

IGNOSCENDA QUIDEM . . . CATULLUS 64 AND THE *FOURTH GEORGIC*

That Catullus' sixty-fourth poem influenced Virgil's work has long been accepted.¹ We approach a little nearer a resolution of the enigma of the *Fourth Eclogue* when we recognize epithalamian elements within it that echo not only the song of the Parcae, but also the themes of the Golden Age, of the Voyage of the Argo, and of the relations between gods and men from Catullus' poem.² Similarly, Ariadne's part in the creation of *Aeneid* 4, both in the 'marriage' scene and in Dido's reproaches to Aeneas, has been noted.³

Curiously, the Aristaeus Episode rarely receives more than the most perfunctory mention in this connection. It is of course customary to class both poems as 'epyllia', alluding to the formal similarity of structure,⁴ and to remark that Virgil has borrowed the line-end 'sperare iubebas'⁵ from Ariadne's speech.⁶ I should like to argue that Virgil's debt to Catullus 64 is at least as great in the *Fourth Georgic* as it is elsewhere. Echoes at the start of the frame build up to a crescendo in the final loss of Eurydice and the tragedy of Orpheus' death.

To begin with structure, it was natural that, in planning a romantic narrative where Aristaeus' 'inventio' was to frame the story of Orpheus, Virgil should have had Catullus' poem, on which he had already drawn for the *Fourth Eclogue*, at the forefront of his mind. In each case the 'digression'⁷ is strongly contrasted with the frame⁸ and concerns a tragic love story. Characteristically, Virgil avoids

¹ I would like to thank Professor R. G. M. Nisbet and Miss M. E. Hubbard, who read and gave their comments on a first draft of this article, also Mr. C. G. Hardie and Mr. J. Griffin, who did the same at a later stage. All remaining mistakes are my own.

² Cf. L. Herman, 'Le poème 64 de Catulle et Virgile', *REL* 8 (1930), 220-1; H. J. Rose, *The Eclogues of Virgil* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1942), pp. 201-3; most recently G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 281 ff., and 'A Version of Pastoral', in *Quality and Pleasure in Latin Poetry*, ed. Woodman and West, (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 45 ff. For the best recent discussion of Catullus 64 itself, see J. Bramble, 'Structure and Ambiguity in Catullus 64', *PCPS* 16 (1970), 22 ff.

³ For the 'marriage', cf. R. G. Austin on *Aen.* 4.316. In general cf. C. N. Jackson, 'The Latin Epyllion', *HSCP* 24 (1913), 45-50 (although I do not share many of his opinions on the 'epyllion'); also A. S. Pease, *Aeneid* 4, (Harvard, 1935), Introduction, p. 14 with n. 100, where he provides further bibliography. A. M. Guillemin, *L'Originalité de Virgile* (Paris, 1913), lists parallels on pp. 77-9.

⁴ Cf. M. M. Crump, *The Epyllion from*

Theocritus to Ovid (London, 1931), pp. 178, 187; Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp. 39, 42. But I would not agree that the second half of *Georgic* 4 is an 'epyllion' and have doubts about the propriety of the title at all.

⁵ *G.* 4.325; cf. Cat. 64.140. W. Richter on *G.* 4.324 ff. notes that the tone of the speech as a whole resembles that of Ariadne; cf. F. Della Corte and H. H. Huxley *ad loc.* P. Jahn, *Aus Vergils Dichterwerkstätte* (Wiss. Beil. z. Jahresber. d. Köln. Gymn. z. Berlin, 1905), p. 7, would compare *G.* 4.317, 'Peneia Tempe' with Cat. 64.285, 'confestim Penios adest, viridantia Tempe'. E. Paratore, *Introduzione alle Georgiche di Virgilio* (Palermo, 1938), p. 25 n. 35, stressed that the frames of the two poems are comparable, for both Peleus and Aristaeus are Thessalian heroes and connected with water deities, the first with Thetis, the second with Cyrene and Proteus, although he does not notice Thetis' own connections with metamorphosis (see below, p. 349 and n. 4). He also pointed out that both digressions conclude with Dionysiac 'orgia'.

