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STUDIES IN
COLLUTHUS' *ABDUCTION OF HELEN*

by

COSETTA MICHELA CADAU

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

University of Dublin
Trinity College
2013

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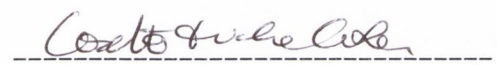

Cosetta Michela Cadau

SUMMARY

The only extant work of Colluthus, an Egyptian epic poet from the late fifth century AD, is an epyllion in 394 hexameters entitled *The Abduction of Helen*. His poem has been interpreted as a product of late antique rhetorical affectation and stagnation, lacking in vigour and originality. The objective of this dissertation is to situate Colluthus within his cultural, literary and philosophical context and to provide a new appraisal of his work employing current interpretative perspectives. The dissertation also identifies new models (notably Claudian) and assesses the influence of contemporary education, genres and art forms on the poem.

Chapter 1 ("Colluthus in His Context") sketches the socio-historical context in which Colluthus was active, the Egyptian Thebaid under the Emperor Anastasius. It discusses contemporary genres and models, the Imperial approach to culture, and the features that make the period between late fifth and early sixth century an era of transition. In addition, the chapter surveys the so-called epyllion tradition from the Hellenistic period to late antiquity and explores key aspects of late antique poetry such as its classicizing aims and pragmatic and performative dimensions.

Chapter 2 ("Colluthus and His Models") analyses the models and genres with which Colluthus engages in a number of sections of his poem, namely the proem and the characterizations of Paris (bucolic poetry), Eris (epic) and Aphrodite (invective). It is argued that Colluthus not merely aims to fulfill the expectations of a late fifth century AD audience but also constantly surprises with unexpected twists and moves. A close reading of the poem shows that Colluthus has a predilection for genres that were highly popular in his time (such as invective), and that his poetry is influenced by rhetorical exercises.

Chapter 3 ("Colluthus' Visual Epyllion") engages with the poet's strong emphasis on visualisation. After a review of scholarship on visuality and ekphrasis, the visual aspects of the poem, including language and philosophical implications of the erotic gaze, are analysed through two case-studies, the descriptions of Paris' journey to

Sparta and of the meeting of Paris and Helen. In addition, the chapter explores the poem's visuality in light of contemporary reading and performance practices. It is argued that Colluthus' ekphrastic epyllion shows a remarkable affinity with late antique pantomime, which raises various questions, among them that of whether Colluthus' poem could itself have been presented in a stage setting.

Chapter 4 ("Colluthus' Polyphonic Epyllion") explores questions regarding voice and perspective (or focalisation). It argues that the use of narrative techniques such as audience addresses and direct speech breaks the fiction of the narration and they are employed by Colluthus with the twofold programmatic objective of revealing his craft and engaging with his audience in evaluations of his characters.

The Conclusion draws together the findings of the preceding chapters in an overall evaluation of the poem, drawing a picture of Colluthus as a poet of his time and rehabilitating the *Abduction of Helen* as a representative and significant product of the complex cultural world of the late fifth century AD. This opens up new questions for further research, such as the balance of Christian and pagan culture within Colluthus' text, and the role of irony in late antique epic.

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to Oran

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CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1. All editions of Colluthus used in this dissertation are listed in the bibliography. Livrea 1968a, Orsini 1972 and Mair 1928 have been systematically consulted. Quotations primarily follow Mair 1928 but alternative readings and conjectures from other sources are noted as appropriate.

2. All translations are my own except where otherwise stated.

3. Abbreviations for classical authors follow the conventions of *LSJ*, but some have been expanded (e.g. 'Aesch.' instead of 'A.', 'Ap. Rh.' instead of 'A.R.').

4. Abbreviations for journals follow the conventions of *L'Année philologique*.

5. Abbreviations for collections of texts and works of reference:

   LIMC H.C. Ackermann and J.R. Giseler (eds.), *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zürich 1981–2009).

   LSJ H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, rev. by H.S. Jones and R. Mackenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford ^{9}1996).

   PMG D.L. Page (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford 1962).

   RE A. Pauly and G. Wissowa (eds.), *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart 1894-1980).

INTRODUCTION

Non-specialists will find little to entice them to read the *Abduction of Helen*, an epyllion by the late fifth-century AD Egyptian poet Colluthus. The English translation in Mair's Loeb edition (1928), replacing the version of Sherburne (1651, sic), is by now outdated. The Italian edition of De Lorenzi (1943 and 1946) maintains some now untenable theories about the unoriginality of the proem, as argued by Livrea (1968ab and 1968) and later by Orsini in his sparsely annotated Budé edition (1972). More recently, Fernández Galiano published a more up-to-date translation in Spanish (1987), but without a commentary.

Livrea's edition offers the only full commentary on the poem to date,[1] but this is largely restricted to philological matters and makes no attempt to elucidate the poem's place in the literary tradition and its relationship with, for example, the novel, rhetoric and the output of other late antique hexameter poets. Orsini includes an introduction which highlights some of Colluthus' models, but makes no serious attempt to interpret the text as a whole or to link it to the cultural background of the late fifth century AD. A long debate[2] was spurred by the publication of Livrea's edition, in which Giangrande (1969) first read Colluthus' poem through the lens of irony.[3] Although Livrea (esp. 1991) dismantled some of Giangrande's re-evaluation of our poet as anachronistic, the general thrust of his interpretation has unquestionably led the way to a new reading of the *Abduction*.[4]

Studies of Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* were limited to a handful of articles until recently: scholars have been interested in Colluthus' meter (Minniti-Colonna 1979, Nardelli 1982), and in his re-elaboration of epic models (James 1969 and 1981, Giangrande 1975), but little effort has been made to contextualise the poem by looking at contemporary literature (the Christian tradition, panegyric, epic poetry,

---

1 Kotseleni 1990 follows Livrea and makes modest contributions to the discussion.

2 For a summary, see Magnelli 2008, 151; also Paschalis 2008, 136.

3 See Magnelli 2008, 166 and Paschalis 2008, 147.

4 Livrea 1991, 561-2 revisits the passages that Giangrande had reinterpreted in an allusive way and re-establishes his position, already set out in his edition of 1968, that Colluthus did not reach the poetic quality of Nonnus, whom he passively recycled. Giangrande responded again in 1974 and 1975a, but these papers add little to the discussion.

theatrical performances, ekphrasis and rhetorical works) or by considering the possible relevance of its cultural, religious and philosophical background.

In recent years, however, Colluthus has attracted more scholarly attention: Palmisciano (1995) worked on the role of persuasion within the epyllion, followed by Rocca (1995) and Williams (2001); Hollis (2006) and Ambühl (2010) contributed to an understanding of the criteria employed by the poet in choosing his sources and models; and Harries (2006) read Paris' role within the epyllion as symbolizing the end of the pastoral era. New models have begun to be identified, for instance for Colluthus' description of Aphrodite's hair (Matthews 1996 and Livrea 2000). In a 2008 fascicle of *Ramus* focusing on later Greek poetry, Magnelli, Paschalis and Prauscello made a significant contribution towards an understanding of the relationship between Colluthus' epyllion and other literary genres.

Against this background my dissertation aims to provide a series of studies of Colluthus' epyllion that situate his poem within its socio-historical and literary context, and that explain his engagement with contemporary and earlier literature and ideas. No previous attempt has been made to reconcile the Egyptian-Christian context of the poet with his work in Greek about classical and pagan topics. Until recent years Colluthus has been interpreted as a classicizing poet who wrote about pagan topics in late fifth-century Egypt. This reading is limited and superficial as it does not take into account that Colluthus composed in a heavily Christianised intellectual context, in which Neoplatonism also played a key role.

My objective is to contextualise Colluthus' work and to investigate whether it is possible to see late antique Egypt in his poem. Some of the relevant questions are whether he writes about topics and in modes that were current at the time, whether he shares his contemporaries' literary and artistic tastes and cultural preoccupations, whether he is familiar with the works of contemporary poets, whether he engages with them on a linguistic level, and how he interacts with his educated audience. The answers to these questions are not always straightforward, as we are dealing with a complex environment: many cultures and languages coexisted in the Thebaid at the time, and late poetry is by nature the complex product of centuries of literary tradition and canon formation and renegotiation. Fresh interpretations are found in the approaches to previous material, so as methodologies for my research I employ

intertextuality as well as analysis of narrative techniques, focusing especially on contemporary models.

The first step in contextualizing Colluthus' poem is to reconstruct the historical and cultural environment in which the poet was active, the Egyptian Thebaid under the Emperor Anastasius, with his contemporary fellow poets, some of whom held positions within the imperial court and composed literature on commission. This is the aim of my first chapter ("Colluthus in His Context"), in which I also consider the role played in late antiquity by rhetoric, performance and poetry and how these constituted the foundation of any individual's preparation to become a public speaker or intellectual. At the end of the chapter, I examine the features of the so-called epyllion tradition to assess Colluthus' place within it. This analysis shows that, while the *Abduction* conforms to the time-honoured conventions of short narrative poetry, it also embraces other elements and features that connect the poem closely to the literary models and manners of the time.

Models and genres that Colluthus employed in selected scenes, namely the proem and the characterizations of Paris, Eris and Aphrodite, are surveyed in the second chapter ("Colluthus and His Models"). Contemporary and previously unidentified models such as Christodorus, Musaeus and Claudian are assessed here, with particular focus on Neoplatonically inspired poems such as Claudian's *Gigantomachy* and the works of Christodorus that survive as Book 2 of the *Anthologia Palatina*. My argument is that Colluthus was not slavishly following in the footsteps of his predecessors and peers, but that he employed the tradition creatively to suit his own objectives, for example, to proclaim his poetics and to surprise the expectations of his late fifth-century AD audience. A close reading of selected passages reveals that Colluthus' poem reflects genres that were highly popular in his time (such as invective) and that rhetorical exercises such as *ethopoiiai* have also left a clear mark.

This raises interesting questions regarding the performative dimension of late antique epic in general and the *Abduction of Helen* in particular, which I discuss in my third chapter ("Colluthus' Visual Epyllion"). Here I focus on the visual impact of the poem, arguing that it is structured as a series of picturesque scenes. Proceeding from a survey of visuality in late antique literature to a philological analysis of visual terminology in Colluthus' epyllion, I argue that the *Abduction* reflects the hunger for

visuality which is typical of late antiquity, in the form of influences of the figurative arts, the ekphrastic tradition, public speaking and theatrical performances. In this chapter I also explore the possibility that these influences may suggest an alternative occasion for Colluthus' epyllion, in the context of pantomimic performances, the popularity of which under Anastasius is also assessed.

Chapter four ("Colluthus' Polyphonic Epyllion") surveys some of the narrative devices employed by Colluthus and attempts to explain why he presents his story as he does. I consider whether notable techniques employed by Colluthus occur in his models and, where they do, I compare their objectives. Addresses to the audience and other narrative devices break the fiction of the narration and disclose the mediation of Colluthus the narrator. I argue that this and other narrative features contribute to achieving the twofold objective of enhancing the theatricality of the epyllion and allowing the author to engage closely with his audience in evaluations of his characters.

The exploitation of traditional models and narrative techniques to suit (and thwart) the expectations of a late fifth-century AD audience, the obsession with visuality, the influence of other contemporary art forms such as ekphrasis and performance, the training received by scholars and public speakers are all elements that need to be considered if one is to fully understand the significance of the *Abduction of Helen* as a literary and cultural artefact in its historical context. In my conclusion, I examine the wider implications of these factors for late antique epic (for instance, the role of Latin models and of Neoplatonism), focusing especially on aspects which may provide further insight into Colluthus as a poet under Anastasius but which cannot be explored in full in this dissertation.

CHAPTER 1

COLLUTHUS IN HIS CONTEXT

Colluthus, as a poet of the late fifth century AD, fits in with the late antique literary context, and his poetry features the characteristics also shared by contemporary poets. Much attention has been devoted to date to the re-elaboration of epic tradition as a means to demonstrate his alleged lack of originality, but no attempt to contextualise has been made. This exercise leads to a better understanding of the literary taste of the time, and how models were employed to achieve originality not necessarily through content. In this chapter, I first review the available information about the poet's life, and then I explore the cultural and literary environment in which authors such as Colluthus operated, in order to understand the dynamic variety of his literary context. The cultural and literary life of late fifth-century Constantinople, which has Anastasius' court at his centre, offers a wide range of genres and trends which feature in some form in the *Abduction*. Reconstructing the cultural environment of the capital, where Colluthus may have been active, will help in situating his work within the network of contemporary poetry. Finally, I attempt to find Colluthus' place within the epyllion tradition.

1. Colluthus' Life

The information available on Colluthus is scarce. The *Suda* (κ1951) lists him as follows:

> Κόλουθος· Λυκοπολίτης, Θηβαῖος, ἐποποιός, γεγονὼς ἐπὶ τῶν χρόνων βασιλέως Ἀναστασίου. ἔγραψε Καλυδωνιακὰ ἐν βιβλίοις ἓξ καὶ ἐγκώμια δι' ἐπῶν καὶ Περσικά.
>
> Colluthus, from Lycopolis, in the Thebaid, epic poet, who flourished during the time of emperor Anastasius. He wrote *Calydoniaca* in six books, *encomia* in hexameters, and *Persica*

Another βίος of Colluthus, included in codex Ambrosianus Q. 5 (gr. 661), and the ὑπόθεσις included in other manuscripts, depend directly on the *Suda*. The spelling of

the poet's name has been subject to discussion.[1] The *Suda* and the Ambrosianus give it as Κόλουθος but other manuscripts[2] write Κολλούθος, which has generally been preferred by scholars[3] on the basis of papyri and *ostraka* and other arguments.[4]

Lycopolis, a semi-Hellenized city on the western coast of the Nile, in the Thebaid region of Egypt, was about 100 km north[5] of Panopolis (the hometown of Nonnus, Cyrus and Pampreius), and is today called Assiout or Asyut. Its location at a crossing-point for caravans through the Libyan Desert[6] made Lycopolis a wealthy town and it enjoyed some form of cultural reputation, since it is defined as λαμπροτάτη in a papyrus from 569 AD[7] and its inhabitants are called εὐλυκοπολῖται in a slightly later text.[8] It was also the hometown of Neoplatonic philosopher Plotinus (205-70 AD).

Colluthus reached his ἀκμή during Anastasius' reign, between 491 and 518. Orsini, De Lorenzi and Mair accept this meaning for the γεγονώς of the *Suda*.[9] If we accept that most poets between the fourth and the sixth century wrote their main works in their thirties,[10] we may tentatively place Colluthus' year of birth between circa 460 and 470. Since Anastasius' reign lasted 27 years, if we assume that Colluthus was alive for the full duration of the emperor's rule (if Colluthus was dead at the time the *Suda* was compiled, the compiler would presumably have recorded it), the *terminus post quem* should be around 460: if we go by this assumption, the poet would have been 31 in 491. An earlier year of birth seems less likely, based on the fact that, if we assume that Colluthus was much older than 31 at the beginning of Anastasius' reign, the *Suda* probably would not have referred to his ἀκμή.

None of the works by Colluthus mentioned in the *Suda* has survived. The topic of the *Calydoniaca* was the myth of Meleager and the Calydonian boar hunt. Livrea[11] suggested that there may be an indirect reference to this work at lines 47-8 of the

---

1 For a comprehensive summary, see Schneider 1866, 404.
2 Livrea 1968a, XI.
3 Unger 1841, XVIII; Bernhardy 1877[3], 401; Parthy 1864, 48.
4 For example, *Pap.* Ox. 2245.4; for further instances, see Livrea 1968a, XI n. 2.
5 Its geographical location is clarified by Ptolem. 4.5, 62-3, *Itin. Anton.* 157, Cusis *M.P.* 24, Lyco *M.P.* 36, Hierocl. *Synekd.* 731, Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Λυκόπολις *Tabula Peutingeriana* ed. Dejardins, Segm. 8 B.2; Λυκοπολίτης appears in Strab. 17.1.40, Plut. *De Isid.* 72, Clem. Alex. *Protr.* 34.7, *Suda s.v.* Πλωτῖνος.
6 Orsini 1972, V.
7 *Pap. Cair. Masp.* 67163.8 and 67309.6.
8 *Pap. Cair. Masp.* 67068.
9 Based on Rohde 1878, 163 and 219.
10 Some example, Pampreius, born in 440, wrote the Ἰσαυρικά about events of 476, between 476 and 484 (the date of his death), so in the period of time when he was 36 to 44; Olympiodorus of Thebes, born in 380, published his historical work in 440, when he was 40.
11 Livrea 1968a, XII n. 5.

Abduction of Helen, the model of which is *Il.* 9.568-81, where Meleager's mother shakes the ground invoking a punishment for her son from Hades and Persephone. Although we do not possess any information regarding the subject of Colluthus' *encomia,* we may presume they revolved around Anastasius, given that the emperor's military achievements were also the topic of the *Persica.* This work was probably centred on Anastasius' victory over the Persians in 506.[12]

The only work by Colluthus that has survived is the *Abduction of Helen* (Ἁρπαγὴ Ἑλένης),[13] not mentioned in the *Suda.* The question why the *Suda* does not mention the epyllion has led to a number of hypotheses over the centuries. Van Lennep, for example, long ago suggested that two poets named Colluthus existed.[14] Later, a secondary debate arose regarding whether the poet Colluthus was the same person as the fourth-century martyr Colluthus (ἅγιος μάρτυς Κόλλουθος) who is mentioned by Palladius.[15] De Lorenzi[16] suggested that the *Abduction of Helen* is merely a fragment of a much larger poem entitled *Antehomerica,* which the poet would have left uncompleted at the time of his death, and which was subsequently published by a scholar, prefaced with an apocryphal proem. This theory is dismantled by Livrea,[17] who ultimately embraces the dating of Weinberger,[18] according to whom the *Onomatologos,* one of the sources of the *Suda* and the work of Hesychius of Miletus (a contemporary of Colluthus), was published before the *Abduction of Helen.* This would imply that the *Abduction* must be dated after the *Calydoniaca,* the *Encomia* and the *Persica.*

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12 Cameron 1982, 236-7.

13 Some manuscripts have Ἁρπαγὴ τῆς Ἑλένης, but Livrea 1968a, XII n. 6 rejects this form as Colluthus in his poem never uses the article with proper names, with the only exception of 284 ὁ δὲ Δάρδανος ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν, which is justified by the model, Φ 189 ὁ δ' ἄρ' Αἰακὸς ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν.

14 Van Lennep 1747, XIX.

15 Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* p. 154.9 Butler.

16 De Lorenzi 1929, 39-40.

17 See Chapter 2.

18 Weinberger 1930, 1473-5; Livrea 1968a, XIII-XIV.

2. Literary Culture at the Time of Anastasius

Colluthus lived under Anastasius I, who reigned between 491 and 518.[19] This time saw a number of external conflicts[20] and reforms (see below), but also a vast and variegated literary production. I will focus here on some aspects of the historical background of the time which define the imperial approach towards cultural and literary life,[21] before discussing the literary panorama of the time.

Internally, social riots, which pitted the factions[22] of the Greens/Reds (representing the lower classes and Monophysites) against the Blues/Whites (rich orthodox landowners),[23] developed from festivals in which sport and theatrical performances such as mime and pantomime took place. They began in 491 and culminated in 501 during the Brytae festival: on this occasion the stage collapsed, and one of Anastasius' sons was among the 3,000 dead. At the time, mime, which was supported by Procopius and Choricius of Gaza, was tolerated, but pantomime was opposed by the Church. The measures taken to clean up the spectacles resulted in a ban on the gladiatorial fights (*venationes)* first in 499, and then on pantomime shows in 502. This last ban confined the factions (and the popular charioteer Porphyrius) to hippodromes, in the hope of containing the rioting element of their audience,[24] but disturbances continued until the Nika riot in 532.[25]

Many scholars consider Anastasius' time an era of transition,[26] mainly because the tension between Christianity and paganism came to a peak in the sixth century, and this emerged, among other aspects of social life, and this also emerged in the cultural and literary environment. Anastasius surrounded himself with educated men, and he was known as a promoter of literary endeavour at the Imperial court and its provinces.[27] John the Lydian (an administrator and writer on antiquarian topics, born in 490) recalls, as a pleasant memory, that his career went faster under Anastasius,

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19 He succeeded Zeno (474-491), and was succeeded by Justin (518-527) andJustinian (527-565). See Allen and Jeffreys 1996; Swain and Edwards 2004; Bagnall 1995 and 2007; Haas 1997; Nicks 2000; Haarer 2006.

20 The war against Sassanid Persia (502-506), the invasion of the Balkan provinces by Slavs and Bulgars, the African war and the Isaurian war (492-497), all of which are covered by Procopius' *Historiai*; Haarer 2006, 11-114.

21 Rapp 2005.

22 Liebeschuetz 1998; Greatrex and Watt 1999.

23 Haarer 2006, 224; Chauvot 1986, 166-71.

24 Haarer 2006, 223-9.

25 Greatrex and Watt 1999; Liebeschuetz 1998; Greatrex 1997; Cameron 1973, 239.

26 Allen and Jeffreys 1996.

27 Nicks 2000.

while he cannot say the same about his professional progress under Justinian; we can assume his comment to be genuine and particularly valuable, as he did not write an encomium for Justinian.

Priscian's and especially Procopius' panegyrics list the achievements of Anastasius in times of war and peace:[28] in particular, Procopius tells us of how he abolished the *chrysargyron*[29] in 498, of his financial reforms,[30] and of his many building projects.[31] Among the many men of letters at court, Turcius Rufus A. Asterius, consul in 494, was also a poet; Leontius, praetorian prefect in 510, was also a law professor and was later involved in the *Codex Iustinianus*; Sergius, prefect in 517, was also a lawyer, a writer, and a sophist; and finally Priscian, who was from Caesarea but was active in Constantinople, was also the author of the *Institutio de Arte Grammatica*, which became a popular Latin manual during the Middle Ages.[32]

Christodorus of Coptos' activity at the court offers some insight into the philosophical atmosphere at the imperial court: the poet's Neoplatonic position is manifested clearly in his *monobiblos* dedicated "to the pupils of the great Proclus",[33] composed probably around 485, year of the philosopher's death. But Christodorus was able to openly maintain his views also after he was hired by the emperor in 497, as he employs some Neoplatonic terminology from the orphic oracles also used by Nonnus in the ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippus (*AP* 2. 398),[34] a work commissioned by the emperor and composed around 503. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that Neoplatonism was, if not embraced and promoted, certainly accepted at Anastasius' court.[35]

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28 In 494 Anastasius reformed the coinage; in 498 the *collatio lustralis*, a tax on craftsmen, was abolished, while successful efforts were made to increase the efficiency of tax collection and reduce the rates of land taxation. At his death he left behind a surplus of 320,000 lbs. of gold; Haarer 2006, 7, 185-7 and 202-6.

29 The *chrysargyrion* was an unpopular tax, levied every four years on people of all ranks and on animals, which was in force during the first 170 years of the Eastern Roman Empire. Libanius, Zosimus and Evagrius report that it caused extreme hardship, claiming that parents were forced to sell their children as slaves or prostitutes to pay the levy.

30 Haarer 2006, 194-213.

31 Haarer 2006, 233-45.

32 Dante puts him together with the sodomites in his *Divina Commedia*, Inf. XV 109. However, we have no other testimony of this, and even Boccaccio expressed his surprise at Dante's verdict, and assumed he intended with his allegation to blame those who actually teach his doctrine. Others think that Dante mixed up Priscian with a Priscillian, a heretic bishop of the fourth century.

33 Lamberton 2012.

34 Tissoni 2000a, 37-44.

35 I here follow the chronology of the works proposed by Tissoni 2000a, 20-3, who, on the basis of comparison with the panegyrics of Anastasius by Procopius of Gaza and Priscian of Caesarea, argues against Cameron's date of 500 AD for the ekphrasis.

The literary production of the fifth and sixth centuries is vast and ranges across a variety of genres, which often blend together: the ekphrastic historical *De Aedificiis* by Procopius of Caesarea also works as a panegyric of Justinian, while his *Secret History* doubles as an invective against the same emperor and his court; Christodorus' epic on the Isaurian wars also fulfils the purpose of an encomium to Anastasius, and Paul the Silentiary's ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia contains encomia of Justinian and the patriarch Eutychius. Recent scholarship has contributed to a better understanding of the intricate connections between literary works and patronage.[36] I will summarize here roughly by genre the authors who were active under or around Anastasius' reign who have a connection with Colluthus through their style or content; these aspects will be discussed over the next chapters. My aim here is to understand the literary taste of the time in which Colluthus operated, as well as surveying the environment in which he may have possibly operated, Constantinople being one of the main cultural capitals of the time.

a. Egyptians and Poetry

Between the fourth and sixth century AD, the concentration of poets in the Egyptian region of Thebaid is much higher than in other regions. It has been argued by various scholars[37] that it is not possible to join the poets who followed - more or less broadly- the metric rules established by Nonnus in a "school of Nonnus", on the basis that the existence of such a school, or doctrine, cannot be demonstrated. It seems more appropriate to speak of a "Nonnian style", based on the definition of what those metric rules involved.

What is the root of this exceptional passion for poetry among Egyptians? Eunapius,[38] a sophist from Sardis from the fourth century AD, recalls how Prohaeresius, a contemporary Christian teacher and rhetorician from Caesarea who taught in Athens, was asked by the Romans to send over one of his pupils to teach in Rome. The selected pupil was Eusebius[39], from Alexandria, a student particularly

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36 Cameron 1965c, 1978, 2004; Rapp 2005; Jeffreys 2006; Miguélez Cavero 2008; Haarer 2010.

37 A comprehensive history of scholarship regarding the so-called school of Nonnus is included in Miguélez Cavero 2008, Chapter 1, in particular 93-9 (about the more recent schools of thought on the definition of "Nonnian style"); see also Gonnelli 2003, 7-8.

38 Eun. *Vitae Sophist.* 493.

39 Eusebius may have been the brother of another sophist, Alexander, who had studied with Julian (*Suda* A 1128). See Penella 1990, 89.

talented at flattering influential people. Egyptians are said to be crazy about poetry,[40] a popular cliché at the time, but also charlatans: αἰγυπτιάζειν meant "to act like an Egyptian, i.e. to be sly and crafty". Zosimus uses the adjective αἰγύπτιος with the disparaging meaning of *charlatan* referring to Oxios from Cordova, who converted Constantine to Christianity.[41] The *Historia Augusta* described the Egyptians as *viri ventosi, furibundi, iactantes, iniuriosi atque adeo vani, novarum rerum usque ad cantilenas publicas cupientes, versificatores, epigrammatarii, mathematici, haruspices, medici. Nam <in> eis Christiani, Samaritae et quibus praesentia semprer tempora cum enormi libertate displiceant,*[42] "For the Egyptians, as you know well enough, are puffed up, madmen, boastful, doers of injury, and, in fact, liars and without restraint, always craving something new... Among them, indeed, are Christians and Samaritans and those who are always ill-pleased by the present though enjoying unbounded liberty".[43] Allusions to the cliché of Egyptians being cunning can also be found in Heliodorus,[44] where we meet the Egyptian priest Kalasiris, who flees his hometown Memphis to escape the temptations of Rhodopis, a beautiful Greek courtesan touring Egypt.

The second element comes from comparing Eunapius' passage to two passages by Choricius of Gaza[45], where it is explained how poetry (the Muse) represents the primary stage of education,[46] when a student- normally a child in the early stage of the education process-, learns how to read, comment and also compose some poetry under the guidance of his γραμματικός. The higher level of education, associated with λόγος and Hermes,[47] should be the natural progression for anyone who intends to become a serious rhetor.[48] Eunapius, in the above passage, criticises the Egyptians for not being able to move on to this second level: Eusebius, although committed to rhetoric and with a successful career back home, realises how inadequate his preparation is when it is time to face a serious orator such as Musonius. Eunapius is criticizing Egyptian education, which promoted poetry as the arrival point of

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40 τὸ δὲ ἔθνος ἐπὶ ποιητικῇ μὲν σφόδρα μαίνονται, ὁ δὲ σπουδαῖος Ἑρμῆς αὐτῶν ἀποκεχώρηκεν, "for that race is mad about Poetry, but Hermes, who inspires serious study, would not dwell with them"; see below and Miguélez Cavero 2008, 86; Cameron 1965c, 470.

41 Cracco Ruggini 1971, 418 n. 57, about Zosimus *Hist. Nov.* 2.29.

42 *SHA Quadr. Tyr. Firm. Sat.* 7.4-5. See Agosti 2001, 236.

43 Transl. D. Magie.

44 Hel. *Aeth.* 2. 25.1, see Morgan 1982, 236.

45 Chor. *Or.* 2 (*Laudatio Marc. II*), 7 (pp. 29-30 Förster-Richtsteig), and *Or.* 7 (*Or. Funebr. In Procop.*), 7 (p. 111 Förster-Richtsteig).

46 Too 2001; Morgan 1998; Cribiore 1996, 1997 and 2001.

47 Agosti 2006a, 42 n. 32 and Pernot 2006, 129-75 about Hermes *Logios* and Demosthenes.

48 Kaster 1988, Marrou 1956, Morgan 1998 and 2003.

schooling, and limited sophists to trivial matters.[49] He associates the Egyptians' passion for leisure poetry (they are described as *versificatores* in the *Historia Augusta*) with epideictic rhetoric, i.e. Egyptians rhetors may be skilled, but only when it comes down to declaiming on fictional topics, or sweet-talking some politician. When confronted with a serious orator, their education may leave them short.

Procopius of Gaza also warns the aspiring professional speaker to steer clear from Alexandria,[50] a place where time-consuming poetry was practised by scholars who were not committed to professional rhetoric. Miguélez Caverosuggests that Eunapius may be blaming the Egyptians for being unable to write "serious philosophical prose",[51] perhaps since he preferred Athenian to Alexandrian Platonism,[52] thus somehow implying that Alexandria had lost its prestige as the philosophical capital. However, some testimonies of the time show that, on the contrary, Alexandria was still the great Egyptian cultural centre that spread its influence (especially on Neoplatonism)[53] to other cities such as Gaza, which had gained a reputation in their own right. Procopius calls Alexandria τὴν κοινὴν τῶν λόγων μητέρα,[54] and Aeneas paints a pleasant portrait of the town, where he studied under the Neoplatonic Hierocles.[55]

Aspiring poets and public speakers, then, underwent the same education. But a shared education also meant that poetry had a pragmatic and performative[56] dimension to it, which has only recently been rightly noted.[57] Poetry, but also *epistulae* and other genres, was read in context of private circles of friends,[58] in which works of the

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49 Miguélez Cavero 2008, 87 and Agosti 2006a, 37.

50 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 57 Garzya-Loenertz εἰ δέ σε τοῦ Μακεδόνος ἡ πόλις ἐφέλκεται χαρίτων ἕνεκα καὶ τοῦ δοκεῖν αὐτὸν ἔχειν ἤδη τὸν Ἑλικῶνα, ζήλου τὸν Ὀδυσσέα καὶ παρελθὼν τὰς Σειρῆνας μέμνησο τῆς Ἰθάκης, "if the city of the Macedonian [Alexandria] appeals to you for its pleasures and because it seems that it holds the Helicon itself, remember Ithaca". Here Ithaca symbolises Odysseus, who, according to a widespread Byzantine interpretative tradition, was the model of the soul's resistance to the abandonment of music and poetry, an image that was also adopted by Neoplatonic philosophers and Christians, see Amato 2010, 339 and 440.

51 Miguélez Cavero 2008, 87.

52 Agosti 2006a, 37.

53 As we know from Aeneas' *Theophrastus* and Zacharias' *Ammonius.* Like Timotheus of Gaza, they also studied at Alexandria under the reign of Anastasius.

54 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 119 Garzia-Loenertz; see also *Ep.* 104 and 118.

55 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 15. Euxitheus, also a pupil of Hierocles in Aeneas' dialogue *Theophrastus*, is probably an autobiographic character, see Penella 2009, 2 and Lamberton 2012.

56 I borrow this definition from Agosti 2006a.

57 Agosti 2006a and 2008.

58 Agosti 2006a, 41.

tradition but also of contemporaries[59] were scrutinized by highly educated scholars, and also in contexts of official public occasions, often of agonistic nature. As rightly interpreted by Agosti, late antique poetry was agonistic as it implied a contest not only with the tradition, but also with rivals: Agathias *AP* 4.4.67-70, in line with Nonn. *Dion.* 25.27, defines poetry's main aim of being read in public before an audience who is able to judge not only the contingent performance, but also the challenge with the previous models.[60]

This performative side of late antique poetry is not surprising and helps in contextualising the role of *ethopoiiai* and *progymnasmata* as models of an epic work such as the *Abduction.* Oral public performance also represents the joining link with theatrical forms and pantomime, as we shall see over the next chapters.

Musaeus is generally considered to be Egyptian, mainly due to the fact that his meter follows Nonnus' rules quite closely. The extremely limited information in our possession tells us he was a γραμματικός.[61] The dating has proven challenging: however, since Colluthus and Christodorus of Coptos refer to him, most scholars date Musaeus between the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the sixth century.[62] Musaeus was probably the addressee of two letters by Procopius of Gaza; the link with the school of Gaza is also justified by Musaeus' style of his *Hero and Leander*, an epyllion in 343 hexameters telling the sad myth with a simple and linear technique.

The plot brings us back to the tradition of Alexandrine elegy, and it is possible that Musaeus modelled his poem on other Hellenistic *epyllia*, since the myth was already familiar to the Latin poets of Augustan age. Musaeus draws especially on Nonnus and Homer,[63] but among his other models are Hesiod, Euripides, Apollonius Rhodius, Callimachus, Lycophron, the *Bassarica* and Oppian's *Halieutica.* Some scholars[64] also linked Musaeus to Ovid, after identifying some similarities between

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59 Possibly also including Biblical texts, see Agosti 2006a, 43 on Sin. 30, p. 259.

60 Agosti 2006a, 43-6.

61 *PLRE* II, *s.v.* "Musaeus, Grammaticus and poet, L V/M VI", p. 768; "Musaeus Grammaticus [4]", *BNP* 9, 319-20.

62 Miguélez Cavero 2008, 25 n. 157.

63 Not only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but also the *Hymn to Aphrodite* and the *Batrachomyomachia*, as his many commentators have shown (Gelzer 1967, 135; Kost 1971, 43). Leander is an Odyssean character, and the scene of Hero's seduction is modelled on the encounter of Odysseus and Nausicaa, see Merone 1955; Morales 1999, 47 and 57-8.

64 Kost 1971, 21-3.

his passages and *Heroides* 18 and 19, although Miguélez Cavero sees the influence of *ethopoiiai* or other rhetorical exercises as the reason behind this, rather than a direct knowledge of Ovid by Musaeus.[65] His faith has also spurred some debate: while he is also influenced by Gregory of Nazianzus and Nonnus' *Paraphrase of the Gospel of Saint John*, there is no obvious reference to the holy texts in his epyllion; nevertheless, Keydell and Kost[66] think he was a Christian. Musaeus enjoyed widespread success, becoming a model to his contemporaries.[67]

Patria were a popular poetic genre of the time. They were poems on the foundation, history and antiquities of cities: the genre originated from the κτίσεις performed by Hellenistic poets at the various θυμελικοὶ ἀγῶνες.[68] Cameron, listing the shared features of the wandering poets between fourth and sixth century AD, cites mobility, as, when the local history of a place was exhausted, after the *patria's* publication, poets had to travel somewhere else, in search for their new location, subject, audience, and patron.

Christodorus of Coptos, recorded by the *Suda* as a ἐποποιός (hexametric poet)[69] was also active under Anastasius, as we have seen. Also hailing from the Thebaid, his name would suggest that he was a Christian, although it is commonly agreed that, while his parents were probably Christian, he must have been pagan.[70] This conclusion is deducted from the fact that he wrote *Against the Christians,* and the poem *About the pupils of the great Proclos*, which he dedicated to Proclos, a Neoplatonic philosopher and a fierce self- confessed pagan. It has also been argued that he was the author of an anonymous encomium of an unknown emperor,[71] identified with Anastasius by Haarer.[72] Christodorus also wrote a history of Constantinople, Ἰσαυρικά, about Anastasius' victory in the Isaurian war in 497,[73] *Lydiaca* on the mythical history of

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65 Miguélez Cavero 2008, 26.

66 Keydell 1933, 767; Kost 1971, 17.

67 Gelzer 1967, 139 considered him an authority in his time and immediately after his death.

68 Cameron 1965c, 489.

69 *Suda* X 525 Adler; Baumgarten 1899; *PLRE* II, 293 *s.v.* "Christodorus, poet L V/E VI"; also Miguélez Cavero 2008, 31 n. 208 ("in spite of Baumgarten's opinion, he seems to be a different person from his namesake in the next entry of the *Suda*"), following Cameron 1965c, 475 n. 33.

70 See Cameron 1965c, 475; Tissoni 2000a, 37; Miguélez Cavero 2008, 31.

71 Tissoni 2000a, 16.

72 Haarer 2010. I am grateful to Dr. Haarer for allowing me to read this paper before publication.

73 Pampreius of Panopolis (440-484) also wrote Ἰσαυρικά, on the restoration of the Isaurian emperor Zeno, aided by his general Illus.

Lydia,[74] and πάτρια on Thessalonica, Miletus, Nacle, Constantinople, Tralles, Aphrodisias. This leads us to assume that Christodorus, like other authors of *patria*, must have had to travel, although poets often also had access to previous material about the topic of interest. Erudition, as a result of memorization practised during training years at school, constituted the cultural backbone of any scholar, so it would have not been impossible for a poet in, for instance, Coptos, to write a patria about Constantinople, using pre-existent aetiological material.

Christodorus also wrote an ekphrasis of the statues displayed in the *thermae* of the gymnasium of Zeuxippus, near the imperial palace in Constantinople (*AP* 2). In his description of Pompey's statue, Christodorus suggests that his poem was commissioned by Anastasius, and allusively compares the emperor's achievements to those of Pompey.[75] Jeffreys suggests that travelling poets used a sample piece to show off their erudition and their skills to impress a potential new patron. This is possibly the method Christodorus and others may have used to move on to the next employer. Christodorus describes statues of Virgil, Apuleius, and Caesar in a work addressed to an educated readership. His public, in order to fully understand and enjoy the poem, would have had to master not only the meter (i.e. ancient quantities that were no longer respected in spoken language), but also a vast catalogue of myths and passages of predecessors who may have written about the same topic, and to whom the new poet may have referred.

Ekphraseis of architectural works especially were extremely popular in late antiquity, and were often composed to be recited on inaugurations, such as Paul the Silentiary's ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia, which celebrated Justinian's rebuilding of the dome in 563.[76] The School of Gaza produced many remarkable examples: John of Gaza described a cosmological painting in the baths of either Gaza or Antioch blending Christian and pagan elements;[77] Procopius of Gaza described paintings of the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus; Choricius of Gaza's *Laudatio Marciani* includes an ekphrasis of two churches.

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74 Two lines survived in schol. A on *Il.* 2.461 (= Heitsch S 8.1); see also Tissoni 2000a, 17-18.

75 See Tissoni 2000a, 21-2; Jeffreys 2006, 127-39.

76 Paul's account emphasizes the effect of light and space in the building and the splendour of the multi-coloured marble. The information he provides corresponds to what is known of the church at that period, and contains useful details about the original decorative scheme; Whitby 1985.

77 Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 5.

b. Panegyric and the School of Gaza

Priscian of Caesarea and Procopius of Gaza, authors of panegyrics of Anastasius, dealt with the tension between Christian and pagan religion differently.[78] Although they are both Christian, Priscian writes in Latin, while Procopius writes in Greek; Priscian mainly uses Christian imagery, while Procopius prefers pagan imagery; Priscian links Anastasius' lineage to Pompey, and insists on the emperor's God-given right to rule, while Procopius links Anastasius' lineage to Heracles and Zeus, and claims the emperor's power comes from a more meritocratic election; Priscian compares the emperor to other recent Roman emperors, like Nerva, Marcus Aurelius, Trajan, while Procopius links Anastasius to pagan characters such as Agamemnon and Alexander; finally, Priscian chooses to exalt Anastasius through virtues that both pagans and Christians aspired to, such as pietas and philanthropy, while Procopius' encomium of Anastasius highlights pagan ideals.

Procopius (465-528) was the initiator of the rhetoric School of Gaza, whose exponents were Christians with a wide knowledge of, and a similar approach to, classical tradition. Procopius also wrote works of ecclesiastical exegesis and secular nature, and *epistulae,* two of which are addressed to a Musaeus,[79] who is generally believed to be the epic poet contemporary of Colluthus. Aeneas, Procopius' contemporary and fellow citizen, was a disciple of Neoplatonic Hierocles[80] in Alexandria; alongside stylish *epistulae,* he wrote the dialogue *Theophrastus* on the immortality of the soul, where he deals with the resurrection of the dead through a Christian approach, but also relies heavily on Plato, Plotinus and his vast knowledge of classical erudition. Choricius of Gaza, Procopius' pupil, was the main exponent of the Palestinian school in the first half of the sixth century. He mainly wrote rhetoric

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78 Nicks 2000, 192-4.

79 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 147 and 165, see Amato 2010, 413 and 427.

80 Hierocles was a militant pagan who was publicly flogged. Neoplatonism did not conflict ideologically with Christianity: Hierocles was influenced by Christianity, and Saint Ambrose by Plotinus. A good summary of works about the relationship between Neoplatonism and Christian monotheism can be found in Edwards 2004. Scholarship exist in support of the view that Christianity was a form of Platonism (there were some Platonists such as Celsus and Porphyry, who were monotheistic, i.e. they believed in an ultimate principle), but Edwards explains that this ultimate principle does not equal the Christian God: the fact that Platonists were monotheist does not mean they were compatible with Christians, who preached God, not a single god. For Christians, God was not an adjective, but a personal name, while for Platonists it was an epithet of the ultimate principle (never a person). Platonism stated that every person houses a little divine, while for Christians God became a man, and there is no belief without worship, no worship due to anyone but God. Ultimately, the difference can be summarized with the Platonism being a philosophy, while Christianity a religion (i.e. involved worship). Even in the early mid-third century, Christianity and Platonism were easily distinguished.

works; among his collection of occasional speeches on historical and mythological subjects, it is worth mentioning the *Apologia Mimorum*, which contains useful information on late antiquity drama.

c. Historiography

In historiography, too, we can see how the tension between the old religion and Christianity is managed differently by authors.

Zosimus lived in Constantinople, where he carried out bureaucratic tasks before 503. He wrote the *New History*, a pagan- inspired work that intended to overturn the ecclesiastic histories;[81] the events stop in 410, before Rome's conquest by Visigoth King Alarichus. Zosimus exalts Rome's government, blames the overthrow of pagan religion for the fall of the empire, and harshly attacks the Christian emperors, especially Constantine and Theodosius. While Polybius had told the events through which the Roman Empire reached its greatness, Zosimos undertook the task of telling the causes of its decline. The strongly pagan perspective reduces remarkably the documentary value of his work, although the *Historia* still stands as a dramatic testimony of how one of the last representatives of pagan religion saw the end of ancient civilization.

John Malalas (491-578), from Antioch, was a chronicler and the author of a *Chronographia* in 18 books; as it stands (the beginning and the end are lost), it begins with the mythical history of Egypt and ends with the expedition to Roman Africa under the tribune Marcianus, Justinian's nephew, in 563. The last book includes a great deal of official propaganda on the reign of Justinian. Malalas focusses largely on Antioch, his hometown, and on Constantinople, and his history, which mixes Biblical material, myth and real history, is not thought to be of much value to the historian. Malalas attempts to reconcile Judaeo-Christian tradition with Hellenic and Roman tradition (as when he synchronizes Trojans and David): he portrays Hellenic tradition digested within his Christian view of the developed Roman government. Malalas supports Church and State, and monarchical principles. The *Chronographia* aimed at the education of common people and monks (as shown by its language, a compromise with the spoken language of the day).[82] This granted Malalas' work a great popularity,

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[81] Tissoni 2000a, 43 n. 63.

[82] However, compare Horrocks 1997, 179-81: "it is still very much a written style. In particular, he employs technical terminology and bureaucratic clichés incessantly, and, in a period of transition

as shown by the number of extant manuscripts of his text which, due to its length, was quite expensive to copy.

Procopius of Caesarea (490-575) wrote about Justinian's wars and military campaigns, emphasizing especially the achievements of Belisarius, the emperor's chief military commander whom he accompanied in his campaign as his legal adviser. He also wrote *De aedificiis*, an ekphrasis of the main buildings built by patron Justinian. The *Secret History* is a tabloid-style account of the immoral lives of Justinian (described here as avid, crazy and cruel), his wife Theodora (Procopius focuses on her past as a pantomime dancer prior to becoming the empress), Belisarius (an inept general incapable of standing his ground with his wife and lover), and his wife Antonina (cruel and unfaithful). Some scholars explain the discrepancy of his position with regards to Justinian (first praised, then denigrated) as an attempt to gain freedom from writing on commission; however recent studies have suggested how Procopius may have meant to present both sides of the same story.[83]

d. Hymnography

Hymnography provides a good example of the literary richness of this period; in contrast with Procopius' classicizing history, the Christian hymns of Romanos the Melodist enjoyed great popularity. He moved to Constantinople under Anastasius and is believed to have produced around 1000 *kontakia*, of which 80 survive. These were sermons of around thirty lines, each with a refrain, and joined together by an acrostic. The kontakion style, a descendant of the Akathistos Hymn,[84] follows a complex rhythmic structure and is characterized by a "lively retelling of Biblical narrative".[85] The subjects vary between ecclesiastical festivals, hagiography or other sacred topics. Romanos' *Kontakion of the Nativity* was sung by the joint choirs of Hagia Sophia and of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople every year at the imperial banquet on that holiday up to the twelfth century.

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from Latin to Greek governmental terminology, still uses the Latin loanwords alongside their Greek replacements (...). The overall impression created by Malálas's style is one of simplicity, reflecting a desire for the straightforward communication of information in the written language of everyday business as it had evolved under the influence of spoken Greek."

83 Kaldellis 2004; Cameron 1985.

84 Peltomaa 2001 backdates the hymn, which is considered the masterpiece of its genre and was previously attributed to Romanos, to the end of the fifth century.

85 Jeffreys 2006, 135.

The picture I have painted in this section shows the variety of genres and tendencies of the literature environment in which Colluthus operated. I have attempted to present the different literary aspects that in some form touched on Colluthus' work, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of his work though its contextualisation among the works of his contemporaries.

3. Colluthus and the Epyllion Tradition

Next, we need to set the background of Colluthus' work from the genre perspective: his poem comes at the very end of a long list of predecessors, and while some features fit in with the so-called epyllion genre, others do not. In this section I critically review existing scholarship on the epyllion genre and analyse where the *Abduction* fits with regards to genre.

In modern scholarship, the word *epyllion* is generally used to define narrative mythological poems of relatively short length (a couple of hundreds of lines), normally in hexameters. Unfortunately, however, the word epyllion has become part of our vocabulary only in recent times.[86] The Greek word epos defined a work in hexameters, or even a single hexameter line:[87] this original meaning should be sufficient for us to place only hexametric poems in the epyllion "genre". However, unfortunately, the matter is not as straightforward as it seems.

In this section, I will review some stylistic and narrative techniques of Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*, and I will analyze how the poet used them through a comparison with the way previous authors of epyllia used them. My approach is based on the idea that Colluthus' epyllion is the result of a tradition and a specific context, and that the poet chose how to use each feature based on how he meant to reprocess his models. I will then briefly review the quantitative aspects (meter and length) that have also been suggested as criteria to classify the poems, as this genre (if there is such a thing) was in fact created by modern scholarship, and such classification does not only involve a series of risks, but also does not ultimately lead to any useful conclusion. We are dealing with a group of poems that differ in contexts and literary traditions: if a criterion to group them together must be sought to understand how

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[86] For the history of the word, see Allen 1940 and 1958.
[87] Hollis 2006, 141.

tradition was reprocessed and find a continuity, it has to be other than their appearance, and possibly internal to the poems.

Various scholars suggested different criteria, attempting to find some shared features across all these poems; for instance Gutzwiller[88] focusses on the subversion of epic norms; Crump[89] focusses on the presence of digressions; Merriam[90] sees in the presence of female heroines the shared feature of epyllia.[91] A more generic pattern is that an epyllion usually tells a full myth or episode.[92]

Ambühl suggests that, rather than entering a debate based on quantitative elements, we should base our examination on the evidence of the extant texts and aim to identify those "qualitative terms regarding style and treatment"[93] that represent the common patterns in all these poems. Another risk involved with the epyllion's taxonomy is the possible trap of a teleological perspective, which involves an evolution in a genre moving from its birth, through to its maturity, and to its death. Moreover, any genre's definition can be strict and rigid, and it does not cater for works that are on the borderline with other genres, and works of this type, which started to appear in Hellenistic times, are most popular in late antiquity: for instance the aetiological interest brought epic and erudite material together in *ktiseis* and *patria*, poems around the mythological foundation of cities.

One reasonable approach could be to blame the epyllion's variety (in topic, style and narrative techniques) for the difficulty in retrieving shared features across the epyllia. In fact, it is certainly possible to differentiate epyllia from epic sub-genres[94] such as hymns, encomia, bucolic and didactic poems, based on their subject: the epyllion has a mythological topic, bucolic poems have a pastoral topic, didactic poems a scientific one, while the hymn has a religious topic, and the encomium a propagandistic content (however, these last two types may contain mythological material, in the form of a mythological *exemplum*). Moreover, it is not always simple to draw the line based on the meter used, since metrical boundaries between genres

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88 Gutzwiller 1981.

89 Crump 1931, 22-4.

90 Merriam 2001.

91 However, this is a feature that appears mainly in later poems, especially from Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata* onwards, and it can be linked to the taste for tragic love stories, which evolved around abandoned or betrayed girls, or women involved in what Merriam calls "unnatural" affections.

92 However, Ps.-Theocr. 25 is the untold tale of the cleaning of the Augean stables, which is its main subject, see Ambühl 2010, 162-3.

93 Ambühl 2010, 152-4.

94 Ambühl 2010, 155.

cannot always be defined, as in Claudian's poems, where epic is blended in with encomium. The key to fully appreciate these poems could be to stop trying to find shared features, and begin to read them as individual products of their time: in each work models and influences from preceding and contemporary tradition flow together, as well as different goals in terms of content and audience.

First, I will summarize the history of the epyllion. The Hellenistic poems of Theocritus and Moschus are idylls where the taste for descriptions is more important than the narrative plot. Callimachus' *Hecale* is considered by most[95] to be the perfect example of Hellenistic epyllion; in this poem the picturesque and realistic descriptions are still present, however they are no longer the main feature: now the plot, although simple and uncomplicated, gains more relevance.

A second stage is represented by Euphorion (whose whose only extant work is represented by some fragments), who presumably launched a new type of composition which inspired Parthenius of Nicaea's *Erotica Pathemata* in the first century BC, the Ps. Gallus' *Ciris* and even Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In this type of epyllion, which generally revolves around a tragic love story, the plot becomes more complex, descriptions are no longer realistic (like in the idyllic epyllia of Theocritus and in the *Hecale*), and there is a marked taste for the sensational and horror. In addition, the choice of myths is instrumental in allowing the poets to delve into morbid psychology.

If we look at Roman poetry of the same period, we can see that not everybody followed the new style launched by Euphorion. In a letter to Atticus[96] written in 50 BC, Cicero alludes to some *cantores Euphorionis*, certainly the poets who belonged to Catullus' circle: Cinna, author of the poem *Zmyrna*; Calvus, author of *Io;* and Cornificius, author of the poem *Glaucus*. The ps. Virgil's *Culex* also probably belongs to this stage, before Virgil's friendship with Gallus.[97] Catullus' *Peleus and Thetis* is a perfectly Hellenistic epyllion composed of a series of graceful pictures modelled on Theocritus' idylls and Moschus' *Europa*, rather than on the *Hecale*. Although Catullus' *carmen* is closer to the bucolic idylls, rather than to Euphorion's and Parthenius'

[95] Hollis 2006, 142.
[96] Cic. *Att.* 7.2.1.
[97] Crump 1931, 47.

poetics, Euphorion was certainly regarded as the model by the circle, as the title of the *Zmyrna* seems to suggest a poem of particularly cryptic subject and language.

Cicero alludes again to the emulators of Euphorion in 44 BC,[98] when the only survivor of the Catullean circle was Cornificius. Crump[99] suggests that Cicero was actually referring to a new circle that had formed: that of Virgil, Gallus and Parthenius. There are some elements in support of this thesis: Virgil may have already published some early work by 44 BC,[100] and so may Gallus, who notoriously translated Euphorion's works, and is linked to the poet from Chalcis by Virgil in two passages.[101] Moreover, the *Culex*, if we assume it is the early work of a young Virgil, must have been written between 54 and 48 BC.[102] The models of this circle were Theocritus and other authors of idylls, while the influence of Callimachus can hardly be found. The *Ciris*, a work that Crump attributes to Gallus or to another poet of this circle, was seen by Cicero as the extreme opposite to his preferred epic, Ennius' *Annales*. Although the work of a talented poet, this type of epyllion was not reproduced later: this could suggest that the Euphorion-style epyllion did not enjoy much popularity.

Virgil's *Aristaeus*, written after the death of Gallus in 26 BC, is a Hellenistic epyllion, which the author has personalised with touches of human realism and romance, making it outstandingly original. All the myths told by Cinna, Calvus, Cornificius and Virgil, appear again in the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid tells a new tale of an old story, and his poetics is characterized by imagination (rather than realism), dramatization and a taste for ridiculous. He brings the reader to a world of illusion, a fairyland.

The tradition of Greek epyllion evolved during the imperial period with the didactic poems *Cynegetica* by Oppian of Anazarbus in Cilicia (late second century AD), and *Halieutica* by Oppian of Apamea in Syria (early third century AD). Epic comes back into fashion around the third century AD with long works such as Quintus of Smyrna' *Posthomerica,* in 14 books, and with the *Sack of Ilion*, a poem in 691 hexameters by Egyptian Triphiodorus. The last epyllia we know of are Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* and Musaeus' *Hero and Leander*, dating to the period between the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century AD.

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98 Cic. *Tusc.* 3.19.

99 Crump 1931, 40-9.

100 The *Eclogues* were composed between 43 and 37 BC and show the mastery of an experienced poet.

101 Virg. *Ecl.* 10.50-1 and Serv. on Virg. *Ecl.* 6.72.

102 Crump 1931, 147.

a. Digressions

Digressions are a common feature of epyllia and are considered by some scholars as a unique factor for classification. These secondary stories are told by another character,[103] or by the main character himself,[104] or are in the form of an ekphrasis[105] of a work of art.

Colluthus, in the *Abduction of Helen*, includes short references to two characters in the space of 30 lines.[106] The first to appear is the story of Phyllis (lines 213-18), who, abandoned in Thracia by Theseus' son Demophoon, who had married her on his way home from the Trojan War, travelled nine times to the shore to look out for her husband's ship, and hanged herself when he did not return.[107] Colluthus is describing the lands that Paris is travelling through on his way to Sparta, and when Paris passes through Thrace, this sad story of abandonment comes to his mind. The story had already been used by Callimachus[108] and recurs in Ovid, *Heroides* 2, and an *epistula* by Procopius of Gaza,[109] a contemporary of Colluthus. The motive of the foreign princess abandoned by a travelling hero[110] is dear to Hellenistic poets, as it includes ingredients such as love, exotic landscape, betrayal, abandonment, bravery, and death – all topics that appealed especially to poets like Euphorion and Parthenius, and that were instrumental to stirring up new sensations in his audience.

The digression in Catullus' *Peleus and Thetis* is the myth of Ariadne who is abandoned in Naxos by Theseus.[111] The size of the digression is considerably out of proportion compared to the main subject (lines 125-50), and we also have a digression within the digression at lines 50-115 on the love of Ariadne and slaying of the Minotaur. Catullus' digression is linked to the main story by parallel (as both are unions between human and divine) and contrast (happy marriage of Peleus and Thetis/unhappy marriage of Ariadne and Theseus). Colluthus, on the other hand, has

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103 E.g. the story of Britomartis introduced by the nurse Carme in the *Ciris*.

104 E.g. the slaying of the Nemean lion told by Heracles himself in Ps.-Theocr. 25.

105 E.g. the ekphraseis of Europa's basket in Moschus' *Europa* and of the bridal couch of Peleus and Thetis, embroidered with the story of Ariadne, in Catullus 64.

106 Between lines 213 and 244.

107 An almond tree grew on her grave and blossomed when Demophoon went to visit her. An alternative version of the myth speaks of a coffin that she had given to her husband before he left for Athens, telling him to open it only if he ever decided not to go back for her; he is then killed when he opens the coffin, as he falls on his sword.

108 Call. fr. 556 Pfeiffer.

109 Proc. Gaz. *Ep.* 47 Garzya-Loenertz.

110 Knox 1996, 111.

111 Colluthus' heroine, Phyllis, is abandoned by Theseus' son.

chosen to present his digression in a very brief yet dramatic way: Paris sees Phyllis' grave, the story of her wandering is told in one line (215), then unexpectedly the poet switches to second person and addresses Phyllis herself,[112] then we see her waiting for Demophon, and wondering if he will ever return from Athens. Suddenly Phyllis becomes a live interlocutor with Colluthus, and readers find themselves face to face with the princess. The effect is not that of a dead person coming back to life, but rather that of a girl stopped in her steps, while she is still wandering[113] in desperation: it is as if she turned around for a moment when the poet addresses her.

The second digression (240-8) tells the story of Hyacinthus, a beautiful boy loved by Apollo and Zephyrus, who, while competing with Apollo, was struck by the discus and died.[114] The story is told by many before Colluthus:[115] a poem in hexameters by Euphorion, titled *Hyacinthus*, did not survive, thus the obvious parallel comes from Ovid,[116] who tells the story from Apollo's perspective. The god's emotions are the focus of the poem: first the god's love for the boy, then his grief and his sense of guilt at Hyacinthus's death, and finally his will to keep his memory alive forever. Ovid sets a beautiful background for the events: the god and the boy strip off their clothes and prepare themselves to compete with the discus at midday, and the scene is saturated with luscious scents (the grass, the body ointment, the herbal remedies and many flowers). Suddenly Hyacinthus is struck: Apollo tries to heal his wound with his remedies, but all fails and the boy dies. The god wants to keep his memory alive in his every song and in a flower that he grows from his blood; finally, as an extreme gesture of dedication, his tears, dripping on the hyacinth, engrave the letters AI AI on the flower's petals. In contrast, Colluthus tells the story almost as a tale of envy: first, the people of Amyklae marvel at the boy so much that they wonder whether he could also be the son of Zeus and Leto. Hyacinthus is then the object of Zephyrus' envy (as the boy preferred Apollo to him), so Apollo protects him. The flower, in the end, is a gift that the earth produces to comfort Apollo after the boy's death. Although Apollo

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[112] The change from indirect to direct speech is an interesting feature that will be discussed in Chapter 4.

[113] A similar destiny was that of Hero in Museaus 336-8. Although Leander had been swallowed by the sea, he had not abandoned her.

[114] In an alternative version, Zephyrus is responsible for blowing the discus on Hyacinthus, seeking revenge because Hyacinthus preferred Apollo to him.

[115] *Il.* 2.595-600; Palaeph. 46; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.3.3; Paus. 3.1.3, 3.19.4; Philostr. *Im.* 1.24 (Hyacinthus); Philostr. Jun. *Im.* 14 (Hyacinthus); Luc. *Dial. Deor.* 14 (170 AD); First Vatican Mythographer 197 (Thamyris et Musae).

[116] Ov. *Met.* 10.162-219.

weeps, no other emotion is displayed. Moreover, there is no mention of Apollo's responsibility for Hyacinthus's death. Colluthus expects his reader to know the story: by relying on such a well-known tale, he can afford to omit some elements of the myth and pick only those that are most useful to tell his tale of envy.

b. The Myth

Another feature of many epyllia, especially from the first century BC onwards, is the type of myths chosen, often not well known (secondary traditions or even new),[117] springing from a taste for the rare and the obscure.

However, familiar myths were also popular: many Hellenistic epyllia focussed on the familiar myth of Heracles;[118] in particular, the motive of the fight of Heracles against the Nemean lion proved to be a particularly popular topic, [119] perhaps since this was his first labour, a fact that can be linked to the Hellenistic interest for aetiology (where the *aition* was represented by the lion skin). The aim could have been to re-write Heracles' myth to re-invent the literary tradition around Heracles, as in Ps.- Theocritus 25, where the author continuously questions the sources and process of information- gathering and truth -finding, sowing doubts in his audience about the authority and reliability of the transmission of tradition. This is in line with the image that Theocritus 24 (*Heracliscus*) presents of the hero, who canonically had been represented as uneducated and a glutton, and now, instead, is busy with music and grammar, and on a balanced diet.[120]

Colluthus chooses an extremely well-known myth, thus joining a more Hellenistic tradition on this account: he could have intended to tell an old story in a different way or with new outcomes in mind. Dracontius, a contemporary of Colluthus, also wrote an *Abduction of Helen*, generally considered to be of a low standard,[121] although he introduced some variations to the story such as the meeting between Helen and Paris, which takes place not in Sparta but in Cyprus. Moreover, as we shall see in Chapter 2, the choice of such a well known myth was instrumental to Colluthus' objectives as it offered an optimal opportunity to play with the reader's expectations.

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[117] Such as *Zmyrna* by Cinna, or Parthenius' characters in his prose.

[118] Among them Theocr. *Id.* 13 and 24, Ps.-Theocr. 25, Ps. Moschus' *Megara*, *Heracleia* by Rhianus, Diotimus and Phaedimus, and also Diotimus' *Heracles' Labors*.

[119] Ambühl 2010, 156-7.

[120] Ambühl 2010, 159-62.

[121] Hollis 2006,156.

Some[122] also see love stories as a shared feature of epyllia. It is certainly possible to track this feature across the epyllia between the third century BC and the sixth century AD, with Theocritus 13, Moschus' *Europa*, Catullus 64, the *Ciris*, Virgil's *Aristaeus*, and Musaeus' *Hero and Leander*. However, not all poems deal with a love story, such as Theocritus 24, Ps.-Theocritus 25, the *Megara*, Callimachus' *Hecale*, and the *Culex*. Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* can hardly be defined as a love story: there are many other elements that play a part, such as Aphrodite's power and Hermione's abandonment. The encounter of Paris and Helen occupies around seventy lines and, while it certainly is a central part of the poem, it is a moment of erotic process rather than a love story. There is no romantic anticipation on behalf of either of the two characters involved,[123] and the only future the couple can look forward to is one of toil and tragedy.

c. Heroines

It cannot be denied that the focus in Colluthus' poem is on female characters. From the first century BC, the focus on heroines increased in epyllia, a fact linked to the interest for tragic love stories, particularly from Parthenius onwards. However in Colluthus there is no exaggerated pathos, no taste for morbid details, and the perspective on the heroines is different: where we elsewhere may lose interest in the overloaded story of an abandoned girl, here we almost feel sorry for Helen, the victim of a love spell at the hands of Aphrodite, and for the family she abandons.

We can somehow see a similarity with the *Ciris*' Scylla, who inspires pity as she is the victim of an uncontrollable force (love), while Ovid's Scylla is painfully torn between love and duty. The *Ciris*' Scylla is not guilty like Ovid's, and we can say the same about Colluthus' Helen, who, although acting as Aphrodite's puppet, leaves her home with a stranger, and, when she has the opportunity to straighten things up with her daughter (in her dream), she rejects any responsibility and blames Paris.

d. Direct Speech

Direct speech is frequently used by composers of epyllia as a technique to create a domestic and realistic atmosphere: characters who speak directly to each other impact readers more than a story told by a narrator, where second-hand information

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[122] Crump 1931, 22.

[123] Paris, who is said to long for the one he had not even seen, anticipates his prize, not the woman.

is presented. A great example is the Ps.-Moschus' *Megara*, a poem built on the two speeches by Heracles' mother Alcmena and wife Megara, where we can feel the anguish felt by the two women as they share their concern. Ps.-Theocritus 25, on the cleaning of the Augean stables, also contains various speeches through which an unaware ploughman tries to identify a Heracles in disguise. In the *Ciris*, Scylla's nurse Carme tenderly comforts Scylla and remembers her daughter's destiny.

The role of direct speech in Colluthus is crucial: as I will discuss in Chapter 4, the story is told mainly through speeches, which multiplies the perspectives the reader is presented with, and gives the impression of a polyphonic text.

e. Style

One aspect that is generally agreed upon is the epyllion's style, which is always allusive, erudite, refined, and its atmosphere, which is always intimate and realistic.124 The allusive taste of Alexandrine poets led to multiple outcomes, and and again, it is not possible to group multiple poems under the same flag. The *Hecale*, for instance, with its erudite references and refined allusions, and Catullus' *Peleus and Thetis*, the result of a very fine *labour limae* and yet gracefully light poem, have little in common, for instance, with Lycophron's *Alexandra*, considered by some to be an example of how Hellenistic poetry at its worst produced a maze of pedantic and obscure allusions.

Colluthus skilfully adapts his pitch to the context: Aphrodite addresses Athena and Artemis with a sarcastic tone, while mesmersed Helen sounds ironically naive at the sight of beautiful Paris. In the two narrative segments of the poem – the arrival of the guests to Peleus and Thetis' wedding, and the description of Paris' journey to Sparta- Colluthus' style is refined and allusive, always encapsulating an erudite memory of previous poetry in his lines. His approach demands narratees' participation and interaction with his text.[125]

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[124] Crump 1931, 24, 31; Del Corno 1988, 405; Ambühl 2010, 159.

[125] See Chapter 4.

f. Meter

If we abide by the original meaning of the word epyllion, we should group only hexametric poems under this definition.[126] However, some poems in elegiacs are stylistically very close to the epyllia, such as Callimachus' tale of Molorcus and Heracles in the Victoria Berenices in the elegiac *Aitia*. We also know of poets who wrote in both meters: Philitas wrote the hexametric *Hermes* and the elegiac *Demeter*, and Eratosthenes, the author of a hexametric *Hermes* and the elegiac *Erigone*. Alexander Aetolus and Parthenius of Nicaea also wrote poems in both meters. Why did some poets switch between two meters? The preference for hexameter or distich can hardly be put down to simply personal taste, as, if this were the case, poets would generally adhere to their meter of choice. But then Gregory, for instance, wrote panegyrics and invectives in both hexameters and iambics. Boundaries between different metrical forms had been always quite vague, and there seems to be no rigid equation between a genre and a meter. Stylistic differences existed between epic and elegiac compositions: Cameron[127] discriminates between personal elegy (where the narrator is present) versus impersonal epic, although it is hard to agree with such a differentiation as it is purely based on statistics regarding the number of interventions made by the narrator;[128] moreover, there are cases where this does not apply, as in Callimachus' hexametric *Hecale* versus his elegiac *Aitia*, where there is no relevant difference in the weight of the author's voice.[129]

Another interesting point is that Philitas, Callimachus, Euphorion and Parthenius all had a great reputation as elegy masters among Romans,[130] but there is no evidence, for instance, that Euphorion wrote elegies:[131] what survived are some epigrams and some hexametric fragments which seem to suggest an epic subject. We can hypothesize that his work in elegiacs was of higher quality than his hexametric production, or that his elegiac production was simply larger compared to what has

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126 Our list would include the idylls by and falsely ascribed to Theocritus, Moschus' *Europa*, Ps.-Moschus' *Megara*, Callimachus' *Hecale*, Bion's *Epithalamium of Achilles and Deidamia*, Philitas' and Eratosthenes' *Hermes* (which were probably hymns), Euphorion's *Chiliades*, Catullus' *Carmen* 64 (*Peleus and Thetis*) and the lost epyllia of the other *neoteroi*: the *Zmyrna* by Cinna, *Io* by Calvus and *Glaucus* by Cornificius, Ps.-Virgil's *Culex*, Ps.-Gallus' *Ciris*, Virgil's Eclogue 4 (*Aristaeus*), Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*.

127 Cameron 1995, 437-53.

128 Ambühl 2010, 155.

129 Ambühl 2010, 155.

130 Prop. 3.1.1, Virg. *Ecl.* 10.50, Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.58.

131 Ambühl 2010, 156.

survived. Or should we assume that elegiacs enjoyed in general a wider popularity or favour than hexameters?

g. Length

Another criterion that is often used to define epyllion is the poems' length. But here, as well, we face some challenges as not all poems are equally long. Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*, 394 hexameters, is neither close to the shortest poems (Theocritus' *Id.* 13, 76 lines), nor the longest (Eratosthenes' *Hermes*, 1600 lines); however, among these two extremes, we have a substantial series of Roman and late antique poems whose length is between roughly four and seven hundred lines: Catullus' *Peleus and Thetis* comes up to 408 verses, the *Culex* to 616, the *Ciris* to 541, Triphiodorus' *Sack of Ilion* to 691, making our judgement more challenging.

Hollis[132] questions how anyone could suggest to use the same definition of epyllia for poems of a considerable length, such as Callimachus' Hecale (whose estimated length is at least 1000 lines)[133] and Eratosthenes' Hermes, and much shorter poems, like Theocritus Id. 13 and 24 (circa 186). Ambühl[134] also rejects the classification based on the criterion of length, as, again, it is based on statistical analysis, and does not take into consideration that, between the third century BC and the sixth century AD, epic writing had naturally been through centuries of development, and, as stylistic formulas changed, size may also have evolved. Fashion in favour of a longer or shorter work played a role, as well as each poet's taste for a more narrative or more synthetic story-telling style. Callimachus' dislike for long and grand poems, for instance, can also be seen as a result of the evolution of public and poetic frameworks. While archaic bards had a large audience prepared to listen to their work, Hellenistic epic was addressed mainly to an élite of well-educated readers; moreover, an archaic poet could avail of the benefit of recitation and conceal a mistake, and even a mediocre poem, if recited by a skilled poet, could be made attractive, while Hellenistic poets had no external aid, and thus their poems had to be refined and focussed around form and detail.[135]

The multiplicity of lengths of the various poems cannot be justified only by the different contexts in which poets were writing, as, while we can probably expect

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[132] Hollis 2006, 142-3.
[133] Hollis 1990, 337-40 and 2006, 142.
[134] Ambühl 2010, 152.
[135] Crump 1931, 10-11.

shorter works during Hellenistic times, this does not actually apply to, for instance, the *Hecale*, the poem of the very poet who had condemned poems *of various thousands of lines.*[136] Many factors can play a role in dictating the length of a poem: a poet may or may not decide, for instance, to tell a story briefly, to include a digression of various length (sometimes including a secondary digression), to linger on some names that provide the opportunity for aetiological information. A poet can also decide to simply tell a story in a linear series of pictures (like the *Hylas*, or *Hero and Leander*), or to add extra side-stories which do not add to the plot itself but are instrumental in adding drama or in embellishing the main story, or in displaying the poet's erudition (like Catullus' *Peleus and Thetis*).

In conclusion, we have seen how Colluthus' *Abduction* fits in to a degree with the definition of epyllion as a genre, and what the limitations of such definition are. I have examined the literary context in which Colluthus was active and argued how a more accurate consideration of this aspect contributes to a better understanding of certain tastes that are displayed in his work. The interest for visual behaviour, like that for architectural ekphraseis, for instance, fits in with the obsession of the time with anything visual, as well as with the Neoplatonic theories on eros: these aspects will be the subject of the next chapters of this dissertation.

[136] Call. *Aitia* fr. 1.3-5.

CHAPTER 2

COLLUTHUS AND HIS MODELS

The *Abduction of Helen* is a jigsaw of models interacting on a linguistic, content-based and stylistic level. While most of these models have been identified by Livrea in his 1968 edition, no work has been done to interpret how these models have been employed. Colluthus' version of the story is based on the *Cypria*,[1] with a few alternatives which are discussed in this chapter, but he also engages with Homer, Apollonius and Nonnus as his main models. My aim in this chapter is not to provide an exhaustive survey of Colluthus' sources and models, but to focus on how and why he engaged with specific models in key scenes. Modalities and objectives of Colluthus' allusive technique are discussed further ad hoc, with particular attention to Colluthus' originality and to his choices of contemporary models.

In this chapter, I have selected three scenes in which the poet draws on specific genres: the proem and the description of Paris (bucolic poetry), Eris (epic poetry), and the beauty contest with Aphrodite's speeches (rhetoric and invective), and I argue that his objective was not to fit in with his predecessors, but to create expectations in his readers to then surprise them with a twist. I employ a methodology which considers traditional epic models but also identifies allusions[2] to more contemporary poets, and in some instances offers a new reading through the key to Colluthus' poetry, irony.

My approach owes much to the theories of Fowler and Hinds in particular;[3] however, since the debate around the author's intentionality with regards to textual connections to other texts is still open,[4] rather than analysing Colluthus' engagement with the literary tradition in the hunt for poetic emulation or competition with his poetic predecessors, I aim to focus on the effects that the poet hopes to achieve in his

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1 See Ch. 2 n.8.

2 For the theory behind intertext and allusion see Fowler 1997.

3 Fowler 1997; Hinds 1998. See also Farrell 2005 and Schmitz 2007 for surveys of literary theory and the classics.

4 Farrell 2005, 98-9.

readers, and, consequently, on how an educated reader would have received such references, independently from the author's intentions. In some occasions, however, I suggest a classification of Colluthus' echoes to other texts as either citations or revisions are possible; this differentiation is in some instances possible based on a traditional analysis of the models used to either support a point (thus by quoting a predecessor as a warrant) or to disagree strongly from them, with the intention of presenting a new version of the story or to correct the model's version.[5]

This choice derives from the fact that the two main criteria to distinguish intentional from accidental references as defined by the intentionalist school of thought, i.e. the author's familiarity with his model (markedness), and the significance of the reference,[6] can only partially be applied to the *Abduction*. First, no matter how close Colluthus' text may seem to, for instance, a line of Nonnus, it can hardly be proven that he knew these texts himself. This statement may seem as an exaggeration, given that what Conte and Barchiesi define as the *modello- codice*[7] is represented, in this context, by the whole epic tradition of models ranging from Homer to Triphiodorus; however, given that we do not have any information about Colluthus' biography, we can only assume that his education would have involved first-hand reading of his models. He could have read some of the texts in the original language, some in translation, or in school, or in translinear translation. Secondly, the point on significance of the reference to another text leads to obvious questions around the perspective of such significance: is the intertextual reference significant in the eyes of the author, or in those of the reader? Again, another matter that is still open. As mentioned earlier, I chose to attempt a discussion from the reader's perspective.

1. A Bucolic Opening

The opening of Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* (lines 1-16) and the section about Paris (102-26) provide an instant bucolic feel to the readers. Literary models, content, and scenario are borrowed from the pastoral world, so that the impression from the

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5 Hinds 1998, Chapter 4; Riffaterre 1990, 73-5.
6 Fowler 1997, 19; Farrell 2005, 99-102.
7 Conte 1986, 141-51; Barchiesi 1984, 91-121.

sounds and images that we perceive in this section is unmistakably bucolic; but did Colluthus just want to paint another bucolic picture?

The proem[8] occupies the first sixteen verses of the *Abduction*, and is followed by the scene of Peleus and Thetis' wedding, including a parade of the gods and goddesses attending the ceremony (lines 20-39), and Strife's plan to take revenge on Zeus, as she was not invited (lines 40-58). Strife throws the beautiful apple into the nuptial banquet, and Hera, Athena and Aphrodite all wish to seize it (lines 59-68).

This first part of the poem (up to line 40) is structured quite closely on Apollonius *Arg.* 1.1-227: the proem occupies in both poems the first 16-17 lines; afterwards, Colluthus goes straight into the scene of the wedding of Thetis and Peleus, listing the gods attending, like in Apollonius, where the next part is occupied by the Argonauts' catalogue, with shared features that will be discussed below. Moreover, he is also involved in a banquet in *Arg.* 1.12-14 and neglects to pays his respects to a goddess (Hera), like Cheiron and Peleus do in the *Abduction* in 39-40.

Colluthus begins his poem by addressing the Nymphs directly, and asks them to tell him about Paris and the story of the abduction of Helen, which he is about to tell. The traditional incipit of an epic poem more commonly involved the Muses as the repositories of the truth:[9] this happens in many Homeric and Hesiodean *loca*,[10] and in Hellenistic and late epic,[11] as well as in Roman epic.[12] According to Giangrande,

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[8] In 1928, De Lorenzi suggested that the *Abduction*'s proem was the work of a scholar who added it to the poem after Colluthus' death. His theory was based on alleged contradictions between the proem and the rest of the poem, which pushed him to consider the *Abduction* a fragment of an unfinished poem, which explained why it is not quoted among the works of Colluthus in the *Suda*. This poem, De Lorenzi's view, was an *Antehomerica*, a work that was meant to cover the events prior to the Trojan war and stand beside Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica* and Tryphiodorus' *Sack of Ilion*, which bridged the gap between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. De Lorenzi also based his theory on two different traditions that would have been followed within the poem: the author of the proem follows Callimachus' *Aitia*, whose models are the *Cypria* and Sophocles' lost *Krisis* (this can be reconstructed through some similarities with Ovid's *Heroides* 16 and 17, and with Lucian's *Dialogues of the Goddesses*). The rest of the poem, however, does not follow Callimachus, Ovid or Lucian, but seems to follow only the *Cypria*. Livrea 1968a, XVIII-XXIII and 1968b convincingly refuted all of De Lorenzi's arguments. In particular, he attributes Colluthus' alleged discrepancies from a lost Hellenistic model to the preference for a different narrative technique, a "pittoricismo di superficie"[8] that, while being unconcerned with chronological order, favours instead a sequence of picturesque images, well-defined characters and colourful dialogues, joined by bare links. This, according to Livrea, reveals the direct influence of Nonnus on our poet, and a possible influence of pantomime (especially for the invective of Aphrodite): as we shall see later, this suggests an interpretation of the epyllion through the lens of performative poetry.

[9] Livrea 1968a, 56; Accame 1963, 257-81, 385-415.

[10] *Il.* 1.1 θεά, *Od.* 1.1 Μοῦσα, Hes. *Th.* 1 Μουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων, *Op.* 1 Μοῦσαι Πιερίηθεν, *Thebais* fr. 1 Allen θεά, *Hymn Merc.* 1 Μοῦσα.

[11] Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1.1 ἀρχόμενος σεο Φοῖβε, Nonn. *Dion.* 1.1 θεά, Tryph. 4 Καλλιόπεια, Mus. 1 θεά.

[12] Virg. *Aen.* 1.8 *Musa*, Enn. *Ann.* 1 *Musae*, 217 *Musarum*, Sil. It. 1.3 *Musa*.

Colluthus is not calling the Nymphs as witnesses of the facts, but as inspirers,[13] following a Hesiodic-Hellenistic motif: Colluthus, who extensively uses Alexandrine models,[14] confirms this with ποταμοῦ Ξάνθοιο γενέθλη (1); in fact, water was in Hellenistic times a symbol of poetry (see infra), and Nymphs are water divinities.

So why does Colluthus choose to invoke the Nymphs and not the Muses? Livrea[15] rejected De Lorenzi's interpretation,[16] which justified the unexpected invocation of the Nymphs, and not the Muses or Apollo, as the deliberate choice of a poet other than Colluthus, who was attempting to not appear too obvious. The long debate is after all superfluous, as they are not necessarily to be distinguished in this context:[17] in Lycophron 274, for instance, the Muses are called Nymphs. His choice could also confirm the bucolic nature of his opening. There is a rich tradition involving the Nymphs as the addressees of a request by the author to concede him a song, or as the recognised teachers: in Theocritus, Simichidas introduces his song by telling Lycidas how he also learnt many good songs from the Nymphs, while he was tending his cattle.[18] Virgil also asks the Nymphs to grant him a poem before he starts his song: *Nymphae (...) mihi Carmen, (...) concedite* in *Ecl.* 7.21, and they are addressed again in *Aen.* 8.71-3 *nymphae, Laurentes nymphae*, and by Statius in *Silvae* 1.5.23. Callimachus too, in *H. Del.* 109, has Νύμφαι Θεσσαλίδες, ποταμοῦ γένος, εἴπατε πατρί and 256 νύμφαι Δηλιάδες, ποταμοῦ γένος ἀρχαίοιο.

