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Orpheus in love and metapoetical complexities

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τὸν πέρι μοῦσ' ἐφίλησε, δίδου δ'ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε:

(*Od.* 8.63)

… whom the Muse loved above [all other men], and gave him both good and evil (trans. Murray)

Contents

Preface

This study would never have been possible without the ceaseless help, advice, and encouragement of a considerable number of more experienced scholars, friends, family and loved ones, and I will try to leave no one without a small token of my appreciation. The brevity of the following list of my indebtedness is ultimately a product of my own peculiar inclination of always trying to solve issues myself and only after failing to do so, to ask for support. Among the greatest lessons I have learnt from the process of writing this thesis is the realisation of the often glaring limitations of my own knowledge, and the importance of anticipating my need to ask for support.

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Trondheim, Oxford, London.

Abbreviations

Aen.	*Aeneid* of Virgil
AP	*Ars Poetica* of Horace
Argon.	*Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius
Ars am.	*Ars amatoria* of Ovid
Carm.	*Odes* of Horace
Catull.	*Carmina* of Catullus
Diog. Laert.	*Lives of Eminent Philosophers* of Diogenes Laertius
Ecl.	*Eclogues* of Virgil
Eurydice	*Eurydice: Or the Devil Henpeck'd* of Henry Fielding
G.	*Georgics* of Virgil
Id.	*Idylls* of Theocritus
Lament	*Lament for Bion* of Anonymous [Moschus]
Loves	*Loves or Beautiful Boys* of Phanocles
Met.	*Metamorphoses* of Ovid
Od.	*Odyssey* of Homer
Orphée	*Orphée aux enfers* of Jacques Offenbach, Henri Crémieux and Ludovic Halévy
Silu.	*Siluae* of Statius
Tr.	*Tristia* of Ovid

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There is no heroism without excess … praise of a hero can be achieved by hints at the risk of hybris which the hero runs because of his greatness. For this, we must remember that hybris does not equate with our 'pride' but can signify excess in many forms. Heroes are ambiguous.

(Sharrock 1994, 114)

Thesis statement

This dissertation argues that the human errors inherent in the tragic and death-ridden love stories of the divinely gifted bard Orpheus permit poets to use him as a complex metapoetic figure, adopting him as a reflection or distortion of the poetic traditions they create for their poetic *personae* or those of their colleagues, ranging from tragic to comic representations, and from purely metapoetic functions to political and social commentary. The argument emerges from close analyses of the figure of Orpheus among many others in Hellenistic catalogue poems and poems lamenting the death of other poets, through to the complex roles taken up by Orpheus in the corpora of Vergil and Ovid with important reverberations in postclassical times. The lasting impact of the figure of Orpheus beyond antiquity is stressed through a framework where reflections on the ambiguous hero are expounded in cases of modern receptions, including that of contemporary poetry, in our day and age. Throughout, the dissertation's focus on Orpheus' ambiguity as a heterosexual, devoted, but ultimately failing husband of Eurydice and homoerotic lover of Calaïs and alleged inventor of the institution of pederasty in Thrace, freshly demonstrates that the two ideas of Orpheus in love and Orpheus in metapoetical complexity, typically appear in conjunction, almost by necessity.

Introduction

I General introduction

When Superman, arguably the most successful of American comic book heroes, was first launched by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster in 1938, he had no known weaknesses. Though his impressive superhuman powers have been central to his appeal, it would not be long before writers of *Superman* stories decided to make him into a more complex character by introducing his susceptibility to a rare green metal. This novel vulnerability was first introduced by Siegel under the name of 'K-Metal' in a 1940 comic book story that was shelved by his DC Comics editors.[1] The editors may have reacted more against this storyline's other major departure from previous *Superman* narratives insomuch as it included Superman revealing his secret identity to Lois Lane, for kryptonite, as it came to be known, proved to be too good an addition to his character not to resurface and it became central to later *Superman* stories, starting with an episode of the *Superman* radio show in 1943, and a comic book plot in 1949.[2]

Superman may seem like a far cry from Orpheus, a hero belonging to ancient Greek mythology who is first attested in the 6th century BC in a poem by Ibycus and in a near-contemporary sculptural relief at Delphi.[3] In fact, the two figures share a number of intriguing similarities, and what today is the more famous story of Superman may help to introduce some aspects of Orpheus' character.[4]

Like Superman, who in most cases avoids physically harming even the most crooked villain, Orpheus espoused a pacifist approach to life, preferring to solve problems with his supernatural musical and poetic abilities, which he could use not only to enchant human and divine audiences but even the natural world around him. There may even be an echo of Orpheus' powers to control nature in Superman's recurring bending of the rules of physical reality in his pursuit of justice. Like Superman, Orpheus is not really human. Whereas Superman is an alien from a lost planet, Orpheus descends from at least one, or in some versions, two deities, as his mother invariably is given as one of the Muses (mainly Calliope), whilst his father was reputed to be either the Thracian king Oeagrus or the god Apollo. As we shall see, this parentage links Orpheus with poetry and music in a way that has been exploited

[1] Tye 2013: 49–50.
[2] Tye 2013: 91.
[3] Robbins 1982: 5.
[4] There is increasing scholarly interest in the study of the relationship between comics and the classics, spearheaded by the two volumes Kovacs and Marshall 2011 and Kovacs and Marshall 2016.

by poets when they wish to approach topics of a metapoetic nature. The two heroes also share a link with outer space, as Orpheus' favoured instrument can be seen in the night sky in the constellation *Lyra*, as recounted in the Hellenistic prose catalogue detailing the mythic origins of constellations, the *Catasterismi* of Pseudo-Eratosthenes.

A recurring feature of the stories told about this odd pair involves their attempts at rescuing their beloved. In Superman's case this is Lois Lane, who is the girlfriend of Superman's alter ego Clark Kent, but who is oblivious to the fact that the two are one and the same. This is in spite of Superman's highly unimpressive disguise, which seemingly boils down to donning a pair of glasses. In most versions, Orpheus' beloved is typically referred to as his wife, the human or nymph Eurydice, but his rescue mission is a one-off, unlike the repeated stories of the episodic adventures of Superman, and in most accounts it ends in failure. As Eurydice is accidently killed on their wedding day, Orpheus, in an attempt to bring her back to life, descends into the underworld, a so-called *katabasis* (literally 'a going-down'), and uses his powers to enchant the deities of the dead to grant him his wish. However, the return of Eurydice is conditional upon Orpheus refraining from looking back at her until they reach the surface, which he ends up doing. Poets have speculated as to why he glanced back, but perhaps the most attractive reason is that given by Virgil in the *Georgics*, where he blames *furor* – 'madness', in what may be interpreted as Orpheus' inability to control his desire to see his beloved.

There is also an alternative tradition that provides Orpheus with a different beloved, the Argonaut and fellow demigod Calaïs (starting with the Hellenistic poet Phanocles), yet also in this version of events, Orpheus comes up short to some extent. Ultimately, there is a major difference between Superman and Orpheus in that the former as a franchise character is immortal, there is no definite end to his story, and even if he were to be killed off, he would be alive and well in subsequent stories. Orpheus on the other hand is famous for his death, which plays a major part in his legendary status. Orpheus' powers meet their match as (at least according to Ovid) he is attacked by a group of Thracian women, typically they are Maenad followers of the god Bacchus/Dionysus, and as they surround the Thracian bard Orpheus, his supernatural music proves futile as they decapitate him and fasten his head to his favoured instrument, the lyre. The miraculous side of Orpheus is however harder to slay, as his head continues to sing even in death, and it remains intact as the lyre ferries it along all the way from the Thracian river Hebrus to the Greek island of Lesbos.

There is a particular reason for why I have chosen to introduce Superman as a contrasting figure for Orpheus, namely that I will go on to argue that the love story (or stories – if we chose to consider Orpheus' homoerotic and heteroerotic aspects as separate) of Orpheus

can be seen to play the role of Superman's kryptonite in the way that they affect his characteristics as a hero figure. When Superman is exposed to pieces of this metal which is one of the rare remains of his lost home planet Krypton, his powers weaken. This makes him appear more like a regular human being, and turns him into a more relatable character, as we may recognise more of our own human struggles in these moments of Superman's weakened state. In Orpheus' case, it is when he struggles to be a lover or husband that his human side comes into view, and the drama of his story becomes most acute. Unlike Superman's unique struggle with kryptonite, love is a force we all may recognise, and the universality of his myth, which has been retold and reworked throughout millenia, may in large part rest upon a presumptive universality of love.[5]

We know more or less the precise time of composition as well as the identity of the author who first introduced kryptonite to the stories of Superman, but in comparison we do not know precisely when the love story of Orpheus was first told. The earliest poetic texts where Orpheus feature do not refer to it directly, and many, like fr. 384 Page by Simonides, are concerned with Orpheus' powers to control the natural world:

…τοῦ καὶ ἀπειρέσιοι
πωτῶντ' ὄρνιθες ὑπὲρ κεφαλᾶς,
ἀνὰ δ' ἰχθύες ὀρθοὶ
κυανέου 'ξ ὕδατος ἅλ-
λοντο καλâι σὺν ἀοιδâι.

Over his head flew numberless birds, and fish leaped straight up from the dark-blue water at his beautiful song. (trans. Campbell)

For direct evidence that this side of Orpheus was present at an early date we must look to the prose *testimonium* of the Attic philosopher Plato (c. 428 – 348 BC) who explicitly references Orpheus' love story at *Symposium* 179d2-180a4 where the young symposiast Phaedrus criticises the hero's unwillingness to die for his beloved which he compares with the bravery of Achilles and Alcestis. Plato's version of the story is highly unusual, since, analogously to the fake Helen in Euripides' play by that name, it depicts Orpheus' wife as being a mere illusion, or φάσμα,

[5] Whether our contemporary, post-Romantic concept of love can be applied to ancient contexts is a hotly debated topic. For a recent reappraisal in favour of seeing romantic love as at least in part applicable to ancient contexts see Thorsen in Thorsen et al. 2021, and for a representative of the main skeptical position with regards to this see Reddy 2012.

who is handed over to him by the gods of the Underworld instead of Eurydice's actual shade. Hunter sounds a warning about using Plato as a witness to the poetic tradition of Orpheus' love story:

> ' … his [Phaedrus'] very idiosyncratic version of the story of Orpheus … reflects the kind of jesting approach to inherited stories which could be amply illustrated from ancient sympotic literature of all periods.'[6]

We may choose to see Plato primarily as making fun of the preceding poetic tradition, but even such a humorous jibe necessitates a target version of the love story against which its humorous alterations make sense. Sansone has argued that the love story must have at least appeared by the 5th century BC among Athenian dramatists.[7] His leading candidate for a drama devoted to the story of Orpheus' *katabasis* and his failed attempt to resurrect Eurydice is a lost work by the playwright Aristias of Phlius, a near contemporary of Sophocles. We know the names of five of his plays: *Antaeus*, *Atalanta*, *Fates* (Keres), *Cyclops* and *Orpheus*, of which at least *Cyclops* is thought to have been a satyr-play, like its Euripidean counterpart.[8] In Sansone's view the plot of Aristias' *Orpheus* directly inspired Plato's version of events.[9] It may be more helpful to think of Aristias' *Orpheus* as one of the main targets for Plato's inversion of the love story, as the one line we have preserved from it certainly seems to indicate the underworld setting of Orpheus' *katabasis*: ἦν μοι παλαίστρα καὶ δρόμος ξυστὸς πέλας (9 F 5 Snell, 'I had a wrestling school and a covered racetrack nearby', trans. Sansone). What would make better sense than for the speaker of this line to be a dead shade – someone lamenting what they had owned – a wrestling school and a racetrack – when they were alive and wealthy, as opposed to their dismal existence in the afterlife?

What little we know about Aristias' *Orpheus* might at least indicate that the love story of Orpheus appeared within poetry from an early date, and well before the longer fragments or whole texts which we will look at in this study. Consequently, in my analyses I will assume that poets from the Hellenistic period onwards were well acquainted with poems featuring Orpheus' love story.

Ancient myths like the one about Orpheus are a key element in the poetic tradition, and given the lengthy influence of ancient poetry upon later poetic texts, myths continue to play an

[6] Hunter 2004: 39.
[7] Sansone 1985: 53–64.
[8] Wright 2016: 95.
[9] Sansone 1985: 55.

important role within poetry.[10] Myths have for a long time been a central object of study within classics and other academic disciplines, and scholars have tried to identify their evolution over time, their various strands and variations and the like.[11] This has also been the case in the study of the famous myth of Orpheus whose story has enthralled scholars just as it has fascinated poets, composers, and artists throughout the ages.

In addition to other aspects, such as the myth's role within art, music, and ancient religion, the myth of Orpheus has been studied for its relationship with preceding poetic texts, and its role within them. As a story of the first, and foremost (semi-) human poet, Orpheus' myth has naturally lent itself to metapoetical associations and has become emblematic for the poetic tradition, or more precisely, Orpheus has become emblematic for the various poetic traditions within which poets position themselves and their colleagues. The way that Orpheus is used to create connections within, and between, poetic texts has notably been studied in the case of the three most canonical and influential texts in transmitting the myth to posterity: the *Argonautica*, a Hellenistic heroic epic poem by Apollonius Rhodius; the *Georgics* – Virgil's didactic epic poem, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, an epic poem saturated with myths. The highly complex role of Orpheus within these texts has been subjected to many different analyses and investigative approaches, but the specific function of the love story of Orpheus within them, and within the poetic tradition more generally, has received little attention from scholars.[12]

The present study proposes to clarify some of the ways in which the love story of Orpheus is used within the poetic tradition rooted in ancient Greek and Roman poetry as well as its later reception. I will base my analysis on a key assumption, namely that the main poetic version of the love story always ended with Orpheus' failure to resurrect his wife (at least up until medieval poems (see below). This has been argued extensively by Heath,[13] whose analysis I will follow as a premise for my subsequent argument. My main argument is that in spite of this relative uniformity and homogenity within the poetic tradition concerned with Orpheus, poets have managed to engender highly complex functions for his love story within poetic texts. In fact, almost whenever the love story is accentuated or hinted at, the representations of Orpheus in poetic texts lend themselves to complex metapoetical interpretations. This complexity can be found to be intimately tied to the love story of Orpheus, as this introduces

[10] The continuing influence of ancient Greek myths in modern Greek surrealist literature is a good example, as discussed in Yatromanolakis 2012. See also the volume Kossman 2001 for further examples of modern poetic receptions of Greek myths.
[11] Some central works on the study of myths in general are the two books by Geoffrey S. Kirk, Kirk 1970 and Kirk 1974. For a more recent approach, see Csapo 2005.
[12] The work of Segal, e.g. 1993 is a notable exception to this.
[13] Heath 1994.

themes beyond the purely metapoetic aspects of Orpheus' character. I will try to provide some answers as to what it is that makes this the case, yet the main impetus for my analysis is to establish that the two ideas, Orpheus in love and metapoetical complexity, typically appear in conjunction, almost by necessity. I will first try to provide some background for why it is important to ask questions about the role of Orpheus within poetry, and to demonstrate the basis upon which I have created the framework for my analyses.

II Finch's Orpheus – poetic exemplar or cautionary tale?

What is missing from the study of Orpheus as a lover within poetry? In order to introduce some of the issues that need to be better understood, we might first look at a poem that not only provides an overview of Orpheus' myth, albeit under an unusually critical gaze, but whose critical reception may illustrate one of the key problems within existing scholarship. The English poet Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea (1661-1720), wrote a poem where the myth of Orpheus was a central reference point, entitled *To Mr. Pope In answer to a coppy of verses occasion'd by a little dispute upon four lines in the Rape of the Lock*, otherwise known simply as *The Answer*.[14] We shall see that the critical reception of this poem may provide some answers as to why the study of the love story of Orpheus in poetry is in need of fresh approaches, and together with the final poem I will look at, Duffy's 'Eurydice', it will create a female framing for the poems of male poets that are analysed in the central portion of this study. As will become clear when we look at the ancient representations of Orpheus, Finch's depiction of Orpheus was unusually bold:

Disarm'd with so genteel an air,
The contest I give o'er
Yet Alexander have a care
And shock the sex no more.

We rule the World, our Life's whole race,
Men but assume that right,
First slaves to every tempting Face,
Then Martyrs to our spight.

You of one Orpheus, sure have read,

[14] The exact date of composition for *The Answer* is unknown, but it is most likely to have been written shortly after the publication of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* in 1712.

Who wou'd like you have writ,
Had he in London town been bred,
And Polish't to his wit;

But he (poor soul) thought all was well,
And great shou'd be his Fame,
When he had left his Wife in Hell,
And Birds and Beasts cou'd tame.

Yet vent'ring then with scoffing rhimes
The Women to incense,
Resenting Heroines of those Times,
Soon punish'd the offence;

And as thro' Hebrus, rowl'd his Scull,
And Harp besemar'd with Blood,
They clashing, as the Waves grew full,
Still Harmoniz'd the Flood.

But you our Follies, gently treat,
And spin so fine the thread,
You need not fear his awkward fate,
The Lock won't cost the Head.

Our Admiration you command,
For all that's gone before;
What next we look for at your Hands
Can only raise it more.

Yet, sooth the Ladies, I advise,
(As me, to Pride you've wrought,)
We're born to Wit, but to be wise
By Admonitions Taught.[15]

[15] McGovern and Hinnant 1998: 69-70.

Finch here provides a neat summary of the love story of Orpheus: Orpheus lost his wife Eurydice, tried to bring her back from the Underworld, yet failed to do so as he broke a taboo against looking at her ('When he had left his Wife in Hell', v. 15). His traditional powers to sway the natural world with his magical poetry and music are mentioned (v. 16), as is his death, which is caused by a group of women ('Resenting Heroines of those Times | Soon punish'd the offence', v. 19-20), who react to Orpheus' misogyny by tearing off his head and placing it upon his lyre, which continues to play even in death ('Still Harmoniz'd the Flood', v. 24). Finch essentially follows Ovid's Orpheus-narrative in the *Metamorphoses* in terms of the sequence of events, though she depicts Orpheus as much more untroubled with regard to his loss of Eurydice. The witty twist in Finch's poem is that she reminds her addressee, Alexander Pope, of the gory details of the story of Orpheus' death at the hands of women, so as to hint at the risk he runs if he truly offended women. However, unlike Orpheus, Pope is merely reprimanded for having shocked women, but not Finch herself (vs. 1-4), and Finch's threatening mythical exemplum is revealed to be irrelevant to his situation (v. 27).

Finch's poem may be read as the latest poem in an ongoing debate about the merits of women poets where Orpheus can be seen as an embodiment of the male poetic tradition. This debate originated with an exchange of poems between Finch and a fellow woman poet, Mrs Randolph. Finch's poem was written in response to Alexander Pope's *Impromptu, to Lady Winchilsea*. Far from being counted among her critics, Alexander Pope was an intimate friend and frequent dinner guest at the townhouse of Anne Finch in London and had apparently shown Finch the manuscript for his *The Rape of the Lock*, which had included some lines alluding to her most famous poem, *The Spleen*.[16] Pope's poetic attempt at assuaging Finch's supposed indignation, raised by this allusion to her work, includes numerous allusions to another of her poems, *An Epistle From Ardelia To Mrs. Randolph in answer to her Poem upon her Verses*. In that poem, Finch praises the poetic achievements of the obscure poet Mrs Randolph by linking her with a number of great women poets of the past, notably the ancient Sappho and Corinna, as well as more contemporary poets.[17] This poem was in turn inspired by a poem where Randolph had complimented Finch's poetry and thus embodied the kind of poetic sisterhood it espoused.[18]

Pope's *Impromptu* latches onto the poetic strategy of Finch's poem to Randolph in attacking the existence of this alternative canon of female poets:

[16] McGovern and Hinnant 1998: 105.
[17] Orinda – the Pen name of the poet Katherine Philips is mentioned at line 31, see McGovern and Hinnant 1998: 122–23.
[18] McGovern and Hinnant 1998: 121–22.

In vain you boast Poetick Dames of Yore,
And cite those Sapphos we admire no more;
Fate doom'd the fall of every Female wit
But doom'd it then, when first ARDELIA writ.
Of all Examples by the World confest,
I knew ARDELIA cou'd not quote the best,
Who like her Mistress on Britannia's Throne
Fights, and subdues, in Quarrels not her own.
To write their Praise you but in vain essay;
Ev'n while you write, you take that Praise away:
Light to the Stars the Sun does thus restore,
But shine himself till they are seen no more.[19]

According to Pope, by writing such a poem as *An Epistle From Ardelia To Mrs. Randolph,* Finch (whom Pope refers to by her pen-name Ardelia) is undermining her own message of the greatness of earlier women poets since she outshines them all. If anyone should feel hurt by this poem it is therefore Randolph, whose accomplishments are judged to be inferior. However, the very idea of women poets seems to be in the line of fire here insomuch as the ending of Pope's *Impromptu* subverts the very womanhood of Finch by comparing her with the sun and employing a masculine pronoun (*Impromptu*, vs. 11-12, 'Light to the Stars the Sun does thus restore, | But shine **himself** till they are seen no more.'). In this way, Pope seems to intimate that Finch can be considered a great poet but only if she is understood in terms of a male being, the sun. His poem could therefore be understood to make fun of women poets in general since it reinterprets Finch in a way that excludes her from membership in her desired poetic sisterhood. In her response to this, Finch can be seen to deploy Orpheus as an emblematic figure for the male poetic tradition Pope belonged to, yet Orpheus is seen to be a highly problematic role model given his gruesome demise.

In his doctoral thesis on the myth of Orpheus in literature, Lee is very harsh in his assessment of the merits of this poem, as he writes: ' ... Orpheus really means very little to an age that could refer to him as callously as does Lady Winchilsea ...'.[20] Is this really a fair assessment of Finch's poem, and of her literary milieu? And even if it were the case, is it meaningless to approach Orpheus through a less rose-tinted lense? Is Orpheus necessarily a

[19] McGovern and Hinnant 1998: 68.
[20] Lee 1960: 187.

positive embodiment of the poetic tradition, or should we approach him as a more complex, even ambiguous figure?

Finch can provide us with an entirely different example of how Orpheus could be represented, as she could utilise Orpheus as a poetic device in much less 'callous' ways than in *The Answer*. In her poem *A Ballad to Mrs Catherine Fleming in London from Mashanger farm in Hampshire* she described the differences between the country surroundings of a holiday retreat and the hustle and bustle of London. She complains that even though she appreciates much of what the country life can offer, she misses the company of her female friend, whose powers of attraction could immediately bring her back to the city:

Then how can I from hence depart,
Unless my pleasing friend;
Shou'd now her sweet harmonious art,
Unto these shades extend:
And like old Orpheus' powerfull song,
Draw me and all my woods along.
With a fa-la &c.

So charm'd like Birnam's they wou'd rise,
And march in goodly row,
But since it might the town surprize,
To see me travel so:
I must from soothing joys like these
Too soon return in open chaise.
With a fa-la &c.[21]

This poem is an early example of how the story of Orpheus can be used to praise the poetic charms of a woman, Mrs Fleming, and is perceptive in its allusion to Orpheus' powers to move trees, a phenomenon that is most prominent in Ovid's catalogue of the trees that are attracted by the music of Orpheus following his failed attempt to resurrect Eurydice (*Metamorphoses* 10.90-142),[22] and in Virgil's *Eclogues*, where Orpheus is presented as leading a train of trees, which literally are referred to as *siluas* 'woods' (*Ecl.*3.46), cf. v. 69, 'Draw me and all my woods'. In

[21] McGovern and Hinnant 1998: 79.
[22] J.R.R. Tolkien provides an interesting example of how a later writer responds to this aspect of the myth, as well as to both Ovid and Virgil's versions of it, see Sundt in Williams 2021 (forthcoming).

applying the Orphic power to move trees to Fleming, and the ownership of the trees to herself, Finch effectively makes both women partake in some resemblance to Orpheus. Rather than being a dangerous mythic *exemplum* whose fate should be avoided, arguably the function of Orpheus within *The Answer*, in this poem Orpheus is instead presented as a positive model of poetic enchantment, and becomes a male poetic exemplar that is equally suitable for men and women poets.

III Orpheus – a poet in many parts

Before taking a look at how to reevaluate the role of Orpheus within the poetic tradition, it might first be necessary to see how my approach connects with the preceding scholarship, which is considerable. The myth of Orpheus was central to much of the research that appeared following the ritualistic turn within classics spearheaded by Jane Harrison' book *Prolegomena to Greek Religion*[23] and for about half a century most scholars approaching the myth were more interested in the religious, cultic background with which it was associated, and less with the myth's function within poetry. Particularly noteworthy in this respect was W. K. C. Guthrie's *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, the standard reference work on Orphism, or what the author termed 'the Orphic movement',[24] as well as Ivan M. Linforth's volume *The Arts of Orpheus*,[25] both of which were sceptical of the existence of an independent Orphic religion (Linforth more so). More recently, Spanish scholars have led the way in studing Orphism, as in the comprehensive volume edited by Bernabé and Casadesús *Orfeo y la tradición órfica: un reencuentro*.[26]

These scholars of ancient religion have often studied some of the poetry associated with Orpheus, but only as evidence supporting the ideological and theological framework of Greek religion. Their main interest is in the large body of texts collectively known as *Orphica*, which are typically concerned with eschathology and Orpheus' role as a mystic guide to the afterlife. Martin L. West's book *The Orphic Poems* provides a good starting point for those interested in these texts.[27] Though his *katabasis* forms the basis for seeing Orpheus as able to provide such guidance, the love story of Orpheus is never in focus in these texts, and they are better described as religious poetry than as 'literary' poetry. *Orphica* also typically present themselves as written *by* Orpheus, which makes questions about metapoetic aspects largely irrelevant.

[23] Harrison 1903.
[24] Guthrie 1966.
[25] Linforth 1941.
[26] Bernabé Pajares and Casadesús 2008.
[27] West 1983.

Burges Watson has looked at the importance of Orphism within the poetic tradition, and she has found traces of Orphic mysticism, through the medium of Plato, in the elegy *Loves or Beautiful Boys* by the Hellenistic poet Phanocles (whom I discuss in chapter 1.3-6).[28] With the exception of this poem, the only central Orpheus-narrative within the ancient poetic tradition that has been found to be influenced by Orphic ideas is the *Orphic Argonautica*, an anonymous late antique mini-epic where Orpheus (who is the poem's first person narrator) talks of having written various Orphic texts and having completed his failed *katabasis* prior to embarking upon the Argonautic expedition.[29] However, given that this poem, like the *Orphica*, claims to be written by Orpheus, it falls outside the scope of my study of the metapoetical complexities connected with Orpheus as a character within poetry.

The study of Orpheus' role within the poetic tradition proper picked up speed in the latter half of the 20th century. It was explored in Lee's doctoral thesis from 1960 (spanning the tradition from Antiquity until modernity) which will be discussed below, as well as in articles such as Peter Dronke's 1962 piece 'The Return of Eurydice',[30] which expanded the study of Orpheus into medieval reception and beyond. This new line of investigation was pushed significantly further by John B. Friedman's 1970 monograph *Orpheus in the Middle Ages*.[31] This volume explored the journey of Orpheus within the shifting landscape of ideas that bridged the ancient and medieval traditions, and demonstrated the vast changes in how his allegorical function was interpreted, culminating in the 14th century 'Orpheus-Christus' of Pierre Bersuire.[32]

The changing tradition of Orpheus became the target of two important volumes in the following decade: the first to appear was the multi-authored volume edited by John Warden in 1982,[33] the other was an collection of essays on Orpheus in poetry by the prolific Charles P. Segal appearing in a single volume in 1989.[34] The former collection, *Orpheus: The Metamorphoses of a Myth* (1982) is significant for presenting a mixture of approaches to the myth in the arts and is not limited to literature. Emmet Robbins' introductory chapter on Orpheus among the Greeks is typical of the structuralist and psychological trends in scholarship at the time, which was more interested in the myth than its function within poetry.[35] William S. Anderson's essay

[28] Burges Watson 2009 and 2014.
[29] For an edition with a French translation and commentary see Vian 1987.
[30] Dronke 1962.
[31] Friedman 1970.
[32] Friedman 1970: 1–2.
[33] Warden 1982.
[34] Segal 1993.
[35] Robbins in Warden 1982: 3–23.

on Ovid's reception of Virgil is more noteworthy for my research since it is the prime example of a less sympathetic reading of Ovid's Orpheus-narrative.[36] Anderson starts by exploring the troubling image of Orpheus in Virgil's *Georgics*. In his interpretation, Orpheus is flawed by overindulgence in sentimentality and his main role is to act as a foil to 'establish the 'heroic' stature of Aristaeus' – the purposeful farmer-hero who expiates his guilt.[37] In Ovid's version, Anderson argues that Orpheus is primarily used to challenge and parody Virgil's narrative. He singles out the jarring tone of Orpheus' initial mourning ('That adverb 'satis' is damning … ')[38] as well as the playful rhetoricity of Orpheus' visit in the Underworld as the main symptoms of Ovid's parody.[39] However, Anderson, who also wrote a commentary on the *Metamorphoses*,[40] is more balanced in his interpretation than is often imagined:

> … Ovid did develop, I would maintain, more than a facile parody of Virgil. Whereas Virgil had made his central object the portrayal of irrational love as 'furor', faulty though pathetic, Ovid inspects Orpheus' love and finds it wanting.[41]

In addition to these essays we find further investigations into the relationship between Christianity and Orpheus from late antiquity (Irwin) into the medieval period (Vicari), as well as brilliant essay on the Neoplatonist Ficino's revamped interpretation of Orpheus (Warden). The volume's greatest strength is perhaps its expansive treatment of Orpheus in the Renaissance and Baroque, including art (Scavizzi), opera (McGee) and Spanish baroque drama (León).

Segal's volume *Orpheus: The Myth of the Poet*, is, as the title indicates more concerned with poetry and poetics than with Orpheus' reception in other media. His essays cover some modern poets (chapters 6-7), where especially Rilke's reception of the myth is thoroughly analysed, but their main focus is the Roman poets Virgil, Ovid and Seneca (chapters 1-5). Interestingly, the volume includes an essay that revisits Segal's earlier readings of Virgil and Ovid, offering a certain recalibration of his positions. He initially approached Virgil's handling of the Orpheus myth as one of contrasting attitudes towards nature, life and love, encapsulated in the descriptions of Aristaeus and Orpheus. This is highly reminiscent of Anderson's interpretation. The novelty of Segal's approach was his identification of another character in the *Georgics*, the

[36] Anderson in Warden 1982.
[37] Anderson in Warden 1982: 34–36.
[38] Anderson in Warden 1982: 40.
[39] Anderson is especially caustic about Orpheus' speech to the Underworld deities, which he describes as 'tawdry rhetoric', see Anderson in Warden 1982: 40–42.
[40] Ovid and Anderson 1972.
[41] Anderson in Warden 1982: 47.

shapeshifting deity Proteus, as the 'fulcrum of this basic difference between the two mortal heroes and the attitudes they embody'.[42] With regard to Ovid, Segal differs greatly from Anderson in emphasising the pathos and humanity of his narrative, rather than the parodic. Above all, Segal sees Ovid's Orpheus in a more positive, sympathetic light, as an example of 'the victory of love but also, in a certain sense, the victory of art.'[43] In revisiting the Orpheus of Virgil and Ovid, Segal assesses large parts of the scholarly debate on these texts and realigns himself accordingly with a somewhat more sympathetic reading of Orpheus' role. Segal adopts an emphasis upon the ironies inherent in Virgil's allusions to mythical models, notably to Homeric allusions in Aristaeus' narrative, which 'keep us distanced from Aristaeus',[44] and similarly reinterprets Ovid's Orpheus-narrative in light of its surrounding complex of mythic narratives, notably drawing upon Bloom's concept of the anxiety of influence.[45]

The work of Segal and Anderson is representative of one of the main scholarly debates regarding the myth of Orpheus. This debate is concerned with the more fruitful interpretation of Virgil's and Ovid's Orpheus narratives, which arguably are some of the most complex and expansive within the ancient poetic tradition. Of these two, the former narrative is further complicated by the importance of Orpheus for Virgil's earlier collection, the *Eclogues*, as well as the longstanding problem of the *laudes Galli*.[46] This problem has above all been approached by Italian scholars, for example, Gian Biagio Conte writes on this issue twice.[47] I shall return to this problem in later chapters.

Elisabeth Henry's monograph *Orpheus with his Lute: Poetry and the Renewal of Life* is perhaps the foremost example of a study of the myth of Orpheus in literature throughout the ages.[48] As can be surmised from its title, this book is concerned with showing the constancy of Orpheus' role as poetic paragon amidst the many alterations to his story from one author to the next, as she writes in the introduction:

[42] Segal 1993: 46.
[43] Segal 1993: 70.
[44] Segal 1993: 75.
[45] Segal 1993: 91.
[46] This problem is rooted in a reference by the ancient commentator Servius that indicated that Virgil, in response to political pressure, had erased a section of the poem in which he had praised his friend and colleague Gallus. For an introduction to the extensive scholarship on this debate, see Jacobson 1984; Gagliardi 2012 and 2013.
[47] Conte 1986 and Conte in Conte and Harrison 2007.
[48] Henry 1992.

> The image of Orpheus as the supreme poet-musician, however, was an enduring one; whatever additional roles he might assume, Orpheus was essentially the embodiment of poetry and music.[49]

Henry was particularly interested in the philosophical and psychological aspects of the myth's reception.[50] Above all she traces the shifting ways in which Orpheus was perceived as anything from a sympathetic but flawed poet, via an interpreter of the divine or spiritual guide to a Romantic tragic lover, yet always remaining both a lover and a poet 'whose nature is a paradigm for all artists.'[51] Even though she stretches her subject out to cover all aspects and all ages of the myth's reception, her chapter I 'The Backward Glance' and chapter XI 'Roman Choice' provide the basis for much of what I will discuss in terms of erotic aspects of the myth, although her judgment on the importance of these aspects within Greek poetry leave much to be desired. Henry is at her most elucidating when she illustrates the vast differences between Roman, renaissance and Victorian romantic ideas about love and marriage, and sounds a warning bell against anachronistic readings. For example she notes concerning Virgil:

> The idea of divine forgiveness, and indeed of divine righteousness, is entirely absent from Virgil, and that is why Christian readers of the *Georgics* as well as the *Aeneid* have often been impelled to cry 'Can you bear this?'.[52]

Her readings of Virgil's moral compass in chapter XI 'Roman Choice' are quite lucid and aptly illustrate the ambiguity inherent in his representation of Orpheus in the *Georgics*. She sees Orpheus as being dismissed by Virgil for being 'a singer – however inspired – who simply spun music from undisciplined personal emotion … For this reason he cannot be a Roman hero.'[53] Aristaeus, his agricultural foil in the poem, is instead compared with deities such as Apollo and Poseidon, who impart secrets to mankind but typically perform acts of 'rapacious male virility' – he is called 'unattractive', but is finally judged as superior through his expiation of guilt, as he 'offers his sacrifices as instructed, without emotion.'[54] Her book has been criticised for skimming the surfaces of too many texts, as well as for its lack of appreciation of humorous renditions of

[49] Henry 1992: 6.
[50] Henry 1992: 6.
[51] Henry 1992: 25.
[52] Henry 1992: 22.
[53] Henry 1992: 190.
[54] Henry 1992: 187–89.

the story.[55] The same criticism can be levelled against the only other work of a similarly broad scope, Lee's doctoral thesis, which I will return to below. In addition to their seeming blind-spot for the humorous, these scholars also seem to share a problematic theoretical grounding. Henry commits the very error she warned against when at the end of each chapter she attempts to glean some universal truth about what it means to be a poet, sometimes in overtly Catholic Christian terms:[56]

> What is a poet? … His poetry can bring deliverance from spiritual death, bringing his hearers to a new knowledge of their divine Creator, who gave him this special power. In this way souls that have been disordered can be healed, and the human relation with God may be restored … [57]

It might be argued that the very idea of trying to learn universal truths about poets based on the reception of Orpheus is anachronistic in itself, and would perhaps be more at home in a medieval exegetical work than in a modern scholarly debate.

There is no lack of books that attempt to provide full surveys of the various versions of the myth of Orpheus within both prose and poetry. An important contribution in this regard appeared in 1922 with Kern's *Orphicorum fragmenta*, a collection of nearly all textual references to Orphism and Orpheus in Greek antiquity.[58] This work was only partially superseded by the recent catalogue of Bernabé, *Orphicorum et Orphicis similium testimonia et fragmenta*, which, though it includes Roman material missing from Kern's collection, is marred by its lack of indices.[59] These two collections of Orphic and Orpheus-related texts are helpful for identifying the full scope of this material, but are limited in time to the supposed history of Orphism. They are as such more helpful to a student of Greek religion than to one of poetry.

The myth's direct reception after Antiquity must therefore be sought elsewhere. In this regard, *The Oxford guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts, 1300-1990s* is invaluable.[60] A thorough survey of the reception of Orpheus in the early and high medieval periods is a *desideratum* of scholarship, though most of this material is treated in John B. Friedman's *Orpheus in the Middle*

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[55] Roland Mayer writes in his review 'My only criticism is that the writer's tone is humourless. It came as no surprise that among the many reconstructions of Orpheus, from Monteverdi to Rilke, that H. sympathetically discusses, there was no room for Offenbach's', see Mayer 1993: 439.
[56] I have been told by Stephen Harrison, who knew her, that Henry was 'a serious Catholic'. In this she was similar to Lee, who later became a Jesuit priest.
[57] Henry 1992: 62.
[58] Kern 1922.
[59] Bernabé Pajares 2005.
[60] Reid and Rohmann 1993.

Ages.[61] Aside from debates on the correct interpretation of poems, there is therefore much work that could be done to contribute to surveying the reception of the myth, especially in covering the medieval period, as well in providing a more in-depth overview of the myth's post-antique reception in other languages than English, since both Henry and Lee have largely limited their work to Anglophone poets.[62] However, the present study is not primarily intended to fulfil all of these *desiderata*. Instead, I intend to provide a better understanding of some aspects of the myth in poetry, much like the thematic treatment in Henry's book. Having said that, my work incorporates texts that have received less scholarly attention within its scope, so as to act, at least in part, as a supplement to the broader surveys of the myth's reception.

IV Looking away from Orpheus as 'romantic hero'

There is a problem within much of the existing scholarship on Orpheus that goes beyond the fact that most scholars have asked very different questions to those of the present study. Lee, whose critique of Finch was referred to above, is the best example of a main line within scholarship on Orpheus in poetry characterised by its approach to him as a tragic, but largely positive figure – as a hero who must be interpreted with reverence, and whose inclusion by poets must primarily be understood within these parameters. Other examples of this branch of scholarship includes the work of Henry and Segal.

It is not difficult to see why scholars have tended towards a more sympathetic reading of Orpheus. He is *the* Greek hero who most easily could be interpreted as exhibiting the ideals of romanticism. His story seems to act like a precursor to the romantic ideals of connecting with nature, creating art through inward inspiration, the transcendent power of art, the privileged position of lyric poetry, and not least, of great emotionality; especially in expressions of love. Orpheus is a unique mythic character in the way that he was seen to have supernatural powers over nature in virtue of his art. His artistic credentials had an impeccable pedigree since (as already noted) he was the son of the epic muse Calliope, and either the human, King Oeagrus of Thrace, or the god of poetry himself, Apollo. Orpheus' connection with his emotional side was evident in the way that poets had presented him as grieving for a lost love, whether this was the teenage demi-god Calaïs (as in the Hellenistic poet Phanocles) or the more usual suspect, Eurydice. Above all, Orpheus could represent the transcendent power of art to nearly overcome

[61] Friedman 1970.

[62] The German poet Rilke is an important exception, whose reworking of the myth is treated by both of these authors as well as by Segal, see especially Segal 1993: chapter 6 'Orpheus in Rilke: The Hidden Roots of Being' 118–54.

the very nature of reality itself by persuading the gods of the dead to hand over a shade. His failure in this endeavour was often put down to the overpowering strength of his love by ancient poets, as in the famous version in Virgil's *Georgics*, and to romantic sensibilities, this was in no way damaging to his reception.

However, there are several problems with seeing Orpheus as a romantic hero in ancient poetry. For one thing, love was most likely perceived in a somewhat different way in ancient Greece and Rome than it is today or during the Romantic era. We may look at Virgil for an example of this, who stresses the maddening character of love as he lets his Orpheus be driven to break his agreement with the gods not by *amor*, but by *furor* 'madness' (*G.* 4.495). Secondly, we should remember that Orpheus' life in the Thracian countryside was far removed from the urban life of most ancient poets. Depictions of pastoral beauty, as typified by the pastoral genre Virgil had inherited from Theocritus and other Hellenistic precursors should not necessarily be seen as indicative that these poets yearned to live like shepherds away from the pleasures of Syracuse, Alexandria, or Naples. Such a 'romantic' approach to Orpheus may therefore be problematic and limiting, and call for a reinterpretation of his love also with non-romantic glasses. It is anachronistic to insist upon seeing Orpheus in a completely unambiguous, idealising light, and by doing so, we arguably risk overlooking more nuanced ways of understanding Orpheus' appearance in poetry and his significance.

V Building a simpler Orpheus

From this brief survey of the preceding scholarship it is clear that the literary representations of the myth of Orpheus appear to be highly varied, especially if we consider both religious texts, prose and poetry. I have therefore narrowed down my approach so as to look only at the role of Orpheus as a figure within poetry, and not to consider the poetic role of Orphism. I will also argue that within the poetic tradition, there is a main strand of texts that refer to the love story of Orpheus, directly or otherwise, and that the majority of these may be interpreted in light of Orpheus' failure in resurrecting his wife during his *katabasis*. This opens up a much more limited field of study in which we may investigate how the love story of Orpheus appears together with a number of metapoetical complexities.

An important article for my concerns was written by Maurice Bowra in 1952, 'Orpheus and Eurydice',[63] which launched a long debate about the development of the myth's *katabasis* episode. Bowra postulated that Virgil was indebted to a lost Hellenistic poem in introducing a

[63] Bowra 1952: 113–26.

tragic ending and ultimate failure of Orpheus' *katabasis*. One of the first to respond to this theory was Lee. In his doctoral thesis, the first full-length study devoted to the myth of Orpheus in literature (1960),[64] Lee attempted to trace the history of the myth of Orpheus in the arts from antiquity to the present, with particular emphasis upon the anglophone world and with special attention to its reception in opera and film. He aligned himself with Bowra in seeing a development from a successful to an unsuccessful ending to the myth's narrative, and in subsequent publications he would trace this development to the Attic 'Orpheus-relief' which is found in Roman copies, one of which might have been known to Virgil and inspired him.[65]

The debate about the myth's ultimate failure or success received its most lengthy, convincing contribution from John Heath in a 1994 article simply titled 'The Failure of Orpheus'.[66] Heath noted that the preceding scholarly debate on the subject had in fact included strongly dissonant voices, notably Graf (1986)[67] and Ziegler (1939),[68] who had objected to the seemingly overwhelming consensus that the myth included a happy ending not only in medieval, but also in ancient texts, yet that their arguments had not been given due credit.[69] Heath therefore spends a considerable amount of time reexamining all of the main textual passages, as well as artwork in other media that have been seen as indicative of a version of the myth with a successful *katabasis*. He firstly showed how problematic it would be for the chronology of the myth to suppose that Orpheus had successfully resurrected Eurydice when all accounts of his death tell of his rejection of women (or in rarer cases, of Dionysus), and none include any hint whatsoever that Eurydice is alive at this point:

> The incubus of proof must be on those who insist on a happy ending to the tragic story. It is they who must explain the disappearance of Eurydice. Why is she not with her famous husband at his death?[70]

He then proceeds to dismantle the supposedly strongest candidate for a text that includes allusions to a successful *katabasis*, Euripides' *Alcestis*. This play is of a notoriously problematic tone, which Heath claims has made some critics blind to the ironies in the protagonist Admetus' words. The king who has allowed his wife, Alcestis to die in his stead is portrayed as a very

[64] Lee 1960.
[65] Lee 1996.
[66] Heath 1994.
[67] Graf in Bremmer 1986: 80–106.
[68] Ziegler 1939: 'Orpheus'.
[69] Heath 1994: 163–64.
[70] Heath 1994: 166–67.

gauche man, who not only, in reaction to the loss of his wife, alludes to Orpheus' powers of song during his *katabasis*, but also makes a strange allusion to the similarly ill-fated myth of Protesilaus and Laodameia.[71]

Heath's argument is more straightforward when dealing with Plato's *Symposium* where the character Phaedrus tells a novel version of the myth of Orpheus where Eurydice's spectre, not Eurydice herself, is given back to him,[72] before turning to a number of texts that include Orpheus' *katabasis* and love story within a group of similar examples. He shows how all of these texts are problematic as evidence in favour of an ancient successful denouement of the myth, but not always for the same reasons. Isocrates' reference to Orpheus' ability to resurrect people in the *Busiris* is problematic because the reference is to plural resurrections, perhaps to create a parallel with the actions of the god Busiris.[73] The main fragment from Hermesianax' catalogue poem *Leontion* opens with an account of Orpheus' seemingly successful *katabasis* (the *Leontion* will be discussed in chap. 1.7-11). This poem is read by Heath as a Hellenistic meditation upon the destructive power of love, which would seem to preclude a happy ending.[74] He further illustrates how easy it is to misread references to the *katabasis* as if it were successful with an example from *Aen.* 6. Orpheus' story is alluded to by Aeneas in a list of other famous heroes who undertook a *katabasis* (6.116-123):

> Aeneas wants to make the catabasis. He is concerned only with a safe journey down and up, not about the objects or results of the parallel quests he cites [Pollux, Theseus, Hercules – only Hercules is entirely successful in bringing someone back from the underworld]. Similarly, Hermesianax specifies neither the safe arrival nor second death of Agriope [= Eurydice].[75]

A similar argument of misreading is applied to the later Hellenistic *Lament for Bion* (see chap.2.2-6), where Orpheus is compared with the bucolic poet Bion who has the power to charm the deities of the underworld into sending him back to the world above. Whilst some have seen this as a clear example of a version of the myth with a happy ending, notably Heurgon,[76] Heath again dismisses this on the grounds of an imperfect parallel between the two poets. Whereas the poem states that on the one hand Bion, whom the poem praises in the most fantastic terms, will be sent back 'to the mountains' if he sings before Persephone (v. 122-125), i.e. he could resurrect

[71] Heath 1994: 168–78.
[72] Heath 1994: 178–82.
[73] Heath 1994: 182–83.
[74] Heath 1994: 188.
[75] Heath 1994: 188. For more about the name of Agriope instead of Eurydice for Orpheus' wife, see chapter 1.
[76] Heurgon 1932.

himself and live again among his native Sicilian mountains, Orpheus, on the other is merely able to have Eurydice handed over to him, not to return her to life.[77]

The full implications of Heath's article have yet to make their way into scholarship. If Virgil didn't invent the failed *katabasis*, and Orpheus was always envisaged as ultimately unsuccessful in his quest, then this makes him into a less than perfect figure, at least in antiquity, and not the seemingly flawless paragon for poets one sometimes imagines. Are the erotic aspects of Orpheus more problematic than we think? It is possible to envisage competing explanations for why Orpheus turned around to look at Eurydice besides an uncontrollable erotic desire. For an example, Ovid presents the fateful glance as a casual accident on Orpheus' behalf based upon his lack of trust that Eurydice is still behind him, but without revealing whether his desire to check was a reflection of a deeper erotic desire. In chapter 4 we shall encounter Henry Fielding's Orpheus who is actively made to turn around by Eurydice herself because in his version, Eurydice is perfectly happy in the afterlife and has no feelings of love for her husband. However, in the majority of the other Orpheus narratives under consideration, it seems clear that the fault lies with Orpheus, and it will be fruitful to look at love as the main theme in explaining why he turned around to look at Eurydice. A story about a lover who fails because of his inability to control his feelings raises questions about whether poetry can control love, and, as a corollary, nature, and whether Orpheus in this way can be a symbol of the limitations not just of love, but also of poetry.

A researcher who sees this problem clearly is Kania. In a recent study of Virgil's *Eclogues* he discusses the presence of Orpheus and Orphic-like 'singer-herdsmen' throughout the majority of this collection. These include both fictive herdsmen and the *personae* of poets such as the elegist Gallus, many of whom are described in terms reminiscent of both Orpheus and the Daphnis of Theocritus' *Idyllls* 1. According to Kania, the characters of the *Eclogues* are engaged in what he refers to as a kind of pastoral dialogue or dialectic between being read as pure fiction, and as purely allegorical.[78] He also sees this kind of dialectic as present both in the structure of the poems, many of which are dialogues, as well in how we should understand Orpheus' position within the collection.[79] Orpheus is not himself a character in the *Eclogues*, and instead assumes a role as poetic role model, but one that embodies 'a dialectic between power and inadequacy'.[80] Kania sees the source of this ambivalence of Orpheus firstly in that his amazing powers over the natural world are shared by a number of characters, in contrast with the way that Bion is

[77] Heath 1994: 190.
[78] Kania 2016: 35.
[79] Kania 2016: 35.
[80] Kania 2016: 59.

repeatedly compared with Orpheus in the *Lament for Bion*.[81] Secondly, all the characters that are presented in an Orphic light are limited in various ways from appearing as the preeminent poet-figure within the collection.[82] Thirdly, this kind of qualified greatness belongs to Orpheus too, who must vie for position as supreme mythic poet with Linus and Daphnis,[83] and he is further compromised, just like Gallus, one of the characters with Orphic overtones, by his submission to love:

> Of course, Orpheus is no stranger to *amor*; while his love for Eurydice led him at least to attempt a heroic conquest of death, his failure to bring her back to the world of the living casts a shadow on the *Eclogues'* moments of Orphic glory.'[84]

Kania here agrees with Heath in seeing Orpheus' *katabasis* as ultimately failed and describes the evidence in favour of success as 'not compelling'.[85] I will argue that this latter point, an integral part of the love story, is the most troubling element of what Kania identifies as the roots of Orpheus' ambivalence within the *Eclogues*. If Orpheus' powers are shared by many characters, this does not necessarily make him appear less symbolic of poetic greatness, it just gives him the edge over competing poetic exemplars such as Daphnis. Nor does it detract from his greatness if no single character in the collection appears equal to Orpheus' preeminence. On the other hand, his failure as a hero due to the power of love *is* problematic. This can clearly have negative implications for how we interpret Orpheus' role as a symbolic figure for the positive potential of poetry. If this is true for the *Eclogues*, why not for other poems? I follow the lead of Kania and Heath in studying the full implications of the love story (not limited to the failure of the *katabasis*) upon Orpheus' otherwise superb metapoetic potential.

Before turning to my analysis of Orpheus narratives I will finally briefly look at the theoretical framework that underpins my investigation. My approach is largely concerned with how Orpheus functions in terms of the relationships and connections he may have between authors, readers, the poetic tradition, and society at large. Not every text will exploit all of these possibilities, but it may be helpful to look at what these may entail.

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[81] Kania 2016: 59.
[82] Kania 2016: 62.
[83] Daphnis is together with Orpheus the main model for the 'more capable bucolic master-singer, whose exemplar is Bion Boukolos [in Lament for Bion]', see Kania 2016: 59.
[84] Kania 2016: 62.
[85] Kania 2016: 62, n. 88.

VI Orpheus and metapoetical complexity – a new typology of Orpheus' mythological functions[86]

In this study I use the term 'metapoetical complexity' to mean the many interconnections between the different functions that Orpheus may have within the poetic tradition, which ultimately derive from his role as a poet and a lover. These interconnections are complex insomuch as they rarely appear in isolation, and they are metapoetical insomuch as they always hinge upon Orpheus' essential characteristic as a poet-figure, which points to the poetic nature of the narratives in which he appears in. The core characteristics of Orpheus as a figure in poetry, in antiquity and beyond, carry with them a potential for metapoetical complexity which can be summarised in the following three aspects expounded under the following subheadings (VII-IX).

VII Orpheus as the poetic tradition

Orpheus' myth includes a number of characteristics that make him into a particularly good figure with which to embody the poetic tradition itself. Orpheus is typically depicted as the son of the epic Muse Calliope, and he is sometimes thought of as the inventor of poetry (by humans), e.g. by Porphyry.[87] Though his preference for playing the lyre makes him especially suitable to symbolise lyric poetry, his legendary status and supernatural poetic powers provide a much broader association with the poetic tradition that is not limited to specific genres. This will become clear in my analyses of Orpheus' role within texts from various genres in signalling that a poet is discussing the poetic tradition within which, or against which, he or she identifies himself.

VIII Orpheus as the poet's mirror

In virtue of being a supremely powerful (if flawed) poetic exemplar, Orpheus presents authors with the possibility of using him as a standard against which they themselves may be compared. There is a longstanding tradition within the poetic tradition of including poet-figures within poems, which in part may reflect back upon the authors of the poems. Some early examples of this can be found in the Homeric epics.[88]

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[86] I am indebted to Kirk for this terminology, see Kirk 1970: 252.
[87] In commenting upon Horace's *Ars Poetica* v. 391, see Bernabé Pajares 2005: 479.
[88] In the *Iliad*, both Helen and Achilles act in a capacity as poets. Helen even weaves a narrative about the ongoing war. In the *Odyssey*, the two bards Phemius and Demodocus both mirror the poet in singing about Odysseus' exploits.

IX Tilting the mirror - the love story and connections beyond the author

That Orpheus also was a lover opens up a much broader range of possible connections beyond his role as a poet-figure. Not everyone is a poet, but everyone, one may hope, experiences love. The love story arguably creates stronger feelings of sympathy in readers who may identify with Orpheus' struggles with love more so than they identify with his music and poetry. His role as a lover may also be used to reflect back upon society, and may in particular be relevant when approaching topics related to love, such as marriage. This provides an opening for political and social critique through the medium of Orpheus' love story.

X A note on the overall structure

Within each analysis chapter, my overall approach in arguing for the metapoetical complexities associated with Orpheus' love story is to identify three key texts that initially appear to have a lot in common. Through analysing each individual text, I wish to demonstrate that the similarities run less deep within each category than might be have been expected if it had not been the case that the love story was suited for metapoetical complexity. In addition to this, by identifying thematic trends we may also discover new ways of understanding the poetic tradition and move beyond mere chronology, though chronological concerns lie behind the structuring of each individual chapter. Thematic problems can reveal different aspects of Orpheus' metapoetical complexities by avoiding an exclusive emphasis upon lines of inspiration in the tradition of *Quellenforschung*.

I have also extended the scope of source texts beyond ancient poets, as already illustrated by the debate between Finch and Pope regarding Orpheus as a poetic model figure. By looking at some later texts it is possible to see how trends within the ancient part of the tradition may be further developed, as in the case of Orpheus' connections with marriage criticism in chapter 4, where Ovid's Orpheus-narrative can be shown to provide an impetus for the highly comic narratives of Fielding and Offenbach/Crémieux/Halévy which may form a coda to Ovid's version. Later receptions can also bring out tendencies whose seeds were present in essence within the ancient tradition. This is especially relevant in the case of women poets who like Finch latch onto the most problematic sides of Orpheus' actions vis-à-vis women, notably towards his wife. I will frame my analysis by looking forwards to another woman's take on

Orpheus' love story in Duffy's poem 'Eurydice' from her collection *The World's Wife* (1999) as this poem provides an opening for looking back at the preceding tradition.

Chapter 1: Starting from the top – Orpheus in Hellenistic poetic catalogues

1.1 Three catalogues – two distinct modes of Orpheus

From the early Hellenistic period we have preserved three Orpheus narratives that in many ways lay the foundation for the subsequent poetic tradition in which Orpheus appears, as they provide the earliest direct examples of Orpheus' love story in poetry as well as of his epic side as one of the Argonauts. These narratives are to be found in the epic *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius, and in the two elegiac poems: *Loves or Beautiful Boys* by Phanocles and the *Leontion* of Hermesianax of Colophon. The three narratives are limited to discrete stages of Orpheus' life, since the first deals with Orpheus' journey as one of the Argonauts, whilst the second depicts his death, and the third recounts his *katabasis*. In a similar fashion, though we lack a clear picture with regard to their date of composition beyond that they all appear to be from the first half of the 3rd century BC, the three poems seem likely to be written in sequence and with awareness of each other.[89] The different scenarios of each poem could lead to the presumption that all three narratives are highly different in the way that they make use of Orpheus' story, but this is not the case. All three poems share two defining characteristics, namely that they depict Orpheus fully or partially within the confines of poetic catalogues, and neither poem includes the typical name for Orpheus' major love, Eurydice. This makes it necessary to investigate if there are some specific functions that Orpheus performs when he is found in a catalogue among a number of other characters with whom he may be compared or contrasted, and also to see if there is some shared explanation for what could be seen as active avoidance of the name Eurydice. By answering these questions, we might elucidate some aspects of how Orpheus in love can be seen as an ambiguous character.

I will concentrate in this chapter on the narrative of Hermesianax, primarily since Orpheus' role within this poem is the least understood in scholarship. A more profound understanding of its overall poetic design can illustrate the ambiguity of Orpheus' position in a way that is echoed in Phanocles' narrative, and such an analysis can also explain why Eurydice is nowhere to be found in any of the three poems. It will become clear that Orpheus' depiction in Hermesianax is aimed at making him appear similar to the other characters in his catalogue,

[89] Seeing the philosopher Leontion as the intended addressee of Hermesianax' poem, known from her association with Epicurus, my suggestion is that the chronology was Hermesianax, Apollonius, Phanocles, for a discussion of the latter two see Leutsch 1857.

whereas the opposite is seen to be the case in Apollonius' narrative, where Orpheus' position is exceptional in his great success as a hero. As the most conventional presentation of Orpheus among the three catalogues, Hermesianax' depiction can provide the best starting point in support of a more general theory for how to understand the function of Orpheus when he is depicted as a lover within the ancient poetic tradition, and I will also treat it first in this chapter.

