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Sostratus *Suppl. Hell.* 733: A Lost, Possibly Catullan-Era Elegy on the Six Sex Changes of Tiresias

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This paper is about a lost poem of uncertain date by an unknown author, an author who may never have existed at all. But I shall argue that this author did exist, and that he was probably writing with a Roman patron (or at the very least, acquaintance) named Strabo in mind. With less confidence I shall suggest that he might have been from a famous family of late-Republican scholars that included the teachers of Pompey and his sons, and that his poem on the several (not just two) gender switches of Tiresias might even have had some influence on Catullus, in particular on Catullus 63, the poem on the self-emasculation of Attis. My work on this lost poem began in the spirit of recent efforts to identify the Greek background to Catullus 63 and also to sketch the intellectual background of the age of Catullus more generally. But the connection with Catullus or even to his time-period is extremely conjectural, and the paper is basically a study of an unusual, interesting, and little-known artifact of Hellenistic poetry in what I believe we can now say is a Roman context.

The poem, attributed to a "Sostratus" who cannot be identified with certainty, survives only in a prose summary in the Homeric commentary of the twelfth-century bishop Eustathius. Eustathius' own source is probably Ptolemy Chennus, an author writing in the first and early second century C.E., once thought to have fabricated nearly all of the texts and authors he cites. But Chennus has been partially vindicated by Tomberg's 1968 study, which has been wrongly ignored by Brisson's 1976 treatment of Sostratus' Tiresias story; Tomberg has also had little effect on the brief reference to Sostratus in Forbes Irving's 1990 monograph on metamorphosis in Greek myth. As far as I can tell, the summary of Sostratus' poem has never been translated into English, or discussed in English for more than a sentence or two,[1] so most of this paper will

[1]The main discussions in any language, all but the first two quite brief, are by Wagner, Brisson, Jacoby, Tomberg, and the editors of *SH*. In English, there are two sentences from

be taken up with presenting text, translation, and analysis of the summary and discussing candidates for authorship. At the end of the paper, I shall then briefly consider possible influences of Sostratus' *Tiresias* on Catullus 63. Even if we cannot be certain about Sostratus' date and influence, his version of the Tiresias myth should be of interest to students of myth and to those interested in the topic of gender in the ancient world: it features such unusual situations as a woman killing a would-be rapist and gods apparently changing a person from female to male as a punishment, and from male to female as a favor. Sostratus' version of the myth is also not available in any mythology textbook of which I am aware. As the summary of Sostratus' poem has been included in Lloyd-Jones and Parsons' decade-old *Supplementum Hellenisticum*, discussion of the lost poem may also provide an example of how "the *Supplementum Hellenisticum* permits us to see the large poetic world of which Alexandria was but a small part" (Zetzel 1987: 362).

Commenting on the Odyssean passage in which Circe tells Odysseus to consult Tiresias in the underworld, Eustathius reviews versions of the myth of Tiresias. The first is the familiar story found in the pseudo-Hesiodic *Melampodia* and in Ovid, in which Tiresias is changed into a woman once, then back into a man years later, after which he mediates the famous argument between Zeus and Hera about gender and sexual pleasure.[2]

Forbes Irving 163–64; cf. also the reviews of Brisson by Walcot, *G&R* 24 (1977) 211 (one sentence of summary); Stubbs, *JHS* 98 (1978) 188–89 (two sentences on this "faintly repulsive biography"); Burkert, *MH* 35 (1978) 159 (who questions Brisson's structural analysis of a myth Brisson has pronounced a fake); and Loraux, *L'Homme* 18 (1978) 238–42 (which I have not seen). See now, as well, the brief comments of Cameron 1995: 382.

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[2]See Hes. *Melamp.* fr. 275 Merkelbach-West, where the editors quote the following: [Apollod.] 3.6.7; sch. *Od.* 10.494; sch. Lyc. 683; Tz. on Lyc. 683 (cited, not quoted); Phleg. *Mir.* 4, pp. 73–74 Keller (= *FGrH* 257 F 36 IV = p. 1178, 8 Jacoby; Jacoby lists as sources Dichaearchus [fr. 37 Wehrli], Clearchus, and Callimachus [fr. 576 Pf.], but Bulloch 18 n. 1 thinks Phlegon may be "confused"; see below in text at n. 11 on Caeneus). The story appears

Eust. 1665.44ff. (on *Od.* 10.494):

> φέρεται δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ μυθικὸς λόγος, ὅτι δράκοντας ἐν Κιθαιρῶνι μιγνυμένους ἰδὼν καὶ τὴν θήλειαν ἀνελὼν μετέπεσεν εἰς γυναῖκα. εἶτα συγκατενεγκὼν μετὰ καιρὸν καὶ τὸν ἄρρενα τὴν οἰκείαν φύσιν ἀπέλαβε. τοῦτον Ζεὺς καὶ Ἥρα διαφερόμενοι κριτὴν εἵλοντο οἷα πεπειραμένον ἑκατέρας φύσεως, εἰ ἄρα μᾶλλον τὸ ἄρρεν ἢ τὸ θῆλυ ἐνεργοῦντα γέγηθεν. ὁ δ' ἐγνωμάτευσέ πως ἐμμέτρως ὡς εἴπερ ἐν δέκα μοιράων εἴη τὰ τῆς τερπωλῆς, τὰς ἐννέα ἐμπίπλησι γυνὴ τέρπουσα νόημα. ἐφ' ᾧ Ἥρα μὲν ὀργισθεῖσα ἐκτυφλοῖ αὐτὸν, Ζεὺς δὲ δωρεῖται τὴν μαντικὴν, ὡς ἔχειν οὕτω καὶ αὐτὸν ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε, τὸ μὲν τὴν μαντοσύνην, τὸ δὲ καὶ ἀλαωτήν.
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> The myth told about Tiresias is as follows. Seeing snakes on Cithaeron having intercourse he killed the female, and was turned into a woman. Then after happening upon the male snake at just the right time he regained his own gender. Zeus and Hera chose him as judge when they were quarreling about whether the male or the female enjoyed intercourse more, since he had experience of both genders. His decision (in the original verse[3]) was that "if there were ten shares of pleasure, the portion of delight the woman would feel would be nine." Angered at this, Hera blinded him, but Zeus granted him prophetic power, so that he would have something of both good and bad, on the one hand skill at prophecy, on the other blindness.

The second version is that found in Pherecydes of Athens and in Callimachus, whom Eustathius mentions by name, in which Tiresias is blinded after seeing a goddess bathing, although Eustathius says the goddess is Artemis, while in Callimachus it is Pallas Athena.[4]

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also in Ov. *Met.* 3.316–38; Paus. 9.33.2 (not much detail); Ant.Lib. *Met.* 17 (the story of Leucippus, with Tiresias included in the list of sex-change stories; the manuscript notes cite Nicander); Hyg. *Fab.* 75.

In general on the myth of Tiresias see Brisson; Bulloch 14–25; Forbes Irving 162–70; Roscher *Lex.* s.v. Teiresias (5.178–207); Gantz 528–30.

[3]Slightly altered by Eustathius so as not to scan as proper hexameters; cf. Hes. *Melamp.* fr. 275 M-W, where a couple of different versions of the lines are cited.

[4]The error replaces the name of the goddess seen bathing by Tiresias in Callimachus with that of the one seen bathing by Actaeon in another myth also mentioned by Callimachus. See Call. *Lav.Pall.*, for which our extant source, and perhaps Callimachus', is Pherecydes *FGrH* I 3 F 92 (= Jacoby pp. 85–86) = [Apollod.] 3.69 + sch. T *Od.* 10.493. Callimachus alludes to sources when he says (56) μῦθος δ' οὐκ ἐμός, ἀλλ' ἑτέρων; these may be his sources for the cult of Athena and not for the Tiresias story, but see Bulloch 17–25 for the possibility that the Tiresias-Athena myth was a basic part of Argive cult. The error about whom Tiresias sees bathing may be attributed to Ptolemy Chennus (see below), to Eustathius, or to an

> Καλλίμαχος [*Hymn* 5] δὲ λέγει τὸν Τειρεσίαν ἰδόντα γυμνὴν λουομένην τὴν Ἄρτεμιν περί που τὴν Βοιωτίαν πηρωθῆναι.
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> But Callimachus [*Hymn* 5] says that Tiresias was struck blind after seeing Artemis [an error for Athena] naked while bathing somewhere in Boeotia.

The third version is said to be from an elegiac poem by Sostratus, and it features six switches of gender, each bringing also new status in terms of age or appearance, and ends with a species switch, as Tiresias is changed into a mouse of unspecified gender.

I present here a text and, since I have not seen this fragment translated into English before, a translation of the summary, followed by comments on the "poem" and a necessarily tentative discussion of authorship, before appending some brief final comments on the possible influence of Sostratus on Catullus.

Text and Translation

The text is basically that of the *Supplementum Hellenisticum*, which differs from that of Stallbaum's edition of Eustathius and what Jacoby prints in *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*[5] only in a couple of places, one discussed in my comments on the sixth metamorphosis. I also discuss a possible emendation or correction of an error in the first metamorphosis. For convenience of consultation and comment I have numbered each of the metamorphoses (six sex changes, then a species switch, for a total of seven stages), even though this involves some arbitrary decisions. In this I follow Brisson, but with some modifications of his divisions.

Eust. 1665.48ff. (on *Od.* 10.494); cf. *SH* 733, *FGrH* IA 23 F 7 (p. 188):

> **First change**. Σώστρατος δὲ ἐν Τειρεσίᾳ, ποίημα δέ ἐστιν ἐλεγειακόν, φησὶ τὸν Τειρεσίαν θήλειαν τὴν ἀρχὴν γεννηθῆναι καὶ ἐκτραφῆναι ὑπὸ Χαρικλοῦς, καὶ ἑπτὰ ἐτῶν γενομένην ὀρειφοιτεῖν. ἐρασθῆναι δὲ αὐτῆς τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα. καὶ ἐπὶ μισθῷ συνουσίας διδάξαι τὴν μουσικήν. τὴν δὲ μετὰ τὸ μαθεῖν μηκέτι ἑαυτὴν ἐπιδιδόναι τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι κἀκεῖνον ἀνδρῶσαι αὐτήν, ἵνα πειρῷτο Ἔρωτος.

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intermediary. For discussion of whether Artemis or Athena was the first to figure in a myth about being seen in the bath, see Bulloch 19, Lacy, Haslam, and Depew 411–12.

[5]Cf. Jacoby, *FGrH* (Berlin, 1923–) and Stallbaum. Texts are also offered by Chatzis 1.11–13, Hercher 286–87, and Wagner 131–32.

Second change. καὶ αὐτὴν ἀνδρωθεῖσαν κρῖναι Δία καὶ Ἥραν ὡς ἀνωτέρω ἐρρήθη. καὶ οὕτω πάλιν γυναικωθεῖσαν ἐρασθῆναι Κάλλωνος Ἀργείου ἀφ' οὗ σχεῖν παῖδα κατὰ χόλον Ἥρας τὰς ὄψεις διεστραμμένον. διὸ καὶ κληθῆναι Στράβωνα.

Third change. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τοῦ ἐν Ἄργει ἀγάλματος τῆς Ἥρας καταγελῶσαν εἰς ἄνδρα μεταβληθῆναι ἀειδῆ, ὡς καὶ Πίθωνα λέγεσθαι.

Fourth change. ἐλεηθεῖσαν δὲ ὑπὸ Διὸς εἰς γυναῖκα μορφωθῆναι αὖθις ὡραίαν καὶ ἀπελθεῖν εἰς Τροιζῆνα.

Fifth change. ὅπου ἐρασθῆναι αὐτῆς Γλύφιον ἐγχώριον ἄνδρα καὶ ἐπιθέσθαι αὐτῇ λουομένῃ. τὴν δὲ ἰσχύι περιγενομένην τοῦ μείρακος πνῖξαι αὐτόν. Ποσειδῶνα δὲ, οὗ παιδικὰ ἦν ὁ Γλύφιος, ἐπιτρέψαι ταῖς Μοίραις δικάσαι περὶ τούτου. καὶ αὐτὰς εἰς Τειρεσίαν αὐτὴν μεταβαλεῖν καὶ ἀφελέσθαι τὴν μαντικήν.

Sixth change. ἦν αὖθις μαθεῖν ὑπὸ Χείρωνος καὶ δειπνῆσαι ἐν τοῖς Θέτιδος καὶ Πηλέως γάμοις. ἔνθα ἐρίσαι περὶ κάλλους τήν τε Ἀφροδίτην καὶ τὰς Χάριτας, αἷς ὀνόματα Πασιθέη Καλὴ καὶ Εὐφροσύνη. τὸν δὲ δικάσαντα κρῖναι καλὴν τὴν Καλὴν, ἣν καὶ γῆμαι τὸν Ἥφαιστον, ὅθεν τὴν μὲν Ἀφροδίτην χολωθεῖσαν μεταβαλεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς γυναῖκα χερνῆτιν γραῖαν, τὴν δὲ Καλὴν χά‹ρ›λιτας [*SH*; χαίτας] αὐτῇ ἀγαθὰς νεῖμαι καὶ εἰς Κρήτην ἀπαγαγεῖν, ἔνθα ἐρασθῆναι αὐτῆς Ἄραχνον, καὶ μιγέντα αὐχεῖν τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ μιγῆναι.

Seventh change. ἐφ' ᾧ τὴν δαίμονα ὀργισθεῖσαν τὸν μὲν Ἄραχνον μεταβαλεῖν εἰς γαλῆν, Τειρεσίαν δὲ εἰς μῦν, ὅθεν καὶ ὀλίγα φησὶν ἐσθίει ὡς ἐκ γραός, καὶ μαντικός ἐστι διὰ τὸν Τειρεσίαν. ὅτι δὲ μαντικόν τι καὶ ὁ μῦς δηλοῦσιν ὅ τε χειμών, οὗ σημεῖον ἐν καιρῷ οἱ τῶν μυῶν τρισμοὶ, καὶ αἱ ἐκ τῶν οἰκιῶν φυγαὶ, ἃς δια‹δι›δράσκουσιν ὅτε κινδυνεύοιεν καταπεσεῖν.

τούτου δὲ τὸ διγενὲς δηλοῖ σὺν ἄλλοις καὶ ὁ Λυκόφρων, παρ' ᾧ φέρεται τὸ τὸν Τειρεσίαν "ἀνδρῶν γυναικῶν εἰδέναι ξυνουσίας" [*Alex.* 683]. ὁποῖόν τινα καὶ τόν Καινέα γενέσθαι φασί.

First change. And Sostratus in the *Tiresias*, an elegiac poem, says that Tiresias was originally born female, and was raised by Chariclo. At the age of seven she was wandering in the mountains, and Apollo fell in love with her, and taught her music as payment for sexual intercourse. But after being taught the girl no longer gave herself to Apollo, and he changed her into a man, so that she would have experience of Eros.

