



The Ceyx Legend in Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book XI

A. H. F. Griffin

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THE CEYX LEGEND IN OVID, *METAMORPHOSES*, BOOK XI

The saga of Ceyx, king of Trachis, begins at *Met.* 11.266 and continues to 11.748. Ceyx' adventures form the longest single episode in the *Metamorphoses* (482 verses), slightly longer than the Phaethon legend (432 verses, *Met.* 1.747–2.400). Three metamorphoses take place in the course of the Ceyx narrative. The first is that of Ceyx' brother Daedalion who is transformed into a hawk. The second transformation occurs in the course of the exiled Peleus' visit to Ceyx when a wolf attacks Peleus' cattle and sheep and is eventually turned into stone. The third metamorphosis is that of Ceyx and his wife Alcyone into halcyons.

The linking together of these three metamorphoses was entirely an Ovidian invention: it had never been done before. It is therefore important to see the Ceyx story *as a whole*, as it was put together by Ovid. Attention naturally concentrates on the most interesting episode in it – the Ceyx–Alcyone – but the Daedalion and Peleus episodes are integral parts of the narrative and not separate legends.¹ The story is framed by the contrasting transformations of the two brothers. The fierce and bellicose Daedalion becomes a bird of prey (*Met.* 11.344). The gentle and uxorious Ceyx becomes a happily paired halcyon (11.741–8). It is ironic that we first meet Ceyx when he is mourning the transformation of his brother into a bird, since the same end awaits him. The brothers' characters are very different but their fates are similar. Ceyx' dealings with Peleus (11.268–409) bring out the king of Trachis' hospitable, peace-loving, godly and husbandly qualities and give us a rounded and detailed picture of his personality to balance the developed character-study of his wife Alcyone which is to follow. The spotlight passes from Ceyx to Alcyone at *Met.* 11.410.

We know that Ovid used Nicander of Colophon's *Metamorphoses* as the main source for the Ceyx–Alcyone episode.² The episode of Peleus and the wolf also came from Nicander. A prose outline of Nicander's version has been preserved by Antoninus Liberalis.³ The story of Daedalion's metamorphosis into a hawk may also have been told by Nicander. It was certainly treated by other poets besides Ovid, as Hyginus tells us.⁴ Nicander we are told was hereditary priest of Apollo at Claros.⁵ Apollo takes pity on Daedalion grieving for the loss of his daughter Chione and turns him into a hawk (*Met.* 11.338 ff.). Mercury and Apollo were equally guilty of the

¹ The importance of the Ceyx–Alcyone is widely recognized. 'The story of Ceyx and Alcyone (11.410–748)... could hardly fail to impress the ordinary reader... as one of the most moving and powerful episodes in the entire poem' (E. J. Kenney, *CR* N.S. 15 (1965), 295). It is a mistake, however, to treat the Ceyx–Alcyone as an entirely independent story, quite apart from the 150 verses about Ceyx (including Alcyone's first appearance) which precede it. See, for example, J. J. Hartman, *Mnemosyne*, 2nd ser. 46 (1918), 337–57. M. M. Crump, *The Epyllion from Theocritus to Ovid*, p. 214. *Met.* 11.410 marks the beginning of a new episode, not a new story.

² Probus, *Commentary on Georgics* 1.399: 'dilectae Thetidi alcyones'. A. S. F. Gow and A. F. Scholfield, *Nicander* (Cambridge, 1953) suggest the mid-second century or somewhat later as the most likely *floruit* for Nicander.

³ Antoninus Liberalis 38. *Λύκος*. ('*Ἰστορεῖ Νικάνδρος ἐτεροιοιμένων ἄ.*)

⁴ Hyginus CC. Pherecydes of Athens, the 'genealogist' (*floruit* 456 B.C.?) told the story of the twin births of Autolycus and Philammon, fathered by Mercury and Apollo, but the mother, according to Pherecydes, was Philonis, daughter of Deion, not Chione, daughter of Daedalion, as in Ovid. (Schol. Hom. *Od.* T. 432).