⁶ Cat. 64.140.

⁷ I use the term purely for convenience and without qualitative implications.

⁸ Cf. B. Otis, *Virgil, A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 193 ff., although

the Catullan 'ecphrasis' to introduce his Orpheus myth, and chooses prophecy,¹ the other device beloved of Hellenistic poets as a vehicle for digression. But we should not forget that his Catullan model also contained a prophecy. That poem's second 'digression', concerning the deeds of Achilles, is in the form of a prophetic epithalamium delivered by the Parcae. Virgil has combined both techniques in borrowing Homer's Proteus to prophesy a tragic love story.

Water is important in both poems. In Catullus this is most striking in the scene of Ariadne's lament on the Naxian shore, to which we return three times during the narrative, whilst the story of the minotaur and Ariadne's abduction from Crete and that of Theseus' disastrous voyage home occupy the intervening sections. We meet the tableau of solitary lament by water² three times in the *Fourth Georgic*. The episode begins with Aristaeus pouring out reproaches to his mother at the head of Peneius.³ At line 464 it is Orpheus who sings 'solo in litore secum', calling grief-stricken upon his wife's name. Finally, after the second loss of Eurydice, he laments again 'deserti ad Strymonis undam'.⁴

Apart from the general situation, similarities of vocabulary, although infrequent, may be found. At line 140 Ariadne complains that Theseus had offered her marriage, not desertion:

... non haec miserae sperare iubebas.

Aristaeus bemoans that he had been led to expect his own immortality, not the death of his bees:

... quid me caelum sperare iubebas?⁵

As Orpheus laments on the shore:

te, dulcis coniunx, te solo in litore secum,⁶

the position of the phrase 'in litore' recalls Ariadne's reproach:

sic me . . .
perfide, deserto liquisti in litore, Theseu?⁷

and the same line returns to our minds when we read of Orpheus' mourning, 'deserti ad Strymonis undam'.⁸ The parallelism is still more striking at *Georgic* 4.507:

septem illum totos perhibent ex ordine mensis . . .

which recalls Catullus' Ariadne:

*saepe illam perhibent ardenti corde furentem . . .*⁹

I do not find the composite epithet 'sympathetic-empathetic' helpful in distinguishing the special quality of the Orpheus narrative.

¹ Although Proteus' story concerns the past it should still be regarded as prophecy. Proteus is a prophet in the Homeric and Hesiodic sense, as Virgil is at pains to emphasize in line 393. For Hellenistic poets and prophecy see L. Hensel, *Weissagungen in der alexandrischen Poesie* (Diss. Giessen, 1908).

² For examples of laments beside water outside Catullus see below, p.344 n.3.

³ G.4.317 ff. My concern here is solely with the general situation. For Aristaeus' particular predicament, especially the affront to 'honos' or τιμή, *Iliad* 1.347 ff., Achilles' complaint to Thetis, is, of course, the primary source.

⁴ G. 4.508, but see p.348 below for further details.

⁵ G. 4.325.

⁶ G. 4.465.

⁷ Cat. 64.132-3.

⁸ G. 4.508.

⁹ Cat. 64.124.

Finally in the nightingale simile we find the words 'maestis . . . questibus'¹ echoing 'maestam . . . querellis' of Ariadne.²

In his use of the lament beside water as one of the elements that articulate the whole episode, unifying both frame and inset, Virgil's debt to his predecessor is clear. At the same time he obtains a striking contrast in that here two heroes weep, one to his mother, the other for his wife, rather than the heroine who bewails her lost lover.