Second change. Having been changed to a man, he acted as judge for Zeus and Hera, as has been mentioned above. Having been changed back into a woman, she fell in love with Callon the Argive, by whom she had a son, who was called Strabo or "Squinter," because he was born with squinting eyes, due to the anger of Hera.

Third change. After this Tiresias laughed at the statue of Hera at Argos, and was changed into an unsightly man, and so called Pithon or "Monkey."

Fourth change. Zeus pitied her and changed her back to a woman in the bloom of youth and sent her to Troezen.

Fifth change. There a local man named Glyphius fell in love with her and assaulted her as she was bathing. But she was stronger than the young lad, and strangled him. Glyphius was the beloved of Poseidon, who turned the matter over to the Moerae for judgment. The Moerae turned her into Tiresias, and took away the skill at prophecy.

Sixth change. But he learned this again from Chiron, and dined at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. There a beauty contest was held between Aphrodite and the Graces, whose names were Pasithea, Cale, and Euphrosyne. He acted as judge, and judged Cale most beautiful, and Hephaistus married her. This made Aphrodite angry, and she changed him into a poor old gray-haired woman, but Cale made her extremely attractive [*manuscripts:* gave her a good head of hair], and led her away to Crete. There Arachnus fell in love with her, and after lying with her he boasted that he had lain with Aphrodite.

Seventh change. At this the goddess became angry and changed Arachnus into a weasel, and Tiresias into a mouse. He says this is why a mouse eats little, from having been an old woman, and has the power of prophecy, because of Tiresias. That the mouse has prophetic powers is made clear both by the way that their squeakings are a timely sign of a storm, and by the way they flee and run away from houses that are in danger of collapse.

That Tiresias had experience of both genders is made clear by a number of authors, including Lycophron, in whom it is said that Tiresias "knew the intercourse of both men and women" [*Alex.* 683]. They say that something similar happened to Caeneus as well.

The "poem"

After introductory paragraphs on the general nature of the "poem," my comments will proceed through the summary in order. My analysis owes much to those of Brisson and Wagner, but both builds upon their work and also differs from them on a number of points. Some weighty words of caution are

appropriate at the start, for of necessity much of what follows depends on the accuracy of the summary, whether by Ptolemy Chennus, Eustathius, or someone else, and there is good reason to be skeptical of the details or emphases of this or any summary. Peter Knox has recently shown the danger inherent in trying to use the stories in Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata* to try to reconstruct the poetry of figures like Euphorion and Philetas; Richard Hamilton and others have discussed the liberties taken by the authors of hypotheses to Euripidean plays; and I myself have published a papryus hypothesis to two books of the *Iliad* that omits all mention of the gods (Knox 1993a: 63–65, Hamilton 1976, O'Hara 1984). We have already seen Eustathius wrongly report that Artemis, and not Athena, was the goddess seen in the bath by Tiresias in Callimachus' *Hymn.* And even a careful summarizer may have as his goal merely reporting the facts of the myth, not the content and structure of a poem. But this is our only evidence for what the poem was like, and we must do what we can with it. Further, my sense is that the stories in this summary are so strange that an epitomizer is less likely to confuse or contaminate them than someone trying to summarize a more familiar myth would be. Still, caution is necessary. In what follows I shall refrain from inserting the phrase "if the summary does not mislead us" again and again, but this possibility should be kept in mind at all times.

Before Tiresias is changed into a mouse, he or she undergoes six metamorphoses that lead through seven quite distinct identities: young girl, man, mother, ugly man, young woman, "Tiresias" (old man?), and old woman. Although from a prose summary we can get no sense of whether the elements were handled with wit and skill or with heavy-handed pedantry, the poem must have contained many features of Hellenistic elegy and epyllion. These include: metamorphosis;[6] rape or attempted rape; a suffering, presumably distraught

[6]For Hellenistic and Roman interest in metamorphosis (esp. up to I B.C.E.), see in general Forbes Irving 19–37, and more specifically Call. *Glaucus* (a title in the Suda), fr. 288 Pf. on Scylla (unclear whether metamorphosis figured in these two), and 577 Pf. (on Caeneus; insecure: see below in text); Euphorion (*SH* 413, briefly); Boios *Ornithogonia*, adapted or translated I B.C.E. by Aemilius Macer (frags. in Courtney); Nic. *Heteroioumena* in four or five books (Boios and Nicander are cited often by the source notices in Ant.Lib.); Alexander Aetolus *Halieus* fr. 1 Powell; Theodorus (*SH* 749–50, date uncertain); Didymarchus *Metamorphoses* (*SH* 378a, date uncertain); Antigonus *Alloioseis* (*SH* 378a, date uncertain, perhaps I B.C.E.); [Mosch.] *Epitaph. Bion.* (South Italy early I B.C.E.?); Parth. *Metamorphoses* in prose or verse (*SH* 605a, 636); Cic. *Pontius Glaucus* and *Alcyones* (called by Courtney 1993: 152 the "first appearance in Latin poetry of a metamorphosis"); Calvus *Io;* Cinna *Smyrna*; Cornificius *Glaucus*; [Verg.] *Ciris* (later but borrowing from earlier texts); Verg. *Ecl.* 6, *G.* 1.404–9 (Nisus and Scylla, perhaps alluding to Parthenius and Gallus; see

woman, to whom the poet might have addressed pathetic apostrophe, or given a speech lamenting her lot,[7] perhaps on one of the occasions when one god punishes Tiresias and another tries to compensate; the anger of a god against a mortal as in the stories of Heracles, Io in Calvus' epyllion, Vergil's Aeneas, and probably Smyrna in the epyllion of Cinna;[8] different types of aetiologies, puns and wordplay (cf. O'Hara 1996a); and at least one example of learned Homer-interpretation in the Alexandrian fashion. The poem is inherently episodic, not "one continuous poem" designed to please an Aristotelian aesthetic. Although the same character, in a different physical form, is featured in every episode, the poem has affinities with the kind of catalogue poem favored by Alexandrian and some other Hellenistic poets (cf. Knox 1986: 12–13, Stewart 197–98, Cameron 1992: 309–10), both in the way that it moves from episode to episode, and also in the way that it borrows from a number of different myths, or even tells well-known stories, with Tiresias inserted as the protagonist. This way in which myths usually associated with other mythological characters have been transferred to Tiresias is one of the most interesting features of the "poem." The myths borrowed include those of Cassandra and Apollo, the daughters of Proetus who laugh at a statue of Hera, Paris as judge of divine beauty, and Anchises boasting of having loved Aphrodite, as well as the traditional versions

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Thomas ad loc.), *A.* 6–12 (Caeneus, Circe, Picus, Allecto, Io, Cycnus, Aeneas' ships, Diomedes' men; cf. Hardie 1992 for shape-shifting in Vergil), and of course Ov. *Metamorphoses*. For later periods see Ant. Lib. and a Michigan papyrus preserving a list of transformations (see Renner).

[7]See, e.g., Lyne 1978b: 173 (on apostrophe); Kubiak 16–17 ("Loss of emotional control, whether temporary or permanent, is a condition especially associated with certain characters in Hellenistic poetry. Usually, but not always these figures are women"); Catullus' Ariadne (64.177 *nam quo me referam*?); Cinna's Zmyrna (fr. 6.1 Courtney, *te* [sc. *Smyrna*] *matutinus flentem conspexit Eous*); Calvus' Io (fr. 6 Courtney, *a virgo infelix, herbis pasceris amaris*); and the "Fragmentum Grenfellianum" or "Alexandrian Erotic Fragment" (*Lyr.Adesp.* 1 Powell).

[8]Cf. the anger of Poseidon and Helius in Hom. *Od.*; Hera at Heracles in Hes. *Theog.* 315, Theoc. 24; Aphrodite at Daphnis in Theoc. 1.96; Demeter at Erisichthon in Call. *Cer.*; Hera at Leto in Call. *Del.* 55–58, 221–59 (*cholos*); in A.R. *Arg.*, Hera at Pelias (Feeney 62–63), Zeus at the Aeolidae and at Jason and Medea (4.576–77 [*cholos*]; Feeney 64); Hera at the Proetids who laughed at her statue at Argos (see below on Tiresias' third metamorphosis); probably Aphrodite at Smyrna or her mother in Cinna's *Zmyrna* (see Knox 1983 on Panyassis ap. [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.14.4 [κατὰ μῆνιν Ἀφροδίτης], Hyg. *Fab.* 58 and [Lactant. Plac.] *Narrat. Fab.* 10.9 [*iracundia Veneris*]); Hera/Juno at Io in Calvus' *Io* and then at Aeneas in *Aeneid*—for connections between the last two see O'Hara 1990: 78–80. In later authors cf. numerous passages in Ovid (for jealousy of beauty cf. *Met.* 4.670 [Cassiopeia], 11.299–327 [Chione] and below in text on the third metamorphosis); the anger of Venus at Psyche in Apul. *Met.* 4.29–30 and Eros at Habrocomes in X. *Eph.* 1.1, and most of the metamorphoses reported in Antoninus Liberalis.

of the Tiresias story as told in the *Melampodia* and Callimachus' elegiac *Hymn* 5. Tiresias' misadventures in different locales also resemble somewhat those of Odysseus or, especially, the protagonists of a Greek or Roman novel, who are at times similarly pursued by the anger of a god, and often move from place to place as Sostratus' Tiresias does (the pattern also appears in the stories of Aeneas and Io). We should keep in mind that Hellenistic love poetry may be viewed as either a predecessor of the ancient novel (the older thesis of Rohde), or as a distant or close older cousin (the more popular theory today).[9] We cannot tell whether each metamorphosis received full treatment, as many episodes do in Callimachus' *Aetia* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, or was dealt with in brief as in Lycophron, Euphorion's *Chiliades* or Vergil's *Eclogue* 6; but the amount of detail in the summary suggests longer treatment.

At the end of the summary Eustathius cites a reference to Tiresias' sex-change by Lycophron, and says that "some say (φασί) that something similar happened to Caineus as well." It would be helpful to know who said what, but Hellenistic stories of sex-changes are poorly attested. They perhaps included that of Leucippus in Nicander, who, according to the manuscript notes to Antoninus Liberalis 17, was born a girl but became a boy, and whose story Ovid tells—but with the protagonist named Iphis.[10] Antoninus also mentions Hypermestra/Mestra, the daughter of Erysichthon whose ability to take any shape helps feed her father's insatiable appetite (cf. Lyc. 1393–96, Ov. *Met.* 8.870ff.), Caeneus, and the otherwise unknown Siproetes. Ovid must have known a Hellenistic source for his brief mention of the otherwise unattested Sithon at *Met.* 4.280: *ambiguus fuerit modo vir, modo femina Sithon.* Callimachus might also have told the other story of Tiresias' transformation, and, intriguingly, the story of Caeneus.[11] The direct evidence that Callimachus described both the alternate Tiresias tale and the myth of Caeneus is a perhaps untrustworthy report in Phlegon (Call. frs. 576–77 Pf.; see above, n. 2), but for Caeneus there are other indications that he or another Hellenistic poet treated

[9]Cf. Rohde; Giangrande (possible influence of prose paraphrases of erotic poetry); Perry 14–15, 120–122; Hägg 121–22 (helpful catalogue of motifs in both Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata* and the novel); Anderson 1984: 20 n. 7; Reardon, index s.v. "Rohde."

[10]Cf. Forbes Irving 152–55, Ov. *Met.* 9.666–797. For caveats about the notes in the manuscripts to Antoninus and Parthenius, see below at n. 51.

[11]On Caeneus see Forbes Irving 155–62, Zeitlin 133–34; cf. Hes. fr. 87 M-W; Pi. fr. 167 = *Thren.* VI; Acusilaus *FGrH* 2 F 22; A.R. *Arg.* 1.59–64 and sch.; Ant.Lib. 17.4 (citing Nicander); Verg. *A.* 6.448; Ov. *Met.* 12.169–209; sch. Lucian *Gall.* 19; Hyg. *Fab.* 14; [Apollod.] 1.22; Plut. *Mor.* 75E.

the story in some detail. The scholia to A.R. 1.57–64 say that, in contrast to Apollonius, who makes Coronus the son of Caeneus a member of the expedition, "some say that Caeneus sailed with the Argonauts, not Coronus" (τινὲς δέ φασι Καινέα συμπλεῦσαι τοῖς Ἀργοναύταις, οὐ Κόρωνον). Callimachus is an attractive candidate for alternative versions of the story of the Argonauts (cf. *Aet.* frs. 7–21 Pf. and *SH* 250–51). Later, Vergil offers a brief treatment of the myth in the underworld, where Caeneus is one of those done in by *durus amor*, like Dido (*A.* 6.448–49 *it comes et iuvenis quondam, nunc femina, Caeneus / rursus et in veterem fato revoluta figuram*). The style and substance of Vergil's lines led Norden to think they owed something to a learned, even "affected" Hellenistic tale of metamorphosis; he even compared the mix of grammatical genders (*femina/Caeneus/revoluta*) with that of Catullus 63.6ff. (Norden 251 ad *A.* 6.445). And Ovid's detailed version of the Caeneus story at *Met.* 12.182–208, 459–535 probably owes something to Hellenistic, perhaps even Callimachean, precedent (so briefly Knox 1993b: 360). By Aulus Gellius' day one is able to refer to "that well-known old poets' story about Caenis and Caeneus" (9.4.15 *notissima illa veterum poetarum de Caenide et Caeneo cantilena*). Servius, in his comment on *A.* 6.448, offers a tantalizing reference to what is probably a post-Vergilian neo-Platonic idea, but which could just conceivably describe a doctrine relevant to either the Caeneus story specifically or sex-change more generally. This is the idea that those going through metempsychosis alternate from one sex to another. Servius' words: *qui* (sc. *Caeneus*) *...post mortem tamen in sexum rediit. hoc autem dicto ostendit Platonicum illud vel Aristotelicum, animas per* μετεμψύχωσιν *sexum plerumque mutare.*[12] Sostratus' Tiresias alternates gender, and since the total of seven transformations seems adapted from the story in the Hesiodic corpus that Tiresias lived seven lifetimes,[13] Servius' story may offer a clue to some Hellenistic predecessor for Sostratus, perhaps a story involving Caeneus (see below on the first metamorphosis for a bit more on Caeneus). Finally, we may note that Euphorion fr. 96 Powell perhaps refers to Tiresias (so Powell); if so, it would be interesting to know whether the often innovative Euphorion followed one of the traditional myths or created a new one similar, in some ways, to that of Sostratus' poem.

[12]Bode 1.154; cf. 2.108 *post mortem in sexum redit*, which seems dependent on Vergil. For metamorphosis and metempsychosis see also Hardie 68 and Buffière 506–17 on "the transformations of Circe" as "a figure of the cycle of metempsychosis" (Hardie).

[13]Hes. *Melamp.* fr. 276 M-W; sch. Lyc. 682; cf. Wagner 133, Brisson 82, Forbes Irving 164.

