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Narrative and Lyric Levels in Catullus

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Metalepsis is most straightforwardly understood as a feature of narrative literature. The foundational definition given by Genette in *Figures* III assumes the existence of a narrator and a narratee, existing in an extradiegetic universe within which an act of narrating is taking place, and of characters, existing in a diegetic universe governed by that act of narrating.¹ This chapter takes as its starting point the Catullan poem which might be expected to show the clearest potential for metaleptic readings: Catullus 64, the (short) epic story of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis which is the most obviously narrative poem in the corpus.² Catullus, however, is not normally seen as a primarily narrative poet. He has often been claimed as an important figure in the history of lyric poetry, and although this claim has usually been made by critics who have more or less explicitly had his short ‘personal’ poems in mind, certain aspects of his ‘long poems’ too can be fruitfully analysed by making use of concepts conventionally associated with lyric, whether they draw more on ancient or modern understandings of that difficult term.

This leads to an interesting problem for the reader interested in metalepsis. If narrative typically creates distinct narrative levels across which a narrator, narratee, or character might make a metaleptic leap, lyric may be

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¹ Genette (1972: 243–6 = 1980: 234–7).

² For my reasons for avoiding where possible the term ‘epyllion’ see Trimble (2012).

understood, on the contrary, as tending to establish some kind of unified poetic moment in which the lyric speaker, addressee(s), and perhaps other people and objects all come to exist on the *same* level.³ In such a situation metalepsis might seem unlikely or impossible. Lyric, however, is like a highly reactive chemical element: it is rarely found in its pure form, and then not for very long. When reading poems in which a lyric mode seems dominant, readers may find themselves identifying narratives, however brief, which establish narrative levels, however subtly suggested: and with narrative levels comes the potential for metaleptic transgressions from one level to another. At this stage, we may reasonably begin to ask who exactly it is that might have the potential to make such transgressions. This question becomes particularly interesting if we look at the diverse corpus of a single author who wrote both narrative and lyric, and the case of Catullus may offer some challenging answers.

Narrative Levels: Catullus 64

The opening of Catullus 64 creates a basic boundary between two narrative levels: the diegetic world in which the events of the narrative take place, and the extradiegetic world in which its narrator is telling his story. The first two lines are framed by the words *quondam...dicuntur* (64.1–2)⁴ as the pine trees cut down to build the Argo ‘are said’ to have swum as a ship in the sea ‘once’, long ago. Whatever else an expression of this kind may imply about this highly allusive text,⁵ it establishes the poem as a story told, *dicuntur*, known from an existing and possibly even oral tradition, and puts its events in the past, *quondam*, at a considerable temporal distance from its anonymous epic narrator. Then, as the indirect speech construction *dicuntur...nasse*, ‘are said to have swum’ (64.1–2), is soon succeeded by finite verbs,⁶ we might already observe an instance of mild metalepsis. The slippage is normal epic convention, but it is also, in Genette’s terms, pseudo-diegesis, and in De Jong’s, the ‘blending of narrative voices’.⁷

³ See further below, pp. 126–7.

⁴ Unless otherwise specified all references are to Catullus. The text of Catullus is taken from Goold (1989), except in the case of poem 64, where I use my own working text for my forthcoming edition with commentary (Cambridge University Press); translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

⁵ For such formulae as ‘Alexandrian footnotes’ marking literary allusion see Hinds (1998: 1–3).

⁶ *ausi sunt*, ‘dared’ of the Argonauts (64.6), *fecit*, ‘made’ of Minerva (64.9), and following.

⁷ Genette (1972 = 1980: 236–7); De Jong (2009: 99–106).

the main narrator starts to speak on behalf of his equally anonymous, traditional informants, blurring the boundary between them.

We should remember this effect as we look at the way in which a second boundary between narrative levels is soon established in Catullus 64: the boundary between the two stories told in the poem, one nested inside the other, which is actually cited by Genette in his discussion of narrative levels just before he first introduces the concept of metalepsis.⁸ As the primary narrative continues from the opening discussed above, we learn that the immediate result of the launching of the Argo is that the Nereids rise to the surface of the sea to wonder at it. One of the Argonauts, Peleus, falls in love with one of the Nereids, Thetis, and we are soon hearing about the setting of their wedding celebrations (64.43–9). Among the furniture in Peleus' luxurious palace is the couple's marriage bed, which is covered with a dyed purple cloth. Here begins the transition onto a new narrative level: and like many, following Bal, I find it more helpful to conceptualize this level as 'inside' or 'beneath' the primary one and therefore to call it 'hypodiegetic' rather than Genette's 'metadiegetic'.⁹ The coverlet is 'decorated with ancient figures of people' (*priscis hominum uariata figuris*, 64.50). Assuming that the epithet is transferred, we understand 'figures of people from former times'—and one can debate whether *priscis* is focalized through the narrator, again emphasizing that the characters and events soon to appear in the hypodiegetic narrative are in the far past from his point of view, or through Peleus and Thetis and their wedding guests, indicating a significant temporal gap between the two levels about to be established, even though that causes serious problems for mythical chronology.¹⁰ But even without such a temporal gap, there is an ontological gap: the coverlet that those present at the wedding can see has representational content. It signifies (*indicat*, 'gives information about') the brave deeds or virtues (*uirtutes*) of the heroes (64.51).

⁸ Genette (1972 = 1980: 231): 'the second narrative can be handled as a nonverbal representation... which the narrator converts into a narrative by describing it himself (the print representing the desertion of Ariadne, in *The Nuptial Song of Peleus and Thetis*...)' 'Print' translates 'toile peinte', 'painted canvas' (Genette 1972: 241), which is itself misleading: the text of Catullus 64 gives no information about whether the coverlet is a painting, embroidery, tapestry, or some other kind of artwork.

⁹ Bal (1977: 35); Genette (1972 = 1980: 228), keeping the terms from Genette (1969: 202). Cf. Grethlein in this volume, p. 29 n. 14.

¹⁰ In the standard chronology of Greek myth the voyage of the Argo predates the adventures of Theseus. Catullus' apparent reversal of this order follows Apollonius' *Argonautica*, in which Jason tells the story of Theseus and Ariadne as something that has already happened (A.R. 3.997–1004); but Catullus makes the 'problem' worse by presenting the Argo as the first ship in history (64.11), which Apollonius avoids doing. See O'Hara (2007: 34–41), Weber (1983).

This statement is then explained with the word *namque* ‘for’ (64.52)—and in the rest of that line, the transition onto the hypodiegetic level is complete.

*namque fluentis onis prospectans litore Diae
Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tuetur
indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores...*

For, looking out from the wave-sounding shore of Dia, Ariadne sees Theseus departing with his swift ship, bearing in her heart uncontrollable fury... (64.52–4, trans. adapted from Goold)

The narrator is now telling us about Ariadne, who finds herself abandoned by Theseus on the island of Dia. Although, following that *namque*, we assume that this is a description of a picture that appears on the purple cloth—an epic ecphrasis—for the next two hundred lines there are no explicit reminders of this. Even the initial twenty lines or so are presented as a description of Ariadne on the beach, not, in fact, as a description of a picture of Ariadne on the beach. In the terms of Becker’s useful analysis of the levels on which a piece of ecphrastic text can represent a work of visual art that itself represents something, Catullus’ text has moved completely from the level of the *opus ipsum*, the artwork itself, onto the level of the *res ipsae*, whatever it is that the artwork depicts.¹¹ This makes it easier for the text to move from the descriptive to the narrative mode. The narrator soon begins to characterize the single moment in time depicted on the coverlet by referring to its immediate past—Ariadne *has just* woken up (64.56)—and its immediate future—she therefore *does not yet* believe what she is seeing (64.55). Before long, deciding to explain in more detail why Ariadne is experiencing the emotional turmoil in which he is so interested, he leaves behind the present and imperfect tenses in which the description has been couched so far, and moves into the finite aorist-perfect of narrative with the word *externauit* (64.70)—Venus ‘afflicted’ Ariadne with grief... some time earlier, at the point when Theseus first came to Crete.¹² The next sentence, explaining Theseus’

¹¹ Becker (1995: 42–3). Cf. also Grethlein in this volume on the levels involved in pictorial representation.