However, laments beside water were not exclusive to Catullus,³ nor is this the first time that Virgil has shown interest in the theme of song beside a river. The motif had figured prominently in *Eclogue* 6 where the Muses find Gallus ' . . . errantem Permessi ad flumina . . . '⁴ Here the poet is certainly imagined singing and the theme of his song will be tragic, perhaps elegiac. Later in the poem the Eurotas is said to hear the song of Apollo and to teach the words to its bay trees. Here again Williams⁵ has suggested that the choice of the river is significant and that Apollo's song is a lament for the dead Hyacinthus. Thus in the laments of the singer Orpheus for his dead wife there may be elegiac elements.⁶

Within the Aristaeus episode the waterside lament forms only part of a much larger structural block. The sequence of flight, loss, lament by water, and descent returns three times, first of Aristaeus after the loss of his bees, then of Eurydice fleeing from Aristaeus and lost to Orpheus who weeps and descends in search of her, and finally with Eurydice's second flight⁷ the series begins a third time and Orpheus' second loss and lament follow. In Orpheus' passage down the Hebrus in death Virgil may deliberately have united the themes of the two earlier catabases, water and Hades.

The lines on the second loss of Eurydice reflect the influence of Catullus most directly. For the burden of Ariadne's lament, in particular lines 132–8 and 177–83, provides the web upon which Virgil weaves his tragic account. Ariadne's speech begins:

sicine me patriis avectam, perfide, ab aris,
perfade, deserto liquisti in litore Theseu?
sicine discedens neglecto numine divum
immemor al' devota domum periuria portas?

¹ G. 4.515.

² Cat. 64.130. I am grateful to Professor Nisbet for drawing my attention to the last two parallels.

³ Achilles' complaints to his mother, *Il.* 1.347 ff. and 18.35 ff., and Odysseus' solitary brooding on Calypso's isle, *Od.* 5.151 ff., provide the prototypes for the theme. It was popular with Hellenistic poets too. At Theoc. 11.13–14 the Cyclops sings of Galatea alone on the shore, and Mr. Griffin reminds me of the Cyclops in Hermesianax (fr. 1 P.) and of Orpheus himself in the same poet (fr. 7.8 P.). For weeping heroines in general, cf. Polymele in Philetas' *Hermes* (fr. 5 P.) and the Medea of Apollonius.

⁴ *Ecl.* 6.64. Virgil has this poem in mind elsewhere in the Aristaeus Episode. His own picture of the mysterious Silenus contributes

to his presentation of the chaining of Proteus. For details, cf. my doctoral dissertation, 'The Aristaeus "Epyllion"' (Oxford, 1976), pp.107 ff.

⁵ *Tradition and Originality*, pp.246–7.

⁶ Phanocles had represented Orpheus in a similar light to the lover of Roman elegy when he set him beneath a tree singing of his longing for the boy Calais (fr. 1.1–6 P.). For the waterside lament in elegy, cf. Prop. 1.15.9–14, where Calypso's longing for Ulysses is compared to that of the poet for Cynthia; Prop. 1.17, the poet in a storm at sea, and its companion piece, 18, the poet in wild and lonely scenery, where springs are also mentioned. My thanks are due to Miss Hubbard for drawing my attention to the Propertian passages.

⁷ G. 4.500.

*nullane res potuit crudelis flectere mentis
consilium? tibi nulla fuit clementia praesto?
immitte ut nostri vellet miserescere pectus?*¹

Theseus, as hard of heart, immovable, and ignorant of clemency, is the recipient of all her reproaches. Breaking his vows and without concern for the vows of heaven, he has abandoned her on the shore. Above all, and this is the *leitmotiv* of Catullus' poem, in his lack of care he is convicted of forgetfulness: 'immemor a!', the flaw which will result at the end of the tale in his own father's death.²

The themes of this lament are vital for our understanding of Virgil's poem. At the very moment of Eurydice's loss, the poet unmistakably signals his debt to Catullus: 'immemor, heu!', although the implications are diametrically opposed to those of Ariadne's complaint. Theseus had 'forgotten' Ariadne because he did not care for her. Orpheus forgets the injunctions of Persephone precisely because he cares too much for Eurydice. His 'amor' reaches the dimensions of 'dementia' and 'furor', and in this frame of mind he breaks his vows not to Eurydice, as Theseus did to Ariadne, but to the gods of the underworld. Where Theseus' disregard of the power of the gods is direct, in the form of contempt for Ariadne, Orpheus' is indirect, the result of his love for his wife. Theseus is consistently forgetful, and this flaw in his character finds concrete expression in the affair of the black sail that brings final disaster upon him. Orpheus, after his single act of forgetfulness, will never be able to forget.