The Trojan nymphs are here the addressees of six questions posed by Colluthus (5-13):[19] they are asked to reveal Paris' plans; whence he came[20] sailing the sea; what need was there for the ships and for a herdsman to cause the turmoil; what was the origin of the feud; what was the suit; and where Paris first heard the name of Helen. Besides the traditional nature and location of this invocation, this apostrophe to the Nymphs appears more powerful than that to Dionysus in 252, not only in length (it occupies the whole premium, 16 lines), but also because it demands an active role

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13 Giangrande 1969, 149 and 1968. Livrea 1991, 562 strongly disagreed, showing that Colluthus drew his inspiration from a series of passages in Quintus.

14 Livrea 1968a, XXII.

15 Livrea 1968a, 57.

16 De Lorenzi 1928, 48.

17 For West 1966, 154-5 Colluthus' choice is another "unsuccessful experiment".

18 Theocr. 7.91-3 πολλὰ μὲν ἄλλα / Νύμφαι κἠμὲ δίδαξαν ἀν' ὥρεα βουκολέοντα / ἐσθλά. The Nymphs are also questioned by the poet in 1.65 πᾷ ποκ' ἄρ' ἦσθ', ὅκα Δάφνις ἐτάκετο, πᾷ ποκα, Νύμφαι; cf. also 1.140-1 ἔκλυσε δίνα / τὸν Μοίσαις φίλον ἄνδρα, τὸν οὐ Νύμφαισιν ἀπεχθῆ.

19 The presence of numerous questions is typically Callimachean, see *Aet.* fr. 7.19-21 and 2.86, where the Muses are interrogated by the poet durig a banquet.

20 I follow ἐξ ὀρέων, the reading of β, adopted by Livrea, Mair and Orsini.

for the Nymphs themselves. While Dionysus is simply called upon and apologized to, here the Nymphs are asked to come and to satisfy the poet's curiosity by fulfilling a number of requests. In an atmosphere of lively interaction, Colluthus bombards the Nymphs with questions, establishing from the beginning his aetiological interest, which was also confirmed by the insistence on vocabulary about the origin of the Trojan War (ἀρχεκάκων 9, ὠγυγίη 10). A close model of his proem is certainly Nonnus' proem to the *Dionysiaca*, where the poet with similar confidence demands answers from the Muses.[21] But there are more reasons why they, and no one else, are being interrogated: one is that they witnessed the events themselves: γὰρ ἐθηήσασθε μολοῦσαι (13). Thus by demanding answers directly from the eyewitnesses, Colluthus is also sealing the truthfulness of his version of the facts, but most importantly Nymphs had replaced Muses in Theocritus as privileged inspirers of pastoral song, and this is precisely what he is about to sing: a bucolic proem.

The Nymphs are also a choir, an element that fits in with the overall theatrical feel of the epyllion. Choirs and dances in fact appear widely from the beginning of the poem: see for instance the dance that the Nymphs are about to do in 4, and Apollo's entourage, a choir of Muses in 24.

So who are these Trojan Nymphs? Apart from the Callimachean model mentioned above, Quintus of Smyrna mentions them, as the daughters of river Xanthus, in three places.[22] We know that Colluthus' choice of addressing the Nymphs shows a clear intent to adhere to the bucolic tradition. Livrea also sees in Colluthus' choice to introduce the daughters of the river Xanthus (1) a possible erudite allusion to the venue where the judgement took place, as in *ET* the river is indicated as the place where the Nymphs wash their hair and adorn their bodies for the judgement.[23] However, considering Colluthus' attention to colours and hairstyles within the epyllion, the choice of ξανθός could simply be a playful reference to the blonde river;

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21 Shorrock 2008.

22 Quint. Smyrn. 11.245-6 ἐπεστενάχοντο δὲ Νύμφαι / καλλιρόου Σιμόεντος ἰδὲ Ξάνθοιο θύγατρες, "but all the Nymphs were wailing, daughters born of Xanthus and fair-flowing Simoïs", 12.459-60 ἄμφι δ' ἄρα στενάχοντο μέγα Ξάνθοιο θύγατρες / Νύμφαι καὶ Σιμόεντος, "the Nymphs, daughters of Xanthus and Simois moaned aloud", and 14.72-3 Ξάνθος ἔθ' αἱματόεντος ἀναπνείων ὀρυμαγδοῦ / μύρετο σὺν Νύμφῃσιν, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἔμπεσε Τροίῃ ἔκποθε, "Xanthus, scarce drawing breath from bloody war, mourned with his Nymphs for ruin fallen on Troy" (transl. A. S. Way).

23 See *Etym. Magn.* 715.37-39, *s.v.* Σκάμανδρος· Ξάνθος δέ, ἐπειδὴ ἐκεῖ λουσάμεναι αἱ θεαὶ ξανθὰς ἔσχον τὰς κόμας, ὁπότε Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ἦκον ἕνεκα κάλλους κριθησόμεναι; also schol. AB on *Il.* 21.1-2, Eust. 1197.49 and Wörner, *s.v.* "Skamandros" in Roscher 4, 978-9.

this suggestion is reinforced by the presence, at the following line, of πλοκάμων, the Nymphs' locks.

The scene in which the Nymphs are presented also deserves some consideration: they are on the banks of a river, playing with a ball, when they abandon their veils to prepare for a dance on the Ida (2-4). The scene contains all the traditional ingredients of other rape scenes, where girls are presented as playing or dancing or busy with other innocent activities (like picking flowers or fashioning garlands) in a *locus amoenus* (a meadow, a river or a spring), and suddenly they are raped.[24] The direct model of this passage is *Od.* 6.100-2: αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ σίτου τάρφθεν δμῳαί τε καὶ αὐτή, σφαίρῃ ταὶ δ' ἄρ' ἔπαιζον, ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι, τῇσι δὲ Ναυσικάα λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μολπῆς. "Then when they had had their joy of food, she and her handmaids, they threw off their veils and went to play at ball, and white-armed Nausicaa began to sing". The similarity of the two passages appears even more striking as in 105 the Nymphs are said to be with Nausicaa. Colluthus goes beyond Homer through *opposition in imitando.*[25] While in Homer the veils are put aside not to be an obstacle to their singing, in Colluthus the veils would serve a purpose, in holding the Nymphs' πλοκάμοι (2) while they play. What the poet is asking is that they play with their hair down, so they look most beautiful at the moment they need to inspire him, so that his poetry may also be beautiful (*remota metaphora*).[26]

a. A Poetic Manifesto

This first part of the poem, including, as we shall see, the description of Paris, includes many references to the poetics of Colluthus. The opening scene contains a number of water elements: the Nymphs are daughters of the river Xanthus ποταμοῦ (1); his sands are recalled in ψαμάθοισι (3); κελάδοντος... ποταμοῖο, the river "sounding like flowing water" (6); πόντον (7)/ἁλός (8); νηῶν (8); πόντον (9). Colluthus aims at creating a

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[24] In *h.Dem.* 6-10 Persephone is picking flowers in a meadow with the daughters of Oceanus when Zeus kidnaps her. In Moschus, *Europa* 28-36, Europa and her friends are making flower baskets and plucking flowers in a beautiful meadow (68-9) when Zeus appears in the shape of a bull and abducts the young girl. Claudian *Rap.* 2.136-141 also describes Persephone as she is fashioning flower baskets and garlands, just before she is abducted by Pluto in 204.

[25] Giangrande 1969, 149.

[26] The scene gains an additional meaning if we consider the context of the judgement of Paris. Κρήδεμνα, "veils", represent the modesty which is left behind; paradoxically, what follows is not the Nymphs being plucked away from the river, but Paris, who being taken from Troy to judge the goddesses.

picturesque scene in an impressionistic way, and for the proem the image is that of flowing water. Similarly, in *Cypria* fr. 5 Allen, Aphrodite's toilette on the Ida rich with fountains was accompanied by the Nymphs. Water is a well-known allegory for poetry, which originates from Philetas and also appears in Callimachus and Propertius.

It is possible that Colluthus also attempts here an allegoric reference to his poetry, as did Callimachus in *h.Ap.* 105-12, where he, through the voice of Apollo, expresses his taste for brief and refined poetry:

> ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὔατα λάθριος εἶπεν·
> 'οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ' ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει.'
> τὸν Φθόνον ὠπόλλων ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὧδέ τ' ἔειπεν·
> 'Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλά
> λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἕλκει.
> Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
> ἀλλ' ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
> πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.'
>
> Envy secretly said in the ear of Apollo: "I admire not the poet who does not even sing as much as the sea." Apollon kicked Envy with his foot and spake thus: "Great is the stream of the Assyrian river, but it carries on its waters much filth of earth and much waste. But the bees carry water to Deo not from everywhere, but of the trickling stream that springs from a holy fountain, pure and undefiled, the very crown of waters.[27]

Callimachus' passage recalls a debated Homeric passage, *Il.* 21.192-7, where Oceanos is said to be the father of all rivers, springs, and of the whole sea. This passage has been used allegorically by many poets to symbolize Homer (as πόντος/Ὠκεανός) versus his epigones, an image that was presumably created during Hellenistic times.[28] So when Callimachus says ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει (106), by πόντος he means Homer.

The water terminology used by Colluthus, however, is not the only element that corroborates this interpretation: κελάδοντος also suggests the idea that the poet is inviting the Nymphs to leave the loud river. Noise normally has a negative connotation when associated with the concept of epic. In the above Callimachean passage, Apollo himself explains that the river carries much filth and waste, so

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[27] Callimachus' lack of appreciation for imitators of Homer who aim to create a long epic that includes all the elements of the story, and his preference for a brief, refined and pure composition is expressed in *Ait.* 1.21-4 καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα / γούνασιν, Ἀπόλλων εἶπεν ὅ μοι Λύκιος· / ...] ἀοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅττι πάχιστον / θρέψαι, τὴν Μοῦσαν δ' ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην, "For, when I first placed a tablet on my knees, Lycian Apollo said to me: 'poet, feed the victim to be as fat as possible, but, my friend, keep the Muse thin'". See also *AP* 12.43.3-4.

[28] Williams 1978, 88-9; Giangrande 1969, 149.

Colluthus exploits this association to reinforce the idea that he intends to move away from the long and all-comprehensive epic, to favour a polished short παίγνιον. Interestingly, this word is used at line 2 with reference to the toys, undoubtedly a ball that the Nymphs leave on the shore before setting themselves to a dance, based on Colluthus' Homeric model, *Od.* 6.100-2. The word also defines light playful poems, as we know from Leon. *AP* 6.322: τήνδε Λεωνίδεω θαλερὴν πάλι δέρκεο Μοῦσαν, δίστιχον εὐθίκτου παίγνιον εὐεπίης. ἔσται δ' ἐν Κρονίοις Μάρκῳ περικαλλὲς ἄθυρμα τοῦτο, καὶ ἐν δείπνοις καὶ παρὰ μουσοπόλοις. We are aware of this also from Philetas, who titled some of his works Παίγνια.[29]

But the metaphor poetry-water was also extremely popular in late antiquity: Claudian employed it in the proem of his *Gigantomachy* (1-17), where he hopes to overcome the difficulties (of the poetic agon),[30] to drive his poem to a safe harbour, crossing the dangerous sea of the Alexandrine crowd (the judging spectators), and finally to reach the victory in his contest through the praise of his listeners. This image was then re-elaborated by Nonnus in *Dion.* 13.50-2, by John of Gaza in his ekphrasis of a cosmological painting in the baths of either Gaza or Antioch (1.16), and by Paul the Silentiary in his ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia 444-5.[31] Since Claudian is among the main models of Colluthus, as I argue more in detail over the course of this chapter, it is possible that our poet meant to allude to him here, too.[32]

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29 See also Cat. 50.1-6 *hesterno, Licini, die otiose / multum lusimus in meis tabellis, / ut conuenerat esse delicatos: / scribens uersiculos uterque nostrum / ludebat numero modo hoc modo illoc, / reddens mutua per iocum atque uinum*, "At leisure, Lycinius, yesterday we'd much fun with my writing tablets as we'd agreed to be frivolous. Each of us writing light verses played now with this metre, now that, capping each other's jokes and toasts" (transl. G. Lee).

30 Cameron 1970a, 26 n. 19.

31 Agosti 2006a, 48.

32 For convenience, I group here the main linguistic parallels that I have found between Colluthus and Claudian and that are discussed in this thesis: Coll. 82-84 Κύπρις μὲν δολόμητις ἀναπτύξασα καλύπτρην / καὶ περόνην θυόεντα διαστήσασα κομάων / χρυσῷ μὲν πλοκάμους, χρυσῷ δ' ἐστέψατο χαίτην – Claud. *Gig.* 45-46 πρῶτα μὲν ἁπλεκέας περόνῃ διεκρίνατο χαίτας /καὶ πλεκτὰς ἔσφιγξε πυκνοῖς περιπλέγμασι σειράς and *Rapt.* 2. 15-17 [Venus] illi multifidos crinis sinuator in orbes / Idalia divisus acu; sudata marito / fibula purpureos gemma suspendit amictus; Coll. 91-93 καὶ πολέμων βασίλειαν ἀεὶ καλέουσιν Ἀθήνην·/μούνη Κύπρις ἄναλκις ἔην θεός. οὐ βασιλήων / κοιρανίην, οὐκ ἔγχος ἀρήιον, οὐ βέλος ἕλκω – Claud. *Gig.* 43 Κύπρις δ' οὔτε βέλος φέρεν, οὐχ ὅπλον; Coll. 94-98 ἀλλὰ τί δειμαίνω περιώσιον ἀντὶ μὲν αἰχμῆς / ὡς θοὸν ἔγχος ἔχουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων; / κεστὸν ἔχω καὶ κέντρον ἄγω καὶ τόξον ἀείρω, / κεστόν, ὅθεν φιλότητος ἐμῆς ἐμὸν οἶστρον ἑλοῦσαι πολλάκις ὠδίνουσι καὶ οὐ θνήσκουσι γυναῖκες - Claud. *Gig.* 50-54 εἶχε γὰρ αὐτή / πλέγμα κόρυν, δόρυ μαζόν, ὀφρῦν βέλος, ἀσπίδα κάλλος, / ὅπλα μέλη, θέλγητρον ἐν ἄλγεσιν· εἰ δέ τις αὐτῇ / ὄμμα βάλοι, δέδμητο, βέλος δ'ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐάσας / ὡς Ἄρεως αἰχμῇ τῇ Κύπριδος ὄλλυτο μορφῇ; Coll. 155-58 ἡ δ' ἑανὸν βαθύκολπον, ἐς ἠέρα γυμνώσασα/κόλπον, ἀνῃώρησε καὶ οὐκ ἠδέσσατο Κύπρις. / χειρὶ δ' ἐλαφρίζουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων / στῆθος ἅπαν γύμνωσε καὶ οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν – Claud. *Gig.* 48-50 λεπτὰς δ'εὐανέμοιο ῥαφὰς χαλάσασα χιτῶνος / πορφυρέων οὐ κρύπτεν ὑφ' εἵμασιν ἄνθεα μαζῶν, / ὄμματος εἰς ἄγρην ὡπλισμλενη; Coll. 173 ἀγλαΐην ἐφίλησα, καὶ ἀγλαΐη με διώκει – Claud. Gig. 43-44 ἀλλ'ἐκόμιζεν / ἀγλαΐην; Coll. 18 νυμφιδίων Πηλῆος

It remains to be considered to which sort of playfulness Colluthus is referring. Colluthus may be alluding to the lack of a propagandistic purpose in this particular poem, composed simply to entertain readers. Παίγνια represents therefore another element to Colluthus' programmatic incipit; by choosing this technical word, he is aligning his poetry to Callimachus' ideals of playfulness, brevity, and sophistication. Moreover, by indirectly echoing the *Aitia*'s proem, where Apollo visists Callimachus while he is scribbling on his tablets, the reader is also reminded of Hesiod's *Theogony* proem 23-4: αἵ νύ ποθ' Ἡσίοδον καλὴν ἐδίδαξαν ἀοιδήν, ἄρνας ποιμαίνονθ' Ἑλικῶνος ὕπο ζαθέοιο. "And one day they taught Hesiod a glorious song while he was grazing his lambs under holy Helicon". This implicit connection serves the additional purpose of a conceptual link to the next part of the poem, in which we meet another shepherd, Paris.[33]

Colluthus has made a statement of his poetics (he intends to follow Callimachus), and the nature of this poem (light, playful, and entertaining). He now moves on to describe his role as a poet.

At lines 7-8, Paris sets out to sail a sea he was not accustomed to, although ignorant of matters of the sea: ἀθεα πόντον ἐλαύνων ἀγνώσσων ἀλὸς ἔργα. Colluthus here echoes Hes. *Op.* 649: οὔτε τι ναυτιλίης σεσοφισμένος οὔτε τι νηῶν. He returns to the concept of the "works of the sea" also in 230 ὅσοις ἁλὸς ἔργα μεμήλει, "those who care about the works of the sea": he could be playing again with a double meaning, and indirectly referring to Homer's imitators, who keep writing long epics.

However, the verse has been interpreted[34] as a possible reference to the poet himself. Like ignorant Paris, Colluthus introduces himself as about to embark on

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ἀειδομένων ὑμεναίων - Claud. *Rapt.* 2.230-31 nimbis Hymenaeus hiulcis / intonat; Coll. 33 γάμων ἀδίδακτος Ἀθήνη – Claud. *Rapt.* 1.35 inpatiens nescire torum and 3. 279 quid vos experts thalami; Coll. 40 οὐ Χείρων ἀλέγιζε καὶ οὐκ ἐμπάζετο Πηλεύς - Claud. *Rapt.* 1.137-138 despexit utrumque / flava Ceres; Coll. 53 ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα- Claud. *Rapt.* 1.69 quamvis indocilis flecti; Coll. 103 λιθοκρήδεμνον - Claud. *Rapt.* 2.179 scopulis inclusa; Coll. 126 μήπω πολλὰ καμοῦσαν ἐὴν ἀνέκοπτεν ἀοιδήν - Claud. *Rapt.* 1.271-72 inperfectumque laborem / deserit; Coll. 167 οὔπω μῦθος ἔληγεν - Claud. *Rapt.* 1.117 vix ea fatus erat; Coll. 318-20 νὺξ δέ, πόνων ἄμπαυμα μετ' ἠελίοιο κελεύθους, / ὕπνον ἐλαφρίζουσα, παρήορον ὤπασεν ἠῶ / ἀρχομένην - Claud. *Rapt.* 3.404-405 iamque soporiferas nocturna silentia terries / explicuere vices; Coll. 338 γόον εὔνασον - Claud. *Rapt.* 2.277 desine funestis animum ... curis; Coll. 340-41 γοεραὶ μὲν ἐπιμύουσιν ὀπωπαί, / πυκνὰ δὲ μυρομένης θαλεραὶ μινύθουσι παρειαί - Claud. *Rapt.* 3.311 largis nunc imbribus ora madescunt.

[33] Another interesting element that fits into the poetic manifesto as a technical word is line 4 ἐς χορὸν Ἰδαίῃσιν ἐπεντύνασθε χορείαις, where Colluthus clearly echoes Call. *h.* 2.8 καὶ ἐς χορὸν ἐντύνασθε, and Mosch. 30, an expression considered equivalent to the almost technical χορὸν ἀρτίζεσθαι ἱστάναι; Bühler 1960 n. *loc.*, and Kotseleni 1990, 115.

[34] Kotseleni 1990, 68.

poetic composition, a challenging task at which he is inexpert. It is possible that Colluthus simply wishes to appear humble about his art. This would be surprising based on the following consideration. The epyllion is not listed among the works ascribed to him in the *Suda*, in all probability because the compiler was not aware of the poem, as Weinberger and Livrea believe,[35] probably due to a separate transmission of the poem. However, the *Abduction of Helen*'s popularity must have been greater than that of his other poems, if we go by the extant manuscripts that transmitted the text to us. Following this logic, we could speculate that this was Colluthus' last or one of his last works, the one that best showed off his poetic skills, erudition and knowledge of earlier poetry. If we go by this hypothesis, the self-portrait as a poet about to explore a territory that he was not used to, ignorant of its "works", seems rather challenging to accept. Colluthus had both the experience and the knowledge of poetic composition. He had already sailed in the sea of poetry (as the *Suda* tells us of works in hexameters), and he was very knowledgeable about its rules (as we assume from both previous epic work and the erudition that he shows in the epyllion itself).

So, in what other way could Colluthus refer to himself, when he alludes to his inexperience and ignorance? Comparing the epyllion itself to his other works, the nature of the topic itself could not have represented the key point: the *Calydoniaca*'s topic is the mythological story of Meleager, and the *Persica* with all probability had for its subject Anastasius' Persian wars, so the poet could not have been alluding to a completely new theme that he had never dealt with before. Meter also does not answer the question, as it is reasonable to presume that the *Calydoniaca* and the *Persica*, as well as the ἐγκώμια δι' ἐπῶν, were also written in hexameters. Colluthus could have meant that for the first time he was approaching a παίγνιον, a light poem for entertainment purposes, rather than a politically involved poem with propagandistic objectives. In fact, in the *Calydoniaca* the poet may have used the story of Meleager's wild boar hunt to celebrate the emperor's achievements, and since the *Persica* and the encomia were clearly composed for propaganda purposes, it seems fair to suggest that the *Abduction* does not share the same function. The epyllion shows off Colluthus' erudition, fine taste, and knowledge of poetry, and also aims at making its

[35] Livrea 1968a, XIV.

readers (or audience) smile. Political references are replaced by ironic portraits and unexpected scenes,[36] ensuring that the poem's spirit is playful and light.

b. The Introduction of Paris

The bucolic feeling continues in this first part of the proem as the narration moves on to give a first sketch of Paris. The very first words that refer to Paris in the epyllion are θεμιστοπόλοιο νοήματα μηλοβοτῆρος (5), "the counsels of the shepherd judge". The representation of Paris as a shepherd is quite consolidated[37] in literature and in figurative arts, so this characterization does not come as a surprise. Νόημα is an interesting word choice here, as it conveys the idea of perception, as well as that of planning; later on we will see that Paris rushes to hand the apple over to Aphrodite, smitten by her beauty and by the sight of her naked chest. His decision is solely based on what he sees, the nudity of Aphrodite versus the non-nudity of Hera and Athena, so the lexical choice seems appropriate in this case, where Colluthus is possibly anticipating how the course of events will evolve later in the story.

It also seems quite ironic that Colluthus describes Paris as θεμιστοπόλοιο (5), as θέμις is normally associated with Zeus.[38] The line acquires an even more humorous meaning when, at the end of the verse, we realise that Colluthus is extremely keen to discover the counsels of a μηλοβοτήρ, a judge-shepherd, not Zeus'. Μηλοβοτήρ, moreover, a Homeric hapax[39] also used by Nonnus[40] and Apollonius,[41] seems to be a

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36 Such as Paris' toilette before his meeting with Helen, or Aphrodite's invective to Athena.

37 *Il.* 24.29, Pind. fr. 6 a Snell-Maehler, Bion 2.10, Virg. *Aen.* 7.763, Ovid. *Her.* 5 and 16, Luc. *Dear. Iud.* 5: οὐχ ὁρᾷς βοίδια κατὰ τὸν ἐμὸν οὐτωσὶ δάκτυλον ἐκ μέσων τῶν πετρῶν προερχόμενα καί τινα ἐκ τοῦ σκοπέλου καταθέοντα καλαύροπα ἔχοντα καὶ ἀνείργοντα μὴ πρόσω διασκίδνασθαι τὴν ἀγέλην; "don't you see the tiny cattle over here in the direction of my finger, coming out from among the rocks, and someone running down from the cliff, holding a crook and trying to prevent the herd from scattering out ahead of him?" (transl. A. M Harmon); Lyc. 91 Καὶ δή σε ναύτην Ἀχερουσία τρίβος καταιβάτις πύγαργον οὐ πατρὸς κόπρους στείβοντα ῥακτῶν βουστάθμων ξενώσεται,ὡς πρόσθε κάλλους τὸν θυωρίτην τριπλαῖς, "And you, betrayed sailor, the downward path of Acheron shall receive, walking no more the stables of thy father's rugged steadings, as once when you were arbiter of beauty for the three goddesses"; Christod. 219: ὁ βουκόλος. Colluthus and Christodoros depend on Nonn. *Dion.* 10.312 τηλίκον ἔλλαχε κάλλος ὁ βουκόλος, ὃν σὺ τραπέζῃ and 15. 308 ἃ πόσα Δάφνις ἄειδεν ὁ βουκόλος· ἀμφὶ δὲ μολπῇ, which are based on Theocr. 6.1 Δαμοίτας καὶ Δάφνις ὁ βουκόλος (Tissoni 2000a, 177).

38 *Il.* 16.384-93, where Zeus' concern for mortals' rejection of justice is described through its graphic consequences, and 13.4-9, where the father of the gods turns his gaze from the fighting Achaeans to peaceful people like the Musoi, showing that justice is the main driver of his decisions (Constantinidou 1994, 14 and Lloyd-Jones 1983, 1-27); Hes. *Op.* 9 κλῦθι ἰδὼν ἀίων τε, δίκῃ δ' ἴθυνε θέμιστας τύνη· "you, who see and listen, pay attention to me, and with just right make judgments straight": here, the poet invites the Muses to sing the praises of Zeus, the sole administrator of justice.

39 *Il.* 18.529; *h.Merc.* 286.

40 Nonn. *Dion.* 5.121; 41.26; 45.160.

favourite of Colluthus, as he uses it again to refer to Paris in 158. The word involves a word game in itself, as μῆλον can mean sheep or goat, but also apple and breasts; thus the word can work as "sheep-tender" or "feeder", as well as "breast-tender" or "feeder".

With ἀγνώσσων ἁλὸς ἔργα (8), Colluthus may also be alluding to Paris' ignorance, and not only in matters of the sea,[42] but also with regards to his lack of education. This would fit in well with the overall portrait that the poet gives us of Paris, a suitably dressed shepherd (108-9), unaware of justice (11), scared (δειμαίνοντα 127), and who is mainly associated by Hermes with making cheese (γαῦλον ἀπορρίψας 128). As in Eur. *IA* 573-89, Paris is a weak judge because of his lack of education. Aphrodite's prize then made him greedy. Meeting Helen meant he became possessed by eros, and, finally, their affair leads to strife and to the Trojan War. Paris' ignorance may thus be considered as the cause of the feud: if Zeus had given the task to judge the three goddesses to somebody more educated, perhaps Aphrodite's seductive means would not have been as effective as they proved to be with a naive shepherd.

Colluthus continues and expands on the description of Paris at lines 102-26, where Paris is presented as a fully kitted bucolic character: already a shepherd (μηλοβοτῆρος 5, βουκόλος 10 and 88, νομεύς 11), and unaware of the business of the sea (8), his character is now defined as tending to his father's flock (104),[43] busy with pastoral duties (105-7), dressed in proper pastoral attire (108-10), a maker of music for Pan (111-21), busy making cheese (128); finally, he awards Aphrodite a lovely fruit (130), which is more a pastoral prize than the golden apple of the myth.[44]

Before beginning the description of Paris, Colluthus sets the scene at the feet of Mount Ida (102).[45] In line with the bucolic framework, Paris is first described as

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41 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 2.130 and 165, as noted by Giangrande 1969, 149.

42 This is why he rushes to offer sacrifices on the shore prior to his departure (Giangrande 1969, 152).

43 In *h.Aphr.*, Anchises, too, is found by Aphrodite while tending flocks: 54-5: ὃς τότ' ἐν ἀκροπόλοις ὄρεσιν πολυπιδάκου Ἴδης / βουκολέεσκεν βοῦς, "Anchises who was tending cattle at that time among the steep hills of many-fountained Ida".

44 Harries 2006, 541.

45 Colluthus differs here from Ovid (*Her.* 16.53-4 *est locus in mediis nemorosae vallibus Idae / devius et piceis illicibusque frequens*, and in *Ars* 1.684 *colle sub Idaeo*) and Lucian (*Dear. Iud.* 5 μὴ πρὸς ἄκρῳ τῷ ὄρει, παρὰ δὲ τὴν πλευράν), according to whom the contest took place on the top of Ida. The expression ἔνθα λιθοκρήδεμνον ὑπὸ πρηῶνος ἐρίπνην (103) derives from Nonnus *Dion.* 14.381-3, and 18.61, but Colluthus could be alluding to Claud. *Rapt.* 2.179 *scopulis inclusa.* The attempt of Montes Cala 1987-88, 109-112 to restore and justify the *lectio difficilior* based on β, Ἰδαίης

tending to his father's flock (κουρίζων ἐνόμευε Πάρις πατρώια μῆλα 104), as the shepherd Hymnus in Nonn. *Dion.* 15.206, and the Cyclops in *Od.* 9.127. The choice of κουρίζων reminds us of Zeus again, like θεμιστοπόλοιο, as he is thus described by Apollonius when, still a child, he used to inhabit the Diktaion cave in *Arg.* 1.508 and 3.134.

Paris' duties as a shepherd involve separating the bulls from sheep (105-7). Colluthus' model for these lines is *Od.* 4.411-13, where Eidothea, Proteus' daughter, reveals her father's habits to Menelaus as she suggests that he hide among the seals in her father's cave, in order to find out from Proteus the reason that is preventing their return: φώκας μέν τοι πρῶτον ἀριθμήσει καὶ ἔπεισιν· αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν πάσας πεμπάσσεται ἠδὲ ἴδηται,λέξεται ἐν μέσσῃσι, νομεὺς ὡς πώεσι μήλων, "first of all he will go among his seals and count them, but after he has reviewed them all and noted their number, he will lie down in the middle of them, like a herdsman among his sheep". The choice of this model seems meaningful as Paris and Proteus shared a connection with Helen: the first kidnaps her from Sparta, the other, according to the tradition transmitted by Stesichorus and Euripides in the *Electra* and *Helen*, keeps her with him in Egypt, while the *eidolon* is at Troy. Colluthus borrows from this passage πεμπάσσεται (πεμπάζετο 106) and πώεσι μήλων (πώεα μήλων 107).

The mixed nature of Paris' flock (bulls and sheep) has attracted some interest. Colluthus uses the word μῆλα with a different meaning,[46] so in 104= flocks, and here in 107= sheep.[47] The obvious model for this line is Nonn. *Dion.* 18.94 ταύρων ζατρεφέων ἀγέλην καὶ πώεα μήλων "a herd of fat bulls and a flock of sheep" and Colluthus' line also echoes Claudian again, in *Rapt.* 1.262-3 *vitales utrimque duas, quas mitis oberrat*

τρικάρηνον ὑπὸ πρηῶνα Φαλάκρης, "at the feet of a cliff, the peak of Phalacra, for the dances on Ida", did not find much consensus. Colluthus may be reminiscing about Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1.581: Πηλιάδας δὲ παρεξήμειβον ἐρίπνας, "the heroes sailed along the cliffs of Pelium": here, the first places that the ship Argo sails along are listed very quickly and with an embryonic tendency to "paesaggio interiorizzato" (Paduano 1986, 159). The choice of ὑπερέδραμον somehow contrasts with this dramatic context: in Theognis 1.620 the verb is used to overcome poverty, and it is generally used for metaphorically defeating hardship, never for "run over or surpass" a landmark in a geographic context (*LSJ*, 1869): Colluthus may be ironic, as in this case Hermes and the goddesses have just "overcome" the peak of the mountain, while the reader would expect some form of hardship. Colluthus derives the expression ἐπὶ προχοῇσιν ἀναύρου (105) from Mosch. 31 ἢ ὅτε φαιδρύνοιτο χρόα προχοῇσιν ἀναύρων, "whenever she washed her body at the streams of the river", since this passage (line 30) was also the model for Colluthus' line 4 (Livrea 1968a, 118-9). Moschus in his turn depends on Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.67, where Jason crosses the river Anauros, ἐξότ' ἐπὶ προχοῇσιν ἅλις πλήθοντος Ἀναύρου; see also 1.8.

[46] Like οἰοπόλοισιν, meaning "pastoral" in 15 and "lonely" in 357, and ἤθεα, in 11 "familiar place, home", in 115 "costumes".

[47] As Livrea 1968a, 121 highlights, the distinction between ταύρων= ox/bulls and μήλων= sheep is underlined by the anaphora.

temperies habitanda viris, "on either side lay two habitable zones, over which ranged a temperate mildness suitable for men to live in". However, here the first questions about Paris' credibility as a shepherd arise: Paris is a herdsman of sheep and goats, as well as bulls (105, 113, 116), but nowhere else is he portrayed as a βουκόλος of bulls.[48] Magnelli agrees with Harries on Colluthus' lack of concern with harmonising Paris to the bucolic utopia:[49] Harries interpreted this apparent negligence as the poet's intention to create a bucolic impression that did not need to be precise. However, he accepts Fantuzzi and Williams's suggestion that this passage may echo the strange mix of animals that Theocritus' Cyclops boasts of owning (11.34).[50]

It is possible that, as suggested by Williams,[51] ταύρων is used here as a synonym of βοῶν, based on Theoc. 1.21, [Theoc.] 27.48 and 71. However, precisely these two passages offer the ground for Prauscello's alternative interpretation.[52] She argues that Colluthus exploits bucolic and Homeric tradition and exegesis where he found a precedent for Paris as herdsman of bulls to evoke a web of associations that foreshadows Paris' aggressive future as rapist, but also to direct readers' expectations and shape his narrative strategies. In fact, in Theocritus bulls are among the wild and untamed animals that join the θρῆνος for Daphnis (1.71-2), and are also mentioned by him in his epitaph (1.120-1). In this passage, where cowherds, shepherds and goatherds gather around suffering Daphnis, Priapus accuses Daphnis of being δύσερως (compare Coll. 194 Δύσπαρις) for failing to seize an opportunity with a girl and thus of lowering himself to the level of goatherds, who only wish they could mount their goats (85-88). The context of this lament reveals how material wealth and amatory success depend on the size of animals you pasture. The bull is commonly found as a slang word for phallus. In Ps.-Theocritus 27, one of the very few descriptions of full satisfaction found in ancient literature, Daphnis is cast in the role of the predator, and he is tending bulls. This feature is clearly linked to his sexually predatory attitude towards Helen/Akrotime. Moreover, in *Il.* 11.385, Diomedes addresses Paris as "famous for your *keras*". Scholiasts first interpretated this as a reference to a strange hairstyle, but thanks to Eustathius we know that, on the basis of a passage of Archilocos,[53] either

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48 Prauscello 2008, 183 and 189 n. 73; Magnelli 2008, 155.
49 Magnelli 2008, 155, Harries 2006.
50 Hunter 1999 on Theoc. 11.34.
51 Magnelli 2008, 169 n. 33.
52 Prauscello 2008, 183-5 and 190 n. 85.
53 Arch. fr. 247 W^2.

Aristotle or Aristophanes of Byzantium read into this a reference to Paris' vaunts of sexual prowess.

While I accept the validity of the sexual allusions, and Colluthus' aim to guide his reader's expectations, I would stretch this further and argue that the poet's ultimate objective might be, once again, to surprise his readers by failing to fulfil those expectations, and instead providing a new twist, i.e. that Paris' identity is not that of a lover/rapist, either. If it is true that everything leads readers to expect a highly sexual character and a lover, it is also true that Paris' identity as a lover is questionable. In fact, when later Athena offers courage to Paris (145), a skill that he definitely needs, and that does not belong to the bucolic world,[54] ironically he turns it down. Then, Hera wonders what use battles are to a king (150): this sounds very odd in Homer's world. Finally, when Aphrodite manages to convince Paris through erotic promises, his evolution into the new role (lover) is revealed. It looks as if Colluthus were making Paris regress back (rather than evolve) to his Homeric role: a cockscomb, a woman-crazy man, a seducer,[55] as also confirmed by Ovid, who, in *Her.* 17.253-4, defines his job specification: *tu, Pari, semper ama.* Our Paris, again, at first glance seems to fit into this characterization as a lover:[56] he cannot wait to get his prize (167) and burns with desire after the idolized Helen (193), but his credibility as a character who is the prey to eros (ἱμείρων δ' ὑπ' ἔρωτι 193) is null compared to that of Helen, who ticks all the boxes of erotic characterization.[57] He does not present any symptom of eros, he fails to show any emotions at the sight of Helen, he does not comment on her beauty, he does not correspond her signals (see Chapter 3 for further discussion on this).

Colluthus now proceeds to describe Paris' pastoral attire, with a goat's skin hanging behind him and a crook (108-110), modeling his shepherd on Lycidas from Theocritus 7.15-19:

> ἐκ μὲν γὰρ λασίοιο δασύτριχος εἶχε τράγοιο
> κνακὸν δέρμ' ὤμοισι νέας ταμίσοιο ποτόσδον,
> ἀμφὶ δέ οἱ στήθεσσι γέρων ἐσφίγγετο πέπλος
> ζωστῆρι πλακερῷ, ῥοικὰν δ' ἔχεν ἀγριελαίῳ

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54 Harries 2006, 541-2.

55 *Il.* 3.39 = 13.769 Δύσπαρι εἶδος ἄριστε γυναιμανὲς ἠπεροπευτά.

56 For Magnelli 2008, 154-5, Paris' character is all about sex, in line with the Homeric model.

57 I disagree on this point with Paschalis 2008, 142.

δεξιτερᾷ κορύναν

> In fact he had the reddish skin of a thick-haired billy-goat on his shoulders, still odorous of fresh curd; around his chest an old peplos was fastened by a wide belt, and he held in his right hand a curved crook of wild olive tree.

Colluthus again introduces his own twist to Lycidas' portrait, replacing Theocritus' male goat with a female goat. He mixes in a reference to a Nonnian passage (where the rare word δορή appears), where some of the satyrs, who were quintessentially cowards already in satiresque drama,[58] are masked in ways that remind us of Heracles: *Dion.* 14.130, οἱ δὲ δοραῖς λασίῃσιν ἐκαρτύνοντο λεόντων, "others made themselves stronger with skins of shaggy lions". He adds an allusion to Ap. Rh. 4.1347-50, where Jason reveals to his crew his vision of three goddesses dressed in goat-skins, *like maidens.* Here, the similarity of the detail of the goat's skin hanging from the neck downwards around the back and waist[59] is especially striking:

> Κλῦτε φίλοι· τρεῖς γάρ μοι ἀνιάζοντι θεάων,
> στέρφεσιν αἰγείοις ἐζωσμέναι ἐξ ὑπάτοιο
> αὐχένος ἀμφί τε νῶτα καὶ ἰξύας, ἠύτε κοῦραι,
> ἔσταν ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς μάλ' ἐπισχεδόν

> Listen, friends; as I lay in my grief, three goddesses covered in goat-skins from the neck downwards round the back and waist, like maidens, stood near, over my head.

Is there a link with the comic (and also coward) Dionysus in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, who threw a lion's skin on top of his tunic? Interestingly, the word ὀρεσσαύλοιο, used by Colluthus as a variation on Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.33 (on which see below), is used by Nonnus in *Dion.* 24.130, in a passage where the Bassarids act as make-do lionesses: Βασσαρίδων δὲ φάλαγγες Ἐρυθραίῃ παρὰ λόχμῃ σκύμνον ὀρεσσαύλοιο τιθηνήσαντο λεαίνης "in the Eritrean woods troops of Bassarides breastfed the cubs of a mountain lioness".[60]

But is our Paris really dressed as a shepherd? All these passages that our poet is alluding to seem to refer to people in disguise or pretending to be somebody else: Colluthus is ironically dressing Paris in the standard bucolic uniform, but he does not really believe himself (nor do his readers) that he is actually a shepherd. In other words, he is playing with the genre in a subtle way that educated readers would have

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58 Eur. *Cycl.* 596 and 642.

59 Herodotus in 4.189 speaks of goat-skin cloaks and how the Greeks borrowed that style from the Libyan women.

60 Nonnus uses the same word also in 14.378, where a bacchant grabs the skin of an enraged bull and skins him. In Eur. *Cycl.* 330 δοραῖσι θηρῶν σῶμα περιβαλὼν ἐμὸν "I wrap my body in the skins of beasts"- during the Cyclops speech to Odysseus about his lack of respect for Zeus.

understood, and he is dressing up his character as a shepherd, while from the rest of the story and from earlier tradition readers would have known that he is actually a coward, a non-achiever, and, at least in this poem, not even a proper lover. Thus, while the passage first brings Lycidas to mind, a closer reading reveals that Colluthus' Paris is only dressed up as a shepherd, but he is actually a fake.

This impression is corroborated by the images that the word χίμαιρα inevitably – as it appears only once in Homer, *Il.* 6.181 - evokes. The Chimaera, a polymorphic creature that is many animals, πρόσθε λέων, ὄπιθεν δὲ δράκων, μέσση δὲ χίμαιρα, "was lion in the front part, a snake in the rear part, and a goat in the middle", where the lion may be a reference to Heracles, the snake to Cadmos,[61] and the goat would represent our link to Colluthus' passage. The Chimaera was one of the monsters that Bellerophon was sent to defeat by Proteus. This myth has interesting connections not only with Heracles' myth (the Nemean lion killed by Heracles was the son of Chimaera), but also with Jason's, as well noted by Hunter:[62] both Proteus and Pelias try to eliminate the better man from their kingdom, employing similar instruments (the Chimaera and the fire-breathing bulls of Aietes). After the successful completion of the tasks, both Bellerophon and Jason receive what they wanted (in Bellerophon's case, half of Iobates' kingdom, and in Jason's case, the Golden Fleece), and marry the kings' daughters (although only Iobates gives his consent to marriage).

Let us now consider Paris' pastoral crook.[63] Readers continue to be reminded of Heracles by καλαῦροψ (110), which, like the adjective ποιμένιος, is a rare word,[64] and brings to mind two passages in particular: first, Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.33, on which Colluthus

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61 Who, in Nonn. *Dion.* 2, dresses up as a pipe-playing shepherd to enchant Typhoeus - this scene is also a model for Colluthus when he later speaks of Paris playing the pipe.

62 Hunter 1988, 448-9.

63 There is debate about the reading ἀπέκειτο (accepted by Mair, Livrea and all other editions) which implies that the pastoral crook was laid aside (as Paris' hands were busy with the pipe that he is playing as he walks), but Giangrande 1969, 150 supports ὑπέκειτο, which would imply that his crook was tied to his belt and thus lay beneath his shepherd's skin (Kotseleni 1990, 188). Livrea disagrees with the mss. version as he interprets it as *humi iacebat pedum,* and defends his position highlighting Colluthus' intention to present Paris more as a singer than a shepherd (Livrea 1991, 564).

64 It is used only once by Homer in *Il.* 23.845: ὅσσόν τίς τ' ἔρριψε καλαύροπα βουκόλος ἀνήρ, "how far as a cattleman throws his crook". However, it appears in Nonn. *Dion.* 15.349, where the shepherd Hymnus asks Nicaea not to put his pastoral crook on his grave, but narcissus flowers; in 16.317, where a satyr invites Pan to become a vine-dresser and quit his pastoral crook; in 15.208, where Hymnus holds a crook in his hands; in 23.158, where some of the Telchines lead a bull with a pastoral crook; in 43.216, where Pan hits the sea with his pastoral crook.

introduces a twist[65] by replacing ὀριτρεφέος with ὀρεσσαύλοιο: ὁ δ' ἐρεμνὴν δίπτυχα λώπην αὐτῇσιν περόνῃσι καλαύροπά τε τρηχεῖαν κάββαλε τὴν φορέεσκεν ὀριτρεφέος κοτίνοιο,"[Amycus] threw on the floor his dark cloak, double fastened by buckles, and his rough crook, made of mountain olive, which he used to carry around".[66] Secondly, [Theocr]. 25.207-9 also shares much with Apollonius' passage, where Heracles is telling Augeas' son Phyleus about his slaying of the lion of Nemea: ἑτέρηφι δὲ βάκτρον εὐπαγὲς αὐτόφλοιον ἐπηρεφέος κοτίνοιο ἔμμητρον, "and in the other hand a sturdy crook, made, without peeling or pithing, of a shady wild-olive": here βάκτρον, a synonym of καλαῦροψ, is used.

The image of the pastoral crook is also widely exploited with sexual allusion in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*: in 1.79-83, a curious simile of Eros (who is leading Zeus as the bull who kidnaps Europa) as a cattleman, he uses his bow like a pastoral crook and drives Zeus towards the marine pastures of the sea:

> τιταινομένοιο δὲ ταύρου
> βουκόλος αὐχένα δοῦλον Ἔρως ἐπεμάστιε κεστῷ
> καὶ νομίην ἅτε ῥάβδον ἐπωμίδι τόξον ἀείρων
> Κυπριδίῃ ποίμαινε καλαύροπι νυμφίον Ἥρης
> εἰς νομὸν ὑγρὸν ἄγων Ποσιδήιον·
>
> While the bull hurried, Eros like a cowherd whips his neck enslaved by the girdle, and, carrying the bow on his shoulders like a pastoral crook, he leads Hera's groom with this Cypris' wand towards the wet pastures of Poseidon.

In 47.401, Ariadne, remembering her mother Pasiphae's passion for a bull, says οὐ μὲν ἐγὼ ψαύσοιμι καλαύροπος "I will not touch the pastoral crook". The most interesting parallel could be 15.285, where Hymnus, in love with Nicaea, thinks of a speech for her, where he lists shepherds who were loved by divinities such as Titonos (kidnapped by Aurora), Ganymedes (by Zeus) and Endymion (by the Moon): ῥῖπτε βέλος καὶ ψαῦε καλαύροπος, ὄφρα τις εἴπῃ· "Ὑμνου μηλονόμοιο βόας Κυθέρεια νομεύει', "Throw away your darts and take the pastoral crook instead, so that one may say: 'It is Cytherea who grazes the cows of Hymnus the cattleman'". The technique of listing previous *exempla* is used traditionally in pleas of unrequited lovers, as in Ps.-Theocritus 20.32-

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[65] Apollonius' περόνῃσι is also exploited by Colluthus at 83, but referred to Aphrodite's perfumed locks, not to a cloak.

[66] The rough appearance of Amycus (who challenges every guest to boxing with him, and kills whoever loses) contrasts with that of Polydeuces, who is wearing a rich cloak received as a gift (here the contrast is that of βία/τέχνη).

45. According to D'Ippolito there is a similarity between this list and the one Paris gives to Helen in Ovid, *Heroides* 16.197-204:[67]

> da modo te facilem nec dedignare maritum,
> rure Therapnaeo nata puella, Phrygem.
> Phryx erat et nostro genitus de sanguine, qui nunc
> cum dis potando nectare miscet aquas.
> Phryx erat Aurorae coniunx, tamen abstulit illum
> extremum noctis quae dea finit iter.
> Phryx etiam Anchises, volucrum cui mater Amorum
> gaudet in Idaeis concubuisse iugis.
>
> Just be condescending: give yourself to me and do not despise a Phrygian husband, you, girl born in the countryside of Therapne. A Phrygian and born from our same blood was he, who now in heaven with the gods mixes water with nectar for their drinks; a Phrygian was the husband of Aurora, and yet the goddess who cuts the night short stole him away; a Phrygian was also Anchises, with whom the mother of the winged Loves prides herself to have joined together on the mountainsides of the Ida!

Colluthus curiously applies this listing technique to the meeting of Helen and Paris, where love is - at least in terms of result - reciprocated, and replaces the list of shepherds with the list of Paris' ancestors (while she lists the heroes that she does know):[68] there may be a subtle game happening here, in which Colluthus uses the word "crook" to allude to Eros' power as in the bull's image. The effect is, once again, surprising, as readers find here something that they would expect in a scenario of unreciprocated love or *paraclausithyra.*

So far, our Paris is really trying to resemble a shepherd, to look like Cadmos who in his turn pretended to be a shepherd, to look like strong Heracles with his lion skin on, and to look like old-fashioned sexy Paris, too: unfortunately, a well-read reader could not be deceived, and would realise that he is none of the above, or that maybe he is a little bit of all of them.

On closer inspection, the text could offer some clues on how this bucolic renegotiation should be interpreted. The verb αἰωρέω (109), not used by Homer, is borrowed by Colluthus from Nonnus, who uses it, in *Dion.* 19.265, to describe in detail the dance of Silenus in competition with Maro on the occasion of the funeral games in

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[67] D'Ippolito 1964, 97.

[68] Gonnelli 2003, 210 n. 278 notes how the similarity with the Ovidian passage cannot prove a dependence of Nonnus from it.

honor of Staphilos. These games, as Dionysus[69] clarifies in 19.143-57, include poetic[70] and pantomimic contests: when Silenus loses, he metamorphoses into a river. The character of Proteus was traditionally associated with pantomime due to his metamorphic nature.[71] There could then be a subtle allusion to pantomime here, as we have seen above that Colluthus already alluded to Proteus in 106-7. Colluthus' use of the bucolic tradition here could be offering an artful twist to allow us to glimpse into his character a pantomime dancer, a versatile actor who is able to look like and impersonate (a multi-faceted) Paris - the shepherd.

The representation of Paris playing his reed-pipe (111-16, 123 and 125-6), alone,[72] has also raised a few questions since, as the protégée of Apollo, he traditionally plays the lyre. After the judgement, his patron goddess is Aphrodite.[73] This representation of Paris with the lyre is very common in figurative art, in the *Iliad* and in the *Cypria*, where the version given finds Paris tending to his father's flock at Hermes' arrival. In the version of the myth presented by Euripides, that of Paris exposed as a child on the Ida and living with the shepherd who ignored his origins, the representation of Paris playing a reed pipe (instead of a lyre)[74] is in line with this version of the story presented in *Hel.* 357-9 and *IA* 576-8. The reed pipe appears in figurative art only in later times: we have a Pompeian fresco[75] and a relief from the fourth century AD. Colluthus follows the literary version of the *Cypria*, but surprisingly he portrays Paris playing the pipe,[76] as per the alternative version of the myth: this seems like a contradiction, but it could be the twist that by now we would expect from our poet.

In this passage there are some more references to Colluthus' poetics which reveal his intention to be seen as an epic bard and a bucolic singer: the choice of λιγυρός and ἀοιδή (112) echoes Hesiod *Op.* 658, who speaks of a tripod that he dedicated to the Muses of the Helicon ἔνθα με τὸ πρῶτον λιγυρῆς ἐπέβησαν ἀοιδῆς,

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[69] Pantomime was associated with the cult of Dionysus and to death as a form of return to life (Gonnelli 2003, 321).

[70] Agosti 2006a, 49 contextualised this passage within the performative and agonistic dimension of late epic poetry.

[71] Gonnelli 2003, 319-25, and 382-3.

[72] Anchises was also found alone by Aphrodite in *h.Aphr.* 76 τὸν δ' εὗρε σταθμοῖσι λελειμμένον οἷον ἀπ' ἄλλων, and playing the lyre in 79-80 ὁ δὲ σταθμοῖσι λελειμμένος οἷος ἀπ' ἄλλων / πωλεῖτ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα διαπρύσιον κιθαρίζων.

[73] Rasch 1913, 50 n.4.

[74] Jouan 1966, 100, and Stinton 1965, 28.

[75] K 264 and 253 Clairmont, see Livrea 1968a, 124.

[76] The pipe, Pan's favourite instrument, according to Nonnus (*Dion.* 10.389, 17.69, 41.372-73, 42.384, 2.118, and 16.332) is once again mentioned at 115.

"where for the first time they introduced me to the harmonious song".[77] The expression is based on *Od.* 12.183 λιγυρὴν δ' ἔντυνον ἀοιδήν, where the sirens "began to sing a harmonious song". Colluthus also purposefully employs the technical expression ἀναβάλλειν μολπήν/ἀοιδήν (116) to define the beginning of the poetic singing, and certainly had in mind Christod. 130, where Stesichoros λιγυρὴν ἀνεβάλλετο μολπήν. This passage is also based on Homer, who employs ὁ φορμίζων ἀνεβάλλετο καλὸν ἀείδειν when Phemios and Demodocos start to sing.[78] Theocritus also used similar expressions related to the bards Damoetas (6.20) and Daphnis (8.71). Nonnus used the same formula when bard Leucos started his song in *Dion.* 24.242. Colluthus also employs διώκω, whose use in a musical and poetic sense is well documented.[79] At 123, Colluthus chooses another technical word, λιγαίνων, which appears only once in Homer in *Il.* 11.685 referred to heralds, but often in Nonnus, again always in singing contexts,[80] *e.g.* in *Dion.* 7.48-50 οἶδα μέν, ὡς ἐρόεις πέεται γάμος, ἦχι λιγαίνει Πανιάδος σύριγγος ὁμόθροος αὐλὸς Ἀθήνης·"I know how pleasant is a wedding in which Athena's aulos plays together with Pan's pipe", and of himself in 25.260 ἀλλὰ λιγαίνειν πνεῦσον ἐμοὶ τεὸν ἄσθμα θεόσσυτον, "so inspire my song, infuse me with your divine breath".

Paris is so wrapped up in his music that he forgets about his flock: the clausula καὶ οὐκ ἐμπάζετο μήλων (114) is the result of conflation[81] between *Od.* 20.384, ὁ δ' οὐκ ἐμπάζετο μύθων, where Telemachos does not pay attention to the suitors, and Nonn. *Dion.* 15.214 οὐ βοέης ἀγέλης ἐμπάζετο, where it is once again Hymnus who no longer cares for his flock once he falls in love with Nicaea. The typical indolence of the person in love, who loses interest in their occupation, goes back as far as Sappho,[82]

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77 Also Dion. Halic. *Dem.* 5 καὶ οὔτε τὸ λιγυρὸν ἔοικεν ἐμφαίνειν λάλον οὔτε τὸ κομψὸν θεατρικόν.

78 *Od.* 1.155 and 8.266.

79 Pind. *Nem.* 5.24 φόρμιγγ'... χρυσέῳ πλάκτρῳ διώκων, "chasing the lyra with a golden plectrum", Simon. Frag. 29 Bergk (Pind. Frag. 107a3 Snell) καμπύλον μέλος διώκων "chasing an ode of varied metre", Pratin. Lyr. Fr. 5 page μήτε σύντονον δίωκε μήτε τὰν ἀνειμέναν {Ἰαστὶ} μοῦσαν;

80 Nonn. *Dion.* 13.49, where Nonnus applies it to himself listing the leaders; in 24.230 of bard Leucos; in 25.419 of bard Amphion; in 43.392 of a wedding song sung by Galatea; in 44.12 an Amadriad is singing in honour of Dionysus; in 46.302 Apollo sings; in 47.291of Pan.

81 Livrea 1968a, 125.

82 Sapph. fr. 102 V. γλύκηα μᾶτερ, οὔτοι δύναμαι κρέκην τὸν ἴστον πόθωι δάμεισα παῖδος βραδίναν δι' Ἀφροδίταν, "Sweet mother, I am unable to weave my web: desire for a boy overcomes me at soft Aphrodite's will"; see Pattoni 2005, 253 n. 58.

and had found bucolic application[83] to besotted shepherds in Theocritus,[84] *e.g.* in 1.52-4:

> αὐτὰρ ὅγ' ἀνθερίκοισι καλὰν πλέκει ἀκριδοθήραν
> σχοίνῳ ἐφαρμόσδων· μέλεται δέ οἱ οὔτε τι πήρας
> οὔτε φυτῶν τοσσῆνον ὅσον περὶ πλέγματι γαθεῖ.
>
> He then with some stalks weaves a nice trap for grasshoppers, joining them with a reed; nor does he care as much for his wallet or for his vines as much as he enjoys his plaiting.

and again in 11.12-14, where Cyclops, in love with Galatea, forgets about his flock, and later complains about his neglected duties (73-4):

> ἀγεῖτο δὲ πάντα πάρεργα.
> πολλάκι ταὶ ὄιες ποτὶ τωὔλιον αὐταὶ ἀπῆνθον
> χλωρᾶς ἐκ βοτάνας
>
> Everything else was for him nonessential. Often sheep returned alone from the green pastures to the stable.

As other behaviours which fit in with the erotic symptomatology, neglecting the flock is also codified by the novel: in Longus, both Chloe and Daphnis lose interest in their flock as soon as they fall in love, as *e.g.* in 1.10.2: Ἡ μὲν ἀνθερίκους ἀνελομένη ποθὲν ἐξ ἕλους ἀκριδοθήκην ἔπλεκε καὶ περὶ τοῦτο πονουμένη τῶν ποιμνίων ἠμέλησεν, "[Chloe] picked stalks of asphodel from here and there and wove a trap for grasshoppers,[85] and while she was busy with this, she paid no attention to her sheep". [86] Later, in Nonnus' *Dion.* 15.207-14, Hymnus also neglects his sheep, like Anchises before him in *h.Aphr.* 77-80 (this is an interesting detail as the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* is one of Colluthus' main models throughout the epyllion):[87] νομίην ἐρατῇσι καλαύροπα χερσὶ τινάσσων εἰς βαθὺν ἦλθεν ἔρωτα καὶ

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[83] Pattoni 2005, 243 n. 34.

[84] In Theocr. 10.1-6, tireless husbandman Milon reproaches Bucaeus, who, being in love, can no longer work as hard as he once did.

[85] Obvious the Theocritean model of above mentioned 1.52-4.

[86] The topos reoccurs in 1.13.6: τροφῆς ἠμέλει, νύκτωρ ἠγρύπνει, τῆς ἀγέλης κατεφρόνει, "she did not care for food, she spent her nights awake, she did not care for her flock", and 1.17.4 Ἠμέλητο καὶ ἡ ἀγέλη by Daphnis.

[87] *h.Aphr.* 77- 80 Ἀγχίσην ἥρωα θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος ἔχοντα. / οἱ δ' ἅμα βουσὶν ἕποντο νομοὺς κάτα ποιήεντας / πάντες, ὁ δὲ σταθμοῖσι λελειμμένος οἷος ἀπ' ἄλλων / πωλεῖτ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα διαπρύσιον κιθαρίζων, "the hero Anchises who was comely as the gods. All the others were following the herds over the grassy pastures, and he, left quite alone in the homestead, was roaming hither and thither and playing thrillingly upon the lyre". There are many analogies between the circumstances of Anchises and Aphrodite's meeting in the Hymn with Paris and Helen's meeting; one of them is that like Anchises, Paris was also tending his flocks when Hermes arrived, alone, playing the lyre, and is scared at the arrival of the god.

οὐκέτι τέρπετο ποίμνῃ, εἴκελος Ἀγχίσῃ ῥοδοειδέι, τοῦ ποτε Κύπρις ἀργεννὴν ἐνόμευεν ὀρεσσινόμων στίχα ταύρων κεστὸν ἐλαφρίζουσα βοοσσόον· [...] οὐ βοέης ἀγέλης ἐμπάζετο, "while among his loving hands he held his pastoral crook, he fell in the deepest of loves, and he did not care for his flock any longer, like rosey Anchises when it was Cypris who grazed the white rows of the mountain bulls releasing her belt like a sting [...] he no longer cared for his flock".

Like Paris' other behaviours, his negligence also raises some questions about the credibility of his pastoral identity: while neglecting the flock is an acceptable behaviour in an erotic context (i.e. when the character is in love), it is certainly not acceptable in a bucolic context in which the character is simply playing music but he is not in love. In Theocritus, herdsmen take care of their flocks and care that someone else looks after them while they sing (1.14 and 3.1-5), but Paris forgets about his herd.

On his way home, Paris plays his pipe (115-210): it is the beginning of a section entirely dedicated to Paris' music. Colluthus recycles a formula from Homer (*Il.* 6.511 = 15.268: μετά τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων "to the familiar place, pasture of mares") which in the first occurrence is applied precisely to Paris, presented as a proud warrior, in contrast with Colluthus' cowardly character, and in the second example to Hector, another Homeric model of bravery.

When embraced by the magic created by Paris' enchanting music, which silences dogs and relaxes even bulls (117-21), and that only Echo responds to, readers may be reminded of a line of Triph. 477 μοῦνος ἀμοιβαίην ἀνεβάλλετο γῆρυν ἀνοίξας, where "only [Anticlus] opened his lips and tried to answer" to Helen from inside the wooden horse (Odysseus will cover his mouth and suffocate him): the allusion adds an ill-fated taste to the line. But our poet probably had in mind Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*'s passage about Icarios' death, allusions to which reoccur later in the poem, 47.177-8: μούνη δ' ὑστερόφωνος ἐμὸν κτύπον ἔκλυεν Ἠχὼ θρήνοις ἀντιτύποισι τεὸν στενάχουσα τοκῆα, "only Echo, late-resounding, heard my screams and listened to your father, responding with funeral songs".

The (un)barking dogs[88] bring us back to the bucolic framework with the allusion to Theocr. 2.35, where Simaetha prepares her spell and says that the bitches

[88] The verb is usually used for dogs (Triph. 611) or wolves (Call. fr. 725 Pf., Theocr. 1.71), Quint. 12.518, Nonn. *Dion.* 2.253. Exceptionally Apollonius refers it to lions (4.1339) and Oppian (*Hal.* 1.399) to beavers. Dion. Per. 83 and Antip. *AP* 11.31.2 also uses it for the sea.

are barking in the town, a sign that the goddess Artemis, whom she is invoking, is around. The bellowing bulls do not appear in bucolic poetry but they do in Homer, *e.g.* in *Il.* 18.579-81, σμερδαλέω δὲ λέοντε δύ' ἐν πρώτῃσι βόεσσι ταῦρον ἐρύγμηλον ἐχέτην· ὃ δὲ μακρὰ μεμυκὼς ἕλκετο, "among the first cows two scary lions held a bellowing bull; and he, bellowing loudly, was dragged".[89] I suggest that, however, Colluthus meant to allude here especially to two Nonnian passages: *Dion.* 48.790, where curiously Echo (who appears in Colluthus in 199) bellows responding to Aura's labour cries: φθόγγον ἀμειβομένη μυκήσατο δύσθροος Ἠχώ, "disharmonious Echo bellows, responding to the girl who screams loudly" (where Colluthus replaces δύσθροος with ἀντίθροος), and 45.150 ἐμυκήσαντο δὲ ταῦροι, where the miracle of Dionysus' transformation (nowhere else documented) is described (he himself bellowed like an army of nine thousand soldiers in 45.136).[90]

The silence accompanying music and nature's appreciation is popular in epic Greek poetry: Euphemia, the invitation to silence, is a ritual topos that normally preceeds the arrival or the epiphany of a god.[91] In Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, which shares many features with Colluthus' epyllion, Ceres' arrival is also accompanied by nature's silence in 1.209-13, as is Zeus' speech to Mercury in 1.84-8. However, the presence of Echo responding to Paris' music strongly contrasts with such an almost religious scenario, as it evokes four of the most violent episodes (two murders and two rapes) of Nonnus' *Dionysiaca:* in 4.327 she imitates the cries of Philomela, who had been raped and deprived of her tongue so that she could not tell her sister about the violence; in 15.389 she cries for the death of Hymnus, killed by Nicaea who had rejected him; in 47.177 Icarios tells his daughter Erigone that only Echo heard his screams while he was being killed by drunk peasants, and now she responds to her funeral lamentations; and in 48.790, as seen above, she bellowed in

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89 Also in *Il.* 21.237, about the river Scamander bellowing like a bull, and in *Od.* 10.413 of heifers bellowing.

90 This simile is a Homeric topos (Accorinti 2004, 418).

91 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 2.159-63, where nature enjoys the Argonauts' singing and lyre playing: ξανθὰ δ' ἐρεψάμενοι δάφνης καθύπερθε μέτωπα / ἀγχιάλου φύλλοις, τῇ περ πρυμνήσι' ἀνῆπτο, / Ὀρφείῃ φόρμιγγι συνοίμιον ὕμνον ἄειδον / ἐμμελέως, περὶ δέ σφιν ἰαίνετο νήνεμος ἀκτή/ μελπομένοις, "and with their blond heads crowned with laurel- the laurel that was on the shore, and to which they had tied also the ropes of ship Argo- they sang harmoniously an hymn to the sound of Orpheus'cithara, and the windless shore rejoiced at their song"; Call. *h.* 2.17-19 εὐφημεῖτ' ἀίοντες ἐπ' Ἀπόλλωνος ἀοιδῇ. / εὐφημεῖ καὶ πόντος, ὅτε κλείουσιν ἀοιδοί / ἢ κίθαριν ἢ τόξα, Λυκωρέος ἔντεα Φοίβου. "Be silent as you listen to Apollo's song: even the sea is silent, when the bards sing the cithara or the arrows, instruments of Lycoreus Phoebus"; Pind. *P.* 1.5-12; Eur. *Bacch.* 1084-5; Ar. *Thesm.* 43; *Av.* 777-8; Theocr. 2.38; Limen. *Delf. Pean.* 2.7-10 (references from Cuypers' commentary to *Arg.* 2.)

response to Aura's labour cries. Nonnus lingers in morbid details in each of these episodes: with Philomela, the gush of blood that pours from her severed tongue flows mixed with that of her lost virginity, and the tears of the girl are paradoxically responded by Echo (who in her turn has lost her voice after lamenting the death of her beloved Narcissus). After the murder of the shepherd Hymnus, killed by Nicaea, nature and the gods take part in a long funeral lamentation which is structured traditionally with refrains.[92] In the violent death of Icarios, wounds are described with an abundance of bloody images as his body lies on the dust. The tale of the rape of Aura, who, like Philomela and Nicaea, wanted to preserve her virginity, is probably the most challenging to read, as the girl not only has to suffer the violence committed by Dionysus with trickery (she drinks wine and falls asleep), but has then to deal with an unwanted pregnancy and a painful, prolonged, and unassisted labour (Artemis, who traditionally protects women in labour, is here seeking revenge[93] and thus delays the birth of the twins); the girl cries because of her physical pain as well as her misfortune, and after the birth of Iacchos she kills herself.

Echo's presence in Colluthus' passage (119) could be interpreted as ironic: the scene of Paris playing music to Pan has no violent connotation at all, unless of course we think of the outcome of the story. The allusion to Echo cannot only be interpreted as a literary cliché, but has deeper roots in her role, analogous to that of the crying figures who repeated, in traditional funeral lamentations, the words of the *princeps planctuum*, following a pre-established script for the situation.[94] Colluthus' intention was to simply build an ironic scene in which Echo is responding for once not to screams and cries, but to pipe music. Moreover, as the line brings to mind the above mentioned scenes of murder and rape, the may have intended to paint a bucolic peaceful scene, while the imagination of the reader would travel by contrast to violent scenes of the opposite nature.

Echo was also one of the nymphs loved by Pan: the fact that she is echoing music composed by Paris for Pan may also play a role. In Nonn. *Dion.* 8.24-5, heavily

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92 The obvious models are Theocritus 1.71-75, where wolves, lions and other animals cry for the death of Daphnis, Bion's *Lament for Adonis*, and the *Dead Adonis*; see Gonnelli 2003, 222-3. According to Harries 1994, 74 this is the last episode of bucolic poetry in the *Dionysiaka*: Nonnus evolves more towards a soteriological approach. For instance, Dionysus grows up only after the bucolic words/Hymnus (which at the beginning of the poem helped Cadmos to defeat Typhoeus) have failed.

93 According to Nonnus, Aura had mocked Artemis' breasts while they were swimming after a hunting session. Artemis asked Nemesis to punish her for her arrogance.

94 Bonadeo 2002, 144.

pregnant Semele, Dionysus' mother-to-be, is attracted by Pan's music to go outside and to sing along with the melodies: πολλάκι ποιμενίην ὑπὸ δειράδα θυιάδι φωνῇ Πανὶ μέλος συνάειδε καὶ ἔπλετο σύνθροος Ἠχώ, "often at the feet of hilly pastures with a possessed voice she sang along Pan's melodies, and in repeating them she became Echo". The line evokes epic singing and inspired poetry that reconnects Paris' song directly to that of Pan again (116). The presence of ἀντίθροος (119) in Colluthus may be metapoetic: like Echo, who echoes the crying and lamentation of others, so the poet echoes and responds to previous models. Also in Nonn. *Dion.* 16.334-5 Pan, in a monologue in which he blames Dionysus for using his vine to steal the virginity of any girl he fancies, complains that Echo is repeating the songs of Syrinx, who, like Echo, had rejected him: τὸ δὲ πλέον ἠθάδι μολπῇ/φθεγγομένης Σύριγγος ἀμείβετο σύνθροος Ἠχώ. "what is more, Echo responds in concord to the usual song of Syrinx". In 32.130-1, Nonnus tells of Dionysus' madness, during which he wanders in the lonely woods, where Echo stops resounding the songs of Pan, but instead repeats the discordant but dominant bellowing of Dionysus:[95] Πᾶνα δὲ καλλείψασα καὶ ὑστερόφωνον ἀοιδὴν φθόγγῳ μαινομένῳ μυκήσατο δύσθροος Ἠχώ, "abandoning Pan and his repetitive songs, Echo bellows squeaking at that maddened sound, returning a wild echo that imitates Dionysus".

Orsini was surprised that Colluthus failed to import the dramatic adjective ὑστερόφωνος, emotionally loaded as it refers to the cries of Icarios, which are heard too late by Echo, from 47.177,[96] but he fails to appreciate Colluthus' linguistic pastiche, created by mixing four Nonnian passages: he re-employs μούνη at 118 from 47.177 (on Icarios' death), and ἀντίθροος at 119 (which also echoes ἀντιτύποισι from the previous passage) from 13.414 (where the Pleiades' cries are multiplied by Echo), which also becomes his *variatio* on σύνθροος of 8.25 and δύσθροος of 48.190.

The image of the bulls bending their heavy flanks and sleeping on the green grass (120-21) appears as an interesting double allusion to Nonn. *Dion.* 48: in 260-1 it is Aura who lies down on a bush, before mocking Artemis' chest, while in 761 the adjective βαρύγουνος (often used by Nonnus),[97] is applied to heavily pregnant Aura, here in turn mocked by Artemis: ἡ πρὶν ἀελλήεσσα, πόθεν βαρύγουνος ὀδεύεις, "you, once

[95] According to Agosti 2004, 439, this is a stretched witticism.

[96] Orsini 1969, 21-2.

[97] Nonn. *Dion.* 4.306, where the Pythian oracle says to Cadmos εὐνήσει βαρύγουνον ἐὸν πόδα δαιμονίη βοῦς,"the divine cow will rest her tired feet"; full list of occurrences in Livrea 1968a, 128.

storm-swift, why do you walk on heavy knees?" The adjective curiously contrasts with *Il.* 6.505, where Paris is described as ποσὶ κραιπνοῖσι πεποιθώς, "trusting in his fast feet", and with the slow pace that Paris will demonstrate later on in the story, failing to rush to Helen. There may also be an allusion to a simile in Ap. Rh.[98] *Arg.* 1.575-8 ὡς δ' ὁπότ' ἀγραύλοιο μετ' ἴχνια σημαντῆρος μυρία μῆλ' ἐφέπονται ἄδην κεκορημένα ποίηςεἰς αὖλιν, ὁ δέ τ' εἶσι πάρος, σύριγγι λιγείῃ καλὰ μελιζόμενος νόμιον μέλος, "And as when in the track of the shepherd, their master, countless sheep, replete with grass, return to their stables, and he goes before playing a pastoral tune on his shrill reed".

Paris appears scared when, under a shelter or high-roof of trees, messenger Hermes arrives (122-4, 127). Livrea, on the basis of coherence with 17 and on its heavy presence in Nonnus,[99] prefers the reading from β ὑψιλόφοιο, "high-peaked", versus ὑψορόφοιο transmitted by M, "high-roofed"; however ὑψορόφοιο appears normally with reference to θάλαμος, and, in particular, refers to Helen's thalamus in *Od.* 4.121. This element suggests a potential ironic allusion in our poem that Livrea is not too eager to consider.[100]

Διάκτορον (123) represents possibly the only textual occurrence in which we may glimpse Colluthus' knowledge of Christian literature: the word is used with its double meaning of messenger and servant also by Nonnus, but in one case the secondary meaning from the Biblical tradition of "Jesus as παῖς θεοῦ" is added (son and servant of God), and also the tradition of the sovrapposition Hermes-Gabriel-Jesus: *Par.* 5.21-2: κοίρανε, νουσοκόμοιο φιλοστόργοιο χατίζω· οὐ γὰρ ἔχω τινὰ φῶτα διάκτορον vs John κύριε, ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἔχω.[101] Polisemantic value is added here to Homeric language. The terminology, typical of Biblical exegesis, can be applied to late antique epic, where Homeric language is enriched with new allegorical meanings. For Agosti, this can only work in a text of ideological content (such as, in fact, Nonnus'

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98 Also 4.1423-5 καὶ δὴ χθονὸς ἐξανέτειλαν / ποίην πάμπρωτον, ποίης γε μὲν ὑψόθι μακροί / βλάστεον ὄρπηκες, "first of all they grew grass from the ground, and, above the grass, tall shoots rose up", where the Hesperides take pity on the thirsty Argonauts.

99 See Livrea 1968a, 128-9. Livrea also questionably resolves (and defends, in Livrea 1991, 564, against the attack of Giangrande 1969, 151) the discrepancy between Hermes appearing alone and the plural θεῶν at 124 with printing the *reading* θέων, a hint to Paris' intention to run away in fear.

100 Livrea 1991 rejects the overall interpretation of Colluthus as "umorista" offered by Giangrande 1968.

101 Agosti 2005, 24-5.

Paraphrasis), but it cannot work in a mythological work (such as *Dion*).[102] It appears likely that Colluthus is here choosing to play with this word: the *Dionysiaka* are one of his main models, so it would seem unlikely that he did not know the *Paraphrasis* at all. However, there are no other instances in the *Abduction* of allusions to Christian words or contents, so the question remains open.

Paris' fear has been seen[103] as an ancient element derived from the *Cypria*, as it is not featured in Eur. *Andr.* 274-92 nor in Soph. fr. 511 Pearson. But Paris is quite scared in Lucian *Dear. Iud.* 5.7.10, and in Ovid. *Her.* 16.65 *obstipui gelidusque comas erexerat horror*, "I was mute, and chill tremors had raised my hair on end":[104] in this passage we also have silence, like earlier when Paris was playing.[105] The reason for this fear has been justified with Paris' awareness of the gap between his rustic origins and the goddesses', well documented in literary tradition[106] and figurative arts.[107] Giangrande, in particular, stretched the text too far in pushing Hermes to catch a glimpse of Paris' cloak, which would have smelt of cheese based on the association of ὀρεσσαύλοιο δορὴ χιμαίρης (108) with Theocr. 15-19 (see above), and to thus hint, with γαυλόν (128), at Paris' dairy activities. However, Livrea demonstrated the deficiencies of such an interpretation, which would also imply the threefold duty of shepherd, pipe-player and cheese-maker.[108] I read Paris' fear as another fitting

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102 Agosti 2005, 21-2, and 2001.

103 Stinton 1965, 11 and Livrea 1968a, 129.

104 Transl. G. Showerman.

105 Anchises also looks away from Aphrodite once he realises she is a goddess in *h.Aphr.* 181-3.

106 Eur. *Hel.* 357-59 θῦμα τριζύγοις θεαῖσι / τῶι τε σήραγγας Ἴδας / ἐνίζοντι Πριαμίδαι ποτ' ἀμφὶ βουστάθμους, "as a sacrifice to the three goddesses and to the son of Priam, who once sat on the hollows of Ida, near the ox-stalls"; *Hec.* 644 ἐκρίθη δ' ἔρις, ἂν ἐν Ἴδαι κρίνει τρισσὰς μακάρων παῖδας ἀνὴρ βούτας, ἐπὶ δορὶ καὶ φόνωι καὶ ἐμῶν μελάθρων λώβαι, "The strife the shepherd decided on Ida, between three daughters of the blessed gods, brought as its result war and bloodshed and the ruin of my home"; *IA* 180-4 Πάρις ὁ βουκόλος ἂν ἔλαβε / δῶρον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας, / ὅτ' ἐπὶ κρηναίαισι δρόσοις / Ἥραι Παλλάδι τ' ἔριν ἔρινμορφᾶς ἁ Κύπρις ἔσχεν, "whom Paris the herdsman carried off from the banks of reedy Eurotas, his gift from Aphrodite, when that queen of Cyprus entered beauty's contest with Hera and Pallas at the gushing fountain", and 1291-309 μήποτ' ὤφελες τὸν ἀμφὶ / βουσὶ βουκόλον τραφέντ' / Ἀλέξανδρον οἰκίσαι / ἀμφὶ τὸ λευκὸν ὕδωρ, ὅθι κρῆναι / Νυμφᾶν κεῖνται / λειμών τ' ἔρνεσι θάλλων / χλωροῖς καὶ ῥοδόεντ' / ἄνθε' ὑακίνθινά τε θεαῖς δρέπειν· ἔνθα ποτὲ / Παλλὰς ἔμολε καὶ δολιόφρων Κύπρις / Ἥρα θ' Ἑρμᾶς ὁ Διὸς ἄγγελος / ἁ μὲν ἐπὶ πόθωι τρυφῶσα / Κύπρις, ἁ δὲ δορὶ Παλλάς, / Ἥρα δὲ Διὸς ἄνακτος / εὐναῖσι βασιλίσιν, / κρίσιν ἐπὶ στυγνὰν ἔριν τε / καλλονᾶς,"Would that he never had settled Alexander, the herdsman reared among the herds, beside that water crystal-clear, where are fountains of the Nymphs and their meadow rich with blooming flowers, where hyacinths and rose-buds blow for goddesses to gather! Here one day came Pallas and Cypris of the subtle heart, Hera too and Hermes messenger of Zeus; Cypris, proud of the longing she causes, Pallas of her prowess; and Hera of her royal marriage with king Zeus; to decide a hateful strife about their beauty" (translations E. P. Coleridge;) also 573-89.

107 Livrea 1968a, 130.

108 Giangrande 1969,151 (reinforcing Giangrande1968, 530) and Livrea 1991, 565.

element of his cowardice; his features escape a precise definition, but his lack of drive, on the contrary, appears clearly from his weak credibility as Helen's suitor and his disengagement from her.

Paris' reaction to the sight of the gods is to lean his pipe against an oak[109] and abruptly interrupt his song (125-6).

Colluthus' most likely model is Nonn. *Dion.* 2.20-2, where Typhoeus, mesmerized by Cadmos' pipe playing[110,] suddenly wakes up from the spell and frantically searches for his thunder: ἀλλὰ καλυπτομένου νεφέων σκιοειδέι μίτρῃ ἔμπνοος εὐκελάδοιο δόναξ σίγησε νομῆος ἁρμονίην τ' ἀνέκοψεν, "but as soon as shadow of the blanket of clouds wrapped that melodious shepherd, his flute fell silent, and the harmony was interrupted". The allusion to such an important moment - that of the battle between Zeus and Typhoeus - adds to the drama of the moment and enhances Paris' fear. The idea of a choir of pipes[111] - χορὸν εὐκελάδων δονάκων (125) echoes Ar. *Nub.* 312 εὐκελάδων τε χορῶν ἐρεθίσματα, "the excitement of melodious choruses. Here, the chorus is introducing itself and singing a song about the Eleusinian mysteries, life and death: evoking Aristophanes, Colluthus may be anticipating the outcome of what is happening now.

With "the song that had not been laboured much yet" (μήπω πολλὰ καμοῦσαν ἐὴν ἀνέκοπτεν ἀοιδήν 126), Colluthus is making another clear poetic statement: "his song". As Giangrande clarified,[112] a Hellenistic debate[113] saw on the one side Hesiod and, later, Philitas, who thought that poetry came out of the inspired shepherd's lips without any intervention. The poet was, thus, a simple means of transmission: Hesiod *Th.* 39: φωνῇ ὁμηρεῦσαι, τῶν δ' ἀκάματος ῥέει αὐδή, ἐκ στομάτων ἡδεῖα "[the Muses]

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[109] The oak is normally associated with Zeus in Homer,[109] but Colluthus meant to allude to Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1.537, where the departure of the ship Argo is accompanied by the prodigy of the yelling harbour and of the speaking wood-beam that comes from Dodona, home to a famous oracle of Zeus, which Athena had put in the ship's bottom (the wood eventually speaks in *Arg.* 4.580-84).

[110] He had been summoned by Zeus to cheat Typhoeus, and dressed by Pan as a shepherd for the occasion.