I will then continue by looking at the way that Orpheus is catalogued in the *Argonautica*, written by a frequent user of catalogues, the Alexandrian librarian Apollonius. In this epic poem, Orpheus assumes an especially dignified and exceptional position among its characters: he can be seen to share strong links with Apollonius' authorial *persona* and where his love story is avoided even in the description of Orpheus' background. I will try to show how the explicit avoidance of Orpheus' love story adds to the increasing tension between the epic's narrative scope and an ancient reader's knowledge about subsequent events, notably the tragedy of Medea and Jason's married life and Orpheus' own tragic loss of Eurydice. In another way, Orpheus' role as poet's mirror also means that he is tinged by the erotic aspects of this epic which are stressed at key points in the narrative, as seen in the proem in the middle (*Argon.* 3.1-5) where the Muse Erato is evoked in her capacity as a representative of Aphrodite. Finally, I intend to show that the two elegiac narratives share more than a generic framework, inasmuch as they both exploit the tensions that can derive from Orpheus' love stories and create more ambiguous portrayals of this mythic hero. This ambiguity is most easy to see in the case of Phanocles, given the unusual role he provides for Orpheus as a promoter of exclusive pederasty, as well as his presentation of Orpheus' failure to defend himself from the attack of the Thracian women. As such, this poem is a natural next step after analysing Apollonius' Orpheus in that it can provide a contrast to Apollonius' narrative to which it acts as a continuation in terms of plot sequence. This poem is also the first to encapsulate the three constitutive elements of the myth of Orpheus as defined by Segal: art, love, and death. [90]

1.2 Reconsidering Orpheus in Hermesianax' *Leontion*

We will start with perhaps the most unusual of Hellenistic catalogue poems, Hermesianax of Colophon's *Leontion*.[91] Though it is likely to be slightly earlier than the Orpheus narratives of Apollonius and Phanocles,[92] Hermesianax' narrative may be considered as less connected with

[90] Segal 1993: 2.
[91] The most indepth study of this poem is perhaps Kobiliri 1998, but her focus is on the stylistics of Hermesianax' poem.
[92] Schulze puts the birth of Hermesianax c. 324/320 BC and claims that he lived until at least 284/280 BC, based largely on the ancient testimonia that identifies him as a student of Philitas of Cos, see Schulze 1858: 9–22.

these, and as bridging the gap between a more *hetaera*-focused Colophonian tradition and the wider Alexandrian poetic tradition.[93] The question of how the love story is affected by political context is more relevant in the case of the *Leontion*, which is the only one of the Hellenistic texts that includes Orpheus' wife. Hermesianax' version of the story opens the main fragment from his catalogue elegy addressed to his beloved who may have been identical with the woman philosopher Leontion, branded as a *hetaera* and disciple of Epicurus.[94] *Fr.* 7 Powell, is transmitted in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus (13.597B), and though the poem seems fairly straightforward to come to grips with – given the relatively large number of surviving lines (ca. 1 line from book 1 and some 98 lines from book 3 of the *Leontion*) – Hermesianax' text presents numerous difficulties for scholars. It is a text that has divided opinions between those who view it as an ingenious poem by a poet who writes tongue-in-cheek about poetic predecessors,[95] and those who hold a low view of its style and narrative devices such as Cameron, who scathingly describes it as 'much the most crudely Hesiodic poem to have survived from the golden age of Hellenistic literature'.[96] What were the ideas behind its design, and how should we understand the inclusion of Orpheus within the poem? I will here try to show how a reappraisal of the overall plan of the *Leontion* is needed in order to understand Orpheus' role. Such a reappraisal is possible through close analysis of the text itself as well as of its literary and socio-political context. Above all, I will argue for why it makes sense to approach the addressee as being the Epicurean philosopher Leontion and provide new arguments for why Hermesianax avoids the name Eurydice in his Orpheus-narrative. The tension that drives the humour of the poem will be shown to be reliant upon the ambiguous, elegiac position of Orpheus and the other lovers whose stories make up the plot of this catalogue elegy.

In a section where the topic is courtesans and poets Athenaeus introduces Hermesianax fr. 7 in the following manner: ... ὧν ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ κατάλογου ποιεῖται ἐρωτικῶν (*Athen. Deipn.* 13.597 b, '... in the third book of which he made a catalogue of love-affairs ... ', trans. Lightfoot). So at least a large portion of the third book consisted of a catalogue of love stories. Furthermore, this catalogue can be divided into two different sections within the fragment, in which the first part deals with poets (vs. 1-78) and the second with philosophers (vs. 79-98). Based on the other fragments and testimonia of Hermesianax, Schulze suggested that book 1 of the poem dealt with the love stories of shepherds, as typified by Polyphemus (Herodian, περὶ μον. λεξ., GG

[93] For a discussion of the close verbal echoes that link Phanocles' and Apollonius' narratives, as well as their shared emphasis upon Argonauts, see Leutsch 1857.
[94] For a discussion of this possibility (as well as a sceptical argument against it) see Schulze 1858: 22–25.
[95] Asquith in Hunter 2005: 281.
[96] Cameron 1995: 381.

III.2, p. 922.20 Lentz), Daphnis and Menalcas (Σ Theocr. *Id.* 8.53–56d, p. 210.9 Wendel), whereas book 2 consisted of stories from mythology about lovers who died.[97] Though it it impossible to say for certain with regard to the missing sections of the overall poem, it seems likely that all of the stories were unhappy, given that the emphasis in Hermesianax fr. *7* is upon the suffering of the lovers in the pursuit of their beloved. This might well be a debt to Hermesianax' fellow Colophonian, Antimachus, whose catalogue elegy the *Lyde* according to Plutarch consisted of a number of unhappy love stories from mythology, ostensibly written to console its author after the loss of his wife.[98] However, the two Colophonian catalogue elegies might have even more in common if we question the testimonium that labels Lyde as the wife of Antimachus. Matthews thinks it more likely that she was a courtesan, given that this is the verdict of the majority of testimonia about Antimachus.[99] Following a less reductive approach, it may be possible to think that Antimachus and Hermesianax were deliberatedly being vague about the marital and social status of their beloved. Based upon sources outside of Hermesianax' poem it might seem even more unlikely that the real-life Leontion were his wife. According to a scholion to Nicander's *Theriaca*, Hermesianax wrote the *Leontion* to Λεόντιον τὴν ἐρωμένην 'his beloved Leontion'.[100] Hermesianax betrays the influence of Antimachus by including him in his catalogue of poets who suffered in love:

Λύδης δ' Ἀντίμαχος Λυδηΐδος ἐκμὲν ἔρωτος
πλεγεὶς Πακτωλοῦ ῥεῦμ'ἐπέβη ποταμοῦ·
δαρδάνη δὲ θανοῦσαν ὑπὸ ξηρὴν θέτο γαῖαν
κλαίων, αἰζαον δ' ἦλθεν ἀποπρολιπὼν
ἄκρην ἐς Κολοφῶνα· γόων δ' ἐνεπλήσατο βίβλους
ἱράς, ἐκ παντὸς παυσάμενος καμάτου.
(Fr. 7.41-46)

Antimachus, for Lydian Lyde struck
With passion, trod beside Pactolus' stream;
...and when she died, laid her beneath the dry earth
Lamenting, and departing (from...?) came
To Colophon's hill; and holy books with tears
He filled, when he had ceased from all his grief. (trans. Lightfoot)

[97] Schulze 1858: 34–37.
[98] T12, see Matthews 1996: 4.
[99] Matthews 1996: 27.
[100] Schulze 1858: 9.

This presentation of an elegiac poet who suffers in love is typical of Hermesianax' catalogue poem as a whole inasmuch as all of the narratives emphasise the power of love and the suffering it engenders for those that pursue it in vain. The catalogue of poets in love does however broaden this essentially elegiac situation to poets from all genres, and its organizing principles appear to be a mixture of chronology and generic concerns defined by pairs of complementary narratives.[101] These run from the mythic poets Orpheus and Musaeus (vs. 1-20) who both are depicted within a Underworld setting,[102] via the epic poets Hesiod and Homer (vs. 21-33), the elegiac Mimnermus and Antimachus (vs. 34-46), the lyric Alcaeus and Anacreon (vs. 47-56), the tragic Sophocles and Euripides (vs. 57-68) to the seemingly odd pairing of the dithyrambist Philoxenus with the elegist Philitas (vs. 69-78).[103] The chronological principle appears to break down with the final pair of poets given that Philoxenus and Philitas were born approximately a century apart, as does the generic pattern, since they were famous for composing in different genres.

A different trend that pervades the catalogue is for Hermesianax to single out poems that were addressed to or written in memory of each poet's beloved. Often this would manifest itself in the form of intertextual allusions to these poems. In the case of Orpheus, the poem in question is the song that persuaded the gods of the underworld to give back his lover Agriope (vs. 13-14) whilst the dead Musaeus is depicted as singing in praise of Antiope in the same environs (vs. 15-20). Whereas it is possible that Hermesianax here was alluding to existing poems that purported to be composed by either Orpheus or Musaeus, the ritual character of the surviving Orphic poetry appears to make it unlikely that any of these poems had reached a widely recognised or canonical position suitable for alluding to. Any primarily religious poem about Orpheus' *katabasis* may have avoided the topic of Orpheus' love story, and it is only Ovid's partially tongue-in-cheek version among the surviving Orpheus narratives that dares to relay the contents of such a song. Instead, the allusive technique on display in the *Leontion* seems to indicate that Hermesianax was more interested in alluding to Homer and the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* in the section on Orpheus, as argued by Tueller.[104] However, if we carefully analyse the poetic design of the *Leontion* it will become apparent that Orpheus is not an exceptional case, and his inclusion in the poem fits well with the overall principles behind its representation of poets.

[101] Lightfoot 2010: xii.
[102] As noted by Tueller 2007: 107.
[103] Gärtner 2012: 78-79.
[104] Tueller 2007.

1.3 The puzzling Agriope

The most striking feature of Hermesianax' Orpheus-narrative is that he gives the name of Orpheus' love interest as Agriope, which is the only time this name appears in connection with Orpheus. Starting with the *Lament for Bion* (see chapter 2), all of the later Orpheus narratives give Eurydice as the name of Orpheus' wife. The wife of Orpheus was clearly part of his story prior to Hermesianax' poem since e.g. Plato explicitly refers to her in a section of the *Symposium* (179d2-180a4) but does not give her a name. Given that we do not know by what name the wife of Orpheus was referred to prior to Hermesianax, it is just as possible that there was a prior tradition of calling her Eurydice as that she was called Agriope, or indeed some other name entirely.[105] I will investigate what reasons Hermesianax could have had to alter the name if indeed Eurydice was the traditional name. The name Agriope is not common, and its meaning ('wild-eyed') is not wholly positive when applied to a human being. Guthrie observes that the name 'suits well the Thracian nymph or Dryad whom he [Orpheus] might naturally be supposed to have married.'[106] However, if we assume that Agriope is the same figure as Eurydice, as most scholars have done, why has Hermesianax used such a seemingly rare name for her? I shall here try to provide two possible explanations for this puzzling feature of his poem, one that is based upon the political climate Hermesianax might have been writing in, and the other upon a closer look at the women in the catalogues of poets and philosophers and their roles as 'proto-*puellae*.' The latter approach is particularly apt for shining a light on Orpheus' role as 'proto-elegiac lover'.

1.4 Queen Eurydice I of Egypt

There might have been a good reason for both Hermesianax, Apollonius and Phanocles to have avoided using the name Eurydice, namely the widespread political fallout connected with a contemporary queen of the same name, the Macedonian Eurydice I, wife of Ptolemy I Soter of Egypt.[107] This real-life Eurydice was the last of a long line of Macedonian Eurydices. One of

[105] In his doctoral thesis, Lee dates Eurydice to the 4th century BC, but he conflates the two paradoxographers Palaephatus and Heraclitus, thus giving an incorrect date for the testimonium in question (Heraclitus 21 Festa), see Lee 1960: 26; Heraclitus can be dated on linguistic terms to the 1st or 2nd century AD, see Stern 2003: 53-54.

[106] Guthrie 1966: 30.

[107] Stephen Harrison has pointed out to me that something similar to what I will describe in the case of Eurydice also occured with the name Anna in the English composer Henry Purcell's baroque opera *Dido and Aeneas*, where her name is replaced with the name Belinda in the libretto of Nahum Tate so as to not allude negatively to the future queen (Anne I) given the tragedy associated with Anna and her sister Dido.

the wives of the Macedonian king Amyntas III bore this name (regn. c. 393/392-370 BC), and their son Philip II would rename his Illyrian wife Audata Eurydice.[108] The Eurydice who became queen of Egypt (c. 335 – 285 BC) was the daughter of Antipater, the regent of Macedonia at the death of Alexander, and therefore represented a third generation of Eurydices among Macedonian royals. Yet tellingly, in the period after Eurydice of Egypt there were only two Eurydices to be found among the ranks of the Hellenistic dynasties, and both belonged to the subsequent generation – i.e. they were born before the later years of Eurydice of Egypt.[109] That is to say, after the first quarter of the third century BC, the name appears to fall out of use. This might be the result of changing fashions, yet the naming of children among royal families could signal political or diplomatic intentions – the foremost role of royal princesses was to cement alliances with other kingdoms through marriage. There is every possibility that the name had accrued some problematic baggage which would make it less suitable for princesses destined for alliance-building among the Hellenistic kingdoms.

Little is certain about Eurydice of Egypt. It is known that she married Ptolemy I Soter around 322-321 and would provide Ptolemy with a number of children (from between five to six): Ptolemy Ceraunus, an anonymous son, Ptolemais, Lysandra, Meleager and Argaeus are variously ascribed to her.[110] Beyond producing royal offspring, Plutarch merely mentions that she met Demetrius Poliorcetes in Miletus c. 287/286 BC and gave him the hand of her daughter Ptolemais in marriage (Plut. *Lives: Demetrius* 46). This piece of information can be seen as an indication that by this time, things were not going well for Eurydice and that she attempted to become a bigger player on the political stage through marrying off her daughter to a rival monarch to Ptolemy, Demetrius Poliorcetes, though it might equally indicate that Eurydice was trusted by Ptolemy I Soter to carry out diplomatic missions on his behalf.[111] However, Eurydice must have fallen from favour when several of her children became embroiled in a conflict with the offspring of another wife of Ptolemy I Soter, Berenice I. Not only that, but her children would cause havoc among other Hellenistic kingdoms and would marry into the family of the man who had forced the citizens of Colophon into exile. This was the home town of Hermesianax.

According to Ogden, conflicts between rival family groups consisting of the various wives of Hellenistic kings and their respective children typified the dynastic struggles of the

[108] Ogden 2010: 11–16.
[109] These are the wives of Demetrius I of Macedon and of the younger Antipater, respectively, see Ogden 2010: 55, 57–62, 173–77.
[110] Ogden 2010: 69.
[111] Ogden 2010: 72.

Hellenistic period. He explains this phenomenon of what he dubs 'amphimetric disputes' (between the children of different mothers) based upon the prevalence of polygamy among successor monarchs and their lack of a defined tradition of primogeniture, which he traces to a shared origin within the Macedonian royalty.[112] The amphimetric dispute between the offspring of Eurydice I and Berenice I was particularly violent and would have made Eurydice's position at court untenable. The key event in this conflict was Ptolemy I Soter's decision to make his son by Berenice I his designated heir and co-regent in 285 BC.[113] This son, who would rule in his own right from 283 BC as Ptolemy II (later known by his epithet Philadelphus) would execute not one but two of his half-brothers supposedly on charges of treason: Argaeus, and a brother of unknown name who rebelled against him in Cyprus, both were sons of Eurydice.[114] Clearly this would have made Eurydice's position problematic, and to mention her name would be tantamount to alluding to rebellions and treason at the Alexandrian court. This may explain why the name was avoided by both Hermesianax, who may have had links with the court through his connection with Philitas, and certainly by Apollonius, who was employed by the Ptolemies. Phanocles' stylistic and thematic links with Alexandrian poets may also indicate that he had connections with their court.

This was far from being the only place where the offspring of Eurydice would challenge the sitting rulers. The eldest son of Eurydice, Ptolemy Ceraunus, is a case in point. His political career was short-lived but dramatic, fittingly for his epithet which translates as 'Thunderbolt'. Rather than confronting Philadelphus in Egypt, Ceraunus would try to win a kingdom for himself at one of the other successor courts, by hook or by crook. He was present at the Macedonian court of Lysimachus in 284 BC when the latter executed his own son Agathocles at the instigation of his wife, the half-sister of Ceraunus, Arsinoe II.[115] When Agathocles' widow Lysandra fled from the court, Ceraunus followed her into exile (she was his full sister) and they ended up at the court of the rival successor king Seleucus I. However, Ceraunus would not prove a loyal servant. Following the death of Lysimachus in the battle of Corupedium, Ceraunus murdered Seleucus in 281BC in an attempt to seize his crown.[116] Ceraunus' next move consisted of approaching Lysimachus' widow, his half-sister Arsinoe, and luring her to marry him, thus obtaining the Macedonian crown through a levirate marriage in 280/279 BC. Their marriage ended with the murder of Arsinoe's children at Cassandreia, then the Macedonian

[112] Ogden 2010: ix–x.
[113] Ogden 2010: 70.
[114] Ogden 2010: 72.
[115] Ogden 2010: 60.
[116] Hölbl 2001: 35.

capital city.[117] Eurydice was present at Cassandreia during this time, but we do not know what happened to her next when Ceraunus was killed by Gallic invaders in 279 BC.[118] Ptolemy Ceraunus' actions would have made it problematic to allude to him if a poet wanted royal sponsorship from nearly all of the Hellenistic dynasties. As a rival to the dynasty of Ptolemy Philadelphus and brother of two men that had been executed for treason, he would have been awkward to bring up at Alexandria. The court at Antioch was presided over by the son of the man Ceraunus had murdered, Antiochus I. After a time of anarchy, at Cassandreia there was a new ruler in 277BC, Antigonus II Gonatas, who might have disliked the mention of his predecessor. This could have been one reason for Hermesianax not using the name Eurydice.

A more personal motive for this could also be identified if we turn to the daughters of Eurydice. As mentioned earlier, her older daughter Ptolemais had married the Antigonid king of Macedon, Demetrius I Poliorcetes and her younger daughter Lysandra would marry the son of his successor on the Macedonian throne, Lysimachus. At about the time when Lysandra got married to Agathocles, his father Lysimachus would lay waste the city of Colophon, whilst presumably forcing its citizens into exile. This is apparent from the following comment by Pausanias:

> διέβη δὲ καὶ ναυσὶν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τὴν Ἀντιγόνου συγκαθεῖλε. συνῴκισε δὲ καὶ Ἐφεσίων ἄχρι θαλάσσης τὴν νῦν πόλιν, ἐπαγαγόμενος ἐς αὐτὴν Λεβεδίους τε οἰκήτορας καὶ Κολοφωνίους, τὰς δὲ ἐκείνων ἀνελὼν πόλεις, ὡς Φοίνικα ἰάμβων ποιητὴν Κολοφωνίων θρηνῆσαι τὴν ἅλωσιν. Ἑρμησιάναξ δὲ ὁ τὰ ἐλεγεῖα γράφας οὐκέτι ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν περιῆν· πάντως γάρ που καὶ αὐτὸς ἂν ἐπὶ ἁλούσῃ Κολοφῶνι ὠδύρατο.
>
> *Description of Greece*, 1.ix§7

He also crossed with a fleet to Asia and helped to overthrow the empire of Antigonus. He founded also the modern city of Ephesus as far as the coast, bringing to it as settlers people of Lebedos and Colophon, after destroying their cities, so that the iambic poet Phoenix composed a lament for the capture of Colophon. Hermesianax, the elegiac writer, was, I think, no longer living, otherwise he too would certainly have been moved by the taking of Colophon to write a dirge. (trans. Jones)

This highly specious claim seems to assume that since no famous dirge by Hermesianax for the capture of Colophon survived into the days of Pausanias (who wrote in the 2nd century AD), the poet must have perished before this event. This might well be pure guesswork, and Schulze

[117] Ogden 2010: 75–77.
[118] Ogden 2010: 72.

dismisses it.[119] Hermesianax might have survived well into the first quarter of the third century BC, and it is not necessary to assume that Hermesianax was present at Colophon during its capture, nor is it necessary to think that Hermesianax by necessity would have composed a dirge about Colophon. Though Pausanias might be erroneous in his conclusion, his line of thought might not be wrong. There is the possibility that we might look for allusions to Lysimachus within the surviving poetry of Hermesianax, and very indirectly to the former's harsh dealing with the Colophonians. Lysimachus had started his career as king of Thrace following the settlement of Babylon (323 BC).[120] There is only one reference to Thrace in the surviving poetry of Hermesianax, namely the epithet he allots to Agriope – 'Thracian' (fr. 7 v.2). Orpheus too is traditionally associated with Thrace, as we saw in the case of Phanocles' narrative. Whether this was intended as an allusion to Lysimachus' Thracian connections is difficult to say, but if it was, it is hard to see it as conveying any blame aimed at his destruction of Colophon.

1.5 Leontion and the 'proto-*puellae*' of Hermesianax' catalogues

It might be argued against the preceding lines of reasoning that they are dependent upon too many variables about which we are ignorant. In order for Hermesianax to have based his creative choices upon the political situation when treating the myth of Orpheus, he would have had to be alive at a bare minimum until after the forced exile of the Colophonians, and preferably after 280 BC, by which point the children of Eurydice had left a messy trail of political turmoil around the various Hellenistic courts. I will therefore propose a second approach to the seeming anomaly surrounding Agriope that is less dependent upon external circumstances, and more upon the internal design of Hermesianax' poem. When looking at the *Leontion* and its catalogues of poets and philosophers, most scholarly attention has been directed at the male poets and philosophers who constitute its main characters. The only woman who has been the subject of some debate is the poem's eponymous addressee, Leontion. An interesting question in this regard, is to also ask ourselves who the other women who populate the two catalogues are, and see if they share any characteristics that could help contextualise Agriope's role within the poem.

Following after Agriope, the second woman of the poets' catalogue is the object of Musaeus' love, the Eleusinian Antiope (Hermesianax fr. 7, 16-20). She is described as leading a procession for Demeter (διαπομπεύουσα, fr. 7, 19), and like in the preceding section, this action is described within the confines of the Underworld. However, there is no information on the

[119] Schulze 1858: 16.
[120] Hölbl 2001: 12–13.

prehistory of Musaeus' love for Antiope apart from the fact that he didn't leave her 'without a gift' (ἀγέραστον, fr. 7, 15). Presumably the form of his gift is Musaeus' poetry that lets the memory of Antiope live on. Crucially, Antiope is barred from reciprocating the love of Musaeus by the circumstances of her death. The next woman is the supposed love of Hesiod 'Eoie' whose very lack of real identity precludes the possibility of her giving into Hesiod's desires. Hermesianax here plays with the similarity between the Hesiodic formula 'or such a woman as' (ἢ'οἵη), which is a major feature of the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (see above) and the name 'Ηοίη 'dawn', and uses this to conjure up a ficticious love-relationship as the inspiration for Hesiod's own poetry, turning him into what Caspers dubs a 'crypto-lover'.[121] Unlike the other women of the catalogue, Eoie is entirely made up by Hermesianax, and it should perhaps come as little surprise that Hesiod suffers much in his pursuit of her (πόλλ' ἔπαθεν, fr. 7, 25). Like Agriope, Eoie is not fleshed out much beyond a demonym as she is identified as Ascraean (Ἀσκραϊκὴν, fr. 7, 24). The object of Homer's affection is also fictitious and is drawn from his own poetry, though more directly than Eoie since Hermesianax has singled out one of Homer's characters, Penelope.

The description of Penelope departs from the gloomy setting of the preceding women as she is alive, and she is praised as 'prudent, wise' (πινυτῆς, Hermesianax fr.7, 30). She is not the only one among the women of Hermesianax' catalogues that can be described as wise, or to use a cognate Latin term, *docta*. The prominent female poet Sappho is set up in a love-triangle between her fellow poets Alcaeus and Anacreon, where the unreality of the situation is made clear through what is interpreted by Bing as a jocular approach to chronology (Anacreon lived more than a century after the other two poets).[122] An interesting case is the role of Aspasia of Miletos and Socrates' failed wooing of her (vs. 89-94). The real life Aspasia was for a long time considered to have been a *hetaira*,[123] perhaps in part because she, unlike most Athenian women of the period we know of, was noted for her learning, as in the Suda, where she is described to have been 'powerful with regard to words' (δεινὴ περὶ λόγους, Adler α4202). D'Angour goes far in reestablishing Aspasia's intellectual and social standing and argues that the character Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*, who acts as an instructor in love to the young Socrates, is based upon an actual relationship between Aspasia and Socrates that proved formative for his subsequent philosophical career.[124] Plato may be reluctant to credit Aspasia with philosophical insight, but

[121] Caspers in Harder et al. 2006: 23.
[122] Bing in Rosen and Farrell 1993: 626–27.
[123] Bicknell sees this as a misattribution possibly as a result of anti-Periclean propaganda. He notes how the ancient historian Heracleides Ponticus had labelled Aspasia as an hetaera from Megara whereas all other evidence points to her coming from Miletos and as being the de facto wife of Pericles, Bicknell 1982: 243, n. 30.
[124] D'Angour 2019.

he plays with the notion that Aspasia had acted as a teacher of rhetoric to Socrates (hardly a compliment given Plato's typically negative treatment of the rhetorical teaching of sophists), though not in philosophy, and a lengthy funerary oration supposedly composed by Aspasia makes up the majority of Plato's *Menexenus* (236D - 249C). This may be a reflection of Aspasia's actual rhetorical teaching given that Plato repeatedly attacks the leading teachers of rhetoric in Socrates' lifetime without anyone doubting that these sophists really did act as teachers. However, the *Menexenus* appears to play with the irreality of Aspasia's rhetorical talent, as Socrates' interlocutor Menexenus misogynistically expresses his doubts about whether she, as a woman, really could compose such a speech (249 D), though he is convinced by Socrates' assurances that she was the author. Plato's discussion of women's intellectual parity with men in the *Republic*, and Diotima's privileged position in the *Symposium* make it unlikely that Plato would discredit Aspasia's learning on such grounds, yet he may have had a different agenda in the *Menexenus*. Perhaps it was composed as an attempt to mock political speakers like Pericles by insinuating that Aspasia was the real force behind his oratorical skills? Something similar seems to be echoed in Hermesianax' description of the relationship between Socrates and Aspasia in his catalogue of philosophers:

οἵῳ δ' ἐχλίηνεν ὃν ἔξοχον ἔχρη Ἀπόλλων
ἀνθρώπων εἶναι Σωκράτη ἐν σοφίῃ
Κύπρις μηνίουσα πυρὸς μένει. ἐκ δὲ βαθείης
ψυχῆς κουφοτέρας ἐξεπόνησ' ἀνίας,οἰκί'
ἐς Ἀσπασίης πωλεύμενος· οὐδέ τι τέκμαρ εὗρε,
λόγων πολλὰς εὑρόμενος διόδους.
(Fr. 7.89-94)

And Socrates, whom Apollo called pre-eminent
In wisdom among men: with what strong flames
The angry Cyprian burned him; and his soul,
So deep, withstood a lighter kind of trial,
When visiting Aspasia's; remedy
He found none, though he found mazes of words. (trans. Lightfoot)

In this section Socrates' Socratic way with words plays a leading role. His idiosyncratic ability appears to be the result of visiting Aspasia's house, where he 'found mazes of words' (λόγων πολλὰς εὑρόμενος διόδους, fr. 7, 94). The reference to Aspasia's house, not Pericles', can be seen

to indicate that it was Aspasia herself that was the teacher that taught Socrates his wit, again a possible attack upon Pericles' supposed inferiority in rhetorical ability. Similarly, the 'mazes of words' can also be understood as indicating that Aspasia had been able to outwit the philosopher himself. However, unlike Plato in the *Menexenus*, Hermesianax appears not so much to be ridiculing Aspasia's role as a rhetorical or philosophical instructor as Socrates' unbridled love for her and inability to outsmart her with his words.

In addition to this subcategory of *doctae* women represented by Aspasia, there are a number of examples of women who have inspired poets to compose poems who bear their name. This theme starts with the flute girl Nanno who is pursued by the early elegist Mimnermus (vs. 35-37). Antimachus' Lyde is the next example (vs. 41-46 quoted above), and Antimachus is paired with Mimnermus as a fellow elegist, though this generic scheme is broken towards the end of the poets' catalogue with the teacher of Hermesianax, Philitas, whose elegiac work the *Bittis* is presented within the same tradition of eponymous women. The woman he pursues is described as particularly resistant towards his advances, as is the mythic beloved of Philoxenus who precedes her, Galateia.

Before we finally turn to Orpheus and his beloved, Agriope, it might be useful to summarise the findings thus far. What becomes apparent from analysing the other depictions of women in Hermesianax' catalogue is that a number of the women are characterised as wise or learned and that several give rise to poems carrying their name, but they all share one important aspect: the women invariably appear to resist the advances of their poet/philosopher lovers. Considering this recurring trait, it might be fruitful to think of these women as forerunners of the *puellae* of Latin love elegy, and their relationships with their lovers as evocative of an elegiac-style love relationship. We might therefore look forward to the later genre and see how some of its features might be applicable to Hermesianax' case. In her introduction to the *Cambridge Companion to Latin Love Elegy*, Thorsen notes how heterosexual relationships between poets and female characters typify most of the genre.[125] The recurring futility of the poet-lovers' endeavours is even more universal:

> The contrast between what the Latin elegiac lover longs for (joy, mutual fidelity and love until death) and what he gets (disillusionment) creates the very *raison d'être* of Latin love elegy – as poetry. When the latin elegiac lover does not get what he wants, he writes about it instead.

[125] Thorsen in Thorsen 2013: 3-4.

> The continuous experience of non-fulfilment urges the elegiac lover to vent his frustration in verse, along with repeated attempts at seduction...[126]

If we compare this with Hermesianax' poet/philosopher-lovers it seems to ring true for most of the poets that they compose poetry in frustration at not having their love reciprocated, but even some of the philosophers appear to be driven by their beloved to philosophise – as we saw in the case of Aspasia's possible instruction of Socrates in dialectic (fr. 7, 94). The characteristics of the elegiac *puellae* seems equally relevant. The *puellae* of Latin love elegy are not in general easily identifiable with real-life persons: 'scholarly debate continues over the degree to which the elegiac *puella* is purely *scripta* ('written', cf. Prop. 2.10.8) and the fictitious object of the poet's creation'.[127] The catalogues of Hermesianax blends clearly fictitious *puellae* (such as Penelope and Eoie – who are characters in 'objective' epics) with historical persons like Aspasia. In between these two categories we find the women about whom nothing else is known beyond the fact that they are memorialised through elegiac poems – Nanno, Lyde and Bittis. The possible fictionality of the *puellae* of Latin love elegy is probably the reason why the existence of these latter women has been cast into doubt.[128] What then of the poem's addressee, Leontion? Should her existence be cast into doubt too, or should our scepticism be limited to the reality of her relationship with Hermesianax? Unlike either Nanno, Lyde or Bittis, we know from independent sources that there existed a woman named Leontion who even lived during the same period as Hermesianax. If we assume that she may have been the addressee of Hermesianax, then she might provide valuable additional information about the poem, in particular with regard to its date of composition.

Diogenes Laertius provides examples of the often hostile treatment Leontion was given by critics of her philosophical teacher, Epicurus, and attributes the following slander to a number of Stoic writers:

> ... ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἕνα προαγωγεύειν, καὶ Λεοντίῳ συνεῖναι τῇ ἑταίρᾳ.
>
> (*Diog. Laert.* 10.4.)

... further, that one of his [Epicurus'] brothers was a pander [pimp] and lived with Leontion the courtesan; (trans. Hicks)

[126] Thorsen in Thorsen 2013: 5.
[127] Thorsen in Thorsen 2013: 11.
[128] Asquith in Hunter 2005: 281–85.

Diogenes Laertius also categorises the following statements about Epicurus' correspondence with Leontion as slander, though the quotation he cites from a critic of Epicurus is hardly problematic:

> ... ἔν τε ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς πρὸς μὲν Λεόντιον 'Παιὰν ἄναξ, φίλον Λεοντάριον, οἵου κροτοθορύβου ἡμᾶς ἐνέπλησενἀναγνόντας σου τὸ ἐπιστόλιον'·
>
> (*Diog. Laert.* 10.5)

Also that in his letters he wrote to Leontion, 'O Lord Apollo, my dear little Leontion, with what tumultuous applause we were inspired as we read your letter.' (trans. Hicks)

That Leontion was part of Epicurus' circle is later attested when Diogenes explains that she was a *hetaira* and the παλλακή ('concubine', 10.23) of Epicurus' leading disciple Metrodorus. Leontion is further attested to have had at least one daughter, Danaë, whose father is likely to have been Metrodorus in the absence of any other candidate – Epicurus' will mentions provisions for Metrodorus' children, but only names the son, fittingly named after the master:

> ἐπιμελείσθω<σαν> δὲ καὶ Ἀμυνόμαχος καὶ Τιμοκράτης τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Μητροδώρου Ἐπικούρου καὶ τοῦυἱοῦ τοῦ Πολυαίνου, φιλοσοφούντων αὐτῶν καὶ συζώντων220μεθ' Ἑρμάρχου. ὡσαύτως δὲ τῆς θυγατρὸς τῆςΜητροδώρου τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν ποιείσθωσαν, καὶ εἰς ἡλικίανἐλθοῦσαν ἐκδότωσαν ᾧ ἂν Ἕρμαρχος ἕληται τῶνφιλοσοφούντων μετ' αὐτοῦ, οὔσης αὐτῆς εὐτάκτου καὶπειθαρχούσης Ἑρμάρχῳ.
>
> (*Diog. Laert.* 10.19)

'And let Amynomachus and Timocrates take care of Epicurus, the son of Metrodorus, and of the son of Polyaenus, so long as they study and live with Hermarchus. Let them likewise provide for the maintenance of Metrodorus's daughter, so long as she is well-ordered and obedient to Hermarchus; and, when she comes of age, give her in marriage to a husband selected by Hermarchus from among the members of the School; …' (trans. Hicks)

Though Epicurus' will didn't specify the mother of Metrodorus' children, Leontion is the only woman we know of that Metrodorus had a romantic relationship with. A passage in Athenaeus informs us that Leontion had a daughter who had saved Sophron the governor of Ephesus from a plot against his life because he was her former lover (*Deipnosophistes* 13.593).

If Danae was indeed the daughter of Metrodorus and Leontion she might provide us with a better way of dating Hermesianax' poem. According to Diogenes Laertius, Metrodorus

passed away seven years before Epicurus in c. 278/287 BC (10.23) and at the time of Epicurus' writing his will (some time after the death of Metrodorus), the latter's daughter was not yet of a marriageable age. We can deduce from this that Metrodorus and Leontion are likely to have had children together a few years prior to 278 BC, and that Leontion either had died prior to the writing of Epicurus' will, or she had resumed her trade as a *hetaera* (unless her status as *hetaera* also should be seen as slander), thus rendering her financially independent even if her children were in need of the support of Epicurus' heir as head of the Epicurean school.

If Hermesianax wanted to portray himself in a similar situation to the lovers about whom he writes in the hope that he would succeed in courting his beloved Leontion, it is perhaps likely that he composed his poem either before Leontion became a mother or after she became a widow; though her having children shouldn't be seen as an obstacle to love – as illustrated by Homer's supposed infatuation with Penelope, which would imply an adulterous relationship with a woman who had a grown son. As we saw earlier, if Hermesianax had composed his poem after 280 BC this would go some way in explaining the possible avoidance of the name Eurydice, and if he wrote it a year or two later, then Leontion could have just become a widow and been a more suitable target for his advances. There are in fact no good arguments against the likelihood that Hermesianax addressed his poem to the philosopher Leontion, even if we choose to question the reality of any erotic relationship between the pair. Her position as a woman philosopher would go some way in explaining the inclusion of a catalogue of philosopher-lovers in Hermesianax' poem.

The life of the philosopher Leontion can also serve to strengthen our analysis about the characteristics of the women that appear in Hermesianax' poem. If indeed she was a *hetaera*, this would perhaps make it less likely that she got married, and indeed, none of the other women in the catalogues are explicitly said to have been married to the lovers that pursue them. This seems to be the overriding principle behind their inclusion in the poem. What then of Agriope? Scholars have typically assumed that Agriope was the wife of Orpheus, but this is in fact never made clear by Hermesianax. A possible reason for why he chose to describe her as 'Thracian Agriope' (fr. 7.2) is that this name and demonym provides no information about her married status, which makes her blend in among the other 'proto-*puellae*' of his catalogues of poets and philosophers.

1.6 Orpheus and the ambiguity of the poets' catalogue

We may now turn to Orpheus' role within Hermesianax' poem and see how he fits in with the other poets and philosopher that are included in the two catalogues. Orpheus' story opens the surviving portion of book 3 of the *Leontion* and is the longest of all the sections of the poem:

'Οἴην μὲν φίλος υἱὸς ἀνήγαγεν Οἰάγροιο
Ἀγριόπην Θρῇσσαν στειλάμενος κιθάρῃ
Ἀϊδόθεν· ἔπλευσεν δὲ κακὸν καὶ ἀπειθέα χῶρον
ἔνθα Χάρων ἀκοὴν ἕλκεται εἰς ἄκατον
ψυχὰς οἰχομένων, λίμνην δ' ἐπὶ μακρὸν ἀϋτεῖ,
ῥεῦμα δι' ἐκ μεγάλων ῥυομένη δονάκων.
ἀλλ' ἔτλη παρὰ κῦμα μονόζωστον κιθαρίζων
'Ορφεὺς, παντοίους δ' ἐξανέπεισε θεοὺς
Κωκυτὸν τ' ἀθέμιστον ἐπ' ὀφρύσι μειδήσαντα
ἠδὲ καὶ αἰνοτάτου βλέμμ' ὑπέμεινε κυνὸς,
ἐν πυρὶ μὲν φωνῇ τεθοωμένου, ἐν πυρὶ δ' ὄμμα
σκληρὸν τριστοίχοις δεῖμα φέρων κεφαλαῖς.
ἔνθεν λυδιάων μεγάλους ἀνέπεισεν ἄνακτας
Ἀγριόπην μαλακοῦ πνεῦμα λαβεῖν βιότου.[129]
(Fr. 7.1-14)

Such as Oeagrus' dear son summoned back
From Hades, furnished with his lyre: Agriope
Of Thrace. He sailed to that implacable, harsh place
Where Charon draws into his public craft
Departed souls, and cries across the lake
That pours its stream through beds of lofty reed.
That lone musician Orpheus suffered much
Beside the wave, but won the various gods;
Lawless Cocytus with his menacing scowl
And the dread regard of Cerberus he withstood,
His voice sharpened in fire, in fire his cruel eye,
On triple rank of heads freighted with fear.
With song he won the underworld's great lords,
For Agriope to regain the gentle breath of life. (trans. Lightfoot)

[129] Kobiliri and Hermesianax 1998: 13.

The emphasis of Hermesianax is upon the great sufferings undertaken by Orpheus on his journey to bring back Agriope, which fits well with the overall design of the poem. Some scholars have seen Orpheus' inclusion within the poem as jarring with the plot design of the rest of the catalogues, since upon a simplistic reading it can appear as if Hermesianax depicts Orpheus as succeeding in rescuing his beloved from the Underworld. Heath has argued convincingly that all that Hermesianax has to say on this matter is that Orpheus succeeded in convincing the gods to let him have his beloved back, and therefore doesn't depart from the main ancient tradition which holds that Orpheus ultimately failed. The latter shows how easily other Orpheus narratives could be seen to point to a successful recovery of his beloved if we read their accounts of the initial stages of Orpheus' katabasis free from their context and note that the overriding principle of the *Leontion* is to depict the power of love to cause suffering to all of the exemplary poets and philosophers, and likely also to the characters of the preceding books too.[130] Tueller similarly provides examples of how a refined allusive technique is deployed by Hermesianax to hint at the demise of Orpheus as well as the second loss of Eurydice. He sees links between the opening lines' wording and Orpheus' epitaph (quoted by Alcidamas fr.16.24), which could hint at his demise.[131]

This allusive technique can be described as exploiting allusions to each poet's works in their respective sections, but as we saw earlier, this is not likely to be the case with Orpheus' poetic output. Instead we find allusions to several of the other poets listed in Hermesianax' catalogue. We can identify links with the Homeric *Hymn of Demeter* and with Demeter's loss of Persephone, which parallels the story of Orpheus and Eurydice,[132] as well as with Hesiod's *Work and Days* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*.[133] The opening word of the fragment, οἴην, (v. 1) clearly alludes to Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* (see above). By way of comparison, we might note how Hermesianax' section on Hesiod exclusively uses Hesiodic poems as material for his allusions:

φημὶ δὲ καὶ Βοιωτὸν ἀποπρολιπόντα μέλαθρον
Ἡσίοδον πάσης ἥρανον ἱστορίης,
Ἀσκραίων ἐσικέσθαι ἐρῶνθ' Ἑλικωνίδα κώμην·

[130] Heath 1994: 184–89.
[131] Tueller 2007: 101.
[132] Tueller 2007: 102–3.
[133] The word in question here is the rare μονόζωστον (v. 7), which means both to travel alone, or to be lightly girded. A related term, μονόζωνος finds resonances with the word οἰόζωνος in *Work and Days*, v. 345 and *Oedipus Tyrannus*, v. 846, see Tueller 2007: 104–6.

ἔνθεν ὅ γ' Ἠοίην μνώμενος Ἀσκραϊκὴν
πόλλ' ἔπαθεν, πάσας δὲ λόγων ἀνεγράφατο βίβλους
ὑμνῶν, ἐκ πρώτης παιδὸς ἀνερχόμενος.[134]
Fr. 7.21-26

And I say that even Boeotian Hesiod
Lord of all knowledge, left his home and came,
In love, to Ascra, Heliconian town;
And, wooing Eoie, Ascraean maid,
He suffered much, composed whole catalogues
In homage, with the girl heading the list. (trans. Lightfoot)

Hermesianax here plays with the similarity between the former Hesiodic formula 'ἠ'οΐη' and the name 'Ηοίη 'dawn' – and uses this to conjure up a ficticious love-relationship as the inspiration for Hesiod's own poetry, turning him into what Caspers dubs a 'crypto-lover'.[135] Bing also notes the presence of the obscure word κώμη, previously found in Hesiod.[136]

All of the allusions to poets in the Orpheus-section refer to poets that appear later in the catalogue, e.g. Hesiod, Homer and Sophocles are all included. By linking Orpheus allusively with these other poets who arguably belong to a select group, Hermesianax avoids the difficulties engendered by the uncertain status of Orpheus as mythical, not fully historic poet. At the same time, the allusions to other poets in the Orpheus-narrative welds the figure of Orpheus onto the canon that Hermesianax is establishing through his praise of other poets who in general are described using positive adjectives. This canon can rightly be seen as Callimachean. That is because it includes poets that were seen to foreshadow central aspects of Callimachean poetics: Homer, Hesiod and Philitas. We will later see how reverently Homer was referred to by Callimachus, but Hesiod became nearly as prominent a poetic forebear and ideal within his poetic outlook. Cusset describes the influence of Hesiod upon Callimachus as predicated upon Hesiod's function as a model for 'how to renew poetry [after Homer] without distancing himself from the poetic tradition.'[137] Callimachus alludes to Hesiod several times, both during the famous opening of the *Aetia* fr. 2 Pf., as well as in the *Epigram* to Aratus, *Epigram* 27.1 Pf., to mention a few examples. Philitas' position as pioneer for the novel aesthetic of

[134] Kaibel 1992: 13.71.
[135] Caspers in Harder et al. 2006: 23.
[136] Bing in Rosen and Farrell 1993: 630.
[137] Cusset in Acosta-Hughes et al. 2011: 454.

Callimachus is generally accepted. Heerink e.g. notes that the Callimachean 'ideas about poetry may well go back to Philitas'.[138] Not least, Philitas embodied the novel ideal of a scholar poet, which would lie at the heart of Callimachean poetics – i.e. to show mastery of the poetic tradition even whilst avoiding the pitfalls of overworking old poetic materials. The canon of Hermesianax also includes other poets that were favoured by Hellenistic poets, such as Sappho.[139] Orpheus' position within the canon cannot be considered in quite the same way since his poetry belongs to myth – even though poems written under his name may have influenced Callimachean poets. As such, he could be seen as a marker of the Callimachean avant-garde's adherence to the poetic tradition, which was combined with a desire to renew it.

We are therefore faced with two seemingly incongruous processes that are combined within Hermesianax' poem. On the one hand he can be seen to provide a list of poetic exemplars that are praiseworthy in virtue of their work, but on the other he depicts them all as singularly unsuccessful lovers who suffer greatly. Yet the *Leontion* can hardly be called pathetic or tragic, since Hermesianax's poetic technique manifests itself in erudite allusions to the work of most of the poets, and a playful exploitation of the same poems to parody the Hellenistic *bios*-tradition. The conclusion from this must be that the poetic exemplars of the catalogue are presented in a highly ambiguous manner, and that Orpheus is no different from his peers in this regard. Like the rest he is not successful as a lover, even though his poetic prowess is peerless. We might also choose to see the naming of Agriope as a way for Hermesianax to make Orpheus appear more similar to the other poets and philosopher by making his beloved seem more like a 'proto-*puella*', in many respects foreshadowing the opacity concerning the status of the women in the later genre of Latin love elegy; but the name Eurydice could also be politically problematic at the time of writing. The ambiguity of the poem can be seen to extend to Hermesianax himself given that he undermines the efficacy of any message of love to Leontion by showing that none of his poetic predecessors have succeeded. Even if he acts as a super-poet who controls the poetic tradition by quite literally cataloguing it, Hermesianax runs the risk of ending up just as unsuccessful a lover as the poets that he lists.

1.7 Orpheus as ideal poet in Apollonius' *Argonautica*

In the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius, Orpheus makes no appearance as a lover. However, the special characteristics of this epic poem and Orpheus' position within the work as a partial poetic alter ego makes his love story come into sight in a way that makes it a relevant narrative

[138] Heerink 2015: 9.
[139] Cusset in Acosta-Hughes et al. 2011: 471.

for the present study. This text can in fact act as an example of how the special qualities of Orpheus as a poet's mirror can be exploited even when his love story is pushed underneath the surface. Apollonius introduces Orpheus in the opening portion of a catalogue. In this case it is the catalogue of the Argonauts who participate in Jason's expedition to retrieve the Golden Fleece from the faraway land of Colchis (1.23-27):

Πρῶτά νυν Ὀρφῆος μνησώμεθα, τον ῥά ποτ' αὐτη
Καλλιόπη Θρήικι φατίζεται εὐνηθεῖσα
Οἰάγρῳ σκοπιῆς Πιμπληίδος ἄγχι τεκέσθαι.
αὐτὰρ τόνγ' ἐνέπουσιν ἀτειρέας οὔρεσι πέτρας
θέλξαι ἀοιδάων ἐνοπῇ ποταμῶν τε ῥέεθρα ·
(*Argon.* 1.23-27)

First then let us name Orpheus, whom once Calliope bare, it is said, wedded to Thracian Oeagrus, near the Pimpleian height. Men say that he by the music of his songs charmed the stubborn rocks upon the mountains and the course of rivers. (trans. Seaton)

This opening part of the catalogue section on Orpheus provides a lot of information concerning Orpheus' life, but in the main, the information relates to his magical musicality and, as a consequence, to what kind of role he will play in the expedition. Yet this question is not really given a satisfactory explanation by the narrator beyond the fact that Orpheus' magical powers were recommended by the seer and pedagogue Chiron (v. 1.34). Apollonius' description of Orpheus' background is mainly concerned with genealogy and geography: his parents are given as Calliope and Oiagros, and we are told where he was born (near Pimpleia). More importantly, Orpheus is given pride of place at the head of the catalogue; we cannot know whether this was the case in the fragmentary poems of Hermesianax and Phanocles. Clearly, his role within this epic is singled out to be significant, yet there is no consensus as to precisely what Apollonius may have wished to signal with this choice. A number of different interpretations of what special role is allotted to Orpheus within the *Argonautica* have been suggested, but most seem to link Orpheus with the overall characteristics of the poem, including Apollonius' own poetic *persona*. This can be illustrated by the different approaches of the recent work of Klooster (2011) as well as the more established study by Hunter (1993). In addition to these, it might be fruitful to compare these two with Heerink (2015) whose work on the figure of Hylas in the *Argonautica* can be seen as complementing our understanding of Orpheus' role. What is missing from these

approaches is a reevaluation of how Orpheus' role must be understood also in relation to Apollonius' special emphasis upon love as a theme within his poem.

Klooster is mainly interested in the religious background of the *Argonautica* as well as Orpheus' performances, which she sees as key to understanding Orpheus' position within the work. As the son of Calliope, the muse of epic, Orpheus mirrors the close connection between Muses and poets which had become a feature of poetry since at least Homer and Hesiod. Apollonius' contemporary Callimachus was especially vocal about his connection with the Muses, to the extent that it can be argued that they function as additional markers for Callimachean poetics. According to Klooster, there exists a similarly close relationship in the *Argonautica* with a divine poetic authority and the author, but there it is the relationship between Apollonius as narrator and Apollo, whom Apollonius associates with his story at the opening of the epic:

> ἀρχόμενος σέο, Φοῖβε, παλαιγενέων κλέα φωτῶν
> μνήσομαι…
>
> (*Argon.* 1.1-2.)

Beginning with thee, O Phoebus, I will recount the famous deeds of men of old ... (trans. Seaton)

Orpheus appears several times during the narrative of the *Argonautica*, but never in the capacity of more typical hero-figures, e.g. he never displays any of the violent actions and feats of strength associated with Heracles. His role is above all that of singer and Klooster provides a summary of his musical appearances within the epic and attempts to categorise each song according to its content or genre:

> a) 1.494-515: cosmogony/divine succession song
> b) 1.540: rowing song
> c) 1.569-572: song for Artemis
> d) 2.161-162: song to honour the victory of Polydeuces over Amycus
> e) 2.685-693: song for Apollo
> f) 4.902-909: song against the Sirens
> g) 4.1158-1160 and 1193-1196: songs for the wedding of Jason and Medea.[140]

[140] Klooster 2011: 83.

As we can see from Klooster's track list, Orpheus appears in some roles that are more typical of epic, i.e. he sings victory songs (d), he overcomes fabulous monsters (the Sirens) in song (f), but he also sings songs with a content that seems to fit less comfortably our expectations of an epic hero in the conventional sense. Of particular note are the longest songs, the cosmogonical song (a) and the song for Apollo (e). The latter song is significant inasmuch as it is immediately followed by another song by Orpheus in the form of a miniature hymn to Apollo (2.703-713). This latter hymn and the cosmogonical song (a) are singled out by scholars as crucial to the overall interpretation of Orpheus' role within Apollonius' epic.[141]

The cosmogonical song in book 1 is Orpheus' first appearance after his introduction in the catalogue of heroes. This section comes after the quarrelsome and blasphemous Argonaut Idas has picked a fight with Jason during the departure banquet of the Argonauts at Pagasae. This quarrel is resolved not by the seer Idmon, who tries to intervene, but by Orpheus' agency, in a passage that has been seen as central to the overall themes of Apollonius' epic.[142] Orpheus calms the spite of Idas by singing a song of cosmological flux and power transfers, ending with a prolepsis of Zeus' subsequent rise to Olympus and his powers of retribution (1.492-511):

Χώετ'ἐνιπτάζων· προτέρω δέ κε νεῖκος ἐτύχθη,
εἰ μὴ δηριόωντας ὁμοκλήσαντες ἑταῖροι
αὐτός τ' Αἰσονίδης κατερήτυεν † ἂν δὲ καὶ † Ὀρφεύς,
λαιῇ ἀνασχόμενος κίθαριν, πείραζεν ἀοιδῆς.
Ἤειδεν δ' ὡς γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἠδὲ θάλασσα,
τὸ πρὶν ἔτ' ἀλλήλοισι μιῇ συναρηρότα μορφῇ,
νείκεος ἐξ ὀλοοῖο διέκριθεν ἀμφὶς ἕκαστα·
ἠδ' ὡς ἔμπεδον αἰὲν ἐν αἰθέρι τέκμαρ ἔχουσιν
ἄστρα, σεληναίης τε καὶ ἠελίοιο κέλευθοι·
οὔρεά θ' ὡς ἀνέτειλε, καὶ ὡς ποταμοὶ κελάδοντες
αὐτῇσιν νύμφῃσι καὶ ἑρπετὰ πάντ' ἐγένοντο.
ἤειδεν δ' ὡς πρῶτον Ὀφίων Εὐρυνόμη τε
Ὠκεανὶς νιφόεντος ἔχον κράτος Οὐλύμποιο·
ὥς τε βίῃ καὶ χερσὶν ὁ μὲν Κρόνῳ εἴκάθε τιμῆς,
ἡ δὲ Ῥέῃ, ἔπεσον δ' ἐνὶ κύμασιν Ὠκεανοῖο·
οἱ δὲ τέως μακάρεσσι θεοῖς Τιτῆσιν ἄνασσον,
ὄφρα Ζεὺς ἔτι κοῦρος, ἔτι φρεσὶ νήπια εἰδώς,

[141] Clare calls the former song' ... perhaps the single most significant passage in the entire poem', see Clare 2009: 53.
[142] Clare 2009: 53.

Δικταῖον ναίεσκεν ὑπὸ σπέος, οἱ δέ μιν οὔπω
γηγενέες Κύκλωπες ἐκαρτύναντο κεραυνῷ,
βροντῇ τε στεροπῇ τε· τὰ γὰρ Διὶ κῦδος ὀπάζει.
(*Argon.* 1.492-511)

Thus in wrath Idas reviled him, and the strife would have gone further had not their comrades and Aeson's son himself with indignant cry restrained the contending chiefs; and Orpheus lifted his lyre in his left hand and made essay to sing. He sang how the earth, the heaven and the sea, once mingled together in one form, after deadly strife were separated each from other; and how the stars and the moon and the paths of the sun ever keep their fixed place in the sky; and how the mountains rose, and how the resounding rivers with their nymphs came into being and all creeping things. And he sang how first of all Orphion and Eurynome, daughter of Ocean, held the sway of snowy Olympus, and how through strength of arm one yielded his prerogative to Cronos and the other to Rhea, and how they fell into the waves of Ocean; but the other two meanwhile ruled over the blessed Titan-gods, while Zeus, still a child and with the thoughts of a child, dwelt in the Dictaean cave; and the earthborn Cyclopes had not yet armed him with the bolt, with thunder and lightning; for these things give renown to Zeus. (trans. Seaton)

Hunter has shown how the narrative strategy of this song is characterised by the use of indirect statements in a highly repetitive and restrained manner ('he sang of … and of how … and of how etc.'):

> This form is not merely a marker of didactic style, but also stresses the poet's control of Orpheus' songs: Orpheus can only utter through our poet.[143]

Orpheus' position as internal narrator is therefore impinged upon by Apollonius' poetic *persona*, which can even be found to merge with Orpheus' narration in at least two passages of the poem. The first such passage consists of the final six verses of the cosmogonical song, 1.506-511. These lines are devoid of the formulaic introduction of a new topic, ὥς τε ('and how'), which last appeared at line 1.505. The seemingly constant emphasis that the song is narrated by Orpheus thus comes to a halt, and:

[143] Hunter 1993: 148.

> ... our uncertainty as to whether the words are those of Orpheus or of the poet increases; the mingling of voices, our uncertainty as to 'who speaks', is crucial. Orpheus and the poet have become one.[144]

It seems clear that Apollonius' and Orpheus' shared roles as narrators not only mirror each other, but can overlap. This makes it possible to view Orpheus' role in the epic as in part predicated upon Apollonius' fashioning of his poetic *persona*.

The narrative mirroring between author and character can also be seen in the catalogue entry about Orpheus. After the section devoted to Orpheus' genealogy and place of birth, we find a description of how Orpheus herded trees with his song and relocated them in an orderly fashion far from their original position (*Argon.* 1.28-34):

> φηγοὶ δ' ἀγριάδες κείνης ἔτι σήματα μολπῆς
> ἀκτῇ Θρηικίῃ Ζώνης ἔπι τηλεθόωσαι
> ἑξείης στιχόωσιν ἐπήτριμοι, ἅς ὅγ' ἐπιπρό
> θελγομένας φόρμιγγι κατήγαγε Πιερίηθεν.
> Ὀρφέα μὲν δὴ τοῖον ἑὼν ἐπαρωγὸν ἀέθλων
> Αἰσονίδης Χείρωνος ἐφημοσύνῃσι πιθήσας
> δέξατο, Πιερίῃ Βιστωνίδι κοιρανέοντα ·

And the wild oak-trees to this day, tokens of that magic strain, that grow at Zone on the Thracian shore, stand in ordered ranks close together, the same which under the charm of his lyre he led down from Pieria. Such then was Orpheus whom Aeson's son welcomed to share his toils, in obedience to the behest of Cheiron, Orpheus ruler of Bistonian Pieria. (trans. Seaton)

Klooster is interested in the metapoetical function of these trees, which she sees as an expression of Orpheus' ability to instill order:

> Orpheus here functions as a metaphor for the poet's or (narrator's) ordering of traditional stories (cf. ἐνέπουσιν [v. 26 quoted above]) to establish a unified, orderly narrative about the Argonauts, «proof» of which is then provided by the (still visible) traces left in the Argo's wake, the many *aetia* related throughout Apollonius' narrative...[145]

[144] Hunter 1993: 149.
[145] Klooster 2011: 77.