¹² In 64.73 I read *illa tempestate... quo tempore*, ‘at that time, at the time when’, following a reading found in some humanistic manuscripts, rather than either of the usually printed possibilities *illa tempestate... quo ex tempore* (Lachmann), ‘at that time, ever since the time when’ or *illa ex tempestate... quo tempore* (Baehrens), ‘ever since that time, the time when’—largely because this makes better sense of the tense of *externauit*. For a full *apparatus criticus* see Kiss (2013) *ad loc.*

quest, is framed by the words *perhibent olim*, 'they say that once' (64.76), equivalent to *quondam...dicuntur* at the beginning of the poem. The narrator is no longer telling us about what the coverlet depicts, but is now drawing again on some sort of inherited, verbal narrative tradition.

Therefore, although we may still reasonably choose to refer to the central part of the poem, its inner story of Ariadne, as 'the ecphrasis', we should acknowledge that strictly speaking only this very first section and the very last are formally ecphrastic, describing scenes on the coverlet. Everything in between—the whole story of Ariadne's relationship with Theseus, her revenge on him, and the unintended death of his father Aegeus, told with the help of direct speech, epic simile, divine machinery, and a very free approach to narrative order—is introduced either by that initial *perhibent olim* or by another formula of verbal authority.¹³ We may conclude that it stands in the same relation to the extradiegetic narrator as do the events of the poem's opening—irrespective of the ontological hierarchy between the two stories that was established by the presence of a picture on Peleus' and Thetis' bed. Only at the end of 'the ecphrasis' does the narrator remind his readers that this long section of the text has supposedly been his response to a visual stimulus. At 64.251, the descriptive mode returns with *at parte ex alia*: 'in another part' of the picture, Bacchus was arriving, inflamed with love for Ariadne. After a brief description of the god's maenadic followers, the text leaves the hypodiegetic level behind to return to the wedding (64.265–8). By describing the reaction of the couple's local Thessalian guests to what they see, the narrator reminds us that Ariadne and Bacchus exist within an artistic representation that can be enjoyed as such by characters in the poem's primary narrative universe: the Thessalians gaze 'eagerly', *cupide* (64.265). This remains the case even though those characters see a picture that contains less than the narrator's ecphrasis (only, we may assume, the scenes described in the two formally ecphrastic panels) and emphasizes rather different aspects of the story (essentially, Ariadne's future with Bacchus rather than her past with Theseus). Yet, simultaneously, by turning most of this ecphrasis into a narrative governed by *perhibent*, *ferunt*, and so on, the narrator has largely removed any formal distinction between the hypodiegesis and the diegesis in which it is embedded. Moreover, he has strongly implied that *his* position with respect to all parts of the inner story is exactly the same as it is

¹³ *sed quid ego...commemorem?* 'but why should I relate?' (64.116–17); *perhibent*, 'they say' (64.124); *ferunt olim*, 'they say that once' (64.212).

for the outer one. That, perhaps, is hardly surprising, since even the visual content of the coverlet is presumably something he heard about from the same verbal tradition that gave him the rest of the details of Peleus' and Thetis' wedding.

Later in this chapter I will discuss the complexities created for some possible instances of metalepsis in Catullus 64 by the nature of the poem's narrative levels. In order to discuss these alongside certain dynamics in other poems, however, I will first explore some ways of approaching literary mode and level across the Catullan corpus.

Catullus, Lyric, and the Second Person

In the history of Catullan criticism the literary mode that has played the largest part is lyric.¹⁴ Specifically, the Catullan corpus—or at least those parts of it in which Catullus himself seems to speak of his own experiences—has been seen as a place where the kind of first-person perspective often thought to be a defining feature of lyric poetry emerges in a particularly important way and perhaps for the first time. This theme is important from the early twentieth-century Romanticism of Havelock in *The Lyric Genius of Catullus* to Johnson's history of *The Idea of Lyric* in the early 1980s and through to Miller's *Lyric Texts and Lyric Consciousness* in 1994, which calls Catullus' poetry 'the first extant example of a true lyric collection'.¹⁵ With Miller's book, however, this strand of criticism in terms of 'lyric' actually comes to give an important place to narrative, although not so much to the clearly narrative poems like 64. Rather, Miller describes how narrative emerges in Catullus from a collection of individual lyric moments. For him (however counterintuitively for classicists thinking of the performed lyric of archaic and classical Greece), Catullus' collection is significant because lyric only becomes lyric when it is written, collected, and ready to encourage the reader to attempt to use it in the construction of narratives, albeit always plural narratives rather than a single, decidable one. It is Miller who likens Catullus' work to a 'Garden of Forking Paths', the image from Jorge Luis Borges that characterizes a work of literature which seems to contain no plot, but 'in fact possesses a plurality of them'.¹⁶

¹⁴ Wray (2001: 1–35). Note the telling chapter title: 'Catullan criticism and the problem of lyric'.

¹⁵ Havelock (1939); Johnson (1982); Miller (1994) (quotation at 52).

¹⁶ Miller (1994: 75). For a recent discussion of narrativization and Catullus see Lewis (2013).

Such an account of lyric and narrative in Catullus raises a dizzying question, especially from this volume's perspective: could narratives constructed in this way ever establish narrative levels across which metalepsis might take place? I will return to this question in a rather different way at the end of the chapter.¹⁷ I think it is best approached by sidestepping for the moment the possibility of giving a narratological analysis of any narratives that may emerge from the corpus as a whole, in order to make room for looking instead at literary mode on the small scale, in specific poems—and for doing so in as open-minded a way as possible. However exactly it got into that state, Catullus' poetry as we read it today is a uniquely diverse and unpredictably ordered collection.¹⁸ This means that the genre (in ancient or modern terms), mode, and entire *mise en scène* of any individual poem are always underdetermined by external factors and renegotiated with us as readers every time we turn from one poem to another—and frequently within a poem too. In spite of the critical history just summarized, then, Catullus' work may be said to invite a reading strategy which does not immediately seek to categorize each poem as 'lyric', 'narrative', or something else, but remains willing to respond to elements that impel a poem towards either the 'narrative' or the 'lyric' end of a spectrum.¹⁹ Pushing in the direction of narrative might be the presence of third-person actors or the passage of time in the past, while lyric might be suggested by a sense of first-person involvement in a present moment or the appearance of certain kinds of second-person address.²⁰ In fact, the second person, just as much as the first, is a speciality of lyric criticism, and my discussion will make particular use of some different ways of thinking about the second person drawn from such sources, while

¹⁷ See below, pp. 142–5.

¹⁸ Skinner (2007a) gives a useful account of the perennial debate over what role Catullus himself might have played in the arrangement of the corpus as it survived to its Renaissance rediscovery. I am sympathetic to the idea advanced by Butrica (2007: 23–4) that 'what we have is simply "one man's Catullus"' compiled during the technological transition from papyrus roll to codex in late antiquity.

¹⁹ Of the traditional threefold categorization of literary form going back ultimately to Pl. *Rep.* 3.394c, drama plays a less important role in Catullus: only poems 62 and 67 are primarily dramatic.