[111] Χορὸν εὐκελάδων δονάκων (125) does not represent an unicum in epic poetry (Giangrande 1969, 151), as Livrea 1968a, 131 argues based on Xenoph. *Oec.* 8.20 χορὸς σκευῶν, Galen. *De us. Part.* 11.8 χορὸς ὀδόντων and Ach. Tat. 8.6.4, who defined the pipe a τῶν καλάμων χορός. ("the set of musical reeds", i.e. "set of pipes"): similar expressions are in Opp. *Hal.* 1.621: ὑψιπετὴς γεράνων χορὸς ἔρχεται ἠεροφώνων, [...] τῇσι δ' ἄρ' ἱπταμένῃσι κατὰ στίχας," there comes the high-flying choir of clanging Cranes...flying in ordered ranks".

[112] Giangrande 1969, 151, contradicting Livrea 1968a, 131, who claimed that the line could not be understood without the reference to Hesiod.

[113] Giangrande 1968, 511-33, dismantled by Livrea 1991, 564-5.

with concord voice; unwearying the sound flows sweet from their mouths". On the other hand are Theocritus and obviously Colluthus, who think that poetry is artistically elaborate and civilized. Paris is forced to stop his song at the sight of the gods, therefore his song had not been fully composed.

It should also be noted, though, that the expression πολλὰ καμοῦσαν also appears in some ironic contexts, as in Nonn. *Dion.* 25.197 (of Heracles who with "much effort"[114] kills the Lernia), and in an erotic context in Ruf. *AP* 5.75 where the poet, after much work, succeeds in conquering the girl he was after. However, once again the striking parallel with Claudian hints at the possibility that Colluthus may have read and thus may be imitating the Alexandrian poet: Proserpina, at the arrival of the goddesses, also leaves her weaving work unfinished in *Rapt.* 1.271-2: *inperfectumque laborem deserit.*

It is perhaps useful at this point to briefly survey the nature of Colluthus' connection with Claudian. I focus in the present work on Claudian mainly, as the textual references in the *Abduction* closely suggest such a connection; however, this does not exclude the possibility that Colluthus may have employed other Latin models. Above all, Catullus 64 could also have been a generic model for Colluthus, who shares an interest for allusive complexity; the possibility that our poet may have engaged with the Latin poet certainly needs further research. Over the course of this work I discuss a number of parallels which suggest a strong relationship between the two texts. Evidence of Claudian as a model, which had been cautiously hinted at by Livrea as is advocated in my work,[115] would lead to important conclusions within the broader field of the relevance of Latin models among late Greek epic poets. James and Lee, in their edition of Quintus' Posthomerica 5,[116] strongly advocate Quintus' direct imitation of Ovid, and suggest that what seem like vast discrepancies between Quintus and Virgil are not caused by the poet's ignorance of his source, but rather constitute part of a "well-considered 'political' scheme to ignore the Romans' national epic and supplant it with a Greek account of the end of the Trojan War, viewed from the Greek perspective. In this fight it may also be significant that the Roman author to whom Q. does pay tribute, Ovid, is by no means an exemplary representative of the Great

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[114] The poet is here ironic, as Heracles was helped in this task, while Dionysus acted alone.

[115] Livrea 2000.

[116] James and Lee 2000, especially on lines 180-317, 180-236, and 237-90. Their position is in line with Keydell and Erbse.

Imperial Idea".[117] The debate around the possible dependence of late Greek poetry from Latin models generated much interest and led to further scholarship. However, even Gärtner's work on Quintus' *Posthomerica* and the *Aeneid*[118] does not offer a clear position on the matter of the author's dependence on Virgil. Gärtner takes position in favour of direct influence only on two instances: in Quintus' description of the testudo used by the Greeks against the Trojans at *Posthomerica* 11.358ff. (=*Aen.* 9.505-17 and 2.440-50), and in the similarities analysed between *Posthomerica* 12 and *Aeneid* 2. For the majority of possible parallels, Gärtner adopts a much more cautious approach, either ruling out influence, or suggesting that influence is unlikely, with Francis Vian.[119]

The characterization of Paris suggests that Colluthus, like Nonnus,[120] had an impressionistic (and therefore visual) aim; the poet meant to create an impression of a bucolic scene, with as many details as possible,[121] but was unconcerned with accuracy in re-creating the stereotype. Paris' characterization as a bucolic type is not entirely convincing:[122] yes, he likes to play his pipe and looks like a herdsman, but this does not mean he shares all the values of the pastoral world, and, just to mention some of his downfalls, he pastures a strange mixed herd of sheep and bulls, plays the pipe instead of the lyre, and forgets about his flock. His characterization as the Homeric sexy Paris is equally unconvincing, as we shall see more in detail in the next chapter. The numerous allusions to other potential identities (Heracles and Jason) also do not work as credible parallels, but they rather substantiate the image of a polymorphic character, who can be many people: a shepherd, a lover, a king, a hero, a pantomime dancer.

This impression is reinforced when we compare Paris' to Jason's ambivalent character. Hunter summarized how Jason has been interpreted in many ways by scholars in the attempt to pin down the nature of his heroism: he is a quiet diplomat who works through consensus rather than force, he is a sex-appeal hero, he is an anti-

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117 Cuypers 2005, 607.

118 Gärtner 2005.

119 Maciver 2009.

120 Harries 1994, 76 interprets the death of Hymnus in Nonnus as the death of pastoral world, where wine is the new instrument replacing the pastoral music. The lack of precision, especially with regards to the instruments that Nonnus attributes to Cadmos playing in Book 2, for instance, is not relevant as the poet tries to build an impression in his reader' imagination.

121 Harries 1994, 67-9.

122 Magnelli 2008, 155.

hero, he embodies the Sceptic's "suspension of judgement", he is lifelike and credible like one of us. But for Hunter, scholars forgot that epic is not necessarily centred on a single hero, and Jason's "disappointing" heroism is the result of an incorrect analysis which invokes what the poet has chosen not to say to explain narrative. We should instead go by Aristotle's *Poetics* (where character is defined through a close connection between epic and tragedy), and thus focus on what actually happens: that is, the actions and words that are said and done, as manifestations of Jason's moral choices.[123] Instead, what seems to be the behaviour of a disappointing hero acquires meaning when read in the light of the Homeric model: for instance, Jason does not always know what to do or say (he is ἀμήχανος against πολυμήχανος Odysseus), but Homeric heroes are also affected by doubts and despair.[124] Jason sometimes needs encouragement,[125] unlike Homeric heroes, but similarly to Euripides' Orestes in the *Electra:* they both need support "to accomplish difficult but necessary tasks imposed upon them by oracular command";[126] his sexual identity may also seem jeopardized when his delight is compared to that of a πάρθενος in *Arg.* 4.167-73, but this can also be explained as a stage of his transition to manhood. [127]

From this perspective, Paris can also represent a doublet for the poet: he, too, can be the poet who is able compose in a Homeric style, as well as in bucolic, invective, and ekphrastic style. Equally, Colluthus' style and models cannot be pinned down to a particular type, but the multi-faceted nature of his writing allows for a number of readings. One further element contributes to such an interpretation: Nonnus establishes his poetic ideal of ποικιλία evoking the apparition of Proteus,[128] the ever-changing god, in *Dion.* 1.13-15: he, a symbol of the variety of his song, is also possibly alluded to by Colluthus in 109, as seen above.

A further interesting example which highlights how irony and intertextuality function together is offered by the scene in which Paris, who has been told to examine

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123 Hunter 1988, 437-8, and 442.

124 Hunter 1988, 438-42, and 447 discusses how Jason is not as bound to the security of the community and not as hungry for personal κλέος as Homeric heroes, and how his relationship with his crew is based, unlike Odysseus', on solidarity and mutual interdependence in a democratic structure.

125 Hunter 1988, 441, 445.

126 Hunter 1988, 452.

127 Hunter 1988, 451-3.

128 Proteus is challenged and defeated by the poet in a virtuosity contest.

the goddesses' faces (130),[129] scrutinizes their necks and feet instead (134-6), and ultimately ends up choosing breasts.

δεῦρο διακρίνων προφερέστερον εἶδος ὀπωπῆς
φαιδροτέρῃ τόδε μῆλον, ἐπήρατον ἔρνος, ὀπάσσαις.
τοῖον ἀνηὔτησεν· ὁ δ' ἤπιον ὄμμα τανύσσας
ἦκα διακρίνειν πειρήσατο κάλλος ἑκάστης.
δέρκετο μὲν γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων σέλας, ἔδρακε δειρὴν
χρυσῷ δαιδαλέην, ἐφράσσατο κόσμον ἑκάστης
καὶ πτέρνης μετόπισθε καὶ αὐτῶν ἴχνια ταρσῶν.

Come and choose the most perfect beauty of face, and award the most striking with this apple, a much desired fruit. This he cried. So Paris opened his kind eyes wide open, and tried to assess slowly the beauty of each. He raked the brightness of the light blue eyes, and peered at their necks adorned with gold; he marked the arrangement of each, and the shape of their heels from behind, and the flats of their feet.

The passage joins together allusions to three different encounters with the gods from Homer and the Hymns.[130] First, Paris' scrutiny of the the light of the goddesses' grey-green eyes, their necks adorned with golden jewellery, their order (*kosmos*) and the shape of their heels from behind (δέρκετο μὲν γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων σέλας) would prompt an educated reader to recall Athena's famous (and ambiguous) epithet 'bright eyes flashing'at *Il.* 1.206, and her epiphany (200). Colluthus rekindles the Homeric ambiguity around the identity of the eyes by adopting the plural, which may also echo the epiphany of Aphrodite to Helen in *Il.* 3.396-7 καί ῥ'ὡς οὖν ἐνόησε θεᾶς περικαλλέα δειρὴν στήθεά δ'ἱμερόεντα καὶ ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα, "and of course, when she recognized the beautiful neck of the goddess, and her lovely chest and her radiant eyes..."). Moreover, σέλας (134) acts as a hint to guess the next allusion: in χρυσῷ δαιδαλέην, ἐφράσσατο κόσμον ἑκάστης, καὶ πιέρνης μετόπισθε καὶ αὐτῶν ἴχνια ταρσῶν (135-6), we should see a clear reference to the encounter of Anchises and Aphrodite in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (85-92), where the goddess wears on her neck beautiful gold necklaces that sparkle like the moon (ὡς δὲ σελήνη 90). The beginning and the conclusion of the two episodes also share similarities, leading Colluthus' readers to deduce how the context will end: when he first sees Aphrodite, Anchises assesses the goddess, like Paris does in Colluthus (*h.Aphr.* φράζω 84 – Coll. ἐφράσσατο 135), and at the end Eros wins him over:

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[129] Faces are, as noted in the analysis of Aphrodite's invective, the body part that deserves most attention in the epyllion, and, as stated by both Zeus (75) and the goddess (86), the key beauty criteria.

[130] I am very grateful to Dr Ashley Clements, to whom I owe this argument, for sharing these ideas with me.

Ἀγχίσης δ' ὁρόων ἐφράζετο θαύμαινέν τε
εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε καὶ εἵματα σιγαλόεντα.
πέπλόν μὲν γὰρ ἔεστο φαεινότερον πυρὸς αὐγῆς,
εἶχε δ' ἐπιγναμπτὰς ἕλικας κάλυκάς τε φαεινάς:
ὅρμοι δ' ἀμφ' ἁπαλῇ δειρῇ περικαλλέες ἦσαν.
καλόν, χρύσειον, παμποίκιλον: ὡς δὲ σελήνη
στήθεσιν ἀμφ' ἁπαλοῖσιν ἐλάμπετο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι:
Ἀγχίσην δ' ἔρος εἷλεν, ἔπος δέ μιν ἀντίον ηὔδα:

Anchises gazed and took stock of her, wondering
At her appearance, her stature, and her shining garments;
For she wore a dress brighter than firelight,
And she had twisted bracelets and shining ear buds.
Round her tender neck there were beautiful necklaces
Of gold, most elaborate: it shone as the moon
Around her tender breasts, a wonder to see:
Anchises was seized by desire, and he addressed her face to face.

It comes as no surprise that Aphrodite was the one who was destined to have the most radiant face in the *Abduction*.[131]

The last element that is scrutinized by Paris is the heels of the goddesses' feet (135-6). At this point Colluthus brings in an allusion to another Homeric epiphany that involves (again) and thus sheds ambiguity around the identity of the goddess. In *Il.* 13.66-72, the two Ajaxes realises that he was speaking to a god, not to the prophet Calchis, exposed by his strange walk: ἴχνια γὰρ μετόπισθε ποδῶν ἠδὲ κνημάων ῥεῖ' ἔγνων ἀπιόντος 71-2– Coll. μετόπισθε ... ἴχνια ταρσῶν 136:

τοῖιν δ' ἔγνω πρόσθεν Ὀϊλῆος ταχὺς Αἴας,
αἶψα δ' ἄρ' Αἴαντα προσέφη Τελαμώνιον υἱόν:
'Αἶαν ἐπεί τις νῶϊ θεῶν οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσι
μάντεϊ εἰδόμενος κέλεται παρὰ νηυσὶ μάχεσθαι,
οὐδ' ὅ γε Κάλχας ἐστὶ θεοπρόπος οἰωνιστής:
ἴχνια γὰρ μετόπισθε ποδῶν ἠδὲ κνημάων
ῥεῖ' ἔγνων ἀπιόντος: ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοί περ

And of the two swift Aias, son of Oileus, was first to mark the god, and forthwith spoke to Aias, son of Telamon: "Aias, seeing it is one of the gods who hold Olympus that in the likeness of the seer biddeth the two of us fight beside the ships—he is not Calchas, the prophet, and reader of omens, for easily did I know the tokens behind him of feet and of legs as he went from us; and plain to be known are the gods.

The two Ajaxes are aware that they have been speaking to a god in disguise, but they are unable to learn his/her exact identity. By reminding us that, while it is easy

[131] Note the emphasis on beauty of face also in *h.Aphr.* 174-5 κάλλος δὲ παρειάων ἀπέλαμπεν ἄμβροτον, like in Coll. 87 σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων, 130, 263.

enough to detect the presence of a god through the interpretation of known signs, grasping their precise identity is not simple, Colluthus is exploiting this passage to re-propose the question around divine identity in the context of Paris' judgement, and therefore to push his readers to wonder which goddess are they to see, and which goddess is Paris actually looking at.

Colluthus interweaves references to three epic epiphanies and exploits the conventional signs that expose immortals to mortals to create the elaborated scene where Paris visually evaluates the goddesses. The aim is presumably to lead readers, by means of hints to be decoded within his text, towards this identification and towards the correct anticipation of what is going to happen next. If all the allusions are decoded correctly, readers are meant to see the goddesses in this sequence (kosmos): the sparkling eyes of Athena first (the γλαυκῶπις - γλαυκῶν βλεφάρων 134), and maybe also of Aphrodite (ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα *Il.* 3.396-7), and then Aphrodite, evoked through the allusion to her necklaces which glisten like the moon in *h.Aphr.* 90. Like Paris assesses the order (135), so should we, in conjunction with the result and the logic behind the contest, which exploits the allusion to a passage that highlights the power of Aphrodite while she is fully dressed to add emphasis to her bare breasts. It is now clear how the contest is going to end.

The end result achieved by Colluthus plays with tradition through a complex intertextual weaving, and creates for the readers associations with what happens next. The fact that Paris, through a multiplicity of textual references, eventually chooses something that he had not been told to even consider (breasts) leads to an ironic outcome that is at the same time extremely rich in imagery.

As I have argued in this section, every feature admits legitimate questions to the educated public that Colluthus was targeting; the key to unlocking the text's originality is to read these apparent discrepancies as intentional effects carefully planned by the narrator. Colluthus is not inadequate in failing to fulfil the expectations that he himself drives his readers towards: he is succeeding in deliberately leading readers to anticipate certain outcomes in order to then surprise them with something else. The choice of such a well-known story may have been instrumental to this objective, as it guaranteed high expectations in the readers in terms of content, characterization and ethical interpretation.

2. An Epic Eris

Eris' episode is introduced by the act of disrespect perpetrated by Cheiron and Peleus, who fail to honour her (39-40). Strife is then compared, in a pastoral similitude, to a heifer who wanders away from the woody pasture into the lonely bush, hit by the gadfly (41-5); her plans to disrupt the banquet are described (46-56), followed by her decision to give them up, and opt instead for the golden apples of the Hesperides, which she throws in the middle of the banquet (lines 57-63).

Colluthus makes an original choice here to allocate a fully characterised role to Eris, who is an active persona in the story and whose actions are not simply reported as the root-cause: in fact, Eris does not act as a character in any other version of the myth: in Apuleius (*Met.* 10), the scene starts with Paris on Mount Ida; Lucian (*Dear. Iud.*) starts from Zeus' handing of the apple over to Paris, to give to the fairest; Strife is not present in *Cypria*, Ovid (*Her.* 16 and 17), nor in Catullus (*C.* 64). Eris' role as the originator of the war at Troy, however, is acknowledged by the most popular tradition, followed by [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.1-2, Luc. *Symp.* 35, Libanius *Progym.* 8.50.12, and Hygin 92: according to this version, Eris came to the wedding uninvited[132] by Peleus. In an older tradition, instead (*Cypria* 1, *schol. Il.* 4, and, if Fraenkel is right with his version, Aesch. *Ag.* 681-698), Eris' role is instrumental to Zeus' plan to reduce the earth's population.

Our poet draws on many of these sources, however, in order to mould his character. While in the previous section (proem and Paris' description) Colluthus draws mostly on the bucolic genre, for Eris' scene he follows almost exclusively epic models.[133] In this section, I focus on how Colluthus employs epic tradition to create his Eris, drawing especially on the topos of the gadfly simile, and on *Iliad* 9.

a. The Gadfly

The first image of Eris that Colluthus gives to his readers is that of a heifer stung by a gadfly (41-43). Like the animal, the goddess drives herself away from the crowd, a

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[132] Other occurrences of uninvited goddesses: *Il.* 9.533-6 (Artemis), Soph. *Aj.* 176, Eur. *Hip.* 147, Apollod. 1.9.8, *schol.* Eur. *Or.* 249.

[133] This pattern is evident from the beginning of this part: in lines 39-40 Colluthus conflates Ap. Rh. 1.14, Ἥρης δὲ Πελασγίδος οὐκ ἀλέγιζεν, "although [Pelias] paid no honour to Pelasgian Hera", and 3.65 where Hera in her turn recalls that Pelias had left her unhonoured with sacrifice: ὅς μ' ὑπερηνορέῃ θυέων ἀγέραστον ἔθηκεν. Here also, the similarity with Claudian appears immediately striking: in *Rapt.* 1.137 Ceres disdains Juno and Latona.

victim of envy. The word used by the poet to describe the jealousy pangs, βαρυζήλοισιν (44), is an interesting choice as it evokes simultaneously ἔρος and ἔρις: it is used by Macedonius Consul, a contemporary of Colluthus, in *AP* 5.243.5, applied to Eros, jealous of the poet's lover, by Tryphiodoros in 49, applied to Helenos, envious of his brother Deiphobos who had triumphed over him over the hand of Helen, and by Lycophron in 57, applied to Oenone (Paris' wife): Colluthus is here pointing directly at Helen, object of ἔρος and cause of ἔρις.

The simile of the gadfly is popular in epic poetry.[134] Livrea agreed with Pfeiffer (although he had failed to report Colluthus' passage) in identifying Aesch. *Suppl.* 307-8 βοηλάτην μύωπα κινητήριον. οἶστρον καλοῦσιν αὐτὸν οἱ Νείλου πέλας, "King a sting, torment of cattle, constantly driving her on. [Chorus]: They call it a gadfly, those who dwell by the Nile" as the source of Call. fr. 301 βουσόον ὅν τε μύωπα βοῶν καλέουσιν ἀμορβοί,[135] "The ox-driving gadfly, which the herdsmen call the goad" and of the motive overall.[136] However, the origin of the topos has been later correctly identified by James in Homer *Od.* 22.299-301:[137]

> οἱ δ' ἐφέβοντο κατὰ μέγαρον βόες ὡς ἀγελαῖαι·
> τὰς μέν τ' αἰόλος οἶστρος ἐφορμηθεὶς ἐδόνησεν
> ὥρῃ ἐν εἰαρινῇ, ὅτε τ' ἤματα μακρὰ πέλονται·
>
> They were running away here and there through the halls like a herd of kine that the darting gad-fly falls upon and excites during the spring, when days are long.

The successful simile is not missing from any epic poet (Oppian of Anazarbus also employs it in a scientific description in *Hal.* 2.521-32), so much so that it seems to be a

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[134] See Gigli 1978. The topos enjoyed popularity also with Roman literature, as in Virgil, who employs it in *Geor.* 3.146-56: est lucos Silari circa ilicibusque uirentem / plurimus Alburnum uolitans, cui nomen asilo / Romanum est, oestrum Grai uertere uocantes, / asper, acerba sonans, quo tota exterrita siluis / diffugiunt armenta; furit mugitibus aether / concussus siluaeque et sicci ripa Tanagri. / hoc quondam monstro horribilis exercuit iras / Inachiae Iuno pestem meditata iuuencae. / hunc quoque (nam mediis feruoribus acrior instat) / arcebis grauido pecori, armentaque pasces / sole recens orto aut noctem ducentibus astris, "There's a gadfly, its Roman name is asilus, but the Greeks call it, in their tongue, oestrus, that buzzes round the groves of Silacus, and the green oaks of lburnus, in great numbers, fierce, and high-pitched in sound, and whole herds scatter from it, through the woods, the breeze, the trees, and banks of dry Tanagra, stunned, in terror, mad with bellowing. Juno once worked her terrible anger with this creature, when she plagued Io, the daughter of Inachus, changed to a heifer. Keep it away from the pregnant herd, too (since it attacks more fiercely in the midday heat) by grazing the cattle when the sun's newly risen, or the stars are bringing on the night". (transl. A.S. Kline). Just before Colluthus' time, Empress Eudocia (c. 401-460) remembers the topos in *Mart. Cypr.* 1-15.

[135] Nonnus remembers this line in *Dion.* 11.191 μύωπα βοοσσόον.

[136] Livrea 1968a, 84. Aeschylus employs an ongoing gadfly metaphor for Io also in *Prom.* 567, 578-81, 589-90, 673-7, 680-2, 836-7, 879-80.

[137] James 1969.

staple of the genre, applied to both angry (ἔρις) and besotted subjects (ἔρος). Apollonius 1.1265-71 models his version[138] on Homer, making sure not to re-employ any of the same words, when he describes Heracles' anger at the news of his beloved Hylas' death:

> ὡς δ' ὅτε τίς τε μύωπι τετυμμένος ἔσσυτο ταῦρος
> πίσεά τε προλιπὼν καὶ ἐλεσπίδας, οὐδὲ νομήων
> οὐδ' ἀγέλης ὄθεται, πρήσσει δ' ὁδὸν ἄλλοτ' ἄπαυστος,
> ἄλλοτε δ' ἱστάμενος καὶ ἀνὰ πλατὺν αὐχέν' ἀείρων
> ἴησιν μύκημα, κακῷ βεβολημένος οἴστρῳ—
> ὣς ὅγε μαιμώων ὁτὲ μὲν θοὰ γούνατ' ἔπαλλεν
> συνεχέως, ὁτὲ δ' αὖτε μεταλλήγων καμάτοιο
> τῆλε διαπρύσιον μεγάλῃ βοάασκεν ἀυτῇ.
>
> And as when a bull stung by a gadfly tears along, leaving the meadows and the marsh land, and recks not of herdsmen or herd, but presses on, now without cheek, now standing still, and raising his broad neck he bellows loudly, stung by the maddening fly; so he in his frenzy now would ply his swift knees unresting, now again would cease from toil and shout afar with loud pealing cry.

Quintus of Smyrna 207-11 follows Homer in associating the gadfly with fear:

> Ἀργεῖοι δὲ βόεσσιν ἐοικότες ἐπτοίηντο
> οὔς τ' ἄμοτον μεμαῶτας ὑπὸ ζεύγλῃ καὶ ἀρότρῳ
> τύψῃ ὑπὸ λαπάρην ταναοῖς ὑπὸ χείλεσιν οἶστρος
> αἵματος ἱέμενος, τοὶ δ' ἄσπετον ἀσχαλόωσιν
> ἔργου ἑκὰς φεύγοντες
>
> The Argives were then seized by panic, like bulls straining steadily under the yoke of a plow, when they are struck in the side by the thin sting of a gadfly thirsty for blood; in their unspeakable torment they abandon their duty.

Nonnus employs the simile in *Dion.* 42.185-9 to describe the passion of Dionysus for Beroe:[139]

> ὡς δ' ὅτε βοῦς ἀκίχητος ἔσω πλαταμῶνος ὀδεύων
> ἐσμὸν ὀρεσσινόμων παρεμέτρεεν ἠθάδα ταύρων
> οἰστρηθεὶς ἀγέληθεν, ὃν εὐπετάλῳ παρὰ λόχμῃ
> βουτύπος ὀξυόεντι μύωψ ἐχαράσσετο κέντρῳ
> ἀπροϊδής, ὀλίγῳ δὲ δέμας βεβολημένος οἴστρῳ
> τηλίκος ἐστυφέλικτο,
>
> As when an ox, rushing over the flats, goes past the well-known herd of mountain-grazing bulls, driven away from the flock when a gadfly, goad of bulls, has secretly pierced his hide with sharp sting under the leafy trees: how small the sting that strikes, how large the body of the beast shaken by it!

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[138] Also 3.275-7: Τόφρα δ' Ἔρως πολιοῖο δι' ἠέρος ἶξεν ἄφαντος, / τετρηχὼς οἷόν τε νέαις ἐπὶ φορβάσιν οἶστρος / τέλλεται, ὅν τε μύωπα βοῶν κλείουσι νομῆες, "Meantime Eros arrived unseen through the grey mist, causing violent, as when the goad, which oxherds call the gadfly jumps on grazing heifers".

[139] Also see 15.214-8.

Triphiodorus obviously had all four models in mind when describing Cassandra's ἔρις at 359-67:

διαρρήξασα δ' ὀχῆας
ἔδραμεν ἠύτε πόρτις ἀήσυρος, ἥντε τυπεῖσαν
κέντρον ἀνεπτοίησε βοορραίσταο μύωπος·
ἡ δ' οὐκ εἰς ἀγέλην ποτιδέρκεται οὐδὲ βοτῆρι
πείθεται οὐδὲ νομοῖο λιλαίεται, ἀλλὰ βελέμνῳ
ὀξέι θηγομένη βοέων ἐξήλυθε θεσμῶν·
τοίη μαντιπόλοιο βολῆς ὑπὸ νύγματι κούρη
πλαζομένη κραδίην ἱερὴν ἀνεσείετο δάφνην.
πάντη δ' ἐβρυχᾶτο κατὰ πτόλιν

[Cassandra] tore apart the bars and she ran, like a restless heifer whom the sting of a gadfly, that torments the ox, has smitten and stung to frenzy: which does not look to the herd anymore nor obeys the herdsman nor longs for the pasture, but whetted by the sharp dart she goes beyond the range of oxen: in such way, her heart distraught by the pricking of the shafts of prophecy, the maiden shook the holy laurel wreath and cried everywhere throughout the city.

In the table below, I summarize how the topos has been linguistically re-elaborated by Colluthus and his predecessors.

Homer	Aesch.	Ap. Rh.	Call.	Oppian	Quintus	Nonnus	Tryph.	Coll.
οἶστρος	μύωπα κινητήριον. οἶστρον, οἰστρηλάτῳ δὲ δείματι	μύωπι, οἴστρῳ	μύωπα	οἶστρος, βουτύπος	οἶστρος	βουτύπος ... μύωψ, μύωπα	βοορραίστα ο μύωπος, κέντρον	φοινήεντι μύωπι, βοῶν ἐλατῆρι; οἶστρον (97); κέντρον (96)
βόες	βοηλάτην	ταῦρος	βοῶν, βουσόον	βουσίν	βόεσσιν	βοῦς, ταύρων, βοοσσόον	πόρτις	πόρτις; βοῶν
		οὐδὲ νομήων/ οὐδ' ἀγέλης ὄθεται		οὔτε τι βουφόρβων μέλεται σέβας οὔτε νομοῖο,/ οὔτ' ἀγέλης	ἔργου ἑκὰς φεύγοντες		ἡ δ' οὐκ εἰς ἀγέλην ποτιδέρκεται οὐδὲ βοτῆρι/ πείθεται οὐδὲ νομοῖο λιλαίεται	νομοῖο, ξυλόχοισιν
		πίσεά τε προλιπὼν καὶ ἐλεσπίδας		ποίην δὲ καὶ αὔλια πάντα λιπόντες		ἔσω πλαταμῶνος ὀδεύων/ ἐσμὸν ὀρεσσινόμων παρεμέτρεεν ἠθάδα ταύρων	βοέων ἐξήλυθε θεσμῶν	βησσήεντος ἀποπλαγχθεῖσα νομοῖο
		ἔσσυτο		σεύονται		ὀδεύων	ἔδραμεν	ἀλᾶται
				Βέλος + ὀξὺ		ὀξυόεντι ...κέντρῳ	Κέντρον; βελέμνῳ/ὀ	

				κελεύων			ξέι	
	χρίει τις οἶστρος, οἰστηλάτῳ δὲ δείματι παράκοπον, τῆς οἰστροδινήτου κόρης, ὀξυστόμῳ μύωπι χρισθεῖσ', οἰστροπλὴξ δ' ἐγὼ μάστιγι θείᾳ, οἰστρήσας, οἴστρου δ' ἄρδις χρίει μ' ἄπυρος	μύωπι τετυμμένος; κακῷ βεβοληµένος οἴστρῳ		λύσσῃ τεθοωμένοι	οὔς τ' ἄμοτον μεμαῶτας ὑπὸ ζεύγλῃ καὶ ἀρότρῳ τύψῃ ὑπὸ λαπάρην ταναοῖς ὑπὸ χείλεσιν οἶστρος αἵματος ἱέμενος	ὀλίγῳ...βεβοληµένος οἴστρῳ	τυπεῖσαν; βελέμνῳ ὀξέι θηγομένη	φοινήεντι μύωπι... τυπεῖσα
		ἴησιν μύκημα		πάντῃ δὲ βρυχή			πάντη δ' ἐβρυχᾶτο	

Oppian uses the very same words that Homer had used, as highlighted by James[140]: βουσίν 521 (Hom. βόες), οἶστρος 522 (Hom. οἶστρος), where Apollonius has ταῦρος and μύωπι (1.1265), and also imitates Apollonius playing with Homeric expressions, as he does with ποίην (524) used to replace πίσεα (Ap. 1.1266), exploiting Homer's formula πίσεα ποιήεντα. Nonnus recovers βοῦς, but also has ταύρων, reflecting Apollonius. He uses βουτύπος in place of Homer's and Oppian's οἶστρος, but βουτύπος had also been used by Oppian as a synonym in 529.

Colluthus' simile is presented concisely in the space of only three lines (41-43), and, in choosing μύωπι, πόρτις, νομοῖο and τυπεῖσα, pays tribute to Tryphiodoros more than to any other model. He introduces elements of originality to the topos: while his predecessors had described the animal as no longer concerned with their herdsman, pasture and herd, Colluthus describes the heifer as simply wandering away from the pasture in the glen, roaming in lonely copses, an image that is closer to that of Nonnus and Triphiodorus, than to their predecessors'. This comparison applies better to the character of Eris as a goddess who instinctively seeks to be alone in her envy, a feeling that drives individuals to isolation from the group. Moreover, Colluthus shows originality also in employing ἐλατῆρι (43) in a different meaning than

[140] James 1969, 84-5.

"driver":[141] in this context the word means "pressing on". He employs words that have not been previously used in his models: ἀλᾶται at 42 (where Triphiodorus had ἔδραμεν, Nonnus ὀδεύων, while Apollonius and Oppian had used forms of σεύω), and φοινήεις at 43 (a Homeric hapax) instead of βοοραίστης to define the μύωψ. Colluthus recovers ἐρημαίῃσιν (42), an adjective not employed by Homer, probably imitating Nonnus,[142] Triphiodorus 141 and especially Moschos 3.21 and Ap. Rh. 2.385, 672[143] who used the adjective applied to natural places such as trees, planes, islands. He also uses ξυλόχοισιν (42), a word that is traditionally associated with wild and aggressive animals, like in *Il.* 11.415 (of a wild boar).[144] The closest model, however, seems *Il.* 5.162, where a lion comes out to attack cows pasturing in the thicket. With this choice, the poet is reminding his readers that, although Eris is being compared to a calf, her nature is still that of an angry beast. Another interesting word choice is πληγῇσι (44), which would make more sense if referred to Eros stinging his victims, but here it is referred to the victim herself. Colluthus also uses similarly structured expressions to mirror the heifer and Eris: πόρτις... φοινήεντι μύωπι...τυπεῖσα corresponds to βαρυζήλοισιν Ἔρις πληγῇσι δαμεῖσα, and ἀλᾶται to πλάζετο. The simile is continued by μαστεύουσα, which first (45) describes Eris as an animal walking around in anger, craving for food (δαῖτας, "feast"), and later is applied to Hermione, the daughter whom Helen will leave behind and who will also be desperately searching for her mother (μητέρα μαστεύουσα 388): the choice of πόρτις, "young heifer, calf" may also be an allusion to her. Eris and Hermione are then associated in their search, one for revenge, the second for her mother. The model for this is Nonn. *Par.* 20.11 ἥψατο μαστεύουσα of Mary Magdalene.[145]

Colluthus also plays with the above-mentioned ambiguity between strife and eros through the use of two words which are normally used to define erotic sting, οἶστρος (97)[146] and κέντρον (96),[147] but are also employed in the gadfly similes. By doing so, he ensures to embody that ambiguity in his character, whose actions spur

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[141] As in *h.Merc.* 265 and *Il.* 4.145.

[142] *Dion.* 3.203, 42.61.

[143] See Livrea 1968a, 83.

[144] Also see *Il.* 21.573 (of a panther), *Od.* 4.335 and 17.126, (of a lion), 19. 445 (of a wild swine), Palaeph. 14 (of a bear).

[145] Giangrande 1969, 150.

[146] Mus. 129, 133; Nonn. *Dion.* 34.97.

[147] Nonn. *Dion.* 4.217, 6.348, 15.85, 34.24, 41.323, 42.210, 48.509 and *AP* 10.120. However κέντρον can also imply pain as in *Dion.* 3.335, 6.51, 19.1, and even a half and half goad: *Dion.* 42.441 κέντρον γλυκύπικρον.

from envy and ἔρις, but are also associated with ἔρος. Cause and effects of the war, then, are blurred: strife and eros, in the persons of uninvited Eris and lustful Paris and Helen, are both at the root and at the end of the Trojan War.

b. Eris' Plan of Destruction

The second part of Eris' description goes through her various plans to disrupt the banquet (46-56). The goddess appears here as scary as she did in *Il.* 4.440-5:

> Δεῖμός τ' ἠδὲ Φόβος καὶ Ἔρις ἄμοτον μεμαυῖα,
> Ἄρεος ἀνδροφόνοιο κασιγνήτη ἑτάρη τε,
> ἥ τ' ὀλίγη μὲν πρῶτα κορύσσεται, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
> οὐρανῷ ἐστήριξε κάρη καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαίνει·
> ἥ σφιν καὶ τότε νεῖκος ὁμοίϊον ἔμβαλε μέσσῳ
> ἐρχομένη καθ' ὅμιλον ὀφέλλουσα στόνον ἀνδρῶν.
>
> And Terror, and Defeat, and relentless Eris stormed too, sister and partner-in-arms of slaughterer Ares, only a slight thing when she first rears her head but her head soon hits the sky as she strides across the earth. Now Eris hurled down the leveller Hate amidst both sides, walking among the crowd, multiplying men's weeping.

Colluthus remembers this passage with χθονίων and οὐρανὸν (50-1 - Hom. 443). From Eur. *Phoen.* 798-800 Colluthus borrows the verb that describes Eris' thinking (μήσατο Coll. 55 - Eur. 799) and πολυμόχθοις (μόχθων Coll. 61 - Eur. 800):

> ἦ δεινά τις Ἔρις θεός, ἃ τάδε
> μήσατο πήματα γᾶς βασιλεῦσιν
> Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις
>
> Eris is truly a goddess to fear, who devised these troubles for the princes of this land, for the much-suffering sons of Labdacus.

For this section, Colluthus follows closely *Il.* 9.568-81: during the embassy to Achilles, Phoenix makes a lengthy and emotional plea for him to stay, taking the example of Meleager, another warrior who, in a moment of rage, refused to fight, to illustrate the importance of responding to the pleas of helpless comrades. But Achilles stands firm, still feeling the sting of Agamemnon's insult. In this particular passage, Meleager's mother, Althaea, begs the underworld gods to punish her son:

πολλὰ δὲ καὶ **γαῖαν** πολυφόρβην **χερσὶν** ἀλοία κικλήσκουσ' Ἀΐδην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν **πρόχνυ καθεζομένη**, δεύοντο δὲ δάκρυσι **κόλποι**, παιδὶ δόμεν θάνατον· She kept pounding fists on the earth that feeds us all, kept crying out to Hades and grim Persephone, she	**πολλάκι** δ' εὐλάιγγος ἀπὸ κλισμοῖο θοροῦσα ἵστατο καὶ παλίνορσος **ἐφέζετο· χειρὶ** δὲ πέτρης **οὔδεϊ κόλπον** ἄραξε καὶ οὐκ ἐφράσσατο **γαῖα**· And many times she jumped up from her seat, embroidered with precious stones, got ready, and then, as backtracking, she sat down again. With her hand, she

knelt, tears streaking her robes, screaming that they should kill her son.	stroke to the ground, and the bosom of the earth seemed not to notice.
τῆς δ' **ἠεροφοῖτις** Ἐρινὺς ἔκλυεν ἐξ **Ἐρέβεσφιν ἀμείλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσα**. τῶν δὲ τάχ' ἀμφὶ πύλας **ὅμαδος καὶ δοῦπος** ὀρώρει πύργων βαλλομένων· [...] And out of dark Erebos a Fury who walks in darkness heard her cries, although she had an implacable heart, and suddenly tramp of men around the gates was heard, towers battered under assault [...]	ἤθελεν **ὀρφναίων γυάλων κληῖδας** ἀνεῖσα, ἐκ **χθονίων** Τιτῆνας ἀναστήσασα **βερέθρων** **οὐρανὸν** ὑψιμέδοντος ἀιστῶσαι Διὸς ἕδρην. ἤθελεν **ἠχήεντα**[149] πυρὸς **πρηστῆρα** τινάσσειν, Ἡφαίστῳ δ' ὑπόεικεν **ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα,** καὶ πυρὸς ἀσβέστοιο καὶ ὀπτευτῆρι σιδήρου. καὶ She had all intentions to unfasten the bolts of the dark hollows, and raise the Titans from the nether abyss and to wipe out the sky, home to Zeus, who rules on high. She was willing to brandish a roaring hurricane of fire, but, however untamed, she gave in to Hephaestus, forger of unquenchable fire and iron.
πολλὰ δέ μιν λιτάνευε γέρων ἱππηλάτα Οἰνεὺς οὐδοῦ ἐπεμβεβαὼς ὑψηρεφέος θαλάμοιο **σείων κολλητὰς σανίδας** γουνούμενος υἱόν· and over and over the old horseman Oeneus begged him, he took a stand at the vaulted chamber's threshold, shaking the bolted doors, begging his own son![148]	**σακέων βαρύδουπον** ἐμήσατο **κόμπον** ἀράσσειν And she did think about pounding out the loud-roaring clash of shields.

Livrea links Colluthus' scene directly to the above Homeric passage, for a number of lexical correspondences: χερσίν 568 - Coll. 47 χειρί, καθεζομένη 570 - Coll. 47 ἐφέζετο, κόλποι 570 - Coll. 48 κόλπον;[150] I believe that the parallel goes further: in Hom. γαῖαν 568 - Coll. 48 γαῖα, πρόχνυ 570 - Coll. 48 οὔδεϊ, ἠεροφοῖτις 571 - Coll. 49 ὀρφναίων γυάλων, Ἐρέβεσφιν 572 - Coll. 50 χθονίων βερέθρων, ἀμείλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσα 572 - Coll. 53 ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα, ὅμαδος καὶ δοῦπος 573 - Coll. 55 κόμπον, σείων κολλητὰς σανίδας 583 - Coll. 49 κληῖδας ἀνεῖσα. Livrea had suggested a content similarity based on the fact that Colluthus was also the author of a *Calydoniaca*, about the myth of Meleager. The similarity shared by Altaea and Eris is their anger, and the overall darkness and noise associated with this feeling. Moreover, both characters express their resentment by throwing an object, Eris the apple into the banquet, and Althaea the piece of wood that represented Meleager's life into the fire.

Eris' jumping up and down from her seat also reminds us of Medea when she first falls in love with Jason in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 645-55: she hesitates a long time before walking into Calciope's room to speak to her; she goes out of her room, then hesitates and returns back to her own room three times, torn between shame and desire. Here, again, a behaviour dictated by Eros is shared by Eris.

148 Transl. R. Fagles, adapted.
149 Ap. Rh. 1.1236.
150 Livrea 1968a, 85-7.

Other scenes of similar violence from Nonnus are evoked by Colluthus' passage, in particular *Dion.* 36.96-107, where Hades is worried that Poseidon may subvert the cosmic order with his onslaughts and expose the earth's foundations (especially 101 μή ποτε κινήσας χθονίων κρηπῖδα βερέθρων).[151] Line 62 is the industrious mix of two half hemistychia by Nonnus:[152] *Dion.* 36.41 χειρὶ δὲ δινεύουσα πεπηγότα νῶτα χαλάζης,[153] where Hera strikes Artemis with a sharp dart, and 1.398 καὶ σύ, τελεσσιγόνοιο γάμου πρωτόσπορος ἀρχή, a *clausola* often referred by Nonnus to Eros,[154] where Eris is causing strife, πόλεμος, μόθος, while Eros in contrast is the originator of fecund marriage.

Colluthus may also recall Hecuba's gesture in Eur. *Troad.* 1305-9: γεραιά γ' ἐς πέδον τιθεῖσα μέλε' ἐμὰ καὶ χερσὶ γαῖαν κτυποῦσα δισσαῖς. [Χο] διάδοχά σοι γόνυ τίθημι γαίαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς καλοῦσα νέρθεν ἀθλίους ἀκοίτας. "Yes, as I stretch my aged limbs upon the ground, and beat upon the earth with both my hands. [Chorus]: I follow you and kneel, invoking from the nether world my hapless husband".[155]

When Eris eventually gives in to Hephaestus (53), Colluthus' model is Triph. 684-5 Ξάνθος ἰδὼν ἔκλαυσε γόων ἁλιμυρέι πηγῇ, Ἡφαίστῳ δ' ὑπόεικεν ἀτυζόμενος χόλον Ἥρης, "and Xanthus, beholding the fiery doom of the city, wept with seaward flowing fountain of lamentation, and, terrified by the anger of Hera, yielded to Hephaestus". The word ἀμαιμακέτη (53) evokes terrible monsters out of control which are thus inevitably associated with Eris: Nonnus employs it often,[156] as in *Dion.* 1.296 ἔντεα δὲ Κρονίωνος ἀμαιμακέτῃσιν ἀείρων, about Typhoeus, a monster born from Gaia and Tartaros; in *Il.* 6.179 and 16.329, the word is applied to the Chimaera, who, interestingly, was the daughter of Typhoeus, as was also alluded to at 102; and Hes. *Th.* 319 also uses it when speaking of the raging fire that the Chimaera vomited.

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151 Also *Dion.* 26.128 κρύψατε σὺν γενετῆρι καταχθονίῳ με βερέθρῳ, where Eeria begs to be locked up with her father in the deep pit; 4.55 τοσσατίους Τιτῆνας ἐνεκλήισσε βερέθρῳ; 2.338 ἀπὸ χθονίοιο βερέθρου; and *Par.* 2.104-106, 6.157-9, and 2.1-4.

152 Orsini 1969, 16-17.

153 Colluthus employs two words that in Nonnus are applied to Typhoeus: ἀμαιμακέτη from 1.296, and δινήσασα from 2.456.

154 As in 41.129.

155 Also *h.Ap.* 155, where Hera invokes the help of the goddesses of the Underworld; Diog. Laert. *AP* 7.118.

156 Livrea 1968a, 89.

Before desisting, Eris thinks that the loud noise of clashing shields may scare the gods and prompt them to get up (55-6): ἰωήν though, the version accepted by Mair and others is a correction of the manuscript version, which reads ἰωκήν, "pursuit", "riot". There is no need to amend this version, as the word has been picked by the poet in anticipation of the toils that are the consequences of Eris' gesture, i.e. the Trojan War. Moreover, ἰωκήν is also identified in *Il.* 5.740 with Eris herself: ἐν δ' Ἔρις, ἐν δ' Ἀλκή, ἐν δὲ κρυόεσσα Ἰωκή, "Strife, Violence, Riot that makes the blood run cold".

Eris finally settles on the plan to throw the golden fruit into the banquet of the gods (59-61). The gesture of throwing or giving an apple (μηλοβολεῖν) is traditionally associated with a love declaration[157] in the pagan tradition, the apple being a symbol of fertility or a love gift. The same gesture acquires a slightly different meaning in the myth of Acontius and Cydippe, where it is a binding token of marriage,[158] while in the myth of Atalanta golden apples are given to Hippomenes by Aphrodite as a trick to distract the girl during their footrace and thus allow him to win and marry her. Livrea notes how the story that told that the apple was to be offered to the fairest among the three goddess,[159] previously dated to the Hellenistic period, was backdated to around 650-625 BC thanks to the discovery, in the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, of an ivory comb showing Paris in the act of giving the apple to Aphrodite.[160] The chronological detail does not help in understanding whether Colluthus uses the tradition with any originality; however, in this case it is Eris who is throwing the apple, an act that will cause not love but strife and war. The negative connotation of her throwing the fruit may have some connection with the Christian tradition attached to the apple as a symbol of transgression and sin,[161] considering that the apple is defined by Colluthus πολέμοιο προάγγελον ἔρνος (60) and μόθου πρωτόσπορον ἀρχήν (62), which refer not only to the quarrel started by the apple among the goddesses, but also to the ultimate consequence of the contest, the war of Troy, its destruction and the death of many people. Colluthus' search for the primeval of the war is aligned with the late antique interest in aetiology; however, since this

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157 E.g. Ar. *Nub.* 997; *AP* 5.79, 80; Cat. 65.19.

158 Cydippe read aloud the inscription that Acontius has engraved on the apple, "I swear by Artemis that I will marry Acontius", and by doing so, bound herself to him. Each time she was to marry, then, she fell ill, until the oracle at Delphi revealed the cause of the obstacle. Her father finally agreed to marry her to Acontius. The story is told by Aristaen, *Ep.* 1.10 and Ovid *Her.* 20 and 21.

159 Luc. *Dial. Deor.* 20.7; Tzetz. n. Lycophr. 93; Apollod. *Epit.* 3.2; Eur. *Andr.* 276.

160 Livrea 1969, 93.

161 Sept. *Genesis* 3.1.

was a topic that Hellenistic poetry shared with early Christian literature, Colluthus may have chosen this particular episode to play with both traditions.

3. Aphrodite's Agon

Aphrodite is the character who enjoys most airtime in the epyllion: her three speeches expose different sides to her character, and give Colluthus the opportunity to play with rhetoric subgenres such as invective and the agon, aligning his work to the performative dimension of late antique poetry.[162] In this section, I explore how the poet has exploited current and popular topoi (such as the goddess's toilette) and genres to give his own take on a well-known character and tick the right boxes with his contemporaries. I also argue that the main models for this part are Claudian's *Gigantomachy* and Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* 9. The result is a feisty Aphrodite against whom Hera and Athena do not stand a chance.

a. Aphrodite's Toilette

Colluthus pays attention to hairstyles: Paris takes care that his hairdo is perfect before meeting Helen (231-5), and at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus Apollo sports curls that evoke Bacchic grapes (26).[163] The most detailed description is that of Aphrodite's hair ahead of the beauty contest (82-4): here, acoustic vividness (beside visual) is achieved through a redundancy of both hair-related terms (καλύπτρην,[164] κομάων, πλοκάμους, χαίτην) and of the word χρυσῷ, as well as through the alliteration of κ, especially in the initial of the first and last word in 82 and 83, and of χ, which is also the initial of the first and the last word in 84.

The image of Aphrodite (or another goddess) doing her toilette, and especially fixing her hairstyle, is extremely popular, and Colluthus pays homage to many

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162 Agosti 2006a.

163 The description of his hair is rich with Dionysus-related allusions, see Ch. 3 n. 202.

164 Christodoros uses the same words to describe Aphrodite in his ekphrasis of the goddess' statue in the gymnasium of Zeuxippos in Constantinople: χρυσείῃ ... καλύπτρῃ, see Tissoni 2000a, 123-124.

models.[165] The goddess' coquettishness was a standard feature of the beauty contest as presented in vase-painting and sculpture,[166] as we will see more in detail below.

First, let us reconstruct the goddess' hairstyle, which was correctly interpreted by Matthews through comparison of various models. First, Homer describes Hera's hairstyle in *Il.* 14.175-7:[167]

> τῷ ῥ' ἥ γε χρόα καλὸν ἀλειψαμένη ἰδὲ χαίτας
> πεξαμένη χερσὶ πλοκάμους ἔπλεξε φαεινοὺς
> καλοὺς ἀμβροσίους ἐκ κράατος ἀθανάτοιο.
>
> Therewith she anointed her beautiful body, and she combed her long hair, and with her hands plaited the shiny braids, fair and ambrosial, that streamed from her immortal head.

Hera then proceeds to put on a dress woven for her by Athena and borrows a girdle from Aphrodite. The Homeric passage is ironically played with by Callimachus, who, in *Lav. Pall.* 21-2, contrasts Aphrodite's elaborate beauty routine with Athena's natural beauty: Κύπρις δὲ διαυγέα χαλκὸν ἑλοῖσα πολλάκι τὰν αὐτὰν δὶς μετέθηκε κόμαν, "But Cypris took a shining mirror and often altered the same lock",[168] and especially 31-2: οἴσετε καὶ κτένα οἱ παγχρύσεον, ὡς ἀπὸ χαίταν πέξηται, λιπαρὸν σμασαμένα πλόκαμον, "and bring her [Athena] a comb all of gold, that she may comb her hair, once she has anointed her glossy tresses", where the similarity of the language with Colluthus is striking (see below).[169]

Secondly, in Apollonius *Arg.* 3.45-50, Aphrodite is visited by Athena and Hera while she is fixing her hair, and thus interrupts her coiffure:

> λευκοῖσιν δ' ἑκάτερθε κόμας ἐπιειμένη ὤμοις
> κόσμει χρυσείῃ διὰ κερκίδι, μέλλε δὲ μακρούς
> πλέξασθαι πλοκάμους· [...]·
> ἀτὰρ μετέπειτα καὶ αὐτή
> ἵζανεν, ἀψήκτους δὲ χεροῖν ἀνεδήσατο χαίτας.

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[165] Aside from the passages mentioned infra, Aphrodite's bath is described in *Od.* 8.364-6 (the passage reappears almost unchanged in *H. Aphr.* 61-65) and *Cypria* fr. 4 and 5 Allen; Hera's is described in Nonn. *Dion.* 32.10-37.

[166] Clairmont 1951, 45, 48, 61 (twice), 63, 109. In particular, Bulloch 1985, 130 recalls Athen. 687c (=Soph. fr. 361) τὴν μὲν Ἀφροδίτην Ἡδονήν τινα οὖσαν δαίμονα μύρῳ τε ἀλειφομένην παράγει καὶ κατοπτριζομένην, τὴν δὲ Ἀθηνᾶν Φρόνησιν οὖσαν καὶ Νοῦν, ἔτι δ' Ἀρετὴν ἐλαίῳ χριομένην καὶ γυμναζομένην.

[167] Matthews 1996.

[168] The detail of Aphrodite insisting on the same lock twice reappears in Nonn. *Dion.* 32.12-13 πολλάκι δ' ἰσάζουσα καθειμένον ἄχρι μετώπου πλαζομένης ἔστησε μετήλυδα βότρυν ἐθείρης, and in Tibull. 1.8.10, who imitates Callimachus, *saepeque mutates disposuisse comas*, where he compares Foloe's natural beauty to Marato's, which is artificial.

[169] Bullock 1985, 142.

> Having let her hair down over her white shoulders on either side, she was parting it with a golden comb and was about to braid the long plaits. [...] And then she herself sat down and tied up her uncombed hair with her hands.

Like Callimachus, Apollonius draws on the Homeric passage above, so πλέξασθαι - ἔπλεξε, χεροῖν -χερσί, and the shared πλοκάμους and χαίτας. Medea's toilette in *Arg.* 3.828-35 also comes into the picture:

> ξανθὰς μὲν ἀνήψατο χερσὶν ἐθείρας,
> αἳ οἱ ἀτημελίῃ καταειμέναι ἠερέθοντο·
> [...] δῦνε δὲ πέπλον
> καλόν, ἐυγνάμπτοισιν ἀρηρέμενον περόνῃσιν,
> ἀμβροσίῳ δ' ἐφύπερθε καρήατι βάλλε καλύπτρη
> ἀργυφέην.
>
> With her hands she gathered up her golden tresses which were floating round her shoulders in careless disarray, [...] and she donned a beautiful robe, fitted with well-bent clasps, and above on her head, divinely fair, she threw a veil gleaming like silver.[170]

By comparing the three passages, Matthews clarified that Colluthus, like Apollonius, employs three different words for hair: κομάων at 83 (Ap. Rh. κόμας) is a generic term for hair,[171] πλοκάμους at 84 (Ap. Rh., Call. and Hom. πλοκάμους) is the braided hair,[172] and χαίτην at 84 (Ap. Rh., Call. and Hom. χαίτας) is the loose, unbraided hair.[173]

This elaborate hairstyle is also sported by the statue of Aphrodite in Christodorus' ekphrasis (*AP* 2.81 Christ. 81 χρυσείῃ πλοκαμῖδας ὑποσφίγξασα καλύπτρῃ),[174] and by Claudian's Venus in his *Gigantomachy*[175] 43-54, as well spotted by Livrea;[176] in my opinion, her portrait was the main model for Colluthus' Aphrodite, as we will see over the course of this chapter. I quote here the full passage:

> Κύπρις δ' οὔτε βέλος φέρεν, οὐχ ὅπλον, ἀλλ'ἐκόμιζεν
> ἀγλαΐην· θεμένη γὰρ ἐπ'ὄμμασιν ἄγγελον αὐγήν,
> πρῶτα μὲν ἀπλεκέας περόνῃ διεκρίνατο χαίτας
> καὶ πλεκτὰς ἔσφιγξε πυκνοῖς περιπλέγμασι σειράς,
> στίμμεϊ δ'ὀφθαλμῶν ἐρατοὺς ὑπεγράψατο κανθούς.
> λεπτὰς δ'εὐανέμοιο ῥαφὰς χαλάσασα χιτῶνος
> πορφυρέων οὐ κρύπτεν ὑφ' εἵμασιν ἄνθεα μαζῶν,

[170] Transl. R.C. Seaton.
[171] *Il.* 17.51; Nonn. *Dion.* 32.16; Call. *h.* 5.22.
[172] Nonn. *Dion.* 32.28, Hera's toilette; Eur. *Hec.* 923; Call. *h.* 5.32.
[173] Nonn. *Dion.* 43.59; Call. *h.* 5.31.
[174] Tissoni 2000a, 123-24.
[175] From here onwards, I will refer only to Claudian's Greek *Gigantomachy*, unless otherwise specified.
[176] Livrea 2000, 441-43.

ὄμματος εἰς ἄγρην ὡπλισμλενη· εἶχε γὰρ αὐτή
πλέγμα κόρυν, δόρυ μαζόν, ὀφρῦν βέλος, ἀσπίδα κάλλος,
ὅπλα μέλη, θέλγητρον ἐν ἄλγεσιν· εἰ δέ τις αὐτῇ
ὄμμα βάλοι, δέδμητο, βέλος δ'ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐάσας
ὡς Ἄρεως αἰχμῇ τῇ Κύπριδος ὄλλυτο μορφῇ.

Cypris did not bring a dart, or a weapon, but she brought
Beauty: for she placed before her eyes the bright messenger,
And first she parted her unplaited hair with a pin
And tied up her plaited locks in tight tresses,
Then she drew a line with kohl under the lovely corners of her eyes.
And she loosened the fine fastenings of her robe that gave in easily to the wind,
And she did not hide underneath her garments the flowers of her flushing breasts,
Armed for the chase of the eye.[177] For she had
A chignon as a helmet, her breasts as a spear, her look as a dart, her beauty as a shield,
Her curves as weapons, a charm among the pains. If someone
Gazed upon her, he was subdued, letting the sword fall from his hand
He was killed by the beauty of Cypris as by the spear of Ares.

Through direct comparison of Claudian and the above mentioned texts, it is possible to identify the exact sequence of steps involved:

1. First, the goddess parts: διεκρίνατο 45 - Coll. 83 διαστήσασα

2. With a hair pin or clip: περόνῃ 45 - Coll. 83 περόνην θυόεντα - Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3. 46 χρυσείῃ διὰ κερκίδι - and also Claud. *De nupt. Hon. Et M.* 102-3 *haec morsu numerosi dentis eburno multifidum discrimen erat*, and *Rapt. Pros.* 2.15-17 *illi multifidos crinis sinuatur in orbes Idalia divisus acu sudata marito fibula purpureos gemma suspendit amictu,* "her hair was twisted into many curls, parted with a Cyprian pin; a brooch, the sweated toil of her husband, supported her purple cloak with its gem"; in the following passages Hera and Medea pin their robes, not their hair, with gold brooches,: *Il.* 14.180 περονᾶτο - Nonn. *Dion.* 32.15 περόνην - Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.833

3. The loose hair: χαίτας 45 - Coll. 84 χαίτην - *Il.* 14.175-6 Χαίτας πεξαμένη - Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.45-6 κόμας κόσμει - Call. *h.* 5.31-2 χαίταν πέξηται

4. Next, she binds her plaited tresses: πλεκτάς...σειράς 46 – Coll. 84 πλοκάμους - *Il.* 14. 176 πλοκάμους – Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.46-7 μακροὺς πλέξασθαι πλοκάμους - Christ. 81 πλοκαμῖδας ὑποσφίγξασα – Call. 51 πλόκαμον, in a hair bun, πλέγμα κόρυν[178]

5. And anoints them with gold: Coll. 84 χρυσῷ μὲν πλοκάμους, χρυσῷ δ' ἐστέψατο χαίτην - *Il.* 14.180 - *h.Aphr.* 65 - Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3. 46 and 828 - Christ. *AP* 2.81 χρυσείῃ καλύπτρῃ - Claud. *Rap.* 1.138 *flava Ceres.*

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[177] Claudian's passage clearly alludes to Plat. *Phaedr.* 250d, where beauty enters the lover's soul through their eyes, a concept that, as we shall see in Chapter 3, returns in Colluthus' scene of Paris and Helen's meeting.

[178] Nonn. *Dion.* 2.271 περιπλέγδην, 12.199 and 36.368 περιπλεκής; see Livrea 2000, 442.

So what did this hairstyle look like? Matthews suggests a similarity with Euphorbus' hair described in *Il.* 17. 52 πλοχμοί θ', οἳ χρυσῷ τε καὶ ἀργύρῳ ἐσφήκωντο, "his hair was drenched in blood, and his plaits, that were braided with gold and silver",[179] but the style described by Colluthus looks more like Antheia's hair on the occasion of Artemis' procession as described by Xenophon of Ephesus in *Eph.* 1.2.6 κόμη ξανθή, ἡ πολλὴ καθειμένη, ὀλίγη πεπλεγμένη, πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀνέμων φορὰν κινουμένη, where πεπλεγμένη refers to part of the hair being braided, while most of it is let down loose (καθειμένη).[180] Speaking of loose hair being tossed by the breeze, like Apollo's in Coll. 25-6 χρυσείοις δ' ἑκάτερθε τινασσόμενος πλοκάμοισι βότρυς ἀκερσεκόμης ζεφύρῳ στυφελίζετο χαίτης, Athenaeus, quoting a passage from Asius,[181] says that the Samians, on the occasion of Hera's celebrations, combed their hair out of their braids (πλοκάμους κτενίσαντο) and then let their loose hair (χαῖτας), held by gold bands, down on their chest and shoulders, free to move with the winds.[182] The hairstyle with a chignon of plaits on the top of the head, and the rest of the hair let loose on the shoulders, is typical of late antiquity,[183] as described in fourth century AD by Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium in Cappadocia, in his homily *In mulierem Peccatricem* 6.143-8 against the libertine dames of his time:

> Ὢ πόσους νεανίσκους
> κατέθελγον μεστὸν ἀναιδείας βλέμμα περιφέρουσα. Ἐπὶ λύμῃ
> γὰρ τῶν θεατῶν ὡραϊζομένη πῇ μὲν πολυπλόκοις σειραῖς τὴν
> κεφαλὴν ἐπύργουν, πῇ δὲ νομάδας πλοκάμων ἐκ κορυφῆς εἴων
> κατὰ μετώπου πλανᾶσθαι· ἄλλοτε δὲ τὰς παρειὰς ἐφοίνισσον καὶ
> τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς κατέγραφον
>
> Oh how many young men I enslaved to my charm flaunting a look full of shamelessness! In fact, for the sake of insult of the onlookers, I used to build a tower of curled locks on my head beautifying myself, while I allowed the stray locks to casually flow from the top of my head down to my forehead. On other occasions I put some blush on my cheeks and I drew a line under my eyes.

However, artworks may have also played a role here as Aphrodite is always represented with elaborate hairstyles (Table A), starting from the famous portrait of

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179 Matthews 1996.

180 Eu. *BA.* 695 καθεῖσαν εἰς ὤμους κόμας, *IT* 51-52 κόμας ξανθὰς καθεῖναι.

181 As. Fr. 13.5 Bernabé/Davies, in Athen. 12.525 e-f, from Duris of Samos, *FGrHist.* 76 F 60.

182 Matthews 1996, 39 explains how the practice of marching to the Heraeum with braided hair was considered a faux pas.

183 Livrea 2000, 442, who quotes full bibliography on the tower hairstyle from Knecht 1972, 59-60.

Aphrodite Anadyomene by Apelles. The marble Aphrodite of Milos (Fig. A), the Crouching Aphrodite (Fig. B), the Syracuse Aphrodite (Fig. C) and the goddess as portrayed in the cameo Portland vase (Fig. D) all sport an elaborate hairstyle with pins at the back of their head. The Aphrodite of Rhodes (Fig. E) is crouching while fixing her hair with her hands; the goddess wears a veil in the Parthenon frieze (Fig. F), in an Apulian vase (Fig. G) and in a silver coin (Fig. H), among numerous other artworks.[184]

Table A

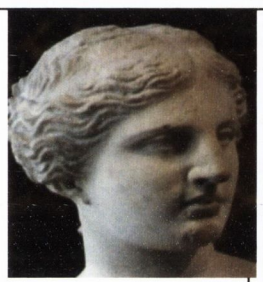	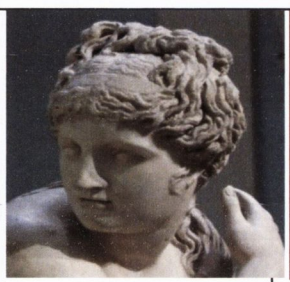	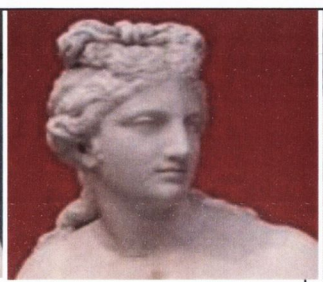	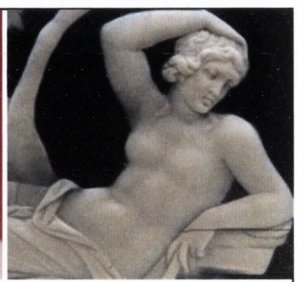
Fig. A: Aphrodite of Milos, 130-100 BC. The Louvre, Paris.	Fig. B: Crouching Aphrodite, Roman copy from the second century BC after a Hellenistic original, British Museum, London.	Fig. C: Syracuse Aphrodite, from the second c. AD, based on the original from the fourth c. BC, Archaeological Museum of Athens.	Fig. D: Portland vase, dated between 5 and 25 AD, today at the British Museum, London.
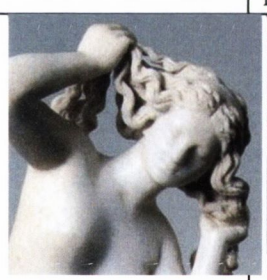	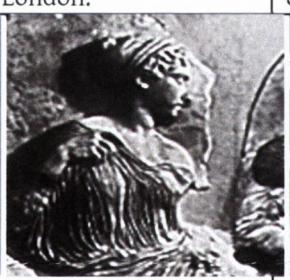		
Fig. E: Aphrodite of Rhodes, first c. AD, Archaeological Museum of Rhodes.	Fig. F: Parthenon frieze, 437-432 BC.	Fig. G: Apulian vase, 380 BC.	Fig. H: silver coin, from Corinth, 300 BC.

For Livrea, it is very likely that Claudian's Venus was inspired by figurative arts, but he cannot stretch as far as to identify his model with the Gigantomachy on the doors of the Artemision in Ephesos, a gift of Trajan after the war against the Scythians, an artwork which was later transferred to the senate in Byzantium and then described by

[184] From *LIMC s.v.* Aphrodite: n. 114 (p. 15), 424 (p. 40), 425, 430, 431 and 432 (p. 41), 445, 446, 447, 448, and 449 (p. 42), 450 and 454 (p. 43), 502 (p. 49), 516 (p. 50), 541, 543 and 545 (p. 53), 667 (p. 66), 672, 677 and 679 (p. 67), 681, 682,683, 684, 686a and 687 (p. 68), 1038 (p.103), 1251 (p. 126); *s.v.* Aphrodite (in per. or.) n. 87- a terracotta statuette from third century AD- (p. 162), 89 - a seashell-shaped pendant in lapis lazuli from the fourth century AD-(p. 163), 192 –a painted terracotta lantern from the second century AD - (p. 166).

Themistius in the fourth century AD.[185] However, although Aphrodite was often represented in artworks about the Gigantomachy,[186] she is not described at all in Themistius' passage.

Examples of artworks from late antiquity which show Aphrodite fixing her hair (Table B) include a vase from the fourth century AD (Fig. A), a pyxis from the sixth century AD (fig. B), and a figurine from Egypt from the second half of the second century AD (Fig. C). These suggest that the motif of the goddess styling her hair survived in art until Colluthus' time.

Table B

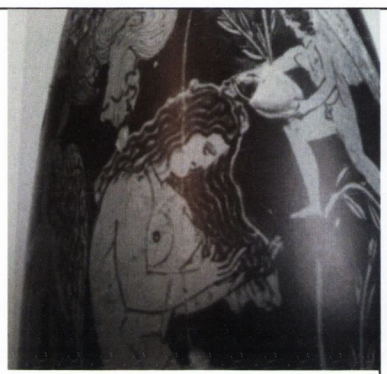		
Fig. A: terracotta vase from the fourth c. AD. Kassel, Staatliche Kunstammlungen (*LIMC* n. 988 *s.v.* Aphrodite, 96).	Fig. B: ivory pyxis from the sixth c. AD, Today at Baltimore, Walters Arts Gallery (*LIMC* n. 126 *s. v.* Paris).	Fig. C: bronze figurine from Egypt from the second half of the second c. AD (*LIMC* n. 44 *s.v.* Aphrodite (in per. or.), 159.

The poet meant to recreate the scene as a pretty portrait of a vain lady. During her speech to Paris, Aphrodite shows no concern for modesty, as she lifts her robe and does not mind showing her breasts (οὐκ ᾐδέσσατο Κύπρις 156, οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν 158), just like, again, Claudian's Aphrodite in *Gig.* 49 πορφυρέων οὐ κρύπτεν ὑφ' εἵμασιν ἄνθεα μαζῶν, and Aphrodite's statue in Christodorus' ekphrasis (*AP* 2.79 ἀπὸ στέρνοιο δὲ γυμνή, and 2.100 γυμνήν - Coll. 155 γυμνώσασα). Colluthus may have also been inspired by seeing a statue, or by reading the celebratory epigrams *APl* 160, 162, 163, 168 on Praxiteles' Aphrodite from Cnydos. Thus, a description of the goddess

[185] Themist. *Or.*13 176d-177a and *Or.* 34.23.2.227, 23: in this panegyric of Emperor Gratian, Themistius compares the effect of the princeps' moral beauty over the barbarians to that of Eros and Aphrodite's beauty over the Giant in the Gigantomachy (Giomi 2003, 374). For Livrea 2000, 443, Claudian focused here on the goddess' preparation, champion of "armi paradossali" (i.e. beauty), a topic which will be discussed later in this chapter; see Gigli-Piccardi 1985, 57-63, and Clairmont 1951, 78-87.

[186] *LIMC s.v. Aphrodite* n. 1394-1403, especially the Pergamon altar = n. 1400.

grooming herself seems the natural complement to such a vain personality, especially if we go by the relevance given to grooming within the epyllion; with the goddesses, Paris also prepares himself for his meeting with Helen, which is also a judgment.

One last consideration may be made on the basis of comparison with this last passage from Claudian. Giomi interprets Aphrodite's nudity as an allegory for the Neoplatonic ascension and purification that is necessary to approach the divine.[187] On the other hand, the spiritual death of the Giant is well expressed at 55 by the fact that he is "dressed", as clothes symbolise matter and thus death.[188] Colluthus may then be ironically alluding to the fact that, while Aphrodite, by stripping off, is paradoxically getting closer to the divine, the other two goddesses are still fully clothed, and are going nowhere other than the material world. It would be a double victory for Aphrodite: Colluthus exploits a Neoplatonic allegory to achieve an ironic output. In this case, in fact, differently from the passage of Paris' sea-crossing, which, as discussed, can be interpreted as a Neoplatonic metaphor, it would be challenging to accept this interpretation literally rather than as another ironic twist, where the goddess would be ironically ascending to God.

b. The Agon

After her victory, Aphrodite humiliates her rivals Hera and Athena (172-89): this passage marks a sudden change of genre to a mini-invective. Its tone is quite different from Aphrodite's previous speeches (the one to the Loves, at 86-98, and the one to Paris at 160-66), although in the first one we can already foresee some signs of her proud attitude: when she gathers the Loves around her (86),[189] she begins to speak as a vulnerable and un-warlike candidate who does not stand a chance in the contest with two very powerful rivals such Hera and Athena (89-93). And yet, halfway through her monologue she realises that she, too, has weapons, and far more powerful than her rivals' (94-8). In the same way, while trying to persuade Paris to give her the prize, she cockily builds up the tone to the point of questioning the value of the others' rewards (164-5).

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[187] Giomi 2003, 376.

[188] Plot. 1.6.7.5-7

[189] The meaning of περιπτύξασθε is to be interpreted in this way, not simply as "embrace" as Orsini 1972, 5 and others translate, see Williams 2001, 179.

First, it needs to be clarified that we are dealing with a contest, since there has been some discussion around the interpretation of line 172: Mair reads εἴξατέ μοι πολέμοιο συνήθεες, εἴξατε νίκης, "surrender to me, you, accustomed to war; yield the victory to me", but Livrea supports εἴξατέ μοι πολέμοιο, συνήθεος εἴξατε νίκης, "declare yourselves defeated in this war, yield to me the usual victory", as εἴκω goes with genitive.[190] He also thinks that the expression "accustomed to war" sounds difficult. On the contrary, this is unquestionably an *agon*: at 86 Aphrodite introduces the scene with ἐγγὺς ἀγών: "the contest is near!", so we are definitely speaking of an ἀγὼν περὶ κάλλους, and it is Colluthus himself who clearly states this at 87: σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων. Moreover, the tone of Aphrodite's speech to the Loves is that of a general exhorting his soldiers before a battle: Williams rightly spots the theme of *militia amoris*,[191] where the invitation to the Loves to help their mother may be an allusion to earth stirring up the Titans in Claudian's Latin *Gigantomachy* 27-8: *sed vos, o tandem veniens exercitus ultor, solvite Titanas vinclis, defendite matrem.*

However, it is not just a beauty contest: in her own speech to Paris, the goddess had earlier made the point that she has nothing to do with war: δέξο με καὶ πολέμων ἐπιλήθεο,[192] [...] ἔργα μόθων οὐκ οἶδα· τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; [...] ἀντὶ μὲν ἠνορέης ἐρατὴν παράκοιτιν ὀπάσσω, "'Pick me and forget wars: [...] I do not know the works of war. For what has Aphrodite to do with shields? Instead of manly bravery, I will give you a charming bride" (160-4), benchmarking herself and her reward on a completely different level to Hera and especially Athena (who had offered the kingdom on Asia and the gift of excellence in war). Her statement to Paris comes across as false and deceitful: the goddess, in her speech to the Loves, had actually reported what people say about her rivals, and listed her own alleged deficiencies: "I am unwarlike", she says.[193] However, she had then reached the conclusion that, while she may not own metal weapons as the other goddesses,[194] no one masters the equally lethal weapons of love and pain as effectively as she can. At 91-8 she says:

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190 Livrea 1968a, 151-2.

191 Williams 2001, 179.

192 A close model is Nonn. *Dion.* 10,111, although the circumstances are quite different (Ino is ready to throw herself into the sea for having killed her son Melicertes).

193 The model for this is *Il.* 5.330-3 Κύπριν ... ἄναλκις ἔην θεός, οὐδὲ θεάων / τάων αἵ τ' ἀνδρῶν πόλεμον κάτα κοιρανέουσιν, / οὔτ' ἄρ' Ἀθηναίη οὔτε πτολίπορθος Ἐνυώ. "Cypris ... a weak goddess, she is not one of those goddesses who dominate the battles of men. She is neither Athena nor Enyo, destroyer of cities".

194 Williams 2001, 179-83.

καὶ πολέμων βασίλειαν ἀεὶ καλέουσιν Ἀθήνην·
μούνη Κύπρις ἄναλκις ἔην θεός. οὐ βασιλήων
κοιρανίην, οὐκ ἔγχος ἀρήιον, οὐ βέλος ἕλκω.
ἀλλὰ τί δειμαίνω περιώσιον ἀντὶ μὲν αἰχμῆς
ὡς θοὸν ἔγχος ἔχουσα μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων;
σκῆπτρον ἔχω καὶ κέντρον ἄγω καὶ τόξον ἀείρω,
κεστόν, ὅθεν φιλότητος ἐμῆς ἐμὸν οἶστρον ἑλοῦσαι
πολλάκις ὠδίνουσι καὶ οὐ θνῄσκουσι γυναῖκες.

As for Athena, they always call her the queen of battles.
Only I, Cypris, am an unwarlike goddess. I wield no sovereignty,
Like a king should, I brandish no warlike spear, nor do I draw the bow.
But why do I fear beyond measure, since, instead of a spear
I have as my swift sword the honeyed girdle[195] of the Loves?
I do hold a sceptre, and I do wield a spur and I do raise a bow:[196]
That girdle, from where women catch my sting of desire,
And travail many times, but never to the point of death.[197]

Colluthus is here establishing that Aphrodite's seductive weapons are equally powerful as the military ones by making the goddess herself say what Claudian had already said of Venus in the *Gigantomachy* 50-4:

εἶχε γὰρ αὐτή
πλέγμα κόρυν, δόρυ μαζόν, ὀφρῦν βέλος, ἀσπίδα κάλλος,
ὅπλα μέλη, θέλγητρον ἐν ἄλγεσιν· εἰ δέ τις αὐτῇ
ὄμμα βάλοι, δέδμητο, βέλος δ'ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐάσας

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[195] Colluthus, following Nonnus, identifies the κεστός with a μίτρη παρθενίη (or a magic charm) worn around the breasts, while Christodorus retrieves the Homeric interpretation of it as an embroidered belt that tied across the chest and at the back (Tissoni 2000a, 130-31) in *AP* 2.100-101 ἐπὶ στέρνων δὲ θεαίνης / αὐχένος ἐξ ὑπάτοιο χυθεὶς ἐλελίζετο κεστός and 289-90 ἀμφὶ δὲ μαζοῖς / κεστὸς ἕλιξ κεχάλαστο, χάρις δ' ἐνενήχετο κεστῷ. See also Antiph. Mac. *AP* 6.88.1-2 Αὐτή σοι Κυθέρεια τὸν ἱμερόεντ' ἀπὸ μαστῶν, / Ἰνώ, λυσαμένη κεστὸν ἔδωκεν ἔχειν. Homer had already explained that Aphrodite's chest was precisely the hiding place for all her devices in *Il.* 14.214-17 ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα / ποικίλον, ἔνθα δέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο· / ἔνθ' ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ' ἵμερος, ἐν δ' ὀαριστὺς / πάρφασις, ἥ τ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων, "She removed from her chest the embroidered multicoloured belt, where all the enchantments are: love, and desire and flirts are there, and seduction, which steals the reason of even wise men". Lucian also, in *Dear. Iud.* 10, may be alluding to such an item, as Athena prompts Paris not to let Aphrodite undress until she has removed her girdle, as this is a magic object: Μὴ πρότερον ἀποδύσῃς αὐτήν, ὦ Πάρι, πρὶν ἂν τὸν κεστὸν ἀπόθηται—φαρμακὶς γάρ ἐστιν—μή σε καταγοητεύσῃ δι' αὐτοῦ, "Paris, do not let her undress until she takes off her girdle, for she is an enchantress; or else she may bewitch you with it".

[196] Note the symmetry (which features in all of the other goddesses' speeches, see below) of the passage, in which her assets correspond precisely to her deficiencies: ἔγχος corresponds to κέντρον, and τόξον to βέλος. Only κεστόν fails to match with κοιρανίην, hence Orsini 1972, 22 supposes a lacuna. However, I accept here William's conjecture of σκῆπτρον, which is not only justified by parablepsy (the first word of the next line is again κεστόν), but also by the fact that the girdle had actually just been described, and ultimately matches with Hera's κοιρανίην, see Williams 2001, 181, who reveals how, with this restoration, Aphrodite's speech would be "as elegant as her coiffure".

[197] Note the variation at 364 Νηιάδες ζώουσι καὶ οὐ κτείνουσι γυναῖκας.

ὡς Ἄρεως αἰχμῇ τῇ Κύπριδος ὅλλυτο μορφῇ

For she had a chignon as a helmet,
Her breasts as a spear, her look as a dart, her beauty as a shield,
Her curves as weapons, a charm among the pains. If someone
Gazed upon her, he was subdued, letting the dart fall from his hand
He was killed by the beauty of Cypris as by the spear of Ares.

The repetition of βέλος (Claud. 43, 51, 54 - Coll. 93) and αἰχμή (Claud. 54 - Coll. 94), and the statement that the goddess' body parts and equipment are weapons as powerful as those of Ares, match perfectly (Claud. 52-4 - Coll. 92-3) and climax into the shared statement that women are prepared to suffer the pains of childbirth for love (Claud. 52 - Coll. 97-8).

A second model for this passage is Nonnus *Dion.* 35.168-179, the above-mentioned episode about the Indian prince who falls in love with the girl he has killed, and who is advised to beware of warlike Aphrodite (Coll. ἄναλκις 92 - Nonn. ἀπτόλεμος 168):

[...] ἀπτόλεμος γὰρ
Κύπρις ἀριστεύει πλέον Ἄρεος, οὐδὲ χατίζει
ἀσπίδος, οὐ μελίης ποτὲ δεύεται· ἀμφότερον γὰρ
ἔγχος ἐμὸν πέλε κάλλος, ἐμὸν ξίφος ἔπλετο μορφή,
καὶ βλεφάρων ἀκτῖνες ἐμοὶ γεγάασιν ὀιστοί·
μαζὸς ἀκοντίζει πλέον ἔγχεος· ἱμερόεις γὰρ
ἀντὶ δοριθρασέος θαλαμηπόλος ἔπλετο Μορρεύς.
μὴ Σπάρτης ἐπίβηθι, μαχήμονες ἦχι πολῖται
χάλκεον εἶδος ἔχουσι κορυσσομένης Ἀφροδίτης,
μή σε δόρυ κρατέουσα τεῷ πλήξειε σιδήρῳ.
οὐ τόσον αἰχμάζεις, ὅσον ὀφρύες· οὐ τόσον αἰχμαὶ
ἀνέρας οὐτάζουσιν, ὅσον βάλλουσιν ὀπωπαί·

You see, unwarlike Aphrodite is more valiant than Ares, and does not even need the shield, never mind the spear: beauty is my spear, my looks are my sword, the gaze of my eyes are my darts; a breast strikes harder than a spear: from brave warrior Morrheus has turned to loving husband. It is better for you not to go to Sparta, where those bellicose citizens have a bronze icon of armed Aphrodite: I would not want her brandishing her spear and strike you with her iron! You lack the fighting power of eyelashes; spears do not wound men as much as eyes do.

