trouble, driven by Roman discord to become a "miserable ground" (*miseri…solo*), the fertile ground that gave Propertius birth (*me genuit*)--a miserable land as progenitor for a miserable poet, with this last poem providing yet another way to understand the sadness of Propertius that we'd queried at his first book's beginning.

In this section, I show how Propertius' portrayal of Cornelia, and, in particular, of Cornelia's Protesilaus-inspired solution to the problem of death's absence, is a natural outgrowth, delimitation, and reversal of what had been Propertius' puzzle from his very first poem, the problem of poetic love as soliloquy, in other words, the problem of solitude. For in Propertius' final poem, Propertius' perennial themes—desire, longing nostalgia, love in and of absence—remain the same, but they are relegated to a guarded, close-kept, place. And yet, although this new and private setting does put an end to elegy's flagrantly public posture of withdrawal, it does not remove, but, rather, heightens, elegy's power to move and represent desire itself. Soliloquy, as we will see, is both a resource and a source of anxiety to elegiac love in this last poem; as we shall see, Propertius' wrestling with the problem of solitude ensures that this poem will be neithe purely patriotic nor, as other critics have made it out to be, wholly dark and pessimistic. For at the same time that this poem gives weight to Cornelia's ghost, giving her an entire poem to address herself, from the dead, to her husband, family, and country, it also has Cornelia expound a model for future communication that will mean an end to dialogue, and a beginning, at least in secret, of dialogic soliloquy, with the dead husband, Paullus, left to speak, in solitude, with the images of his own mind's making.

Insisting on the importance of figures of unrealized desire does not require that we deny that this poem participates in and confirms a wide range of social codes that were at the core of Augustus' new dispensation. It is undeniable, for example, that this poem honors an historical figure who lived and died, and the fact that this figure was part of an aristocratic family with very close connections to the first citizen of Rome—the "god" who cries at Cornelia's death is

none other than the man-god, Augustus[821] —shows that this poem is very much an *historia Romana*,[822] and, beyond that, a "part of the established empire,"[823] a panegyric, in the strongest sense, for Augustus and his moral reforms.[824] Indeed, the poem's powerful echoes of the rhetoric of formal state consolation and elegy only heightens the sense that Propertius' last poem is decidedly, and strongly, Roman, Augustan, and political in tone and intention.[825] Indeed, in

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[821] 4.11.58-60 *defensa et gemitu Caesaris ossa mea. / ille sua nata dignam vixisse sororem / increpat, et lacrimas vidimus ire deo*; as Hutchinson notes, there is something paradoxical in this god's flowing tears, for "gods were not meant to weep." (Hutchinson *ad* 4.11.60; cf. Ov. *Fasti* 4.521-2, and *Epic. Drusi* 466)

[822] 3.4.10 *ite et Romanae consulite historiae!*

[823] As Propertius had predicted of Tullus, at 1.6.34 *ibis et accepti pars eris imperii*.

[824] For Butler and Barber (1933:xv), the poem formed "a worthy conclusion to a book that is predominantly Roman in spirit," and, in a similar vein, Alison Keith (2008:137) sees the poem as the culmination of a process that has been ongoing through book 4 (and especially apparent in 4.6) by which Propertius "in public pefrormance abandons amatory themes for imperial panegyric (cf. 4.10, 4.11)." For Cairns (2006:361), 4.11 is evidence that "by 16 BCE Propertius had been fully assimilated into the innermost circles surrounding the imperial family…Propertius' last words to his public, placed in the mouth of Cornelia, are thus those of a fully committed supporter of the regime." See also Günther 2006:395.

[825] On the rhetorical elements in 4.11, and in particular its relationship to the *consolatio*, see Reinhardt 2006:216, who sees the poem as a form of funeral mime, for which, cf. Suet. *Vesp*. 19, Purcell 1999, and Sumi 2002.

many senses, this poem seems to be an ideal example of what Andrew Feldherr (2000) has shown to be a key function of Roman poetry of lament: depictions of solitude, withdrawal, and private mourning can serve, through their public function as shared literature, as a way to bring together otherwise isolated, alienated, or separated people.

Cornelia, we have said, is this poem's sole speaker, and her range of address is wide, including figures mythological, divine, human, natural, and phantasmagoric, allowing us a broad view on a particularly complex female character. We've already seen Propertius displace his living desire on to the dead Protesilaus (1.19), then on to the far-away Arethusa (4.3), then, at last, on to the dead Cynthia herself (4.7): here, Propertius shares speaking desire, but of a different character, with someone wholly outside of his normal frame. The character of Cornelia herself has been analyzed from a number of perspectives: as a representation of the anti-elegiac woman,[826] as a paean to married love,[827] as a form of disguised resistance to codes of conduct for women at Rome,[828] as despair at death's power to destroy even the best of matrons,[829] as a consummate portrait of a Roman ice queen.[830] Recently, Micaela Janan (2001:167), building on a wealth of feminist approaches that have focused on the "scriptedness" of elegiac women, has

[826] Stahl 1985:262, Wyke 1987a:171-2.

[827] Plessis 1884:288-9; Grimal 1952:449; Highet 1957:98-105; Luck 1959:115; Reizentstein 1969; Weeber 1977:217-49.

[828] Richardson 1977:481.

[829] Curran 1968.

[830] La Penna 1951:86-8, 1977:94-5; Hallett 1971:163-75; Hubbard 1974:145-9; Sullivan 1976:44.

performed a detailed Lacanian reading of the poem, to reveal the ways by which Propertius uses Cornelia not so much to "champion Woman so much as reveal Her to be the concomitant of our own unexamined habits of mind."[831] What has impressed almost all critics, then, is the strong sense of presence that Cornelia possesses, and in such a way as to connect her with the institutions, sites, and very real social world of Augustus' Rome.

But alongside this poem's undeniably important social functions, this poem aims to give the elegiac, soliloquizing, and solitary imagination that had been Propertius' *métier* a space all its own in this new moral and poetic regime, and the place for erotic, that is, Propertian, elegy, turns out to be a place of complete secrecy and solitude.[832] In this new model of elegiac life and love, there must, at least in public, be some ostensible "propriety and limit to longing," especially, as we shall see, if Propertius means to defend himself against Horace's attempt to put elegy in its place.[833] And so it is fitting that this, the last of Propertius' elegies, begins with a command to put an end to elegy (4.11.1-8):

Desine, Paulle, meum lacrimis urgere sepulcrum:
panditur ad nullas ianua nigra preces:
cum semel infernas intrarunt funera leges,

[831] On Cynthia as an empty signifier and a cipher, see Miller 2004:60-8. For critiques of Lacanian readings of Propertius, see Buchan 2005:198-202 and Lowrie 2005:108-116.

[832] New ideas about the relationship of the public and private clearly played an important role in the Roman Revolution; see, for example Wallace-Hadrill 1994, especially ch. 2-3.