First change: Tiresias breaks the bargain with Apollo, and is turned into a man. The author's reshaping of material from the traditional Tiresias myth and from other well-known myths is apparent from the start. The setting in which the protagonist wanders in the mountains resembles that of the story in which Tiresias sees the snakes on Mount Cithaeron; Brisson suggests that the stories of the first four metamorphoses are made from elements in that version of the story, disassembled and rearranged. The setting is not specified for the first episode in the summary, but often will be mentioned later in the story; the interest in varied settings may be viewed in the context of the geographical interests of other Hellenistic poets, together with that of the Greek poets and scholars of the age of Catullus as described by Wiseman 1979 and also with that of Sostratus of Nysa, whose brother taught Strabo the geographer. (Below in the section on authorship I shall suggest that Sostratus of Nysa is the most attractive of several candidates for authorship of the *Tiresias.*) The number seven, the age of the girl here,[14] is also the number of transformations in this poem, the number of lifetimes Tiresias lives in other versions of the myth, and the number of years some versions give to him as woman (Ov. *Met.* 3.326–27 says that Tiresias spent seven autumns as a woman, then saw the snakes again during the eighth).

In structure, the story of Tiresias being changed into a man after having sexual relations with Apollo somewhat resembles that of Caene or Caenis, who "after being seduced by Poseidon is transformed into an invincible warrior Kaineus" (Forbes Irving 155), except that the instigator of that change seems to be not the god but the woman:

> The motive for the sex change varies. In Akusilaos it is mysterious: "it was not holy for her to bear children." Ovid makes it an indignant reaction to her rape. The scholiast to Lucian [*Gall.* 19] has her outwitting Poseidon and receiving the gift without losing her virginity at all (Forbes Irving 156).

If the story of Caenis was told by Callimachus (see above), we have no clue as to how.

[14]My translation suggests that seven was the age at which Apollo approached the girl, but the Greek may also be read to say that she merely began to wander the woods at age seven, and that some time passed before Apollo noticed her. But modern notions of seven being an inappropriate age may not be helpful; see Watson on eroticism and children in antiquity, although his evidence focuses mainly on slaves.

The picture of the ill-fated maiden wandering in the mountains resembles the setting of other erotic stories; Wagner 134 suggests "Alexandrian bucolic," and Verg. *Ecl.* 6.52 springs to mind, where Silenus addresses Pasiphae: *a! virgo infelix, tu nunc in montibus erras*. But of course figures in erotic myth often wander, often in mountains.[15] In Call. *Lav.Pall.* 118 Athena comments that his mother receives her blind son Tiresias ἐξ ὀρέων; cf. Bulloch's comment on the phrase "symbolising the wild, where savagery is normal," and on Tiresias and "the wilds" see also Forbes Irving 167–68. We might also think of the *locus amoenus* in Ovid, the pleasant rustic setting that in the *Metamorphoses* frequently produces the expectation in the reader that something unpleasant, often a rape, is about to happen (cf. Heath 53–64; Hinds, ch. 2; Segal, esp. 15–16, 39–56; Parry).

The broken bargain with Apollo is borrowed from the Cassandra story, best known from Aeschylus *A.* 1202–13.[16] But, whereas in that story Apollo bartered prophetic skill, here he teaches music—perhaps against expectations for a Tiresias story but still within Apollo's area of expertise. In a number of places in the summary, we seem to be seeing evidence that Sostratus has displaced traditional elements to a new place in the story, but at this point there may be a problem with the text. When the protagonist is "turned into" Tiresias in the fifth metamorphosis after killing Glyphius, the beloved of Poseidon, he or she is also stripped of the power of divination. But in Eustathius there is no mention of when Tiresias is taught divination. There are two possible explanations. The more popular is to assume that in the original poem Tiresias was given skill at divination by Zeus after the argument between Zeus and Hera about sexual pleasure, which Eustathius covers only with a cross-reference to his earlier account of the traditional version. Another solution (mentioned but rejected by Wagner 134 and Brisson 85 yet still worthy of consideration) would be to emend or correct μουσική at the start of the summary to μαντική; this is perhaps less of a textual problem than an error by Eustathius or his source, comparable to the misidentification of Artemis as the goddess whom Tiresias sees in the bath in Callimachus.

Our protagonist's decision not to continue to go through with the bargain with Apollo is one of several risky or rebellious decisions or actions that he/she will make during the course of the poem. These are generally the source of

[15] See Clausen 1986; Kubiak; Thomas; Ross 1975: 61–65.

[16] The Sibyl also breaks a bargain with Apollo (eternal life for sex) at Ov. *Met.* 14.129–53 (cf. 141 *contempto munere Phoebi*).

Tiresias' troubles, although at other times there will be a Kafkaesque sense that Tiresias is being punished for no reason, or for being at the wrong place at the wrong time (cf. Call. *Lav.Pall.* on Athena's lack of responsibility for the punishment, and also Ov. *Met.* 3.334–35 on Tiresias' being punished unjustly: *gravius Saturnia iusto / nec pro materia fertur doluisse*).

Of some interest is the assumption attributed to Apollo that only as a man can Tiresias know *Eros* (it hardly matters whether we print *Eros* or *eros*). If by this is meant "unfulfilled desire" or "unrequited love" such as that of the rejected Apollo, there seems to have been little of that in the poem. In the summary, at least, Tiresias' male roles in fact never involve erotic activity: acting as judge in the dispute between Zeus and Hera, he talks about sex in a way that would imply experience, and judges a beauty contest at or after the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, but as a male never has a male or female lover. It has been suggested to me that Apollo's assumption recalls what is said in Plato's *Symposium* about the *eros* that comes from the Heavenly Aphrodite being purely masculine (Pl.*Smp.* 181c ὁ δὲ τῆς Οὐρανίας [sc. Ἔρως] πρῶτον μὲν οὐ μετεχούσης θήλεος ἀλλ' ἄρρενος μόνον...); perhaps the original text made some sort of allusion to this.

Wagner 134 n. 3 suggests that the phrase·ἵνα πειρῷτο Ἔρωτος is a reference "auf das folgende Abenteuer," but also notes: "Welcher Art die Erfahrungen ware, die er in der Zwischenzeit machte, war zweifellos auch in dem Gedichte geschildert." Perhaps.

It is at least theoretically possible that the name Tiresias was not used at the start of the poem, and that the protagonist was identified only as the daughter of Chariclo, in a kind of learned antonomasia. In the fifth metamorphosis Eustathius says the Moerae "turned her into Tiresias," which could be the first occurrence of the name. Brisson suggests a different explanation for the phrase "turned her into Tiresias;" see below on that fifth episode.

Second change: a woman again after the argument of Zeus and Hera, Tiresias has a son called Strabo. Brisson notes that the traditional blinding of Tiresias is displaced here onto the son born with weak eyes that bring him the name Strabo, "Squinter." This episode may offer important clues to the identity of the author of the poem, which have not, I think, been noticed before. Sostratus provides an *aetion* of the name Strabo, comparable to countless *aetia* of Roman cognomina such as that of Scaevola in Livy 2.12–13. Strabo occurs occasionally as a Greek name, but mainly in Roman contexts, and the name is much more common as a cognomen of the late Republic or early Empire (if I

read the evidence correctly). It is one of many Roman cognomina based on physical deformities, a type of name more appealing to the Romans than the Greeks (cf. Kajanto 222–87; we might compare, as Nicholas Horsfall suggests to me, the blemishes-and-all verism of Roman Republican as opposed to Greek statuary; see, e.g., Kleiner 31–38). It is easy to imagine "Sostratus," whoever he was, writing the episode in tribute to or as flattery of a real or prospective Roman patron. My discussion of authorship below will treat this question in more detail.

Sostratus' story of the aftermath of the argument between Zeus and Hera must have been different from the traditional version to which Eustathius refers, in which Hera blinds Tiresias and Zeus gives him the gift of prophecy as compensation. In Sostratus Tiresias will apparently never be blinded, although a kind of vision problem appears for her son Strabo. As Brisson 86 notes, blinding would make incomprehensible the choice of Tiresias as judge of the beauty contest, which provokes the sixth metamorphosis; we may also note that the third metamorphosis comes after Tiresias laughs at a humble statue of Hera. The summary also does not explain how Tiresias has been changed back to a woman. It seems reasonable to suppose that Hera is responsible for this, having changed Tiresias into the sex that, according to Tiresias, receives more pleasure in sex. On this reading Zeus must have given the gift of divination as compensation, although this makes less sense than the other versions of the story in which Tiresias receives prophetic "sight" after losing the sight of his eyes. If we emend or correct Eustathius to make Tiresias learn not μουσική but μαντική from Apollo in the first episode, the change to a woman could be either a punishment from Hera or a reward from Zeus, who might have changed Tiresias back into her original gender after his victory in the argument with Hera. Note that in the fourth metamorphosis Zeus changes Tiresias from an ugly man into a young woman.

It is perhaps also odd that Tiresias is able to report that women enjoy sexual intercourse more, if his/her only erotic experience as a female was as a reluctant seven-year-old lover of Apollo (on her age see above, n. 14). Wagner (quoted above) suggests that the summary omits material depicted in the poem that would fit such a phrase ἵνα πειρῷτο Ἔρωτος. In the traditional version of the Tiresias story, in which Tiresias is born male but spends seven or eight years as a woman, Tiresias' revealing of women's pleasure can be regarded as similar to his viewing Athena in the bath in Callimachus' version: "his period as a woman may be seen as a form of involuntary spying or at least as the

acquiring of information he should not have revealed" (Forbes Irving 167). The motivation for Hera's punishment makes a bit less sense in Sostratus' version, which involves an informer born female.[17]

Third change: Tiresias laughs at the statue of Hera and is changed into an ugly man. Previous studies of Sostratus have not noted a clear model for this episode. The way that Tiresias incurs the wrath of Hera by laughing at her statue is borrowed from one version of the myth of the daughters of Proetus. In the story told by Acusilaus (*FGrH* 2 F 28), the Proetids mock the "the small seated statue made of wood from the pear tree" (Burkert 168) said to have been brought from Tiryns to the Argive Heraion, where it still remained for Pausanias to see it (2.17.5, 8.46.3). Both the offense against Hera (or Dionysus) and the punishment vary; one well-known punishment is that of being made to think they are cows (cf. Tiresias made to look like a monkey?), to which Vergil alludes at *Ecl.* 6.48–51, in verses inserted into the middle of the story of Pasiphae in the manner of neoteric epyllion:

> Proetides implerunt falsis mugitibus agros,
> at non tam turpis [sc. quam Pasiphae] pecudum tamen ulla secuta
> concubitus, quamvis collo timuisset aratrum
> et saepe in levi quaesisset cornua fronte.
>
> The daughters of Proetus filled the fields with feigned mooing,
> yet none of them sought such foul intercourse with
> cattle, even though each feared a plow being put on her neck,
> and often felt for horns on her smooth brow.

The story of Proetus and his daughters is treated or mentioned by, among others, Callimachus, Theocritus (probably), Philodemus, and Strabo (the student of Sostratus of Nysa's brother Aristodemus—see below). The version in the Hesiodic *Catalogue* has them losing their hair, a motif possibly recycled by Sostratus when a Grace tries to make Tiresias attractive again after the sixth metamorphosis (but probably the mention of hair there should be emended away—see below).[18]

[17]It may be worth noting that the next story described in Ptolemy Chennus after his apparent reference to Sostratus' *Tiresias* (Phot. *Bibl.* 146b III p. 52 Henry; see below) is that of Erymanthus the son of Apollo, who is blinded after seeing Aphrodite in the bath after she has had sexual relations with Adonis.

[18]Cf. Call. *Dian.* 233–36; Phld. *Piet.* p. 54 Gomperz; Str. 8.6.6; also Paus. 2.17.5 and 8.46.3; Acusilaus of Argos *FGrH* 2 F 28; Bacchyl. 11.40–58 and 82–112. See Burkert 168–73; Forbes Irving 71–72; Seaford 118–36 and, on the Proetids in *Ecl.* 6, Courtney 1990: 102

The summary refers explicitly to the anger of Hera here (κατὰ χόλον Ἥρας); the most prominent recurring motif in this summary/poem is that of the anger of a deity against the mortal Tiresias. Tiresias rebuffs and is punished by Apollo in the first episode, probably angers Hera in judging her dispute with Zeus, and incurs Hera's wrath in this episode by laughing at her statue. After this the wrath of Hera drops out of the picture, and then Tiresias kills the beloved of Poseidon, whose reaction seems measured: he turns the case over to the Moerae for judgment. Throughout the episodes, the male deities, Apollo and Poseidon, seek punishment less passionately than do the goddesses Hera and Aphrodite. The sixth metamorphosis occurs when Tiresias angers and is punished by Aphrodite (τὴν μὲν Ἀφροδίτην χολωθεῖσαν) after not choosing her in the beauty contest; the final change comes when Tiresias incurs her wrath again (τὴν δαίμονα ὀργισθεῖσαν) when her lover boasts that he has lain with Aphrodite. We should note the prominence of stories of a god's wrath against a mortal in Hellenistic and especially first century B.C.E. literature; for anger at beauty contests or rivals in pulchritude cf. esp. *A.* 1.26–27 *manet alta mente repostum / iudicium Paridis spretaeque iniuria formae* (sc. *Iunonis*); Prop. 2.28.9–10 *num sibi collatam doluit Venus? illa peraeque / prae se formosis invidiosa dea est.* Of course such jealousy also occurs in later tales, such as at the beginning of both Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* and the tale of Cupid and Psyche at the center of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (see above, n. 8).

Brisson 82 notes that this new myth of Tiresias maintains or even stresses what he describes as the basic characteristic of the two more popular myths: the position of Tiresias as marginal figure, as a mediator between the sexes and between those of different ages.

Fourth change: Zeus pities Tiresias, and makes her a woman in the bloom of youth (ὡραία). It is interesting to note Zeus' assumption (unless Tiresias in the original poem made a specific request, such as we sometimes see in Ovid) that Tiresias would rather be a young woman than an ugly man, which is noteworthy for displaying an attitude I suppose rare in the ancient world. That Tiresias was born female must be taken into account, and it is possible that the erotic interest Zeus typically shows in young women throughout myth is also a factor. If we suppose that, after the dispute about pleasure in sex, Hera punished Tiresias with being made a woman and Zeus compensated her with

(on the *Suda*'s mention of a Theocritean poem *Proetides*); Clausen 1987: 101 and 1994: 195 (suggesting that Calvus may have mentioned them, and that Vergil alludes to the loss of hair); and O'Hara 1996b.

the gift of divination, we see here a second time, as Brisson notes, that Hera punishes and Zeus tries to compensate, although this theory has the disadvantage of making feminization a punishment in one episode but a compensation in another. Is the ugliness of "Monkey" enough to allow this? In the sixth metamorphosis we shall see τὴν μὲν Ἀφροδίτην (punishment), τὴν δὲ Καλήν (compensation). Both Callimachus' *Hymn* 5 and the traditional Zeus-Hera story feature punishment and compensation; it is worth recalling Eustathius' summary of the latter, which says that Zeus gave him divination "so that he might have something of both good and bad." If however we emend μουσική to μαντική in the first episode and conjecture that Zeus, after the dispute about pleasure in sex, changed Tiresias back to a female, we would then have repeated attempts by Zeus to return Tiresias to her original gender.

