of an uncomprehending voice consistently maintained. Canace describes urgent emotion, an aberrant liaison, and violent action in the flat tones of an upper-class *puella* complaining that she must—it's unfair but she'll do it—card a little more than her usual quota of wool.

The singular persona of Canace is achieved by two means in the epistle. The first is a reliance upon strict narrative unparalleled in the *Heroides*. Otis has noticed quite correctly that the Canace epistle seems to transcend the limits of elegiac discontinuity. He writes:

> But though the limits of elegy might be stretched, they remain a barrier to both effective continuity of narrative and serious treatment of major themes. It is true that some short elegies do express grief or passion, but these are not usually narrative in any strict sense. Ovid perhaps came nearest to such narrative in a letter like that of Canace to Macareus or in such episodes of the *Fasti* as the Ceres-Demeter legend.[63]

In *Heroides* 11 the effect of the narrative emphasis is not the "serious" expression of "grief or passion," but just the reverse. The narrative interest supersedes and suppresses introspection, reflection, moral evaluation, rhetorical justification, and emotional reaction—in short, all that we expect of an ambiguous heroine of incestuous love. The narrative bias of the epistle keeps us at a distance from Canace. Her soul is no arena of moral conflict or moral turbulence. She is, primarily, what she does, and what she does is not very much. She is at best a passive accomplice in the action, at worst an uncomprehending victim of it.

Ovid's second instrument in the creation of Canace's strange simplicity is closely allied to the first. It is the quality of the action she narrates. As the catalogue of horrors which is her story unfolds, her normality and unreflecting acquiescence seem more and more at odds with their context, more and more the humorously audacious "reverse megalomania" of which Auden speaks. To a Roman audience, and even to our more libertine, or liberated, sensibilities, she must have seemed, and now seems, oddly paradoxical: an unmotivated rebel, an inconsequential sinner, an uninspired lover and mother, an unattractive victim. She is most distinguished by what is least distinguished in her: her inflexible lack of moral tension. She is *minime vivax. Non putares eam sensisse.*

[63] Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 38.

VI ⊙ ARIADNE *IN EXTREMIS*: *HEROIDES* 10

Ariadne to Theseus

I have found the whole race of wild beasts gentler than you.
I might better have trusted any of them than trust in you.
The letter you read, Theseus, I send from that shore
from which the sails carried your ship—without me,
5 the shore where my sleep betrayed me fully, where you betrayed me,
in a crime plotted against me as I slept.

It was that time when the earth is first sprinkled
with crystal frost and the birds complain, hidden in the leaves.
Half-waking, languid from sleep, I turned
10 on my side, and my hands felt for Theseus.
Not there! I draw back my hands, and then again
I move my arms all over the bed—not there!
Fear shook the sleep from me. Terrified I rise
and my body is hurled out of my widowed bed.
15 Immediately I beat my breast with my palms
and tore my hair, just as it was, tangled from sleep.

There was a moon. I look to see if I can see anything but the shore.
The shore was all there was that my eyes could see.
I run, now here, now there, and everywhere in disorder:
20 the deep sands check my girlish feet.
Meanwhile, as I cried "Theseus" over the whole shore,
the hollow cliffs would send me back your name.
And as often as I called out to you, the place itself would call back.
The very place wanted to help me in my pain.

25 There was a mountain, with sparse bushes rising on its peak.
From there the cliff hangs over, eaten away by the roaring flood.
I climb it—courage gave me strength—and from there I scan
the deep waters far and wide with my glance.
From there—for the winds too were cruel to me—
30 I saw your sails billowing to the headlong south winds.
When I saw the sight I thought I had not deserved to see
I grew colder than ice and became only half alive.
But sorrow does not permit lengthy languishing; it rouses me,
rouses me and I call "Theseus" at the top of my voice.

HEROIDES 10

Mitius inveni quam te genus omne ferarum;
credita non ulli quam tibi peius eram.
quae legis, ex illo, Theseu, tibi litore mitto
unde tuam sine me vela tulere ratem,
5 in quo me somnusque meus male prodidit et tu,
per facinus somnis insidiate meis.

Tempus erat, vitrea quo primum terra pruina
spargitur et tectae fronde queruntur aves.
incertum vigilans a somno languida movi
10 Thesea prensuras semisupina manus—
nullus erat! referoque manus iterumque retempto,
perque torum moveo bracchia—nullus erat!
excussere metus somnum; conterrita surgo,
membraque sunt viduo praecipitata toro.
15 protinus adductis sonuerunt pectora palmis,
utque erat e somno turbida, rapta coma est.

Luna fuit; specto, siquid nisi litora cernam.
quod videant oculi, nil nisi litus habent.
nunc huc, nunc illuc, et utroque sine ordine, curro;
20 alta puellares tardat harena pedes.
interea toto clamanti litore "Theseu!"
reddebant nomen concava saxa tuum,
et quotiens ego te, totiens locus ipse vocabat.
ipse locus miserae ferre volebat opem.

25 Mons fuit—apparent frutices in vertice rari;
hinc scopulus raucis pendet adesus aquis.
adscendo—vires animus dabat—atque ita late
aequora prospectu metior alta meo.
inde ego—nam ventis quoque sum crudelibus usa—
30 vidi praecipiti carbasa tenta Noto.
ut vidi haut dignam quae me vidisse putarem,
frigidior glacie semianimisque fui.
nec languere diu patitur dolor; excitor illo,
excitor et summa Thesea voce voco.

35 "Where are you going?" I cry, "Theseus, you villain, turn back.
Turn your ship! She is missing her full crew!"

That is what I cried aloud, and what my voice could not accomplish, I made up for
by beating my breasts, whipping mixed with my words.
If you could not hear me at least you might be able to see me:
40 my frantic hands sent signals far and wide.
I fixed my white veils to a long branch—veils to remind you
(as if you didn't remember!) that you had forgotten me.
And now you were swept from sight. Then, at last, I cried
and the eyes that once had been tender grew dull with grief.
45 What better could those eyes do than weep for me
after I had ceased to see your sails?

Alone, either I wandered about with streaming hair
like a bacchant aroused by the Ogygian god
or else, cold, sat looking out to sea upon a rock:
50 I was as much stone myself as was the seat I sat on.
Often I return to the bed; it once had received us both
but never was to receive the two of us again,
and I touch, instead of you, the traces you left
and the covers to which your body had given its warmth.
55 Lying down, I drench the bed in copious tears, and I cry
"Both of us touched you. Give us both back once again.
We came here together. Why don't we leave together?
Where, faithless bed, is the better part of myself?"

What can I do? Where can I go? I am alone on an untilled island.
60 I see no works of men, no traces of cattle.
On every side sea surrounds the land; nowhere a sailor,
no ship to trace the doubtful paths of the sea.
But suppose I find companions, and winds, and a ship:
what path shall I take? My father's land forbids my approach.
65 And though I should glide through peaceful waters on a fortunate craft,
though Aeolus temper the winds, an exile is what I shall be.
Oh Crete, though you enclose a hundred cities, I may not even
look upon you, the land the infant Jove knew well.
No: for by my act my father was betrayed, and the country—dear names both—
70 governed by my father in his just rule, betrayed too,
when I gave you the thread to be your guide, directing your steps
so that you would not, despite your victory, die in those sinuous halls.
And then you told me "I swear, by the very jeopardy I now encounter,
that you, so long as we both shall live, will belong to me."

35 "quo fugis?" exclamo; "scelerate revertere Theseu!
flecte ratem! numerum non habet illa suum!"

Haec ego; quod voci deerat, plangore replebam;
verbera cum verbis mixta fuere meis.
si non audires, ut saltem cernere posses,
40 iactatae late signa dedere manus;
candidaque inposui longae velamina virgae—
scilicet oblitos admonitura mei!
iamque oculis ereptus eras. tum denique flevi;
torpuerant molles ante dolore genae.
45 quid potius facerent, quam me mea lumina flerent,
postquam desieram vela videre tua?

Aut ego diffusis erravi sola capillis,
qualis ab Ogygio concita Baccha deo,
aut mare prospiciens in saxo frigida sedi,
50 quamque lapis sedes, tam lapis ipsa fui.
saepe torum repeto, qui nos acceperat ambos,
sed non acceptos exhibiturus erat,
et tua, quae possum pro te, vestigia tango
strataque quae membris intepuere tuis.
55 incumbo, lacrimisque toro manante profusis,
"pressimus," exclamo, "te duo—redde duos!
venimus huc ambo; cur non discedimus ambo?
perfide, pars nostri, lectule, maior ubi est?"

Quid faciam? quo sola ferar? vacat insula cultu.
60 non hominum video, non ego facta boum.
omne latus terrae cingit mare; navita nusquam,
nulla per ambiguas puppis itura vias.
finge dari comitesque mihi ventosque ratemque—
quid sequar? accessus terra paterna negat.
65 ut rate felici pacata per aequora labar,
temperet ut ventos Aeolus—exul ero!
non ego te, Crete centum digesta per urbes,
adspiciam, puero cognita terra Iovi!
at pater et tellus iusto regnata parenti
70 prodita sunt facto, nomina cara, meo,
cum tibi, ne victor tecto morerere recurvo,
quae regerent passus, pro duce fila dedi.
tum mihi dicebas: "per ego ipsa pericula iuro,
te fore, dum nostrum vivet uterque, meam."

75 We both live, Theseus, and I am not yours—if a woman can be said to live
when she has been buried alive by the guile of a dishonest man.
Dissembler, you ought to have bludgeoned me with the club that killed my brother;
then the promise you made me would have been canceled by my death.
Now, however, my mind must not only endure thoughts of what I shall doubtless suffer,
80 but of all the possible things any woman can suffer when abandoned—
A thousand forms of death invade my mind:
death is less an ordeal than death's postponement.
Again and again, first from one direction, then from another, I think I see them
about to rush me: the wolves who will shred my entrails with ravening tooth.
85 And who knows: it may be that this place breeds tawny lions
and there is a chance that the island harbors savage tigers too.
And word has it that the oceans cast enormous seals up on shore!
And what is to prevent some pirate from running me through with his sword?

But it matters only that I need not be tied, as a slave, in those dreadful chains
90 or made to spin enormous quotas of wool (such work ruins the hands),
I, whose father is Minos, whose mother is the daughter of Apollo,
I—here memory lingers most lovingly—who was promised in marriage to you.
When I look out on the sea, on the land and the long expanse of the shore,
many, on land and on sea, are the perils that menace me.
95 There remains the sky above—phantom visions of the gods appall me!
Forsaken, for savage and wild beasts I promise prey, and food.
And if men do live here and work this land, I stand in dread of them:
I have learned, from my own abuse, to be afraid of foreigners.

Would that Androgeos were alive! And would that you, O country of Cecrops,
100 had not expiated your impiety with your own dead children!
And would that your right hand, Theseus, had not with knotty log
murdered that man who was a man above, and in the part below, a bull.
I wish I had never given you the thread to guide you in your return,
the thread repeatedly hoisted and hauled through your hands.
105 Yet it would scarcely have surprised me if victory, even then, were yours
and the monster, flattened, flailed the soil of Crete:
your heart could not possibly have been punctured by his horn: it is iron,
and even had you not protected your breast, you would not have been hurt:
you wear flint there, you wear steel there, Theseus,
110 you have something there to transcend the temper of rock.

Unkind sleep! Why did you hold me in that leaden languor?
If I had to sleep, better to have slept forever in eternal night.

75 Vivimus, et non sum, Theseu, tua—si modo vivit
femina periuri fraude sepulta viri.
me quoque, qua fratrem, mactasses, inprobe, clava;
esset, quam dederas, morte soluta fides.
nunc ego non tantum, quae sum passura, recordor,
80 sed quaecumque potest ulla relicta pati.
occurrunt animo pereundi mille figurae,
morsque minus poenae quam mora mortis habet.
iam iam venturos aut hac aut suspicor illac,
qui lanient avido viscera dente, lupos.
85 quis scit an et fulvos tellus alat ista leones?
forsitan et saevas tigridas insula habet.
et freta dicuntur magnas expellere phocas!
quis vetat et gladios per latus ire meum?

Tantum ne religer dura captiva catena,
90 neve traham serva grandia pensa manu,
cui pater est Minos; cui mater filia Phoebi,
quodque magis memini, quae tibi pacta fui!
si mare, si terras porrectaque litora vidi,
multa mihi terrae, multa minantur aquae.
95 caelum restabat—timeo simulacra deorum!
destituor rapidis praeda cibusque feris;
sive colunt habitantque viri, diffidimus illis—
externos didici laesa timere viros.

Viveret Androgeos utinam! nec facta luisses
100 inpia funeribus, Cecropi terra, tuis;
nec tua mactasset nodoso stipite, Theseu,
ardua parte virum dextera, parte bovem;
nec tibi, quae reditus monstrarent, fila dedissem,
fila per adductas saepe recepta manus.
105 non equidem miror, si stat victoria tecum,
strataque Cretaeam belua planxit humum.
non poterant figi praecordia ferrea cornu;
ut te non tegeres, pectore tutus eras.
illic tu silices, illic adamanta tulisti,
110 illic qui silices, Thesea, vincat, habes.

Crudeles somni, quid me tenuistis inertem?
aut semel aeterna nocte premenda fui.

And winds, you too were cruel, and all too perfectly punctual as well.
And you breezes, so obliging, so accommodating to my tears.
115 Cruel too was that right hand, which despatched me as well as my brother,
and cruel the promise, hollow words, with which you answered my demand.
Sleep, and wind, and trust, all sworn to treachery against me;
one fraction of a girl, I was betrayed by a faction of three.

Shall I die then, without the sight of my mother's tears,
120 and will there be no one whose hand will close my eyes?
Must my unfortunate spirit escape into alien air
with no kind touch to arrange and annoint my limbs?
Shall sea-birds perch aloft my unentombed bones?
Is the fitting reward for my kindness such burial as this?