If we return to song (a), it is possible to see how this highlights another aspect of Apollonius' epic – its interaction with its main model text (the *Odyssey*), which further can strengthen this view of Orpheus' self-referential role. Orpheus' song (a) can be shown to share a number of parallels with the songs of Demodocus in *Od.* 8. Demodocus was a bard who lived at the court of the Phaeacians, and was characterised by blindness. This alone was enough for ancient commentators to see him as paralleling the supposedly blind poet Homer himself.[146] Whilst it is more than likely that the similarity between author and character were inferred only by later biographers desperately trying to find anything reminiscent of autobiographical details in the Homeric corpus, i.e. that Homer's supposed blindness was inferred from Demodocus' and not attested independently, it nevertheless would have played an important role in the later reception of Homer. Hägg casts doubt on just how important the tradition of Homeric blindness really was for later readership. Notably, the important Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer* (in its current form c. 1 century AD) lets this important detail disappear from view in many episodes;[147] however, the topos seems to be at least as old as the *Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo*, whose author presents himself as blind.[148] Demodocus is therefore a good model for what later readers (such as Apollonius), if not the author himself, would see as an instance of poetic self-reflection, and particularly, because of his positive presentation in the *Odyssey*, he is representative of a kind of indirect self-praise by the poet. It might therefore be helpful to compare Orpheus' depiction in the *Argonautica* with the way that Demodocus is presented by Homer.

In the *Odyssey*, Demodocus sings three songs, one about Ares and Aphrodite, which is evoked in Orpheus' song (a) through their shared cosmological theme; a second song about the fall of Troy, which has a quite similar narrative structure to the repeated markers of indirect speech in song (a), and a final song about Odysseus' quarrel with Achilles, which parallels the performative context of song (a) which is sung in order to end another quarrel between heroes.[149] Hunter sees Demodocus' songs as models for Apollonius' play with indirect discourse and internal narrators in order to blur the lines of the narrative setting. This further aligns Orpheus with Apollonius as metapoetical marker of self-reflection:

[146] Lefkowitz 2012: 15.
[147] Hägg and Harrison 2012: 138.
[148] Lefkowitz 2012: 16.
[149] Hunter 1993: 149–50.

> Such a tour de force of Homeric allusion and conflation makes very strong the identification between Apollonius and the 'ideal poet', whether this be Orpheus or Demodocus.[150]

Demodocus is given the highest of praise by the Phaeacian king Alcinous, by Odysseus himself as well as by the poem's narrator. Alcinous includes Demodocus' performance as the highlight of a feast in Odysseus' honour, when he bids his men summon the bard to the palace (*Od.* 8.43-45):

' ... καλέσασθε δὲ θεῖον ἀοιδὸν
Δημόδοκον: τῷ γάρ ῥα θεὸς πέρι δῶκεν ἀοιδὴν
τέρπειν, ὅππῃ θυμὸς ἐποτρύνῃσιν ἀείδειν.'

And summon the divine minstrel, Demodocus; for to him above all others has the god granted skill in song, to give delight in whatever way his spirit prompts him to sing. (trans. Murray)

These three lines display a special choice of wordplay with two groups of related nouns divided equally across the three lines. The first group comprises the related adjective θεῖος – godlike, and the noun θεός – god, as well as the similar- sounding θυμός, whilst the second consists of words related to singing: ἀοιδός - singer, ἀοιδής – singing, and ἀείδειν – to sing, which punctuate each line. These stylish lines can be said to underpin the privileged position of Demodocus. In a later passage, Demodocus is fetched by one of the king's heralds, who leads him by the hand to the palace, since he is blind, and the herald shows him the greatest respect (8.62-70):

'κῆρυξ δ' ἐγγύθεν ἦλθεν ἄγων ἐρίηρον ἀοιδόν,
τὸν πέρι μοῦσ' ἐφίλησε, δίδου δ'ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε:
ὀφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμερσε, δίδου δ' ἡδεῖαν ἀοιδήν.
τῷ δ' ἄρα Ποντόνοος θῆκε θρόνον ἀγρυρόηλον
μέσσῳ δαιτυμόνων, πρὸς κίονα μακρὸν ἐρείσας:
κὰδ δ' ἐκ πασσαλόφι κρέμασεν φόρμιγγα λίγειαν
αὐτοῦ ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς καὶ ἐπέφραδε χερσὶν ἑλέσθαι
κῆρυξ: πὰρ δ' ἐτίθει κάνεον καλήν τε τράπεζαν,
πὰρ δὲ δέπας οἴνοιο, πιεῖν ὅτε θυμὸς ἀνώγοι.'

[150] Hunter 1993: 150.

Then the herald approached leading the good minstrel, whom the Muse loved above all other men, and gave him both good and evil; of his sight she deprived him, but gave him the gift of sweet song. For him, Pontonous, the herald, set a silver-studded chair in the midst of the banqueters, leaning it against a tall pillar, and he hung the clear-toned lyre from a peg close above his head, and showed him how to reach it with his hands. And beside him he placed a basket and a beautiful table, and a cup of wine, to drink when his heart should bid him. (trans. Murray)

It is noteworthy that Demodocus is the last to be introduced to the feast, i.e. the guests have to wait to eat until he has sat down, just as he is given pride of place as the final element of the feast to be listed by Alcinous at the opening of the book.

If we return to Orpheus in the *Argonautica*, we find that he is given an equally privileged position within the epic. In fact, it might be argued that Orpheus, a semi-divine hero, is presented as an even more dignified character than the blind human Demodocus. For starters, when Jason and Medea are married, the ceremony takes place among the Phaeacians, and it is Orpheus who entertains with his music (twice, at 4.1158-1160 and 4.1193-1195). Orpheus not only sings to entertain, but as we saw in the case of song (a), he uses his music to quell discord, and even to overcome the monstrous obstacle of passing near the island of the Sirens (4.902-909). As noted, Orpheus was given pride of place at the head of the catalogue of heroes (πρῶτά νυν Ὀρφῆος μνησώμεθα, 'First then let us name Orpheus', *Argon.* 1.23). In addition to this, Orpheus is associated with the central deity of the poem, Apollo, whom we earlier saw that he sang to at *Argon*. 2.687-693. This elevates Orpheus' standing among the minor characters and makes him similar to Jason.

Heerink notes the strong links between Jason, Apollonius and Apollo, 'the patron of both Jason and the poet'.[151] These shared links with Apollo are used by Heerink as an argument in favour of Apollonius' adherence to Callimachean poetic ideals, since he sees Apollo as equally important within the poetic self-representation of Callimachus and Apollonius:

> There are good reasons to suppose that Apollonius' patron god [Apollo] has a metapoetical role in the *Argonautica* similar to the one he has in Callimachus.[152]

Heerink's main argument for this is the prominent role of Apollo in the programmatic passages of *Aetia* fr. 1.21-28 Harder and the *Hymn to Apollo* (105-112). In addition to the importance of

[151] Heerink 2015: 30.
[152] Heerink 2015: 31.

Apollo for both poets, Heerink sees Apollonius' attitude to Homeric epic as highly Callimachean:

> ... scholars have shown that Apollonius' *Argonautica* reveals an attitude that resembles Callimachus's with regard to Homer and heroic-epic poetry in several ways. Apollonius, for instance, does not renounce the works of Homer, which are obviously an important model for the *Argonautica*, but the epic is strikingly unheroic.[153]

According to Klooster's analysis, Orpheus is similarly characterised within the *Argonautica* by his close connection with Apollo:

> Significantly, in half of the occasions, the god to whom tribute is paid on the instigations of Orpheus is *Apollo*. For him Orpheus founds an altar at Thynia (2.685-693) and on different occasion he dedicates his lyre and tripod to him (2.928-929, 4.1547-1459 resp.). Throughout, Apollo clearly is the most important god to the expedition in the perception of Orpheus.[154]

She argues that the inclusion in the epic of hymnic elements such as Orpheus' song (e), which is addressed to Apollo, connects Apollonius' song with the Orphic hymns.[155] This adds to the already strong connections between Orpheus and Apollonius which could be seen in the narrative 'mixing' in Orpheus' song (a). There is indeed a strong hymnic flavour that pervades the *Argonautica*, which according to Klooster can be explained by imagining that Apollonius:

> ... wished to return to what he apparently perceived as Orpheus' preferred genre, the songs of praise for the divine and for heroes, hymn. Thus, with the form of the *Argonautica* and his representation of Orpheus, Apollonius points back to the beginnings and original function of poetry: religious song that brings order and harmony to the world.[156]

In addition to this solemnising of Orpheus' role, his overall dignified representation within the epic rests upon the fact that Apollonius avoids all mention of Orpheus' love life. All we are told about his background is his semi-divine parentage, his ability to use his music to control trees,

[153] Heerink 2015: 32.
[154] Klooster 2011: 87.
[155] Klooster 2011: 90.
[156] Klooster 2011: 91.

and Chiron's prophecy that he will help the Argonauts overcome the Sirens. There is no mention of a relationship between Orpheus and Eurydice, or with anyone else for that matter.

1.8 Hints at Orpheus' love story in the *Argonautica*

Even if the love story of Orpheus is avoided on the surface of the text, it can be seen to be present in a different way as part of the poem's engagement with previous texts, appearing, so to speak, as an element of its narrative or poetic horizon. We have seen several examples of how the *Argonautica* engages with the poetic tradition, in particular its close intertextual relationship with the *Odyssey*. This relationship can be seen to point backwards to an earlier point in time in terms of the poems' relative dates of composition, but at the same time it anticipates its plot in virtue of being set in an earlier past a full generation earlier than the Homeric epic. In a similar way we may think of how the *Argonautica* likely engages with preceding poetic narratives about Orpheus' love story, though we lack more than fragmentary evidence of such texts prior to the Hellenistic age. What we do have is the example of Hermesianax, who we saw was likely to have composed his Orpheus-narrative before Apollonius. In this way it is possible to think of Apollonius actively placing his version of Orpheus at a different stage of his heroic career than e.g. to the one we saw in Hermesianax' *Leontion* (the *katabasis*).

The tight limitation of the timeframe of the *Argonautica* can be said to create an especially heightened set of tensions between what a contemporary reader would know would happen to the poem's cast after the epic has ended with the Argonauts returning to their point of departure. Notably, the main protagonist Jason and his relationship with Medea has a famously tragic aftermath as she in most versions of their story would end up killing her children to avenge herself upon Jason casting her aside for another woman. As Hunter notes with regards to Medea's associations with magic: 'In the future – which is both known and unknown – lies Euripides' *Medea*, in which the Colchian princess will use her powerful drugs to exact revenge…'.[157] It is similarly likely that an ideal contemporary reader would know of the love story of Orpheus, if not through Hermesianax then through earlier lost poets. As previously noted, Orpheus is made to play an important role at the wedding of Jason and Medea. As the wedding begins with the couple's entrance into a cave that acts as bridal chamber, Orpheus's musical role is singled out among the Argonauts, and later again as the wedding ceremony draws to a conclusion:

[157] Hunter 1993: 59.

… οἱ δ’ ἐνὶ χερσὶν
Δούρατα νωμήσαντες, ἀρήια, μὴ πρὶν ἐς ἀλκὴν
Δυσμενέων ἀίδηλος ἐπιβρίσειεν ὅμιλος,
Κράατα δ’ εὐφύλλοις ἐστεμμένοι ἀκρεμόνεσσιν,
ἐμμελέως, Ὀρφῆος ὑπαὶ λίγα φορμίζοντος
νυμφιδίαις ὑμέναιον ἐπὶ προμολῇσιν ἄειδον.
(*Argon*. 4.1155-1160)

... ἐν δε σφισιν Οἰάγροιο
υἱὸν ὑπαὶ φόρμιγγος ἐυκρέκτου καὶ ἀοιδῆς
ταφρέα σιγαλόεντι πέδον κροτέοντα πεδίλῳ.
(*Argon*. 4.1193-1195)

And the heroes in their hands wielded their spears for war, lest first a host of foes should burst upon them for battle unawares, and, their heads enwreathed with leafy sprays, all in harmony, while Orpheus' harp rang clear, sang the marriage song at the entrance to the bridal chamber … and among them the son of Oeagrus, oft beating the ground with gleaming sandal, to the time of his loud-ringing lyre and song. (trans. Seaton)

It may be possible to see the emphasis upon Orpheus' music and dance as part of Medea and Jason's wedding as a way for Apollonius to play with his readers' knowledge not only about the tragic future of the hastily married couple, but also of the one figure who is singled out among the Argonauts in relation to their wedding. The tragedy of Orpheus' loss of Eurydice may not be perfectly parallel to Jason and Medea's fate, but it shares with it the theme of love ending in tragedy and can add to our anticipation of the impending doom that looms over their married life.

The detail of Orpheus stamping on the ground with his sandal can be seen as a further indication that his appearance draws attention to future events as this looks back to the oracle heard by King Pelias at the opening of the epic about a man with a single sandal (Jason) who would become the cause of his downfall (*Argon*.1.5-7). We have earlier seen how Orpheus' first song (*Argon*.1.492-511) ended with Zeus' powers of retribution. This is necessarily linked with the preceding context of the row between Idmon and Idas and 'in telling of the origins of the present Olympian order Orpheus foreshadows the inevitable retribution which one day will fall upon the blasphemous Idas.'[158] This use of Orpheus to foreshadow a later mythic event is

[158] Hunter 1993: 177.

perhaps revisited when Orpheus' sandal subtily hints at Jason's own impending doom, thereby creating a ring composition where Jason goes from being the hero who will bring down a king at the opening of the poem to becoming a king who himself in turn will suffer (after all, Jason marries a princess, thereby taking a big step towards becoming a king).

There is another way in which it is possible to trace hints at Orpheus' love story within the *Argonautica*. We have seen several examples of how scholars have drawn attention to links between Orpheus and the poetic *persona* of Apollonius. These have mainly been predicated upon relatively clear equivalences and overlaps between their respective roles within the poem (as representatives of the hymnic characteristic of epic poetry blurring the lines between narrator and internal narrator and as sharing a connection with Apollo and other features associated with the new 'Callimachean' poetics etc.), yet there may also be an implicit linking between Apollonius' narration of an erotically themed epic and the erotic side of Orpheus, even if this is not explicitly included within the poem's scope. By seeing Orpheus as a parallel for Apollonius in other respects, any characteristics that Apollonius attaches to his own poetic *persona* may in turn colour the way that we think of Orpheus. Perhaps the best place to see the special emphasis Apollonius puts upon erotic themes within his take on the epic genre is the opening of book 3:

Εἰ δ' ἄγε, νῦν, Ἐρατώ, παρά θ' ἵστασο, και μοι ἔνισπε,
ἔνθεν ὅπως, ἐς Ἰωλκὸν ἀνήγαγε κῶας Ἰήσων
Μηδείης ὑπ' ἔρωτι. σὺ γὰρ καὶ Κύπριδος αἶσαν
ἔμμορες, ἀδμῆτας δὲ τεοῖς μελεδήμασι θέλγεις
παρθενικάς• τῷ και τοι ἐπήρατον οὔνομ' ἀνῆπται.
(*Argon.*3.1-5)

Come now, Erato, stand by my side, and say next how Jason brought back the fleece to Iolcus aided by the love of Medea. For thou sharest the power of Cypris, and by the love-cares dost charm unwedded maidens; wherefore to thee too is attached a name that tells of love. (trans. Seaton)

This second invocation by Apollonius' poetic *persona* of a divine guarantor at the midpoint of the narrative has been seen to signal that love will become the main theme of the remaining section of the poem.[159] The Muse Erato is chosen from among her sisters because of her specific connections with love, as her very name is connected with *eros*.[160] Her presence is needed due to her erotic powers over young girls, applicable to the young Medea whose love story with

[159] Morrison 2007: 299.
[160] Hunter 1993: 180.

Jason will form a major part of the remaining plot of Books 3 and 4 of the *Argonautica*. At the opening of Book 4, a Muse is also evoked (Erato again?), but there, in a Homeric fashion, she is asked to provide her own narrative, ἔννεπε (*Argon.*4.2, 'tell'), recounting the mental state of Medea as she struggles with her internal conflict between love for her family and love for Jason. In the opening of Book 3, Apollonius merely asked the Muse to provide assistance by standing next to him, like some narrative driving instructor with an extra set of wheels. This has been seen by Morrison as a way to signal a crisis in Apollonius' confidence as narrator:

> The narrator of the *Argonautica* began with unprecedented confidence, declaring his autonomy from the Muses, but by book 4 was reduced to complete obedience to the Muses, even attempting to hand over his narration to them.'[161]

It is interesting to notice that this apparent mistrust in his own skills as narrator is linked with those parts of the epic that deal in greater detail with love and in particular with the psychology of someone, Medea, who is in love and is spurred on to do terrible things (like murdering her brother). By avoiding explicitly treating the love story of Orpheus, Apollonius may be said to continue to play with his supposed inability to treat such themes on his own. Just like Apollonius as narrator, Orpheus too can be said to have struggled with love, though in a different way, i.e. not in the telling of love, but in coming to terms with loss of a beloved and in controlling his love during his *katabasis* (as we shall see in later narratives such as Virgil's in the *Georgics*, see chapter 3). The importance of erotic themes for the *Argonautica* in this way leaves an imprint upon the character of Orpheus as his story can be seen to mirror the erotic lack of expertise displayed by Apollonius' poetic *persona*. The very presence of these erotic themes also reminds us as readers that a character such as Orpheus also may have an erotic side to their story, even if his lies outside the timeframe of the *Argonautica* itself.

To summarise, Orpheus' function within the *Argonautica* can be described as what Fantuzzi and Hunter have dubbed a 'poet-guarantor' who can strengthen the credentials of poets.[162] By including him within a poetic catalogue, a poet can draw attention to the poetic tradition he or she is writing in, and by presenting Orpheus in an idealized manner, the credentials of the successor poet (the author) are in turn strengthened through being linked with the mythic superbard. Against this elevated representation of Orpheus, we nevertheless find traces and hints at his love story that lies outside of the *Argonautica's* plot, but inside the poem's

[161] Morrison 2007: 306.
[162] Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004: 3.

poetic horizon. As we shall see in the case of Phanocles, added emphasis upon Orpheus' love makes the metapoetic function of Orpheus within catalogues less straightforwardly idealised and further destabilises his role as a model poet.

1.9 The failures of Orpheus in Phanocles' *Loves or Beautiful Boys*

As befits a different genre, Phanocles' elegiac work *Loves or Beautiful Boys* tells a very different story about Orpheus from the one we saw in the *Argonautica*. This narrative is the earliest to clearly encompass all three of the constitutive elements of the myth of Orpheus (as interpreted by Segal): art, death, and love.[163] As such, the narrative of Phanocles can illustrate how the themes of both death and of love can destabilise the image of Orpheus as a positive metapoetical representative. The failures of Orpheus as lover complement the failure of Orpheus in warding off his own death, but his failure in the realm of love can also be seen in his role as erotodidact for the men of Thrace in that he teaches them to be exclusively pederastic, which if followed to the letter would risk the downfall of Thracian society, not to mention rejecting the women of Thrace who unsurprisingly turn tragically against him. By doing this, his teachings become unbalanced and potentially subversive. I shall here try illustrate all three of these failures of Orpheus and how they create ambiguities for his role as ideal poet.

Phanocles' Orpheus-narrative has been seen as an analogy for the story of Hylas and Heracles in Apollonius' *Argonautica*.[164] It is likely to have been composed nearly contemporaneously with Apollonius' *Argonautica* given that it includes a number of likely intertextual allusions to the former work which equally may have run in the other direction with Apollonius alluding to Phanocles. Marcovich notes several instances of clear borrowings in his apparatus to the text – such as the way that the opening line of *Loves* is highly similar to line 4.905 of the *Argonautica*: 'εἰ μὴ ἄρ' Οἰάγροιο πάϊς, θρηΐκιος 'Ορφεύς' - *If not then the son of Oeagrus, Thracian Orpheus*; [165] and similarly, the way that the weapons of the Bistonian women are referred as 'keen-edged swords' (a wording also found at *Argon.* 2.101).[166] These verbal echoes can indicate a close connection between the two authors, and may well function in a capacity similar to the role of verbal echoes between the poems of Apollonius, Theocritus and Aratus, as argued by Leutsch, who places Phanocles firmly within the Alexandrian poetical milieu.[167] In addition

[163] Segal 1993: 2. Hermesianax' narrative deals with Orpheus' *katabasis*, but not with his death, nor does it inform us about Agriope/Eurydice's second death.
[164] Stern 1979: 136.
[165] Marcovich 1979: 360.
[166] Marcovich 1979: 361.
[167] Leutsch 1857.

to being an 'Alexandrian' text, the *Loves* is often considered within the context of such works as the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* and Hermesianax' *Leontion*.[168] Phanocles' *Loves* and Hermesianax' *Leontion* both belong to a category of poetry that has been referred to by a number of different terms: Cameron (1995) labeled it 'Hesiodic elegy',[169] whilst Cairns (1979) less succinctly spoke of 'objective narrative Hellenistic elegies with subjective framing passages'.[170] There is however a greater consensus between scholars as to what these terms entail. 'Catalogue elegy' is a subgenre of elegy that seems to have appeared as a development of the archaic narrative elegies of Mimnermus, as well as of the genealogical catalogues of Homer ('the ship-catalogue' of *Iliad* 2.494-759) and above all those attributed to Hesiod (e.g. the *Catalogue of Women*). Its invention is sometimes credited to the classical poet Antimachus of Colophon,[171] and less securely to Mimnermus.[172] Hunter notes the possible links between Hesiodic catalogue and Colophonian elegy:

> ' ... Hermesianax and Antimachus were both from, and Mimnermus at least associated with Colophon. This elegiac form [catalogue elegy] is then often represented as a kind of cross between the tradition of Colophonian 'personal' elegy and 'Hesiodic' catalogue poetry.[173]

However, he goes on to show that these poems, exemplified by Hermesianax and Phanocles, make use of a very simplified conception of the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* as generic framework, significantly visible in their repetition of the Hesiodic *ehoie*-formula ('or such a woman as') which appeared to have been frequently used in the *Catalogue of Women*,[174] and that the impersonal narrative mode of the latter poem was more easily adapted to the Hellenistic epic of Apollonius.[175] Regardless of whether the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* should be seen as the main model for the poems of Phanocles or Hermesianax, the latter two poems certainly share many important features. Whereas Hermesianax' poem was organised around heterosexual love stories, Phanocles' poem recounted a number of pederastic love stories, apparently in an attempt to provide a novel approach to the format of catalogue elegy. Out of

[168] Stern 1979: 135.
[169] Cameron 1995: 362-386.
[170] Cairns 1979: 214-230.
[171] Matthews follows Heinze (1919), Luck (1959), Vessey (1971) and West (1974) in favour of Antimachus, see Matthews 1996.
[172] Cameron cites West 1974 who suggested that Antimachus edited Mimnermus elegies to give prominence to Nanno, Cameron, 1995: 312.
[173] Hunter in Hunter 2005: 262.
[174] Hunter in Hunter 2005: 262; Asquith in Hunter 2005: 272–76.
[175] Hunter in Hunter 2005: 244.

its many pederastic narratives, we have preserved only the fragment that is devoted to Orpheus, Phanocles *fr. 1* (Powell=Stobaeus, Eclogae 20.2.47, IV 461-2 Hense). This fragment is arguably a complete section of Phanocles' catalogue since it opens with a variation of the Hesiodic *ehoie*-formula and ends with the death of Orpheus and the aftermath of this event[176]:

ἢ ὡς Οἰάγροιο, πάϊς Θρηίκιος Ὀρφεὺς,
ἐκ θυμοῦ Κάλαϊν στέρζε Βορηϊάδην,
πολλάκι δὲ σκιεροῖσιν ἐν ἄλσεσιν ἕζετ' ἀείδων
ὃν πόθον, οὐδ' ἦν οἱ θυμὸς ἐν ἡσυχίηι,
ἀλλ' αἰεί μιν ἄγρυπνοι ὑπὸ ψυχῆι μελεδῶναι
ἔτρυχον, θαλερὸν δερκομένου Κάλαϊν.
τὸν μὲν Βιστονίδες κακομήχανοι ἀμφιχυθεῖσαι
ἔκτανον, εὐήκη φάσγανα θηξάμεναι,
οὕνεκα πρῶτος ἔδειζεν ἐνὶ Θρῄκεσσιν ἔρωτας
ἄρρενας, οὐδὲ πόθους ἧινεσε θηλυτέρων.[177]
τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ μὲν κεφαλὴν χαλκῶι τάμον, αὐτίκα δ' ὑπῆν.
εἰς ἅλα Θρηϊκίην ῥῖφαν ὁμοῦ χέλυϊ
ἥλῳ καρτύνασαι, ἵν' ἐμφορέοιντο θαλάσσηι
ἄμφω ἅμα, γλαυκοῖς τεγγόμεναι ῥοθίοις.[178]
τὰς δ' ἱερῆι Λέσβωι πολιὴ ἐπέκελσε θάλασσα·
ἠχὶ δ' ὣς λιγυρῆς πόντον ἐπέσχε λύρης,[179]
νήσους τ' αἰγιαλούς θ' ἁλιμυρέας, ἔνθα λίγειαν
ἀνέρες Ὀρφείην ἐκτέρισαν κεφαλήν,
ἐν δὲ χέλυν τύμβωι λιγυρὴν θέσαν, ἣ καὶ ἀναύδους
πέτρας καὶ Φόρκου στυγνὸν ἔπειθεν ὕδωρ.
ἐκ κείνου μολπαί τε καὶ ἱμερτὴ κιθαριστὺς
νῆσον ἔχει, πασέων δ' ἐστὶν ἀοιδοτάτη.[180]
Θρῇκες δ' ὡς ἐδάησαν ἀρήιοι ἔργα γυναικῶν
ἄγρια καὶ πάντας δεινὸν ἐσῆλθεν ἄχος,
ἃς ἀλόχους ἔστιζον, ἵν' ἐν χροῒ σήματ' ἔχουσαι
κυάνεα στυγεροῦ μὴ λελάθοιντο φόνου·

[176] Most scholars interpret the fragment as an integral section of the catalogue, see e.g. Stern 1979: 135.
[177] Bernabé Pajares 2005: 459-60, 1004 T(T 77 + 116K.)
[178] Bernabé Pajares 2005: 485, 1038 T (T 77 K.)
[179] Bernabé deletes a lacuna postulated by Dawe between line 15 and 16, see Bernabé Pajares 2005: 493.
[180] Bernabé Pajares 2005: 493, 1054 T (T 77 + 128 + 131 + 132 + 133 K.)

ποινὰς δ' Ὀρφῆϊ κταμένῳ στίζουσι γυναῖκας
εἰσέτι νῦν κείνης εἵνεκεν ἀμπλακίης.[181]

Or how Thracian Orpheus, the son of Oeagrus, loved Calaïs, the son of Boreas, with all his heart and often he would sit in the shady groves singing his heart's desire; nor was his spirit at peace, but always his soul was consumed with sleepless cares as he gazed on fresh Calaïs. But the Bistonian women of evil devices killed Orpheus, having poured about him, their keen-edged swords sharpened, because he was the first to reveal male loves among the Thracians and did not recommend love of women. The women cut off his head with their bronze and straightaway they threw it in the sea with his Thracian lyre of tortoiseshell, fastening them together with a nail, so that both would be borne on the sea, drenched by the grey waves. The hoary sea brought them to land on holy Lesbos ... and thus the lyre's clear ringing sound held sway over the sea and the islands and the sea-soaked shores, where the men gave the clear-sounding head of Orpheus its funeral rites, and in the tomb they put the clear lyre, which used to persuade even dumb rocks and the hateful water of Phorcys. From that day on, songs and lovely lyre-playing have held sway over the island and it is the most songful of all islands. As for the warlike Thracian men, when they had learned the women's savage deeds and dire grief had sunk into them all, they began the custom of tattooing their wives, so that having on their flesh signs of dark blue, they would not forget their hateful murder. And even now, the women pay reparations to the dead Orpheus because of that sin. (trans. Burges Watson)

This fragment is typical of Hellenistic poetry in combining vivid emotions with a number of *aetia* that explain the origins of the poetic tradition of Lesbos and the Thracian tradition of tattoos for women. Just as in the *Argonautica* it exploits the figure of Orpheus in order to express poetological ideas, and Orpheus can in many ways be seen as marking Phanocles' adherence to a Callimachean set of aesthetics. This constitutes the theme of 'art' in Segal's tripartite scheme.

1.10 Artistic prowess in Phanocles' catalogue

The metapoetical theme of Phanocles' poem can be illustrated by looking at two sections. Firstly, the *aetion* that links Orpheus' singing head with the poetic associations of Lesbos (vs. 21-22) creates an explicit link between Orpheus and a specific poetic tradition. Above all, it makes a point about how poetry can survive death, just as the head of Orpheus continues to sing (note λίγειαν … κεφαλήν, 'clear-sounding head', vs. 17-18). It is quite possible that Phanocles saw himself as a successor to the (homo)erotic poetry of Sappho, one of the two canonic lyric poets hailing from Lesbos. In addition to this, in lines 16-20 we find a number of poetologically

[181] Bernabé Pajares 2005: 460, 1004 T (T 77 + 116 K.)

charged words that are typical of 'Callimachean aesthetics', or which at the very least seem to align Phanocles with the aesthetics of Alexandrian poets, again an indication of his proximity to Apollonius. This part of the poem appears to be especially significant given the stylistic polish that has gone into its composition. The section in question provides an unusual combination of stylistic elements, we find word play, alliteration and verbal echoes centered around Orpheus' lyre and head. The adjective λιγυρός, ή, όν – 'clear, shrill, sweet-toned' (v. 16) is repeated at line 19, and in both cases it is used to describe the lyre of Orpheus, which is variously labeled as a λύρα or λύρη (v. 16) and a χέλυς (v. 19). The noun λύρης also echoes the form of the adjective (λιγυρῆς), since it can be included within it if we discount the letters -ιγ-. Sandwiched between these two references to the lyre of Orpheus is a description of his head which is characterized as λίγεια (v. 17), the feminine form of λίγυς. Λίγυς and λιγυρός are synonyms with nearly identical meanings. In terms of the imagery of this passage, the effect of enclosing the lines that describe Orpheus' head between lines that describe his lyre (whilst tying all of these lines together through the repeated use of related adjectives) is to create a textual echo of the action described, where Orpheus' head is literally and linguistically fastened to his lyre. This effect was first noted by Marcovich, who compares the passage with Lucian's description of the singing head of Orpheus:

> Orpheus' head is tied up to his lyre (13 ἥλῳ καρτύνασαι). Now the cut-off head of the singer *keeps* singing, and his faithful lyre *keeps* accompanying him: τὴν μὲν ᾄδουσαν…τὴν λύραν δὲ αὐτὴν ὑπηχεῖν [Lucian *Adversus Indoctum*]. It is to express exactly this miraculous music after death that Phanocles uses λίγεια κεφαλή sandwiched between λίγυρή λύρη and χέλυς λιγυρή.[182]

The words that are used in this section betray a familiarity with a Callimachean-like aesthetic. In the *Aetia*, Callimachus' poetic *persona* is described as being child-like – even in old age:

> ἔπος δ' ἐπὶ τυτθὸν ἑλ[ίσσω
> παῖς ἅτε, τῶν δ'ἐτέων ἡ δεκὰς οὐκ ὀλίγη.
> (*Aet.* fr. 1.5-6 H)

...but like a child I roll forth a short tale, though the decades of my years are not few. (trans. Trypanis et al.)

Heerink puts this passage in connection with a later description of Callimachus' poetical style:

[182] Marcovich 1979: 364.

τῷ πιθόμη]ν· ἐνὶ τοῖς γὰρ ἀείδομεν οἳ λιγὺν ἦχον
τέττιγος, θ]όρυβον δ' οὐκ ἐφίλησαν ὄνων.
(*Aet.* fr. 1.29-30 H)

… For we sing among those who love the shrill voice of the cicada and not the noise of the . . . asses'. (trans. Trypanis et al.)

Callimachus' poetic self-representation is here connected with the image of a child, whose stature is recalled in the equally minute cicada at v. 30, and which in its turn can be seen as an allusion to the following passage from Homer:

τοῖσιν δ'ἐν μέσσοισι πάις φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ
ἱμερόεν κιθάριζε, λίνον δ'ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄειδε
λεπταλέῃ φωνῇ.
(*Il.* 18.569-571)

And in their midst a boy made pleasant music with a clear-toned lyre, and to it sang sweetly the Linos song with his delicate voice ... (trans. Murray)

Heerink summarises Callimachus' allusion in the following manner: 'Callimachus has based his poetic persona and program on Homer's boy and his Linus song respectively.'[183]

Crucial for our concerns is the description of the lyre used by the boy in Homer's ecphrasis of Achilles' shield; it is called a φόρμιγξ λιγεία (v. 18.570, 'clear-toned lyre'). This description of the lyre is evoked by Callimachus in the description of his poetical style where the adjective λίγυς, εία ('clear-toned') was transferred to describe a cicada – a metaphor for the poet. This adjective can therefore be seen as a marker of Callimachean poetics. In Phanocles' poem, the adjective λίγυς, εία reappears, together with its related synonym λιγυρός, ή, όν. There, the two terms are applied both to the lyre and to the head of a poet – in this case the head of Orpheus. A less perfect overlap can also be seen with Linus, who like Orpheus was seen as a mythic poet/musician. Regardless of how closely it is possible to attach Phanocles to Callimachean aesthetics, he certainly lets Orpheus appear in a positive light qua artist by describing Orpheus' musical attributes using positive adjectives and in highlighting how his

[183] Heerink 2015: 14.

artistry survives in the (homo)erotic poetic tradition at Lesbos. This artistic prowess is however put in jeopardy when we look at the problematic role of Orpheus in the rest of the fragment.

1.11 Martial failure in Phanocles

Orpheus is an unusual mythic hero in his lack of martial prowess, though there are plenty of examples of less central mythic characters who share this characteristic, notably the many seers who play central roles in epics, e.g. Calchas and Tiresias, or heroes like Nestor whose main martial feats belong in the past and whose main quality in the *Iliad* is his wise advice in the council of the Greeks. Unlike heroes such as Heracles and Achilles, Orpheus' only weapon is his lyre and his only powers are his music and poetry. In many episodes that are told about his myth, Orpheus' pacific powers are not problematic. After all, it speaks volumes about the extent of his artistry when he is able to convince the gods of the Underworld to hand over Eurydice, or when he is represented as able to move animals, trees and even rocks by the power of his music alone.

There are however moments of crisis when his artistry fails him, and it is exactly such a moment that is emphasised by Phanocles. His description of the death of Orpheus is very direct and high-paced, from introducing Orpheus in the role of unhappy pederast in verses 1-6 we are immediately told that he is killed by Bistonian (a Thracian tribe) women: τὸν μὲν Βιστονίδες κακομήχανοι ἀμφιχυθεῖσαι | ἔκτανον…, ('But the Bistonian women of evil devices killed Orpheus, pouring about him', vs. 7-8).[184] There is no mention of any attempt from Orpheus to defend himself, he is surrounded and killed with the women's sharpened swords (εὐήκη φάσγανα, v. 8) and his head is cut off. The complete inability, or perhaps, the depressed unwillingness of Orpheus (owing to his love-sickness?) to defend himself against their attack can only be seen as a martial failure, which demonstrates the limitations of pacific artistry. Phanocles' description of Orpheus' death does however make him appear more sympathetic in comparison with his murderers, who are denounced as being devisers of evil (κακομήχανοι, v. 7).

1.12 Erotic failures in Phanocles

However, the most important failings of Orpheus are not linked to his inability to defend himself, but rather to his role as a pederastic lover. Phanocles opens the fragment with a description of Orpheus suffering the tell-tale signs of love-sickness in lines 3-6:

[184] Stern notes the abrupt change of tone in this scene, see Stern 1979: 140.

> Like other unlucky suitors – the Cyclops, Bucaeus, Corydon – Orpheus here sits in the shady groves, singing, his heart not at rest, afflicted by cares which keep him awake, as he gazes on his beloved.[185]

Since this scene is the immediate precursor to the murder of Orpheus, it becomes clear that he has failed to win the heart of the Argonaut Calaïs, the son of the wind god Boreas. Stern notes that the unattainability of Calaïs parallels the story of Hylas in the *Argonautica*, the beautiful boy whom Heracles fails to recover.[186] This failure of Orpheus to woo Calaïs is of course typical of the elegiac lover (what would be elegiac about happy love stories?), as is the link between love-sickness and the production of poetry. Stern reads this as an essentially positive message of the poem, and explains Phanocles' decision to note that the head of Orpheus travels to Lesbos as an extension of the link between homoerotic passion and poetry:

> … the poetic impulse is also said to have a close affinity with water and the sea. That it should, in addition, be said to arise on the island of Sappho has of course a particular appropriateness: to connect the creation of poetry with that form of passions associated with her and, in this fragment, with Orpheus himself may well have been Phanocles' special emphasis.[187]

In this sense it possible to balance the failure of Orpheus as an active lover against the resulting poetic creativity, a feature which was to become a mainstay within the subsequent tradition of Roman love elegy.

Yet, there is another aspect of Orpheus' role in *Loves* that is more problematic, namely his erotodidactic activities among the men of Thrace. Pederasty as an institution was not in general seen as problematic among the Greeks; however, it often operated within a strict set of limitations, of which the most important was the minimum age and the transient nature of such relationships. According to the traditional definition of pederasty in scholarship, it involved an older lover *erastes* and a younger beloved adolescent *eromenos*.[188] Such a relationship would therefore be limited in time by the fact of the adolescent man growing up, and would not be seen as a great risk to the marital institution. As long as the grown lover returned home to beget children for the polis, the average Greek city state or Hellenistic kingdom had no major issues

[185] Stern 1979: 139–40.
[186] Stern 1979: 139.
[187] Stern 1979: 141.
[188] Dover 1978: 16.

with pederasty. Davidson has provided a more nuanced picture of Greek pederasty, and notes the many examples in ancient Greek culture of more long-lasting relationships, some of which were publicly sanctioned with ceremonies, as on Crete and in Boeotia.[189] However, even in such cases it is unlikely that homoerotic relationships were promoted to the exclusion of traditional marriage, but may have operated in parallel.

The typical limitations within which pederasty was sanctioned are therefore breached when Orpheus is made into a spokesman for pederasty *tout court*: οὕνεκα πρῶτος ἔδειξεν ἐνὶ Θρῄκεσσιν ἔρωτας | ἄρρενας, οὐδὲ πόθους ἤνεσε θηλυτέρων (vs. 9-10, 'because he was the first to reveal male loves among the Thracians and did not recommend love of women'). The motivation for the Bistonides to murder Orpheus can be interpreted in two ways. First, they reacted to the novelty of the pederastic institution, given that Orpheus is said to have introduced it to Thrace, in which case their crime would seem overly cruel and barbaric when viewed through ancient Greek eyes. Second, their murderous plot was an understandable, albeit excessively violent reaction against a practice that would risk shattering the foundations of Thracian society. If the Thracian men had all become full-time pederasts this would not only leave Thracian women no erotic role, but even endanger the creation of future generations, who would only presumably be produced once all the younger men had grown too old to be pederastic beloved *eromenoi*. The introduction of pederasty by Orpheus is also described in very general terms (i.e. 'male loves'), and it is possible to interpret this as going beyond pederasty in the limited sense into promoting more equal homosexual relationships without the same time-constraints. This could well be a sufficient outrage for the women of Thrace to be driven to murder. Perhaps part of Phanocles' poetic agenda in *Loves* was to problematize different sides of the institution of pederasty, and Orpheus' narrative was thus tailored to show the problems of excessive pederasty?

It can be argued against seeing Orpheus' erotodidactic role as problematic that the Thracians were not a well-integrated part of the Greek world. By the third century BC the Thracians occupied a position not too dissimilar to that which the Macedonians had held in the 4th century BC. Like the Macedonians, the Thracians were famous warriors and played an important role in providing mercenaries for the various Hellenistic kingdoms. Thrace had increasingly come into contact with Greek colonists since at least the 8th century BC and Thracian elites had undergone a gradual process of Hellenisation.[190] However, Thrace was not a cultural centre in the way the Macedonian court had become under the rule of Philip II. In a

[189] Davidson 2008: 475–77.
[190] Theodossiev in Valeva et al. 2015: 3.

mythic past set before the 8th century BC, Thrace would have been considered even more remote from Greek culture, and it could therefore be seen as a relatively neutral place to contemporary Greek audiences of Phanocles.[191] This would go some way in removing any sympathy for the plight of the Bistonides, whose crime would then be seen as typical of Thracian savagery. However, by including an *aetion* on a Thracian custom, explaining why the Thracian women wear tattoos, Phanocles can be said to include Thrace within the scope of the Hellenistic world. *Aetia* in Hellenistic poetry were mainly concerned with Greek customs, not those of other cultures. For examples of this we might consider the many *aetia* of Apollonius or of Callimachus. Cameron saw the prevalence of aetiological poetry as a reflection of the interests of local audiences which itinerant poets could tap into.[192] As such, the tattoo *aetion* could be viewed as a possible attempt by Phanocles to gain the interest of a Thracian audience. A story about the most famous Thracian hero, Orpheus, who was killed by Thracian women who in their turn were punished by Thracian men was perhaps not the most problematic of narratives to please Thracian ears, but it couldn't do any harm if Phanocles fashioned the story to seem fresh and novel. An *aetion* would be helpful in this regard, presumably it was an invention of Phanocles' part to link Orpheus' story with a cultural practice as unspecified (unlike let's say a religious ritual tied to a set location) as tattooing. It would also be helpful if the Thracian women were not seen as fully evil, and if the pederastic practices of the Thracian men were depicted as entirely unproblematic.

It is fair to say that Phanocles' fragment about Orpheus can be seen to contain implicit tensions between the sympathetic and positive presentation of Orpheus' poetic abilities and his failure to use these abilities to defend himself against the Bistonides. This tension does not however make Orpheus into an unsympathetic character. Similarly, whilst his artistry is seen as a positive byproduct of his pederastic love for Calaïs and can be seen as the foundation of the Lesbian poetic tradition (above all of the homoerotic side of the poetry of Sappho), the excessive pederastic creed which Orpheus espouses is not unproblematic and could be viewed as exceeding the limits of traditional pederastic love. In this way the love story and death scene both create a more ambiguous image of Orpheus than the highly dignified positive character we witnessed in the *Argonautica*.

[191] For a study of ancient perceptions of Thracians and other barbarians see Bonfante 2018.
[192] Cameron 1995: 42–44.

1.13 Conclusion

The three different Orpheus narratives under study in this chapter reveal highly different ways of representing Orpheus. All seem to use Orpheus as a way of introducing metapoetic themes and his inclusion at the head of poetic catalogues could be understood to be based upon more than organisational principles such as chronology. Orpheus represents the poetic tradition, not limited to the mythic past, but reconfigured by each poet. For Hermesianax this tradition is defined according to poets who were in love regardless of generic constraints, whereas for Apollonius Orpheus is connected with the epic tradition, and for Phanocles with the tradition of pederasty. We have seen how each of these three poets to varying degrees destabilise the positive metapoetic function of Orpheus through references to his role as lover.

Apollonius casts him in the role of ideal poet in a way that provides a form of self-praise. He achieves this through occasional narrative mixing and thematic links with Apollo which blur the lines between the authorial narrator and Orpheus in the *Argonautica*. Additionally, even in his narrative where the love story of Orpheus goes unmentioned, its destabilising presence may be felt through the intertextual role enacted by Orpheus in relation to preceding poems as he in part foreshadows the tragedy of Jason and Medea, and as a reflection of Apollonius' erotically charged narration. Apollonius' apparent confession that he lacks expertise in handling erotic narratives can be seen to mirror Orpheus' erotic shortcomings. In contrast to this arguably indirect reflection of Orpheus as lover, a much more ambiguous Orpheus is found in the catalogue elegies of Phanocles and Hermesianax, who both depict him as a 'proto-elegiac lover', unsuccessful in his attempts to win his beloved, whether this is Calaïs or Agriope. By including the love stories of Orpheus these poets inherently make Orpheus seem less like an ideally prestigious poet, though Phanocles still seems to use Orpheus as a marker for the poetic tradition of his day and as a predecessor within the pederastic/homoerotic poetic tradition. The more personal narrative style of Hermesianax is characterised by his use of direct asides to his addressee. This makes any role for Orpheus as a parallel for the poet even more ambiguous in his poem, given that Hermesianax presents Orpheus not as a special case or as an ideal poet, but as just as unsuccessful in love as the other members of his catalogues.

Chapter 2: Orpheus in The Dead Poets' Society – Orpheus in poetic laments

2.1 Playing with the myth's complexity

In chapter 1 we saw how Orpheus could be used as a very powerful metapoetic figure, with which poets could align themselves in order to praise the power of poetry in general, and by extension also to heighten their own poetic status. The risk of hubris attached to a straightforward comparison between a poet and Orpheus could be avoided through making any alignment between Orpheus as paradigmatic poet and the poet himself or herself less direct and more ambiguous. Emphasising erotic aspects could be a useful tool for achieving this goal as this made the poet appear more human and less divinely dignified. However, when a poet deploys Orpheus as a metapoetic figure with regard to another poet than himself, the risk of hubris is seemingly removed altogether. When used as part of a poetic compliment, the metapoetic associations can therefore operate in relative isolation. Even so, poets have often drawn upon Orpheus' erotic associations in poems that praise dead colleagues, not least because the love story of Orpheus is intimately tied with death and loss.

In this chapter I shall look at how Orpheus appears as a symbolic figure in a number of poems concerned with death and poetic compliment. The main question to be investigated is whether the erotic side of the myth of Orpheus can be used positively as part of comparisons with other poets. This application of the myth could perhaps be seen as apt for poets wishing to openly eulogize dead poets through their relationships with wives or lovers whilst at the same time praising their poetic achievements, or, in a slightly different manner, allusions to erotic relationships could be a way of lightening the tone of poems concerned with death and lament. Death is a recurring theme within these poems, to the point that I shall argue that this is another key to why the erotic element appears to be referred to in this setting, since the main love stories of Orpheus are so intimately tied to the deaths of Eurydice and of himself. The theme of death does not need to be limited to eulogies: it can take the form of fictionalized family trees where a supposedly shared set of poetics is transferred across generations of poets, or indeed, it can manifest itself through poems highlighting poetic deaths, either by dealing with a poet's departure from a poetic genre or with his physical departure from his old life, if not from actual life.

I shall start off this chapter by looking at an important model for including Orpheus within a context of lament, the anonymous Hellenistic poem *Lament for Bion*. In this poem

Orpheus is central to the poem's agonistic tendency, but its treatment of the love story can serve to balance this aspect. This poem will be shown to be a model for the subsequent poems in this chapter, and introduces Orpheus into the landscape of bucolic. Next, we will consider how Statius deploys Orpheus and his love story in *Siluae* 2.7 to eulogise Lucan by celebrating both the deceased poet's love for his wife and the prowess of his poetry; I shall then discuss the possible erotic implications of Horace's comparison between Virgil and Orpheus in eulogizing the dead critic Quintilius in *Carm.* 1.24.[193]

2.2 Orpheus and agonism in the *Lament for Bion*

The *Lament for Bion* (which I shall refer to as the *Lament*) is a hexameter pastoral poem written by an anonymous poet (whom I shall call the Epitaphist),[194] which is part of the reason for its relative obscurity compared with poems by the genre's more famous practitioners – e.g. Theocritus and Virgil. Adrienne Troia's recent doctoral thesis (2016) is the most expansive study of this poem yet. She dates the poem to sometime between the end of the second century BC and the 50s BC, based on external evidence in the Suda and internal evidence, i.e. that it is likely that the poem was written after the death of Bion, whose dates are also uncertain.[195] It is of course not entirely impossible that the poem was written during Bion's life, but most poets would perhaps find it poor taste to lament the death of a colleague *ante factum*. The poem retains the form of a funeral lament, but its contents are far from typical of this poetic subgenre. Troia interprets the *Lament* as:

> … a series of *agones* and agonistic episodes marked by the fictionalisation of the major characters, particularly Bion, who appears in the poem as an archetypal bucolic shepherd-poet and onto whom the settings, themes, and characters from his own poetry are projected.[196]

This agonistic attitude towards the *Lament* is very much in line with more recent approaches to the pastoral tradition in general. Pastoral poetry was long considered primarily in terms of its inherent mixture of urbane complexity and rural simplicity, however, according to Thomas

[193] There is some overlap between the following analyses of Orpheus' function in the *Lament for Bion* and *Carm.* 1.24 and my discussion in Sundt in Thorsen et al. 2021 (forthcoming).
[194] The alternative is the term 'Pseudo-Moschus', given that the poem was attributed to Moschus. Troia notes that this misattribution might be medieval, stemming from a desire to assign the poem to a known bucolic poet other than Bion or Theocritus, with Moschus being the only known alternative preserved in the Suda, see Troia 2016: 4.
[195] Troia 2016: 3–4.
[196] Troia 2016: 6.

Hubbard pastoral poetry should rather be approached as a poetic tradition driven by the desire of novice poets to challenge their predecessors and create a name for themselves within a confined generic framework. Above all this is the case of the subgroup of pastoral poems centered on shepherds, the bucolic:

> The bucolic, more than any other poetic type, is *about* poetic influence and succession: bucolic poetry by its very nature can exist only as part of an interconnected tradition of poets influencing other poets.[197]

This interconnected tradition is evident e.g. in the *Lament*'s reworking of the earliest surviving poem from the pastoral genre, Theocritus' *Id.* 1. Like the *Lament*, this poem contains an extended lament for a bucolic shepherd-poet, the mythical Daphnis, and the recurring refrains of both these poems exhort the Muses to take the lead in the lamentation.[198] Similarly, the topos of tradition and poetic influence is central to the *Lament* where the author of the poem openly presents himself as the poetic heir of Bion:

… αὐτὰρ ἐγώ τοι
Αὐσονικᾶς ὀδύνας μέλπω μέλος, οὐ ξένος ᾠδᾶς
βουκολικᾶς, ἀλλ'ἄντε διδάξαο σεῖο μαθητάς
κλαρονόμος μοίσας τᾶς Δωρίδοσ, ᾇ με γεραίρων
ἄλλοις μὲν τεὸν ὄλβον ἐμοὶ δ'ἀπέλειπες ἀοιδάν.
(vs. 93-97)

But the dirge I sing for you expresses the grief of Italy. I am no stranger to bucolic song: I have inherited that Dorian Muse which you taught your pupils; that was your bequest to me when you left your wealth to others but to me your song. (trans. Hopkinson)

This open assertion of the author that he claims to be the heir to Bion, and to the tradition that he represents, is a prime example of Hubbard's point about pastoral as a tradition driven by early-career poets challenging their predecessors. The novelty of the *Lament* lies in its introduction of Orpheus as a model competing with the Daphnis of Theocritus in the role of pre-eminent bucolic shepherd-poet. Raymond Kania (2012) makes this point explicit, and sees Orpheus' initial function within the poem as being a paradigmatic figure for the topos of the

[197] Hubbard 1998: 21.
[198] Hubbard 1998: 42.

natural world's mourning for a poet, which he interprets as the defining characteristic of the *Lament*'s fictional bucolic world.[199] Whilst the *Lament* avoids any direct reference to a similar case of pathetic fallacy in the aftermath of Orpheus' own death, the poem nevertheless alludes to such a possibility.[200] As we shall see, Orpheus plays a central role in the *Lament*, which I shall argue serves to create tension between the Epitaphist and the deceased Bion, in a way that allows both poets to be praised, whilst leaving their relative status partially undecided. Both Bion and the Epitaphist himself are explicitly compared with Orpheus.

As befits his central role in the poem, Bion is the first to receive this seemingly positive designation. The poem's opening stanzas (vs. 1-12)[202] detail the grieving of the natural world, in the first stanza by rivers and flowers, and in the second by nightingales and nymphs. The reason for this mourning is revealed at the end of the second stanza, when the death of Bion is announced: ὅττι Βίων τέθνακεν ὁ βουκόλος, ὅττι σὺν αὐτῷ | καὶ τὸ μέλος τέθνακε καὶ ὤλετο Δωρὶς ἀοιδά (v. 11-12, '[bear news] that Bion the oxherd is dead; that with him song too has died, and Dorian minstrelsy has perished'). His fictional recasting as an oxherd or shepherd-singer is the main component of Bion's *persona* within the *Lament*: he is thus reimagined as an embodiment of the bucolic tradition, but a bucolic tradition that is widened to include such disparate figures as Homer, who is later described as a brother poet of Bion (vs. 70-77). This creates a problem – will the bucolic genre, and song itself, survive the loss of its leading practitioner?[203]

The elevated status of Bion appears to be heightened even more when his death is described in the succeeding stanza: ἀπώλετο Δώριος Ὀρφεύς (18, 'the Dorian Orpheus is dead'). At this point Troia sees a reference to 'his [Orpheus'] role as a legendary, foundational character in the evolution of a specifically bucolic strain of herdsmanly song.'[204] Specifically, the role of Orpheus in the opening of the poem can be envisaged as drawing up comparisons between Orpheus' supernatural music and Bion's poetic prowess based upon the similar reactions of the natural world to their deaths.[205] As noted by Kania 2012 (see above) this argument partially presumes the existence of a prior lost poem in which the death of Orpheus is described in terms of pathetic fallacy – the supernatural grief of nature. I am more attracted to Troia's interpretation of how the opening stanzas can be seen to draw up comparisons not just between Bion and Orpheus, but also indirectly between Orpheus and the Epitaphist,

[199] Kania 2012: 668.
[200] Kania 2012: 668.
[202] Framed by the refrain at uneven intervals at line 8 and 13.
[203] Kania 2012: 659–60.
[204] Troia 2016: 12.
[205] Troia 2016: 150.

parallel to the function of Orpheus that we just saw in Apollonius' *Argonautica*. According to Troia the opening of the poem can be read as a display of the 'Epitaphist's own command over the natural world in the manner of Orpheus'.[206] This can be arguably be seen through the use of imperatives, in that the Epitaphist's song directs the grief of the natural world (glades (v.1), rivers (v.1-2), flowers (vv. 4-7) etc.), much as Orpheus is typically depicted as controlling flora, fauna and minerals with his singing.

2.3. Pederasty and bucolic agonism

A slightly different aspect of how the preceding poetic tradition depicted Orpheus can be found to influence the middle part of the *Lament*. During the eleventh stanza, the Epitaphist engages in a lengthy synkrisis where Bion is placed on an equal footing with the great Homer. At the end of this we learn the following details about Bion:

> καὶ παίδων ἐδίδασκε φιλήματα καὶ τὸν Ἔρωτα
> ἔτρεφεν ἐν κόλποισι καὶ ἤρεθε τὰν Ἀφροδίταν.
>
> (*Lament for Bion*, vs. 83-84)

... and taught about the kisses of boys; he kept Love close by him and provoked Aphrodite. (trans. Hopkinson)

To teach about the kisses of boys must surely refer to the teaching of pederastic practices. Pederasty is indeed an important theme in bucolic poetry, and this might well be an allusion to earlier bucolic poems where it plays a part. A possible candidate for this would be Theocritus' *Idyll* 5, but rather than looking for direct allusions to it, we might use it to illustrate how pederasty can be presented in the central figure of the bucolic tradition. Just like the agonistic relationship between Bion and the Epitaphist we encounter in the *Lament*, Theocritus' poem is concerned with the relationship between a poetic mentor and his student, yet it is not a poem of mourning, but a more straightforward poetic agon between the two contestants Comatas and Lacon. The elder Comatas is open about the fact that he has engaged in a pederastic relationship with Lacon, and that this relationship, as is often associated with pederasty, involved teaching Lacon a thing or two other than pederasty:

35 ΚΟ. ἀλλ'οὔτι σπεύδω• μέγα δ' ἄχθομαι εἰ τύ με τολμῇς

[206] Troia 2016: 151.

ὄμμασι τοῖς ὀρθοῖσι ποτιβλέπεν, ὅν ποκ'ἐόντα
παῖδ' ἔτ' ἐγὼν ἐδίδασκον. ἴδ'ά χάρις ἐς τί ποχ' ἕρπει•
θρέφαι καὶ λυκιδεῖς, θρέφαι κύνας, ὥς τυ φάγωντι.
ΛΑ. καὶ πόκ' ἐγὼν παρὰ τεῦς τι μαθὼν καλὸν ἢ καὶ ἀκούσας
40 μέμναμ, ὦ φθονερὸν τὸ καὶ ἀπρεπὲς ἀνδρίον αὔτως;
ΚΟ. ἁνίκ' ἐπύγιζόν τυ, τὸ δ' ἄλγεες•[207]
(*Id.* 5.35-41)

CO. I'm not in a hurry; but I'm annoyed that you dare to look me in the face, me who used to teach you when you were still a boy. See what a good turn comes to at last: rear wolf cubs, rear dogs, and they'll eat you up.
LA. And when do I remember ever learning or even hearing anything good from you, you simply envious and foul little fellow?
CO. When I was buggering you, and you were in pain; (trans. Hopkinson)

Hubbard sees this exchange as a struggle for poetic independence on the part of Lacon, who claims to have forgotten his relationship with Comatas and resorts to free himself from the role of student by in turn becoming a lover of boys.[208] Lacon claims to have won the love of not one, but two boys, the latter whom he presented with a gift in return for a kiss:

ΛΑ. ἀλλ'ἐγὼ Εὐμήδευς ἔραμαι μέγα · καὶ γὰρ ὅκ' αὐτῷ
135 τὰν σύριγγ'ὤρεξα, καλόν τί με κάρτ' ἐφίλησεν.
(*Id.* 5.134-135)

LA. But I am much in love with Eumedes; and when I gave him the panpipe he gave me a fine kiss. (trans. Hopkinson)

The giving of gifts is another common element in pederastic relationships, and in the case of the beloved this may amount to kisses. With regards to the pederastic passage from the *Lament* (vs. 83-84) we might imagine that the Epitaphist is referring not to one, but to a number of poems. Theocritus' *Idyll* 5 might merely be hinted at through the mention of παίδων ...φιλήματα 'kisses of boys' (v. 83), just as there might be an allusion to *Idyll* 1 in line 84 since Daphnis angered Aphrodite in the former poem, just like Bion: ἤρεθε τὰν Ἀφροδίταν 'provoked

[207] Gow 1952: 22-23.
[208] Hubbard 1998: 33.