²⁰ The rest of this chapter largely uses this kind of minimal approach, paying attention to person and tense or time. It would be a larger project, and a fascinating one, to explore the application to ancient poetry of some of the categories suggested by recent scholarship asking what narratology can say about modern lyric or more generally poetic texts. These categories include 'sequentiality', 'mediacy', and 'articulation' (Hühn 2004, 2005), 'ambivalence' between fictionality and factuality (Hühn 2014), 'progression' and 'judgment' (Phelan 2007), 'segmentivity' and 'countermeasurement' (McHale 2009, following Rachel Blau DuPlessis and John Shoptaw). I am grateful to one of OUP's anonymous readers for drawing my attention to this.

not forgetting that appearances of the second person in narrative texts—that is, apostrophes—now also draw significant interest from classicists looking for ancient metalepsis.²¹

The first approach to the second person comes from an account of lyric which seeks to emphasize the first-person lyric ‘I’ to the virtual exclusion of the ‘you’. This might make sense to a critic who believes that what matters in lyric poetry is meditative introspection. In the case of Catullus this line is taken by Quinn in the last chapter of *The Catullan Revolution*, which is called ‘The beginnings of modern lyric.’²² Quinn’s Catullus is working his way towards being a properly introspective ‘modern’ lyric poet, who can speak simply in the first person without needing to address anyone. Therefore, where a second person does appear in Catullus it is, according to Quinn, just ‘a device’, an unfortunate ‘formal survival’ of earlier poetry in which the poet’s self-analytical interior monologue was hampered by having to consider an audience.

In contrast to this, Culler in *The Pursuit of Signs*, and then even more explicitly in *Theory of the Lyric*, sees the second person as essential to lyric.²³ Culler’s preferred term is ‘apostrophe’; and while, as just suggested, a classicist might more typically understand apostrophe as an occasional effect within a narrative text,²⁴ Culler, writing about modern and particularly Romantic poetry, uses it to articulate the distinction between the lyric and narrative modes. For Culler, this distinction is predicated on the difference between second-person address and third-person narrative, but it also involves will and time—or, perhaps, level. To apostrophize, he argues, is to establish a relation between the speaking subject and something else, ‘to will a state of affairs, to attempt to call it into being’. Moreover, whereas narrative depends on the passage of time, apostrophe draws what is apostrophized into a different kind of temporal space shared by the lyric first person: ‘what might be called a timeless present but is better seen as a temporality of writing’, or ‘a time of discourse rather than story.’²⁵ One could, despite Culler, repurpose this as a description of the metaleptic effect of apostrophe in a narrative text and say that a narratorial apostrophe pulls a character in the diegesis onto the extradiegetic level on which

²¹ See De Jong (2009: 93–7), Nauta (2013b: 234–43), and De Jong in this volume, with further references.

²² Quinn (1959: 85–100).

²³ Culler (1981: 149–71; 2015: 186–243). See also Budelmann in this volume, p. 60.

²⁴ As suggested by its etymology, ‘turning aside’, and by ancient definitions, e.g. Quint. *Inst.* 9.2.38–9.

²⁵ Culler (1981: 165; 2015: 226).

the first-person narrator speaks; this already seems to me a useful account to keep available next to the alternative explanation that in apostrophe it is the narrator who moves onto the diegetic level.²⁶ But Culler is actually saying something more radical: that lyric dissolves all boundaries between the lyric speaker and other subjects by bringing everyone and everything that is addressed into the same world—perhaps into the same ‘temporality’—as the poet. Either this is a sort of universal metalepsis operating throughout a text, all the time, or it is an effect that precludes metalepsis across narrative boundaries by putting everything involved, or at least everything addressed, in a text onto a single, lyric level.

Culler’s discussion, however, is largely concerned with apostrophes to inanimate things: ‘O wild West Wind’. Drawing on Northrop Frye (who was drawing on John Stuart Mill), he writes that the lyric poet ‘turns his back on his listeners’ to address ‘himself or someone else’, and does not always seem to mind whether it is himself or someone else.²⁷ If we begin to suspect that Culler is really concerned with a Romantic interiority not too different from Quinn’s modernist meditative introspection, we might wonder whether a different sort of approach would be more helpful if we prefer to understand the second person in ancient poetry as fundamentally rhetorical. In the first chapter of her book on narrative in Horace’s lyric poetry, Lowrie refers to Culler’s argument and then distinguishes between address, which expects or allows for the possibility of receipt by the person addressed, and apostrophe, which does not.²⁸ This is a potentially useful distinction, more precise than one based on the reality versus unreality, or the presence versus absence, of the addressee, although those too *may* be relevant. Insisting too strongly on it, however, could lead to our ignoring or accommodating too easily the very aspect of second-person address whose strangeness Culler wanted to highlight: that is, the idea of bringing into existence a state of affairs in which whatever is addressed in the second person has the potential to be—a person. As we examine potentially metaleptic uses of ‘you’ in Catullus, we may sometimes want to speculate, with Culler, that any apostrophe, or any address, might create the possibility that the ‘you’ might be a subject who could potentially listen, speak back, or take action, on the level of the one who addresses it—even if we do not actually see it doing so.

²⁶ On these alternatives cf. De Jong in this volume, pp. 80, 94.

²⁷ Culler (1981: 151–2; 2015: 186), quoting Frye (1957: 249–50).

²⁸ Lowrie (1997: 20–6). Lowrie goes on to explore the differences between lyric and narrative in much more rigorous detail than I am able to do here.

I would like to keep an open mind, too, about the best way of conceptualizing whoever or whatever appears in this poetry in the first, second, or third person. I have so far used terms such as ‘actor’, ‘speaker’, and ‘subject’ that aim to be reasonably neutral, as well as others such as ‘narrator’ and ‘character’ that imply more about the nature of the text concerned and the relation in which their referents stand to the levels it establishes. The notion of a ‘subject’ seems particularly helpful for two reasons. On the one hand, it suggests subjectivity. In literature we may meet subjects that can perceive things; that can respond subjectively to what they perceive, by feeling emotions or making judgements; that can speak, often to communicate these responses; that have the will or the power to take actions in the world around them; and that perhaps exist in one ‘place’, in terms of space and time and literary level, but may be able to do any of these subjective things metaleptically across those boundaries. On the other hand, this kind of ‘subject’ interacts with grammatical subject. This point is interestingly emphasized in the work of Janan on Catullus, although this chapter is far from adopting her fairly thoroughgoing Lacanian approach.²⁹ When looking microscopically at the poetry of Catullus and paying attention to the dimension of grammatical subject, we will be primed to notice grammatical person, and, in particular, a very simple formal effect that Ellis, the nineteenth-century commentator, noted alongside such features as diminutives and prosaic expressions among ‘peculiarities in the language of Catullus’:³⁰ frequent, obtrusive, interesting *changes* of grammatical person. It is, as we have seen, well established that interesting effects may occur when second-person address appears as an unexpected interruption to a narrative in the third person; but it may be just as interesting when the basically I–you scenario of a lyric poem is conversely interrupted by third-person statements that push towards narrative—cases where, as Évrard-Gillis tantalizingly observes in her brief study of poems in which Catullus himself appears in a combination of first, second, and third person, it might be the case that ‘the [lyric] speaker becomes a character in a represented [narrative] universe’.³¹ As we consider these and other effects in Catullus’ poetry, and particularly as we observe potential instances of metalepsis that

²⁹ Janan (1994: x): ‘The model is the grammatical subject, governed from outside itself by rules of grammar and syntax making up a linguistic structure—rules that grant the “I” its meaning.’

³⁰ Ellis (1889: xxix): ‘Catullus passes rapidly from speaking in one person to speaking in another.’

³¹ Évrard-Gillis (1977: 116): ‘le locuteur s’éloigne et devient personnage d’un univers représenté.’

seem connected with them, we may want to leave open the possibility of using still other terms for the subjects we encounter, and perhaps even of moving from speaking of *person* to speaking of *people*.³²

Divine Address and Metalepsis in the Long Poems

I turn now to three cases of an unexpected second person in Catullus' 'long poems',³³ beginning with Catullus' second most obviously narrative poem, poem 63. After ninety lines of mythological narrative about Attis' religious madness and self-castration—and, fortuitously, in Mynors' Oxford Classical Text, just after a page turn³⁴—the reader is confronted with what is clearly a hymnic close. The speaker turns to address Attis' goddess in an apotropaic prayer:

*dea, magna dea, Cybele, dea domina Dindymi,
procul a mea tuos sit furor omnis, era, domo:
alios age incitatos, alios age rabidos.*

Goddess, great goddess, Cybele, goddess, lady of Dindymus, far from my house be all your fury, queen: drive others to that frenzy, drive others to that madness! (63.91–3, trans. adapted from Goold)

These lines contain an unexpected second *and* an unexpected first person. Other than the galliambic metre, there has been no clear internal clue to prepare the reader for a hymnic ending.³⁵ In particular, the narrator's voice has been straightforwardly third-person. Or—has it? In fact, the narrator has used the second person before, at 63.9, *tympanum tuum, Cybele, tua, mater, initia*, as Attis picks up 'the light tambourine, your tambourine, Cybele, your mystic instrument, Mother' (trans. Goold). On a first reading, this line probably strikes the reader as a 'formal' poetic apostrophe, a passing

³² See also Malina (2002) on metalepsis and subject construction. Malina is particularly interested in how metalepsis may construct the *reader's* subjectivity: cf. below, pp. 142–5.