125 You will return to the harbor of Athens; then, restored to your homeland,
when you stand exalted in the sight of your countrymen,
telling the flattering tale of the death of the Minotaur
and of the chambers of rock hewn into paths of confusion,
tell them about me as well, abandoned on this shore, alone:
130 I must not be expunged from your index of honors.
But Aegeus is not your father, and you are not the son of Aethra, Pittheus' child:
you were bred by granite cliffs and the waste of oceans.
I could wish to heaven that you saw me from your high deck;
my pitiful form would have made you wince.

135 Yet look at me now, not with your eyes (impossible) but with your mind's sight,
as I cling to a cliff lashed by the sporadic shock of the wave.
Look at my hair, let down in the mournful fashion of grief;
see my dress, so drenched by my tears that it might be soaked by a storm.
Like a field of corn set shivering beneath the wind, my body trembles
140 and the letters I scrawl falter at the tremor of my hand.
I do not plead with you now on the grounds of my service to you—it came to nothing;
let no favor be owed to me for what I did—
but certainly don't punish me for it! Even if I am not the cause of your survival,
still there is no reason why you should cause my death.

145 These hands, exhausted by the beating of my plaintive breast,
I pitifully hold out to you across the enormous sea.
Grieving, I exhibit my hair to you (as much as is left of it).
By my tears I beg you, tears which your acts have caused—
turn back your ship, Theseus! Reverse your sails and return!
150 If I have died before then, you will at least take away my bones.

vos quoque crudeles, venti, nimiumque parati
flaminaque in lacrimas officiosa meas.
115 dextera crudelis, quae me fratremque necavit,
et data poscenti, nomen inane, fides!
in me iurarunt somnus ventusque fidesque;
prodita sum causis una puella tribus!

Ergo ego nec lacrimas matris moritura videbo,
120 nec, mea qui digitis lumina condat, erit?
spiritus infelix peregrinas ibit in auras,
nec positos artus unguet amica manus?
ossa superstabunt volucres inhumata marinae?
haec sunt officiis digna sepulcra meis?

125 Ibis Cecropios portus patriaque receptus,
cum steteris turbae celsus in ore tuae
et bene narraris letum taurique virique
sectaque per dubias saxea tecta vias,
me quoque narrato sola tellure relictam!
130 non ego sum titulis subripienda tuis.
nec pater est Aegeus, nec tu Pittheidos Aethrae
filius; auctores saxa fretumque tui!
di facerent, ut me summa de puppe videres;
movisset vultus maesta figura tuos!

135 Nunc quoque non oculis, sed, qua potes, adspice mente
haerentem scopulo, quem vaga pulsat aqua.
adspice demissos lugentis more capillos
et tunicas lacrimis sicut ab imbre gravis.
corpus, ut inpulsae segetes aquilonibus, horret,
140 litteraque articulo pressa tremente labat.
non te per meritum, quoniam male cessit, adoro;
debita sit facto gratia nulla meo.
sed ne poena quidem! si non ego causa salutis,
non tamen est, cur sis tu mihi causa necis.

145 Has tibi plangendo lugubria pectora lassas
infelix tendo trans freta longa manus;
hos tibi—qui superant—ostendo maesta capillos!
per lacrimas oro, quas tua facta movent—
flecte ratem, Theseu, versoque relabere vento!
150 si prius occidero, tu tamen ossa feres!

IN HIS *Ars Poetica*, Horace exhorts the aspiring writer of tragedy to avoid subjects that are unknown and untouched. But if it is difficult to treat unfamiliar subjects, it would seem from Horace's subsequent remarks no less difficult to take as your subject *publica materies*, ground open to all. Horace writes of the hazards of the latter endeavor, of its trap of personal intimidation or private shame (not to mention those forbidding apparitions Tradition and Genre), with the dark and homely irony that comes of exercised familiarity:

> publica materies privati iuris erit, si
> non circum vilem patulumque moraberis orbem,
> nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus
> interpres, nec desilies imitator in artum
> unde pedem proferre pudor vetet aut operis lex. (*Ars P.* 131–35)

> In ground open to all you will win private rights, if you do not linger along the easy and open pathway, if you do not seek to render word for word as a slavish translator, and if in your copying you do not leap into the narrow well, out of which either shame or the laws of your task will keep you from stirring a step.

Horace's cautionary advice on the difficulties of treating *publica materies* with originality is more relevant to Ovid's letter of Ariadne, *Heroides* 10, than to any other poem in the collection.

Of the legendary heroines of ancient Greece and Rome who pen Ovid's fictive epistles, none, not the freshly canonized Dido nor the perennially ferocious Medea, were so invitingly and so dangerously *publica materies* as was golden-haired Ariadne. Catullus found in her, some say, "the morbid reflex of his own bitterness."[1] Others more generously assert that Ariadne is the "fullest expression" of Catullus' own experience, "a means through poetry to forget his love and, at the same time, a means to see it most clearly and truly [*sic*], to give an abstract universality to a personal chaos."[2] But before Catullus found Ariadne and made of her an "abstract universal," an archetypal fulfillment of erotic longing and betrayed hope, she had already acquired the status, in art, of a favorite *figura communis*. Moreover, within the venerable pictorial tradition the accent had shifted. She had gradually become less and less the Cretan type-figure of the resourceful

[1] Robinson Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), p. 282.

[2] David Ross, *Style and Tradition in Catullus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 174.

maiden who rescues the hero-adventurer. She had become instead, with increasing persistence, the maiden of Dia, midway between human and divine love, between doomed futurity and the consolation of ecstatic apotheosis. Ellis writes of Ariadne on Dia that "no incident appears so frequently on vases of every period with every variety of detail."[3] And as a testament to the Latin attraction for the pathetic-erotic, as well as to that curiously pervasive Roman alloy of hope, nostalgia, and doubt that found its highest expresison in Vergil's *Aeneid*, there is Ariadne as she is found in Pompeii. In Pompeii, there are three times as many paintings of Ariadne as there are of any of Ovid's other heroines—fifty-seven of her in all, and of these thirty show her on Dia.[4] Ariadne on Dia, by the time Ovid made her the heroine of *Heroides* 10, was all too visibly *non intacta*. She was, in poetry and painting alike, *publica materies*.

It is Ovid's usual practice in the *Heroides* to make his heroine conform to the elegiac type of the *relicta* or *deserta*, and at times, as in the case of Deianira, Phaedra, Hypsipyle, or Canace, the adjustment exhibits a degree of disconcerting elasticity. But in Ariadne Ovid inherited not only a literary prototype, and an equally strong pictorial tradition, but an accomplished *type* as well. Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid himself invoke *languida Gnosia* on Dia again and again with tireless promptitude, though idiosyncratic modulation, as the ideal elegiac type of the abandoned heroine, *multa querens* and *multa flens*. It is this characteristically Augustan typing of Ariadne that occasions the major difficulty in the reading of Ovid's poem. Mario Praz, in his attack on Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*, defines a type as

> something like a neuralgic area. Some chronic ailment has created a zone of weakened resistance, and whenever an analogous phenomenon makes itself felt, it immediately confines itself to this predisposed area, until the process becomes one of mechanical monotony.[5]

Praz's metaphor is, for our purposes, far more descriptive of the danger to the reader—Ovid's reader in this instance—than to the writer. While masquerading as *languida Gnosia*, the Ariadne of *Heroides* 10 is, perhaps unexpectedly, no more a mere type than Wilde's Salomé. She

[3] Ellis, *Commentary*, p. 280.

[4] Karl Schefold, *Die Wände Pompejis* (Berlin: A. Francke Verlag, 1957), p. 367. See also the illuminating discussion of Ariadne in Pompeian painting in E. W. Leach, "A Study in the Sources and Rhetoric of Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* and Ovid's *Heroides*" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1963), pp. 411–13.

[5] Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony* (New York: Meridian, 1963), p. 191.

is neither a pale reflection of Catullus' heroine nor a chiaroscuro enlargement. Nor is she, like some of Ovid's other heroines, a latter-day suburban ingénue dressed in the incongruous garb of legend. While following Catullus 64 with a precision of imitation which seems unparalleled in the *Heroides*, Ovid allows his Ariadne to disfigure, while embodying, the elegiac type. Within the elegiac framework she sometimes takes on the surprising characteristics, grossly at odds with the present situation, of the resourceful "master-maid," characteristics present in the older pictorial tradition but fallen into desuetude within elegy. She is far from the "neuralgic area" some readers have taken her for.

Ovid, as we have seen, shows little inhibition in his often idiosyncratic and irreverent deviations from his heroine's familiar prototypes. Yet in *Heroides* 10 his divergence from the type and from his Catullan model is unique, for he follows Horace's recommendations on how *not* to write. Throughout the poem, Ovid seems to vault willingly *in artum unde pedem proferre pudor vetet aut operis lex* by his emphatic, rigorous, and even literal uses of poetic *topoi* which call attention to the medium of speech at crucial moments in the poem, thereby puncturing the very Catullan pathos he takes pains, at first, to evoke. Moreover, discordant literary, rhetorical, and pictorial conventions, *non convenientia sibi*, are pursued within *Heroides* 10 with a vengeance, and throughout the poem such conventions overpower Ariadne's voice.

In *Heroides* 10 Ovid himself feigns the role of *fidus interpres* so flagrantly that his poem becomes too *fidus* to ring true. For this reason *Heroides* 10 becomes the funniest, most outrageous poem in the collection. It ruins Ariadne. And her destruction is accomplished *privato iure* by a comic *gigantomachia* of literary, rhetorical, and pictorial proprieties, each in turn exposed as artificial and arbitrary. It of course comes as no surprise to us when Ovid submits epic and heroic themes to the foreign decorum of elegy, or elegy to the alien decorum of the *suasoria* or *controversia ethica*; or when he submits Rome's legendary history to the urbane scrutiny of the parasitic poet-lover, or tragedy to a comic or trivializing perspective. But in *Heroides* 10 pictorial realism, the rhetorical *captatio misericordiae* and *cohoratio*, the roccoco description, and Catullan feeling vie with one another to produce a whole whose dominant mood is universal travesty. No decorum survives, however uneasily. The only device which unifies the poem is what the Russian formalists call "the device of laying bare the device." The result is Ovid's purest parody.

It will be illuminating, if somewhat arbitrary, to chart the deterioration of Ovid's heroine by beginning not at the beginning but at the top: with Ariadne's hair. In paintings and vases, Ariadne's hair is her glory—long, streaming, disheveled, fair. In some Pompeian paintings we see nothing of Ariadne's face at all—only the curls obscuring the indefinite curve of her cheek and trailing down her back in abundant, if contrived, disarray.[6] In literature Ariadne's hair scarcely ever escapes notice. Homer calls her καλλιπλοκάμῳ Ἀριάδνῃ(*Il.* 18.592). And the epithet caught on. To Theocritus she is ἐυπλοκάμω Ἀριάδνας (*Id.* 2.45). In Hesiod she is the ξανθὴν Ἀριάδνην (*Theog.* 947), with whom χρυσοκόμης Διώνυσος falls (almost narcissistically, it seems) in love. In Catullus her mitre slips, unnoticed, from her fabled blond head, *flavo vertice*. In Ovid, however, Ariadne's hair receives a different kind of attention, and the quality of this attention provides an index to Ovid's treatment of his heroine. In order to clarify from the outset the quality of the poem's comic parody, we shall turn, out of context, to the four passages in the poem in which Ariadne mentions her own *croceas comas*, her yellow hair. And in each case we shall examine Ovid's divergence from his Catullan model.

In Catullus 64 Ariadne is utterly unmindful of her appearance and her clothing. Her thoughts lie elsewhere:

Quem procul ex alga maestis Minois ocellis
saxea ut effigies bacchantis, prospicit, eheu,
prospicit et magnis curarum fluctuat undis,
non flavo retinens subtilem vertice mitram,
non contecta levi velatum pectus amictu,
non tereti strophio lactentis vincta papillas,
omnia quae tota delapsa e corpore passim
ipsius ante pedes fluctus salis aludebant.
sed neque tum mitrae neque tum fluitantis amictus
illa vicem curans toto ex te pectore, Theseu,
toto animo, tota pendebat perdita mente. (Catull. 64.60–70)

From far away among the sea-weed, the daughter of Minos
looks for him with tears in her eyes, like the marble image of a bacchant:
she looks for him, seething with great waves of passion,

[6] Karl Schefold, *Vergessenes Pompeji* (Munich: A. Francke Verlag, 1962), pl. 173.1, from the *domus Uboni.*

not keeping the fragile scarf on her yellow hair,
not keeping her breast veiled by her light dress,
not binding her white breasts with the smooth band;
with all these, as they slipped from her whole body,
the salt waves toyed before her feet as she stood.
But then, caring nothing for her scarf, nothing for the drifting
clothes,
with all her heart caring for you, Theseus,
with all her spirit, and all her mind, she was fixed there, lost.

Catullus creates an image of stillness, inner turmoil, and preternatural absorption by comparing Ariadne's posture to that of a stone statue of a bacchant and her feeling to the seething of the waves. He then amplifies her absorption by the anaphora of *non, non, non*, listing all those things of which Ariadne is unconscious, while at the same time elaborating beautifully his description of her. He reiterates in summary what she does not notice, and concludes (*toto pectore, toto animo, tota mente*) by showing that heart, soul, and mind, all that can be called the seat of perception, thought, or emotion, are entirely devoted to the contemplation of one object, *te Theseu*. The unexpected apostrophe to Theseus emerges suddenly, with hard and direct clarity, from the gossamer, impressionistic portrait of Ariadne on the beach. The last two lines are both revelation and conclusion. For although their hard and lapidary control and their abstractions contrast with the delicate obscurity of the earlier picture, they are a natural summary of a portrait become the portrait of an emotion. What Ariadne is doing and what she is wearing do not concern us merely in and for themselves, nor are they meant to. They are an evocative correlative to a state of being, a way of feeling.