Aphrodite' (84). A more important lesson to learn from *Idyll* 5 is that pederasty is an important ingredient in bucolic poetry, and can be intimately tied to the relationship between generations of poets. By alluding to this side of the bucolic tradition in his depiction of Bion, the Epitaphist prepares the reader for his subsequent revelation of being Bion's heir (vs. 93-97). When he reveals this, he does not mention anything about having been involved in a pederastic relationship with Bion, and strictly speaking, he has not said that Bion was a pederast, merely that he had been a teacher of pederasty: παίδων ἐδίδασκε φιλήματα 'he taught about the kisses of boys' (83).

This role of Bion as pederastic pedagogue is reminiscent of a poem outside the bucolic tradition (the boundaries of which are severely overdrawn by the Epitaphist to encompass Homer alongside Bion). In the preceding chapter, we looked at Phanocles' elegiac fr. 1, where Orpheus was presented as a pederastic lover of the Argonaut Calaïs. He appears to have been unsuccessful also in this quest, and the poem opens with a description of the love-sickness caused by Calaïs (vs. 1-6), yet his pederastic side is not limited to his own love-affairs. When he is subsequently killed by a group of Thracian women, their motive is revealed to be the following:

οὕνεκα πρῶτος ἔδειξεν ἐνὶ Θρῄκεσσιν ἔρωτας
ἄρρενας, οὐδὲ πόθους ἤνεσε θηλυτέρων.
(Phanocles fr. 1.9-10)

... because he was the first to reveal male loves among the Thracians and did not recommend love of women. (trans. Burges Watson)

Phanocles makes Orpheus into a teacher of pederasty among the men of Thrace. This position as a teacher of pederasty is much rarer within Greek culture than the relatively common practice of *being* a pederast.[209] I will not argue that the Epitaphist alludes very directly to Phanocles here (the explicit references to Eurydice at the end of the *Epitaph* seem to draw attention away from Orpheus' pederastic side), but the pederastic pedagogy of Orpheus featured in Phanocles' elegy admirably complements this side of Bion in a way that widens the range of associations created by his comparison with Orpheus.

[209] For an overview of the wide occurences of pederasty in ancient Greek society see Davidson 2008.

2.4 Outdoing the master

One of the chief characteristics of the *Lament* is the way that the Epitaphist includes characters from Bion's own poetry as active participants in lamenting his demise. A good example of this is Galateia's appearance in the poem's ninth stanza:

κλαίει καὶ Γαλάτεια τὸ σὸν μέλος, ἅν ποκ'ἔτερπες
ἑζομέναν μετὰ σεῖο παρ' ἀιόνεσσι θαλάσσας·
οὐ γὰρ ἴσον Κύκλωπι μελίσδεο. τὸν μὲν ἔφευγεν
ἁ καλὰ Γαλάτεια, σὲ δ'ἄδιον ἔβλεπεν ἅλμας,
καὶ νῦν λασαμένα τῶ κύματος ἐν ψαμάθοισιν
ἕζετ'ἐρήμαίαισι, βόας δ' ἔτι σεῖο ωομεύει.
(vs. 58-63)

Galatea, too, weeps for your music—Galatea, whom you used to delight as she sat with you on the seashore; for you sang nothing like the Cyclops. The lovely Galatea would avoid him, but you were a more welcome sight to her than the sea. Now she has forgotten the waves: she sits on the empty beach and still tends your cattle. (trans. Hopkinson)

Troia points out that this section has a number of intertextual links with poems about the failed relationship between Galateia and Polyphemus, notably poems by Theocritus (*Id.* 11), Hermesianax and Bion's own fr. 16, which is echoed in the choice of words at lines 59 and 62. Fr. 16 portrays a love-lorn Polyphemus 'by the sand and shore' who whispers the name of Galateia and claims that he never will abandon hope – but calls Galateia ἀπηνέα (v. 3, 'cruel'), indicating the futility of his desire.[210] In the *Lament*, Bion's song, and by extension – poetry itself – is vindicated as the failure of Polyphemus is replaced by Bion's success at both wooing Galateia and transforming her into a fully bucolic character. The success is however limited to the *Lament*:

> ...the song supplied by Theocritus was no cure for Polyphemus' love, nor that supplied by Bion; only when Bion has been relegated to the world of fiction, and the song rewritten by his new heir [the Epitaphist], does Galatea bend.[211]

This depiction of a fictive agon over the love of Galatea between Bion and Polyphemus is therefore subsumed into a larger agon between the Epitaphist and Bion in terms of who is the

[210] Troia 2016: 121–22.
[211] Troia 2016: 123.

greater poet. Troia concludes that this handling of the Galateia-topos allows the Epitaphist to show off his mastery of the poetic tradition that is represented by it, as well as strengthening his later claim of being the poetic heir of Bion.[212] At this point in the poem, the Epitaphist clearly appears to assert a kind of superiority vis-à-vis his poetic predecessor. However, this will be somewhat constrained in the case of the Epitaphist's handling of Orpheus.

Before analysing this topos, we should pause to consider the possibility that Bion had included Orpheus too among the characters of his poetry. If this is deemed plausible, we should include this intertextual, agonistic perspective in our analysis of Orpheus' appearances in the *Lament*. Bion's fr. 6 is a good candidate for a poem concerned with Orpheus. This fragment contains a problematic line printed with cruces by Gow:

> μηδὲ λίπῃς μ'ἀγέραστον, †ἐπὴν χὠ Φοῖβος ἀείδειν
> μισθὸν ἔδωκε.† τιμὰ δὲ τὰ πράγματα κρέσσονα ποιεῖ. (vs. 1-2)

Don't leave me unrewarded. Even Phoebus rewards singing, and honour makes things better. (trans. Hopkinson)

Regardless of how this fragment should be emended, it seems safe to conclude that it speaks about recompense for singing and could well fit with the setting of Orpheus pleading before the gods of the Underworld. In his commentary to the work of Bion, Reed (1997) entertains the possibility that Bion's fr. 6. did contain the story of Orpheus and notes a possible allusion to it when the word ἀγέραστος appears in the *Lament* at exactly the point where the Epitaphist discussed the likelihood that Persephone would reward Bion for his song (like she did Orpheus): ... οὐκ ἀγέραστος | ἐσσεῖθ' ἁ μολπά ... (vv. 122-123, 'the song would not go unrewarded'.[213] Such an allusion could increase the standing of the Epitaphist in his agon with Bion by demonstrating his ability to manipulate his predecessor's poetic output in yet another instance. At least in some ways, this is similar to the earlier allusions to Bion's fr. 16 where the Epitaphist goes one better than his mentor and lets him overcome the shortcomings of his own poetic creation, the failed lover Polyphemus. The possible allusion to fr. 6 appears during the last stanza of the *Lament*. This stanza continues to deal with the Epitaphist's relationship to Bion, who was revealed to be the poetic heir of Bion at lines 93-97. As we shall see, the question is whether the end of the poem should be read as agonistic and as a challenge to the poetic

[212] Troia 2016: 132.
[213] Reed 1997: 152.

superiority of its predecessor by questioning the Epitaphist's position, or whether it strikes a more conciliatory note. Central to our concerns, the poem ends with several references to Orpheus, and in order to grasp the meaning of the ending of the poem, it is necessary to first to look closer at the overall role of Orpheus within the poem.

2.5 Orpheus as bucolic model – Bion 'Orphicised'?

Returning to Kania's article on the introduction of Orpheus to the bucolic genre, we have already seen how he understands Orpheus' primary function within the *Lament* as that of being a model bucolic poet. According to Kania, Orpheus has been, to a greater or lesser extent, 'bucolicised'.[214] The main impetus for seeing Orpheus in this light is his supernatural musical and poetical talent, which seems to imply as close a connection with the natural world as the pathetic fallacy associated with Bion's death in the *Lament*.[215] However, Orpheus' position is limited by his inability to complete his underworldly rescue mission. This point is hinted at in the final section of the *Lament*, which we shall see is characterized by the use of hypothetical clauses.[216] The necessary conclusion from the tragic outcome of Orpheus' *katabasis* is to see him as an ambiguous, or limited role model for Bion and the Epitaphist:

> He, [the Epitaphist] too, is a singer for whom Orpheus is a model; but Orpheus is for him a limiting model whose powers and achievements – themselves limited or incomplete – cannot be matched.[217]

The limitations of Orpheus as supernatural poet are part of the Epitaphist's rhetorical strategy of combining grief for an emblematic figure for the pastoral genre, Bion, with a celebration of a tradition within which the Epitaphist sees himself as the legitimate poetic heir and successor.[218] It is still possible to see Orpheus' role within the bucolic world as a marker for the tradition of the pastoral genre, with its inherent limitations, and it is precisely through his limited and liminal position as a supernatural bucolic role model that it becomes possible to incorporate him as a model for subsequent bucolic poets. If Orpheus had succeeded in his *katabasis*, his perfection would raise the bar too high for subsequent bucolic poets. The question remains nevertheless, to what extent Orpheus can be said to be fully 'bucolicised', or whether he should mainly be

[214] Kania 2012: 668.
[215] Kania 2012: 669.
[216] Kania 2012: 671.
[217] Kania 2012: 672.
[218] Kania 2012: 672.

interpreted as a marker for poetic greatness (albeit slightly limited greatness).

There are numerous poets who appear within the *Lament*. Some, like Theocritus (v. 93) are clear poetic predecessors for Bion and the Epitaphist in pastoral, but the majority belong to clearly distinct genres. Troia pays particular notice to the inclusion of Homer within the poem. Unlike the other historic poets mentioned, Homer features as part of a direct synkrisis with Bion, i.e. he is compared with Bion on a more equal footing without Bion necessarily emerging as the better poet. As part of this synkrisis, Homer is presented as a brother of Bion, as both are named as sons of the river Meles:[219]

70 τοῦτό τοι, ὦ ποταμῶν λιγυρώτατε, δεύτερον ἄλγος,
τοῦτο, Μέλη, νέον ἄλγος. ἀπώλετο, πρᾶν τοι Ὅμηρος,
τῆνο τὸ Καλλιόπας γλυκερὸν στόμα, και σε λέγοντι
μύρασθαι καλὸν υἷα πολυκλαύτοισι ῥεέθροις,
πᾶσαν δ' ἔπλησας φωνᾶς ἄλα · νῦν πάλιν ἄλλον
75 υἱέα δακρύεις καινῷ δ' ἐπὶ πένθεϊ τάκῃ.
(*Lament*, vs. 70-75)

This is a second grief, a fresh grief, for you, Meles, most musical of rivers. It is not long since the death of your poet Homer, sweet mouthpiece of Calliope; they say that from your lamenting waters you made moan for your fine son, and the whole sea was filled with the sound of your voice. Now you weep again for another son and dissolve with fresh grief. (trans. Hopkinson)

Troia sees this 'fraternisation' as part of a concerted effort to lessen the differences between Homer and Bion:

> By writing Homer and Bion as brothers, the author casts their respective genres of epic and bucolic ... as two sides of the same coin.[220]

Furthermore, though the *Lament* contains references to the differences in theme or subject matter between the two genres represented by Bion and Homer (vs. 80-84), Troia notes that Homer is carefully adjusted to chime with the erotic themes characteristic of what Reed defines as 'late bucolic'.[221] Firstly, Troia sees Homer as presented within a group of attractive young

[219] This is connected with Smyrna, one of the leading candidates among the cities that claimed to be the birthplace of Homer, see Nagy 2012: 135.
[220] Troia 2016: 92.
[221] Troia 2016: 94–95, n. 156; Reed in Fantuzzi and Papanghelis 2006: 210–11.

men, whose respective deaths are compared with that of Bion.[222] Arguably, there is no direct indication in the poem that Homer died young, but he is referred to as καλὸν υἷα 'beautiful son' (v. 73). The use of this adjective is shared with Bion himself (v. 7) and can be seen to echo the refrain of the poet Bion's own *Lament for Adonis*, a poem about the most famous representative of the idealised beautiful men who die young.[223] Homer is further aligned with Bion through the prominence that is given to his female characters Helen and Thetis (vs. 78-79), at the same time as Bion earlier in the poem is described in a manner that may allude to Homer's Achilles. Whilst Bion has a ταχὺν μόρον 'speedy fate' (v. 26), Achilles was ὠκύμορος 'quick-dying' (*Iliad* 1.417).[224] Troia concludes that 'This gendered and genre-reversing reimagining mitigates distance and difference between Homer and Bion.'[225] Based on this analysis it is possible to see Homer's appearance within the *Lament* as an example of how a poet can be 'bucolicised' in spite of his fame as an epic poet. Homer's characterisation and contextualisation present an extreme case of how a poet can be appropriated to act as a comparable model for a bucolic poet. What then about Orpheus?

Unlike Homer, Orpheus was not a poet with anything approaching a clearly defined poetic trajectory. He could therefore be aligned with practically any genre as a poetic forefather. Paschalis claims that Orpheus is clearly appropriated as a bucolic model within both the *Lament* and Virgil's *Eclogue* 6, which is heavily dependent upon the *Lament* as an intertext.[226] Given the complex situation of Homer's 'bucolisation' in the *Lament*, we might have to qualify Paschalis' statement and ask ourselves, to what extent is Orpheus ever completely 'bucolicised' within the *Lament* (e.g. there is stronger case for a 'bucolicised' Orpheus in *Eclogue* 4)? Any appropriation of Orpheus as a generic predecessor should be based upon his life, i.e. his story, more than upon the poetic corpus that was attributed to him in Antiquity. It is therefore worthwhile to look at how Orpheus' story can be aligned with the generic constraints of bucolic.

The story of Orpheus differs from the life of a historic poet such as Homer, but only insomuch as the former's life is even more fictionalised. The main conduit for biographical details about Orpheus was likely to have been poetry, not biography. This implies that any reference to Orpheus' story, which could be appropriated by a bucolic poet such as the Epitaphist or Virgil, was dependent upon the preceding poetic tradition, where Orpheus is found in genres that differ to a greater or lesser extent from bucolic or pastoral. These prior

[222] Troia 2016: 96.
[223] Troia 2016: 97–98.
[224] Troia 2016: 100.
[225] Troia 2016: 100.
[226] Paschalis 1995: 621.

models, notably the Hellenistic examples we analysed in chapter 1, bring with them dissonant generic associations, and Orpheus' story can therefore be seen as having had a longer history within elegy and epic than in the relatively recent bucolic genre. To overcome these obstacles, the Epitaphist appears to have pursued a number of strategies. According to Kania, the *Lament* relies upon establishing two distinct areas of comparison between its representation of Bion and Orpheus' story. The first similarity is central to the poem's overall structures as it defines the comparisons with a number of poetic grandees and Bion, i.e. a shared pathetic fallacy. The topos of pathetic fallacy recurs at several points in the poem, so much so that Kania concludes ' ... the *Lament* sets nature's supernatural sensitivity to exceptional poets (Bion, Homer, Theocritus, and others) as the essential feature of its bucolic world.'[227] In the case of Orpheus' relationship with Bion, any parallel instance of pathetic fallacy is only faintly implied, but never directly referred to. The closest we get is the following:

ἄρχετε Σικελικαί, τῶ πένθεος ἄρχετε, Μοῖσαι.
Στρυμόνιοι μύρεσθε παρ'ὕδασιν αἴλινα κύκνοι,
καὶ γοεροῖς στομάτεσσι μελίσδετε πένθιμον ᾠδάν
†οἵαν ὑμετέροις ποτὶ χείλεσι γῆρυς ἄειδεν.†
εἴπατε δ' αὖ κούραις Οἰαγρίσινι, εἴπατε πάσαις
Βιστονίαις Νύμφαισιν, ' ἀπώλετο Δώριος Ὀρφεύς'.
(*Lament*, vs. 13-18)

Begin, Sicilian Muses, begin your grieving song. You swans of Strymon, cry woe beside your waters; with your lamenting voices sing a dirge such as old age produces from your throats. Say once more to the daughters of Oeagrus, say to all the Nymphs of Bistonia, 'The Dorian Orpheus is dead'. (trans. Hopkinson)

There is no disputing that these verses seek to establish a close affinity between Bion and Orpheus, not only by adapting Thracian geographical names to the Sicilian, bucolic background of Bion, but also by the explicit epithet 'Dorian Orpheus' (v. 18).[228] However, rather than seeing this as a 'bucolisation' of Orpheus, are we not equally at liberty to think of this process of assimilation as an 'Orphicisation' of Bion? Especially the use of the epithet seems to indicate this directionality. If Bion is the 'Dorian Orpheus', and if we assume that 'Dorian' equates to 'bucolic' within this context, then it follows that the original Orpheus isn't 'Dorian',

[227] Kania 2012: 668.
[228] Kania 2012: 667.

nor is he 'bucolic'. Allied with this perspective, we might have to rethink the use of the pathetic fallacy as a marker for bucolic greatness within the *Lament*. As Kania points out, pathetic fallacy is used in reference to a number of poetic figures, and is not limited to poets that easily can be seen as prefiguring Bion within the bucolic tradition created by the poem.[229] Lines 86-92 are particularly indicative of this:

πᾶσα, Βίων, θρηνεῖ σε κλυτὰ πόλις, ἄστεα πάντα.
Ἄσκρα μὲν γοάει σε πολὺ πλέον Ἡσιόδοιο·
Πίνδαρον οὐ ποθέοντι τόσον Βοιωτίδες ὗλαι·
οὐ τόσον Ἀλκαίῳ περιμύρατο Λέσβος ἐραννά,
οὐδὲ τόσον τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὀδύρατο Τήιον ἄστυ·
σὲ πλέον Ἀρχιλόχοιο ποθεῖ Πάρος, ἀντὶ δὲ Σαπφοῦς
εἰσέτι σεῦ τὸ μέλισμα κινύρεται ἁ Μιτυλήνα.

Every famous city, every town laments you, Bion. Ascra groans for you much more than for Hesiod; the woods of Boeotia do not yearn for Pindar so much as for you; lovely Lesbos did not grieve so much for Alcaeus, nor the town of Teos for its own poet; Paros missed you more than Archilochus; Mitylene still mourns for your music, and not for Sappho's. (trans. Hopkinson)

This section is part of what is labelled the 'catalogue of cities' by Troia,[230] and comprises a number of examples of a slightly different type of pathetic fallacy. Here we hear of places who mourn Bion more deeply than they mourned for their famous poetic offspring. This section of 'urban', or perhaps better 'local', pathetic fallacy includes poets from all over the Greek world who are representative of highly discrete genres. We encounter Hesiod and his Ascra (v. 87) – the foundational figure of didactic poetry; the lyric poets Pindar, mourned by the woods of Boiotia (v. 88), Alcaeus (v. 89), mourned by Lesbos, Anacreon by Teos (v. 90), and Sappho by Mytilene (v. 91-92); as well as the iambic poet Archilochus (v. 91) mourned by Paros. In the subsequent verse 93 we find Theocritus in a similar setting, and we have previously noted how Homer was mourned by the river Meles (vs. 70-75).

This catalogue of famous poets is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, it seems to be indebted to the catalogue of poets in love which we encountered in Hermesianax fr. 7, as discussed in Chapter 1. All of the poets (and of course Orpheus too) occur in either poem with the exception of Theocritus, and Bion, who was born too late for Hermesianax' poem. In

[229] Kania 2012: 668.
[230] Troia 2016: 135.

Hermesianax' case we might think of his catalogue as an attempt to 'elegiacise' the poets he catalogues in order to create a ficticious poetic tradition within which he might carve out a position for himself as an heir. The situation in the *Lament* might appear different in that the poets here are turned into objects for pathetic fallacy, but the tone of the two catalogues is not necessarily all that dissimilar. In the *Lament*, the catalogue of famous poets is part of the hyperbolic praise showered upon Bion. It would be difficult to read the *Lament* as entirely solemn, and sad throughout, given its arguably excessive use of hyperbole. Similarly, trying to read Hermesianax' text with a completely straight face runs the risk of missing the point of what the poet is trying to achieve. What unites the selection of poets in either poem appears to be a question of quality. These poets were reckoned by the Greeks to be classics,[231] the preeminent performers within their respective genres, and some of them could also be seen as founders of a genre, e.g. Hesiod as founder of didactic; Theocritus as founder of pastoral etc. As such, it is much easier to see their function in the poem as helping to praise the poetic credentials of Bion, but not necessarily signalling any reorientation of the poetic hierarchy of genres. In Troia's interpretation, the inclusion of poets who are compared with Bion is not only part of the Epitaphist's strategy of praising Bion; it can also be seen to be part of an overall agonistic tendency in which the author asserts his mastery over the tradition by citation and intertextual allusions, and fills the void left by Bion.[232]

2.6 Orpheus as limiting poetic exemplar

When we reach the ending of the *Lament*, the seemingly agonistic positioning of Bion and the Epitaphist loses some of its sting. This is dependent upon a reconsideration of Orpheus' position as a model bucolic poet. The *Lament* concludes with an extended apostrophe to Bion in the Underworld:

115 … εἰ δυνάμαν δέ,
ὡς Ὀρφεὺς καταβὰς ποτὶ Τάρταρον, ὥς ποκ'Οδυσσευς
ὡς πάρος Ἀλκεῖδας, κὴγὼ τάχ'ἂν ἐς δόμον ἦλθον
Πλουτέος ὥς κέ σ'ἴδοιμι και, εἰ Πλουτῆι μελίσδῃ,
ὡς ἂν ἀκουσαίμαν τί μελίσδεαι. ἀλλ'ἄγε Κώρᾳ
120 Σικελικόν τι λίγαινε καὶ ἁδύ τι βουκολιάζευ·

[231] Pfeiffer notes that Orpheus is grouped together with Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer as the preeminent early poets by several ancient authors, ranging from Plato to poets such as Aristophanes and Hermesianax (as we saw in Chapter 1), see Pfeiffer 1968: 52.
[232] Troia 2016: 133–43.

καὶ κείνα Σικελά, καὶ ἐν Αἰτναίαισιν ἔπαιζεν
ᾠόσι, καὶ μέλος οἶδε τὸ Δώριον· οὐκ ἀγέραστος
ἐσσεῖθ'ά μολπά, χὡς Ὀρφέι πρόσθεν ἔδωκεν
ἀδέα φορμίζοντι παλίσσυτον Εὐρυδίκειαν,
καὶ σέ, Βίων, πέμψει τοῖς ὤρεσιν. εἰ δέ τι κἠγών
συρίσδων δυνάμαν, παρὰ Πλουτέι κ'αὐτὸς ἄειδον.
(vs. 115-126)

Had it been possible, I would have gone down to Tartarus and maybe entered the halls of Hades like Orpheus, like Odysseus once did, like Alcides, in order to see you and, if you sing for Pluto, to hear what song it is. But come, play for the Maiden some Sicilian song, some sweet country melody. She too is a Sicilian who used to play on the shores of Etna, and she knows the Dorian mode. Your song will not go unrewarded; just as she once gave back Eurydice to Orpheus for his sweet lyre playing, so she will restore you, Bion, to your hills. And if my piping had any power, I would myself have played for Pluto. (trans. Hopkinson)

In this closing section of the poem the Epitaphist imagines what it would be like to visit the Underworld in order to see Bion. He appears almost absorbed into this dream vision when he suddenly exhorts Bion to sing to Persephone in order that Bion might be restored to his hills. Orpheus's act of entering the Underworld (v. 116) is mentioned in addition to Heracles and Odysseus as one of three famous katabasts (or in the case of Odysseus 'near-katabasts' since he does not actually enter the Underworld proper) (vs. 116-117) who together seem to indicate that it could be possible to undertake such a journey. Orpheus' limited success in convincing Persephone to hand over the shade of Eurydice (vs. 123-124) has been noted in the Introduction, but here we might consider the possible implications of his ultimate failure. We might think that the Epitaphist consciously alludes to Orpheus' failure in resurrecting Eurydice in order to make him appear a limited poetic exemplar, whose poetic prowess is surpassed by Bion. Unlike Orpheus, Bion would surely if he tried to be able to resurrect someone (himself).

However, the Epitaphist does not make it certain that Bion is singing in the Underworld, or that he sings to Persephone, whom the poem depicts as the deity responsible for handing over Eurydice. The idea that Bion might be singing to Pluto is at first only floated in a hypothetical mood of uncertainty: εἰ Πλουτῆι μελίσδῃ (118, 'if you sing to Pluto'), and it appears as if Bion would require the help of the Epitaphist to stir him into singing to Persephone.[233] If he were to sing to Persephone he could take advantage of her Sicilian background by singing

[233] Note the imperatives in vv. 119-120: ἄγε ('come on'), λίγαινε ('play'), βουκολιάζευ ('sing bucolically').

something bucolic – associated with Sicily within the poetic world of the *Lament*.[234] Bion, who up until this point has been given the highest praise, is now seen to be limited, and even though he might be able to outperform Orpheus, much as he outperformed another of his poetic creations, Polyphemus, this success is dependent upon the help of his poetic heir, the Epitaphist. This is so both in that the Epitaphist's *persona* needs to command Bion to action, and in that (on a metapoetic level) this is only possible within the fiction created by the real-life Epitaphist. If this stanza includes a conscious allusion to Bion's poem where Orpheus' failed *katabasis* appeared (two lines of which are preserved as Bion fr. 6), we seem to find a similar case of poetic self-assertion vis-a-vis his mentor on the Epitaphist's behalf.

There are nevertheless important differences between the two situations. In the former allusion to Bion's poem about Polyphemus and Galateia (vs. 58-63), Polyphemus, a kind of 'anti-poet', is negatively compared with Bion. We might think of Polyphemus being alluded to as an inferior poet to Bion, who in his turn appears inferior to the Epitaphist who illustrates his mastery of Bion's poetic legacy by alluding to it and outperforms his mentor by fictionalising him. In the latter case things become less clear-cut. Firstly, since Orpheus is less clearly surpassed by Bion, and secondly, because Orpheus is compared with both Bion *and* the Epitaphist himself. With regards to the former point, it can be argued that Orpheus does not appear to be inferior to Bion, at least initially. Without any intertextual knowledge a reader might think that Orpheus is entirely equivalent to Bion since both seem able to resurrect someone (Eurydice or themselves) by singing to Persephone. Yet, if we assume that Heath (1997) is right in that Orpheus failed ultimately in resurrecting Eurydice in all ancient poetic accounts,[235] then the equivalence becomes lost. Only Bion appears able to resurrect himself, and can thus be seen as a super-Orpheus who succeeded where the original ultimately failed. According to this negative context, the situations seem more similar – in both cases the Epitaphist flaunts his mastery of Bion's poems by alluding to them and by perfecting the flaws of Bion's characters in his own fictionalised use of Bion as a character within the *Epitaph*.

Although this might be the case, there is a problem when the Epitaphist implicitly compares himself with Orpheus. At first, Orpheus was used as an example of how the living could visit the Underworld: εἰ δυνάμαν δέ, | ὡς Ὀρφεὺς καταβὰς ποτὶ Τάρταρον (vs. 115-116, 'had it been possible, I would have gone down to Tartarus like Orpheus'). Yet when we realise that the success of Orpheus was limited, this makes the second comparison with the Epitaphist

[234] Theocritus wrote several poems on Siciliy, and the *Lament* makes Sicily central to bucolic song, which can be seen e.g. from the recurring refrain: ἄρχετε Σικελικαί, τῶ πένθεος ἄρχετε, Μοῖσαι ('begin your mourning, Sicilian Muses') see also Troia 2016: n50, 23.
[235] As discussed in the Introduction.

more ambivalent: εἰ δέ τι κἠγών | συρίσδων δυνάμαν, παρὰ Πλουτέι κ'αὐτὸς ἄειδον (vs. 125-126, 'And if my piping had any power, I would myself have played for Pluto'). If the Epitaphist had been able to visit the Underworld and use his poetic powers to attempt to resurrect someone (like Orpheus did), he would have attempted it. This statement is troubling in many ways. Troia notes that this whole visit to the Underworld 'is presented to the reader in the form of a contrary-to-fact condition, implying that the Epitaphist does not view this result as possible'.[236] What was the point of bringing up the spectre of Orpheus' *katabasis* when its end result differed from the Epitaphist's desired goal of helping Bion to resurrect himself? Moreover, if the Epitaphist compares himself with Orpheus, but questions whether his poetic powers are equivalent to those of the Thracian bard, this would make him appear inferior to Bion, who potentially could succeed in the role of Orpheus in the Underworld. Another point worth noticing is that the Epitaphist seems to imagine that Bion's road to rescue is through singing to Persephone, but he ends the poem by saying that if he had been given the opportunity, he himself would have sung to the seemingly unmovable Pluto.

This analysis should make it clear that the *Lament*'s recurring use of Orpheus can be seen to inform the agonistic relationship between the Epitaphist and Bion in a way that initially seems to favour the younger poet, but the comparisons with Orpheus at the end appear to undermine the Epitaphist's position of superiority vis-a-vis his fictionalised poetic predecessor Bion. Neither of these two poets can resurrect themselves and overcome death, but require the help of another, both on an intrapoetic level in order to direct their song to the right divinity, Persephone, as well as on a metapoetic level – by requiring the help of a successor to be remembered. In the former case, even if they could sing to Persephone, their success in resurrecting themselves would not be guaranteed, as the example of Orpheus' failed *katabasis* illustrates, and in the latter, their resurrection would only be limited to that of being a memory, or a poem.

Orpheus' love story provides an opening for including Orpheus as a limiting bucolic model poet within the pastoral genre, whose greatness becomes a novel parameter against which Bion and the Epitaphist might be compared. However, by hinting at the tragic outcome of Orpheus' *katabasis*, the references to the love story limit the poetic superiority of Orpheus in a way that destabilises the agonistic tendency of the poem. All three poets, Bion, the Epitaphist, and Orpheus himself, appear confined to creating a lasting impression upon the world they leave behind, as exemplified through the pathetic fallacy that pervades the *Lament*, while being unable to overcome the bonds of death either for themselves or for others.

[236] Troia 2016: 151.

2.7 *Siluae* 2.7: Lucan as Calliope's adopted son and Polla as Laodamia

Statius' poem *Siluae* 2.7 is hard to fit into typical generic confines. It quickly becomes apparent that it only masquerades as a poem celebrating a poet's birthday. However, since the poet in question is the dead Lucan, and the addressee is his widow, this makes it a poem concerned with lament in which the use of Orpheus to illustrate artistic prowess, particularly in overcoming death, is just as evident as his function in describing a love relationship. As such it can serve as a model for the 'miniature-tradition' of funerary poems that combine the praise inherent in poetic comparisons with Orpheus with expressing love for a dead person through allusions to the erotic side of the mythic bard. Statius' poem balances these two sides particularly well, in that the use of the Orpheus analogy is central to the poem's use of mythic examples, and conjures up strong connections with both love and art. Statius' unusual[237] *genethliacon* addressed to Polla on the birthday of her deceased husband Lucan contains a considerable number of interesting references to Orpheus:

natum protinus atque humum per ipsam
primo murmure dulce uagientem
blando Calliope sinu recepit.
tum primum posito remissa luctu
longos Orpheos exuit Dolores
et dixit: "puer o dicate Musis,
(*Silu.* 2.7.36-41)

et sedes reserabis inferorum,
ingratus Nero dulcibus theatris
et noster tibi proferetur Orpheus.
(*Silu.* 2.7.57-59)

sed taedis genialibus dicabo
doctam atque ingenio tuo decoram,
qualem blanda Venus daretque Iuno
forma, simplicitate, comitate,

[237] However, Martial also wrote three epigrams: 7.21, 7.22, and 7.23, to celebrate Lucan after his death, also commissioned by his widow Polla, see van Dam 1984: 455.

censu, sanguine, gratia, decore,
et uestros hymenaeon ante postes
festis cantibus ipsa personabo.
(*Silu.* 2.7.82-88)

sic ripis ego murmurantis Hebri
non mutum caput Orpheos sequebar
(*Silu.* 2.7.98-99)

adsis lucidus et uocante Polla
unum, quaeso, diem deos silentum
exores: solet hoc patere limen
ad nuptas redeuntibus maritis.
(*Silu.* 2.7.120-123)

At first, newborn and down on the ground, as he sweetly wailed his earliest murmuring, Calliope took him onto her loving lap. Then easing for the first time, she set mourning aside, putting off her long grief for Orpheus, and spoke: 'Boy, dedicated to the Muses … and you will unbar the dwellings infernal. Ungrateful Nero and our Orpheus you shall recite to kindly theaters … but with the torches of wedlock bestow on you a mate, cultured to grace your genius, one that a kindly Venus or Juno might grant for beauty, simplicity, graciousness, wealth, birth, charm, elegance; and myself shall sound the wedding song before your doors in festal chant … So once I followed Orpheus' vocal head on the banks of murmuring Hebrus ... come here in your splendor, Polla calls, and beg one day, pray you, of the gods of the silent ones. That door is apt to open for husbands returning to their brides. (trans. Shackleton Bailey)

In Statius' poem, the story of Orpheus and Eurydice has been seen by Liddell to have a pivotal function in serving as a 'point of comparison for the story of Lucan and Polla'.[238] Lucan becomes a replacement son for the muse Calliope, who supposedly forgot her grief for Orpheus once she heard the baby Lucan's sweet cries.[239] This serves the main argument in this chapter well, and I have little to add to Liddell's arguments in favour of this interpretation of Orpheus' function in the poem. What could be of interest in addition is to see how Statius uses the references to the myth of Orpheus to engage with the Roman poetic tradition, by alluding both to Catullus

[238] Liddell 2003: 22.
[239] The humorous element in this play with 'Lucan's precociousness' is noted by van Dam, see van Dam 1984: 471.

(to be expected in a hendecasyllabic poem) and Ovid. This can be seen as a similar tendency to Virgil's in the two Gallus poems from the *Eclogues* (6 and 10) in creating poetic lineages where Orpheus acts as a starting point.

Lucan is described in terms reminiscent of the Thracian river Hebrus, which becomes a symbol for the death of the Thracian poet Orpheus. The newborn Lucan wails sweetly from his first sounds: *primo murmure* (*Silu.* 2.7.37), as befits a poet, which mirrors the subsequent description of the river: *murmurantis Hebrus* (*Silu.* 2.7. 98). The same adjective is also found in Ovid's depiction of the demise of Orpheus, but there it is used of the tongue, not the river: *flebile nescio quid queritur lyra, flebile lingua | murmurat exanimis, respondent flebile ripae.* (*Met.* 11.52-53), '...the lyre gave forth some mournful notes, mournfully the lifeless tongue murmured, mournfully the banks replied'. Ovid's version may well find its response too in Calliope's prophecy of Lucan and Polla's marriage, where she will act as Hymenaeus: *et uestros hymenaeon ante postes | festis cantibus ipsa personabo* (*Silu.* 2.7.87-88, 'and myself shall sound the wedding song before your doors in festal chant', perhaps because in the *Metamorphoses* Hymenaeus did such a botched job with Orpheus' marriage(?):

adfuit ille quidem, sed nec sollemnia uerba
nec laetos uultus nec felix attulit omen;
fax quoque, quam tenuit, lacrimoso stridula fumo
usque fuit nullosque inuenit motibus ignes.
(*Met.* 10.4-7)

He was present, it is true; but he brought neither the hallowed words, nor joyous faces, nor lucky omen. The torch also which he held kept sputtering and filled the eyes with smoke, nor would it catch fire for any brandishing. (trans. Miller et al.)

Unlike the disastrous ceremony performed by Hymenaeus at Orpheus' marriage, Calliope will bring happy wedding torches: *taedis genialibus* (*Silu.* 2.7.82) as well as festive marriage songs: *festis cantibus* (*Silu.* 2.7.88) to Lucan and Polla's marriage feast. This slightly humorous reference serves to lighten the poem, which already struggles with the tension between being a celebratory birthday poem, or *genethliacon*, and acting as a funerary eulogy. The irreverent character of Catullan hendecasyllabics should also be noted as a way of lightening the mood of the poem.[240]

Towards the end of the poem Statius prays that Lucan should be given a reprieve from the afterlife in order to celebrate his birthday with his wife. The gods of the Underworld are

[240] Morgan 2010: 108.

described as *deos silentum* (*Silu.* 2.7.121, 'gods of the silent ones'), which makes Lucan's continued singing, even after death, appear in stark relief. Just like Orpheus before him, Lucan will be able to overcome death. However, though this can be seen as a kind of imperfect inversion of the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, in that Lucan takes on the role of an Orpheus who predeceased his wife rather than the other way around,[241] it might equally bring to mind the story of Laodamia and Protesilaus. In their case, the dead Protesilaus was returned to Laodamia for one day only, which is another, perhaps closer, mythic predecessor hinted at in the note on how common this is: *solet hoc patere limen* (*Silu.* 2.7.122, 'that door is apt to be open'). The *limen* may thus be an allusion to *Catull.* 68, which includes a comparison with the brief joy Catullus and his girl enjoy in a house, made available to them by his friend Allius, and the fate of Laodamia and Protesilaus. In this poem, the simile is introduced by the unlucky omen of Catullus' *domina* stepping on the doorstep, or *limen*:

intulit et trito fulgentem in *limine* plantam
innixa argute constituit solea,
coniugis ut quondam flagrans aduenit amore
Protesilaeam Laudamia domum.
(*Catull.* 68.71-74)

…stepped, and set the sole of her shining foot on the smooth threshold, as she pressed on her slender sandal: even as once Laodamia came burning with love to the house of Protesilaus. (trans. Cornish et al.)

However, this is a more oblique reference, and it hardly subtracts from the focus upon the myth of Orpheus as subtext.

The poem's most direct allusion to a literary predecessor in the passages on Orpheus is of course the mention of Lucan's own lost work entitled *Orpheus* which is linked with a work about Nero, *Laudes Neronis*: *ingratus Nero dulcibus theatris | et noster tibi proferetur Orpheus* (*Silu.* 2.7.57-58, 'Ungrateful Nero and our Orpheus you shall recite to kindly theaters'). We have four fragments attributed to this *Orpheus*, some in hexameter form, some in prose summaries, which seem to refer to Orpheus' enchantment of the underworld's denizens (Lucan fr.1 Courtney), their anticipation of hearing Orpheus again after his loss of Eurydice (Lucan fr. 2 Courtney), and the enchantment of wild beasts (Lucan fr. 3 Courtney) and fauns (Lucan fr. 4 Courtney).[242]

[241] Liddell 2003: 28.
[242] Courtney 1993: 352–53.

The metre of these fragments would suggest a mini-epic or epyllion, but presumably one intended for public recitation, given the reference to *theatris* (*Silu.* 2.7.57). The highly scanty survival of Lucan's poem does not however permit us to say very much about its contents, nor its exact relationship with the lost *Laudes Neronis*.[243] I would just like to note that the context is a bit puzzling: could the previous line's (57) reference to the Underworld, provided that we take this as an introduction to the subsequent lines and choose to see the two poems as connected by Statius, indicate that Lucan wrote one poem in which the plot was centered upon descriptions of Orpheus, and another on Nero acting as a bard where perhaps he included allusions to Orpheus having a poetic showdown with Nero in a comic manner, or flattering manner, inspired, let's say, by the descriptions of Orpheus in the afterlife in *Aen.* 6 and *Met.* 11 and the poetic contest of the *Frogs*? Whatever this poem by Statius can teach us about Lucan's lost work, it can be seen to constitute a prime example of a poet employing the myth of Orpheus to express the themes of both poetic prowess and conjugal lament within a single narrative. As we shall see, it is also typical of the next poems under consideration in this chapter in that all three poets manage to include praise for another poet's oeuvre in reprising a figure of myth referred to in the work of that other poet.

2.8 *Carm.* 1.24: Virgil as Orpheus – Quintilius as Eurydice

In the first book of his *Odes* Horace writes a striking poem of lament and of possible consolation:

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
tam cari capitis? praecipe lugubris
cantus, Melpomene, cui liquidam pater
    uocem cum cithara dedit.

ergo Quintilium perpetuus sopor
urget; cui Pudor et Iustitiae soror
incorrupta Fides nudaque Veritas
    quando ullum inueniet parem?

multis ille bonis flebilis occidit,
nulli flebilior quam tibi, Vergili.
tu frustra pius, heu, non ita creditum

[243] van Dam places the two poems close in time and suggests that the latter might have been anything from a mime to a dramatic monologue, see van Dam 1984: 480.

poscis Quintilium deos.

quid? si Threicio blandius Orpheo
auditam moderere arboribus fidem,
num uanae redeat sanguis imagini,
quam uirga semel horrida

non lenis precibus fata recludere
nigro conpulerit Mercurius gregi?
durum: sed leuius fit patientia
quidquid corrigere est nefas.
(*Carm.*1.24.1-20)

What restraint, what limit can there be to our sense of loss for one so beloved? Teach me a song of mourning, Melpomene, for our Father has given you a clear-toned voice and the lyre to accompany it. So then, sleep without end lies heavy on Quintilius. Modesty, and incorruptible Good Faith (sister of Justice), and naked Truth—when will they find his equal? Many a good man weeps at his death, and none weeps more than you, Vergil. You beg the gods to restore Quintilius, pleading that he was not entrusted to them on such terms; but your piety is all in vain. What if you could play more charmingly than Thracian Orpheus the lyre that was once heeded by the trees? Would blood return to the empty wraith once Mercury, who is never soft-hearted enough to open the gates of death in response to prayers, has driven it with his dreaded staff to join the dusky herd? It is hard. But endurance can make lighter what no one is allowed to put right. (trans. Rudd)

As with so many of Horace's poems this too is riddled with paradoxes and raises numerous questions. Firstly, it involves an interesting cast, and worthy of some comment. In the opening stanza, Melpomene (v. 3), later the tragic muse,[244] is invoked to inspire songs of mourning. This is puzzling: why should she do so if there is no point in singing, since even if Virgil were to outperform the superhuman poetic prowess of Orpheus, even this would not bring back the dead? Furthermore, is the invocation meant for Horace or for Virgil? The tragic and lyric muse Melpomene is a recurring character in Horace's poetry, as is also the case with Virgil, Quintilius and Orpheus, and stands in a close connection with the author himself. She appears in the *sphragis* to the first collection of the *Odes*: *et mihi Delphica | lauro cinge volens, Melpomene, comam*

[244] Nisbet and Hubbard notes that Horace is quite haphazard about assigning poetic provinces to the Muses he mentions by name, including Melpomene. She is of course less chosen for family connections, insomuch as she is the aunt of Orpheus. See Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 283.

(*Carm.*3.30.15-16, 'Melpomene ... , and if you would be so kind, surround my hair with Delphic bay, ') and also in the fourth book: *Quem tu, Melpomene, semel | nascentem placido lumine uideris* (*Carm.*4.3.1-2, 'The man whom you, Melpomene, have once looked on with kindly eyes...'. In virtue of her connection with the instruments of the lyre family, we may even be tempted to see her as the unnamed muse in these lines from the *Ars Poetica*::'*… ne forte pudori | sit tibi Musa lyrae sollers et cantor Apollo.*' (*AP.*406-407, 'So you need not blush for the Muse skilled in the lyre, and for Apollo, god of song'). In all of these later instances, Horace seems preoccupied with the everlasting quality of poetic renown, and it is possible to see something similar at play in *Carm.* 1.24. Words used about poetry and of Melpomene herself are mirrored in two of the later poems. There is a parallel between the eternal character of the renown granted by Melpomene in *Carm.* 4.3 to anyone she has 'looked on with kindly eyes' and the eternal fate of anyone that is touched by Mercury's wand in *Carm.*1.24, which is also expressed in the similar composition of the sentences with (*quam ... semel*, *Carm*. 1.24.16) and (*quem … semel* 4.3.1). In the *Ars*, Horace questions the concept of *pudor* – shy modesty – in relation to a poet's calling. Equally, in the opening of *Carm.* 1.24 he questioned if *pudor* is appropriate when longing for a deceased person, *Carm.*1.24.1). This concept may in turn lead us to take a closer look at how Quintilius is presented in the poem.

Quintilius appears in the *Ars Poetica* as the example of a candid critic: *Quintilio siquid recitares: 'corrige, sodes, | hoc' aiebat 'et hoc'* (*AP.* 438-439, 'If you ever read aught to Quintilius, he would say: 'Pray correct this and this'.') This passage is filled with legal language, positioning a would-be-poet as defendant against the judgment, or perhaps, the prosecution of the critic Quintilius: *si defendere delictum quam uertere malles* (*AP.* 442, 'If you preferred defending your mistake to amending it'). The critic is here hailed almost in the terms of the elder Cato's definition of a Roman orator, as recorded by Quintilian: *Sit ergo nobis orator quem constituimus is qui a M. Catone finitur uir bonus dicendi peritus* (*Inst. Orat*. 12.1.1, 'So let the orator whom we are setting up be, as Cato defines him, 'a good man skilled in speaking'.' In the *Ars* the description runs: *uir bonus et prudens uersus reprehendet inertis, | culpabit duros* (*AP.* 445-446, 'An honest and sensible man will censure lifeless lines, he will find fault with harsh ones', and he is even portrayed with a word connected with the office of censor: *arguet ambigue dictum, mutanda notabit* (*AP.* 449, 'He accuses that which has been said ambiguously, and marks faulty what must be changed').[245] The legalistic language used to describe the literary critic's profession in the *Ars* is reminiscent of the virtues represented by the goddesses mentioned in connection with Quintilius in *Carm.* 1.24, *Pudor* – Modesty,

[245] Brink comments on another part of the AP that the verb notare can be associated with the censor's black mark, the nota. See Brink 1971: 232.

Justitia – Justice, *Fides* –Trustworthiness and *Veritas* –Truth. We know little else about Quintilius other than this praise for his just literary criticism. His role as a beloved critic among the Augustan poets (*multis…bonis*, v. 9) may well also be the main reason for Virgil's particular sorrow (*nulli flebilior quam tibi*, v. 10). However, it is possible to read this emphasis upon Virgil's relationship with Quintilius as something more than literary affection and friendship.

In comparing Virgil's situation with that of Orpheus, Horace draws on the most common version of Orpheus' story in literature – his search for his lost wife Eurydice. Virgil's own version in the *Georgics* is echoed quite directly in the ode, at least at one point.[246] Just like Mercury is *non lenis precibus*, so too is Pluto described: … *Manisque adiit regemque tremendum | nesciaque humanis precibus mansuescere corda* (*G.* 4.469-470, 'He came to the Underworld and the terrible king, | and the hearts that could not be softened by human prayers.', trans. Fairclough). In Virgil's version there is a large emphasis upon the *furor* – madness, or sexual desire – that drove Orpheus into looking back and losing Eurydice, on the very point of retrieving her. Her final words upon vanishing forever make this clear: *illa 'quis et me' inquit 'miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu | quis tantus furor?* … (*G.*4.494-495, 'She said: What madness destroyed poor me, and you Orpheus, what great madness?'). Eurydice is blameless, and can in many ways be described as exhibiting the opposite quality of *furor* - namely *pudor* 'restraint'. Similarly, this was one of the qualities attached to Quintilius (*Carm.*1.24.6), emphatically positioned first in his 'catalogue of virtues'. It also appears in the opening line, and is given added force through repetition.

Akbar Khan has suggested that Horace may deliberately have reprimanded Virgil for his comparative lack of *pudor*:

> ' ... in his 'outweeping' others to whom the death of Quintilius brought grief, [Virgil] transgressed the limits of *pudor* ... Horace may well be hinting that Virgil does not possess to a sufficient degree a quality so obvious in the man whose death he mourns!'.[247]

Orpheus too is noted for his lack of restraint in grieving. When he mourned for Eurydice after his failed *katabasis*, Virgil lets Orpheus mourn for a full seven months:

> septem illum totos perhibent ex ordine mensis
> rupe sub aëria deserti ad Strymonis undam
> fleuisse...

[246] Thom notes that the 'tone and the details … mirrors that of Vergil', see Thom 2014: 119.
[247] Akbar Khan in Anderson 1999: 76.

(*G.*4.507-509)

> Of him they tell that for seven whole months day after day beneath a lofty crag beside lonely Strymon's stream he wept. (trans. Fairclough)

In this way Horace may draw upon Virgil's own depiction of Orpheus in order to convey a point about moderation in grief, effectively advising Virgil with Virgil not to act like one of the characters in his own poems. In order to do so, he explicitly links Virgil with Orpheus' supreme poetic abilities in the penultimate stanza within the context of a hypothetical *katabasis* on Virgil's part.

This sounds very much like the situation of the Epitaphist considering the possibility of a similar venture in the *Lament for Bion*. There we saw how the reference to Orpheus' *katabasis* could imply overtones of Orpheus' homoerotic associations in the Epitaphist's and Bion's suggested imitation of his attempt to rescue his beloved. If Horace is placing Virgil in the role of Orpheus, then by taking on the likeness of Eurydice, or at least her equivalent position as desired object for an attempted *katabasis*, Quintilius assumes a role in their relationship that goes above and beyond that of a friend and certainly that of a critic's professional relationship. Putnam also noted how the opening of *Carm.* 1.24 alludes to Catull.96 wherein Catullus tries to console his friend Calvus on the death of his wife Quintilia, whose name 'slides easily into Quintilius'.[248] If Horace is evoking this other poem in this instance, then we have an added emphasis upon the femine positioning of Quintilius vis-à-vis the active Virgil. Hinting towards a homoerotic relationship between the two may not least explain why Virgil is depicted as excessively grieving and why he mourns Quintilius more than anyone else, more even than any family members.

Regardless of how strong we judge their relationship to be, it is interesting to see how Horace lets Virgil take comfort in the fact that time and patience will heal his sorrow. In the closing stanza of the poem there is a contrast between the harsh realities of death, (*nigro … gregi, durum*), and the subsequent effect of *patientia*, namely to make the situation appear lighter, *leuius*. The herd of the dead shades is often referred to as light and insubstantial, *leuis*, as in the earlier poem of the *Odes* celebrating Mercury: '*leuem ... turbam*' (1.10.18-19). In this sense, patience will literally make death appear more like itself, not only lighter to bear. The underlying credo of accepting the realities of life and death is thus emphasized with a typically Horatian sleight of hand.

[248] Putnam 1992: 124

2.9 Conclusion

The figure of Orpheus can be used as an instrument for paying a poetic colleague a compliment in a way that combines comparisons between an addressee's poetic prowess and the strength of their feelings for a loved one. By looking at some Hellenistic, Augustan and Flavian poetry, it is possible to identify a tendency to include Orpheus in poetic lineages. This creation of imaginary bloodlines of poetic descent can then serve as vehicles of praise for a contemporary poet in identifying them as an heir to Orpheus' poetic mastery. It is also possible to see open or oblique references to an addressee's love and loss as reflected in the image of Orpheus. The love between Lucan and his wife Polla is central to Statius' *Siluae* 2.7, just as the love between Virgil and Quintilius is central to *Carm.* 1.24. The *Lament for Bion* is a special case in its double comparison with Orpheus, which not only lets the author compete with his master Bion over who is the better poet, but also enacts a kind of pederastic role-play. In all three cases, Orpheus appears to be a limiting poetic exemplar, whose failure to resurrect his wife creates an opening for comparisons with later poets by not setting the bar impossibly high.

Chapter 3: Virgil's Metamorpheus – looking backwards and forwards with Orpheus

3.1 A recurring Virgilian character

Virgil is a special case in terms of representations of Orpheus. Not only is he unique in that all three of his canonical texts feature Orpheus in lesser or greater roles, but they present the optimal case study for looking at the importance of genre with regard to Orpheus. It would be surprising if the manner of representing Orpheus remained constant across the *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and the *Aeneid*, and I will try to show in what ways the generic associations of Orpheus change from one poem to the next, what effect the inclusion, allusion to, or avoidance of the love story has upon these associations, and how this fits with earlier scholarship on the role of Orpheus in Virgil. As will become apparent, Orpheus' associations with love are never far away, even when they are not explicitly referred to, and love is a key element in understanding his function within Virgil's poetic corpus.

3.2. A framework for Orpheus' generic associations

Before approaching Virgil's representations of Orpheus, it might be best to consider in what ways the story of Orpheus lends itself to various genres, i.e. what generic potential is inherent in the myth, and then to apply these more general premises as a framework for the subsequent analysis of each Virgilian text.

As we have seen in the earlier chapters, Orpheus is a complex figure who could be used as an integral character within a broad range of genres and subgenres. This is clear from the examples in Greek poetry. Though ancient scholiasts were puzzled by his appearance among the Argonauts,[249] he could clearly be part of an heroic epic, in spite of his less martial virtues. After all, he was far from the only Argonaut who acted as a non-combatant during the expedition. Interestingly, his erotic aspect was not explicitly evoked by Apollonius, whereas his near contemporaries, Hermesianax and Phanocles, made it their focus as part of integrating Orpheus within erotic catalogue elegies. In the case of the *Lament for Bion*, Orpheus could be included as a predecessor and bucolic model, in particular due to the pathetic fallacy associated with his death (the motif of supernatural grief within the natural world, see Chapter 2).

[249] Karanika 2010: 393.

However, with the introduction of the love story and the *katabasis* towards the end of this poem, his credentials as model pastoral poet were left partially undermined.

What differentiates Orpheus' appearances within these poems is largely down to their inclusion or avoidance of those parts of his story that could be seen as characteristic of their respective genres. The epic characteristics of Orpheus are largely confined to his Argonautic sojourn, but equally, a *katabasis* like Orpheus' is an element we find in many epics, e.g. both in the *Odyssey* and in the *Aeneid*. The problem with Orpheus' *katabasis* in epic terms is that he differs from the heroic katabasts Odysseus and Aeneas in his failure to accomplish what he travelled to the Underworld to do. This does not stop epic poets from referring to the *katabasis*, as exemplified elsewhere by the *Orphic Argonautica*, but it makes such references more likely to point away from epic characteristics.

For a pastoral/bucolic poet, Orpheus offers a number of avenues for depicting him as an in-world, bucolic character. We have already noted his associations with the pastoral trope of pathetic fallacy in this regard. Acting like a kind of shepherd, albeit of trees and wild animals as opposed to the typical herds of most bucolic shepherd-singers, the story of Orpheus' lamenting in Thrace among beasts and applauding branches can certainly also be cast in a bucolic light. The trope of the bucolic master singer and his comparison with previous masters, what might be called bucolic agonism, is another viable route for making Orpheus part of a bucolic landscape. We saw how this agonistic trait in bucolic was combined with Orpheus' role as a benchmark of poetic excellence in the *Lament for Bion.* However, this role of Orpheus as a more or less perfect model for poetic excellence is not limited to bucolic, but can be seen as an overriding characteristic of how he is represented in poetry more generally. A better way to distinguish between the various parts of Orpheus' generic potential is to consider the importance of setting within each poetic genre. This is because the differences in setting provide a better way to explain the generic associations of the love story of Orpheus given that this differs markedly in setting from the other parts of his story.

If we return to the genres of epic and pastoral, we can notice how they differ markedly in scenario. The island-hopping and exotic landscapes of the Argonautic expedition provide a much broader backdrop to the pastoral landscapes of bucolic poetry, and these are easy to distinguish between. A more problematic case is the generic associations of Orpheus' *katabasis* and its Underworld setting. One category of these can be described as evoking love elegy.[250] The setting of Orpheus' entry into the Underworld, where he has to overcome Cerberus by

[250] For an overview of scholarship on Roman love elegy and its connections with Rome and the 'real' world of its poets, see Thorsen in Thorsen 2013: 15–18.

singing has clear parallels with a *paraklausithyron*, a song at or to the door of a beloved. This poetic theme is found in a number of genres,[251] but is perhaps most strongly associated with the *exclusus amator* of love-elegy. Like the typical *persona* in this elegiac subgenre, Orpheus can be construed as an elegiac lover who tries to gain access to his beloved's abode, and uses his poetry to convince a doorkeeper to let him in. Ovid's *Amores* 1.6 provides a good example of this setting, where the poet's *persona* attempts to convince a *ianitor* – doorkeeper – to let him into Corinna's house and therefore bedchamber.[252] A different side to the Underworld setting is its urban parts. Like a true Otherworld, the ancient Underworld was conceived of as a vast realm encompassing places and landscapes similar to those of the world of the living. Even if the Hellish inn we encounter in the *Frogs*, where Heracles ate all the food without paying, is a comic invention on Aristophanes' part, there is at least one part of the Underworld that is universally filled with urban associations: the palace of Hades and Persephone. When Orpheus pleads before the gods of the Underworld to release Eurydice, this implicitly brings with it a modicum of urban associations, and this makes the next part of Orpheus' *katabasis* closer to the urban setting of love-elegy.

However, as with all *katabaseis*, any description of a visit to the Underworld would not be complete without some larger overview of its many famous inhabitants as well as their alloted spaces within the overall landscape. Outside of the palace of Hades, this landscape is typically described as more of a rural scene where rivers, meadows, trees and rocks constitute the main features. This part of Orpheus' *katabasis* is therefore more evocative of pastoral. The earlier part of Orpheus' love story, which we find elaborated in the *Georgics*, is also within a pastoral setting. When Aristaeus chases Eurydice she is bitten by a snake near a riverbed. As such, the love story presents a mixed potential for generic associations, but which for the sake of simplicity can be summarised as both elegiac and pastoral.