³³ The conventional designation for poems 61–8. Although these poems range in length from 24 lines (65) to 408 lines (64), it is fair to say that they are all 'long' for Catullus, and it may well have been their length that led them to be grouped together in the copy of the collection from which the surviving manuscripts descend.

³⁴ Mynors (1958: 58).

³⁵ Harrison (2005: 18–22) gives a balanced analysis of the poem's multiple generic affinities.

second person in the middle of third-person narrative, something familiar since Homer.³⁶ However, if the same reader remembers 63.9 after reading the end of the poem, the effect is disconcerting. In Lowrie's terms, the ending looks like true address, intended for receipt by the goddess: so does that mean that the earlier line was address too, and not 'mere' apostrophe? Was the goddess somehow 'there' or 'listening' on the narrator's level throughout? The poem began with no indication of the circumstances in which we were to imagine it as being uttered: in fact, it began like an epic, *in medias res*.³⁷ But if it always was a lyric hymn, perhaps Cybele is not at such a safe distance, on the level of narrated myth, as we thought. This appears to be an *anti*-hymnic close, not summoning the goddess but pushing her away: and while Nauta has sensibly argued that 'apostrophe may be construed as a sign of the narrator's own immersion in his story',³⁸ here I would argue not only that such immersion has become dangerous to this narrator—or more generally the speaking subject who suddenly emerges in the first person in these lines, possessed of a home (*domo*) and a mind susceptible to fury (*furor*)—but that it may be the goddess as much as the speaker who is breaking down the barrier between the world in which Attis' sufferings take place and the world in which that speaker lives.³⁹

There is a syntactical difference between the two addresses to the goddess in 63. In 63.9, the vocative nouns and second-person pronominal adjectives simply cluster around the words for an object appearing in the ongoing narrative (the tambourine), whereas 63.91–3 focus on verbs, a jussive subjunctive and a repeated imperative. It is this difference of syntax that makes the former address look so innocuous on first reading, and marks the latter so clearly as a prayer. This may be contrasted with two other divine addresses in Catullus' long poems which are specifically *not* prayers just where we might expect them to be, and which therefore invite us to consider quite how Catullus' narrative levels might be meeting at moments of potential metalepsis. The first takes us back to near the beginning of poem 64: it is the invocation of the heroes at 64.22–30, immediately after Peleus has fallen in love and Thetis—in contradiction of the usual mythical tradition—has been said not to be unwilling to marry a mortal.⁴⁰ This is the first appearance of a second-person address—and also

³⁶ See references under n. 21 above.

³⁷ Attis' story simply starts: *super alta uectus Attis celeri rate maria*, 'Attis carried in a speedy vessel on the crest of deep seas...' (63.1, trans. adapted from Goold).

³⁸ Nauta (2013b: 235).

³⁹ Cf. below, p. 137, on Troy in Catullus 68, and Bing in this volume on Stesichorus' Helen.

⁴⁰ 64.20 *humanos non despexit hymenaeos*, 'did not disdain a human marriage'; contrast e.g. *Il.* 18.434.

of a first person of any kind—in this third-person narrative poem, and, like the end of 63, it is marked as hymnic. The heroes are praised for their ancestry (64.23–23b) and Peleus for his good fortune (64.25–7); there is a hymnic anaphora of *te*, ‘you’, and the repeated *saluete*, ‘hail’, is equivalent to the Greek hymnic *χαίρετε*. However, something is missing. In both lyric and hexameter traditions, Greek and Roman hymns usually combine praise and prayer;⁴¹ and where a hymnic invocation appears, as here, near the beginning of an otherwise non-hymnic text, it usually turns into a prayer for inspiration.⁴² Here there is no prayer, only the first-person promise of future song offered by this narrator in 64.24, his imitation of the ‘rhapsodic farewell’ of the Homeric hymns: *uos ego saepe meo uos carmine compellabo*, ‘You, you I will often invoke in my song.’⁴³ *saluete* is the only imperative.⁴⁴ Hymnic convention is similarly subverted as the narrator goes on at 64.28–30 to ask Peleus a series of apparently enthusiastic questions: did Thetis really become his wife? did her divine family really consent? Questions can certainly be a hymnic feature; but then, however rhetorical, formally they will still ask for unknown information: ‘who’ or ‘which.’⁴⁵ The questions here, in contrast, require only a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. Applying Culler’s approach, it might be that by apostrophizing the heroes, and Peleus in particular, the narrating voice of Catullus’ poem draws the characters of his primary narrative onto the level that he occupies as he tells their story. Yet not only do these characters leave Catullus’ questions unanswered—the opportunity for a moment of very strong metalepsis is *not* taken, as Peleus himself does not speak—but even the questions themselves are not of a form that invites the contribution of new information. Despite the pious enthusiasm for the heroic age that seems to characterize the Catullan narrator at this point, it appears that he does not want to relinquish his own control over the content of his mythical narrative.

⁴¹ Furley and Bremer (2001: 50–64).

⁴² This is particularly characteristic of didactic: e.g. Hes. *Th.* 104–15, Arat. *Phaen.* 17–18, and even a version at Lucr. 1.24–8.

⁴³ The formulaic final line of many of the Homeric hymns is *αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σέο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομαι* *ᾠοῖδης*, ‘but I will remember you and another song too’. This probably referred originally to the epic recitation that immediately followed, perhaps also to singing of the deity again on a future occasion: see Richardson on *h.Hom.* 2.495.

⁴⁴ Contrast even the Apollonian narrator’s farewell to the Argonauts at A.R. 4.1773–5, also in the background for Catullus here. There the request for the heroes’ favour, *ἴλατε*, ‘be gracious’, though initially seeming unspecific, is still a request; moreover, it soon comes to imply that the Argonauts may also be being asked to fulfil the immediately following wish that ‘these songs’ may be ‘sweeter’ in the future (*αἶδε δ’ ᾠοῖδαι | εἰς ἔτος ἕξ ἔτεος γλυκερώτεραι εἶεν αἰείδειν*).

⁴⁵ Fedeli (1983: 49), citing parallels for Catullus’ repeated *quis*, ‘who...?’ questions to Hymen at 61.46ff.