[833] For Horace at his least (but still very) restrained, see Horace, *C*. 1.24.1-2 *Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus / tam cari capitis?*

non exorato stant adamante viae.

te licet orantem fuscae deus audiat aulae:

nempe tuas lacrimas litora surda bibent.

vota movent superos: ubi portitor aera recepit,

observat herbosos lurida porta rogos.[834]

"Cease, Paullus, to burden my grave with tears: the black door opens to no prayers. When once the funeral procession has entered the world below, the way stands fast in inexorable adamant. Though the god of the hall of darkness hear your pleading, doubt not that infernal shores will drink your tears unmoved. Prayers move the gods above: after the ferryman has received his coin, a wan portal closes on the collapsed funeral pyre. " (trans. Goold, rearranged according to MS line-order)

Cornelia's opening word—"cease" (*desine*)—borrows from funeral inscriptions in which the dead are made to ask the living for an end to laments.[835] It is also, of course a fitting word to open a poem that ends a book, a collection, and, formally speaking, a lifetime of poetry.[836] As if to bring attention to this poem's concluding function, Propertius had opened the previous,

[834] I agree with Heyworth (*ad*. 4.11.1-8*)* and Hutchinson (*ad* 4.11.8), and against Goold 1966:102-4 and Butrica 1984:198-9, that there is no justification for transposition in these lines.

[835] cf. Hutchinson *ad* 4.11.1; examples include *CIL* 1^2 1215.*b*3 *desinite…lacrimas fundere*; 1^2 1223.13-14 *desine iam frustra, mater mea*…

[836] On the closural effect of *desine*, see Hutchinson *ad* 4.11.1, and H-M 2011:342.

penultimate poem of the collection, 4.10, a mytho-historical celebration of Jupiter Feretrius, with the inverse term: "I shall begin…" (*incipiam*).[837]

Recalling the way that Horos reversed the opening poem's turn away from love and towards *res Romanae*, Cornelia's call for an end to lament seems, by contrast, an ideal way to confirm the finality of aetiological poetry, its victory over the poetry of desire, and it is, in many ways, an opening uniquely well suited to bring to an end, not such any poetry, but elegiac poetry in particular. For these words so frequently put into the mouth of the dead--"stop pressing my tomb with tears"--also evoke, and not by accident, what the all too living opponents of elegy, and elegiac lament, say when they want to help a mourning poet choose a cheerier theme or a more august mode. So, when Horace wants to dissuade his friend Valgius (*amice Valgi*) from perpetual lament, and, poetically speaking, the elegy of dead love, he tells Valgius, "You constantly burden (*semper urges*) the departed, Mystes, with tearful songs (*flebilibus modis*), neither with the rising night do your loves subside, nor when it flees the quick sun."[838] This leads Horace to his major piece of advice: "Cease at last your soft complaints!" (*desine mollium / tandem querellarum--C.* 2.9.17-18).[839] In the Augustan period, generic interstices were creative

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[837] 4.10.1 *Nunc Iovis incipiam causas aperire Feretri / armaque de ducibus trina recepta tribus*.

[838] Hor. *C.* 2.9.9-20, esp. ll. 9-12 *tu semper urges flebilibus modis / Mysten ademptum, nec tibi Vespero / surgente decedunt amore / nec rapidum fugiente solem.*

[839] Common words include *desine:desine; urges:urgere; flebilibus:lacrimis.* Compare the common request for an end to mourning with Aeneas' request for an end to Dido's elegiac love: "stop inciting me and yourself with your complaints" (V. *A.* 4.360 *desine meque tuis incendere teque querelis*); on Dido and the elegiac tradition, see Cairns 1989:129-150.

war-zones, so how a poet drew generic lines, what he put inside and what outside his repetoire of genius, could be very important, and subject to dispute; in the case of Propertius and Horace, we should not miss, for example, that Horace actually imagines himself entering into gladiatorial combat with an elegist, in the empty temple of the Roman bards (*vacuam Romanis vatibus aedem*), with many suspecting that his laughably proud elegiac opponent--"he is a Mimnermus and puffs up with the adoptive name"--might be none other than Propertius.[840]

For Propertius, then, to take up Horace's limitation on elegy is something worthy of note, and would have been even if Propertius had not already deployed these fighting words in precisely the opposite sense: in an earlier poem, Propertius had used this formulation to express his (sometime-)false friend Lynceus' turn towards elegy, and in particular erotic elegy, and away from the tragic mode (2.34.41-46):

desine et Aeschyleo componere verba coturno,
desine, et ad mollis membra resolve choros!
incipe iam angusto versus includere torno,
inque tuos ignis, dure poeta, veni!
tu non Antimacho, non tutior ibis Homero:
despicit et magnos recta puella deos.

[840] *Ars Poetica* 91-101, on which, see Brink *ad loc*. The identification with Propertius is based primarily on Propertius' claim at 1.9.11-12 *plus in amore valet Mimnermi versus Homero; / carmina mansuetus lenia quaerit Amor*. On Propertius' relationship to Horace on elegy, see Houghton 2013:351-2.

> "Cease (*desine*) to compose speeches for the buskin of Aeschylus and relax your limbs for gentle dances. Begin (*incipe*) now to turn your verses on a narrow lathe and come nearer, hard-hearted poet, to the fires you feel. You will not far safer than Antimachus or Homer: an attractive girl despises even the mighty gods." (trans. Goold)

Propertius is here not so much recommending elegy as announcing what now seems to be the inevitable capture of Lynceus by elegy's flames, with a concomitant promise of a fate that will be as perilous and painful as that of Antimachus or Homer.[841] What is important, however, is that

[841] Antimachus, we recall, was "struck" (πληγεὶς) with love of Lyde, much as Milanion, in Propertius' first elegy, had been "wounded" (*saucius*) with love for Atalanta; Antimachus' vulnerability to love does not end, however, with Lyde's death, for it is that death that propels Antimachus into his tearful elegies. Antimachus, too, on one possible reading of Hermesianax's lines (see above), may have reacted to Lyde's death by giving up epic themes and turning towards the erotic elegy of lament, in much the same way as Propertius advises Lynceus to turn from tragedy to love. Homer's vulnerability derives from the same source as our own knowledge of Antimachus' fate: Hermesianax's *Leontion*, which recounts that Homer fell in love with one of his own creations, Penelope (fr. 7.27-34). Antimachus loved a real woman, then wrote elegies that evoked her after her death, populating his world with sad mythological figures in order to lessen his distress; Homer sang not only the *Odyssey* but also the *Iliad*, "Icarius' race [Penelope's father], Amcylas' town [Helen's ancestor]" out of love for Penelope: "smarting for her, he settled in a tiny isle, leaving behind his own broad homeland far behind" (ἣν διὰ πολλὰ παθὼν ὀλίγην ἐσενάσσατο νῆσον, / πολλὸν ἀπ' εὐρείης λειπόμενος πατρίδος·) and sang his poems while "touching on his own distress (ἰδίων ἁπτόμενος παθέων)." What exactly is being suggested here

the command issued by Propertius to Lynceus--"Stop writing tragedy; start writing elegy!"--is precisely the reverse of the message implied by Propertius' last two poems--"Start writing aetiologies; stop pronouncing elegies!"[842] And not just any elegies, as it turns out, but the kind of elegies that Propertius had written from his first poem: elegies recited to absent girls.