Fifth change: she kills a would-be rapist, is put on trial, and turned into Tiresias. This unusual and interesting episode borrows and recasts elements from the Pherecydes-Callimachus version of the Tiresias myth in which Tiresias is blinded after seeing Athena in the bath.[19] But there is more to it than that. In Brisson's view the first four episodes recast the snakes-Zeus-Hera version found in the Hesiodic corpus and in Ovid, and the fifth then inverts the Athena version. Tiresias plays a different role here: in Callimachus the male Tiresias surprises the female Athena; here the female Tiresias is attacked in the bath by the male Glyphius. There Tiresias is blinded but receives the gift of divination as recompense; in Sostratus this episode will lead to his losing the gift of divination. In both versions, the female has little trouble with the male: Athena of course is a goddess, but Tiresias' ability to ward off and even kill Glyphius ("but she was stronger...") is noteworthy. Would the original text suggest that Tiresias retains some of the superior strength of a male, so that the physical metamorphoses are not really complete? Or would Sostratus imply that it is more outrageous for one who has once been a man to be raped? Note however that our protagonist's propensity for resistance to male sexual aggression begins when she is a young female who refuses to continue to have relations with Apollo. That Glyphius is a "young lad" (μεῖραξ)[20] and the beloved of Poseidon must also be taken into account: Glyphius tries to change

[19]So Wagner and Brisson; see too above n. 4 for the relationship between this myth and that of Actaeon.

[20]According to *LSJ*, the word originally meant "young girl, lass," then is "used as fem. of men *qui muliebria patiuntur*, Cratin. 55, Luc. *Sol.* 5," then appears in later writers as "boy, lad;" the technically diminutive form μειράκιον is used of boys at all periods.

his status from that of the passive partner with Poseidon to that of the active partner with Tiresias, and fails.[21] The situation of Glyphius means that the gender-identity of both actors in the scene is in some way in doubt: Tiresias is a female who has (twice) spent time as a male, and Glyphius is a male who has been taking the passive role with Poseidon. The poem would seem to have raised and problematized issues of just where to draw the line between male and female.

Tiresias' resistance to Glyphius brings more trouble, however, since he was the beloved of Poseidon, and Poseidon joins the list of gods whose anger Tiresias incurs. In general terms, the anger of Poseidon against Tiresias for killing his beloved may be compared with his anger against Odysseus for blinding his son, except that here Poseidon's wrath is mild enough for him to agree to arbitration by the Moerae. Would the original poem have dramatized a court proceeding as in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* or Ovid's *Armorum Iudicium* (*Met.* 13.1–398), with discussion of the right to kill an attempted rapist?

My search for other stories, historical or literary, in which a mortal woman kills an attempted rapist has yielded few even reasonably close parallels.[22] In Xenophon of Ephesus *Eph.*4.5, Anthia kills Anchialus: he is a lovesick robber who has tried to rape her at night, and "in desperation she drew a sword that was lying beside her and struck him. The blow proved fatal: while he was trying to embrace and kiss her, he had leant right on top of her; she held the sword underneath him and drove it into his chest" (Anderson translation). Unlike Tiresias, Anthia does not triumph because of superior strength; in a scene repeated in countless modern melodramas, Anchialus' own strength, weight, and aggression provide the force that drives the blade home. Xenophon's date is uncertain, but thought by many to be not far from the second century C.E., and I think he is unlikely to be a model for Sostratus, who, even if his own uncertain date should turn out to later than Xenophon, tends to borrow from much earlier myths.

Seneca Rhetor *Con.*1.2 discusses the case of a virgin captured by pirates and sold into prostitution who keeps her virginity by persuading would-be

[21] See the analysis of Catullus' Attis-character by Skinner 1993: 107–30 and, in more detail, Clay.

[22] See also below n. 31 for the story in Plutarch of a woman who killed a soldier of Alexander's *after* he had raped her.

For help in looking for models for this tale I thank Carla Antonaccio, Jeffrey L. Buller, David Sider (Heracles), Jeff Carnes, Richard Wevers, David Konstan (Xenophon), Elizabeth Bobrick (Danaids), Susan Cole (Plutarch), and Tom McGinn (Seneca).

customers to donate their fee (cf. Tarsia in *Historia Apollonis Regis Tyri*), until a soldier tries to force himself on her and she kills him. The discussion concerns whether she can become a priestess after having lived in a brothel, even if technically a virgin, and after killing the soldier, even if justifiably. There is little resemblance to Sostratus' episode.

So many of Sostratus' stories are borrowed from myths involving other characters that I have a strong suspicion that this one has been as well, and so it seems worthwhile to take time to trace possible models for it. Earlier myths that come closest to providing a parallel are the following:

- Ares is said by one myth to have been the first to be put on trial for homicide before the Areopagus: he had killed Halirrhothius, a son of Poseidon, who was in the act of raping Ares' daughter Alcippe. According to Pausanias, this confrontation took place by a spring in the sanctuary of Asclepius, which may mean that, like Tiresias, Alcippe was attacked while bathing. That the victim was Poseidon's son is also of some interest for the story of Tiresias put on trial for killing Poseidon's beloved. Poseidon prosecutes Ares "with the twelve gods acting as judge," and Ares is acquitted.[23] The story is an *aetion* for Athenian homicide law, which permitted a man to kill someone caught raping his wife, daughter, mother, sister, or concubine.[24] Roman law eventually took a similar attitude; the *Digest* of Justinian reports a Hadrianic rescript declaring that a man should not be punished for killing someone trying to rape him or a family member: *Dig.* 48.8.1.4 *item divus Hadrianus rescripsit eum, qui stuprum sibi vel suis per vim inferentem occidit, dimittendum* ("should get off").[25] See below for the possibility of Hadrianic discussion of this issue as a clue to Sostratus' date.
- One version of the Actaeon myth might have featured an attempted rape or "marriage" of Artemis in the bath, after which the goddess has Actaeon killed.[26] Lacy has argued that a "pre-Hellenistic" version of the Artemis

[23]Cf. Harris 372, [Apollod.] 4.14.2, Paus. 1.21.4, Hellanicus *FGrH* 323a F 22, Dinarchus *Dem.* 87. In a Roman context, the story was told by Varro, who rejected it as an *aetion* of the name Areopagus, but Augustine's summary of Varro does not permit us to know what details Varro included. See Var. ap. August. *C.D.* 18.10 p. 267, 20 D = *GRF* 249, 186 Funaioli.

[24]Dem. 23.53–54; Lys. 1.30–35; cf. Harris; Scafuro, esp. 133–36; Harrison 19, 32–33, 36; Cole 97–113.

[25]Gardner 118–19. Despite the gender of *eum*, I imagine the rescript would apply to either a man or a woman. (I thank Tom McGinn for discussion of this passage.)

[26]Cf. Lacy 26–42; Heath esp. 21–22, 53–64 (p. 54 on Actaeon in mimes in first century B.C.E. Rome).

myth, to which Callimachus, Diodorus Siculus, Hyginus,[27] and a number of iconographic representations allude, might have gone something like this:

> a companion in the chase to Artemis, Aktaion brings a hunted deer to the spring sanctuary and...dedicates its skin, or extremities, to her; he then discovers the goddess bathing in the spring itself, and, crazed with desire, claims her as his wife. The outraged Artemis gives Aktaion the outward appearance of his erstwhile quarry and offering and thereby instigates the hounds' aggression. (Lacy 39)

The dogs then tear him to pieces. Lacy's phrase "claims her as his wife" offers a non-violent interpretation of Diodorus' phrase προῃρεῖτο τὸν γάμον κατεργάσασθαι τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ("undertook to accomplish a marriage to Artemis"). Without the original text, the evidence that this did not involve an attempted rape, and for the "loftiness of Aktaion's aspiration," is not so "unequivocal" as Lacy claims. Some have been skeptical about Lacy's assertion that the myth is early (cf. Heath 21 n. 21), but Diodorus' reference to "the version some tell" (οἱ μὲν ὅτι...) is clear evidence that Actaeon's attempt to rape or marry Artemis was known at least in the first century B.C.E.

- Thetis resists the attack or attempt to capture her by Peleus with shape-shifting and a kind of wrestling, but he holds on and wins out. A few of the many vases depicting Peleus and Thetis seem to show Peleus' assault taking place as she is bathing,[28] and of course it would not be surprising for an incident involving a sea nymph to take place by water.[29] No known version of the Peleus and Thetis myth provides other details relevant to this episode of Sostratus, but it may be noted that the wedding of Peleus and Thetis will be the setting of at least part of the next episode.
- In Ov. *Fast.* 2.332–58, the drunken Faunus tries to rape the sleeping Hercules, who is wearing the clothing in which Faunus had just seen Omphale. Hercules easily thrusts him away (*reppulit*), with such force that

[27]Call. *Lav.Pall.* 110–15 (says merely that he saw her without meaning to); D.S. 4.81.4 τὴν δ' αἰτίαν ἀποδιδόασι τῆς ἀτυχίας οἱ μὲν ὅτι τὸ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν διὰ τῶν ἀνατιθεμένων ἐκ τῶν κυνηγίων προῃρεῖτο τὸν γάμον κατεργάσασθαι τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος...; Hyg. *Fab.* 180 *Actaeon...Dianam lavantem speculatus est et eam violare voluit.*

[28]See Wagner 135; Roscher *Lex.* s.v. Thetis 794–95; and esp. Krieger 133–37.

[29]Cf. Krieger 5–8; Gantz 229; Stoneman 58–63; Hes. fr. 210 M-W; Pi. *N.* 3.35–36, 4.62–65, sch. Pi. *N.* 3.60 (= S. frs. 150 and 618 Radt) and 4.101; sch. A.R. 1.582; sch. Lyc. 175 and 178; Ov. *Met.* 11.221–65; Paus. 5.18.5; sch. *Il.* 18.432, 434 (with Erbse's notes).

Faunus can hardly get up off the ground, but there is no further violence (cf. Fantham 196–201, Parker 202–209). Fantham and others have noted the similarities between Ovid's story and the description in Plautus' *Cas.* 875–936 (itself based on Diphilus' *Cleroumenoi*) of the repelling (offstage) of a would-be husband from a girl's bed by a rival disguised in a wedding veil, who then kicks and beats him (930–31), although here too the violence is far from fatal. As possible sources for Ovid besides comedy, Fantham suggests popular drama ("Atellan, mime, or pantomime"), Hellenistic painting, "a Hellenistic burlesque in which Pan or Priapus served as villain instead of Faunus," or poetry such as "a Hellenistic narrative elegy on the union of Hercules and Omphale." In Sostratus, Tiresias' "strangling" (πνῖξαι) of Glyphius has a Heraclean ring to it.

- The Danaids, with one exception, kill their husbands after or just before the consummation of their marriages, to which they were unwilling partners. This could be likened to defending themselves from rape, although ancient readers might have thought of them as defending the dignity of their father Danaus rather than their own. The trilogy of which Aeschylus' *Supplices* was a part has been thought by many to have featured a trial, as apparently in Sostratus, but the evidence is slight, and any trial might have concerned punishing not the forty-nine for the killing but rather Hypermnestra for her disobedience to her father.[30] Later versions of, or allusions to, the myth do imply a trial of either Danaus or the forty-nine daughters. Euripides *Or.* 871–73 and the scholiast point to a trial of Danaus, but Apollodorus 2.1.5 says that Athena and Hermes cleansed the Danaids of their guilt at the behest of Zeus, a story which "may point to a tradition that they were brought to trial and that the two divinities played a part similar to that of Athena in the *Eumenides*" (Bonner 134–35). At any rate the Danaids can, like Procne (below), be called "women who violently resist male aggression" (Bobrick; more generally, see Zeitlin).
- There is no violent resistance to rape in the fifty or so rape narratives in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where women who escape rape attempts do so by shape-changing. In two poems Ovid even comments on the futility of female resistance, especially against a god: *Fast.* 2.801 (Lucretia): *quid faciet?*

[30]Cf. Garvie 205–11; Bonner; Winnington-Ingram 286. For the popularity of the myth in I B.C.E. Rome see Spence (mostly on Augustan texts and the Palatine temple of Apollo, but note also Lucr. 3.1003–10).

pugnet? vincetur femina pugnans; *Met.* 2.436–37 (Callisto): *illa quidem pugnat; sed quem superare puella...poterat?* (see Curran 275).

In Ovid and elsewhere, Procne and Philomela do take revenge on the rapist Tereus by killing his children.[31] Forbes Irving 159–60, commenting on the violence of the woman-turned-man Caeneus (a real "killer," as his name implies), notes that mythic women sometimes become men (like Caenis/Caeneus) or act like men (huntresses like Daphne and Atalanta) after rape, rape attempts, or the undesired attention of suitors, and that they become "not so much men as characters of an extreme nature with a potential for violence and savagery," usually "directed towards the men who attempt to marry or rape them." It should be noted that Caeneus, who becomes a man after being raped as a woman by Poseidon, dies in the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, which is to say that he dies trying to prevent the rape of Hippodameia and the other Lapith women (Zeitlin 133–34). But punishment of a rapist or attempted rapist is usually left to the gods, or to the husband,[32] who in myth as in law is thought to be the aggrieved person. Perhaps Tiresias as a sometime male is entitled to be both intended victim and avenger.

Brisson 89 interprets the odd statement here "They changed him into Tiresias" to be an assertion by Sostratus (or in his view, Ptolemy Chennus), that, although he is aware of the two traditional myths about Tiresias, we meet the "real" Tiresias only in the otherwise unattested myths of the last two metamorphoses—see below. It seems likely that "Tiresias" here is an old man,

[31]For a historical anecdote about a woman killing a man who has raped her see the story in Plut. *Alex.* 12 and *de Mul. Vir.* 259E–260D of a war captive who kills a soldier of Alexander's who has raped her, either by pushing him down a well or throwing rocks down on him when he is in the well looking for treasure; "impressed by her courage, Alexander allowed her to leave as a free woman" (I quote Cole 112; see her for more details). The story has little in common with that of Sostratus' Tiresias. Cole also cites [Plut.] *Par.* 310B–C, where a woman kills her father, who has raped her, and herself in response to an oracle demanding that an impious one be sacrificed.

