_Cypria_s and the _Cypria_

When I was first asked to speak about the *Cypria*, and for a conference about Cyprus, my thoughts went immediately to the fact that the island is rather poorly represented in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (*Il*. 11.21–23, *Od*. 4.83, 8.362–366, 17.442–444, 447–448),[1] a fact even more jarring when we consider the obvious importance of Cyprus in Mediterranean history.[2] This kind of reaction represents a very common scholarly reflex, in that we often rely upon Homer to illumine other early texts (epic or not); such 'Homerocentrism' partly reflects the nature of the evidence, but more importantly it's typical of the way we are trained to think, as Classicists: we are taught to explain a text or an artefact largely in relational terms, in the light of other texts and artefacts, frequently by looking for its identifiable and knowable sources. And when one figure dominates the landscape as much as Homer does, almost compelling us to filter everything through the remarkable prisms of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, then the appreciation of poems which haven't survived into the modern world becomes even more difficult.

This is particularly true when it comes to the fragmentary poem we know as 'the *Cypria*'.[3] We don't know the name of its author, its date, nor even what the title (τὰ Κύπρια ἔπεα) actually means – is it 'things/verses to do with Cyprus' or 'things/verses from *or* current in Cyprus' or even 'things to do with Aphrodite', since one of her epic epithets is Κύπρις, 'the Cyprian'?[4] In fact, if we're honest, we don't really 'know' this poem in any meaningful, independent way at all.[5] The nature of the problem – and the way scholarship habitually refuses to face it – can be illustrated with reference to the famous discrepancy between the summary of the *Cypria* devised by Proclos in the 3rd (or 5th) century AD and the poem's fr. 14 Bernabé (= Herodotos 2.117):

Thanks to the organising committee of the conference *Cyprus: a place and topos in ancient literature*, held under the auspices of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens at the House of Cyprus in Athens (the event where the paper on which this chapter is based was first delivered) – Katerina Carvounis, Andreas Gavrielatos, Grammatiki Karla, and Amphilochios Papathomas – not only for their exemplary hospitality in Athens but also their attention to this chapter and its material. Elton Barker read and much improved an earlier version.

[1] As with the episode from *Odyssey* Book 8 cited above, most further references in early Greek poetry to Cyprus occur in connection with Aphrodite: *h.Ven*. 5 (*passim*), *Th*. 193–200, Alcm. fr. 55.1, Sapph. fr. 35.1, 65.6; cf. *h.Hom.* 1.8.

[2] For a recent overview, see Steele 2019: 147–55, with bibliography.

[3] For the most recent summary of the questions surrounding this work, see Currie 2015; for a recent monograph-length treatment, Davies 2019.

[4] The adjective Κύπρια itself means nothing more than 'Cyprian things', usually qualified (as in the passage we are about to discuss) with ἔπεα 'verses'; I use *Cypria* throughout this chapter as a convenient shorthand for the poem's title.

[5] See especially Barker 2008 for a clear outline of the way in which our records of this poem are invariably and entirely inflected by the dominance of the Homeric tradition.

> κατὰ ταῦτα δὲ τὰ ἔπεα καὶ τόδε τὸ χωρίον οὐκ ἥκιστα ἀλλὰ μάλιστα δηλοῖ ὅτι οὐκ Ὁμήρου τὰ Κύπρια ἔπεά ἐστι ἀλλ' ἄλλου τινός· ἐν μὲν γὰρ τοῖσι Κυπρίοισι εἴρηται ὡς τριταῖος ἐκ Σπάρτης Ἀλέξανδρος ἀπίκετο ἐς τὸ Ἴλιον ἄγων Ἑλένην, εὐαέϊ τε πνεύματι χρησάμενος καὶ θαλάσσῃ λείῃ· ἐν δὲ Ἰλιάδι λέγει ὡς ἐπλάζετο ἄγων αὐτήν. Ὅμηρος μέν νυν καὶ τὰ Κύπρια ἔπεα χαιρέτω.
>
> And especially in these verses and this passage (Homer) shows that the Cyprian verses (τὰ Κύπρια ἔπεα) are not Homer's but someone else's work. For in the Cyprian (τοῖσι Κυπρίοισι) (sc. verses) it is said that on the third day from Sparta Alexander came to Ilion with Helen, experiencing a favourable breeze and a gentle sea. But in the *Iliad* (Homer) says that he wandered with her. Enough, then, about Homer and the Cyprian verses.

Here the historian seeks to differentiate Homer from the author of the *Cypria* – part of a long process by which the old epic poems were sorted into authors and places, and disassociated from 'Homer' as a convenient cover-all originator of all early epos[6] – on the basis of a factual disagreement: in the *Iliad*, Helen and Paris were said to come from Sparta to Troy via Sidon, where they seem to have picked up some rather glamorous souvenirs (6.288–292); but in the *Cypria* they sail home in three days without any real interruption. The only problem with Herodotos' statement is that, by the time we get to Proclos, the record has shifted, and now the *Cypria* both agrees with and elaborates on the Homeric version: not only did Paris stop at Sidon as the *Iliad* has it, but he also sacked it (arg. 18–19 Bernabé).