This ambivalence can be taken further, insomuch as love is represented in slightly different, but largely overlapping ways within pastoral and elegy. Both of these genres put a large emphasis upon love as a theme, however, they differ in the overall centrality of love in comparison with other themes – we might think of the frequent stagings of poetic *agones* in pastoral – and more crucially, they present different degrees of dedication to love. The best place to look for this difference is in extreme situations where pastoral and elegiac lovers make radically different choices in their dedication to love. In the case of *Id.* 1, the very beginning of the extant Greek pastoral tradition opens with the story of the shepherd Daphnis who declines

[251] For examples from comedy, lyric, as well as elegy, see Canter 1920: 355.
[252] For the indebtedness of Ovid to earlier examples of paraklausithyra see Yardley: 1987: 183.

to admit defeat in his struggles with love, even when this point is pushed by the goddess of love in person. Instead, Daphnis continues to defy the power of love and provoke Aphrodite's anger as he dies. Tellingly, the lamenting Daphnis blames love for his apparent suicide ἦ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὑπ' Ἔρωτος ἐς Ἄιδαν ἔλκομαι ἤδη (*Id.* 1.130), 'for I am now being haled away by Love to Hades.' Suicide as a cure for love is also discussed as a viable path in love-elegy (eg. by Ovid at *Am.* 3.14.41-42), but the subjective framing of this genre makes it less common, with some notable exceptions in those poems that are free from the constraints of a direct authorial *persona*-figure, e.g. the *Heroides*. In the struggle with love, a pastoral lover can therefore refuse to give in to love, as Daphnis refuses to do in life as in death, as well as in the afterlife, for that matter, where he boasts Δάφνις κὴν Ἄίδα κακὸν ἔσσεται ἄλγος Ἔρωτι (*Id.* 1.103), 'Even in Hades Daphnis will be a source of bitter grief for Love.' In contrast, a truly elegiac lover is doomed to lament and grieve out of lovesickness, but is ultimately defeated by love, and willing to admit it. As we shall see, this point is made abundantly clear in *Eclogue* 10, a poem that is concerned precisely with defining pastoral and elegy as different genres. There the elegiac poet Gallus is given the famous line *omnia uincit Amor*: *et nos cedamus Amori* (*Ecl.* 10.69), 'Love conquers all; let us, too, yield to Love!'.

3.3 *Orpheus in siluis*: Orpheus 'bucolicised' in the *Eclogues*

In the preceding chapter we have seen how Orpheus' inclusion in the pastoral tradition within the *Lament for Bion* could be interpreted as a limiting poetic exemplar for the Epitaphist and Bion. In that poem, poetic greatness could be seen as his defining characteristic. This greatness was limited by hints of his failed *katabasis*, but strengthened by allusions to the pathetic fallacy associated with his death. When Virgil imports Orpheus into his pastoral world he appears to follow a similar recipe of including him as an exemplar of poetic greatness, but without mentioning either the pathetic fallacy or his love story directly. Orpheus begins his Virgilian career in the *Eclogues* as a recurring background figure who above all is associated with his ability to control trees. This appears to be the defining feature of Orpheus' 'bucolisation' within the *Eclogue* world, but as we shall see, this simplification of the story of Orpheus creates tensions with his overall bucolic identity. These tensions will eventually surface as part of *Eclogue* 10, the collection's final poem, which exhibits a notable emphasis upon generic limitations. In this poem, the appearance of Gallus as a complex figure with clear Orphic overtones contrasts with the seemingly simpler Orphic figures of the preceding *Eclogues*, to which we first will turn our attention.

In *Eclogue* 1, the singer Tityrus is described as controlling trees, or forests, teaching them to echo the name of his beloved Amaryllis: ... *tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra | formosam resonare doces Amaryllida siluas* (*Ecl.*1.4-5). ' ... you, Tityrus, at ease beneath the shade, teach the woods to re-echo 'fair Amaryllis''. The association between Orpheus and woods/trees is given further air-time in *Eclogue* 3, where an image of Orpheus appears inscribed on a pair of cups:

Et nobis idem Alcimedon duo pocula fecit
et molli circum est ansas amplexus acantho,
Orpheasque in medio posuit siluasque sequentis
(*Ecl.*3.44-46)

I also have two cups, made by the same Alcimedon, and he has clasped their handles with twining acanthus, and in the centre placed Orpheus with the woods following him. (trans. Fairclough)

Kania sees this ekphrastic element as an image of Orpheus' poetical greatness, [253] and we may note that this is a recurring topos within the pastoral genre, clearly alluding to the similarly elaborate cup in Theocritus' *Id.* 1. There the story of Daphnis was preceeded by a description of an intricate cup, which just like the pair made by Alcimedon in *Eclogue* 3 was fashioned from wood. The ivy-wood cup of Theocritus was the prize won in a bucolic song contest between the singers Thyrsis and an unknown goatherd, and its intricate imagery evokes part of Homer's famous ekphrasis of Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18. Heerink notes how this ivy cup has been seen as a metapoetic object representing a *mise en abyme*, and in particular its image of a boy weaving a trap for grasshoppers can invite associations with a Callimachean poetical programme in its emphasis upon sophistication and attention to small details (See Chapter 4, page 176).[254] Virgil's inclusion of Orpheus on his ekphrastically elaborated cup in *Eclogue* 3 can therefore be seen to add to an interpretation of how Orpheus functions as a kind of pastoral representative within the *Eclogues* world.

In *Eclogue* 4, the poem's pastoral narrator is comparing himself with Orpheus in terms of poetic prowess, and boasts that he will surpass him and all other poetic exemplars:

non me carminibus uincet nec Thracius Orpheus
nec Linus, huic mater quamuis atque huic pater adsit,
Orphei Calliopea, Lino formosus Apollo.

[253] Kania 2012: 673–74.
[254] Heerink 2015: 59–63.

(*Ecl.* 4.55-57)

[Then] shall neither Thracian Orpheus nor Linus vanquish me in song, though mother give aid to the one and father to the other, Calliope to Orpheus, to Linus fair Apollo. (trans. Fairclough)

This boast combines Orpheus with a number of other representatives of musical or poetic prowess (Apollo, Calliope, and Linus) but most of these are harder to pin down as having clearly bucolic associations to the exclusion of other genres. Orpheus' appearance within this outstanding group of poetic exemplars could therefore instead be interpreted to signal poetic greatness, and they should not primarily be seen as exclusively bucolic singers or exemplars. This representation of Orpheus within a broader ensemble of poetic grandees is reminiscent of the similar role he was given within the *Lament for Bion*, and is something which Virgil revisits later in the *Eclogues*.

In *Eclogue* 6, Orpheus is presented in parallel with Apollo as an emblem of the poetic greatness of Silenus. The central song of Silenus, which constitutes the main portion of this poem, is described as having the following effect:

tum uero in numerum Faunosque ferasque uideres
ludere, tum rigidas motare cacumina quercus;
nec tantum Phoebo gaudet Parnasia rupes,
nec tantum Rhodope miratur et Ismarus Orpheus.
(*Ecl.* 6.27-30)

Then indeed you might see Fauns and fierce beasts sporting in measured dance, and unbending oaks nodding their crests. Not so does the rock of Parnassus rejoice in Phoebus; not so do Rhodope and Ismarus marvel at their Orpheus. (trans. Fairclough)

The typically Orphic power to move trees is here applied to Silenus, and is juxtaposed with Orpheus' own power to enchant his native mountains, Rhodope and Ismarus. This highly positive comparison becomes part of Silenus' 'bucolic' repertoire. Interestingly, Orpheus is here mentioned with regard to the positive emotional effects he had upon the mountains of Thrace (exemplified by the mountain range Rhodope), which *miratur* 'marvel' (v. 6.30) at Orpheus to a

lesser degree than the Fauns, wild beasts and oak trees delight in Silenus' song.[255] This personification of the landscape can be described as the opposite of the tragic pathetic fallacy associated with the death of great poets such as Bion in the *Lament for Bion*, which there became a benchmark of poetic greatness. In *Eclogue* 6, the grieving for a dead poet is replaced with delight at a poet who may be alive or dead at the time (Orpheus), whom we are made to imagine in a somewhat similar scene to that of Silenus' audience of trees and woodland denizens. This positive depiction of Orpheus is highly in keeping with the playful tone of this eclogue, which mixes more solemn imagery with scenes that are reminiscent of mimes.[256] There is indeed a solemn side to the Orphic characteristics that are superimposed upon Silenus. His choice of cosmogony as the theme for his opening number (vs. 6.31-40) recalls Orpheus' first song in Apollonius' *Argonautica*.[257]

This seemingly strong Orphic character of Silenus is not limited to his role within the poem, however, for, as Silenus proceeds to sing, he continues far beyond more cosmogonical themes to include a description of a scene of poetic initiation:

Tum canit, errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum
Aonas in montis ut duxerit una sororum,
utque uiro Phoebi chorus adsurrexeris omnis;
ut Linus haec illi diuino carmine pastor
floribus atque apio crinis ornatus amaro
dixerit: 'hos tibi, dant calamos (en accipe) Musae,
Ascraeo quos ante seni, quibus ille solebat
cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos.
his tibi Grynei nemoris dicatur origo,
ne quis sit lucus quo se plus iactet Apollo.'
(*Ecl.* 6.64-73)

Then he sings of Gallus, wandering by the streams of Permessus—how one of the sisterhood led him to the Aonian hills, and how all the choir of Phoebus rose to do him honour; how Linus, a shepherd of immortal song, his locks crowned with flowers and bitter parsley, cried to him thus: 'These reeds—see, take them—the Muses give you—even those they once gave the old Ascraean, wherewith, as he sang,

[255] The inclusion of Fauns has been variously interpreted, e.g. as representative of older Latin poetry through their connection with the Saturnian metre, see Ross 1975: 25, or as Roman counterparts to Silenus, see Virgil and Coleman 1994: 182.
[256] Coleman 1994: 182 (note on line 27); 203.
[257] Ross 1975: 28. See also Kania 2016: 61, n. 85.

he would draw the unyielding ash trees down the mountain sides. With these do you tell of the birth of the Grynean wood, that there may be no grove wherein Apollo glories more.' (trans. Fairclough)

At this stage it is the poet Gallus, the founder of Latin love elegy,[258] who is described as inheriting pipes that mirror Orpheus' powers to move trees (vs. 71-72). This linking of the typical bucolic instrument (pipes) with the figure of Orpheus illustrates Virgil's attempts at 'bucolicising' Orpheus insomuch as the latter's preferred instrument, the lyre, is replaced. As an elegiac poet, Gallus similarly has been partially 'bucolicised' in order to accomodate him within the *Eclogue* world. Noting Propertius' echoes of Gallus' 'initiation' at *Prop*. 2.13.3-8, Coleman sees this primarily as praise for Gallus' elevation into a higher form of elegy.[259] Ross interpreted Gallus' initiation as key to understanding the poem's overall meaning. From the seemingly variegated hodge-podge of themes we encounter within the song of Silenus (which range from the opening cosmogonical element to stories of love, loss, and metamorphosis), Ross saw a unified conception of poetry as emerging from an analysis of the dramatis personae in Gallus' inititation scene: the Muses, Linus, Hesiod, Apollo, and crucially, Orpheus.[260] These famous poets and divinities mainly represent what Ross dubs 'scientific poetry' as an extension beyond the more established term 'Hesiodic-Callimachean poetry',[261] whereas Elder has suggested a more restrained concept of describing the model figures as Virgil's 'House of Inspiration'.[262] Harrison notes the links with Hesiod (who had depicted Linus as a character) and Callimachus, but also emphasises the connections between the figure of Silenus and the poet Parthenius, Virgil's teacher of Greek, who had composed a *Metamorphoses*, which is possibly echoed in the mythic narratives of Silenus' song.[263] Parthenius was associated with both Virgil and Gallus, as he had written a prose repertory of mythic narratives for the use of Gallus, the *Erotica Pathemata*. Parthenius' suggestions may also have lain behind the scene of the Gryneian Grove of Apollo:

> This scene of poetic consecration, then, presents Gallus with a topic associated with Parthenius, and it is tempting to see in the presentation of the poetic pipes by Linus to Gallus a parallel to Parthenius' own provision of poetic themes for Gallus...[264]

[258] See e.g. Raymond in Thorsen 2013.
[259] Coleman 1994: 196.
[260] Ross argues that the reference to Orphic powers to move trees at *Eclogues* 6.71 need not be taken with the subsequent reference to Hesiod, and can therefore act as an even stronger allusion to Orpheus himself, see Ross 1975: 23.
[261] Ross 1975: 28–31.
[262] Elder 1961: 114.
[263] Harrison 2007: 47–55.
[264] Harrison 2007: 56.

Even if this is proposing too much unity for a highly disparate mix of poetical exemplars, it does provide a good case for seeing Orpheus as central to Virgil's construction of poetical models for Gallus as well as for other bucolic characters within the *Eclogues*. In particular, it is revealing that Virgil repeats the highly poetologically laden word *deducere* from the opening *recusatio* of the poem in reference to Orpheus' powers.[265] Orpheus and the catalogue of poetic greats may also betray the influence of the catalogues found in Phanocles and Hermesianax (see Chapter 1).[266]

Eclogue 6 is important for understanding Virgil's use of Orpheus within the *Eclogues*, not merely given the elevated associations of poetic greatness he appears to convey himself, and confer upon Gallus, but precisely because this is the *Eclogue* that most clearly exhibits Virgil's close relationship with the *Lament for Bion*, in which Orpheus played an even more central role. The strong echoes of the *Lament* in *Eclogue* 6 have been noted by Paschalis. He singled out the shared identification of shepherds as bucolic poets (Linus and Bion), the demarcation of bucolic in opposition to heroic poetry, as well as the pervasive use of 'Orphean' elements in both poems.[267] What is even more enlightening is that Paschalis identifies thematic links between the mythological allusions and *aetia* of each text. Both poems draw heavily upon myths concerned with metamorphosis and lament (e.g. the nightingale at *Lament* v. 9 recurs as Philomela at *Eclogue* 6.78-81), which goes some way to explain Virgil's choice of a seemingly puzzling array of mythic references as part of a larger set of allusions to the *Lament*.[268]

What is missing from Paschalis' analysis is a perspective of tone, which seems to differ considerably between the two poems. As we have seen, the *Lament* may be a less than straightforward poem of lament that mixes agonistic elements with explicit praise for the dead Bion. However, its overriding tone is one of hyperbolic lament. In contrast, *Eclogue* 6 is introduced with the neoteric buzzword *ludere* (*Eclogue* 6.1); 'to play',[269] and can indeed be shown to play with a number of elements; most clearly with the expectations of its addressee, Varus, who is paid his due praise at the opening (vs. 6.6-12) before being left in the poem's wake. There is also a metrical pun at lines (6.27-28) where *in numerum ... ludere* 'dancing in rhythm/playing in metre' can be seen to allude to the fauns' generic associations with a poetic metre, the Saturnian, which carries with it a farcical, playful tone. The fauns both dance in time and play in a metre as the first examples of the several poetic figures included within the poem's compass. Their

[265] Ross 1975: 26–27.
[266] Stewart 1959: 197–98.
[267] Paschalis 1995: 617–19.
[268] Paschalis 1995: 619–21.
[269] The neoteric associations are noted by Coleman 1994: 175. For a slightly different angle on neoteric poetologically significant words see Krostenko's chapter in Skinner 2011: 212–32.

association with the Saturnian metre also bridges the gap between the playful rusticity of the opening section and the prophetic song of Silenus, as the Saturnian metre was associated with prophets and oracles by ancient Roman writers (e.g. Ennius).[270] In combination with the mainly Hellenistic and Greek poetic connections featured in Silenus' song and the poetic initiation scene of Gallus, this also positions Gallus at the end of a Roman poetic tradition in its most mythical, archaic forms.

The poem arguably also plays with one of its main model texts, the *Lament*. In some small way, *Eclogue* 6 can be understood as an inversion of the tone of the *Lament*, but with a mirroring of its context of praise. This inversion is evident in the positive reactions of mountains and trees to the music of Silenus and Orpheus (vs. 6.28-30), and secondly in the replacement of the living poet Gallus for the dead Bion. Just as Bion's position as model poet for its author was central to the *Lament*, so Gallus is elevated among the poetic pantheon of Silenus' song and emerges as a secondary addressee of the overall poem. Virgil does however differ in his choice of Gallus as an object for praise since the two belong to different poetic genres, and Virgil cannot therefore lay claim to following directly in the latter's footsteps. His strategy for including praise for Gallus in a bucolic setting is therefore characterised by attempts to 'bucolicise' him in order to invite him into the bucolic world of the *Eclogues*. Orpheus plays a small, but crucial role in this respect, as his powers become a marker for poetic excellence within Gallus' initiation.

However, it is up to the mythic (half-) brother of Orpheus, Linus, to play the part of inviting Gallus to this bucolic world, and Linus is accordingly described in terms that are much more reminiscent of a bucolic poet: *diuino carmine pastor* (v. 6.67), 'a shepherd of divine song'. Ross goes as far as interpreting Orpheus and Linus as representative of different branches of the same poetic genealogy, representing 'scientific poetry' and 'pastoral alternative', respectively.[271] He also traces the inclusion of Orpheus here to the lost poetry of Gallus himself, and sees the whole initiation scene as ultimately dependent upon a Gallan passage.[272] If Orpheus did feature in Gallus, which is entirely plausible given his background as an important character in Hellenistic elegy, then this would further dissociate him from the narrower label of being a bucolic model poet. It would also add to Orpheus' associations with the genre of elegy, which becomes important for interpreting the role of Orpheus in the background of the final poem of Virgil's *Eclogues*. In particular, Orpheus' possible generic ambivalence in *Eclogue* 6

[270] Wiseman 2006: 516–20.
[271] Ross 1975: 30.
[272] Using Propertius 2.13.3-8 as a point for triangulating this lost Gallan passage, where Propertius reused Hesiod, the Muses, Orpheus, Linus, and woods in connection with each other, see Ross 1975: 34–36.

teaches us that we do not need to pin down Orpheus' appearance in *Eclogue* 10 as too connected with either pastoral or elegy.

If we turn to *Eclogue* 8, we find a highly interesting passage with regards to Orpheus. There the intending suicide Damon sings a bitter prayer where he desires the total upheaval of the world:

> nunc et ouis ultro fugiat lupus, aurea durae
> mala ferant quercus, narcisso floreat alnus,
> pinguia corticibus sudent electra myricae,
> certent et cycnis ululae, sit Tityrus Orpheus,
> Orpheus in siluis, inter delphinas Arion.
>
> (*Ecl.* 8.52-56)

Now let the wolf even flee before the sheep, let rugged oaks bear golden apples, let alders bloom with daffodils, let tamarisks distil rich amber from their bark, let owls, too, vie with swans, let Tityrus be an Orpheus – an Orpheus in the woods, an Arion among the dolphins! (trans. Fairclough)

The name Tityrus (v. 55) here refers back to the opening poem, where we saw that Tityrus was indeed represented as sharing in Orpheus' powers to control trees, teaching them to sing of his beloved (*Ecl.* 1.4-5). In the magical realm of Virgil's bucolic world there are clear hints that Orphic powers are within reach for its shepherd singers, but Damon's prayer presents this as a marvel comparable with wolves fleeing from sheep. Kania points out that the *Eclogues* 'permit a plurality of singer-herdsmen to touch Orphic greatness. But, given the sporadic availability of such powers, there is no preeminent figure in the *Eclogue* world.'[273] Given the uncertainty about what degree of 'Orphic greatness' that is truly obtainable within the *Eclogue* world, it becomes possible to see Orpheus once again as more of a benchmark of poetic greatness than as a defining model bucolic poet.

If we think further about the representation of Orpheus in *Eclogue* 8, then the very repetition and qualification inherent in lines 8.55-56 point towards the broader characteristics of Orpheus, of which his bucolic associations are but one of many aspects. In the earlier discussion about how to create a framework for analysing Orpheus' generic associations we have seen how differences in setting could function as an important distinguishing feature between genres. Clearly, this principle for demarcation seems to be hinted at by Virgil at this

[273] Kania 2016: 62.

point. In the *Eclogue* world, the word *siluae* (v. 56) appears, together with a number of related terms for vegetation (cf. *myricae*, *nemus*, *arbusta*), as a symbolic metonym that is used to demarcate the pastoral genre itself.[274] *Eclogue* 8 thus makes it plain that Orpheus may be and indeed has been incorporated into the pastoral genre, and that he, unlike its aboriginal flora, is an outsider to the genre who requires adaptations to be included within its scope. We might ask ourselves: 'what kind of Orpheus should Tityrus be?', and Damon will explain that he should be like Orpheus when he was in the woods, not anywhere else, e.g. on a heroic expedition with Jason or down in the Underworld. At this point in the collection, the stage is set for a zooming out from the narrow scope of the 'bucolicised' Orpheus, which now can be seen as confined to those parts of his life he spent among trees, and not among shades or Argonauts. If we think back to the 'bucolicised' Orpheus of the *Lament for Bion*, we can therefore see that the love story, belonging partially in a location (the Underworld) other than the bucolic *siluae*, is marked out as only partially compatible with Orpheus' pastoral associations.

3.4. Orpheus in *Eclogue* 10

Scholars have approached the final poem of the *Eclogues* as an intricate riddle of a text, e.g. Conte described interpreting it as 'following a path as crooked as Theseus'.[275] The complexity of this poem is largely down to the fact that it combines the elegist Gallus as its central character with a reworking of Theocritus' *Idyll* 1 and its central character, the dying bucolic singer Daphnis. In adding this ring composition, harking back to what may well have been the opening of Theocritus' bucolic poems, Virgil not only creates a closural effect within his own collection, but within the genre of pastoral itself. The intermingling of elegiac elements, with a combination of characters that are leading representatives for love elegy and bucolic, respectively, creates a number of tensions. These have variously been interpreted as a demonstration of the incompatability of the two genres,[276] whereas others have seen Gallus as more integrated within bucolic or pastoral in a way that illustrates the limits of this genre in curing love or war, whilst celebrating its generosity vis-a-vis other genres.[277] In a similar vein to this, Kania attempts to show how Gallus can be seen not as an alien figure, but as an integrated character within Virgil's fictional world. He argues that Gallus' depiction in the poem can be seen as part of a sequence of *Eclogues* concerned with suffering lovers (2 and 8), and in particular with the pathetic fallacy.[278]

[274] Harrison 2007: 36–37, 45.
[275] Conte 1986: 103.
[276] Conte 1986: 100–129, and e.g. Putnam 1970.
[277] This is the argument of Perkell 1996: 138.
[278] Kania 2016: 145.

This theme is also central to Orpheus' story and echoes of this can be seen reflected in Gallus within the poem.[279] Kania's main point is that both Corydon in *Eclogue* 2 and Damon in *Eclogue* 8 try to overcome love through art and performance, but cannot overcome it, and so 'Gallus' suffering proves that he belongs'.[280]

This course of action is equally relevant in the case of Orpheus, perhaps the greatest example of a supreme artist attempting to sing his way out of love, but rather than seeing this as a group of four unhappy lovers that all belong within the same category, by adopting a perspective of differences in action it is possible to notice important distinguishing features between Corydon and Damon on the one hand, and Gallus and Orpheus on the other. However, we shall see that there still are good arguments to be made for seeing Orpheus as belonging more closely with Damon and Corydon within the pastoral ambit, particularly if we return to considerations of settings and their generic associations.

The crucial question for our concerns is to what extent Gallus and Orpheus represent opposing or convergent generic associations in *Eclogue* 10. Their adopted courses of action with regard to love could be revealing in this instance, particularly when we compare these with those of other pastoral characters who are faced with troublesome love. In *Eclogue* 2, the shepherd Corydon pours out his suffering at finding his advances to the attractive boy Alexis unreciprocated. This poem is clearly using *Idyll* 11 as an important intertext, where Polyphemus similarly lays bare his wounded heart. As Du Quesnay points out in his study of Virgil's use of *Idyll* 11 as the main intertext for *Eclogue* 2: 'A gentle humour which pervades the whole poem derives from the reader's constant awareness that Corydon is acting out the role of Theocritus' Polyphemus.'[281] In its sexual configuration, Virgil's poem is also reminiscent of Orpheus as suffering pederastic lover as depicted in Phanocles' *Fr.* 1. What is shared between the slightly more bucolic characters Corydon and Polyphemus is their ultimate turning away from the objects of their desire. In the case of Polyphemus this is made clear towards the end of *Idyll* 11, when he asks himself: ... τί τὸν φεύγοντα διώκεις; | εὑρησεῖς Γαλάτειαν ἴσως καὶ καλλίον' ἄλλαν (*Idyll* 11.75-76), 'why do you pursue someone who flees? Maybe you'll find another Galatea who is even prettier'. In the final line of *Eclogue* 2, which recalls the Theocritan passage, Corydon addresses himself: ... *inuenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexin* (*Ecl.* 2.73), 'you will find another Alexis, if this one scorns you'. In the case of Phanocles' representation of Orpheus, he ends up considering no such thing, but continues to pursue Calaïs right up until his death. A highly

[279] Kania 2016: 150; See also Ross 1975: 92–96.
[280] Kania 2016: 150.
[281] Du Quesnay 1979: 41.

different, but equally fatal, decision is undertaken by the shepherd Damon in *Eclogue* 8, who decides to leap to a watery grave as the final cure for his lovesickness: *praeceps aërii specula de montis in undas | deferar; extremum hoc munus morientis habeto* (*Ecl.* 8.59-60), 'Headlong from some towering mountain peak I will throw myself into the waves; take this as my last dying gift'. This defiant opposition to continuing to love echoes the defiant Daphnis of *Idyll* 1, who indeed is associated with Damon in the second half of *Eclogue* 8, where a fellow shepherd, Alphesiboeus, laments the latter's suicide and sings about Daphnis.

If we look at Gallus' attitude towards love as depicted in *Eclogue* 10, we find a rather different course of action. Gallus at first contemplates replacing his affection for Lycoris with other objects for his love, like Corydon had done:

> certe siue mihi Phyllis siue esset Amyntas
> seu quicumque furor (quid tum, si fuscus Amyntas?
> et nigrae uiolae sunt et uaccinia nigra),
> mecum inter salices lenta sub uite iaceret;
> serta mihi Phyllis legeret, cantaret Amyntas
> (*Ecl.* 10.37-41)

Surely, my darling, whether it were Phyllis or Amyntas, or whoever it were—and what if Amyntas be dark? violets, too, are black and black are hyacinths—my darling would be lying at my side among the willows, and under the creeping vine above—Phyllis plucking me flowers for a garland, Amyntas singing me songs. (trans. Fairclough)

However, the memory of Lycoris dispenses with any such fanciful ideas as she immediately follows in his stream of thought:

> hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori,
> hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer aeuo.
> nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis
> tela inter media atque aduersos detinet hostis.
> tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere tantum)
> Alpinas, a! dura niues et frigora Rheni
> me sine sola uides. a, te ne frigora laedant!
> a, tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!
> (*Ecl.* 10.42-49)

Here are cold springs, Lycoris, here soft meadows, here woodland; here with you, only the passage of time would wear me away. But now a mad passion for the stern god of war keeps me in arms, amid clashing steel and fronting foes; while you, far from your native soil—O that I could but disbelieve such a tale!—gaze, heartless one, on Alpine snows and the frozen Rhine, apart from me, all alone. Ah, may the frosts not harm you! Ah, may the jagged ice not cut your tender feet! (trans. Fairclough)

This passage is characterised by the pathetic touch of using the repeated apostrophic onomatopoeion, *a* (used once each in vs. 10.47,48, and 49). Gallus has clearly forgotten all else and is absorbed by his worries for Lycoris who is detained by the Rhine in the cold north. His subsequent plans of curing his lovesickness through living in the wilderness and spending his time either carving poetry into trees (vs. 10.52-54) or hunting wild boars in the company of nymphs (vs. 10.55-57) are ultimately recognised as futile:

60 ... tamquam haec sit nostri medicina furoris,
aut deus ille malis hominum mitescere discat.
iam neque Hamadyrades rursus nec carmina nobis
ipsa placent; ipsae rursus concedite siluae.
(*Ecl.*10.60-63)

As if this could heal my frenzy, or as if that god could learn pity for human sorrows! Once more Hamadryads and even songs have lost their charms for me; once more farewell, even ye woods! (trans. Fairclough)

The futility of such endeavours is further accentuated when Gallus claims that even if he went to the ends of the world, exemplified by the northerly river Hebrus and the southerly Aethiopians (vs. 10.65-68), nothing could cure his love. Faced with this conclusion, Gallus choses to do something that clearly sets him apart from either Corydon or Damon; he decides to continue to pursue his love even if this too were to be ultimately futile: *omnia uincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori* (*Ecl.* 10.69), 'Love conquers all; let us, too, yield to Love!'.

Ross sees this final section of the poem as particularly evocative of Orpheus. He notes that the river Hebrus is mainly associated with him and recalls the earlier links between Gallus and Orpheus in *Eclogues* 6, before eventually concluding that 'not even by drinking the cold (Orphic) waters can he [Gallus] change love...'.[282] Ross links this emphasis upon the cold wilderness of the North with Orpheus' sojourn in a wintry landscape following his second loss

[282] Ross 1975: 93.

of Eurydice in the *Georgics* (4.517-519), and sees both passages as examples of how Virgil plays with associations between cold landscapes and the inability to overcome personal loss through the magic of poetry.[283] Ross' interpretation of Orpheus' role in the *Eclogues* presents an extreme position where his main role is to compliment Gallus as symbolic of important aspects of his poetry. His arguments for this draw upon later texts, notably Propertius and the *Georgics*, as well as on putative reconstructions of Gallus' largely lost poetry. However, if we instead limit ourselves to looking at texts that precede the *Eclogues*, we might reach firmer inferences about Orpheus' function within the collection.

If we wish to put the parallels between Orpheus and Gallus as lovers to the test, then we should look at the surviving sources Virgil could draw upon in incorporating Orpheus. The main surviving representations of Orpheus in love prior to Virgil are those by Phanocles and Hermesianax, as discussed in Chapter 1. In Phanocles' representation, Orpheus' story is told from the point where he sings to try to soothe himself in his perturbed state of love for Calaïs and concludes with his promotion of pederasty among the men of Thrace, which causes his murder at the hands of a group of Thracian women. Like Gallus in *Eclogue* 10, Orpheus as pederast refuses to deviate from his preferred course of action in the field of love. Similarly, in Hermesianax's account, Orpheus is driven to his *katabasis* out of his love for Agriope. Both of these Hellenistic poems can be seen as precursors of Roman love-elegy, and as such, there clearly is some potential for linking Orpheus with Gallus in *Eclogue* 10, purely in terms of their strategies as elegiac lovers. However, this seems to be a course that is avoided by Virgil; in fact, the crucial verses in *Eclogue* 10 that can be used for linking the two characters try to accomplish the very opposite.

If we turn to look at the settings of Orpheus and Gallus as represented in *Eclogue* 10, their situation appears rather less similar. Before the poem's climactic final line uttered in the *persona* of Gallus, where he gave in to love (or to love-elegy), he protests that even if he accomplished a plethora of pastoral *adynata*, he could not change Amor (or love-elegy as a genre):

non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,
nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque niues hiemis subeamus aquosae,
nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo,
Aethiopum uersemus ouis sub sidere Cancri.

[283] Ross 1975: 94.

(*Ecl.* 10.64-68)

No toils of ours can change that god, not though amid the keenest frosts we drink the Hebrus and brave the Thracian snows and wintry sleet, not though, when the dying bark withers on the lofty elm, we drive to and fro the Ethiopians' sheep beneath the star of Cancer! (trans. Fairclough)

Harrison follows Conte in interpreting *Eclogue* 10 as a metaliterary, symbolically significant poem:

> The pastoral genre of the *Eclogue* book is disturbed by the irruption of the love-elegist Gallus; the prospect of Gallus' love-elegies being disturbed in turn and redirected towards pastoral is entertained, but in the end Gallus returns to love-elegy and the *Eclogue* book finally returns to Theocritean pastoral'[284].

On this reading, there is an important metageneric register to be identified among the poem's various characters, locations and creatures. The overriding strategy of the poem's metaliterary or metageneric confrontation seems to be to attach the majority of associations with love-elegy to Gallus, and a significant minority to a single other character, Amor, whereas the majority of the other elements to a smaller or larger degree can be seen to signal pastoral associations. Whilst there seems to be a large divide between these two categories, they are each quite flexible in what they encompass. Some of the poem's symbolic elements belong on the outskirts of their respective genre. Harrison notes this with regard to the relevant passage quoted above, in which Virgil alludes to Orpheus:

> ... the pastoral nature of the *adynata* of 65-68 and the extreme climates proposed for herding (as so often metaphorical for pastoral poetry) suggests that even the most flexible interpretation of pastoral will not allow its coexistence with or appropriation of Gallan love-elegy.[285]

When paired with the southernly Aethiopians as an extreme (vs. 65-68), it becomes clear that Thrace, represented through the river Hebrus (v. 65) and the toponym *Sithonias* (v. 66), here appears as marking the northern pole of the mythological landscape of Greco-Roman poetry, and is therefore very far from the central landscapes of pastoral alluded to earlier in the poem (notably Arcadia, referred to through its inhabitants, the *Arcades* (v. 31)). If we consider the

[284] Harrison 2007: 63.
[285] Harrison 2007: 73.

setting of Orpheus' story in Thrace in this manner, it becomes possible to see that he too, by implication must be seen as belonging on the outskirts of pastoral.

3.5 Orpheus in the *Eclogue* book

It is now possible to make some general observations about Orpheus' role and his generic associations in the *Eclogue* book as a whole. We have seen how Orpheus initially appeared as an integrated, succesfully 'bucolicised' background character in poems such as *Eclogue* 1. There, as elsewhere, his main characteristics were tied to his qualities as an exemplary, super-natural singer, whose poetic excellence was reflected through his ability to move trees to the tune of his music. However, this image conceals other aspects of Orpheus' story, above all his inability to overcome either death or the loss of his wife. The repeated omission of Orpheus' tragic love story creates an increasing tension throughout the *Eclogue* book. With each reference or allusion, we as readers are made to think back to Orpheus' story, and with each recollection there is an increasing risk that we happen to think of those other parts of Orpheus' story. When we finally approach the end of the collection, the last explicit reference and the last allusion to Orpheus (in *Eclogues* 8 and 10, respectively) both seem to point outwards to this broader picture. In *Eclogue* 8 we came face to face with the selectivity behind Virgil's Orpheus: in the *Eclogues* he was to be limited to being an 'Orpheus in the woods' who could act as a model for Tityrus, the first shepherd singer of the collection. This silvan Orpheus was highlighted by anaphora as being a special case – which clearly alluded to the broader picture from which he was demarcated.

A slightly different case could be seen in the closural *Eclogue* 10. There, Orpheus' pastoral associations were alluded to through references to his Thracian homeland, the setting for much of his life's story. In this final allusion, the Thracian backdrop for Orpheus' sojourn in the woods were depicted as belonging on the very fringes of the pastoral world, clearly in contrast to the Arcadian or Sicilian heartland of the genre's typical landscapes. As such, Virgil's representation of Orpheus' generic associations undergo a gradual change during the *Eclogue* book. In the earlier poems Orpheus appears fully 'bucolicised' as a seemingly integral part of the bucolic landscape. Yet as the pastoral poetic project of Virgil nears its completion, the 'bucolisation' of Orpheus becomes qualified as more of a fringe phenomenon, with hints at the other aspects of his story and with it also towards the more complex generic associations inherent in it. This paves the way for loosening Orpheus' seemingly watertight links with pastoral within Virgil's poetry, and allows for a more complex picture to emerge when Orpheus makes his comeback in the next Virgilian genre, didactic epic.

3.6 Orpheus' complex generic assocations in the *Georgics*

No other part of Virgil's oeuvre has been the object of a more intense scholarly debate and nowhere do we find a greater plurality of scholarly opinion than with regard to Orpheus' role in the *Georgics*.[286] To provide some ingenious solution to the interpretative difficulties identified in this area would therefore be just as miraculous as the resurrection of Aristaeus' bees. The latter story constitutes the narrative frame for Orpheus' which is embedded within the fourth book's theme of beekeeping, but Orpheus resonates with the overall message of the *Georgics* and can be seen as a key figure to the work as a whole. What follows is therefore a limited attempt at clarifying some of the aspects of Orpheus' role through the prism of his generic associations. I will follow the line of thought espoused by most scholars, who have seen Orpheus' inclusion within the work not merely as highly complex, but as symbolically significant. In particular, I will build upon Conte's first attempt at identifying an elegiac connection with Orpheus and Harrison's work on generic enrichment where he looks at Orpheus' role in regard to the *Georgics*' programme of intra-epic poetic ascent. The goal of this analysis is to see how the 'Georgic Orpheus' can illustrate how his love story can be used to create a high degree of metapoetical complexity, exhibiting generic associations with pastoral, love-elegy, and neoteric epyllia. I will argue that this complexity is deliberate in that Virgil uses Orpheus to thematise his looking back at his past work and that of other poets, especially in the preceding generation, whilst the figure of Aristaeus, together with other aspects of the *Georgics*, look forwards to new poetic projects, foreshadowing the *Aeneid*.

3.7 Contextualising Orpheus within the Georgics

The *Georgics* is Virgil's second poetic work, and is unusually metapoetical. In her study of ancient didactic poetry, Volk argues that this is partly down to the generic shift from pastoral, inasmuch as didactic poetry can be seen to be highly self-conscious. She explains this feature as defined by the use of explicit statements about poetic programmes (to teach readers about something, so-called didactic 'intent'), teacher-student constellations, direct references to the poetic nature of the text and to the framing of it as a spontaneous creation.[287] The *Georgics* exhibits all of these generic markers: its main narrator, who is revealed to be Virgil's poetic *persona* in a *sphragis* (vs.

[286] For a good overview of the main scholarship on Orpheus' role in the poem, see the relevant sections of the commentary by Thomas 1988. This may be supplemented with more recent discussions in Campbell 1996: 231–38; Lee 1996 and Anagnostou-Laoutides 2005 in addition to the works referred to later in my analysis.
[287] Volk 2002: 40.

4.559-566), claims to be singing an *Ascraeum carmen* (2.176), i.e. to be writing in the tradition of the didactic poet Hesiod of Ascra, and the subject matter is introduced with the opening lines:

> Quid faciat laetas segetes, quo sidere terram
> uertere, Maecenas, ulmisque adiungere uitis
> conueniat, quae cura boum, qui cultus habendo
> sit pecori, apibus quanta experientia parcis,
> hinc canere incipiam.
> (*G.* 1.1-5)

What makes the crops joyous, beneath what star, Maecenas, it is well to turn the soil, and wed vines to elms, what tending the cattle need, what care the herd in breeding, what skill the thrifty bees—hence shall I begin my song. (trans. Fairclough)

However, the *Georgics* is a very special type of didactic poem. Firstly, in the relative detachment of its speaker from the main work at hand, i.e. to instruct farmers in agriculture, viticulture, animal husbandry, and beekeeping, it differs markedly from its main Roman poetic model Lucretius' *De rerum natura*[288]. The *Georgics* also blends the world-views of its main intra-generic models, as summarised by Gale:

> For Lucretius, the imperfection of the world proves that the gods have no concern with human life; yet though death and decay are inevitable, happiness is easy to attain, simply by accepting the world as it really is. Hesiod's picture is grimmer: though worshipping the gods will bring its rewards, endless toil is inescepable, and success can be attained only through hard work. For Aratus, on the other hand, Zeus is a kindly father, akin to the Stoic *pronoia* (providence), and the universe is systematic and orderly. Virgil's text allows each of these models to predominate in turn...[289]

The *Georgics* is also unusual in the way that it constructs a highly complex teacher-student configuration that includes both *agricolae* (v. 1.101) 'farmers', as well as Virgil's patron, Maecenas. Volk argues that these two internal audiences are embedded within the text – in addition to its external audience – and she concludes that: 'The *Georgics* thus emerges as a work that takes poetic self-consciousness to an extreme level, drawing an extraordinary amount of

[288] Volk 2002: 137.
[289] Gale 2000: 58.

attention to the artificiality of its discourse'.[290] Finally, the poem appears to have a secondary theme outside (or perhaps, inside) its didactic project, namely to thematise Virgil's own poetic trajectory. We shall see that Orpheus plays a key part in this, in addition to his role within the didactic programme of the *Georgics*.

This metapoetic side of the poem manifests itself not only in the sphragis (4.559-566) where Virgil points back to his preceding body of poetry, the *Eclogues*, but also in references to what kind of poetry he could have written, and what he could write in the future.[291] Harrison sees the *Georgics* as an arena where Virgil can stage an intra-generic debate, negotiating a space among rival subgenres of the hexameter super-genre that encompasses heroic/martial epics generally and Homeric epic specifically, mock-epic, Theocritean pastoral, and neoteric epyllia.[292] This aspect of the poem's poetic programme can manifest itself in ways that not only confront other epic options, but can equally combine metaliterary and metageneric concerns with poetic praise for Augustus, the poem's other dedicatee.[293] Harrison illustrates this point in his analysis of a key section of the second book, the so-called *laudes Italiae* at vs. 2.136-176. Here, the comparison between eastern landscapes and Italian ones includes Callimachean hints of poetic superiority in the negative adjective *turbidus* (2.137) 'murky', which is used in reference to the river Hermus. This simultaneously alludes to the eastern conquests of Alexander, as well as to the encomiastic poetry of Choerilus and other of Alexander's court poets.[294] The tertiary goal of providing an encomium for Augustus is aligned with this metapoetical section in the end of the *laudes Italiae*, where Augustus is positioned within the same eastern environs, thereby replacing Alexander as military ideal:[295]

170 ... et te, maxime, Caesar,
qui nunc extremis Asiae iam uictor in oris
imbellem auertis Romanis arcibus Indum.
(*G.* 2.170-172)

... and you, greatest of all, Caesar, who, already victorious in Asia's farthest bounds, now drive the craven Indian from our hills of Rome. (trans. Fairclough)

[290] Volk 2002: 136.
[291] Volk 2002: 139.
[292] Harrison 2007: 136–37.
[293] Harrison 2007: 138–42.
[294] Harrison 2007: 139–42.
[295] Harrison 2007: 144, 148.

Choerilan-style encomiastic epic is only one example of poetic options that are rejected in the *Georgics* in favour of the poem's special brand of didactic epic. In the *proem* to book 3, we find a kind of *recusatio* where a number of subjects fit for poetic treatment are listed. These other poetic options are however introduced as inviable: *cetera, quae uacuas tenuissent carmine mentes |omnia iam uulgata* (*G.* 3.3-4, 'Other themes, which else had charmed with song some idle fancy, are now all trite.', trans. Fairclough). These other options are not necessarily critisised by the poem's speaker, they are merely incompatible with the goal of entertaining his audience.[296] This *recusatio* includes references to both less fashionable poets such as Choerilus and Panyassis, as well as to the more influential Apollonius and Callimachus.[297] Instead of the themes taken up by these writers, the speaker of the *Georgics* proceeds to a lengthy description of a future poetic project (vs. 3.10-39), whose topic will be the glory of Caesar Augustus. This promised poem seems more like a martial panegyric epic in the style of Varius, than the *Aeneid* that eventually was to follow,[298] but clearly indicates a direction upwards among the epic subgenres.

These preceding remarks will hopefully suffice to contextualise Orpheus within the overall characteristics of the *Georgics*, and we may now finally turn our attention to his narrative and its generic associations.

3.8 Orpheus and Aristaeus – a symbolic pair

The story of Orpheus is told in a convoluted manner as a kind of mythological digression from the main flow of the didactic plot. The second half of book 4 is mainly devoted to two lengthy narratives: that of Aristaeus, an agricultural demigod who undertakes a quest to resurrect his dead bees, and the story of Orpheus' love story, *katabasis*, and death, which is framed by Aristaeus' narrative. The core problem for scholars in interpreting Orpheus' role in the *Georgics* is the troubling balance, or lack thereof, between these two symbolically significant narratives.

One of the foremost interpretations was launched by Conte, who based his approach upon the premise that the seeming opposition between Aristaeus and Orpheus should be understood within the confines of a single unit, which he identifies as an inset epyllion. His approach is driven by a structuralist impetus to look at the text itself as the primary source of significance, and he advocates an 'organic reading'.[299] Conte's next point is especially relevant for my analysis. He acknowledges that Aristaeus and Orpheus are complex mythical heroes

[296] Volk sees lines 3.3-9 as quite humorous in tone, see Volk 2002: 146–47.
[297] Harrison 2007: 150–52.
[298] Harrison 2007: 154–55. Virgil's contemporary and friend, the poet Lucius Varius Rufus belonged to the circle of Maecenas and had composed a panegyric to Augustus, see Conte et al. 1999: 258.
[299] Conte 1986: 130–31.

who carry with them a wide range of associations (Orpheus much more so than Aristaeus), but he notes that Virgil's representations of them are highly specialised:

> ... his Orpheus is not a seer, a revealer of heavenly mysteries, or a demiurge of human progress [and] Virgil's Aristaeus is the most representative hero of the domain of the *Georgics*, since he possesses all the attributes that relate to the agricultural skills.[300]

That Aristaeus appears within the *Georgics* primarily in virtue of his connections with the poem's didactic message is by far the least unproblematic interpretation of his role. Though he may not generate a strong sympathy, particularly not with a post-Romantic modern audience, he, rather than Orpheus, can clearly be seen as the 'hero', whose choices and characteristics support the world-view espoused on the surface of the poem. What Conte makes clear is that out of Aristaeus and Orpheus, Orpheus is the figure who is harder to pin down, but that it is possible to identify the salient features of what he represents within the poem. By comparing the careers of the two figures within the *Georgics*, what I have referred to as their different courses of action, Conte argues that the pair can be seen as representative of two 'ways of life', that of a pious farmer, and that of a lover.[301] What engenders a greater complexity for Orpheus is the fact that he not only is a lover, but is depicted as a *love-poet*, given that he sings of the loss of his bride Eurydice.[302] Conte notes the elegiac associations inherent in Orpheus' paradoxical poetic power that ultimately is both fuelled and undermined by love:

> The effects of this paradox are widespread in elegiac poetry: poetry that is born to offer consolation for the unhappiness of erotic passion («*solans aegrum...amorem*»; solacing anguished love [*G.* 4.464] is, in the end, condemned to mirror that passion painfully («*flesse sibi et gelidis haec euoluisse sub antris.*»; he wept, and in the chill caverns related these events [*G.* 4.509]).[303]

Seen against this interpretation it is only a short step to ask: is Orpheus in the *Georgics* primarily a representative of love-elegy?

[300] Conte 1986: 133.
[301] Conte 1986: 134–35.
[302] Conte 1986: 135–36.
[303] Conte 1986: 136.

3.9 Love-elegy and the 'Georgic Orpheus'

Conte has noted one area where we can look for associations with love-elegy: Orpheus is represented as singing about his experiences in an attempt to console himself, which he fails to do (though as we saw in the case of *Idyll* 11 and *Ecl.* 2, this could also be a pastoral trait), though he is able to enchant the natural world around him. The setting of this scene of self-consolation is Thrace, and it follows the final loss of Eurydice, as did the similar earlier depiction of Orpheus' sorrow when he initially lost his bride. The first of these episodes of failed consolation is described in the following manner:

ipse caua solans aegrum testudine amorem
te, dulcis coniunx, te solo in litore secum,
te ueniente die, te decedente canebat.
(*G.* 4.464-466)

But he, solacing an aching heart with music from his hollow shell, sang of you, dear wife, sang of you to himself on the lonely shore, of you as day drew nigh, of you as day departed. (trans. Fairclough)

The tone of this passage is deeply pathos-filled, and features a sustained anaphora of the word *te* (twice each in vs. 465 and 466), referring to the direct object for Orpheus' singing – Eurydice. When Orpheus loses Eurydice for a second time, his song of lament is described in even greater detail:

septem illum totos perhibent ex ordine mensis
rupe sub aëria deserti ad Strymonis undam
flesse sibi, et gelidis haec euoluisse sub antris
mulcentem tigris et agentem carmine quercus:
qualis populeae maerens philomela sub umbra
amissos queritur fetus, quos durus arator
obseruans nido implumis detraxit; at illa
flet noctem, ramoque sedens miserabile carmen
integrat, et maestis late loca questibus implet.
nulla Venus, non ulli animum flexere hymenaei:
solus Hyperboreas glacies Tanaimque niualem
aruaque Riphaeis numquam uiduata pruinis
lustrabat, raptam Eurydicen atque inrita Ditis
dona querens...

(*G.* 4.507-520)

Of him they tell that for seven whole months day after day beneath a lofty crag beside lonely Strymon's stream he wept, and in the shelter of cool dales unfolded this his tale, charming tigers and drawing oaks with his song: even as the nightingale, mourning beneath a poplar's shade, bewails her young ones' loss, when a heartless ploughman, watching their resting place, has plucked them unfledged from the nest: the mother weeps all night long, as, perched on a branch, she repeats her piteous song and fills all around with plaintive lamentation. No thought of love or wedding song could bend his soul. Alone he roamed the frozen North, along the icy Tanais, and the fields ever wedded to Riphaean snows, mourning his lost Eurydice and Pluto's cancelled boon; (trans. Fairclough)

Again, we find a clear description of the object of Orpheus' lament (*raptam Eurydicen atque inrita Ditis | dona querens*, (*G.* 4.519-520, 'mourning his lost Eurydice and Pluto's cancelled boon'). Interestingly, Eurydice was earlier described with a word that is evocative of the objects of love typical of love-elegy, she was a *moritura puella* (*G.* 4.458, 'the girl that was to die'), however, any attempts at fitting Eurydice neatly into the role of elegiac *puella* are hampered by the preceding reference to her as *coniuge* (*G.* 4.456, 'wife') since the marital status of elegiac *puella* is typically left open to interpretation, (though there are examples of elegies where poets evoke marital imagery in connection with their beloved, e.g. Catull. 68).

However, in both cases of attempted self-consolation, though the activity of singing to console one's own love-sickness or the loss of a beloved might have associations with love-elegy, the setting and the nightingale-simile used to elaborate the depiction of Orpheus' lament can be seen to point elsewhere. The most typical trait of the two scenes is the seeming perpetuity of the singing. A pastoral lover would perhaps consider ending his grief through suicide, or would even look for a new love, but Orpheus does neither. In the first instance, he does not in fact stop singing even when he embarks upon his *katabasis*, but merely tries to bring his song to bear upon new addressees, turning from self-consolation to active pleading with the gods of the Underworld (*G.* 4.467-487). In doing so, Orpheus moves from one typical setting of an elegiac poet-lover to another, from self-consolation to *paraklausithyron*. In the second instalment of his self-consolation, he expressly refuses to stop singing for seven whole months until he eventually is killed.

His death is explained by Virgil through Orpheus' refusal to give up his love for Eurydice and replace it with another:

520 ... spretae Ciconum quo munere matres

inter sacra deum nocturnique orgia Bacchi
discerptum latos iuuenem sparsere per agros.
(*G.* 4.520-522)

... till the Ciconian women, resenting such devotion, in the midst of their sacred rites and their midnight Bacchic orgies, tore the youth limb from limb and flung him over the far-spread plains. (trans. Fairclough)

The Ciconian murderers of Orpheus are described as *spretae...quo munere* (*G.* 4.520, 'spurned in terms of this offering') – which must be understood with reference to the earlier line *nulla Venus, non ulli animum flexere hymenaei* (*G.* 4.516, 'No thought of love (lit. 'no Venus') or wedding song could bend his soul') – perhaps an allusion to Daphnis rejecting the help of Venus/Aphrodite in *Idyll* 1? In adopting this description of Orpheus' demise, Virgil departs from the pederastic stage of Orpheus' story preferred by Phanocles (see Chapter 1). However, by including the death scene, he nevertheless appears to allude back to this text, a predecessor to the genre of love-elegy. The influence of Phanocles' *Loves* upon the *Georgics* has been attested by Marcovich, who argues that the repeated anaphora of Eurydice's name used in describing the decapitated head of Orpheus evokes the polyptoton and anaphora of Phanocles' Fr. 1 Powell vs. 16-18:

ἠχὴ δ' ὡς λιγυρῆς πόντον ἐπέσχε λύρης,
νήσους τ' αἰγιαλούς θ' ἁλιμυρέας, ἔνθα λίγειαν
ἀνέρες Ὀρφείην ἐκτέρισαν κεφαλήν,

which also describes Orpheus after his decapitation[304]:

tum quoque marmorea caput a ceruice reuulsum
gurgite cum medio portans Oeagrius Hebrus
uolueret, Eurydicen uox ipsa et frigida lingua,
a miseram Eurydicen! Anima fugiente uocabat:
Eurydicen toto referebant flumine ripae.'
(*G.* 4.523-527)

[304] Marcovich 1979: 364–65.

And even when Oeagrian Hebrus rolled in mid-current that head, severed from its marble neck, the disembodied voice and the tongue, now cold for ever, called with departing breath on Eurydice—ah, poor Eurydice! 'Eurydice' the banks re-echoed, all along the stream.' (trans. Fairclough)

However, there is another author closer at hand about whom it would make sense for Virgil to be alluding to in his reprise of Orpheus in the *Georgics*, and furthermore, this author belongs firmly within the genre of love-elegy. Since the publication of the commentary on the *Georgics* by the late antique grammarian Servius, there has been a longstanding controversy about the importance of Gallus for our appreciation of the Orpheus-narrative.[305] Servius had made the extraordinary claim that Virgil had excised some lines from the *Georgics* which originally had contained a section in praise of Gallus. The exact position of this lost *laudes Galli* is not made clear by Servius, but he appears to think that it was placed at some point during the Aristaeus and Orpheus narratives of the second half of the Fourth Georgic.[306] The supposed reason for this revision was given by Servius as relating to the political downfall of Gallus and his subsequent suicide in 26 BC,[307] yet this seems hard to reconcile with the likely date of publication for the *Georgics* in 29 BC.[308] However, even if we chose to disregard Servius completely, and instead limit ourselves to looking at the Virgilian text itself and its relationship with other previous poems, there still remains a number of associations between Gallus and Orpheus in the *Georgics*, and there can still be imagined good reasons for Virgil to evoke these links.

As we saw in the earlier discussion of the *Eclogues*, Orpheus is alluded to in both of the two poems where Gallus appears as a character in that collection. In *Eclogue* 6, Orpheus' powers to move trees was referred to as part of Gallus' 'initiation scene'. This supernatural power was the most typical 'bucolic' characteristic in Virgil's representation of Orpheus, and was aligned with Gallus by Linus when he handed him a set of pastoral pipes (... *quibus ille solebat* | *cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos* (*Ecl.* 6.70-71). Ross argued that the subject of this sentence could be taken as Orpheus, and not with the preceding subject (*Ascraeo ... seni*).[309] Clearly, as part of Virgil's seeming attempt at 'bucolicising' Gallus in *Eclogue* 6, Orpheus played a small, but significant part. When Orpheus was evoked once more in *Eclogue* 10, the relevant passage is even linked by intratextual allusion in the *Georgics*. When Gallus is made to renounce all things

[305] For a thorough overview of this see Jacobson 1984. For recent reappraisals of the controversy, see Gagliardi 2012 and 2013.
[306] Jacobson 1984: 273.
[307] For an introduction into the life and work of C. Cornelius Gallus see Raymond in Thorsen 2013: 59–67.
[308] Harrison 2007: 165.
[309] Ross 1975: 23.

pastoral as a viable antidote to his love for Lycoris, he claims that even if he drank from the Hebrus he would not be able to alter Amor: *nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus* (*Ecl.* 10.65), which is clearly alluded to in the description of Orpheus' decapitated head, which even is carried by the Hebrus *gurgite ... medio* (*G.* 4.524).[310] Whereas Orpheus clearly is the main point of reference shared by these two lines, then at least by association, Gallus emerges as a tangential point. This link between Orpheus and Gallus within the work of Virgil is not dependent upon shared generic associations that exist prior to Virgil's collection, but purely by the fact that they both feature in the *Eclogues*. Even so, I will argue that this linking of the two characters creates a weak form of generic association between Orpheus and love-elegy. In virtue of coming into contact with Gallus, Orpheus, who appeared to have been deployed to attempt to 'bucolicise' Gallus, can in turn be seen to have been contaminated with Gallus' generic background. In *Eclogues* 6 and 10, Orpheus is therefore also to some degree 'Gallicised'.

The 'Gallicised' Orpheus in the *Georgics* is most apparent in the climactic section of his story and in Virgil's description of his backwards glance:

cum subita incautum dementia cepit amantem,
ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere Manes:
restitit, Eurydicenque suam iam luce sub ipsa
immemor heu! uictusque animi respexit. ibi omnis
effusus labor atque immitis rupta tyranni
foedera, terque fragor stagnis auditus Auernis.
illa 'quis et me' inquit 'miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu,
quis tantus furor?
(*G.* 4.488-495)

... when a sudden frenzy seized Orpheus, unwary in his love, a frenzy meet for pardon, did Hell know how to pardon! He halted, and on the very verge of light, unmindful, alas, and vanquished in purpose, on Eurydice, now regained looked back! In that instant all his toil was spilt like water, the ruthless tyrant's pact was broken, and thrice a peal of thunder was heard amid the pools of Avernus. She cried: 'What madness, Orpheus, what dreadful madness has brought disaster alike upon you and me, poor soul? (trans. Fairclough)

When put to the test, Orpheus is 'conquered in mind' (*uictus animi, G.* 4.491) by a 'sudden madness' (*subita ... dementia, G.* 4.488). The maddening and overpowering qualities of love are

[310] See above, Ross 1975: 93.

also pointed out by Eurydice, as she complains about the 'great madness' (*quis tantus furor, G.* 4.495) that led Orpheus to look back and destroy all they had hoped for. In *Eclogue* 10 we find similar descriptions of love as insanity, and of its all-conquering supremacy. Unlike Eurydice, who was doomed to die a second time because of love, Gallus may not literally be dying, but he is introduced into the poem at the point when he too 'was dying from love' (*Ecl.* 10.10), ... *amore peribat*). His disturbed state of mind is pointed out to him by Apollo, who asks 'why are you frenzied?', '*Galle, quid insanis?*' (*Ecl.* 10.22), and he in turn refers to the objects of his love as 'my craze' (*mihi...furor, Ecl.* 10.37-38), before labelling Amor himself 'insane' (*insanus*, *Ecl.* 10.44). Finally, as we have seen in the preceding discussion of the *Eclogues*, Gallus ends his appearance in the collection with a declaration of his submission to Amor and of the latter's unlimited power (*Ecl.* 10.69).