For Cornelia's first line also reacts to, builds on, and complicates, the ambition and hope expressed by first Propertius' first poem and its *exemplum*, the Milanion motif: Cornelia urges Paullus to accept what Propertius of the first poem, deceived by pastoral wish-fulfillment, could not, that prayers cannot reach a girl who is not there: "the black gates open to no prayers

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is far from clear: did Homer fall in love with Penelope, or with the character of Penelope that he had himself sung into being? The text is Hermesianax fr. 7.27-34 Αὐτὸς δ' οὗτος ἀοιδός, ὃν ἐκ Διὸς αἶσα φυλάσσει / ἥδιστον πάντων δαίμονα μουσοπόλων / λεπτὴν ᾗς Ἰθάκην ἐνετείνατο θεῖος Ὅμηρος / ᾠδῇσιν πινυτῆς εἵνεκα Πηνελόπης, / ἣν διὰ πολλὰ παθὼν ὀλίγην ἐσενάσσατο νῆσον, / πολλὸν ἀπ' εὐρείης λειπόμενος πατρίδος· / ἔκλεε δ' Ἰκαρίου τε γένος καὶ δῆμον Ἀμύκλου / καὶ Σπάρτην, ἰδίων ἁπτόμενος παθέων. "The very bard, whom Zeus' fate upholds / Sweetest divinity of all versed in song, / The godlike Homer set mean Ithaca / To verse for love of wise Penelope. / Smarting for her, he settled in a tiny isle / Leaving behind his own broad homeland far behind; / And hymned Icarius' race, Amyclas' town / And Sparta, touching on his own distress." (trans. Lightfoot)

[842] It is remarkable, with these poetic and epigraphic contexts in mind, that Cynthia's first word in Propertius' poetry—*tandem*, "at last,"—can be taken together with her alter ego Cornelia's first word—*desine*, "stop,"—to yield Horace's call for an end to elegy, *desine mollium / tandem querellarum* (*C*. 2.9.17-18), "stop, at last, your soft complaints."

(*preces*)" and "surely (*nempe*) the deaf shores (*litora surda*) drink your tears."[843] And yet, for all her insistence on the irreversibility of death, and the deafness of the dead, Cornelia is…speaking, and, not only that, listening. Does Paullus hear his wife's words? We do not know, and are given no indication, no stage-direction or description, of any reaction on his part. Can she hear him? She certainly thinks she can, at least his groans, but is equally certain that the underworld itself will close its ears to his pleas, making his prayer, if not wholly unheard, at the very least ineffectual and vain. As Hutchinson has noted (*ad* 4.11.2), Paullus' prayers (*preces*) are imagined as being addressed to the gods, to Cornelia, and to the gates of death; what has gone unnoticed, however, is that these failed "prayers" take up, as well, those prayers that successfully won for Milanion, but not for Propertius, the love of an absent girl.[844] In the terms of Propertius' first elegy, Paullus suffers like Propertius, from the absence of his girl--like Propertius, his prayers will, in the end, be unsuccessful, unable to achieve the success that Milanion's tears secured: they will not bring Cornelia back, and, even worse, they may not even reach her at all.

Abandoning the hope that tears and prayers can reach absent beloveds across space or the boundaries of mortality, entails an end to a particular way of conceiving Propertian elegy. But while this last poem is, in its way, a refusal of elegy, it is also, and this is what makes it so

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[843] Cornelia's use of *nempe* has obviously rhetorical value, but also note *Anth. Lat*. 721 *Vivere post obitum vatem vis nosse, viator? / Quod legis, ecce loquor; vox tua* ***nempe*** *mea est.* Andrew Felhderr (2000:218 n. 34) compares this poem with a fragmetnary inscription from Ostia, *CIL* 14.356= *CE* 1450.

[844] Note the prevelance of "prayer" words in the opening lines of 4.11: 2 *preces*, 4 *non exorando…adamante*, 5 *orantem*, 7 *vota*.

strange, an invitation to a new model of elegy, one more avowedly personal, private, solitary, and individual than had previously been the case. As we have seen, we have no way of knowing to what extent such a concept, or such a structure, was something that Propertius inherited or adapted from the Greek models for the erotic elegy of lament, works like Antimachus' *Lyde*, Parthenius' *Arête*, or Calvus' *Quintilia*. But it is also quite possible that the foment of writing concerned with the problems of solitude, soliloquy, and social engagement; the conflict between the individual and society in a time when the rules of privacy and politics were being rewritten; and the possibility for increasingly tight larger structures offered by developments in the technology and utilization of the book form, proved, collectively, the ideal groundwork for Propertius' development of a new kind of poetry.

But it is important to note that Cornelia's epitaph makes for anything but a clean close to elegy. First, there is a tension in the poem's premise: although the underworld gods may not hear or respond to Paullus' prayers, the fact that Cornelia has heard Paullus' complaints and can speak to him in this poem suggests that, as in the phantom Cynthia's return from the dead, "there are, after all, ghosts," and that these ghosts can hear our prayers, and we can hear their responses. Cynthia, there, had insisted that her ghost was one of weighty substance; here, Cornelia affims that what substance she has is of a limited kind: "I am such a weight (*onus*)," Cornelia tells Paulus, "as can be gathered (*legatur*) in five fingers (*digitis quinque)*."[845] It is also a line that draws attention to Cornelia's textualization as epitaph: *legatur* suggests not only the ash grasped

[845] Prop. 4.11.14 *et sum quod digitis quinque legatur onus*. For Papanghelis (1987:187), the line possesses "a stark physiological, post-mortem quality" and lies "closer to John Donne's 'Funerals' and 'Relics' than to the conventional pathos of ancient sepulchral poetry."

in a mourners hand, but, as well, the braille-like touching-reading that epitaphs invite: "I am," that is, "such a weight as can be *read* by five fingers."[846] Cornelia's conversion into text is emphasized later in the poem: "on *this stone* I will be read (*legar*) to have been married to one man."[847] As Michèle Lowrie (2008:171) has noted, throughout this poem, deictics draw us both to the underworld[848] and to the tomb itself,[849] with the result that the poem as a whole has us

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[846] cf. "Margaret Hubbard 1974:146-7 "a load for five fingers to scrabble for…so the mansuscripts say, and perhaps rightly, with a single letter variation on the ordinary expression, 'a load five fingers can carry.'" Reading tombstones is very important in Propertius' work: the phantom Cynthia commands Propertius to "inscribe a song worthy of me on a column--a short song, that a porter rushing from the city might read (*legat*): 'Here, in Tibur's soil, lies golden Cynthia: glory, Anio, is added to your banks."(Prop. 4.7.83-6) Philip Hardie has tantalizingly suggested that Ovid's assurance, at the end of the *Metamorphoses,* that "*ore legar populi*" (15.878) might mean, not only "I shall be read on the lips of the people," but also "'I [i.e. my soul] shall be gathered on the lips of the people', hinting at an image of poetic tradition and transmission as a Pythagoreanizing reembodiment of dead poets in the bodies of living poets – or living readers." (Hardie 2002b:2)

[847] 4.11.36 *in lapide hoc uni nupta fuisse legar.* On punning of *lex, legatur* (4.11.14) and *legat* (4.11.36), and for the meaning of these "reading" terms in the poem more broadly, see Lowrie 2008:175-6. Feldherr 2000, on Catullus 101, draws special attention to the way that the reader's voice becomes the "living presence of the dead," comparing especially *CE* 513 and *CE* 1278.

[848] 4.11.17-18 *immatura licet tamen* ***huc*** *non noxia veni: / det pater* ***hic*** *umbrae mollia iura meae.*

unsure whether "whether we are hearing Cornelia speak or reading her inscription…[generating] a logical discrepancy that makes the speech act inconsistent."