In Ovid's *Heroides* 10, when Ariadne wakes to discover Theseus gone, she must, for want of a narrator, describe herself. And yet must she? It is noteworthy that in the *Heroides* Ovid's heroines often describe what they think, feel, do, and see, but only rarely do they elaborate upon their own appearance. When they do so, it is for the creation of a special effect, usually to establish an objective approximation for an emotion already described at some length. And when they do not do so, it is for equally good reason. Self-description interrupts and dispels the illusion of the heroine's concentration upon her love and upon the issues accompanying her situation. It leaves her rhetorical stance vulnerable to the impression of self-love, or vanity. Ovid is not forced to desribe Ariadne's appearance. Yet he does force Ariadne to describe herself numerous times in the course of her epistle,

and he not only evokes, but welcomes and even invites, the comic effects latent in first-person pictorial realism.[7]

The first reference to Ariadne's hair occurs near the beginning of the poem, when Ariadne describes the moment of awakening:

incertum vigilans a somno languida movi
Thesea prensuras semisupina manus—
nullus erat! referoque manus iterumque retempto,
perque torum moveo bracchia—nullus erat!
excussere metus somnum; conterrita surgo,
membraque sunt viduo praecipitata toro.
protinus adductis sonuerunt pectora palmis,
utque erat e somno turbida, rapta coma est. (9–16)

Half-waking, languid from sleep, I turned
on my side, and my hands felt for Theseus.
Not there! I draw back my hands, and then again
I move my arms all over the bed—not there!
Fear shook the sleep from me. Terrified I rise
and my body is hurled out of my widowed bed.
Immediately I beat my breast with my palms
and tore my hair, just as it was, tangled from sleep.

Ariadne's behavior is the conventional response of the bereaved heroine, yet it is disturbing for two reasons. It seems prima facie excessive because it so thoroughly violates the intense restraint of Catullus' portrait. More important, the description of her activity supplants the description of emotion (except for the single word *conterrita*) and thereby heightens the note of excess in her conventional behavior. The verbs vacillate chaotically from present to past, arousing then violating the expectation of immediacy. And Ariadne uses passive rather than easily available active forms. She describes herself almost as an objective observer might describe her, distancing the reader from her feeling, yet further achieving a disconcerting externality. Limbs, palms, breasts, and hair seem scarcely to belong to her. Such excess is compounded when Ariadne adds, in a sudden and self-conscious parenthesis (which qualifies *rapta coma est*), *utque erat e somno turbida* (16). Because the line is spoken by Ariadne herself, it seems a final touch of calculated artifice, as though, holding up a mirror to the

[7] See Leach, "Study in Sources," pp. 422–26, for a discussion of this "confusion between creator and image."

toilette of passion, she perceives the lack of the consummate elegiac ribbon and adjusts her image in the glass. Because it is *she* who speaks, reminding us of the disheveled charm to which Propertius succumbs,[8] and to which Bacchus himself will succumb in the *Ars Amatoria*,[9] she seems to say (while revealing all the self-concern of a posturing prima donna), "I beat my breasts; then I tore my hair, and I felt so terribly bad I didn't even comb it first."

We cannot but be reminded that at least this aspect of elegiac grief, the depiction of the disheveled woman, is primarily invoked when poets wish to stress the fact that grief makes their mistresses or heroines even more lovely, the disarray of the hair offering a sensual foretaste of the disheveled pleasures of the night. Ariadne's parenthesis, then, because at once so conventional and so at odds with her expected preoccupation with Theseus, has the effect of a whispered yet audible prompting from the wings. The elegiac protocol of feminine bereavement, the conventions of romantic portraiture, and the precedent of the Catullan *maesta Minois* all conspire against one another to produce, by *concordia discors*, an amusing trivialization of Ariadne's hyperbolic pain. The result is no accident of Ovidian amplification. It is parody, a modal distortion "which reduces what is of normative status in the original to a convention, or mere device."[10] It is a parody sustained rigorously throughout the poem by similar (and often more obvious) means: trivialization through excessive amplification, and through an unconventionally conspicuous reliance upon convention.

The second mention of Ariadne's hair in *Heroides* 10 is one part of a contrived distortion of Catullus' famous simile of the bacchant (64.60–62). In Catullus there is no mention of Ariadne's streaming locks. Indeed, the simile does not strive for, and even violates, pictorial realism. For if Ariadne is motionlessly looking out upon the water *ut saxea effigies*, her hair cannot be tossed back with the ecstatic movement of the Trieteric dance (although it can, one supposes, be blowing in the wind). Instead, by a kind of negative capability and with a consummately delicate proleptic touch, Catullus introduces Bacchus, who will be Ariadne's savior, into the evocation of her futile longing for Theseus. But Ovid divides the Catullan picture into two similes, violating its economy in the interest, once again, of parody:[11]

[8] Propertius 3.6.9–10: *sic ut eam incomptis vidisti flere capillis / illius ex oculis multa cadebat aqua?*

[9] *Ars Amatoria* 1.529–34.

[10] Tuvia Schlonsky, "Literary Parody: Remarks on its Method and Function," in *Proceedings of the 4th Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association*, ed. François Jost (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), p. 797.

[11] See Leach, "Study in Sources," p. 433: "In the economy of this simile motion is

Aut ego diffusis erravi sola capillis,
  qualis ab Ogygio concita Baccha deo,
aut mare prospiciens in saxo frigida sedi,
  quamque lapis sedes, tam lapis ipsa fui. (47–50)

Alone, either I wandered about with streaming hair
  like a bacchant aroused by the Ogygian god
or else, cold, sat looking out to sea upon a rock:
  I was as much stone myself as was the seat I sat on.

Ovid's Ariadne either courses with streaming hair (*diffusis capillis*), like a real bacchant and like the familiar bacchant of vase and wall paintings, *or* she sits looking at the sea, cold and immobile as a rock. The similes, and the verb *prospiciens*, invite comparison with Catullus. But comparison reveals the comic excess of Ovid's lines. *Sola* and *frigida* are otiose in comparison with Catullus' economy, but they hint that Ariadne's mind is less occupied with Theseus than with her own predicament and her own discomfort. We are reminded that, after all, if Ariadne is *frigida* it is because she has, with the inexperienced desperation of a Sea Scout on a survival mission, hung her clothes on the nearest tree, where they beckon in the wind to the heedless and escaping Theseus. And if Ariadne resembles a bacchant, it is not because art can trap in a frozen gesture something of an expression of rapt other-worldly frenzy. Ovid's Ariadne does not resemble a statue at all, but a real bacchant—and for one reason alone: not her emotion, but her loosened hair (47). Ariadne's attempt at poetic elaboration is merely a frigid failure, a failure that becomes disaster when she concludes *quamque lapis sedes, tam lapis ipsa fui*. She compares herself, half-naked and freezing, not to art, to a *saxea effigies*, but to the very rock on which she sits!

However comic Ariadne's final alteration of Catullus' simile may be, the more substantial clue to the intended parody of the passage is in the expression *Ogygio concita Baccha deo* (48). The name given Bacchus is a jibe, I think, at the neoteric and characteristically Catullan recondite allusion. But Ovid outdoes Catullus. His allusion is so mannered and precious as to defy identification. Nowhere else in extant Greek or earlier Latin literature is Bacchus called *Ogygius*.[12] And

concealed under stasis; Ariadne's form begins to achieve a verbal [*sic*] and emotional life while still preserving artistic silence."

[12] The epithet *Ogygius* is used for Dionysus once (here) in Ovid, once in Lucan, three times in Statius, and then drops from sight in Latin literature.

nowhere else in the extensive references to the god in the Ovidian corpus is he ever called by that name. Palmer half-heartedly conjectures that the word *Ogygius* is a reference "to an undistinguished Theban cult site."[13] We would do well, I think, to wonder at the intended effect of so baffling an expression.

By doubling the god's name, just as he doubles the simile, Ovid brings Bacchus more materially into the picture than Catullus does, thereby emptying the simile of the bacchant even more radically of its allusive suggestiveness. Yet Bacchus is mentioned only here in Ovid's poem, and it is crucial that the adjective used to describe him is both recondite and unequivocally ugly in sound as well as in associations. The god Dionysus, forever young, forever at his revels, is given only one epithet in Catullus 64: *florens*. Hence Ovid's unprecedented use of the word *Ogygius* is not merely a deliberate divergence from Catullus but a deliberate challenge as well. For in *Heroides* 10 Bacchus, as *deus Ogygius*, is described by a euphemism for "Theban" that in Greek suggests exactly the opposite of *florens*: hoary, ancient, as remote in history and legend as Ogyges, the primeval founder of Thebes. Bacchus, like Ariadne, does not escape the distortion and near-caricature of Ovid's parody.[14] If his bride-to-be is as inert as a rock, the god himself is made to suggest the ancient and rocky Ogygian range.

The third reference to Ariadne's hair occurs near the end of the poem in a passage in which Ariadne paints a lurid and almost gothic picture of herself composing her letter to Theseus, while clinging for dear life to the wave-beaten rocks in her tear-soaked *tunica*:

> di facerent, ut me summa de puppe videres;
> movisset vultus maesta figura tuos!
>
> Nunc quoque non oculis, sed, qua potes, adspice mente
> haerentem scopulo, quem vaga pulsat aqua.
> adspice demissos lugentis more capillos
> et tunicas lacrimis sicut ab imbre gravis.
> corpus, ut inpulsae segetes aquilonibus, horret,
> litteraque articulo pressa tremente labat. (133–40)

> I could wish to heaven that you saw me from your high deck;
> my pitiful form would have made you wince.

[13] Palmer, *Heroides*, p. 376.

[14] Ovid may here be consciously substituting for *florens* Dionysus the bearded, mature god of the earliest pictorial tradition.

> Yet look at me now, not with your eyes (impossible) but with your mind's sight,
> as I cling to a cliff lashed by the sporadic shock of the wave.
> Look upon my hair, let down in the mournful fashion of grief;
> see my dress, so drenched by my tears that it might be soaked by a storm.
> Like a field of corn set shivering beneath the wind, my body trembles
> and the letters I scrawl falter at the tremor of my hand.

The fiction of the epistolary form is nowhere else in Ovid's *Heroides* so transparently absurd as in this letter, and Ovid's picture of Ariadne's mode of composition is a mercilessly comic attack upon generic proprieties, including those of his own *genus ignotum*. The combatants in this struggle of conventions are a motley crew: the decorum of the epistolary fiction itself, a decorum called utterly into question with *qua potes*; the pastoral simile; the romantic scenery of the pictorial tradition; and the rhetorical fashion of sentimental self-portraiture as the medium of the petitioner's peroration, his *cohortatio*.

The result of the struggle is at best a Pyrrhic victory: the arbitrary alignment of conventions calls each convention into question. If Ariadne is clinging to a rock, how can she be writing? If she is clinging to the wave-tossed rock in a real landscape, must not the reader reflect that her clothing is more probably drenched with real sea spray than with enough elegiac tears to make her *tunicas* not merely damp but *sicut ab imbre gravis*? If Theseus is still at sea and if, moreover, he cannot possibly receive correspondence from a deserted island bereft of even inefficient mail service, how can he possibly envision her present state of distraction *non oculis, sed mente*? If Ariadne is genuinely frantic, why does she begin her address with the prosaic instruction to the audience appropriate to a contestant in a rhetorical *agonisma*? And is not the wave-tossed shore of barren Dia an odd setting for a simile appropriate to the *Georgics*, especially one which aims at pictorial verisimilitude rather than—as in Catullus—evocative interiority? Finally, are not all these motifs (some of which appear in far more delicate modulation in *Ars Am.* 1.525–64) patently absurd when the heroine employs them to describe herself as though she were objectively watching her own situation *non oculis sed mente*? The whole description is too self-conscious an assemblage of discordant conventions to ring true. The organizing factor in the passage is parody: the device of exposing not emotion but the *mores lugentis*, the artificed self-portrait of an Ariadne who grieves for herself.

In the sometimes amusing yet oddly lyrical sequence in the *Ars Amatoria* in which Dionysus captures Ariadne for his bride, Dionysus himself is first captured by the combination of beauty and grief in Ariadne:

> utque erat e somno, tunica velata recincta,
> nuda pedem, croceas inreligata comas,
> Thesea crudelem surdas clamabat ad undas,
> indigno teneras imbre regante genas.
> clamabat flebatque simul, sed utrumque decebat;
> non facta est lacrimis turpior illa suis. (*Ars Am.* 1.529–34)

> Just as she was, fresh from sleep, dressed in a loose tunic,
> barefoot, her flaxen hair unbound,
> she cried out upon cruel Theseus over the deaf waves
> while the undeserved tears rained down her tender cheeks.
> She called out, and while she called, she wept, but both were becoming:
> her tears did not make her any the less lovely.

It is important to notice that in this passage, Ariadne has not begun tearing at her legendary *croceas comas* or beating her *lactentis papillas.* But in Ariadne's final reference to her hair in *Heroides* 10, she shows that she may actually have done herself almost irreparable damage. She is decidedly *turpior facta*:

> Has tibi plangendo lugubria pectora lassas
> infelix tendo trans freta longa manus;
> hos tibi—qui superant—ostendo maesta capillos!
> per lacrimas oro, quas tua facta movent—
> flecte ratem, Theseu, versoque relabere vento!
> si prius occidero, tu tamen ossa feres! (145–50)

> These hands, exhausted by the beating of my plaintive breast,
> I pitifully hold out to you across the enormous sea.
> Grieving, I exhibit my hair to you (as much as is left of it).
> By my tears I beg you, tears which your acts, have caused—
> turn back your ship, Theseus! Reverse your sails and return!
> If I have died before then, you will at least take away my bones.