A still stranger absence of prayer occurs at the beginning of poem 68b. One of the features suggesting that what is printed in most texts of Catullus as 68.41 should actually be understood as the opening of a new poem is the address to the Muses.⁴⁶ But instead of asking the Muses to tell him a story of the distant, mythical past which he can then tell in the poem that follows,⁴⁷ Catullus announces that he will tell *them* what his friend Allius did for him (a story of the recent, personal past), so that they will be able to speak to ‘many thousands’ of others, and will also be able to make the paper on which he writes loquacious too (68.41–6). There is one possible parallel for this reversal of what would usually happen when the first-person poet and second-person Muses confront one another. In the proem to the first book of his *Argonautica*, Apollonius asks that the Muses should be the *ὑποφῆτορες* of his song (A.R. 1.22); Morrison makes a careful argument for understanding this word as ‘interpreters’ rather than ‘inspirers’, so that Apollonius is asking for the Muses to pass on to others the story about the Argonauts that he tells on his own narrative authority.⁴⁸ But even if this is right, Apollonius is less explicit than Catullus, and also less intimate, less oddly chatty: his reference to the Muses is not even in the second person.⁴⁹ The opening of 68b is more generally reminiscent of Callimachus’ conversation with the Muses in *Aetia* books 1 and 2, where Callimachus calls the Muses *θεαί*, ‘goddesses’ (Call. fr. 7c.1 Harder), in the same sort of way as Catullus uses *deae* here, while Catullus’ opening address *non possum reticere, deae*, ‘I cannot keep silent, goddesses’, would be an accurate encapsulation of the typical stance of the garrulous Callimachean persona throughout the first two books of the *Aetia*. In the extant fragments, however, Callimachus never goes as far as Catullus does here. At one point he tells his readers how an earlier writer, Xenomedes of Ceos, wrote down the *μῦθος*, ‘story’, of Acontius and Cydippe, from which source it reached *ἡμετέρην*... *Καλλιόπην*, ‘my Calliope’ (Call. fr. 75.76–7 Harder). But even there, and assuming that Calliope is more than just a metonym for poetry,

⁴⁶ The question whether Catullus 68 is one poem or two (or three, with 68c starting at 68.149) is very old and very vexed. For an introduction to the bibliography see Lowrie (2006: 116 n. 7), and for a cogent new argument Leigh (2016). I agree with Leigh that ‘Catullus 68 is so conspicuously built out of recurrent terms, motifs, themes and preoccupations that any attempt to divide it into two entirely separate poems must fail’ (223), but would add a strong emphasis to the word ‘entirely’.

⁴⁷ As paradigmatically at *Od.* 1.1, *ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα*, ‘tell me, Muse, about the man...’.

⁴⁸ Morrison (2007a: 286–93).

⁴⁹ A.R. 1.22, *Μοῦσαι δ’ ὑποφῆτορες εἶεν ἀοιδῆς*, ‘may the Muses be the interpreters/inspirers of the song’; note the third-person *εἶεν*.

we have the ‘well-read Muse’⁵⁰ informing the current writer, not vice versa. In Catullus 68b, as in Catullus 64, the speaking voice again subverts the reader’s expectations of divine address in order to assert his own authority over the story he will tell: and since the speaker of 68b is also the protagonist of that story, this use of the first and second persons is one way in which the poem raises what we might call Catullus’ own experiences to the status of myth. This looks like a complex negotiation between poet and gods about what are going to count as the relevant narrative worlds in the first place.

Lyric Subjects and Narrative Metalepsis: Catullus 68

The extraordinarily rich and confusing Catullus 68 can be partially tamed by an analysis in terms of multiple ring composition.⁵¹ 68a, the letter to Manlius, begins and ends with Catullus’ depression and inability to write, and centres (68.19–26) on the death of his brother. 68b opens, as we have just seen, with Allius’ house and Catullus’ love, proceeds via several similes to the story of the love and marriage of the mythical heroine Laodamia, then to the Trojan War, and in the centre, again, the death of Catullus’ brother (68.91–100); the return journey is via the Trojan War, Laodamia (with a simile), another series of similes (with further reference to Laodamia), to Catullus’ love and Allius’ house. But this account in terms of two nested series of topics becomes considerably destabilized if attention is paid both to narrative level and to second-person address.

In 68a things are not too difficult. The situation in both outer sections (68.1–19, 27–40) is a present tense I–you address, in a letter, from Catullus to Manlius, complicated only temporarily and comprehensibly by the accounts scattered throughout the poem of the content of the letter from Manlius that Catullus is answering (a sort of recurrent embedded narrative); by Catullus’ references to both of them as drowning or shipwrecked sailors in 68.3–4 and 13 (a hint at a metaphorical world); and by the statement in 68.15–17 that ‘when’ Catullus was first grown up he ‘played often enough’, *multa satis lusi* (a brief narrative of his past). The central section is clearly

⁵⁰ See Bing (1988), especially 27–8.

⁵¹ See e.g. Courtney (1985: 92–9). Goold (1989) indicates one possible scheme for 68b with subheadings in his translation.

marked by the change in the reference of the second person from Manlius to Catullus' brother.

In 68b, however, the constantly renewed topics of the poem are introduced unpredictably, often with a new second-person address and/or with an indication of a new narrative level, but not in a way that clearly marks each of the concentric rings as an utterance existing on one defined level and directed at a distinct addressee. In the very centre, the section on the dead brother at 68.91–100 is again a second-person invocation of him. But Laodamia, the mythical figure who is such an important part of the nested structure, is only addressed during her second appearance (68.105, 117, 129); her first in fact contains another apotropaic prayer, as Catullus briefly addresses Nemesis (68.77–8). 68b opens, as we have seen, as an address to the Muses *about* Allius (40ff.); it closes as an address *to* Allius (68.149ff.), preceded, probably, by Catullus' address to himself (68.142).⁵² Catullus' apparent attempts to begin a narrative about his love and Allius' service, with the shifts to a third-person, past-tense narrative mode at 68.51 and 68.67, are soon interrupted by similes. This happens first with similes in the present tense (a stream 'gushes', *prosilit*, from a rock and runs down a valley to a road, 68.57–62; a favourable wind 'comes', *uenit*, to sailors in a storm, 68.63–5), then with one clearly defined as belonging to a narrated past (Laodamia 'once arrived', *quondam... aduenit*, at her husband's house, 68.73). If Laodamia's embedded narrative level is fairly well established by that *quondam*, then on what level or levels do the actions narrated in the present-tense similes exist—either in 68.57–65 or when new worlds open up as we hear in 68.119–28 about a daughter who 'nurses', *alit*, a longed-for grandson for her father, and a dove who, with a confusing further indication of other potential storytellers, 'is said to snatch kisses', *dicitur... oscula... decerpere*? Within one of the sections on Laodamia is a further simile whose content is attributed to others (*ferunt Grai*, 'the Greeks say', 68.109); her love is compared to an abyss which Hercules 'is said to have once dug', *quondam... fodisse... audit* (68.111–12), but it is not simply the case that everything narrated in this simile exists in a deeper past than that of Laodamia, since 'the Greeks say' in Catullus' time that this abyss still drains its marsh in the present (68.109–10). And in any case, the second pair of present-tense similes in 68.119–28 turn out to apply first to Laodamia (68.129–30), if also to Catullus' beloved (68.131).

⁵² Catullus seems the most likely addressee of the imperative in this line (*tolle*, here probably 'take away' or 'cease'). A lacuna should be printed after 68.141.

There are, it seems to me, two main ways of understanding the effect of all this, along the lines I have suggested earlier in this chapter.⁵³ On the one hand, it is possible to see the multiplicity and confusion of addressees and narrative levels in Catullus 68 as tending to create, overall, a single level, world, or poetic ‘moment’ on or in which everything in the poem exists. This can be analysed in terms of ‘lyric’, and in more than one way. One could argue that the repeated use of the second person with different referents eventually frees 68, or at least 68b, from a strong sense of being addressed to anyone at all, especially in the longer sections in between explicit addresses: it is easy to see Quinn’s ‘meditative lyric introspection’ in Catullus’ words on his own love at 68.130–48, for instance, and possibly throughout. Or one could make the case that all the subjects in the poem come to exist in Culler’s ‘temporality of writing’, in which ‘the lyric can displace a time of narrative, of past events recorded, and place us in the continuing present of apostrophic address, the “now”’.⁵⁴ Feeney has noted that on what is perhaps the primary narrative level of 68b, in which Catullus’ beloved ‘goddess’ (*diua*, 68.70) comes to meet him at Allius’ house, very little ‘actually happens’; ‘[a] man provides a house, a woman arrives—the rest is analogy and reflection.’⁵⁵ The rest, perhaps, ‘displacing’ the narrative of the woman’s arrival, is lyric. The arrival of the beloved in 68 is, or is a parody of, the arrival of a bride,⁵⁶ and this effect of the ‘displacement’ of narrative by lyric may be compared not only to Catullus 61, a formally lyric wedding song in which the present-tense ‘narration’ of what is going on at the bride’s arrival blends constantly with second-person address in which she and everyone else involved are encouraged to get on with it all, but also with the primary narrative of Catullus 64: one of the very strangest things about the treatment of narrative there is that while, as I have shown, the ecphrasis develops into a narrative in which a great deal happens, the outer story of Peleus and Thetis, at least after its fast-moving opening, very soon slows down into a highly descriptive account of their wedding in which, again, very little actually happens, except for a series of arrivals at

⁵³ See above, pp. 120, 126–7.