This discrepancy, this paradox, in Paullus' relationship to his dead wife becomes most acute, when Cornelia, having reminded Paullus that all of the household and household duties now belong to Paullus alone,[850] goes on to advise him to keep his grief to himself, and away from their children (4.11.79-84):

et si quid doliturus eris, sine testibus illis!
cum venient, siccis oscula falle genis!
sat tibi sint noctes, quas de me, Paulle, fatiges,
somniaque in faciem credita saepe meam:
atque ubi secreto nostra ad simulacra loqueris,
ut responsurae singula verba iace.[851]

"And if you are about to grieve, do so when they cannot witness it; when they come, deceive their kisses with cheeks that are dry. Be the nights enough for you to wear out with thoughts of me, and the dreams

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[849] 4.11.36 *in lapide* ***hoc*** *uni nupta fuisse legar.*

[850] 4.11.78 *tota domus coepit nunc onus esse tuum; "onus*" recalls and contrasts with Cornelia, who, as we have seen above, is only *onus* to be grasped/read with five fingres (4.11.14).

[851] Rothstein 1924 reads *tace* for *iace*, but, as Fedeli has noted, the case for *tace* is heavily strengthened by comparison with the final lines of the first poem of book 2, which also involve tomb-side mourning: 2.1.75-8 *si te [Maecenas] forte meo ducet via proxima busto, / esseda caelatis siste Britanna iugis, / taliaque illacrimans mutae iace verba favillae: 'Huic misero fatum dura puella fuit.'*

> which oft by faith assume my features: and when in secret (*in secreto*) you speak to my images (*simulacra*), utter every word as though I would reply." (trans. Goold, with alterations)

This is only one part of a much larger poem, but it is one that, in providing an alternative model for elegiac speech, deserves close attention. In a poem whose judicial frame makes "witnesses" (and their tears) so ubiquitous,[852] it is notable that the one man whose pain and mourning must be without witnesses is Paullus, who can be sad, but whose cheeks must be dry.[853] Paullus, who must stop crying at Cornelia's tomb, need not, it seems, let go of Cornelia all together: he can not only speak to her, but he can act as if he could speak *with* her. He is not to do this in front of his children, nor, by extension, in front of his household, his new wife, or anyone else: the conversations are to take place at night, perhaps in dreams, and, most certainly, "in secret."

The *topos* of lovers speaking with the image of an absent beloved was not, of course, unknown in ancient myth and literature, and Propertius, as we have seen, made use of one of the classic examples of this *topos*, Laodamia and her image of the dead Protesilaus, towards the end of his *Monobiblos*.[854] Deborah Steiner has, as well, recently shown how archaic Greek statues and inscriptions were designed and written, in part, as a way to console survivors and preserve social relations.[855] And, as many critics have emphasized, Cornelia's particular advice here, and

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[852] 4.11.37 *testor maiorum cineres,* 4.11.99 *flentes me surgite, testes*.

[853] As the advice to Jews at Ivy League universities used to go: “Dress British, think Yiddish.”

[854] For a treatment of the *topos* of lovers' dialogues with the portrait of an absent beloved, and as a form of *sermocinatio*, "giving speech to a voiceles agent"), see Bettini 1999:118, with reference to Paullus at p. 119.

[855] Steiner 2001, esp. 151.

her words elsewhere in the poem, seem to strongly echo key elements of the myth of Alcestis, the wife who gives herself over to death in order to lengthen her husband's life.[856] In Euripides' version of the story, once Alcestis had sacrificed herself, Admetus promised himself certain consolations (*Alcestis* 348-56):

> "An image of you shaped by the hand of skilled craftsmen shall be laid out in my bed. [350] I shall fall into its arms, and as I embrace it and call your name I shall imagine, though I have her not, that I hold my dear wife in my arms, a cold pleasure, to be sure, but thus I shall lighten my soul's heaviness. And perhaps you will cheer me by visiting me in dreams. For even in sleep it is pleasant to see loved ones for however long we are permitted." (trans. Kovacs)[857]

But what is at the key element of Paullus' predicted actions--his speaking to his wife's *simulacra* "as if they could respond" (*ut responsurae*)--is completely unattested in any of the versions of the Alcestis myth that have come down to us. Scholars have taken a wide variety of stances on this scene of secret soliloquies: for Richardson (*ad* 4.11.84), the moment was "close to bathos," presumably because it just seems silly for someone to talk to someone who isn't there, sillier still,

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[856] On Cornelia as Alcestis, see Curran 1968:136, 138; Paduano 1968; Reitzenstein 1969; Richardson 1977:481-2; Janan 2001:158-163.

[857] σοφῆι δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σὸν / εἰκασθὲν ἐν λέκτροισιν ἐκταθήσεται, / ὧι προσπεσοῦμαι καὶ περιπτύσσων χέρας / ὄνομα καλῶν σὸν τὴν φίλην ἐν ἀγκάλαις / δόξω γυναῖκα καίπερ οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν· / ψυχρὰν μέν, οἶμαι, τέρψιν, ἀλλ' ὅμως βάρος / ψυχῆς ἀπαντλοίην ἄν. ἐν δ' ὀνείρασιν / φοιτῶσά μ' εὐφραίνοις ἄν: ἡδὺ γὰρ φίλους / κἀν νυκτὶ λεύσσειν, ὅντιν' ἂν παρῇ χρόνον.

or perhaps even mad, to leave one's imaginary friends pauses for response; for Micaela Janan (2001:162), the moment is one of tragic banality, with the empty spaces that are all that remain of Cornelia representing the emptiness, the non-existence, the "insubstantiality of the principles to which she has subjected the whole of her life," her memory insulted by the fact that "pantomime conversation costs Paullus next to nothing;" and for Michèle Lowrie (2009:359), the moment is an "allegory of reading" that crowns the triumph of textuality, for, "although art or poetry cannot be expected to speak on its own, posterity can continue to address it as if it could."

What has not been emphasized, however, is the way in which this image of the lover's, not soliloquy, but soliloquizing demi-dialogue, represents a new way of posing the problem that had been important for Propertius' work since his very first poem and that had been embodied in the case of Milanion: what does it mean to speak to an absent beloved? These dreams are one of the elements that help extend the ambiguity of this poem's situation to its farthest, and critically underappreciated, horizon: Paullus, by "exhausting the night about" Cornelia, will see and speak with, not Cornelia, but with dreams that he will believe to be of her--*somniaque in faciem credita saepe meam*. Certain textual critics have suspected *credita*,[858] but, as we saw was the case with Horace's Argive man, what one believes one hears or sees is of the essence of the kinds of hallucinations, the imagined scenes, that Cornelia is here discussing. Hence the important juxtaposition of these frequent, iterative, and plural dreams with the equally plural *simulacra*: Cornelia is not speaking, here, of the kind of *imago*, a physical fetish or icon, that a Laodamia could hold in her hand, but, rather, of the kind of *imago* that one can possess, in multiple forms

[858] Hutchinson *ad loc.* favors Graevius' emendation to *reddita*.

and more privately, in and as one's dreams.[859] These *somnia* and *simulacra* will, says Cornelia, be Paullus' doing, the product of his belief and imagination, even before he begins his conversations.[860] These conversations, Cornelia emphasizes, will be one-sided, and suffused not so much with sound as with expectation: "Throw out your words one by one (*singula verba*),[861]

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[859] *Pace* Hutchinson *ad* 4.11.83-4, who sees Cornelia as urging Paullus "to intense communion with her image, whether statue (cf. Eur. *Alc*. 348-54, Stat. *Silv*. 2.7.128-31) or small portrait (cf. Ov. *Ex P.* 2.8.57 (*simulacra*), 65-74).