⁵ See Gow and Scholfield, *op. cit.* p. 5.

double rape of Chione. The choice of Apollo as the compassionate *deus ex machina*, transforming Daedalion into a hawk as an act of pity, is understandable if Nicander, his priest at Claros, wished to present the god in as favourable a light as possible.

Ovid may indeed have taken both Daedalion and Chione and the Peleus and the wolf episodes from Nicander's *Metamorphoses* but he had to set them in the context of the Ceyx legend. This was not simply a question of writing link passages between stories of three different metamorphoses. Nicander's poem did not link episodes together in a connected narrative: it was a collection of separate stories whose only common feature was that each contained a metamorphosis.⁶ Ovid incorporated the Daedalion episode into the Ceyx legend by the device of making Daedalion Ceyx' brother. Ovid's readers, of course, cannot be expected to know of this relationship and Ceyx tells them, as well as Peleus, about it at 11. 295–6. By making Daedalion and Ceyx brothers Ovid achieves a nice contrast with the Peleus episode. Peleus is guilty of fratricide (11. 267), whereas Ceyx is a model of fraternal concern and loyalty.⁷

Ovid also invented the visit of Peleus to Ceyx at Trachis. There is nothing implausible about this visit since Ceyx was well known for his hospitality, and Peleus and he could be treated as contemporaries.⁸ In addition, Ovid has altered the usual sequence in which Peleus' murder of his half-brother Phocus and his marriage to Thetis took place.⁹ Peleus' marriage to Thetis traditionally took place after the murder of Phocus and Peleus' subsequent adventures as an exile.¹⁰ The marriage was the climax of his career, a reward for all he had previously endured. Ovid has reversed the order of the murder and the marriage for the obvious reason that he could fit the incident of Peleus and the wolf into the Ceyx narrative but not the marriage of Peleus and Thetis. The story of Peleus' marriage would inevitably have overshadowed the conjugal relationship between Ceyx and Alcyone.

Ovid also associates the wolf episode with Peleus' murder of Phocus. This too is an innovation. In Nicander the wolf was not associated with Phocus but with a later, accidental killing by Peleus after which he collected a herd of cattle and sheep as a peace-offering for the dead man's father.¹¹ In Ovid the cattle and sheep have accompanied Peleus into exile, a plausible enough explanation of their presence with him at Trachis (*Met.* 11. 276–7). The herds are, of course, needed for the wolf to attack and had to be brought on stage by some means or other.

Ovid has fitted the Daedalion and the Peleus episodes into the Ceyx narrative with

⁶ Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet*² (Cambridge, 1970), 48.

⁷ The geography fits tolerably well. *Trachis*, where Ceyx is king, *Mt Parnassus* where Daedalion's metamorphosis takes place, and *Thisbe* where, as a hawk, he harries the famous doves, are all situated in central Greece within easy reach of each other (*Met.* 11. 269–72, 300, 339).

⁸ Hercules was a guest at Ceyx' wedding in Trachis, an incident treated by Hesiod in his *Κήρυκος γάμος* (see fr. 263–9, Merkelbach et West, *Fragmenta Hesiodica*, Oxford, 1967). Since Peleus and Hercules were both fellow Argonauts there is nothing 'chronologically' improbable about Ovid inventing a visit of Peleus to Ceyx.

⁹ Marriage of Peleus and Thetis: *Met.* 11. 217–65. Peleus' visit to Trachis after his murder of Phocus: *Met.* 11. 266–409.

¹⁰ See Apollodorus, *Library* 3. 12. 6–3. 13. 8.

¹¹ Antoninus Liberalis 38 can be summarized as follows: 'Peleus was purified of the murder of Phocus by Eurytion, son of Iros. He accidentally killed Eurytion during a hunt. Peleus fled to Acastus and thence, accused by Acastus' wife of an attempt to seduce her, to Chiron on Mt Pelion. Peleus there collected a herd of cattle and sheep and took them as a peace offering to Iros. Iros refused to accept them. A wolf attacked and slaughtered the animals. The wolf was turned into stone by divine intervention and stood for a long time on the border between Locris and Phocis.' In Nicander (*Ant. Lib.* 38) Peleus' visit to Acastus preceded the wolf episode: in Ovid it follows it (*Ovid. Met.* 11. 408–9).

consummate neatness. There is no jarring note at any point. The mechanics of fitting three previously unconnected legends together clearly involved more than a scissors-and-paste technique.