From Virgil's point of view, there is a further irony in Catullus' use of the word 'immemor' at 64.122-3:

... aut ut eam devinctam *lumina somno*
likerit *immemori* discedens *pectore coniunx*?

For Ariadne was not Theseus' 'coniunx'; marriage is merely what she hoped for. Orpheus really is Eurydice's husband and it is the loss, not merely of his beloved, but of his wife that he feels so deeply. In Virgil's poem it is not the abandoned mistress but the departing wife who is overcome by *somnus*:

... conditque natantia *lumina somnus*.³

Connected with the shift of emphasis in the use of 'immemor' is the theme of inclemency, a charge that may not be laid at Orpheus' door as it was at that of Theseus. Yet Virgil has already levelled this accusation against the underworld in telling of Orpheus' arrival there:

... manisque adiit regemque tremendum
nesciaque humanis precibus mansuescere corda.⁴

Orpheus' dementia was such as would be

ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes:⁵

and the broken 'foedera' are those 'immitis tyranni'.⁶

¹ Cat. 64.132-8.

² Cat. 64.241-8. On the theme of 'forgetfulness' that runs throughout the Catullan poem, cf. F. Klingner, *Catullus Peleus-Epos* (Sitzb. bay. Ak. d.Wiss.,

phil.-hist. Kl., München 1956), 6, p.50.

³ G. 4.496.

⁴ G. 4.469-70.

⁵ G. 4.489.

⁶ G. 4.492.

Apart from the obvious verbal parallels with Ariadne's description of Theseus, Catullus' Cupid figures in a similar light:

heu misere exagitans *immiti corde furores*
sancte puer, curis hominum qui gaudia misces.¹

and the mention of 'furores' there indicates that Virgil has done more than just divide the characteristics of Theseus between Orpheus and the deities of the dead. Eurydice attributes her husband's lapse to some great 'furor' which we have identified with the earlier 'dementia' and connected with 'amor'. In Catullus it is Ariadne who is the constant victim of 'furor' from the moment that she first sets eyes upon Theseus.² As she watches the departing fleet she is 'indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores'.³ In her address to the Eumenides she speaks of herself as helpless, '... amenti caeca furore'.⁴ Thus, in his failure of memory, Orpheus is as closely related to Catullus' Ariadne as he is to his Theseus.

This doubling of the roles of Theseus and Ariadne in Orpheus sheds light on one of the more curious features of Virgil's poem. At specific points both Orpheus and Eurydice are found playing the part of either of their two Catullan counterparts.⁵ I have already suggested that Orpheus' waterside laments should be compared with that of Ariadne. Between them, Orpheus becomes increasingly like Theseus, only to revert at the end to his original 'character' of Ariadne. This is subtly achieved and the method merits consideration here.

The descent to the underworld to rescue Eurydice and Orpheus' escape with her bear at least formal comparison with the passage of Theseus through the labyrinth and his escape with Ariadne from Crete.⁶ Indeed, there is a slight verbal similarity in the lines that describe each return. When Theseus leaves the labyrinth, Catullus writes:

inde *pedem sospes multa cum laude reflexit*.⁷

Virgil speaks of Orpheus thus:

iamque *pedem referens casus evaserat omnis*.⁸

The association of ideas is less surprising when we remember that Theseus himself traditionally descended to the underworld to carry off Persephone, and that the myths of Eurydice and of Persephone are not without their connections.⁹

We have already seen that at the moment of the backward glance Theseus is uppermost in Orpheus. He is 'immemor' and Eurydice's lament at the point of separation and the closing of her eyes in sleep parallel those of Ariadne. However, even within Eurydice's speech, the mention of Orpheus' 'furor' invites comparison with Ariadne's, and in what follows Orpheus' role swings gradually back towards that of Ariadne, whilst Eurydice's departure displays increasingly marked affinities with that of Theseus.