[32]Ixion tries to assault Juno, and is punished on the wheel in underworld (Pi. *P.* 2, etc; see Gantz 718–21); Tityos, under orders from Hera, attacks Leto after she lies with Zeus, and is hit by Jupiter's lightning (*Od.* 11.576–81, Hyg. *Fab.* 55 [for the lightning]; see Gantz 39); Oilean Ajax is punished by Pallas Athena, who has the use of Zeus' lightning, for his rape of Cassandra (cf. Gantz 651–55, Austin on *A.* 1.41 and 4.403 with references); Nessus is killed by Heracles as he attempts to rape Deianeira (S. *Tr.* 555–77, Gantz 432–34); Sextus Tarquinius is punished by Brutus after Lucretia kills herself (Livy 1.57–60); Verginius fatally stabs his daughter Verginia rather than let her be raped by Appius Claudius, who is imprisoned, and kills himself (Livy 3.44–58; on Lucretia and Verginia see Joshel, who gives further references).

although the summary does not specify. The wording of part of the seventh and last episode must be considered here as well: there the protagonist is changed from an older woman into a mouse, and the summary adds the aetiological note that the mouse "eats little, from having been an old woman, and has the power of prophecy, because of having been Tiresias" (ὅθεν καὶ ὀλίγα φησὶν ἐσθίει ὡς ἐκ γραός, καὶ μαντικός ἐστι διὰ τὸν Τειρεσίαν). The name Tiresias is associated with the character as prophet, as distinct from the guise of "old woman;" this may be due to the author of the summary, but may also suggest that the protagonist was not thought of as "Tiresias" in every form.

Sixth change: after the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, and the beauty contest between the Graces, Tiresias is changed to an old woman, but then made more attractive by a Grace. The unusual notion of Chiron as teacher of divination (Wagner 135–36) combines his traditional function as teacher of the famous (Jason, Achilles, Asclepius, Amphiaraus; see Brisson 90) with the ability to prophesy he shows at Euripides *IA* 1064ff.; Pindar *P.* 9.39–65, where he prophesies to Apollo and the scholia comment on the inversion; and Horace *Epod.* 13.10ff. Chiron's teaching μαντική instead of medicine may be compared with Apollo's bartering not μαντική but μουσική for sex in the first episode (if we do not emend there).

At (or perhaps after, depending on one's interpretation of ἔνθα as "there" or "next") the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, Tiresias acts as judge in a beauty contest, combining the role he played in the dispute between Zeus and Hera with that traditionally played by Alexander/Paris at (or after) the wedding. Again Sostratus is adapting another myth to his protagonist. In the traditional versions of the contest, most but not all of which are connected with the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, Eris sets up the beauty contest among Aphrodite, Hera, and Athena, and Paris, bribed with the offer of Helen, chooses Aphrodite.[33] In Sostratus, Tiresias, not having learned from previous bad experience as a judge, agrees to take part in a contest featuring Aphrodite and three Graces, Pasithea, Cale, and Euphrosyne. This time Aphrodite loses to the Grace Cale. Besides the whole contest being modeled on distortions of traditional elements (Brisson refers to Sostratus' version as "un hapax"), some details reflect more precise displays of learning. When Tiresias, who once got in trouble mediating a dispute between Zeus and Hera, agrees to judge another

[33]This was the beginning of the *Cypria*; see Procl. *Chr.* 102.14–19, and cf. Townend 21–30 and Gantz 229–30 and 567–71, with further references.

contest, it features a nymph named Pasithea: in Homer, Pasithea is the nymph with whose love Hera bribes Sleep into helping her during another dispute with Zeus (*Il.* 14.267ff.; a tiny bit more on Pasithea will come in the discussion of Catullus at the end of the paper). A more certain example of learning has been described by Wagner 136–37, who notes that the name Cale for a nymph is unattested, but can be best understood as an example of Alexandrian Homer-interpretation. In *Il.* 18.382–83, a Grace greets Thetis as she arrives to visit Hephaestus:

> τὴν δὲ ἴδε προμολοῦσα Χάρις λιπαροκρήδεμνος
> καλή, τὴν ὤπυιε περικλυτὸς ἀμφιγυήεις.

Allen's text treats Charis as a name, and καλή as an adjective. Sostratus' reference to a Grace named Cale suggests a different reading, construing χάρις as a noun and Καλή, at the beginning of line 383, as a name: not Charis who is beautiful, but a Grace named Cale. The scholia on 383 show that the name of this character was an object of dispute: "some named her Thaleia, others Aglaia"; the latter name is that of Hephaestus' wife at Hesiod *Th.* 945. "So we discover in the poem of Sostratus a new piece of learned Alexandrian interpretation, unknown to our Homeric scholia" (I translate from Wagner 136).

After Aphrodite makes Tiresias an old woman, what does Cale do to compensate? The editors of *SH*, with a small emendation of the text of Eustathius, have the Grace grant Tiresias not "a good head of hair" (χαίτας ἀγαθάς) but more general sexual attractiveness (χά⟨ρ⟩ιτας ἀγαθάς). The emendation makes perfect sense for the summary as we see it in Eustathius: Arachnus is more likely to boast that he has slept with Aphrodite after being with a woman granted general attractiveness by a Grace than if he has been with an old woman with nice hair.[34] The adjective ἀγαθάς, however, is odd with χάριτας; a referee for this journal suggests that the original text might have had χάριτας with no adjective, the adjective representing an attempt by Eustathius or someone earlier to make sense of a corruption into χαίτας. Still, χαίτας is not impossible, since it would correspond to the description of Aphrodite making her a poor old "gray-haired" woman (γυναῖκα χερνῆτιν γραῖαν). I have also mentioned that one version of the myth of the daughters of Proetus, from whose myth Sostratus borrows earlier to motivate the third

[34]Cf. the beautification of Odysseus by Athena at *Od.* 6.229–35 (235 κατέχευε χάριν) and 23.156–62, and Aeneas by Venus at *A.* 1.588–93.

metamorphosis, has them losing their hair when they anger the deity.[35] And we should keep in mind that this is a summary, and that the description of the hair could have been simply the most elaborate part of an overall makeover of Tiresias by Cale, especially given a Hellenistic aesthetic that sometimes favors disproportionately lavish description. Even reading χαίτας, Wagner 136 suggested that more than hair would have been involved. It may also be relevant that the summary refers in the next episode to the woman as a γραῦς. In either case, as Brisson notes, Aphrodite tries to make Tiresias unattractive sexually and Cale tries to compensate.

The end of this episode moves Tiresias to Crete. To understand this setting it may be relevant that, after telling what was presumably Sostratus' story of the seven metamorphoses, Ptolemy Chennus explained "why Tiresias was called the daughter of Phorbas by the Cretans:" Phot. *Bibl.* 146b, III p. 52 Henry: λέγει...καὶ ὡς Τειρεσίας ἑπτάκις μετεμορφώθη, διὰ τί τε ὑπὸ Κρητῶν οὗτος Φόρβαντος κόρη ἐκαλεῖτο. Some have suggested that the Cretans linked Tiresias and Phorbas because both are snake-killers, but as the editors of *SH* point out, this seems insufficient to make Tiresias the daughter of Phorbas (see *SH* p. 353, Brisson 107).

Seventh change: Tiresias becomes a mouse. Cale's well-intentioned assistance or compensation again puts Tiresias in a position to get in trouble with the gods. Attractive once more, she attracts a lover whose boasting brings the wrath of Aphrodite down upon both of them; they are changed from lovers into mortal enemies: the mouse and weasel whose enmity was popular in fable (Aesop. 174 Hsr. = 165 Perry = 239 Ch.), tavern-art (so Phaed. 4.6.1–2), and a newly-discovered, probably post-classical mock-epic *Galeomyomachia.* (For a wealth of information on mice, weasels, and lizards, see Brisson 91–111 and also Schibli on the *Galeomyomachia*, esp. 9–11.)

Neither Wagner nor Brisson mention that the idea of punishment for having boasted of sleeping with Aphrodite originates in *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 286–88, where the goddess tells Anchises that if he boasts of having had relations with her, he will be struck by Zeus' thunderbolt; later treatments of the story assume that he did and was (see Austin on *A.* 2.649). The difference here is that whereas Anchises is punished for boasting of having slept with Aphrodite,

[35]Hes. *Cat.* fr. 133, translated at Burkert 169: "because of their loathsome lewdness, the goddess destroyed the tender flower of their youth"; "over their heads she poured a dreadful itching substance and spread white leprosy over their whole skin, and now their hair fell out on their scalps and their beautiful heads were bald."

something he actually did, Arachnus is punished for boasting falsely. Brisson compares the offense and punishment of Arachnus with that of the like-named Arachne, who challenges Athena in weaving and is turned into a spider (e.g., Ov. *Met.* 6.1–145); they both belong to the rather large category of haughty mortals punished by a deity with metamorphosis.

On the phrasing of the explanation that the mouse "eats little, from having been an old woman, and has the power of prophecy, because of Tiresias," which seems to associate the name Tiresias only with the protagonist as prophet, see above on the sixth metamorphosis. The *aetion* of the mouse's small appetite and prophetic powers at the end of the tale suits Hellenistic taste, and resembles those found at the ends of tales in Callimachus, Ovid, or Antoninus Liberalis. Since the *Tiresias* poem begins with a story involving Apollo, and ends with Tiresias turned into a mouse with prophetic powers, my colleague Andrew Szegedy-Maszak suggests to me that a poet like Sostratus might have taken the opportunity to make learned allusion to the connections with mice implied by Apollo's epithet Smintheus (see, e.g., Kirk on *Il.* 1.39 and Erbse's ap. crit. on the scholia).

Eustathius ends his summary or quotation of the summary with a citation from Lycophron on Tiresias, just as he had prefaced it with a reference to Callimachus' *Hymn* 5. He concludes with a vague statement that "some say" (φασί) that "something similar" happened to Caeneus, whom I have discussed above.

The author

Who is the Sostratus to whom Eustathius attributes this poem? There are several principal candidates, although the author of this elegy need not be any one of them.

1) There was no Sostratus. It is possible that "Sostratus" is a fiction, invented by the man who, according to this theory, also completely invented our six-sex-change Tiresias story. This would be Ptolemy Chennus (Ptolemy the "Quail" as Bowersock 1994: 24 notes), a first-to-early-second-century collector of odd myths, once almost universally thought to be a shameless fabricator of rare myths. According to the Suda, he wrote an epic in twenty-four books entitled *Anti-Homer*, a novel entitled *Sphinx*, and a seven-book collection of bizarre versions of myths called by the Suda *Paradoxos Historia* and by other sources *Kaine Historia* or *Novel History*.[36] The last work we know mainly

[36]For his date, probably during the reign of Trajan or Hadrian, cf. *RE* XXVIII 2 (1959) s.v. Ptolemaios 77, col. 1862 (Dihle); see too Bowersock 1994: 24: "he taught and wrote at Rome

from the extensive summary made by the ninth-century scholar Photius. It is indeed likely that the *Kaine Historia* is the ultimate source for Eustathius' knowledge of the *Tiresias* of Sostratus, for it is the only other source to report that Tiresias was changed seven times (Phot. *Bibl.* 146b, III p. 52 Henry: λέγει...καὶ ὡς Τειρεσίας ἑπτάκις μετεμορφώθη, διὰ τί τε ὑπὸ Κρητῶν οὗτος Φόρβαντος κόρη ἐκαλεῖτο—the link with Eustathius is made in Chatzis 1.11–13). The story certainly resembles the others that he reports enough for him to have included it, or to have invented it. Some have even thought that Eustathius repeats an actual chapter from Ptolemy, and this may be true either if Ptolemy has invented Sostratus or if he is indeed summarizing an actual poem. But blanket mistrust of Ptolemy, still found in Brisson and Forbes Irving, has been shown by Tomberg's careful study to be completely unjustified. As Wilson puts it in his review, "Ptolemy has often been accused of conscious fabrication of mythological and other facts, but Tomberg shows beyond much doubt that he was at pains to cite his authorities, whose existence is not open to suspicion." The editors of the *Supplementum Hellenisticum*, commenting on the *Tiresias* poem, concur: "fidem Ptolemaei ab aliis saepe improbatam optime vindicavit K.-H. Tomberg."[37] Formidable skeptics remain,[38]

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from the time of Nero until the early second century," but the connection with the age of Nero is not certain.

[37]Wilson 134–35; *SH* p. 353. Tomberg 6ff. tells how Hercher, in his mid-nineteenth-century study of Ptolemy, concluded that he was a "Schwindler," simply because many of the stories in the *Kaine Historia* were unparalleled in the Greek literature available to Hercher. Then "die Beispiel Herchers machte Schule," and his conclusions usually went unquestioned. With more Greek literature available, Tomberg is in a much better position to evaluate the *Kaine Historia*; he puts the work in the context of "Mytho-Paradoxographie" such as that of Callimachus and many later authors; the search by Callimachus and Euphorion for obscure myths, which Euphorion perhaps "kontaminierte oder in Analogie zu anderen Sagenkreisen Erstversionen herstellte" (68, citing Meineke *An. Alex.* 33 "maior etiam obscuritas Euphorionis carminibus ex eo adhaesit, quod passim fabulas pro suo arbitrio et consilio immutavit"); the "Handbook-Culture" of the Empire; the collections of Parthenius and Antoninus Liberalis and the later notices in the manuscripts about their sources; the Alexandrian fondness for catalogues and lists; the dinner-party Homeric *zetemata/problemata* and *luseis* later extended to Roman questions such as *de Aeneae matre vera* (59; Sen. *Ep.* 88, 37); and authors like Aulus Gellius. Tomberg 61 argues tellingly that for Ptolemy's work to be useful for dinner-party *zetemata*, he must have cited a source for each piece of information, not just the ones Photius' summary includes. This context does not preclude either Ptolemy or his sources making things up, but fabrication from whole cloth of the seven-episode Tiresias story seems unlikely.

[38]E.g. Winkler 143–44, who calls Ptolemy (with some degree of fondness) "a liar on a grand, academic scale," and more recently Bowersock 1994: 24–27, who says that Ptolemy "told lies as easily as he breathed" and claims of his "alleged authorities" that "it is perfectly

but even in the scornful summary of Photius (who says Ptolemy is hollow and pretentious and an unsophisticated stylist: ὑπόκενός τέ ἐστι καὶ πρὸς ἀλαζονείαν ἐπτόμενος, καὶ οὐδ' ἀστεῖος τὴν λέξιν), many citations of sources survive, and we may suppose the original had even more; Tomberg suggests that a source would have been provided for each story in Ptolemy. Framing Eustathius' summary of the *Tiresias*, we see references to Callimachus and Lycophron, even though the reference to Callimachus contains an error. This Tiresias story is bizarre, but no more so than many of the obscure variants of myth found in Servius, Homeric scholia, or even Euphorion or Callimachus.[39] To paraphrase Tomberg, there is no reason to doubt the existence of the *Tiresias* elegy (172–73 n. 111). It should also be noted that Jacoby has suggested that Eustathius owes his version of the story not to Ptolemy Chennus (as most scholars think, following Chatzis), but to Homeric scholia now lost, and that he attributes the poem to Sostratus of Nysa (#5 below).[40]

2) Sostratus medicus. A doctor, drug expert, and zoologist named Sostratus dates from the second half of the first century B.C.E.; we know that he wrote after the death of Cleopatra, since comparison with the scholia to Nicander shows that the information about the snake that killed Cleopatra at Ael. 9.61 derives from Sostratus (cf. Wellmann 1891: 338–39, and *RE* s.v. Sostratos 13). In 1892 Wagner argued that this man was probably the author of the *Tiresias* elegy, finding the *aetion* of the weasel and mouse at the end of the story compatible with his zoological interests. But even though Wagner makes many excellent remarks about the content of the *Tiresias* fragment (several of which I have drawn upon above in my own analysis of the summary), the idea that a zoologist is the most likely author of aetiological poetry featuring animals is less than compelling, and has been rightly rejected by Wellmann and Jacoby. Wagner even suggests that Sostratus the doctor, who wrote after 30 B.C.E., may be identical with #5 below, the *grammaticus* Sostratus of Nysa. But Sostratus *medicus* is not a good candidate; his importance for the study of the *Tiresias* is

clear that he simply made them up." Neither Winkler nor Bowersock mentions Tomberg, and the claims of both seem impressionistic rather than convincing—although the impressions of such scholars are not to be dismissed lightly.