[860] For the collocation of *somnia* and *simulacra*, see Lucr. 4.788-91 *quid porro, in numerum procedere cum* ***simulacra*** */ cernimus* ***in somnis*** *et mollia membra movere, / mollia mobiliter cum alternis bracchia mittunt / et repetunt oculis gestum pede convenienti?*; Lucr. 5.62-3 *sed simulacra solere in somnis fallere mentem, / cernere cum videamur eum quem vita reliquit.* Propertius' *ad simulacra* is the only example of this particular phrase in the Latin corpus, though people do often speak to a single *simulacrum*: Caesar speaks of how he was in the temple of Minerva (*BC* 3.105.3) and *ad simulacrum Minervae spectavisset*; Livy describes how, after Jupiter was insulted by a visiting enemy diplomat, Tiberius Manlius, the consul, went *conversus ad simulacrum Iovis* (*AUC* 8.5.8), with direct addresses (*inquit*) to Jupiter following (*audi Iuppiter*—just before the offender dies, and Manlius proclaims his famous *es, magne Iuppiter*). Later in Livy, Perseus and his brother Demetrius watch as two columns *concurrere ad simulacrum pugnae*, "engage in a combat simulation," (*AUC* 40.6.5) a helpful reminder of the words broader applicability to imagination, deception, and show.

[861] Tibullus demonstrates one model for these "one by one words" in the first poem of his second book, which calls forth friends who never arrive for the celebration of the *Amarvalia*, friends

as if to one about to respond."[862] It is not that Cornelia's ghost will speak to Paullus, but that he is to act in such a way that presupposes that she will.

We are involved, here, in a very delicate dialectic, and one that needs unravelling. There is one sense in which Cornelia promises the kind of presence offered in dreams: it is not her presence that she promises, but Paullus' ability to call forth a Cornelia for himself, and of himself. By this logic, these images are no more real than the empty shadows of nothing that Propertius once feared even when he was completely alone: "I cannot tolerate Jupiter as a rival. Even when alone, I fear my own shadows--which are *nothing* (*quod nil est*)--so stupid am I, and I tremble, often, when there is nothing to fear."[863] When Propertius is alone, he imagines hostile

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whom he exhorts to make echo the name of Tibullus' patron and friend, Messalla: "But let each say over their wine-cup, 'Health to Messalla!' and the name of the absent one be echoed in every word (Tib. 2.1.31-2 *Sed 'bene Messallam' sua quisque ad pocula dicat, / Nomen et absentis singula verba sonent*). *Singula verba* was a phrase that appealed to Ovid during his period of exile, with *singula* usefully hinting at the bursts of sobbing that Ovid's isolation could inflict (*Tristia* 3.5.13-14 *et lacrimas cernens in singula verba cadentes / ore meo lacrimas, auribus illa bibi*; *Ep. ex Pont*. 1.5.19-20 *Scilicet incipiam lima mordacius uti / et sub iudicium singula verba vocem*), but it is possible that Ovid's use of the phrase at *Heroides* 16.244 (*ad vulnus referens singula verba meum*) could have predated the publication of Propertius' fourth book.

[862] On *ut responsurae*, Shackleton-Bailey 1967 compares helpfully with Pliny *Paneg*. 73.6 *Hoc ipsum has nos sedes quasi responsuras interrogemus, uiderintne umquam principis lacrimas.*

[863] 2.34.17-20 *lecto te solum, lecto te deprecor uno: / rivalem possum non ego ferre Iovem. / ipse meas solus, quod nil est, aemulor umbras, / stultus et in nullo saepe timore tremo*.

company: will Paullus' future interaction with Cornelia be, like those shadows, "a thing of nothing?" If the Cornelia's with which Paullus will interact in the future are such things are dreams are made of, then might the Cornelia that we are listening to Paullus address now, be, as well, such a dream? The possibility that Cornelia herself might be an invented specter raises, in turn, a larger challenge to the premise of the poem as a whole: given the confused nature of Cornelia's status in this poem--as simultaneously written object and speaking ghost, as dream and as vision, as in the underworld and also prior to the crossing of the river--and given to its anxieties about the very possibility of conversation with the world of the dead--recall the deaf streams and closed gates of the opening--this command by Cornelia, with its rich resonances of Alcestis and Laodamia, encourages us to wonder whether this entire poem itself might be the kind of poetic dream-product that develops out of the empty spaces and silences that Paullus is asked to maintain in his conversations with the dead, whether this is a poem written out of desire and expectation, out of internal, rather than external, vision and audition.[864] If this can be the case for Cornelia, then could it not, as well, be the case with Cynthia? Seen in this light, our first encounter with Cynthia herself had been a kind of audition for this moment: Propertius had come across a sleeping Cynthia, and had played out a script of love and seduction with the sleeping Cynthia, who, upon awaking, turns out to have been a figure in as profound a state of physical and mythological solitude as Propertius himself. That dialogue failed, however, because Cynthia was, in the end, present, because Cynthia did, in the end, wake up from her sleep: how much

[864] As Hutchinson notes (*ad loc.*) tersely, but thought-provokingly, "That communication interacts with the present communication, also ultimately unreal."

more perfect, how much less easily disturbed, is the entire elision of the beloved herself by way of fiction.

Some would be tempted, here, to take this last poem as authorization to gleefully read Cynthia as *merely* a cipher, an empty projection of Propertius' imagining. But this would make for very weak reading: Propertius is interesting because he keeps alive the tension between the solitudes that he imagines, and the other populated worlds and figures that continually come into those empty spaces, and in ways that seem uncontrolled and uncontrollable. Even if we see figures like Cynthia as Propertius' projections, there is nothing *mere* about them, and they are not ciphers: instead, they are creatures that desire, that want to be close and communicate. For although Propertius did come upon the sleeping Cynthia back in elegy 1.3, Cynthia did, in that poem, wake up and assertively speak her peace, in ways that frustrated the moral clarity of Propertius' self-representation in the first *Elegy*; and, as we have seen, Cynthia did speak from the dead, affirming her own virtue and voice against the falseness of Propertius and his immoral dalliances; and, lest we forget, Cornelia is, herself, the sole voice of this poem, so that whatever we intuit about the fictionality of her future, present, or past voice, is a fiction that she has made for herself.