¹ Cat. 64.94-5.

² Cat. 64.86 ff.

³ Cat. 64.54.

⁴ Cat. 64.197.

⁵ Compare Catullus' own practice in his 68th poem, where Protesilaus is both Catullus' brother and Lesbia; cf. C. W. Macleod, 'A Use of Myth in Ancient Poetry',

CQ 24 (1974), 84-5.

⁶ Cat. 64.112-15.

⁷ Cat. 64.112.

⁸ G. 4.485.

⁹ Both Miss Hubbard and Mr. Hardie offered me helpful suggestions on this association of ideas.

For it is Eurydice who leaves Orpheus and not the other way about. 'Fugit', the verb used, is found twice in Catullus 64 of Theseus' departure from Naxos, first right at the start of the ecphrasis, in conjunction with the adjective 'immemor', in the line:

immemor at iuvenis *fugiens* pellit vada remis.¹

and secondly in the other section of Ariadne's lament mentioned above,² which now becomes increasingly important for Virgil. Ariadne's questions are bitter:

coniugis³ an fido consoler memet amore?
quine *fugit* lentos incurvans gurgite remos?⁴

After the flight of Eurydice 'ceu fumus in auras / commixtus tenuis',⁵ Virgil represents Orpheus 'prensantem nequiquam umbras et multa volentem / dicere'.⁶ In the futility of all speech and action for Orpheus there is perhaps a faint echo of Ariadne's soliloquizing in a similar dilemma:

sed quid ego ignaris nequiquam conquerar auris
externata malo, quae nullis sensibus aucta
nec missas audire queunt nec reddere voces?
ille autem prope iam mediis versatur in undis.⁷

Theseus is already in mid-ocean where words cannot reach him. Ariadne is left to pursue a series of rhetorical questions as to what hope of rescue she has:

nam quo me referam? quali spe perdita nitor?
Idaeosne petam montes? at gurgite lato
discernens ponti truculentum dividit aequor . . .
coniugis an fido consoler memet amore?
quine *fugit* lentos incurvans gurgite remos?⁸

Similarly Orpheus' words cannot reach Eurydice. Like Theseus she has fled away. Charon will not allow the husband to recross the Styx in search of her:

Quid faceret? quo se rapta bis coniuge ferret?
quo fletu manis, quae numina voce moveret?⁹

The answer to this set of rhetorical questions comes back with a deadly irony when we remember those of Ariadne to her own. For Eurydice, like Theseus, is afloat, albeit on very different waters:

illa quidem Stygia nabat iam frigida cumba.¹⁰

We are back once again where we started: Orpheus alone again and lamenting, this time beside a river's waters. Indeed he laments beside two rivers. In the indirect questions of 504–5, we find a suppressed version of the now familiar

¹ Cat. 64.58.

² p.344.

³ Ariadne's delusions on the subject of marriage serve as the model for Dido in *Aen.* 4; cf. p.342 above.

⁴ Cat. 64.182–3.

⁵ G. 4.499–500.

⁶ G. 4.501–2.

⁷ Cat. 64.164–7.

⁸ Cat. 64.177–9, 182–3.

⁹ G. 4.504–5.

¹⁰ G. 4.506. The image of the ship on the horizon bearing away the beloved is familiar from Pompeian wall paintings of the story of Theseus and Ariadne. The iconography of that legend is discussed by Klingner, *op. cit.* pp.32–8.

lament by water.¹ Orpheus' complaint begins at the Styx itself. It is only at 507 with the verb 'perhibent' that the scene shifts to the banks of the Strymon, where the lament is most fully stressed in the nightingale simile, itself reminiscent of Catullus, albeit of a different poem.²