How we go about dealing with this discrepancy depends entirely on how we approach the question of early Greek epic history. A Neoanalyst, for example, might look at the issue in terms of the *Cypria* being or representing a poem on which Homer drew directly or indirectly, i.e. through an earlier version, whether (sometimes) oral or (more usually) written. Thus, we could believe that (i) the later-attested sack of Sidon reflects the original story which Homer knew and to which he was alluding with the reference to the city in *Iliad* 6; or (ii) Herodotos' uneventful three day journey is the original, which Homer wished to challenge and replace with his own.[7]

An oralist (like me) takes a different view: the three-day voyage in Herodotos is probably a typical length of time for an easy journey (cf. *Il*. 9.362–363), and this may show that the *Cypria* is an authentic witness to a still-thriving tradition of oral composition, perhaps entirely independent of the *Iliad*; the later story would then indicate the openness of the *Cypria* to processes of interpolation, to bring it into line with the *Iliad* (or, perhaps less likely, it might show that Paris' journey progressed like an heroic *nostos*, with a stuiable military adventure

[6] See Graziosi 2002.

[7] See, e.g., Dowden 1996, 48; Currie 2016, 229 n. 3 opts instead for later interpolation into the *Cypria* to bring it into line with the *Iliad*, which is indeed possible, no matter what one's methodological inclinations.

of its own).[8] Furthermore, if one is an oralist of the 'crystallisation' school associated with Gregory Nagy (as I am not), then one holds that a discrepancy of this sort is natural for an oral tradition, in which the text changes from one performance to the next without being fixed (something he terms *mouvance*): to this way of thinking, the divergence in the records of the *Cypria* reflects precisely the expected lack of fixity in the oral tradition, as the poets respond to the changing desire or needs of their audiences.[9]

Perhaps the range of possible conclusions tells us something important about the nature of the evidence, and the limitations of our knowledge about literary production and transmission in this period. Much is uncertain. But all these mutually exclusivising views suffer from several drawbacks. Firstly, they rarely focus on the *Cypria* itself: what does it *mean* for that poem, for instance, for Paris and Helen to have a three-day, easy journey home? Might it indicate a surprising absence of divine hostility – itself a typical feature in a *nostos* tale (e.g., *Il*. 14.252–254, 15.24–28)[10] – for the returning hero and his stolen bride? Perhaps the ease of the journey in the version known to Herodotos expresses an overall divine support for Helen's Trojan sojourn, and thus the ultimate sack of the city, given the inability or disinclination of any one deity to impede their progress. On the other hand, what of the more troubled return as recorded by Proclos, for example the sack of Sidon or the storm sent by Hera to impede him (χειμῶνα δὲ αὐτοῖς ἐφίστησιν Ἥρα: arg. 18), as a means of making Paris seem more personally and physically impressive? Like Heracles in the *Iliad* passages cited above (whether or not they were the inspiration for the version of the story Proclos knew), Paris becomes a figure worthy of direct divine hostility, which he nonetheless manages to overcome, while his ability to sack a city renders him a more straightforwardly heroic figure, given the prestige attached in epos to being a 'city-sacker'. It has been proposed that Hector is a recent import into the story as the chief defender of Troy, and that Paris was originally a much more important and imposing figure; these details could reflect a trace at least of his 'original' standing,[11] and at the very least a conception of Paris as a much more imposing character. In either case, we should be thinking also about the effects on the poem, and what more we can say about it, rather than worrying only about sources. However these versions come about, they say something about the requirements of their various audiences, and the ambition and purpose of their poets / authors.

Secondly, the standard approaches also reveal something, unwittingly, about themselves – their absolutism and mutual preclusivity, and this despite the fact that the predicates of each of these ways of thinking are rather uncertain. That is not say we don't need

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[8] For the *nostos* theme in early epic, see Bonifazi 2009.

[9] For an early statement of this (often repeated) theory, see Nagy 1996; for critique, see Finkelberg 2000.

[10] For the typical role of the storm in the *Odyssey*, see de Jong 2001, 83, 594–595. That we should consider this story to be a *nostos* may seem controversial, but consider the prominence of the wedding entry in Trojan myth (see most recently Spelman 2017) and the notion of returning home with the bride in these tales (e.g., *Il*. 22.468–472). It is not important for my general point, but an intriguing consideration nonetheless.

[11] See the discussion of Wathelet 1988, 856–868.

predicates; we do – in fact it is impossible to say anything without having predicates and assumptions – but we need to get them as reasonable as possible if we are to put ourselves in a position to say anything about this poem which doesn't simply reinforce those predicates. Some recent steps in this direction have been taken by Jonathan Burgess and Benjamin Sammons,[12] both of them explicitly trying to take Homer out of the equation, as though the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were quite independent creations with little if no practical effect on the *Cypria* (and the other poems of the 'Cycle').