The comparison of Colluthus' passage to Nonnus' leaves no doubt about the effectiveness of the goddess' power: her monologue, which had started as the pitiful request for help of an unconfident mother, actually grows into a war cry from which the goddess emerges stronger than ever, ready to face her competition and, to the eyes of the readers, armed with much better chances than her rivals.

In fact, a statue of armed Aphrodite, called the Amyklaion *Aphrodite*, a work of Polycletos (the Young) of Argos, did exist,[198] as we learn from Nonnus' passage,[199] so it is possible that Colluthus had this artwork (or a notion of it) in mind, as this statue was in Amyklae, a town 5km south of Sparta, which Colluthus mentions at 241 with the digression of Hyacinthus. Nonnus mentions the same statue again in *Dion.* 43.6, during the *agon* of Dionysus and Poseidon, to express the idea of bellicose love.[200] It can hardly be a coincidence that an armed Aphrodite, possibly the ekphrasis of a statue in Amyklae, is mentioned in two contexts of agon.

c. Aphrodite's Invective

Aphrodite's speech to Hera and Athena after her victory (172-89) is shaped as an invective and includes, as I will discuss below, the standard features of ψόγοι that were normally incorporated in imperial encomia[201] as a means of comparison with the enemies of the person to be praised. But what drives Colluthus' choice towards invective? What made invective the genre to invest on for a writer in late antiquity?

Contrasting encomia and invective gave poets the opportunity to display their rhetorical ability. Nonnus exploits this technique, using it widely in the *Dionysiaca* to exalt Dionysus by rejecting his enemies' continuous allegations. The presence of invective in Nonnus, often accompanied by a voyeuristic interest for graphic descriptions of rapes and genitals,[202] has been interpreted as a conscious effort by the poet, as ψόγος was originally linked to the cult of Dionysus, a "god of earthly joy" as described by Agosti.[203] In *Piscator* 25, Lucian says Καίτοι ἐκεῖνοι μὲν καθ' ἑνὸς ἀνδρὸς ἐτόλμων τοιαῦτα, καὶ ἐν Διονυσίοις ἐφειμένον αὐτὸ ἔδρων, καὶ τὸ σκῶμμα ἐδόκει μέρος τι τῆς ἑορτῆς, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἴσως ἔχαιρε φιλόγελώς τις ὤν. "But they [Aristophanes and Eupolis] at least confined themselves to a single victim [Socrates], and they had the charter of Dionysus; a jest might pass at holiday time, and the laughing God might be well pleased". Colluthus may be doing something very similar: with his proem and the portrait of Paris he has built an impressionistic bucolic scene; with his description

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198 The statue was, according to Paus. 3.15.10, under a tripod in the Amyklaion, Apollo's sanctuary, and was also the object of Antimach *AP* 9. 321, Leon. *AP* 9. 320, *APl* 173-177, see Vian 1997, 144.

199 Nonnus mentions the statue often, in *Dion.* 31.259-63 and 34. 115-21.

200 Accorinti 2004, 288-89.

201 Miguélez Cavero 2010, 35 and 40.

202 Rapes of Nicaea, *Dion.* 16.250-69, and Aura, 48.607-44; scene of Achilles and Penthesilea which comes close to necrophilia, 35.21-78.

203 Agosti 2001, 246.

of Strife he has inserted a brief epic digression; now, he exploits the occasion for the goddesses' speeches to add some iambic spirit to his poem.

A panegyrist is expected to refute objections and accusations coming from his rivals, and Nonnus ensures to do so over the 48 books of his poem. The encomiast would praise his subject often by attacking his enemies in their weaker spots. Traditionally, these included origins (the enemy may be a barbarian, or not really a god: in Nonnus, for instance, Dionysus is accused of not really being the son of Zeus and of not possessing the divine attributes),[204] whatever was reprehensible in their character, and possibly the lack of ethics in their behaviour (for instance, Dionysus is often accused of cowardice by his enemies in the *Dionysiaca*).[205]

Appearance was often the target of satire and invective:[206] the panegyrist would prey on physical defects,[207] like Palladas, who, in *AP* 11.204 slanders the orator Maurus, whose snout is compared to that of an elephant, and Nonnus ridicules the Indian prince Morrheus for attempting to whiten himself in the sea before meeting Chalcomedea in *Dion.* 35.185-98; the scene is insulting on various levels: the poet has poked fun not only at the colour of the prince's skin but also at his failed attempt to succeed with an initiation of the Dionysiac cult of which the red sea is a symbol,[208] and he also plays with the well-known late antique proverb according to which washing an Ethiopian meant doing something pointless.[209] Sometimes such attacks can target inappropriate attire such as Dionysus' effeminate clothes in the *Dionysiaca*,[210] as this would be treated as evidence of their inner persona and potentially proof of their lack of mores.

In late antiquity, invective was as common as encomium, and it was not necessarily restricted to iambics. [211] One of the reasons for the decrease in use of

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[204] Iris accuses Dionysus in *Dion.* 20.196-221; a soldier at 29.52-67; Deriades in 39.33-74; Poseidon in 43.145-91; Pentheos in 44.134-83, in 45.66-94, 45.254-61 and in 46.10-51.

[205] Orontes accuses Dionysus of cowardice in *Dion.* in 17.170-91; Deriades in 21.241-73, 27.22-135, and at 36.339-49; Poseidon in 43.145-91.

[206] Agosti 2001, 237.

[207] Julian *AP* 11.367 compares a man's face to that of an ostrich, in 11.368 suggests to a hairy man to have his face shaven by scythes, and dedicates 11.369 to a dwarf. Agathias *AP* 11.372 ridicules a man as skinny as a ghost; 11.273 is against a man who is lame on the outside and on the inside.

[208] Agosti 2004, 583.

[209] Agosti 2001, 243.

[210] Orontes accuses Dionysus of effeminacy in *Dion.* 17.170-91 and 17.249-61; Iris in 20.196-221; Pentheos in 44.134-83.

[211] Agosti 2001, 219-21.

iambics for invectives[212] in high literature is, according to Agosti, to be seen in how late antique education stigmatized any indecorous display (ἀπρέπεια) of loss of control or anger, the cause of invective.[213] Staying above the limit of respectfulness, and not lowering oneself to the level of vulgar insults, are standards that writers in late antiquity prided themselves on; for instance, Synesius in *de Ins.* 20 satirizes two philosophers, "whose dignity did not keep them from insulting one another".[214] This aspect appears in both Nonnus and Colluthus, where the aggressiveness of the person attacking contrasts clearly with the passive silence of the victim: so Semele in Nonnus *Dion.* 9 and Aphrodite in Colluthus display audacity and lack of self-control, while Hera in both, and especially Athena in Colluthus fail to respond to the provocation and appear composed in their silence (they do not react to her speech, which is sealed by Ἥρην ἐξελάσασα καὶ ἀσχαλόωσαν Ἀθήνην 192).

Invective seems to be a preferred genre of the Egyptians in late antiquity,[215] who, as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, were particularly fond of aggressive literary styles and injury. The Egyptians had a reputation as liars and charlatans, but they were also known as quarrelsome and quick to lose their temper to the point of enjoying verbal injury,[216] and also as *genus hominum seditiosissimum, vanissimum, iniuriosissimum,* "a breed most seditious, deceitful, prone to injury".[217] In the fourth century AD, Ammianus describes the Egyptians as *genus hominum controversum et assuetudine perplexus litigandi semper laetissimum.*[218] Earlier, Seneca had also defined Egypt as a *loquax et in contumelias praefectorum ingeniosa provincial in qua etiam qui uitauerunt culpam non effugerunt infamiam ... cui etiam periculosi sales placent*', "a saucy province with a genius for insulting its governors, where even those who

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[212] The meter continued to be widely used for all that was aimed at reaching a wide audience or popularity, such as didascalic Christian poetry: Gregory of Nazanzius claimed that one of the reasons why he devoted himself to poetry was to *miscere utile dulci,* and also that part of the Scriptures were iambic compositions, *Epist. n. Paul.* 30.3, and in *Carm.* 2.1.39. Extremely popular were also the so-called translations of hexametric poetry into trimeters, closer to the spoken language, such as those of Callimachus and Apollonius made by Marianus of Eleutheropolis.

[213] Agosti 2001, 224.

[214] Pallas, in *AP* 11.299, remains above λοιδορία as this is the punishment of whoever indulges in it. Julian, in *Epist.* 80, p. 89. 15-20 Bidez, prides himself on never having abused or slandered anyone; however, he also tries to bypass the ban imposed by *paideia* by claiming to draw inspiration from the barbarians who are free to abandon themselves to the wild iambus by composing ἄγρια μέλη since they are not obliged to display self-control (see also Agosti 2006a, 36 n. 4).

[215] Cameron 1965c, 479, and Agosti 2001, 236.

[216] *SHA Quadr. Tyr. Firm. Sat.* 7.4-5.

[217] As above 8. 5.

[218] Ammian 22.6.1.

managed to avoid guilt could not escape slander... and they also enjoy dangerous wits".[219]

Alexandrians in particular had "a flair for invective".[220] The second-century-AD historian Herodian, speaking about Alexandrians, says πεφύκασι δέ πως εἶναι φιλοσκώμμονες καὶ λέγειν εὐστόχους ὑπογραφὰς ἢ παιδιάς, ἀπορριπτοῦντες ἐς τοὺς ὑπερέχοντας πολλὰ χαρίεντα μὲν αὐτοῖς δοκοῦντα, λυπηρὰ δὲ τοῖς σκωφθεῖσι,[221] "they are by nature fond of joking at the expense of those in high places. However witty these clever remarks may seem to those who make them, they hurt very much those who are ridiculed". This passion for ψόγος is well testified by the Alexandrian Claudian, the author of *In Rufinum* and *In Eutropium,* invectives against two of Arcadius' ministers, and by Palladas, the author, also in the fourth century AD, of many invective epigrams against politicians.222 Conscious of losing friends because of his love of ψόγος, Palladas swore that he would quit his addiction, but could not help himself in *AP* 11.340:

> Ὤμοσα μυριάκις ἐπιγράμματα μηκέτι ποιεῖν,
> πολλῶν γὰρ μωρῶν ἔχθραν ἐπεσπασάμην·
> ἀλλ' ὁπόταν κατίδω τοῦ Παφλαγόνος τὸ πρόσωπον
> Πανταγάθου, στέξαι τὴν νόσον οὐ δύναμαι.
>
> I swore ten thousand times to make no more epigrams, for I had brought on myself the enmity of many fools, but when I set eyes on the face of the Paphlagonian Pantagathus I can't restrain my disease.

He admits that invective is Attic honey in *AP* 11.341: Αἰνίζειν μὲν ἄριστον, ὁ δὲ ψόγος ἔχθεος ἀρχή, ἀλλὰ κακῶς εἰπεῖν Ἀττικόν ἐστι μέλι, "Praising is the best thing, but blaming is the cause of enmity; but yet to slander others is Attic honey".

There is some evidence of the Egyptian habit of insulting high-profile personalities: according to Svetonius, Alexandrians called Vespasian stingy: *Alexandrini Cybiosacten eum vocare perseveraverunt, cognomine unius e regibus suis turpissimarum sordium,*[223] "the inhabitants of Alexandria kept on calling him Cybiosacte, surname of one of their kings who had shown the most sordid avarice", and Alexander Severus had a similar fate, as related in the *Historia Augusta: quodam*

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219 *Dial.* 12.19.6.

220 Cameron 1965c, 479.

221 *Hist.* 4.9.2.

222 *AP* 7.681-8 against the rhetor Gessius; 9.292 against Themistius (see Cameron 1965b); 9.393, 10.90-91 against Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria (see Cameron 1965a).

223 Svet. *Vesp.* 19.

tempore festo, ut solent, Antiochenses, Aegyptii, Alexandrini lacessiverant conviciolis, et Syrum archisynagogum eum vocantes, "on the occasion of a certain festival, the Antiochians and Egyptians and Alexandrians had annoyed him with insults, as is their custom, calling him a Syrian synagogue-chief".

In Colluthus, the goddess attacks her rivals on their origins, their appearance, and their character. This rhetorical structure[224] is visible especially in her attack against Athena: Aphrodite mocks her origins first (her birth from Zeus, not from a mother through regular childbirth, 181-3), then her appearance (she wears bronze breast-plates, 184), then her character (her preference for wars to love and her ignorance in matters of love, 185-6), and finally she returns to attack her character (her gender, 187-9).

The first part of the invective, opened by a request to admit defeat (εἴξατέ μοι[225] 172), begins with a σύγκρισις: in *progymnasmata,* these were balanced judgements of both the subject of the encomium and that of the ψόγος. Here, Aphrodite indirectly praises herself by attacking her rivals. Nonnus employed this technique widely in his *Dionysiaca*, challenging Dionysus regularly with Typhoeus, the Indians, Lykurgos, Nicaea, and Heracles.[226] In doing so, he employs all of the standard weapons that were commonly used in panegyrics: mockery, false or half-true statements, and attacks on the weakest sides of the rivals (appearance, personality and morals). In late antique literature encomium and invective followed the same rules, simply reversed,[227] and the two genres often blurred into one another as the sensibility to genres faded,[228] as, for instance, in George of Pisidia's *In Alypium*, where he attacks the monk Alypius for his obesity but then twists his invective into an encomium to his own intelligence.[229]

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224 The speech is rich with alexandrine features such as Bucolic caesura at 17; repetition of ἀγλαίη at 167, 168 and 173; chiasmos at 184 (Harries 2006, 542).

225 The line echoes *Il.* 24.716, where Priam is asking people to yield to him as he carries Hector's body on a chariot.

226 Miguélez Cavero 2010, 38-9.

227 For Cameron 1965c, 479, invective had "each of the subdivisions serving as an opening for vituperation instead of praise"; see also Agosti 2001, 237.

228 Agosti 2001, 224.

229 Although Agosti 2001, 244 (especially n. 133) is not so sure this is not a sarcastic joke, since obesity was normally associated with obtuseness.

This scene is modelled on an episode of the *Dionysiaca* (9.235-6), where Semele, proud of her son Dionysus, casts an invective on Hera and appeals to her to admit her defeat: εἴξατέ μοι· Σεμέλη γὰρ ἑὸν πόσιν ἔλλαχε μούνη τὴν αὐτὴν ἀρόωντα καὶ ὠδίνοντα γενέθλην, "Give place to me all! For Semele alone had a husband who got her pregnant and laboured for the same child". Semele had begun her speech at 208 with Ἥρη, ἐσυλήθης· Σεμέλης τόκος ἐστὶν ἀρείων "Hera, you have lost: Semele's son is the best!" Also, at 10.129-32 Semele says to her sister Ino: πόντον ἔχεις, Σεμέλη λάχε κύκλον Ὀλύμπου· εἶξον ἐμοί· Κρονίδην γὰρ ἐμῆς ἀροτῆρα γενέθλης ἀθάνατον πόσιν ἔσχον, ἐμῆς ὠδῖνα λοχείης ἀντ' ἐμέθεν τίκτοντα, "you have the sea, but Semele obtained the vault of heaven. Give way to me, because an immortal groom, the Cronides, plough my offspring and delivered in my place, suffering the labour of child birth".[230] Nonnus often concludes his confrontations with an invitation to admit defeat:[231] in *Dion.* 12.245 Dionysus demands that Apollo admits his inferiority, and then that Ares does the same (102.251). This appeal was typical of imperial panegyrics,[232] as we see in Agathias' *AP* 4.3.47-52:

> Μή τις ἐπαυχενίοιο λιπὼν ζωστῆρα λεπάδνου
> βάρβαρος ἐς Βασιλῆα βιημάχον ὄμμα τανύσσῃ·
> μηδ' ἔτι Περσὶς ἄναλκις ἀναστείλασα καλύπτρην
> ὄρθιον ἀθρήσειεν· ἐποκλάζουσα δὲ γαίῃ
> καὶ λόφον αὐχήεντα καταγνάμπτουσα τενόντων
> Αὐσονίοις ἄκλητος ὑποκλίνοιτο ταλάντοις
>
> Let no barbarian, freeing himself from the yoke-strap that passes under his neck, dare to fix his gaze on our King, the mighty warrior; nor let any weak Persian woman raise her veil and look straight at him, but, kneeling on the ground and bending the proud arch of her neck, let her come uncalled and submit to Roman justice.[233]

Nonnus' *agon* between Semele and Hera revolves around whose son is best, and Semele's argument is based on Dionysus having been born from his father Zeus directly, and nursed by Rea, Zeus' mother. Colluthus is possibly making a joke here by building a parallel between Dionysus and Athena: while in Nonnus to be born from the father (Zeus in both cases) represents the unique factor that grants superiority to the

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230 Nonnus also exploits the superiority of the air element versus the water, especially in 134-136: σὸς πάις ἔλλαχε πόντον, ἐμὸς τόκος αἰθέρα ναίειν / ἵξεται εἰς Διὸς οἶκον ὑπέρτερον· οὐ γὰρ ἐίσκω / οὐράνιον Διόνυσον ὑποβρυχίῳ Μελικέρτῃ, "Your son had the sea by fate, while mine will go to live in heaven, in the sublime dwelling of Zeus; no, I cannot compare celestial Dionysus to Melicertes of the abyss".

231 In *Dion.* 2.620 Zeus prompts Typhoeus; in 11.86 Ampelos prompts Selene.

232 Coripp. *In laud. Iust.* 380-9.

233 Transl. W.R. Paton.

god, in Colluthus (181-3) parthenogenesis is the reason why Aphrodite mocks Athena and considers her inferior. Moreover, Dionysus is born from Zeus' thigh, while Athena is born from Zeus' head.[234] A further factor to be considered is the labour: in Nonnus, at 9.209-11 Semele says: Ζεὺς ἐμὸν υἷα λόχευσε καὶ ἀντ' ἐμέθεν πέλε μήτηρ, σπεῖρε πατὴρ καὶ ἔτικτε, τὸν ἤροσεν, αὐτοτόκῳ δὲ γαστρὶ νόθῃ τέκε παῖδα, φύσιν δ' ἤλλαξεν ἀνάγκη. "Zeus became mother in my place and delivered my son; he sewed him as a father and gave birth to the one he had sown. He gave birth to a child through a counterfeit womb of his own, and he forced nature to change": λόχευσε[235] (209) confirms the presence of labour pangs and childbirth, while in Colluthus, Aphrodite accuses Athena of having been born ἀλόχευτον (183).

Aphrodite's first argument is in fact that Athena was not even delivered by a mother, through the natural process, but was carried by Zeus in his head, and delivered by the axe of Hephaestus. To recount the birth of Athena, however, Colluthus chooses a metaphor of the fertility of the earth (ἔσπειρε,[236] ῥίζα and ἀνεβλάστησε 181-3), which contrasts ironically with the supernatural birth of Athena,[237] especially with the image of the root of iron (ῥίζα σιδήρου 182) through which Athena was delivered.[238] The verb σπείρω chosen by Colluthus continues to echo Nonn. *Dion.* 9.229, where Hera generates Hephaestus ἄσπορος, and also *Par.* 19.152, where Jesus is ἄσπορος υἱός. Ἀναβλαστάνω, which normally refers to blossoming of plants (as in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1.1131), also occurs about the birth of the first monsters from the earth in *Arg.* 4.676 and of the terrible soldiers born from the earth in Nonn. *Dion.* 14.26.

The actual accusation of not being delivered by a mother, οὐ μαιώσατο μήτηρ (181), echoes two particular passages from the *Dionysiaca*[239] related to parthenogenesis: again 9.228, where Hephaestus is ἀπάτωρ, and 25.487, where Gaia

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234 The birth of both gods from Zeus is evoked in Nonnus' powerful proem to the *Dionysiaca* (1.1-10), for which see Shorrock 2008, 101.

235 In *h.Merc.* 230 applied to Zeus; in Eur. *BA* 3 r to Dionysus, while in Nonnus it is used many times metaphorically (*Dion.*7.84, 27.50, 31.23, 38.246, 280, 47.86), especially 26.274 where it describes the delivery of a pig who gives birth to fish-like creatures: the event happens just after Arrhetus' wedding and his bride, Laobie, gave birth to equally silent creatures, to which later Dionysus will give the gift of speech.

236 Not a hapax, as noted by Giangrande 1969, 152.

237 Kotseleni 1990, 221.

238 The two passages quoted by Livrea1969, 155 as possible models do not shed much light: Nonn. *Dion.* 41.65-66 speaks of the birth of Erechtheos, and Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 4.1641-42 of the birth of Talos, a giant given by Zeus to Europa to guard the island.

239 In *Dion.* 4.437 the expression is used about one of the soldiers born from the ground, attacking Cadmos.

self-reproduces and gives birth to the giant Damasenus. Ἀλόχευτον (183) expresses the process of self-reproduction typical of divinities; the word does not appear in Homer, but Nonnus employs it in the *Dionysiaca* on a couple of occasions:[240] unsurprisingly, in the invective of Semele against Hera (*Dion.* 9.217), where Semele acknowledges that Maia delivered Hermes, but makes a point that the child was certainly not delivered by her groom (like her Dionysus): οὐκ ἐλόχευσεν ἀκοίτης. In 8.27 the adjective is applied to Dionysus: πάις δ' ἀλόχευτος ἐχέφρων ἅλμασιν ἐνδομύχοισι συνεσκίρτησε τεκούσῃ, "the child not born yet, but already conscious, danced together with his mother, jumping in her womb". In 241 Nonnus describes the birth of Athena with similar terms in *Dion.* 20.54: αὐτοτελῆ γονόεντος ἀμήτορα παῖδα καρήνου, "the motherless daughter born by herself from the delivering head of her father".

Colluthus may also recall of two passages of the *Dionysiaca* that seem to combine Platonic motifs[242] with the story told in Genesis 1.26. In 41.51-8 Nature, αὐτογένεθλος, ἀπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτηρ,[243] fashions the inhabitants of Berito, the first city to have been founded in the cosmos, by combining earth, fire, air and water: ἐνθάδε φῶτες ἔναιον ὁμήλικες Ἠριγενείης, οὓς Φύσις αὐτογένεθλος ἀνυμφεύτῳ τινὶ θεσμῷ ἤροσε νόσφι γάμων, ἀπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ, ὁππότε συμμιγέων ἀτόμων τετράζυγι δεσμῷ ὕδατι καὶ πυρόεντι πεφυρμένον ἠέρος ἀτμῷ σύζυγα μορφώσασα σοφὸν τόκον ἄσπορος ὠδὶς ἔμπνοον ἐψύχωσε γονὴν ἐγκύμονι πηλῷ, οἷς Φύσις εἶδος ὄπασσε τελεσφόρον· "here lived men coeval of the Dawn, whom self-reproducing Nature, following a chastity's law, delivered, out of marriage, without a father, without childbirth, without a mother, when, in the atomic fusion of a quadruple bond, combining water together with the blazing steam of the air, the inseminated birth fashioned a wise fruit, breathing the breath of life on the pregnant mud". The birth of the habitants of Berito echoes the genesis that follows the flood in 7.4-6, where Nature

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[240] *Dion.* 24.269 Eros looks at the sterile cosmos as Aphrodite has turned to Athena's handloom: παπταίνων ἀλόχευτον ἀνήροτον αὔλακα κόσμου, "he peered at the furrows of the world fallen out of love, sterile".

[241] Gigli-Piccardi 2003, 576 notes how the motif echoes Luke's gospel (*Nov. Test. Ev. Luc.* 1.41: ἐσκίρτησεν τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ αὐτῆς) where John jumps in Elisabeth's womb when Mary walks in. However, the image of a god who manifests divine powers before his birth was already in Call. *h.* 4.86-99 and 162-95 (prophecy of Apollo pronounced in Leto's womb) and in Plut. *De Is. Et Osir.* 12.356 where the two gods begin their love before their birth.

[242] The two passages echo the tale of the earth-born who begin to reappear after the destruction caused by the abandonment of the cosmos by the god of government in Plat. *Pol.* 271a-c, and the genesis of the mortals by the hands of Epimetheos in Plat. *Prot.* 320d.

[243] An almost identical line occurs in Greg. Naz. *Carm.* 2.2.7. 254 (PG 37. 1571): αὐτοπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος.

fashions men, mixing together the four elements: καὶ φύσις ἐρρίζωτο, τιθηνήτειρα γενέθλης, καὶ χθονὶ πῦρ κεράσασα καὶ ἠέρι σύμπλοκον ὕδωρ ἀνδρομέην μόρφωσε γονὴν τετράζυγι δεσμῷ, "and Nature, nurse of the generative principle, put roots down; mixing fire with earth and water with air she shaped the human race with this quadruple bond". There are a number of connections between these passages and Colluthus: we find again the concept of roots (Nonn. 7.4 ἐρρίζωτο - Coll. 182 ῥίζα), which echoes ancient philosophical terms such as ῥιζώματα;[244] this detail adds solemnity to the scene.[245] Moreover, the concept of bond (Nonn. τετράζυγι δεσμῷ 41.54 and 7.6 - Coll. 157 μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων) may allude back to the universal bond described by Plato.[246]

The concept of a god who brings himself forth, and who therefore is his own father and son, in an endless cycle, dates back to Euripides: in a fragment we read ἀκάμας τε χρόνος ...τίκτων αὐτὸς ἑαυτόν,[247] and in another αὐτοφυᾶ. In the third century BC, Chrysippus says ἅπαντά τ' ἐστὶν αἰθήρ, ὁ αὐτὸς ὢν καὶ πατὴρ καὶ υἱός. [248] The image is an Egyptian concept[249] testified for Osiris and Ptah, but is also found with regards to Zeus begetting Dionysus who is identical to Zeus,[250] and referred to Zeus himself in Aelius Aristides: ἐποίησε δὲ πρῶτος αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν ... αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἐποίησε.[251] Similar terminology appears in a magical inscription from Antinoupolis: δεῦρο μοι ὁ αὐτογεννήτωρ θεέ, and αὐτὸς πάτωρ, αὐτομήτωρ[252] and in Gnostic-Hermetic texts[253] such as Firm. Mat. *Math.* 5.3: *Quicumque es deusqui per dies singulos caeli*

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244 Emped. Fr. 7 (6).1 Wright τέσσαρα γὰρ πάντων ῥιζώματα πρῶτον ἄκουε and Pythagoras in Porph. *Vit. Pythag.* 20 οὗ, μὰ τὸν ἀμετέρᾳ γενεᾷ παραδόντα τετρακτύν, παγὰν ἀενάου φύσιος ῥιζώματ' ἔχουσαν.

245 Gigli-Piccardi 2003, 525.

246 Plat. *Tim.* 32c καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἔκ τε δὴ τούτων τοιούτων καὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τεττάρων τὸ τοῦ κόσμου σῶμα ἐγεννήθη δι'ἀναλογίας ὁμολογῆσαν, φιλίαν τε ἔσχεν ἐκ τούτων, ὥστε εἰς ταὐτὸν αὑτῷ συνελθὸν ἄλυτον ὑπό του ἄλλου πλὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ συνδήσαντος γενέσθαι. Τῶν δὲ δὴ τεττάρων ἓν ὅλον ἕκαστον εἴληφεν ἡ τοῦ κόσμου σύστασις. ἐκ γὰρ πυρὸς παντὸς ὕδατός τε καὶ ἀέρος καὶ γῆς συνέστησεν αὐτὸν ὁ συνιστάς, μέρος οὐδὲν οὐδενὸς οὐδὲ δύναμιν ἔξωθεν ὑπολιπών, "and out of these materials, such in kind and four in number, the body of the Cosmos was harmonized by proportion and brought into existence. These conditions secured for it Amity, so that being united in identity with itself it became indissoluble by any agent other than Him who had bound it together. Now of the four elements the construction of the Cosmos had taken up the whole of every one. For its Constructor had constructed it of all the fire and water and air and earth that existed, leaving over, outside it, no single particle or potency of any one of these elements" (transl. W.R.M. Lamb).

247 Fragment by Euripides or Critias II, 88 B 18 D.-K.= Eur. Fr. 594 Nauck.

248 *Frag.* 1078.

249 Versnel 1990, 227-9.

250 Firm. Mat. *De errore* 26.1, Clem. *Protr.* 2.14 and Arnob. *Adv. Nat.* 5.21.

251 Ael. Arist. *Εἰς Δία* (*Or.* 43).8

252 Crisi 1974, 119-24. For other similar inscriptions see Versnel 1990, 227 n. 109.

253 Whittaker 1980, 176-93.

cursum celery festinatione continuas...tu tibi pater ac filius uno vinculo necessitudinis obligates, tibi supplices manus tendimus. In later literature it relates to Christ, such as in Synesios 3.145: Πατέρων πάντων πάτερ αὐτοπάτωρ, προπάτωρ ἀπάτωρ, υἱὲ σεαυτοῦ, and Didymos Ἀθάνατος δὲ Θεὸς, ... αὐτογένεθλος, τίκτων αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν, ἀεὶ νέος, οὐ ποιητός, and αὐτολόχευτος γίνεται, ἐξ ἔθεν αὐτὸς ἐὼν γενέτης τε καὶ υἱός.[254]

Unsurprisingly, Colluthus ironically twists the way self-reproduction is treated: while Nonnus uses ἀλόχευτος to define Nature as self-reproducing, but also, again, Christ (in *Par.* 19.145),[255] Colluthus uses it to humiliate Athena, implying that to be born through the alternative process is not something to be proud of; in fact, according to Aphrodite, Athena has nothing to boast about: οἷα δὲ κυδιάεις ἀνεμώλιος, Ἀτρυτώνη (180).

Aphrodite's second accusation against Athena is of despising love: she covers herself in bronze robes, avoids love and seeks wars (184-5).

Colluthus' model is Hes. *Op.* 198 λευκοῖσιν φάρεσσι καλυψαμένω χρόα καλὸν where Aidos and Nemesis wrap their beautiful bodies in white robes and leave the mortals to join the Olympus.[256] Lines 185-6 reflect the structure of lines 176-9. Here the first two hemistychia correspond to each other (φεύγεις φιλότητα + ἁρμονίης ἀδίδακτος, and Ἄρεος ἔργα διώκεις + ὁμοφροσύνης ἀδαήμων): Athena's contempt for love is justified by her lack of experience in harmony, and her passion for wars by her lack of concord. The line is modelled on Hector and Achilles' chase in *Il.* 22.157-8 τῇ ῥα παραδραμέτην φεύγων ὃ δ' ὄπισθε διώκων· πρόσθε μὲν ἐσθλὸς ἔφευγε, δίωκε δέ μιν μέγ' ἀμείνων, "over there the two of them ran, the one running away, the other chasing him; one, strong, ran ahead, and a much stronger one chased him".

Next, Aphrodite humiliates Athena for her lack of expertise in matters of marriage. Colluthus had already described Athena at 33 as γάμων ἀδίδακτος when the goddess had reluctantly attended the wedding of Thetis and Peleus. Now Aphrodite

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254 Did. *Peri Triados* 3.2.2 (39, 788-792 Migne).

255 In Nonnus, ἀλόχευτος gains allegorical meanings that exploit its full semantic potential coming from Biblical texts and applied to Christ; this comes from a well-documented tradition of enhancing the semantic possibilities of words (traditionally Homeric vocabulary) to make them work in Christian contexts. As explained by Agosti 2005, the terminology originating from the Biblical exegesis can be also applied to late antique poetry: la "scrittura infinita" (i.e. the text that grows with its readers to acquire multiple meanings and values) becomes polysemic and inexhaustible. Shorrock 2008 and 2011 highlight how the *Paraphrasis* and *Dionysiaca* share some terminology to define both Dionysus and Christ.

256 A similar image is in Quint. 3.586, where the Nereids hurry to the Argive men: δὲ κυανέοισι καλυψάμεναι χρόα πέπλοις.

humiliates her by accusing her of ignoring harmony and concord. The goddess is not simply laughing at the fact that Athena never married; she is insulting Athena deeply, accusing her of missing the crucial value that makes a relationship. In *Od.* 6.181 Odysseus wishes that the gods may grant Nausicaa, together with a husband and a home, ὁμοφροσύνην ἐσθλήν. Athena is unable to comprehend another human being, to share feelings, ideas or any other experience with anyone else. The attack aims at ridiculing Athena's isolation and incapability to relate to others: she was born without a mother; she seeks battles (thus attacking others rather than loving them); she never experiences the beauty of being like-minded.

Colluthus' model for this line is *Od.* 15.196-8, where Telemachus tells Pisistratus that, by virtue of their fathers' friendship, they will share even more oneness of heart: from this passage Colluthus borrows φιλότητος (Coll. 185) and μᾶλλον (Coll. 187). However, Colluthus may also be echoing, with γάμων ἀδίδακτος, his contemporary Musaeus in *Her.* 32, where the expression is used as a compliment to Hero, and the other favourite model, Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*: here, Pluto badly tolerates his ignorance of wedlock (*inpatiens nescire torum* 1.35) and Ceres interrogates the goddesses, *experts thalami* (3.279).

The last part of Aphrodite's invective is a powerful rhetorical question in which the goddess ironically asks whether Athena knows that women like her, who exult in glorious wars, are much more impotent, and that their sex is not clear when one has a close look at their bodies. The beginning of the line (ἀγνώσσεις, ὅτι μᾶλλον ἀνάλκιδές εἰσιν Ἀθῆναι τοῖαι 187-8) clearly echoes Mus. 249 ἀγνώσσεις, ὅτι Κύπρις ἀπόσπορός ἐστι θαλάσσης; καὶ κρατέει πόντοιο καὶ ἡμετέρων ὀδυνάων, "do you not know that Cypris was born from the sea, and on the sea and on our pain she reigns?" The reference to Musaeus' line compels one to make a connection with Aphrodite's origin (her birth from the sea). Here, an educated reader can hardly fail to spot the obvious witticism. In Colluthus, Aphrodite ridicules Athena as she was not born through standard childbirth (181-3), and Colluthus achieves that by re-using the words that were used in Musaeus to highlight how Aphrodite herself, instead, was born from the sea, i.e. also not through standard childbirth. Her invective then, far from losing effectiveness despite its illogical grounds, spurs an ironic smile in the reader, who may wonder why Athena, normally so warlike, does not respond to such a groundless insult.

Aphrodite's final blow alludes to the gender ambiguity of women like Athena, who love battle and guard their virginity: when one looks close, it is not possible to clearly establish their sex (184-9). Coming from Aphrodite, the epitome of femininity, this insult could not be more humiliating for Athena.

At 189, Colluthus uses κεκριμένων μελέων, borrowed from Nonnus, whose context was completely different: in *Par.* 19.188 St. John reports that, when the soldier went to break the legs of the three crucified men to accelerate their death, and he established that Jesus had already died on the cross, he pierced his chest with a sword. Blood and water came out; these things, John says, happened so that the Holy writ that said "Not a bone of his will be broken"[257] would be fulfilled. The prophecy also said: "They will look at the one whom they had pierced".[258] In Nonnus, κεκριμένων μελέων τετριμμένον ὀστέον ἔσται alludes to the limbs of Jesus being examined to check that actually none of his bones had been broken, like in the Easter lamb mentioned in Exodus. Jesus on the cross becomes the new Easter lamb, who carries manhood from the slavery of sin and death to the freedom of the new life of the sons of God. No bone of his will be broken, so as to preserve his purity intact. In Colluthus, the choice of such a symbolic expression has, once again, an inevitably ironic effect: in Nonnus, Christ was the one under scrutiny, while in Colluthus it is Athena's followers. The poet returns to the topic in 301-4, where Paris says to Helen:

> οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης·
> οὐ τοῖαι γεγάασιν ἐν Ἀργείοισι γυναῖκες,
> καὶ γὰρ ἀκιδνοτέροισιν ἀεξόμεναι μελέεσσιν
> ἀνδρῶν εἶδος ἔχουσι, νόθοι δ' ἐγένοντο γυναῖκες.
>
> For you know that Menelaus comes from a feeble race.
> Women born among the Argives are not like you:
> for although they grow with weaker limbs,
> they look like men, and are just counterfeit women.

Notice the reoccurring concepts: ἀγνώσσεις and ἀνάλκιδες 187 corresponds to οἶσθα and ἀνάλκιδος 301, μελέων 189 to μελέεσσιν 303, ἄρσενες and γυναῖκες 189 to ἀνδρῶν and γυναῖκες 304. For this passage, obscure and much debated, Colluthus may have had in mind *Od.* 8. 169-70, where Odysseus, responding to Euryalos who had accused him of not being a proper athlete, says ἄλλος μὲν γὰρ εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος πέλει ἀνήρ,

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[257] *Ex.* 12,10.46; *Num.* 9,12; *Psalm* 34,21.
[258] Zacc. 12.10.

ἀλλὰ θεὸς μορφὴν ἔπεσι στέφει, "one may be inferior in looks, but a god crowns his speech with beauty".[259]

The portrait of Athena that emerges from the epyllion is largely filtered through Aphrodite's subjective eye; the goddess humiliates Athena for the circumstances of her birth, her masculine clothes, her contempt for love and her lack of femininity. Athena had been introduced at Peleus and Thetis' wedding as helmetless (32) and γάμων ἀδίδακτος (33), and now Aphrodite ridicules her in the lowest possible way, questioning her gender, while she herself shows off her breasts and wins the prize for the most beautiful goddess. Visually, on the one hand we have Aphrodite's bare chest (155-6), and on the other Athena covered in a bronze breast-plate (184). Athena's unattractiveness provokes disgust, which is exploited by Aphrodite in her speech. Claudian's portrait of Athena in *Rapt.* 2.21-35 may have been a model to Colluthus: here, the goddess wears a helmet and a spear (which she later removes at 144-5), but she wears a Cretan tunic which flows to the breeze, she shows her bare arms, and her overall appearance is gentler (*lenis* 27) as her brother Apollo, from whom she was different only in gender (*solusque dabat discrimina sexus* 29). Colluthus twisted Claudian's reference to sex to his means, in order to support Aphrodite's invective.

However, Colluthus may have meant to play with the scene on another level: Athena's unconcern with grooming may already have been known to readers, in which case Aphrodite's invective would be doubly effective. Readers may also have remembered Athena's lack of interest in love in *h.Aphr.* 8-10, where the goddess is more interested in martial business: κούρην τ' αἰγιόχοιο Διὸς γλαυκῶπιν Ἀθήνην·οὐ γάρ οἱ εὔαδεν ἔργα πολυχρύσου Ἀφροδίτης,ἀλλ' ἄρα οἱ πόλεμοί τε ἄδον καὶ ἔργον Ἄρηος, ὑσμῖναί τε μάχαι τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργ' ἀλεγύνειν, "the daughter of Zeus who holds the aegis, blue-eyed Athena, for she dislikes the works of all-golden Aphrodite, but she is pleased by war and the works of Ares, and by fights and battles and looking after beautiful crafts". Readers may have also remembered Athena as described in Call. *h.* 5.13-20, where the goddess does not require perfumes, oils or a mirror[260] (nor did Hera, in contrast with Aphrodite, who looked at herself in the mirror and fixed the same lock of hair twice in 21-2). Callimachus also spoke of Athena's birth from Zeus'

[259] In Chapter 3 I argue a possible allusion to this line also in Coll. 279.

[260] Although Callimachus does justify this with ἀεὶ καλὸν ὄμμα τὸ τήνας, "her face is always beautiful".

head in 134 μάτηρ δ' οὔτις ἔτικτε θεάν, and in *Aet.* fr. 37 Ἡφαίστου λόχιον θηξαμένου πέλεκυν βρέγματος ἐκ δίριο σὺν ἔντεσιν ἅλαο πατρός, "when Hephaestus sharpened his obstetrical axe, you sprang out armed from your father's bright forehead", echoing Aesch. *Eum.* 736-8. μήτηρ γὰρ οὔτις ἐστὶν ἥ μ' ἐγείνατο, τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αἰνῶ πάντα, πλὴν γάμου τυχεῖν, ἅπαντι θυμῶι, κάρτα δ' εἰμὶ τοῦ πατρός, "For there was no mother who gave me birth; and in all things, except for marriage, whole-heartedly I support the male and I am entirely on the father's side".

d. Symmetric Speeches

Aphrodite's speeches before, during and after the contest actually mirror each other and are built with a rhetorically precise network of cross-references.[261]

For both Hera and Athena, Aphrodite first expresses her concerns about the rivals' powers and reputation while she talks to the Loves. Secondly, when she is trying to persuade Paris to give her the prize, she makes a counteroffer which contrasts clearly with those of Hera and Athena. Finally, in her post-victory speech, she mocks both goddesses again by undermining their role, power and origin.

Aphrodite's argument is directed not only at Paris, but also at the reader, and is strategically orchestrated from the very beginning, when, pretending to be hopeless in front of the other two powerful goddesses, she gathers the Loves and makes herself strong after realizing that her resources are not any less powerful. The reader then becomes knowledgeable about Aphrodite's weapons[262] before Paris and, at the time of the contest, is in a better position than Paris to make a decision. In addition, when the time of judging comes, the reader expects her to win.

The goddess' argument plays on dismantling her rivals' reputation and undermining the value of their offers. Reputation plays an important role in Athena's strategic speech: she does not acknowledge or state Hera's and Athena's role and status (the first as the nurse of Graces and holder of sovereignty, the second as the queen of battles), but reports their reputation as overheard second-hand information: she says φασί for Hera twice (90 and 174), καλέουσιν for Athena (91). After her

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[261] Similarly, Nonnus had built a tight net of references in his proem (*Dion.* 1.11-33), demonstrating his virtuosity in mimicking and especially expanding his model (*Od.* 4.435-59): Homer described Proteus' six metamorphoses in 3 lines, while Nonnus dedicates 3 lines to each transformation; see Shorrock 2008, 102-3.

[262] All three of them: the girdle, the goad and the bow (96). Livrea 1968a, 114 thought it was unlikely that the goddess listed three different weapons (for conjectures on this passage, see Williams 2001, 180).

victory, Aphrodite exploits her chance to demonstrate how she was in fact right to implicitly question Hera's and Athena's role: Hera, the mother of Ares, who was said to have given birth to the Graces, cannot take pride in her role as queen or mother today, as none of her children have come to rescue her. As for Athena, she cannot boast about being the queen of battles either, as she has also lost to Aphrodite's more effective weapons (94-8).

When it is time to persuade Paris to crown her as the winner, it is all about the reward that each goddess is promising. Aphrodite begins her plea by addressing Paris with a smile (159) – the same smile that she had reserved for her fellow goddesses in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.51 - except, this time, ironically, she is addressing a μηλοβοτῆρα. When it is time to speak to Athena, instead, she insults her (189).[263] Aphrodite plays the extra card of showing her naked breasts, while Hera and Athena restrict themselves to a speech. The goddess makes a brief speech which mirrors those of her two rivals. Like them, she undermines the others' rewards as worthless: ἐπιλήθεο 160 and κάλλιπε 161 echo Athena's request to forget Hera and hold in no honour Aphrodite (ἐάσας 139 and ἀτιμήσας 140), and Hera's request to ignore the works of war (ἔργα μόθων ἀθέριζε 150). Curiously, Hera does not refer to Aphrodite in her speech.

The three speeches are linked to one another through ring composition as each contains an element which is then also dealt with in the next speech: Athena, the first to speak, promises Paris that vindictive Enyo will never press down on him (144), and Hera responds by saying that the slaves of Enyo fall into an early grave (153); Hera requests Paris to ignore the works of war (ἔργα μόθων ἀθέριζε 150), and Aphrodite distances herself altogether from wars (ἔργα μόθων οὐκ οἶδα 162); Athena had promised excellence in war (πολέμους 145), and Hera questions whether wars (πολέμων 150) belong in a king's world, and finally Aphrodite also invites Paris to forget about wars (πολέμων 160). Hera asks the rhetorical question τί γὰρ πολέμων βασιλῆι; (150), and Aphrodite responds with the rhetorical question τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; (162).[264]

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[263] As per Giangrande 1969, 152, and 1968, 531-3, this is an example of *arte allusiva* to be enjoyed by educated readership.

[264] Based on Nonn. *Dion.* 24.303-304 Ἄρεϊ πέπλον ὕφαινε· νεοκλώστῳ δ' ἐνὶ πέπλῳ / ἀσπίδα μὴ ποίκιλλε· τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; where Hermes reminds Athena not to embroider shields on the cloak for Aphrodite.

It is Aphrodite, however, who has the last word on her rivals' promises by counteracting word for word to what they promise. After dismissing Hera's and Athena's offers, she makes the counteroffer of Helen to her rivals' rewards. Athena had promised manly courage (ἠνορέης 141, ἠνορέην 145), while Aphrodite's alternative (ἀντὶ μὲν ἠνορέης 164) is a lovely bride. Regal Hera (κοιρανίην 90, 93 and 154) had promised Paris to make him ἡγήτορα (149) and κοίρανος (151): Aphrodite's alternative (ἀντὶ δὲ κοιρανίης 165) is Helen's bed. Hera had undermined Athena's ἠνορέη by saying that its followers do not always excel (οὐκ αἰεὶ θεράποντες ἀριστεύουσιν Ἀθήνης 152), but Aphrodite again responds to her in kind that it is through beauty that women excel: ἀγλαΐῃ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι γυναῖκες (163).[265] As in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, Colluthus is expected to reject all possible allegations against the subject to extol, and he achieves this by making her *laudanda* respond her enemies on each account: power, status, rewards.

Let us look closely at Athena's offer, ἠνορέη. In Nonnus, this is the virtue that Dionysus must demonstrate through his toils to produce evidence of his superiority and manhood. Often in the *Dionysiaca* the god is threatened by allegations of effeminacy,[266] and the poet promptly smoothes them out in 25.27-30:

> ἀλλὰ νέοισι καὶ ἀρχεγόνοισιν ἐρίζων
> εὐκαμάτους ἱδρῶτας ἀναστήσω Διονύσου,
> κρίνων ἠνορέην τεκέων Διός, ὄφρα νοήσω,
> τίς κάμε τοῖον ἀγῶνα, τίς εἴκελος ἔπλετο Βάκχῳ
>
> I challenge new and old poets in glorifying the sweaty toils of Dionysus; and if I compare the manhood of the children of Zeus, it is because I want to find out who achieved such a deed, who was like Bacchus.

It is interesting that Dionysus' virtue is now Athena's. What is more, if in Nonnus Dionysus had to demonstrate ἠνορέη to reject the charges of effeminacy against him, in Colluthus Athena is quite proud of her manliness, and does anything within her power to reject femininity. Both divinities aspire to the same manliness, for different reasons, but ironically here it is a woman who rejects the main attribute of her gender. If for Athena excellence belonged to her followers, for Aphrodite it belongs to women.

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[265] The direct model is Nonn. *Dion.* 40.27-8 ὀππόθι πολλαὶ / Χειροβίης πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι γυναῖκες, see Orsini 1969, 16.

[266] Nonn. *Dion.* 17.170-91 and 249-61; 20.196-221; 44.134-83.

The key to success is no longer prowess (ἠνορέη) but beauty (ἀγλαΐη). Aphrodite is the living proof of this as she is crowned the winner because she has devoted herself to beauty and she openly acknowledges it (ἀγλαΐην ἐφίλησα, καὶ ἀγλαΐη με διώκει 173). We know this already from Colluthus' model Claudian, who, in *Gig.* 43-4, had stated that Venus had not brought darts or weapons, but beauty, which is her weapon: Κύπρις δ' οὔτε βέλος φέρεν, οὐχ ὅπλονἀλλ'ἐκόμιζεν ἀγλαΐην. Beauty shines through all of her speeches, and we can be in no doubt that the contest is indeed about beauty, not just status, reputation or achievements. At 87, Aphrodite had pondered σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων, "it is on beauty of face that I am judged today".[267] It is because she knows that beauty is what is tested that she bares her chest, knowing that there can be no more effective card to play and no better spectacle for Paris. Her beauty then becomes suddenly visible, tangible, accessible and undeniable, unlike the gifts that have been promised by Hera and Athena, both intangible and not immediately accessible. The goddess, standing there with her breasts on show, can very confidently urge the judge: δέχνυσο μορφὴν ἡμετέρην (160-1). Just like her own beauty, her gift is tangible: she does not offer a skill or a value (like prowess or sovereignty) but a lovely bride (ἐρατὴν παράκοιτιν 164), who has a name, and the physicality of the whole scene climaxes in the next line with Aphrodite urging Paris to jump into bed with her (Ἑλένης ἐπιβήσεο λέκτρων 165). It is obvious, then, that the goddess is playing on the visual impact of her nudity on Paris, and offers to the speechless viewer a natural outlet for the desire she has spurred.

As Williams notes, the motif of the superiority of physical beauty over weapons of war is particularly common in late epic.[268] We have seen how in Nonn. *Dion.* 35.21-40 an Indian who has just killed a beautiful Bassarid falls in love with her corpse. She arms herself with beauty (ἀγλαΐῃ κεκόρυστο 23); wounded, she wounds her enamoured killer (ἰμείροντα φονῆα οὔτασεν οὐτηθεῖσα 23-4); beauty becomes her weapon (βέλος δέ οἱ ἔπλετο μορφή 24) and, while dying, she triumphs (φθιμένη νίκησε 25). The Indian eventually admits in 37-43:

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[267] Paschalis 2008, 144 notes how, although the key beauty criterion across all the poem is face, Paris ends up choosing breast - another unexpected twist.

[268] Williams 2001, 182-3. According to Neoplatonism (Plot. *Enn.* 1.6.8.6-8), beauty was also superior to violence thanks to the ennobling power that spurs in the lover the memory of divine beauty, as discussed in Chapter 3.

παρθενικὴ ῥοδόπηχυ, τεὸν δυσέρωτα φονῆα
οὔτασας οὐταμένη, φθιμένη ζώοντα δαμάζεις,
καὶ σὺ τεὸν βλεφάροισιν ὀιστεύεις ὀλετῆρα·
ἔγχος ἐνικήθη σέο κάλλεϊ· σεῖο προσώπου
μαρμαρυγαὶ κλονέουσιν, ὅσον γλωχῖνες ἀκόντων·
στῆθος ἔχεις ἅτε τόξον, ἐπεὶ σέο μᾶλλον ὀιστῶν
μαζοὶ ἀριστεύουσιν, ὀιστευτῆρες ἐρώτων.[269]

Rose-armed girl, you, wounded, wounded your enamoured killer, and, while dead, you kill a living man; with your eyes you kill the one who has killed you. The spear is defeated by your beauty; the beauty of your face hurts as much as sharp swords. Your chest is like a bow, because your breasts, shooters of love, excel more than darts.

Nonnus' model seems to be Libanius' *ethopoiia* 12-13 Foerster,[270] featuring Achilles' speech at the sight of dead Penthesileia: the motif is not present elsewhere and demonstrates that rhetorical exercises were not only scholastic material but could also be used as model for literary texts. Nonnus features the same topic again in *Dion.* 42.234-7, where Pan teaches a fearful Dionysus:

εἰπέ, τί σοὶ ῥέξει μία παρθένος; οὐ δόρυ πάλλει,
οὐ ῥοδέῃ παλάμῃ τανύει βέλος· ἔγχεα κούρης
ὀφθαλμοὶ γεγάασιν ἀκοντιστῆρες ἐρώτων,
παρθενικῆς δὲ βέλεμνα ῥοδώπιδές εἰσι παρειαί

Speak: what is one girl alone going to do to you? She does not wield a spear; she does not throw a dart with her rosy hand: the girl's weapons are her eyes, shooters of love; her darts are her rosy cheeks.

Musaeus also writes similarly (92-5):

κάλλος γὰρ περίπυστον ἀμωμήτοιο γυναικὸς
ὀξύτερον μερόπεσσι πέλει πτερόεντος ὀιστοῦ.
ὀφθαλμὸς δ' ὁδός ἐστιν· ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοῖο βολάων
κάλλος ὀλισθαίνει καὶ ἐπὶ φρένας ἀνδρὸς ὁδεύει.

The clear beauty of a chaste woman reaches mortals sharper than a winged dart, and her eyes mark her route. Beauty slips out from her bright look and it opens up its way down to a man's heart.

Claudian's *Gigantomachy* 43-54 also features this theme in the already discussed portrait of beauty-armed Venus.[271]

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269 The statement had been anticipated by Morrheus, who, in *Dion.* 34.323 says of Chalcomedea: καὶ μελίης πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι παρειαί, a line that is echoed by Colluthus 163.

270 Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 7.

271 Giomi 2003, 373.

When it comes to Hera, Aphrodite mocks her because none of her children (the Graces, Ares, and Hephaestus) have come to her help: the model for lines 175-9 is *Il.* 15.14-77. In Homer, Zeus blames Hera for the storms that are haunting Heracles, and he threatens to hang her from the sky again, like he did in the past when she was responsible for Poseidon persecuting Heracles' army returning from Troy. On that occasion, he had hung her up in the sky through a golden chain, with two anvils tied to her feet, and he had prevented any god from coming to her rescue. Nonnus re-elaborated the scene in *Dion.* 35.279-313, where Zeus is angry with Hera as she is persecuting Dionysus. He reminds her of the same episode quoted by Homer, again with anvils and golden chain, adding that neither Ares nor Hephaestus could release her, and, unless she nurses Dionysus back to health, he threatens to punish her in exactly the same manner, as well as to tie Ares up in chains and whip him as he, like Tantalus, walks around a wheel. The golden chain that was used to hang Hera up (*Il.* 15.19-20 δεσμὸν ... χρύσεον ἄρρηκτον, Nonn. *Dion.* 35.292 χρυσέῳδεσμῷ) becomes in Colluthus Aphrodite's honeyed girdle of the Loves: μελίφρονα δεσμὸν ἐρώτων at 95 and 157.

This phase of Aphrodite's attack follows another standard feature of ψόγοι:[272] the negative comparison. She lists all the qualities that her rivals do not have, and points out how they have failed to demonstrate their status. The negative comparison is a stylistic device used to enhance the subject who is to be extolled (in this case, Aphrodite) and shed some criticism over the addressee of the invective (Hera and Athena) by denying that this person acted as they were supposed to[273]. A long list of negatives (lines 175-89) describes Hera and Athena in a demeaning way that in contrast highlights Aphrodite's superiority:

[...] ἀλλά σε πᾶσαι
σήμερον **ἠρνήσαντο**, καὶ **οὐ** μίαν εὗρες ἀρωγόν.
οὐ σακέων βασίλεια καὶ εἰ[274] πυρός ἐσσι τιθήνη·
οὔ σοι Ἄρης ἐπάρηξε, καὶ εἰ δορὶ μαίνεται Ἄρης,

[272] For instance, see the sequence of negatives in a panegyric attributed to Libanius, *Progym.* 9.2.5 on Hector: ὁρῶν ταῦτα ἐκεῖνος οὐ παρήνεσεν, οὐκ ἀπέτρεψε μὴ τολμᾶν, οὐκ ἔπεισεν, οὐκ ἠνάγκασεν, οὐδὲν οὔτε μικρὸν οὔτε μέγα ἐποίησε κωλύων τὴν ἀδικίαν. Libanius aims here at depriving Hector of any virtue and good deed through ἀνασκευή (refutation), for which also see Theon 111-2, Hermog. *Prog.* 11, Aphth. 10.8-19.

[273] Miguélez Cavero 2010, 36-9.

[274] I prefer the reading of b, which reads καὶ εἰ instead of καὶ οὐ. (M, accepted by Livrea, Mair and Orsini). This version seems more plausible as the three lines would be built in a mirror-like fashion, and the first three hemistychia would correspond to three equally structured hemistychia in the second halves of the lines. Note the alliteration.

οὐ φλόγες Ἡφαίστοιο, καὶ εἰ φλογὸς ἆσθμα λοχεύει
[...] ἦν γάμος **οὐκ ἔσπειρε** καὶ **οὐ μαιώσατο** μήτηρ, 181
ἀλλὰ σιδηρείη σε τομὴ καὶ ῥίζα σιδήρου
πατρῴων **ἀλόχευτον** ἀνεβλάστησε καρήνων.
οἷα δὲ χαλκείοισι **καλυψαμένη** χρόα πέπλοις
καὶ **φεύγεις** φιλότητα καὶ Ἄρεος ἔργα διώκεις, 185
ἁρμονίης **ἀδίδακτος**, ὁμοφροσύνης **ἀδαήμων**.
ἀγνώσσεις, ὅτι μᾶλλον **ἀνάλκιδές** εἰσιν Ἀθῆναι
τοῖαι, κυδαλίμοισιν ἀγαλλόμεναι πολέμοισι,
κεκριμένων μελέων **οὔτ'** ἄρσενες **οὔτε** γυναῖκες;

Nonnus uses the same technique in Semele's invective mentioned earlier (*Dion.* 9.212-29):

ἤροσε μοῦνον Ἄρηα καὶ **οὐ** τεκνώσατο μηρῷ. [...] 213
Λητὼ Φοῖβον ἔτικτε, καὶ **οὐκ ὤδινε** Κρονίων· 216
Ἑρμείαν τέκε Μαῖα, καὶ **οὐκ ἐλόχευσεν** ἀκοίτης· [...] 217
οὐδὲ τόκῳ Σεμέλης **ἀπάτωρ** Ἥφαιστος ἐρίζοι, 228
ἄσπορον ἐκ γενετῆρος ὃν αὐτογόνος τέκεν Ἥρη 229

> Bacchus is better than Enyalios, for he only conceived your Ares, but did not deliver him from his thigh [...] Leto gave birth to Phoebos, the son of Cronos did not. Maia gave birth to Hermes: he was certainly not delivered by her groom [...] Not even Hephaestus, who is fatherless, could compete with Semele's son: him, whom Hera gave birth to by herself, without a father's seed.

In this case, Hera's children should have rescued her, but they did not;[275] thus, in Aphrodite's logic, hers is just a title. Colluthus refers closely to both the invective of Semele in book 9 of the *Dionysiaca*, and the threat of Zeus to Hera in book 35: Colluthus 178 οὔ σοι Ἄρης ἐπάρηξε echoes Nonnus 35.290 οὐ πυρόεις Ἥφαιστος ἐπήρκεσεν where Colluthus' ἐπαράγω plays with Nonnus' ἐπαρκέω; Colluthus' 179 φλόγες Ἡφαίστοιο, καὶ εἰ φλογὸς ἆσθμα λοχεύει, "the flames of Hephaestus, even if he breathes fire" echoes Nonnus 35.290-1 πυρόεις Ἥφαιστος [...] οὐ δύναται γὰρ τλήμεναι αἰθαλόεντος ἕνα σπινθῆρα κεραυνοῦ, "fiery Hephaestus [...] for he cannot tolerate one single sparkle of the burning lightning". Also note the anaphora of οὐ in Coll. 176-9 as in Nonn. 35.290.

At 177, Aphrodite draws her conclusions from Hera's abandonment by the Graces, Ares and Hephaestus: she is not queen of shields although she is nurse of fire. As Livrea notes, each hemistychion of this line is developed respectively at lines 178 and 179: so that οὐ σακέων βασίλεια goes with οὔ σοι Ἄρης ἐπάρηξε, καὶ εἰ δορὶ μαίνεται Ἄρης, and οὐ πυρός ἐσσι τιθήνη with οὐ φλόγες Ἡφαίστοιο, καὶ εἰ φλογὸς

[275] For 176 εὗρες ἀρωγόν see [Apolin.] *Psalm.* 33.33.

ἄσθμα λοχεύει.[276] Curiously, this is the only instance where the title is given to Hera. Colluthus calls Aphrodite βασίλεια at 28, 140 and 315, and at 16 he actually calls her Χαρίτων βασίλειαν, in contrast with Hera who is defined Χαρίτων τιθήνην at 89, and whose role as the mother of the Graces is reiterated at 174-5; at 291 Paris calls Helen βασίλεια, and at 91 Athena is πολέμων βασίλειαν. The sentence sounds ironic on Aphrodite's mouth at the moment of her victory, as the goddess had already undermined the title at 162 by rhetorically asking τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; earlier, Aphrodite had questioned the relevance of her role, and now she establishes that she does not even own that title, as Ares did not come to rescue, although he rages with his spear. In parallel, the goddess also deprives Hera of her title of nurse of fire, as Hephaestus did not show up either, although he breathes fire.

This is definitely Aphrodite's contest, and her invective elevates her victory to a triumph. But what effect does Aphrodite's invective achieve on readers? Her accusations are not completely true (for instance, Hera does not really lose her status simply because her children did not come to her help, nor is Athena's gender really up for debate although she preserves her virginity): they are an hyperbolic version of the truth. The aim of invective was not to establish a new truth, but to mix fantasy with some facts, in order to create an impression of untrustworthiness in the readers. Obviously, readers would be unconcerned with verifying the truthfulness of the facts presented, but they would be left with a sense that the *laudandus* is superior to his enemies,[277] an impression that would last until the next battle. Panegyrics were the normal instrument of propaganda in late antiquity, and – as Miguélez Cavero notes - they could be approached with humour and in a rhetorical and literary fashion.[278] Colluthus succeeds at this: the invective is built so perfectly from a rhetorical perspective that its sharpness makes it stand out from the rest of the epyllion, and although we do not really think any less of Athena, the irony of Aphrodite's last rhetorical question cannot fail to still make us smile.

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[276] Livrea 1968a, 153.
[277] Miguélez Cavero 2008, 35 and 39.
[278] Miguélez Cavero 2010, 40.

CHAPTER 3

COLLUTHUS' VISUAL EPYLLION

Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* reads as a series of picturesque scenes[1] with a strong visual impact. The poem's episodes, though chronologically organised, do not form a continuous sequence[2] that comprehensively covers the whole story. The poet seems rather to have chosen the episodes with the highest pictorial potential (as well as offering occasion to display his erudition by means of digressions and/or allusions to other episodes in previous literature) and to have worked them out almost as vignettes.

Throughout the epyllion, ekphrastic elements make up a significant portion of the text. Colluthus elaborately describes locations and surroundings and lingers on his characters' appearance and attire. He focusses on how characters interact through gestures, actions and speech, and on their impact on each other, the narrator and the readers. The visual impact has also a psychological influence on readers and leads their perception and evaluation, suggesting how they might read, and sometimes judge, an action or event. Helen, Paris, Aphrodite and Hermione are all described in a sort of three-dimensional way: we are told how they look, how they behave, what they perceive and how their actions are affected by what they see and hear.

In this chapter, I will analyse Colluthus' use of visual elements, their effects and their implications for the interpretation of the *Abduction of Helen*. In the course of my discussion I will touch upon a number of possible approaches and features to these elements. Firstly, I will explore how the epyllion fits into, and plays with, the ekphrastic tradition in narrative literature, and I will analyse how the poet uses vision as an instrument to lead readers' expectations towards certain emotive reactions that suggest how the next scene should be perceived.

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1 Giangrande 1969, 150: the stand-alone episodes are to be mentally connected with prior events, a technique well known to Theocritus.

2 Livrea 1968a, XX.

A second interpretive context for the *Abduction* is the dramatic tradition. Although the poem is a narrative text, Colluthus in many respects tells his story as if it were a performance; or more precisely, readers are made to feel as if they were reading a description of a play rather than a story. Readers open a book but, in a sense, end up going to the theatre, seeing a performance not with their own eyes but as reported through the narrator, through his descriptions and his comments.[3] Colluthus is in fact a remarkably overt and intrusive guide, who constantly engages with his readers, breaks the fiction, reveals himself and operates on a metatextual level.

Thirdly, one might explore what specific kind of performance Colluthus' epyllion engages. At the end of this chapter, I will review the various forms of dramatic art that were being performed in late antiquity and argue that the *Abduction* has a particularly close relationship with pantomime. I will argue that its sections neatly map on to the scenes of a pantomime and that the judgment of Paris and abduction of Helen were in fact popular themes for pantomimes. As in the case of Herodas' mimiambs, various possibilities arise. Does the epyllion merely play with genre and mimic a pantomime?[4] Did it end up being performed on stage like some other short poems we know about? Was it designed to be performed or to be publicly read from the start?

1. Visuality in Literature

Scholars discussing visuality in a text may be referring to a number of different phenomena. One of these is ekphrasis, as well as the significance of viewing and looking within the text. In addition, one may explore the repercussions of the viewer's gender and social context, or the emotional and ethical effects of the action of looking on the audience. As this chapter touches upon all of these aspects, I will briefly introduce them and survey current scholarship.

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3 Agosti 2006b, 352 highlights how in late antiquity written and recited word interacted as in a double performance, creating a new form of communication that touched synesthetically readers/viewers.

4 In a similar way to poems including ekphraseis, such as Asterius of Amasea's who attempted to compete with the painter of the martyrdom of St. Euphemia, see Agosti 2006b, 353.

In ancient progymnasmata, the rhetorical exercises which were a key element to the educational curriculum, ekphrasis refers to any sort of vivid description.[5] Handbooks of rhetoric and ancient literary critical works elaborately illustrate how vividness is to be achieved in oratory and literature by exploiting the power of the visual and the sensibility of the audience.[6] In antiquity, to the four standard types of ekphrasis (those of people, events, places and times), Theon added a new category for ekphraseis of *tropoi*, Hermogenes those of occasions; Aphtonius those of the animal and botanic world, and, in the fifth century AD, Nicolaus[7] added ekphraseis of statues and paintings (ἀγάλματα and εἰκόνες)[8]. In modern scholarship, the term is used more narrowly for a description of a work of art, a sculpture or a painting,[9] either as a free-standing literary form, such as the many ekphrastic epigrams on Myron's statue of a cow in the *Greek Anthology*, Christodorus' *AP* 2 on the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippus in Constantinople, and Philostratus' descriptions of painting in the *Imagines*,[10] or ekphrastic digressions contained within narrative or dramatic texts, such as the description of Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18.578-608 and that of Ariadne's embroidered cover in Catullus 64.50-264, or that of Dionysus'shield in Nonn. *Dion.* 25.380-562.

The reliability of these artistic ekphraseis has spurred much debate in scholarship: Mango, for instance, argued how Byzantine literature, especially ekphrasis, is spoiled by a "fundamental dishonesty": Byzantine writers are so enwrapped in their love for rhetorical language and topoi that they are not only unable to view the artworks, but they are also unable to see them without drawing on pre-existent codified models.[11] Christodorus, for instance, is unconcerned with describing the exact physical reality of the statues[12] and looks instead for the aspects

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5 Elsner 2007, 20 n. 3.

6 Goldhill 2007, 3-15. Quintilian *Inst.* 6.2.29 and Longinus *On the sublime* 15. 9 in particular help clarify the meaning and interaction of *enargeia*, *phantasia* and persuasion.

7 Nicol. *Prog.* 69, 4-11 Felten. See Tissoni 2000a, 47.

8 An interesting example of how word and art merged through visualization is Christod. 288-290: in the description of Aphrodite's statue, the poet employs a rare word (κεχάλαστο) which had been used to describe the goddess looking at herself in the mirror in Ares'shield, on Jason's cloak in Apoll. Rh. *Arg.* 1.742-46. Tissoni 2000a, 204 notes how Christodorus employs the rare word, which had been referred to armed Aphrodite in a fictitious object such as Jason's cloak, to describe a real statue.

9 Elsner 2007, 20; Webb 1999, 7-11, 15-18.

10 Prioux 2007, Goldhill 1996 and 2007.

11 Mango 1975.

12 According to Waltz 1928, 54 n. 4, Christodorus had certainly seen the statues that he was describing before the fire that, during the Nika riots in 532, destroyed the gymnasium: this would justify his frequent use of the imperfect. However, Tissoni 2000a, 57 and 21-22 disagrees and backdates the

that are not immediately perceptible to eyesight, making his ekphrasis, in the majority of the cases, actually an ethopoiia of the character which offers him a pretext to display his passion for erudition.[13]

In late antiquity, hunger for visuality (*scopophilia*)[14] dictated by the *spettacolarizzazione* of the civilization, meant that written and performed word often interacted in many genres, such as Christian homilies, epideictic oratory and especially ekphrastic poetry.[15] The subjects of these works - in both verse and prose- were mostly artworks, being man-made, such as statues (Christodorus' ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippus), paintings (John of Gaza's description of a cosmological painting in the baths of Gaza, and Procopius of Gaza's ekphrasis of the complex collection of paintings of the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus), buildings (as Procopius of Caesarea's treatise *de Aedificiis*, about the architectural achievements of Justinian),[16] cities and, later, churches (Choricius of Gaza' *Laudatio Marciani* which includes an ekphrasis of two churches with their decorative scheme) or natural spectacles.[17] Later, the wonder moved on to Jesus' miracles and words,[18] and to descriptions of imaginary works.[19]

Being one of late-antique poetry's basic rhetorical structures, ekphrasis (and the education leading to describe) leads to consequences on the style and the framing of the content such as attention to detail, a tendency to digression and juxtaposition of scenes (as in Colluthus) in a synchrony that is unconcerned with chronological order, and to φαντασία as a means of helping the viewer to interpret with an

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ekphrasis at around 503, on the basis that it is unlikely that the poet wrote the encomiastic Isaurika (celebrating Anastasius' victories against the Isaurians in 498) fourteen years after the emperor's death (518); another element in support of Tissoni's thesis is that Christodorus, unlike Procopius of Gaza, quotes Pompey as an ancestor of Anastasius in his panegyric, like Priscian had done in 503 when his panegyric of the emperor was recited in public.

13 Tissoni 2000a, 54.

14 Winkler 1974.

15 Agosti 2006b, 352-53.

16 Although Procopius' aim was to write a panegyric of the emperor, not an ekphrastic account: he is not very interested in the aesthetic descriptions of churches, as much as he is on the curious details about them. For instance, his lack of flair for the visual shows in his failure to pick up on the opportunity to describe Ravenna's beautiful churches and Hagia Sophia. See Cameron 1985, 231-33.

17 Like Phaeton admiring the cosmos in Nonn. *Dion.* 38.307-317, where the poet revives a Hellenistic topos, (Agosti 2006b, 361), or Nonnus' description of Brongus' cave in *Dion.* 17.37-45.

18 In Nonn. *Par.* 4.251 (th miracle of the centurio's son), and 11.173 (Lazarus). For more examples see Agosti 2004, 812-813.

19 Eustathius Makrembolites' novel *Hysmine and Hysminias* (twelfth century AD) includes accounts of allegorical picture cycles.

intellectual gaze what the eye cannot see.[20] The poet often challenged the graphic artist to paint a better picture through his words: an example is the ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia of Paul the Silentiary, a high functionary at the court of Justinian, which was recited in 563 in the presence of both the emperor and Constantinople's patriarch Eutychius.[21]

Recently many studies have been devoted to describing the ways in which ekphrasis works and can be interpreted,[22] and to analysing in detail individual ekphrastic texts in various genres and their relationship with the works of art they describe.[23] These studies have focussed, for example, on how authors of ekphraseis competed with each other to describe artworks in the most original way (as in the case of the many poems dedicated to Myron's Cow) and on their aim of educating the viewer in how art should be interpreted, providing a sort of handbook.[24] Interpreted in this way, Christodorus' ekphrasis of the statues could be divided into epigrams that could have served as a vademecum for visitors of the Zeuxippus gymnasium. Ekphrasis, being primarily a vivid description, also aimed at provoking emotions in its readers,[25] by, for instance, insisting on the technical challenge that the artist had to overcome in order to achieve a particular effect, or by making the characters of the artwork provide an illustrative explanation of the represented scene.[26]

Beyond ekphrasis, a growing interest in the relationship between viewer and object (or person) viewed has recently led to a boom in scholarly work on ancient authors' and audiences' perception of the gaze in rhetoric and literature. Such studies

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20 Agosti 2006b, 352-56 notes how, for instance, Nonnus' digression in *Dion.* 25.380-562 on Dionysus' shield works as a poetic manifesto- in line with ekphrastic tradition, a virtuous demonstration of realism (ἐνάργεια), and an appeal to φαντασία, i.e. to the reader's imagination to see beyond and to perceive the hidden meaning of the described images (showing the destiny of the god).

21 Whitby 1985. The poem marks the first attempt to share a classical instrument (the hexameter) for both ecclesiastical and secular encomium (both the emperor and the patriarch, although he had not contributed to the rebuilding of the church, are praised). In Paul, it is the pagan divinity of Rome who invites Justinian to rebuild Santa Sophia (a church as the symbol of his reign!), while a few years later the Christian element has already become predominant: in Corippus of Gaza (565 AD) it is the Christian Virgin who prompts Justin to assume the imperial throne.

22 Webb 2009b; Elsner 2002; Bartsch and Elsner 2007; Goldhill 2007, 1 n. 1; Goldhill and Osborne 1994.

23 Some examples: on Homer, Bulloch 2006 and D'Acunto and Palmisciano 2009; on ekphrastic epigram, Prioux 2007 and Goldhill 2007; on Xenophon, Goldhill 1996 and 1998; Theocritus, Lamari 2008; on Catullus, Elsner 2007; on Moschus, Petrain 2006; on Ovid, Salzman-Mitchell 2005; on Virgil, Smith 2006.

24 For Goldhill 2007, 18-19, ekphrastic epigrams aim to prepare a cultured citizen of the Empire and to enable him to play the game of competitive cultural performance. See also Agosti 2006b, 359-90.

25 Tissoni 2000a, 51-53.

26 James-Webb 1991, 10-11.

have not been limited to ekphrastic texts in the narrow (modern) sense but have focussed more broadly on works in which the action of "looking" plays an important role. These include, naturally, tragedy and comedy,[27] but also non-theatrical texts such as epic,[28] the novel[29] and even historiography.[30]

An important dimension of this type of textual visuality – including what is visible (body language, appearance) and the action of looking at something/someone- are emotions, social status, role and reputation. Constantinidou, for instance, analyzed how heroes and gods look in Homer's work disclosing feelings such as rage or divine approval.[31] Cairns examined how "looking at" and "looking away" may express, in different contexts, confidence or inadequacy, as well as respect or disrespect for the other, ἔρος or envy.[32]

Approaches originating in film theory and feminist criticism have been applied to ancient texts[33] in an effort to better understand how the viewing perspective and particularly the viewing subject's role may affect the interpretation of texts and possibly help in understanding the social and dynamic aspects of the culture in which they were produced, the author's point of view and message, and their effect on readers and audiences. Thus, for instance, Hawley read the duel of Eteocles and Polyneikes as a western movie,[34] where the fight is presented in absence of words and movement. Such theories provide an interesting and fresh approach to ancient texts, sometimes offering persuasive new readings that take into account the power of the gaze. Such interpretations frequently focus on the gender of the viewer and of the object viewed, where gender is not simply meant as the sexual gender, but also the mental or perceptive one, i.e. the viewing subject may be a woman (as in Erinna *AP* 6.352)[35] who is viewing the object with the eyes of man, or as a male would view it.[36]

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27 With no claim to comprehensiveness: Hawley 1998; Fletcher 1999 (on Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*); Zeitlin 1994 (on Euripides).

28 Prier 1989; Elsner 2007; Salzman-Mitchell 2005; Smith 2006.

29 Fusillo 1989, 111-170 and 196-207; Morales 2004, 130-43, 152-72, 199-220.

30 Goldhill 2007, 5-6.

31 Constantinidou 1994

32 Cairns 2005.

33 Hawley 1998, 83-4.

34 Hawley 1998, 96.

35 Discussed by Goldhill 2007, 11.

36 Goldhill 2007, 9 and 11-15, against Skinner 2001, argues that no feminine ekphrastic tradition existed, and that, given especially that both female and male authors (and viewers) employ the same models, topics and terminology, one explanation may lie in education, which homogenized both sexes' views.

On the visual aspects of Colluthus' poem no scholarly work has as yet been undertaken and the current chapter constitutes an attempt to fill this gap. My starting point will be an examination of Colluthus' vocabulary of "seeing" and "looking" (which I will call visual terminology). The objective of this examination is twofold: firstly, to understand how the poet is employing his verbs compared to tradition (Homer, Apollonius and Nonnus), and secondly, whether he uses a certain terminology in relation to specific context, scene types, or characters, with particular focus on the possible psychological consequences of his word choices on the readers.

I will then consider the ekphrastic features that I believe contribute the most to producing visual effects within the poem by analysing Colluthus descriptions of his characters' gestures and appearance. It is hard not to visualise Aphrodite exposing her breasts, or Strife jumping up and down on her chair in anger, for instance, as well as the backdrop against which each event in the poem is taking place. Colluthus' detailed pictorial descriptions are likely to make a powerful impression (*phantasia*) on his readers, which allows them to "almost become viewers"[37] of the scene. I will examine these aspects by focusing on the characterization of Paris, the figure who is most frequently and most elaborately described.

Finally, I will examine visual power and the impact it has on the characters within the text and on Colluthus' readers. In this part I focus on two case studies (Paris' journey to Sparta and the meeting of Paris and Helen) to examine how perception emotionally affects the characters, and how Colluthus drives his readers to certain psychological reactions in preparation for the next scene.

2. Colluthus' visual Terminology

Colluthus employs a rich vocabulary of vision-related terms, from the verbs indicating different ways of "seeing" and "looking", each with more or less subtle nuances of meaning, to the nouns belonging to these semantic fields, such as those to signify the face, the look and the eyes.

Fundamental scholarship includes the works of Vendryes and Prévot, who provided detailed linguistic background on the relevant vocabulary, especially

[37] Goldhill 2007, 3.

retrieving their Indo-European origin and explaining how the use has evolved from Homeric times onwards,[38] while Thordarson focuses on how the vocabulary has been adopted by the different genres across time, justifying semantic choices by each author and demonstrating how linguistic evidence can be helpful in identifying the linguistic source of some texts.[39] Prier concentrates instead on the centrality of light in all its manifestations in archaic Greek language, in particular on the phenomenology of sight and appearance.[40] His stimulating approach is unusual and based on the interrelationship between what he defines as geometric projections between the "this" (the point of intention) and the "other" or "that" (the object viewed), the forces of both interacting in a Kraftfeld or field of forces.[41] Prier also examines the difference between δοκεῖν and φαίνεσθαι, which is not linguistically marked in English, French or German as it is in Greek, indicating on the one hand human activity, and on the other the process of phenomena appearing or being perceived.[42] Prier's observations on the direction and on the quality of the various types of viewing especially in Homer have shed some light on how I have interpreted some of the epyllion's episodes.

Comparison of occurrences of verbs of seeing in Colluthus and previous epic poets:

Colluthus	Homer	Apollonius	Nonnus
1. εἶδον (9x) +	1. εἶδον (480x) +	1. παπταίνω: 12x	1. δοκεύω: 78x
2. ὁράω: (2x): 11x	ὁράω: 116x	2. δέρκομαι 11x	2. δέρκομαι: 71x
3. διακρίνω:6x	2. παπταίνω: 31x	3. θηεύμαι: 8x	3. ὀπιπεύω: 61x
4. παπταίνω:5x	3. θηέομαι: 29x	4. ὀπιπεύω,	4. εἶδον: 51x
5. θηέομαι:3x	4. δέρκομαι: 15x	διακρίνω: 4x	5. παπταίνω: 43x
6. ἀνατέλλω:3x	5. διακρίνω: 14x	5. δοκεύω: 3x	6. διαμετρέω: 14x
7. φράζομαι:3x	6. δοκεύω: 7x	6. ἀνατέλλω: 2x	7. τανύω:4x
8. δέρκομαι,	7. ὀπιπεύω: 6x	7. Εἶδον: 1x	8. διακρίνω: 3x
διαμετρέω, ὀπιπεύω,	8. διαμετρέω,	8. βλέπω, ὁράω,	9. θεάομαι: 2x
δοκεύω:2x	ἀνατέλλω: 1x	διαμετρέω, τανύω	10. ὁράω, βλέπω: 0x
9. τανύω ὄμμα:1x	9. τανύω ὄμμα: 0x	ὄμμα: 0x	
10. βλέπω:0x	10. βλέπω: 0x		

Colluthus uses a wide range of verbs to describe the action of "seeing" and "looking": this variegated use is visible particularly in the passages where characters are

[38] Vendryes 1932 Prévot 1935.