⁵⁴ Culler (2015: 226). Culler associates the effect particularly with ‘poems that multiply apostrophes to different figures’ (225).

⁵⁵ Feeney (1992: 35).

⁵⁶ She arrives on the threshold, though unluckily stepping on it (68.70–2); this moment prompts the first comparison, to Laodamia’s arrival as a bride (68.73–4); she is accompanied by Cupid, dressed and behaving rather like Hymen (68.133–4, cf. 61.1–35, esp. 8–10); however, she is not given away by her father, but rather steals away from her husband (68.143–6).

the palace in which the wedding takes place.⁵⁷ It is well known that the narrator of Catullus 64 seems determined to present a bright, happy version of this wedding in which Peleus is supremely blessed, Thetis is willing to marry him, their future separation is not envisaged and the moment at which Eris arrives with the apple that will trigger the Trojan War is never actually reached; it is in Greek lyric poetry, in Alcaeus and Pindar, that other references to this wedding as an example of mortal good fortune tend to appear,⁵⁸ and perhaps there is something 'lyrical' about the rather anti-narrative nature of Catullus 64's outer frame, as if it has caught the lyric spirit of the apostrophe to the heroes at 64.22–30.⁵⁹

Such 'lyric' readings, however, are not the only way of responding to the complicated use of narrative and address in Catullus 68. If, as we read, we are more inclined to accept the text's frequent invitations to register a shift onto a new narrative level, then, even if these levels are not always completely coherent, we will still see multiple boundaries in the text: more of the cases of second-person address may strike us as instances of metaleptic apostrophe, gaining their power from a transgression of these boundaries, and raising the question we have already encountered of which subject is to be identified as transgressing them;⁶⁰ and we may find other metalepses besides those effected by apostrophe, too. As we have seen, it is at the moment when the presumed primary narrative level of 68b adopts the narrative mode most obviously, as the *diua* arrives on Allius' threshold (68.70–2), that this narrative is interrupted by a new narrative about Laodamia. In the words *ut quondam*, 'as once' (68.73), the hypodiegetic level of Laodamia's world is doubly established: its role in the poem is the subordinate one of simile, and its action took place in the distant past.⁶¹ When Catullus returns to Laodamia and apostrophizes her (68.105), the second-person *tibi*, 'you', is juxtaposed with *tum*, 'then', re-emphasizing the second of these differences. Laodamia seems safely on her level, and so in this apostrophe, it looks as if it is Catullus who briefly crosses over to that level in order to address Laodamia, and the metaleptic effect is mild.⁶² What happens in between these two passages, however, complicates

⁵⁷ The Argo sails and Peleus and Thetis come together in the first thirty lines; then the human guests arrive (31–49) and depart (267–77), the divine guests arrive (278–302), and the Fates' spinning is described (303–22).

⁵⁸ Alc. 42 Voigt, Pi. N. 5.22–37, I. 6.25, 8.26–46, P. 3.86–96.

⁵⁹ See above, pp. 130–1.

⁶⁰ See above, pp. 126–7, 129–30.

⁶¹ Cf. the double move onto a new level of representation and (almost certainly) into the deeper past at the start of the ecphrasis in poem 64 (above, p. 121).

⁶² Cf. 63.9 (above, pp. 129–30).

matters considerably. Telling the story of Laodamia's marriage, the poem begins to explain the context of her husband Protesilaus' death by opening another past-tense narrative, *nam tum*, 'for then' (68.87), that for a moment threatens to begin at the beginning and tell the story of the entire Trojan War. But that potential narrative is derailed, not by a new simile, but by the mention of Troy itself, not quite addressed, but repeatedly named as if in invocation, exclaimed at with the parenthetical *nefas*, 'horror!' (68.89), immediately presented as a subjective agent, rousing the Greeks against itself (68.87–8), and then acting subjectively not in the deep narrative world of simile and mythical past, but in the recent and personal past in which it has killed Catullus' brother (68.91–2). Here, as at the end of poem 63,⁶³ the subject which crosses over from one narrative level to another seems to make a move upwards and outwards onto the level of the poem's main speaker, and a move full of threat: and it even seems possible for this subject not to be a person at all, but merely a personified place. Seeing Troy itself as the subject of the metaleptic movement here allows us to appreciate more keenly the contrast with the immediately following apostrophe to Catullus' brother himself: a person, but a dead one. Buried at Troy, he is geographically distant from Catullus (68.97–100 contain *tam longe*, 'so far away', *nec prope cognatos cineres*, 'not near kindred ashes', *extremo...solo*, 'distant soil', *terra aliena*, 'foreign land', trans. adapted from Goold); killed by Troy, he seems to have been instantly dragged back onto the deep narrative level from which Troy metaleptically rose to snatch him. Catullus attempts to bridge the gap by addressing him (68.92–6); but whereas Culler is relatively optimistic about what poetic apostrophes to the dead can achieve, saying that they 'displace' the 'irreversible sequence' of linear, 'empirical time' by a move into the 'discursive time' of poetry,⁶⁴ Catullus, here and every time he addresses his brother—and throughout the corpus he seems unable to mention him without addressing him⁶⁵—emphasizes separation in the very apostrophe itself, *misero frater adempte mihi*, 'brother stolen from me to my misery' (68.92, trans. Goold). It is difficult to see either Catullus or his brother as successfully crossing narrative levels here; this looks like a failed attempt at metalepsis.⁶⁶

⁶³ See above, pp. 129–30. ⁶⁴ Culler (1981: 166).

⁶⁵ 65.10–12, 68.20–4; poem 101.

⁶⁶ This account in terms of metalepsis takes its place alongside other discussions which investigate the tension between presence and absence, distance and closeness in Catullus 68 and especially in these lines: see in particular Miller (2004: 52–4), Lowrie (2006), esp. 127–8. Meanwhile, Feldherr (2000) discusses the related dynamics of poem 101 as informed by Roman funerary practices, epitaphs, and monuments: cf. esp. 216–17 on whether Catullus, in

In my discussion above of the apostrophes to Peleus at 64.25–30 and the Muses at 68.41ff. I argued that the Catullan narrator seemed determined not to give up control over what happens in his narrative.⁶⁷ In this apostrophe, meanwhile, it looks as if the power exercised by Troy and death make it impossible for Catullus to give any agency to his brother, even if he would like to. But there is a final subject in poem 68 whose agency is very much at stake, and who is almost the only person involved in the poem who is never addressed: Catullus' beloved. Insofar as the poem is a many-layered narrative, she remains on its primary level only, arriving at Allius' house, giving Catullus 'stolen joys', *furtiva...munuscula* (68.145, trans. Goold), yet unfaithful to him (68.135). Insofar as it is a meditative lyric, while Manlius, Allius, Laodamia, and the brother all appear in the second person on the same lyric level as companions in Catullus' meditation, the *diua* remains in the third person, at a distance, even at the very end in which a wish for her future happiness still seems to be addressed to Allius and not to her (68.155–60). By not addressing her Catullus tries to avoid raising questions about the scope of her power over what happens to him and his poetry.