Why would Virgil play upon this link between Orpheus and Gallus in the *Georgics*? Harrison offers the following explanation:

> One way of interpreting the metaliterary significance of Aristaeus and Orpheus is to view them as representing different parts of Virgil's own poetic career. Orpheus, given the strongly neoteric style of his story and its concerns with poetry and passion as the highest values, looks back to the topics and atmosphere of the *Eclogues* and to the neoteric generation from which that poetry-book draws its colour;[311]

Under this interpretation, Orpheus' Gallan links could be seen as a prime example of evoking the neoteric background from whence the *Eclogues* had appeared. By revisiting Orpheus, Virgil therefore highlights the poetic roads he has left behind, as well as those of his older peers. I find this approach highly fruitful for understanding the appearance of Orpheus within the *Georgics*, and it can be further supported by looking at two additional sides of Orpheus' generic associations within the poem: his links with pastoral and with neoteric epyllia.

3.10 Orpheus' pastoral associations in the *Georgics*

As we have seen, Orpheus was highly 'bucolicised' throughout most of the *Eclogues*, a process wich focused upon his ability to move trees or bring the natural world to a halt, as in *Eclogue* 8.1-4:

[311] Harrison 2007: 165.

Pastorum Musam Damonis et Alphesiboei,
immemor herbarum quos est mirata iuvenca
certantis, quorum stupefactae carmine lynces,
et mutata suos requierunt flumina cursus,

The pastoral Muse of Damon and Alphesiboeus, at whose rivalry the heifer marvelled and forgot to graze, at whose song lynxes stood spellbound, and rivers were changed... (trans. Fairclough)

When Orpheus reappears as a character in the *Georgics* we can once more see elements that point to his recent bucolic past within Virgil's corpus. Whereas his associations with love-elegy were dependent upon what Orpheus did, his course of action, any pastoral associations in the *Georgics* are more visible in terms of *where* he is represented. The Thracian backdrop provides a number of pastoral settings within the Orpheus-narrative; e.g. his second period of grief is set in a rural landscape, albeit hardly the sunny landscapes typically found in pastoral poetry. Even so, this is the setting for his most pastoral act, his herding of trees and tigers:

septem illum totos perhibent ex ordine mensis
rupe sub aëria deserti ad Strymonis undam
flevisse, et gelidis haec evolvisse sub antris
510 mulcentem tigris et agentem carmine quercus
(*G.* 4.507-510)

Of him they tell that for seven whole months day after day beneath a lofty crag beside lonely Strymon's stream he wept, and in the shelter of cool dales unfolded this his tale, charming tigers and drawing oaks with his song: (trans. Fairclough)

If we disregard the cold nature of this setting (*gelidis ... antris*, *G.* 4.508) – a feature we could see as belonging on the fringes of pastoral, then it becomes possible to recognise it as similar to the setting of several lamenting pastoral shepherd singers. The major difference is really the supernatural element of enchanting trees and tigers. We have already seen how the enchanting of trees was used to mark the pastoral associations of Orpheus in the *Eclogues*.

In the case of the *Lament for Bion*, an important element in 'bucolicising' Orpheus was the suggested parallel between his death and that of Bion in terms of the pathetic fallacy. This strategy was not deployed by Virgil in the *Eclogues*, but it does feature in the *Georgics*, albeit in a

slightly different sense. When Eurydice is killed by a snake bite (*G.* 4.458), this provokes the following reaction:

at chorus aequalis Dryadum clamore supremos
impleuit montis; flerunt Rhodopeiae arces
altaque Pangaea et Rhesi Mauortia tellus
atque Getae atque Hebrus et Actias Orithyia.
(*G.* 4.460-463)

But her sister band of Dryads filled the mountain-tops with their cries; the towers of Rhodope wept, and the Pangaean heights, and the martial land of Rhesus, the Getae and Hebrus and Orithyia, Acte's child. (trans. Fairclough)

This extended pathetic fallacy can be seen as influenced by the *Lament for Bion*, and can therefore be viewed as signalling associations with pastoral. If Eurydice appears 'bucolicised' in this respect, then so too does Orpheus by association.

Perhaps the best place to look for pastoral associations is in the nightingale-simile that is used to describe Orpheus' second lament at losing Eurydice after his failed *katabasis*:

qualis populeae maerens philomela sub umbra
amissos queritur fetus, quos durus arator
obseruans nido implumis detraxit; at illa
flet noctem, ramoque sedens miserabile carmen
integrat, et maestis late loca questibus implet.
(*G.* 4.511-515)

... even as the nightingale, mourning beneath a poplar's shade, bewails her young ones' loss, when a heartless ploughman, watching their resting place, has plucked them unfledged from the nest: the mother weeps all night long, as, perched on a branch, she repeats her piteous song and fills all around with plaintive lamentation. (trans. Fairclough)

Though this simile is highly complex, and brings with it possible allusions to the *Odyssey* and other texts that belong outside pastoral (e.g. a different version of this myth appears in a simile used to describe Penelope's disturbed frame of mind at *Od.* 19.512-524),[312] it does include

[312] Anhalt 2001: 145–59.

significant pastoral *topoi*. The nightingale is firstly depicted as singing in the shade. This was the setting for many pastoral shepherd singers in the *Eclogues*, and this *topos* is notably featured in both the opening and closing of the collection. In *Ecl.* 1.4, Tityrus was described as singing *lentus in umbra*, 'at ease in the shade', whereas in *Ecl.* 10.75, Virgil's poetic *persona* comes out with a warning against the possible negative side-effects of this activity: ... *solet esse grauis cantantibus umbra*, 'the shade is usually harmful for those who sing'. In this instance, the warning proves to be true, the nightingale suffered the loss of its fledglings, and interestingly, Orpheus too can be seen to have been harmed by his experience with a different kind of shade, the shades of the dead as in the traumatic second loss of Eurydice. In the earlier description of his *katabasis*, we find the following description that links the shades of the dead with trees:

> umbrae ibant tenues simulacraque luce carentum,
> quam multa in foliis auium se milia condunt,
> Vesper ubi aut hibernus agit de montibus imber...
> (*G.* 4.472-474)

... came the insubstantial shades, the phantoms of those who lie in darkness, as many as the myriads of birds that shelter among the leaves when evening or a wintry shower drives them from the hills ... (trans. Fairclough)

Here we see how the shades of the dead can be likened to birds that hide among leaves that are carried off by the evening breeze or a winter storm, most of which will derive from trees. There are further links between the nightingale-simile and the description of the shades in the Underworld. Just like the nightingale, many of them have lost their offspring: *impositique rogis iuuenes ante ora parentum* (*G.* 4.476), 'and youths placed upon pyres in front of parents' faces'. The sum result of this nexus between pastoral, shade, and death is to create an association between Orpheus and the literal shadows of pastoral.

Another pastoral connection is evident in the contrast between the nightingale and the figure of the farmer who has killed her offspring. This *durus arator* (v. 4.512) has been seen as representative of the *agricolae* who are the main addressees of the *Georgics*, and his murder of the fledgling nighingales follows the prescribed course of action for a good farmer who must sacrifice the lives of individual animals for the best interests of the farm. If the nightingale must represent something non-agricultural, but bordering the world of the farm, then the closest option at hand is to see it as a pastoral creature. The nightingale, though often a metapoetic figure applicable to any genre, may here be seen to point back to its function within pastoral

poems such as Theocritus' *Idyll* 5 (see Chapter 2). There the nightingale features among a number of other birds with a positive poetological symbolism in opposition to the negative attributes of the character Lacon who is associated with jays and hoopoes:

> ΚΩ.: οὐ θεμιτόν, Λάκων, ποτ' ἀηδόνα κίσσας ἐρίσδειν,
> οὐδ' ἔποπας κύκνοισι· τὸ δ', ὦ τάλαν, ἐσσὶ φιλεχθής.
> (*Id.* 5.136-137)

It's not right, Lacon, for jays to compete against nightingales or hoopoes against swans; but you, you wretch, just love to quarrel. (trans. Hopkinson)

The central point of the whole simile thus appears to be to distance Orpheus from the core didactic message of the *Georgics*, and in its stead it associates him with other poetic genres, above all with a negative, tragic conception of pastoral. As such, we can once more see Orpheus' role as a marker for the poetic options that Virgil has left behind, and by illustrating the negative side of pastoral, the nightingale-simile associated with Orpheus makes it possible to see the preceding pastoral collection as a closed off chapter – like the harmful shade of *Ecl.* 10.75, pastoral can be harmful for a poet, and Virgil is better off having escaped unscathed from it and should look forward to other poetic projects.

3.11 Orpheus' associations with neoteric epyllia

If we turn to look at more formal aspects of narrative technique as well as the frequency of allusions to Homeric epic, it becomes possible to see an important difference between the frame-narrative of Aristaeus and the inset story of Orpheus. Harrison notes that several scholars have studied the interaction between Aristaeus' story and Homeric epic, whereas Orpheus' narrative is better understood formally as evoking Hellenistic epyllion.[313] He sums up this constellation in terms of different associations within the epic-supergenre:

> This last major section of the poem, then, presents something of a tension between an epic framework and its enclosed epyllion, between two parts of the ancient epic tradition, a tension which itself unfolds against the background of a poem which belongs formally to a third part, Hesiodic didactic. [314]

[313] Harrison 2007: 161.
[314] Harrison 2007: 161.

The preserved examples of the genre of epyllion are thin on the ground in ancient poetry. The best preceding example in Roman poetry is Catull. 64, but as Perutelli notes, this poem is not necessarily suited to act as a model for the epyllion at Rome: 'Within the range of the Roman epyllion, Catullus remains an extreme case' (*Nell'ambito dell'epillio romano, Catullo rimane il caso limite*).[315] More recently, Trimble has provided an extensive overview of the prolonged scholarly debate about how, if at all, Catull. 64 can be encompassed by the elusive term of epyllion.[316] However, Catullus' poem acted as an important intertext for the *Georgics*. Like the convoluted narrative technique of Virgil's poem, *Catullus* 64 deals with a pair of love-stories that are set within each other, with the inner story of Ariadne told as an extended *ekphrasis* framed by the story of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and the birth of Achilles. Though this narrative technique is mirrored by Virgil, we have seen that the framing narrative of Aristaeus is better understood as operating within the mode of Homeric epic.

Segal provides useful examples of how Virgil interacts with the Homeric model texts in the Aristaeus-narrative, especially with the *Odyssey*. His reading stresses the ironies of Virgil's reception of Homer: though Achilles appears to be the intended parallel for Aristaeus (both heroes are driven by a proximity to 'cosmic destruction' and have a sea goddess as their mother), Orpheus better parallels the Homeric hero's intensity of emotion.[317] The Homeric echoes are strongest during Aristaeus' journey to visit his mother and his subsequent quest to wrestle advice out of Proteus. The Nereids who accompany Aristaeus' mother, Cyrene, are depicted as singing about Venus and Mars, the topic of one of Demodocus' songs in book 8 of the *Odyssey*, and the encounter with Proteus is a variation upon Menelaus' similar meeting with the shape-shifting sea-god in *Od.* 4.[318] This sustained interaction with Homeric materials prepares Virgil for the work ahead and foreshadows the much greater scale of Homeric reception which structures the *Aeneid*. Harrison notes that:

> ... Aristaeus is crucial here, as it is he who moves from symbolizing the farmer-hero of the *Georgics* to reworking Homeric heroes (Achilles and Menelaus) in a way which will form a key technique of the *Aeneid*, and which thereby marks an intra-generic ascent towards the *Aeneid*'s literary form of martial epic.[319]

[315] Perutelli 1979: 64.
[316] Trimble in Baumbach and Bär 2012: 55-79.
[317] Segal 1993: 73–74.
[318] Segal 1993: 74.
[319] Harrison 2007: 163.

We have previously seen how there are Homeric intertext at work also within the Orpheus-narrative, how then are we to qualify it as being more like a neoteric epyllion?

The editors of the Brill *Companion to Greek and Latin Epyllion and Its Reception* stress the theoretical fuzziness and difficulty inherent in demarcating the ancient genre of epyllion, in particular given the lack of any discussion concerning this epic sub-genre within ancient criticism.[320] Nevertheless, Baumbach and Bär have outlined some possible features that can help to identify the genre. Crucially, they see epyllia as formally distinguished by being shorter hexameter poems that lack didactic or hymnic traits, and as including a third person narrator and a mythological topic.[321] This broad definition is however not helpful in drawing a distinguishing line between the Aristaeus and Orpheus narratives. Both are shorter hexameter narratives told in a narrative mode more similar to Homeric epic than Hesiodic didactic epic, and both deal with a mythological topic. In order to proceed I therefore suggest that we focus upon the qualification of looking at Orpheus' associations with neoteric epyllion.

Like the term 'epyllion', the definition of a poetic milieu as 'neoteric' is entirely anachronistic, but it is a useful term for defining certain poetic trends best exemplified by Catullus. Höschele notes that epyllia appeared to be typical of the generation of poets preceding that of Virgil. In addition to *Catullus* 64, she lists the lost *Zmyrna* of Cinna, Cornificius' *Glaucus*, Valerius Cato's *Diana* or *Dictynna*, and provides a discussion of Calvus' somewhat less fragmented *Io*.[322] What unites these examples of epyllia is their mythological topics, which all appear to be focused upon love stories, and more often than not, upon problematic love stories with bizarre or taboo characteristics. The *Zmyrna* dealt with the incestous affair between Myrrha and her father, the *Glaucus* may have broached the subject of the relationship between the sea-god Glaucus and Scylla (prior to her metamorphosis into a creature matching the physical hybridity of Glaucus), whilst the love of the mortal Minos for Diana Britomartis is the likely subject for the *Dictynna*.[323] Seen against this background, it is possible to see clearer parallels between the Georgic Orpheus and the Roman epyllia current in the preceding generation of poets. Like their chosen topics, Virgil has focused upon a story of problematic love, and this theme is much more central to the Orpheus-narrative than it is to the framing narrative of Aristaeus. A deciding factor in this regard is the fact that the story of Aristaeus' attempted rape of Eurydice is not related by the poem's narrator who retells the main story of Aristaeus, but is told by Proteus within the inset Orpheus-narrative (*G.* 4.456-459).

[320] Baumbach and Bär in Baumbach and Bär 2012: ix–xi.
[321] Baumbach and Bär in Baumbach and Bär 2012: xi–xiv.
[322] Höschele in Baumbach and Bär 2012.
[323] Höschele in Baumbach, and Bär 2012: 335.

Another possible way to see the Orpheus-narrative as more 'epyllion-like' is if we compare it with the length of the framing narrative. Whereas Aristaeus' narrative runs from lines 4.315-452, and continues at 4.528-558 for a total of 169 lines, that of Orpheus is contained within 4.453-4.527, which at 75 lines is less than half of that of Aristaeus. This imbalance is much greater than that between the ekphrastic story of Ariadne (Catull. 64.50-266 – 217 lines) and its framing narrative of the wedding of Peleus and Thesis (vs. 64.1-49 and 64.267-408 – 191 lines). In this case it becomes possible to see Orpheus' story as evocative of the epyllion-genre also in its relative brevity and compactness vis-à-vis that of Aristaeus.

3.12 Looking back at Orpheus in the *Georgics*

Hopefully, it is now possible to better appreciate some of the ways in which Orpheus in the *Georgics* can be seen to evoke not only the previous poetic output of Virgil himself, especially in its pastoral associations, including its interaction with Virgil's depiction of Gallus in the *Eclogues*, but also the work of the neoteric generation of poets, exemplified by the love-elegy of Gallus *the poet*, as well as by the neoteric versions of epyllia. In all of these cases, we can see how the love story can provide a complex set of generic and sub-generic associations, and in particular, it can add associations with love-elegy and neoteric epyllia that were absent from Orpheus' representations in the *Eclogues*.

What is the combined effect of this complex set of generic associations? We saw earlier how Orpheus could be seen to represent the earlier poetic output and background of Virgil. By looking back to an already completed phase in his poetic career, Virgil thus creates a nostalgic image of Orpheus, both in terms of metapoetics and in terms of the subjective, pathos-filled tone of the narrative of his love story, *katabasis,* and death. However, this literal looking back upon the poet's own career may not be seen as unproblematic, as can be illustrated by looking forwards in the text to the conclusion of the *Georgics*. The love story of Orpheus, and Aristaeus' narrative, its frame, are both left behind as the poem seemingly speeds up its pace, and its tone changes in its concluding *sphragis* (4.559-566):

Haec super aruorum cultu pecorumque canebam
et super arboribus, Caesar dum magnus ad altum
fulminat Euphraten bello uictorque uolentes
per populos dat iura uiamque adfectat Olympo.
illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat
Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis oti,

565 carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque iuuenta,
Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.

So much I sang in addition to the care of fields, of cattle, and of trees, while great Caesar thundered in war by deep Euphrates and bestowed a victor's laws on willing nations, and essayed the path to Heaven. In those days I, Virgil, was nursed by sweet Parthenope, and rejoiced in the arts of inglorious ease—I who toyed with shepherds' songs, and, in youth's boldness, sang of you, Tityrus, under the canopy of a spreading beech. (trans. Fairclough)

This conclusion to the poem must be seen as partially playful, at least if we look at the words *lusi* 'I have played' (v. 4.565), and *ignobilis oti* 'inglorious ease' (v. 4.564), yet its evocation of the *Eclogues* in the final line and its juxtaposition of poet and Caesar convey more serious points. Gale sees the *sphragis* as simultaneously praising the achievements of Octavian whilst criticising his ambition; and Virgil's affectation of a reclusive, Epicurean lifestyle as both playful mock-modesty and a realisation of the negative, chaotic sides of poetic inspiration.[324] Harrison interprets the conclusion as a seeming realisation of the poem's inadequacy, but notes how an intertextual allusion to Callimachus' *Aetia* fr.1.20 Pf. can be seen as a call to arms, and not as a pessimistic refusal of epic and its martial materials: 'Epic thundering will follow to match the thunderbolts of Caesar/Augustus'.[325] In order to look forward to full-blown martial epic, the poetry represented by Orpheus, i.e. the early Virgil's *ignobile otium*, must be left behind.

3.13 Orpheus in the *Aeneid* – a return of Apollonius' Orpheus

In the final poem of Virgil, we once again encounter Orpheus as a character, and also as an important reference for allusions. There are two points in Aeneas' story where Orpheus plays a key part as a parallel for both his loss of Creusa and his *katabasis*, but these are mainly allusions, and not representations, and do not add up to the same centrality that we have seen in the case of Orpheus' position in the *Eclogues* or the *Georgics*. This might lead to the assumption that Orpheus' associations with Apollonian epic are his overriding characteristic within the *Aeneid*, but even here, the situation can be revealed to be more complex.

When Aeneas journeys to the Underworld, his *katabasis* includes a thorough survey of the land of the dead, and he is witness to those who suffer especial punishments as well as to great heroes of both the past and the future. His visit is nearing its end when he sees the abode

[324] Gale 2003: 325–28.
[325] Harrison 2007: 167.

of the fortunate, and Orpheus here makes an appearance as a seemingly minor, almost decorative character:

His demum exactis, perfecto munere diuae,
deuenere locos laetos et amoena uirecta
fortunatorum nemorum sedesque beatas.
largior hic campos aether et lumine uestit
purpureo, solemque suum, sua sidera norunt.
pars in gramineis exercent membra palaestris,
contendunt ludo et fulua luctantur harena;
pars pedibus plaudunt choreas et carmina dicunt.
nec non Threicius longa cum ueste sacerdos
obloquitur numeris septem discrimina uocum,
iamque eadem digitis, iam pectine pulsat eburno.
(*Aen.* 6.637-647)

This at length performed and the task of the goddess fulfilled, they came to a land of joy, the pleasant lawns and happy seats of the Blissful Groves. Here an ampler ether clothes the meads with roseate light, and they know their own sun, and stars of their own. Some disport their limbs on the grassy wrestling ground, vie in sports, and grapple on the yellow sand; some tread the rhythm of a dance and chant songs. There, too, the long-robed Thracian priest matches their measures with the seven clear notes, striking the lyre now with his fingers, now with his ivory quill. (trans. Fairclough)

We might firsly note that Virgil is much more selective in this depiction of Orpheus than in the preceding Orpheus-narrative of the *Georgics*. Here, Orpheus is depicted as a poet (accompanying the dancers with his lyre, v. 6.646) and as a priest (v. 6.645), he is a *uates*, no more, no less, and evokes the more elevated Orpheus of Apollonius' *Argonautica*. Like in Apollonius' story, Orpheus also appears as the first to be singled out from a (miniature) catalogue of heroes. This epic association makes him integrate well with Virgil's *katabasis*-narrative, but Orpheus' transformation into a minimal version of himself leaves us as readers with a number of questions, as there are important differences between the two settings. In Virgil's case, the heroes that are catalogued immediately after Orpheus are all connected with Troy:

hic genus antiquum Teucri, pulcherrima proles,
magnaimi heroes nati melioribus annis,
Ilusque Assaracusque et Troiae Dardanus auctor.

(*Aen.* 6.647-650)

Here is Teucer's ancient line, family most fair, high-souled heroes born in happier years—Ilus and Assaracus and Dardanus, Troy's founder. (trans. Fairclough)

Since Orpheus had no real connection with Troy, this creates is a much starker contrast than the one between Orpheus and the other Argonauts, all of whom shared in the same expedition. His inclusion therefore jars slightly with the subsequent passage. Instead, if we look at the preceding section, we can find a further echo of Apollonius' Orpheus. When Orpheus played at the wedding of Jason and Medea, Apollonius depicted him as beating the ground with his foot:

… ἐν δέ σφισιν Οἰάγροιο
υἱὸν ὑπαὶ φόρμιγγος ἐυκρέκτου καὶ ἀοιδῆς
ταρφέα σιγαλόεντι πέδον κροτέοντα πεδίλῳ·
(*Argon.* 4.1193-1195)

... the son of Oeagrus in their midst, as he beat the ground rapidly with his shining sandal to the accompaniment of his beautifully strummed lyre and song.

Just as in this scene, in Virgil's depiction of the Lands of the Blessed the chorus of dancers and Orpheus' accompaniment upon the lyre creates a mixture of song, lyre-play, and the beating of feet (vs. 6.644-6.646). Most significantly, the representations of Orpheus in the *Argonautica* and the *Aeneid* are similar in their avoidance of referring directly to his love story. In one sense, it would seem incongruous to point out the tragedy of his past, why would Orpheus even be among those 'more fortunate woods' (*fortunatorum nemorum*, v. 6.634)[326] if he were still traumatised by his longing for Eurydice? The fact that Orpheus has turned from solipsistic self-consolation to accompanying others with his music can perhaps be seen as a positive improvement and provides some closure to his Virgilian journey.

However, whilst the love story of Orpheus may be absent from the explicit description of him here, there are several allusions to it in the case of Aeneas. In many ways, this can act as a parallel to the way that Orpheus' love story foreshadowed the tragedy of Jason and Medea in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius. The difference between the two situations is that Aeneas and

[326] The pastoral character of this part of the Underworld creates a link with Orpheus' first appearance in Virgil's poetry, bringing him full-circle.

Creusa's tragedy lies in the past, as does the love story of Orpheus. When Aeneas is visited by the ghost of Creusa there are conscious echoes of the final loss of Eurydice in the Orpheus-narrative in the *Georgics* (4.497-503).[327] In the case of Aeneas and Creusa they part in the following manner:

iamque uale et nati serua communis amorem.'
haec ubi dicta dedit, lacrimantem et multa uolentem
dicere deseruit, tenuisque recessit in auras.
ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum;
ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago,
par leuibus uentis uolucrique simillima somno.
(*Aen.* 2.789-794)

'…. And now farewell, and guard your love for our common child.' When thus she had spoken, she left me weeping and eager to tell her much, and drew back into thin air. Thrice there I strove to throw my arms about her neck; thrice the form, vainly clasped, fled from my hands, even as light winds, and most like a winged dream. (trans. Fairclough)

We can here see how Creusa's farewell (*iamque uale* (*Aen.* 2.789), cf. *G.* 4.497), Aeneas' grief (*multa uolentem* (*Aen.* 2.790), cf. *G.* 4.501), and Aeneas' frustrated attempts at grasping her image (*comprensa* (*Aen.* 6.793), cf. *G.* 4.501: *prensantem*) all partially mirror not only Orpheus' and Eurydice's situation, but also allude to it with close verbal echoes. There is an important difference in that when Creusa appeared as a ghost shortly after her death, she was already lost by Aeneas' failure to look back, and that she was trying to reassure Aeneas that he was right to go on.[328] In the case of Orpheus and Eurydice, he reacted to her loss that he had caused in that instance. Similarly, Aeneas' *katabasis* echoes that of Orpheus in several places, and there is even a whole line (*G.* 4.480 and *Aen.* 6.439) that is repurposed from one poem to the other, as has been studied by Setaioli.[329]

The purpose of these allusions may be to contrast Aeneas with Orpheus, much like Aristaeus was used as a foil in the *Georgics*. In comparable situations, Aeneas performs better in practical terms, and achieves more than Orpheus did. This speaks in favour of his qualities within the epic of Virgil – as a representative of filial duty, *pietas*. However, the repeated allusions

[327] Gale 2003: 338.
[328] Gale 2003: 338.
[329] Setaioli 1969: 9–21.

back to the Orpheus-narrative of the *Georgics* makes the eventual appearance of Orpheus as a hero among the Groves of the Blessed seem like something of a surprise, why after such great ceaseless sorrow and failure is he featured there? This paradox adds to the already complex depiction of Orpheus within the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*.

3.14 Conclusion

Orpheus undergoes quite a journey through Virgil's poetic career. In the *Eclogues* he goes from being 'bucolicised' into an integral element of the *Eclogues'* pastoral world to appearing more on the fringes of the genre. By alluding to the death of Orpheus in *Eclogue* 10, Virgil is nodding towards his love story and its associations with other genres beside those of pastoral, thus setting the stage for novel generic associations in poems other than pastoral ones.

In his next poetic project, Virgil offers a much more complex representation of Orpheus as he lets the love story take centre stage in the narrative. By playing upon associations with pastoral, love-elegy, and neoteric epyllia, Orpheus can be seen to represent Virgil's earlier poetic output and that of his predecessors among the neoterics. Virgil's nostalgic looking back in the *sphragis* matches the nostalgia of Orpheus, and both actions are ultimately presented as retrogressive and negatively nostalgic, even though they engender much sympathy from us as readers. In order to proceed towards martial epic, the poetry represented by Orpheus has to be left behind in favour of the practical poetry represented by Aristaeus, who both encapsulate the lessons to be learned from the didactic side of the *Georgics*, and points forwards to Aeneas.

In the *Aeneid*, finally, we find at least two functions of Orpheus. The first is to act as foil to Aeneas as he reacts to the loss of his wife in Book 2, and undertakes a *katabasis* of his own in Book 6. By the use of strong verbal echoes, we are made to recall the Orpheus of the *Georgics* complete with his many generic complexities, and this adds to the complexity of Aeneas within the poem. The second function is to evoke the more elevated, purely positive Orpheus of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, as we confront the shade of Orpheus at the end of his journey in the Groves of the Blessed. This epic Orpheus of the *Aeneid* appears to have come to terms with his grief as he redeploys his musical and poetic abilities to accompany the dancing choruses that surround him, in an apparent return to the bardic dignity of Apollonius' Orpheus. This ending to Orpheus' Virgilian career adds to the paradoxical and often ambiguous ways that he was depicted in the preceding poems: if Orpheus is to be left behind, why can not Virgil refrain from bringing back the memory of him, and even singling him out as part of Aeneas' *katabasis*? The final brush with Orpheus is both nostalgic and almost optimistic, and it presents a way to include a more purely positive role for Orpheus within a poem. However, this lighter, more

unproblematic Orpheus, cannot completely avoid being associated with his love story, just as he was in Apollonius' epic.

Chapter 4: Orpheus and marriage criticism – from parody to politics

4.1. Introduction

There are several stories from Greek mythology concerned with spouses attempting to cross the threshold of death, such as the story of Protesilaus and Laodamia or that of Admetus and Alcestis. We have seen in the preceding chapters how Orpheus' story appears in highly complex metapoetical contexts, and that a key element is his failure to either resurrect the shade of Eurydice or prevent himself from being murdered. These failures on the part of Orpheus, despite their tragic aspects, create an opening for more comic or parodic receptions of the story, as can be seen in several instances throughout the poetic tradition as it extends into much later times; here texts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can be very instructive. A special case within this more comic/parodic category is to be identified in texts that not only include extra-generic parodic elements, but which also utilise Orpheus' shortlived time as a married man, and his failed attempt at rescuing his wife as a vehicle for either lampooning or more seriously criticising social or political issues, as well as the very institution of marriage itself.

In this chapter we will look at example texts from three different genres within the poetic tradition (considered very broadly)[330] that together can illustrate the diversity and complexity of this phenomenon: Ovid's extensive Orpheus-narrative in the *Metamorphoses*, and two interesting later vernacular receptions of the Orpheus story, Henry Fielding's farce *Eurydice: Or the Devil Henpeck'd* and Jacques Offenbach's *opéra-bouffon* the *Orphée aux enfers*, with a libretto by Ludovic Halévy and Hector Crémieux. The dramatic texts of Fielding and Offenbach/Crémieux/Halévy offer themselves as a natural coda to themes and tendencies already inherent within the ancient poetic tradition, but which may be made more apparent when compared with later examples. Though these three texts differ vastly in period and genre, each of them has been seen by scholars to utilise the love story of Orpheus as a foil for parody of some part of the preceding poetic tradition where Orpheus appears. In addition to this they have been seen as critical of political and social establishments, as well as of marriage. However, none of them have been seen to contain all of these elements, and none have hitherto been considered to convey a more profound criticism of the institution of marriage. The central

[330] I am mainly thinking of poetry as defined in the ancient sense, which included dramatic genres, but regardless of this, Fielding's play combines prose with metrical rhymed verse in ten interspersed songs (nine 'Airs' and one 'Chorus') and can be considered as at least partially poetic even in more narrow definitions of poetry.

questions in this regard will be to see to which degree each text can be considered parodic and political, and how they deal with the topic of marriage. From the subsequent analyses, it will become apparent that the situation is more complex than hitherto considered by scholars.

I will open this chapter with a novel interpretation of Ovid's Orpheus. The Orpheus-narrative in the *Metamorphoses* has mainly been seen as a parody of Virgil's in the *Georgics*, but this aspect will be shown to play a much less significant role than hitherto considered by some scholars. I shall suggest that we have here an extension of Ovid's politically serious marriage criticism in the *Ars Amatoria*, and we shall see how his representation of Orpheus can subvert Augustus and act as a contrast with Ovid's own triumphant self-reflection at the end of the *Metamorphoses*. In the case of *Eurydice: Or the Devil Henpeck'd* I will show how this text primarily aims its parodic sting against the contemporary operatic tradition in London, and though this play was rumoured to have caused a riot that forced it to end its run on its opening night, it in fact contains very little in the way of political or social criticism. Finally, in the case of *Orphée aux enfers* I will try to bring together some of the scholarship on this opera's unusual combination of musical, political, social and textual parody. This narrative goes the farthest in breaking apart the relationship between Orpheus and Eurydice and its ending may even be seen to associate Eurydice with the future murderers of Orpheus.

4.2 Ovid's Orpheus – is it a parody?

One of the main questions asked by scholars of Ovid's Orpheus-narrative in the *Metamorphoses* has been to what extent it can be described as a parody of Virgil's Orpheus-narrative in the *Georgics*, with which it shares a number of similarities, but also considerable differences. Aligned with this question is to ask to what degree Ovid subverts the figure of Orpheus, and if he does so, whether this has mainly metapoetical significance for Ovid's text, or if this is part of conveying some form of underlying political criticism.

The main advocate for interpreting Ovid's Orpheus as a Virgilian parody has been Anderson, both in his 1972 commentary on the *Metamorphoses* 6-10, and especially in his 1982 chapter, 'The Orpheus of Virgil and Ovid: *flebile nescio quid*'.[331] Against such interpretations we find Segal who provides a more sympathetic reading of Ovid's Orpheus in a 1972 article and a book chapter in his collection of Orpheus-articles, *Orpheus: The Myth of the Poet*.[332] Heath's 1996 article 'The Stupor of Orpheus: Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' 10.64-71' has largely won the day on the side of scholars who view Orpheus as a less sympathetic character in Ovid's version, but it

[331] Ovid and Anderson 1972; Anderson in Warden 1982.
[332] Segal 1993.

might still be fruitful to reconsider whether 'parodic' is a helpful label in this regard, even if we agree with this line of interpretation.[333] In particular, if we compare Ovid's Orpheus with the succeeding texts in this chapter it may be possible to gauge the extent of what may better be described as parodic elements or deliberate undercutting of the character Orpheus himself. Once we have established this foothold in the more intertextual and metapoetic side to Ovid's Orpheus we may proceed to look at how he may be part of an underlying criticism of Augustan marriage legislation. This political aspect has the potential to spill over into later times, as I will argue in the case of the subsequent narratives in this chapter. In order to do this, I will first look at Orpheus' own story and then at the larger narrative context within the *Metamorphoses* as well as Ovid's earlier *Ars Amatoria.*

4.3 Virgil's Orpheus in Ovid's

Orpheus' own story opens the tenth book of the *Metamorphoses* and spills over into the opening of the eleventh, yet for most of the tenth book, Ovid uses Orpheus as an internal narrator of others' stories, thereby inviting comparisons with the overall narrator, Ovid's poetic *persona*. This privileged function places Orpheus in the company of Calliope and Pythagoras, who are similarly given extensive time on-stage as internal narrators in books 5 and 15, respectively. This fact alone should alert us to the significance of Orpheus within the *Metamorphoses*, and I will go on to argue that his function is just as complex here as in the case of Virgil's version in the *Georgics*. Ovid introduces Orpheus within the overall narrative as he is about to marry Eurydice (*Met.* 10.1-7). This connection with marriage as a theme will become important in my later discussion about Ovid's criticism of Augustan marriage legislation, and its insistence upon (re)marrying. The wedding of Orpheus takes place with highly inauspicious omens, before we immediately are presented with a description of Eurydice's death that departs markedly from Virgil's, in particular in terms of Orpheus' reaction:

> ... nam nupta per herbas
> dum noua Naiadum turba comitata uagatur,
> occidit in talum serpentis dente recepto.
> quam satis ad superas postquam Rhodopeius auras
> defleuit uates, ne non temptaret et umbras,
> ad Styga Taenaria est ausus descendere porta;
>
> (*Met.* 10.8-13)

[333] Heath 1996: 353–70.

... for while the bride was strolling through the grass with a group of naiads in attendance, she fell dead, smitten in the ankle by a serpent's tooth. When the bard of Rhodope had mourned her to the full in the upper world, that he might try the shades as well he dared to go down to the Stygian world through the gate of Taenarus. (trans. Miller et al.)

Anderson is here struck by the limited grief of Orpheus.[334] Without Virgil's Aristaeus to blame for Eurydice's death, Ovid's Orpheus could have been all the more free to grieve at her demise without any emotions of anger competing for his attention. Instead, the extent of his grief is qualified as *satis* 'enough' (v. 10.11), which Anderson labels 'damning'.[335] Segal strongly disagrees and sees this as a way for Ovid to humanise Orpheus: '*satis* suggests a human limit and measure lacking in the wild grief of Virgil's hero'.[336] We might have forgiven Orpheus for seemingly being so quick to leave off his grief as the reason he does so is to take decisive action and attempt a *katabasis*, but the brevity of his grief sets a dangerous precedent as his second lament (after losing Eurydice again) is, even more clearly, of a limited duration:

... septem tamen ille diebus
squalidus in ripa Cereris sine munere sedit:
cura dolorque animi lacrimaeque alimenta fuere.
(*Met.* 10.73-75)

Seven days he sat there on the bank in filthy rags and with no taste of food. Care, anguish of soul, and tears were his nourishment. (trans. Miller et al.)

Segal may once again claim that this second period of lamentation is more human in scale than Virgil's equivalent seven months in a northern wilderness (*G.* 4.507-510), but is it is strange of him to consider Virgil's version 'farther into the realm of myth and fancy' than Ovid's setting by the otherworldly river Styx.[337] At his later stage it may not be necessary to question Orpheus' emotions, but by providing this extension and added detail about his grief, Ovid may make us become suspicious about Orpheus' prior earnestness. Something seems to have changed from the initial loss of Eurydice as Orpheus' second grief clearly is more heartfelt (and more of a

[334] Anderson in Warden 1982: 40.
[335] Anderson in Warden 1982: 40.
[336] Segal 1993: 58.
[337] Segal 1993: 66.

natural reaction). The description of Orpheus' *katabasis* only adds to the suspicion that Orpheus' feeling for Eurydice were not initially so clear-cut.

In what is perhaps Ovid's greatest departure from Virgil's narrative, he dares to attempt a full rendition of Orpheus' plea to the Gods of the Underworld as he lets Orpheus speak in direct speech:

' ... o positi sub terra numina mundi,
in quem reccidimus, quidquid mortale creamur,
si licet et falsi positis ambagibus oris
uera loqui sinitis, non huc, ut opaca uiderem
Tartara descendi, nec uti uillosa colubris
terna Medusaei uincirem guttura monstri;
causa uiae est coniunx, in quam calcata uenenum
uipera diffudit crescentesque abstulit annos.
posse pati uolui nec me temptasse negabo;
uicit Amor.

(*Met.* 10.17-26)

O ye divinities who rule the world which lies beneath the earth, to which we all fall back who are born mortal, if it is lawful and you permit me to lay aside all false and doubtful speech and tell the simple truth: I have not come down hither to see dark Tartara, nor yet to bind the three necks of Medusa's monstrous offspring, rough with serpents. The cause of my journey is my wife, into whose body a trodden serpent shot his poison and so snatched away her budding years. I have desired strength to endure, and I will not deny that I have tried to bear it. But Love has overcome me...(trans. Miller et al.)

Anderson is here alert to the fact that Orpheus admits that his grief at first was abortive, and something he tried to overcome: ' ... stressing again the chasm that lies between him and Virgil's inconsolable singer'.[338] It is also possible to interpret this confession in a different way - as Orpheus admitting that he didn't originally love Eurydice, but had come to love here once he had lost her.

The remainder of his speech provides a witty spin upon the problems of mortality:

... supera deus hic bene notus in ora est;
an sit et hic dubito. sed et hic tamen auguror esse,

[338] Anderson in Warden 1982: 40.

famaque si ueteris non est mentita rapinae,
uos quoque iunxit Amor. per ego haec loca plena timoris,
per Chaos hoc ingens uastique silentia regni,
Eurydices, oro, properata retexite fata.
omnia debemur uobis, paulumque morati
serius aut citius sedem properamus ad unam.
tendimus huc omnes, haec est domus ultima, uosque
humani generis longissima regna tenetis.
haec quoque, cum iustos matura peregerit annos,
iuris erit uestri; pro munere poscimus usum.
quod si fata negant ueniam pro coniuge, certum est
nolle redire mihi; leto gaudete duorum.'

(*Met.* 10.26-39)

... a god well-known in the upper world, but whether here or not I do not know; and yet I surmise that he is known here as well, and if the story of that old-time ravishment is not false, you, too, were joined by love. By these fearsome places, by this huge void and these vast and silent realms, I beg of you, unravel the fates of my Eurydice, too quickly run. We are totally pledged to you, and though we tarry on earth a little while, slow or swift we speed to one abode. Hither we all make our way; this is our final home; yours is the longest sway over the human race. She also shall be yours to rule when of ripe age she shall have lived out her allotted years. I ask the enjoyment of her as a boon; but if the fates deny this privilege for my wife, I am resolved not to return. Rejoice in the death of two.' (trans. Miller et al.)

Considered as a whole, Orpheus's speech has been deemed the most divisive element among scholars of Ovid's narrative, as may be illustrated by the two vastly different interpretations of Anderson and Segal. Anderson sees it as bathetic, rhetorically 'cheap' and 'flashy', and that this displays Ovidian wit at its best: addressing a speech filled with commonplaces about death typical for a consolatory speech to the highly untypical audience of the immortal gods of the Underworld.[339] Essentially, Anderson sees the speech as a clever joke where 'Ovid has taken away the tragic mood Virgil sought'.[340] Segal interprets the speech in a diametrically opposite fashion. In his reading the speech is pathos-filled and touching - an expression of Ovid's 'more human Orpheus'.[341] Though he is aware of the speech's 'rhetorical elaboration' in its opening, he sees the subsequent references to the loss of Eurydice as deeply effective: 'The pathetic note

[339] Anderson in Warden 1982: 40–41.
[340] Anderson in Warden 1982: 41.
[341] Segal 1993: 63.

is sounded in the immediately preceding *crescentes abstulit annos* of the «new bride» (8-9). It suggests also the young couple's loss of the happiness of their best years.'[342] Interestingly, Segal compares this particular phrase with two other couples that appear earlier in the *Metamorphoses*, whose relationships are described by the phrases *concordes annos* and as *dulces concorditer exegit annos* (Philemon and Baucis, 8.708, and Procris and Cephalus, 7.752, respectively).[343] This intratextual allusion to these other couples may not be as straightforwardly positive set of comparisons as Segal may think, as we shall see in the subsequent analysis of Orpheus' Ovidian context.

Ovid and Virgil adopt very different strategies in relating the effects of Orpheus' words upon the denizens of the Underworld. Whereas Virgil had emphasised the reaction of the human shades, in the subsequent passage of Orpheus' narrative, Ovid speeds past these to elaborate upon the effects upon the more fantastical inhabitants:[344]

Talia dicentem neruosque ad uerba mouentem
exsangues flebant animae; nec Tantalus undam
captauit refugam, stupuitque Ixionis orbis,
nec carpsere iecur uolucres, urnisque uacarunt
Belides, inque tuo sedisti, Sisyphe, saxo.
tum primum lacrimis uictarum carmine fama est
Eumenidum maduisse genas; nec regia coniunx
sustinet oranti nec qui regit ima negare,
Eurydicenque uocant. umbras erat illa recentes
inter et incessit passu de uulnere tardo.
(*Met.* 10.40-49)

As he spoke thus, accompanying his words with the music of his lyre, the bloodless spirits wept; Tantalus did not catch at the fleeing wave; Ixion's wheel stopped in wonder; the vultures did not pluck at the liver; the Belides rested from their urns, and thou, O Sisyphus, didst sit upon thy stone. Then first, tradition says, conquered by the song, the cheeks of the Eumenides were wet with tears; nor could the queen nor he who rules the lower world refuse the suppliant. They called Eurydice. She was among the new shades and came with steps halting from her wound. (trans. Miller et al.)

[342] Segal 1993: 63.
[343] Segal 1993: 63.
[344] As noted by Anderson in Warden 1982: 41.

Anderson here notes the humorous tone inherent in the alliterative line 44 (... **s**edi**s**ti, **Si**s**s**yphe, **s**axo),[345] and this passage, together with the darkly comical detail of Eurydice's limping shade (v. 49), certainly seems to be lighter in tone than the subsequent desciption of Orpheus' backwards glance:

50 hanc simul et legem Rhodopeius accipit Orpheus,
ne flectat retro sua lumina, donec Avernas
exierit ualles; aut inrita dona futura.
carpitur adcliuis per muta silentia trames,
arduus, obscurus, caligine densus opaca,
55 nec procul afuerunt telluris margine summae:
hic, ne deficeret, metuens auidusque uidendi
flexit amans oculos; et protinus illa relapsa est,
bracchiaque intendens prendique et prendere certans
nil nisi cedentes infelix adripit auras.
60 iamque iterum moriens non est de coniuge quicquam
questa suo (quid enim nisi se quereretur amatam?)
supremumque 'vale,' quod iam vix auribus ille
acciperet, dixit reuolutaque rursus eodem est.

(*Met.* 10.49-63)

Thus then the Thracian hero received his wife and with her this condition, that he should not turn his eyes backward until he had gone forth from the valley of Avernus, or else the gift would be in vain. They took the up-sloping path through places of utter silence, a steep path, indistinct and clouded in pitchy darkness. And now they were nearing the margin of the upper earth, when he, afraid that she might fail him, eager for sight of her, turned back his longing eyes; and instantly she slipped into the depths. He stretched out his arms, eager to catch her or to feel her clasp; but, unhappy one, he clasped nothing but the yielding air. And now, dying a second time, she made no complaint against her husband; for of what could she complain save that she was beloved? She spake one last 'farewell' which scarcely reached her husband's ears, and fell back again to the place whence she had come.

Anderson here attacks Orpheus for being:

[345] Anderson in Warden 1982: 42.

> ... a shallow, self-satisfied, self-indulgent «lover», who could never perceive his own guilt, who would have to imagine Eurydice being grateful to him for his (doltish) passion even in her final moments.[346]

He also interprets the motives given by Ovid for Orpheus' backwards glance as deflecting some of the guilt away from him, especially when compared with Virgil's depiction of Orpheus' *furor*.[347] Segal also notes that Orpheus' alternative motivation is less damning for our feelings towards him, and sees them as the 'solicitude of a lover or a husband for the weakness of his beloved', and he fails to see any irony in the description of Eurydice's second death, nor in Ovid's deliberation about whether Eurydice had any cause for complaint.[348] When we later turn to look at Orpheus' larger Ovidian context, the question of whether a husband's love can be a negative thing will be shown to be cause for concern as part of Ovid's marriage criticism.

What comes next in Orpheus' narrative is another departure from Virgil's version of events as Ovid lets Orpheus be stunned by grief, a situation which he describes through a pair of significant similes, just as Virgil inserted the poignant nightingale-simile at the equivalent point in the narrative:

> Non aliter stupuit gemina nece coniugis Orpheus,
> quam tria qui Stygii, medio portante catenas,
> colla canis uidit; quem non pauor ante reliquit
> quam natura prior, saxo per corpus oborto;
> quique in se crimen traxit uoluitque uideri
> Olenos esse nocens, tuque, o confisa figurae,
> infelix Lethaea, tuae, iunctissima quondam
> pectora, nunc lapides, quos umida sustinet Ide.
>
> (*Met.* 10.64-71)

By his wife's double death Orpheus was stunned, like that frightened creature who saw the three-headed dog with chains on his middle neck, whose numbing terror left him only when his former nature left, and the petrifying power crept through his body; or like that Olenos, who took sin upon himself and was willing to seem guilty; and like you, luckless Lethaea, too boastful of your beauty, once two hearts joined in close embrace, but now two stones which well-watered Ida holds. (trans. Miller et al.)

[346] Anderson in Warden 1982: 42.
[347] Anderson in Warden 1982: 42.
[348] Segal 1993: 65.

The significance of this for our sympathy or otherwise towards Orpheus has been studied by Heath, who argues that:

> The two similes combine to paint a rather unheroic blush on the plaintive singer. Ovid seems to be having a bit of cynical fun by deflating the pathos of the tale just at the moment of its emotional climax.[349]

His analysis is based upon a careful reconstruction of the contexts of the two mythical plots of the similes, whose appearance in poetry is largely unique to Ovid's narrative.[350] The reference to Cerberus in chains evokes Hercules' successful *katabasis* to retrieve the three-headed dog and can act as a negative parallel to Orpheus' failed *katabasis*: 'The episode contrasts the failure of the singer with the accomplishments of the club-wielding strongman.'[351] Heath links this simile with Orpheus' earlier reassurance to the Underworld god that he had not come to carry off Cerberus, whom he referred to as a 'Medusan monster' (v. 10.22) – a possible reference to Hercules overcoming the shadow of the Gorgon Medusa earlier in his *katabasis*.[352] Like Medusa, Orpheus is often described as having the power to transfix his audience – though unlike her, Orpheus never literally petrified them. Heath notes how following Virgil's Orpheus-narrative in the *Georgics* the verb *stupeo* had 'become the standard verb to portray Orpheus' mastery over the creatures in Hades in particular.'[353] Ovid has applied this verb in such a context in his description of Ixion (10.42), whereas there is no description of a similar stupefaction of Cerberus. Instead, Orpheus is paralyzed (*stupuit* v. 10.64) by his loss as he glanced back: 'unsuccessful in his heroic quest to bring someone up from the dead, he is fairly compared to a man who was turned to stone (at the sight of Cerberus).'[354] Heath also finds an earlier link for the second simile within Orpheus' speech. In lines 10.38-39, Orpheus had offered to die in order to be reunited with Eurydice; now, in his stupefaction, he is compared with the petrified Olenos who chose to be punished together with his hybristic wife; 'He *can* follow the path bravely taken by Olenos: he may join his wife through death ... But he does not.'[355] Orpheus in fact attempts to reenter the Underworld with his poetic powers, but is stopped: *orantem frustraque iterum transire uolentem | portitor arcuerat*. (*Met.* 10.72-73, 'Orpheus prayed and wished in vain to

[349] Heath 1996: 354.
[350] Heath notes that we have several testimonia concerning Hercules' *katabasis*, but no poetic narrative prior to Ovid of his abduction of Cerberus, see Heath 1996: 355.
[351] Heath 1996: 356.
[352] Heath 1996: 359–60.
[353] Heath 1996: 361.
[354] Heath 1996: 363.
[355] Heath 1996: 365.

cross the Styx a second time, but the keeper drove him back', trans. Miller et al.). This reference to a gatekeeper or *portitor* may well evoke Cerberus, which could strengthen Heath's argument about the Cerberus-simile's deflation of Orpheus' heroics. Orpheus reliance upon his art alone, and his unwillingness to die echoes the representation of him by Phaedrus in Plato's *Symposium* (179 b-e) where Orpheus' same unwillingness to die for his beloved is attacked.[356]

We have so far seen how Ovid appears to undermine Orpheus' standing as a tragic, sympathetic hero, but his rewriting of Virgil's *katabasis*-narrative can hardly be said to be all parody and no pathos. As Segal revisited Ovid's Orpheus in 1989, he appeared to move slightly towards Anderson's interpretation and stressed Ovid's mixture of parody and pathos:

> ... parody of the Virgilian episode is all-pervasive in Ovid's version. But parody is a very general term, and interpreters continue to differ on the major issues ... I continue to believe that Ovid has his own brand of seriousness and sympathy, mingled though it is with irreverence.[357]

This might well be true for the previous sections, but when Ovid at the opening of book 11 depicts the murder of Orpheus and its aftermath, that part of the narrative has been seen as the strongest example of dark humour in the whole Orpheus-narrative, and also as the clearest example of Ovid parodying Virgil's Orpheus:

Te maestae uolucres, Orpheu, te turba ferarum,
te rigidi silices, te carmina saepe secutae
fleuerunt siluae, positis te frondibus arbor
tonsa comas luxit; lacrimis quoque flumina dicunt
increuisse suis, obstrusaque carbasa pullo
Naides et Dryades passosque habuere capillos.
membra iacent diuersa locis, caput, Hebre, lyramque
excipis, et (mirum!) medio dum labitur amne,
flebile nescioquid queritur lyra, flebile lingua
murmurat exanimis, respondent flebile ripae.
(*Met.* 11.44-53)

[356] Heath 1996: 366.
[357] Segal 1993: 81. More recently, Reed provides an interpretation which emphasises the indeterminacy and ambiguity rather than the parodic in Ovid's Orpheus, much like the earlier work of Segal on Orpheus in Ovid, see e.g. Reed 2013: xix.

The mourning birds wept for thee, Orpheus, the throng of beasts, the flinty rocks, and the trees which had so often gathered to thy songs; yes, the trees shed their leaves as if so tearing their hair in grief for thee. They say that the rivers also were swollen with their own tears, and that naiads and dryads alike mourned with dishevelled hair and clad in garb of sombre hue. The poet's limbs lay scattered all around; but his head and lyre, O Hebrus, thou didst receive, and (a marvel!) while they floated in mid-stream the lyre gave forth some mournful notes, mournfully the lifeless tongue murmured, mournfully the banks replied. (trans. Miller et al.)

This section transfers the pathetic fallacy which Virgil had attached to the initial death of Eurydice (*G.* 4.460-463) and applies it to the death of Orpheus. The mourning tree that sheds its hair/leaves (*Met.* 11.46-47) in lamentation may be seen as having a humorous touch,[358] and this may also recall the emasculated Attis and the corresponding hair-cut of his pine-tree self (*Met.* 10.103-105). Ovid also echoes Orpheus' grief for Eurydice at *G.* 4.465-466 through a similarly extensive anaphora of the word *te*, yet whereas Virgil included a second extensive anaphora of the name Eurydice, Ovid lets his Orpheus murmur some 'indistinctly weepy something'.[359]

Yet even here, the humour is not so much directed at Virgil as at undermining the reader's sympathy for Orpheus. By reminding us of Virgil's more extensive treatment of Eurydice, Ovid manages to undercut his Orpheus by pointing out that Eurydice should have been grieved for at this moment in the story, but that Orpheus either is incapable of doing so or has outright forgotten all about her as he expires.[360] When the couple next are reunited as shades, their relationship in the afterlife is described with just a few lines. This may either be seen as natural variation of tempo within the hundreds of narratives of the *Metamorphoses*, or as a deliberately witty touch:

umbra subit terras et quae loca uiderat ante,
cuncta recognoscit quaerensque per arua piorum
inuenit Eurydicen cupidisque amplectitur ulnis.
hic modo coniunctis spatiantur passibus ambo,
nunc praecedentem sequitur, nunc praeuius anteit
Eurydicenque suam iam tuto respicit Orpheus.
(*Met.* 11.61-66)

[358] Neumeister 1986: 180.
[359] Makowski 1996: 37.
[360] Makowski 1996: 37.

The poet's shade fled beneath the earth, and recognized all the places he had seen before; and, seeking through the blessed fields, found Eurydice and caught her in his eager arms. Here now side by side they walk; now Orpheus follows her as she precedes, now goes before her, now may in safety look back upon his Eurydice. (trans. Miller et al.)

Orpheus is seemingly eager to see Eurydice, and after embracing her shade, the two stroll about without any danger of breaking divine taboos. The contrast between the preceding allusions to Eurydice and their reunion in the afterlife creates a far from blissful denouement, as Makowski concludes: ' ... the reader of Ovid is left to imagine the reunion of Eurydice with her bisexual husband who consigned her to oblivion in favour of man-boy love.'[361]

4.4 Ovid's Orpheus as Phanocles

If we turn to the intermediate stage of Ovid's Orpheus-narrative, it becomes increasingly hard to identify moments of sympathy for the very special metamorphosis that Orpheus undergoes. As Orpheus returns to the living, unlike the extensive anguish in Virgil's narrative and subsequent death scene, Ovid revives the pederastic Orpheus of Phanocles, turning him away from solipsistic consolation to a more active purpose for his music:

tertius aequoreis inclusum Piscibus annum
finierat Titan, omnemque refugerat Orpheus
feminеam Venerem, seu quod male cesserat illi,
siue fidem dederat. multas tamen ardor habebat
iungere se uati; multae doluere repulsae.
ille etiam Thracum populis fuit auctor amorem
in teneros transferre mares citraque iuuentam
aetatis breue uer et primos carpere flores.
(*Met.* 10.78-85)

Three times had the sun finished the year and come to watery Pisces; and Orpheus had shunned all love of womankind, whether because of his ill success in love, or whether he had given his troth once for all. Still, many women felt a passion for the bard; many grieved for their love repulsed. He set the example for the people of Thrace of giving his love to tender boys, and enjoying the springtime and first flower of their youth. (trans. Miller et al.)

[361] Makowski 1996: 38.

This description of Orpheus' apparent metamorphosis from heterosexual husband to misogynistic prophet of pederasty has been seen as the final straw, permitting us as readers to undergo a metamorphosis of any lingering sympathy for Orpheus. Anderson here highlights the speculation in vs. 10.80-81: *seu ... siue*, as a way for Ovid to elicit scepticism from his readers towards Orpheus' seemingly voluntary adoption of pederasty, and the possibility that this was the result of feeling victimised - when Orpheus clearly was far from blameless.[362] In his study of the bisexual aspects of Ovid's Orpheus, Makowski also notes a change of tone during the description of Orpheus' metamorphosis to pederasty 'all of this ... in the diction and preciosity of Alexandrian pederastic poetry.'[363] This may well indicate the introduction of a novel parodic target text, namely Phanocles' *Loves or Beautiful Boys*.[364] Phanocles' catalogue elegy is the best example of a text that openly deals with Orpheus as a pederast prior to Ovid, but as we saw in Chapter 1, Phanocles had presented Orpheus in a much more sympathetic light by avoiding the main story of his failure to rescue Eurydice. We must therefore now turn to Ovid's reworking of Phanocles' narrative and see how this second intertext can be interpreted as part of his parodic treatment of Orpheus.

In his 2008 article on Phanocles, Gärtner provides a run-through of Ovid's reception of Phanocles. He notes how *Met.* 10.83-84 'unmistakably betray the influence of Phanocles fr.1.9'.[365] However, Ovid's reception extends well beyond these lines. If we look at the main sequence of events, it is possible to recognise seemingly close overlaps between Ovid's and Phanocles' pederastic Orpheus narratives. Gärtner provides a schematic presentation of these parallels, and notes that both narratives depict Orpheus singing an erotically themed song, or set of songs (*Met.* 10.78-11.2); the murder of Orpheus (*Met.* 11.3-49), the journey of Orpheus' head and lyre to Lesbos (*Met.* 11.50-66), and the punishment of the Thracian women responsible for his murder (*Met.* 11.67-84).[366] Ovid's departures from Phanocles' scheme are therefore more concerned with how these events are presented, with the main differences occuring during the first stage of the narrative. In representing the pederastic Orpheus' singing, Ovid differs from Phanocles' description of Orpheus' subjective love for Calaïs:

[362] Anderson in Warden 1982: 44.
[363] Makowski 1996: 29.
[364] Marcovich notes that scholars have acknowledged this link since at least Heinsius' Ovid-edition of 1652, see Marcovich 1979: 363.
[365] My translation, see Gärtner 2008: 31–32.
[366] Gärtner 2008: 32.