[39] Thordarson 1971. For instance, based on the use of θεωρέω as a synonym of βλέπω (Thordarson 1971, 121-2) it is believed that the gospel of St. John was written in either Syria (Palestine) or Asia Minor.

[40] Prier 1989.

[41] Auerbach 2003, 1-19.

[42] Prier 1989, 19-22.

occupied in the act of looking, like when Paris is judging the goddesses' beauty (132-36: 5 verbs), when he scans the landscape and buildings during his journey to Sparta (202-248: 9 verbs), during the waterspout episode (202-210), when Helen first meets Paris (254-316: 9 verbs), and when Hermione is looking for her mother (328-86: 6 verbs).

The use of different verbs and words marks a clear desire to display his erudition. Colluthus uses specific words in specific situations, adhering to their precise meaning, and he tends to use certain verbs only for certain characters. For instance, he uses ὁράω in the present only on two occasions (340 and 381), both related to Hermione. Colluthus exploits all the different connotations of a word, using the same word on multiple occasions with different meanings, as noted by Ludwich and Livrea,[43] again displaying his virtuosity, but also possibly forcing his reader to gather pick the correct meaning each time, stimulating an interaction that will be examined in the last chapter of this thesis. Two good examples are ὀπωπή and εἶδος. Ὀπωπή (6x) means "face" in 130 and 273, while in 124, 259 and 305 it means "eye" or "gaze", and in 340 it means "eyes" with a more physical connotation, without reference to the "gaze" or "look" of Hermione. Εἶδος (3x) means "beauty" in 130, "icon" in 239, "look" or "appearance" in 304. Εἶδος is semantically linked to ἰδεῖν, the most used verb in Colluthus, and it designates a phenomenon originating from the viewed object/person,[44] therefore something that appears (φαίνεται) and whose trueness cannot be established.[45] It is not accidental that Colluthus chooses to define beauty with this word, given that we are dealing with a beauty contest, a circumstance in which the only beauty that is up for judgement is that of the exterior appearance. In Homer, the word signifies a god's gift to humans that is not necessarily associated with ethical qualities or virtues, as it happens in Plato, but simply defines the quality of being pleasing to the eye,[46] and this is why it recurs often in attributes that add up to the good looks expressed by εἶδος. For instance, in *Od.* 4.263, Helen regrets abandoning Menelaus who lacked neither good looks (εἶδος) nor intelligence (φρένες). Colluthus plays a sort of inverse game using, in 130, εἶδος ὀπωπῆς, i.e. specifying that the (only exterior) beauty that Paris should judge is that of the face, reiterating the concept that we are dealing with outer beauty only.

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43 Ludwich 1901, 14; Livrea 1968a, 69.
44 Prier 1989, 101-8.
45 See also its connection with εἴδωλον, Prier 1989, 101-2.
46 Prier 1989, 104.

The passage in 304-5 is more intricate. Paris says to Helen that Argive women look masculine and thus they are only counterfeit women. Paris here expresses his expectation that women should also have the εἶδος of women, but in this case their appearance and their identity are mismatched. A similar gender discrepancy had also been blamed on Athena by Aphrodite earlier in 187-9, where the goddess questioned Athena's sex.

The table illustrating Colluthus' verbal choices and their contexts indicate that the poet favours three verbs in particular in their original significance: ὁράω, παπταίνω and δοκεύω. The other "seeing" verbs are used by our poet as synonyms and do not carry the specific meaning that they originally had. For instance, δέρκομαι, a meaningful verb in Homer which originally designated a sharp, quick glance (typically of snakes) that generated terror or wonder (θάμβος) in the viewer,[47] is used by Colluthus with a generic meaning: at 134, Paris looks at the neck of the three goddesses, and at 214, he sees the tomb of Phyllis. The actions are not accompanied by any connotation of sharpness, rapidity, terror or wonder, and are directed at inanimate objects.

I will thus focus my attention on these three verbs, and will examine how Colluthus embraces tradition by choosing the contexts in which he employs these verbs, with particular attention to the emotive connotations that apply to each situation.

The verb ὁράω (in the present and in its aorist εἶδον) is the most used in Homer for "to see", although it keeps its original meaning of "to pay attention to"[48] (its aspect dictates the durative and lengthy nature of the gaze), while εἶδον designates an

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47 Prier 1989, 29-31.

48 The verb, which originally signified an active and intentional meaning, close to that of "to guard," (Prévot 1935, 142-6), later assimilated its meaning to that of the auxiliary aorist εἶδον, which, together with the desiderative ὄψομαι and the perfects ὄπωπα and ἑόρακα formed the most common paradigm used in Attic from Homer onwards(Prévot 1935, 158-9). The only other verb which stood beside ὁράω and was later to supersede it is βλέπω, which, however, always kept its opposite meaning of active, intentional and expressive viewing. This process appears complete already in Attic, in the κοινή and in Modern Greek, where the standard system is formed by βλέπω and εἶδα. Apollonius, Nonnus and Colluthus follow the Homeric choice to avoid βλέπω (Prévot 1935, 135 and Prier 1989, 269). Thordarson 1971, 121-2 suggests that the absence of this verb may be due to its original expressivity and vulgarity, an aspect which cannot be sustained by its uncertain etymology.

occurrence and is often used in contexts of wonder.[49] Colluthus follows this choice, unlike Apollonius and especially Nonnus, who never uses the present. Colluthus also limits the use of ὁράω to only 2 occasions (340, 381), while he extensively uses εἶδον.

The use of ὁράω in Colluthus indicates, in all cases but one, a passive, unintentional viewing which belongs more to the world of perception than to that of conscious and intentional observation. This use is therefore in line with the system that was in place since Homer and shows the influence of εἶδον on the present.[50]

It is useful to consider the only case in Colluthus when ὁράω is used with a slightly different meaning than the passive and unintentional viewing:[51] in 340, the maids ask Hermione οὐχ ὁράᾳς; γοεραὶ μὲν ἐπιμύουσιν ὀπωπαί, "Do you not see? Your tearful eyes cannot see (are closed over)." The maids are surprised and are trying to convince Hermione that Helen has not left, but that she has perhaps joined a meeting of women or has stopped off on the banks of the Eurotas. The maids think that they are seeing the truth, but what they see is actually a false notion of the truth, and with a rhetorical question they interrogate the child about a fake truth which she cannot possibly see. Sorrow and desperation can indeed prevent one from seeing the truth or reality, just as any other emotional alteration: one may not see reality for what it is when in anger or in a state of excitement, as it may happen with intoxication. Therefore, if the maids were actually aware of the truth, this "emotional blindness" of Hermione would make perfect sense. However, what on the one hand complicates matters more and on the other makes them more deceitful is the duplicity of illusion that covers Helen's destiny: the maids think she is gone to meet women at an assembly, while Hermione is convinced that she has left. Illusion wraps reality in two different ways, and even those who are supposed and think to see the truth, do not really see it; we are then left with two blind parties: not only Hermione, who is

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49 Prier 1989, 268-9.

50 In the gospels the fight for predominance does no longer involve ὁράω versus βλέπω, but rather θεωρέω versus βλέπω (Thordarson 1972, 119-26). Ὁράω is found rarely in the gospels, perhaps a choice that was dictated by the necessity of a verb that meant "to contemplate, to witness, to observe", a meaning well expressed by θεωρέω, which was also widely employed for this purpose in religion, philosophy and science in classical times (Prévot 1935, 268-9).

51 The other occurrences, where the verb is clearly used to define an intentional, passive viewing, are: 69, of Zeus seeing the quarrel; 85, of Aphrodite seeing her children; 123, of Paris seeing Hermes; 193, of Paris pursuing the one whom he had not seen; 215, of Paris seeing Phyllis' nine circle path; 257, of Helen as soon as she saw Paris; 262, of Helen seeing no quiver of arrows on Paris' face; 273, of Helen seeing Paris' face; 381, of Hermione not seeing her mother; 392, of Cassandra who sees the newcomer (Helen).

justified in her blindness because of her being a child,[52] upset, and blinded by tears, but also the maids, who are blind although they are adults, emotionally unaltered, and not blinded by tears in their eyes.

The reader is then the only party who sees the truth, being aware of what happened to Helen from the tale told just a few lines earlier, and also knowing how the well-known story goes. The reader therefore holds a privileged position, as he looks from the outside to both the maids and Hermione in their unawareness of what the truth actually is. This generates a sort of urge to act, which may feel almost like saying to the maids: "No, she is right in suspecting something has happened. Helen really has abandoned her", but instead, readers are left in the frustrating position of being unable to help Hermione. It is like watching a violent act from the outside, wishing to be able to prevent it or help the victim.

Sympathy, raised in readers through the presence of a helpless, upset and abandoned child who is also misled by a false reality, may then turn into frustration, but luckily Hermione has a dream and decides to follow her instincts and to seek her father's help. Interestingly, the dream also provides another false truth, if we accept the one who speaks is actually Helen, and not her eidolon of Euripidean memoy.[53] Helen herself lies and tells her, at 379-80, that a deceitful man (ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ) kidnapped her from her house. Hermione is then pointed to another direction again, where she does find out that her mother is not returning (as she initially feared), but she is once again cheated on the actual truth, i.e. her mother's real intentions and the circumstances in which she has left the house. Helen leads her to believe that Paris has kidnapped her and omits to say that she has left willingly, a fact that is clearly illustrated with her words ἔψομαι, ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει (315). The choice of an active verb, placed as the first word in the line, leaves no doubts around Helen's decision, immediately justified by her interest in the buildings that sit on the foundations laid by Poseidon and Apollo,[54] and her commitment to obey Aphrodite's orders. Everything is going according to the plan that Aphrodite had revealed to Paris

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52 She was nine years old when she was abandoned by her mother (Apoll. *Epit.* 9.3).

53 I am convinced that this is the case, as the presence of Helen's image would not lead to the pun of her behaviour contrasting with her version of the story. If the eidolon were speaking in the dream, Helen would actually not be a liar, and her behaviour would not offer the poet any room for judgement, given that her departure is justified by her willingness to obey Aphrodite's orders.

54 Colluthus' humour again, see Combellack 1971, 49.

in Lucian *Dear. Iud.* 15.1-4: κἀπειδὰν ἀφίκῃ εἰς τὴν Λακεδαίμονα, ὄψεταί σε ἡ Ἑλένη. τοὐντεῦθεν δὲ ἐμὸν ἂν εἴη τὸ ἔργον, ὅπως ἐρασθήσεταί σου καὶ ἀκολουθήσει.[55]

To return to the use of ὁράω, the verb here continues to refer to a passive viewing and is even more justified as it designates perception: in fact the maids mean "Can you not see [the truth], i.e. can you not understand?", and immediately justify her not-seeing with the fact that her eyes are shut by tears, thus preventing her from seeing reality (or what they think that is). The verb is used to signify the act of "not seeing" something, or rather "failing to see something" also at 381, where Hermione wakes up after a dream in which she has seen Helen but fails to see her: again, she fails to see a false reality. In both cases the girl is presented as not seeing reality (οὐχ ὁράᾳς, οὐχ ὁρόωσα) but is, in fact, seeing it.

The ambiguity of Hermione's vision is also announced also by the words chosen by Colluthus to describe her dream directly before this scene, at 371-2 ἡ μὲν ἀλητεύουσα δολοφροσύνῃσιν ὀνείρων μητέρα παπταίνειν ὠίσατο, "wandering amongst the trickeries of dreams, she thought she was seeing her mother." Readers should also remember what the poet had previously said about dreams, at 318-23:[56]

> νὺξ δέ [...] δοιὰς δὲ πύλας ὤιξεν ὀνείρων,
> τὴν μὲν ἀληθείης - κεράων ἀπελάμπετο κόσμος -
> ἔνθεν ἀναθρῴσκουσι θεῶν νημερτέες ὀμφαί,
> τὴν δὲ δολοφροσύνης, κενεῶν θρέπτειραν ὀνείρων.
>
> And night [...] opened the two gates of dreams: the one of the truth - it gleamed with the sheen of horns - where the divine oracles sprang up, infallible; the other, the gate of illusion, feeder of vain dreams.

Deceitful dreams are in both instances described with the word δολοφροσύνη: we can be in no doubt about the falseness of what Hermione has seen in her dreams; they are also described as "fruitless" or "vain" (κενεός 323),[57] i.e. devoid of the ἀληθεία that marks true dreams, those of unmistaken oracles. Therefore, just as she had not believed what her maids had previously told her about her mother's disappearance, Hermione now disbelieves her dream and realises that Helen has not returned; thus immediately she acts on it and sends a message to her father in Crete.

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55 Paschalis 2008, 138.

56 For the epic models of the scene see James 1981, 140-2.

57 The adjective often refers to unfounded ἐλπίδες (Simon. 5.16), φόβοι (Eur. *Suppl.* 548).

Ironically the truth is seen by a little girl: her rejection of illusion is much more powerful as she manages to see reality despite her young age, her distress and especially the fact that she has not actually seen Helen with her own eyes, but she simply feels what is true. Hermione proves here that eyes are not even necessary to see what is real.

Hermione's anguish reminds us of rape scenes as in *h.Dem.* 20-1, where Persephone is lamenting and crying when abducted. The girl's behaviour also represents an interesting inversion of the traditional role of mother-looking-for-child (as, again, in *h.Dem.* 40 and Claud. *Rapt.*): in Colluthus, it is the child who is searching for her mother.[58]

Finally, let us consider how Hermione's anguish is viewed by the maids. Among the contexts in which heroes can become the object of other characters' gaze, Hawley included madness.[59] Hermione is not suffering physical pain, but her distress is clear from her abundant crying and her gestures (she throws away her veil at 328). Her behaviour is similar to that of Sophocles' Oedipus, who questions himself and ultimately deprives himself of his eyes, as they have failed to judge the truth. Hermione therefore fulfils the requirements to be looked at by other characters.

Παπταίνω[60] implies affective connotations, its meaning being "to throw fearful looks everywhere" or "to look for something through the eyes with fear". In Homer, the verb is used to describe a glance of terror,[61] as in *Od.* 12.232-3, where Odysseus tires his eyes while throwing glances of fear everywhere to spot Scylla. Prier explains that the direction of the viewing implied by this verb works from the inside out, as the terror glance originates from the νόος, and is like the darting sight of an eagle searching in all directions for a prey with its eyes, as Menelaus' look in *Il.* 17.674-78. Thus the viewing expressed by παπταίνω is bi-directional as, on the one hand, the viewer is darting glances out in all directions and, on the other hand, the glance itself comes from his mind and is a result of his perception of the object viewed.

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58 See more on this in Chapter 4.
59 Hawley 1998, 86-93. More on this below.
60 Traditionally restricted to epic, this is a Homeric verb of popular origin (Prévot 1935, 257).
61 Prier 1989, 26-7.

Colluthus uses the verb with this specific meaning in three[62] of the five occurrences. In particular, the verb is used in a passage in conjunction with the only two occurrences of δοκεύω (263-5) about Helen:

> πολλάκι δ' ἀγλαΐῃσιν ἐυγλήνοισι προσώπων
> παπταίνειν ἐδόκευε τὸν ἡμερίδων βασιλῆα·
> ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡμερίδων θαλερὴν ἐδόκευεν ὀπώρην.
>
> And more than once she searched with her eyes his beautiful face and bright eyes, to see the king of vine. But she did not manage to spot any swollen fruit of the vine.

We can detect a certain fear in Helen while she attempts to recognize the stranger and for a moment she fears she is actually staring at Dionysus. The multi-direction element of her looking is expressed by πολλάκι at 263, which reflects πάντοσε and πάντῃ of the above-mentioned Homeric passage.

Δοκεύω means "to spy" and designates the action of focussing on one thing only (opposite to παπταίνω, which indicates the darting gaze in all directions), however with a passive connotation due to its derivation from δέχομαι, "to receive".[63] It is used in Homer about heroes who watch their prey with the intention of killing,[64] and thus implies a brutal force that comes from within the viewer but is directed outwards[65]. The focus of this intense gaze seems to be in Homer the key to success and this element may be the link with the meaning of "to keep one's gaze fixed on something", considered by Prévot exceptional, as in *Il.* 23.325, where Nestor advises his son to watch closely the man in the lead if he wants to win a horse race.[66] Colluthus may be playing on the ambivalence of meaning of this verb in his time, first emphasizing Helen's search for hints, and then the negative result of her search. See also *AP* 5.253 by Irenaeus Referendarius, a contemporary of Colluthus: τίπτε πέδον, Χρύσιλλα, κάτω νεύουσα δοκεύεις, "why do you bend your head down and stare at the ground, Chrysilla".

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62 At 359, Hermione lengthily scans the trees and woods in fear in search of her mother; at 372, Hermione, in fear, thinks that she sees her mother in her dreams (a deceitful environment, as discussed).

63 Prévot 1935, 253-4.

64 For instance, *Il.* 8.340 and 13.545-6.

65 Prier 1989, 37.

66 In *Od.* 5.571-5 Odysseus, following Calypso's advice to keep the Bear constellation on his left hand-side in order to successfully cross the sea, cannot sleep and closely watches the Bear, that is, in its turn, casting on Orion, pointing at a particular direction. The directions of the gazes here form a field of forces, the geometric cosmos of Prier 1989, 38. See also *AP* 5.253 by Irenaeus Referendarius, a contemporary of Colluthus: τίπτε πέδον, Χρύσιλλα, κάτω νεύουσα δοκεύεις, "why do you bend your head down and stare at the ground, Chrysilla".

Finally, a few considerations are required on two verbs that are used by Colluthus in an interesting way. Ὀπιπεύω means "to look with prying eyes at": this viewing is curious, secret and dangerous:[67] an inner and active drive to watch something secretly well expressed in *Il.* 7.243, where Hector wants to face Ajax in open battle, not in a secret ambush: λάθρῃ ὀπιπεύσας, ἀλλ' ἀμφαδόν. Curiosity is present in both occurrences in Colluthus: at 256 where Helen looks curiously in front of the thick doors, and in 261 she thinks she is seeing Eros.

Διακρίνω is used by Colluthus exclusively as a technical verb always referring to the selection process of the goddesses' beauty contest, and it is also only used in this context within the poem.[68]

3. Description of Characters' Gestures and Appearance

In this section, I will be concerned with how Colluthus deals with ekphrastic features in the descriptions of his characters. I will begin with a brief summary on how physical description is approached in the tradition, and then evaluate how our poet exploits eye-catching content to feed to his visual-obsessed public.

Detailed physical description is approached differently by genres and especially periods, with factors such as gender, and cultural and social conventions playing an important role in addressing the viewer's reaction towards the spectacle. A male or a female viewer may gaze and react differently depending on the social standards of the time, as well explained by Hawley, who focusses on the ocular culture of the fifth century BC in particular.[69]

In Homer, the physical aspect of heroes is normally not described, Thersites being a rare exception in *Il.* 2.216-19.[70] Homeric descriptions of heroes focus instead

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67 In *Od.* 19.67 Odysseus peeps at women.

68 Lucian used the expression δικαστὴς γενέσθαι in *Dial. Dear.* 7.

69 Hawley 1998.

70 While putting on their armour, heroes may be described, "as if these external attributes partly define masculine heroism" (Hawley 1998, 94). Bodies of wounded, dying or dead heroes are also often described in the *Iliad*, and in Helen's teichoscopy (*Il.* 3.161-242), a very visual episode in which Helen identifies heroes for Priam (Constantinidou 1994, 2) there are some vague references to the heroes' size and height. Antenor, who describes Odysseus as πολύμητις and fixing his gaze onto the ground, says that they did not mind his looks. Odysseus' beautification by the hands of Athena in *Od.* 6.224-37, similar to his reunion with Penelope in book 23, where the hero also bathes (as Paris does in Colluthus) can probably be justified as a divine phenomenon through which a goddess enhances the hero's physical appearance to make him more desirable for Nausicaa.

on heroes' virtue, κλέος, prowess and courage by which they are recognized[71] and through which their reputation travels, by means of the bards' songs.

In fifth-century theatre, heroes are described and offered to the voyeuristic eye of viewers only in situations of pain (Heracles in Sophocles' *Trachiniai* or Euripides' Hippolitus), suicide on stage (like Euripides' Alcestis and Sophocles' Ajax), humiliation (as Aeschylus' Agamemnon, who first receives proskinesis by Clytemnestra and is later murdered by her, and as the sex-deprived men in Aristophanes' Lysistrata), illness or madness (Aeschylus' Orestes in the *Eumenides* and Sophocles' Oedipus), and finally in scenes of disguise (Aristophanes' Agathon in the *Thesmophoriazusai*).[72] Corpses and wounded bodies are treated with particular interest by tragedians (a legacy from Homer): Heracles takes a long time to die in *Trachiniai*, thus offering a painful spectacle to the audience who is forced to watch. Often, wounded bodies represent the central element of the "looking", as it happens in Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, especially when the gruesome duel between Eteocles[73] and Polyneikes is graphically described in 1246-1481,[74] or with the description of the violent death of Parthenopaeus in 1159-61, which has a more powerful impact than other heroes' deaths as he was young and beautiful.

Hawley[75] explains tragedy's interest in displaying males in situations of weakness through drama's reflection of the awareness of the many social groups in the fifth century BC. By presenting masculinity threatened by alterations of the mind, pain, and sexual humiliation, theatre aims in fact at highlighting masculinity as the force that wins through all these challenges. Spectators are forced to question and realise the differences between weak femininity and superior masculinity,[76] and to ask themselves whether gender is simply a matter of external attributes, φύσις or νόμος.

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71 Segal 1995 in particular analyses how κλέος is used (sometimes ironically) as an identification and recognition criterion in the Odyssey, and how heroes achieve (and indeed may lose) this vital attribute. Here, as well, intellectual skills only are instrumental to build κλέος: so Odysseus and Penelope excel equally in δόλοι and μῆτις (see especially, 208-10), and, in particular, Odysseus' guile is ironically enormous when compared to his actual size beside the Cyclops (*Od.* 9.513-16). Strength and valour in battle become futile for Odysseus, who needs a value that goes beyond the ἀρετή in the battlefield of the Iliad.

72 Hawley 1998, 86-93.

73 Visuality plays an important role in this drama, as is well explained by Cairns 2005, 133, who highlights how the terrible look in Eteocles' eyes (δεινὸν ὄμμα) graphically transmits his rage towards his brother, who, in turn, demonstrates his lack of respect for him by looking away.

74 Discussed in Hawley 1998, 95-6; see also Craik 1988, 95.

75 Hawley 1998, 94-5.

76 Hawley 1998, 92 also explains how (strong) masculinity can be "created" by female characters (as Clytemnestra) only through inner qualities, while (weak) femininity can be achieved by male characters by simply wearing feminine clothes (as Pentheus in Euripides' *Bacchae*).

The lack of physical description in Homer and in classical drama contrasts with the abundance of details spent on protagonists of later literature. In the novel, a full description of the beautiful young lovers is normally provided on the occasion of their first meeting, when visual interaction plays an important role, as we will see below. In late antique epic, descriptions of characters are equally rich: Claudian, in *Rapt.* 2.36-55, describes Proserpina's physical beauty and attire ("her outfit was gathered together and clasped with a rounded gemstone", 40),[77] and closes the detailed portrait with *tali luxuriat cultu* (55), "such was the elegant attire she presented herself in". John Malalas in the sixth century AD describes the Homeric heroes at length in *Chron.* 5.13-40.

Furthermore, while in tragedy males were to avoid the female's erotic gaze,[78] as the Hippolytus Kalyptomenos in Euripides, in the novel and in late literature the opposite happens: for instance, in Longus bodies are described and erotically gazed at by both Daphnis and Chloe (*Daph.* 1.13, 15-16, 24).

As seen in Chapter 2 about Aphrodite's toilette, Colluthus devotes particular attention to the description of his characters' appearance, both their physical elements (hair, eyes) and other elements such as their attire, movements and gesticulation. In this section, I will analyse how Colluthus deals with ekphrastic features: by this I refer to his descriptions, since the epyllion does not contain an ekphrasis per se, i.e. an individual description of an artwork or any other external character or event, displayed in the shape of a digression. For this purpose, it is useful to recall Elsner's differentiation of the definitions of ekphrasis;[79] here, I mean by ekphrasis the vivid description of any visual phenomenon.

One more specification is necessary about the nature itself of descriptions, which, being representations of an object or phenomenon through the eyes of the narrator, necessarily come as impressions of an indirect source: the viewer sees a landscape, for instance, and describes it to the reader. Truth is already filtered by one pair of eyes, and inevitably has become impression before we hear about it. The subjective perception of the viewer/narrator plays an important role here, and one may say that all ekphraseis are also evaluations. Some of the descriptions included in

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77 Claudian also describes the goddesses in detail in 2.11-35.
78 Hawley 1998, 90, and also see above.
79 Elsner 2007, 20.

the *Abduction of Helen*, voiced by the poet (or other characters), have a stronger ethical connotation and therefore may be closer to evaluations rather than to ekphrastic descriptions. A judgement of Colluthus is detectable, for instance, in Δύσπαρις (194), "ill-fated Paris": here, the line between how Paris is described and how Paris is presented (a positive or negative light) by the author is thin. While being aware of this duplicity I have considered in this section all descriptions, including those that imply an opinion of the poet or of other characters.

Fusillo[80] deals with ekphrasis as a description of an artwork only, and distinguishes between ekphraseis of a digressive type that are not related to the main storyline and that favour everyday life scenes, such as Achilles' shield in the *Iliad* (18.578-608), and ekphraseis that imply a connection with the subject of the plot, which is the preferred type in Hellenism with Apollonius, Moschus and then Virgil. In Catullus 64, for instance, the love of Ariadne and Theseus is intertwined with that of Thetis and Peleus, protagonists of the carmen. Xenophon of Ephesos, in his description of the Babylonian canopy (*Ephes.* 1.12), follows Apollonius and the nuptial quilt described in Catullus, and Achilles Tatius' model is Moschus' ekphrasis of Europa's flower basket (*Eur.* 37-62). On the other hand, Heliodorus follows the Homeric model, building his ekphraseis as separate digressions of aesthetic nature (like in his description of the buckle worn by Theagenes in *Aeth.* 3.3. during the Delphic procession and Charickleia's breast band in 3.4). He exploits the potential of the feature less than the other novelists, but makes the crucial difference of only describing objects that are crucial to the plot.

Colluthus describes with at least one word most of the characters that appear in the epyllion; for instance, the physical appearance of all the gods attending the wedding of Thetis and Peleus is described as they arrive: Apollo's hair is buffeted by the wind (25-6), Persuasion carries a bridal wreath and Eros' quiver (30-1), and Ares is presented without his helmet, his breast-plate and his sword (36-8). In the *Abduction*, descriptions are not always just an illustration of the characters' appearance, but often reveal their emotional state, as it happens with Eris, whose frustration is expressed through her wandering in search of a way to disrupt the divine banquet (45), her rage by her jumping up and down in her chair (47), her evil intentions by her

[80] Fusillo 1989, 88-90.

throwing the apple into the banquet whirling her hand (62-3). Hera, at the start of the judgment scene, rises up in astonishment (65), and the complete desperation of Hermione is expressed vividly through her gesticulation, language and behaviour: she casts her veil away (328)[81] and cries, in fact, for the whole episode (over twenty words related to crying and sorrow in 328-88). Gesticulation and body language are used to make the inner emotions of the characters visible to the readers,[82] as facial expression, especially of the eyes, is often used in Homer to substitute or to add colour to acts or words.[83] This form of ekphrasis acquires a pictorial value as it enhances the emotive status of the characters and brings it out for everyone to see, almost as if the readers were looking at a painting or at a sculpture.

Colluthus' most detailed descriptions focus on the two key roles in the epyllion: Paris and Aphrodite. Interestingly, Helen's body is not directly described except for a couple of remarks made by Paris, in which he refers to her as the prize of the contest (περικλήιστον, ἐμῶν ἀντάξιον ἔργων, νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν, "a worthy recompense of my labours, a glorious and desirable wife," 294-5). The fact that Aphrodite deserves a description reinforces the impression that her role within the plot is primary, and that her power is fiercer than Helen's beauty.

Paris is the character to whom the poet dedicates more descriptions. In the next section I focus on Paris' description from an ekphrastic perspective as a case study, since his persona is described in vivid and different ways at various stages and since it is possible to identify a progression in his appearance reaching a climax to a beyond- divine status.

a. Paris' visual Evolution

In the previous chapter I have argued that Paris' bucolic identity, built on literary models, is used by Colluthus as a means to lead his readers' expectations, rather than as an arrival point. Here, I discuss Paris's characterization from a visual point of view, analyzing how his evolution across roles is presented through ekphrastic descriptions.

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81 In Claud. *Rapt.* 3.149-50 Ceres tears her cloak to pieces and then her hair.

82 Cairns 2005 explores the inner emotions- especially in relation to characters' social status, role and τιμή -transmitted by the acts of looking straight at somebody and looking away from somebody.

83 Constantinidou 1994, 1-4 and 7-9 examines a few Homeric formulaic expressions in which the eyes of heroes are compared to fire and express anger or frenzy boiling inside them.

We have seen how the first impression of Paris that the poet creates in his readers is that of an ignorant shepherd, someone who has inappropriately been put in charge of judging the immortals. His pastoral attire includes a goat's skin and a crook (108-10).[84] Next, Colluthus describes Paris' love of music and singing, and how he neglects his duties to play his pipe (112-3, 104-5, 123-6). Music is the first feature to introduce a new element to the first impression Paris had made, and the description of the effects of his music on the animal world contributes to slightly change the reader's opinion (117-21):

> οὐ κύνες ὠρύοντο καὶ οὐ μυκήσατο ταῦρος,
> μούνη δ' ἠνεμόεσσα, βοῆς ἀδίδακτος ἐοῦσα,
> Ἰδαίων ὀρέων ἀντίθροος ἴαχεν Ἠχώ.
> ταῦροι δὲ χλοερῆς κεκορηότες ὑψόθι ποίης,
> κεκλιμένοι βαρύγουνον ἐπ' ἰσχίον εὐνάζοντο.
>
> No dog barked, nor a bull bellowed: only Echo, unable to speak, resounded back with the wind from the hills of Ida, and the bulls laid down, replete, on the green grass, and rested their lazy haunches.

Suddenly, we no longer see an ignorant herdsman, but a pipe-playing shepherd who honors Pan with his music in an idyllic scenario. Colluthus exploits the visual impact that Paris' movements and gesticulation can have on readers. The physicality of characters' behaviour creates an all-round scene, in which they move in three dimensions. The reader, who becomes almost a viewer,[85] is forced to imagine Paris playing his pipe, moving in a bucolic landscape. Language of poetry and visual language of art (sculpture but also painting) work together to create a picturesque image for the readers. Colluthus may have known (or known of) certain artworks in which Paris was pictured playing a lyre (Table C),[86] as in Fig. A, where he is surrounded by five goats, testifying to his pastoral role. In Fig. B Paris holds a lyre on a rocky outcrop, a sort of natural throne: could this have inspired the image of Paris οἰοπόλοισιν ἐφεδριόωντα θοώκοις of the proem (15)?

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[84] In one of the *Abduction*'s main models, the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* (84-90), the object of Anchises' gaze is Aphrodite, whose appearance is described as a θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι, a visual phenomenon that causes amazement in the viewer.

[85] Goldhill 2007, 3, Agosti 2006b, 352-3.

[86] *LIMC s.v.* Paris no. 13 (p. 107), 20 (p. 109), 30 and 34 (p. 111), 34b, 35 and 36 (p. 112), 38 and 39 (p. 113), all dated between 550 and 440 BC.

Table C



Fig. A - Kylix in Attic red figures from 490 BC from Makron. Antikenmuseen, Berlin.



Fig. B - Hydria from circa 500 BC. British Museum, London, 3E 445.

Paris' crook also often appears in his iconography,[87] as in a sarcophagus relief from the third century AD,[88] where he is portrayed seated on a rock holding his usual stick.

Paris the shepherd is portrayed as an easily scared boy: as he sees Hermes, he jumps up in fear and avoids the look of the gods (123-4, 127). Averting the gaze can convey a feeling of fear, and, when the viewer is looking away from a god, a sense of respect due to a wide gap in status.[89] In tragedy, female erotic gaze was to be avoided by males, as this could threaten their masculinity, as in Christ. *AP* 2.219-20, where Paris tries to avoid the look of tearful Oenone: εἶχε δ' ὀπωπὴν πλαζομένην ἐτέρωσε δυσίμερος.

When Zeus instructs Hermes about the task to be assigned to Paris, he describes him in quite a different way: παῖδα Πάριν Πριάμοιο (72). A confirmation of the shepherd's young age is given by κουρίζων ... Πάρις (104). Paris himself also states that Priam is his father in his introductory speech to Helen (285), where he also outlines his lineage claiming direct descent from Zeus, since he descends from Dardanus who, in turn, was the son of Zeus (286), and that the walls of his fatherland were built by Poseidon and Apollo (289-90). We are then indirectly informed of Paris' status in 142, where Athena says φασί σε κοιρανέειν καὶ Τρώιον ἄστυ φυλάσσειν: this is the first instance where

87 *LIMC s.v.* Paris: no. 39 (p. 113), 40 (p. 114), 46 (p. 116), 50 (p. 117), 52a (p. 118), all dated between 440 BC and 325 BC.

88 *LIMC s.v.* Paris no. 82b (p. 124), today at the Louvre, Paris.

89 Cairns 2005, 134.

Paris is introduced as a king and no longer as a shepherd (although the goddess is reporting second-hand information). His transformation has begun. Paris' status is then unquestionably confirmed by Hera who, first calls him a βασιλεύς (150), and then goes on to outline the duties of a κοίρανος (151), the category in which she sees Paris. But it is then Paris himself who, in his speech (280-304)[90] to Helen upon his arrival to her house, confirms, among other things,[91] his status: he is a prince (ἀριστεύων) and pursues the deeds of his race (ἐμφύλια πάντα διώκω 284).

Paris' new role is demanding and places him in a similar league as Zeus, as he becomes dispenser of θέμις, a concern that traditionally had always belonged to Zeus.[92] This new role had been anticipated in the proem, where the Nymphs were asked by the poet to reveal the plans of the shepherd-judge (5) and the occasion for a shepherd to judge immortals (11), and it had also been established earlier by Zeus: διακρίνειν δὲ θεάων κέκλεο (74-5). Paris, ignorant of rhetoric, is now expected to judge the goddesses' words (their promises are purely verbal, with the exception of Aphrodite). We will see later how the prince sings to Helen his song of seduction, modelled on Aphrodite's speech.

His full transition into the new role of judge is marked by Hermes' speech, where Paris is told to leave his milking pail and his flocks (128) to become a judge: δεῦρο θεμιστεύσειας ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων· δεῦρο διακρίνων (129-30). From now on, Paris no longer fears the gods as he tries to judge the goddesses' beauty (διακρίνειν πειρήσατο 133). His new role of justice administrator is reinforced by the technical verb διακρίνω, which is used three times in reference to Paris:[93] at 74 (where Zeus told Hermes to order Paris to judge), and at 130 and 133, making δίκη clearly Paris' business, as anticipated in the proem by τίς δὲ δικασπολίη (12), reiterated by δίκης προπάροιθεν (137), and especially by Paris' self-identification at 291-3:

> αὐτὰρ ἐγώ, βασίλεια, δικασπόλος εἰμὶ θεάων·
> καὶ γὰρ ἀκηχεμένῃσιν ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων
> Κύπριδος ἀγλαΐην καὶ ἐπήρατον ἵνεσα μορφήν

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[90] The scene will be analyzed as a whole in the last part of this chapter. Here, I will focus only on how Paris introduces himself.

[91] The elements he covers in his presentation are the traditional ones of Homeric heroes: his lineage, his ancestors, his descent from Zeus, and his achievements.

[92] See Ch. 2 n. 38.

[93] The verb occurs 6 times in the epyllion, always about the beauty contest: at 76 referred to "the one who is chosen", at 87 beauty of face is Aphrodite's judge, at 148 about Paris' choice in Hera's speech.

> And I, queen, am judge to the goddesses: for I judged amongst the irritated heavenly goddesses, and I chose the beauty of Cypris and her charming shape.

We find Paris again at 167, after he has accomplished his judging duties. Naively mesmerized by the sight of Aphrodite's bare chest, he rushes to hand over to her the prize of beauty (οὔπω μῦθος ἔληγεν, ὁ δ'ἀγλαὸν ὤπασε μῆλον 167). This passage is strikingly similar to *Claudian's Rapt.* 1.117 *vix ea fatus erat, iam nuntius astra tenebat*, where Mercury hurries to carry the message from Pluto to Jupiter. Once again, this is an element that may prove Colluthus' knowledge of Claudian's works and of Latin.

As simple and perhaps shallow as it may seem, Paris' choice makes perfect sense given that his criterion is just to favor what looks best to him, so, again, the visual impact. The two rivals of Aphrodite, on closer inspection, do not seem to come remotely close to the goddess' sex appeal. At her arrival to the wedding of Thetis and Peleus, Athena is helmetless (32), and reluctantly attends the ceremony, being untaught of marriage (33): we may imagine her as slightly unfriendly, certainly the un-flirtatious type, if she usually wears a helmet. Moreover, Aphrodite shares in her invective a few unflattering details on Athena, accused of covering her body in bronze garments (184), and of avoiding love to pursue instead the works of Ares (185). What can possibly be less attractive, in the eyes of Paris (but also in those of an audience), than a woman who does not want to be one? Beside topless Aphrodite, breast-plated Athena simply does not stand a chance.

Colluthus does not share any details about Hera's appearance, including when the time comes for the three goddesses to make the most of their looks (81): nothing is said about Athena and Hera, while Aphrodite's coquetry is described at length as she styles her hair. Finally, when it is time to convince Paris, Athena and Hera rely only on their verbal promises, while Aphrodite, topless, teases him with the promise of an equally beautiful spouse, her own sister, who will give him what he now can only desire.

Paris' role as a just judge reaches a paradoxical climax in the final portrait that Colluthus gives us of him: Helen, in Hermione's dream, defines him ὁ ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ (380), and Hermione τις ἀνὴρ ἀθεμίστιος (385). The initial description of Paris as θεμιστοπόλος and δικασπόλος is completely reversed as we now find a deceitful and lawless man. Ἀπατήλιος and ἀθεμίστιος mark a definite change in Paris' status to the extreme opposite of the δίκη of which he was earlier a minister. Colluthus began

Paris' description as a naive shepherd, who knew nothing, and yet was put in charge of judging the goddesses; he progressed to the role of judge, completing his task; finally, the circle is closed when Paris is perceived (by Helen and her daughter) as a man who has or knows no law, but instead as someone who has cheated them.

Zeus describes Paris as τὸν ἀγλαὸν ἡβητῆρα (71), anticipating another aspect of the image that readers should perceive of the character, and that will become more striking after the beauty contest: his beauty. To create this image, the poet uses the picturesque description of his bath (231-5), which contrasts strongly with the previous description of Paris as a shepherd among his flocks, with a goat's skin hanging down his thigh (108-9). As he approaches the time of his meeting with Helen, Paris prepares and beautifies himself by bathing in the river:

> αὐτὰρ ὁ χιονέοιο λοεσσάμενος ποταμοῖο
> ὤχετο φειδομένοισιν ἐπ' ἴχνεσιν ἴχνος ἐρείδων,
> μὴ πόδες ἱμερόεντες ὑποχραίνοιντο κονίης,
> μὴ πλοκάμων κυνέῃσιν ἐπιβρίσαντες ἐθείρας
> ὀξύτερον σπεύδοντος ἀναστέλλοιεν ἀῆται.
>
> And he bathed himself in the snowy river, he came out leaning his foot with careful steps, minding that his charming feet are not soiled with sand, and that the winds, blowing heavily on his helmet, do not unravel the curls of his hair, if he walks too fast.

Before his meeting with Nausicaa, Odysseus also washes himself in a river, and Athena enhances his beauty (*Od.* 6.223-35). In Paris' case, there is no divine intervention, although the process can probably be considered part of Aphrodite's plan. The care he takes in coming out of the waters minding that his feet do not get soiled, and that his curly hair does not become messy if he rushes out, seems unexpected if we recall the speed at which he earlier handed the prize over to Helen, and he put out to sea, eager to claim his bride (193-200). Paris' beautification by the hands of Aphrodite brings to mind of course Anchises' divine looks in *h.Aphr.*: he is δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ἐοικώς at 55 and ἥρωα θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος ἔχοντα at 77.

Hairstyles represent a descriptive feature to which Colluthus pays particular attentionas seen in the previous chapter about Aphrodite. The description of his characters' hairdo makes them recognizable for the readers and builds a visual identity that, again, contributes to the vividness of the characters. Colluthus focusses

his descriptive attention on the head of his characters,[94] also often describing their headgear[95] and the movements of their face, such as their smiles.[96]

Paris' plan does not come as a surprise: as the goddesses beautified themselves earlier in the poem, so does he, investing in his grooming to make an impact. Baths seem to be a crucial fascination weapon especially in the novel: in Longus 1.13, Daphnis' bath seems miraculous in Chloe's eyes: ὅτι δὲ μὴ πρότερον αὐτῇ καλὸς ἐδόκει, τὸ λουτρὸν ἐνόμιζε τοῦ κάλλους αἴτιον, "she thought that since he hadn't seemed beautiful to her before, the bathing must be the cause of his beauty",[97] so much so that she becomes almost addicted to watching him bathing again (ὅτι μὴ Δάφνιν ἐπεθύμει λουόμενον ἰδέσθαι πάλιν).[98]

The makeover of Colluthus' Paris is successful: at 250-3 he appears handsome enough to challenge Dionysus,[99] and ἀγαλλόμενος (250) puts him in the same league of Aphrodite's beauty (ἀγαλλομένην Ἀφροδίτην 16) and Hera (Ἥρη μὲν παράκοιτις ἀγαλλομένη εὐνῇ 63). The same word is used by Aphrodite when she mocks the manly Athena-like women, who exult in glorious wars, κυδαλίμοισιν ἀγαλλόμεναι πολέμοισι (18): the phrase mirrors that which is used in reference to Paris: θεσπεσίῃσιν ἀγαλλόμενος χαρίτεσσιν (250). The other expression used by the poet to describe Paris' facial beauty, ἐπ᾽ἀγλαίῃσι προσώπων (253), reoccurs at 263, when Helen is scrutinizing Paris' face trying to understand if it is Eros or not.

We have seen in Chapter 2 how facial beauty is established by Aphrodite as the key to success: the fact that now Paris also has a beautiful face makes him a winner, too. In fact, he is so good looking as to be considered superior in beauty to Dionysus by the poet himself, and to be mistaken for Eros by Helen. Moreover, Aphrodite's statement at 172 ἀγλαίην ἐφίλησα, καὶ ἀγλαίη με διώκει implies that if beauty follows her as the winner, beauty also follows him as the winner. In fact, Paris has won a prize (Helen), just like Aphrodite who has won the beauty contest, so it seems logical that

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94 Paschalis 2008, 144.

95 Helmetless Athena (32), and Ares (36); Hermione wears a veil (328), as Cassandra (391).

96 Ares arrives to Peleus and Thetis' wedding smiling (39); Athena (137) and Aphrodite (159) smile during the contest.

97 Transl. C. Gill. Chloe also blames his pipe as the reason she finds him so attractive. The motif reoccurs at 1.22 and 32.

98 Chloe embraces voyeurism: ἔπεισε δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ λούσασθαι πάλιν καὶ λουόμενον εἶδε καὶ ἰδοῦσα ἥψατο καὶ ἀπῆλθε πάλιν ἐπαινέσασα, καὶ ὁ ἔπαινος ἦν ἔρωτος ἀρχή, "she also persuaded him to have another bath; and as he bathed, she watched him, and after watching she touched him; then she went away, thinking again how handsome he was. And that thought was the beginning of love." The process of falling in love starts from eyesight, moves on to touch, then on to the mind.

99 See Chapter 4.

the goddess' power and beauty extend to him too. Just as Aphrodite won, thanks to her facial beauty, so Paris wins, in virtue of the same quality. In the reader's eyes, the initial image of an ignorant shepherd has now been fully replaced by that of a beautiful prince, whose looks are comparable to those of the gods; Colluthus could not have paid a higher compliment to Paris.

By beautifying himself, Paris invests on impressing Helen, an act that may seem unnecessary, as she will be his regardless of his looks or any other circumstance: destiny has already been written by Aphrodite, and things can only go one way as the goddess' will becomes reality. Paris should therefore walk into Helen's house as a confident man ready to collect his bride, but, instead, he is unsure about the outcome of the events, and he prepares for the gallant meeting as if its positive ending depended somehow on his effort, rather than on Aphrodite's role. It is not simply the word of a goddess that Paris does not seem to fully trust, but also her honesty and fairness. Lucian, in *Dear. Iud.* 16 had highlighted this lack of trust in the dialogue between an almost pedantic Paris and Aphrodite, where the prince made sure to put things in black and white before committing himself to crowning the goddess as the winner:

> ΠΑΡΙΣ Δέδοικα μή μου ἀμελήσῃς μετὰ τὴν κρίσιν.
> ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ Βούλει οὖν ἐπομόσομαι;
> ΠΑΡΙΣ Μηδαμῶς, ἀλλ' ὑπόσχου πάλιν.
> ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ Ὑπισχνοῦμαι δή σοι τὴν Ἑλένην παραδώσειν
> γυναῖκα, καὶ ἀκολουθήσειν γέ σοι αὐτὴν καὶ
> ἀφίξεσθαι παρ' ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Ἴλιον· καὶ αὐτὴ
> παρέσομαι καὶ συμπράξω τὰ πάντα.
> ΠΑΡΙΣ Καὶ τὸν Ἔρωτα καὶ τὸν Ἵμερον καὶ τὰς Χάριτας ἄξεις;
> ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ Θάρρει, καὶ τὸν Πόθον καὶ τὸν Ὑμέναιον ἔτι
> πρὸς τούτοις παραλήψομαι.
> ΠΑΡΙΣ Οὐκοῦν ἐπὶ τούτοις δίδωμι τὸ μῆλον· ἐπὶ τούτοις λάμβανε
>
> Paris: I fear you may forget about me after the verdict.
> Aphrodite: Do you want me to take an oath then?
> Paris: Not at all; but promise once again.
> Aphrodite: I promise to give you Helen as your wife, and that she will follow you and come to your people in Troy; and I myself will be there and will arrange the whole thing.
> Paris: And shall you bring Love and Desire and the Graces?
> Aphrodite: Do not fear: beside them, I shall bring Desire and Wedlock as well.
> Paris: Then on these conditions I give you the apple: take it on these conditions.

The impression on the reader is that what matters is visual impact: as the goddesses do anything they can to make themselves look their best, so does Paris, hoping to be

chosen. Before each of these characters faces a crucial competition, they spend some time focussing on enhancing their hairstyle in particular, above other features of their appearance: Aphrodite wants to be chosen by Paris, Paris wants to be chosen by Helen, and Apollo also wants to shine at the wedding among the other gods. They all invest energies in one asset in particular: their hair. They could have spent some more time improving the appearance of their clothes, for instance; Paris may have been concerned about knocking on Helen's door with a goat's skin hanging down his thigh, but he just worries about his hair and shoes. On the other hand, Aphrodite's neglect of her own robe makes sense, as she probably had already planned to show her chest to the judge.

The beauty of the prince-shepherd is logically associated with desire: he has πόδες ἱμερόεντες (233), a feature that associates him with Helen, a νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν (295).[100] Paris himself is also actively desiring: ἱμείρων δ' ὑπ' ἔρωτι καὶ ἣν οὐκ εἶδε διώκων, "prey to desire under the influence of love, and pursuing a woman whom he had never even seen" (193). Paris' desire, then, is bidirectional: he desires and is desired; as we shall see later, the same applies to Helen, who almost instantly falls in love with the stranger. However, at 194 we meet Δύσπαρις. The prince is now presented as ill-fated, because his greed will lead to the war of Troy. Colluthus returns here to the Homeric portrait of Paris in *Il.* 3.39=13.769 Δύσπαρι εἶδος ἄριστε γυναιμανὲς ἠπεροπευτά, αἴθ' ὄφελες ἄγονός τ' ἔμεναι ἄγαμός τ' ἀπολέσθαι, "Wretched Paris, beautiful to look at, crazy about women, beguiler! If only you had never been born, or died unmarried!" He also plays with δυσίμερος (echoed by Colluthus in ἱμείρων 193), a neologism by Apollonius (*Arg.* 3.961=4.4), which is adopted on many occasions by Nonnus, and by Christodorus *AP* 2.220 in his ekphrasis of Paris,[101] where it alludes to the unlucky loves of Paris. Nonnus, in *Dion.* 9.247, anticipates Ino's conjugal misfortunes with the similar δύσγαμος.

This definition assumes an ethical connotation as Colluthus places it at the start of the scene in which the prince is preparing for his journey: he gathers his companions and then the ship is assembled. Various elements contribute to giving the reader the impression of the bad destiny ahead of this ἀπατήλιος and ἀθεμίστιος man:

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[100] Only Paris and Helen are defined as desirable in the epyllion: Aphrodite, with her bare chest, for instance, is not defined in this way, although Paris' decision is clearly based on his titillation from the daring sight. Similarly, in Xen. *Mem.* 3, the spectacle of the ἑταίρα Theodote leaves her viewers titillated and unsatisfied, as explained by Goldhill 1998, 181-2, who studied the politics of visual erotic exchange in the dialogue.

[101] Tissoni 2000a, 178.

Phereclus, who cuts the oaks to build the ship, is ἀρχεκάκοιο (197), and the ships are not planned nor blessed by Athena, patron of carpentry: νῆας δ' οὐκ ἐνόησε καὶ οὐκ ἤσκησεν Ἀθήνη (201). The journey to recover the desired object of desirable Paris thus begins with an ill destiny, and this is confirmed by the storm which Paris and his crew encounter shortly after they depart (206).[102]

4. Visual power and its impact on the characters

Much has been written about the importance of visuality in Greek culture,[103] from various points of view: as a means of establishing status and reputation[104] and social role,[105] as a way of reading emotions hidden within,[106] and as an instrument to show off one's education.[107] In the previous two parts of this chapter, I have argued that Colluthus uses visual terminology and ekphrastic features, such as the vivid descriptions of his characters, to enhance the graphic impact of his poem, and thus to allow his educated readers to become viewers of his story. In this section, I plan to focus on understanding the emotional and affective impact that the visual behaviour of characters has on the characters themselves and on readers.

Firstly, characters' visual behaviour occupies a large portion of the body language described in the epyllion: they do a great deal of looking at each other (Helen and Paris) and at places (Paris' journey towards Sparta), and they show off their appearance and looks (I refer here to the weight of characters' description within the story; for instance, the parade of the gods arriving at Peleus and Thetis' wedding).

Secondly, characters' behaviour is on more than one occasion dictated by visual impact: thus Paris crowns Aphrodite as the winner since the sight of her nudity has had a more powerful impact on him than listening to Hera and Athena's speeches[108]; the same can be said of Helen, who, mesmerized by Paris' beauty upon his

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102 This phenomenon will be discussed later in this chapter.
103 Hawley 1998, 93-96, Goldhill 1996.
104 Cairns 2005, 126.
105 Goldhill 1998.
106 Constantinidou 1994, Prier 1989, Elsner 2007.
107 Goldhill 2007, 18-19.
108 Harries 2006, 542.

arrival to her house, does not take long to decide to leave with him.[109] Characters act based on what they see only, and no other criterion seems to play a role in their actions: Aphrodite sees (visual act) and wants the apple (for it represents a symbol of her superiority over the other goddesses) and this is what drives her to invest time in her toilette (enhancing what is visible: visual act) in order to impress (visual act) the judge and thus to win; Hermione does not see her mother, nor does she see the truth in what the maids tell her, and thus she informs Menelaus. In none of the scenes I have just mentioned does logic or rationale play a part: for instance, Paris dismisses the long-term and substantial offers made by Hera (kingdom of Asia) and Athena (gift of prowess) in favor of what looks best to him at the moment: a beautiful bride.[110]

A third observation relates to characters' awareness of the visual power; they want and know how to impress, and they also know that visual impression is the key to success: so does Paris, who allows time to prepare himself before his meeting with Helen (he does not, for instance, invest in gifts to bring her), and so does Aphrodite, whose toilette takes place ahead of the beauty contest.

It is also interesting that the story chosen by the poet is the root cause of the war at Troy, a trivial and shallow beauty contest, i.e. a purely visual competition. Visual impressions, looks, vanity and lust lead to hardship, pain and death: one may reasonably question if such a superficial judgement was worth the toils of Troy.

Characters look at or away from other characters, they gaze or glance at them, they may look at them in certain ways that express (sometimes in conjunction with their body language) their inner emotions, as when Helen and Paris exchange erotic gazes at each other. Equally, in a passive[111] approach, characters may see (i.e. witness) a phenomenon, like Paris sees the storm around his ship, and may thus find themselves in the passive position of being the unintentional viewer of something. In both these cases, the visual behaviour impacts other characters, in the way they perceive the viewer. This two-ways power relationship builds psychological consequences that affect how characters react. For instance, when Hermione looks

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[109] Her decision is presented somehow ironically as dictated by her desire to see the glorious foundations laid by Poseidon and Apollo (310-313), see Combellack 1971, 49.

[110] In Luc. *Dear. Iud.* 9, Paris refuses any responsibility for his decision, blaming his eyes only for the verdict: "Εν τοῦτο, ὦ Ἑρμῆ, πεῖσον αὐτάς, μὴ χαλεπῶς ἔχειν μοι τὰς δύο τὰς νενικημένας, ἀλλὰ μόνων τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν διαμαρτίαν, "Hermes, do me this one favour: persuade the goddesses who are defeated not to be angry with me, but to think that only my eyes have made a mistake".

[111] Concepts of active and passive viewing are based on Prévot 1935.

everywhere for Helen, and when she wakes up from her deceitful dream, she reacts to these fruitless sights or visions with desperation, and eventually with an action plan to recall her father.

Visual behaviour and the gaze also represent a powerful instrument[112] used by the poet to lead the reader's perception in one way or the other. Colluthus, as we have seen earlier when examining Paris' different roles and his transition from naivety to lawlessness, drives the reader's opinion towards a favourable-unfavorable assessment of the character, impacting how the next scene is read and how the overall story is eventually perceived. Glimpses of evaluation appear occasionally, revealing the poet's disapproval of Paris' greed, Aphrodite's lack of modesty and Helen's lack of compliance to her marital and motherly duties, or his sympathy with abandoned Hermione in a long and visual pathetic account of her abandonment.

In the next part, I will focus on the two scenes that offer most opportunity for considerations of the above-mentioned aspects: first, Paris' journey to Sparta, which can be seen as a visual journey through lands, mythological anecdotes, and phenomena; then, I will analyze Paris and Helen's encounter through the perspective of traditional phenomenology of two lovers' first meeting.

a. Paris' Journey to Sparta

Paris' journey to Sparta (202-48), which occupies a considerable amount of space in the epyllion,[113] can be seen as a long digression, considering that it does not represent a crucial element within the plot. The episode is built as a very visual journey, where Paris, as well as the reader, sees (passively) many things that happen and appear along the way, and also actively looks at specific items.

The journey starts in the best possible way, with Paris paying tribute to Aphrodite with many sacrifices (203-4), and then setting off to sea on his way to Sparta on the Hellespont, but something visually striking happens.[114] An omen of his laborious toils appears to him τῷ δὲ πολυτλήτων σημήια φαίνετο μόχθων, "a presage of the troubles that will prove hard to endure" (206). The linguistic passivity of this event is underlined by both the choice of φαίνομαι and σημήια, which is a mark or a

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[112] Lada-Richards 2003, 3-37 expands on the relationship between dance and sculpture, and how the two artistic means used each other as a model. Viewers of both forms of art would study each other to learn how their visual impact could be enhanced.

[113] Over one-eighth of the 394 lines.

[114] See μέν (202) ... δέ (206).

sign by which a thing (or god) is known to the viewer. Paris has no escape from the sight of the omen, which, moreover, is not a view that he chooses or seeks.

Next, Colluthus describes with much precision a Mediterranean waterspout (206-10).[115] This detail is unique in Colluthus, as it is not found in any other version of the myth, with the exception of Dracontius, who, however, speaks of a storm in different circumstances.[116] Waterspouts are scientifically described as having an upward and rotatory motion;[117] Apollonius had already described a similar phenomenon,[118] but Colluthus goes beyond by specifying that the upward movements are rotatory (spirals). Moreover, waterspouts are normally accompanied by jets of water or spouts:[119] Colluthus describes these as well with ἀμιχθαλόεντος ἀπ' ἠέρος in 209.[120]

The scene that Paris and his companions have to face is striking: the black sea rises above and crowns the sky with a chain of dark spirals, while a rainy storm pours down from the smoky air, and the sea surges. The colours (κυανέη... ὀρφναίων... ἀμιχθαλόεντος 206-10) paint a dark picture for both fleet and readers and work as efficiently as the shapes and dynamics described by the poet: ὕπερθεν ἀναθρῴσκουσα... ἑλίκων ἐζώσατο δεσμῷ... ὄμβρον ἰεῖσα... ἐκλύσθη δέ τε πόντος: there is a sea rising up, a chain of spirals in the sky, a rainy storm, and the scene is closed again by the image of the sea rising up (206-10). On the one hand, the θάλασσα (207) involved in the meteorological phenomenon, on the other hand the πόντος (210), across which the sailors are rowing.[121] The image is vivid and fearful, and Paris and his companions are scared even more as this is an unexpected event: before their departure they had made sacrifices to Aphrodite, the goddess who had sent them in

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115 Giangrande 1975a, 36-37.

116 In Drac. *Carm.* 8.385 Paris is surprised by a storm on his way back from Telamon; he then ends up in Cyprus, where he meets Helen while Menelaus is in Crete. In Ovid *Her.* 16.223, Paris sails with favorable winds, see Rocca 1997, 175.

117 *Encicl. Ital. s.v.* Trombe.

118 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 2.169-173: ἔνθα μὲν ἠλιβάτῳ ἐναλίγκιον οὔρεϊ κῦμα / ἀμφέρεται προπάροιθεν ἐπαΐσσοντι ἐοικός, / αἰὲν ὑπὲρ λαιφέων ἠερμένον· οὐδέ κε φαίης / φεύξεσθαι κακὸν οἶτον, ἐπεὶ μάλα μεσσόθι νηός / λάβρον ἐπικρέμαται, "Here the wave, similar to a steep mountain, rises in front of the salors, and, as high as a cloud, seems to be falling down on them; you would think that you will not manage to escape the terrible fate, because it hangs as a threat right in the middle of the ship, but nonetheless it spreads if it meets an expert sailor".

119 Giangrande 1975a, 38.

120 Livrea 1968a, XLI, unsatisfied with the participle ἰεῖσα, suggested a rather absurd conjecture dismantled by Giangrande 1975a, 38-9, who notes how the use of the participle instead of a *verbum finitum* is an epic feature frequent from Homer to Musaeus.

121 Giangrande 1975a, 40 highlights the stylish use of synonyms in the same passage as an epic feature, imitating *Il.* 2.609-14, where, also, the sailors are ignorant of the matters of the sea (οὔ σφι θαλάσσια ἔργα μεμήλει), see Coll. 7-8.

the direction of Sparta and who was supporting Paris' union with Helen. Therefore, they were not expecting and could not predict that something like this would happen.

The omen, Colluthus tells us, serves as a sign of πολυτλήτων...μόχθων (206), the future toils that will be many and hard to endure[122] as a consequence of this union. However, the poet does not tell us if Paris and his companions realise what the storm means. The oarsmen continue to row throughout the apocalyptic scene (ἐρεσσομένων ἐρετάων 210): they do not, as one would expect, suddenly stop rowing in bafflement to look at the incredible scene. We should exclude that the men do not stop nor seem to notice what is happening because the scene is not noticeable or striking enough to stop the action on the boat, as, if this were the case, the description would not be as remarkable and visually effective as it is. Perhaps Paris and his crew notice the incredible and sudden storm but decide to ignore it and keep rowing? This is possible:[123] Paris, surprised by this inauspicious sign, may have decided to just keep going on his journey: maybe he did not even realise that the storm was actually an omen (he has been, after all, just a shepherd until now). Quite differently, Ceres recognizes many omens of her daughter's tragic abduction in Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, and she fears they may carry some truth: *Ah vereor, ne quid portendant omina veri!* (Claud. *Rapt.* 3.124-6, 132).

However, especially if we keep in mind that Paris is still the naïve young shepherd that the poet has introduced earlier, one would imagine that he would have been even more scared than a noble prince (as he appears to be later on). Colluthus had also described him on more than one occasion as δειμαίνων (124, 127). So if Paris is so easily scared, why does he not fear the storm? Of course, Paris may feel confident in Aphrodite's support (λεχέων ἐπίκουρον ἐφεσπομένην Ἀφροδίτην 203). However, as discussed earlier, Paris had stopped to beautify himself before meeting Helen, a behaviour that can be interpreted as a sign of his lack of trust in Aphrodite's promise.

Moreover, one may question for what kind of audience the storm is written. Colluthus clearly states at the beginning of the passage that an omen (not just a storm) appears to him, thus readers are immediately informed that the natural scene that they are about to witness is not just a climatic circumstance, but a token sent from the gods with a precise message and purpose. Paris and his companions may not

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[122] Or that will prove hard to endure for many people, with a reference not only directly to Helen's and Paris' abandoned families (Oenone, Menelaus, Hermione), but especially to the multitude of people who died in the Trojan War.

[123] Pucci 1998, Bushnell 1982.

know that, but readers do; with this knowledge, what readers see is not simply a sea storm, but the war of Troy, with all its dead and suffering that it will cause. Forced to visualise the double scene, readers watch and consider the consequences of Paris' union with Helen, and, if they were positive and enthusiastic at the beginning of the journey, they are now perhaps questioning whether the lust of one man is worth the death and sacrifice of so many innocent people. The darkness of the phenomenon, the circular movements of the sea, and the smoky sky cannot allow a reader to remain emotionless and cannot fail to evoke thoughts of war, death and pain. Colluthus, with the ekphrasis of the omen, provokes a reaction in his reader, if not in his characters (who seem oblivious to it). Readers are the only party who can appreciate the full meaning of the storm, as they are the only ones who know that it is also a premonition. For one moment, then, narrator and readers share the knowledge of what is happening, while characters seem unaware of it.

An ekphrasis can cause in readers feelings of sympathy or disagreement towards what is described,[124] and in this case the effects of the scene are twofold: readers have been led to positive feelings of sympathy, enthusiasm, and support towards Paris' journey because of the sacrifices mentioned at 203-4, and also because of the triumphal speech made by Aphrodite, who questioned Paris (but also the readers) about what is more important than love. Readers have been persuaded with Paris by Aphrodite's words and beauty that she is the only one who truly deserves victory, and therefore that Paris' journey is not only legitimate but necessary for Love to triumph above everything. Readers are thus embarking on this journey with Paris, supporting him. After witnessing the omen, however, their position may change; confronted by such an intense sight they are reminded of what that journey will ultimately lead to, and may at this point switch to feelings of condemnation towards Paris.

In fact, Colluthus had already offered more than one hint about the consequences of Helen's abduction: the references to the judgment of the goddesses as the primeval cause of evil have already been highlighted,[125] and just before this episode, Colluthus had also described Paris as ill-fated, prey to desire under the influence of love, chasing a woman whom he had never even seen (193-4). So the Paris

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[124] Bartsch and Elsner 2007, ii and iv explain how contrasting emotions can arise from an ekphrastic description, speaking of disobedient ekphrasis in the sense that readers may sympathize with what is described, but also feel an impulse to resist the fiction.

[125] Lines 8, 10, 60, 62, 169, 191 and 197.

who starts gathering his companions for the expedition is an already unfortunate man, on his way to a bad fate; readers are almost woken up by the poet and reminded of what they know already, that war and pain are ahead.

Goldhill[126] explained how the power to make something visible to readers, and thus turn readers into almost viewers, is defined as *enargeia* (or realism) in rhetoric manuals. It is through *phantasia* (impression)[127] and enargeia that orators are able to reach their audience's deepest emotions. He applies the concept to ekphrastic description, in which the writer may drag the reader to a passive experience, enslaving (not only persuading) him. This dazzling experience deprives the reader of any rationality and logic he may have: he is led away from facts and loses his critical ability. The reader becomes a viewer who is ultimately unable to rationalise.

This psychological effect of ekphrasis, which works almost as a spell when the orator or poet is *euphantasiotatos*, i.e. most skilled in affecting his audience through phantasia,[128] seems to be something that Colluthus plays with. In fact, he earlier persuaded his readers that Aphrodite's victory was completely deserved by dazzling them with the sight of her naked chest, and now that the reader is on board and eager to travel with Paris to meet the beautiful Helen, he breaks the fiction, bringing the reader back to reality (almost), and reminding him that this journey is only leading to a series of deadly consequences. Colluthus has first deprived his readers of their rationality, when, just as much as Paris, they were left speechless in front of the beautiful topless goddess, and now he shakes them out of their senses and pushes them to join him in an ethical judgment.

This interpretation may work together with a Neoplatonic reading of Paris' sea-crossing: for Neoplatonic philosophers, the sea represents the matter, thus the sensible world and evil,[129] and death in the sea is equivalent to death of the soul.[130] In our scene, Paris' journey may metaphorically represent the soul's journey across the temptations of matter, and the waterspout may allegorically represent the risks of material weaknesses, such as, in Paris' case, lust and greed. The fact that he ignores

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126 Goldhill 2007, 3-6.

127 Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.29.

128 Goldhill 2007, 4, and Quint., as above.

129 For Porph. *Antr.* 34.11, the sea is ἡ ὑλικὴ σύστασις: he defines Odysseus' journey on the sea as an allegory of the soul's passage through the world of matter, and Tiresias' prophecy to him in *Od.* 11. 122-23 as an allegory of the soul's exit from the sensible world and its return to its original place; Giomi 2003, 371-72. See also Porph. *Vita Plot.* 22.32-35 andGreg. Naz. *carm.* 1.2.9. 22-24.

130 Sin. *Ep.* 5 123-28.

the dangers (i.e. the waterspout-omen) may mean that he jumps into his destiny unaware of the consequences. A similar interpretation has been suggested[131] for Musaeus' epyllion, where, at 269-70, Hero cleans Leander from the marine saltiness: the end of Leander's journey may symbolize the end of the soul's torment during its passage over the material world (i.e. the sea). On the other hand, there is no uncertainty about the Neoplatonic meaning of Claudian's *Gigantomachy* 30-32, where the Giant swallowing the sea water symbolizes his close relationship with matter, as the passage contains a clear reference to Porph. *Marc.* 33, p. 125, 19-21. Claudian's affinity with the circle of Neoplatonic Christian philosopher M. Theodorus, who was elected consul in Milan in 399, and for whom Claudian read a panegyric in the same year, is well known;[132] according to Livrea, Claudian composed his Gigantomachy the year after,[133] which makes it almost impossible to reject such an interpretation. Claudian was one of Colluthus' main models, as we have seen; another of his main models was Christodorus, who also, as seen in Chapter 1, had affinities with Neoplatonism. Given the relationship between Colluthus and his models, a Neoplatonic interpretation of the passage does not seem unreasonable.

The next twenty lines include a geographical description of Paris' journey across Thrace and over to Achaia, approaching the south of Greece. Just after the Mount Pangaeon, in Thracia, something else appears to Paris: Phyllis' tomb (213-18). Colluthus chooses a verb (ἔδρακε 214) that evokes Homeric ideas of snakes and piercing looks, but ironically in this case the object of Paris' look is just a grave, not a person (or an enemy!). The activity implied by δέρκομαι is dimmed by the role assigned to the tomb itself as the viewed object: ἀντέλλοντα (214): as much as the viewer looks actively at the grave, so the object arises upon the viewer's horizon, i.e. appears to him.

The myth of Phyllis[134] involves much visuality, and perhaps this is the reason why our poet chooses to place this particular story here: in both scenes a phenomenon appears to the main character. Phyllis had given a chest to Demophon,

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131 Gelzer 1975, 316-22; Livrea 1976, 152-60 disagreed with this Neoplatonic interpretation.

132 Giomi 2003, 372.

133 Livrea 1998. For a summary of the discussion around the *Gigantomachy*'s dating see Giomi 2003, 361-62 and Tarigo 2012, 4-7.

134 Gantz 1993, 701-2. In all versions of this myth, the death of Phyllis happens after the war of Troy (see Rocca 1997, 175); this slip in precision by Colluthus does not surprise us as he is not interested in presenting the events in chronological sequence.

her husband, who was leaving her to go to Greece, and had asked him not to open it unless he decided not to return to her. In one version of the myth, told by the scholia ad Lycophron,[135] Demophon[136] opens the chest and is frightened by a φάσμα,[137] an apparition, or a phantom; he then falls with his horse and is impaled on his own sword. In this short digression an omen also appears to the viewer, a sign of death ahead, just like an omen had appeared to Paris; the character is forced by the poet to re-live and re-view what has just happened, perhaps as an ironic reminder of the toils that await him, although nothing is said about Paris' reaction to this second presage.

The scene is particularly impactful also given the redundancy with which Colluthus insists on Phyllis' tragic story: first, the concept of wandering in vain, graphically described by δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος ... κελεύθου... διαστείχουσα ... δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον... ὁππότε νοστήσειεν, then that of Phyllis' sadness: Φυλλίδος ... φιλήνορος... κινύρεο, ... ἀκοίτην ἀπήμονα (215-17). The reader, and Paris with him, cannot help but picturing the distressed wife wandering the nine-circle course up and down, back and forth, desperately hoping to see her husband returning. The scene exercises a sort of emotional influence, generating from an unanimated object (the grave), on the viewers (Paris and the readers), and it reminds them of what has just happened in the previous scene (the omen) and also what is about to happen as a consequence (war of Troy).

Just before the palace of Menelaus, Paris stops to observe the architectural beauties of Sparta, like Odysseus had done (after his similar bathing in the river before meeting Nausicaa) in *Od.* 7.43-5, where he had admired the tall walls of the city of the Phaeacians. Dionysus had also admired the mosaics of Staphylus' palace in Nonn. *Dion.* 18.87-92.[138] Colluthus also inserts a digression about Hyacinthus (240-8), which interestingly is also mentioned by Claudian in *Rapt.* 2.131-6.

Paris' interest for the Spartan buildings is unlikely and absurd for Combellack, and so is Helen's interest in the buildings that sit on foundations laid by Poseidon and

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[135] Σ 495.54-63 καὶ Φυλλὶς αὐτὸν προπέμπει ἄχρι τῶν Ἐννέα ὁδῶν καὶ δίδωσιν αὐτῷ κιβώτιον εἰποῦσα ἱερὸν εἶναι μητρὸς Ῥέας καὶ μὴ ἀνοίγειν αὐτό, εἰ μὴ ὅταν ἀπελπίσῃ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὴν ἄνοδον. ὁ δ' ἐλθὼν εἰς Κύπριν ἐκεῖ κατῴκει. καὶ τοῦ τακτοῦ χρόνου διελθόντος ἡ Φυλλὶς ἀρὰς θεμένη κατὰ Ἀκάμαντος ἑαυτὴν ἀναιρεῖ, Ἀκάμας δὲ τὸ κιβώτιον ἀνοίξας φάσματι κρατηθεὶς ἄνεισιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἵππον καὶ τοῦτον ἐλαύνων ἀτάκτως ἀπόλλυται· τοῦ γὰρ ἵππου σφαλέντος ἐκ τῶν ὀπισθίων μερῶν κατενεχθεὶς τῷ αὐτοῦ ἐμπήγνυται ξίφει.

[136] Here called Akamas, as in Aischines (2.31) and in Lucian (*Salt.* 40)

[137] Note the shared semantic root of φάσμα and φαίνετο, used at 206 to indicate the storm.

[138] Nonnus also describes Thebes in *Dion.* 5.51, and Athens in 47.1.

Apollo.[139] However, there is a tradition that presents Paris as an accidental tourist.[140] In Lucian *Dear. Iud.* 201.15, Aphrodite sends Paris to Sparta on a sightseeing journey: Σὺ μὲν ἀποδημήσεις ὡς ἐπὶ θέαν τῆς Ἑλλάδος. Something similar happens in Ovid *Her.* 16.31-5 *nec me crede fretum merces portante carina findere—quas habeo, di tueantur opes. nec venio Graias veluti spectator ad urbes; oppida sunt regni divitiora mei. te peto*, where, in 131-32, Menelaus also gives Paris a guided sightseeing tour of the city: *ille quidem ostendit, quidquid Lacedaemone tota ostendi dignum conspicuumque fuit.*[141] In Dictis of Crete (first century AD) 4.26, Paris is presented as a real tourist who, during his journey through Sparta, meets Helen,[142] and in the *Vita Homeri* (probably end of second century AD), Paris is welcomed as a guest by Helen (in Menelaus' absence) during his journey to Greece, where he goes to learn about Greek culture.

Colluthus is sure to include both of the two main subjects of late antique ekphrasis, man-made artworks and natural spectacles, first by making Paris go sightseeing around Sparta, and then making him witness the dramatic waterspout. His choice is well thought-out and effective in fulfilling his contemporaries' poetic expectations in terms of popular genres.

b. The First Encounter of Paris and Helen

In the episode of Helen and Paris' first meeting (254-316) Colluthus plays with the phases and dynamics associated with scenes of this type, and with erotic phenomenology in general; inevitably, visual behaviour and the gaze play a vital role in the communicative exchange between the two characters.[143]

In this section, after a review of philosophical theories on the role of the gaze in the erotic process, I answer some questions about the visual and emotional aspects of this scene, such as the nature of the visual behaviour of Colluthus' characters and the affective consequences of their gazing on the readers; the social context of the gazing (who is doing the viewing and who is viewed as object of desire); and the gender-related considerations that can be extracted from the scene.

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139 Combellack 1971, 48.
140 Rocca 1997, 171-2.
141 Paschalis 2008, 140.
142 Dictis was concerned with presenting a rationalised version of the story, in which all divine intervention was removed (Rocca 1997).
143 Harries 2006, 543.

Eros travels through the gaze, in Colluthus as well as in ancient culture in general.[144] Metaphysical and physiological studies of medical and philosophical nature,[145] as well as literary sources of all genres agree, through various theories, that the eye is the vehicle of erotic passion. The topos of love at first sight develops from these theories, initially with Hellenistic epic[146] and elegy, and then spreading to the novel and to a variety of genres including modern cinema. The novel is, however, the genre that contributes the most to establish this route as the necessary channel through which the structured process of falling in love happens,[147] and also to re-elaborate the ancient concept of eros as a disease that affects both parties in the same way.

The eye plays a vital role in the ancient materialist optical theories[148] that substantiate the foundation of what, in the novel and in later literature, became the erotic-gaze theories. The emissionist theory[149] is based on the concept that the eyes emit rays towards the object of vision, as shown by the famous notion that the sun is an all-seeing eye;[150] this theory emphasizes the active role of the eye versus what is viewed, and is widely displayed in early poetry[151] and tragedy.[152] The first step towards interactionism, a theory according to which the eye not only emits effluences (active role) but is also the recipient (passive role) of emissions generated from the viewed object, is made by Empedocles,[153] whose theories have traditionally been interpreted as such[154] by Aristotle[155] and is thus aligned to what expressed by Plato.[156] The Stoics' position and that of Galen,[157] implies an equally interactionist relationship between the eye, which represents the vehicle of a πνεῦμα generated by the brain and directed at the object of vision, and the object itself. In contrast with the

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144 Fusillo 1989, 196.

145 *E. g.* Epic. Fr. 31 Usener, Lucr. 4.1141-91, Plato *Phaed.* 251a-d. Also see Di Benedetto 1985, 145-156, and Foucault 1984, 139-141.

146 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3. 253 and 275-90; Theocr. 2.82-86.

147 Rousset 1984, especially 14-15 analyzed the various phases involved in this process.

148 Dickie 1991, 26-28, Morales 2004, 15-18 and Cairns 2005, 138-39, include brief and clear summaries of these theories.

149 Theorized by Euclid, *Optics*, introd. axioms 1-7 and Alcmaeon of Croton A 5 DK.

150 Ar. *Thesm.* 17 ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντίμιμον ἡλίου τροχῷ; Anacreontea 26, Pind. *Paean.* 9, fr. 52k. 1-2 Snell-Maehler, Soph. *Tr.* 606.

151 In *Il.* 14.294 Zeus' seduction is described, *Od.* 4.150, 19.446; Hes. *Th.* 826-7; Sapph. Fr. 31 LP (for a detailed analysis of Sapphic erotic language, see Lanata 1966), Pindar fr. 123, 2-3 and 10-12 Snell.

152 Soph. *Aj.* 69, Ag. 469-70, 742-3; Eur. *Hipp.* 525-6, *Andr.* 1179-80, *Hec.* 367-8, 1104, *Her.* 130-2; regarding the role of the erotic gaze in tragedians, see S. Durup 1983, 143-149.

153 A 86 (especially Theophr. *De Sensu* 7-8, 14, 18-19), B 84 DK; B 89, 109a DK.

154 However, some more recent interpretations emphasize the receptiveness of the eye versus its activity in Empedocles' theories, as noted by Cairns 2005, 138 n. 54.

155 Aristot. *Sens.* 2, 437b10-438a5.

156 Pl. *Tim.* 45bd and *Theaetetus* 156ab.

157 Chrysipp. *SVF* 2.866 (see Goldhill 2002, 377); Gal. *De Plac. Hyppocr. et Plat.* 7.5 (5.618-28K).

interactionist theories are Democritus and the atomists,[158] who believe in a purely passive role of the eye, seen as the recipient of εἴδωλα generated by the viewed object. Aristotle's theory[159] involves the coloured object of vision affecting on a quality level both the transparent medium between object and viewer, and the eye itself: while he firmly rejects the theories of his predecessors, the remains of those materialist ideals remain in his theory, too, since the qualitative change made on the medium and on the eye is still of material nature.

In an erotic context, emanationist theories apply to the eyes of the beloved issuing arrows or fire towards the lover, a common image in epigrams.[160] The activity aspect is present, as well expressed in epigrams such as Meleager *AP* 12.101.1-3,[161] where the very aware Mousey (the poet's beloved) takes ownership and brags about his conquest. However, the beloved does not always play an active part consciously, but could unconsciously be spurring desire (although not actually emitting effluences) in the lover (who is receptive), so the situation may be one of unaware activity (or passive activity!), as for instance the one in which Paris finds himself in Eur. *IA* 584-6 ἐν ἀντωποῖς βλεφάροις ἔρωτά τ' ἔδωκας ἔρωτί τ'αὐτὸς ἐπτοήθης, "kindling love in Helen's entranced eyes and feeling its flutter in your own breast".[162]

The lover, paradoxically, can also end up being the victim of the beloved's gaze, and surrender to the power of Eros, as in *AP* 12.199. In such scenarios, love becomes a passive experience for the helpless lover, in a curious twist of roles, as explained by Plato's Phaedrus.[163] Here, eros is explained as a physiological process involving ἀπορροαί from the body of the beloved entering through the lover's eyes into their soul, and thus causing the lover's desire.[164] This concept is beautifully expressed by Musaeus in *Her.* 94-95 κάλλος γὰρ περίπυστον ἀμωμήτοιο γυναικὸς

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158 Democr. A 77, A 135 (Theophr. *De Sensu* 49-55), B 123 DK.; Leucipp. A 29-30 DK; Epic. *Ep.* 1.49-50; Lucr. *Rer. Nat.* 4.26-468.

159 Arist. *De anima* 2.7, 418a26-419b3, *De sensu* 2, 437a19-438b16, 440a15-20, and especially his example of the eye of a menstruating woman causing discolouration of a mirror described in *De insomniis* 459b27-460a26. See Cairns 2005, 139 n.58. Also in Heliod. *Aeth.* 10.14.7, a mother having intercourse in front of a picture of Andromeda is the cause of her daughter's pale skin.