That's not quite my approach here, since their method – though very close to my own position – takes as its starting point something which we cannot know, viz that the Homeric poems had no influence on the later attested poems of the epic 'cycle', or on the sources we use to reconstruct that material.[13] Instead, my first recommendation is that we have to stop using exclusivising models, in the form of confident statements that the audience either definitely did or definitely did not know their Homer. We can't approach the evidence for the *Cypria* on the basis that either of these assumptions is true, and we can't use methods which take them, openly or implicitly, as their foundation. There may have been people in the audience who did know the *Iliad*, and who knew it in sufficient detail to grasp fairly complex allusion to it. Though I am sceptical of the extent to which this is possible in a culture where familiarity would have been largely confined to performance, that's probably true of at least some people in the audiences of Stesichorus and Ibycus in the middle of the sixth century, as I have argued elsewhere,[14] so it could theoretically be true of an audience for the undated (but probably sixth-century) *Cypria* as well.

No-one, however, would suppose that such people would have comprised the totality or even the majority of any given early audience, or that the *Iliad* would have constituted the majority of their experience of epic poetry about Troy. They would have heard dozens, if not hundreds, of such performances during their lifetime, so that the majority of their inherited conglomerate, as it were, would have comprised these other songs / versions / texts. Any epic poet, therefore, would have to deal with the totality and variety of this audience experience. By focusing initially on this aspect of the audience's access to the tradition, as we shall see, we don't exclude the possibility of allusion to single versions within the inherently interterxtual phenomenon of early Greek epic, but we don't bet the house on it either:[15] instead, we shall

[12] Burgess 1996, 2012; Sammons 2018.

[13] See Kelly 2006 for the argument that Pindar's sixth *Pythian*, which narrates the death of Antilochos and is frequently deployed as evidence for the story in the *Aithiopis*, actually shows considerable knowledge of the Homeric *Iliad*, and cannot therefore be used uncritically as evidence of the cyclic poem; see *contra* Currie 2016, 247–53, though I am unconvinced by his arguments.

[14] Kelly 2015a. There is, however, no compelling evidence of this in Sappho: see Kelly 2020.

[15] As Hinds 1998, 34–47, I distinguish in this chapter between 'allusion' as a reference to a particular version of a song or story, and 'intertextuality' as a reference to a more generic, less reified (and in this case, traditional) background. This latter phenomenon is very close to Kristeva's original conception. In my view, allusion develops from the general (universal?) context of intertextuality as a result of the proliferation of writing, and the greater levels of textual fixity it provides, as the Archaic period proceeds.

try to put them back into that framework in a way that neither overestimates nor underestimates their importance.

Let us proceed by looking at *Cypria* frr. 4 and 5 Bernabé (= frr. 5 and 6 West, 4 and 5 Davies) and the narrative context into which they are usually placed.

fr. 4

εἵματα μὲν χροΐ ἕστο, τά οἱ Χάριτές τε καὶ Ὧραι
ποίησαν καὶ ἔβαψαν ἐν ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσιν,
οἷα φέρουσ’ ὧραι, ἔν τε κρόκωι, ἔν θ’ ὑακίνθωι,
ἔν τε ἴωι θαλέθοντι ῥόδου τ’ ἐνὶ ἄνθεϊ καλῶι
ἡδέι νεκταρέωι, ἔν τ’ ἀμβροσίαις καλύκεσσιν   5
<αἰθέσι>[16] ναρκίσσου καλλιπνόου. ὧδ’ Ἀφροδίτη
ὥραις παντοίαις τεθυωμένα εἵματα ἕστο.

Clothes she put around her skin, which the Charites and
the Hours made and dipped in spring flowers,
such as the seasons bring, in crocus, and in hyacinth,
and in blooming violet and in the rose’s bloom – fair,
sweet, nectarine – and in ambrosial cups
<gleaming?> of fair-breathing narcissus. Thus Aphrodite
dressed herself in clothes fragrant with all kinds of flowers.

fr. 5

ἣ δὲ σὺν ἀμφιπόλοισι φιλομμειδὴς Ἀφροδίτη
πλεξάμεναι στεφάνους εὐώδεας ἄνθεα ποίης
ἂν κεφαλαῖσιν ἔθεντο θεαὶ λιπαροκρήδεμνοι,
Νύμφαι καὶ Χάριτες, ἅμα δὲ χρυσέη Ἀφροδίτη,
καλὸν ἀείδουσαι κατ’ ὄρος πολυπιδάκου Ἴδης.   5

And she, with her attendants, laughter-loving Aphrodite
weaving crowns fragrant, the flowers of the meadow,
put them upon their heads, the gleaming-veiled goddesses,
the Nymphs and the Charites, and with them golden
Aphrodite, singing beautifully along Ida of many springs.