Collis erat collemque super planissima campi
area, quam uiridem faciebant graminis herbae.
umbra loco deerat; qua postquam parte resedit
dis genitus uates et fila sonantia mouit,
umbra loco uenit.
(*Met.*10.86-90)

A hill there was, and on the hill a wide-extending plain, green with luxuriant grass; but the place was devoid of shade. When here the heaven-descended bard sat down and smote his sounding lyre, shade came to the place. (trans. Miller et al.)

Gärtner notes how this scene alludes back to the setting of Orpheus' song in Phanocles' fr.1.3, also including a setting under the shadow of trees, and interprets this as motivated by Ovid's desire to include his catalogue of trees (vs. 10.91-142), which creates a link with Orpheus' subsequent songs.[367] Stephens sees the reference to *umbra* (10.88,90) as a double pun, which points back to Orpheus' preceding loss of Eurydice (who was described as being among the recent shades at vs. 10.48-49, ' ... *umbras erat illa recentes | inter*'), as well as to the literal shadow of the trees.[368]

However, it is equally possible to see links with shade as a *topos* in Virgil. Firstly, insomuch as Virgil had emphasised the link between leaves (sc. of trees) and shades of the dead at *Georg.*4.472-474 through a Homerically tinged simile, and secondly, because of Virgil's earlier reference to his authorial *persona* sitting in the shadow of a tree at *Ecl.*10.70-75. In this manner, Ovid appears to combine allusions to both Phanocles as well as to two of the key poems in Virgil's corpus in terms of Orpheus-representations. The links with *Eclogue* 10 are particularly interesting. In the opening of that poem, Virgil had depicted his authorial *persona* singing a song about Gallus, and crucially, the audience of this song would be Lycoris, Gallus himself (*Ecl.*10.2), but also the very woods, which would echo the song: *non canimus surdis: respondent omnia siluae*, (*Ecl.*10.8, 'We sing to no deaf ears; the woods echo every note.', trans. Fairclough). This personification of trees or woods refers back to the opening of the *Eclogues*, in which Tityrus had taught the woods (*siluas*) to echo the name of his beloved Amaryllis (*Ecl.*1.4-5), all the while seated under the shadow of a tree. At the close of the collection, Virgil's authorial *persona* seems to move away from the poetic project Tityrus had embodied, for he declares: *surgamus: solet esse grauis cantantibus umbra*, (*Ecl.* 10.75, 'Let us arise. The shade is oft perilous to the singer', trans.

[367] Gärtner 2008: 34–35.
[368] Stephens 1958: 180.

Fairclough). In Ovid's context, the setting of a singer (Orpheus) in the shade of trees becomes noteworthy for his non-compliance with Virgil's warning. Ovid makes a point out of the fact that Orpheus actively seeks out shade, even in a place where it was not provided by nature. If the shadow in question alludes back to Eurydice, then a different reading emerges: Virgil's closural statement becomes a warning *foreshadowing* of Orpheus' later demise, and it strengthens the already well established guilt of Orpheus in causing Eurydice's second death. The shadow of Eurydice's death, Orpheus' main failure, will come to harm him – very explicitly so in Ovid's lengthy description of his death (*Met.* 11.1-60).

This is not the only place where Ovid uses his Phanoclean frame to allude to Virgil. Makowski notes that whereas many of the stories embodied by the trees in Orpheus' catalogue allude back intratextually to earlier metamorphoses within Ovid's own narrative, the catalogue also includes intertextual allusions. These are not limited to Virgil. For an example, the elm and ivy mentioned at *Met.* 10.99-100 can be seen to evoke Catullus' epithalamium Catull. 61.106-109,[369] and we may also see the subsequent story of Attis and his metamorphosis into a pine tree as a reference to Catullus' extensive Attis-narrative in Catull. 63:

et succincta comas hirsutaque uertice pinus,
grata deum Matri, siquidem Cybeleius Attis
exuit hac hominem truncocque induruit alto.
(*Met.* 10.103-105)

... the bare-trunked pine with broad, leafy top, pleasing to the mother of the gods, since Attis, dear to Cybele, exchanged for this his human form and stiffened in its trunk. (trans. Miller et al.)

Makowski here notes the humorous element in Ovid's description of the pine tree as a 'foppishly coiffed eunuch'.[370] In his reading, Ovid can be seen to ridicule the overly effeminate male ideal associated with parts of pederastic culture. Makowski sees a second example of this in the subsequent narrative about Cyparissus and his love for a ridiculously ornamented stag:

namque sacer nymphis Carthaea tenentibus arva
ingens ceruus erat, lateque patentibus altas
ipse suo capiti praebebat cornibus umbras.
Cornua fulgebant auro, demissaque in armos

[369] Makowski 1996: 33.
[370] Makowski 1996: 34.

pendebant terete gemmata monilia collo;
bulla super frontem paruis argentea loris
uincta mouebatur, parilique ex aere nitebant
auribus e geminis circum caua tempora bacae.
(*Met.* 10.109-116)

For there was a mighty stag, sacred to the nymphs who haunt the Carthaean plains, whose wide-spreading antlers gave ample shade to his own head. His antlers gleamed with gold, and down on his shoulders hung a gem-mounted collar set on his rounded neck. Upon his forehead a silver boss bound with small thongs was worn. Of equal age, pendent from both his ears, about his hollow temples, were gleaming pearls. (trans. Miller et al.)

This passage is an exaggerated version of Virgil's description of a deer at *Aen.* 7.483-492, which in Makowski's reading already contained traces of a humorous tone, and as such, he does not see it as parodic, but as a 'comic allusion to the *Aeneid* within a larger passage playing on the *Georgics*.'[371] This example raises an important issue. If Virgil's model narrative is interpreted as less pathetic, serious etc., then Ovid's heightening of any comic tone in his reworking can hardly be called parodic. As such, Ovid's intertextual relationship with his Roman precursor should rightly be seen as more complex and varied in ways that extend beyond pure parody. If we look at Orpheus' next actions we might see a much clearer example of parody as part of an intertextual allusion.

When Orpheus is about to start singing to his audience of trees, the prooemium to his song in part recalls the theme of Phanocles' *Loves or Beautiful Boys*:

nunc opus est leuiore lyra; puerosque canamus
dilectos superis inconcessisque puellas
ignibus attonitas meruisse libidine poenam.'
(*Met.* 10.152-154)

But now I need the gentler touch, for I would sing of boys beloved by gods, and maidens inflamed by unnatural love and paying the penalty of their lust. (trans. Miller et al.)

[371] Makowski 1996: 35.

Gärtner has pointed out that this poetic programme matches the pederastic teachings and misogyny of Orpheus in Phanocles fr.1.9-10.[372] However, this situation is different to the earlier examples of intertextual parody, for what Ovid does next is to provide Orpheus with a number of songs that illustrate his avowed poetic programme. Gärtner does not see anything comic in this, but is aware of the intertextual reference at play:

> Ovid's device has in a way turned the external (the design principle of Phanocles' elegy) into the internal (Orpheus' internal song) and at the same time has maintained the 'central pivot' of this transformation, namely Orpheus (he is an object in Phanocles, in Ovid, in contrast, he is the fictive creator of a catalogue poem).[373]

What is interesting to notice here is that the contents of Orpheus' internal narration (and of the internal narration embedded within that song in Venus' role as narrator) do not follow his promised poetic programme of providing positive examples of pederasty and negative ones of heterosexual relationships. In addition to the story of Cyparissus featured in the catalogue of trees, Orpheus sings of the pederastic relationships between Apollo and Hyacinthus (*Met.* 10.161-219), Jupiter and Ganymede (*Met.* 10.155-161), yet as Anderson has remarked 'Only one boy manages to survive to gratify his lover, that is Ganymede ... Thus, Orpheus' advocacy of pederasty has proved self-contradictory.'[374] Among the other stories (Atalanta and Hippomenes, Venus and Adonis, Pygmalion and his statue, Myrrha and Cinyras), only the incestuous story of Myrrha appears to fulfil the programmatic promise as being a story of a woman's illicit love and punishment, yet as Anderson points out ' ... Myrrha exhibits a rich moral awareness and struggles against her passion', which leads him to conclude: ' ... the stories of this supposedly incomparable bard fail to prove his points: boy-love ends in lamentation, not happiness; girl-love refuses to be reduced to a simple formula of libido and punishment.'[375]

The effect of this extensive undermining of Orpheus, acting in the role of Phanocles, is to see the main part of book 10 not as a Virgilian, but as a Phanoclean parody. This parody of Phanocles' poetic project is arguably different from Ovid's intertextual play with and undermining of Virgil's version of the character Orpheus. For example, it is not possible to find as many examples of intertextual allusions in Ovid's narrative to Phanocles' fragmentary text, and perhaps there wouldn't be as many to be found even if we had had the whole of Phanocles'

[372] Gärtner 2008: 37–38.
[373] My translation, see Gärtner 2008: 36.
[374] Anderson in Warden 1982: 45.
[375] Anderson in Warden 1982: 46.

elegy. Perhaps this is a hallmark of a truer form of parody, as not only showing the mastery of a predecessor's poetry through allusion, but creating a recognisable reflection of a predecessor through grafting him directly onto one of his characters.

4.5 Ovid and Orpheus – looking back from exile

We have so far looked at how Ovid incorporated extensive intertextual allusions to preceding texts as well as, in the case of Phanocles, parodic treatments of their whole poetic projects. It is now time to look at Ovid's Orpheus from an intratextual perspective, and in particular at how this narrative functions in relation to surrounding narratives within the *Metamorphoses*, as well as its relationship with Ovid's earlier didactic elegy, the *Ars Amatoria*. By analysing these relationships, it will be possible to see Orpheus' functions within the *Metamorphoses* in a different light. Firstly, as a reflection upon Ovid's real-life artistic failure in being sent into exile because of his art, at least in part due to his writing of the *Ars*, and secondly as a vehicle for political defiance in reworking various aspects of the marriage criticism Ovid had conveyed in the *Ars*. I will first look at Orpheus' role in terms of artistic failure, and then look at the political criticism inherent in his representation by Ovid.

Ovid's Orpheus shares a number of characteristics with other narratives within the *Metmorphoses*. Above all, he is represented as an artist/poet and as a lover, and like several other artistic figures of the *Metamorphoses*, he fails in his struggles with the forces of love and the nature of reality. In addition to these qualities, Orpheus is also significant for his extensive role as an embedded narrator, a role he shares with e.g. the Muse Calliope (his mother) in Book 5. The metamorphic theme running through the stories that all of these internal narrators relate invites comparisons with the overall narrator of the poem, Ovid's poetic *persona*. An important question that arises when considering this aspect of Orpheus is whether he is used to highlight Ovidian self-doubt by reflecting Ovid's own failings, or if he is used as a contrasting figure against whom Ovid can display his artistic self-confidence.

In order to approach these questions, it is first necessary to establish whether or not the Orpheus-narrative should be understood as part of Ovid's exile poetry. As with most questions about dates of composition in the case of ancient writers, we must look at Ovid's own words for clues, and Ovid seemingly provides a lot of information on the matter. Within the poem itself Ovid includes a *sphragis* (*Met.* 15.871-879) where he claims that the poem was finished, yet in the exilic *Tristia*, he claims that the poem was published in an unfinished state:

... sed carmina maior imago
sunt mea, quae mando qualiacumque legas,
carmina mutatas hominum dicentia formas,
infelix domini quod fuga rupit opus.
(*Tr.* 1.7.11-14)

But my verses are a more striking portrait, and these I bid you read however poor they are—the verses that tell of the changed forms of men, the work broken off by the unfortunate exile of their master. (trans. Miller et al.)

This passage explicitly invites us as readers to compare Ovid with his own composition – yet claims that the work must be judged with consideration of its unfinished state. There may be good reasons not to interpret this statement as factual. Firstly, in stressing the unfinished character of his major epic poem, Ovid might try to echo the much more creditable story that Virgil had left the *Aeneid* unfinished (as can be seen through its occasionally incomplete hexameter lines) and had ordered it to be burnt as he lay on his deathbed.[376] Ovid attempts to act like Virgil insomuch as he later in the same poem claims to have burnt the autograph manuscript of the *Metamorphoses* (*Tr.* 1.7.15-22), either because he hated his poems *ut crimina nostra* (*Tr.* 1.7.21, 'as my crimes' – or because he was unhappy with their unfinished state: *quod adhuc crescens et rude carmen erat*, *Tr.* 1.7.22, 'since the song was still growing and rough'. Ovid also imitates what happened with Virgil's poem, as he next claims that he had failed to stop others in publishing the *Metamorphoses* (*Tr.* 1.7.23-24).

The important point is to ask why it was so important for Ovid not just to emulate Virgil, but to make it appear as if the *Metamorphoses* was published in its pre-exilic, unfinished state, and that he even claimed to have left for exile without his autograph manuscript, thus denying himself the possibility for later revisions? Hinds has seen *Tr.* 1.7 as consciously trying to reframe how Ovid wants his audience to read the *Metamorphoses*:

> ... it is a poem about how the *Metamorphoses* can be redeployed, how it can be rewritten, to reflect the circumstances of Ovid's exile, and thus, ultimately, to help him book his trip home.[377]

Another possible answer may be that he wanted to avoid raising suspicions against any subsequent revisions of the poem in exile. Scholars like e.g. Fulkerson have entertained the

[376] For a discussion of the ancient reception of this story, see Stok in Farrell and Putnam 2014: 117.
[377] Hinds 1985: 26.

possibility of such an exilic revision, and have interpreted parts of the poem as a critique of Augustus.[378] Such criticism may have been given added motivation by Ovid's feeling of being unjustly, or at the very least, too harshly punished by Augustus, yet if he wanted to achieve a pardon, he would have had to camouflage his attacks extra carefully. I think it makes perfect sense to view Orpheus' function within the *Metamorphoses* against a backdrop of an exilic composition date, and this can add to our understanding of the poem's treatment of artistic failure as well as its highly veiled political criticism.[379]

4.6 Ovid and Orpheus – when poets fail

Leach has analysed the several instances of artists that fail to achieve their desired goals within the *Metamorphoses*.[380] She has pointed out that in many of these narratives there appears to be a struggle between the artist and love – notably in the case of Pygmalion, whose narrative is told by Orpheus, whereas other artists are challenging the gods and the natural order of things, e.g. Arachne who competes with Minerva in weaving in Book 6. Orpheus in a way does both of these things, as he tries to rescue his love-life and then, when he fails to use his art to control his emotions, he turns his love-life on its head and redirects his artistic ventures in light of his newfound pederastic identity, yet fails to quell the Maenads. Leach is careful to note points in Orpheus' narrative where his artistic role breaks down. His initial grief is not clearly expressed artistically (*uates defleuit* (*Met.* 10.12)), but 'suggests the dissolution of musical power in emotion.'[381] Equally, when he descends to the Underworld in seach of Eurydice, he waits to use his musical prowess until he stands before Persephone, and: 'Even then, Ovid uses the prosaic 'ait' ('he said').'[382] In Leach's reading, Orpheus' face-off with the Maenads (*Met.* 11.1-60) can be seen as a failed attempt at controlling nature through art, which ultimately is doomed by a flawed conception of nature:

> The artist is isolated amidst nature. The order he has created is ultimately powerless to defend him. Nature in its fullest sense includes not only the enchanted circle of beasts and trees, but also the Maenads and the violent passions Orpheus had attempted to deny in his art.[383]

[378] Fulkerson 2006: 388–402.
[379] For an opposite view, that Ovid in fact anticipated his exile through his treatment of failing artists such as Orpheus, see Johnson 2008.
[380] Leach 1974: 102–42
[381] Leach 1974: 119.
[382] Leach 1974: 119.
[383] Leach 1974: 126.

As Orpheus' head floats downstream, his artistic powers have all but left him – being reduced to inarticulate murmurs, and when his shade is reunited with his love, Eurydice, his lyre is nowhere to be found: 'Personal satisfaction for the artist seems only to be obtained in a withdrawal from art into love.'[384]

Scholars have pointed out that there is an exception to what Leach saw as a recurring topos of artistic failure among the characters of the *Metamorphoses*, namely, the story of Pygmalion.[385] Yet even in his case, any seeming success on the part of Pygmalion can be seen to be compromised by his relationship with Orpheus, who relates Pygmalion's narrative, and as in the case of Orpheus, because art proves insufficient to achieve this artist's goals. Pygmalion is a sculptor who reacts against the impiety of the Propoetides (*Met.* 10.220-242) by becoming a sworn misogynist:

'Quas quia Pygmalion aeuum per crimen agentes
uiderat, offensus uitiis quae plurima menti
245 femineae natura dedit, sine coniuge caelebs
uiuebat thalamique diu consorte carebat.
(*Met.* 10.243-246)

Pygmalion had seen these women spending their lives in shame, and, disgusted with the faults which in such full measure nature had given the female mind, he lived unmarried and long was without a partner of his couch. (trans. Miller et al.)

Heath has pointed out that Pygmalion's story functions as an inverse parallel to Orpheus', starting from misogynistic renunciation of women, to love for an inanimate woman (Pygmalion's 'sex-doll-like' sculpture), and ending with her successful animation: 'The bard sees himself and his persuasive song in Pygmalion.'[386] There are even strong verbal echoes between the two narratives at their moments of crisis; when Orpheus glances back and loses Eurydice, and conversly, when Pygmalion gazes at his statue and realises his miraculous reward of a wife:

[384] Leach 1974: 127.
[385] For an overview of previous scholarly consensus on this matter, see Leach 1974: 124, n. 40.
[386] Heath 1996: 369.

dum **stupet** et dubie gaudet fallique ueretur,
rursus **amans** rursusque **manu** sua uota **retractat**.
corpus erat; saliunt temptatae pollice uenae.
(*Met.* 10.287-289)

The lover stands amazed, rejoices still in doubt, fears he is mistaken, and tries his hopes again and yet again with his hand. Yes, it was real flesh! The veins were pulsing beneath his testing finger. (trans. Miller et al.)

This passage reuses the verb *stupeo* (*Met.* 10.66), the qualification of the artist as *amans* (*Met.* 10.57),[387] and also echoes Orpheus' stretching out his hands (*Met.* 10.58), but with the opposite result to his. The seemingly straightforward artistic success of Pygmalion can only be seen as positive when read in isolation, something we should be vary of when approaching the *Metamorphoses*. Heath is aware of this potential for the narrative to be undermined by its context:

> ... Ovid has carved a dangerous trench under the sculptor's pedestal. We listen to a disenchanted and failed bard create a tale of an enchanted and triumphant artist. ... In the fictional world of a fictional singer love and art combine to produce miraculous, death-defying love ... Orpheus, however, ... is trapped in Ovid's world, not Pygmalion's.[388]

As Heath and Leach have both noted, Pygmalion needed to trust in his abilities as a lover as well as those of an artist.[389] Crucially, the final thing Pygmalion attempts is to bring a votive gift for Venus and he prays at her temple that the gods may give him a wife:

... 'si di, dare cuncta potestis,
sit coniunx, opto', non ausus 'eburnea uirgo'
dicere Pygmalion 'similis mea' dixit 'eburnae.'
sensit, ut ipsa suis aderat Venus aurea festis,
uota quid illa uelint, et, amici numinis omen,
flamma ter accensa est apicemque per aëra duxit.
(*Met.* 10.274-279)

[387] Heath 1996: 370.
[388] Heath 1996: 370.
[389] Leach sees Pygmalion's art as being abandoned for love, whereas Heath stresses the balancing of the two, see Leach 1974: 124; Heath 1996: 369.

'If ye, O gods, can give all things, I pray to have as wife——' he did not dare add 'my ivory maid,' but said, 'one like my ivory maid.' But golden Venus (for she herself was present at her feast) knew what that prayer meant; and, as an omen of her favouring deity, thrice did the flame burn brightly and leap high in air. (trans. Miller et al.)

In this passage, the triple flame that leaps up acts as a good omen for the fulfilment of Pygmalion's desire, in contrast with the bad omen at Orpheus' interaction with another deity, Hymen, as well as the bad omen of a triple thunderclap Virgil's Orpheus received in *G.* 4.493. This provides an especially strong emphasis upon Pygmalion's actions at this moment and arguably makes his piety and love the ultimate reason for his imaginary (in Orpheus' telling of his story) success. Pygmalion is therefore really no different from the other artists within the *Metamorphoses*, whose art invariably fails them.

Why did Ovid spend so much time on stories of artistic failure – and in particular, stories where artists are punished in some way? We have seen in the previous chapters how Orpheus could function as a representative for some part of a poet's engagement with the preceding poetic tradition. The closest Orpheus narrative to Ovid's one, which he repeatedly alludes to and sometimes parodies, is Virgil's 'Georgic' Orpheus. In Chapter 3, we saw how Orpheus there could be seen to signal Virgil's looking back at the poetic milieu from where he had started his career, and it is not too far-fetched to imagine Ovid doing something similar with Orpheus and the other artist/poet-characters in the *Metamorphoses*. If we presume that the *Metamorphoses* was completed in exile, then the many failed artists of its narrative could be interpreted as embodying Ovid's looking back at his past artistic failure and punishment.[390]

A special case of this self-referential function of artists who fail can be seen in Ovid's sustained interaction with the myth of Daedalus, who among numerous other instances features in a significant section of the central pivot points of both the *Ars* (2.21-98) as well as in the *Metamorphoses* (8.183-235). In engaging with this myth, Ovid can in fact be seen to entertain the possibility of actively associating himself with the failure of Daedalus' son, Icarus, but in a manner that engenders a kind of self-depreciatory self-encomium of his own greatness as reflected in the fame obtained by Icarus. In her study of the second book of the *Ars*, Sharrock argues in favour of seeing a partial metapoetic resemblance between Ovid and Daedalus as well between Ovid and Daedalus' ill-fated son, Icarus.[391] In the version of the myth that Ovid narrates in the *Ars*, Sharrock has shown how the two figures on one level may be seen as

[390] Pagán has suggested that Ovid may also be commenting upon the demise of Gallus and its possible resonances in Virgil's Orpheus-narrative, see Pagán in Sluiter and Rosen 2004: 369–89.
[391] Sharrock 1994: 87–195.

symbolic for a poetological dialectic concerning poetic greatness and hybris. Daedalus, who flies midway between sea and sky on his artificial wings may represent the 'Callimachean' poetics of limited generic aspirations (i.e. the elegiac didactic of Ovid's *Ars*),[392] whilst Icarus, who falls to his death after soaring too high, yet gains a famous name (cf. the Icarian sea) may be said to point towards greater generic endeavours, i.e. epic, and the excesses of 'un-Callimachean' poetry.[393] This seeming dichotomy is however far from unambiguous, as Sharrock notes:

> Daedalus is not an unambiguous signifier of Callimacheanism … nor is Callimacheanism an unambiguous signified. Daedalus can be transgressive or cautious. Callimacheanism can be cautious or transgressive. Icarus is the famous transgressor, but is he 'epic' or 'attempts at elevated poetry in Callimachean style'?[394]

In a post-exilic context, Ovid revisits their story, and at times associates his own writing of the *Ars* more clearly with Icarus and his ambiguous fame, as in *Tr.* 1.1.87-90.[395] In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid similarly makes Daedalus into the main reflection of his own poetic *persona*, using his story of losing Icarus as an illustration of his 'own *ars*-induced loss – his exile. The exile was the atonement, the price which Ovid paid for his boundary-bursting *Ars*, his famous crime.'[396]

As we saw with Virgil, it is also hard to see Ovid fully reflected in Orpheus, at least not within the temporal confines of the poems in which they include him, and in particular given that Ovid's poetic *persona* at the end of the *Metamorphoses* vehemently refuses to be included among the ranks of failed artists. Orpheus represents the past, but his inclusion in the *Metamorphoses* may signal a looking forward to future glory, much like the myth of Daedalus and Icarus functioned as a way to reflect upon the dialectic between past loss/failure and future fame. Interestingly, both Icarus and Orpheus end up dead at sea, and we saw how the association between Orpheus' head and Lesbos (e.g. in Phanocles, see Chapter 1) added to the poetic fame of that island. In the poem's concluding *sphragis*, we hear Ovid presenting himself as a confident artist, who signals that he, unlike his fictional characters, will ultimately succeed in achieving immortality and avoiding flux:[397]

[392] Sharrock 1994: 133–46.
[393] Sharrock 1994: 155–67.
[394] Sharrock 1994: 167.
[395] Sharrock 1994: 169.
[396] Sharrock 1994: 172.
[397] Nagle 1988: 125.

Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iouis ira nec ignes
nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere uetustas.
cum uolet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aeui;
parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum;
quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama
(si quid habent ueri uatum praesagia) uiuam.
(*Met.* 15.871-879)

And now my work is done, which neither the wrath of Jove, nor fire, nor sword, nor the gnawing tooth of time shall ever be able to undo. When it will, let that day come which has no power save over this mortal frame, and end the span of my uncertain years. Still in my better part I shall be borne immortal far beyond the lofty stars and I shall have an undying name. Wherever Rome's power extends over the conquered world, I shall have mention on men's lips, and, if the prophecies of bards have any truth, through all the ages shall I live in fame. (trans. Miller et al.)

This close to the epic can therefore be seen as a proud vindication of Ovid as an artist, in spite of the exile meted out by Augustus, which 'As *ira Iouis* ... is relegated to the world of myth.'[398]

4.7 Orpheus' *Ars Amatoria* and marriage criticism

We have seen how Orpheus in part may be supposed to reflect Ovid's poetic career in terms of his exile, though more as a figure Ovid could distance himself from, just as he would have liked to distance himself from his exile. In this regard it is revealing that there appears to be a number of intratextual links between the Orpheus narrative (including at least one of its embedded stories, that of Myrrha) and Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, the very poem he blamed for causing his downfall, e.g. in *Tr.* 2 where the *carmen* 'poem' referred to as one of two causes of his exile, *carmen et error* (*Tr.* 2.207) is clearly alluded to as being the *Ars*, as the following accusation makes clear: … *qua turpi carmine factus | arguor obsceni doctor adulterii*, (*Tr.* 2.211-212, 'the charge that by an obscene poem I have taught foul adultery', trans. Wheeler). I will next argue that Ovid's recurring allusions to the *Ars* in the Orpheus narrative are aimed at that poem's criticism of

[398] Leach 1974: 135. For an overview of scholarship in favour of seeing the sphragis as written in exile, see Wheeler 2000: 148, n. 107.

Augustan marriage legislation, and that Ovid both parodies this earlier criticism, and, underneath the surface, reinforces it.

That Ovid uses Orpheus to reflect upon his earlier composition of the *Ars* has been recognised by scholars such as Janan, who notes a possible allusion to it in Orpheus' *prooemium*:

> ... Iovis est mihi saepe potestas
> dicta prius; cecini plectro grauiore Gigantas
> sparsaque Phlegraeis uictricia fulmina campis.
> nunc opus est leviore lyra; puerosque canamus
> dilectos superis, inconcessisque puellas
> ignibus attonitas meruisse libidine poenam.
> (*Met.* 10.149-154)

> Oft have I sung the power of Jove before; I have sung the giants in a heavier strain, and the victorious bolts hurled on the Phlegraean plains. But now I need the gentler touch, for I would sing of boys beloved by gods, and maidens inflamed by unnatural love and paying the penalty of their lust. (trans. Miller et al.)

If we compare this section with the following passage from the opening of the *Ars* it is possible to notice that Orpheus has provided a poetic programme opposite to that of Ovid's authorial *persona* in the *Ars*:

> este procul, uittae tenues, insigne pudoris,
> quaeque tegis medios, instita longa, pedes.
> nos uenerem tutam concessaque furta canemus,
> inque meo nullum carmine crimen erit.
> (*Ars Am.* 1.31-34)

> Keep far away, ye slender fillets, emblems of modesty, and the long skirt that hides the feet in its folds. Of safe love-making do I sing, and permitted secrecy, and in my verse shall be no wrong-doing.

Here Ovid banishes married women, metonymically referred to by their typical clothes, and instead proposes to sing of love relationships that exist outside of marriage. In Janan's interpretation the rewriting of this programme in the *Metamorphoses* is an act of self-parody:

> We recognise that Orpheus' poem parodies Ovid's didactic poem on love ... Orpheus has, in effect, thrown down the gauntlet to his creator as epic poet and *praeceptor amoris* by formulating a radically different concept of 'safe love' – one that speaks of no safe women to love.[399]

Though Orpheus in one sense may be a self-parody of Ovid's stint as *teacher of love*, his links with the *Ars* opens up a set of subversive comments upon that poem's political dimensions, i.e. its criticism of Augustan marriage legislation. We shall therefore first pause to look at what this legislation entailed, before approaching how Ovid may use Orpheus to redouble his criticism of it.

We do not possess much in the way of direct evidence about the exact contents and wording of Augustan marriage legislation. In his magisterial study of Augustan family law, Csillag (1976) points out the difficulties inherent in reconstructing this part of Roman legislature given the poor transmission of mss, of which 'only insignificant fragments survive.'[400] The objectives of this legislation are easier to reconstruct. An important trend during the late Republic was a decrease in family size among the Roman elites, which could be interpreted as stemming from a desire to keep accumulated wealth from being dispersed among numerous heirs and in paying for numerous dowries.[401] This trend was symptomatic of what was perceived to be a general decline in traditional morality, and was paralleled in a declining birth-rate of free-born citizens of the lower classes. Ostensibly to combat this decline, Augustus wanted to strengthen the standing of the Roman family by promoting marriages, particularly among the senatorial and equestrian elite. Two laws regulating marriages among Roman citizens were enacted as part of this program of moral 'reform'. These two laws seem to have been overlapping to the extent that later jurists treated them under a single heading as the *Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea*.[402] The two originally distinct laws were supplemented by a separate law concerning adultery, the *Lex Iulia de adulteriis*, which appeared alongside the Julian law on marriage.

The laws promoting marriage aimed to make it easier to contract a marriage, offered distinct economic and social rewards for married couples and parents, and introduced severe disadvantages for public advancement and limited the rights to inherit for unmarried or childless citizens.[403] For most purposes it was deemed sufficient to be engaged to reap the

[399] Janan 1988: 116.
[400] Csillag 1976: 20.
[401] Csillag 1976: 44–45.
[402] Csillag discusses the problem of distinguishing between the two laws which he dates to c. 18 B.C. (lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus) and 9 AD (Lex Papia Poppaea), see Csillag 1976: 25, 31.
[403] Csillag 1976: 77.

benefits accrued from getting married, originally without a specified limit, which the *Lex Papia Poppaea* limited to two years in order to avoid that citizens abusing this loop-hole by getting engaged to very young girls.[404] Regardless of these efforts, marrying and producing offspring was not deemed very attractive and many leading Romans simply couldn't be bothered, at least if we are to believe this later account by Tacitus on the introduction of the *Lex Papia Poppaea*:

> relatum dein de moderanda Papia Poppaea, quam senior Augustus post Iulias rogationes incitandis caelibum poenis et augendo aerario sanxerat. nec ideo coniugia et educationes liberum frequentabantur praeualida orbitate. (*Annals* 3.25)

A motion was then introduced to qualify the terms of the *Lex Papia Poppaea*. This law, complementary to the Julian rogations, had been passed by Augustus in his later years, in order to sharpen the penalties of celibacy and to increase the resources of the exchequer. It failed, however, to make marriage and the family popular—childlessness remained the vogue. (trans. Moore et al.)

Ovid was clearly not alone in reacting negatively to the Augustan marriage reform, though ostensibly he appears to have complied with the laws promoting marriage since he was married (three times) and had fathered children. The objections to marriage raised in the *Ars Amatoria* were however that love, not marriage, should be the goal of relationships, and that this meant pursuing love outside marriage. The problem for Ovid was that his poem easily could be interpreted as a 'handbook of adultery'.[405] However, even its more basic message that love was a valuable pursuit, which could require a 'user-manual' advising numerous and time-consuming actions, would seem to run counter to the goals of the Augustan marriage legislation. Had Ovid wanted to be a propagandist for this, he would have written an *Ars Coniugalis* – a 'marriage manual' instead – if such a thought experiment may be permitted. In the Orpheus narrative and its surrounding context, we shall see that love within marriage is presented in a highly problematic way, which can be construed as furthering this criticism.

4.8 Married couples and the heterosexual Orpheus

We have so far seen that the pederastic stage of Orpheus' career in the *Metamorphoses* included a possible self-parody of Ovid's composing the *Ars Amatoria*. However, if we turn to how the heterosexual marriages of Orpheus and others in the *Metamorphoses* are represented, it is possible

[404] Treggiari 1991: 65.
[405] Harrison in Thorsen 2013: 143.

to discover an underlying repetition of a more sombre message against marriage found in the *Ars*. Thorsen has recently demonstrated how a careful reading of the *Ars* and its overall structure may reveal a subsidiary message about the dangers of love, in particular for married women.[406] In her interpretation of the poem we may identify a significant ring-composition between the account of the rape of the Sabine women near the opening of Book 1 and the story of the death of Procris who is killed, seemingly accidentally, by her husband Cephalus near the end of Book 3. Given that the rape of the Sabine women was the foundational legend behind the Roman marriage institution, the explicit rape scenes in Book 1 connect marriage with violence, a message that is made more serious through Procris' demise, which illustrates the potential for married life to end with a wife being murdered.[407] By carefully disentangling the various strands of the several references to Procris and Cephalus within the *Ars*, Thorsen points out that this couple, far from being good role models for lovers 'form a perfect match in their reciprocal suspicion and extra-marital inclinations.'[408] We may discover this fact more easily in other Ovidian poems as Procris' infidelity with King Minos is revealed in the *Remedia Amoris* (vs. 451-453), whereas only Cephalus' infidelity with the goddess Aura is referred to openly in *Ars* 3.83-84.[409] Yet all the longer mythical narratives of the *Ars* can be found to be connected with adulterous relationships centred around the island of Crete and King Minos – which may hint at his relationship with Procris.[410] When seen against the backdrop of the surface didactic message of the *Ars*, i.e. to pursue love with unmarried women, the example of Procris becomes a warning against the risks love could create for married women:

> The deepest undercurrent of this [anti-marital] message, as illustrated by the story of Procris is that marriage is dangerous. It is as if the female audience of book 3 of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* are being told: «Look at Procris: her husband killed her».[411]

How is this relevant to the Orpheus narrative? We have already seen that Segal traced a faint allusion to *dulces concorditer exegit annos* (*Met.* 7.752) in the story of Procris and Cephalus in the *crescentes annos* describing Orpheus and Eurydice's relationship (*Met.* 10.24). In the *Metamorphoses*, Procris and Cephalus' story is revisited by Ovid, but this time it is told in the words of Cephalus, who appears to distort it to his own benefit. Thorsen points out that

[406] Thorsen 2018: 140–65.
[407] Thorsen 2018: 158.
[408] Thorsen 2018: 150–51.
[409] Thorsen 2018: 151.
[410] Thorsen 2018; 157.
[411] Thorsen 2018: 157–58.

Cephalus makes it appear as if he had no suspicion of Procris' adultery, as it would harm his diplomatic mission to Aegina during a war where Minos was a key player if Cephalus was perceived to have murdered Procris motivated by jealousy against the Cretan king.[412] Cephalus is however open about the fact that he was responsible for the death of Procris. This fact in their story connects him with Orpheus, but also, perhaps, with an unlikely couple, the deeply pious, but utterly poor Philemon and Baucis.

Segal had also found a textual link between Orpheus/Eurydice; Cephalus/Procris and this aged couple, whose relationship lasted for *concordes annos* (*Met.* 8.708). Their relationship may appear to be the very antithesis to the troubled marriage of Procris and Cephalus, yet here too we should pause to consider the details of their narrative. Philemon, like Orpheus and Cephalus, may in fact be seen to be at least partially responsible for the death of his wife. When asked by Jupiter and Mercury what the couple desired as a reward for their unique piety, it is Philemon who utters their supposedly joint request:

705 ... cum Baucide pauca locutus
iudicium superis aperit commune Philemon:
'esse sacerdotes delubraque uestra tueri
poscimus, et quoniam concordes egimus annos,
auferat hora duos eadem, nec coniugis umquam
710 busta meae uideam neu sim tumulandus ab illa.'
(*Met.* 8.705-710)

When he had spoken a word with Baucis, Philemon announced their joint decision to the gods: 'We ask that we may be your priests, and guard your temple; and, since we have spent our lives in constant company, we pray that the same hour may bring death to both of us—that I may never see my wife's tomb, nor be buried by her.' (trans. Miller et al.)

Their immediate metamorphoses into trees (*Met.* 8.711-719) is a seemingly ironic solution by the gods to this wish, and hardly what the couple would have desired. Equally, even if the story is read sympathetically, this comically poor couple could hardly constitute a serious example of a happy marriage for Ovid's elite audience.

The nearest married couples to Orpheus and Eurydice within the narrative are also hardly the best role models for the happy union of marriage and love. In both of these cases,

[412] Thorsen 2018: 157.

the union of two lovers requires divine intervention and the radical metamorphosis of one of the couple. In the case of the lesbian couple Iphis and Ianthe (*Met.* 9.666-797), their marriage is allowed to take place by the goddess Isis turning Iphis into a man, and the marriage of Pygmalion is only made possible by Venus interceding to animate his statue (*Met.* 10.243-295). These married couples differ from Orpheus and Eurydice not only in their seemingly happy denouement, but also in terms of the equality between the couple. At the other two weddings, the love goddess Venus is always in attendance: (*Met.* 9.796 – together with both Hymen and Juno – and alone at *Met.* 10.295), yet when Orpheus weds Eurydice, only Hymen is present (*Met.* 10.1-7). We have earlier noted the possibility that Orpheus didn't love Eurydice when he married her – even if he later claimed to do so (*Met.* 10.26), and this detail of the missing Venus may provide further credence to this assumption.

In this regard, Orpheus' heterosexual phase may act like a comment upon Augustan marriage legislation and its intention of promoting marriages. Orpheus can be seen as a man who tries to comply with Augustus' recommendations – he marries, even though it is uncertain whether he loved his bride – and he tries to forget her after she dies, presumably with the intention of remarrying (*Met.* 10.25). His subsequent troubles arise, at least in part, when (a newly realised?) love for his dead wife spurs him on to attempt to resurrect her, yet an uncertain balance between love and distrust in Eurydice leads him to kill her (*Met.* 10.55-56). Just as in the case of Procris and Cephalus, mistrust and love combined prove fatal for the wife. Ultimately, Eurydice, like Procris, is a victim of her loving but mistrusting husband – and may have had every right to complain that she was loved by her husband (*Met.* 10.61). In this way, the Orpheus-narrative repeats the earlier warning in the *Ars* against the dangers posed to wives by their loving, if mistrustful, husbands, perhaps in an even starker manner since Ovid avoids depicting either Orpheus or Eurydice as being adulterous prior to Orpheus' pederastic stage.

4.9 Myrrha and Augustan marriage legislation

The topic of adultery and marriage is however an integral part of the longest of Orpheus' narratives – the incestuous story of Myrrha and her father Cinyras, whose testing of the limits of Augustan marriage legislation has recently been reconsidered by Ziogas. Like Janan, he points out that Orpheus' pederastic teachings were similar to those of Ovid's *praeceptor amoris* in the *Ars* insomuch as both establish a doctrine of extra-marital desire and he links this with recent interpretations of Orpheus as a self-reflective figure for Ovid's punishment and his marriage

criticism (e.g. Johnson, referred to earlier).[413] In the case of Orpheus' narration of Myrrha' story, this mirroring of Ovid's *praeceptor amoris* is especially clear. Ziogas singles out how Orpheus' introductory disclaimer inverts the *praeceptor amoris'* disclaimer that he would not speak of marriage and that married women were not his audience in *Ars Am.* 1.31-34 (quoted above):

300 dira canam; procul hinc natae, procul este parentes!
aut, mea si uestras mulcebunt carmina mentes,
desit in hac mihi parte fides, nec credite factum,
uel, si credetis, facti quoque credite poenam.
(*Met.* 10.300-303)

A horrible tale I have to tell. Far hence be daughters, far hence, fathers; or, if your minds find pleasure in my songs, do not give credence to this story, and believe that it never happened; or, if you do believe it, believe also in the punishment of the deed. (trans. Miller et al.)

Though Orpheus' disclaimer may appear more rhetorically slippery than that of the *praeceptor amoris* – effectively undermining and contradicting its own claims to veracity ' ... both Ovid and Orpheus' declarations are subversive and disingenuous.'[414] With regard to the subsequent story itself, Ziogas makes a highly important observation about Orpheus' rhetorical flair and its connections with courtrooms and jurisprudence:

> Courtroom rhetoric features prominently in the story of Myrrha, a nod to the reader that Orpheus' narrative needs to be read vis-à-vis Roman law.[415]

We have just seen what such a legalistic reading of Orpheus' heterosexual phase could reveal, and Ziogas provides a similar analysis of the Myrrha-narrative. He shows how the myth is manipulated so as to question the goals of Augustan marriage legislation, by 'illustrating the misfortunes of having children.'[416] The reasoning of Myrrha as she vacillates between her impious desire to sleep with her father and the demands of law and custom, can be seen to play with legalistic rhetorical exercises, *suasoriae* or *controuersiae*, and functions based upon the existing blurred lines between the legal status and relative ages of wives and daughters, given that most Romans married women many years their junior and that the law did not distinguish effectively between

[413] Ziogas 2016: 30.
[414] Ziogas 2016: 31–32.
[415] Ziogas 2016: 33.
[416] Ziogas 2016: 35.

daughters and women.[417] Additionally, the description of Myrrha's incestuous intercourse with her father is presented as a perverse marriage ceremony, which seeks to veil their breach of Augustan marriage laws in committing an especially unusual and troubling form of adultery.[418] Clearly, marriage, love, and adultery could be configurated in ways that proved deeply troubling, but Ovid's depiction of Myrrha's story could also be seen to question the contemporary Roman legislation on family relationships more generally, and could highlight the relative imbalance between the legal status of men and women.

4.10 'Orphic' Sabine women and 'Augustan' maenads

I will finally take a look at the end of Ovid's Orpheus narrative, including its aftermath (*Met.* 11.1-84), and how this can be understood in relation to the *Ars*. Arguably, in this section of the *Metamorphoses* there are a number of clear inversions of the story of the rape of the Sabine women, which we have seen played an important role within the structure and message of the *Ars*. These inversions may initially be seen as part of Ovid's apparent self-parody, but may also take aim at Augustus and his marriage reforms.

As the now pederastic Orpheus meets his end, Ovid deploys a large number of metaphors drawn from the world of theatre. Orpheus' audience of animals are referred to as his theatrical audience:

ac primum attonitas etiamnum uoce canentis
innumeras uolucres anguesque agmenque ferarum
Maenades Orphei titulum rapuere theatri;
(*Met.* 11.20-22)

And firstly the Maenads tore at the countless birds that still were spellbound by the singer's voice, and at the snakes and row of beasts, which formed the glory of Orpheus' theatre. (trans. Miller et al.)

This theatrical metaphor is further developed through a simile that describes the attack upon Orpheus as a deer that is attacked in a different kind of theatre; the arena:

[417] Ziogas 2016: 36–39.
[418] Ziogas 2016: 39–40.

... structoque utrimque theatro
ceu matutina ceruus periturus harena
praeda canum est;
(*Met.* 11.25-27)

... and as when in the amphitheatre in the early morning of the spectacle the doomed stag in the arena is the prey of dogs. (trans. Miller et al.)

Miller has analysed this simile and the preceding animal-simile which compared the attack with birds mobbing a *noctua*-owl, and sees them as an ironic reversal of the preceding portrayal of Orpheus in theatrical terms, as well as a reversion of the natural order he seemingly had established.[419] However, this is also a reversal of the theatre described as the scene of the rape of the Sabine women in the *Ars.* In the Orpheus-narrative we find the story unfolding with the bard playing to a mixed crowd of woods, wild beasts and rocks ... *siluas...animosque ferarum ... et saxa* (*Met.* 11.1-2) as he is spotted by a group of Ciconian Maenads, described as wearing animal pelts (*Met.* 11.3-5). As the women attack him, there is another theatrical element that is highlighted: their use of Bacchic music:

... sed ingens
clamor et infracto Berecyntia tibia cornu
tympanque et plausus et Bacchei ululatus
obstrepuere sono citharae;
(*Met.* 11.15-18)

... but the huge uproar of the Berecyntian flutes, mixed with discordant horns, the drums, and the breast-beatings and howlings of the Bacchanals, drowned the lyre's sound. (trans. Miller et al.)

This display of Bacchic music recalls the strong association of Bacchus/Dionysus with the theatre, and can therefore be seen as an attempt at using the theatre against Orpheus. Ultimately, however, their attack is found to be misjudged. Whereas Bacchus had no problem with Pentheus suffering the punishment of *sparagmos* (ritual tearing apart by Maenads) earlier in the *Metamorphoses*, this time around the Maenads are punished by the god that both they and Orpheus share a strong association with.

[419] Miller 1990: 144–47.

With this picture we may now compare the account of the rape of the Sabine women in the *Ars*. There the aggressors who perform an act of violence are the soldiers of Romulus, who just like the Maenads are described as being wild or unkempt, not only that, but the theatre they are seated in is of an equally rustic character:

tunc neque marmoreo pendebant uela theatro,
nec fuerant liquido pulpita rubra croco;
illic quas tulerant nemorosa Palatia, frondes
simpliciter positae, scena sine arte fuit;
in gradibus sedit populus de caespite factis,
qualibet hirsutas fronde tegente comas.
(*Ars Am.* 1.103-108)

No awnings then hung o'er a marble theatre, nor was the platform ruddy with crocus-spray; there, artlessly arranged, were garlands which the leafy Palatine had borne; the stage was unadorned; the people sat on steps of turf, any chance leaves covering their unkempt hair. (trans. Mozley et al.)

The pastoral characteristics of this theatre, adorned with garlands of leaves taken from the Palatine and seats that are made of turf, are effectively the inverse of Orpheus' pastoral setting which is made to evoke a theatrical scene. There is also an inversion to be found insomuch as the soldiers of Romulus are listening to a flute player – a *tibicen* (*Ars Am.* 1.111), and just like in the case of the Maenads we also find the use of shouting and applause as an element in the Romans' strategy:

in medio plausu (plausus tunc arte carebant)
rex populo praedae signa petita dedit.
(*Ars Am.* 1.113-114)

... in the midst of the applause (the applause then was rough and rude) the king gave to the people the expected sign of rape. (trans. Mozley et al.)

The description of both attacks uses the word *praeda* in reference to their victims, literally 'spoils, prey' (*Met.* 11.27/*Ars Am.* 1.114) and the attack of the Romans is also described using similes drawn from the animal kingdom:

ut fugiunt aquilas, timidissima turba, columbae,
ut fugit inuisos agna nouella lupos:
(*Ars Am.* 1.117-118)

As doves, most timorous of birds, flee from the eagles, as the weanling lamb from the hated wolf...(trans. Mozley et al.)

If we turn to look at the motivations for the two attacks and their consequences, we find another set of similarities and inversions. The Maenads were inspired to attack Orpheus because of his misogyny or his scorn for marriage, of which they are representatives (*Met.* 11.7) as noted by Johnson:

> ... although the Ciconian women are not physically present in the audience for Orpheus's second song, the song itself expresses his teachings, his ideology of pederasty and of illicit sexuality in general; all of this scorns their wifely status, which is foregrounded by Ovid with the term *nurus* (11.3). They form, in essence, an audience before and after the fact.[420]

In a related manner, the motive for Romulus' soldiers in abducting the women of the Sabines is to provide themselves with women they can marry, in order to have children and continue the Roman race (*Ars Am.* 1.125). The consequences for each group of attackers is more of an inversion, as the Maenads are punished, whereas the Roman soldiers are rewarded with the wives they have abducted (*Ars Am.* 1.131). Once again this may be motivated by Ovid's desire to point out female suffering – the women involved may attempt to be aggressors but end up like the Sabines as victims. Yet a different, more positive and subversive message may also lurk beneath this particular inversion of the Sabine episode.

Orpheus was closely associated with Bacchus (as well as with Apollo, the main other god he was associated with within Orphic mysticism), and he shared this with the *praeceptor amoris* of the *Ars*, who associates himself with Bacchus in *Ars Am.* 1.525: *ecce, suum uatem Liber uocat* 'Lo! Liber summons his bard.', trans. Mozley). This line is echoed in the *Metamorphoses* as Bacchus makes an appearance in order to punish the murder of Orpheus:

[420] Johnson 2008: 113.

Non impune tamen scelus hoc sinit esse Lyaeus
amissoque dolens sacrorum uate suorum
(*Met.* 11.67-68)

However, Lyaeus [Bacchus] did not suffer such crime as this to go unavenged. Grieved at the loss of the bard of his sacred rites...(trans. Miller et al.)

In punishing the Maenads, Bacchus seems to signal that it was an abuse of the Bacchic rites as well as the theatrical, or more generally, of the poetic art, to attack Orpheus, and by extension, if we complete the parallels, that it was wrong to punish Ovid. The Maenads are punished by being turned into oak trees, *robora* (*Met.* 11.82-83). This choice of metamorphic castigation not only looks back to the trees that constituted Orpheus' audience prior to him be attacked by the Maenads,[421] and echoes the oak trees mentioned by Apollonius in relation to his Orpheus, but is also significant in another way. If Orpheus partially acts like an Ovidian self-parody, then the failure of the Maenads to fully silence his head may evoke Ovid's claim that he will survive in the mouth of his future audience (*Met.* 15.878-879). In the face of a backlash from the Maenads, who at very least are associated with married women in being labelled *nurus* (*Met.* 11.3, 'daughter in-laws') and may act as representatives for Augustus' marriage legislation, the poet within the poem, Orpheus, survives complete annihilation, just as the external narrator predicts a similar posthumous existence. The oak trees may support such an association with Augustus since they, together with the bay tree, were intimately connected with Augustan iconography. Augustus' house on the Palatine, from where the leaves adorning the theatre of Romulus in the *Ars* also were taken, featured both of these trees as honorific status symbols, and this fact was commemorated in Augustus' coinage.[422] By associating the Maenads with Augustus, Ovid can be seen to have inverted the ending of his own story of punishment – instead of being the unavenged victim, he creates a version of events where he manages to vindicate himself and call down divine wrath upon the divine Augustus. In doing so, Ovid has turned from self-parody to a sly attack against his adversary, who is imagined as a silenced group of married women – a particularly playful way of poetically destabilising Augustus and his marriage legislation.

[421] Makowski 1996: 37.
[422] Stackelberg 2009: 90.

4.11 Fielding's *Eurydice: Or the Devil Henpeck'd* – a political play?

We have seen in the case of Ovid's description of Orpheus' death how the appearance of Bacchus signalled associations not only with the poetic art more generally, but also with the dramatic art more specifically. The possible echoes in the *Metamorphoses* of the rape scene in Romulus' theatre in the *Ars* could further this connection between Orpheus and the stage. This phenomenon was already well established by the 5th century BC as we saw in the Introduction in the case of the lost plays the *Bassarae* and *Orpheus* by Aeschylus and Aristias, respectively, and this dramatic tradition was revived by Lucan, as we saw in Chapter 2 where Statius alluded to Lucan's lost play *Orpheus*. We may now turn to look at two surviving examples much later in European literature of how Orpheus' love story may be represented upon the stage and how it may be exploited for comic effect and criticism of the institution of marriage. As we shall see, this criticism may be more or less severe, and Fielding provides an example of the latter.

The British novelist (and pioneering police administrator)[423] Henry Fielding (1707-1754), known for his great picaresque novel *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling* (1749), was in his day perhaps equally famous as a comic playwright, and two of his plays were ostensibly concerned with the myth of Orpheus. The main question asked by scholars studying the former of these, the farce *Eurydice: Or the Devil Henpeck'd*, has been why it caused such outcry during its premiere at Theatre Royale at Drury Lane on 19 February 1737[424] that it had to be abandoned, something which became an important source of amusement in Fielding's later piece *Eurydice Hiss'd, or, A Word to the Wise*, which premiered on 13 April 1737.[425] The answers to this question are intimately connected with to what degree the first play, *Eurydice*, contained large-scale political criticism, in particular since the later play has been interpreted as a highly political satire aimed at the government of Sir Robert Walpole.[426] In this play, England's leading politician can be seen to be allegorised in the character of Pillage, who also functions as a representative of Fielding himself.[427] *Eurydice* political sting has been seen as part of the reason behind the Stage Licencing Act of the same year, which introduced considerably tighter control of the London theatre scene.[428] Was there any similar political tendency in *Eurydice*?

In his biography of Fielding, Cross blamed the play's failure on a conflict between paying theatre-goers and footmen:

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[423] As magistrates, Fielding and his half-brother ran the first predecessor of the Metropolitan Police, the so-called Bow Street Runners, see Cox 2013: 73–77.
[424] See Goldgar's introduction in Miller 1972: xxxvi (vol. 2).
[425] O'Brien 2015: 204.
[426] See especially Cleary 1984: 103–6.
[427] O'Brien 2015: 206.
[428] The political upheaval of this period is discussed in Cross 1918: 216–37, (vol. 1).

> At that time, the performance of a play, whatever its merits might be, was exposed to interruptions by footmen, who were admitted *gratis* to the gallery or allowed to occupy places in the boxes until their masters or mistresses appeared for the later Acts. ... These footmen, sitting in the boxes with their hats on, conversing aloud, applauding and hissing, became an intolerable nuisance to people in the pit as well as to actors, manager, and author[429].

According to Cross, the audience on the night of the premiere had included a large number of footmen, who appear to have become particularly rowdy, so much so that the paying audience members in the pit rose up against them and tried to force them out of the theatre. This caused a minor riot in turn from the footmen, who broke down a door and entered the gallery, where they were contained until the authorities were summoned and some arrests were made. The play was however still interrupted by hisses from the audience and was unable to be completed.[430] Cleary follows Cross in blaming the play's failure upon this riot, and sees the play's lampooning of fashionable young men, or *beaux*, as the triggering factor.[431] However, this story of the events on the night is almost completely based upon a single anonymous letter to the column 'Occasional Prompter' in the newspaper *The Daily Journal*, 22 February.[432] Goldgar disputes the importance of this anonymous account of the events (signed 'Ingenus' (sic)) and instead insists that we should look at the text of the play itself for reasons why it failed, as well as for clues in *Eurydice Hiss'd*, which, although it was a play and not a newspaper article, nevertheless was dependent on its audience recognising some semblance of the actual events of the failed premiere of *Eurydice* in order to appreciate the parody of them in the later play.[433] In short, Fielding may have been forced to withdraw the play for other reasons than the premiere riot itself, and may have made fun of these reasons in subsequent plays.

Goldgar notes two possible explanations that may have been hinted at by Fielding himself in *Eurydice Hiss'd*, firstly that *Eurydice* incensed *beaux*, especially those connected with the army, though he deems this less likely to have caused such outrage.[434] Instead, he points to the play's handling of a much more contentious issue, the recent attempt of Walpole's government to put an end to the sale of gin by imposing a £50 annual licence to be able to sell it in quantities

[429] Cross 1918: 1:206, 207.
[430] Cross 1918: 1:207.
[431] Cleary 1984: 95.
[432] Goldgar in Miller 1972: xl (vol. 2).
[433] Goldgar in Miller 1972: xl-xli (vol. 2).
[434] Goldgar in Miller 1972: xli (vol. 2).

smaller than two gallons, the hugely unpopular Gin Act of 1736.[435] This act of parliament was alluded to in no uncertain terms in *Eurydice*.[436] When Orpheus is depicted as bargaining with Eurydice to return with him, one of her reasons for hesitating is the following:

> EURYDICE: ... And if I should be taken sick on the road, what should I do? Indeed, in this world I might make a tolerable shift; but on the other side of the river Styx, if I was fainting, no publick House dare sell me a Dram.
> ORPHEUS: I will buy two Gallons, and carry them with me.[437]

In *Eurydice Hiss'd*, this joke directed at the Gin Act was blamed for *Eurydice's* terrible reception by the theatrical public, where the 'third gentleman' reports that:

> At length, from some ill-fated Actor's Mouth,
> Sudden there issued forth a horrid Dram,
> And from another rush'd two Gallon's forth:
> The Audience, as it were contagious Air,
> All caught it, hollow'd, cat-call'd, hiss'd, and groan'd.[438]

According to Goldgar, this reference to a joke aimed at the Gin Act in *Eurydice; or the Devil Henpeck'd*, was an indication that this had not been well received by the audience, if anything because the joke itself was far from critical enough of the Gin Act, which it displayed as something which could easily be circumvented.[439] It might be relevant that if part of the reason for the ill-humour of the audience on the particular night were that the paying members had reacted against unruly footmen admitted for free, then a joke about buying 2 gallons wholesale in order to avoid the excise tax on gin could only serve as a reminder to the less affluent members of the audience of that the wealthy were able to circumvent the tax that they themselves could not. This had the potential to unite both servants and other less affluent audience members against the play itself, and would add to some of the paying members' pecuniary frustrations. In this regard, *Eurydice* might be considered only partially a political play, but one whose criticism was too weak for its intended target, Walpole, to feel attacked. Instead its humour could be seen to be aimed at the less affluent by an irascible audience.