Ariadne's hands are worn out (at last) from beating her breasts. Her

breasts, by an arch catachresis, are *lugubria*; and while *lugubris* is never, in prose, appropriate to parts of the body but is often applied to mourning apparel (*cultus, vestis*), we recall that after so much beating of breasts Ariadne's body is probably by now as black, or blue-black, as a Roman suit of mourning. Her athletic body (*animus dat vires*) is sadly changed in the final line of the poem, reduced to a pile of importunate bones. And what of her fabled yellow curls? *Hos tibi—qui superant—ostendo maesta capillos*: there's scarcely a hair left. It is tempting to imagine Ariadne without her crown, the crown exalted to the skies as a mark of Dionysus' love, the crown she now requires as much as Julius Caesar required his (according to Suetonius) to conceal his unfashionable baldness. Or to imagine her as Propertius did, whose Corinna, he says, charms him not merely by her beauty but *quantum quod posito formose saltat Iaccho / egit ut euhantes dux Ariadna choros* (rather because she dances beautifully when the wine is offered, like Ariadne, when she led the Maenad dances, 2.3.17–18).

Propertius' picture is far less charming when contaminated by Ovid's, for we must now envision *dux Ariadna* orgiastically tossing an almost entirely depilated head. If Dionysus is attracted to *this*, he is either more charitable than one might have anticipated, or his tastes more aberrant still. If, as Hesiod thought, "blonde Ariadne" was an appropriate consort for "golden-haired Dionysos," in Ovid's *Heroides* 10 *Ogygius deus* meets his unpalatable match.

Rather than examine the development of the heroine's persona (as I have done elsewhere), I shall isolate those passages in *Heroides* 10 which depend upon the comic hybridization of generic proprieties of the sort sketched in the discussion of Ariadne's hair. Let us begin by looking closely at the way in which Ovid elaborates Ariadne's discovery that she has been abandoned by Theseus. Ariadne begins the account of her morning's rude awakening languidly, with a periphrasis whose lyrical and elegiac delicacy swiftly degenerates into a crude realism:

> Tempus erat, vitrea quo primum terra pruina
> spargitur et tectae fronde queruntur aves.
> incertum vigilans a somno languida movi
> Thesea prensuras semisupina manus—
> nullus erat! referoque manus iterumque retempto,
> perque torum moveo bracchia—nullus erat! (7–12)

> It was that time when the earth is first sprinkled
> with crystal frost and the birds complain, hidden in the leaves.

Half-waking, languid from sleep, I turned
 on my side, and my hands felt for Theseus.
Not there! I draw back my hands, and then again
 I move my arms all over the bed—not there!

These lines seem, at first, almost too patently conventional. In Augustan elegy, mythological allusion is often reductive in scope, eschewing reverberations of a specific literary text. Characters from myth or legend are invoked only to call to mind a posture, mood, or category. Ariadne on Dia is an instance of the *deserta* or *relicta*, conventionally *multa querens* or *flens* as in Ovid's brief reference to her in *Metamorphoses—desertae et multa querenti / amplexus et opem Liber tulit* (When she was abandoned and greatly lamenting, Liber brought her his help and his embraces, 8.171–72)—or in Tibullus' mention, *Gnosia, Theseae quondam periuria linguae / flevisti ignoto sola relicta mari* (Woman of Cnossos, you once cried out to an unknown sea—abandoned, alone—the treachery of Theseus' words, 3.6.39–40). But when Augustan writers allude to her posture and mood before her discovery of Theseus' treachery, she is conventionally *languida: Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina / languida desertis Gnosia litoribus* (As the woman of Cnossos, when Theseus' ship departed, lay faint on the deserted shore, Prop. 1.3.1–2).

Catullus had assembled the whole collage of later motifs: the *relicta* and *deserta, querens* and *flens*; the *cedens carina*; the *deserta litora* and *ignotum mare*. In his poem, each pathetic moment is a static gesture, each isolated from the next and exploited less for its content than its mood. But not even Catullus, who enlarges the picture of Ariadne, develops Ariadne's transition from *languida* to *flens* and *multa querens*. Ovid, however, subjects that transition to close and comic scrutiny. The conventional *languida a somno* is elaborated prosaically: *incertum vigilans*. Ariadne, in an effort at pictorial verisimilitude, is *semi-supina*. Her hands reach for Theseus with a sleepy familiarity too domestic for romance. *Nullus erat* is the flat and faintly comic language of ordinary speech. It seems definitive. But it isn't enough for Ariadne. Half-blind with sleep, she gropes around on the bed once again (*refero manus*) and then again (*iterumque retempto*) and yet again, enlarging the gesture (*perque torum moveo bracchia*). But once more, *nullus erat*. The scene, with its structurally elegant but lexically otiose *variatio*, takes on the garish theatricality of a Mack Sennet silent movie sequence. It has none of the poignance of the Vergilian futile embrace, none of the effect of the Catullan triad *toto pectore, toto animo, tota mente*. But it establishes pretensions to poignance and effect. The delicate elegiac setting of the periphrasis might indeed have poised a subtle and ironic counterweight to Ariadne's discovery, for the birds too are *tectae* and *queruntur*. But what follows the periphrasis upsets the balance—it is too strong, too graphic, too literal, and too funny. Ariadne's frantic sleepy groping is a travesty of the pathetic gesture.

Catullus' Ariadne does not break artistic silence or dispel the impression of passionate immobility until Catullus has first recounted the entire story of Theseus' adventures on Crete, a story told with sympathy for Ariadne's perspective, but with the narrator's voice. Only then, when the effect of Theseus' betrayal, injustice, and insensitivity has strained the poetic tension to the appropriate point, does Catullus allow Ariadne to deliver her curse, or to move:

ac tum praeruptos tristem conscendere montes
unde aciem in pelagi vastos protenderet aestus,
tum tremuli salis adversas procurrere in undas
mollia nudatae tollentem tegmina surae,
atque haec extremis maestam dixisse querellis,
frigidulos udo singultus ore cientem. (Catull. 64.126–31)

And now, grieving, she would climb the steep mountains
from which she might strain her sight over the huge tumult of the
 sea,
and now she would run out against the waves of the trembling
 salt-sea,
lifting the soft skirt above her bare calves,
and in sorrow she spoke these things in her last laments,
summoning the chill sobs, while her face was wet with tears.

Neither Ariadne's climbing the mountain nor her venture into the waves is designed to promote an impression of athletic or hysterical vigor. In the first instance of action (126–27), in contrast to the *pelagi vastos aestus* is her vulnerability. She does not, one notices, run up, down, or around the mountain top. In the second instance of action, the dominant effect is once again her vulnerability, as well as the delicate beauty of her gesture, as she lifts her *mollia tegmina* above the wave. Needless to say, she does not cavort along the shoreline. In both cases the action (*conscendere, procurrere*) is not emphasized per se, but is designed to give allusive concreteness to her state of mind and to the uselessness and futility of any action. She has no recourse. The scene is undeniably picturesque, but picturesque by way of sug-

gestion. And when Ariadne does speak after long silence, she delivers a curse fraught with prophetic import, a curse invoking the Eumenides with full tragic grandeur, a curse validated by Jupiter's grandiose nod.

Heroides 10 is quite another, and quite a comic, story. The Catullan contrast between Ariadne's static pose and inner turmoil is entirely dispelled. Ovid creates a *satura* of generic motifs in uneasy alliance: the pastoral responsiveness of nature, the rhetorical *descriptiuncula loci*, the Hellenistic bed complaint, the fashionably profuse detail of romantic portraiture. Within this extravagant texture, Ariadne rarely stops running. She does, however, pause to explain why she can't stop: the first time (in what seems an arch allusion to her violation of Catullan decorum) excusing, as it were, her adrenalin supply (*adscendo—vires animus dabat*, 27); and the second time explaining (perhaps to Propertius) why she simply cannot play the part of *languida Gnosia*, however *semianimis* and *frigidior glacie* she may feel, when confronted with the sight of Theseus' retreating sails (*nec languere diu patitur dolor; excitor illo, / excitor et summa Thesea voce voco*, 33–34). Underlining her gymnastic and operatic hysteria is, of course, the repetition of *excitor* and the shrill paronomasia of *voce voco*.

When in Catullus 64 Ariadne awakens on the deserted shore of Dia, she knows instantly that Theseus had deserted her while she slept, for she sees his ship in the distance. But as Catullus acutely remarks, belief is not a matter of mere perception. It involves the whole emotional life. So for a moment Ariadne cannot credit her vision:

> namque fluentisono prospectans litore Diae
> Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tuetur
> indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores,
> necdum etiam sese quae visit visere credit,
> utpote fallaci quae tum primum excita somno
> desertam in sola miseram se cernat harena. (Catull. 64.52–57)

> For there, looking out from the wave-sounding shore of Dia,
> Ariadne sees Theseus leaving with his swift fleet,
> Ariadne, bearing uncontrollable madness in her heart—
> and she cannot believe what she is seeing, and no wonder,
> since only now first awakened from treacherous sleep
> she sees herself in her pain abandoned on the empty shore.

Ovid, however, sacrifices the psychological import of the scene for the pictorial. In *Heroides* 10 Ariadne also exhibits a delayed belief in Theseus' departure, but in this case the delay is concretely motivated:

Ariadne fails to see Theseus' ship under sail. Hence she runs back and forth along the shoreline clamoring for him:

> Luna fuit; specto, siquid nisi litora cernam.
> quod videant oculi, nil nisi litus habent.
> nunc huc, nunc illuc, et utroque sine ordine, curro;
> alta puellares tardat harena pedes.
> interea toto clamanti litore "Theseu!"
> reddebant nomen concava saxa tuum,
> et quotiens ego te, totiens locus ipse vocabat.
> ipse locus miserae ferre volebat opem. (17–24)

> There was a moon. I look to see if I can see anything but the shore.
> The shore was all there was that my eyes could see.
> I run, now here, now there, and everywhere in disorder:
> the deep sands check my girlish feet.
> Meanwhile, as I cried "Theseus" over the whole shore,
> the hollow cliffs would send me back your name.
> And as often as I called out to you, the place itself would call back.
> The very place wanted to help me in my pain.

The repetition of *siquid nisi litora, nil nisi litus* is graceless and flat. Ariadne's is a Plautine incredulity. Once again Ariadne describes her body as though it did not belong to her (*oculi, pedes*), and once again Ovid underscores his comic effect by having her attempt at pathos backfire. For Ariadne runs *huc et illuc sine ordine*, but not without some clumsiness. There is, of course, nothing disturbing in the locution "the deep sands checked her girlish feet." But the rare adjective *puellaris* would be somewhat mannered if used by a poet-narrator and is doubly so when used by the heroine to describe herself. "The deep sands checked *my* girlish feet" is both foolish and affected. Ariadne's invocation of the pastoral pathetic fallacy is equally foolish. She has first specified that the rocks resound only in echo, and their echoing should, we expect, underscore the desolation of the site rather than score a rhetorical point. But Ovid playfully underlines what is arbitrary in Ariadne's claim for nature's sympathy by repeating *locus ipse*, unlike an echo, backwards in the next line. Thus the language of the scene, its repetitions and arbitrary detail, cuts across the pathos of the situation. Compared to Catullus' Ariadne, Ovid's energetic heroine, stumbling and shouting through the moonlit surf to the cacophonous

accompaniment of the echoing landscape, has all the emotional complexity of the *concava saxa* whose pity she claims to have earned. *Quamque lapis sedes, tam lapis ipsa fui.*

Failing to find Theseus on the shore, Ariadne climbs a precipitous mountain (*animus dabat vires*). The top holds only some scarce prosaic scrub, *rari vertices*, whose presence, by its irrelevance, heightens the irrelevance of the whole *descriptiuncula*. Yet Ariadne's description (25–26), which begins *mons fuit*, rather clumsily echoing the abbreviated *luna fuit* of the preceding sequence, is despite the scrub fashionably picturesque, however gratuitous its detail. For the sheer verge of the cliff has been romantically gnawed by the encroaching waves. When from that vantage Ariadne sees Theseus' *cedentem carinam* hastened by the winds, she no longer finds nature sympathetic, but exclaims, *nam ventis quoque sum crudelibus usa* (29). Wilkinson rightly judges the parenthesis disturbing:

> The story of Ariadne, told against a romantic background of shore and cliffs and trees, is one of the best things in the whole collection. . . . There is one touch here that jars, to my feeling; the fine conception of inanimate nature sympathizing with Ariadne's plight is blurred by the rather trite parenthesis about the winds being heartless as her lover.[15]

The "touch that jars" is, I think, amusing and intentional. The conventional elegiac conceit of the winds which hasten the departing lover (a conceit found nowhere in greater profusion than in Ovid's *Heroides*) exerts a deliberate tension against the earlier pastoral conceit. And if by its banality it does not sufficiently challenge the romantic mood, Ariadne's subsequent cry to Theseus does: *"quo fugis?" exclamo; "scelerate revertere Theseu! / flecte ratem! numerum non habet illa suum!"* (35–36). No amount of editorial hedging mitigates the fact that after cursing Theseus like a proper Plautine shrew, Ariadne says, "Turn your ship! She is missing her full crew!" Ariadne's diction is distinctly inappropriate and nothing short of comic. However, it is not artlessly amusing. It has a rather subtle Ovidian point.