This scene is now usually held to denote the beautification of Aphrodite for her appearance to Paris before his eponymous judgement, though it was once considered to refer to Helen.[17]

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[16] The reading here is disputed. The question is irrelevant for my purposes in this chapter.
[17] See Bernabé 1996 ad loc., 46.

Events of this sort are very common in Homer and early epos in general, and several critics[18] have sought to link the *Cypria*'s scene directly and allusively with Hera's so-called 'Deception of Zeus' in *Iliad* Book 14, and with Aphrodite's own dressing scene in *Odyssey* Book 8 and/or in the sixth *Homeric Hymn*, another undated poem which may well have been known to the *Cypria* poet.[19] This allusive nexus can be configured variously: e.g., the *Odyssey* scene alludes to the *Iliad*'s scene, whilst the *Cypria* alludes to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* scenes together whilst also alluding to the *Homeric Hymn*, or the *Iliad* alludes to the *Cypria* and the *Homeric Hymn*, and so on. In all these cases, however, the meaning and function of the *Cypria*'s scene depends upon a reconstruction of specific relationships, almost (and sometimes actually) to the exclusion of all other considerations: i.e., if the *Iliad* alludes to the *Cypria* (or a forerunner), then Hera and Zeus' behaviour is seen as a counterpoint to Aphrodite and Anchises' love affair, or even to the apparent seduction of Paris; if, conversely, the *Cypria* alludes to the *Iliad*, it claims some kind of filiation with that famous text (if it was famous by that time, of course), or seeks to appropriate, contest or even supplant its primacy as a record of the Trojan War; if, finally, it alludes to the *Homeric Hymn* as well as or instead of the *Iliad*, then it makes the war a quasi-cosmic event, by linking it with the history of Aphrodite's power and its subjugation to Zeus.

Now, this kind of direct stemmatology is precisely the kind of thing which was being done by later ancient readers and, if we were dealing with Vergil's use of Homer and Apollonios, few of us would bat an eyelid at such an intricate chain of association and interpretation. But, in the Archaic period, where the required detailed textual knowledge might not be possible, where the audience came into contact with poetry largely through performances, is this really likely? There's no particular verbal reminiscence to work with (see below), since all of the very few similarities with other such scenes (and elsewhere in early Greek epic) look to be formulaic or variations thereupon,[20] as one can see below:

fr. 4

1: | εἵματα μὲν χροῒ ἕστο ~ περὶ χροῒ εἵματα ἕστο | (5x Hom.)
1: Χάριτές τε καὶ Ὧραι ~ ἐϋπλόκαμοι Χάριτες καὶ ἐΰφρονες Ὧραι | (*h.Ap*. 194)
3: ἔν τε κρόκωι, ἔν θ' ὑακίνθωι ~ κρόκον ἠδ' ὑάκινθον (*Il*. 14.348, *h.Hom.* 19.25)

fr. 5

1: φιλομμειδὴς Ἀφροδίτη (6x Hom., 5x *h.Hom*., 1 Hes.)
5: καλὸν ἀείδουσαι ~ καλὸν ἀείδοντες (*Il*. 1.473), καλὸν ἀειδῆισιν (*Od*. 19.519), cf. καλὸν ἀείδ- – × | (3x Hom., 2x *h.Hom*.).
6: πολυπίδακος Ἴδης (5x Hom.)

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[18] Most recently, Currie 2016, 147–160, with reference to previous treatments and very full bibliography.
[19] For citations and tabulation of typical elements, see below, table 1.
[20] So Davies 2019, 60, and even West 2013, 76 (on fr. 4 = his fr. 5): "the diction of the fragment is largely conventional."

This is not a promising list, allusively speaking, while the most typical part of it, the catalogue of flowers in fr. 4, may be compared with several related passages in early epos, but there is no close phraseological reminiscence: all of the flowers are found in other passages, but not in the same order or in a standard number, and only the pairing of the crocus and the hyacinth (itself typical) appears in precisely the same order as that in another scene (*Il*. 14.348); while other passages have other flowers, as well: the *Deception of Zeus* in *Iliad* 14, for instance, uses the lotos, crocus and hyacinth (14.348) as the covering on which the copulating Zeus and Hera do their business. A particular relationship might be supposed with the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (6–8), which contains 5 of the 6 flowers listed in *Cypria* fr. 4 – the rose, crocus, violet, iris, hyacinth and narcissus – though they do not occur in the same order (except for ending with the narcissus)[21] nor do the two poets use the same phraseology. It looks, then, as though this kind of catalogue and its material is a traditional unit, which poets could learn, alter and reproduce as they saw fit.[22] Certainly there is no reason from this evidence to believe that the *Cypria* poet had any other such catalogue known to us before his eyes, or in his memory, as he was composing.