As an aside from the main thesis of this paper, I would add that to treat the scene by the Styx as a 'lament by water' results in a chiasmus stretching from start to finish of the ecphrasis. It begins with the death of Eurydice and her flight along, or perhaps even through the waters of the rivers. There follow the pathetic fallacy embodied in the mourning of Thrace and Orpheus' solitary mourning on the seashore. He enters Taenarus, still singing, since his passage through Hades is depicted in terms of the reaction of its inhabitants to the song, and it must be assumed from the description of the rivers that he mourns beside them. At the centre lies the loss of Eurydice and then the process is reversed: again a lament in Hades, this time beside the Styx, a solitary lament beside the Strymon, with a hint of the pathetic fallacy in the description of the reaction of beasts and trees to his song, and finally his own death and the floating of his head down the Hebrus, with, last of all, a breath of the pathetic fallacy as the river banks take up his song.

With the disappearance of Eurydice Virgil has not finished with Catullus 64. He goes on to tell of Orpheus' sparagmos at the hands of the Thracian women,³ a story that had not hitherto, so far as we have any certain knowledge, been linked with that of Eurydice. Its original motivation was Orpheus' worship of Helios at the expense of Dionysus, not his rejection of the favours of Dionysus' devotees.

Ariadne's lonely vigil on the seashore and Orpheus' wanderings in the north of Greece are both brought to a close by the advent of Dionysus' followers.⁴ For Ariadne⁵ the wine god comes as Iacchus to take her for his wife. His company is the full Bacchic rout, carrying thyrsi, dismembering bullocks,⁶ binding snakes about their bodies, all to the noisy accompaniment of drums, cymbals, trumpets, and flutes. It is with four lines of this onomatopoeic cacophony that Catullus brings his ecphrasis to a close.

On turning to Virgil's adaptation, the comparison is macabre, and in the hands of a lesser poet must have bordered on the grotesque. Orpheus' contrasting fate is heavily underlined in the words that follow the nightingale simile:

nulla Venus, non ulli animum flexere hymenaei.⁷

Orpheus wanders alone in a landscape of northern snows rejecting all thought of marriage as solace for his loss. The Dionysiac rout that ends his wanderings is the antithesis of the brilliance and gaiety of the Bacchanals who carry Ariadne off to her wedding, although even in Catullus the sparagmos has not gone unmentioned.⁸

¹ I owe this suggestion to Miss Hubbard.

² Cat. 65.12–14; cf. p.351 n.1 below.

³ For earlier versions cf. Aesch. fr. 23–5 N., from the Bassarids; Eratosthenes, *Cat.* 24 (p.140 Robert) and the rather idiosyncratic romancing of Phanocles (fr. 1 P.).

⁴ Cf. Paratore, loc. cit.

⁵ Cat. 64.251–65.

⁶ Cat. 64.257.

⁷ G. 4.516. Jahn, op. cit.

p.18, suggests that the interesting phrase 'animum flexere hymenaei' owes something to the epithalamium of Catullus' Parcae, where we find '... adveniet fausto cum sidere coniunx, quae tibi *flexanimo* mentem perfundat amore' (329–30), and the context of marriage would confirm his suggestion.

⁸ Cat. 64.257. This may have affected Virgil's idea of linking the sparagmos with the loss of Eurydice in the first place.

Rather the Maenads of Thrace, infuriated at Orpheus' scorn, tear him to pieces and scatter his limbs about the fields.¹ Their 'orgia' are those 'nocturni Bacchi' and Virgil says nothing of cries or music. As far as his poetry is concerned, the sparagmos takes place in total silence, for it is the same lament which has dominated the narrative throughout that haunts the end of Proteus' tale. Dionysus' Maenads may kill the singer; it is beyond their power to silence the song:

Eurydicen toto referebant flumine ripae.²

So far we have been concerned with the influence of the ecphrasis of the Catullan poem on Virgil, with the waterside lament and the remodelling of the story of Theseus and Ariadne for that of Orpheus and Eurydice. These are the aspects for which Virgil draws most heavily upon his model. But they are not the only points of contact between the two poems. A comparison between the frame of Catullus 64 and the story of Aristaeus also has some insights to offer.