160 Meleager *AP* 5.96, 12.63, 12.72, 12.106, 12.110, 12.144, Rhian. *AP* 12.93.9-10.

161 Particularly interesting are two epigrams of Meleager, *AP* 12.109, in which Diodoros, the beloved, while busy emitting flames towards young men is, in his turn, hunted by Timarios' greedy eyes, and 12.113, where Eros himself (the darting god par excellance) is captured by Timarios' eyes. In these cases, the active energy emanating from the beloved towards the lover is diverted by the effluences issued by another (unconscious) beloved.

162 Trans. E.P. Coleridge. See also Soph. fr. 474 R and Pind. fr. 123.204 SM.

163 Pl. *Pheadr.* 251bc; also in Crat. 420b.

164 Nonnus defines the eyes always as ὀχετηγοὶ ἐρώτων, the love's "irrigation ditches", see Gigli-Piccardi 1985, 73-75, and Giomi 2003, 375.

ὀξύτερον μερόπεσσι πέλει πτερόεντος ὀιστοῦ. ὀφθαλμὸς δ' ὁδός ἐστιν· ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοῖο βολάων κάλλος ὀλισθαίνει καὶ ἐπὶ φρένας ἀνδρὸς ὁδεύει, " the bright beauty of a chaste woman reaches mortals sharper than a winged arrow and eyes mark its path. From the glaring gaze beauty slips out and makes its way down to the man's heart". This almost medical theory is in line with the notion that some diseases were transmitted by eyesight, like ophthalmia and epilepsy,[165] and with the belief that eyes could be the vehicle of various affections, benign like eros, but also malicious ones.[166] This is the case of φθόνος (envy) and βασκανία (evil eye), a well-established superstition that Plutarch and Heliodorus attempted to substantiate scientifically.[167] Cairns[168] identifies the main difference between the eye's role in a context of eros and in a context of envy in the fact that the eye of the beloved, who spurs desire in his lover, does so in a passive or unaware manner, while the possessor of the envious eye is actively malicious and means to affect the other maliciously.[169] In fact, rays emitted by the eyes, which are the gazes of the mind in Neoplatonism, are fatal for the eyes' owners, when they are addressed in the wrong direction.[170]

When we are dealing with ἔρος, the emanationist theory applies best, as the lover's eye is a vulnerable recipient of the effluxes issued by the beloved's looks, which generates the pathos in the lover's soul. Vice versa, in the case of a malicious emotion (like envy or the evil eye), the active emissionist theory applies, as it is the agent (i.e. the possessor of the envious eye) who is the victim of the pathos of the soul.[171]

The emanationist model[172] is the preferred scientific base for the erotic process as presented by novelists. However, in novels the emissionist theory also plays a role in that the lover's eye, passive recipient of the effluxes emanated by the beloved, is constantly hungry for the beautiful,[173] as in Heliodorus 7.75, where Charikleia spots

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165 Heliod. *Aeth.* 3.7.4; [Alex. Aphr.] *Probl.* 2.42. Theophr. *Char.* 16. 14

166 Resentment travels through the eyes of Medea in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 4.1669-73.

167 Plut. *Quest. Conv.* 5.7; Hel. *Aeth.* 3.7.5; Dickie 1991 deals with the question whether Heliodorus depended on Plutarch, and on Heliodorus' ironic re-elaboration of Plutarch's passage.

168 Cairns 2005, 140-1.

169 For Neoplatonic interpretations of the sick or weak eye as a metaphor for the impure soul which cannot elevate to the knowledge of God see Giomi 2003, 366-67.

170 Giomi 2003, 371, on the interpretation of Claud. *Gig.* 21-22.

171 Plut. *Quest. Conv.* 681 A-E. See Cairns 2005, 140-41.

172 Simon 1988.

173 Xen. *Symp.* 1.9-10, where Callias and the other onlookers are drawn to Autolycus, and none of them remained untouched by his beauty (τοῦ Αὐτολύκου τὸ κάλλος πάντων εἶλκε τὰς ὄψεις πρὸς αὐτόν· ἔπειτα τῶν ὁρώντων οὐδεὶς οὐκ ἔπασχέ τι τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπ' ἐκείνου); *AP* 5.100.2; Meleager *AP* 12.92; Heliod. 1.2.5; Luc. *Imag.* 1.

Theagenes from a distance and is stung by his sight, and 7.7.7, where the same happens to Theagenes. Chariton states this clearly: ἔστι γὰρ ἴδιον ἔρωτος τὸ φιλόκοσμον, "it is characteristic of Love to indulge in display" (6.4.3), explaining how Love is the one instigating the desire to view the beloved in the lover: ὁ Ἔρως αὐτῷ ... ἔνδον παρὼν καὶ λέγων "οἷον ἦν ἐνθάδε Καλλιρόην ἰδεῖν, "love entered the King's thoughts, whispering to him, "How wonderful it would be to see Callirhoe here" (6.4.5, trans. B.P. Reardon).

This two-way affection explains how the process of falling in love in the novel happens in a simultaneous and mutual manner, where each character is affected by the other's beauty. So, although the eye of the beloved, even if dispassionate and unaware, has the power over the lover, and the eye of the lover is impotent, in the first meeting's scenario both parties undergo the same passive experience.[174] This is what happens, for instance, in Achilles Tatius, where the reciprocal glances generate εἴδωλα, and ἀπορροαί emanating from the beloved's body enter the soul of the lover through their eyes, generating a sea of affections.[175] The impressions received by each other's eyes are said here to be greater than τὰ ἔργα, intercourse itself.[176] A contemporary of Achilles, Clemens of Alexandria, condemns wrong looking as sinful just as much as wrong acting (discussing of idolatry), since worshipping a statue is considered by him short of copulating with it.[177]

So how does Helen and Paris' behaviour compare to the above described processes of erotic physiology? Helen appears smitten from the very first moment she sees Paris: she starts by looking curiously at the godly doors, and, as soon as she sees him she invites him to sit on a precious seat. The very first response of Helen to the sight of the beautiful stranger says much about her, and the speed with which she acts implies the sight of Paris has struck her.

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[174] See Meleager's above-mentioned epigrams *AP* 12.109, 113 and 144, However, in these cases the emphasis is simply put on the swap of roles between beloved and lover (the beloved is tricked and becomes lover), not on the simultaneous and mutual falling in love.

[175] Ach. Tat. 1.9.4-5 (Morales 2004, 130-5): this passage will be examined later in the chapter; 1.4.4-5 κάλλος γὰρ ὀξύτερον τιτρώσκει βέλους καὶ διὰ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν καταρρεῖ· ὀφθαλμὸς γὰρ ὁδὸς ἐρωτικῷ τραύματι. πάντα δέ με εἶχεν ὁμοῦ, ἔπαινος, ἔκπληξις, τρόμος, αἰδώς, ἀναίδεια, "For beauty's wound is sharper than any weapon's, and it runs through the eyes down to the soul. It is through the eye that love's wound passes, and I now became a prey to a host of emotions: admiration, amazement, trembling, shame, shamelessness" (trans. J. J. Winkler); also see Heliod. 3.5.4-6.

[176] Φαντασία is a Stoic technical term, which plays a critical role in Achilles Tatius' novel (Goldhill 2002, 377-9).

[177] *Protrep.* 4. See Goldhill 2002, 381-2.

The immediacy with which Helen is stung by eros is a standard phase of the process as described especially in the novel,[178] where the two young protagonists usually meet and instantly are hypnotized by each others' eyes, as in Ach. Tat. 1.4.4 ὡς δὲ εἶδον, εὐθὺς ἀπωλώλειν.[179] The motif, however, was not new: in *h.Aphr.* 56-7, Aphrodite sees Anchises and instantly falls for him τὸν δὴ ἔπειτα ἰδοῦσα φιλομμειδὴς Ἀφροδίτη ἠράσατ', ἐκπάγλως δὲ κατὰ φρένας ἵμερος εἷλεν.

It is worth considering further the timing of Helen and Paris' falling in love process: Paris had been prey to desire since before their meeting, and pursuing "the one whom he had not even seen" (193), because Aphrodite had described her to him as a lovely bride (164). He himself admits that he has heard of her reputation (294-5).[180] In novels, characters' fame can drive desire for each other even before they meet,[181] as it happens in Xenophon of Ephesus 1.2, where Anthia and Habrocomes long to meet after they learn about each other's reputation (Habrocomes, as will happen with Paris later, is compared to a god for his beauty). The process is well explained in Ach. Tat. 2.13.1-2:

> οὗτος ἀκούων τὴν Σωστράτου θυγατέρα εἶναι καλήν, ἰδὼν δὲ οὐδέποτε, ἤθελεν αὐτῷ ταύτην γενέσθαι γυναῖκα ... τοσαύτη γὰρ τοῖς ἀκολάστοις ὕβρις, ὡς καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν εἰς ἔρωτα τρυφᾶν καὶ ταῦτα πάσχειν ἀπὸ ῥημάτων, ἃ τῇ ψυχῇ τρωθέντες διακονοῦσιν ὀφθαλμοί... ἀναπλάττων γὰρ ἑαυτῷ τῆς παιδὸς τὸ κάλλος καὶ φανταζόμενος τὰ ἀόρατα ἔλαθε σφόδρα κακῶς διακείμενος.
>
> He heard people speak of Sostratos' daughter as a beautiful woman, and, although he had never seen her, on this basis alone he wanted her for his wife...Such is the audacity of men with no self-control on them! They can fall in love with a rumor and suffer with their ears the agonies usually experienced by the soul from love's wounds in the eye...By indulging phantasies of her beauty for himself and forming an impression of the unseen, he sank by imperceptible degrees into a miserable state.

In Lucian Paris is also so charmed by Helen before he has seen her that he thinks he can see her: πλὴν ἐρῶ γε ἤδη τῆς Ἑλένης καὶ οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως καὶ ὁρᾶν αὐτὴν οἴομαι, "but I am in love with Helen already and I do not know how but I think I see her" (*Dear. Iud.* 15). The key to understanding Paris' desire for Helen is precisely in those φαντασίαι mentioned by Achilles Tatius, the same ones that Cleitophon, in 1.9.1,

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[178] Rousset 1984, 14-15 and chapter 8; Fusillo 1989, 197-9.

[179] Chariton 1.1.6 ταχέως οὖν πάθος ἐρωτικὸν ἀντέδωκαν ἀλλήλοις, and Heliodorus 3.5.4 ὁμοῦ τε γὰρ ἀλλήλους ἑώρων οἱ νέοι καὶ ἤρων.

[180] Instead, Helen develops feelings of desire for him (Πάριν ποθέουσα 278) only after seeing him.

[181] Fusillo 1989, 198.

mentions to his cousin Cleinias: πάντοτε Λευκίππην φαντάζομαι, "impressions of Leukippe face me all the time."[182] Reputation, then, as well as the sight of the beloved's beauty, can also create impressions in the lover's soul, and these can drive desire.

Helen's first reaction is to invite the stranger into her house immediately. The sight of Paris and the calling him inside are in fact contemporaneous (ὡς ἴδεν, ὣς ἐκάλεσσε 257); Helen leads Paris into the heart of the house (257), and then sits him on a silver chair that has recently been made (νεοπηγέος ὑψόθεν ἕδρης ἀργυρέης 258-9). The reader can immediately see the effects of the sight of beauty on her by her search for a contact. In the two famous precedents of the scene, the heroines behave in a similar way: Penelope had Odysseus (still disguised as a beggar) sit on a well-polished chair covered in fleeces (*Od.* 19.97-102), while Medea reached for Jason's hand in Apollonius (*Arg.* 3.1067-8). In Heliodorus, too, Charikleia hands a torch over to Theagenes as soon as they meet: τὴν δᾷδα ὁλκότερον ἡ μὲν ἐνεχείριζεν ὁ δὲ ὑπεδέχετο, *Aeth.* 3.5.5.

Helen is instantly affected by eros through vision and rushes to bring Paris into her own personal space, eager to find out more about the beautiful stranger; she wants to question him about his ancestors and his origin, like Penelope wanted to ask Odysseus questions (ἐθέλω δέ μιν ἐξερέεσθαι *Od.* 19.99).

The next phase of Paris and Helen's meeting involves staring and recognition, two standard stages in scenes of lover's first encounter, codified by the novel especially: Helen tries to find something familiar in him; she searches his appearance hoping to recognize someone she knows. I have mentioned earlier how the eye of the lover is constantly hungry for the beautiful: we now find that Helen cannot satisfy her eyes with gazing (κόρον δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ὀπωπῆς 259). Once emanations of the beloved's beauty have travelled through the eyes into the lover's soul, emotions start to flow inside and staring becomes the vehicle through which they show on the outside, starting with ἔπαινος, the admiration mentioned by Achilles Tatius 1.4.5, where Cleitophon admits: τοὺς δὲ ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀφέλκειν μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς κόρης ἐβιαζόμην· οἱ δὲ οὐκ ἤθελον, ἀλλ'

[182] Goldhill 2002, 377-8 highlights how the passage expresses Stoic theories, which privileged viewing as the access to knowledge of the world. As noted earlier, φαντασία and φαντάζομαι are technical terms in Stoic and other materialist ocular theories, and define the impact which, in the form of impressions, the external world has on the viewer. The same concept is also expressed in Chariton 6.4.7 ταῦτα ἀναζωγραφῶν καὶ ἀναπλάττων ἐξεκαίετο σφόδρα, "Painting this scene in his imagination, the King burned with passion" (trans. B.P. Reardon).

ἀνθεῖλκον ἑαυτοὺς ἐκεῖ τῷ τοῦ κάλλους ἑλκόμενοι πείσματι, καὶ τέλος ἐνίκησαν. "My eyes defied me. I tried to force them away from the girl, but they swung back to her, drawn by the allure of her beauty, and finally they won". Chloe, like Helen, also stares at Daphnis, captivated by his beauty: ἡ μὲν γὰρ γυμνὸν ὁρῶσα τὸν Δάφνιν ἐπ' ἄθρουν καὶ ἐνέπιπτε τὸ κάλλος (Long. 1.24.1).

Staring is probably the most intense pleasure lovers can achieve before intercourse; however, in the erotic visual language of antiquity this translates into an even superior pleasure. The scientific explanation for this is given by Achilles Tatius 1.9.4-5:

> οὐκ οἶδας οἷόν ἐστιν ἐρωμένη βλεπομένη· μείζονα τῶν ἔργων ἔχει τὴν ἡδονήν. ὀφθαλμοὶ γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντανακλώμενοι ἀπομάττουσιν ὡς ἐν κατόπτρῳ τῶν σωμάτων τὰ εἴδωλα· ἡ δὲ τοῦ κάλλους ἀπορροή, δι' αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν καταρρέουσα, ἔχει τινὰ μίξιν ἐν ἀποστάσει· καὶ ὀλίγον ἐστὶ τῆς τῶν σωμάτων μίξεως· καινὴ γάρ ἐστι σωμάτων συμπλοκή.
>
> You have no idea how marvellous a thing it is when a lover is looked at. It is a greater pleasure than the Business. For the eyes receive each other's reflections, and impress from there little images as in mirrors. Such an emanation of beauty, flowing down through them into the soul, is a kind of copulation at a distance. This is not far from the intercourse of bodies. For it is a novel kind of embrace of bodies.

Helen's hungry eyes at the sight of Paris make sense in a time of voyeuristic scopophilia such as late antiquity.[183] Nonnus, as seen in Chapter 2, indulged in detailed descriptions of erotic fascination, rapes and wounded bodies: see, for instance, the lengthy descriptions of Hymnus staring at Nicaea's body in *Dion.* 15.220-54, and of the Indian staring at the dead Bassarid in 35.37-43.

Besides the erotic nature of Helen's looking in terms of pleasure versus the sexual act itself, some considerations can be made around the context of gazing and the gender of the viewer. Hawley deals with the male body as the object of the gaze of both the audience and other characters.[184] I have discussed earlier on which exceptional occasions it was considered acceptable for the male body (or corpse) to be looked at. For female viewers, it was considered acceptable to gaze at men only in certain contexts, such as when the gaze was not one of erotic desire,[185] and in

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[183] Harries 1994, 65, Agosti 2006b, 352.

[184] Hawley 1998.

[185] For instance in the case of Euripides' Medea, who considers it a wife's duty to look at her husband's soul (*Med.* 247), see Hawley 1998, 90.

situations of disguise,[186] with the consequences described by Hawley,[187] i.e. that masculinity is only expressed/able by female characters in tragedy as an inner quality[188] (such as strength or courage), and femininity by male characters only as exterior attributes[189] (such as the garments or the moves). This is all in line with Aristotelic theories that masculinity is stronger while femininity is weaker, with social conventions of the fifth century BC, according to which females are second class, and with audiences being composed of all male spectators, mainly Athenians and of various social classes. In the context of erotic gazing, the female gaze was generally avoided by male characters as threatening, as we have seen in the case of Euripides' *Hippolytus Kalyptomenos*, who veiled his head not only (as traditionally interpreted) because he was trying to avoid religious pollution, but also, in light of recent theories, because he did not want his masculinity to be threatened by Phaedra's look of desire. Hawley contrasts Hippolytus to Odysseus, who, although beautified by Athena before his meeting with Nausicaa (a female viewer) in *Od.* 6.223-35, is not feminised nor is his masculinity threatened at any stage, therefore, in epic there was no serious concern about gender as there was in the fifth century BC.

What about Paris? Is he feminised through the scenes of his toilette, his beauty glorified by the poet's compliment, and especially now, under the scrutiny of Helen's gaze? Paris' masculinity does not appear to be jeopardized by any of his vain features (the hair that he does not want the wind to ruffle, the feet that he doesn't want to dirty, his pastoral attire) nor by Helen's look, although he is unquestionably the object of her gaze, and not vice versa. His beauty is the undisputable object of desire here, while the notion of her beauty reaches him only through her reputation via Aphrodite. This represents a radical twist versus classical tradition, where Helen's beauty was normally the object of the gaze and desire of men; however, from Hellenistic times on, differentiation in the viewer's gender seems to have disappeared: Medea looks straight into Jason's eyes (ἀνέδρακεν ὄμμασιν ἄντην, *Arg.* 3.1010), and for a long time.[190] In the novel, females gaze as much as males, which shows that there is no longer a boundary between genders in terms of who should be the object of the

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[186] As in Aesch. *Choeph.* 563-4, see Hawley 1998, 90-1.

[187] Hawley 1998, 85-95.

[188] As Aeschylus' Clytemnestra.

[189] As Agathon in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusai.*

[190] Medea looks at beautiful Jason for the whole scene (956-1162), and she also shows the physical Sapphic symptoms of love: her heart misses a beat, her vision is blurred, she blushes (962-965 and 1009-10). For a focussed analysis of the nature of their visual interaction see Cairns 2005, 132-33.

gaze and who should do the looking: in Longus, for instance, both Daphnis and Chloe look at each other at various stages, as in 1.24.1-2.

One other consideration links, once again, our Paris to Apollonius' Jason: first, he happily plays a secondary role as the acquisition of the Golden Fleece is mainly achieved with the aid of Medea's magical powers, and when the Fleece is attained, his delight is compared to that of a πάρθενος who sees the full moon caught in her fine dress (*Arg.* 4.167-73). As Hunter noted, *rites de passage* often involve sexual reversal, and it is paradoxical that, precisely at the time of Jason's biggest achievements (the Fleece and Medea), he is compared to a young girl to mark his transition into manhood. Apollonius' Jason is at a crucial transitional stage: "halfway between Apolo, the model kouros, and the war-god Ares (*Arg.* 3.1282-3)".[191] Colluthus' Paris, a multi-faceted character as we have seen in Chapter 2, does not suffer either from these less-than-masculine attributes.

The hunger for gaze is closely connected to the next motif, that of recognition (ἀναγνώρισις). In Hel. *Aeth.* 3.5.4-5, the prophet Calasiris explains the reasons why two souls seek to find something familiar in the other's features:

> ὥσπερ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐκ πρώτης ἐντεύξεως τὸ ὅμοιον ἐπιγνούσης καὶ πρὸς τὸ κατ' ἀξίαν οἰκεῖον προσδραμούσης. Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἀθρόον τι καὶ ἐπτοημένον ἔστησαν ... τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀτενεῖς ἐπὶ πολὺ κατ' ἀλλήλων πήξαντες ὥσπερ εἴ που γνωρίζοντες ἢ ἰδόντες πρότερον ταῖς μνήμαις ἀναπεμπάζοντες
>
> As if the soul recognized its kin at the very first encounter and rushed to meet that which was worthily its own. For a brief second full of emotion they stood motionless ... and while they gazed hard into each another's eyes, as if remembering whether they had previously met somewhere or seen each other before.

As per Dickie, Heliodorus' passage owes to Platonic theories (*Phaedr.* 249d-253c), according to which the soul fell due to the weight of men's corruption, but gained wings again once men got in touch with the beauty emanated by a boy.[192] The soul then remembers the time when it was in touch with truth, experiencing Sapphic symptoms (fr. 31 LP) of erotic turmoil such as blushing, pallour, dismay, obsession, and cannot live apart from that person, who has become its link to return to the

[191] Hunter 1988, 451-3. On war-like Jason, see especially 442.
[192] Dickie 1991.

divine.[193] This is why the two lovers recognize (or try to recognize) themselves from an obscure past, rather than knowing each other for the first time. Beauty is then the ennobling mean that spurs a memory of the divine in the lover, and in Heliodorus these Neoplatonic concepts are expressed clearly.[194] Heliodorus also codifies the process of falling in love as a result of divine predestination, highlights the Sapphic symptoms in the so-called phase of exchange[195] between the two lovers,[196] and more importantly updates Plato's theory by applying it to female beauty.[197]

Colluthus does not put Helen through all the visible Sapphic symptoms of eros, although she is stunned and shy (267) and her inner turmoil shows through her visual behaviour. Later, she picks up courage (θαρσήσασα 307 and οὐ τρομέω 316) and addresses Paris again as a stranger (but this time using the epic model of vocative preceded by ὦ),[198] like Hero does with Leander insistently in Mus. *Her.* 123, 174, 178 and 181. Her staring and immediate attempt to recognize the stranger can thus be translated as her soul recognizing the person who is able to reconnect her to the divine; what is more, her own process of falling love is also predestined by Aphrodite, like that of Charikleia and Theagenes in Heliodorus.[199]

Helen first thinks that she is looking at Eros, and then she realises that it is not him; then, she sees no quiver of arrows and keeps searching Paris' beautiful face with her eyes, trying to see Dionysus. But she does not manage to spot any swollen fruit of the vine, spread upon his well-proportioned gracious head (260-6):

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193 Fusillo 1989, 199-200.

194 Hel. *Aeth.* 1.4, 3.45.4 and 5.7 see Giomi 2003, 374.

195 Rousset 1984, chapter 6 (especially, 120) defines as "exchange" the phase in which the two lovers throw signals at each other, such as making a spectacle of themselves: for instance, Anthia (in Heliod. *Aeth.* 1.3.1-2) offers as much as it is possible of her body for Habrocomes to see, forgetting what the appropriate costumes for a virgin like her are (see also Fusillo 1989, 198-99).

196 Hel. *Aeth.* 3.5.5-6 εἶτα ἐμειδίασαν βραχύ τι καὶ κλεπτόμενον καὶ μόνῃ τῇ διαχύσει τοῦ βλέμματος ἐλεγχόμενον. Ἔπειτα ὥσπερ καταιδεσθέντες τὸ γεγονὸς ἐπυρρίασαν, καὶ αὖθις, τοῦ πάθους οἶμαι καὶ τὴν καρδίαν ἐπιδραμόντος, ὠχρίασαν, καὶ ἁπλῶς μυρίον εἶδος ἐν ὀλίγῳ τῷ χρόνῳ τὰς ὄψεις ἀμφοῖν ἐπεπλανήθη καὶ μεταβολὴ παντοία χροιᾶς τε καὶ βλέμματος τῆς ψυχῆς τὸν σάλον κατηγοροῦσα, "Then they smiled a fleeting, furtive smile, discernible only as a slight softening of their expressions. And then they blushed, as if they were embarrassed at what had occurred, and a moment later – I suppose as their passion touched their hearts – the colour drained from their faces. In short, in the space of an instant, an infinity of expression passed across both their faces, as every imaginable alteration in complexion and countenance bore witness to the waves that pounded their souls" (transl. J. R. Morgan).

197 Plato never admitted this as a possibility (Plut. *Amatorius* 766e-f).

198 Giangrande 1969, 153 aligns to Helen's newly found courage the use of this specific Homeric (Giangrande 1968) module, not used by him before at 268.

199 The falling in love process is inserted into a ritual context: Charikleia hands over to Theagenes the torch to set the sacrificial fire.

ἄλλοτε δὴ χρύσειον ὀισαμένη Κυθερείης
κοῦρον ὀπιπεύειν θαλαμηπόλον—ὀψὲ δ' ἀνέγνω,
ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν Ἔρως· βελέων δ' οὐκ εἶδε φαρέτρην—
πολλάκι δ' ἀγλαΐῃσιν ἐυγλήνοισι προσώπων
παπταίνειν ἐδόκευε τὸν ἡμερίδων βασιλῆα·
ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡμερίδων θαλερὴν ἐδόκευεν ὀπώρην
πεπταμένην χαρίεντος ἐπὶ ξυνοχῇσι καρήνου.

In the space of a few lines we have multiple references to eyesight again, highlighting the intensity of her gaze, at the same time inquisitive and full of desire. Ὀπιπεύω alludes to Helen's curious, spying gaze; ἀναγιγνώσκω excludes all possibilities of a recognition of Eros; παπταίνω adds a touch of fear in her eyes; δοκεύω goes back to the inquisitive look. Helen's emotional turmoil is made visible to readers through the nature of her various glances, and visual behaviour here displays on the outside the emotions that the woman is experiencing on the inside: curiosity, desire to recognize, fear.

The famous antecedent of this recognition scene is Penelope, who hesitated for a long time when she faced Odysseus upon his return in *Od.* 23.93-5:

ἡ δ' ἄνεω δὴν ἧστο, τάφος δέ οἱ ἦτορ ἵκανεν·
ὄψει δ' ἄλλοτε μέν μιν ἐνωπαδίως ἐσίδεσκεν,
ἄλλοτε δ' ἀγνώσασκε κακὰ χροῒ εἵματ' ἔχοντα

She sat for a long time in silence, wonder filled her chest; looking at him, at times she recognized him clearly, at times she did not, covered in rugs as he was.

Another very visual scene of ἀναγνώρισις is in Euripides, where Menelaus struggles to believe what he sees, and Helen challenges the truth that comes from sight.[200]

Helen attempts to recognize one of the gods through her memory of paintings or sculpture, as it happens with Anchises in *h.Aphr.* 92-9, where the hero wonders whether the beautiful lady he is looking at (Aphrodite) is Artemis, Leto, Aphrodite, Themis, Athena or one of the Graces. On this occasion Aphrodite candidly lies about

[200] Eur. *Hel.* 557-80 τίς εἶ; τίν' ὄψιν σήν, γύναι, προσδέρκομαι; /[...]Ἑλένηι σ' ὁμοίαν δὴ μάλιστ' εἶδον, γύναι / [...] οὔ που φρονῶ μὲν εὖ, τὸ δ' ὄμμα μου νοσεῖ; / [Ελ.] οὐ γάρ με λεύσσων σὴν δάμαρθ' ὁρᾶν δοκεῖς; / [Με.] τὸ σῶμ' ὅμοιον, τὸ δὲ σαφές γ' ἀποστατεῖ. / [Ελ.] σκέψαι· τί σοι δεῖ πίστεως σαφεστέρας; / [Με.] ἔοικας· οὗτοι τοῦτό γ' ἐξαρνήσομαι. / [Ελ.] τίς οὖν διδάξει σ' ἄλλος ἢ τὰ σ' ὄμματα; "Who are you? What a strange vision I see before my eyes![...] I look at you, woman: you look exactly like Helen! [...] How is it possible that I can think clearly and yet I see hallucinations? {Hel.} Look at me. Do you not realise that you have your wife in front of you? {Men.} Indeed you do look like her, and yet evidence stops me from believing you. {Hel.} Look harder: what other evidence do you want? Who can know me better than you? {Men.} Yes, you do look like her, I am not denying that. {Hel.} If you do not believe your eyes, what would you believe?"

her identity, claiming that she is not a goddess, but a mortal, so that he will be reassured about whom he is about to join (109-10).

Interestingly, the two divinities that Helen thinks of when looking at the stranger in the *Abduction* are Eros himself, the one who is possessing her right now, and Dionysus, the god to whom Colluthus had compared Paris for his beauty just before his arrival (251-3). Both gods are associated with the mysterious effects of divine power on mortal life, particularly in human minds and emotions,[201] so Colluthus may have wished with this choice to underline the impact of both gods on his heroine.

The fact that Helen also mistakes Paris for Dionysus reinforces Colluthus' evaluation and makes the association with the god even stronger. The poet had also hinted at Dionysus as a model of beauty earlier, where he had alluded to the god while describing Apollo's Bacchic hairstyle with the term βότρυς in 26.[202] The god is associated with aggressive eros, like Pan.[203] In the *Symposium*, Xenophon describes a dance at the dinner party in which the god is mimed as he seats Ariadne on his lap, kisses and caresses her, while she can barely keep her composure (*Symp.* 9.3-7). Dionysus is also presented as a model for beauty in Longus on various occasions: Daphnis associates himself to the god while attempting to demonstrate to Chloe the superiority of his looks over Dorcon (1.16); later, looking at Chloe, he also thinks he is seeing a Nymph from the cave, i.e. a bacchant (1.24.1). During the festival in honour of Dionysus, some women compare Daphnis to Dionysus: Οἷον οὖν εἰκὸς ἐν ἑορτῇ Διονύσου καὶ οἴνου γενέσει αἱ μὲν γυναῖκες ... τῷ Δάφνιδι τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπέβαλλον καὶ ἐπῄνουν ὡς ὅμοιον τῷ Διονύσῳ τὸ κάλλος, "As is only natural at a festival celebrating Dionysus and the birth of wine, the women ... stared at Daphnis and complimented him, saying he was as beautiful as Dionysus" (2.2).[204]

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201 This influence is predominant and recurrent in the novel, see Reardon 1989, 303 n. 26.

202 Colluthus' model is Apollo as he appeared to the Argonauts who had just arrived in the Thyniade island in Ap. Rh. 2.676-7 χρύσεοι δὲ παρειάων ἑκάτερθεν / πλοχμοὶ βοτρυόεντες ἐπερρώοντο κιόντι· "and about his cheeks on both sides his golden locks flowed in clusters as he moved" (transl. R.C. Seaton). He mixes the Apollonius model with a metaphor based on the expression βότρυς... χαίτης based on Nonn. *Dion.* 1.528 βαθυσμήριγγος ἀλήμονα βότρυν ἐθείρης, "a straying curl of her thick hair". In 12.179 Nonnus reveals the etymological game when he describes Ampelos' metamorphosis, which also involved that βόστρυχα βότρυες ἦσαν, "the clusters of his hair were bunches of grapes". Colluthus also contaminates this metaphor with *Dion.* 18.12

203 Longus 4. 26.2 (Reardon 1989, 312 n. 36, 334 n. 362).

204 In the same circumstance, the men in the winepresses praise Chloe's beauty and their jumping around her is compared by Longus to the dancing of satyrs around a bacchant: 2.2: οἱ δὲ ἐν ταῖς ληνοῖς ποικίλας φωνὰς ἔρριπτον ἐπὶ τὴν Χλόην καὶ ὥσπερ ἐπί τινα Βάκχην Σάτυροι μανικώτερον ἐπήδων. Daphnis and Chloe make sacrifices to Dionysus in 3.9.2; an ekphrasis of pictures at a

The comparison of the hero to a god for his beauty in an erotic scene is not new: in Homer, Odysseus wonders whether Nausicaa is a goddess or a mortal (*Od.* 6.149-52), while she thinks first that he is ugly, but then changes her mind: πρόσθεν μὲν γὰρ δή μοι ἀεικέλιος δέατ' εἶναι, νῦν δὲ θεοῖσιν ἔοικε, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν (242-3). Anchises appears to Aphrodite as δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ἐοικώς in *h.Aphr.* 54-5, and θεῶν ἄπο κάλλος ἔχοντα in 77. In Chariton, Dionysius, Chaereas' rival, mistakes Callirhoe for Aphrodite while the girl is paying her tributes to the goddess.[205] Colluthus makes things more interesting here, by not introducing a simile,[206] but making the viewer seek for clues in the face of the stranger, and attempting twice to identify him. By doing so, he steps closer to Heliodorus' passage mentioned above and thus to a philosophical clarification of the episode. Comparing the beloved to a god means idealizing the beloved,[207] a process that is displayed (to continue with Chariton's passage) in Dionysius remembering every single detail about the girl while lying in his bed unable to sleep (2.4.3), and in the famous scene of Medea re-seeing images of Jason's looks, clothes, but also his words. Here, the subjective representation of Medea's interiority is built through visual and auditory pictures that return to her mind and that contribute to her belief that no other man is like him.[208] In the case of Colluthus, there is no time (within the short epyllion) for the two lovers to remember each other: the focus is all concentrated on their first and only

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temple of the god is described at 4.3.1-3 (and the owner of these pictures is named Dionysophanes, a sort of deus ex machina who resolves the problems of the plot; Cleariste is compared by Reardon 1989, 338 n. 68 to Alcinous' wife Arete in *Od.* 6.305-15, 7.54-5).

205 Char. 2.3.6-7. When Dionysius hears the girl speaking, the similarity of her voice to that of a god makes him fall in love: λαλούσης δὲ αὐτῆς ἡ φωνὴ τῷ Διονυσίῳ θεία τις ἐφάνη· μουσικὸν γὰρ ἐφθέγγετο καὶ ὥσπερ κιθάρας ἀπεδίδου τὸν ἦχον. ἀπορηθεὶς οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ πλέον ὁμιλεῖν καταιδεσθεὶς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὴν ἔπαυλιν, φλεγόμενος ἤδη τῷ ἔρωτι, "As she spoke, her voice seemed the voice of a god to Dionysius; it had a musical sound, with the effect of a lyre's note. He did not know what to do; he was too embarrassed to continue talking to her; so he went off to his house, already aflame with love"(trans. B. Reardon). Sapph. Fr. 31 L.-P. φαίνεταί μοι κῆνος ἴσος θέοισιν ἔμμεν' ὤνηρ; in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.956-961, Jason is compared to Sirius for his beauty when he appears to Medea.

206 In Longus, 1.24.3, Daphnis and Chloe attempt to find similarities between each other's features and nature: καὶ ἡ μὲν εἴκασεν αὐτοῦ τὴν κόμην, ὅτι μέλαινα, μύρτοις, ὁ δὲ μήλῳ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς, ὅτι λευκὸν καὶ ἐνερευθὲς ἦν.

207 Fusillo 1989, 201.

208 Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.451-58: πολλὰ δὲ θυμῷ / ὥρμαιν' ὅσσα τ' ἔρωτες ἐποτρύνουσι μέλεσθαι· / προπρὸ δ' ἄρ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἔτι οἱ ἰνδάλλετο πάντα, / αὐτός θ' οἷος ἔην οἵοισί τε φάρεσιν ἧστο / οἷά τ' ἔειφ' ὥς θ' ἕζετ' ἐπὶ θρόνου ὥς τε θύραζε / ἤιεν· οὐδέ τιν' ἄλλον ὀίσσατο πορφύρουσα / ἔμμεναι ἀνέρα τοῖον· ἐν οὔασι δ' αἰὲν ὀρώρει / αὐδή τε μῦθοί τε μελίφρονες οὓς ἀγόρευσεν, "But in her soul all the love's troubles were in turmoil: in front of her eyes still the images formed of every detail: the appearance of Jason and his clothes, how he spoke how he sat, how he moved to leave, and while she was thinking it seemed to her that no other man was like him; his voice and the sweet words that she had heard always kept returning to her ears". Paduano and Fusillo 1986, 437 and Fusillo 1989, 201.

meeting. Thus, by making Helen search for a god in her beloved, the poet may be somehow anticipating what in Apollonius happens later; the effort that Helen makes to recognize someone in Paris' face works therefore as a sort of memory that she is trying to retrieve.

The next phase in Paris and Helen's meeting involves Helen's astonishment (θαμβήσασα 267) and her questioning Paris about his provenance. Helen's amazement represents another standard erotic symptom: in Heliodorus, both lovers also stand in amazement when they first meet: Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἀθρόον τι καὶ ἐπτοημένον ἔστησαν (*Aeth.* 3.5.5). This phase is particularly crucial as it denotes visual interaction:[209] The intensity of Helen's gaze comes back to her in the form of astonishment: θαμβέω expresses a stupefied wonder, and it often describes the reaction to some other visual impact on the viewer.[210] For instance, in Homer Helen is amazed when Aphrodite, who is looking at her with flashing eyes in an epiphany,[211] invites her to return to Paris: ὡς οὖν ἐνόησε θεᾶς ... ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα, θάμβησεν (*Il.* 3.398).

Helen, once she has realised that she is not standing in front of Eros or Dionysus, attempts to discover the stranger's origins, again, by trying to fit the stranger into a domain of her knowledge, as if putting the pieces of a jigsaw back together. She organizes her speech in a rational way, first acknowledging his beauty and thus assuming he may be a king, then proceeding to list the famous (and beautiful) Greek heroes known to her, and concluding that she has never seen his face before (268-77). In *Il.* 3. 234-35 Helen also claims she can list the Greek heroes.[212]

Her first question (ξεῖνε, πόθεν τελέθεις; ἐρατὸν γένος εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν 268) echoes Medea's question to Jason in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.1071-2 εἰπὲ δέ μοι πρόφρων τόδε· πῇ τοι ἔασιν δώματα; In Heliodorus, Charikleia also inquires about Theagenes' origins (τίνων δέ ἐστιν ἢ πόθεν;),[213] and in Musaeus, Hero is also curious about Leander's origins (εἰπὲ δέ, μὴ κρύψῃς, τέον οὔνομα καὶ σέο πάτρην 185). The interest for the

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209 Constantinidou 1994, 11.

210 Prier 1989, 87-8.

211 Aphrodite's flashing eyes are a traditional feature of the goddess' beauty and a clue for her recognition (she here appears disguised as a Spartan woman), see Constantinidou 1994, 12.

212 Kennedy 1986, 12 noted how however her inability to see and visually represent (in her web) the heroes (for instance, she is unaware that her brothers Kastor and Polydeukes have died) reflects the superiority of oral poetry, as the bard can represent also sound and dynamism, and is omniscient.

213 Hel. *Aeth.* 4.5.5. Charikleia's question also involves an interesting Freudian twist as she wants to know about Theagenes "whether he looked at me with an evil eye or not", as Calasiris had told her.

beloved's origins reveals a desire to approach, and become more familiar with, the stranger.[214]

After excluding that the stranger belongs to the divine category, Helen considers whether he may be a king, based on his beauty (ἀγλαΐην μὲν ἔοικας ἀριζήλῳ βασιλῆι 269) which has impressed her so much. Helen claims to know Deucalion's offspring, Antilochus, the lineage of Aeacus, and other heroes (Peleus, Telamon, Patroclus and Achilles). She knows for a fact that he does not come from Pylos or Phtia, and she reiterates that she is certain she has not seen the stranger before (ἀλλὰ τεὴν οὐκ οἶδα παρ' Ἀργείοισι γενέθλην 270, and τεὴν δ' οὐκ εἶδον ὀπωπὴν 273). The line echoes Mus. *Her.* 76 τοίην δ'οὔ ποτ' ὄπωπα νέην ἰδανήν θ'ἁπαλήν τε, "but I have never seen such a sweet and beautiful young woman". Helen is trying to impress Paris by listing the Greek heroes with whom she is familiar, perhaps noticing that her beauty has not had the same effect on him that his looks have had on her. Paris' beauty has clearly impressed Helen, but since he fails to react in a similar way, she uses her credentials to gain his attention. Helen is also the most beautiful woman in the world: she may be used to men's attention or reaction to her appearance, but nothing seems to be happening with this attractive stranger, and her mindset may be "you impress me with your beauty, but who are you? Let's see your credentials". She speaks from the height of her status as Menelaus' wife, her reputation as the most beautiful woman in the word, and her familiarity with famous Greek families and heroes, while the stranger so far has only beauty to claim for.

Paris on his part has gained (in the eyes of the readers) a higher profile through the various stages of his description: when he arrives at Helen's house, we already know that he is a prince, the son of Priam, and that he is beautiful, while Helen does not know him. His status, however, is not demeaned by the fact that Helen does not know who he is, as she claims to know only Greek heroes. Therefore, her erotic gaze does not affect his status in any shape, differently from Euripides' Hippolytus, who protected his purity from Phaedra's gaze.[215]

At the end of her speech, Helen's desire for Paris is finally declared (Πάριν ποθέουσα 278): the contrast with Paris, who was desiring Helen since before their meeting (193) is evident and based on power of both vision (in the case of Helen) and of fame (for Paris). The prince-shepherd is the clear object of desire in the scene, as

[214] Fusillo 1989, 206.
[215] Hawley 1998, 90.

her eyes are fixed on him, while nothing is said about Paris' visual behaviour towards Helen.

Next, it is Paris' turn to speak. His speech is articulated in two parts: first, he declares his identity and his ancestors (280-90), and then he explains his role and the reason behind is visit, urging Helen to leave with him.

His speech wants to be seductive and persuasive. The prince demonstrates here what he has learnt from Aphrodite's speech earlier; Colluthus adds rhetoric skills[216] to his beauty and his status by making Paris a skillful orator. Helen's brief welcome (266-75) echoes the shrill pastoral music (λιγύθροος 278 - λιγυρὴν 112 - λιγύπνοον 311), while Paris opens a honeyed speech (μειλιχίην ἠμείβετο γῆρυν ἀνοίξα, 279) to Helen. He employs the same climax that Aphrodite had employed in 188-89 in 302-3, and in 300 he asks a rhetorical question and plays with the revealing ambiguity of Κύπριν. Paris's speech reminds us of Jason's, who appears as a skilled diplomat from Pindar (*Pyth.* 4.136-8) to Euripides (Med. 446-7, 455-6, 621-2) to Apollonius (*Arg.* 3.385-96), especially in 2.621 and 1.294-305, where he employs μειλιχίοις ἐπέεσσι and παραβλήδην. However, such honeyed words, notes Hunter, need not to convey the whole truth, but rather aim to comfort the listener, and παραβλήδην is not associated with truth either (3.1078-101).[217] Readers, remembering the impression of deceitfulness associated with Jason's speech to Medea, would have perhaps perceived Paris' words similarly.

Odysseus had explained how a man may be inferior in looks (εἶδος ἀκινδνότερος) but wrapped in beauty in his speech thanks to the gods (μορφὴν ἔπεσι, *Od.* 8.170): in Paris' case, beauty is not in question as we have seen. Odysseus had also decided to invest in ἐπέεσσιν μειλιχίοισι (*Od.* 6.143, 146, 148) to impress Nausicaa, instead of begging at her knees; our Paris does not hesitate between options.

The prince relies on his ancestors and on their deeds to impress Helen: he speaks of his father's wealth, of his ancestor Dardanus, son of Zeus, and how he was served by the immortals, Poseidon and Apollo, who built the towers of Troy (281, 289-90), where as a prince he pursues the duties of his lineage (284). This last statement is the only credit that Paris can claim for himself: he trusts his divine origins to impress

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[216] Harries 2006, 543 n. 94 notes how the whole speech is modelled on Theocr. *Id.* 18 (*Epith. Hel.*).

[217] Hunter 1988, 446-7.

Helen much more than anything else, failing to realise that his beauty has already done that.

Through his confidence in the reputation of his lineage Paris attempts to match Helen's fame. To do so, he reveals his identity and re-creates his own κλέος assuming the position of a self-singing bard, like when Odysseus[218] sings among the Phaeacians of his own glory, playing the unusual role of singer and object sung at the same time.[219] Paris' self-introduction, however, appears closer to the speech of Aeneas to Dido in *Aeneid* 1, a re-elaboration of the Odysseian passage: in Virgil, Aeneas, like Paris, boasts about his Trojan origins (Coll. 280-83, Virg. 375-76); he is sent by sponsor Aphrodite (294-5, 298 - Virg. 382 *matre dea monstrante viam*),[220] and, before revealing his identity (Coll. 285 - Virg. 283), questions Dido with two conditional clauses (280-83 - Virg. 372-6), of which Colluthus' first echoes closely Virgil's second: εἴ τινά που Φρυγίης ἐνὶ πείρασι γαῖαν ἀκούεις, Ἴλιον 280-1, *si vestras forte per auris Troiae nomen iit* 375-76). However, Paris omits to state his name.[221] His refined speech proves effective and stylistically superior to his previous rustic song (ἀγροτέρων καλάμων λιγυρὴν ... ἀοιδήν 112).

In the Homeric model, Odysseus is removed from the heroic context of battles and prowess, so his speech presents a retrospective κλέος (he has already fought at Troy, thus his heroic achievements belong to his past), while in the case of Paris the heroic successes are still ahead of him, and he cannot brag about his achievements in the war even if he wanted to. He invests in telling Helen about his lineage because this is all he has. Moreover, Odysseus makes himself proud of his δόλοι, not his ἀρετή.[222] He needs a more universal type of κλέος, that goes beyond ἀρετή,[223] to defeat and intellectually overcome the monsters he meets during his journey back home, and now that he is about to tell the Phaeacians about his travelling adventures his astuteness is all the more valuable as nobody cares about his physical appearance any

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218 *Od.* 9.19-20 εἶμ' Ὀδυσεὺς Λαερτιάδης, ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν / ἀνθρώποισι μέλω, καί μευ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει.

219 Segal 1995, 204-5 highlights how κλέος identifies both the songs sung by bards in praise of gods and heroes, as well as the eternal fame that lives forever among men and keeps the hero's name alive.

220 And so is Leander in Mus. *Her.*152 σοὶ δέ με Κύπρις ἔπεμψε.

221 Harries 2006, 544. A detail picked up by Helen who addresses him again as ξεῖνε at 308, like she had done at 268, prior to his introduction: he remains a stranger to her. See also Giangrande 1969, 153 on the "cocky" use of vocative preceded by ὦ here.

222 As per Penelope's portrait in 4.725-6=4.815-16: παντοίῃσ' ἀρετῇσι κεκασμένον ἐν Δαναοῖσιν, / ἐσθλόν, τοῦ κλέος εὐρὺ καθ' Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἄργος, "who among the Danaans excelled in all virtues, a brave man, whose fame goes wide through Hellas and the midst of Argos" (trans. Segal).

223 Segal 1995, 206-10 analyzes the hero's ethic progression from ἀρετή to κλέος.

longer.[224] Paris, on the other hand, cannot claim any similar qualities yet, and even when he does he is actually using his lineage's deeds again (284). A further difference between Paris and Odysseus concerns the audience of their speech: while Odysseus asks Penelope (his beloved) not to ask about his lineage as this would bring back painful memories and grief (*Od.* 19.116-18), Paris, in front of Helen, boasts about his name, his ancestors and his fatherland, as heroes typically do in heroic (but not necessarily erotic) contexts.[225]

Paris' speech seems to reflect the emotional interaction of Jason's speech to Medea in Apollonius,[226] when she asks him about his hometown: the hero specifies that he also wishes to share information about his origins (εἰ δέ τοι ἡμετέρην ἐξίδμεναι εὔαδε πάτρην, ἐξερέω· μάλα γάρ με καὶ αὐτὸν θυμὸς ἀνώγει, *Arg.* 3.1083-4). However, while his sincerity is not questionable, what his speech reveals is the superficiality of his feelings towards Medea, as he later on rhetorically asks what is the point of telling her about his provenance, openly devaluing the importance of the information: ἀλλὰ τίη τάδε τοι μεταμώνια πάντ' ἀγορεύω, ἡμετέρους τε δόμους, 1096-7. This does not come as a surprise from ἀμήχανος Jason, a "disappointing" hero who needs encouragement, reassurance, and the aid of Medea's magical powers.[227] Our Paris also concludes his speech by asking Helen a rhetorical question about the uselessness of the information he just gave her (οὐκ ἐρέω· τί δὲ τόσσον ἐπισταμένην σε διδάξω; οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης 300-1), thus showing a lack of consideration and understanding of the real nature of Helen's interest similar to that shown by Jason towards Medea. Jason demonstrates in his speech that he views Medea as her own father, and although she is reassured by his promise to bring her away as his bride, his reply disappoints and mortifies her by showing a potential exploitation of her feelings. Moreover, he positions her in a much lower place in his hierarchy of values by only providing information she already has, and insisting not on the erotic involvement with her, but on the political aspects of his role (especially his deal with her father and the figure of Ariadne).

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[224] *Il.* 3.223-4: what a change from when Odysseus' looks had impressed Nausicaa in *Od.* 6.237; see Constantinidou 1994, 4-5.

[225] For instance, Glaucus speaking to Diomedes in *Il.* 6.150-211. See Segal 1995, 207-8.

[226] Hunter 1987.

[227] Hunter 1988 provides a thorough analysis of Jason's "heroism", which reads the behaviour of Apollonian Jason against the offset of the Homeric model, rather than in light of what the poet chooses not to say (a school of thought which has led to many interpretations of the psychology of Jason from the perspective of modern concern with a central hero rather than with a pattern of events- see for instance Beye 1982 and Vian 1978.

The imbalance of Jason and Medea's feelings appears clear from the start.[228] Although Paris does not have another priority as Jason has (recovering the fleece), his interest in Helen is not purely erotic, but also based on his expectation of the prize awarded to him by Aphrodite. Like Achilles in the *Iliad*, he demands what is owed to him. He thus proceeds to announce to Helen what their respective roles are and what the purpose of his visit is: he first presents himself as the δικασπόλος θεάων, and explains to her what his achievements are (i.e. settling a suit among the goddesses and praising Aphrodite's beauty, ἀκηχεμένῃσιν ἐπουρανίῃσι δικάζων Κύπριδος ἀγλαΐην καὶ ἐπήρατον ἥνεσα μορφήν 292-3), then justifies his intentions by sealing them with divine intervention ("it is Aphrodite who offered this prize to me", 294-6) and personal accomplishments ("I have endured to cross such seas", ἧς ἕνεκεν τέτληκα καὶ οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι 297). At this point Paris distances himself completely from Helen by speaking of her in the third person,[229] as if she were absent: his emotional detachment makes Helen a recompense (ἀντάξιον) that is owed to him, putting her in a similar position as Medea, an instrument to Jason. He then urges her (in the first person plural) to marry him, but not because of her beauty or personality: he is simply urging her to obey the goddess' orders (298).[230] What is more, he supports his request not by begging her to reciprocate his desire, but by expressing his fear of being humiliated by her refusal (μή με καταισχύνειας, ἐμὴν μὴ Κύπριν ἐλέγξῃς 299). Leander, in Mus. *Her.* 157, uses the same concept to persuade Hero: πείθεο καὶ σύ, φίλη, μὴ Κύπριδι μῆνιν ἐγείρῃς. Paris concludes his plea with a clumsy observation (302-4):

> οὐ τοῖαι γεγάασιν ἐν Ἀργείοισι γυναῖκες,
> καὶ γὰρ ἀκιδνοτέροισιν ἀεξόμεναι μελέεσσιν
> ἀνδρῶν εἶδος ἔχουσι, νόθοι δ' ἐγένοντο γυναῖκες.
>
> Women born among the Argives are not like you: for although they grow with weaker limbs, they look like men, and are just counterfeit women.

There is no reference to Helen's beauty at all, and no visual sign to denote any unspoken reaction of the prince at the sight of the most beautiful woman in the

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228 Paduano 1986, 505.

229 See Chapter 4.

230 Similarly, Jason's promises, including the one to marry Medea, appear only at the end of his speech, as a somehow forced last resort to convince the girl to help him, in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3. 1122-30.

world. Paris' speech does not exude any erotic signal in his words or in his visual behaviour, and does not match Helen's interest in any form. All the clichés of erotic meeting scenarios have been used by the poet in Helen's behaviour, but not in Paris', and his speech demonstrates that he has read the woman's hints all wrong. While she is impressed by his beauty, he just speaks of his father and the gods who are his friends, and relies on a divine command to persuade the lady to marry him. Similarly, in Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* 19.4.1.3, Helen cannot fight back the eros generated by her gazing over Paris' body, and for this reason she is not guilty: Colluthus may be exploiting a similar technique to balance responsibilities and to highlight to readers what the reasons behind Helen's actions are. This erotically imbalanced scene contrasts with the harmonious meeting of Hero and Leander in Musaeus, where the poet not only highlights at various points how the two lovers read and respond to each other's signals (ὁ δ' ἔνδοθι θυμὸν ἰάνθη, ὅττι πόθον συνέηκε καὶ οὐκ ἀπεσείσατο κούρη 107-108, "he rejoiced in his heart because the girls had understood his desire and had not rejected him"; ὡς δ' ἐρατῆς ἐνόησε χαλίφρονα νεύματα κούρης 117, "but the lover understood her weak signals") but also theorizes the psychology behind contradictory signals: Θηλείης δὲ Λέανδρος ὅτ' ἔκλυεν οἶστρον ἀπειλῆς, ἔγνω πειθομένων σημήια παρθενικάων· καὶ γὰρ ὅτ' ἠιθέοισιν ἀπειλείουσι γυναῖκες 129-31, "Leander understood the deep meaning of the girl's threat and recognized in it the sign of the girl's surrender. In fact, when women threaten young men, this is almost a preannouncement of loving affairs",[231] and πειθοῦς γὰρ τάδε πάντα προάγγελα· παρθενικῆς δὲ πειθομένης ποτὶ λέκτρον ὑπόσχεσίς ἐστι σιωπή 164-5, "all of these are signs of surrender, as silence is the promise of a young virgin persuaded to love". In contrast, Colluthus presents a one-way communication that reveals Paris' disinterest in Helen.

The lack of reaction to Helen's beauty is not only evident from the fact that Paris does not refer to her beauty (differently from Luc. *Dial. Deor.* 14, where, inquiring about Helen, he asks ποία δὲ τὴν ὄψιν ἐστί; "what is her appearance?"), but also by the fact that Colluthus does not describe Paris' visual behaviour, while he provides plenty of information about Helen's. Her obvious interest is imbalanced versus his impassivity. Similarly, Helen's entrance is described in detail during Telemachus' and

[231] Note Colluthus' reappraisal of οἶστρος in 97.

Peisistratus' visit to Menealus' house,[232] but not one of the present men looks at or comments on her: Telemachus keeps crying, while Peisistratus and Menelaus are busy with identifications and tearful memories of Troy. The most beautiful woman in the world does not provoke any reaction in the whole passage. The common trait among the two passages may confirm an established tendency to avoid precise descriptions of Helen,[233] as this could set boundaries to a legendary beauty, and may be in line with the intention to entrust her beauty to the reputation of it, which would leave the imagination of whoever hears of her run wild. So Paris, who heard of her from Aphrodite, immediately creates pictures of her in his mind, and this generates desire in him, but now that he faces the woman herself and can see her with his own eyes, he does not react. The irony of this paradoxical situation is created by the expectation that Colluthus has generated in Paris (the viewer),[234] and by his laconic and emotionless reaction.

Helen now responds to Paris' invitation with a behaviour that confirms an imbalance between the two: his speech leaves her perplexed, speechless and stunned (305-7); she then expresses admiration for Apollo's and Poseidon's intervention in building Troy's walls and she wishes she could see that (308-13).[235] Finally, she orders him to bring her to Sparta, and confirms her willingness to obey the δικασπόλος Paris and Aphrodite's orders, a formal commitment (sealed by συνθείην 317) that goes beyond the fear of her husband's reaction (ἀγρέο νῦν Σπάρτηθεν ἐπὶ Τροίην με κομίζων. ἔψομαι, ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει. οὐ τρομέω Μενέλαον, ὅταν Τροίη με νοήσῃ. τοίην συνθείην καλλίσφυρος ἔννεπε νύμφη 314-16).

Once again, Colluthus' first concern is to describe Helen's visual behaviour: she fixes her eyes onto the ground (ἡ δ' ἐρόεσσαν ἐπὶ χθονὶ πῆξεν ὀπωπήν 305), an initial sign of her perplexity at Paris' words.[236] Antenor described Odysseus as he looked down and concentrated before speaking words that fell onto the ground like

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[232] *Od.* 4.120-37. Helen sits on a throne with a woolen rug, and a stool is placed under her feet. Only the poet compares her to Artemis.

[233] In Euripides' *Helen* 1087-8 and 1186-8, the only details provided about her looks are her long curly hair (which she cuts) and white robe, which she changes for a black one before celebrating the fake funeral rite for Menelaus.

[234] And in the readers, who also "see" Helen now for the first time.

[235] Her desire to come in contact with Paris is evident here, similarly to Medea's wish to appear unexpected at Jason's fireplace in *Arg.* 3.116-17.

[236] Similarly Hero in Mus. 160: Παρθενικὴ δ' ἄφθογγος ἐπὶ χθόνα πῆξεν ὀπωπήν, and 169 ποτὶ γαῖαν ἔχεν νεύουσαν ὀπωπήν.

snowflakes.[237] Hera and Athena also fixed their eyes before their feet (ποδῶν πάρος ὄμματ' ἔπηξαν, Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.22) before resolving to consult Aphrodite. Interestingly, Jason and Medea both fix their eyes onto the ground, in a shared moment of modest emotion (ἄμφω δ' ἄλλοτε μέν τε κατ' οὔδεος ὄμματ' ἔρειδον αἰδόμενοι, Ap. Rh. *Arg* 3.1022-3), but here, Helen is alone in her confusion.

Helen is lost for words (δηρὸν ἀμηχανέουσα καὶ οὐκ ἠμείβετο νύμφη 306), struck by aphasia, another common symptom of the erotic disease.[238] Sappho first spoke of how eros makes one speechless,[239] and the physiological process became part of the standard framework.[240] Penelope was also silent and stunned at the sight of Odysseus: ἡ δ' ἄνεω δὴν ἦστο, τάφος δέ οἱ ἦτορ ἵκανεν, "she sat for a long time in silence, wonder filled her chest" (*Od.* 23.93) and she admits to Telemachus(105-7):

> θυμός μοι ἐνὶ στήθεσσι τέθηπεν
> οὐδέ τι προσφάσθαι δύναμαι ἔπος οὐδ' ἐρέεσθαι,
> οὐδ' εἰς ὧπα ἰδέσθαι ἐναντίον.
>
> My heart is filled with wonder in my chest: I am unable to say a word to him, or to interrogate him, nor can I look at him in the face.

In Apollonius, being lost for words is no longer just a symptom of the erotic phenomenology but also represents Medea's inhibitory scruples:[241] she suffers from aphasia from the very first moment Eros hits her with his dart (τὴν δ' ἀμφασίη λάβε θυμόν, *Arg.* 3.284), and she is speechless time and time again during the meeting.[242] More significantly, the symptom is, once again, shared with Jason as they first meet in a long moment of silence: τὼ δ' ἄνεῳ καὶ ἄναυδοι ἐφέστασαν ἀλλήλοισιν,[243] "So they two stood face to face in silence", while in Colluthus Helen suffers alone.

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[237] *Il.* 3. 217-22 ὑπαὶ δὲ ἴδεσκε κατὰ χθονὸς ὄμματα πήξας... ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότα χειμερίῃσιν. See Constantinidou 1994, 3-4.

[238] Fusillo 1989, 202.

[239] Fr. 31.6-7 L.-P. ὤς με φώναίσ' οὐδ' ἒν ἔτ' εἴκει, ἀλλά κὰμ μὲν γλῶσσα †ἔαγε†.

[240] For instance, in Char. 2.7.4. Dionysius is speechless when he hears that Callirhoe is there (ἀκούσας οὖν ὅτι Καλλιρόη πάρεστιν, ἄφωνος ἐγένετο).

[241] Paduano 1986, 417.

[242] Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 1011 οὐδ' ἔχεν ὅττι πάροιθεν ἔπος προτιμυθήσαιτο, "she did not know what word to say first"; 1063 σῖγα; in 1137-8 even Medea's maids watch her from afar, upset, and in silence: ἀμφίπολοι μὲν ὀπιπτεύουσαι ἄπωθεν σιγῇ ἀνιάζεσκον.

[243] Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.967-72. The two silent lovers are here assimilated to two oaks (the model is Sapph. fr. 47 L.-P., where eros is compared to the wind that shakes the oaks). This scene is particularly meaningful as it marks the first emotional process shared by Jason and Medea as a couple (although he will detach himself from the erotic turmoil very quickly, by doing so enhancing the fragility and temporariness of their common grounds). The silence, which is a vehicle of inhibitory

The way Helen looks at Paris, a mixture of desire, amazement and wonder, discloses the inner turmoil eros is causing her. The meeting of Helen and Paris is clearly based on the meeting of Jason and Medea narrated by Apollonius, a scene in which visuality also plays an important role, and that is in turn based on the encounter of Odysseus and Nausicaa (*Od.* 6.135-97). While Apollonius elaborates the Homeric passage,[244] we have seen how Colluthus plays with both these predecessors and with other models from the novel genre. In contrast to the encounter of Jason and Medea, however, Colluthus' scene does not include details of visual behaviour for both lovers, but only for Helen. The counterpart here (Paris) does not show any emotion, does not communicate at all through his gaze, and, more importantly as this is an erotic context, does not pick up on any erotic hint Helen is sending him, thus does not respond to either visual or auditory stimulation. While Jason and Medea's episode focuses largely on the visual interaction between both characters to each other's speech,[245] in our epyllion the visual activity works one way only, from Helen towards Paris. As discussed in Chapter 2, Colluthus suggests many roles for his Paris, but his characterization does not quite fit any of idem. In particular, the poet plays with Paris' role as a lover, but we have seen in this chapter that his performance in front of Helen, anticipated through allusions from the beginning of the poem, disappoints, ultimately making him unfit (in the eyes of the readers) as a lover, too. However, the concern with a central hero and with psychological and romantic expectations is anachronistic here, and what should ultimately be considered is the character expressing his thoughts through his actions within his context,[246] independently from his audience's expectations. Textual expectations are, as we have seen, a different matter.

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scruple as what is illicit is also ineffable, becomes then paradoxically the highest form of emotional communication (Paduano 1986, 493).

244 My approach on the interpretation of Jason's behaviour owes much to Hunter 1987 and 1988.

245 The same can be said for Catullus 64, see Elsner 2007, 21, who defines the carmen as "a poem full of gaze", where the visual attention is directed at both natural beauty (Ariadne), through voyeurism, and artificial creation (the ship Argo) which can attract the viewers' gaze as an unnatural excess, a *monstrum*. Wonder directed at both these types of spectacle is typical of late antique poetry, see Agosti 2006b, 361.

246 Hunter 1987, 436-8.

5. The Abduction of Helen and Pantomime

In the previous section of this chapter I have discussed how Colluthus' detailed descriptions contribute to the theatricality of the story, and how the visual interaction of the characters emotionally affects characters themselves and readers. Colluthus introduces his characters with their trademark attire or a behaviour that has belonged to that character in previous tradition (Paris with the goat's skin) almost as if this were an obligatory step, like presenting Heracles with his lion's skin. This observation leads to some potentially new reading keys for the text, such as the possibility that the dramatic features of Colluthus' epyllion may point to its performative dimension or to an actual theatrical performance.

As discussed in Chapter 2, late antique epic is characterised by a recovery of the most genuine classicism (so, in the *Abduction*, bucolic and epic tradition), but also by a sort of revolution in its fruition, which implies public reading (hence the influence of rhetoric genres such as invective). Agosti argued that, especially in Egypt from the third century AD, poetry goes back to a pragmatic and performative dimension that implies a close connection with the audience, in both contexts of private literary circles, and on the occasion of public readings for festivals and poetic contests.[247] These occasions offered poets the opportunity to compete not only with each other, but also with their poetic predecessors, engaging with tradition through emulation as well as competition. These aspects appear clearly in Agathias *AP* 4.67-70 and Nonn. *Dion.* 25.27. The *Dionysiaca*, in particular, contains some episodes that were suitable for public reading as they are independent (books 15 and 16: Hymnus and Nicaea, and book 38 with Phaeton), and some small auditoria, which have been recently discovered in Alexandria, seem the perfect venue for this type of reading.[248]

The epyllion contains some features that reflect conventional aspects of a specific type of dramatic performance, pantomime,[249] and that therefore draw the two genres near. In this chapter I suggest that Colluthus intentionally chooses to introduce in his epyllion these pantomime-reflecting features, and writes his text as if it were a pantomime. The poet is aware of this extremely popular art form and wants

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[247] Agosti 2006a and 2008.

[248] Agosti 2006a, 49. Like most cities of Roman Egypt, Panopolis had a theatre, which did not survive, but is mentioned in Pap. Beatty Pa. 1.333,375 (dated to 298 AD); see Gonnelli 2003, 321 n. 4.

[249] The uniqueness of pantomime's features versus other dramatic genres such as tragedy will be discussed under each subject. The *Abduction*'s features remind us only of the pantomime features, not, for instance, of tragic features, as we will see below.

to offer to his readers a highly visual and scenic tale that would help them re-create the visual experience of a pantomime in their imagination. To do so, Colluthus exploits some of the conventional features of pantomime, such as the organization of the plot in individual monodramas (as, for instance, in the case of Hermione), and stylistic instruments (such as the concretization and personification of ideal concepts) that ultimately contribute to the dramatization of the myth. From this perspective, the observations discussed in the previous chapter about visuality, projected onto the stage, acquire a new meaning that doubles the role of the addresses, that of the poet himself and the occasion: readers are also spectators, the poet is also a choreographer, the text acts as a script, literary characters are also actors with roles.

A further claim I plan to make in this chapter is that the pantomime-like features of the text would have then led to, and facilitated, a mise-en-scène of the epyllion on stage as a pantomime. Towards the end of this chapter I suggest a conversion of the *Abduction* into an actual pantomimic performance by building an experimental stage script for the text to be acted on stage: this exercise confirms the epyllion's compatibility with pantomimic performance and at the same time corroborates the theatricality of the text.

In the next section, I present a brief history of the pantomime in late antiquity, reviewing the main sources, structure, occasions, and venues in which it is documented as a great form of entertainment.[250] Subsequently, I examine the theatrical features that the *Abduction* shares with pantomime.

a. Pantomime in Late Antiquity

Ancient pantomime was a ballet-style dramatic performance where a single male masked dancer (ὀρχηστής)[251] impersonated mythical or historical characters accompanied by a chorus or a solo singer singing a libretto containing the plot and music.[252] The main sources of information about ancient pantomime are the dialogue *De saltatione* by Lucian of Samosata (125-180 AD), the *Oration* 64 of Libanius of Antioch (314-394 AD), and Colluthus' contemporaries Choricius of Gaza's *Apologia Mimorum*,

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250 I found especially useful Lada-Richards 2003 and 2004, Hall and Wyles 2008, Vesterinen 2007, Webb 2008 and 2009a, Liebeschuetz 1998, Greatrex 1999, and, for the relationship between Imperial performance and Christianity, Lugaresi 2008. More recently, Manuwald 2013.

251 Vesterinen 2007, 61-2. Sometimes, as we will see below, accompanied by an assistant actor.

252 Lada-Richards 2004, 17; Vesterinen 2007, 56.

and Procopius of Caesarea's *Secret History*. Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, particularly book 19, also provides interesting information.

All sources admire the versatility of pantomime dancers: they not only had to master the knowledge of the story but also had to be extremely skilled dancers and effective communicators. Lucian speaks of σαφήνεια: the performance was not just a dance show, but a silent act. Paul the Silentiary, a contemporary of Colluthus, admires the art of a deceased pantomime who was able to re-create "figures of men of old with silent gestures", εἰκόνας ἀρχεγόνων ... μερόπων νεύμασιν ἀφθόγγοισι. Dancers were mimes who had to play their characters through movements of their bodies, steps (φοραί), gestures (χειρονομία),[253] facial expressions (especially winks of the eyes, νεύματα).

In *Salt.* 62-3, Lucian recalls how the cynic Demetrius, previously sceptical about the capabilities of a dancer who, to convince him, had performed without music, eventually admits: Ἀκούω, ἄνθρωπε, ἃ ποιεῖς· οὐχ ὁρῶ μόνον, ἀλλά μοι δοκεῖς ταῖς χερσὶν αὐταῖς λαλεῖν, "Not only do I see, but I hear the things you do, and it seems to me that it is your hands themselves who are speaking". Nonnus, in *Dion.* 7.19-20, also speaks of the many communication channels of a pantomime: ὅτε στροφάδεσσιν ἐρωαῖς ὀρχηστὴρ πολύκυκλος ἑλίσσετο λαίλαπι ταρσῶν, νεύματα μῦθον ἔχων, παλάμην στόμα, δάκτυλα φωνήν, "When the circling dancer twirled in twists and turns with a tumult of footsteps, using only nods for words, hand for mouth, fingers for voice", and in 19.198-204 and 216-19, Maro uses his fingers to mime old myths:

> ὣς εἰπὼν ἐχόρευε Μάρων ἑλικώδεϊ ταρσῷ,
> δεξιὸν ἐκ λαιοῖο μετήλυδα ταρσὸν ἀμείβων,
> σιγὴν ποικιλόμυθον ἀναυδέι χειρὶ χαράσσων·
> ὀφθαλμοὺς δ' ἐλέλιζεν ἀλήμονας, εἰκόνα μύθων,
> νεύματι τεχνήεντι νοήμονα ῥυθμὸν ὑφαίνων·
> καὶ κεφαλὴν ἐτίνασσε καὶ ἤθελε βόστρυχα σείειν,
> εἰ μὴ γυμνὰ μέτωπα λιπότριχος εἶχε καρήνου.[...]
> ἐς Σατύρους δ' ὀρόων Γανυμήδεος ἔγραφε μορφὴν
> χερσὶν ἀφωνήτοισι, καὶ ὁππότε δέρκετο Βάκχας,
> Ἥβην χρυσοπέδιλον ἐχέφρονι δείκνυε σιγῇ.
> τοῖα Μάρων ἐχάρασσε πολύτροπα δάκτυλα πάλλων,
>
> He spoke thus, then Maro with rotating step switching his prop in turn, now on the right, now on the left, while with one hand he writes in the sky a silence that speaks many words. He lets his eyes wander, imitating a story, embroidering with artistic movement of his head an eloquent rhythm: he moves his head and would like to shake

[253] The sophist Lesbonactes of Mytilene (second century AD), calls pantomimes χειροσοφούς(Luc. *Salt.* 69).

> his curls, if, bold as he is, he did not have a naked forehead [...] he looks at the Satyrs and with his hands he paints Ganymede; when, on the other hand, he looks at the Bacchants, he paints, with a silence that is easy to understand, Hebe with golden shoes. This is what Maro depicts with multiple movements of his fingers.

The *Dionysiaca* have in fact been defined "epica della gestualità" as pantomime is so influential in Nonnus that in his proem he establishes his poetic ideal of visual word (but also acoustic- ποικιλία), evoking the apparition of Proteus (the ever-changing god, like Dionysus), which symbolizes the variety of his song, and challenging him in a virtuosity contest which he wins, securing Dionysus as his protector (*Dion.* 1.13-15):[254]

> ἀλλὰ χοροῦ ψαύοντα Φάρῳ παρὰ γείτονι νήσῳ
> στήσατέ μοι Πρωτῆα πολύτροπον, ὄφρα φανείη
> ποικίλον εἶδος ἔχων, ὅτι ποικίλον ὕμνον ἀράσσω

> Evoke for me the image of multiform Proteus, while he joins your dance in the nearby island of Pharos, may he appear in the variety of his shapes, as I wish to sing a variegated song.

Lucian (*Salt.* 19) explains how Proteus, the transformer, represented a familiar model for orators. He is nothing but a prototypical pantomimist who changes masks, and his transformations are nothing but impersonations on stage. Stories of metamorphosis such as Silenus' transformation into a river in Nonn. *Dion.* 19.225-86, therefore, provide ideal content for pantomimes.[255] Like Proteus, Dionysus also shares a passion for transformation, and his connection with pantomime is made clear especially in

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[254] Agosti 2006b, 354-55, and Shorrock 2008.

[255] Ingleheart 2008 and Schlapbach 2008, 314-337 explain how metamorphoses became a popular topic of pantomime by arguing that pantomime and rhetoric shared models. In *Salt.* 19, Lycinus shows how Proteus, far from being the pantomime's ideal or content, is in reality a pantomimist himself. The model therefore dissolves as the ideal of the medium is the medium itself: pantomime aspires to transformation, and as this is what pantomime actually does, the model is not a myth. Thus, pantomime is self-referential, as what a pantomimist aims to be is an actor, so a pantomimist wants to be what he already is. This logic (Lada-Richards 2004 and 2007) can be extended to explain other myths as pantomime performances. In mythology, many gods like to change shape: then, it is easy to be a god on stage. So the divine skills of a metamorphosing god are really the good skills of a talented dancer/actor, so myth is not pantomime's content, but it represents pantomime, which is prior to myth. The presentation of Proteus as a pantomime actor is a genial *aition* by Lucian, as, working on an actor's versatility or a performer's expressive possibilities, it leads to impersonation> visibility> eye-witnessing> truth. Plato had seen the danger of a poet who could get lost in his character and the debate had lasted for centuries. In rhetoric, Proteus was a familiar model like the octopus, to which orators are compared to, as mentioned by Pindar's version of Amphiaraus' admonition (Philodemus, *Rhet.* II p. 75, 32-4 Sudhanus): orator= octopus= rhetorical ideal; however a pantomimist, being a model of versatility, fits this ideal better.

the *Dionysiaca*.[256] Already the god of tragedy and comedy in classical times, he continues to be associated, in late antiquity, with theatrical arts. From Hellenistic and imperial Egypt, in fact, dancers and travelling entertainers were usually called with the name Dionysus.[257]

Libanius explains how in a pantomime, dancers move from swift movements to a still statuesque pose that creates for the spectator a living picture in a moment in time (*Or.* 64.117-18):

> τό γέ τοι δι'ἀκριβείας ὀφθῆναι τῶν δρωμένων ἕκαστον ὑπὸ τῆς ὀξύτητος ἡρπάσθη πολλάκις μεταπίπτοντος εἰς ὅ τι βούλει τοῦ σώματος. Πρωτεὺς Αἰγύπτιος μικροῦ τούτων ἕκαστος. φαίης ἂν αὐτοὺς τῇ ῥάβδῳ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς, ἣ τὴν ἰδέαν τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως τρέπει, πάντα φαίνεσθαι. πρεσβύτας, νέους, ταπεινούς, ὑψηλούς, κατηφεῖς, ἀνειμένους, διακόνους, δεσπότας. τὼ πόδε δὲ κἂν διερευνήσαιτό τις μὴ Περσέως αὐτοῖς ἐνῇ πλεονέκτημα.
>
> Mind you, the possibility of each of the actions being accurately observed has been taken away by the speed of their body repeatedly undergoing a change to whatever you like. Each of them is almost Proteus the Egyptian. You would say through the wand of Athena, which transforms the shape of Odysseus, they take on every guise; old men, young men, the humble, the mighty, the dejected, the elated, servants, masters. With respect to their feet, one might even question whether they possess the advantage over Perseus (transl. Molloy).

A pantomime's body was therefore like a canvas on which gender, age, divine or mortal nature, and sexuality, could be displayed.[258] The dancer's versatility to switch between roles of different sexes, nature and age[259] is also argued by Lucian *Salt.* 75, who defends pantomime performers' physical *symmetria* (the beauty ideal canonized by the Doryphorus of Polykleitus). Lucian's point, that dancers fit in with the beauty canon and are not what one sees on stage, is well demonstrated in a terracotta statuette from Roman Egypt[260] of a dancer who lifts his cloak to reveal his male attributes while also removing his female mask.

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256 Gonnelli 2003, 319-25.

257 Daris 1988.

258 Vesterinen 2007, 132-3.

259 In the anonymous epigram *AP* 16.289, the ability of dancer Xenophon of Smyrna to change roles during his performance in the *Bacchae* is praised: Αὐτὸν ὁρᾶν Ἰόβακχον ἐδόξαμεν, ἡνίκα Λήναις / ὁ πρέσβυς νεαρῆς ἦρχε χοροιμανίης, / καὶ Κάδμου τὰ πάρηβα χορεύματα καὶ τὸν ἀφ' ὕλης / ἄγγελον, εὐιακῶν ἰχνελάτην θιάσων, / καὶ τὴν εὐάζουσαν ἐν αἵματι παιδὸς Ἀγαυὴν / λυσσάδα. φεῦ θείης ἀνδρὸς ὑποκρισίης, "We thought we were looking at Bacchus himself when the old man lustily led the maenads in their furious dance, and played Cadmus tripping in the fall of his years, and the messenger coming from the woods where he had spied on the tumult of the Bacchants, and possessed Agave exulting in the blood of her son. Heavens! How divine was the man's acting!"

260 Vesterinen 2007, 56 and 138-9, and Plate 4, Fig. 19.

How were scenes structured in pantomime? Since we are dealing with a silent form of art, some form of communication code must have been used by the dancer and/or the chorus/solo singer to carry the audience seamlessly from one scene to the next, so that there would have been no ambiguity about which part of the story was being played. Plut. *Mor.* 747c explains how dancers would interrupt movements (κινήσεις) and strike a pose (σχέσεις) to create a pause and transition between roles.[261] After this, action was renewed, not resumed, so a new scene would have been acted.[262]

Earlier in this chapter I have discussed how the viewing process affects gender. How did this process work in pantomime, where all communication travels through viewing? Pantomimes, usually male actors, were generally considered effeminate. Interestingly, displaying one's body in public in a rhetorical context was considered appropriate, while appearing on stage in public while performing a pantomime was generally disapproved of. A male audience was thought to be affected by the view of generic male dancers, as dancers' effeminacy would extend on male spectators, who would eventually lose their moral sense and become effeminate themselves.[263] But not all sources agree on the immoral effects of pantomime on the audience: Lucian, in *Salt.* 78-9, describes the effects of pantomime as edifying and morally uplifting for spectators (a discrepancy that can easily be justified with the apologetic nature of his text):

> οὕτω δὲ θέλγει ὄρχησις ὥστε ἂν ἐρῶν τις εἰς τὸ θέατρον παρέλθοι, ἐσωφρονίσθη ἰδὼν ὅσα ἔρωτος κακὰ τέλη· καὶ λύπῃ ἐχόμενος ἐξέρχεται τοῦ θεάτρου φαιδρότερος ὥσπερ τι φάρμακον ληθεδανὸν καὶ κατὰ τὸν ποιητὴν νηπενθές τε καὶ ἄχολον πιών.
>
> Such is the potency of a pantomime's art, that the amorous spectator is cured of his infirmity by perceiving the evil effects of passion, and he who enters the theatre under a load of sorrow departs from it with a serene countenance, as though he had drunk that draught of forgetfulness that lulls all pain and wrath.

While we have extensive information on the introduction of pantomime in Rome under Augustus,[264] knowledge of late-antique pantomime is less broad. Libanius'

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[261] Hall 2008, 270, Hall and Wyles 2008, 78, 88-9 and Schlapbach 2008, 334-6.

[262] Lada-Richards 2004, 23.

[263] Vesterinen 2007, 135-7. The same applies to female dancers, who supplied a distorted image of women that would be retained by spectators.

[264] Augustus introduced pantomime in Rome with Pylades from Cilicia and Bathyllus of Alexandria, who was a close friend of Mecenates, around 23 BC (Cass. Dio 53.31.2-3). The most popular occasion was the *Ludi Saeculares* in 17 BC, where at least one *saltator* performed. The games constituted an important part of the *princeps*' programme of cultural renovation (Zanker 1988, 101-2, and 167-93),

Oration 64 was written in Antioch, and from it we learn that Antioch was a great place to have fun.[265] Lucian's *De Saltatione* was also composed there, in response to Aelius Aristides' attack to dancers. With regards to dancers, we know that Commodus (second century AD) granted public support for mimes and pantomime dancers, and that it was certainly possible to hire dancers in Egypt. Pantomime was also popular in Roman Britain and France[266] around 300 AD, and sculptures of the Judgement of Paris appear on the *pulpitum* of the theatre of Sabratha in Libya (175-200 AD).