Thus, we lack triggers for a direct, allusive relationship with another passage, indeed any particular analogous passage, in early Greek epos. Let us, then, try to configure a method which does not employ allusion (which is certain for later periods) as its first – almost its only – interpretative principle; let us turn instead to the traditional resources, the inherent intertextuality, of Archaic oral epic. Luckily, we have several examples of this kind of material across a range of texts, periods and places with which to work, material from which to see what the *Cypria* poet and his audiences may have understood by what modern scholars call the 'seduction scene', the larger sequence of narrative in which the *Cypria*'s dressing fragments definitely stood (certainly in the Adornment section).[23]

	1. ***Helen*** **i**	**2.** ***Helen*** **ii**	**3.** ***Hera***	**4.** ***Nausikaa***
	Il. 3.121–60	*Il*. 3.383–446	*Il*. 14.159–351	*Od*. 6.13–284
Visitation	(Iris) 121–138	(Aphr.) 383–394	(to Aphr.) 188–224	(Athene) 13–40
Adornment	(141, 158)	383–397, 415, 420	166–223 (267–268)	18 (80, 96)
Suggestion	137–140	390–394	163 (208–209)	27, 66-67, etc.

[21] The order in the *Cypria* is crocus, hyacinth, violet, rose, and narcissus.

[22] So Richardson 1974, ad *Dem*. 4–6, 140–141. Indeed, the hymnist even alters both the order and the substance of the catalogue at the end of *h.Hom.* (426–428): crocus, iris, hyacinth, rose, – replacing the violets with the *leiria* (? white lily) – and narcissus. Thus, saying that a list is traditional is not to imply that there must have been one such list which *all* poets learned, merely that the notion of a flower catalogue was shared across many poets and strands of the tradition, to be deployed in a variety of 'erotic' contexts. How we untangle that, or relate those strands to a single, clean line of transmission or influence, seems to me both unlikely as an historical fact and impossible as a scholarly method.

[23] The table follows Forsyth 1979, 109 (with my additions); cf. also Sowa 1984, 71–72, Janko 1992, 170–171; Brown 1997; Currie 2016, 147-160.

Movement	142	419	188, 292	50, 74–83
Attendants	143	420–422	–	18, 84, 99–109
Veil	141	419	184–185	(74) 100
Reaction	154–160	441–446	294–328	(113, 135–136), 149f.
Sex	→	X	346–51	(→ *Penelope* ii)

	5. ***Aphrodite*** **i**	**6.** ***Penelope*** **i**	**7.** ***Penelope*** **ii**	**8.** ***Aphrodite*** **ii**
	Od. 8.267–366	*Od*. 18.187–213	*Od*. 21.1–78	*h.Ven*. (5) 47–154
Visitation	(Ares)* 267–296	(Athene) 187–190	(Athene) 1–3	(Zeus) 47–52, 58f.
Adornment	364–365	190–196	(51–60)	61–65 (95)
Suggestion	291–294	203–204 (253ff.)	56, 75–78	45–46, 53–58
Movement	362–363	206	58–63	66
Attendants	–	207, 211	61, 66	–
Veil	–	210	65	(85–90)
Reaction	(290–294, 326–357)	212–213	72, 84–8, 103–10ff.	91, 144–154
Sex	(X)	→	(X)	X

	9. ***Aphrodite*** **iii**	**10.** ***Woman***	**11.** ***Pandora***
	h.Ven. (6) 2–18	*Th*. 570–613	*Op*. 57–89
Visitation	(Aphr.) 2–5	(Zeus) 570	(Zeus) 57–71
Adornment	6–13	572–584	65, 73
Suggestion	–	–	(56–57)
Movement		585–587	(83–85)
Attendants	14–15	–	–
Veil	14–15	(574–575)	(76)
Reaction	15–18	588–589	85–89
Sex	(X)	(X)	(X)

Before getting to the typology in its broadest terms, let us note that flowers and catalogues of flowers don't generally play a role in these scenes,[24] except – sort of – in the *Dios Apate*, where vegetation springs up beneath Zeus and Hera as they copulate (*Il*. 14.347–348). In fact, they

[24] Currie 2015: 299; Davies 2019: 58–68 makes no mention of this fact in his discussion of the fragment.

tend to occur at moments of actual 'seduction', whether or not the wider scene of this sort is taking place.[25] This is therefore the only epic dressing scene we know of in which such a catalogue appears. So the *Cypria* poet did something original and, apparently, unique;[26] its import seems to be relatively clear, in that the catalogue – and the very dressing of Aphrodite – looks forward, synecdochically, to the moment of consummation between Paris and Helen, and perhaps also the successful pseudo-seduction of Paris himself by the goddess.[27] The *Cypria* poet didn't have to do that, but he did, and it deploys the usual associations of the flower catalogue in a new setting, and does something quite novel with it.