Up to this point we have been trying to identify ways in which Ovid has altered the outline of events in episodes which he has taken from Nicander, his main source for the Ceyx narrative as a whole. There are also some places where we can see Nicander's original behind Ovid. The most obvious is Ceyx' choice of Claros in Asia Minor as the place to consult an oracle of Apollo (*Met.* 11. 413). Nicander tells us that he was reared at Claros and his *Vita* adds the information that he was hereditary priest of Apollo there.¹² In sending Ceyx to Claros Nicander was, as it were, advertising his own status and services. Ceyx of Trachis could more conveniently have consulted Apollo at nearby Delphi, and Nicander has to make Delphi inaccessible owing to a blockade (*Met.* 11. 413–14) in order to explain Ceyx' journey to distant Claros. Claros involves a *sea*-journey from Trachis. The sea plays a very important role in Ovid's Ceyx–Alcyone. It looks as if Ovid was indebted to Nicander for giving such prominence to the sea.

Ovid's debt to Nicander at *Met.* 11. 410–14 is certain. In some places, however, a Hellenistic background (Nicander?) can be surmised. At *Met.* 11. 421–43, for instance, Alcyone tries to dissuade Ceyx from sailing to Claros because of the danger of a sea-storm. As the daughter of Aeolus, ruler of the winds, she remembers being terrified by the winds which her father kept locked up at home when she was a child – 'I knew them and have often seen them when a child in my father's house' (*Met.* 11. 437–8). Interest in children and their emotions is a noticeable feature of Hellenistic art and literature. Callimachus (*Hymn* 3) describes the goddess Artemis as a child with sixty companions 'all nine years old'. Hermes plays bogy to the daughters of the gods when they misbehave and each one 'straightway runs into her mother's lap with her hands upon her eyes' (*Hymn* 3. 70–1). Alcyone's recollection of her childish fear of the monster winds has a definite Hellenistic flavour.

In Nicander Ceyx almost certainly died by shipwreck, as the poet's introduction of a sea-journey from Trachis to Claros suggests. Hyginus (LXV), who had access to more ancient sources than we do, also tells us that Ceyx perished *in naufragio*. Ovid's sea-storm and Ceyx' shipwreck (*Met.* 11. 474–572) are indebted partly to Nicander and partly to the Roman tradition of the literary sea-storm (e.g. Virgil *Aen.* 1. 34–156).¹³

Nicander can certainly be seen at work in the mention of Alcyone's prayers to Juno for Ceyx' safe return (*Met.* 11. 577–82). In the earliest version of the Ceyx–Alcyone, found in Hesiod's *Ehoiai*, the couple impiously addressed each other as Zeus and Hera. Zeus punished their impiety by turning them into birds which lived apart. In Hellenistic times, as we learn from a Hellenistic dialogue entitled 'Halcyon', the myth underwent a radical transformation.¹⁴ The element of impiety was eliminated and the love interest of the story was developed. The myth described a tragic conjugal love. When Alcyone's husband died her grief was assuaged only when the gods pitied her and turned her into a bird and reunited her with Ceyx who also underwent

¹² Nicander, *Theriaca* 958. See Gow and Scholfield, *op. cit.* pp. 3–5.

¹³ The Roman tradition of the literary sea-storm is, of course, based on the Greek tradition and goes back ultimately to Homer (*Od.* 5. 291 ff.). The subject is discussed by M. P. O. Morford, *The Poet Lucan*, pp. 20–36.