In this poem, Cornelia is the speaker, Paullus the projected cipher who appears and disappears with as much reckless abandon, and narrative incoherence, as did Cynthia in so many of Propertius' poems. And, as important as he is, Paullus is but one of the many figures that Cornelia summons forth as witnesses to her speech, and one that she, at her speech's end, leaves behind for the heavens that she has earned through her virtues (*moribus*) and the merit of her ancestors (*honoratis…avis*). Paullus, that is, is but one shade, but one *imago*, in a much larger cabinet of *imagines*, and, although Paullus may have an *imago* of Cornelia, the Paullus that this

poem gives us is, himself, but the *imago* of Cornelia, with a complex inversion of the polarities that Propertius had expressed by way of Protesilaus in poem 1.19: "I shall always be called," Propertius had told Cynthia, "your *imago*."[865] Cornelia represents yet another instance of Propertius' ability to, not only dream others, but to create a world of powerful dreamers, a world in which the male lover, or the elegiac poet, might be, not only the producer of dreams, but the product of others' dreams. Cornelia, in this sense, represents an ideal endpoint for Propertian elegy, and a culmination of trends that we have observed throughout the writers of this period, because she is the author of the fiction of her own fictionality.

There are, then, two ways of viewing this poem's model of fictional agency: both, however, concern what happens *in secreto*. In Propertius' last poem, there is one sense in which the poet, at last, gives up the struggle with the absent beloved by giving up the game and removing the resistance of external conditions: the poet's relationship to the beloved will be, from here on in, an affair wholly his own, secret, and distinct from the rest of life. In his secret place, Paullus can have what the storm-tossed poet of 1.18 could only dream of: a place where "here, I can freely pour forth my secret anguish," and with no lonely rocks, trees, caverns, or mountains could fail to keep faith.[866]

We cannot, in the end, know whether Paullus' "secret" conversations embody victory or defeat for Propertius' elegy of absence. On the one hand, Paullus' *secretum* is a celebration of elegy's creative power to evoke figures of love and perform the work of longing and desire in a perpetuity independent of normal social pressures and obligations, hidden away from family,

[865] 1.19.11 *illic quidquid ero, semper tua dicar imago.*

[866] 1.18.3-4 *hic licet occultos proferre impune dolores, / si modo sola queant saxa tenere fidem.*

kept a practice of the concealing night, and distinct from the world's more public offices, declaring that even, in this, the most Roman of Propertius' poems, the world of politics cannot eradicate the sensibility of someone who prefers imaginary conversations with a dead beloved to the recovery of Caesar's lost standards. But, on the other hand, Paullus' *secretum* is a kind of relegation to the irrelvancies of solitary prediliction, an admission that the kind of relationship that Propertius had with Cynthia must always be kept secret and purely literary, a kind of private madness that would make no sense, and has no place, in the light of Roman history, familial virtue, and the impositions of law.

Propertius' elegies, we have seen, do not exist in an ahistorical, anti-social, or non-political vacuum--instead, they constantly find themselves within, and define themselves by, the tension inherent in the tension between elegiac subjectivity and the political, public, and Roman persona that Cornelia represents. In this sense, Paullus' *secretum* functions as a metonymy for solitude in both its dual significance and dialectical form, inviting reflections on what solitude offered to writers of this period of literary and social change, of new arrangements of the interlocked spheres of the private and the public. It is a symbol of what we can see as a new way of speaking about individualization, secrecy, and intimate privacy; George Simmel claimed that the growth of individuality and secrecy produced, in the modern world, "an enlargement of life," allowing "the possibilty of a second world alongside the manifest world." (Simmel 1950:330)[867] The

[867] Compare with Habermas 1989 (esp. 44-51), who traced the transformation of private life and public sphere (i.e. the movement from “houses” to “homes”); for review of contemporary treatments in history, see McKeon 2005, and for literary reflexes, see Lynch 2015:78.

problem is that, in a poem such as this, in poetry such as Propertius', we cannot be certain which world is the manifest, which the imagined, let alone which world is the right world for us.

In the end, Propertius' final poem leaves us with the sense that Tobias Reinhardt (2006:204) is only partially right to observe that "Tibullus' elegies usually indulge in introspection or solitary meditation rather than [as in Propertius] dialogue;" as we have seen, Propertius' last poem challenges us to think about dialogues as potential soliloquies, soliloquies as forms of dictation by others. The beloved in Propertius is not, that is, only a "written" creation, but, importantly, a product and producer of belief (*credita*), dreams (*somnia*), fashioning (*simulacra*), and, of course, desire. In Propertius's poetry, we see not only the internalization and aestheticization of loneliness and love, but, as well, the exact opposite, achieved through the complication of the distinctions between, on the one hand, the private, solitary and contemplative, and, on the other, the lovers, withces, wives, rivals, generals, and kings who make up the wider world.

IX. "His *Cynthia*'s Tomb"

Propertius' poetry comes to a close with Cornelia's tomb, but in a way that asks us to reimagine the books of poetry that precede it in the form of Cynthia's tomb. There are other poems and poetry-books from the ancient world that conclude with acts of mourning: the last line of Homer's *Iliad* ends with Hector's tomb,[868] and Statius' *Silvae* with the poet's eulogy--*me*

[868] Hom. *Il*. 24.804 ὣς *οἵ γ' ἀμφίεπον τάφον Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο.*

miserum, he begins--for his son's death.[869] But none ends like that of Propertius, as an epitaph or eulogy spoken by the object of affection itself. This was a form, and an aspect of Propertius' work, whose imitation and appreciation would await the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of 1499, a novel that follows the dream-vision of Poliphilus as he seeks out his beloved Pollia, alternately lusting after women and after the ruined ancient ruins and epigraphs that he so loves to transcribe, in much the same way as Propertius' final book oscillates between love of Rome and its history on the one hand, and the uncatchable girl, on the other; when the *Hypnerotomachia* reaches its penultimate page, Poliphilus awakes from sleep, only for us to find, on the novel's final leaf, the epitaph of the beloved Pollia, spoken in her own voice. Not only was this entire novel a dream of love and stones, but it was motivated by a love that exists, now, only in stones and in dreams.

By way of conclusion, I would like to turn, very briefly, to one of the Renaissance's most astute readers of Latin literature, Ben Jonson, whose Propertius is frozen in time and sadness following the death of Cynthia. Propertius appears as a minor player in the *Poetaster*, one of Jonson's salvos against fellow playwrights Thomas Dekker and Thomas Marston in the battle of critical and dramatic wits that Dekker himself called the *Poetomachia*, and that is commonly known, today, as the War of the Theaters. The *Poetaster* is set in Augustus' court, and shows the greatest poets and thinkers of Augustan Rome (including Horace, Virgil, Tibullus, and Ovid) fighting off the accusations, schemes, and attacks of a rogue's gallery of middling poetasters

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[869] N.B. Statius, *Silv*. 5.25-6 *adclinis tumulo en planctus in carmina verto, / discordesque modos et singultantia verba*

molior orsa lyra.

whose identities are, for the most part, drawn from Horace's *Satires*.[870] But throughout the first act, the poet Propertius is nowhere to be seen, because, as Tibullus explains to Ovid, he is "Full of sorrow for his Cynthia's death":

> Still, and still more, his Griefs do grow upon him,
> As do his hours. Never did I know
> An understanding Spirit so take to heart
> The common work of Fate.

Ovid cannot blame such grief, for he and Tibullus both, "had ourselves been struck / with the like Planet, had our Loves (like his) / been ravisht from us by injurious death, / and in the height and heat of our best days," would have suffered, he claims, similarly.[871] The two go forward with the hope that, like the friends of Shakespeare's Romeo or Antonio, they can cure sadness with sociable mirth. But Propertius will not be won over. "Nay, my sweet Sextus, in faith thou art not sociable," says Ovid. Propertius confesses the fault: "In faith, I am not, Publius; nor I cannot…Pray let me leave you; I offend you all, and my self most." Despite Ovid's and Tibullus' attempts to detain him, Propertius departs in sighs and grief, much praised by Julia--"Methinks I

[870] On Jonson and Horace, see Moul 2010:135-172.