Looking at the scene beyond the flower catalogue, we see that several things are consistent across these examples of narrative; as a typical scene, it would be odd were this not the case.[28] Notably, there are no exact verse-length parallels between the *Cypria*'s two fragments and the other scenes listed here, and only one formulaic repetition with one other scene (3: ἔν τε κρόκωι, ἔν θ' ὑακίνθωι ~ κρόκον ἠδ' ὑάκινθον *Il*. 14.348), a fact which should have made speculation about supposed allusions to those other scenes somewhat harder to advance than it has proven. Nonetheless, I am more interested in the sequence's overall effects and implications.[29]

Firstly, a(nother) god is always involved in motivating the action, so that the dressing figure is usually acting at another's behest, however that may dovetail with her own interests or purposes, and she may be entirely powerless in the situation:[30] thus, for instance, (1) and (2) Helen's subordination to the will, firstly of Iris and then of Aphrodite, and in the latter example the desire of Paris, is acted out well before she enters his room; (4) Nausicaa's intentions are placed directly into her head by Athene; (5) Aphrodite's scene begins with Ares' lustful arrival; (6) Penelope has no idea why she is doing what she's doing, nor does she again

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[25] *h.Cer.* 3–16, Hesiod fr. 26.18–23, 140 M-W; Richardson 1974, 141; cf. *h.Hom.* 19.25–26 (with the connotations of καταμίσγεται); also Archilochus fr. 196a.42–44 W², with Swift 2019, 364–365 for more examples.

[26] The other adornment scenes for Aphrodite in her two *Homeric Hymns* make no mention of flowers. It is of course unwise to make claims of uniqueness, given the tiny amount of material which has survived, but the point is that the *Cypria* poet is capable of poetic composition not derived from, or limited to, the extant texts. Our picture, at the very least, is imperfect.

[27] Currie 2015, 299.

[28] Currie 2016, 147–160 does not really concern himself with the traditional background of these scenes, except to discount it as quickly as possible (typically by restricting the notion of the 'traditional' to verbatim repetition or rigidly fixed structures), so as to get down to the business of constructing implausibly elaborate stemmata of direct influence.

[29] I omit (9), from the second of Aphrodite's *Homeric Hymns*, from much of the discussion, since it is a very abbreviated form of the sequence, but even then shows the same intimations as above: acting at another's behest is submerged in the notion of her receiving her lot (λέλογχεν) – i.e., from Zeus – and her conveyance to the island by Zephyros; deception is inherent in the gods' desirous reactions and the potentially destabilising nature of her beauty among them (15–18; cf. the Ares and Aphrodite story in *Odyssey* Book 8), and her sexual allure will be both her main power but also the source of her greatest weakness in epos, whilst its potential to cause damage is thoroughly evidenced in the Greek epic history of the world.

[30] In what follows, I use the example numbers of each scene for ease of reference.

in (7); (8) Aphrodite has no idea why she's come to Anchises; (10) and (11) Pandora is Zeus' means for revenge on Prometheus. The self-control of Hera (3), the only figure not to receive such a visitation but instead to visit Aphrodite to get some more bling to ready herself for the encounter with Zeus, stands out here, given the usual disparities in power in the other scenes.[31]

Secondly, therefore, deception is always present, shrouding the heralded or promised sexual activity: (2) Helen's renewed sexual pact with Paris enacts in Troy the fatal decision taken on the battlefield, and caps the process by which Menelaos is defrauded of his reward for victory (however qualified); (3) Hera wishes to weaken Zeus' control over the battle; (4) the disjunction between what Nausicaa tells her father and what he understands as her motivation, aside from its nice psychological touch, makes even more sense within the traditional parameters of this scene; (5) the deception is twofold, as the adulterers think they deceive Hephaistos, but he has been too cunning for them; (6) unaware of her own motives, Penelope tricks the suitors into giving up presents and (7) sets up the bow contest; (8) although unaware of Zeus' plan in the *Homeric Hymn*, Aphrodite has her own deception ready, pretending to be a mortal female specifically whisked to Ida to be married to Anchises; (10) and (11) to counteract Prometheus' protection of mankind, Zeus intends woman to inflict damage on them via an unwitting Epimetheus.

Thirdly, someone is always disadvantaged, and most often it is the reacting male – (3) Zeus, (5) Hephaistos after the fact, (10) and (11) Epimetheus and mankind, (6) & (7) the suitors, etc. But disadvantage may also be felt more widely: (1) & (2) Helen's renewed sojourn with Paris is one in a series of scenes at the start of the *Iliad* re-enacting the original story and reason for Troy's downfall, the negative effect of which for her reputation – and the city's fate – she and others are all too aware of (Paris' reputation, of course, is too sordid to require much further elucidation); (3) Hera eventually fails to get her way, and (4) Nausicaa's desire for a husband – in the form of Odysseus – remains unfulfilled; (5) everyone suffers the shame of the event, and the other gods' laughter at their discomfiture; and (8) Aphrodite keenly feels the shame of her human association and its implied weakness.