The Narrator and His Characters

With this focus on subjective power in mind, we can return to three potential cases of metalepsis within the ecphrasis of Catullus 64.⁶⁸ The first shows a subject crossing, or almost crossing, both of the boundaries that I identified between narrative levels in this poem—the boundary between the ecphrasis and the outer story, and the boundary between the world of all the poem's mythical events and the world of the narrator—and doing so very nearly simultaneously. That subject is not, on this occasion, the narrator, who (we might think) would be the most likely to possess the ability to do such a thing, but one of the characters, Ariadne.⁶⁹

Ariadne is a very strong subjective presence in the ecphrasis, especially as she makes the extended speech that dominates the longest of its narrative sections (64.124–211). While in some ways she is in an extremely weak

apostrophizing or addressing his brother, is actually 'recovering his ability to address a living audience' or 'has indeed entered the world of the dead'.

⁶⁷ See above, p. 131.

⁶⁸ I mean by 'ecphrasis' here the whole of the inner story, 64.50–266: see p. 123 above.

⁶⁹ Cf. Nauta (2013b: 243–8) on some other mythical characters in Latin poetry who seem to have similar power.

position—not only objectified by her position as an artistic representation under the gaze of eager viewers, but quite simply abandoned on a desert island, and, as she believes, about to die—through her speech she gains strength, as her eventual curse on Theseus is implemented by Jupiter, allowing her to get her revenge (64.188–248). Earlier in the speech, however, she is still addressing Theseus. Her words so far have been full of excoriation, but she now concludes this section with a surprisingly tender image:

*at tamen in uestras potuisti ducere sedes,
quae tibi iucundo famularer serua labore,
candida permulcens liquidis uestigia lymphis,
purpureaue tuum consternens ueste cubile.*

Yet at least you could have brought me to your house to be your slave and serve you as a labour of love, bathing your bright feet with flowing water or spreading your bed with a purple coverlet.

(64.160–3, trans. adapted from Goold)

We can call this *mise en abyme*, since the purple coverlet Ariadne imagines is a double of the purple coverlet on which she is herself depicted (*purpura*, *uestis*, 64.49–50). But if we admit the possibility that Ariadne herself, as well as the reader, might remember or notice at this point that she is a picture on a purple coverlet, we can also call it metalepsis, as Ariadne seems to catch sight of her depicted self, thus crossing the boundary between the world of the ecphrasis and the world of Peleus' and Thetis' wedding. Such a reading is supported by the way in which, in the very next line, Ariadne perhaps crosses the more fundamental boundary between the world in which both stories of the poem are set and the world in which its narrator speaks:

*sed quid ego ignaris nequiquam conqueror auris,
externata malo, quae nullis sensibus auctae
nec missas audire queunt nec reddere uoces?*

But why do I complain in vain to the unfeeling breezes (beside myself with unhappiness), which, unendowed with sense, can neither hear words uttered nor give them in reply?

(64.164–6, trans. adapted from Goold)

Here it suddenly seems that as well as having seen the picture of herself, she might have heard the narrator telling her story. Her self-questioning

words *sed quid ego?*, ‘but why do I...?’, exactly repeat those of the narrator some fifty lines earlier, as he asked himself why he should narrate various different moments in Ariadne’s myth (64.116). There are many layers to the irony of what Ariadne says here, but one of them resides in this echo of the narrator. Like him, despite questioning the usefulness of speech, she goes on speaking; and although she claims that it is useless to speak to the breezes, she stops speaking to Theseus at this point to address, for the central section of her speech, no one in particular. It seems that her meta-lectic self-consciousness has opened up a space where she can simply talk without a defined addressee, making her more like—perhaps *not* a narrator, but an introspective lyric poet that Quinn would be proud of.

Ariadne, then, like Troy in poem 68, makes a metalectic leap all the way out to the extradiegetic level of the poem’s main speaker from a deeply embedded level within the text—in her case, an explanatory narrative within an ecphrasis within the main narrative, itself told at second hand. But there are other moments in which the narrator seems to enter the world of his characters, rather than vice versa: they are, again, apostrophes. The narrator has one to Theseus (64.69) and one to Ariadne (64.253). The usual comment on Catullus’ apostrophes in this poem is that they are markers of a subjective ‘sympathy’ characteristic of neoteric epic,⁷⁰ and in fact it is easy to see such ‘sympathy’ in the case of the apostrophe to Theseus—not, however, because the narrator sympathizes with Theseus, but because he sympathizes with Ariadne. He therefore addresses Theseus reproachfully, at the end of a line, *Theseu*, just as she does later (64.132). In neither case can Theseus literally, logically hear this, so perhaps it is equally true in both cases that (following Lowrie’s distinction) he is apostrophized rather than addressed. But if the gap between him and Ariadne is simply one of physical distance, what kind of gap exists between him and the narrator? Both the narrator’s apostrophes occur not in the parts of the ecphrasis that are actually marked off as epic narration, but in the properly ecphrastic, descriptive panels, one at the beginning and one at the end. Ariadne and Theseus are therefore at three removes from the narrator: depicted in a picture which exists in a mythical setting about which the narrator has heard from the anonymous traditional sources referred to with *dicuntur*, ‘are said’, in the poem’s opening lines.⁷¹ The apostrophes

⁷⁰ E.g. Fordyce on 64.69. Fernandelli (2012: 140–4) uses the terminology of metalepsis to discuss the apostrophe at Virg. *Ecl.* 6.47 as an example of ‘neoteric narration’ influenced by Catullus 64, but without specific discussion of the narrator’s apostrophes in Catullus 64 itself.

⁷¹ See above, pp. 120, 123.

metaleptically collapse at least two of these distinctions, producing the illusion, so typical of ecphrasis, that the narrator is standing in front of the coverlet depicting Ariadne and Theseus, so that they are in a sense *there* to be addressed, paradoxically closer to him than the mythical characters of epic narration normally would be.

Closer, but still distinct. If in the vocative *Theseu* the narrator's voice sympathetically merges with that of Ariadne, and in the question *sed quid ego?* hers with his, then the final apostrophe at 253 shows the narrator distinguishing himself from his heroine, and emphasizing that his knowledge is superior to hers. He apparently tries to tell her that she is not alone on the island, but that the picture also depicts Bacchus, 'seeking you, Ariadne, and inflamed with love of you', *te quaerens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus amore* (trans. Goold). Like the apostrophe to the brother in 68b, this might be another moment of failed metalepsis, the attempted interaction between the narrator and one of his characters finally underlining the fact that they exist in different narrative worlds. The narrator tries to communicate with Ariadne at this point because except through metalepsis she will never see or hear Bacchus approaching—despite the fact that his maenads are producing raucous music that the text vividly evokes (64.261–4)—since Bacchus exists 'in another part' of the picture (*parte ex alia*, 64.251), and since the picture, being a picture, depicts only one moment of time, and, being a picture, is literally silent. The narrator, existing outside the picture—on whatever level exactly that is—is not restricted in the same way.

At the end of Catullus 64, the narrator's self-positioning turns out to be crucial. The poem has a formal conclusion or epilogue (64.382–408). Whereas in all the different sections up to this point the narrator seems to have had the power to choose what to narrate, describe, or address from a body of myth that appeared to be simultaneously available, spread out before him in all its colourful, emotional luxuriance like the picture on the coverlet, in these final lines he suddenly asserts that he stands in quite a different sort of relation to all of these events and characters. He is, he now says, on the same level as the mythical content of the poem after all, because it is in fact simply the past: *quondam*, 'once', appears again at 64.382 as it did at 64.1, but with no *dicuntur* to underline the distinction of narrative level. This is his past, and, he wants to tell us, also our, the readers', past as well. Mingling between gods and humans will never happen now as it did when Peleus married Thetis in the heroic age, the narrator says, because humans have now become so wicked that the gods have turned their attention away from 'us', *nobis* (64.406). That first-person plural reaches out to the poem's readers, as the narrator tells us that we,

like him, are stuck in the terrible present—a present that the poem never actually specifies as Rome in the first century B.C., and which could just as well be here and now. But we can, finally, ask ourselves whether we feel that we have to accept the narrator's assertion. Are we really on the same level as he is? Or, just as he tried to tell Ariadne that he could see a part of the picture that she could not, will we feel able to assume a more powerful position, deciding that we can, in some sense, see another part of the picture? We may even decide that our experience is more like that of the Thessalian guests who enjoyed looking at the picture on the coverlet (64.265–8): on finishing the poem, we may have the option of walking away and leaving the narrator inside it, on the level in which he performs his act of narrating, a level that is still not the same as real life. It is probable that metalepsis is important in Catullus 64 because this poem is all about the tension between immersion in and alienation from the mythical world.⁷² In the epilogue, alienation finally wins out; but paradoxically it does so in the narrator's assertion that the mythical world is 'our' world at an earlier period in time. It is not, after all, a world that is accessible to and controllable by a poet because it exists on a different, possibly fictional, narrative level.