The first point is a general one, to which we have already referred in discussing the waterside lament, the prominence of water in both poems. Catullus starts with an account of the voyage of the Argo, highlighted by the astonishment of nymphs and sailors at their first meeting. Virgil begins likewise with the tableau of Aristaeus at the head of Peneius. He continues to emphasize watery settings in his description of Cyrene's cavern³ which, in its vitreous luminosity, shares something of the atmosphere of the Catullan opening, and in Aristaeus' descent through the subterranean river network to his mother's kingdom, where the theme of a meeting between land and water-dwellers is reminiscent of Catullus.

In the Proteus episode the theme of water is again to the fore. There may be a connection between Virgil's choice of a shape-shifting sea deity and Thetis' attempts to elude Peleus by metamorphosis, a version conspicuously avoided by Catullus, but the one which was canonical.⁴ If this is so, we are thinking of the Aristaeus Episode at a germinal stage in its conception, perhaps merely in terms of a subconscious association. It is impossible to say whether Virgil started thinking of Catullus because he already had a Proteus episode in his mind or chose Proteus because he was already thinking of working with material from Catullus. We can do no more than signal the probability of a connection at some level.

However, that Virgil used the frame of the Catullan poem in writing the Proteus section there can be no doubt. Most of Aristaeus' consultation with the prophet is the product of subtle adaptation from Homer's account of Menelaus' encounter with the wily ἄλιος γέρων. But the initial description of the sea deity owes little to Homer and a great deal to Catullus. The launching and first voyage of the Argo is described in the following terms:

illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten
quae simul ac rostro ventosum *proscidit aequor*
tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda,
emersere freti candenti *e gurgite vultus*
aequoreae monstrum *Nereides* admirantes.

¹ G. 4.520–2.

² G. 4.527.

³ Jahn, op. cit., p.9, connects the nymphs who sit spinning and listening to Clymene's song with Catullus' Parcae, who work as

they sing.

⁴ Cf. p.342 n.5 above. For the more usual version, Pind. *N.* 4.62, with the Scholia ad loc. and on *N.* 3.35; Apld. 3.13.4–5; Ovid, *Met.* 11.235 ff.

illa, atque haud alia, viderunt luce marinas
mortales oculis nudato corpore *Nymphas*
nutricum tenus exstantes *e gurgite cano*.¹

Cyrene portrays Proteus thus:

Est in Carpathio Neptuni *gurgite vates*
caeruleus Proteus, magnum qui *piscibus aequor*
et iuncto bipedum curru metitur equorum.
hic nunc Emathiae portus patriamque revisit
Pallenen; hunc et *Nymphae* veneramur et ipse
grandaevus *Nereus*; novit namque omnia vates,
quae sint, quae fuerunt, quae mox ventura trahantur,
quippe ita Neptuno visum est, immania cuius
armenta et turpis pascit sub *gurgite phocas*.²

Clearly both passages are variants on the age-old theme of the sea-cortège, but there are still more striking similarities, notably in the line-ends. Where Catullus writes 'proscidit aequor' and '(e) gurgite vultus . . . (e) gurgite cano', Virgil frames his passage with 'gurgite vates'³ . . . gurgite phocas' and ends one of the intervening lines with 'piscibus aequor' where the consonants of the dactylic word are close to Catullus' 'proscidit'. In addition Catullus' mention of 'Nereides' and 'Nymphas' finds its verbal reflection (in reverse order) in the reverence in which Nymphs and Nereus hold the prophet.

That Virgil chooses to imitate this trio of line-ends has broad implications both for his understanding of Catullus and for his own technique of 'imitatio'. For in the earlier poem they are influential in linking the frame and the ecphrasis. Catullus had used the sea setting common to the Argo voyage and the Ariadne story to point the contrast of mood between the two. In the Argo passage, the material between lines 15 and 18 concerns the meeting of nymphs and mariners, the coming together of the creatures of land and water as a result of the invention of sailing. When the same trio of line-ends reappears in Ariadne's lament (a passage which we have already seen was used by Virgil in framing the final departure of Eurydice), the point made is that of the divisive power of the sea, which cuts Ariadne off from all hope of rescue, even as it bears her faithless lover away from her:

Idaeosne petam montes? at *gurgite lato*
discernens ponti truculentum *dividit aequor*.
an patris auxilium sperem? quemne ipsa reliqui

¹ Cat. 64.11–18.