[39]Wagner 141 cites Artem. *Oneir.* 4.63: "There are in Lycophron's *Alexander*, Heracleides Pontus' *Leschai*, Parthenius' *Elegies*, and in many other poets, strange and unusual stories" (ἱστορίαι ξέναι καὶ ἄτριπτοι).

[40]Jacoby 1939–40: 82; cf. *FGrH* IIIa Kom. p. 399. On the difficult question of Eustathius' sources, see the references in Feeney 34–35 and n. 120 to Erbse and Van der Valk 1.86–106; cf. too Wilson 1983: 199.

that some of those who say the attribution to "Sostratus" is a fake also argue that the fame of the doctor's learning led to many unattributed or manufactured stories being falsely attributed to him.

3) Sostratus with the "wet wings." Juvenal 10.176–78 describes a poet whose excited style of recitation of his verses about the Persian invasion's effect on rivers leaves him wet under the arms:

> ...credimus altos
> defecisse amnes epotaque flumina Medo
> prandente et madidis quae cantat Sostratus alis

Sostratus sings *madidis alis*: either with wet armpits, "because of his vehement delivery" (Courtney 1980), or on the wings of poetic inspiration, dampened by drink (Hardy et al.). Nothing is known about this man. The information in the scholia to Juvenal seem to offer little but an interpretation of the lines, and modern guesses putting him in the time of either Aristotle or Juvenal himself are indeed just guesses, although as Courtney says *ad loc.*, "Juvenal's description implies someone nearer to his own time." It is worth noting that one of the testimonia to be discussed below under #5 is attributed to an *On Rivers* of Sostratus; the subject matter of this would fit Juvenal's poet, who sings of the rivers drunk dry by the Persians.[41]

The mention of a Sostratus in Juvenal 10 is one of three factors that may point to a more or less Hadrianic date for the author of the *Tiresias.* The other two are the likelihood that the poem was known to Ptolemy Chennus, who seems to have been still writing in the period of Trajan or Hadrian, and the Hadrianic rescript, discussed above in the context of the killing of Glyphius, saying that a man has the right to kill a rapist attacking him or a member of his family, which may mean the question was "in the air."

[41]Courtney 1980 ad loc. Friedlander on 178 (p. 472) cites the scholiast (*Sostratus poeta fuit. hic Xerxes regis facta describit. madidis autem ideo quia omnes qui cum sollicitudine recitant, necesse est ut alae eis sudent*), and also suggests that Juvenal refers to a competitor in the Capitoline *agon*, the quadrennial poetry contest instituted by Domitian in 86. Nash 154–55 thinks Juvenal refers to the Sostratus cited in [Plut.] *de Fluv.* (see below on Sostratus of Nysa), and notes that Sostratus was himself author of another *de Fluviis*, which Nash suggests was in verse (see below). Bücheler 397 thinks Juvenal refers to Sostratus of Phanagoria, whose use of the word Μυκαλήσιος (see below) he suggests could have been in an epic poem. Thomson 3–4 thinks of Sosistratus, who Arist. *Po.* 26.1462a says used excessive gesticulation in epic recitation; Green 221–22 agrees, but Courtney is rightly skeptical.

4) Sostratus of Phanagoria. From Phanagoria, a city on the Black Sea or the Cimmerian Bosporus, comes my second favorite candidate for authorship of the "Tiresias." This is a poet called Σώστρατος ὁ Φαναγορείτης by Stephanus Byzantinus and Σωσικράτης ὁ Φαναγορείτης by Athenaeus. The first fragment is a brief report on this poet's use of the adjective Μυκαλησίς for a person from Mykale: Steph. Byz. p. 459.13 Meineke s.v. Mykale = *SH* 731: Μυκάλη, πόλις Καρίας....τὸ ἐθνικὸν Μυκαλήσιος...λέγεται καὶ θηλυκῶς Μυκαλησίς, ὡς Σώστρατος ὁ Φαναγορείτης. The second refers to the poet as author of an Ἢοῖοι, "Or such men as...," which would be a *Catalogue of Men*, a masculine counterpart to Hesiod's Ἢοῖαι.[42] In light of the apparent content, the editors of *SH* gloss the title as *Deorum Amasiones* ("Lovers of the Gods"); that content should perhaps remind us of the song of Clymene at *G.* 4.347 (*aque Chao densos divum numerabat Amores*). Most likely these two sources refer to the same poet, whose name should be either Sostratus or Sosicrates. This man is a strong contender to be author of the *Tiresias*, which Lloyd-Jones and Parsons (and now Cameron 1995: 382) suggest perhaps could fit into an Ἢοῖοι. But problems remain with this identification. Sostratus' Tiresias starts life as a female, and has several of his/her most memorable adventures, and apparently all of his/her erotic experience, as a woman; it may be questioned whether this would belong in a poem entitled "Or such *men* as..." For the *Tiresias* to belong to that poem the title Ἢοῖοι would also have to refer to a collection of poems, unless one may refer to a section of a collective-poem like Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as "the '*Tiresias*,' an elegiac poem." The two different versions of the name also reduce his chances of being the author of the *Tiresias* by another fifty percent.

Two other fragments must here be noted, which could be attributed to Sostratus Phanagorites or to my next candidate.

The first is from Eustathius, who says that Paris learned archery from his lover Apollo, and received from him the ivory bow with which he wounded Achilles in the stomach:

[42]Athenaeus 13.590A, III p. 300 Kaibel = *SH* 732: ...ὁ Μυρτίλος ἔφη, 'ἐπείπερ ἡμῖν ἐμποδὼν ἐγένου κατάλογον γυναικῶν ποιουμένοις, οὐ κατὰ τοὺς Σωσικράτους [Σωστράτου Schweighaüser] τοῦ Φαναγορείτου [Musurus: -ριστοῦ A] Ἢοίους ἢ τὸν τῶν γυναικῶν κατάλογον Νικαινέτου τοῦ Σαμίου ἢ Ἀβδηρίτου [fr. 2 Powell] μικρὸν ἐπισχὼν ἐπὶ τὴν παρὰ σοῦ τρέψομαι πεῦσιν, Φοῖνιξ ἄττα γεραιέ' (*Il.* 1.607).

The name of the poem is incorrectly reported as the feminine Ἢοῖαι in the English translation of Lesky 755; the original German is ambiguous (and so not incorrect).

> Eust. 1696.49f. on *Od.* 11.538 = *SH* 734 = *FGrH* 23 F 6: Ἀχιλλέα δὲ ὅτι Πάρις ἀνεῖλε τοξεύσας καθωμίληται. Σώστρατος δὲ ἱστορεῖ Ἀλέξανδρον Ἀπόλλωνος ἐρώμενον καὶ μαθητὴν τοξείας, ὑφ' οὗ τόξον ἐλεφάντινον σχόντα τοξεῦσαι Ἀχιλλέα κατὰ γαστρός.

Like the story of Tiresias' seven metamorphoses, this myth is also found in Photius' summary of Ptolemy Chennus, where it says that it was Helenus who learned archery from his lover Apollo, and from him got the ivory bow with which he wounded Achilles, here on the hand.[43] Since Ptolemy Chennus mentions both the story about Apollo giving the bow to a lover and Tiresias' seven metamorphoses, the author of the story about the bow is perhaps likely to be also the author of the *Tiresias*. The substitution of the wrong name resembles the error with Artemis and Athena in Eustathius' report about Callimachus and Tiresias. As Lloyd-Jones and Parsons note, this story would fit an Ἡοῖοι extremely well.

The second fragment is from Stobaeus, who refers to a second book of Sostratus' *Cynegetica*, and tells the story of Cyanippus and Leuconoe, newlyweds who come to woe because of his love of overnight hunting, as she follows to check up on him, only to be torn apart by his dogs:

> Stob. IV 20b.70, iv p. 471 Hense = *SH* 735 = *FGrH* 23 F 4: Σώστρατος ἐν β' Κυνηγετικῶν· Κυάνιππος τῷ γένει Θετταλὸς γήμας Λευώνην τὰ πολλὰ διὰ φιλοκύνηγον ἐνέργειαν ἐν ὕλαις διέτριβεν. ἡ δὲ νεόνυμφος ὑπολαμβάνουσα συνήθειαν αὐτὸν ἔχειν μεθ' ἑτέρας γυναικὸς κατ' ἴχνος ἠκολούθησε τῷ προειρημένῳ, καὶ ἔν τινι κατακρυβεῖσα συνδένδρῳ τὸ μέλλον ἀπεκαραδόκει. τῶν δὲ πέριξ κλάδων αἰφνιδίως σεισθέντων, οἱ στιβευταὶ κύνες ⟨θηρίον⟩ δόξαντες καὶ αὐτὴν ἀλόγου ζῴου δίκην διεσπάραξαν. τῆς δὲ πράξεως αὐτόπτης γενόμενος Κυάνιππος ἑαυτὸν ἐπικατέσφαξεν.

The story, which puts an Actaeon-like ending to the pattern of the Cephalis and Procris story found in Ov. *Met.* 7.661–865,[44] also appears without attribution as the tenth of the *Erotica Pathemata* of Parthenius, and in a brief form in Ps.-

[43]Ptol. Chenn. p. 195 Westermann, ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 151b, III p. 67 Henry ...ὡς Ἕλενος ὁ Πριάμου Ἀπόλλωνος ἐρώμενος γένοιτο, καὶ ἔλαβε παρ' αὐτοῦ δῶρον τόξον ἐλεφάντινον, ᾧ σχόντα τοξεύσειε Ἀχιλλέα κατὰ τῆς χειρός.

[44]Cf. Lloyd-Jones and Parsons: "Leuconae historia carmen potius redolet quam Τέχνην prosaicam. ipsa historia notam Cephali et Procridis historiam imitatur."

Plutarch *Parallela Minora*, who cites "Parthenius the poet."[45] The lack of attribution in Parthenius should not be taken to mean that the story is Parthenius', for these attributions are not by Parthenius but by a later hand (see below on Parthenius' tale of Herippe). If Parthenius got the story from Sostratus, this means that Sostratus predates Parthenius; this is the closest we come to being able to date the poet from Phanagoria. Sostratus Phanagorites remains my second favorite candidate, but all must remain uncertain.

Before moving on to my final candidate, I should note that it is not inconceivable that the fourth and fifth candidates are the same person, associated by some with the city of Phanagoria, but by others with Nysa.

5) The grammaticus Sostratus of Nysa. From Nysa, an inland city in Asia Minor near the Maeander River, comes the man whom I believe, albeit based on only an accumulation of circumstantial evidence and a certain amount of wishful thinking, to be the strongest candidate. This is Sostratus the *grammaticus*, son of the Menecrates who was a pupil of Aristarchus, and whose work might have inspired the famous comparison between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in Ps.-Longinus *On the Sublime*.[46] Our only source for the life of this Sostratus is a brief note in Strabo, who says that he was brother of the Aristodemus who taught Strabo at Nysa and Pompey's children at Rome, and who also had a school at Rhodes, and a cousin of the Aristodemus who taught Pompey (Pompey the son, of course, of Pompeius *Strabo*).[47] Of the two sons of

[45][Plut.] *Par. min.* 21 p. 310E: ΚΥΑΝΙΠΠΟΣ τῷ γένει Θετταλὸς ἐπὶ θήραν συνεχῶς ἐξήει· ἡ δὲ νεόνυμφος αὐτοῦ ὑπολαβοῦσα διὰ τὸ πολλάκις ἐν ὕλαις μένειν συνήθειαν ἔχειν μεθ' ἑτέρας κατ' ἴχνος ἠκολούθησε τῷ Κυανίππῳ· καὶ ἔν τινι κατακρυβεῖσα συνδένδρῳ τὸ μέλλον ἀπεκαραδόκει. τῶν δὲ κλάδων σεισθέντων οἱ κύνες θηρίον εἶναι δόξαντες ὥρμησαν καὶ τὴν φίλανδρον ἀλόγου δίκην ζῴου διεσπάραξαν. ὁ δὲ Κυάνιππος ⟨τῆς⟩ ἀνελπίστου πράξεως αὐτόπτης γενόμενος ἑαυτὸν ἀπέσφαξεν· ὡς Παρθένιος ὁ ποιητής.

[46]On Menecrates cf. sch. *Il.* 24.804a with Erbse's notes, Hefermehl esp. 291–96, and Russell on *Subl.* 9.11–15.

[47]Str. 14.1.48 p. 650: Ἄνδρες δὲ γεγόνασιν ἔνδοξοι Νυσαεῖς...Μενεκράτης, Ἀριστάρχου μαθητής, καὶ Ἀριστόδημος, ἐκείνου υἱός, οὗ διηκούσαμεν ἡμεῖς ἐσχατόγηρω νέοι παντελῶς ἐν τῇ Νύσῃ· καὶ Σώστρατος δέ, ὁ ἀδελφὸς τοῦ Ἀριστοδήμου, καὶ ἄλλος Ἀριστόδημος, ἀνεψιὸς αὐτοῦ, ὁ παιδεύσας Μάγνον Πομπήιον, ἀξιόλογοι γεγόνασι γραμματικοί· ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος καὶ ἐρρητόρευε, καὶ ἐν τῇ Ῥόδῳ καὶ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι δύο σχολὰς συνεῖχε, πρωὶ μὲν τὴν ῥητορικήν, δείλης δὲ τὴν γραμματικὴν σχολήν· ἐν δὲ τῇ Ῥώμῃ τῶν Μάγνου παίδων ἐπιστατῶν ἠρκεῖτο τῇ γραμματικῇ σχολῇ. The *RE* entry on Sostratus presents a garbled version of his relations, misreading Strabo to make Sostratus rather than Aristodemus the teacher of Strabo. On the family see also Rawson 68.