¹⁴ The *Halcyon* can be found in vol. VIII of the Loeb Classical Library Lucian, pp. 303–17. Macleod, the editor, discusses its date on pp. 303–5. The dialogue, transmitted with the works of Lucian, is now generally dated by scholars to the Hellenistic period. I have discussed the significance of this dating in an article in *Acta Conventus Omnium Gentium Ovidianis Studiis Fovendis* (Bucurestiis, 1976), 321–4.

metamorphosis. In Hesiod Alcyone behaved impiously towards Juno. In Nicander Alcyone becomes pious and the poet drives the point home by describing her particular devotion to Juno. This is very much in the allusive Hellenistic manner and Ovid has taken the point from his original, probably without realizing its significance in the context of the history of the Ceyx-Alcyone legend.

The Sleep episode (*Met.* 11. 583–673) also shows signs of being based on a Hellenistic original. Ehwald suggests in his commentary that there was a Hellenistic source on which Ovid modelled this section and on which Lucian's island of dreams (*Vera Historia* ii. 32–5) was also based. This seems likely. There are many common features both in general outline and in detail in Lucian and Ovid.¹⁵ Both describe the dim and dusky light of the dreams' dwelling place on entry. Poppies abound in both and a sleepy river meanders through. Night has a temple in Lucian and the same divinity gathers sleep-inducing poppies and herbs in Ovid. In the centre of the dwellings a mysterious figure presides over the dreams, Sleep in Ovid, the prophet Antiphon in Lucian. The dreams are divided into various categories depending on whom they can dress up as and represent. In both dreams are winged (*Met.* 11. 650). In Ovid some dreams appear only to kings and nobles, in Lucian some dreams are already dressed up to represent kings and the rich. Some of the dreams have fantastic names which seem to be Hellenistic fabrications. Visitors to both places feel the effects of sleep coming on.

At other places Ovid (or perhaps Nicander) seems to be pointedly disagreeing with the version behind Lucian's island of dreams. Lucian locates the sanctuary of the Cock near the entrance to the city and tells us that Night and the Cock are the two most venerated gods there. Ovid goes out of his way to stress that there is no cock in Sleep's dwelling (*Met.* 11. 597 ff.). Lucian corrects Homer's description of the city walls, saying that there are four gates, not two. Ovid is adamant that Sleep's dwelling has no doors at all (*Met.* 11. 608–9).

In Ovid Sleep is instructed to send a dream to Alcyone informing her of Ceyx' death (*Met.* 11. 623–9). The dream's destination is *Herculean* Trachis (11. 627). Why *Herculean*? Hercules plays no part in the Ceyx-Alcyone and the reference to him here seems pointless. Trachis became a Spartan colony in 426 B.C. and was renamed Heraclea as Thucydides tells us.¹⁶ Hercules was a great Spartan hero and was associated with the locality of Trachis. Ovid's source seems to show through here. *Herculean* Trachis looks like a post 426 B.C. designation and may therefore reflect a Hellenistic source.

The careful division of dream activities between Morpheus, Icelos and Phantasos (*Met.* 11. 633–47) is the sort of neat compartmentalizing which appealed to Hellenistic writers and, since it is also found in Lucian's island of dreams, can be presumed to have a Hellenistic origin. In Ovid Icelos and Phantasos are mentioned simply for the sake of describing them. They have no role to play in the story. Sleep wakes their

¹⁵ *Met.* 11. 592 in R. Ehwald–Otto Korn–Michael Von Albrecht, *P. Ovidius Naso Metamorphosen*, ii (Zürich/Dublin, 1966). Von Albrecht seems to have doubts about a common Hellenistic source for Ovid's and Lucian's dream episodes because Lucian claims to be the first to describe the island of dreams (*Ver. Hist.* ii. 32). This claim need not be taken seriously in view of Lucian's admission that everything in the *Verae Historiae* is a parody of some author or other. The many common features in Ovid's dwelling of sleep and Lucian's island of dreams require some explanation. Lucian hardly used Ovid as a source since he knew little or no Latin. A common Hellenistic source is the most likely explanation of the similarities. Lucian's claim to be the first to write about the island of dreams seems like a joke.