[871] Note that Ovid is careful to lay out double conditions to their similarity: only *if* they had been born under the same sign (presumably, Proprtius was taken to be born under the sign of Saturn, the sign of melancholics), would their response to the death of their beloved have caused such strife. The implication is, of course, that Ovid and Tibullus were *not* born under such a sign, and therefore would react with much greater equanimity to such an apparent tragedy.

love him, that he loves so truly"--and by Gallus' beloved Cytheris--"This is the perfect'st love, lives after death." But Propertius' love does not stop, as Cytheris might have hoped, with a love that lives after death, but moves more and more to a conception that links love and death more closely, as Horace reports to the poets:

> Our melancholick Friend, Propertius,
> Hath clos'd himself up in his Cynthia's Tomb;
> And will by no intreaties be drawn thence.

This act is as incomprehensible to Gallus--"This act of Propertius relisheth very strange with me"--as it would be to the kind of friends whom Propertius addresses in his first poem, people slow to love, quick to recover Caesar's lost standards, wrapped up in ledgers, logs, and accounts.[872] It is here, closed up in Cynthia's tomb, that the *Poetaster* leaves behind Propertius.

But it is not where Propertius leaves us: in Jonson's terms we might say that Propertius is always both inside and outside Cynthia's tomb, always making us aware that his solitary passions are part and parcel of his monumentalizing work, that the "melancholic" artist's retreat already predicates the return to society through his works, and that the poet's soliloquy is neither wholly a product of solitude, nor wholly the product of the poet's own voice.

[872] On the character of Jonson's Propertius, particularly as it relates to Jonson's moral and aesthetic criticisms of Ovid, see Barton 1984:82-3.

Epilogue: A Reader Runs Through It

The problem of reading belongs at the end, rather than the beginning, of our study. This is because we have been interested, primarily, in how a series of authors engaged with the connection between solitude and imagination in their own works. When we have considered questions of reception, it has, therefore, tended to be in the context of writers reading, and rewriting, other writers. In conclusion, I would like to touch, very briefly, on the experience of literary solitude—from the reader's perspective.

Writers of this period did, we know, mean to write for other people. For the most part, they would have agreed with Ovid, who, in his Pontic exile, complained that his muse has more or less abandoned him because writing a poem that one cannot recite to another person is like "dancing in the dark."[873] But Ovid's direct interest, here, is in recitation, rather than reading: in no small part, this is because Ovid's interest in reciting to people is that he wants, in these poems, to be back *among* his own people, at Rome, from which he has been relegated. Recitation was, we know, an important part of literary life in Rome, but, literate Rome was also, as historians of reading have recently brought to the fore through a judicious assembly of the

[873] Ovid. *Pont*. 4.2.33-6 *siue quod in tenebris numerosos ponere gestus / quodque legas nulli scribere carmen idem est: / excitat auditor studium laudataque uirtus / crescit et inmensum gloria calcar habet.* Of course, there is an irony here, as so often: if the exile poetry is as numerous as it is through a muse who pays the poet only seldom visits, how large a corpus would this be had the muse come more frequently to call?

evidence and testimonies, "a textual society."[874] Through text, authors in this society were able to reach out, as many recent interpretations have emphasized, to a broad community of readers in Rome, Italy, and beyond. Virgil was not in Masada, but one of the Essenes or Roman soldiers on that mesa may have had Virgil with him.

From the perspective of literary solitude, many of the texts that we have studied are texts meant to be shared: they allow us to be, not *alone*, but *alone with* the text or author. In its more extreme form, this gives way to what can be called a model of "companionate reading" in which a text becomes one's teacher, friend, or lover. It is this last possibility, the reader as lover, that can lead to a kind of possessive reading, whereby expertise, experience, and acumen are used to distinguish bad from good from ideal from unique readers.[875] So an epigram celebrates Lucius Crassicius' finished commentary on the dense *Smyrna*, poetic masterpiece latest-living neoteric poet, C. Helvius Cinna:

> "To Crassicius only (*uni*) did Smyrna decide to entrust herself.
> Cease, unlearned, to try and make her your wife.
> Crassicius alone (*soli*) she said she wanted to wed,
> To him alone (*uni*) for whom her secrets would be visible."[876]

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[874] Parker 2009:215. Important studies of Rome's textual society include Lowrie 2009 and Stroup 2010.

[875] On "possessive reading" in the 19th century, see Lynch 2015:65-146.

[876] *De Gramm. et Rhet*. 18.1-2 (p. 22 ed. Kaster 1995) *Uni Crassicio se credere Smyrna probavit / desinite, indocti, coniugio hanc petere. / Soli Crassicio se dixit nubere velle, / intima cui soli nota sua exstiterint.* Kaster *ad loc*. suggests uni Crassicio/soli Crassicio might be modeled on

This is a poem appropriated by a reader, but only for one reader alone: this text as woman can have only one man (her husband) at a time. The poem's talk of exclusion—*uni, soli, soli*—suggests, along the lines of the Roman ideal of the *univira*, "the one-man wife," that she will have only this one man, and reader, forever.[877] This is not the first time that a text has fallen in love: in the *Lament for Bion* (1st cent. BCE), the figures and title-characters of Bion's pastoral poetry come forth to mourn the poet's death; this itself was built on a text that we have considered, Hermesianax of Colophon's legend of Homer's love for Penelope, Hesiod's for Eoia. But, here, the text's love is not for a, for the, writer, but, instead, for a reader.[878]

Catull. 70 (*nulli se dicit mulier mea nubere malle*), perhaps thereby providing a window-allusion there to Callim. *Epigr*. 25. For testimonia and fragments of C. Helvius Cinna, with commentary, see Hollis 2007: 11-48.

[877] As Kaster (1995:201) points out, there are other examples of poems being compared to women, as, for example, Suet. *De gramm*. 11.2 (on Cato's *Lydia*); Ar. *Clouds* 530ff.; Callim. Fr. 1.10ff. Pf.; Anth. Gr. 9.63 (Asclep.), 12.168 (Posid.); Hermesianax fr. 7; Ov. Am. 3.1; Martial 14.189; Statius, *Theb*. 12.819ff.; Juv. 7.82. Kaster notes that *intima* could have both a sentimental and sexual connotation, to which I would add, given that questions of literary interpretation are at stake, the importance of Varro's fourth and final level of interpretation, the "inner sanctum and rites of the king" (*adytum et initia regis*—Varro, *DLL* 5.8).

[878] The fact that the *Smyrna* concerned the incestuous Myrrha adds a further level of complexity to this epigram, by suggesting that Crassicius, who has "known her intimaces" (*intima…nota)*

Lucius Crassicius, teacher and scholar, was, however, no ordinary reader: in fact, the whole model of expert scholarly appropriation, or arrogation, of a given text serves to exclude, or at least straiten, the degree of "companionship" that an ordinary reader can achieve with a given author or text.