Pompey, Gnaeus was probably born between 80 and 76, and Sextus between 68 and 66,[48] which gives us some idea when Sostratus' brother Aristodemus was in Rome teaching them, and since Strabo the geographer was born around 63, Aristodemus must have left Rome by the year 50, if he taught Strabo at Nysa (Funaioli p. xv). Strabo's report that Aristodemus was "extremely old" (ἐσχατόγηρως) when he taught him gives us at least some clue as to how old his brother Sostratus would have been at mid-century.

Before reviewing the fragments of Sostratus of Nysa, brief discussion of work by another member of his family may help sketch his intellectual milieu. An Aristodemus of Nysa, whether the brother or cousin of Sostratus we cannot know, argued that Homer was a Roman; whether this was a cause or a result of his interest in the family of Pompey cannot be known, but it cannot have displeased his Roman patrons.[49] I have suggested above that Sostratus wrote for a Roman patron or friend named Strabo. Two fragments are attributed to Aristodemus that suggest that he made a collection of stories, which has been compared with Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata* (Rawson 70 n. 19). In the first, Ps.-Plut. *Parallela Minora* attributes to "the third book of Aristodemus' *Mythice Synagoge*" a story also found in slightly longer form without attribution in Joannes Lydus, telling how Helen stopped a plague at Sparta in response to an oracle.[50] It should be noted that the *Parallela Minora* and *de Fluviis* falsely attributed to Plutarch, which are our sources for several fragments of Aristodemus and Sostratus, have been thought by some to be undependable sources of information, especially as regards the titles of works; Jacoby and others have thought they are perhaps by the same author, and they obviously have much in common with Stobaeus' *Florilegium* as well.[51] In the

[48]*RE* v. 21 pt. 2 s.v Pompeius 32 (col. 2211) and 33 (col. 2214); Syme 255 n. 4. Older scholarship made Sextus born in 75, following the report in App. *BC* 5.144 that he was forty when killed in 35 B.C.E., but more recently scholars have argued that he must have been too young in 49 to campaign in the war against Caesar.

[49]Cf. *Vita Homeri* 6 (Allen vol. 5 p. 251), Bowersock 1965: 127 n. 4, and esp. Robert. Sch. *Il.* 9.453c cites Aristodemus of Nysa, ῥήτωρ τε ἅμα καὶ γραμματικός, for a variant reading. On Nysa see also Magie 989–91 (thanks to Nicholas Horsfall for this reference).

[50][Plut.] *Par. min.* 35 p. 314 C = *FGrH* 1A 22 F (cf. Joann. Lyd. *de Mens.* IV 147 p. 165): λοιμοῦ κατασχόντος Λακεδαίμονα ἔχρησεν ὁ θεὸς παύσασθαι, ἐὰν παρθένον εὐγενῆ κατὰ ἔτος θύσωσιν. Ἑλένης δέ ποτε κληρωθείσης καὶ προαχθείσης κεκοσμημένης ἀετὸς καταπτὰς ἥρπασε τὸ ξίφος καὶ ἐς τὰ βουκόλια κομίσας ἐπὶ δάμαλιν κατέθηκεν· ὅθεν ἀπέσχοντο τῆς παρθενοκτονίας· ὡς Ἀριστόδημος ἐν τρίτῃ Μυθικῇ Συναγωγῇ.

[51]See Jacoby 1939–40: 73–144, esp. 100ff.; cf. also Wagner 140 and Tomberg 24–27.

second, the manuscript of Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata* attributes to "the first book of the *Stories* of Aristodemus of Nysa" the tale Parthenius tells about Heripe, who tried to persuade her unnamed Celt kidnapper to kill and rob the husband who came to ransom her (instead he kills her, and sends the husband on his way). The manuscript note of attribution, which of course derives "not from Parthenius himself, as is often assumed, but from a later commentator,"[52] says however that Aristodemus changes the names, calling the woman Euthymia, and the Gaul Cavaras. "Changing the names" is, however, somewhat like what Sostratus the author of the *Tiresias* does when he transfers the myths of Cassandra, etc., to his protagonist.

Under the name Sostratus Jacoby lists seven fragments (*FGrH* 1A 23 F), some of which have been discussed above. These numbers are his; again the caveat about the titles in the works falsely attributed to Plutarch should be mentioned:

1. The *de Fluviis* and Stobaeus cite a fragment from the "first book" of another *Mythices Historias <Syn>agoge* (the title in Stobaeus is "*Mythice Agoge*"), dealing with an healing herb found in the Tigris:

   [Plut.] *de Fluv.* 24.4 (cf. Stob. *Flor.* IV 36, 21): γεννᾶται δ' ἐν αὐτῷ (sc. ἐν Τίγριδι) βοτάνη κριθῇ παρόμοιος ἀγρίᾳ· ταύτην οἱ ἐγχώριοι θερμαίνοντες ἐν ἐλαίῳ καὶ ἀλειφόμενοι οὐδέποτε νοσοῦσι μέχρι τῆς ἀνάγκης τοῦ θανάτου, καθὼς ἱστορεῖ Σώστρατος ἐν α' Μυθικῆς Ἱστορίας ‹Συν›αγωγῆς.

2. The *Parallela minora* and Stobaeus cite from the "second book of Sostratus' *Thraecica*" (the name is Socrates in [Plut.]) the story of how Codrus as Athenian general fights to his death willingly, because of an oracle that said the Thracians would be victorious if they spared the Athenian general:

   [Plut.] *Par. min.* 18. p. 310 A (cf. Stob. *Flor.* III 7, 67): Ἀθηναίοις πολεμοῦντες χρησμὸν ἔλαβον, ἐὰν Κόδρου φείσωνται, νικῆσαι· ὁ δὲ δρέπανον λαβὼν ἦκεν εἰς τοὺς ἐναντίους ἐν εὐτελοῦς σχήματι καὶ ἕνα φονεύσας ὑπὸ θατέρου ἀνῃρέθη, οὕτω τ' ἐνίκησαν οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι· ὡς Σωκράτης ἐν δευτέρῳ Θρᾳκικῶν.

[52]Knox 1990: 189, with further references, and a warning: "Caution is required in basing broad conclusions on these later accretions to the text of Parthenius. They indicate only that the story as narrated by him was also found in some form in the works cited, perhaps only by an allusive reference; they do not show that Parthenius is in any way summarizing their narratives." Cf. also Tomberg 34–36 and Knox 1993a, esp. 63–65, where he notes that "the source indications in Parthenius have not been shown to be entirely wrong in any given instance."

3. The same two sources cite from the "second book of Sostratus' *Tyrrhenica*" the story, perhaps best known as the background of Ov. *Her.* 11 (more sources in Hopkinson 1984: 31), of how king Aeolus' son Macareus rapes his sister Canace, who then kills herself at Aeolus' urging, after which Macareus kills himself with the same sword:

   [Plut.] *Par. min.* 28 p. 312 CD (cf. Stob. *Flor.* IV 20. 72): ΑΙΟΛΟΣ τῶν κατὰ Τυρρηνίαν βασιλεὺς ἔσχεν ἐξ Ἀμφιθέας θυγατέρας ἓξ καὶ ἴσους ἄρρενας· Μακαρεὺς δ' ὁ νεώτατος ἔρωτι ἔφθειρε μίαν, ἡ δὲ παιδίον ἐκύησεν. † ἐμπεσοῦσα δὲ καὶ ξίφους πεμφθέντος ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός, ἄνομον κρίνασα ἑαυτὴν διεχρήσατο· ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ὁ Μακαρεύς· ὡς Σώστρατος ἐν δευτέρᾳ Τυρρηνικῶν.

4. The story of Cyanippus and Leuconoe from the "second book of Sostratus' *Cynegetica*" described and quoted above under Sostratus of Phanagoria = *SH* 735.

5. The *de Fluviis* attributes to "the second book of Sostratus' *On Rivers*" an *aetion* of a former name of the Ismenus River, "Cadmus' Foot":

   [Plut.] *de Fluv.* 2.1.1 Ἰσμηνὸς ποταμός ἐστι τῆς Βοιωτίας κατὰ πόλιν Θήβας· ἐκαλεῖτο δὲ τὸ πρότερον Κάδμου ποῦς ἀπ' αἰτίας τοιαύτης· Κάδμος τὸν κρηνοφύλακα δράκοντα τοξεύσας καὶ εὑρὼν ὥσπερ πεφαρμακευμένον φόνῳ τὸ ὕδωρ, περιήρχετο τὴν χώραν ζητῶν πηγήν· γενόμενος δὲ κατὰ τὸ Κωρύκιον ἄντρον κατὰ πρόνοιαν Ἀθηνᾶς τὸν δεξιὸν πόδα βαθύτερον εἰς πηλὸν ἤρεισεν· ποταμοῦ δ' ἀναδοθέντος ἐκ τοῦ τόπου, ὁ ἥρως βουθυτήσας Κάδμου πόδα προσηγόρευσεν αὐτόν. μετὰ δέ τινα χρόνον Ἰσμηνὸς, Ἀμφίονος καὶ Νιόβης παῖς, ὑπὸ Ἀπόλλωνος τοξευθεὶς καὶ ἀλγηδόνι συνεχόμενος, ἑαυτὸν ἔβαλεν εἰς τὸν προειρημένον ποταμὸν, ὃς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ Ἰσμηνὸς ὠνομάσθη, καθὼς ἱστορεῖ Σώστρατος ἐν β' περὶ Ποταμῶν.

   The title of this work may be compared with that of Callimachus' *On the Rivers of the Greek World*, and with Juvenal's reference to a poet named Sostratus, discussed above.

6. = *SH* 734, the story of Paris (Helenus?) as the lover of Apollo, discussed and quoted above under Sostratus of Phanagoria.

7. = *SH* 733, the *Tiresias*.

It is possible to sum up the works attributed to Aristodemus and Sostratus, leaving aside the *Tiresias* and keeping in mind that any of these sources could

be misreporting information or especially titles. Aristodemus seems to have produced a collection of myths like that of Parthenius, and Sostratus might have produced a similar collection, as well as works of mythical, ethnographical, aetiological and geographical content (Bux, *RE* ser. 2 vol. 3a col. 1201 s.v. Sostratos #7, also surveys the fragments). To both men are attributed rare myths and odd versions of stories. Besides the significant inclusion of the *aetion* of the name Strabo, which points to a Roman context and perhaps even specifically to Pompeius Strabo (see below), the scholarly and mythological interests of his family make Sostratus of Nysa a strong candidate to be author of the *Tiresias*. In addition, Sostratus' practice of adapting known myths or motifs to a different mythological character seems at least consistent, if not quite distinctively so, with the notion of poetic imagination found in Book 1 of Strabo the geographer, who was the student of the brother of Sostratus of Nysa. Strabo speaks of authors who "deliberately weave in myths, not in ignorance of the facts but by inventing impossibilities for the sake of astonishment and pleasure."[53] The translation of Strabo here is that of Wiseman, whose whole discussion in *Clio's Cosmetics* of the intellectual background of the age that produced men like Parthenius and Catullus, along with Rawson's *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic*, is valuable for understanding Sostratus of Nysa, who may perhaps be described as a kind of minor-league Parthenius.

If Sostratus worked in both prose and poetry, he would be like that of a number of Greek and Roman figures of the age; so too for Sostratus being both a *grammaticus* and poet, for that combination "is both characteristically Hellenistic and also a continuation of the Roman tradition of Livius Andronicus and Ennius."[54] The connection of Sostratus' family with that of Pompeius

[53]Str. 1.2.17 and 35 (quotation from 35). Wiseman 1979: 148: Strabo "defined poetry as a mixture of *historia*, *diathesis* ('composition') and *mythos*: 'the aim of *historia* is truth...the aim of *diathesis* is vividness, as when Homer brings on battle scenes; the aim of *mythos* is pleasure and astonishment. But to invent everything is not persuasive, and not Homeric.' As he says elsewhere, the same applies to prose writers like Herodotus, Ctesias, Hellanicus, Theopompus and the historians of Alexander in India, who 'deliberately weave in myths, not in ignorance of the facts but by inventing impossibilities for the sake of astonishment and pleasure.'" See the discussion of the intellectual background to Catullus' dedication of his libellus to Cornelius Nepos in Wiseman 1979 143–82; for skepticism about Wiseman's claim that Catullus' praise of Nepos is sincere, see, e.g., Horsfall 1989: 117.

[54]Courtney 1993: 190, 118 citing (not all with certainty) Valerius Cato, Diotimus, Laevius, Sevius Nicanor, Pompeius Lenaeus, Lutatius Daphnis. The suggestion by the editors of *SH* "alius poeta alius grammaticus" attempts to distinguish between Sostratus of Nysa and Sostratus of Phanagoria; better perhaps "alius poeta alius grammaticus et poeta"?

Strabo and Pompeius Magnus should also be strongly considered. It may be too much to suggest that Pompey's house was the main focus in Rome of literature and learning in the fifties,[55] but Pompey does seem to have wanted to give the impression that he was interested in matters intellectual. He was "probably the great-nephew of the poet Lucilius and related to the Stoic Lucilii Balbi, was certainly the nephew of the 'learned and wise' Sex. Pompeius, and profited from his education with...Aristodemus of Nysa and the freedman rhetor Voltacilius Pilutus" (Rawson 104). His freedman Pompeius Lenaeus, freed for his learning, was a scholar, *grammaticus* and poet (one fragment in Courtney *FLP*). It would not be surprising for Sostratus of Nysa to have made the acquaintance of some of those known to the family that put the education of two generations at least partly in the hands of his brother and cousin. The apparent production of mythological handbooks by Aristodemus and Sostratus may also dovetail with Pompey's apparent fondness for handbooks, such as that on senatorial procedure produced for him by Varro, when Pompey became consul without ever having been a senator (Gell. *NA* 14.7). A generation later Parthenius produced his collection of *Erotica Pathemata* for the express purpose of aiding Cornelius Gallus in his own poetic composition. The family of Aristodemus, the Roman M. Terentius Varro, and the freed war-captive poet Parthenius are all of different social ranks, and their handbooks might well have differed in content and purpose, but the same spirit of the age might have produced them.

Sostratus of Nysa, then, remains my favorite candidate. But whether or not the author of our poem is the Sostratus associated with the family of Pompeius Strabo and Pompeius Magnus, I believe the *aetion* of the Roman-sounding name "Strabo" makes it likely that he was a client or friend of a Roman named Strabo. The name Strabo may sound Greek to many of us today, because we associate it with the geographer writing in Greek, but Strabo the geographer probably received the name only when he became a Roman citizen, and the name is comparatively rare in Greek contexts.[56] Although the name gives no hard evidence as to the date, there are a number of significant Strabos in the period running from the time of C. Julius Caesar Strabo Vopiscus, born around

[55]See the skeptical discussion by Rawson 104–5 of the interesting but speculative suggestions of Anderson 1963.