¹⁶ Thucydides 3. 92–3, *καταστάντες δὲ ἐτείχισαν τὴν πόλιν ἐκ καινῆς, ἣ νῦν Ἡράκλεια καλεῖται.*

brother Morpheus first and chooses him to take the message of Ceyx' death to Alcyone. He then passes by Icelos and Phantasos without disturbing them (11. 645–8).

Probus gives a brief summary of Nicander's Ceyx–Alcyone in his commentary on Virgil's *Georgics* (1. 399): *Putatur enim Ceyx, Luciferi filius, cum Alcyone, Aeoli filia mutatas in has volucres*. His summary of the legend at 3. 338 is somewhat fuller: *Alcyone, filia Aeoli, uxor Ceycis, quae cum viro naufragio amisso mutata est in aves alcyonas: cuius partus dum excluditur septem diebus mare quietum est*. The fuller summary, besides confirming that Ceyx died by shipwreck in Nicander as in Ovid, also establishes that Nicander described the metamorphosis of both Ceyx and Alcyone into halcyons and associated the halcyon days with their nesting. Nicander's version contained the same contrast between the sea-storm and the halcyon calm that we find in Ovid. The halcyon days are also associated with Alcyone in the Hellenistic Halcyon.¹⁷ This association would seem to be a Hellenistic innovation. There is no evidence that Hesiod linked the halcyon days with Alcyone. In Hesiod Ceyx and Alcyone impiously called each other Zeus and Hera and were punished for this by being transformed into birds which lived apart.¹⁸ In a later, probably Hellenistic, version this punishment was mitigated in two ways. First, the halcyon days were associated with Alcyone as a mark of divine favour or pity, and secondly Alcyone and Ceyx were turned into birds of the *same* species.¹⁹ These two features were probably part and parcel of the radical reshaping of the Ceyx–Alcyone in Hellenistic times.

It may well be, however, that the description of the return of Ceyx' corpse to the shore at Trachis (*Met.* 11. 710–28) is entirely Ovid's idea. There is no evidence or hint of this event in earlier versions. In Ovid the description of Alcyone watching the gradual return of her husband's corpse is designed to correspond to the scene in which he gradually disappeared from her sight as he sailed away (*Met.* 11. 461–72). The episode, however, does not fit perfectly into context, which suggests that it may be something of an addition to the story. Alcyone has just declared her resolute intention of committing suicide (11. 701–9). In the immediately following verses, however, she completely ignores this resolve and concentrates on indulging her grief and nostalgically recalling the past on the sea-shore (11. 710 ff.). She ought to be committing suicide! It is also strange that after Morpheus' elaborate description to her of Ceyx' death, she should behave at *Met.* 11. 717–25 as if she knew nothing about it. It looks as if Ovid has somewhat awkwardly inserted this episode to balance the scene of Ceyx' departure from Trachis and also to give the reader a heightened sense of Alcyone's anguish just before her metamorphosis.

M. Pohlenz pointed out in an important article that three features of Ovid's Ceyx–Alcyone – the sea-storm, Alcyone's dream and the scene in which Ceyx' corpse returns and Alcyone rushes to embrace it – have parallels in the Hero–Leander legend as it appears in the *Heroides* and in Musaeus.²⁰ Pohlenz postulates a Hellenistic Hero–Leander which Ovid and Musaeus copy. He suggests that in the *Metamorphoses* Ovid expanded the Ceyx–Alcyone story by borrowing from the Hellenistic Hero–Leander at these three points. This may be so, though it is wise to be cautious about a Hellenistic version of Hero–Leander since we first come across the legend in Virgil (*Georg.* 3. 258 ff.). Pohlenz's article certainly lends support to my view that the episode

¹⁷ *Halcyon* 2.

¹⁸ See Merkelbach et West frs. 15 and 16 and notes ad loc.

¹⁹ See Schol. Hom. *Il.* 9. 562 and Eustathius 9. 538.

²⁰ M. Pohlenz, 'Die Abfassungszeit von Ovids *Metamorphosen*', *Hermes* 48 (1913), 1–13. The sea-storm is found at Musaeus 309 ff., the dream at Ovid *Ep.* 19. 195 ff. and the return of the corpse and death leap at Musaeus 335 ff.

of the return of Ceyx' corpse has been grafted on to the story by Ovid, and the join shows.