This associative trio – external agency, deception, disadvantage – isn't really surprising, given that early Greek poetry is full of sexual activity viewed as both duplicitous and dangerous. It also fits well, for instance, with the shady and dangerous reputation of marriage in early narrative epos, as Johannes Haubold and Ettore Cingano have shown.[32] So the *Cypria*'s original audiences must have known many examples of this narrative sequence beyond those few which have survived. Put this framework – non-version specific, traditional,

[31] This kind of associative alteration is central to the way early Greek epos uses its traditional background: see Kelly 2007, 67 n. 3 for the number of such alterations surrounding Achilleus in the *Iliad*.

[32] Haubold 2000, 137–143; Cingano 2005. Think of Penelope's remarriage contest in the *Odyssey*; the just-averted violence of Helen's first marriage as apparently told in the *Cypria* itself (arg. 19–20 Bernabé) and in the *Catalogue of Women* (frr. 196–204 M-W), and the disaster of her second and third (*Little Iliad* arg. 10, fr. 4 Bernabé); the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs (*Il.* 1.262–268); and so on.

intertextual – back into play for the *Cypria*, and our scene acquires a newly expansive potential. Firstly, in the most general sense, the trio bestows upon Aphrodite the illusion of power in entering upon this action, when the ultimate purpose is that of Zeus, in the destruction of Troy and the race of heroes. The goddess and Paris are each in their own way deceived, and both to their ultimate disadvantage, he to his death and the doom of his city, and she to the ignominy of being on the losing side in this most important of wars (one among several events in this vein in her 'history' throughout early epos). That is the generic background in the broadest of terms, its reference unlimited by character and story, unbound by specific instantiations. This kind of semantic is readily comparable to the kind of meaning denoted by John Miles Foley's term 'traditional referentiality' or, if you prefer, 'resonance' (the roughly equivalent term used by Barbara Graziosi and Johannes Haubold).[33]

This traditional intertextuality, i.e. knowledge gained from the scene 'type' in the broadest sense, doesn't preclude more specific types of source-derived meaning, since audiences gain their knowledge of the tradition through individual performances and poems, which may comprise more precise or reified potential in the semantic resources on which poets and audiences could draw. In other words, when Aphrodite beautifies herself before appearing to Paris, she now becomes instantly relatable to any and all *particular* scenes in which sexual attraction was thus arrayed, however motivated and to whatever end, whatever character was involved, and in whatever story. The Aphrodite of the *Cypria* is herself in this and many other situations – *and* she is Helen, and Penelope, and Hera, and so on. She is all of these figures and more, a distillation of all the many occasions in epos on which a female, mortal or immortal, has used sexual manoeuvering to inveigle a male into a dangerous situation for her own (or someone else's) ends.

Of course, no member of the *Cypria*'s audience would have had exactly the same repository of stories and narratives as any other, so individual differences must be countenanced, perhaps based on or privileging nothing more than the most recent story or poem encountered. There's no reason for that person to focus on one character to the exclusion of all others, either, so that almost any combination of specific characters and circumstances can be imagined. The poet must have had some inkling of that variety of experience, and thus a desire to capture the widest possible audience within the referential framework. The success of the poem, indeed its very survival, depends on its ability to appeal beyond a narrowly defined or exclusivising interpretative moment.

And, precisely because of this variety of experience, it must be possible that some scenes might have been more implicated in the *Cypria* poet's mind than others, scenes to which he might have intended a direct allusion. Thus, the kinds of allusive chains we spoke about at the beginning, where e.g. the *Homeric Hymn* (or its background story) was invoked as the informative frame for the *Cypria*'s scene, should not be ruled out as a matter of principle. Indeed, if we do read these texts directly together, then Aphrodite indulges once more in a

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[33] Foley 1999; Graziosi and Haubold 2005; Kelly 2007, esp. 1–14. For an attempt to apply this kind of reading to Sappho's interaction with the epic tradition, see Kelly 2020.

sexual game whose outcome she does not herself appreciate or fully understand: the beginning of the Trojan War invokes the same kind of reputational damage, where she will end up on the losing side, as did the 'earlier' episode with Anchises, which was intended by Zeus to end the freedom with which she dominated the sex lives of the other gods. It also signals that this action, in which Aphrodite will enjoy temporary success, will conform to the wider plan of Zeus as signalled famously at the start of the *Cypria* (fr. 1 Bernabé = fr. 1 West = fr. 1 Davies). And it suggests that this action in the *Cypria* is as fundamentally connected to Aphrodite's position within Zeus' order as was the original act of taming through parturition staged in the *Homeric Hymn*. But notice now that all these conclusions develop *from* the traditionally derived intertextual meanings we identified above. This fact is important in two ways.

Firstly, a traditionally intertextual dynamic in this case results in no conflict or undermining of the 'surface' narrative, as for instance in Oliver Lyne's famous 'Two Voices' reading of intertextuality and allusion in Vergil.[34] Nor should one imagine a Verrallian duality in the audience, with the idiots in the gods getting their typical fare whilst the *literati* smile from the circle at the poet's gentle undertone of Euripidean mockery. Instead, the specific allusion grows from within traditional and performative sources of meaning, and represents a more focused, more stable development of those dynamics – one that relies on a greater level of audience knowledge and familiarity, certainly, and on a greater proximity between the moments of composition, performance and recording, perhaps, but a development nonetheless.