When she fails to be heard, Ariadne indulges in another paronomastic frenzy even more extreme than the last: *Haec ego; quod voci deerat, plangore replebam; / verbera cum verbis mixta fuere meis* (37–38). She cries aloud and beats her breasts, mixing *verbera cum verbis*, thereby becoming the most improbable—and surely inaudible—tim-

[15] L. P. Wilkinson, *Ovid Recalled* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 376.

pani section in the entire orchestra of the Ovidian corpus. She beats her breasts not only because she grieves but in order (*mirabile dictu*) to be heard! When that too has failed, she hoists her skirts on the nearest tree, making of her veils white makeshift sails in the wind: *candidaque imposui longae velamina virgae / scilicet oblitos admonitura mei* (41–42). Ovid's intention is coy but lucid. Since his heroine is a comic travesty of her Catullan prototype, she diverges from her model throughout, but in one particular respect her divergence is especially crucial. Because she seems not really to care for Theseus himself (especially in comparison with Catullus' heroine), because her love is too superficial to summon *ex imo pectore* its obverse, the thirst for vengeance, Ovid nowhere in this poem mentions the motif which unifies and deepens the Catullan digression: *sed quali solam me mente reliquit, / tali mente, deae, funestet seque suosque* (But, goddesses, let Theseus destroy himself and his own house through that same spirit [of forgetfulness] with which he abandoned me, 64.200–1). Theseus, *immemor* of Ariadne, will because of her curse be similarly forgetful of his father's injunction that, returning he order his crew to raise white sails as a symbol of his safe return:

> sic funesta domus ingressus tecta paterna
> morte ferox Theseus, qualem Minoidi luctum
> obtulerat mente immemori, talem ipse recepit. (Catull. 64.246–48)

> Thus fierce Theseus, as he entered the chambers of a home in mourning
> for his father's death, himself received such sorrow
> as he by his forgetful mind had caused for the daughter of Minos.

Ariadne's *candida velamina*, designed (like the *candida vela* in Catullus) to warn those who are *immemor, oblitos mei*, are a displaced and disguised allusion to the Catullan action, a comic parody of the instrument of tragic vengeance in Catullus 64. Thus Ariadne's remark that Theseus' ship really doesn't have *numerum suum* is only too appropriate. In Ovid's poem Ariadne, nautical to the end of her ingenuity, is the only sailor to raise the *candida vela*.

Ovid's divergence from Catullus 64 is accomplished, for the most part, not through alteration but through exaggeration, through picturesque description *ad absurdum*, and through rhetorical amplification *ad stultitiam*. Ovid's Ariadne does only three things which do not appear in Catullus: she writes a letter; she attaches her clothing to a branch as a signal to the departing Theseus; and she visits repeatedly

and energetically, and addresses with equal energy, the bed upon which Theseus had left her sleeping. The first divergence, the letter, is an obvious requirement of Ovid's genre, though Ovid goes to great lengths, as I discussed above, to establish rather than suppress the artificiality of the poem's occasion. The second is, as I have argued, not only an amusing diversion but a comic transplant of the motif of the *candida vela*. It alludes to the theme of tragic reprisal which unifies Catullus' digression, a theme which does not appear in Ovid's poem. The third instance of Ovid's divergence is, similarly, a veiled acknowledgment of an important and unifying Catullan device, the device of ecphrasis which makes Catullus' digression possible. In Catullus 64 Ariadne exists only as a figure woven *mira arte* into the tapestry enfolding the *geniale pulvinar* of Peleus and Thetis. But if in Catullus Ariadne comes to life as a figure on a bedspread, in *Heroides* 10 the bed comes to life, is personified, is addressed, is poetically endowed with power (*redde duos*) as well as character and motivation (*perfide lectule*). Once again, this time by the introduction of the "bed complaint," Ovid, comically and *mira arte*, unravels the allusive and suggestive fabric of Catullus' woven artifice. Moreover, Ariadne's address to her bed occurs in a context which, as I shall show, challenges the convention itself, reducing to foolish absurdity its already slender viability:

saepe torum repeto, qui nos acceperat ambos,
  sed non acceptos exhibiturus erat,
et tua, quae possum pro te, vestigia tango
  strataque quae membris intepuere tuis.
incumbo, lacrimisque toro manante profusis,
  "Pressimus," exclamo, "te duo—redde duos!
venimus huc ambo; cur non discedimus ambo?
  perfide, pars nostri, lectule, maior ubi est?" (51–58)

Often I return to the bed; it once had received us both
  but never was to receive the two of us again,
and I touch, instead of you, the traces you left
  and the covers to which your body had given its warmth.
Lying down, I drench the bed in copious tears, and I cry
  "Both of us touched you. Give us both back again.
We both came here together. Why don't we leave together?
  Where, faithless bed, is the better part of myself?"

We are by now all too familiar with the setting of Ariadne's complaint. No detail of the picturesque terrain has escaped our heroine's

eye. We know the moonlit shoreline down to the very texture of the sand which retards her *puellares pedes*. We have heard the resonant caves; we have seen the mountain, the scrub and rocks on its peak, the waves eroding its side. Prepared as we are, then, by Ariadne's desolation, we can only marvel when we discover that Ovid means to remind us that Theseus has, as E. W. Leach remarks, "left his bedroom furniture behind."[16] It is certain that the pictorial tradition, however diverse and logically incompatible its scenic effects may sometimes have been, never placed *languida Gnosia* on a domestic seaside divan. And when Ariadne not only addresses the bed but goes so far as to quote herself doing so, and when she quotes herself in direct, rather than mercifully indirect, discourse, our tolerance for the convention is strained past the breaking point. Yet Ovid imports the sentimental *topos* of the bed complaint into his exposed and barren landscape with the smug intrepidity of Samuel Butler who, in his *Hudibras*, transforms Homer's rosy-fingered dawn into a crustacean in a kettle: "and like a lobster boiled the morn / From black to red began to turn."

The image of the deserted conjugal bed, as well as the convention of the lover's address to the bed, has a venerable history in classical poetry. A brief rehearsal of relevant loci will illuminate Ovid's parody of the convention. The image, later to be transformed into the bawdy *vestigia amantis* and Latin erotic elegy, first appears, I believe, in the chorus' sympathetic evocation of Menelaus' grief for the stolen Helen in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*: ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι / ἰὼ λέχος καὶ στίβοι φιλάνορες (410–11). The pathetic potential of the address to the bed was first fully exploited in Euripides' *Alcestis* in the account given by a servant of Alcestis' preparation for death:

κἄπειτα θάλαμον εἰσπεσοῦσα καὶ λέχος
ἐνταῦθα δὴ 'δάκρυσε καὶ λέγει τάδε·
ὦ λέκτρον, ἔνθα παρθένει' ἔλυσ' ἐγὼ
κορεύματ' ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὗ θνήσκω πέρι,
χαῖρ'· οὐ δγάρ ἐχθαίρω σ'· ἀπώλεσας δέ με
μόνην· προδοῦναι γάρ σ' ὀκνοῦσα καὶ πόσιν
θνήσκω. σὲ δ' ἄλλη τις γυνὴ κεκτήσεται,
σώφρων μὲν οὐκ ἂν μᾶλλον, εὐτυχὴς δ' ἴσως.
κυνεῖ δὲ προσπίτνουσα, πᾶν δὲ δέμνιον
ὀφθαλμοτέγκτῳ δεύεται πλημμυρίδι.
ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλῶν δακρύων εἶχεν κόρον,
στείχει προνωπὴς ἐκπεσοῦσα δεμνίων,

[16] See Leach, "Study in Sources," pp. 418–19.

καὶ πολλὰ θαλάμων ἐξιοῦσ᾽ ἐπεστράφη
κἄρριψεν αὑτὴν αὖθις εἰς κοίτην πάλιν. (*Alc.* 175–88)

But then she went into her own room; and she threw herself on the bed, and wept a long time. "Dear bed," she cried, "here I first gave myself to him; and now I die for him. Good-by, my marriage-bed! I do not hate you; but you have been my death, you alone, since I refused to fail in a wife's duty. And now another wife will possess my place here. She may be happier: more true she could not be!" My mistress knelt beside the bed and kissed it, her eyes streaming, till the coverlet was wet with tears. At last, when she could not weep any more, she sent out, stumbling helplessly; but again and again after going out she went back and buried her face in the bed.[17]

The bed, symbol of conjugal secrecy and fidelity, becomes in both examples a tangible evocation of lost intimacy and betrayed expectations. But the device had latent comic and frivolous possibilities as well, as does any address to an inanimate object. In the amatory epigrams of the Greek anthology, the bed complaint is used not only with nostalgic pathos but with cunning wit, as, for example, in Philodemus' notorious epigram. But here the address to the bed occasions an arch *praeteritio*:

τὸν σιγῶντα, Φιλαινί, συνίστορα τῶν ἀλαλήτων
 λύχνον ἐλαιηρῆς ἐκμεθύσασα δρόσου
ἔξιθι· μαρτυρίην γὰρ Ἔρως μόνος οὐκ ἐφίλησεν
 ἔμπνουν· καὶ πηκτὴν κλεῖε, Φιλαινί, θύρην.
καὶ σύ, φίλη Ξανθώ, με· σὺ δ᾽, ὦ φιλεράστρια κοίτη,
 ἤδη τῆς Παφίης ἴσθι τὰ λειπόμενα. (*Anth. Pal.* 5.4)

Philaenis, with olive-oil make drunk the lamp, that silent confidant of things not to be spoken of, and then leave, for love alone loves no living witness. And close the door tight. And you, my dear Xantho—but you, my lusty bed, learn now the rest of the Paphian's secrets.

Philodemus' bed address includes the familiar resources of the convention: the privacy of the closed chamber, the bed's hypothesized knowledge of shared secrecy and intimacy. Yet the prosaic diction and

[17] Euripides, *Alcestis*, trans. Philip Velacott (London: Penguin, 1968), p. 127.

familiar speech of the epigram dispel the sentimental effect latent in the convention.

Ovid, sensitive to the inherent comic potential of the motif, uses the nostalgic bed visit only once in the *Heroides* outside of *Heroides* 10—in Sappho's epistle:

cognovi pressas noti mihi caespitis herbas;
 de nostro curvum pondere gramen erat.
incubui tetigique locum, qua parte fuisti;
 grata prius lacrimas conbibit herba meas. (15.147–50)

I recognized the grass, pressed down, of the familiar hollow
 our bodies made in the blades on the green remembered bank.
I lay down and touched the place, the part in which you lay.
 The earth that once delighted me was thirsty and drank in my tears.

The stunning tactile effect of the image derives from the delicacy with which it is transferred from its usual setting of the *thalamos* to the silvan context of Sappho's tryst with Phaon. The decorum of Ovid's treatment, the suitability of the image to its context and setting, is not only neglected but avoided in *Heroides* 10.

The humor of Ariadne's bed visit arises from its tension against the pictorial context. And Ariadne's bed complaint is itself a travesty, a contamination of tragic content and mundane prosaic speech. Like Agamemnon's bed, hers not only still shows Theseus' imprint but is, improbably, still warm despite the lapse of time and the chill of the air. (No reader of Ovid would quibble with *torpuere*, of course, had Ariadne herself not made such a point of prolix precision.) Like Alcestis, Ariadne returns again and again to the bed (*saepe torum repeto*). And like Alcestis, she floods the bed with her tears (*lacrimis toro manante profusis*). But there the similarity ends. Ariadne's diction is neither tragically ironic nor pathetically evocative, but comically otiose and commonplace. The irony that the bed *acceperat ambos sed non acceptos exhibiturus erat* is undercut by the prosaic legality of *exhibiturus*, and further undercut by Ariadne's stark and inelegant repetition; *"pressimus," exclamo, "te duo—redde duos! / venimus huc ambo; cur non discedimus ambo?"* ("Both of us touched you. Give back both once again. We both came here together. Why don't we leave together?" 56–57). The venom of *perfide lectule* is swallowed in *par nostri maior ubi est*, a sentimental distinction scarcely in character for the literal Ariadne—a distinction, moreover, falsely humble and an-

ticlimactically precise, and no more elevated in Latin than the mixed English diction of "Where's, o treacherous bed, my better half?" Thus the artificiality of the convention is exposed by the arbitrariness of its usage. Ariadne does not address a bed in a closed chamber but a rumpled sleeping bag on an exposed and windy shore. Moreover, the graphically described context damages the bed's symbolic potential. In so realistic a setting, it cannot be merely allusive shorthand for sexual intimacy; it must become, indecorously, an all too real object. The diction of the address itself is disturbingly pedantic and prosaic, in vivid contrast to the expectations generated by the convention.

S. F. Bonner notices the oddity of Ariadne's bed complaint and reacts with complacent indignation: "A hardpressed declaimer, seeking anxiously *aliquid novi dicere*, could hardly have descended to greater depths of weak sentimentality."[18] It is no accident that Bonner has responded to the patent artificiality of Ovid's use of the *topos*. We are as surprised to discover Ariadne talking to her bed on the shore of Dia as we are to discover that Mrs. Malaprop expects to find allegories on the shore of the Nile. But must we react, as Bonner does and as other readers sometimes have, with educated insensitivity, "connoisseured," as Blake says, "out of our senses"? Ariadne's language is not necessarily the poet's own, and we have, moreover, sufficient evidence that Ovid could employ the convention delicately and without "weak sentimentality" when he chose to do so. We might more profitably, and more naturally, react to Ariadne's pedantic-pathetic bed lament precisely as we do to Sheridan's reptilian mistake, savoring its pretensions and its folly.