Exploring the possibility that the papyrus known as the Barcelona's Alcestis, recovered in 1981, may have been a pantomime libretto, Edith Hall[267] argues that the poem fits in with the period in which pantomime flourished in Latin-speaking regions of the empire (between the first and the sixth century AD) as the papyrus has been dated by Marcovich to the fourth century AD. Pantomime's popularity in imperial times in the East appears clear from the information available, which comes mainly from literary sources. Colluthus' epyllion dates to Anastasius time (491-518), when, as we have seen in Chapter 1, pantomime shows were extremely popular often performed in festivals, where factions' riots caused so much turmoil to force a ban on pantomime shows in 502.[268] The festivals on which we have some information are those of the Brytae, the Maiuma, and the Edessa.

The Brytae festival took place in Constantinople, likely in the Great theatre of Severus,[269] and it involved water spectacles (as some spectators were drowned in the disturbances), mime and pantomime. John of Antioch and John Malalas only refer to it by name.[270] The Edessa festival took place in May at the same time as the Brytae, and surely in 496, 498, 499 and 502. According to [John the Stylite], at the festival pagan

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joining archaic elements (dance) to Greek elements. Until 17 BC, pantomime had a poor reputation, as it was considered an unfit form of entertainment for respectable members of equestrian range and ladies, but Augustus aimed at rehabilitating it. Novelty was a key element to its success with the Roman public: like tigers, elephants and other exotic animals, this previously unseen spectacle, involving a silent dancer accompanied by a singer or a chorus, stunned the spectators. This new show was in most cases based on Hellenic content (myths and tragedy plots), which were also new to the public. Pantomime became an institution of Roman theatres, and reflected parts of archaizing religious forms, which were the obvious connection with Augustean religious reforms. Pompeii was certainly a pantomime-loving city, if we go by the number of theatres and testimonies of pantomime, among which is a wall painting in the House of Apollo showing a dancer impersonating many roles (Hunt 2008, 170-184).

265 Lib. *Or.* 64 11.218.

266 Hall-Wyles 2008, 19.

267 Hall 2008, 258-82.

268 Proc. Gaz. *Pan. Anast.* 16; see Chauvot 1986, 164.

269 Greatrex and Watt 1999, 3-4, Liebeschuetz 1998.

270 Greatrex and Watt 1999 discuss the possible identification of the Brytae with the Edessa festival described by [John the Stylite].

myths were chanted, and an ὀρχηστής danced for three days on this occasion, which is regarded as sinful and blamed for the famine and plague that hit the city.[271] The Maiuma festival also took place in May, from the third century AD, in various cities (mainly Antioch and Aphrodisias, but also Rome) and it also involved water, mime and possibly pantomime.[272] All these festivals took place in theatres, in a context of official contest. In addition to these, we know of a festival of Chemmis in honour of Perseus (identified with Horus or Min-Pan), which took place in Panopolis and was already known to Herodotus (2.91). This festival, which initially included only athletic competitions, from the third century AD also included poetic, on-stage and musical contests.[273]

Pantomime is often associated in imperial times with mime, especially in iconography. The two types of performances shared a place in festivals, as seen above, but mime involved speaking and singing actors, while in a pantomime a silent actor danced wearing a closed-mouth mask.[274] Mime is traditionally associated with an audience of lower social status,[275] while pantomime performances do not seem to be socially confined: copious evidence that pantomime was not just enjoyed by lower classes but was also popular with the literary world comes from Ovid, Nonnus,[276] and Xenophon, who, in *Symp.* 9.3-7, describes a pantomime performance taking place during a dinner party for a well-educated audience. Another key difference involves the themes for the two genres: mime is concerned with everyday-life sketches involving lower-class characters, while pantomime is usually centered on mythological or historical episodes. The training for the two types of performers may have also differed: a pantomime dancer was expected to know the material and to master the art of acting silently with his body. We do not possess information on the training of mime actors, but, considering they acted through speech and singing, one may assume that they did not need to be as skilled in exploiting their bodies for expression as pantomime dancers. Pantomime is also often associated with acrobatic

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271 Jos. Styl. 30 (AD 498) and 27 (AD 496). This detail about the pagan myth content and the pantomime is confirmed by Jacob of Serug, see Moss 1935.

272 Greatrex and Watt 1999, 8-17.

273 A papyrus (*POxy.* 2476) dated to 289 AD lists the privileges for the competitors of the games called Περσέως Οὐρανίου τῶν μεγάλων Πανίων (Gonnelli 2003, 320 n. 1 and 321 n. 3).

274 Vesterinen 2007, 56 and 138-9.

275 Vesterinen 2007, 60 n. 157.

276 Nonn. *Dion.* 7. 19-20, and Ovid *Trist.* 2.519.

dance,[277] although the evidence for this last type of performance appears more conspicuous from the fourth century AD in Roman Egypt, while the evidence for pantomime performers around the same period is less abundant. Vesterinen gives an excellent account of the dancers (of all types) in Roman Egypt, including iconographic and papyri evidence dated between the first and fourth century AD. The monography provides a complete picture of the professional category of dancers, with limited but nevertheless useful references to the late antique period.[278]

b. The *Abduction of Helen* and Pantomime

To substantiate her case that the Barcelona Alcestis may be a pantomime libretto, Hall employs first some criteria such as chronology, provenance, meter and popularity of the myth as a topic for pantomime performances. She then gains evidence through some internal elements such as the level of dramatization of the myth and the structural organization of the text in five monodramas, where characters' roles never overlap.[279] In the next section, I follow a similar approach for the *Abduction of Helen* to show which aspects of the poem reveal the influence of this theatrical genre on the text.

With regards to provenance, Marcovich[280] suggested that the Barcelona Alcestis may come from Eastern regions of the empire, and more specifically from Egypt, based on the fact that in the poem Alcestis burns some Oriental spices while preparing her own funeral. This detail is used to hypothesize that the plot is transferred from Pherae in Thessaly.[281] He also took this theory one step further by proposing Egypt as the precise place of provenance of the poem, since this country was the main producer of papyri. Hall questions whether this may actually have been the origin of the libretto, since the myth of Alcestis was quite popular as a subject for pantomimes,[282] and the poem may have thus originated anywhere, although the actual papyrus was discovered in Spain. The issue of the conflict between the physical origin of the

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277 Although mimes only are associated with acrobatic performers in Roman papyri, a connection which may suggest that shows including mimes and acrobatic performers gained widespread popularity during the Byzantine period. The popularity of circus and races in late antiquity is also reflected in drawings and textile decorations (Vesterinen 2007, 65).

278 Vesterinen 2007.

279 Hall 2008.

280 Discussed in Hall 2008, 260-1.

281 This is also the setting for Euripides' *Alcestis*.

282 The topic is considered a staple of pantomime repertoire by Juvenal 6.652, and is listed as one of the most popular subjects for pantomime by Lucian, in *Salt.* 52.

papyrus and the origin of the poem itself does not apply to our epyllion, as Colluthus' text was discovered in Calabria, in Southern Italy, by Cardinal Giovanni Bessarione in the fifteenth century. However, in the case of the *Abduction of Helen*, the generic consideration about Egypt as the main producer of papyri stands on stronger grounds since we know that Colluthus was from Lykopolis, a semi-Hellenized town in the Egyptian Thebaid region, while the identity and provenance of the author of the Barcelona Alcestis is unknown.

Lucian, in *Salt.* 36-7, tells us how a pantomime should approach the material for the stage and where he should source it:

> ἡ δὲ πᾶσα τῷ ἔργῳ χορηγία ἡ παλαιὰ ἱστορία ἐστίν, ὡς προεῖπον, καὶ ἡ πρόχειρος αὐτῆς μνήμη τε καὶ μετ' εὐπρεπείας ἐπίδειξις· ἀπὸ γὰρ χάους εὐθὺς καὶ τῆς πρώτης τοῦ κόσμου γενέσεως ἀρξάμενον χρὴ αὐτὸν ἅπαντα εἰδέναι ἄχρι τῶν κατὰ τὴν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν Αἰγυπτίαν. Τούτῳ γὰρ τῷ διαστήματι περιωρίσθω ἡμῖν ἡ τοῦ ὀρχηστοῦ πολυμαθία καὶ τὰ διὰ μέσου μάλιστα ἴστω
>
> For his materials, he must draw continually, as I have said, upon his unfailing memory of ancient story; and memory must be backed by taste and judgement. He must know the history of the world, from the time when it first emerged from Chaos down to the days of Egyptian Cleopatra. These limitations we will concede to the pantomime's wide field of knowledge; but within them he must be familiar with every detail.

From Lucian's passage we learn that the pantomime performer was expected to acquire a wide range of subjects, including mythology, history and literature,[283] and also that Cleopatra's story was considered "the last outpost of the "Greek rule".[284] In particular, the erotic and dramatic nature of this last historical milestone, given Cleopatra's intense love life, fulfils the requirements of a suitable topic for pantomime, and bridges the gap between myth and history. Lucian then provides a list of the topics that a good pantomime actor should know in depth (37-61). The actor, considering the size of the list, was to have an excellent memory, but also great taste in choosing the story. Lucian also explains (62) that a performer was to be extremely clear, so that his gestures would be understood and unequivocally linked to the myth by the audience. I have hinted above at the popularity of the myth of Alcestis: its popularity is also confirmed by its presence in the novel, in art and in

[283] In *Salt.* 61 Lucian states that a good dancer cannot ignore the works of Homer, Hesiod and the tragedians. The level of education described implies that a pantomime artist could not have embarked on this profession overnight, and is also aligned with the general reputation of pantomime performers as socially one step or more above mime actors (Hunt 2008, 176).

[284] Vesterinen 2007, 58.

tragedy.[285] When it comes to Colluthus, all of the myths presented in the *Abduction* are included in Lucian's list, and the rape of Helen is the only story to be mentioned three times in the dialogue.[286] Of course the fact that all these myths were popular as topics for pantomime shows does not prove that the *Abduction of Helen* was performed as a pantomime. However, Paris' judgment features as the topic of the tenth book of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, which provides an invaluable account of a pantomime performance, comprehensive of details about the stage setting, the props, the roles of each actor, and their movements and steps.

Ovid's *Heroides* were probably also performed on stage, and the judgement of Paris is also featured in *epistulae* 16 and 17.[287] Most characters featured in the *Heroides* also appear in Lucian's list of popular topics for pantomimes.[288] In *Remedia Amoris* 751-6, Ovid says that love stories are danced and recommends broken hearts to avoid theatres: indeed the erotic and emotive content of the popular myths that were played on stage and their tragic end would justify his recommendation. In *Tristia* 2.519-10 and 2 25-30,[289] Ovid points his finger to Augustus as some of his works were presented on stage as pantomime libretti: Cunningham and Sargent argued that the poems that Ovid was referring to were no other than his *Heroides.*[290] A further consideration of statistic nature can be made about Ovid's *Epistula* 16 (Paris to Helen), whose length is 378 lines, only 16 verses shorter than Colluthus' epyllion: if Ovid's text was used as a libretto for a pantomime, the *Abduction of Helen* could also have been.

Finally, Dracontius, a contemporary of Colluthus, also composed an *Abduction of Helen,* a text clearly structured in five scenes, and, according to Bright, heavily influenced by the aesthetics of pantomime.[291]

It has generally been accepted that the hexameter was the preferred meter for pantomime librettos, based on the fact that two of the texts that almost certainly

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[285] In the Basilica of Herculaneum there is painting of Alcestis and Admetus, a drawing of which is kept at Naples' Archaeological Museum (Hall 2008, 262, fig. 12.1). Also see discussion of the topic in the specific context of funerary art in Hall and Wyles 2008, 105. *POxy.* 4546 includes iambics attributed to Admetus from Euripides' *Alcestis* 344-82.

[286] The judgement of the goddesses (*Salt.* 45.8); the abduction of Helen (40.10, 45.8, 46.5); Phyllis and Demophon (40.9); Hyacinth (45.2); Erigone (40.4).

[287] Hunt 2008, 169-84.

[288] Sargent 1996, 147. For a comprehensive analysis of the sources of Roman libretti, Hunt 2008,169-184; Schlapbach 2008, 314- 337; Panayotakis 2008, 185-97; Zimmermann 2008, 218-26.

[289] Cunningham 1949, 101

[290] Cunningham 1949, 100-106 analyses why other Ovid works cannot be the *poemata* he refers to as *saltata (Trist.* 2.519*)*. Hunt 2008, 176, Ingleheart 2008, 198-217.

[291] Bright 1987, 219-20.

were performed as pantomime were composed in hexameters: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides*, and the Dido episode from Virgil's *Aeneid.*[292] Hall argues that, since the Barcelona Alcestis is also composed in hexameters, this aspect also points in the direction of pantomime. The text has also been considered as the product of a different genre: on the one hand, its similarities with rhetorical exercises[293] have prompted some scholars to interpret it as a declamation; on the other hand, it has been viewed as a cento, a mini tragic drama, and an epyllion. This last consideration is based on the association with the *Hylas* and the *Orestis Tragoedia* of Dracontius, and may represent an interesting point of contact with Colluthus' text. Hall in fact highlights how the Alcestis, compared to Dracontius' epyllia, is "more consistently emotive", and contains more action and rhythmical patterns. These characteristics do not apply to Dracontius' *Abduction of Helen*, but they certainly feature in Colluthus' version of the story, making it a more meaningful parallel to the Barcelona Alcestis.

Colluthus' epyllion is also composed in hexameters; however, even if this feature fits in with pantomime, it cannot in my opinion be considered as exclusively pointing to this genre. Pantomime shared more than one feature with rhetorical *declamationes* and with *ethopoiiai* in particular: in these rhetorical exercises, the speaker impersonated a famous mythological or historical character and fought their case. The speech also included some narrative in third person. Colluthus' epyllion contains sixteen speeches amounting to 36 per cent of the text. Although the dramatic effect achieved in the *Abduction* is obvious, it cannot be said, as for the Barcelona Alcestis, that the story is told solely through a series of monologues, as Colluthus indulges in descriptions and some mythological digressions.

How did the text work with the visual part of the performance, i.e. the dance, and its acoustic part, i.e. the music? Poetry, dance and music had to function together to achieve success. Pantomime was normally accompanied by a hand percussion instrument (like the τύμπανα or κύμβαλα, Lat. *scabellum*) or a wind instrument (like the αὐλός or σῦριγξ), sometimes with the addition of a κιθάρα and water organ: in any case the music was loud, very rhythmical and polyphonic.[294]

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[292] Panayotakis 2008. See also Manuwald 2013 for the libretto of the Pseudo-Senecan Octavia.

[293] The Alcestis is the topic of a rhetorical exercise named *Alcesta* (Hall 2008, 264 n. 15).

[294] Vesterinen 2003, 47-8 and 2007, 58. For a comprehensive summary of the musical instruments accompanying dance see Vesterinen 2007, 185-94.

The musicality of the hexameter began with the theory of one syllable matching one step.[295] Andrieu[296] lists the figures that, especially in a dialogue, could suggest a scenic performance rather than silent reading. These are the same quoted by Mastromarco[297] and Hall,[298] who lists a series of stylistic features that, in the Barcelona Alcestis, would have worked well with the rhythm of the *scabellum*: they are alliteration, rhetorical questions, isoteleuton, avoidance of enjambment,[299]anaphora and the repetition of similar words. For instance, the moment of Alcestis' death was represented on stage by long slow steps accompanied by long words. In the *Abduction*, musical figures are numerous: alliteration is quite common (57, 71, 133-34, 159, 206, 226-27, 243, 283), as are anaphora (95-96, 105-106, 128-29, 283-84) and assonance (71, 256-57). Rhetorical questions are also used by the poet (300, 150, 162, 188-89, 340 and 350). The synergy of a stylistically script, the rhythmical steps and movements of a skilled dancer, and the music would have required the librettist to be competent in theatrical verse and experienced in pantomime technique if he intended to fulfil his commission.

The relevance of monologues within pantomimes was noted in the nineteenth century by many scholars who believed that the word *canticum* implied a form of monologue, and who observed that the number of monologues that would have been included in the pantomime about the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite described by Lucian *Salt.* 63. *Oratio recta* offered the best medium for the dancer to express emotions and pathos, as in an example from the Latin anthology where a series of unconnected active verbs are used to describe a *saltator.*

The Barcelona Alcestis is clearly organized in blocks of 7-13 hexameters corresponding to the five characters of the story (Admetus, Apollo, Admetus' father and mother, and Alcestis), which, as they are direct speeches, can be defined as monodramas. As noted above, the quantitative weight of direct speech in the Alcestis cannot be compared to that in Colluthus' *Abduction.* However, direct speeches are among the most powerful techniques used by Colluthus to dramatize his plot.

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295 David 2006, 227-36.
296 Andrieu 1954, 183-206.
297 Mastromarco 1984, 19.
298 Hall 2008, 279-81.
299 However, the presence of enjambment in Alcestis' role (in 112-16, where one sentence is composed of four hexameters) is justified by Hall 2008, 281 with her role being the most dramatic and emotionally intense of the plot.

Characters speaking in the first person, using the present tense (for instance in Aphrodite's pre-contest speech, 87-98) fit in with a pantomime performance and can be interpreted as a series of choreographic directions pointing at the props that the dancer may have used (96-7: "I have my girdle, I ply my goad, I raise my bow"). The dancer, later (155-7), would have lifted his robe to show Aphrodite's chest (a prop).

The *Abduction of Helen* contains sixteen speeches, around 36 per cent of the whole epyllion. If we exclude the descriptions of the wedding at the start, and the description of Paris' journey to Sparta, it can be said that the plot is actually narrated through direct speeches. The feeling is that of a dramatic, dynamic story narrated by its characters. The dramatization of a plot was also a vital requirement for plots destined to pantomime (versus tragedy): mythological stories had to be first carefully chosen on the basis of their erotic and pathetic potential, and then emotionally enhanced when brought to stage for this type of show, in order to spur a wide range of emotions in their audience. Lucian (*Salt.* 79) praises the effects of a performance, in which spectators will benefit from watching sorrowful topics (ὁπόταν τι οἰκτρὸν καὶ ἐλεεινὸν φαίνηται "whenever anything is represented that calls for sorrow or compassion"), and Libanius (*Or.* 64.110) mentions that death on stage also featured regularly in pantomime shows as the ultimate pathos generator. This is a focal point of distinction between pantomime and tragedy, as in tragedy the presence of corpses or dying bodies was treated in a completely different manner, and death took place almost always off stage (with the exception of Alcestis). Death on stage was not only accepted by also expected in pantomime: in *AP* 9.254 Lucilius attributed the failure of a performance to the fact that the dancer did not actually kill himself on stage while impersonating Niobe. Hall notes how Alcestis' death is expressed first by her preparing her own pyre and arranging the perfumes to burn, then through progressively slower movements and stiffer positions, and longer words, all conveying the idea of a death-dance.

Close to the dramatization of the myth is another stylistic feature of pantomime: the concreteness and physicality of its plots.[300] Abstract concepts are expressed through concrete images or objects, personifications, bodily parts, movements, gestures; for instance, in the Barcelona Alcestis, destiny is envisaged as two sisters who break the thread of fate in line 4. In Colluthus, sleep and death are

[300] Hall 2008, 277-8.

personified as two brothers in 366-8; the night is also personified as she opens the two gates (concrete objects) of dreams (abstract concept) in 318-23; Eris is compared to a heifer stung by a gadfly in 41-45, and her anger and envy are expressed quite physically in the passage that follows (46-63) through a series of gestures and movements: she cannot sit still on her chair, and she thinks of different plans to disrupt the banquet of the gods, until she finally throws in the golden apple. The relevance of gestures differentiates the dancer from an orator and a tragedy actor: the actor of tragedy and the orator use their gestures to express abstract ideas, or the overall sense of what they are saying, while the *saltatores* use them to imitate things, not ideas. Thus the libretto would have helped the dancer with the imitation of precise actions, things, as sung by the choir or singer.

Let us consider Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* from this point of view. If we look at Hermione's tearful awakening, the episode revolves around a series of questions that the girl addresses to herself and her maids. She answers them, too. She suggests possible scenarios and she disbelieves them. She cries herself to sleep. She has a dream, and she even speaks in the dream, asking Helen what has happened. Helen replies blaming Paris; this revelation awakens Hermione, and again, she voices her decision to address a message to Menelaus. There is no need for description in this dynamic scene: characters move fast, dramatically describing scary scenarios (a car accident, an abandoned corpse in the woods, a floating body in the waters, a lost woman who cannot find her way home at night, a lawless kidnapper who broke into a house), and all is made even more dramatic as it is said through the voice of a helpless child. This effect is also enhanced by the language used by Colluthus in this specific passage: the child repeats herself, insists on her status of abandoned daughter, and does not at any stage contemplate the possibility that her mother has left her willingly.

Is the *Abduction* technically suitable to be staged? In-depth analysis of the text's compatibility with stage performance helps us conclude that, if we consider the requirements for each scene (stage equipment, props and masks), bringing this text to the stage would not have represented a challenging task.

Although the location changes a number of times (we move from the wedding to Mount Ida, to Sparta, to Troy), the actual place of each scene is not vital for action

to happen, and all the locations could have been made understood to the audience by means of dance and mime. In addition, a chorus would have recited the hexameters *about* the place, so the public could not have misunderstood. For instance, the change of location in 193, when Paris sets off on his journey to Sparta, could have been mimed by the actor with a rowing movement, and the same goes for Helen opening the doors of her house to Paris in 254. Speaking of Herodas' mime 4, Mastromarco[301] examines how the stage may have been set for representing at once the outside and the inside of Asclepius' shrine: in fact the women first have a conversation around the temple, and then comment on the artworks that are inside it. Mime generally followed a rule of unity of time, space and action, so the apparent obstacle of representing a change of location on stage could be easily overcome by misrepresenting the architecture or the exact archaeology, or by juxtaposing on stage places that in reality were not beside each other. We can assume that something similar may also have happened in pantomimes: in fact, if pantomime actors were so quick in switching masks and props to impersonate multiple characters during the same performance, we can assume that stage props were also being added or moved according to each scene's requirements.

Props and accessories did not represent a challenge either: pantomimes wore a neutral coloured tunic or χλαῖνα,[302]which facilitated a fast adaptation to the next character through the addition of a new mask and some props. Therefore, the role of Paris would have been accessorized with a pipe or a club and a goat's skin, and when the actor had to switch to Aphrodite's role, he would have added an elaborated wig and a prop simulating her breasts.

We have seen that dancers, orators and tragedy actors all used gesticulation. Quintilian[303] disapproves of the Greek habit of orators whose gestures are overdone and synchronized with their words in a rhythmical way, and Hall notes how this disapproval clarifies the difference between an orator and a librettist, who would have aimed at matching text musicality and words' shape to gestures. Colluthus' epyllion, as the Barcelona Alcestis, does not include specific choreographic directions.[304] However, characters' gestures and movements can be read as directions, as well as the announcement of the next character's name. In the previous sections of

301 Mastromarco 1984, 62.
302 Wyles 2008, 61-86 and Vesterinen 2007, 57.
303 Quint. *Inst. Or.* 11.3.102.
304 Hall 2008, 281.

this chapter I have discussed how characters are described in a very pictorial (or ekphrastic) manner, highlighting their gestures and appearance. There can be no doubt that the poet meant to present his characters in a very visual way, whether this was meant simply for the enjoyment of a reader, or as a spectacle for a voyeuristic audience.

In the *Abduction*, the ὀρχηστής availed of all the material he required to impersonate his characters at its best: through dance and gestures (that are described in the text) he could express emotions and actions in a clear way. In particular, characters pointing at objects or body parts constitute a standard code for a skilled gesticulator.[305] As in the Barcelona Alcestis each character points at specific body parts (for instance Admetus' father points at his own eyes, Admetus' mother at her womb alluding to childbirth), so in the *Abduction* we have seen how gestures and bodies, in particular heads (and hairstyles) often constitute part of the new role being introduced.

As discussed earlier in this section, Colluthus may intentionally have composed a poem that would have reminded readers of a pantomime performance. This leads one to imagine that, exactly because of its pantomime-likeness, the text may have been used for a pantomime performance independently from the poet's intention, perhaps after his death or anyhow separately from its fruition as a literary text, similarly to what happened, for instance, to Virgil's *Aeneid*. This consideration would offer a different perspective on the allocation of visuality and action within the plot. The solo dancer would mime the gesticulation and movements imitating, for instance, Aphrodite styling her hair, while the solo singer (if there is one) would chant the lines describing the clasp and gold. If we hypothesize that the poem was used in patomimes, the descriptions of each character's appearance, far from taking away from the visual effect on the audience, do nothing but increase the visual impact. The public would see and hear about the hairstyle, matching the information from the dance and from the song, and compensating for what dance could not tell with the words being sung. The synergy between the language of sculpture and poetry

[305] Hall 2008, 275.

described by Lada-Richards[306] would actually have taken place on stage in this way, and no information would have been missed in the process.

The number of artists (a single masked male dancer plus a solo singer or a chorus) required for a pantomime performance varied according to factors such as the type of venue destined to host the show. [307] Like for mimes,[308] venues for pantomimes depended on the sponsor of the show, so if the client was a rich aristocrat at the Alexandrian court, his luxurious living room could have been an appropriate location.[309] Obviously if a pantomime was being performed at a theatre in front of a large audience, the dancer may have been accompanied by a chorus rather than by a solo singer. How many actors or dancers would have been required to stage Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*? If we exclude the singing staff, would it have physically been possible to stage the text with one single dancer (and/or an assistant actor)?[310]

To answer this question, in the next section I analyze first the number of roles involved in the plot, and at which point a pause to allow for changes of mask or scene would have been required; then, I look at the text by scene, suggesting how the performance and set would have been structured, and how the material would have been allocated to a dancer and/or to a singer/chorus.

In the Barcelona Alcestis there are five characters, a number that, as noted by Hall,[311] is in line with Lucian *Salt.* 66, where the average number of masks used in pantomime shows is said to be five.[312] The roles never overlap, so the dancer would have interpreted each role in a sequence, and would have been able to change masks

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306 Lada-Richards 2003, 3-37.

307 Mastromarco 1986, 46, analysing Herodas' mimes, suggests that multiple mimes could be performed in a sequence, given the shortness of some of them. For instance, mime 7 (129 lines) would have required 7 actors and it could have been represented with mimes 1 and 5 (which share a similar stage setting), where an actor would have played multiple roles across the various mimes.

308 Mastromarco 1984, 65 and 94-5, facing the question whether Herodas' mimiambs were performed in a theatre for the benefit of thousands of spectators, or at the court of Alexandria, in some wealthy house at the presence of selected aristocratic elite, concludes that his texts may have been performed in either of the two occasions, and could also have been destined for reading. The written circulation happened probably without the author's supervision, but thanks to the goodwill of whoever was interested in keeping a copy of the mimiambs. Herodas probably designed his texts just for scenic performance.

309 In Pompeii a living room that was undergoing extensive renovations at the time of the Vesuvius' eruption (69 AD), and which apparently belonged to Poppaea (Hall and Wyles 2008, 16).

310 Quintilian 6.3.65 speaks of a second dancer. See Hall 2002, 29 and 2008, 267 n. 23.

311 Hall 2008, 265, and Vesterinen 2007, 57.

312 In *Salt.* 67 Lucian says that the dancer played four roles (Atreus, Thyestes, Aegisthus and Aerope) in a pantomime about the Argos feud; in Chrinag. *AP* 9.542 a plot is shaped for Bathyllus so that it offered four roles or more.

and props without creating confusion either on stage or in the audience about which role was being played at any given time. In the *Abduction* there are three main characters (Aphrodite, Helen and Paris) plus Zeus, Hermes, Athena, Hera, Hermione, and the maids. All of these nine characters (assuming one maid spoke for all of them) have speaking roles. While the minimum number of roles of four (as stated by Lucian and Chrinagoras) is reached, the high number of roles may seem out of the ordinary and pose some questions. However, I argue that some roles such as that of the maid speaking may have been sung by the chorus, while the dancer continued to play Hermione, thus expressing her reaction to the maids' words. A similar scenario has been suggested by Hall for Admetus in the Barcelona Alcestis, who could have been played by an assistant actor. This suggestion is made because Admetus does not express himself as intensely as the other characters, and his position (lying on a couch and kneeling) would not have been challenging to hold for an assistant. I suggest that something similar may also have happened with Hermes' role: his speech to Paris may have been sung by the chorus or the solo singer accompanying the pantomime. In both scenes, the chorus would have allowed the dancer to express their emotions in a more serial way: so Hermione would have reacted to the maids' speech expressing shock, despair, fear, hope, deception, and Paris would have been allowed to continue acting the naïve shepherd who listens to his assignment.

The next point to be discussed is at which point the mask[313] changes would have taken place. The contrast between the speed of the dancers' skilful steps and the stillness of the transition poses worked effectively as an unequivocal signal for spectators that a new scene, with potentially new characters and new scenario, was about to be introduced. If Colluthus' epyllion was used as a libretto for a pantomime, the choreographer[314] would have structured roles in a sequence, in order to allow the dancer to comfortably change masks and props.

Sara Cascione, who choreographed an experimental version of the Barcelona Alcestis as a pantomime in 1999, noted that the change of mask and accessories took the dancer less than sixty seconds. In the Barcelona Alcestis, identifying the times for mask changes is not complicated, since the text is a series of monologues, and the

313 For masks in pantomime, see Webb 2008, 43-60.
314 Vesterinen 2007, 62.

next character is announced at these times.[315] A similar analysis proves more challenging for the *Abduction*, as speeches alternate with narrative parts. I suggest allocating these to the solo singer (who would have performed a similar role to that of the herald described by Augustine in *Doct. Christ.* 2.38.97).

In the table below, scenes have not been identified on the basis of pauses, but as episodes where one or multiple characters have a part: therefore, all scenes but 1, 3 and 4 are dominated by one single character, while in scenes 1, 3 and 4 the dancer impersonates more than one character. However, as each character's role is quite limited in scenes 1, 3 and 4, they have been grouped (scene 1: the gods' arrival to the wedding; scene 3: the reaction of the goddesses to the apple; scene 4: Hermes and then Aphrodite). In some scenes I propose that the singer/chorus may have sung the lines of a character, while the dancer impersonated a different character's reaction: for instance, in scene 6 the dancer may have continued to impersonate Paris, while the singer/chorus sang lines 129-131, belonging to Hermes. This would have allowed continuity to Paris' performance (along with scenes 5, 6, 7) avoiding the interruption to switch to Hermes' role. I make a similar suggestion for scenes 15, 17 and 23, where a new character is briefly introduced but does not play a fundamental part in it, so in scene 15 and 17 the myths of Phyllis and Hyacinthus are introduced as digressions within Paris' journey to Sparta. Assuming that the singer sang the lines referring to each myth while the dancer continued to play Paris would, again, allow continuity to the overall journey episode, and thus scenes 13 to 18 (lines 193-253) would potentially become one scene.

In scene 23, three different characters are on stage: Hermione, her maids, and her mother Helen. Five different scenes (where the dancer would have impersonated first Hermione, then the maids, then Hermione again, then Helen, and finally Hermione again) should be acted. However, if we picture the dancer playing just Hermione for the whole scene, while the singer sang the lines belonging to the other roles (maids, Helen), the scene would flow better, as the dancer could have acted distraught Hermione while listening to her maids and to Helen's voice.

Scene 22 poses another challenge, as it consists of a passage about dreams (318-327), without characters. This passage could represent a break before moving on to Hermione's scene, so the singer could have sung while the dancer performed

[315] Hall 2008, 268-70 identified mask changes at lines 11, 21, 31, 42 and 71, where the actor would have impersonated Admetus, then Apollo, Admetus' father, Admetus' mother, and finally Alcestis.

without impersonating anyone. I suggest that this part was also included in scene 21, where, after Helen accepted to leave with Paris, the singer would have continued to sing about how Paris brought Helen to Troy (as to wrap up on the key event of the story), and only then did the dancer start his impersonation of Hermione.

Scene	Lines	Dancer	Solo singer/chorus	Stage set
1: Proem and wedding of Peleus and Thetis	1-40	During this descriptive scene with a number of different characters, the dancer impersonates Ganymede, then the various gods arriving to the wedding (with the use of many masks): Zeus, Poseidon, Melisseus, Apollo, Hera, Aphrodite, Peitho, Athena, Artemis, and Ares	sings lines 1-40	No particular stage setting
2: Strife	41-63	Strife in a series of dances: first in her wanderings overwhelmed by jealousy, then her jumping up in her seat, her smiting the bosom of the earth, her unbarring the bolts of the hollows, her brandishing the thunderbolt, her withdrawing in fear of Ares, and finally her throwing the golden apple into the banquet.	sings and accompany the movements of the dancer with the verses	No particular stage setting
3: Reaction of the goddesses and orders of Zeus	64-78	The dancer impersonates in turn Hera, Aphrodite and Athena, then Zeus ordering Hermes to let Paris judge.	sings and accompany the movements of the dancer with the verses	The gods' banquet
4: Aphrodite's speech	79-101	First Hermes obeys Zeus' orders, then Aphrodite styles her hair and makes a speech to the Loves	sings Aphrodite's verses	No particular stage setting
5: Paris	102-126	Paris in his bucolic attire, playing his pipe	sings verses	Mount Ida= bucolic setting
6: Hermes' message	127-131	Hermes tells Paris to judge the goddesses	sings this part, while the dancer continues acting as Paris while listening to Hermes' order	As above
7: Paris judging the goddesses	132-136	Paris analyzes each goddess	sings verses	As above
8: Athena's speech	137-146	Athena promises excellence in war to Paris	sings verses	As above
9: Hera's speech	147-154	Hera promises Asia to Paris	sings verses	As above
10: Aphrodite's speech	155-166	Aphrodite promises Helen to Paris	sings verses	As above
11: Paris	167-169	Paris gives the apple to Aphrodite	sings verses	As above
12: Aphrodite's victory speech	170-192	Aphrodite enjoying her victory and mocking Athena	sings verses	As above

13: Paris sets out to Sparta	193-201	Paris prepares to leave; his ship is built by Phereclus	sings verses	As above
14: The omen	202-210	Paris faces the sea storm	sings verses	A ship
15: Phyllis	211-218	Phyllis wanders and waits for Demophon	sings lines 211-218 (Phyllis' story), while the dancer continues acting as Paris	As above
16: Paris' journey and bath	219-240	Paris continues his journey and washes himself in the river	sings verses	As above
17: Hyacinthus	241-248	Hyacinthus	sings lines 240-248, while the dancer continued acting as Paris	As above
18: Paris' arrival to Sparta	249-253	Paris arrives to Helen's house	sings about Paris' beauty	Outside a large house
19: Helen	254-278	Helen's first speech to Paris	sings verses	Inside a house
20: Paris' reply to Helen	279-304	Paris replies to Helen speaking of his ancestors and the purpose of his visit	sings verses	As above
21: Helen's reply to Paris	305-317	Helen agrees to leave with Paris	sings verses	As above
22: The dream	318-327	Dancer dances without impersonating anyone	sings lines 318-327	As above
23: Hermione	328-388	The dancer impersonates Hermione in this scene, reacting to the words of her maids (sang by singer/chorus) and of Helen (sang by singer/chorus) in her dream.	sings lines 338-347 (acting as the maids); then lines 379-380 (acting as Helen answering Hermione in her dream)	As above
24: Cassandra's premonition	389-394	Cassandra sees Helen arriving and casts away her veil.	sings verses	On the acropolis

What consequences would a performance on stage lead to for Colluthus' text? In a performance of the *Judgment of Paris* danced in a Corinthian theatre,[316] each role was played by a different dancer, and female roles were played by female actors (Ap. *Met.* 10.29-34). This type of performance justifies how pantomime is generally considered the antecedent of modern ballet. Female entertainers are very widely attested to between the fourth and sixth century AD,[317] Theodora being probably the most popular example. Certainly the high visual impact of the scenes that I have discussed in the first sections of this chapter would increase even more if we imagine them represented on stage. We have seen that characters act based on what looks best to

[316] Hall 2002, 29 n. 95.

[317] See Webb 2002, 286-7, and Vesterinen 2007, 62 and 133-5 for gender-related considerations about female performers.

them, therefore, in the case of the beauty contest, the consequences of Paris' decision would be even clearer if we project the scene being acted by two average- looking dancers, one exceptionally sexy dancer, and a naïve shepherd. The visual impact of a topless character would actually make Aphrodite's victory triumphal on stage, as the dancer acting as her would stand out beside armored Athena and anonymous Hera. The audience would have expected and welcomed Paris' choice. This is precisely the scenario described by Apuleius in *Met.* 10.31, when he introduces the actress who plays the role of Aphrodite in his pantomime at the time of the judgment:

> Super has introcessit alia, visendo decore praepollens, gratia colouris ambrosei designans Venerem, qualis fuit Venus, cum fuit virgo, nudo et intecto corpore perfectam formositatem professa, nisi quod tenui pallio bombycino inumbrabat spectabilem pubem. Quam quidem laciniam curiosulus ventus satis amanter nunc lasciviens reflabat, ut dimota pateret flos aetatulae, nunc luxurians aspirabat, ut adhaerens pressule membrorum voluptatem graphice liniaret. Ipse autem colour deae diversus in speciem, corpus candidum, quod caleo demeat, amictus caerulus, quod mari remeat.
>
> After these another girl made her entrance, surpassingly beautiful to look at, with a charming ambrosial complexion, representing Venus as Venus looked when she was a virgin. She displayed a perfect figure, her body naked and uncovered except for a piece of sheer silk with which she veiled her comely charms. An inquisitive little breeze would at one moment blow this veil aside in wanton playfulness so that it lifted to reveal the flower of her youth, and at another moment it would gust exuberantly against it so that it clung tightly and graphically delineated her body's voluptuousness. Moreover, the very colouring of the goddess offered variety to the eye- her body white because she comes down from heaven, her robe blue because she comes up from the sea" (transl. J. A. Hanson).

The appearance of the dancer playing Aphrodite must have left very little to the imagination, and beside two less-than-perfect actresses, her invective would have been received as much more poignant. Another element of interest in Apuleius' description of the actress is colour: the fact that her colouring is highlighted, while that of the other two actresses is not, suggests that she alone wore colourful garments, so the audience's eyes would have been naturally drawn to her.

In conclusion, I have argued have argued that not only does the text reflect features which are thypical of the pantomime, but also that but also that it would have been possible to bring the text on stage. In composing a poem that mirrors pantomime, Colluthus created a sort of metatextual epyllion: the poet tells a story in a text format

as if it were a play about that same story, or a painting displaying the same story.[318] So the reader opens a book, and finds a tale which is told as a play or as an ekphrasis; the poet thus mimes theatre or art for the public. By means of a literary text, the poet imitates a playwright, or a painter. The whole story is mimed for the reader, in fact: characters act, and the poet describes them as they act to his audience. This textual framework would not have been new in poetry, and in Chapter 4 I will argue how Colluthus uses fiction-breaking devices such as indirect address to the audience and auctorial intervention in the narration.

We could speculate further about whether Colluthus meant to compose an actual libretto. The quality of his text seems truly too high to suggest a composition for the stage;[319] however, Mastromarco[320] (although his theories behind the occasion of Herodas' mimiambs are not widely accepted) suggests that Herodas designed his mimiambs for stage performance, and that only later did somebody copy them. I argue that the inverse process is more likely to have happened with Colluthus' epyllion, and that, if it cannot be certain that the text was performed, there can be few doubts about the fact that the poet had pantomime in mind at the time of composing the *Abduction*.

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318 A beautiful painting inspires Longus to tell the story of Daphnis and Chloe. The whole novel can be thus read as a long ekphrasis.

319 For an industry of such a popularity and with such a high turnover in the entertainment world, no actual libretto has survived, which makes any judgment very challenging. However, some sources confirm that librettos did not have a great reputation as quality texts: Seneca (*Suas.* 2.19) speaks of the son of one of his associates who wasted his talent on writing stories for dancing (*fabulae salticae*). According to Lucian (*Salt.* 74), instead, a pantomime dancer should choose his librettos for their quality: the question raised by these two opposite perspectives can easily be explained from the fact that Lucian was writing an apology for the genre and was, thus, biased.

320 Mastromarco 1984, 65.

CHAPTER 4

COLLUTHUS' POLYPHONIC EPYLLION

The *Abduction of Helen*'s structure, organized in scenes individually enjoyable, has already been highlighted by many scholars and by this dissertation. While in the past scholars have criticised Colluthus' unconcern with chronological order, today his selection of the most dramatic stages of the story is praised as a winning technique that fits the format of a short epyllion perfectly. In fact, Colluthus' choice to delve into the least-told but most pathetically-charged parts (such as Hermione's role), and to build on side-events such as Paris' journey to Sparta exploiting its ekphrastic potential, works well towards creating an effect of a dynamic text that switches seamlessly across scenes as well as genres: we have seen Colluthus playing with bucolic poetry in the proem, with rhetoric in Aphrodite's speech, among other genres.

The epyllion's multi-coloured nature is in line with Nonnus' ideal of ποικιλία as expressed in the *Dionysiaca*'s proem, centred on the multifaceted figure of Proteus,[1] a model for ever-changing pantomime actors, and Colluthus made the most of many devices such as genres, vocabularies and narrative techniques such as digression and allusion to create the effect of variety within his poem. There is little time to be bored between changes of scenery, of characters, of linguistic register in the space of less than four hundred lines.[2]

One important ingredient that contributes to achieving this variety effect is the effective employment of narrative techniques[3] such as the switch of voice (whoever is speaking) across the poem, the addresses to readers, the direct or indirect address characters employ in unmatched contexts, and the emotionally-focused use of direct speech within the poem. Colluthus provides different points of view by

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1 Shorrock 2008, 102-3.

2 It is interesting to note that in Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* 3.13, Proteus attends the wedding of Pluto and Proserpina, but he had decided to adhere to one appearance: *certo mansurum Protea vultu*.

3 For the definitions in this chapter I refer to Porter Abbott 2008, 67-99, Herman 2007, 3-108, Bal 1997, especially 3-10 and 142-61, and De Jong, Nünlist and Bowie 2004, XV- 10.

letting his characters speak,[4] and also allowing his own voice to be heard; he acknowledges his narratees, he addresses divinities (Dionysus, the Nymphs) and mythological characters (Phyllis); he makes his characters speak to other characters as if they were not there (Paris speaks of Helen as a reward to Helen herself) or as if they were (Hermione interrogates Helen – who is absent - while speaking to her maids).

The employment of these techniques is part of the earlier epic tradition: Homer first employed many of them, and so did Apollonius, Callimachus and also late antique poets; Colluthus chooses the devices he borrows to achieve different effects that all share dynamism and pathos. We hear many voices aside from Colluthus', and also different versions of the same story:[5] this contributes to building a polyphonic text, a multicoloured story that is told by different people at different times, and the majority of which is not narrated by the same voice. Colluthus enjoys narrating when this involves ekphrastic descriptions that offer him the opportunity to display his erudition, as, for instance, the wedding of Thetis and Peleus, the geographic scenery of Paris' journey to Sparta, the digressions about Hyacinthus, and when narration is centred on particularly picturesque moments, such as the behaviour and formidable plans of furious Eris. When it comes to speeches, however, Colluthus prefers direct to indirect speech, limiting his role to adding a short comment after or before each character has spoken.[6] His choice ensures that the plot becomes current and vivid for the readers, who hear many of the characters' voices telling the story and are not simply told of what happens by the narrator.

I have hinted earlier at the possibility that Colluthus may have been influenced by contemporary forms of theatrical performances such as pantomime: his preference for techniques such as direct speech, direct addresses, and apostrophes may add further evidence to this thesis. What cannot be questioned is the poet's concern with bringing the story to life for his readers: when Paris tells Helen: "it is for her sake that I have endured to cross so many seas", he is really addressing his audience of readers,

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[4] There are sixteen speeches in the poem: Zeus (lines 71-7), Aphrodite (86-98, 160-6, 172-89), Hermes (128-31), Athena (139-45), Hera (148-53), Helen (268-77, 308-16, 379-80), Paris (280-304), Hermione (332-4, 349-64, 374-7, 383-6), maids (338-47).

[5] For instance, Hermes gives directions on the beauty criteria to be followed by Paris, but he uses different criteria; the goddesses undermine each other's offers to Paris; Paris tells Helen about the promise Aphrodite had made to him; Helen lies about the circumstances of her "abduction", after we witness the facts.

[6] As τοίην συνθείην καλλίσφυρος ἔννεπε νύμφη, "such is the agreement the fair-ankled lady proposed", 317.

and his statement comes across ironically, as we shall see later. Equally, when Hermione stops speaking to her maids to call upon Helen, who is no longer in the house, the child's cry is heard by us readers. In fact, if we picture the two scenes as performed on stage, the techniques used by Colluthus gain power from the physical presence of an audience that the characters can actually address. A similar conclusion can be made about Ovid's *Heroides* 9: in 143-144, Deianira's narrative is suddenly interrupted by the news of Heracles' death. The theatrical potential of these lines, which would seem much more effective if we picture them being played on stage, is unquestionably aided by the choice of this narrative technique.[7]

The aim of this chapter is twofold: in the first part, I explore the nature of the *Abduction of Helen*'s narrative, its narrator and narratees, and how they compare to previous tradition; in the second, third and fourth parts I focus on two narrative techniques (addresses and use of direct speech) used by Colluthus to achieve different effects on readers' perception and to implicitly provide information about his characters' emotional journey in order to ultimately enhance the pathos and vividness of the scene. For Colluthus' use of direct speech, I examine the case-study of Helen[8] to demonstrate the psychological underlying factors and the evaluation of the character's behaviour that can be drawn from it.

A precious instrument for my analysis is comparison with previous epic tradition (in particular Homer and Apollonius) and also late antique models such as Claudian, Musaeus and Christodoros; Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* and Musaeus' epyllion *Hero and Leander* not only share a similar topic to Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen* but also the preference for the same narrative techniques mentioned above. As we shall see, the context and the effect achieved by both authors when using these devices are similar: this could suggest that the two poets belonged to the same poetic tradition and that the features of late-antique epyllia were by the late fifth century AD standardized.

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7 Cunningham 1949, 100-6.

8 I have chosen Helen's role as she is the one who is narrated about the least: her role is almost entirely consumed by her speeches, and Colluthus' narrative around her is minimal.

1. The Narratology of Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*

Colluthus' narrative approach follows closely that of Homer and Apollonius; in the *Abduction*, almost every narrative technique that had previously been used in epic tradition is employed. What appears from the overall consideration of the poem from this perspective is the originality of Colluthus' purpose.

a. The Narrator

In Colluthus' epyllion, the narrator[9] is external, overt and omniscient: he, who identifies himself as the poet in the proem (μοι in 6 and in the narratorial intervention-apology to Dionysus in 252-53) knows the full story from the very beginning; in fact, his numerous questions to the Muses in the proem already contain the answer he is demanding: νηῶν ἀρχεκάκων of line 8 already indicates that these ships were up to no good, and νείκεος ἀρχή of line 10 already refers to a feud, like δικασπολίη in 12. This approach follows Homer, who was a similar type of narrator (although less overt later on in the *Iliad*):[10] he also invokes the Muses in his proems as well as in *Il.* 11.218-20, and addresses one of his characters, Patroclus, in *Il.* 16.692-3. Apollonius' approach, on the other hand, was also that of an omniscient narrator, but more overt and self-aware than Homer, as he interacts with his narratees and the Muses constantly, compensating with this for the physical distance that separated him from his readers.[11] Callimachus also reveals himself as omniscient in dialoguing with the Muses and Delos in *h.* 4.1-10 and 82-5, and shows even more self-awareness than Apollonius in his commitment to his patron-god and his genre.[12] In Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, the narrator is overt and also omniscient, as we see from the preface of his book 2, where he tells us that the poet returned to play his lyre again to compose a festive work.[13]

The narrator knows his characters' inner emotions inside out and can read their psychological turmoil through their actions: Eris is prey to the pangs of jealousy (44); her desire to create trouble is revealed by ἤθελεν (in positio princeps in 49 and 52) and ἐμήσατο (55); her fear is exposed by δειμαίνουσα (58). Paris' feelings are also

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9 With narrator I refer here to the primary narrator. The second narrator will be indicated as such.

10 De Jong 2004, 14. For the discussion about Homer's active but implicit evaluative interventions, see De Jong 2004, 17.

11 Apollonius in fact interacts also with his oral sources; see Cuypers 2004, 43, 61-2.

12 Harder 2004, 63-4.

13 Claud. *Rapt.* Pref. 2.13-16.

under scrutiny as he, too, is scared in 124 and 127, and his intentions as he bathes before his meeting with Helen are revealed in 233-4. We have already seen how Helen's emotions are made visible through her visual behaviours; in particular, in 260-4 the narrator exposes her attempts at guessing Paris' identity. The narrator knows that she is already attracted to Paris (Πάριν ποθέουσα 278), that she is amazed by him (θαμβήσασα 267 and 307), and that she is lost for words (ἀμηχανέουσα 306). The narrator of the Homeric poems also knows his characters' emotions quite well, like our narrator: for instance, Eris restrains herself from her plans in 53, like Odysseus restrains himself in *Od.* 17.235-8.

The narrator's omniscience is also clearly confirmed by some instances of prolepsis, where he alludes to later events: Hermione asks her mother whether she has followed Aphrodite (377), showing a glimpse of truth that had not occurred to her before, and in 388 her wandering is described as in vain by the narrator, who clearly knows how things would go from there.[14] Homer also uses prolepsis, for instance in *Il.* 11.604.[15] In Claudian, the narrator's omniscience is also overt: Proserpina weaves in vain a gift for her mother, and in vain she calls upon the clouds; Proserpina is the glory of her mother, "soon to be her sorrow"; secondary narrator Ceres recalls how she lamented and prayed in vain, blaming herself for not having guessed how things would go.[16]

Occasionally, as in Apollonius[17] , the narrator temporarily forgets or pretends to forget his omniscience: this can be deducted especially from his use of indefinites, as in 45, where Eris is wondering how she could ever disturb the banquet of the gods, and whether the gods will leap up in fear (56), and in three instances in which Zeus and Paris ask their interlocutors whether they have ever heard of Hermes, Troy and Priam (71, 280, 282). In his digression on Phyllis, the narrator tells her of how she waited for whenever Demophon would return home (218): he of course knows that he will not return.[18] The use of reported speech is also employed to fake the narrator's

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[14] The multiple occurrences of ἀρχή, πρῶτος and their compounds (9, 10, 62, 197, 394) should also be mentioned here, as they imply that the narrator not only knows how the story goes, but has also evaluated responsibilities and identified the root cause of the strife.

[15] De Jong 1987, 86-89.

[16] Claud. *Rapt.* 1.246, 2.249, 2.37 and 3.228-9.

[17] Cuypers 2004, 51.

[18] In some instances, ποτε is used to refer to an indefinite time, but these vague references cannot be attributed to the narrator's will to fake ignorance about the exact time when Hyacinth and Apollo played together (242) and when Poseidon and Apollo laid the foundations of Troy (308): he rather wishes, in my opinion, to keep the distance from those events and to highlight Helen's amazement

ignorance with regards to the development of the events: he is not, however, questioning his authority (as Apollonius does as a Muse-inspired bard, resorting to historiographical evidence to persuade his narratees of the veracity of his story)[19] but confirming again to know his characters' emotions inside out and also confirming his omniscience, as the narrator knows that things did not go as his characters thought they would. In the first instance Hermione thinks she is seeing her mother (μητέρα παπταίνειν ὠίσατο 372); in the second Helen thinks to be looking at the golden youth who attends to Cythereia (ἄλλοτε δὴ χρύσειον ὀισαμένη Κυθερείης κοῦρον ὀπιπεύειν θαλαμηπόλον 260-1): in both cases they are not seeing the persons they believe they are seeing, implies the narrator. Differently from Apollonius 1.196,[20] however, our narrator refers to a character's critical thinking, not his own, therefore once again indirectly establishing his omniscience that goes beyond the characters' knowledge.

Interesting is the use of φημί in the poem: in all instances (90, 142, and 174), a secondary narrator comments on other characters' reputation, refusing to acknowledge it and somehow questioning it.

In terms of evaluations, the narrator presents his view on how his characters behave very often: Paris is labelled as Δύσπαρις (194), by virtue of his unlucky romances but also of the consequences of his lust on others; the narrator also tells us that Paris exults exceedingly in Aphrodite's promise (κυδιόων δ' ὑπέροπλον ὑποσχεσίῃ Κυθερείης 326): here, again, his judgement is based on what will happen in the future, providing an implied prolepsis of the events. Aphrodite's lack of modesty is also judged heavily and pointed at twice by the narrator: οὐκ ἠδέσσατο Κύπρις... καὶ οὐκ ἐμνήσατο μαζῶν (156-8). On three occasions the narrator speaks of events that took place in spite of the characters' nature preventing them, playing with the narratees' expectations and somehow attempting to surprise them with an unexpected course of events: Artemis attends the wedding in spite of being a huntress (ἀγροτέρη περ ἐοῦσα 35); Eris gives in to Ares although she was untamed (ἀμαιμακέτη περ ἐοῦσα 53);[21] Poseidon and Apollo come to serve Dardanus although they are

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at the novelty of them. This last point is also supported by his use of κεῖνα in 310: the beautiful buildings she wishes to see are far in place and time. See Cuypers 2004, 55-6.

19 Apollonius' narrator is half-Homeric in presenting himself as a Muse-inspired singer, and half-Herodotean in his constant references to autoptic evidence and oral sources; this sometimes leads to the paradoxes of especially *Arg.* 1.23-5 and 1.153-5, see Cuypers 2004, 49-50, 61-62.

20 Cuypers 2004, 51.

21 A possible model for this may be Pluto who reluctantly desists to Lachesis, *quamvis indocilis flecti* in Claud. *Rapt.* 1.69.

immortal (ἀθάνατοί περ ἐόντες 288); and Hermione speaks, however prey to anguish (ἀχνυμένη περ ἐοῦσα 373). Similarly, Troy opens its gates to the pair who will cause the city much trouble, in spite of Cassandra's prophecy but also in spite of what narratees and narrator alike would have expected (Τροίη δ' 393).

The narrator also provides his views on concepts: in 230 he comments that Paris' crew tied the anchors tight as it is custom of those who work at sea; in 227 narratees are told that the journey, from that point, was not long at all, therefore judging the distance and evaluating how long it would have taken for Paris' crew to reach Sparta. Homer also provides evaluative comments (more frequently in the Odyssey)[22], as in *Il.* 2.35-40 and *Od.* 20.291.

Gnomai are rarely uttered by the narrator, like in Apollonius,[23] but curiously our narrator insists on sleep and dreams: in 318-23 we find the image of the double gates of dreams, the truthful and the deceitful ones, and in 366-70 that of brothers Death and Sleep.[24]. More often, gnomai are uttered by secondary narrators: in 302-305, Paris says: "Women born among the Argives are not like you: for although they grow with weaker limbs, they look like men, and are just counterfeit women", a statement that recalls closely that which is uttered by Aphrodite at 187-89: "Don't you know that the Athenas like you are much more impotent when, while exulting in glorious wars, they realise that their body is not men's nor women's?" Aphrodite is in fact the narrator who utters most gnomai: "that girdle, from where women catch my sting of desire, and travail many times, but never to the point of death" (97-98), "It is thanks to beauty that women triumph by far" (163). Athena also makes a statement: "A leader commands the valiant and the peaceful. The winners are not always those who praise Athena. The slaves of Enyo fall into an early grave!" 151-3. Homer also makes himself seen through gnomai, for instance in *Il.* 16.688-70.

b. The Narrative

In Colluthus' poem, the narrative is subsequent (events are told after they have happened); in fact, they are told two eras after they happened, as the events around the rape of Helen are presented as the antecedent of the War of Troy, which, as we gather from the final lines of the epyllion, has also already happened ("But Troy

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22 De Jong 2004, 16.
23 Cuypers 2004, 53.
24 For more on these images see further in this chapter.

unlocked the bolts of her high-built gates and welcomed back on his return the citizen who will be the first cause of her ruin", 393-4).

In the proem, the narrator addresses the Nymphs in the first person. The narrative is organized in a sequence of questions (lines 5-13) which creates a fiction where the narrator pretends to ignore or forget the causes of the whole story (when, where, why). He also states clearly that he wants to find out exactly the primeval cause (10) of the feud, thus setting and also sharing expectations with the narratees about the nature of this curiosity. Aetiology is then established as a primary interest of the narrator and the clear trigger to narration, as in Callimachus' *Aetia*, where the story is told to satisfy Callimachus (secondary narratee) who questions the Muses (secondary narrators), or in *h.* 4.1-10.[25] Claudian had also structured the proem of his *Abduction of Proserpina* with an invocation to the gods followed by a series of questions.[26]

With regards to closure of the narrative, it could be argued whether the narration actually comes to an end or not: the events that the narrator had set out to cover in the title and in the proem, i.e. the rape of Helen, are told in full by the end of the poem; however, the last four lines of the poem open a path for what comes after, almost introducing a sequel to the story. The narrator fulfils the expectations that he had set up in his narrative, but he also engages with his narratees confirming them what happens next.

Moreover, the very last line (δέξατο νοστήσαντα τὸν ἀρχέκακον πολιήτην 394) refers back to νηῶν ἀρχεκάκων of the proem (9-10), sealing a ring composition also reinforced by νοστήσαντα, "returning": the narrator begins and closes his narrative confirming the rape of Helen as the primeval cause of the events that are yet to happen and are not narrated. As in Homer, the closure of the narration goes back to its beginning, and does not clearly put the words 'the end' to the story, but is more like an implicit closure.[27] Once more, however, it is Callimachus who offers the closest model as he often ends his narratives with a reference back to their beginning, as in *h.* 4.273, *h.* 5.131-3, *h.* 6.116-117.[28]

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[25] Harder 2004, 64, 67, 70.
[26] Claud. *Rapt.* 1.20-31.
[27] De Jong 2004, 18; Cuypers 2004, 45 n. 6.
[28] Harder 2004, 78.

c. The Narratees

Narratees are referred to as engaging with their narrator in Colluthus' poem: for instance, Hermes (secondary narratee) acts on his father's command (secondary narrator who has just spoken): πατρώῃσιν ἐφημοσύνῃσι πιθήσας 79, and the Loves hear the bidding of their mother: μητρώης ἐρατῆς ἀίοντες 100.

However, in some passages the narrative reveals shared expectations between secondary and primary narratees, who are therefore acknowledged and implicitly invited to participate: in 71, 280 and 282, a secondary narrator (first Zeus, then Paris) asks whether Hermes and then Helen have heard, respectively, of Paris, Troy and Dardanus. This technique is also used by Callimachus,[29] where similar passages worked to flatter the narratees' erudition and to invite them to cooperate. The narrator also involves his narratees by inserting rhetorical questions in the goddesses' speeches (Hera: τί γὰρ πολέμων βασιλῆι; 150; Aphrodite: τί γὰρ σακέων Ἀφροδίτῃ; 162). By doing so, the secondary narrator is questioning directly the secondary narratees (Zeus>Hermes 71, Paris> Helen 280 and 282, Hera>Paris 150, Aphrodite> Paris 162), but also indirectly his primary narratees, who also hear and try to answer the question. Narratees can also be perceived in Homer through rhetorical questions as in *Il.* 17.260: "of the others, who could recall their names in their mind?" However, it is in Callimachus that narratees are expected to participate the most in the storytelling process; for instance, in *fr.* 178.1-34, a lengthy introduction to Theagenes narrated by Callimachus builds up curiosity in narratees and works as a revision of the stories.[30]

Let us now consider lines 300-304:

> οὐκ ἐρέω· τί δὲ τόσσον ἐπισταμένην σε διδάξω;
> οἶσθα γάρ, ὡς Μενέλαος ἀνάλκιδός ἐστι γενέθλης·
>
> I will not tell you: why should I tell you, who already know so well?
> For you know that Menelaus comes from a feeble race.

The passage above features Paris as a second internal narrator telling Helen, secondary narratee, that he does not need to tell her something she already knows. This consideration can be expanded to the primary narrator, who is adapting the requirements of the second narrator and the second narratee's expectations to

[29] Call. *Aetia* 3-4, fr. 64.5-6.
[30] Harder 2004, 69, 75.

himself and the primary narratees: in fact, why do we- as the primary readers- need to be told about the whole story, since we know it already? Homer also adapted his narratees' requirements to his narrator and to those of other narrates: for instance, in *Od.* 4.535-60, where both a narratee in the past (Menelaus) and in the present (Telemachus) benefit from the secondary narrator's information (Proteus); the same story is also adapted for different narratees: the Oresteia is told to Telemachus with emphasis on Orestes as he is presented as a model for him (*Od.* 1.298-302 and 3.193-200), but when Odysseus is told about it, emphasis is placed on Agamemnon, whose destiny he should avoid (*Od.* 11.409-456)[31]. In Colluthus, denying the need to narrate something that, in fact, he has already narrated and keeps on narrating, is a technique that we also find in Pindar *Nem.* 5.11-6, where the poet creates an "oral subterfuge", i.e. a fictional mimesis of spontaneous speech (and oral improvised composition) to pretend that his narrative has just come to his mind by simple association arisen from a detail he has just mentioned.[32] The narrator in Apollonius also wondered why he should tell the story of Aethalides in extensor in *Arg.* 1.648-49, showing concern for his own evaluative skills with regards to the narration's material (the full story may be too much information) and for his narratees' requirements.

In 268, Helen (secondary narrator) asks Paris (secondary narratee) to tell her about his origins, but by saying εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν she actually joins him as a secondary narratee, and she further joins primary narratees, who want to find out about Paris as well; also in this case, then, requirements and expectations of secondary narratees are shared by secondary narrator and primary narratees. Callimachus uses the same technique in *fr.* 75.13-14, where he employs the first person plural twice (13-14 and 53-54) and he refers to Calliope as "ours" (76-77) to join narrator and narratees;[33] he also mixes apostrophes and secondary narratees in *h.* 5.51-57, where he addresses the men of Argos (narratees of the tale's warning), Athena, then the women attending the ritual, who are also narratees of a story to kill the time while waiting.[34]

The narrator manages narratees' expectations by sometimes offering more information than is necessary (considering that narratees' knowledge of the story is assumed): for instance in 206 he clarifies that a πολυτλήτων σημήια ... μόχθων

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31 De Jong 2004, 23-4.

32 Pfeijffer 1999, 37.

33 See also Call. *Aetia* fr. 75.48-49, where the narrator invites those who have experience of Eros to witness; see Harder 2004, 69, 74.

34 Harder 2004, 72-3.

appeared to Paris: he could have just said that they met with a storm. Also in 167-69 many words describe the apple received by Aphrodite as the primary cause of the war (ὁ δ' ἀγλαὸν ... μῆλον, ἀγλαΐης ἀνάθημα, μέγα κτέρας Ἀφρογενείῃ, φυταλιὴν πολέμοιο, κακὴν πολέμοιο γενέθλην): the narrator is probably not concerned that narratees may overlook or miss the apple's profound and symbolic meaning , but he rather wishes to involve them in evaluating this.

The list of negatives used to list the guests at Peleus and Thetis' wedding (28-40) also deals with narratees' expectations and works as a review of who was there for the narratees, similarly to what happens in Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* 2.147-150, where Diana did not despise the dances, and in Apollonius. *Arg.* 1.224-226, where the departure of Acastus and Argos is told by denying that they remained at home.[35] The "if not" technique is also used in 269-77, where Helen tells Paris how he does not fit into the offspring known to her: this of course gives the narrator the opportunity to tell which heroes she knows. In some cases, the "if not" technique is also used to project a scenario of how things did not go: in 227-8, for instance, narratees are told that Paris' journey was almost over through the negation of the facts that the sail was long and the noise of oars was still heard. Equally, the list of Eris' plans of revenge (49-56) suggests a parallel story of how things did not go, therefore evoking and then contradicting narratees' expectations; in 342-7, the many scenarios offered to Hermione by the maids for Helen's disappearance also work in the same way; in 233-4, Paris ensures his hair is not tossed by the wind and his shoes are not soiled: ultimately, in all these cases narratees' cooperation is gained in confirming the actual version of events. Homer also used this technique[36] in *Od.* 5.436-7, where narratees are told that Odysseus would definitely have died, had Athena not come to his help.

Primary narratees are made aware by the narrator of secondary narratees through their involvement in an all-round scenario where the story is told through the sounds that are heard: the song of Peleus and Thetis' wedding was being sung (17-18);[37] the sound of oars was not heard for long (227-8); the cries of Phyllis (216) and Hermione's especially are heard loud and clear (329, 331, 335, 337, 338, etc.), and so is Paris' music (111-112, 115-116, 122-23, 125-6) and the silence created by it (117-121).

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35 Cuypers 2004, 54-5.

36 De Jong 2004, 16, 22.

37 An interesting parallel is Claud. *Rapt.* 2.230-31, where a wedding song heard announces the wedding of Pluto and Proserpina.

All these sounds are heard (or not heard, but imagined) by secondary narratees, who become like other characters for primary narratees by virtue of their perception.[38]

It is clear that a number of effects are achieved through the use of the above-mentioned narrative techniques in Colluthus' epyllion, and that they build a dynamic, dramatic and polyphonic text being told by multiple narrators in various ways. So what was Colluthus' objective overall? In earlier tradition, auctorial interventions and other narrative techniques had been used to create illusions of various forms: Pindar does its best to make his elaborated, much rehearsed, commissioned and occasion-bound odes look as if they were improvised and composed on the spot, according to the canons of oral poetry.[39] Apollonius, to disguise his elaborated epic, creates the illusion of a narrator talking directly to you, the reader; from his proem, modelled on Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo,* he suggests that his epic should also be read as a hymn to Apollo, and therefore that the narrator is an epic singer performing in front of a live audience.[40] Callimachus' narrative, which is made up of stories of written and erudite nature (unlike in Apollonius, where sources acknowledged are only oral)[41], creates the fiction of an oral narrator performing in front of an audience.[42] In the *Abduction of Helen*, narrative techniques work closely with the poem's ekphrastic and visual impact to create a fiction of performance: Colluthus' poem therefore is written as, and reflects, a theatrical performance such as a pantomime.

In my chapter about the visual aspects of the *Abduction*, I have hinted at the possibility that Colluthus may have meant for his poem to be narrated as a performance or an artwork. [43] This interpretation would explain the presence of the

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38 In Catullus 64, narrative via ekphrasis is focalised through the internal viewer.

39 Pfeijffer 1999, 34-7.

40 Traditionally, epic recitation was preceded by the singing of Homeric hymns: see Cuypers 2004, 44.

41 Harder 2004, 79-80.

42 As in Apollonius' ironic paradox between his Homeric and Herodotean sources mentioned earlier, in Callimachus occasionally the narrator creates a tension between the reality of written communication and the fiction of oral communication: for instance in *Aetia* 1-2 old Callimachus is really writing about the fictional and oral dialogue between the Muses and young Callimachus; see Harder 2004, 79.

43 Longus, in the programmatic start of his novel, admits: ἰδόντα με καὶ θαυμάσαντα πόθος ἔσχεν ἀντιγράψαι τῇ γραφῇ, "As I gazed in admiration, a desire to depict the picture in words seized me". The whole novel is in fact presented as being inspired by a picture that he himself has found: εἰκόνα γραπτήν, ἱστορίαν ἔρωτος, "a painting that told as story of love" (Transl. C. Gill); the story becomes thus twice as emotionally effective: not only did it originate from a beautiful work of art, but also that painting was found personally by the author (see Reirdon 1989, 289 n. 1), who was so touched that he was compelled to describe it through words. Ekphrasis is common in Greek novels, and it becomes more common in Byzantine works: Eustathius Makrembolites, a novelist from the second half of the twelfth century AD, includes large ekphrasis of paintings in books 2 and 4 of the

visual effects in the poem, and would offer insights into Colluthus' audience and occasion. If the poet used his text to achieve a mismatched effect (stage-facing reactions), this would force us to explore the places between narrative and dramatic performance. We would be dealing with a two-level text, in which the author uses dramatic artifices in a text to mime a performance to provoke in his readers reactions similar to the ones experienced by a public of theatre-goers, not readers.

Another aspect links Colluthus to performance: he also wrote panegyrics,[44] which were recited in public normally in the presence of the emperor, as it happened for those of Procopius of Gaza[45] and Priscian of Caesarea for Anastasios. This genre usually borrowed extensively from rhetoric, employing graphic and dramatic effects for enhanced reaction. During the last stage of education, the most challenging exercise students faced was *ethopoiia*, a speech impersonating a famous mythological character; rhetoric and theatricality worked together towards the aim of sounding sensational and shaking the audience.[46] Colluthus, like his predecessors but perhaps also his contemporary poets, consciously or unconsciously wrote his epyllion in a similar way, employing narrative devices to create the illusion of a public performance: the result is a text that shares aspects of rhetorical and theatrical nature.

2. Auctorial Addresses

I now intend to consider in more detail some of the preferred narrative techniques used in the epyllion; these, in some cases, offer the narrator the opportunity to make himself seen by his narratees, and their evaluative nature contributes to enhance the drama of the single episodes. If we take the *Abduction* at its face value – a short epic poem - why does the poet feel the urge to share his views with the readers? In this section, I intend to explore the reasons for Colluthus' interventions and the nature of his evaluations.

Story of Hysmine and Hysminias; Theodore Prodromos, his contemporary, also included a lengthy ekphrasis of a gemstone cup in his *Rhodanthe and Dosicles*, 4.331-411, modelled on Theocr. *Id.* 1 and Ach. Tat. 2.3.

44 In this logic, his other works are compatible with the epyllion, proving a literary consistency.

45 His panegyric was recited in public on the occasion of a statue of the emperor being sent to Gaza, similarly to Paul the Silentiary, whose ekphrasis on Hagia Sophia (including a panegyric of both Justinian and the patriarch Eutychius) was recited inside the building in 563, see Whitby 1985.

46 Rhetorical exercises influenced many other genres: see for instance Peirano 2012, where their role on the Latin pseudepigrapha of the early empire is argued.

Auctorial interventions, especially those in which the poet speaks in the first person, achieve the immediate effect of breaking the fiction. This type of direct address was employed in epic tradition since Homer, and continued to be popular in Apollonius, Callimachus and Nonnus, but was also used in other genres, such as Pindar's choral poetry and epigram. My concern in this section is limited to the literary purposes of Colluthus' addresses as narrative techniques, in light of earlier tradition and especially contemporary writers of the late fifth or early sixth century AD.

It should also be specified that the standard definition of "address" as a narrative technique identifies an address to the reader,[47] such as Mus. *Her.* 23-7: σὺ δ', εἴ ποτε κεῖθι περήσεις, δίζεό μοί τινα πύργον, ὅπῃ ποτὲ Σηστιὰς Ἡρὼ ἵστατο λύχνον ἔχουσα καὶ ἡγεμόνευε Λεάνδρῳ· δίζεο δ' ἀρχαίης ἁλιηχέα πορθμὸν Ἀβύδου εἰσέτι που κλαίοντα μόρον καὶ ἔρωτα Λεάνδρου, "if you one day will pass on those places, I beg you: look for a tower, where once Hero of Sestos stood, who, holding a light, was guide to Leander, and look for the loud undertow straits of ancient Abydos, that perhaps still cries over Leander's destiny and love". Colluthus does not address his reader: my aim is to explore the instances in which the author addresses other characters, thus I define these as auctorial addresses.

Colluthus makes himself seen on three occasions in the epyllion: in the proem, where he addresses the Nymphs (Νύμφαι Τρωιάδες 1) and asks them to come over (δεῦτε 5) and tell him (εἴπατέ μοι 6) the origin of the story; in 251-52, where he addresses Dionysus; and in 216, where he addresses Phyllis. For the purpose of this study, I will focus my attention on the last two instances, since the poet's address to the Nymphs fits in with the standard features of proems, i.e. a sub-genre of its own, and I do not believe it conveys any additional meanings other than those already discussed in the section about Colluthus' proem.

[47] Herman, Jahn, Ryan 2005, 4-5.

a. Address to Dionysus

Colluthus breaks the fiction by directly addressing a god,[48] Dionysus, with a cheeky statement. In 251 he says: ἱλήκοις, Διόνυσε· καὶ εἰ Διός ἐσσι γενέθλης, καλὸς ἔην καὶ κεῖνος ἐπ' ἀγλαΐῃσι προσώπων, "forgive me, Dionysus! Even if you are the son of Zeus, he too was beautiful, for the grace of his face".[49]

When Paris has just arrives at Menelaus' house, and just before Helen opens the door for him, the poet feels the urge to praise his beauty, so much so that he apologizes to Dionysus for saying that Paris' beauty was superior to that of the god's. By voicing his opinion, the poet demands a role for himself; moreover, by interacting with Dionysus, Colluthus adds two more characters to the scene: himself and the god. It is as if the meeting of Paris and Helen were paused for a moment to allow for contemplation of the shepherd's beauty, a contemplation that is enhanced in such a way that Dionysus must be called and apologized to in an almost official way. As we have seen earlier, Paris' makeover had put him in the same aesthetic league as Aphrodite and Hera, as he ἵστατο θεσπεσίῃσιν ἀγαλλόμενος χαρίτεσσιν in 250: his beauty is described as "divine graces" just before he is compared to Dionysus; Colluthus' compliment does not come as a surprise.

With this artifice, the poet is forcing his readers to admire Paris in all his grace (in case they had neglected to appreciate his beauty previously, when he was bathing in 231-5), and thus to pay tribute to his magnificence. Not only that: he is also making us readers see Paris through his eyes, in a way that we would not otherwise have seen him. Would have we realised, even after witnessing his beautifying ablutions from which he re-emerges as a new man, that he was actually superior to Dionysus in beauty? Probably not. Now that we are made to see him through the appreciative eyes of the poet, do we actually believe Paris is better looking than a god? Probably not. The narrator, which in this case also functions as the focaliser[50] through whose eyes we see Paris, appears to care very much about the matter.

Colluthus is evaluating Paris' beauty as an internal narrator, and this by default makes him a less reliable narrator than he would be if he had let this

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[48] Callimachus also addresses gods, for instance Hera in *h.* 4.106-107 and 215-216, Artemis in *h.* 3.72-90, Apollo in *h.* 2.69, 72, 80, and Zeus in *h.* 1.6, 7, 43, 46; see Harder 2004, 74. Claudian also makes Ceres address Latona in *Rapt.* 3.306, and the goddesses in 295 and 311.

[49] In Apollonius, Jason had been compared to Sirius, beautiful to look at but a bearer of anguish for Medea (Arg. 3.956-61). Paris is likewise a carrier of ill fate.

[50] Porter Abbott 2008, 67-99; Bal 1997, 142-61.

judgement to the readers alone.[51] His evaluation is quite personal and shows a high level of involvement, as he feels the need to apologize to a god for Paris' beauty; and yet, Paris is only a mythological remote character, unrelated to the narrator (i.e. Colluthus is the author, not another character within the story in which Paris stars). Then, how can Colluthus' position be justified? The poet is obviously taking sides, and attempting to drive the readers' opinion to "bend a gentle eye" (to say it, again, with Colluthus 132) for Paris; I suspect he is preparing us to be well disposed towards Helen, when she reacts to his beauty with an immediate and irresistible infatuation.

The formula chosen by Colluthus for the apology is also found in Apollonius, who closes his epic by pleading with the Argonauts to be favourable to his singing (ἵλατ' *Arg.* 4.1773-81), apologises to the Muses (ἵλατε 4.982-6) when he has to tell an unflattering story about the gods and, more interestingly, apologises to Apollo in 2.708-10 for referring to his hair, which, of course, is intact (ἱλήκοις).[52] We find ἱλήκοις very often in epigrams: Ruf. *AP* 5.73.3 and in Colluthus' contemporaries Paul the Silentiary (*Descr. Hag. Soph.* 179) and Agathias (*AP* 5.299.9 and 9.154.1): interestingly, the only other passage in which the exact formula used by Colluthus (ἱλήκοις, Διόνυσε) appears is Agathias' *AP* 6.74.5, which may suggest an imitation by Agathias[53]. Nonnus borrows the formula extensively from Apollonius in the *Dionysiaca*[54], to mitigate what the poet is about to say[55], and Colluthus may have had in mind two Nonnian instances in particular, where beauty is at stake: the closest reference could be 10.314- 317, where Dionysus apologizes to Zeus[56] for saying that his beloved Ampelos is better looking than his father's lover Ganymedes:

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51 Porter Abbot 2008, 74-7.

52 Cuypers 2004, 48-9.

53 Not the other way around, since Agathias was born around 536, 18 years after Anastasius' death (which is the only reference we have for Colluthus' life).

54 Livrea 1968a, 196. Other occurrences include 46, 297, where Agave apologizes to Dionysus for he destroyed the whole offspring of Cadmos (ἱλήκοι Διόνυσος); in 4.50 Harmonia apologizes to Hermes; in 8.73 Semele to the Olympus; 16.325, where Pan apologizes to his pasture; 25.211 the poet apologizes to Iolaos because he killed the Hydra but only Heracles took the credit; in 29.115 Dionysus apologizes to Aristeos, as he would not suffer so much for his death as he is for that of Ymeneos, and in 135 to Aphrodite; in 30.287 Athena to Zeus' glory while trying to instil courage in Dionysus. Also see Theocr. 15.143.

55 Accorinti 2004, 480.

56 The formula Ζεῦ πάτερ has a long tradition in epic: *Il.* 1.503, 3.276, 320, 365, 5.421, *Od.* 5.7, 7.331; Call. 1.43; Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 4.1673; Quint. 3.499, 4.49, 8.431; Nonn. *Dion.*11.315, 32.48. It also enjoyed much popularity in other genres: Theogn. 1.731; Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 202; Opp. *Hal.* 1.409; Opp. *Cyn.* 3.237; Pind. *Ol.* 7.87, *Nem.* 8.35; Archil. *Fr.* 177.1; Alc. *Fr.* 691 L.-P., and in late antique and byzantine literature: Procl. *In Plat.* 3.185.5; Theod. Prodr. *Rhod.* 2.468; Eusth. *Hysm.* 6.10.4.

Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἱλήκοις, τανυσίπτερε· μή μοι ἐνίψῃς
Τρώιον οἰνοχοῆα τεῶν δρηστῆρα κυπέλλων,
ὅττι φαεινοτέροιο φέρων ἀμάρυγμα προσώπου
Ἄμπελος ἱμερόεις Γανυμήδεος εἶδος ἐλέγχει·

Zeus father, wide-winged god, forgive me: do not speak to me of your Trojan wine pourer, the servant of your cups, since Ampelos spurs desire and defeats the beauty of Ganymedes with the brilliance of his face, which is more radiant!

Here, like in Colluthus' passage, the face is the beauty criterion that determines superiority; in the other Nonnian passage, interestingly, breasts are the key: in 48.361 Aura apologizes to Artemis' beauty, when she mocks her breasts while swimming: ἱλήκοι τεὸν εἶδος· ἐγὼ σέο μᾶλλον ἀρείων.

It has already been mentioned that beauty is all about the face in Colluthus[57] (see lines 30 διακρίνων προφερέστερον εἶδος ὀπωπῆς, 75 κέκλεο καὶ βλεφάρων ξυνοχὴν καὶ κύκλα προσώπων, and 87 σήμερον ἀγλαΐαι με διακρίνουσι προσώπων, plus the already discussed attention to heads and hair), although paradoxically Paris chooses breasts in the end. In complimenting Paris' beauty, Colluthus once again reiterates his point on facial beauty, and does so employing ἀγλαίη, the same quality on which Aphrodite was tested (87), and that is the reason behind women's superiority (163 ἀγλαΐῃ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἀριστεύουσι γυναῖκες), against ἠνορέη, the valiance promised to Paris by Athena and mocked by both Hera (152) and Aphrodite (164).

Another interesting point is the choice of the myth included in the Nonnian passage of reference: Dionysus, the lover of Ampelos, and Ganymedes, the lover of Zeus (together with Hyacinthus, who is also recalled by Colluthus in 241-8) share the destiny of beautiful young boys kidnapped by divinities, and now Colluthus puts Paris in this league too. If in the Dionysiaca Dionysus was apologizing to Zeus, in the *Abduction* the poet is apologizing to Dionysus, acting as the god did in the Nonnian passage.