In Nicander Alcyone's decision to commit suicide was probably followed immediately by the act of casting herself into the sea where her husband too had died.²¹ Finally in Nicander, as in Ovid, Ceyx and Alcyone were transformed *deorum misericordia* into halcyons and were granted seven halcyon days in midwinter for nesting. During these days the sea is calm and sailors are safe.

In building the Ceyx saga out of three previously distinct stories (Daedalion and Chione, Peleus and the wolf, Ceyx and Alcyone) Ovid used certain recurring themes to give unity to the whole. The outstanding feature of Ceyx' personality is his *pietas* which is shown towards his brother and niece, towards his guest (Peleus), towards the gods and, above all, towards his wife. Another feature is his peace-loving nature and his dislike of war and violence.²² These aspects of his personality contrast with their opposites in the personalities of Peleus, Daedalion and Chione. Peleus' *impietas* shows itself in the murder of his brother Phocus (11. 268). Ceyx, by contrast, shows *pietas* towards his unamiable brother (11. 272–3, 328–9) and towards his conceited niece Chione whose *impietas* towards Diana is duly rewarded (*meritam* traiecit harundine linguam, 11. 325). Attention is drawn to Ceyx' *pietas* towards the gods and towards Apollo of Claros in particular at *Met.* 11. 410–11. His *pietas* towards Alcyone and hers towards him (*pios*...metus, 11. 389–90; *pias*...querellos, 11. 420; *pia* tura, 11. 577) are all-pervasive ideas.

Ceyx contrasts, more in sorrow than in anger, his own *cura pacis* with his brother Daedalion's *ferocia* at *Met.* 11. 297–8. The king is consistently peaceful, contrasting even with Diana (*ira ferox*, 11. 323) and the wolf (*cruento/ore ferum*, 11. 395/6). His opening words are those of peace (*placido*...ore, 11. 282). Even though Peleus' guilt was responsible for the undeserved visitation of the wolf on Ceyx' kingdom, it is, significantly, not Ceyx but the fates who finally drive Peleus away from Trachis (11. 407–9). In brief Ceyx is characterized throughout the story by his *pietas* and his *cura pacis*, which contrast with the *impietas* of Peleus and Chione and the *ferocia* of Daedalion.

In the Ceyx–Alcyone episode the theme of *pietas* finds its fullest expression in the depiction of conjugal love. *Ferocia* and *pax* are not, however, manifested only in human terms: their scope is broadened, and finds expression in the natural and supernatural spheres. Ceyx and Alcyone find themselves in conflict with violence on three levels – human, natural and supernatural. The marauding wolf, and the storm in which Ceyx drowns, are both manifestations of *ferocia*. Ovid's wolf is, in fact, a fiercer beast than the wolf in his source, Nicander. Nicander's wolf attacked unsheltered animals (*Ant. Liberalis* 38);²³ Ovid has turned the wolf into a man-killer (*Met.* 11. 373–5). Since wolf and storm are examples of *ferocia* it is no surprise to discover that Ovid uses the same imagery and vocabulary in both episodes, as the following table shows.

²¹ Hyginus (65) describes Alcyone's suicide as a death leap into the sea: *ipsa se in mare praecipitavit; postea miseratione Thetidis et Luciferi conversi sunt ambo in aves marinas alcyones.*

²² At *Met.* 11. 382 Ceyx arms his soldiers (*not* himself) when he hears of the marauding wolf. But he has no intention of allowing his men to use their weapons: as a good pacifist he regards prayer as more effective: *non placet arma mihi contra nova monstra moveri; numen adorandum pelagi est* (*Met.* 11. 391–2).

²³ καὶ τὰ πρόβατα νομέων ἔρημα λύκος ἐπελθὼν κατέδει.