Ariadne's bed visit and bed complaint are, for yet another reason, a crucial instrument of the Ovidian parody which throughout the poem transforms suggestive gesture into literal prolixity. They announce the structural transition between the exposition of Ariadne's situation and the presentation of Ariadne's argument and lament. Ovid's poem, except for this transitional bed complaint, echoes precisely the two parts of Catullus 64. But Ariadne's address to Theseus' deserted couch seems to be more than mere transition. Despite the best efforts of editors to separate it by punctuation from the lament which follows it, there is, it would seem, no clear division at all. *Quid faciam? Quo feror?* (59) continues the interrogative of the preceding line, *ubi est?* and in no way appears to mark a new rhetorical motive. Thus if because of the pictorial bias and elaborately specific description of the

[18] S. F. Bonner, *Roman Declamation in the Late Republic and Early Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), p. 137.

beginning of the poem we exact from Ariadne's complaint the same setting we have come to expect, we are now required to imagine our heroine delivering the argument which occupies the remainder of the poem, while reclining on the rumpled tear-drenched *torum* on the beach of Dia. By the same token, Ariadne's lament will not seem to have been originally directed to Theseus at all, but rather it will be an extended quotation of a speech delivered in Theseus' absence to the impression of his body on his bed, a quotation twice removed from reality by virtue of its being included in a letter whose delivery is utterly impossible.[19] We are far indeed from the symbolic gesture, guarded by careful obliquity, of Catullus' Ariadne. Ovid has turned Catullus' ecphrasis inside-out and upside-down. His Ariadne is, quite literally, a deserted maiden sitting on a bedspread on a bed while addressing the bedspread of that selfsame bed.

The content of Ariadne's lament in Catullus 64 and *Heroides* 10 is, it would seem, identical but for the curse. Both heroines assert that they have been betrayed, that they are alone on an island that offers no exit, that even were they able to leave they could not return to the country and family they have betrayed, and that they fear not only isolation but a cruel death. But the similarity of their complaints ends with the similarity of content. By a clever sifting and subordination of elements, Ovid eliminates the ethical bias of Ariadne's complaint, emphasizes her physical rather than spiritual isolation, and turns what was a moral accusation into a gothic nightmare, a gallery of picturesque horrors. The parody of Ariadne's symbolic gesture becomes, in the second half of the poem, a parody of her point of view.[20] It is a parody perpetuated by the same means employed earlier: the chaotic confusion of objective and subjective description; the contamination and uneasy alliance of elegiac, rhetorical, and pictorial conventions; the reduction, through obsessive amplification, of intentionally vague and referential literary formulae to morbid excrescences of a literal, if vivid, imagination. And by subordinating Ariadne's ethos to her circumstances, Ovid's parody dissects the Catullan pathos, exposing the integuments of latent sentimentality.

In Catullus' poem, Ariadne first breaks her prolonged silence with a moral evaluation of Theseus' character, citing his perfidy, his forgetfulness, his cruelty, his lack of *clementia* and pity. She enrolls him in the annals of treacherous love. He is *all* men, an exemplum of male exploitativeness:

[19] Leach, "Study in Sources," p. 419, calls the lament "a magnificent improvement upon Catullus' quotation of words spoken by an imaginative figure in a tapestry."
[20] Leach, "Study in Sources," p. 428.

nunc iam nulla viro iuranti femina credat,
nulla viri speret sermones esse fideles;
quis dum aliquid cupiens animus praegestit apisci,
nil metuunt iurare, nihil promittere parcunt:
sed simul ac cupidae mentis satiata libido est,
dicta nihil metuere, nihil periuria curant. (Catull. 64.143–48)

Now let no woman ever believe a man's oath,
let no woman hope a man's words will be true.
They, as long as their eager mind anxiously desires to win something,
do not scruple to swear anything, do not omit to promise anything.
But when once the lust of the avid mind is satisfied,
they have no fear for their words, no care for their lies.

To strengthen her argument, she concludes her indictment by contrasting her own dangerous kindness with Theseus' cruel reparation:

certo ego te in medio versantem turbine leti
eripui, et potius germanum amittere crevi,
quam tibi fallaci supremo in tempore dessem.
pro quo dilaceranda feris dabor alitibusque
praeda, neque iniacta tumulabor mortua terra.
(Catull. 64.149–53)

Yes, I saved you when you were turning in the very whirlwind
of death, and I believed it was better to lose a brother
than to fail you, faithless one, in your hour of final need.
For this I shall be given to the birds and wild beasts, prey to be
torn apart, nor shall I find burial in my death, or have the earth cast upon me.

She then proceeds from her general moral accusation to the contemplation of her own present situation, ending with an account of her utter resourcelessness and vulnerability. She cannot go home, she cannot hope for her father's help, she cannot console herself with Theseus' love, and even if any of those things were available to her

nec patet egressus pelagi cingentibus undis.
nulla fugae ratio; nulla spes: omnia muta,
omnia sunt deserta, ostentant omnia letum. (Catull. 64.185–87)

No way of escape is open: the waves of the sea surround me;
no means of flight; no hope—everything is silent,
everything is deserted, everything threatens death.

It is important to note that Ariadne does not dwell on her situation for its own sake. Her circumstances provide motivation for her solemn curse. Because Theseus will not rescue her, and because she cannot rescue herself, she summons the Eumenides, exacting from them the tragic *dike* that restores balance to the lives of men.

Ovid's Ariadne begins, significantly, where Catullus' heroine ends—not with a meditation on Theseus' character but with a description of the desolation and inaccessibility of Dia: *Quid faciam? quo sola ferar? vacat insula cultu. / non hominum video, non ego facta boum* (What can I do? Where can I go? I am alone on an untilled island. I see no works of men, no traces of cattle, 59–60). Beginning, as Catullus did, with what is perhaps an imitation of Palaestra's speech in the *Rudens*, Ovid ends the couplet with what must be a parody of the epic solemnity of Catullus' poem. *Non hominum video, non ego facta buom* is, as Palmer notes, a direct translation of *Odyssey* 10.98 Striving for the epic grandeur of her Catullan prototype but having none of the interior resources for an epic curse, Ariadne imitates instead one of the flattest lines in Homer's *Odyssey*. But if Homer nods in his sleep, Ovid nods wakefully, for Ariadne's *facta boum* sets the tone for the remainder of her complaint. Moreover, the line is surely, as E. W. Leach has noticed, a "witty reminder of Ariadne's Cretan background."

When Ariadne does, like her model, lament the loss of love, she laments not Theseus but Minos and the Minotaur—betraying, as Hellenistic heroines often do but as Catullus' heroine does not, an exaggerated regard for unpalatable familial ties. Catullus' Ariadne mentions her brother only once. But Ovid's heroine mentions him several times, dwelling on his deformity with characteristic Ovidian relish and excessive sisterly specificity. Moreover, she enlarges on Theseus' murder of the Minotaur with an eye for disconcerting realistic detail, saying, "You might have bludgeoned [*mactasses*] me too, with your *clava*, instead of leaving me here to die." When Ariadne does begin her meditation on Theseus' perfidy, it is not Theseus but she herself who becomes an exemplum—an exemplum not of a moral condition but (in a curious reversal of Catullus' poem) of the physical dangers which might beset any *puella relicta: nunc ego non tantum, quae sum passura, recordor, / sed quaecumque potest ulla relicta pati* (Now, however, my mind must not only endure thoughts of what I shall

doubtless suffer, but of all things that any woman can possibly suffer when abandoned, 79–80).

Any editorial suspicion which would sever these important lines from the poem arises, in part, from an insufficient regard for Ovid's parody. For Catullus' Ariadne, it is Theseus who is an exemplum, a paradigm of universal masculine infidelity and exploitativeness, an archetypal *proditor*. By the same token, Ariadne, tacitly in Catullus and universally in Augustan poetry, is an exemplum of the *puella relicta*, an exemplum by virtue of a law generally acknowledged but specifically described, for example, by Pascal:

> The great and lowly have the same misfortunes, the same sorrows, the same passions, but while the former are on the perimeter of the wheel, the latter are near the hub and are therefore less disturbed by the same movements.[21]

Ovid's Ariadne is too narcissistic to be upstaged. She makes herself the paradigm. Yet she is curiously discontent on the perimeter. She is uneasy as an abstraction. She strives to transcend her universality (while claiming it!) by becoming a concrete particular but, improbably, one which occupies the entire hub (79–80). Unlike some of Ovid's other heroines, Ariadne does not accomplish her banal ambition by a rehearsal of commonplace emotions and drives. She does so by assembling *ex hypothesei* and in characteristic proliferation a collage of picturesque death sequences which deflect our attention entirely from her psychological condition, from eros and ethos alike, a collage which has no precedent in extant Latin or Greek literature.

Ariadne's nightmarish rehearsal of the terrors latent in her surroundings (75–98) is a rhetorical amplification of only three words in Catullus' poem: *omnia ostentant letum*. It is rhetorical both in the loosely pejorative sense of the word as well as in its more narrowly descriptive sense. Her description continues that vein of specious pictorial elaboration established earlier in the poem, a vein of elaboration whose prolixity and excess destroy the Catullan equation of internal and external desolation, emotion, and situation. The elaboration is, moreover, technically rhetorical, governed quite clearly by the practices and abuses of declamation described by Seneca Elder:

> Vivimus, et non sum, Theseu, tua—si modo vivit
> femina periuri fraude sepulta viri.

[21] Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (New York: Everyman, 1960), p. 258.

> me quoque, qua fratrem, mactasses, inprobe, clava;
> esset, quam dederas, morte soluta fides.
> nunc ego non tantum, quae sum passura, recordor,
> sed quaecumque potest ulla relicta pati.
> occurrunt animo pereundi mille figurae,
> morsque minus poenae quam mora mortis habet.
> iam iam venturos aut hac aut suspicor illac,
> qui lanient avido viscera dente, lupos.
> quis scit an et fulvos tellus alat ista leones?
> forsitan et saevas tigridas insula habet.
> et freta dicuntur magnas expellere phocas!
> quis vetat et gladios per latus ire meum?
>
> Tantum ne religer dura captiva catena,
> neve traham serva grandia pensa manu,
> cui pater est Minos, cui mater filia Phoebi,
> quodque magis memini, quae tibi pacta fui!
> si mare, si terras porrectaque litora vidi,
> multa mihi terrae, multa minantur aquae.
> caelum restabat—timeo simulacra deorum!
> destituor rapidis praeda cibusque feris;
> sive colunt habitantque viri, diffidimus illis—
> externos didici laesa timere viros. (75–98)

> We both live, Theseus, and I am not yours—if a woman can be said to live
> when she had been buried alive by the guile of a dishonest man.
> Dissembler, you ought to have bludgeoned me with the same club that killed my brother;
> then the promise you made me would have been cancelled by my death.
> Now, however, my mind must not only endure thoughts of what I shall doubtless suffer,
> but of all the possible things any woman can suffer when abandoned—
> A thousand forms of death invade my mind:
> death is less an ordeal than death's postponement.
> Again and again, first from one direction, then from another, I think I see them
> about to rush me: the wolves who will shred my entrails with ravening tooth.

And who knows: it may be that this place breeds tawny lions
and there is a chance that the island harbors savage tigers too.
And word has it that the oceans cast enormous seals up on shore!
And what is to prevent some pirate from running me through with his sword?

But it matters only that I need not be tied, as a slave, in those dreadful chains
or made to spin enormous quotas of wool (such work ruins the hands),
I, whose father is Minos, whose mother is the daughter of Apollo,
I—here memory lingers most lovingly—who was promised in marriage to you.
When I look out on the sea, on the land and the long expanse of the shore,
many, on land and on sea, are the perils that menace me.
There remains the sky above—phantom visions of the gods appall me!
Forsaken, for savage and wild beasts I promise prey, and food.
And if men do live here and work this land, I stand in dread of them:
I have learned, from my own abuse, to be afraid of foreigners.

Ariadne begins her description proper with a local *sententia* whose alliteration and tripping dactylic rhythm heighten the tension between the playful artificiality of the formulation and the solemnity of the content: *morsque minus poenae quam mora mortis habet* (82). Like most of those *sententiae* quoted by Seneca, this one exposes an intellectual paradox in the case at hand which the speaker then develops at some length, and it acts as a glittering transition to the ensuing substantiation. What follows is also lifted, it would seem, from the practices of the declaimers. Ariadne's vivid catalogue of beasts—wolves, lions, tigers, and even the notoriously peaceful seals expelled by the sea—resembles the strictures of one Fabianus (a pupil of Fuscus, the master of *sententiae*) delivered in a *suasoria* addressed to the question "whether Alexander should launch a fleet upon the sea."[22] The rest of Ariadne's conjecture proceeds by a logical, if somewhat haphazardly

[22] Seneca, *Suasoria* 1.4. The passage is examined for its relevance to *Heroides* 10 extensively, and with insight, by Ms. Leach, "Study in Sources," p. 347. She concludes: "In all Latin poetry there is no precedent in such a passage as this, a mere wideeyed listing of dangerous creatures, but it would seem highly possible that the descriptive *topoi* of declamation may well have supplied a model."

associative, development. She thinks of the dangers from land, from the sea, and from men, men who may perhaps not kill her at all but lead her into slavery. She pauses to protest, in an aside, the incongruity of such a future with her illustrious parentage and her conjugal aspirations. She then concludes by tallying the list before her (93–94). Realizing at that point that her list has not been sufficiently inclusive, she backtracks and adds the sky (95). Having satisfied the abacus of her imagination, she abruptly summarizes her whole argument in the pentameter (96), making the conventional *praeda* sufficiently graphic for her taste by adding the unsavory *cibus*.[23] Finally, she deals with a contingency saved for the last for its ironic application to Theseus (97–98). Ironically, it is she, on Dia, who is *externa*, not her hypothetical abductor. Like the exercises of the rhetors at their worst, Ariadne's catalogue is a transparent verbal fantasy. It is a diversion from her argument, its content too unreal to heighten the pathos of her lament. It is a clear divergence from Catullus and, for sheer irrelevance and gratuitous brilliance, surpasses any other description in the *Heroides*.[24]

The whole passage has occasioned no little editorial disturbance. Lines 79 and 80 have been rejected. "The distich," says Palmer, "which is entirely otiose, seems spurious."[25] One cannot help but agree that the lines heighten the suspicious artificiality of the passage. Catullus' Ariadne suffers the loss of Theseus, and that is sufficient. Why should Ovid's Ariadne suffer so gothic a proliferation of hypothetical dangers, dangers any *relicta* might endure? Again, Ariadne says she has been told that the sea casts seals upon the shore. Palmer rejoins, "Who told her so? To save the writer's credit we must suppose Ariadne to speak generally of all seas." Yet Ariadne is speaking not of all seas but of this region, *ista tellus*. And whose *gladios* can she possibly mean? Palmer says, "of pirates, probably." And what are the ambiguous

[23] The doubling of *praeda* in Catullus 64 is characteristic of Ariadne's voice throughout *Heroides* 10.