² G. 4.387–95. On this passage it should be noted that the connection between shepherding and sea-cortège is not new. Homer used the simile briefly for Proteus and his seals at *Od.* 4.414; at *Od.* 12.96–7 we find:

δελφίνάς τε κύνας τε καὶ εἴ ποθι μείζον
ἔλῃσι
κῆτος, ἃ μυρία βόσκει ἀγαστονος Ἀμφιτρίτη.
But here Virgil surely has in mind the Apollonian simile that follows Orpheus' cosmogony (one of the models for the Song of Silenus), the song sung to guide the *Argo* on

its first voyage. As in Catullus, the ship provokes a startled reaction from the sea's inhabitants:

τοὶ δὲ θαθείης
ἰχθύες ἀίσσοντες ὑπερῷ ἄλός, ἄμμιγα παύροις
ἄπλετοι, ὕγρα κέλευθα διασκαίροντες ἔποντο·
ὥς δ' ὅπῳ ἀγραύλοιο μετ' ἵχνηα σημαντήρος
μυρία μῆλ' ἐφέπονται ἄδην κεκορημένα ποίης
εἰς αὖλῳ, ὁ δέ τ' εἰσι πάρος, σύριγγι λιγείῃ
καλὰ μελιζόμενος νόμιον μέλος—ὥς ἄρα τοίγε
ὠμάρτευν· τὴν δ' αἰὲν ἐπασσύτερος φέρεν οὖρος.
(Ap. Rhod. 1.572 b–579).

³ Compare the similarity to Catullus' 'vultus'.

respersum iuvenem fraterna caede secuta?
 coniugis an fido consoler memet amore?
 quine fugit lentos incurvans *gurgite remos*?¹

That Virgil recognized the significance of this line-end repetition in Catullus is clear. For several of his changes from the first series find their explanation in the second Catullan version. Thus, instead of employing 'e gurgite' plus spondee, he uses the simple 'gurgite' and places the phrases at either end of his description of Proteus. Similarly, the line-end dactyl plus 'aequor' occurs immediately after the first of the 'gurgite' phrases, just as 'dividit aequor' follows on 'gurgite lato'.

Clearly this highly sophisticated verbal quotation from the earlier poem does not have the same sort of implications as does the use of the Theseus and Ariadne themes for the account of Orpheus and Eurydice. A central point is not being made. But it sheds some light on Virgil's technique of composition. Rather than place the Catullan adaptation without warning in the middle of Proteus' prophecy, thus creating a patchwork effect, he prepares the ground from the start. We begin with slight references to Catullus in the appeal to Cyrene and the emphasis on watery settings. Then the reference to an important linking passage in the Peleus and Thetis epyllion introduces the most Homeric section of Virgil's poem with a foreshadowing of the later themes, couched in the most delicate of neoteric 'imitatio'.

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¹ Cat. 64.178–83. Catullus reverses the order 'gurgite plus noun', 'gurgite plus adjective' from the first passage here, creating a formal chiasmus. Virgil avoids the slightly anticlimactic use of 'gurgite' with a following epithet, preferring a disyllabic noun in both cases. Catullus' reference to 'fraterna caede' is interesting, since in 65 he uses imagery for his brother's rather different death that reflects that used in 64 of Ariadne's state of

mind:

'nec potis est dulcis Musarum exponere fetus
 mens animi, tantis fluctuat ipsa malis—
 namque mei nuper Lethaeo gurgite fratris
 pallidulum manans alluit unda pedem.'
 'Gurgite' appears yet again in the fifth foot. Virgil may well have noted the connection, since this poem's nightingale simile is one of several contributors to Virgil's own for the mourning Orpheus at G. 4.511 ff.