Wolf

- 368 *fulmineus*, *rubra suffusus*
lumina flamma
- 367 *oblitus et spumis*
 365 *inde fragore gravi*
- 372 *sternitque hostiliter omne*
 394 *stratos tauros*
 395 *vastatoremque*
 366 *belua vasta*
 395 *ferum*
- 402 *dulcedine sanguinis asper*

Storm

- 522–3 *praebentque micantia*
lumen/fulmina fulmineis
ardescunt ignibus undae
- 501 *unda.../spumisque albet*
 485 *fragor aequoris*
- 507 *saepe dat ingentem fluctus*
latus icta fragorem
- 501 (pontus)...*sternitur interdum*
- 530 *vastius insurgens*
- 490 *feroces.../venti*
 511 (atque) *feri...leones*
 490 *aspera crescit hiems*

Before Ceyx sets sail Alcyone warns him about the terrifying violence of the winds and their destructive potential (11. 435 *vexant*; 11. 436 *excutiunt feris rutilos concursibus ignes*). Brooks Otis gives a brilliant analysis of the violence of the sea-storm in which he shows how Ovid gradually animates and personalizes the storm and gives it malicious intention.²⁴ Otis also draws attention to the balance between the long storm and sleep episodes: *ferocia* is balanced by *pax*.²⁵ *Pax* is, in fact, also personified in the Sleep ecphrasis (Somne, *quies rerum, placidissime. Somne, deorum pax animi...* (*Met.* 11. 623–4)). The storm/sleep contrast is the most obvious, and quasi-personalized, example of the *pax/ferocia* contrast which runs through the whole Ceyx narrative. The contrast finally achieves a resolution in the victory of *pax* and *pietas* which is celebrated in the final verses:

tunc quoque mansit *amor*, nec *coniugale* solutum est
foedus in alitibus: coeunt fiuntque parentes,
 perque dies *placidos* hiberno tempore septem
 incubat Alcyone pendentibus aequore nidis

(*Met.* 11. 743–6)

Ceyx finds himself confronted with *furor* in various guises. It appears first in the blood-guilt of his guest Peleus. It is found also in Chione's *hybris* and in Daedalion's aggressive nature. Even minor characters like Diana and Psamathe give vent to their *furor* (11. 323; 11. 397–400). The wolf is an expression of *furor*, as is the storm which overwhelms Ceyx. Against these manifestations of *furor* is set the *pietas* of Ceyx. His pious wish to consult the oracle of Apollo at Delphi is thwarted by a *profanus* (*Met.* 11. 413–14). The gods from whom he might expect some help, Aeolus his father-in-law and Lucifer his father, turn out to be broken reeds in a crisis (*Met.* 11. 561–2). He finds himself at the mercy of *furor* which finally destroys him.

This conflict between *furor* and *pietas* is surprisingly similar to the fundamental conflict of Virgil's *Aeneid* which reaches an ambiguous conclusion with Turnus' death at Aeneas' hands. In a sense, too, peace is achieved at the end of the *Aeneid* as at the end of the Ceyx legend. The Ceyx episode is not only the longest in the *Metamorphoses* but also one of the most important because it reveals, quite clearly, Ovid's ethical ideals. Perhaps the Ceyx episode is Ovid's tribute to Virgil showing how the younger poet deals, in his own way, with the fundamental tension between *furor*

²⁴ Brooks Otis op. cit. pp. 238–46.

²⁵ Brooks Otis op. cit. pp. 247–51.

and *pietas* running through the *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid* ends on an ambiguous note. At the end of the Ceyx narrative peace gains the victory over violence. This peace and calm is captured in two splendid final verses which must be among the most assonant in Latin poetry, perfectly blending sound with sense (ll. 747–8):²⁶

ventos custodit et arcet
Aeolus egressu praestatque nepotibus aequor

Ceyx and Alcyone are finally reunited in a faithful conjugal relationship, but one which has been achieved only at the cost of metamorphosis and after much undeserved suffering. As at the end of the *Aeneid* there is ambiguity here also. Is the cost of peace and reconciliation too high?

University of Exeter

A. H. F. GRIFFIN

²⁶ Verse 748 is framed by two nouns with the same vowels, *Aeolus . . . aequor*. *Aequor*, of course, is the *calm* sea, a splendid choice of final word.