[24] Howard Jacobson, *Ovid's Heroides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 217, is not amused. His summary evaluation of this whole section is as follows: "In the first place, fear of pirates is more than irrational when, as she herself has declared, no humans are evident on land or sea (60–62). But, even granting the possibility of such an arrival, to complain about it when her major problem is the lack of any human being (as she herself says) is little short of ludicrous. To go from this to a refusal to be slave to these adventurers is ridiculous and only compounded by her proud account of her lineage, which means little enough on an uninhabited island and, moreover, with its mention of father, mother, and fiancé, calls to mind the less than noble betrayal by Ariadne of her parents and her abandonment by Theseus. The only defense here is that this is an intentional joke, for which I see little motivation."

[25] Palmer, *Heroides*, p. 138.

simulacra? Palmer rejects van Lennep's explanation that it is Bacchus' *thiasus* hovering in the air. For had Ovid wanted to suggest that, "the idea would have been more clearly expressed." But Palmer's argument here works against his own conjecture that the *gladios* belongs "to pirates probably." And why does Ariadne say *caelum restabat*? Does she propose, as Burmann suggests, to escape through the sky *pennis adsumptis*?[26] Or is 95 spurious, as its tenuous connection might suggest? Palmer's answer to the difficulties of the passage is radical surgery: "The pentameter of 96 however has no proper connexion with 95 and the only way out of the difficulties which beset the passage is to eject 93–96 or, better, 89–96."[27] But Palmer's surgery is too extreme, an unhealthy operation in which the reader would lose nothing less than the comedy of the passage, and in this poem comedy is nothing if not all.

What is most disturbing, and most amusing, about the passage is its distance from Catullus. We are far from the emotion of loss evoked so beautifully in Catullus. Nor does Ovid substitute for loss the emotion of fear. The lurid substance of Ariadne's imaginings is undercut by the patent rhetorical artifice of her design. The result is a dissonant alliance of unbridled imaginative license and flat, mechanical computation. One imagines Ariadne ingenuously *trying* to suffer, counting off horrors on the fingers of her hand. The final effect is not, as E. W. Leach suggests, a travesty of the hybridization of poetry and rhetoric fashionable in the schools of declamation. Rather, rhetoric and pictorial license are both enlisted as instruments of Ovid's caricature. Ovid transfers Catullus' Alexandrian interest in the portrayal of an emotion (Catullus' Ariadne is not a completely defined woman—she is the emotion she suffers) to his larger and, in this instance, comic interest in the portrayal of a sensibility. Ovid has introduced Ariadne into a concretely visualized world, not a world of symbolic import. Thus the terrors of this literal world, real and imagined, will proliferate according to her sensibility, thereby illuminating it.

The comedy of the passage arises from its designed implausibility of emotion and of event, both deriving from Ariadne's fraudulent sensibility. Not only does Ariadne indulge in the artificialities pointed out by the commentators, but she prefaces her catalogue of dangers by saying; *Vivimus, et non sum, Theseu, tua—si modo vivit / femina periuri fraude sepulta viri* (We both live, and I am not yours—if a woman can be said to live when she has been buried alive by the guile of a dishonest man, 75–76). The remainder of the passage challenges

[26] Palmer, *Heroides*, p. 379.

[27] Palmer, *Heroides*, p. 378.

Ariadne's own elegiac hyperbole: no woman already *sepulta*, dead by grieving, could hypothesize so carefully her own literal dying. Ariadne's struggle for pathetic effect dissipates what might have been the real pathos of her situation. But the larger comedy of the passages derives from the implausibility of event. While Catullus' fictive Ariadne mediates on fictive truths, the fantasy of Ovid's Ariadne is pure fiction. Nothing Ariadne imagines will come true. She will, in fact, be saved by the very *simulacra deorum* that infect her fright. And the terrors she envisions will be instantly annulled upon the arrival of the god.

Catullus does not dwell on the arrival of Bacchus *incensus tuo amore*. To do so would lessen the strength of the impression of Ariadne's emotions, giving her the facile mutability of a rejected lover on the rebound. But because Ovid's Ariadne so clearly laments not the loss of Theseus but her own projected loss of life, our attention is inevitably called to the familiar sequel to the legend, a sequel which cannot but diminish the pathetic force of Ariadne's superfluous complaint. Ovid, unlike Catullus, makes it patently clear that his Ariadne will find in Bacchus neither justification nor transcendental reward but, quite simply, a one-way ticket off scary Dia. Nothing in the poem suggests that her transition will be difficult or meaningful or suggestive of the regenerative power of human suffering. Her adjustment will be of little moment, scarcely surpassing a turbulent exchange of leading men.

Ovid accomplishes the transition from pathos to parody by the structural rearrangement of the substance of Ariadne's complaint and by the unprecedented interpolation of her death fantasy. Both devices make it amusingly clear that Ariadne, not *te Theseu*, is what occupies Ariadne's *tota mente, toto pectore, toto animo*. When Ariadne does turn her mind to Theseus' cruelty and his betrayal, Ovid sustains the note of parody by his special treatment of two established *topoi*, "words in the wind" and the "hard-hearted lover." Both *topoi* are comically overdeveloped (even by Ovidian standards) and hence reinforce the impression of Ariadne's precious persona, her hyperbolic naiveté.

When Ariadne, in Catullus 64, refers to her fatal preference of Theseus to the Minotaur, *germanum meum*, she follows her description of Theseus' unworthy reparation of her kindnessess with a conventional rhetorical question to a cruel lover, ascribing his inhumanity to an inhuman birth:

quaenam te genuit sola sub rupe leaena,
quod mare conceptum spumantibus exspuit undis,

quae Syrtis, quae Scylla rapax, quae vasta Carybdis,
talia qui reddis pro dulcia praemia vita? (Catull. 64.154–57)

What lioness gave you birth beneath a lonely rock?
What sea conceived you and expelled you from its foaming waves?
What Syrtis, what ravenous Scylla, what huge Charybdis bore you,
you who for sweet life make repayment such as this?

The *topos* is as old as Homer (*Il.* 16.33ff.). It is used in Aeschylus (*Eum.* 193) and in Euripides (*Med.* 1342–43, 1358–59; *Bacch.* 988). Vergil found it sufficiently epic and tragic to permit Dido to use it in her confrontation with Aeneas (*Aen.* 4.366–67). Ovid imitated it in *Met.* 8.120–21. Its potential for vivid ferocity is most fully developed in Catullus 64.

When Ovid's Ariadne uses the motif, the imputation of bestial birth which conventionally and naturally accompanies the insult is delayed some fifty lines. Instead, Ariadne modifies the *topos* in a startling direction:

Viveret Androgeos utinam! nec facta luisses
inpia funeribus, Cecropi terra, tuis;
nec tua mactasset nodoso stipite, Theseu,
ardua parte virum dextera, parte bovem;
nec tibi, quae reditus monstrarent, fila dedissem,
fila per adductas saepe recepta manus.
non equidem miror, si stat victoria tecum,
strataque Cretaeam belua planxit humum.
non poterant figi praecordia ferrea cornu;
ut te non tegeres, pectore tutus eras.
illic tu silices, illic adamanta tulisti,
illic qui silices, Thesea, vincat, habes. (99–110)

Would that Androgeos were alive! And would that you, O country of Cecrops,
had not expiated your impiety with your own dead children!
And would that your right hand, Theseus, had not with knotty log
murdered that man who was a man above, and in the part below, a bull.

I wish I had never given you the thread to guide you in your return,
the thread repeatedly hoisted and hauled through your hands.
Yet it would scarcely have surprised me if victory, even then, were yours
and the monster, flattened, flailed the soil of Crete:
your heart could not possibly have been punctured by his horn: it is iron,
and even had you not protected your breast, you would not have been hurt;
you wear flint there, you wear steel there, Theseus,
you have something there to transcend the temper of rock.

Reducing the conventional image *a nimis corde fero* to its literal common denominator, she argues that Theseus did not require her good offices after all. His own *ferrea praecordia* furnish a sufficient Minotaur-proof vest. The decorum of the *topos* of the *durus amator*, a *topos* appropriate to this context, does not survive the infection of Ariadne's methodical materiality. Characteristically, she overworks the image. It collapses from the weight of its own literal, and visual, specificity. Wilkinson finds her hyperbole rightly astonishing, rightly amusing: "We can only laugh outright when Ariadne says she is not surprised that the horns of the Minotaur (whom she insists on calling her brother) could not pierce Theseus' breast, his heart is so hard."[28] But this is no vagrant insight for Ariadne. She convinces herself, it seems, with her own literal metaphor, for at the end of the poem, in what surely is a reference to this passage, she says, *Si non ego causa salutis, / non tamen est, cur sis tu mihi causa necis*" (Even if I am not the cause of your survival, still there is no reason why you should cause my death, 143–44). This couplet continues Ovid's witty transformation of the fictive truth of Catullus into the unadulterated fictions of *Heroides* 10. The mock logic of Ariadne's couplet underscores its silliness, as well as Ariadne's sensibility, too contriving for pathos, too self-regarding for pity. For Ariadne is nothing to Theseus but his *causa salutis*. He is surely not her *causa necis*. But *salus* and *nex* are forever the *causa* and nexus for Ariadne's complaint.

The second convention, the winds, is similarly burdened with an excess and comic exactitude. Winds are hostile to human speech. Drifting, they carry off words, diminish them, and then extinguish

[28] Wilkinson, *Ovid Recalled*, p. 98.

them until what had seemed certitude, *fides*, becomes an *inane nomen*. The *topos* of the winds, which personified becomes emblematic of nature's indifference to the designs and promises of men, spans almost every genre of Greek poetry from epic (*Od.* 8.408) to tragedy (Eur. *Tro.* 419) to pastoral epyllion (Theoc. *Id.* 22. 168, 29.35) to Alexandrine saga (Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.1334). The device was considered stock in Latin epyllion. Vergil invests it with tragic futility in *Aeneid* 9: *sed aurae / omnia discerpunt et nubibus inrita donant* (312–13). Catullus uses the *topos* in 64 twice. In the first instance, the narrator employs it: *immemor at iuvenis fugiens pellit vada remis / irrita ventosae linguens promissa procellae* (58–59). The silver line (59), its epic solemnity enhanced by the alliteration of the last two words, casts a pall of tragic inevitability on Theseus' departure. Later, Ariadne herself echoes the *topos*, elaborating upon it:

> at non haec quondam blanda promissa dedisti
> voce mihi, non haec miserae sperare iubebas,
> sed conubia laeta, sed optatos hymenaeos,
> quae cuncta aerii discerpunt irrita venti. (Catull. 64.139–42)

> Such were not the promises you gave me with your winning voice.
> You did not compel me to hope for this in my sorrow
> but for happy marriage, for a desired wedding—
> all of which the winds of the air scatter now in vain.

In this instance the repetition of *non haec*, challenged by the doublet *sed, sed*, is resolved by another weighty silver line. The whole passage contrives the effect of a powerful diminuendo. The *non haec* amplification requires two lines, the *sed, sed* only one, and the final summary image imbues the impression of betrayed hope with an incontrovertible finality.

The *topos* occurs with notorious regularity in the *Heroides*. It is used only by heroines who have seen their lovers depart by sea, primarily, it would seem, because the situation offers Ovid the opportunity for the playful *ventus, vela* alliteration. The image is not usually expanded beyond a single pungent line. Phyllis, more than any other of Ovid's heroines an adept at logical play and verbal effects, gives the image its greatest terseness and abbreviation, incorporating the effect of zeugma: *ventis et verba et vela dedisti* (you consigned both your words and your sails to the winds, *Her.* 2.26). Dido finds it an occasion for a double alliteration, while keeping the zeugmatic effect:

atque idem venti vela fidemque ferunt? (And shall the same winds carry away both your craft and your constancy? *Her.* 7.10). In both cases the image is developed so economically that its effect is purely rhetorical. That is, it provides the speaker's argument with a conclusion whose honed acuity exposes the irony of her situation and, behind it, the rhetorical bias of her epistolary effort. But no attempt is made to elaborate the image, to imbue it with Catullan or Vergilian grandeur or pathos, or to stamp it with the impress of the heroine's sensibility.

In the context of the tradition, and within the narrower context of the *Heroides* themselves, Ariadne's variation on the *topos* stands apart. It attempts epic expansiveness and sublimity. It takes flight, hovers awkwardly, then collapses in comic superfluity:

> Crudeles somni, quid me tenuistis inertem?
> aut semel aeterna nocte premenda fui.
> vos quoque crudeles, venti, nimiumque parati
> flaminaque in lacrimas officiosa meas.
> dextera crudelis, quae me fratremque necavit,
> et data poscenti, nomen inane, fides!
> in me iurarunt somnus ventusque fidesque;
> prodita sum causis una puella tribus! (111–18)

> Unkind sleep! Why did you hold me in that leaden languor?
> If I had to sleep, better to have slept forever in eternal night.
> And winds, you too were cruel, and all too perfectly punctual as well.
> And you breezes, so obliging, so accommodating to my tears.
> That right hand was cruel, killing me as well as my brother,
> and cruel the promise, hollow words, with which you answered my demand.
> Sleep, and wind, and trust, all sworn to treachery against me;
> one fraction of a girl, I was betrayed by a faction of three.