Our readings throughout this thesis, though, have given us far more democratic models to work with: Propertius, for example, whose works will be read by the "girl, alone, waiting for her man,."[879] In cases like Propertius and his reader, she is *with* the author, and the function of solitude becomes a metonym for the author's ability to create a space in which the reader can be alone *with* him, with and within his text and his worlds. Indeed, in the works of the authors that we have studied, there is no poem, and very few parts of poems, in which we do not feel, as we are reading, that the person or personality of the poet is very much present with us. Although we can distinguish, formally, between 1st-person and more impersonal genres in Roman literature, there is a sense in which all, or at least most, of Roman literature is, as far as our experience goes, an experience of traveling *with* an author, with some genres simply demanding less frequent authorial self-declarations (i.e. epic) than others.

In conclusion, I would like, then, to glance briefly at one Latin poem that, I believe, has learned a great deal from Virgil's *Eclogues*, and gives us the experience of reading solitude, not *with*, but *through*, a poem; it is, in the terms I used in the Introduction, an invitation, a "*vade*

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turns out to be the father-lover of this text, instead of its putative father-author, Cinna. I will be exploring this story in a future study.

[879] Prop. *E*. 3.3.19-20 *ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus, / quem legat exspectans sola puella virum*.

mecum," to read through solitude. That poem is the trochaic *Amnis Ibat* of the late antique Tiberianus,[880] and it is a poem that, in reconceiving of the pastoral "pleasance" as a space or event unto itself makes itself into an ideal vehicle of the reader's imagining solitude:

> Through the fields (*amnis ibat*) there went a river; down the airy glen it wound,
> Smiling mid its radiant pebbles, decked with flowery plants around.
> Dark-hued laurels waved above it close by myrtle greeneries,
> Gently swaying to the whispers and caresses of the breeze.
> Underneath grew velvet greensward with a wealth of bloom for dower,
> And the ground, agleam with lilies, coloured 'neath the saffron-flower,
> While the grove was full of fragrance and of breath from violets.
> Mid such guerdons of the spring-time, mid its jewelled coronets,
> Shone the queen of all the perfumes, Star that loveliest colours shows,
> Golden flame of fair Dione, passing every flower—the rose.
> Dewsprent trees rose firmly upright with the lush grass at their feet:
> Here, as yonder, streamlets murmured tumbling from each well-spring fleet.
> Grottoes had an inner binding made of moss and ivy green,
> Where soft-flowing runlets glided with their drops of crystal sheen.
> Through those shades each bird, more tuneful than belief could entertain (*quam putes*),
> Warbled loud her chant of spring-tide, warbled low her sweet refrain.
> Here the prattling river's murmur to the leaves made harmony,
> As the Zephyr's airy music stirred them into melody.
> To a wanderer (*sic euntem*) through the coppice, fair and filled with song and scent,

[880] Three poems (and part of a possibly a fourth) survive by Tiberianus: this trochaic *locus amoenus* (1), a hexameter curse of gold (2), a phalaecean animal fable about pride (3), and a hexameter hymn to Plato's demiurge (4). See editions by Zuccarelli 1987 and Mattiacci 1990.

Bird and river, breeze and woodland, flower and shade brought ravishment. (trans. J.W. & A.M. Duff)[881]

[881] See Curtius 1990:196-7.

Amnis ibat inter herbas valle fusus frigida,

luce ridens calculorum, flore pictus herbido.

Caerulas superne laurus et virecta myrtea

leniter motabat aura blandiente sibilo.

Subtus autem molle gramen flore pulchro creverat;

et croco solum rubebat et lucebat liliis.

Turn nemus fragrabat omne violarum spiritu.

Inter ista dona veris gemmeasque gratias

omnium regina odorum vel colorum lucifer

auriflora praeminebat flamma Diones, rosa.

Roscidum nemus rigebat inter uda gramina:

fonte crebro murmurabant hinc et inde rivuli,

quae fluenta labibunda guttis ibant lucidis.

Antra muscus et virentes intus hederae vinxerant.

Has per umbras omnis ales plus canora quam putes

cantibus vernis strepebat et susurris dulcibus:

his loquentis murmur amnis concinebat frondibus,

quis melos vocalis aurae musa zephyri moverat.

Sic euntem per virecta pulchra odora et musica

ales amnis aura lucus flos et umbra iuverat.

By losing the frame, inhabitants, agents of pastoral, there is a sense in which this poem approaches a poetry of nature that is for humans, but not of them. As a pastoral without frame, approaching "pure landscape," Tiberianus' poem is preceded, as Ernst Robert Curtius has noted, by (perhaps only) a pastoral ekphrasis by Petronius (*carm*. 131).

But what differentiates Tiberianus' poem from that of Petronius is that there is a person here, and one who makes an entrance towards the poem's close. This world does not just *exist*, but exists *for* a human observer: it exists for you. You know, as you read, that another person has written this poem, but, when we begin the poem, you move along with the river through this scene, experiencing all of those pleasures that the last line so carefully recapitulates: "Bird and river, breeze and woodland, flower and shade brought ravishment."[882] The other person who has moved through this scenery is, of course, the poet, but only technically: for much of the poem, you are alone with the movement along the river, and the poet's only intrusion is in the generalizing "you might think" of the close. The poet does not take the role of a nature tour-guide, but (with the help of a great deal of most invisible artifice) causes the scene to fluidly unfold. The result of the author's hiding is the transmission of this scene to the reader. You become the wanderer of the poem's close, and you become, too, the author of this poem's experience, the author, perhaps, too, at least in feeling, of the poem's text. One is reminded here of one of the definitions of the readerly sublime by Longinus: "For the true sublime, by nature, elevates us: uplifted with a sense of proud possession, we are filled with joyful pride, as if we

[882] The poem is not, as Curtius has emphasized (1990:197), an impressionistic haze: it is a carefully constructed artifice on the level of image, and attentively balanced on the level of line-numbers.

had ourselves produced the very thing we heard."[883] Reading this poem allows us to enter into the solitary imagination of this poem, created by an author but for a reader. Every reader of this poem, no matter how learned, can become its speaker, and author, imagining himself moving along with the river through its green world (*virectum*).

Through a brief look at this poem, I have hoped to suggest, in a very condensed way, what is, from the perspective of a reader's experience, the truly alluring quality of solitude, both in its dual significance and its dialectical tensions. The fact that the literature of solitude always involves others is, not its weakness, but its strength. It is a strength I have attempted to communicate within a given historical context, but the work has not itself been historical: the result is, I believe, something closer to a literary topology than to a topological history of solitude and imagination. Much more could be said of the role that these texts' explorations of solitude played in the history of literary solitude in later times, and of their contribution to histories of subjectivity, individuality, autonomy, and other sacred symbols of Christianity, Renaissance Humanism, Romanticism, and Modernity. For now, I hope to have demonstrated that the sharing of imaginary solitudes was, in 1st century BCE Rome, not only one of the major challenges, but also one of the great joys, of literature.

[883] trans. W. Hamilton Fyfe 1932; *On the Sublime* 7.2 ὑσει γάρ πως ὑπὸ τἀληθοῦς ὕψους ἐπαίρεταί τε ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ γαῦρόν τι ἀνάστημα λαμβάνουσα πληροῦται χαρᾶς καὶ μεγαλαυχίας, ὡς αὐτὴ γεννήσασα ὅπερ ἤκουσεν.

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