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[435] Woods 1937: 368. For more on the so-called British gin craze of the 18th century, see Nicholls 2009: 34–50.
[436] Goldgar in Miller 1972: xlii (2).
[437] Roscoe 1841: 1059.
[438] Roscoe 1841: 1064.
[439] Goldgar in Miller 1972: xliii (2).

4.12 Fielding's *Eurydice* – parodying the classical Orpheus

It appears clear that Fielding's *Eurydice* is not primarily a political satire, but a farce of more variegated character, as can be shown by analysing the play in more detail. Among the play's wide range of humorous topics, two themes stand out as central, namely the way that Fielding deals with different traditions of representing Orpheus, in his classical poetic and operatic forms, respectively. We will look at each in turn.

Eurydice features an extensive parody of the classical stories about Orpheus, but this is only one aspect of the classical reception at work in this play. The full extent of Fielding's acquaintance with the classical poetic tradition in general is visible in several of his works, and *Eurydice* is in many ways typical of the widespread classical reception that was current among 18th century British writers.[440] If we look at Fielding's catalogue of plays we find other examples of classical parodies, notably *Tumble-Down Dick* (1736),[441] which, as its subtitle (*Or, Phaethon in the Suds*) makes apparent similarly employs a parody of a classical myth (likely drawn from the lengthy narrative in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*) as the fulcrum of its comedic plot.

At the very opening of *Eurydice*, Fielding tries to downplay his own classical learning, perhaps to ingratiate himself with the less educated among his audience, as he presents the myth of Orpheus as common knowledge amongst even the least educated:

> CRITIC: ... as it [*Eurydice*] is built (you say) on so ancient a story as that of Orpheus and Eurydice, I fear some part of the audience might not be acquainted with it.
> Would it not have been advisable to have writ a sheet or two by a friend, addressed to the spectators of Eurydice, and let them a little into the matter?
> AUTHOR: No, no; any man may know as much of the story as myself, only by looking at the end of Littleton's dictionary, whence I took it. Besides, sir, the story is vulgarly known. Who has not heard that Orpheus went down to the shades after his wife who was dead, and so enchanted Proserpine with his music, that she consented he should carry her back, with a proviso he never turned to look on her in his way, which he could not refrain from, and so lost her? – Dear sir, every schoolboy knows it.[442]

The play here opens with a dialogue between a critic and the play's author, the salient point of which is the source of the play's plot. Fielding's in-play artistic *persona*, the 'Author', claims to have merely borrowed the plot from the mythological appendix of a dictionary. The dictionary

[440] For an overview of this phenomenon, see Hopkins and Martindale 2012, vol 3 (1660-1790).
[441] O'Brien 2015: 204.
[442] Roscoe 1841: 1057.

in question, Adam Littleton's *Linguæ Latinæ Liber Dictionarius quadripartitus. A Latin Dictionary in four parts* (1673) does include the salient details about the myth of Orpheus (based primarily upon Virgil's narrative as well as the *Orphic Argonautica*),[443] but there are several hints in the play that show a much greater indebtedness to the classical tradition on Fielding's behalf. This went well beyond merely creating a plot that was recognisable as a parody of a classical myth.

For an example, Goldgar notes the influence of Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead* upon the colloquial tone and atmosphere of *Eurydice*, and in particular sees similarities with Lucian's dialogue between Protesilaus, Pluto, and Persephone and the play's depiction of the interplay between Pluto and Prosperpine.[444] Equally, when it comes to the myth of Orpheus itself we find a possible textual echo that indicates that Fielding was considerably better acquainted with ancient Orpheus narratives than what could be found in epitome form in a dictionary. Towards the end of *Eurydice*, Proserpine utters the following criticism of Orpheus:

> PROSERPINE: Yes sir, the gentleman could not stay, it seems, till he got home; but looked back on his treasure, and so forfeited it.'[445]

The wording of this comes close to the following line from a Senecan tragedy: *munus dum properat cernere, perdidit*,' (*Hercules furens* v. 589, 'while he hurried to glimpse the gift, he lost it'). This is particularly obvious since *munus* could equally well be translated as 'treasure'. Another possible allusion to the classical Orpheus tradition can be found when Eurydice dismisses Weasel's claim that Orpheus' singing entices her to go back with him: 'Indeed, sir, you are mistaken. I do not think the merit of a man, like that of a nightingale, lies in his throat'.[446] This comic denial of the possibility for any comparison between Orpheus and a nightingale can be based purely upon the nightingale and Orpheus' qualities *qua* singers, but it might also be a conscious nudge towards the Orpheus narrative in Virgil's *Georgics*. As we saw in the previous chapter, the nightingale simile featured prominently in that representation of Orpheus (*G.* 4.511-515), and it is likely that Fielding had it in mind at this particular instance.

Yet this aside, most, if not all of the play is loose classical parody that avoids direct allusions to ancient source texts, and freely mixes mythical characters with contemporary ones. Not only does the play include such anachronistic characters as the *beaux* Mr Spindle and Captain Weazle, but it provides its mythical characters with modern day attitudes and modes

[443] Littleton 1678: cit. ad loc.
[444] Goldgar in Miller 1972: xxxviii (2). Similarly, Charon has been seen as 'Lucianic', as in Woods 1937: 368.
[445] Roscoe 1841: 1061.
[446] Roscoe 1841: 1058.

of behaviour more at home in Georgian society. Its main 'modern' characters, Spindle and Weazle, represent the 'hipsters' or 'dandies' of Georgian society and are repeatedly under attack in Fielding's play. They are ridiculed for being eager to act as amateur critics:

> AUTHOR: … If you will secure me from the critics, I don't fear the beaux.
> CRITIC: Why, sir, half the beaux are critics,' [447]

for being insincere and shallow:

> AUTHOR: Why, it is the scene between the ghosts of two beaux. And if the substance of a beau be such an unsubstantial thing as we see it, what must the shadow of that substance be? [448]

as well as for being overly emotional:

> MR. SPINDLE: … Dead men (they say) feel no pain; and I am sure we beaux, while alive, feel little else'. [449]

In addition to discussing the ins and outs of living in hell, which is equated with the classical Underworld (just as Pluto is equated with the devil), they also interact with the other characters and comment upon the story of Orpheus. So, besides being important targets for Fielding's satire, the two *beaux* also mirror the critical dialogue between the Author and the Critic, which adds yet another level of narrative framing for the story of Orpheus, and makes the artificiality and self-referentiality of the play an important part of its dramatic technique.

The play's representation of Eurydice is interesting insomuch as it arguably makes her the central character of the plot. The parodic elements in her character are down to a combination of being provided with the words and demeanour of a cynical woman of Georgian high society, and of her complete disinclination towards Orpheus and his attempt at resurrecting her - in stark contrast with the loving wife of classical texts. We have earlier seen how Eurydice argued that it was too risky for her to travel back to life with Orpheus given the poor availability of gin, yet her unwillingness to return is in fact so strong that she tricks Orpheus into turning to gaze at her as the couple are talking with Charon:

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[447] Roscoe 1841: 1057.
[448] Roscoe 1841: 1057.
[449] Roscoe 1841: 1057.

EURYDICE: Help, help, I shall be drowned, I shall be drowned.
ORPHEUS: [*Turning.*] Ha! Eurydice's voice!
EURYDICE: O, unlucky misfortune! why would you look behind you when you knew the queen's command?[450]

This twist of making Eurydice actively provoke the backwards glance of Orpheus can later be found in Carol Ann Duffy's 'Eurydice' (See Conclusions). In Fielding's play, this parodic punchline is the ultimate reversal of the classical depictions of Orpheus in that Eurydice, and not Orpheus, has become the agent behind his fateful backwards glance.

4.13 Fielding's Orpheus and operatic parody

Fielding's parody of the contemporary opera scene in *Eurydice* makes up an extensive portion of the play, and goes beyond merely parodying the most likely Orpheus-themed performance on a London opera stage in Fielding's lifetime. After the army *beau*, Captain Weazel, has welcomed to Hell the departed spirit of Mr. Spindle, a courtier *beau*, the pair's subsequent Lucianic conversation about 'the news from the dead' introduces Orpheus as the husband of Eurydice in the following manner:

'CAPTAIN WEAZEL: Did you ever hear of him in the other world? he is a very fine singer, and his name is Orpheus.
MR. SPINDLE: Oh, ay! he's an Italian. Signior Orpheo – I have heard him sing in the opera in Italy. I suppose when he goes back again they will have him in England.'[451]

We are thus presented with references to two seemingly different traditions that deal with Orpheus: the classical poetic tradition, and the Orfeo of primarily Italianate operas. However, given that the operatic tradition drew heavily upon the classical poetic tradition of Orpheus from its very inception, it may be more precise to consider Fielding's play as a debunking of the entire poetic tradition concerned with Orpheus.[452] There are no further direct references to the former tradition in the play beyond the Author's comments in the opening of the play, but the

[450] Roscoe 1841: 1061.
[451] Roscoe 1841: 1058.
[452] For the centrality of Orpheus within early Italian opera (especially as treated by Peri and Monteverdi), see Jung 2018: 83–103. Also useful is the chapter by McGee in Warden 1982: 163–82, as well as Lee's treatment of the subject in Lee 1960: 151–61.

Orfeo of operas is revisited several times. Eurydice hints that the power of opera singers like him does not derive directly from their song, but from the sexual arousal it engenders:

> 'EURYDICE: … Do you imagine when a lady expires at an opera she thinks of the signior that's singing? No, no, take my word for it, music puts softer and better things in her head.
> AIR 1. *Do not ask me, charming Phillis.*
> When a woman lies expiring
> At fal, lal, lal, lal, la!
> Do you think her, sir, desiring
> Nothing more than ha, ha, ha?'[453]

The intended target for this particular point was the contemporary operatic superstar, Farinelli (Carlo Maria Michelangelo Nicola Broschi, 1705-1782), and the comic effect of Fielding's joke is dependent upon the audience thinking about the fact that Farinelli was a *castrato*, which allowed him to be seen as a comparatively safe choice as a lover for ladies of fashion at the time (without the risk of unwanted pregnancies). This point is made clear later in the play. Goldgar notes that in the season preceding that of Fielding's *Eurydice* (1735-1736), Farinelli is likely to have starred in a pasticcio entitled *Orpheus* with a libretto by Paolo Rolli, which was performed by London's Opera of the Nobility at the King's Theatre.[454] Hume thinks it is likely that Fielding saw this production and specifically targeted its overly cheerful treatment of the myth of Orpheus in his *Eurydice*.[455] Given that Farinelli comes under further attack towards the end of the play, it would make even more sense that this particular opera was a key target for Fielding's humour if Farinelli had appeared in it.

As Orpheus and Eurydice are waiting for Charon's boat to return, Charon asks Orpheus for some Italian songs:

> ORPHEUS: Why, dost thou love music then, friend Charon!
> CHARON: Yes, fags! master, I do. It went to my heart t'other day that I did not dare ferry over Signior Quaverino.
> ORPHEUS: Why didst thou not dare?

[453] Roscoe 1841: 1058.
[454] Goldgar in Miller 1972: xxxviii–xxxix.
[455] Hume 1988: 224.

> CHARON: I don't know, sir; Judge Rhadamanthus said it was against the law; for that nobody was to come into this country but men and women; and that the signior was neither the one nor the other.[456]

This reference to an Italian singer of dubious sex with the name 'Quaverino' clearly identifies Farinelli as its target. Besides being famous for being a castrato, Farinelli was noted for his ability to sustain a note through heightening and lowering the volume of his voice, so-called *messa di voce*,[457] which may explain Fielding's nickname. As the play is nearing its completion, Fielding's in-play comic representation of himself vents his irritation against the contemporary English fashion for Italian operas as well as the exaltation of Farinelli:

> AUTHOR: Sir, if they [opera composers] did not bring abundance of mad people together in their operas, they would not be able to subsist long at the extravagant prices they do, nor their singers to keep useless mistresses; which, by the by, is a very ingenious burlesque on our taste.
> CRITIC: Ay, how so?
> AUTHOR: Why, sir, for an English people to support an extravagant Italian opera, of which they understand nor relish neither the sense nor the sound, is as heartily ridiculous and much of a piece with an eunuch's keeping a mistress: nor do I know whether his ability is more despised by his mistress, or our taste by our singers.[458]

Fielding was in no way unique in ridiculing the 'serious' Orpheus typical of early opera. During the latter part of the 17th and early 18th century there was a craze for all things Orphic in London (and indeed across Europe). The story was not only the subject of two poems by John Dennis (1692) and William King (1704), and featured in a poem by Alexander Pope (1713)[459], but was also regularly performed on stage. An early precursor to this trend was an anonymous masque, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, first performed in 1673 at the Duke's Theatre (and another anonymous masque, presumably unperformed, of that title was published in 1705), which was followed by the larger productions, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, an anonymous opera performed at Punch's Theatre in 1712, and *The Fable of Orpheus and Euridice*, (1718) a ballet-pantomime by John Weaver performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane.[460] The 1730s was the peak of Orpheus-related writing for the English stage. We find a tragedy, *Eurydice*, by David Mallet also performed at the

[456] Roscoe 1841: 1060–61.
[457] Haynes and Burgess 2016: 158.
[458] Roscoe 1841: 1061.
[459] Reid and Rohmann 1993: 787.
[460] Reid and Rohmann 1993: 787.

Theatre Royal in 1731, where an anonymous pantomime, *Orpheus*, was staged in 1735.[461] Fielding's farce from 1737 would therefore have been the third Orpheus-related play to have been seen at the Theatre Royal within a period of some six seasons, and coming a mere two years after another comic version. Were the audience members finally beginning to tire of the subject? At least, following Fielding's *Eurydice*, we find no more Orpheus-plays at this particular theatre until David Garrick's 1767 burletta *Orpheus, or, A Peep behind the Curtain (The New Rehearsal)*.[462] Nevertheless, other London theatres did not shy away from the theme. In fact, both Covent Garden and the New Theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields produced pantomimes entitled *Orpheus and Eurydice* in 1740 (the former written by Theobald or Hill, with music by Lampe, and the latter was written by Henry Sommer).[463]

Within the operatic genre itself, the myth of Orpheus had become transformed into a comic story from an early point in the operatic tradition. Landi's opera had introduced comic elements in his opera from 1619 and the first opera to be performed in Paris, Rossi's *Le Mariage d'Orfée et Euridice* from 1647, also included a mixture of serious and comic elements.[464] By the middle of the 18th century, Lee notes that the myth 'became the classic vehicle for ridiculing opera', and he mentions several examples in a number of languages, including the Orpheus-pasticcio with a text from Rolli performed in London in 1736.[465] The English stage-reception of Orpheus in this century appears to be almost exclusively comic, as are most of the poems written for reading. The many comic poems of this period are dismissed by Lee as in the main 'negligible', in fact, he only has slight praise for Henry Fielding's later allusion to the myth in his novel *Tom Jones*, where the main protagonist is compared to the mythic hero in his ascent with Eurydice as Tom escorts Mrs. Waters into Upton town late at night.[466] What is interesting is that the majority of stage representations of Orpheus in London during the period between 1673-1767 were clearly comic in nature.[467] Fielding's comic Orpheus-narrative was therefore highly typical, and could hardly have been seen as a problematic theme for the contemporary audience. *Eurydice*'s criticism of lavish Italian-style operas need likewise not be seen to have been directed exclusively at Orpheus-operas, of which there in reality were few.[468] This final point

[461] Reid and Rohmann 1993: 787.
[462] Reid and Rohmann 1993: 788.
[463] Reid and Rohmann 1993: 788.
[464] Lee 1960: 162.
[465] Lee 1960: 164.
[466] Lee 1960: 186.
[467] One ballet-pantomime, two farces, three pantomimes and a burletta vs. one tragedy, two masques of unknown character and an opera of unknown character. See Reid and Rohmann 1993.
[468] A revived 1770 pastiche-version of Calzabigi and Gluck's *Orfeo* was the first after the anonymous opera from 1712. Reid and Rohmann 1993: 788.

may be proved by a seemingly extraneous element of the play, its reference to Atalanta, a mythic character without any specific connection to Orpheus.

As Orpheus and Eurydice are left alone by the divinities of Hell, they commence an intense row where Eurydice reveals that she was unhappy in their marriage. As part of this argument, she refers to Orpheus' extensive absence with the Argonauts and also his friendship with Hercules. To this Orpheus retorts:

> ORPHEUS: ... did not you crack one of my best fiddles, only because I would not dance with that coquet Miss Atalanta and the rest of your flirts?[469]

This inclusion of Atalanta could well have been motivated by the play's preoccupation with socially aberrant sexuality, as Atalanta was famous for her attempts to remain unmarried. However, a more interesting possibility is to see the reference to her in light of *Eurydice*'s satiric attacks against the contemporary London opera scene. In the preceding season (1736), Handel had composed a hugely popular opera entitled *Atalanta* in honour of the wedding of Frederick, the Prince of Wales, and Princess Augusta of Saxe-Coburg. Dean notes that no expenditure was spared on what turned out to be a notoriously lavish opening performance at Covent Garden Theatre:

> The proceedings closed with a display of fireworks, devised by 'the ingenious Mr. Worman', which proved so popular that music and spectacle were several times repeated in the open air in the next few years.[470]

This opera certainly would have been a natural target for *Eurydice*'s attacks against extravagant English productions of Italian operas (its libretto was in Italian), and its proximity in time would have made it equally relevant for the play's audience, if not more so, than the Orpheus-pasticcio staged in the same year at the competing London opera scene, the King's Theatre.

4.14 Fielding's *Eurydice* – soft marriage criticism

We finally arrive at the theme of marriage criticism within *Eurydice*. Fielding had earlier treated the topic of contemporary marriage practices in such plays as *The Modern Husband* (1731) and *The Universal Gallant* (1735), both of which lacked the frame of mythical parody for their satirical

[469] Roscoe 1841: 1060.
[470] Dean 1970: 705.

attacks. It may nevertheless be informative to compare Fielding's treatment of marriage in *Eurydice* with these two earlier plays.

In *The Modern Husband*, Fielding approached the problematic legal actions raised by husbands against their wives' lovers, so-called 'criminal conversation' suits.[471] In this play, the protagonists, Mr. and Mrs. Modern, live in a loveless marriage where Mrs. Modern is permitted to take lovers as long as they contribute money, effectively prostituting the wife, but when the couple's finances run into dire straits, the husband suggests entrapping one of Mrs. Modern's lovers:

> MR. MODERN: Suppose I procure witnesses of his familiarity with you, I should recover swingeing damages.
> MRS. MODERN: But then my reputation –
> MR. MODERN: Pooh! you will have enough to gild it; never fear your reputation while you are rich, for gold in this world covers as many sins as charity in the next...
> (*The Modern Husband*, Act 1, Scene IV).[472]

In the end, the scheme fails, and virtue prevails, but the morally problematic plot depicted in the play is clearly not too ridiculous to be unbelievable for the audience, rather, as Ribero notes:

> ... *The Modern Husband*, unlike genteel comedies, goes a long way in its unflinching depiction of sordid social fact – something that would not be attempted again in European theater until Ibsen's drama of social realism.[473]

In the case of this play, Fielding can be said to have attacked not only problematic marriage practices in general, but the existing legislative framework that could be exploited for financial gain by unscrupulous husbands who would not mind being outed as cuckolds as long as they stood to gain materially. Whether or not adultery should be seen as a legally reprehensible offence, Fielding's play exposed how the law could create what clearly were morally problematic situations. His later play, *The Universal Gallant*, goes if possible even further in its display of cynical intrigues of adultery and jealousy, and is described by Kinservik as ' ... eighty-two pages of non-dramatic raillery against jealousy and adultery'.[474] In both *The Modern Husband* and *The Universal*

[471] Stone 1992: 290.
[472] Roscoe 1841: 915.
[473] Rivero 1989: 122.
[474] Kinservik 2002: 77.

Gallant, Fielding's plots had revolved around adultery and his characters had revealed startingly cynical dispositions towards married life.

If we return to *Eurydice*, we find few traces of adultery as a topic. The only exception is the reference to the seeming futility of a eunuch (Farinelli) having a relationship with a mistress. What we do find a lot of are comical statements concerning married life. Proserpine's lines are particularly concerned with displaying her disgust for married life and how unhappy it makes women, as can be illustrated by the first words she utters:

> PLUTO: Indeed, friend Orpheus, I am concerned I cannot grant your request without infringing the laws of my realm. Ask me anything else, and be certain of obtaining: riches, power, or whatever is in my gift. Indeed, you ought to be contented with the common fate of men. Consider, you had the possession of your wife something more than a twelvemonth.
>
> PROSERPINE: Long enough, I am sure, for any poor woman to be confined within the fetters of matrimony.[475]

Such negative sentiments concerning married life parallel Eurydice's unwillingness to return to married life with Orpheus, and also Pluto, who makes the observation that Orpheus is the first husband to ever desire his wife back from Hell.[476] *Eurydice*'s recurring play with the hackneyed topos of marital unhappiness differs markedly from the social criticism of adultery and criminal conversation suits we saw in Fielding's preceding dramatic work, and it might be described as a soft form of marriage criticism. It certainly cannot be described as specifically targeting contemporary marriage practices.

4.15 Offenbach's Orpheus - a multifarious parody

There appear to be many similarities between Offenbach and Fielding's treatments of the love story of Orpheus, but also between Offenbach's and Ovid's versions. Just as Fielding's *Eurydice* had poked fun at contemporary opera performances, *Orphée aux enfers*, Jacques Offenbach's 1858 parody of the Orpheus-myth, premiered during a period of successful revivals in Paris of Gluck's tragic opera on the same topic.[477] Not only that, but this was also a period of Roman classicism actively promoted by Napoleon III, who would later go on to write a history of Julius Caesar where he promoted his own position as the Augustus to Napoleon I's Julius Caesar.[478] The

[475] Roscoe 1841: 1058.
[476] Roscoe 1841: 1058.
[477] Munteanu 2012: 78, 88.
[478] Richardson in Fögen and Warren 2016: 119.

extensive Gluck-parody is well established since Offenbach quotes Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762) both in the libretto in the score (notably repeating the melody of the Gluck aria *Che farò senza Euridice*), and his operatic parody has been the subject of much research, most recently in a doctoral dissertation by Cummins (2017),[479] following an article by Hadlock (2014).[480] Offenbach's timing was nearly perfect: in the same year, Berlioz was preparing one of these Gluck-revivals at the Théâtre-Lyrique, starring Pauline Viardot as Eurydice, the leading operatic superstar of the time – just as Farinelli had been a century earlier.[481] However, Offenbach did not specifically parody Viardot like Fielding had satirised Farinelli, though if he had waited a year, he could have exploited the added comic potential of Berlioz' production in which the female singer Viardot sang the male role of Orpheus, thereby mirroring the unusual genderplay of the *castrato* Farinelli. Instead, Berlioz' production could be seen as reacting to Offenbach's parody of Gluck, and Berlioz avoided adhering strictly to the more popular Calzabigi-version of Gluck's opera, which had been the main target for operatic parody in *Orphée aux enfers*.[482]

Similarly with Fielding's *Eurydice*, scholars have been interested in finding out to what extent Offenbach's operetta could be said to contain political or social criticism,[483] yet less work has been done in exploring more profoundly how the libretto parodies the classical tradition of Orpheus.[484] My goal will therefore be to provide a brief overview of the scholarly consensus on political and social criticism in *Orphée aux enfers*, focusing upon the role of marrige criticism as an element in this, and then to provide an analysis of this *opera-bouffon*'s reception of the classical myth.

4.16 Offenbach's Orpheus - marriage parody as social criticism

Offenbach's and his librettists Crémieux and Halévy's politico/social parody within the libretto of *Orphée aux enfers* has recently been studied by Munteanu (2012). She finds that *Orfée aux enfers* incorporates social or political critique, albeit of a mild type, in the way that the court of Napoleon III is parodied in the operetta's divine court atop Olympus.[485] With the possible

[479] Cummins 2017.
[480] Hadlock in Lichtenstein 2014.
[481] Munteanu 2012: 88.
[482] Fauquet notes that Offenbach in fact spurred Berlioz on in 'his desire to take revenge, on Gluck's behalf, for Offenbach's parody', see Fauquet in Bloom 1992: 197.
[483] See especially Kracauer et al.1938.
[484] Munteanu's article is limited in scope to looking at the classical parody inherent in the figure of L'Opinion Publique and the use of pastoral names, see Munteanu 2012. Hadlock is mainly interested in establishing the contemporary context of the operetta and devotes less time to classical parody within it, see Hadlock in Lichtenstein 2014.
[485] Munteanu, 2012: 81.

exception of its daring use of the controversial, revolutionary *Marseillaise*, it seems to be a reasonable assessment to consider *Orphée aux enfers* as a relatively harmless political piece, in particular given that Napoleon III was one of its fans.[486] However, its critique of contemporary society has been interpreted as much more piercing. Kracauer intepreted that it had ' ... laid bare the foundations of contemporary society and gave the bourgeoisie an opportunity of seeing themselves as they really were'.[487] On this interpretation, the operetta's revelation of the callousness in the marriage of Orphée and Eurydice, as well as the pleasure-seeking abandon of the easily distracted Olympian gods, were an indictment of the hypocrisy and decadence of contemporary society, where revolution or progress were avoided in favour of the cancan and hedonism. The strongest element in this social criticism may perhaps be found in the *opéra bouffon's* treatment of adultery, which we will take a closer look at next.

We saw earlier that Fielding had written a string of comedies that relied upon an almost cynical frankess in their depiction of adultery for their comic effect. *Orphée aux enfers* is in many ways more similar to their treatment of the same topic than Fielding's *Eurydice*. What these two texts do have in common is their depiction of Eurydice as a strong-willed, no-nonsense woman, who is remarkable for her cynical opinions about marriage. For example, already in the second scene of the first act, as both Orphée and Eurydice catch the other preparing to meet their respective lovers, it is Eurydice who comes clean about her adulterous relationship with the man she believes to be the shepherd Aristée, and even suggests that they should have an open marriage:

> EURYDICE: Fort bien! Savez-vous ce que je conclus de tout cela, mon bon chéri? ... c'est que si j'ai mon berger, vous avez votre bergère ... Eh bien! je vous laisse votre bergère, laissez-moi mon berger.
> ORPHÈE: Allons! Madame, cette proposition est de mauvais goût! ... [488]

> EURYDICE: Very well! Do you know what I have concluded about all that, my dear? It's that if I have my shepherd, you have your shepherdess. Well! I let you have your shepherdess, so let me have my shepherd.
> ORPHÉE: Come now! Madam, that idea is in bad taste! (*My translation*)

[486] Kracauer et al. 1938: 183.
[487] Kracauer et al. 1938: 177.
[488] Crémieux et al. 1860: 14.

The differences between the married couple in coping with their mutual infidelity manifest themselves in that Eurydice simply decides that they should separate, whereas Orphée is driven by his regard for L'Opinion Publique (Public Opinion) to attempt to slay Eurydice's lover by booby-trapping the wheatfield where he usually meets Eurydice.[489] When Eurydice is killed by willingly stepping onto one of Orphée's traps and is taken away by Pluton, who reveals his identity as the supposed Aristée, the same L'Opinion Publique harasses Orphée into begging Jupiter to give Eurydice back. Eurydice is however not happy with her new existence, as she gets annoyed with Pluton for leaving her in Hell with John Styx as her jailor:

> EURYDICE: ... Je m'ennuie épouvantablement ici! ...Voilá deux jours que je suis seule, n'ayant d'autre récréation que la compagnie d'un grand bêta de domestique dont on a fait gêolier! ... Ah! Pluton, prends garde! ... tu ne sais pas ce que peut l'ennui sur une femme aussi fantaisiste que moi! ... Si c'est ainsi qu'il m'aime! ... je vais regretter mon mari! ... [490]
>
> Act 2, Tabl.1, Scene 1.

> EURYDICE: I am so dreadfully bored here! I have been alone for two days without any other amusement than the company of a great fool of a servant who has been made my jailor! Ah, Pluto, take care! You do not know what boredom can do to such a capricious woman as myself! If that is how he loves me, I am going to miss my husband! (*My translation*)

Eurydice and Orphée are not alone in having had adulterous relationships. When the gods on Olympus in the second tableau of the first act mount an abortive revolt against Jupiter, they sing a song pointing out his most famous adulterous love objects, including Alcmène, Europe, Danaé, Leda.[491] All of these stories are also found in the *Metamorphoses*, and just as in that poem the many infidelities of Jupiter partially served to undermine his standing and moral authority. In this scene it is possible to see a trace of political criticism aimed at Napoleon III, who was famous for having numerous mistresses, and even, which was perhaps more scandalous at the time, had a mistress without himself being a married man. Williams notes that: 'political and personal factors combined to guarantee him a reputation as a sexual monster'.[492]

The recurring theme of infidelity and adultery makes *Orphée* at least in part socially critical, at least insomuch as this topic was presented in a highly frank and open manner, as the

[489] Crémieux et al. 1860: 19–20.
[490] Crémieux et al. 1860: 72.
[491] Crémieux et al. 1860: 58–60.
[492] Williams, in his medical biography about Napoleon III devotes a whole chapter to his love life, see Williams 1971: 48.

blushing Orphée could indicate. More important is the combination of this with the much more critical undermining of public morality inherent in the role of L'Opinion Publique, which acts as an embodiment of the only guiding principle behind the actions of both the human Orphée and the god Jupiter - *decorum*. As Hadlock concludes:

> ... Offenbach and his librettists ... relied ever more strongly on the libertine strategies of modern urban burlesque ... unmasking individual identities, social hierarchies, and official power structures as an arbitrary game of masks and appearances.[493]

However, unlike Ovid's marriage criticism, Offenbach's text was not actively attacking the institution of marriage, merely pointing out the hypocrisy with which adultery was committed in contemporary society.

4.17 *Eh bien! on la refera, la mythologie* – Offenbach's Orpheus and Ovidian parody

Outside social critique, the score of *Orphée aux enfers* is replete with musical parodies, notably of Gluck, but the libretto, by Ludovic Halévy and Hector Crémieux, is also rich in other forms of classical parody, both of the main mythical model (particularly Ovid and to a lesser extent Virgil) as well as of the classical tradition more generally. The full extent of this has not been investigated in previous scholarship, yet I will limit myself to pointing out some aspect of the *opéra-bouffon's* parody of the classical tradition.

By introducing the character L'Opinion Publique in the prologue, 'un personage symbolique' (Act 1, Avant-scène) *a symbolic figure*,[494] the librettists Halévy and Crémieux have created a parody that may have several possible targets. Firstly, this acts as a parody of the choruses of Attic drama who often present the collective citizen view: in fact, this symbolic character claims to be better than the choruses of old because he spurs on the action instead of just stating the obvious to the audience: *Ce qu'ils avaient compris d'advance* (Act 1, Avant-scène), 'that which they already knew', and secondly, this parodies the prologues common in Euripides that were voiced by divinities.[495] In terms of parody of the Orphic opera tradition, this character also subverts the roles played by symbolic or allegorical characters within the *Euridice* of Peri (1600), i.e. 'Tragedia' – which also voices the prologue, as does 'Musica' in Monteverdi's *La*

[493] Hadlock in Lichtenstein 2014: 184.
[494] Crémieux et al. 1860: 10.
[495] Munteanu 2012: 81-83.

favola d'Orfeo of (1607), or the role of 'deus ex machina' played by Amor in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762).[496]

I would also like note the close links between L'Opinion Publique and the role of the god Mercury in Plautus' Roman comedy, *Amphitruo*. In this instance, as well as in the overall plot that is structured around mistaken identities (e.g. the operetta's *Orphée* confuses his wife with his lover, *Chloë*) the libretto can also be seen as a development of New Comedy, though likely via the prism of the French comedic tradition, both of which are noted for their *comedy of errors*. If we look to Virgil and Ovid, whom we have seen to be the main classical intertexts for *Orphée*, the character L'Opinion Publique may also be seen as a variation upon the Virgilian (*Aen*. 4.173-197) and Ovidian personification allegory of Fama (*Met.* 12.39-66). In Hardie's study of the ancient conceptions and later reception of Fama, he starts by enumerating the main dichotomies that characterises this goddess, including 'Fame versus shame'.[497] In many ways, L'Opinion Publique may be seen to encapsulate this single dynamic of what Hardie describes as the related concept of external structures of honour.[498] In addition to these more general parodies, we can see an easily recognizable allusion to the Aristaeus of Virgil's *Georgics* in the character *Aristée* who acts as a 'welcome lover, ready to 'save' Eurydice from the otherwise inescapable boredom of marriage'.[499]

In an introduction to a composition competition in 1856, Offenbach had indicated his appreciation for the *opéras-comiques* of 18th century French composers such as Grétry, and presented his future musical projects as a return to what he depicted as an original golden age of early *opéras-comiques*.[500] However, unlike Grétry, whose compositions included librettos with close textual allusions to classical models,[501] the libretto for Offenbach's *opéra-bouffon* treated classic source texts in a less direct manner and instead relied upon reversals of plots as its main instrument for classical reception. With regard to the plot's parodic treatment of Gluck's Orpheus, Hadlock makes the following observation:

> Orphée aux enfers resembles ... earlier parodies insofar as it replaces the lofty rhetoric of gods and heroes with trivial, bawdy, and ironic speech, but it goes farther, reversing the emotional dynamics of each situation.[502]

[496] Munteanu 2012: 84.
[497] Hardie 2012: 6.
[498] Hardie 2012: 13.
[499] Munteanu 2012: 85.
[500] Everist in Fauser and Everist 2009: 77–80, 86.
[501] I am indebted to Thea S. Thorsen for this observation with regard to Sedaine's libretto for Grétry's *Raoul Barbe Bleue* (1789).
[502] Hadlock in Lichtenstein 2014: 174.

This point is in fact more valid when considering the play's parody of ancient model texts, which unlike Gluck's *Orfeo* (which is both quoted in the libretto and alluded to in the musical score) are not quoted or alluded to in terms of their particular wording or phrases. Instead, the libretto's classical parody is limited to changes to the classical plots, and in particular the reversal of the characters' emotional states. The contemporary critic Janin, whose condemnation of *Orphée aux enfers* made it infamous and a box-office success,[503] had identified Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as the main classical model for the *opéra-bouffon*.[504] Though Janin's hyperbolic review doesn't provide much details for this claim (see the column 'La Semaine Dramatique' in *Journal de débats politiques et littéraires*, 6th December 1858), he did make a valid point. The libretto of Crémieux and Halévy includes a number of characters who are extraneous to Orpheus' immediate story, but rather than seeing these as simply adding mythical colour to the *opera-bouffon*, it is possible to view them as conscious references to the *Metamorphoses*.

In addition to Orphée, Eurydice and Jupiter, *Orphée aux enfers* also includes the gods Pluton (who is disguised as Aristée and the main link with Virgil's Orpheus), Mercure, Cupidon, Bacchus, and Mars, as well as the goddesses Junon, Diane, Vénus, and Minerve. All of these are characters who appear in the *Metamorphoses*, and several are central characters, especially in the first five books of the epic. In addition to these, we also find references to a number of other mythological characters that appear in the *Metamorphoses*, including the love interests of Jupiter mentioned above, as well as Actéon. In fact, since Aristée appears only as a disguise for Pluton, the only characters not found within the *Metamorphoses* are John Styx (except in the form of the river), who was invented by the actor Monsieur Bache to cater to his particular comic talents, and L'Opinion Publique.[505] Clearly, the librettists had read their Ovid,[506] even if they were not interested in displaying this fact through close intertextual allusions to the *Metamorphoses*, which in a way is understandable, given that the libretto already included numerous quotations lifted from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*. These quotations, in Italian, are highly direct intertextual allusions, and their alien character is the whole point of including them.

There is one aspect of *Orphée's* reception of the *Metamorphoses* that presents more than an amusing inversion or bathethic parody of Ovidian characters, namely the denouement. In a

[503] Kracauer et al. 1938: 175–77.
[504] Hadlock in Lichtenstein 2014: 179.
[505] Hadlock in Lichtenstein 2014: 159.
[506] At least one of the librettists had received a classical education: Halévy had attended the prestigious Parisian Lycée Louis Le Grand, see Vapereau 1893: 751.

seemingly comic twist, Jupiter lets Orphée and Eurydice be free from each other, whom they detest, by firstly scaring Orphée into looking back with the help of a distracting lightning-bolt and thereby breaking the traditional taboo. What Jupiter does next is more disturbing:

> PLUTON: Elle me reste donc?...
> JUPITER: Pas plus qu'à moi – J'en fais | Une bacchante!
> PLUTON (*parlé*): Mais ça n'est pas dans la mythologie!
> JUPITER (*idem*): Eh bien! on la refera, la mythologie![507]

PLUTON: Is she mine then?
JUPITER: No more than she is mine – I am making her a bacchant!
PLUTON (*Spoken*): But that's not in the mythology!
JUPITER (*The same*): Oh well! Then we'll change the mythology!

The implications of this change to 'the mythology' may seem innocuous. As Eurydice is made into a bacchant, the final lines sing of her future which will be spent singing 'drunkedness to your [Bacchus'] elected'.[508] However, by turning Eurydice into a bacchant, or in other words, a Maenad, this opens the possibility that she will do something entirely different in her future life, namely participate in the murder of Orphée as narrated by Ovid at the beginning of *Metamorphoses* Book 11 (see above). For those in the audience who had read their Ovid, this was potentially the most provocative altertion of classical mythology in the *Orphée*, effectively turning the couple's roles on their head and letting Eurydice be responsible for her husband's death.

4.18 Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined three very different authors in terms of how they exploit the comic potential of the love story of Orpheus. What is apparent is that they use this for a variety of reasons to convey criticism of the contemporary practices of politics and marriage as well as to parody and acknowledge the preceding poetic traditions in which Orpheus features as a character.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* includes a lengthy Orpheus-narrative, which we have seen can provide unusually rich veins for interpretations. His use of the Orpheus-figure can be seen as parodying that of Virgil, but perhaps more strongly parodying the poetic project of Phanocles'

[507] Crémieux et al. 1860: 107.
[508] Crémieux et al. 1860: 107.

Loves. Such parody on the surface of the poem is arguably a necessary foil to hide the more subversive messages Ovid introduces into the same narrative. The strongest reference lurking behind Ovid's Orpheus is the *Ars Amatoria* and its provocative criticism of Augustan marriage legislation. This aspect can be seen to permeate large parts of the narrative as Ovid exploits the potential of Orpheus as a vehicle for self-reflection – partially turning him into a self-parodic character of his own poetic failure in being sent into exile. This self-parody is contrasted with the triumphant vindication of Ovid's future artistic success as it is expressed in the *sphragis* to the epic. We have even seen how Orpheus and his relationship with one key narrative of the *Ars*, that of Procris and Cephalus, may be used to restate and add ammunition to Ovid's earlier marriage criticism in the *Ars*, and also how an extensive inversion of another key narrative from the *Ars*, the narrative of the rape of the Sabine women, may be used to convey a form of poetic justice – making Augustan marriage legislation, if not Augustus himself, appear metamorphically punished in the oak trees that once were Ciconian maenads.

Fielding's *Eurydice: Or the Devil Henpeck'd* combined stinging parody of the contemporary operatic scene in London with a mild form of criticism of the unhappy nature of marriage and a light parody in its reworking of the ancient poetic tradition of Orpheus. Fielding especially lampooned the Italian castrato Farinelli, and his play should not be considered as critical in either political or social terms, unlike some of his other plays. In its highly varied mix of comic themes, Fielding's play can be characterised as a farce in the true sense of the word,[509] filled with what for its contemporary audience would have been a wide array of easily recognisable comic targets. That it failed to win an audience may largely have been down to the unruly nature of theatregoers and to its gauche handling of the hottest political topic of the previous year – the taxation of gin.

Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers* was just as complex in its references, as it combined classical parody (mainly of Ovid) and operatic parody aimed at Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (both in the score and the libretto) with elements of political and social criticism. Its openness about adultery and a culture of keeping up appearances could be seen as a mirror of hypocritical marriage practices during the Second Empire, not least by Napoleon III, with its inclusion of the character L'Opinion Publique an especially poignant feature. Its denouement offers a particularly provocative alteration of the ancient mythic narrative by linking Eurydice with the future murderers of Orpheus. Like Fielding's play, it may illustrate the possibility of exploiting a negative interpretation of Orpheus' motivations in his love story so as to completely dissociate

[509] French *farce* from Latin *farcire* 'to stuff'.

an author from Orpheus as a self-referential metapoetic figure, just as we saw in the case of Finch's *Answer* in the Introduction.

Conclusions

In the introduction to this thesis we saw that a key problem when studying Orpheus' function as a character within the poetic tradition is whether he should be understood purely positively, or in a more complex and ambiguous manner. From the various case texts that have been analysed it is clear that Orpheus appears as a highly complex figure within the poetic tradition, and that his love story is a key factor in creating this complexity.

In Chapter 1 we examined three Hellenistic poets that to various extents destabilised their use of Orpheus as a self-referential figure and featured him at the top of catalogues; we further witnessed how both Phanocles and Hermesianax created specific poetic lines of heritage which made Orpheus a pioneering model for their own poetry, and an emblem for their conceptions of the poetic tradition. However, given that they emphasised his failures, in connection with his *katabasis* (as in Hermesianax), or his pederastic love affair with Calaïs or with his death (as in Phanocles), they also undermined his position as an ideal poet-figure, and by presenting themselves as heirs to his tradition they opened up a space for themselves to be successful, given that they might outperform Orpheus in at least some minor details. However, given the humorous approach of Hermesianax, and the persistent suffering of all the poetic and philosophic greats in his catalogue, he also problematises his own poetic standing by associating himself with this tradition of suffering lovers.

Apollonius in his *Argonautica* seemingly came the closest to presenting Orpheus in an unambiguous role as ideal poet, as of all the Orpheus narratives that have been under investigation, it is the one where the love story is the furthest removed from the surface of the narrative. Apollonius depicts neither Orpheus' *katabasis*, nor his death, and Orpheus' failures or fragilities as hero are therefore never mentioned. When considered in isolation, the Orpheus-figure of the *Argonautica* exhibits a high degree of complexity, evoking metapoetical, hymnic and possibly Orphic connections, combining both roles of a *uates* – poet and prophet: but in both of these roles he remains a largely unambiguous exemplar, fully deserving his position at the top of Apollonius' Argonautic catalogue. However, the intertextual relationships with earlier Orpheus narratives (not necessarily limited to Hermesianax, but likely including other earlier narratives) as well as earlier accounts about the ensuing tragedy of Jason and Medea made it possible to view Orpheus' love story as a foreboding presence in the wedding scenes of Book 4. It was arguably clear that Orpheus' love story was never far from the poetic horizon of Apollonius' epic, as the erotic side of Orpheus could also be seen to be partially reflected from the significant erotic side of Apollonius' own poetic *persona* within the poem.

We also saw how the political context could be reflected in these three poets' treatment of Orpheus' love story insomuch as the name, and in two of the poems even the very mention of Eurydice was avoided, which could be explained by the dangerous political legacy of Queen Eurydice I of Egypt. From the three example texts in chapter 1, we may already recognise that all three categories of Orpheus' potential for metapoetical complexity have been realised in some form or another. We can find connections with author, society, politics, and an insistence upon Orpheus' role as embodiment of various definitions of poetic traditions, spanning both elegy and epic.

Chapter 2 demonstrated a great variety in how Orpheus was used to express grief and consolation, whilst combining both metapoetic and erotic associations. In the *Lament for Bion*, Orpheus underwent a marked change in how his character was depicted, appearing first as a paragon of the bucolic/pastoral genre, and as the master whom Bion superseded, yet by the end of the poem his abilities were cast into doubt by the way that the author presents performing a *katabasis* as a an impossible *adynaton*, whether undertaken by Orpheus or by the poem's anonymous author. The failure of Orpheus severely undermined the relative standing of both the poet and the deceased Bion, and created tensions with the agonistic and pederastic tendencies in the poet's claim to be the poetic heir of Bion. Such a pederastic or homoerotic association might also be relevant in Horace's *Carm.* 1.24, where Orpheus is included both in the way of poetic compliment vis-à-vis Virgil, but also in a manner that hints at erotic feelings on the part of Virgil for the deceased critic Quintilius. The latter was associated by Horace with a deceased wife through an allusion to Catull. 96, another poem where a poet tries to console a friend for the latter's loss of a beloved, and by comparing Virgil with Orpheus, Horace further strengthens such an erotic connection by mingling Quintilius' shade with that of Eurydice.

In the case of Statius *Siluae* 2.7, the application of Orpheus within such an erotic context appears in the foreground of the poem as Statius plays upon the similarities and differences between the deceased Lucan and Orpheus, and by extension also between Lucan's widow Polla and Eurydice. Unlike the inauspicious wedding of Orpheus and Eurydice in Ovid's Orpheus-narrative, which Statius appears to allude to, the wedding of Lucan and Polla is praised as highly auspicious and happy. In all three of these poems, the failure of Orpheus to overcome death is central to the consolatory context, and at the same time, the failure permits later poets to be compared with the mythic master poet whose standards may appear more achievable given that all poets would fail in a *katabasis*. The combination with his love story's erotic associations makes the myth particularly apt when dealing with death, art and love.

In Chapter 3 we saw how Orpheus underwent a substantial metamorphosis in his generic associations as well as in his stature as a poetic exemplar. This could be seen in Virgil's manipulation of generic settings/landscapes. In the *Eclogues*, Orpheus went from seeming like a central figure in the poetic landscape of Virgil's bucolic *Eclogue* world to appearing more as an *adynaton*, a fringe character far from the seemingly pleasant pastures of Virgil's poet-figures. In *Eclogue* 10, Orpheus is further aligned with the figure of Gallus, who is associated with the same Thracian landscape where Orpheus' final days were spent, thereby evoking the love story and Orpheus' failures. In this way Orpheus goes from being 'bucolicised' to appearing more elegiac and 'Gallicised'. This paves the way for these same generic associations to be further developed in the *Georgics,* which Orpheus can be seen to point forward to.

In that poem, Orpheus appears to signal a nostalgic looking back to the poetic milieu from whence Virgil started his career, echoing generic links with pastoral, elegy, and neoteric epyllia in terms of both scenarios and formal elements of the narrative. This metapoetic complexity is dependent upon a sympathetic representation of Orpheus that creates the nostalgia he may reflect in opposition to the heroic, yet somehow less sympathetic character we encounter in Aristaeus. As Virgil returns to Orpheus in the *Aeneid*, he appears to set up a similar comparison between Orpheus and another character, Aeneas, who like Aristaeus embodies the ideals espoused as part of the surface message of the respective poems. However, Orpheus appears relatively harmonious with his new setting in the Fields of the Blessed and is more similar to the non-erotic Orpheus of Apollonius' epic.

In Chapter 4, Orpheus went from being a compromised, limiting poetic exemplar to a much more comic character as his love story was exploited in narratives that in various ways included marriage criticism. In Ovid's highly complex *Metamorphoses*-narrative, Orpheus could be seen to present more or less parodic versions of the works of Virgil, Phanocles, and Ovid himself. In this way, Ovid can be seen to use Orpheus to reflect back upon his own position within the specific tradition of Orpheus narratives. Orpheus also recalls Ovid's earlier *Ars Amatoria* through repetitions and inversions that connect his love story with two key narratives in the earlier poem. Orpheus, like so many failed poetic and artistic figures within the epic, also contrasts with Ovid's *sphragis*, where the Roman poet appears as a confident, triumphant artist assured of his ultimate success as poet in overcoming the flux and impermanence of the world he portrays in the *Metamorphoses*. Such a reading depends upon seeing the *Metamorphoses* as a part of Ovid's exilic corpus.

In addition to such metapoetical aspects, Orpheus could be seen to illustrate the dangers of marriage to women, in line with an underlying message of the *Ars Amatoria.* Like Procris,

Eurydice may be regarded as the victim of her husband. We might also find a comment upon Augustan marriage legislation when Orpheus' *katabasis* is depicted in such a manner as to hint at that love was not at first an element in the marriage with Eurydice, which makes his *katabasis* seem like a desperate attempt to stay married. His metamorphosis into a pederastic *praeceptor amoris* can conversly be seen as a parodic turning away from Augustus' drive towards marriage, echoing Ovid's heterosexual *praeceptor amoris* in the *Ars*. The subsequent punishment of Orpheus' killers can thus appear as a parodic vindication of Ovid's marriage criticism, as the maenads are made to echo Augustus' favoured matrons as signalled by their metamorphosis into oak trees. Married citizen women were the very audience to whom Ovid had denied the benefit of the teachings of his *Ars Amatoria*.

A much less strong criticism of marriage practices can be found in the case of Fielding and Offenbach's Orpheus narratives. In the former, Fielding creates a less complex depiction of Orpheus whose love story is exploited as part of *Eurydice; or the Devil Henpeck'd*'s lampooning of the contemporary operatic scene in London, which is most pronounced in the repeated contrasts with the Italian superstar castrato Farinelli. Any political criticism appears less central to the overall plot, which is truly variegated in its combination of targets for its comic attacks, and Fielding's insistence upon the unhappiness of married couples is a far cry from the acerbity of his earlier adultery-themed comedies. Lastly, Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers* converts the love story into a comedy of infidelity, and conjures up a world where the only moral is to keep up appearances, thereby exposing troubled contemporary marriage practices in France, as well as alluding to the sexual intrigues surrounding Napoleon III. The greatest parodic twist upon the classical material that lies behind *Orphée aux enfers* can be found in the subversive denouement where Eurydice is metamorphosed into a bacchant (Maenad), thereby making her one of Orpheus' murderers as related by Ovid.

The overall lessons we may draw from the preceding analyses is firstly that the love story of Orpheus can be manipulated so as to create high or low degrees of metapoetic complexity. He is repeatedly included as a character within poetic texts in virtue of his associations with the poetic tradition, as well as with his role as failed lover but almost perfect poet. What is interesting is the degree to which no poet, with the possible exception of Apollonius, appears to mirror himself directly in Orpheus. All the other poets we have looked at create ways of representing Orpheus in such a way as to partially distance themselves from him, whilst retaining the links he embodies with the poetic tradition(s) they claim to belong within. Orpheus is often undermined by direct or indirect references to the failure(s) inherent in his love story, yet this

very fragility in a way enables poets to associate themselves with Orpheus without risking elevating themselves to a superhuman level of poetic greatness.

The most daring contrast with Orpheus as poetic exemplar could be seen in the case of Ovid, who appears to mirror himself only parodically in Orpheus, and who doesn't shy away from the loftiest claims with regard to his own standing as poet. Later writers like Fielding and Offenbach may even be seen to completely avoid mirroring themselves in Orpheus as they make him stand in for artistic traditions at odds with their own artistic affiliations. This abandonment of the self-reflective function of Orpheus could also be found in Finch's *Answer*, where she depicted Orpheus as a representative of a negative side of the male poetic tradition with which she contrasted her own poetic projects as well as those of her friend Alexander Pope. By associating Orpheus with the male poetic tradition, Finch became a forerunner of contemporary feministic reworkings of his story.

We will end this survey of the function of Orpheus within poetry by considering a contemporary example of a woman poet who, just like Finch in the *Answer*, was able to liberate herself from the use of Orpheus as a self-reflective figure in her consideration of the poetic tradition. In Carol Ann Duffy's poem 'Eurydice', which appeared in her collection *The World's Wife* (1999),[510] we can find not only an echo of Finch's poetic strategy, but also references to a number of other elements of the Orpheus narratives we have looked at. This poem includes ample references to the preceding poetic tradition where Orpheus appears, as it deliberately challenges the male canon Orpheus is largely associated with. As such, it may provide a way for us to look back at the preceding study and its findings, effectively creating a ring-composition of female and feminist poets that can act as a contrast to the work of the male poets analysed in Chapters 1-4.

In a sustained attack against the male poetic tradition embodied by Orpheus, Duffy goes even further than Finch in denying Orpheus' supposed poetic greatness by confining it within an all-male audience. This twist is made apparent when Eurydice, the poem's narrator, firstly describes Orpheus' poetic career and its rapturous effect upon his male and non-human audience, and then proceeds to describe her own role in the creation of Orpheus' poetry as well as her entirely different reaction to it:

> Things were different back then.
> For the men, verse-wise,
> Big O was the boy. Legendary.

[510] Duffy 1999.

The blurb on the back of his books claimed
that animals,
aardvark to zebra,
flocked to his side when he sang,
fish leapt in their shoals at the sound of his voice,
even the mute, sullen stones at his feet
wept wee, silver tears.

Bollocks. (I'd done the typing myself,
I should know.)
And given my time all over again,
rest assured that I'd rather speak for myself
than be Dearest, Beloved, Dark Lady, White Goddess,
etc., etc.

In fact, girls, I'd rather be dead.[511]

Duffy here presents the fame of Orpheus' supernatural poetic abilities through a miniature catalogue of the effect his singing supposedly had upon different parts of the natural world (all animals, fish, and stones). This list of examples hearkens back to the kind of Orpheus we encounter when his love story is removed from the equation. When we read Simonides Fr. 384 Page, that is the kind of Orpheus we meet, as we saw in the Introduction. This fragment is typical in referring to Orpheus' effect upon birds, but is more unusual in its description of fish, and makes Duffy's similar reference to fish create a link with one the earliest depictions of Orpheus in poetry. Duffy signals that this legendary Orpheus only exists in the eyes of an exclusively male audience ('For the men'), which just as in Finch's *Answer* plays upon Orpheus' misogyny and also his association with male audiences in the poems of Phanocles or Ovid. His fame is clearly undeserved, as Eurydice, whose intended audience is female ('girls'), gives a damning assessment of Orpheus' worth as poet ('Bollocks'), and also undermines his ultimate authority over the production of the text as she had done all his typing for him. She also refuses to be an object and addressee of Orpheus' poetry, and instead prefers 'to speak for herself' indicating a less artificial discourse than the singing of Orpheus, i.e. an entirely different kind of female poetry.

[511] Duffy 1999: 59.

Eurydice even prefers to be dead, a point which she proves towards the end of the poem as she reveals that she had actively tried to make, and eventually succeeded in making, Orpheus turn round, just like in Fielding's *Eurydice,* and thus caused herself to die for a second time. Her success in causing Orpheus' failure is ultimately brought about by Eurydice's praising him as a great poet:

> *Orpheus, your poem's a masterpiece.*
> *I'd love to hear it again...*
>
> He was smiling modestly
> when he turned,
> when he turned and he looked at me.
>
> What else?
> I noticed he hadn't shaved.
> I waved once and was gone.
>
> The dead are so talented.
> The living walk by the edge of a vast lake
> near the wise, drowned silence of the dead.[512]

In this way, Duffy makes a point of turning Orpheus' fame and his poetic pride against himself, thereby using his role as poetic mirror as a weapon to attack him. This can be seen through Duffy's repetition of the phrase 'when he turned', which makes it seem as if Orpheus first turns around absorbed in 'modest' musings concerning his poetry, and only after doing one complete round does he turn again to look at Eurydice. Orpheus' self-obsession reveals poetic fame and pride to be potentially debilitating, and casts the authority of the male poetic tradition itself into doubt. This ending of the poem also echoes Ovid's description of Orpheus as being *squalidus*, unshaved (cf. *Met.* 10.74), and the brevity in which he portrayed Eurydice's farewell (cf. *Met.* 10.62).

In Duffy's final stanza we finally learn why Eurydice preferred death as the poem comes full circle. In the opening stanza, Eurydice had described her experience of living in the Underworld in the following way:

[512] Duffy 1999: 61–62.

...It was a place where language stopped,
a black full stop, a black hole
where words had to come to an end.
And end they did there,
last words,
famous or not.
It suited me down to the ground.[513]

In this description of the Underworld, Eurydice was free from endless male poetry, since all words would have to come to a halt there. Instead of suffering through further poetry as practised by male poets like Orpheus, who objectify women (as Eurydice had complained), Eurydice wishes to return to the company of the dead, who, unlike Orpheus - merely reputed to be great ('Big O'), really are talented. However, the talent of the dead is not aggressively poured out on unwilling target, but must be gleaned from the 'wise, drowned silence of the dead'. To listen to the dead may seem impossible when they are drowned in silence, yet this still leaves an opening for a different kind of interaction with the talented dead, namely of reading their works. Duffy thus ends by making Eurydice the mistress of her own reading of the poetic tradition, but one that isn't exclusively male, nor predicated upon contemporary fame. She also opens up the possibility for Eurydice to become a poet by conclusively dying, since she too could be considered talented insomuch as she claims that the dead in general are 'so talented'.

After having read the work of a number of talented dead (and living – Duffy is still going strong) we are now reaching the end of this study. In the Introduction I pointed out a weakness in the previous scholarship in that Orpheus had often been interpreted as a straightforwardly sympathetic character who was treated with a certain romantic awe. Should Orpheus always be viewed with awe? It is now possible to provide an answer to this question, yet perhaps by first asking a slightly different one. To what extent can Orpheus be completely successful for him to function as a mirror for poets? The answer to this must be that a completely successful Orpheus is an impossible role model for later poets. Like Superman, Orpheus needed his kryptonite in order to become a more complex character. The failure associated with his love story may therefore be seen as a necessary precondition that tilts the poetic mirror of Orpheus slightly to the side, stopping real life poets from having their own deficiencies fully revealed in comparison with the mythic father of the human poetic tradition, in whose reflection they would

[513] Duffy 1999: 58.

be left stupefied, like the trees, shades, gods or rivers affected by Orpheus' awesome poetry. In extreme cases, the failure of Orpheus may even be exploited by poets who wish to distance themselves completely from an earlier conception of the poetic tradition they make Orpheus symbolise, as we have seen in the case of Fielding and Offenbach, as well as the women poets Finch and Duffy. This is not the same as misreading the story of Orpheus. The love story of Orpheus is far from a divergence from his metapoetical symbolism within the poetic tradition, but is a key factor in allowing him to appear as a central figure around whom the construction of poetic traditions, the past and future of poetic projects, as well as political and social concerns, all converge.

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