Secondly, that allusive knowledge is not the whole story; both the traditional reference of the scene type, as well as the audience's intertextual recall of many performances of that scene, means that any person in the audience who did not know the potentially alluded texts, or did not know them to the extent required to make and sustain the allusion, would hardly feel any interpretative loss. The success of the poem, in other words, does not depend upon a single allusion to another specific text or episode.

Therefore, just as writing doesn't cancel out orality but preserves its conceptions and structures whilst transforming them, so allusion doesn't cancel out less precise forms of intertextuality or referentiality, but pushes their capacities and semantic potential further: these qualities must have been able to interact with one another as the poetic culture of Archaic Greece developed, and their relationships changed as that period went on, with allusion playing an ever more prominent role in the poetry we have inherited. My own view is that an increasing proliferation of written texts is the best explanation for this phenomenon, though allusion never entirely replaces other semantic dynamics. They co-exist, instead, in a tense, jostling, and shifting interactive balance.

The distinctions and method advanced here are, I suggest, necessary, for two reasons. At the moment, scholars spend time arguing about whether or not an allusion is possible or

[34] Lyne 1987. For a piquant critique of the way Classicists have developed Kristeva's original notion of intertextuality, see Weeden 2020.

probable, and this unduly limiting contest means that the two sides generally end up in mutually preclusive disagreement, and thus, inevitably, reinforce the predicates they brought to the process.[35] By contrast, the method offered in this chapter does not rule out allusion *a priori*. Indeed, its very strength comes precisely in the fact that allusion may not alter fundamentally the interpretation of a specific poem or scene. But, in every case, the analysis gives us a richer, more nuanced and – I suggest – a more historically authentic reading of the *Cypria*'s dressing scene, and it allows us to recapture something of the poet's ambition when faced with an audience of varied experience and knowledge.

More importantly, it avoids the pitfalls of the solely allusive reading, as we find it, for instance, in Currie's recent (2016) treatment of this material. His approach depends on assuming the dominant presence of Homer (or *Gilgamesh*) in the minds of the *Cypria* poet and his audiences, which is deeply uncertain. That is just not a defensible first position, and so it is no surprise at all when he concludes that his assumptions have been justified by the discussion: if one begins by assuming what one sets out to prove, that 'proof' tends not to be very difficult. Currie's method also ignores the other available interpretative avenues derived from the performative culture of Archaic epos. That is a wasted opportunity, a wilful failure to hear all there is to hear. This is all the more reprehensible when we remember that we lose nothing by beginning with the traditional and performance background: we can still see wonderful, intricate and sophisticated things being done with a more generically defined or articulated tradition, while our conclusions are considerably expanded in the way they depict the *Cypria*'s scope and subsequent appeal. If we can, against this background, make a case for a particular allusion, then all well and good, but we simply cannot start – or end – with allusion as the fundamental, central semantic strategy of early Greek poetry.

Indeed, in this case, there is no warrant to think in allusive terms, since there is no significant similarity in phraseology which could possibly trigger such an interaction in the case of *Cypria* frr. 4 and 5 Bernabé. But noting that doesn't place the poem in an hermetically sealed vacuum: instead, the audience's awareness of the generic background to these scenes, filtered through their actual experience of versions of narrated seductions in early epic poetry (and beyond), allows them to contextualise and 'place' this current scene within that framework, with whatever individual contours informing the specific individual's experience. That process bestows enormous meaning on frr. 4 and 5, explaining both the several characters' motivations and predicting their future.

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[35] This charge can be brought with some justice against my own previous work (esp. Kelly 2015a), which sought mainly to deny the kinds of allusive references which are increasingly popular in scholarship on this period. I would maintain that this is important, since we cannot simply allow any and all allusions without having a rigorous method to identify them, and one which takes into account the particularities of the Archaic period and its literary dynamics (largely performative and oral, lack of written texts, etc.). But we need a positive complement to the *pars destruens*, so as to move beyond a rigidly dichotomising approach, as Rutherford 2019, 235–236 well notes in an explicit comparison of my methods with those of Currie 2016.

To conclude: the dressing of Aphrodite in these two fragments of the *Cypria* can make a wider point about the literary culture of the Archaic period, and thus have I aligned myself with those scholars I maligned at the start of this chapter, and for the very reason I maligned them – using the *Cypria* to say something about other texts. Nonetheless, however suitable it is for the topic of this volume, I offer the foregoing method as a starting point for appreciating and exploring the *Cypria*, which is probably the most famous Greek literary text directly associated with this fascinating island. If we proceed thus, eventually we may discover the second part of this chapter's title, and not just keep going round and round on the first.

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