Catullus and His Readers

Considering the different narrative and lyric levels in these poems, and the subjects who make (or fail to make) metaleptic moves from one to another, therefore raises an extremely important and difficult question: what role is played in Catullus' poetry by real life, and on what level does Catullus himself exist? Catullus appears in a variety of subject-positions throughout his corpus: as the second-person addressee of others (10.25) or, much more frequently, of himself (8.1, 19, 46.4, 51.13, 52.1, 4, 76.5, 79.2); as a third-person character in statements which he either makes about himself (6.1, 7.10, 8.12, 11.1, 13.7, 14.13, 38.1, 44.3, 49.4, 56.3, 58.2, 68.135, 79.3, 82.1) or reports others making about him (68.27, 72.1);⁷³ and, obviously (but implicitly), as a first-person narrator or lyric speaker—his name never

⁷² For approaches emphasizing this theme see e.g. Fitzgerald (1995: 140–68), Dufallo (2013: 39–73).

⁷³ The conventions of reported speech mean that we cannot tell whether Manlius' letter and Lesbia's utterance are to be imagined as having addressed Catullus in the second person or named him in the third.

appears straightforwardly in the first person, 'I, Catullus,' but in poems in which it appears in the second or third person, it does so in such a way as to invite the reader to call that poem's speaker Catullus, and probably to do the same for other poems too. Catullus is also a Roman author in whose real past existence we believe.⁷⁴ As we have seen, his longer, more clearly narrative poems use metaleptic effects to explore exactly where their narrator—implicitly or presumably, Catullus—stands with respect to their various narrative levels, and what control he or other subjects may have over what happens on any of them. Poem 68 does so in a particularly suggestive way because it contains both mythical narratives and narratives of Catullus' own life—but the same is true, after all, of the corpus as a whole. Many of the shorter and more 'lyric' poems also contain brief narratives, and we may turn to them with the same question: how much of what happens on the various levels created in this poetry, and perhaps on a level outside it, in his life or in reality, can Catullus control?

In poem 58, for instance, Catullus tells Caelius that Lesbia, whom Catullus once loved overwhelmingly (58.1–3), now performs sex acts at crossroads and in back alleys (58.4–5). Genette suggests that we can say 'Virgil has Dido die';⁷⁵ we can presumably say 'Catullus has Ariadne get her revenge on Theseus'; but should we also say 'Catullus has Lesbia set herself up as a street prostitute'? In poem 72, Catullus reminds Lesbia of past promises of fidelity:

*dicebas quondam solum te nosse Catullum,
Lesbia, nec prae me uelle tenere louem.*

You once used to say, Lesbia, that you knew [or: wished to know] Catullus alone, and did not wish to possess even Jupiter in preference to me.

(72.1–2, trans. adapted from Goold)

dicebas quondam sounds like Ariadne addressing Theseus at 64.139–40, *at non haec quondam blanda promissa dedisti | uoce mihi*, lamenting that Theseus has not kept the promises he 'once' gave her in a 'winning voice'; *quondam* is not part of Lesbia's speech here, and is an example of the regretful use of 'once' to refer to a happier time in one's own personal past,

⁷⁴ Cf. Kearey in this volume.

⁷⁵ Genette (1972 = 1980: 234). On the ambivalence of the expression in the French original, see Matzner in this volume, p. 3 n. 6. For further discussion of the complexities of this statement see Kearey and Lovatt in this volume.

employed by Catullus elsewhere.⁷⁶ And yet, in juxtaposing a verb of speech with an adverb of past time, *dicebas quondam* also evokes the traditional way of opening a mythical narrative which we saw at the opening of 64, *quondam...dicuntur*—and at least one mythical character, Jupiter in his capacity as a potential sexual partner, duly appears in what Lesbia says.⁷⁷ Are Lesbia and Catullus, who also appear in the report of Lesbia's speech here, mythical characters too? If so, then while the pines on the peak of Pelion at the beginning of 64 'are said' to have fallen in the stable, generalized impersonal passive of mythical tradition, in 72 Jupiter, Lesbia, and Catullus himself are all characters on a level dependent on what Lesbia, briefly a mythical narrator, once used to say. Unlike in poem 68, Catullus does now address his beloved—but he does so in order to lament his lack of control over the contrast between what happens on the level she once created, *dicebas*, and what is now happening in the world he describes in the second half of the poem, in which her promises have not been kept (72.5–8).⁷⁸

Genette refers to Borges to make the point that metalepsis may be perturbing because it can suggest that there might be another level above and outside what we might think of as the outermost, topmost one on which the act of narrating takes place: 'that the extradiegetic is perhaps always diegetic, and that the narrator and his narratees—you and I—perhaps belong to some narrative'.⁷⁹ We know that Catullus does indeed belong to such a narrative, in at least two ways: he belongs to the narratives about his life that readers inevitably construct out of his poetry,⁸⁰ and he belongs to the narratives of Roman literary history written by critics and—long before them—by other poets. Being poets, these first few writers in the extant record to mention Catullus may do so in either a narrative or a lyric mode. Though already dead, Catullus can easily be addressed: Propertius, boasting about the power of his own books to make Cynthia famous, nods an apology to him (Prop. 2.25.3–4, *pace, Catulle, tua*, 'by your leave, Catullus'). Elsewhere, Propertius is more careful to give Catullus his due,

⁷⁶ 8.3 *fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles*, 'once the sun shone bright for you' (trans. Goold; Catullus addresses himself), contrasted with 8.9 *nunc*, 'now'.

⁷⁷ See above, p. 120; reading the opening words of 72, Kubiak (1986) begins to move in this direction.

⁷⁸ For his attempts to exert control over that world and his reader's response to it, see Pedrick (1986: 201–7), Janan (1994: 88–92).

⁷⁹ Genette (1972 = 1980: 236). Borges (1964: 46): 'if the characters in a story can be readers or spectators, then we, their readers or spectators, can be fictitious'. Cf. Kennedy in this volume.

⁸⁰ See above, p. 124.

stating that his poetry has put Lesbia onto the same level as famous mythical heroines, making her ‘better known than Helen herself’ (Prop. 2.34.87–8, *scripta Catulli | Lesbia quis ipsa notior est Helena*). Lygdamus mentions that Catullus has sung about Ariadne—and suddenly Ariadne is on a level where Lygdamus seems to feel comfortable addressing her ([Tib.] 3.6.41, *sic cecinit pro te doctus, Minoi, Catullus*, ‘so, daughter of Minos, did learned Catullus sing for you’). Yet in Horace’s *Satires*, Catullus appears as the *object* of a verb of singing (Hor. S. 1.10.18–19, *simius iste | nil praeter Caluum et doctus cantare Catullum*, ‘that ape, learned only in singing Calvus and Catullus’), a metonym for his poetry, as in the title of this chapter. And for Ovid, imagining the fate of the dead Tibullus, he has become a mythical character, crowned with ivy in a mythical underworld (Ov. *Am.* 3.9.61–2)—but again, one who can be addressed, *docte Catulle*, ‘learned Catullus’ in the vocative. These poets have started to explore the levels on which Catullus—and two of his most powerful characters, Lesbia and Ariadne—can exist. But most of them, too, will soon join Catullus as characters in the writings of their successors, both poets and, later, critics. Looking at Catullus and metalepsis, then, ultimately leads us to ask who may be in control not only of narratives and lyrics about Catullus, but also narratives (if rarely lyrics) about his readers—us.