[56]*RE* ser. 2 v. 4a col. 75 s.v. "Strabon" lists only three "Greeks" with the name: Tiresias' son in Sostratus, a keen-eyed Sicilian Greek of the time of the first Punic War, and the geographer. Fraser and Matthews 1987 list four Greek Strabones, three from the first century C.E.

130 B.C.E. and curule aedile in 90, to the time of Tiberius and Sejanus—Sejanus whose natural father was a Seius Strabo, and one of whose sons was called Strabo.[57] Brief comments on this period may be useful here: these paragraphs offer more information than argument, and the reader is invited to indulge the skepticism appropriate when a scholar claims that the period about which he knows the most offers more evidence than periods about which he knows less. This whole period, nevertheless, is attractive because it marks the rise at Rome of interest both in learned Hellenistic poetry, and in having Greek intellectuals attached to the households of great Romans, first in the late Republic (e.g., Archias, Philodemus), and then during the principates of both Augustus and Tiberius.[58] It also offers, besides Pompeius Strabo, several Strabos with literary or at least intellectual interests or connections, whom it may help to mention here. Most of these would not fit my argument that Sostratus of Nysa is the author of the *Tiresias*, but it is at least conceivable that some otherwise unattested Sostratus (of perhaps even the undateable Sostratus of Phanagoria) wrote our poem to please one of these men.

C. Julius Caesar Strabo Vopiscus,[59] born around 130 B.C.E. and curule aedile in 90, was known as a writer of tragedies (Cic. *Brut.* 177), and an

[57]See Kajanto 235–46. As Strabos of the Republican period he lists (p. 239) C. Fannius Strabo, cos. 161; C. Iulius Caesar Strabo Vopiscus, aed. cur. 90; M. Laenius Strabo, eq. Rom. 54; M. Licinius Strabo, trib. mil. 178; Cn. Pompeius Strabo, cos. 89; the Titii of *RE* 6A, 1569 nn. 41 and 42, of 43 and 46 B.C.E.; coinmaker L. Vol. Strab(o) of ca. 79; and those mentioned in *CIL* I:2 app. 297, and *CIL* I:2 686 = X 3783 (71 B.C.E.). For the imperial period he says ten senators were named Strabo, and in *CIL* for the Imperial period he finds twenty-five apparently free persons and three freedmen. He also notes that the name is mainly found in *CIL* volumes VI (Rome) and IX (South-Eastern Italy). Badian 6 comments on the unpopularity of the name Strabo among sons of Strabos: "there is not a single case, in the Republican aristocracy, where the cognomen 'Strabo,' whether a third or fourth name, was assumed by a son" (so too *RE* ser. 2 v. 4a col. 75 s.v. Strabo). For brief ancient discussions of the name cf. the sources quoted in Pease on Cic. *ND* 1.29.80.

For help with Strabos I thank Catherine Rubincam, Christer Bruun, Alvaro Sanchez-Ostiz of the Universidad de Navarra, and Robert Kaster (though I do not claim they endorse all of what I say here).

[58]See Bowersock 1965, esp. 1–13 "The Late Republican Background" and 122–39 "Greek Literature Under Augustus"; Treggiari; Crawford; Wiseman 1979: 143–74 and 1982; Williams; Gold 1982 and 1987; Rawson; Syme 346–66.

[59]See Bickel 1–15 for the ingenious but not necessarily compelling argument that this Caesar had no cognomina until, during the construction of the temple to Mars Ultor in the Forum of Augustus in 2 B.C.E., the cognomen Strabo was added, wrongly, to differentiate him from the Dictator. Bickel calls this an honest error based on a presumed marginal note, traces of which perhaps appear in Asconius, to a passage in Cic. *Div. Caec.* 63 mentioning both this Caesar and Pompeius Strabo.

anecdote in Valerius Maximus 3.7.11, probably to be dated to the 90s B.C.E., links him with the poet Accius and with the Collegium Poetarum, of which he might well have been a patron, or at least a member with a high view of his own rank, to judge from the anecdote.[60] This Caesar's dates probably place him too early to have been a likely patron of Greek poets working in a learned Hellenistic style.

At the more attractive date of 51 B.C.E., Cic. *Fam.* 13.64.1 places a Servilius Strabo in the vicinity of Nysa, perhaps as an advocate of the Nysaeans: Nero, the father of the emperor Tiberius, is said to be looking out for the interests of the Nysaeans and those of Servilius Strabo.[61] Strabo the geographer, born perhaps in 63, is likely to have received his citizenship and his name from a Roman patron somehow associated with the name Strabo. The connection of Strabo with the family of Sostratus, and of Sostratus' *Tiresias* with the name Strabo, suggests perhaps a shared patron.[62] Some scholars suggest that Strabo's patron was the mysterious Servilius Strabo linked with Nysa by Cicero; I have noted above that Strabo studied at Nysa, probably around or not far from this date of 51 B.C.E. Bowersock, however, suggests a different Roman patron for Strabo: Aelius Gallus, the second prefect of Egypt, who probably adopted the man who became Tiberius' prefect of the Praetorian Guard, Aelius Gallus Sejanus, whose natural father was a Seius Strabo: "It is not excessive to suppose that the geographer received the citizenship from his patron, Aelius Gallus, but took his cognomen from the family of his patron's adoptive son" (1965: 128–29).

We know also that Sejanus had a son named Strabo (cf. Syme 307), a rare example of the name being passed on, here with a generation being skipped, and across the boundaries of adoption. This brings us forward to the reign of Tiberius, which perhaps offers a rather different context in which to place

[60]*Is (Accius) Iulio Caesari amplissimo ac florissimo viro in collegium poetarum venienti numquam adsurrexit, non maiestatis eius immemor, sed quod in comparatione communium studiorum aliquanto se superiorem confideret. quapropter insolentiae crimine caruit quia ibi voluminum non imaginum certamine exercebantur.* Cf. Horsfall 1976: 81–82, with earlier references; more recently see Gruen 89 n. 39.

[61]Cf. too J. *AJ* 14.239 (brief mention of Publius Servilius Strabo, son of Publius, being present at a decree concerning the Jews in 49 B.C.E.).

[62]It must be stressed that the family of Strabo the geographer had no connection with that of Pompey during the lifetime of Pompeius Strabo (d. 87); see Bowersock 1965: 127 for Strabo's family's support for Lucullus and subsequent problems under Pompeius Magnus' ascendancy.

Sostratus' *Tiresias*. Genuine interest in literary or intellectual matters by Sejanus himself is unattested, but his emperor seems to have been extremely interested in poetry of the most challengingly Alexandrian kind; Euphorion, Rhianus, and Parthenius are said to have been particular favorites (Suet. *Tib.* 70; cf. Syme 346–66, Bowersock 1965: 133–34). It is easy to imagine that the learned Alexandrian style of the *Tiresias* is designed to please Tiberius as ultimate patron, and that its *aetion* of the name Strabo is designed to flatter the family of the man who at one time held much of the power of patronage under Tiberius.

Catullus

If the author of the *Tiresias* was either Sostratus of Nysa, connected with the family of Pompey in the first half of the last century B.C.E., or another Sostratus writing before the time of Catullus, it is possible that the Roman author knew the Greek poet and his poem and was, perhaps, even influenced by it. With appropriate caution, Courtney describes his suggestions about "How Catullus Came to Write the Attis" as "a chapter from a historical novel." The end of this paper will offer tentative suggestions concerning the possible influence of Sostratus' *Tiresias* on Catullus and especially on Catullus 63, the *Attis*. Thus in part the paper continues the work of recent efforts by Shipton and Courtney to identify the Greek background to Catullus 63,[63] and the attempts by scholars like Wiseman and Rawson to describe the intellectual background of the age of Catullus more generally. Since the identification and dating of Sostratus' *Tiresias* must remain uncertain, claims for influence on Catullus must be even more cautious than those advanced by Courtney for the influence of Varro and Greek epigram on Catullus 63. Still we can outline some possibilities, all contingent on the tentative identification of the author of the *Tiresias* as Sostratus of Nysa, or another Sostratus, perhaps the one from Phanagoria, writing before and known to Catullus.

I begun with what may be called incidentals. First, if Sostratus wrote before Catullus, Catullus might have come across him in his researches on the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, which the *Tiresias* mentioned and perhaps even described at length. Second, it has been suggested that Catullus 51 alludes to

[63]On the possible Greek background to Catullus 63, cf. Shipton 444–49 and Courtney 1985, who both discuss probable influence on Catullus of four Hellenistic epigrams: Alcaeus of Messene 21, Gow-Page 133–44 = *AP* 6.218; "Simonides" 2, G-P 2304–13 = *AP* 6.217; Antipater of Sidon 64, G-P 608–31 = *AP* 6.219; Dioscurides 16, G-P 1539–54 = *AP* 6.220. Cf. too Most 115, Lyne 1978b: 181 and, on the galliambic meter, esp. Mulroy.

Callimachus' version of the Tiresias myth (Zetzel 1992: 52), perhaps indicating an interest in Sostratus' protagonist, at least as depicted by other authors. Third, and somewhat more significantly, the rare nymph-name Pasithea occurs in Homer, in Catull. 63.42–43 (*ibi Somnus excitam Attin fugiens citus abiit: / trepidante eum recepit dea Pasithea sinu*), and in Sostratus' account of the beauty contest, but in no other author dated before Catullus.[64] Catullus' reference to Pasithea may come directly from Homer, but, if he knew the *Tiresias*, that poem would be an intermediate source and should be noted in commentaries on line 43.

Now I move to an issue of more substance. If known to Catullus, Sostratus' poem dealing with a figure who switches back and forth from male to female several times might have had some influence both on Catullus' overall exploration of gender and specifically on Catullus 63. Catullus' interest in questions of gender has received a fair amount of attention in recent years; in particular, critics have pointed to his habit of identifying with the position of, or even speaking through, a female character. Catullus associates himself with the voice of Sappho in fr. 31, the poem he imitates in Poem 51; with a flower cut down by a plow in an image or simile with associations of castration or defloration of a virgin in 11; with Atalanta losing her virginity in 2b; with the young girl hiding her love-token from her mother in 65; with Ariadne abandoned by Theseus in 64; with Berenice worried about losing her husband in 66; and with Laodamia left by Protesilaos, and Juno tolerant of the adulteries of Jupiter, in 68.[65] In Catullus 63, Attis castrates himself, and the poem varies the gender of the pronouns and adjectives referring to the protagonist in a way that has long confused scribes and students. Sostratus' *Tiresias*, with its protagonist actually switching from male to female (instead of just switching "gender" and becoming a *notha mulier* as Attis does), must have varied the

[64]Cf. Fordyce ad loc., but the Antipater he cites as mentioning Pasithea in *AP* 9.517.5–6 is not Antipater of Sidon (d. ca. 125 B.C.E.), but Antipater of Thessalonica (fl. 20 B.C.E.–20 C.E.[?], Gow-Page). Other Pasitheas (from Roscher *Lex.* s.v.) include a Nereid (daughter of Nereus and Doris in Hes. *Th.* 247) and a Naiad (wife of Erichthonius in [Apollod.] 3.14.6). Besides Homer, Catullus, and Antipater, our Pasithea is mentioned by Paus. 9.35.1, Quint. Smyrn. 5.399–403 (daughter of Hera and wife of Sleep); and several times in Nonnus *Dion.*, where she is the daughter of Dionysus, but still desired by and promised to Sleep: 15.91, 24.260–63, 31.110–196, 33.25–54, 34.43–45, 47.278–80. Nonnus, who "had access to vast amounts of Hellenistic literature no longer available to us" (Knox 1990: 192), may have known other representations, but all these passages could derive from *Il.* 14.

[65]Cf. Skinner 1993: 109, who provides extensive further references; see now also Janan passim, esp. index s.v. transsexuality, and on 63 in particular Clay.

gender of its pronouns and adjectives a great deal, although perhaps more predictably than Catullus 63. In 63.62–64, Attis describes his experience of what to him seems like a bewildering array of "physical shapes":

> quod enim figuraest, ego non quod obierim?
> ego mulier, ego adolescens, ego ephebus, ego puer,
> ego gymnasii fui flos, ego eram decus olei....

In line 63, Attis enumerates four stages of existence, woman, young man, ephebe, and boy. Sostratus' Tiresias similarly experiences human life in six different *figurae*, although her/his changes are more radical than those of Attis: girl, man, mother, ugly man, young woman, old man (probably), and (eventually attractive) old woman. Tiresias in fact could answer Attis' question in 62 ("what shape have I not been?"), for Attis has never been a mother or an old man or woman. Catull. 63.63, on the other hand, seems to allude in the words *gymnasii...flos...decus olei* to Attis as an object of older male desire, and some have suggested that Catullus' poem is a "character study of a young man who found that he 'could not make the transition society demanded from the role of *puer delicatus* to that of husband'" (Skinner 113, quoting Quinn 249–51; see now also Clay). At least in the extant summary, Sostratus' Tiresias is at no time the male object of male desire; his masculine roles, in fact, seem never to involve erotic activity.

Conclusion

Sostratus' story of Tiresias has been called by one of the few English-speaking scholars to mention it "a faintly repulsive biography." Catullus 63 would lend itself to an unattractive prose summary: Greek boy comes to Phrygia, sings, dances, castrates self, wakes up and feels bad; chased into woods by Cybele's lion. And yet this poem has been judged by some "Catullus' greatest poem" (Wiseman 1985: 180).

From the summary in Eustathius we cannot really know whether Sostratus' *Tiresias* explored gender issues or other thematic material in a sophisticated and interesting way, or simply aimed at humorous effects or pedantic displays of learning. But such details as the killing of the attempted rapist and Jupiter's gift of turning Tiresias from an ugly man into a young woman suggest that the author might have been aware of some of the poetic potential of sexual role reversal. This might suggest conceivable influence on both Catullus' exploration of female roles and voices and the periodic

assumption of the weaker, more passive erotic stance by Augustan elegists. Whether a poet is expressing genuine sympathy for the woman's position or is engaging in self-indulgent fantasies fully consistent with a misogynistic world-view can be difficult to determine, even for well-known poets whose work is fully extant,[66] and more speculation on Sostratus here would be unfounded. And after all the caveats above about the possible untrustworthiness of the summary, and the uncertainty about the date and author of the *Tiresias*, it hardly needs to be said that claims about the influence of this poem and poet on Catullus must be tentative. But the idea that Sostratus of Nysa is the author of the poem, and that the poem was known to and had some influence on Catullus, remains attractive to me. Short of that, it may be that Sostratus' *Tiresias* offers an example of the *type* of poem Catullus might have seen or heard, just as the whole *Supplementum Hellenisticum* offers glimpses of the broader literary context of the Greek and Roman poets of the last three centuries B.C.E.

[66]Compare, e.g., the harsh criticism of Ovid's rape scenes in Richlin 1992 with the remarks of Skinner 1993: 120 on Catullus' "victim figures" as offering "alternative subject positions." On 129 n.70 Skinner contrasts her stance with Richlin's.

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