A close examination of this passage will reveal the consistency of method of Ovid's parody in this poem. The passage echoes those lines of Catullus quoted above. The context in which the convention is used is the same, and to some extent the organization of Ovid's passage echoes the formality of Catullus'. The structure of Ariadne's triple apostrophe is classically regular, except in this case the rhetorical effect is crescendo, not diminuendo—accretion followed by a pointed reiteration of the argument. The variation in the hexameter openings is elegant: *crudeles somni, vos quoque crudelis venti, dextera crudelis.*

But once again Ovid employs a conventional instrument of pathos, invests it with all the elements of structural amplification which would ordinarily contribute to a poignant effect, allows the diction and content to distort and undermine the potential poeticism, and lets the innate unreality of the convention surpass the boundaries of tacit restraint and collapse, punctured by its own specificity.

Ariadne first apostrophizes her slumbers with quaint hyperbole: her sleep was cruel because it didn't go far enough. If she could not have been awakened in time, she should have been allowed to sleep *aeterna nocte*. The winds too are cruel, imbued, however, not with the classical indifference one might expect but with *parati* and *officiosa*, petit bourgeois bureaucratic malice. Theseus' hand, the *dextera* given as a pledge of *fides*, is also cruel, for it is the hand *quae me fratremque necavit*. Whatever hope of pathos had existed in the passage is extinguished in this relative clause. Ariadne, who only two lines earlier wished she were dead, is suddenly as dead as the Minotaur whom her gratuitous sisterly sympathy dignifies with the jarring title *fratrem*. Her locution obscures, comically, the unspoken distinction she intends between *lebendigtot* and *mausetot*. And *datae dexterae*, the conventional metaphor for the pledge of faith, becomes suddenly literal, for Ariadne is speaking of Theseus' *real* hand. Because she speaks literally, when the convention requires a metaphor we are asked to agree that Theseus, surprisingly, was *crudelis* in his heroic annihilation of the Minotaur, a novel point of view, even for Ariadne. Both *necavit* and *dextera*, then, become at once literal and metaphorical in the same line, and the resulting confusion of perspective is chaotic and comic.

After the daring poeticisms of the first three couplets, the final hexameter is an anticlimactic and surprisingly flat tally of the conspirators (117–18). The simple structure of the hexameter conceals what amounts to a complicated zeugmatic figure, for *fides* and *somni* are abstractions at a different level and *venti* are disturbingly material, yet each of the three *iurarunt in me*. Suspension of disbelief cannot easily take us where Ariadne so unhesitatingly expects us to follow. The hexameter is too suspiciously compact for credibility. And the final pentameter effectively undercuts the whole passage. The naive certitude of the formulation satisfies Ariadne's mathematical bent, but its simplicity of arrangement is belied by its own implicit extremism. Each of Ariadne's *causae*, poetic abstractions and *nomina inania* amplified only shortly before with such largesse, has its poetic license quite suddenly revoked. All answer, punctiliously, a less than prosaic roll call: *prodita sum causis una puella tribus*. It is almost universally the case in Ovid's

poetry that when in an ostensibly lyric passage he begins counting, the resulting tone is less than ideally lyric, and usually funny. This line is no exception. The flat formulation with its only superficial precision exposes the vacuity of Ariadne's claim. She has carried the conventional *topos* too far. Ariadne's *somni* are too patently innocent. *Fides* is the real culprit, and yet she makes no distinction between them. The accumulation of the three *causae* thus exposes what is arbitrary in the entire device. Her locution achieves, by fiat, a merely rhetorical success. It is a verbal fantasy, genuine only in its genuine irrelevance, a prolix irrelevance characteristic of Ariadne's sensibility throughout the poem.

In sum, the humor of Ariadne's complaint derives from two sources. The first is literary parody, the imitation of conventions of poetic expression—conventions whose palpable design is in Catullus obscured by emotion, but which in Ovid become exposed as mere artifice, arbitrary excrescences of Ariadne's morbid imaginings. What distinguishes Ovid's re-creation of Ariadne from a failed sublimity, what exempts his creation from the suspicion of involuntary failure, is the regularity of Ovid's parody. Ariadne's hyperbolic inconsistencies defeat each other but are consistent with her voice throughout the poem. Thus they produce the impression of a convincing caricature of a whole and genuine sensibility.

The second source of the humor of Ariadne's complaint is the strategic reordering of her values. In Catullus' poem she grieves only for the loss of love and a significant illusion. Bacchus will be a consolation and poetic justification, not a material substitute for Theseus. His arrival will in no way diminish or challenge the impression of her genuine emotion. In Ovid's poem, however, all the central articles of Ariadne's complaint will be canceled by the arrival of the god, *Ogygio deo*. Hence, the more she enlarges upon the prospect of her own desitution, complaining that she is in fact already dead, the more her complaint seems artificial, superficial, temporary, and comically irrelevant. The death imagery in the poem proliferates far beyond the expectations of mere imitation, and by its frequency as well as its excessively graphic overelaboration, produces a mockery of its model.

In a final example, Ariadne lists the disadvantages of an unhallowed death:

> Ergo ego nec lacrimas matris moritura videbo,
> nec, mea qui digitis lumina condat, erit?
> spiritus infelix peregrinas ibit in auras,

nec positos artus unguet amica manus?
ossa superstabunt volucres inhumata marinae?
haec sunt officiis digna sepulchra meis? (119–24)

Shall I then die, without the sight of my mother's tears,
and will there be no one whose hand will close my eyes?
Must my unfortunate spirit escape into alien air
with no kind touch to arrange and annoint my limbs?
Shall sea-birds perch aloft my unentombed bones?
Is the fitting reward for my kindness such burial as this?

Nothing irregular subtracts from the conventionality of the first two couplets, except perhaps for the reference to Pasiphae, whose role in literature is never a conventionally maternal one. But the third couplet, the alternative to decent burial, is, by ancient standards as well as modern, palpably grotesque. Birds will perch on Ariadne's bones, birds who, after gulping down her flesh, will be her living tombs. Palmer comments on the unattractiveness of the suggestion, one which has no precedent in Catullus, unless it be the *funera nec funera* of the Cecropian sacrifice. The artificiality of the image dispels the pathetic effect of the appeal, an appeal already challenged by our familiarity with the story's sequel. Ariadne's too ingenious poeticism casts suspicion upon her emotion. Yet hers is a designed ineptitude, for it creates a fault, a virtue of parody, which Longinus describes at length:

> τί ποτ᾽ οὖν τὸ μειρακιῶδές ἐστιν; ἢ δῆλον ὡς σχολαστικὴ νόησις, ὑπὸ περιεργασίας λήγουσα εἰς ψυχρότητα; ὀλισθαίνουσι δ᾽ εἰς τοῦτο τὸ γένος ὀρεγόμενοι μὲν τοῦ περιττοῦ καὶ πεποιημένου καὶ μάλιστα τοῦ ἡδέος, ἐξοκέλλοντες δὲ εἰς τὸ ῥωπικὸν καὶ κακόζηλον. (*Subl.* 3.4)

> What, then, is "puerility"? Is it not a pedantic thought which from being over-worked ends in frigidity? One slips into this kind of fault by grasping after the unusual, after the elaborately wrought, and especially after charm, and so runs aground on trumpery and affection.

Sublimity and the expression of strong feeling are indeed dissipated. Mere artifice remains. Yet the result is what Longinus saw as the result of the similar failure of Homer's *Odyssey*: a comedy of character (*Subl.* 9.15).

When, at the end of this poem, Ariadne stretches out arms at last weary of beating her breasts and shows Theseus in a last pathetic appeal, her *capillos—qui superant*, her final image of herself[29]—as a pile of indecently exposed bones—is the natural summary of the parody of the poem. She has become *funera nec funera*, an Ariadne interred alive, a living hostage in the maze of parody, a vivacious specter of Catullus' *maesta Minois*.

In *Heroides* 10 Ariadne throughout strives for sentimental effect and for pictorial verisimilitude, uneasy bedfellows even at the best of times. She assumes, literally and rhetorically, a multitude of postures, most of which are gauche because of her fatal and indefatigable penchant for elaboration, amplification, enumeration, and accretion, all of which inadequately supply the deficiencies of Catullan feeling. I know of no more telling analogue for the cumulative effect of Ariadne's poem than Huckleberry Finn's ecphrasis on the unfinished magnum opus (*sui generis* and *privati iuris* indeed) of the fourteen-year-old Emmeline Grangerford, dead but not forgotten:

> These was all nice pictures, I reckon, but I didn't seem to take to them, because if ever I was down a little they always give me the fantods. Everybody was sorry she died, because she had laid out a lot more of these pictures to do, and a body could see by what she had done what they had lost. But I reckoned that with her disposition she was having a better time in the graveyard. She was at work on what they said was her greatest picture when she took sick, and every day and every night it was her prayer to be allowed to live till she got it done, but she never got the chance. It was a picture of a young woman in a long white gown standing on the rail of a bridge all ready to jump off, with her hair all down her back, and looking up to the moon, with the tears running down her face, and she had two arms folded across her breast, and two arms stretched out in front, and two more reaching up toward the moon—and the idea was to see which pair would look best, and then scratch out all of the other arms; but, as I was saying, she died before she ever got her mind made up, and now they kept this picture over the head of the bed in her room, and every time her birthday come they hung flowers on it. Other times it was hid with a little curtain. The young

[29] Jacobson, *Ovid's Heroides*, p. 218, objects to Ovid's "grotesque, if clever, variation on the heart of stone and steel motif" and then comments on Ariadne's depleted curls: "Not much better is *qui superant* (147); we are evidently to assume that Ariadne has pulled out most of her hair!"

woman in the picture had a kind of a nice sweet face, but there was so many arms it made her look too spidery, seemed to me.[30]

It would almost seem that Ovid and Mark Twain share the same convention: disappointed love; a beautiful maiden; the suggestion of imminent death; the promontory; water; the loosened hair; the moon; the tears; the pathetic, imploring gesture; even the *candida velamina.* But more important and far stronger than the superficial similarities of content are the similarities of parodic technique. Each artist creates his parody of the stock devices of bad pathos by exposing what is arbitrary in them, by taking the reader into the artist's workshop, as it were, and showing the convention as mere artifice. For Ovid and Mark Twain alike, parody is accomplished by what the Russian formalists would call "the creative deformation of a tradition," "the device of laying bare the device." And in both cases the deformation of the tradition ultimately becomes an image of explicit and literal disfigurement: the "spidery" arms of Emmeline Grangerford's heroine, and Ariadne's painfully diminished curls.

Did Ovid set out, we might ask, to parody Catullus? Or was he like a bat, exquisitely sensitive yet strangely blind? The poem goes too unerringly, too consistently, and too consciously to its mark to seem merely the brilliant shellac of a roccoco sensibility, indiscriminately obscuring the natural luster of the Catullan original. But why then should Ovid care to disfigure Catullus?[31] Did he merely indulge an inexplicable animus, that aggression that some psychologists see as the origin of wit as well as of parody's "parasitic" art? Must we content ourselves with the enigmatic smile of Prescott when Perry asked him what he thought of Petronius' *Satyricon*? Or with Prescott's laconic reply that that masterpiece of parody was a "sport," the biological term for "a sudden, inexplicable deviation, a mutation"?[32] Perhaps. But perhaps not. For Ovid, I think, Catullus' Ariadne stood at the limits of pathos, a pathos jealously protected by all the suggestive and

[30] Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* (New York: Signet, 1969), p. 105.

[31] Jacobson, *Ovid's Heroides*, p. 215–16, speculates on this issue, remarking on the numerous passages which "make clear how strongly Ovid did feel the Catullan presence and how deeply he felt the need to rebel against it or go beyond it, even when expansion or redirection contributed nothing, nay might even be detrimental to his poem." He concludes (p. 220) tentatively that "the erratic quality of the poem, sparks of brilliance side by side with overblown rhetoric and obvious artifice, is to some degree *the product of Ovid's compulsion to prove superior to Catullus.* Whether there is more to it than this I am not sure" (my emphasis).

[32] Ben Perry, *The Ancient Romance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 268.

allusive resources of Catullus' art. Ovid needed merely to push Ariadne beyond those limits—toppling her into selfish bathos—to expose the limitations, unreality, and latent sentimentality, not of Catullus' poetry or his view of love and experience, but of what had become, in Ovid's own time, an outworn tradition, a narcotic.

For those who would perhaps object that Ovid's parody levels its guns at a strengthless antagonist, it is important to note that unlike a good deal of classical literature, the stock devices of decadent sentimental portraiture (as well as those of decadent rhetorical display) had in Mark Twain's time weathered the storms of almost two millennia. And to those who would assert that for an audience educated to taste and discrimination, Ovid's victory, or Twain's for that matter, is somehow irrelevant (*parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus*), one can only reiterate the truism that for such an audience sentimentality was and is a compelling and dangerous indulgence. We need only observe the remains of the poetry of Maecenas, the man who perhaps most appreciated what was best in Augustan poetry, to be confronted with that fact. As Oscar Wilde wrote *in carcere et vinculo*:

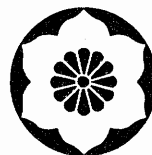
> Remember that the sentimentalist is always a cynic at heart. Indeed sentimentality is merely the bankholiday of cynicism. And delightful as cynicism is from its intellectual side, now that it has left the tub for the club, it never can be more than the perfect philosophy for a man who has no soul. It has its social value; and to an artist all modes of expression are interesting, but in itself it is a poor affair, for to the true cynic nothing is ever revealed.[33]

Seen in this light, Ovid's wit is not only of the highest order, but of the highest importance. *Non fumum ex fulgore dat, sed ex fumo dat lucem* (Not smoke where once was flame, but from smoke: Light).

[33] Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis (Epistola: in Carcere et Vinculis)* (Suffolk: Penguin, 1973), p. 200.

OVID'S TOYSHOP OF THE HEART:

Epistulae Heroidum



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