The invocation to the Nymphs at the incipit of the poem is, with the meeting of Paris and Helen, one of the two most crucial points of the epyllion; it is at these two particular points that the poet can count on the highest level of attention of his readers. It is therefore not accidental that Colluthus calls upon the immortals precisely in these two circumstances: on the one hand, he is granting a connection

[57] Paschalis 2008, 144.

with the gods; on the other hand, he wants to exploit the momentum by breaking the fiction and revealing himself as the craftsman. In the proem, as seen in Chapter 2, the poet also makes a precise statement about his poetics, by means of the sea metaphor and the water-related terminology: this element, associated with the narrative techniques that break the fiction, reveals Colluthus' awareness as a poet and his clear intention to be recognized. By presenting himself in both cases as interacting with the immortals, he is ensuring that his memory is aligned to that of the Nymphs and Dionysus: he can interrogate them and challenge them, although he makes sure not to go beyond the limits of human nature, when he apologizes to the god for complimenting Paris' beauty.

Musaeus, whose *Hero and Leander* tells another story of seduction, interestingly employs similar narrative techniques when it comes to describe Hero's beauty: first, he addresses the reader[58] inviting him to agree that Hero's body is like a meadow of roses: ἦ τάχα φαίης ἐν μελέεσσι ῥόδων λειμῶνα φανῆναι 59-60; here, the direct φαίης is a narrative address as defined above, from the narrator to the reader, and, like Colluthus', it implies a high level of involvement on the narrator's part as it seeks agreement from the readers. Musaeus also appears as an unreliable narrator then, as his opinion of Hero's beauty as something sublime is enhanced by his simile with a meadow of roses: he is not only presenting his opinion but also projecting his idea of it to something half surreal onto readers' imagination, similarly to Colluthus, who projects Paris' beauty into the level of divine beauty. Moreover, his invitation to approve of his image reveals his desire to seek his readers' involvement too.

Another interesting parallel with Musaeus is that Hero's beauty is described by one of her suitors as unlike any of the beauties that he has seen in Sparta: καὶ Σπάρτης ἐπέβην, Λακεδαίμονος ἔδρακον ἄστρον, ἦχι μόθον καὶ ἄεθλον ἀκούομεν ἀγλαϊάων· τοίην δ' οὔ ποτ' ὄπωπα νέην ἰδανήν θ' ἁπαλήν τε 74-6. It is curious that the young man refers to Sparta here, the hometown of Helen. In Colluthus, she had said something similar twice to Paris, when she struggled to identify him: ἀλλὰ τεὴν οὐκ οἶδα παρ' Ἀργείοισι γενέθλην (270), and τεὴν δ' οὐκ εἶδον ὀπωπὴν (273), so our poet could be entertaining an allusive game with Musaeus' passage on more than one level.

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[58] Claudian also addresses his readers on a number of occasions: *Rapt.* 1.257, 2.29 and 124, 3.374 (*credas*, "you would believe...")

Finally, it is worth noting that Christodoros, in his ekphrasis, also addresses many of his characters (i.e. the statues he describes) by name.[59] His invitation to engage in a conversation with him works as a rhetorical device to revitalise the monotony of the ekphrastic catalogue, and aims to achieve an illusionistic identification between art and reality.

b. Phyllis

While describing Paris' journey, Colluthus suddenly addresses Phyllis in the second person singular (214-18):

> Φυλλίδος ἀντέλλοντα φιλήνορος ἔδρακε τύμβον
> καὶ δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος εἶδε κελεύθου,
> ἔνθα διαστείχουσα κινύρεο, Φυλλίς, ἀκοίτην
> δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον ἀπήμονα Δημοφόωντα,
> ὁππότε νοστήσειεν Ἀθηναίης ἀπὸ δήμων.
>
> [Paris] saw the nine-circled course of the wandering path, where you, Phyllis, went through bewailing, while waiting for your husband Demophon to return safe and sound, when should he come back from the land of Athena.

Phyllis is a character who does not play a role within the story[60], but Colluthus makes Paris see her grave, a landmark that awakens memories of her sad wanderings, and exploits this as an occasion to paint a sorrowful digression. By addressing her directly he reveals himself as the poet, again bringing two more characters on the scene: himself and Phyllis. The fiction is thus broken for a few lines, and readers are brought back to the "reality" of a poet building an imaginary environment.

The lexical insistence on her wandering and waiting (δρόμον ἐννεάκυκλον ἀλήμονος...κελεύθου...κινύρεο...δεχνυμένη παλίνορσον...ὁππότε νοστήσειεν) paints a circular picture that is all of a sudden brought to life, although just for a moment. Phyllis' wandering also comes back to mind at the end of the epyllion, when Hermione wanders, in reality (388) and in dreams (371, 376), through the paths where Helen perhaps got lost, while, again, wandering or while, precisely, wandering once again (343, 354).

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[59] Christ. *AP* 2.398 117, 131, 143-4, 175-6, 197, 256.

[60] Unlike Helen, addressed by Paris and Hermione in the cases discussed below.

Kutzo[61] highlighted how these interruptions of the fiction ("indirect audience addresses", where the address is indirect since the fiction is not interrupted by the poet himself, but through some other indirect way: in these cases, the characters) happen in Theocritus, Herodas and Virgil at key transitional points, often when a new scene is about to be introduced, so that they serve the purpose of jarring the audience and prepare them for a change of action. The question of whether these works may have been brought to stage has been explored at length, but he focuses on the textual elements that break the fiction, exposing the artifice of literature. These elements interrupt the poetic artifice for a moment, although the characters all remain in role, and make the audience unequivocally aware of the fiction and of the poet, albeit not long enough to shatter the creative spell and the fictional escape in which they have embarked. In these three works, the audience is addressed by a character, who comments on an external element which exposes the artifice (the meter in Herodas' 1, the Dorian dialect in Theocritus' *Id.* 15, Pollio in Virg. *Ecl.* 3). By momentarily stepping out of the story, the characters acknowledge both the audience, and the poet and his art.

In Herodas 1 the technique is used to prepare the audience for an unsettling end of the mime, where where how and if the two women settle their argument remains unclear. In Theocritus 15, on the other hand, the effect of his dialect-related interruption achieves a very different effect: the discussion about Doric in fact brings the idyll together, achieving a sense of unity. Herodas instead does not achieve this effect: at the end of the mime, we are left with a feeling of dissonance, or lack of clarity about the outcome of the discussion. Kutkzo explains this with the different aesthetic goals and concerns of the two poets.[62] In Homer, addresses in the second person to another character are used more often by a secondary narrator who tells a secondary narratee about a common experience, as in *Il.* 15.18-33, where Zeus reminds Hera of how he hung her from the sky; here, fiction is broken to tell the embedded narrative that then works as a reference for narratees who can relate the

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61 Kutzko 2007, 151-3.

62 Kutzko 2007, 143-6. In Theocritus' Idyll 15, a man interrupts Praxinoa and Gorgo's chat by commenting on their dialect (Dorian), and she replies to his comments (78-93): suddenly the fiction is interrupted. In Herodas' Mimiamb 1, Gyllis invites Metriche to cheat on her husband, and Metriche indignant responds that she would not have tolerated such comments from another woman, also alluding to the choliambs, the meter of Hypponax (69-72). Both passages have programmatic goals linked to literary instruments, while Virgil's *Ecl.* 3.84-5 includes a reference not to a narrative technique, but to a contemporary of the poet, Pollio, who also loved pastoral poetry.

rest of the story to that episode.63 In Apollonius, apostrophes of single characters are rare,[64] but Argonauts are addressed directly by the narrator in 4.1383, as well as in the already mentioned epilogue. Callimachus uses the apostrophe frequently:[65] for instance, he addresses Acontius many times in *Aet.* 3. (e.g. fr. 75.40, 44-48, 51, 53): here, the narrator's interventions cut the distance from the narrated story, but the narrative never becomes sentimental as he continuously intertwines it with erudite material.[66]

However, once again the closest model of Colluthus seems to be Claudian, who addresses Hyacinthus in a brief digression in *Rapt.* 2.131-6:

> Te quoque flebilibus maerens, Hyacinthe, figuris
> Narcissumque metunt, nunc inclita germina veris,
> praestantes olim pueros. Tu natus Amyclis,
> hunc Helicon genuit. Disci te perculit error,
> hunc fontis decepit amor. Te fronte recussa
> Delius, hunc fracta Cephisus harundine luget
>
> You also they harvested, Hyacinthus, mourning with your letters of lamentation, and Narcissus – now famous buds of spring, but once pre-eminent boys: you, Hyacinthus, were born at Amyclae, Narcissus helicon begot; you the swerve of the discus struck, him love of the spring deceived; for you mourned the god of Delos with battered forehead, for him Cephisus with broken reeds.

Colluthus, in 240-8, also introduces a digression about Hyacinthus, narrated in the third person. With the digression of Phyllis, which is narrated partly in the third and partly in the second person, as a direct address to the character, it is possible that Colluthus meant to play with his model, by mixing content and form of narration. Colluthus alludes and varies his model by applying the address to another character but still pays homage to him by exploiting the same anecdote.

So what does Colluthus achieve with his address to Phyllis? At this point in the story, readers have already gone through about 20 lines of Paris and his travelling: an unexpected break comes just at the right time to awaken the audience before continuing for about another 20 lines of the journey. The address to Phyllis is placed roughly halfway between the first and the second part of Paris' journey: in the second half, the 30 lines (218-48) are also interrupted by Paris' ablutions (231-5) and the Hyacinthus digression (240-8).

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63 De Jong 2004, 6.

64 One example is Pollux is also addressed directly by Lykos in *Arg.* 2.798; see Cuypers 2004, 48.

65 Call. *h.* 5.1-4, 13-17, 27-32, 134-8; *h.* 6.1-2, 118-19); see Harder (2004), 72, 74.

66 D'Alessio 1996, 485.

What about the content of this digression?[67] As in his previous references to other myths, Colluthus once again chooses a sad story, that of a love affair that ends with death. The story of Hyacinthus shares the same tearful ending, and is equally powerful as an omen to the unsuccessful ending to Paris and Helen's love affair;[68] however, Phyllis' loyalty to her husband is strategically placed ahead of Helen's contrasting behaviour towards Menelaus.[69] Moreover, the closest connection to the story could be that Phyllis killed herself, like Oenone, the wife of Paris whose existence is only barely referred to in 165, and whom the poet seems to want to erase from the story,[70] together with the other "inconvenient" partner, Menelaus.[71]

It has been noticed that Phyllis' death, in all versions of the myth, happens after the War of Troy,[72] but Colluthus is unconcerned with chronological sequence and precision: as with the other previously mentioned, supposed inaccuracies (the type of animals tended by Paris, for instance), this too can be explained with the poet's intention to paint a picture that was intended to be dramatic, not precise.

By personally addressing the protagonist of such a sad myth, Colluthus reveals his own reaction to the myth; as if moved by the tale of Phyllis' aimless wanderings, he jumps in as though to bring her back to life, as if she were a contemporary and he could feel her pain. The narrator's sympathy and compassion towards the characters is similar to that shown to Patroclus in *Il.* 16.692-3, where Homer addresses the hero compassionately.[73] This technique does not fail to add theatricality to the story, and the switching of subject forces the readers to look at her, as if she were suddenly on a stage beside Paris and Helen, and the poet were pointing right at her.

Musaeus addresses Leander, the main character of his epyllion, on two occasions: first in 86-89 Αἰνοπαθὲς Λείανδρε, σὺ δ', ὡς ἴδες εὐκλέα κούρην, οὐκ ἔθελες κρυφίοισι κατατρύχειν φρένα κέντροις, ἀλλὰ πυριβλήτοισι δαμεὶς ἀδόκητον ὀιστοῖς οὐκ ἔθελες ζώειν περικαλλέος ἄμμορος Ἡροῦς, "O Leander, you prey to an unhappy passion: at the sight of the noble maiden you could not stand for your heart to suffer in secret

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67 The story of Phyllis was included by Lucian in *On Dancing* 40.9 as a popular subject for pantomimes.
68 Paschalis 2008, 140.
69 Magnelli 2008, 160.
70 In Christodoros' ekphrasis 215-217, Oenone (her statue) is described as jealously spying on Paris with an insane look (see Tissoni 2000a, 176): surprisingly, Colluthus decides to pass on this opportunity to build on a picturesque detail.
71 Prauscello 2008, 176 and Paschalis 2008, 145.
72 Rocca 1997, 175.
73 De Jong 2004, 16.

pains, and at once, overwhelmed by the fire-burning darts, you no longer wanted to live without the beautiful Hero". Then in 300-304 ἀλλ' οὐ χειμερίης σε φόβος κατέρυκε θαλάσσης, κατερόθυμε Λέανδρε. διακτορίη δέ σε πύργου ἠθάδα σημαίνουσα φαεσφορίην ὑμεναίων μαινομένης ὤτρυνεν ἀφειδήσαντα θαλάσσης νηλειὴς καὶ ἄπιστος, "but the fear of the stormy sea did not stop you, brave- hearted Leander; the message of the tower, the familiar light, preannouncement of hymenaea pushed you, and you did not care for the fury of the sea, cruel deceitful message". Both moments are equally crucial for the development of the plot, and Musaeus sympathises with his character's inability to restrain himself, first from falling in love with Hero, and then from swimming across the stormy sea.

Musaeus' address to Leander reveals once again his involvement with the story but also with Leander's passion and courage. Another interesting point is that Musaeus highlights that Leander ignored the omen to his fate, the stormy sea; it has been highlighted earlier that Paris, in Colluthus, is oblivious to the many omens that appear to him. But Paris also crosses a stormy sea, a waterspout to be precise: he rows through it with his crew, once again oblivious to the foreshadowing of his sad destiny. In Musaeus, Leander recognizes the omen but decides not to pay attention to it: the narrator also justifies his behaviour as Leander is pushed by eros; in Colluthus, on the other hand, Paris does not recognize the omen (the poet does), is totally unaware of it, and is not even said by the poet to be pushed by any particular force such as eros (he is moved by greed, but Colluthus is not prepared to state this explicitly).

3. Characters' Addresses

On two occasions Colluthus makes his characters speak switching from a narrative form (in the third person) to a direct address (in the second person). Hermione, speaking to her maids, suddenly calls upon her mother, while Paris, standing in front of Helen, speaks about her, as if she were absent. In both instances the psychological condition of the speaking character is emphasized and clarified to the reader, their emotions made readable through a sequence of phrases with different subjects.

a. Hermione

Hermione is speaking to her maids, when suddenly she switches to the second person singular, addressing her absent mother (349-64):

οἶδεν ὄρος, ποταμῶν ἐδάη ῥόον, οἶδε κελεύθους
ἐς ῥόδον, ἐς λειμῶνα· τί μοι φθέγγεσθε, γυναῖκες;
ἀστέρες ὑπνώουσι, καὶ ἐν σκοπέλοισιν ἰαύει·
ἀστέρες ἀντέλλουσι, καὶ οὐ παλίνορσος ἱκάνει.
μῆτερ ἐμή, τίνα χῶρον ἔχεις; τίνα δ' οὔρεα ναίεις;
πλαζομένην θῆρές σε κατέκτανον; ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ
θῆρες ἀριζήλοιο Διὸς τρομέουσι γενέθλην.
ἤριπες ἐξ ὀχέων χθαμαλῆς ἐπὶ νῶτα κονίης
σὸν δέμας οἰοπόλοισιν ἐνὶ δρυμοῖσι λιποῦσα;
ἀλλὰ πολυπρέμνων ξυλόχων ὑπὸ δάσκιον ὕλην
δένδρεα παπτήνασα καὶ αὐτῶν μέχρι πετήλων
σὸν δέμας οὐκ ἐνόησα· καὶ οὐ νεμεσίζομαι ὕλῃ.
μὴ διεροῖς στονόεντος ἐπ' Εὐρώταο ῥεέθροις
νηχομένην ἐκάλυψεν ὑποβρυχίην σε γαλήνη;
ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ποταμοῖσι καὶ ἐν πελάγεσσι θαλάσσης
Νηιάδες ζώουσι καὶ οὐ κτείνουσι γυναῖκας.

She knows the hill, she knows the flow of the river, and she knows the paths that bring to the roses, to the meadow. What are you saying to me, women? The stars are asleep, and she spends the night among the rocks; the stars arise, and yet she does not come back home. **Mother of mine, where are you? On which hills have you stopped? Had you lost your way,** and have the wild beasts slain you? But even wild beasts fear the offspring of much respected Zeus! **Have you fallen from your chariot on the back of the dusty ground, abandoning your body in the lonely woods?** But I did look around searching the trees of the copses full of trunks, even down to their every leaf, and **yet I could not see your body**. And I do not blame the wood. **Have the still waters covered you in the depths while you swam in the liquid streams of the rippling Eurotas?** But even in the rivers and in the open sea the Naiads live, and they do not kill women!

Hermione begins her speech (349) by telling the maids, in the third person, about Helen who does know the hills and the paths to the roses, but then switches suddenly to the second person plural, addressing the maids directly (350). Colluthus then dramatically contrasts, within two lines (351-2), the stars, which sleep and rise in the third person plural, and Helen, who sleeps among the rocks and does not come home in the third person singular, 351-2. In 353 Hermione addresses Helen directly in the second person singular and asks her about her whereabouts (353), then switches to the third person plural wondering whether wild beasts have killed her (in 354-5, and then back again to the second person singular in 356. At 360 Hermione switches to the first person singular. Finally, the last changes of subject refer first to the water that may have covered Helen, in the third person singular (362) and then plural, referred

to the Naiads, 364. In total, there are 12 subjects in the space of 16 lines. The full series of subject is: Helen/you maids/the stars/Helen/the stars/Helen/you Helen/the beasts/you Helen/I/the still water/the Naiads. Similarly, in *Her.* 7, Ovid makes Dido switch three times from the second to the third person[74].

The overall impression achieved by this rapid and continuous subject change is one of emotional disorder:[75] although in the words of the maids (338-47) there are fie subjects in the space of seven lines (you Hermione/Helen/you Hermione/your eyes and your cheeks/Helen), the effect of lines 349-64 is much more dramatic and makes Hermione's desperation almost tangible. As her speech develops into a monologue and an intimate conversation with her absent mother, the interaction sought by Hermione with the third parties in this Helen-gone-missing case becomes a continuous source of anguish for the reader, too. Her behaviour is that of anyone who is searching for something and cannot find it: first she questions the trustworthiness of her maids'version (that her mother has gone to a girls' meeting or for a bath, and she will come back); then she asks her mother directly where she is; she interrogates third parties (the wild beasts - perhaps they have killed her mother, but this is not really a possibility, as beasts would have been frightened of the daughter of Zeus). Hermione addresses her mother directly once again, desperately trying to fit her in one of the various possible scenarios she imagines. Finally, she returns to check again in the same places that have already been searched,[76] hoping to see something that has been overlooked, and she questions herself: she searched among the trees, even down to each single leaf, and she has not seen her mother. The same doubt about overlooking something reappears in 376 when she wonders which mountain has she forgotten to search. The last possibility that Hermione explores is that Helen has drowned in the river Eurotas, but this scenario also proves unlikely, as river nymphs do not kill women.

There are a number of similarities between Colluthus' dialogue of Hermione and her maids, and Claudian's speech of Pluto to his bride in the *Abduction of Proserpina*: both include a prayer to stop crying (338 τέκνον ὀδυρομένη, γόον εὔνασον - Claud. 2.277-8 *desine festis animum, Proserpina, curis et vanis vexare metu*) and the

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[74] Ov. *Her.* 7.25, 103 and last 6 lines of the *epistula*.

[75] Speaking of Ovid's *Heroides*, Cunningham 1949, 103 noticed the theatrical potential of similar passages: "A passage of this sort provides an opportunity for presenting a remarkable sequence of various emotional states, and this presentation might suitably be accompanied by considerable physical activity on the part of an actor".

[76] In Claud. *Rapt.* 3.163-5 Ceres also surveys all the places where Proserpina had once sat.

reassurance that things are not as bad as they seem (in Colluthus 338-47, the reasonable scenarios for Helen's disappearance, in Claudian 2.278-306 the promise of a brighter future in the Hades). Even more relevant is the similarity with Ceres' speech to Proserpina's maid after the tragic discovery of the girl's abduction: like Hermione, she asks questions and wonders about the whereabouts of her daughter (*heu ubi nunc est nata mihi*? 189);[77] the same questions are uttered again, more dramatically, in Ceres' final monologue at the epilogue of the poem, where she wonders whether she will see her daughter again only in her dreams, and in the monologue of Proserpina herself straight after her abduction, where the abducted girl also calls upon her mother: *mater, io!*[78]

I believe that this case is slightly different from the previous instances: as in Phyllis' case, the person addressed here is not a divinity, like Dionysus (and the Nymphs in the proem); Helen is a character who plays a role in the plot and is not, like Phyllis, brought into the story in the form of a digression.

This appeal to Helen cannot, in my view, be classified as an indirect audience address:[79] in fact the poet does not reveal himself, as in the previous instances, and the person addressed is not alien to the story. Since the poet does not speak himself in first person to Helen, the fiction is never broken, and the readers are not brought out of the artificial environment; furthermore, because the scene involves an upset girl (in fact, a child, although her reasoning sounds more like that of an adult) who is trying to make sense of her mother's disappearance in the company of her maids, it makes perfect sense that she herself addresses Helen in a completely natural manner. We could say that her continuous switching from one addressee to another grants her behaviour that touch of naivety that we would expect from a child interlocutor.

Colluthus' dramatic effects do not end here, however. Hermione's address to Helen works as an invocation, and, shortly after her frantic speech, she falls asleep and, thinking she is seeing her mother, once again she calls upon her in 374-7:

> χθιζὸν ὀδυρομένην με δόμων ἔκτοσθε φυγοῦσα
> κάλλιπες ὑπνώουσαν ὑπὲρ λεχέων γενετῆρος.
> ποῖον ὄρος μεθέηκα; τίνας προλέλοιπα κολώνας;
> οὕτω καλλικόμοιο μεθ' ἁρμονίην Ἀφροδίτης;

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77 Claud. *Rapt.* 3.180-92.
78 Claud. *Rapt.* 3.428-37 and 2.258-9 and 267.
79 Kutzko 2008, 151.

> Yesterday, escaping out of the house, you left me to my sorrow, while I was asleep on my father's bed. Which mountain have I missed? Which hills have I forgotten to search? Or maybe you went with the harmony of Aphrodite's beautiful locks?

Her first address to Helen, followed by this second one, responded to by Helen who appears to her in her dream, now gains dramatic effectiveness: the child calls upon her mother while she is awake and asleep, and in the second instance she finally receives an answer. The questions Hermione addresses to Helen are also addressed to the readers or an audience: Colluthus sets some form of expectation, as nobody can answer those questions until Helen does.[80] This passage also seems to echo a similar scene in Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina*, where it is the mother of missing Proserpina who sees her daughter in a dream and asks a number of questions; [81] then, Proserpina responds like Helen in Colluthus: but, differently from Helen, Proserpina accuses her mother of having abandoned her and makes her responsible for her abduction.[82] This comparison reveals the interesting twist between a missing/abandoning mother (Helen) and a searching/abandoned daughter (Hermione) in Colluthus, and a missing/abandoned daughter (Proserpina) and a searching/abandoning mother (Ceres) in Claudian.[83] One difference between the two texts is the daughters' awareness of their mothers' responsibilities: Proserpina, differently from Hermione, calls Ceres neglectful,[84] while Hermione is oblivious of Helen's voluntary departure; but despite the different roles played by the two characters in each poem, both daughters end up being abandoned by a neglectful mother, and both mothers are perceived as neglectful.

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80 Andrieu 1954, chapters X and XL, and 204, 347, analyzing dialogue in Greek and Latin tragedy and comedy, was convinced that classical authors had not designed their works with readers in mind. He support his thesis by showing how the indications related to scene instructions, or to announcements (such as those for characters coming to or leaving the stage) that were unnecessary for spectators, were on the other hand insufficient for a reader who was trying to rebuild the text as originally played. The indications are inconsistent: sometimes they appear too late, so that a reader could not possibly use them as a help to interpret the text. The ancient reader, which Andrieu describes as careful and active towards the text, i.e. able and keen to interpret the text with much less information than what we nowadays require, would have then studied the text carefully to decipher it and rebuild its original development on stage. Andrieu concludes that these elements cannot be considered to be a technical system of indications for readers, and that therefore the authors did not aim their works at readers, but at spectators.

81 Claud. *Rapt.* 3.80-96.

82 Claud. *Rapt.* 3.97-108.

83 Hermione's tears (Coll. 329, 340 etc.) correspond in Claudian to Ceres' tears (*Rapt.* 3.128-9).

84 Claud. *Rapt.* 3.97-104 *Heu dira parens nataeque peremptae / immemor [...] tantane te nostri tenuere oblivia? [...] saeva [...] si non omnem pepulisti pectore matrem.*

I would now like to return to the final supposition about Helen's whereabouts that Hermione suggests: at 377 she hints at the possibility that her mother may have left with Aphrodite. How did this idea enter Hermione's head? It is an important detail, considering that there is no reference to this possibility in her previous speeches, nor have the maids suggested anything remotely close to this. In fact, the elements that Hermione presents to her mother in the dream all refer back to what the girl had said before, except for this one: a) you left me while I was asleep escaping from the house (374-75), already mentioned in 332-34; b) I have searched the hills but I have not found you (376), already mentioned in 349, 353 and 360. After all the theories that the girl and her maids have thought of, the final supposition that comes from Hermione is surprisingly the right one. Thus, paradoxically, Hermione almost reaches the truth in a deceitful dream, the realm of illusion in which even her mother lies.

With the direct address to Helen in 349-57 Colluthus is creating a three-dimensional space in which Hermione, while talking to her maids, is also able to bring into the discussion her absent mother to question her. Later, her appearance in the girl's dream, in response to her second appeal, fulfils Hermione's expectations but also that of the readers, who finally hear Helen's version of the story, or, better still, what she wants her daughter to believe. Of course, by reminding readers that dreams are deceitful, Colluthus plants in his readers the seed of doubt, leaving them wondering whether Helen's voice in the dream should be believed or not. I am convinced that Helen, and not her eidolon, speaks here, since if this were not the case, her behaviour would not offer any room for judgment to the poet and the readers. The whole scene lies on the contrast between her actions and her own version of the story: she, who first takes ownership for her departure, is not happy to blame Paris. If an eidolon were speaking, this contrast would not arise. Paschalis wonders who else would have believed this version of the story; the fact that Colluthus makes Helen tell her version of the story to a child, in a deceitful dream, is quite ironic.[85] Helen's lie can be interpreted as a selfish way to protect Hermione from the harsh reality of a mother who has consciously abandoned her family; Helen could be lying due to guilt, or she could be simply refusing to take responsibility for her actions. In any case, by making Helen lie to her own daughter, as we shall see later, Colluthus is indirectly judging her as a neglectful mother.

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[85] Paschalis 2008, 139-140.

b. Paris

Another similar case is found in 294-9, where Paris, who has just explained to Helen the purpose of his visit, speaks of her first in the third person, as if she were not standing there in front of him:

> ἡ δὲ περικλήιστον, ἐμῶν ἀντάξιον ἔργων,
> νύμφην ἱμερόεσσαν ἐμοὶ κατένευσεν ὀπάσσαι,
> ἣν Ἑλένην ἐνέπουσι, κασιγνήτην Ἀφροδίτης,
> ἧς ἕνεκεν τέτληκα καὶ οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι,
> δεῦρο γάμον κεράσωμεν, ἐπεὶ Κυθέρεια κελεύει·
> μή με καταισχύνειας, ἐμὴν μὴ Κύπριν ἐλέγξῃς.
>
> And she promised that she would give me a worthy reward in return of what I did for her, a famous and desirable bride, the one who they call Helen, sister of Aphrodite. It is for her sake that I have endured to cross so many seas. Come; let's join together in marriage, since Cythereia commands. Do not dishonour me, and do not test Cypris.

He then suddenly switches to the first person, initially in a jussive subjunctive exhorting Helen to join him in marriage according to Aphrodite's orders, and then prompting her directly in the second person singular not to despise him or his protector goddess.

Paris' progression, within three lines, from a detached account about somebody else into a straightforward invitation, and finally into a plea not to be rejected, says much about his psychological condition at the time of his arrival to Helen's house. Speaking to Helen about Helen as if she were a third person shows his lack of emotional connection with her: as noted before, she is just a reward. Her beauty is not something he is experiencing for himself there and then, but is only something he has heard of (περικλήιστον... ἣν Ἑλένην ἐνέπουσι).

His claim to have endured such seas,[86] which comes straight after this attempt to cash in his prize, sounds ironic, as it brings to mind other heroes who legitimately made such claims, such as Odysseus[87] and Leander.[88] However, Colluthus probably meant to ironically respond to Jason's disenchanted words in Ap. Rh. *Arg.* 3.388-9 τίς δ'

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[86] The motif is present in Nonnus, see Livrea 1968a, 211. Paris' exaggeration of his travelling effort is possibly closer to Hermes' words in *Od.* 5.100-101 τίς δ' ἂν ἑκὼν τοσσόνδε διαδράμοι ἁλμυρὸν ὕδωρ / ἄσπετον; "who would willingly accept to cross so much endless sea?"

[87] Odysseus was πολύτλας (Paris boasts τέτληκα), but Paris' journey is not comparable to Odysseus' as it must have lasted no more than six or seven days; Magnelli 2008, 157.

[88] Leander, in Musaeus 203, says Παρθένε, σὸν δι' ἔρωτα καὶ ἄγριον οἶδμα περήσω "Maiden, for the sake of your love I will cross even the wild sea". This line is modelled on Nonn. *Dion.* 42.363 παρθένε, σὸν δι' ἔρωτα καὶ οὐρανὸν οὐκέτι ναίω. However, Leander was really risking his life for Hero!

ἂν τόσον οἶδμα περῆσαι τλαίη ἑκὼν ὀθνεῖον ἐπὶ κτέρας; "who would willingly dare to cross so wide a sea in order to rob someone else's good?". Although Paris is not said to steal in Colluthus' version of the myth, in some versions of the story his abduction of Helen is associated with stealing from Menelaus' palace.[89] The linguistic parallel (Colluthus τέτληκα ...οἴδματα τόσσα περῆσαι 297, Apollonius τόσον οἶδμα περῆσαι τλαίη 388) is obvious, and an educated reader would have been able to detect this subtle irony.[90] He then asks Helen not to despise him or put him to shame, as if he were not sure that Aphrodite's will is actually going to be fulfilled, as if he feared failure. Paris' fear of being let down by Helen, despite Aphrodite's promise, also explains the compliment he pays to Helen at the end of his introductory speech, where he alludes to Helen's superiority among Argive women (300-304).

On this occasion I believe that Colluthus' aim is mainly to portray Paris as completely uninterested in Helen as a person and as a woman; as discussed earlier in the chapter about the visual aspects of the epyllion, he appears insensitive to her beauty and unreceptive to the signals she unconsciously sends him. Ultimately, the poet's technique of switching subjects in this case achieves the effect of presenting an uncommunicative and imbalanced pair.

What does Colluthus aim to achieve by using this narrative technique? In both cases the switch from narrative to direct address shows the level of interaction the speaking character wishes to have with the third character; for instance, Hermione speaks of Helen first in the third person, then, by switching to the second person and addressing her directly, she shows her desire to become close and contact (see, touch) her mother. In contrast, Paris speaks of her interlocutor, Helen, in the third person first: by doing so, he shows his unconscious wish to stay emotionally detached from Helen, and to treat the whole matter as a business with no sentiments involved; only after stating his entitlements to her as a prize he addresses her in the second person, but only to order her to respect Aphrodite's will and marry him.

In the case of Hermione, the reader can hear the pitiful cry and participate in her desperation, not least thanks to a number of elements heightening the pathos of the situation: she is a child, it is a girl, she has been abandoned by her mother, in her sleep, her father is also absent. With Paris, the opposite process takes place, and the

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89 As in *Cypria*, and in Dictis 1.3, for which see Rocca 1997, 171.

90 Magnelli 2008, 157-8.

reader witnesses a very unemotional man knocking on the door of a woman whose beauty he is insensitive to; she is such an object in his mind that he speaks of her as a distant reward. The lack of visual and erotic interaction shown by Paris towards a very involved Helen works in harmony with the way he chooses to speak to her.

4. Direct Speech, Psychology and Evaluation of Characters

Psychological interactions between characters and emotions are not exposed in Colluthus' poem in direct ways, but they are revealed clearly through characters' behaviour and speeches. For instance, the one-directionality between Helen and Paris is revealed by the imbalance of their reciprocal visual communication. In the cases of Paris and Hermione that I have just discussed, the characters' feelings towards their interlocutor are revealed by the direct or indirect way they address them.

Direct speech is the key instrument used by Colluthus to tell the story but also to allow characters to express their view. It can convey a subjective view, a lie, a reasoning that the character is processing, like in the case of Hermione. Direct speech, as well as descriptions, is generally considered a non-narrative element, although it can convey an embedded narrative told by a secondary narrator.[91] In the *Abduction*, the narrator chooses to tell most of Helen's story through direct speech; it is through her words that narratees are made aware of her decision, while the description of her visual behaviour helps in revealing her inner emotions.

In this section, I will analyze how Colluthus presents Helen's psychological developments with regards in particular to the choice she makes to leave her home. The poet brings to light how Helen thinks and justifies her decision to herself; I focus on how her reasoning can be perceived as that of a liar or an innocent woman, and ultimately on how it can lead to an evaluation of her behaviour.

Helen's charm and popularity was directly linked to the ambiguity of her behaviour. While this duplicity was accepted as part of her appeal by Greek sources, Latin sources always present her in a negative light,[92] with the exception, as we shall see, of Ovid. According to Rocca the choice of Roman literature to opt for a negative interpretation

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91 De Jong 2004, 8.

92 Virg. *Aen.* 2.567-74 and Sen. *Troad.* 866-7 and 87-887 for instance offer a contemptible portrait.

of Helen's behaviour (a choice which seals her role in the story as guilty) is explained with the inability for realist Romans to assimilate Helen's two-faced nature into their tradition;[93] Roman authors therefore chose the easiest path of denigration.[94]

The main concern is whether Helen has left out of her own free will (which would make her guilty and adulterous) or her actions can be blamed on somebody else (Eros, Aphrodite, Paris): how does Colluthus deal with Helen's duplicity? Does he make her an adulterous woman and hard-hearted mother, or is she a pitiful female victim of external forces such as love, persuasion or a god's will?

The issue of who was to be blamed for the war is already present from Homer:[95] in *Il.* 3.128-33 responsibility is imputed to Ares, Helen, and also the armies who crave victory,[96] although it is never in question that guilt lies with Helen. Alcaeus condemned Helen's mad decision to follow Paris (fr. 42 L.-P.), while Sappho defends her actions in the name of love (fr. 16 L.-P.). Stesichorus' *palinodia* of Helen[97], in which Helen is rehabilitated to a faithful and innocent wife, is partially shared by Herodotus, who accepts that Helen did not go to Troy but keeps within the Homeric tradition in speaking of adultery. For Herodotus, all guilt lies with Paris, who has betrayed his host's trust and Helen[98]and is responsible of ἀδικία and ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον.[99]

Euripides offers the first direct tradition of the "new Helen", redeemed of all responsibilities: first in the *Electra* of 414, an anticipation of the version of the story that he will bring to stage two years later in the *Helena*: embracing the Stesichorean *palinodia* completely, he makes Helen's faithfulness (and, in particular, her active intention to stay faithful)[100] the key to the new perspective. Helen is sorry for the tragedy she has caused, but she is not apologizing: responsibility lies with the εἴδωλον, which has gained her a bad reputation (δύσκλεια). Her rehabilitation is also full in the eyes of Menelaus, and she manages to return to her previous status, from which she had been removed by Hera and Zeus' will. Euripides had a clear ethical

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93 Rocca 1995, 34.

94 Hellenistic versions of the myth could not have inspired Romans, as these mainly focused on the pastoral aspects of the story and did not add anything new to the version of the Cypria: Theocr. *Hel. Epith.* 26-31 for instance lingers on Helen's divine beauty that makes her superior to all women.

95 Palumbo Stracca 1993, 302.

96 Kennedy 1986, 9.

97 Known to us only via Isocrates *Hel.* 64 and Plat. *Phaedr.* 243 a-b and *Rep.* 576c.

98 Her. *Hist.* 2.114 ἐξαπατήσας τὴν γυναῖκα.

99 Her. *Hist.* 2.115.

100 Monaco 1981, 150.

message to convey: the battle between σῶμα and ὄνομα, and between being and appearing, plays a large role in his version, which was followed by many.

Gorgias redeems Helen completely in any possible scenario: in whichever way we choose to read the events, somebody else is to blame. Isocrates goes further by even redeeming Paris. Ovid's rhetorical organization of Paris' speech depends on him.

Theocritus, in his epithalamion of Helen, portrayed her as a radiant girl on her wedding day and managed to avoid almost completely the thorny matter of her responsibilities.[101]

Ovid rehabilitated Helen by blaming the persuasive power of the logos and offering a version of the events which clarified the psychological processes behind her emotions. Ovid's version, aided by the fact that the medium of the *epistula* supports an intimate dialogue, presents Helen's duplicity from an emotive perspective: the reader can clearly feel her not-too-hidden wish to leave, her struggle with the weight of her conscience. Readers can then sympathize with Helen, as they are first brought along her emotional journey, and secondly they can testify to the impact of peitho on her decisions. According to Rocca, in Ovid there is no trace of an alleged responsibility of Helen: the poet acknowledges the almost magical influence of persuasion[102], which up to then had been affirmed in the Roman tradition only in relation to public contexts, to the world of private and interpersonal relationships, and by doing so he redeems Helen from any guilt. Rocca spreads this consideration to Colluthus as well, identifying this lack of blame in Helen's silent and hesitant reaction to Paris' words in 305-306.[103]

However, Colluthus' imitation of Ovid *Her.* 16 (discussed point by point by Rocca)[104] is not limited to specific stages of the story but is, in my opinion, clear also in

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101 There is a subtle note of tragic irony in the wedding wishes in *Id.* 18.50 (Palumbo Stracca 1993, 302-3).

102 Persuasion has often been compared to magic fluid.

103 Rocca 1995, 36.

104 Rocca 1995, 41-4. Colluthus imitates Ovid *Her.* 16 only for the speech of Paris to Helen. He then stops following Ovid altogether for the rest of the story (there are a number of discordances between the two versions of the myth, listed in Livrea 1968a, XVIII- XX and in Rocca 1995, 46 n. 48: among these, Paris sails with favorable winds in Ovid, while he meets a storm in Colluthus). Livrea explained this partial imitation of Ovid with a lost Hellenistic model which would have been followed by Colluthus; Rocca 1995, 38-41, instead, suggests that Colluthus may have used scholastic *suasoriae* or *ethopoiiae* based on Ovid, taking into consideration that Latin was studied in Egypt and many papyri of Cicero, Livy and Virgil have been found with interlinear translations, and also considering Virgil's influence on Quintus' poetry, for instance. For more on the relationship between late Greek poets and Latin literature see the Conclusions.

his treatment of Helen's behaviour. As concluded in the chapter about the visual effects in the epyllion, Helen's visual behaviour reveals her psychological and emotive reaction to Paris' words and especially sight[105]; her emotions are clearly readable through her body language and the codified visual behaviour she displays. Amazement, curiosity, the search for familiarity and hunger for physical contact are all easily detectable from her description.

In the same way, her hesitation reveals the weight of her conscience: as in Ovid, she is aware of the moral questions that will arise from her choice to leave with Paris. Helen's desire, however, only needs a few seconds to surface again: she is left hesitant and speechless after Paris' words (305-306) but then suddenly she finds her voice again as her admiration for the walls of Troy that have been so courageously laid by Paris' ancestors cannot be kept silent and she admits her desire (ἤθελον) to see them (308-313). Immediately afterwards, her wish becomes an order for Paris to bring her to Troy (ἀγρέο νῦν ... με κομίζων 314) and climaxes in ἕψομαι (315), a clear admission that her decision is voluntary and active. Here, Helen wants to follow Paris jut as much as she wanted to commit to faithfulness to Menelaus and to defend her honor in Eur. *Hel.* 63-64 τὸν πάλαι δ' ἐγὼ πόσιν τιμῶσα.[106] The two passages show the two extreme opposites of how Helen's behaviour could be interpreted, but share the same readiness for accountability and action. In Colluthus, Helen feels confident in her decision, as she justifies it with her intention to duly obey Aphrodite's orders (ὡς Κυθέρεια γάμων βασίλεια κελεύει 315): in her mind, it is not Paris' beauty what makes her leave with him but a religious duty.

With her conscience at peace, Helen can now leave. On the other hand, the reader, who has witnessed Helen's erotic fascination with Paris, is not fooled by her explanation and is very aware of what has made her leave. Differently from Ovid then, where her justification is offered by the poet in the form of the persuasion of Paris' words, in Colluthus Helen does not avail of the same option, as Paris' speech is not what convinces her to leave. Helen's duplicity in Colluthus is resolved once again, like in Ovid and in Gorgias, with the psychological interpretation of her behaviour;

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[105] His speech on the greatness of his ancestors does not produce an effect on her as much as his looks; the same conclusion has been drawn from Paris' reaction to the sight of Aphrodite's bare chest versus the speeches of the goddesses before the beauty contest. With Colluthus, it is all about looks.

[106] Both statements are in first person, and in particular the ἐγώ in Euripides marks Helen's self-declaration of loyalty to her previous husband, see Monaco 1981, 149-51.

however, while in Ovid persuasion is what manipulates her destiny, in Colluthus it is eros.

At this stage there can be some forgiveness for her: readers may sympathize with her, whose destiny to abandon her husband and daughter has already been decided by Aphrodite, and whose mind has been blurred by Eros. Moreover, let us not forget how beautiful Paris was (even the poet could not restrain himself from complimenting him as being superior in beauty even to Dionysus), and the boredom or loneliness Helen may have endured during Menelaus' absence.[107]

But is this the final evaluation of Helen that Colluthus wants to convey? After Paris carries her to Troy, proud beyond reason of Aphrodite's promise (324-7), Helen only makes one more appearance in the story, in circumstances that, as highlighted before, deserve more attention.

She appears to Hermione, who falls asleep while desperately seeking her mother, in a dream. First of all, it should be noted that Colluthus clearly wants to warn us about the nature of dreams: immediately after Helen's decision to leave and before her appearance in Hermione's dream he inserts two descriptions of what sleep and dreams are. In the first passage (318-23), Night opens the two gates of dreams;[108] one is that of truthful oracles, but the other is that of illusion, feeder of vain dreams, (δολοφροσύνης, κενεῶν θρέπτειραν ὀνείρων 323). In the second passage (366-71), Sleep and Death are said to be brothers who share the same destiny, and dreams are, again, an illusion (δολοφροσύνῃσιν ὀνείρων 371). Unsurprisingly, there is a close resemblance between Colluthus' lines 318-20 νὺξ δέ, πόνων ἄμπαυμα μετ' ἠελίοιο κελεύθους, ὕπνον ἐλαφρίζουσα, παρήορον ὤπασεν ἠῶ ἀρχομένην, "and night dispensed sleep, rest from the works after the journey of the sun, and brought along with her the beginning of a new dawn", and Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* 3.404-405: *iamque soporiferas nocturna silentia terris explicuere vices*, "and now night silence

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[107] Which is not told by Colluthus until line 384; Menelaus, like Paris' wife Oenone, is almost cancelled from the story, with bare references made to them, see Paschalis 1008, 145.

[108] The image of true and false dreams is borrowed from Mosch. *Eur.* 1-5 Εὐρώπῃ ποτὲ Κύπρις ἐπὶ γλυκὺν ἦκεν ὄνειρον, / νυκτὸς ὅτε τρίτατον λάχος ἵσταται ἐγγύθι δ' ἠώς, / ὕπνος ὅτε γλυκίων μέλιτος βλεφάροισιν ἐφίζων / λυσιμελὴς πεδάᾳ μαλακῷ κατὰ φάεα δεσμῷ, / εὖτε καὶ ἀτρεκέων ποιμαίνεται ἔθνος ὀνείρων, "Once upon a time Europa had of the Cyprian a delightful dream. 'Twas the third watch o' the night when 'tis nigh dawn and the Looser of Limbs is come down honey-sweet upon the eyelids for to hold our twin light in gentle bondage, 'twas at that hour which is the outgoing time of the flock of true dreams" (transl. J. M. Edmonds). However, as always Colluthus is mixing Homeric with Nonnian references: in 320, Coll. δοιὰς δὲ πύλας - *Od.* 19.562-7, δοιαὶ γάρ τε πύλαι; Coll. ὤιξεν - Nonn. *Dion.* 27.2 ἀντολίης ὤιξε. See James 1981, 141-2.

unfolded upon the earth the ever-returning time of sleep";[109] Claudian had also mentioned the deceitfulness of dreams in *Rapt.* 3.96, where Ceres wonders whether it is a vain shadow that is deceiving her, *an vana fallimur umbra?*

We are reminded of the deceptive nature of dreams just before Hermione and Helen speak in the child's dream: in fact, while she has already entered her dream, Hermione thinks she is seeing her mother (μητέρα παπταίνειν ὠίσατο 372), but she is not really seeing her. In this dream, Helen responds to her daughter's call and says: "My sorrowful child, do not blame me, for I have suffered a terrible fate. The deceptive man who came yesterday took me away" (380). Her statement, if compared directly with the one she delivered as her decision to leave with Paris ("Come now; carry me from Sparta to Troy. I will follow you, as Cythereia, queen of marriage, commands" 314-315) is unquestionably a lie: she had actively declared her own decision to follow Paris (ἕψομαι), and now she blames him for kidnapping her (ἥρπασεν).

Helen, who had previously taken ownership for her choice and even had justified it in her own head with religious duties, now denies all responsibility for her actions and asks not to be blamed, since she has been the victim of a terrible fate (μὴ μέμφεο δεινὰ παθούσῃ);[110] it goes without saying that she is here putting the blame on the divine will, but also on Paris, who is now an ἀπατήλιος ἀνήρ. His deceptiveness, however, had not been detected before by her (with the exception of Paris revealing his sweet voice, μειλιχίην ἠμείβετο γῆρυν 279) and is labelled as such only now for the first time: as discussed above, Helen had been persuaded to leave not by Paris' speech but by his looks. This contrasts with Mus. *Her.* 101-102, where Leander's seducing strategy is openly treacherous: λοξὰ δ' ὀπιπεύων δολερὰς ἐλέλιζεν ὀπωπὰς νεύμασιν ἀφθόγγοισι παραπλάζων φρένα κούρης, "with oblique insidious looks and silent hints he attempted to seduce the girl's heart", and his desire is δολόεντα (103).

With ἀπατήλιος, Helen is clearly referring to the deceptiveness of his words, the irresistible power of the λόγος that made her innocent *in toto* for Gorgias.[111] In Claudian, Proserpina' s abduction is blamed by her mother Ceres on Venus' persuasion in Rapt. 3.227 *persuadet.*

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[109] Transl. C. Gruzelier.

[110] Helen also played the victim in *Il.* 3.176.

[111] Gorgias 4.1-3 εἰ δὲ λόγος ὁ πείσας καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπατήσας, but especially 5.1-2: εἰ λόγωι ἐπείσθη, οὐκ ἠδίκησεν ἀλλ' ἠτύχησεν, εἴρηται.

There may be a number of explanations for the false version of the story given by Helen to Hermione. Helen could wish to tell her child a story that would be less upsetting than the truth: it would be hard to imagine a scene in which a mother openly admits to her daughter of nine years of age that she has voluntarily abandoned her (maybe in a tragedy?). Helen could also be lying to herself: once she has left Sparta, she could have suddenly realised the mistake she has made, and now puts the blame on Paris to cover up her responsibilities as there is no turning back. It is not clear whether the dream is voicing Helens' true disenchantment or if it is Hermione's own imagination.[112] But if we look back at how Colluthus has introduced the circumstances in which this lie is told, we should know that dreams are deceptive, and therefore we should expect nothing but a false version of reality. In this logic, it makes perfect sense that Helen lies.

The fact that she lies in a dream, to a young child, makes it even more ironic to the reader: who else is going to believe her version of the story?[113] Once more, readers are not fooled by Helen, and, as they earlier knew that the real reason for her escape was her lust for Paris, they now know that she has left of her own accord. Ironically, it does not seem that even Hermione will be easily convinced by her mother's version of the events: in such deceptive circumstances, she eventually sees the truth, as, for the first time since she has started searching for her mother, she wonders whether she may have left to pursue harmonious Aphrodite (οὕτω καλλικόμοιο μεθ' ἁρμονίην Ἀφροδίτης 377). The child had never before considered a voluntary departure in the wide range of possibilities that she and her maids had considered, but now she associates her disappearance with a marriage[114] to another man. However, it is only a short-lived glimpse of truth for poor Hermione, as, when she wakes up, she sends for her father by presenting the same, false version that Helen has just told her in the dream: a lawless (ἀθεμίστιος) man came yesterday and stole the house of all its beauty.[115]

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[112] Magnelli 2008, 165.

[113] Paschalis 2008, 139-40 notes how Colluthus uses Hermione as the perfect vehicle for Helen's version of events.

[114] Aphrodite is harmony as conjugal mind-likeness, that very accord that Athena lacked (in 186).

[115] Interestingly, in Claudian Ceres disbelieved the dream in which Proserpina appeared to her, and *gaudet non vera fuisse*, "she rejoiced that it was not true", *Rapt.* 3.111. But later she reconsiders the omens that have appeared to her, and guilt for having abandoned her daughter while indulging in dances emerges, 3.124-33.

There can be no doubt about where Colluthus stands on this. The poet makes no secret of his opinion of Helen, referring to her as a reward (ἀντάξιον 294), but certainly he states his position in 327, where he defines her a φόρτον: this word can mean "freight of war" but also "rubbish" or "burden"; whether the poet meant either of these meanings, his definition is certainly not flattering. Another more subtle allusion to what the poet's evaluation of Helen's behaviour is may be perceived in one of the possible scenarios that Hermione's maids suggest to the girl to explain her disappearance: in 342, they hypothesize that she may have gone to a gathering of women (νυμφάων ἐς ὁμήγυριν ἀγρομενάων). In Musaeus *Her.* 34, Hero, who is said to be chaste and modest, has never taken part to gatherings of women (ἀγρομένῃσι ...γυναιξίν). Nothing is said about the nature of these gatherings, but it is hard not to draw some conclusions from the contrasting behaviour of the two characters.

In conclusion, Helen's responsibility appears clear in Colluthus. The poet makes her fully accountable for her own destiny by making her state herself first both her own intention to follow Paris and then the lie in which she blames Paris. If Colluthus had made his evaluations in the narrative, we could have deduced that that was his opinion of Helen, but the fact that the character is speaking in the first person in both cases makes her ethical position clearer and possibly even worse,[116] and I believe that there can be no doubts about where, for Colluthus, guilt lies. However, it is obvious that Colluthus had no interest in producing a moralizing reading of the myth,[117] and irony, as always, plays a role in this scene too. A child who manages to see the truth against all odds, in her dreams, despite a lying mother and what her adult maids say, is quite ironic: in this lies the twist that Colluthus has accustomed us to, and that we almost expect at this stage. His humour shows, as well noted by Magnelli 2008, 165, in the handling of the mythological tradition:[118] he borrows the elements that have always played a significant role in the post-Homeric debate on Helen's guilt or innocence, and builds a funny scene in which ultimately nobody is fooled by Helen.

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[116] As it would be the case in narrative, in the speech the mitigating circumstances of indirect report are not there.

[117] I agree here with Magnelli 2008, 163-5, although I do not share his interpretation of Helen as a "colourless character".

[118] Magnelli 2008, 165.

CONCLUSION

We know very little about Colluthus. The *Suda* indicates that he hailed from Lykopolis, in the Egyptian Thebaid, dates him to the reign of Anastasius (491-518 AD), and provides some information about his works, but nothing else is said about his life. While working with such limited information on a poet's life can be a stimulus to evaluate his work through an almost unbiased lens, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions about some aspects of his poetics. Colluthus' only surviving work also lacks obvious references to his contemporary context,[119] which makes our task even more challenging. It is possible, however, to paint a rather clear picture of the poet's views (and thus his context) through his text. For instance, although we do not have information about Colluthus' faith, we have seen in Chapter 4 that a number of evaluations in the poem are suggestive of the poet's perspective. These observations do not allow us to establish whether Colluthus was, for instance, a Christian,[120] but they at least fit in with the religious turmoil of Colluthus' times and the general opinion that this was a period of transition. In this section, I summarize the main findings of this dissertation, beginning from a survey of the information that can help define Colluthus, and proceeding to a discussion of his approach to genres, contemporary culture, narrative techniques and audiences.

Let us begin with Colluthus as a poet in late fifth-century Egypt. It is possible to suggest a few possibilities regarding his activity as a poet, based on evidence in our possession about some of his contemporaries. One thing we would like to know about Colluthus, for instance, is whether he interacted with the imperial court at Byzantium or was active in the provincial Thebaid. At the time, men of letters would often move

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[119] Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 6.

[120] A linguistic analysis of the *Abduction* in search of any words that gained a Christian meaning, on the model of that conducted by Shorrock 2011 on Nonnus' works, led to no evidence, with very few exceptions such as the use of the epithet διάκτορος in 123: the word was used by Nonnus (e.g. *Par.* 1.216, 4.98) always in a grammatical and philological exegetic mode, typical of the Alexandrian use, alluding to the double meaning of "messenger" and "servant", but in *Par.* 5.21-2 also alludes to its meaning, within the exegetic tradition of Jesus, of "son" and "servant of God", inviting a juxtaposition of Hermes, Gabriel and Jesus, see Agosti 2005, 24-5. Unfortunately, since the epithet only occurs on this occasion, it is difficult to establish whether Colluthus was simply resuscitating another Homeric fossil (as he often does) or whether he also meant to allude to its Christian significance.

to the most prestigious schools of the Eastern Empire (Byzantium, Antioch, Gaza) to be educated with a view to a public career; in many cases they would end up working in the imperial administration as bureaucrats or lawyers, and in some fortunate cases they would achieve the honour of joining the court and working on imperial propaganda. Poetry was written and enjoyed by these poets, making its reception quite a self-contained environment, as we learn from the many relationships that linked various poets of the *Anthology* for instance.

This was the case of Paul the Silentiary (540-575), a functionary and a poet at the court of Justinian. Agathias (536-582), his protégé and son-in-law, moved from Myrina in Asia Minor to Alexandria and then Byzantium, and secured a position as a Scholasticus (lawyer) at the imperial court. However, he never managed to earn a living solely out of poetry, as Paul: he often complains about his hard work as a high legal functionary at the Royal Stoa,[121] and often criticises his fellow contemporaries who wrote panegyrics to gain a better position. Christodorus of Coptos, in Egypt, also moved to Byzantium to work at the court of Anastasius, where he wrote epic and encomiastic works.

Poetic activity was also lively in the peripheral regions: Procopius of Gaza never left the province, and composed a panegyric for Anastasius in occasion of the visit of the emperor to Gaza, around 512, to inaugurate a statue of his; while it remains uncertain who was present at the public reading of panegyrics performed in the provinces, we know that a copy of each panegyric was sent to Byzantium, and that some poets were active in the province. During the reign of Anastasius, provincial cities like Gaza enjoyed a lively intellectual activity, thanks to the stability and economic prosperity of the times: here, too, as in Byzantium, men of letters worked under imperial patronage and were often commissioned panegyrical works.[122] Scholars such as Zosimus and Eutocius from Ascalon, and Procopius, Aeneas, Choricius and Timothy came from the School of Gaza, which flourished between the fifth century AD and the Arab conquest in 635. This important rhetoric school attracted many scholars even from Athens: the majority of them were Christian, and also refined connoisseurs of the classical tradition, and they represented a successful symbiosis between the two cultures.

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[121] However, he still managed to find money to restore a public restroom in Smyrna, see *AP* 9.662, and Rapp 2005, 387.

[122] Haarer 2010, 28.

Then, did Colluthus leave Lykopolis, and did he work at the court of Anastasius? It is plausible to assume that he left his hometown, as he could not gain a suitable education in the Thebaid, and since it is clear that his erudition was equal to that of other contemporaries, it is reasonable to say that he probably travelled to access such an education. A valid contribution to this discussion is made by the Latin sources[123] used by Colluthus, particularly Ovid and Claudian. Colluthus employs part of *Her.* 16, but does not seem to know the whole *epistula*, as he presents a version of the story which contrasts radically with the one in Ovid. It has been argued whether Colluthus' imitation of Ovid implies a direct knowledge of the model or whether, as Livrea suggested, we must imply a lost model.[124] It has also been suggested that Colluthus may have accessed Ovid's text indirectly through rhetorical exercises from the so-called school of Nonnus. In fact, the myth of Helen was a popular subject for late-antique *ethopoiiai*,[125] some of which we know were used not only within the educational context but also as models for literary texts: for instance, the monologue of the Indian prince who falls in love with the corpse of a girl in Nonn. *Dion.* 35 seems to be based on Libanius' *ethopoiia* 12-13 Foerster, featuring Achilles' speech at the sight of dead Penthesileia.[126] If, as some scholars suggest, Colluthus attended the so-called rhetorical school of Nonnus, he must have moved to Panopolis and from there he may have moved to Alexandria or Byzantium.

Determining whether Colluthus worked at the court of Anastasius is more challenging. He wrote *encomia*, and, while we do not possess any information regarding their subject, we can reasonably assume that the subject was Anastasius, given his popularity with Procopius and Priscian. Regarding his epic works, we can presume that the *Calydoniaca* revolved around Anastasius too, given that the emperor's war achievements over the Persians in 506 were also probably the topic of his *Persica*.[127] There seem to be no elements in the *Abduction* that refer back to the poet's own time, so this could have been his only non-propagandistic work.

I now wish to return to the matter anticipated above on Colluthus' relationship with Latin literature, in order to paint a clearer picture of Colluthus as a court poet. In general, scholars have rejected the possibility that later Greek poets

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123 Regarding Colluthus' possible knowledge of Latin, see below.

124 See Rocca 1995, 41 n. 34; De Lorenzi 1929, 28-48.

125 Rocca 1995, 46.

126 Another example is Calliope's consolation speech to Thetis after Achilles' death, which appears only in an *ethopoiia* on P.Graves and in Quintus' *Posthomerica* 3; see Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 7.

127 Cameron 1965c, 481; Carvounis and Hunter 2008b, 4.

may have used Latin models for their works for many years,[128] explaining textual analogies with the hypothesis of a lost Hellenistic model. Since the end of the last century, however, the concept of Latin sources for later Greek poetry began to gain popularity, after the dependence of Quintus, Triphiodorus and Chariton on the *Aeneid* was cautiously demonstrated.[129] Nonnus' dependence on Ovid also became the object of studies,[130] and the question was then posed for other authors too. Knowledge of Latin was proven in Egypt since the third century AD: papyri of Cicero, Livy and Virgil with facing page or interlinear translation reveals how Latin, the language of the imperial administration, was studied.[131] It cannot be determined whether Colluthus read Ovid in Latin or in translation, or even if he learnt of this text through scholastic exercises; however, the linguistic analogies between Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* (in Latin) and his Greek *Gigantomachy* and Colluthus' *Abduction of Helen*, together with those of content, structure and style discussed in Chapter 2 and 4, lead me to believe that Colluthus read at least this model in the original Latin.[132] Claudian's *Gigantomachy* seems to be an established model already among late-antique poets: his metaphor of poetry as navigation, presented in the proem, is remembered by Nonnus, John of Gaza, and Paul the Silentiary,[133] and it is also present in the proem of the *Abduction*, although we cannot be sure of its dependence on Claudian. Colluthus may have followed this tradition and developed a deeper interest in his other texts (in Latin). The relevance of Latin within the Eastern Empire is personified by Priscian of Caesarea, an Algerian γραμματικός who was active in Byzantium; Priscian, like Procopius of Gaza, wrote a panegyric of Anastasius but always considered himself a Roman, and his criteria for the emperor's praise are Roman and Christian values.[134] Claudian himself, a native of Alexandria who was active in Rome and at the court of Milan, at the end of the fourth century AD composed in both Greek and Latin.[135] It is possible to assume, then, that Colluthus, as a scholar of his time, learnt Latin and was

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[128] This is a controversial matter, as well put by Carvounis 2008b, 6. See also Gärtner 2005 and James and Lee 2000.

[129] Gärtner 2005, and James and Lee 2000.

[130] D'Ippolito 1964, 76; Carvounis 2008b, 3.

[131] Rocca 1995, 38- 41.

[132] Livrea 2000, 441-5.

[133] Agosti 2006a, 48.

[134] For instance, Priscian compares Anastasius to Nerva, Marcus Aurelius and Trajan, and links his lineage to that of Pompey; he also praises him for his *pietas* towards the barbarians he had defeated.

[135] According to Gruzelier 1993, xvii, Claudian's Latin has an element of novelty.

thus able to make specific allusions to his models, imitating Claudian's language in particular.

In this dissertation I have surveyed the similarities between Colluthus and his models, canonised and contemporaries; while Homer, Apollonius, and especially Nonnus are constantly referred to,[136] Colluthus also often engages with other models according to the genre or context with which he is playing. For instance, while creating the visual scene of Helen and Paris' meeting he draws on Heliodorus and other Neoplatonic references derived from the novel; in the bucolic proem Callimachus and Theocritus are prime references; he models his Aphrodite and the episode of Hermione's abandonment on Claudian and Musaeus. Drawing conclusions on the similarities of Colluthus' text with that of another contemporary, Christodorus, may help us to define the portrait of the poet that we have started to paint, i.e. a poet who perhaps worked at the imperial court.

Both natives of the Thebaid, Colluthus and Christodorus composed works of epic and encomiastic nature on presumably similar subjects: Colluthus, as discussed above, probably composed his encomium, *Persica* and *Calydoniaca* about the imperial campaigns to protect the border, while it is certain that Christodorus' *Isaurica* revolved around Anastasius' victory in 497, and a panegyric of the emperor is included in his ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippus (*AP* 2). A number of textual connections between the two poets, especially with regard to the description of Aphrodite and Paris,[137] prompted Tissoni to suggest that Christodorus may have drawn for inspiration from the epigrams celebrating Praxiteles' Aphrodite of Cnydos (*APl* 160,162,163,168):[138] this may also have been the case for Colluthus, who, as we have seen in Chapter 3, probably composed his portrait of Aphrodite based on observation of some artworks. Paris is also described as βούκολος by both poets: this can either be ekphrasis of a real detail, as Paris was often represented as a shepherd in artworks, or perhaps an echo of the rich earlier literary tradition about him.[139]

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[136] Late antique epic poetry (Quintus and Tryphiodorus) also represents a constant model for Colluthus, mainly in his linguistic choices.

[137] For example, in the ekphrasis of the statue of Aphrodite, Christodorus employs similar words to describe the goddess' golden veil as those used by Colluthus in the same context; the goddess bares her chest in both passages.

[138] Tissoni 2000a, 130.

[139] Livrea 1968a, 64; Tissoni 2000a, 177.

Colluthus' and Christodorus' literary affinities may lead to another interesting conclusion regarding the philosophical culture in which Colluthus may have worked. Christodorus' Neoplatonic views are clear in his works both prior[140] and subsequent to his imperial appointment in 497,[141] an element that leads us to assume that Neoplatonism was at least accepted at Anastasius' court.[142] Are there any elements in the *Abduction* that allow us to see a connection between Colluthus and Platonism and Neoplatonism? Aside from a couple of allusions to passages of Apollonius in which Colluthus echoes Empedocles, we have seen that Colluthus embraces the erotic theories of Platonic origin (re-elaborated and codified by the novel, especially Heliodorus) of the eye as the channel through which love enters one's soul. These two elements alone are insufficient for us to assess the extent of Colluthus' philosophical position, as they could be derived from the imitation of Apollonius' passages). More meaningful evidence is provided by the episode of Paris' journey by sea, which can be interpreted as a Neoplatonic metaphor for a man braving the matter and the senses,[143] similar to Odysseus' journey and more relevant to Leander's sea-crossing in Musaeus, and to the Giant's fall in the sea in Claudian's *Gigantomachy*,[144] one of Colluthus' closest models. If we accept that Colluthus worked at the imperial court, and by virtue of his literary affinity with fellow countryman and court-poet Christodorus, it would be reasonable to assume that Colluthus also shared this philosophical tradition.

Understanding the impact of Neoplatonism on Colluthus unfortunately does not shed any more light on the nature of his other works, but it contributes to increasing our understanding of the *Abduction* as a potentially metaphorical text and provides further insight into the poet's life, allowing us to better contextualise Colluthus as a poet working at Anastasius' court. Further research on this aspect may bring to light new philosophical readings of the *Abduction.*

The elements that I have here pieced together - Colluthus' activity under the patronage of Anastasius, his affiliation with other poets working in a shared cultural environment (that was also self-sufficient in terms of reception), and his allusions to

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140 *Monobiblos* dedicated "to the pupils of the great Proclus".

141 The ekphrasis of the statues of the gymnasium of Zeuxippus (503), a work commissioned by the emperor, contains references to Neoplatonism; Tissoni 2000a, 37-44.

142 I here follow the chronology of the works proposed by Tissoni 2000a, 20-3, who, based on comparisons with the panegyrics of Anastasius by Procopius of Gaza and Priscian of Caesarea, argues against Cameron's date of 500 AD for the ekphrasis.

143 Giomi 2003, 371-2.

144 Claudian's affinity with the circle of the Neopatonic Christian philosopher M. Theodorus is discussed by Giomi 2003 and Tarigo 2012.

Neoplatonism - paint a rather different picture from the traditional image of Colluthus as an isolated, unoriginal Nonnian scholar who composed a heterogeneous cento-like epyllion. The new Colluthus emerges as a professional poet whose activity was closely connected with that of his contemporaries, and who paid homage to epic tradition as much as to contemporary propagandistic poetry and Neoplatonic theories such as those of Christodorus.

What is Colluthus' approach towards previous literary tradition? In Chapter 2 it has been established that the poet plays with different genres in various scenes of his epyllion: beside a bucolic proem lies an epic description of Eris' rage, followed by an agon and an invective delivered by Aphrodite. Colluthus also engages with other sub-genres, such as ekphrasis of architecture and artworks. During Paris' journey the poet inserts a brief ekphrasis of the buildings of Sparta. He also portrays his Aphrodite as fully armed, modelling her on Claudian's Venus in the *Gigantomachy* but also on the Amiklaion Aphrodite, a statue of the armed goddess often mentioned by Nonnus. The elaborate hairstyle of the goddess and of Paris may also have been borrowed from the figurative arts, as discussed in Chapter 2. This specific type of ekphrasis was rather in fashion at Colluthus' time: often ekphraseis of public buildings or artworks that had been built or restored by the emperor were commissioned as instruments of propaganda. This is the case, for instance, of Procopius of Caesarea's *De Aedificiis*, Paul the Silentiary's ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia (both of which celebrate Justinian), and the description of the cosmos painted in the baths of Gaza by John of Gaza. By embracing this popular sub-genre,[145] Colluthus demonstrates once again that he is very much a poet of the late fifth century, as opposed to a colourless follower of a long-past classical tradition. His epyllion, however, does not contain an encomium of Anastasius, so the poet briefly touches upon the genre and incorporates it in the geographical ekphrasis of Paris' journey, almost as if simply to evoke a theme familiar to contemporary readers. The panegyrical objective of late-antique architectural ekphraseis is not present here, but Colluthus nevertheless exploits the genre to make his epyllion more current and relevant.

[145] Colluthus touches upon other genres too, such as πάτρια, for instance, when he refers to the myth of Hyacinthus of Amyklae.

The renegotiation of genre[146] that I have just described, in which the traditional genre is given a twist by the poet, is a feature of late antique poetry, which aimed at recovering the most genuine classicizing tradition, while also tried to revolutionize the canons, the fruition and the objectives of genres.[147] This is a constant feature of Colluthus' poetics that we can deduce from the analysis of his models. One device used by the poet is to make specific linguistic choices in order to evoke a series of associations that foreshadow what is yet to happen, driving the reader to expect a certain outcome. We can see how Colluthus achieves this, for instance, in the proem, where the invocation of the Trojan Nymphs creates in his narratees expectations[148] of a programmatic nature with regard to his poetics (association of Nymphs with water, of water with poetry), of an aetiological nature (subject of the poem- Helen- the cause of the Trojan War) and of the tragic outcome of the story, in the form of omens (Trojan Nymphs as the daughters of the river Xanthus are traditionally mourning for Troy[149], and Xanthus, son of Zeus, who fought Achilles in to defend Troy)[150]. Moreover, the lamentation evoked by the daughters of Xanthus creates a bridge connecting the bucolic world to its threnodic origin (as in Thyrsis' lament song for Daphnis)[151] and we have also seen that the mourning and pastoral themes are also often associated in Nonnus, as in Nature's mourning for the death of Hymnus in *Dion.* 15.

Similar considerations apply to the description of Paris, where Colluthus plays with various words (such as μῆλον[152] and ταῦρος)[153] to create expectations of a standard pastoral portrait, but then surprises his readers by using tradition to achieve an unexpected outcome. This is the case, for instance, of the beauty criteria that Zeus establishes for Paris; however, instead of judging the face of the three goddesses, Paris focuses his attention on necks and feet (134-6), and in the end he chooses breasts (130-6). Colluthus blends here allusions to three divine epiphanies from the Homeric tradition: Athena with her flashing eyes in *Il.* 1.200-206, Aphrodite as she appears to

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146 I borrow this definition from Prauscello 2008.

147 Tarigo 2012, 2 and Agosti 2006a.

148 This theory finds consensus with recent scholarship: Paschalis 2008, 138; Magnelli 2008, 162-4; Prauscello 2008, 174 and 185.

149 Quint. Smyr. 12.459 and 11.245.

150 *Il.* 21.308-14.

151 Prauscello 2008, 176.

152 Paschalis 2008, 146 explains the associations evoked by "sheep", "flock", and "breast".

153 Prauscello 2008, 184 explains the apparent discrepancy of Paris tending mixed flocks with the double meaning of the word for bull, which also refers to the phallus and sexual power.

Helen in *Il.* 3.396-7 and also as she appears to Anchises in *h.Aphr.* 88-9. These allusions, easily detectable by an educated reader, can be interpreted as hints deliberately placed by the poet to make readers guess that the beauty contest will end with the crowning of Aphrodite as the winner. Colluthus' further reference to Homer, (*Il.* 13.66-71, where the two Ajaxes are at a loss as for the exact identity of the divinity they have been speaking to) may be an allusion to the challenges involved with identifying a god: in fact, Helen experiences this very difficulty when she tries to recognize a god in Paris at 260-66, and the poet may thus be suggesting his readers to question the identity of the goddess whom Paris has been looking at. By decoding the intertextual references to the Homeric passages included in the description of Paris' visual behaviour, readers are led to re-create in their imagination images of Athena and then Aphrodite, who is evoked through the reference to her necklaces from *h.Aphr.* The intertextual allusion is thus employed here by Colluthus to actually add emphasis to the goddess' naked chest, prompting the readers to guess who will be the winner.

Colluthus, as well noted by Prauscello,[154] employs not only bucolic and Homeric tradition but also the relevant exegesis and traditions of reception as a tool for orienting readers' expectations and shaping his narrative strategies. It is reasonable to conclude that the poet not only assumes that his narratees share the same knowledge, but that he actually expects this as, otherwise, it would not be possible to fully receive and enjoy his poetry. A similar perspective is that of Callimachus, whose narratees are expected to interact and employ their knowledge to complete the picture that the poet is providing.[155] Colluthus' interest for an aetiology contributes to such a conclusion: where Paris is oblivious to the multiple omens that are placed along his journey by the narrator, readers cannot ignore them, and their expectations are clearly driven by the poet to view Paris as a future sexual predator and Helen as the one responsible for the disaster at home and for many at Troy.

Narratees' knowledge is demanded and relied upon by Colluthus to decipher allusions as signs that need to be decoded: when a gadfly or a man with a goat's skin appears in the story, the reader is immediately bombarded with a series of previous occurrences that are recalled to mind and build the first level of his allusive associations, so that readers instantly recognize the genre in which he wishes to place

[154] Prauscello 2008, 185.
[155] Harder 2004.

his scene (for instance, a pastoral context). Then, when readers feel familiar with the bucolic picture, and are comfortable with this genre, suddenly Colluthus produces his twist, jarring his readers and achieving what actually is his objective, i.e. an ironic game with tradition. Allusion is not, then, the goal of Colluthus' poetics,[156] but an instrument aimed at leading readers' expectations in a certain direction, only to undercut those expectations with an ironic surprise.

The voyeurism which was typical of late antiquity is not only apparent from Colluthus' taste for ekphrasis of buildings mentioned earlier, but also from the numerous other occasions in which a picturesque description is presented to the reader. From characters' gestures to the visual behaviour in Helen and Paris' meeting scene, our poet demonstrates his interest for the visual in many aspects. In Chapter 3 I surveyed and assessed the precision of Colluthus' choices in terms of visual terminology, a pattern that is aligned with that of his main models, Homer, Apollonius, and Nonnus. In the two case-studies I examined, Paris' journey to Sparta and his meeting with Helen, I have explored how visual and emotional worlds interact and how emotions are communicated to the reader by means of outer appearance and visual language. It has been considered how Paris and Helen's erotic involvement is not mutual, but how, instead, the gaze travels only from Helen towards Paris: the one-directionality of such a dynamic implies gender-related considerations which lead us to conclude that for Colluthus too, as in the novel and epigram before him, the object of the gaze is no longer only the female body, but can also be that of a man (who, paradoxically, does not respond).

The visuality of Colluthus' epyllion is clearly more than just an aesthetic choice: our poet was evidently influenced by public speaking (*ethopoiiai, progymnasmata, agon*) and by contemporary forms of performance, as I suggested in the final part of Chapter 3. Late-antique poetry, especially in the East and Egypt, from the third century AD, is characterized by a clear return to a more pragmatic and performance-oriented dimension,[157] which implies a close relationship with its audience. Poetry is composed for recipients not only on the occasion of private

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[156] Giangrande 1969, 152 supported this thesis linking Colluthus' irony directly (and only) to Hellenistic literature, but was thoroughly criticised by Livrea 1991. Setting aside the polemic, I have selected the useful elements from each scholar's argument to understand what Colluthus' ultimate goal may have been by reading allusion as a literary technique rather than an objective.

[157] Agosti 2006a and 2008.

readings in élite literary circles, but also public readings *coram populo*. The festivals of the Brytae, Maiuma, and of Chemmis in Paonopolis all included poetic *agones*[158] (in which tradition was both emulated and challenged, in a two-level competition which involved the predecessors as much as the contemporary rivals) as well as pantomimic performances and musical contests at least from 250 AD.[159] Nonnus may have had some exposure to these festivals, as he displays a thorough knowledge of pantomime in *Dionysiaca* 9, where he describes the dances of Maro and Silenus.

Similarly in Colluthus, characters are described in their interaction among themselves, and their inner emotions are revealed through their visual behaviour. In this way, the narrator drives readers' expectations in one way or the other, promoting interaction also between them and the characters. This process is not simply finalised to enhance the pathos and the drama of the scene, but reveals the poet's intentions to create a poem that reflects a performance such as a pantomime. While it is not possible to ascertain whether Colluthus' text was used as a pantomime libretto (as happened to other texts), the compatibility of the *Abduction* with this genre and the shared features with it can be hardly questioned, leading us to conclude that the poet's aim was in fact to write a text that was to be received and enjoyed as a pantomime.

We are pointed in the same direction by the study of Colluthus' narrative style. The poet follows on the footsteps of the traditional epic models but also carefully imitates later models. In particular, he exploits narrative techniques used by authors of epyllia of similar subject (Claudian's *Abduction of Proserpina* and *Gigantomachy* in the fourth century AD and *Hero and Leander* by Musaeus, a contemporary of Colluthus) at key points in his narrative. For instance, the abandoned victims' tragedy is presented strictly through direct speech (Hermione, Proserpina); the poet addresses some of the characters for enhanced pathos (Colluthus: Phyllis and Dionysus; Musaeus: Leander). The presence of narratees is implicitly acknowledged through references to primary sources, and their participation is also required for the epyllion to be received appropriately.

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158 Not only epic works were publicly recited, but, as we have seen, also panegyrics and ekphraseis, like Paul the Silentiary's poem on Hagia Sophia, see Tarigo 2012, 2.

159 These games, which are also mentioned by Her. 2.91, initially included only athletic competitions, see Gonnelli 2003, 320-1.

In other poets, the choice of these narrative techniques served the purpose of aligning their work with a previous model (Apollonius' *Argonautica* with the *Hymn to Apollo* for instance). In the *Abduction*, the poet achieves a twofold objective: first, as in his address to Dionysus, he breaks the fiction, revealing his role as a narrator and disclosing his craft by engaging in a conversation with a god, thus demanding a place in the contemporary literary world. Secondly, he creates a fiction of a performance through a text written as if it were a play. Readers can also be spectators, and while reading or listening to his poem they can also watch it as a pantomime. Thus, characters often speak to readers and to other characters through visual language, making their thoughts clear so that on no occasion readers are unaware of their feelings.

The illusion is built and maintained through a series of narrative artifices that make the story more scenic such as Helen's apparition in Hermione's dream, Paris' judgement of the goddesses and Aphrodite's public display of her breasts. Some of these scenic details are of course part of the story, but Colluthus puts his mark on them by choosing each time the version of the myth with the most pictorial potential. For instance, the waterspout does not appear in any other version of the story;[160] Colluthus invents this feature (perhaps modelling it on that which drowns Leander in Musaeus) and elevates it to an omen, which of course goes unnoticed by Paris and his crew. Following this logic, the goddesses being judged in the nude in some sources[161] may seem as a missed opportunity; on the contrary, Colluthus chooses the version in which the goddesses are dressed, and only afterwards, unexpectedly, does Aphrodite undress providing the graphic entertainment greatly exploited by the poet.

In this dissertation the cultural environment in which Colluthus was active has been examined in order to retrieve a more precise characterization of the poet. By using evidence from the works of his contemporaries and their cultural surroundings, a new reading of his poetry has been suggested from a new perspective which necessarily takes into consideration patronage literature and features of his current literary taste, such as the strong interest in the visual. This insight leads to a new interpretation of Colluthus as a mature poet who shows awareness of, and confidence in, his poetics,

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[160] As discussed in Chapter 3, other sources speak of favourable winds or of storms but in different circumstances.

[161] Ov. *Her.* 16.115 and Luc. *Dear. Iud.* 10.

and who is not afraid to engage with his audience to communicate his relationship with his models and his expectations in terms of reputation. Many aspects of Colluthus' poetics, such as his irony, still require further research and may lead to new insights into his work. It still remains to be clarified how this epyllion relates to the rest of Colluthus' literary production: was it a work of leisure, unrelated to patronage relationships, or did it fulfil other unknown objectives?

While in the past Colluthus was blamed for failing to fulfil the expectations he had created by setting the scene within a certain genre, in this dissertation it has been suggested that he may have meant to surprise his readers precisely with such twists. Reading the *Abduction* from this perspective involves reinterpreting what was previously seen as the disappointing anticlimaxes to each scene as the ironic twists that the poet intended for learned readers. Interaction between narrator and educated narratees has in fact been an established feature of erudite poetry since Hellenistic times, thus irony may then be the key to fully appreciating Colluthus' ability to surprise us as readers by innovating and playing with genres.

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STUDIES IN COLLUTHUS' *ABDUCTION OF HELEN*

Cosetta Michela Cadau

ABSTRACT

The *Abduction of Helen*, an epyllion in 394 hexameters by the late fifth century AD Egyptian poet Colluthus, has generally been interpreted as a product of late antique rhetorical affectation and stagnation, lacking in vigour and originality. My dissertation attempts to situate Colluthus within his cultural context and provide a new appraisal of his work employing current interpretative perspectives. It evaluates the poem's connections with long-established and contemporary literary genres and modes, forms of art, and (Neoplatonic) philosophy and exploring how the poet renegotiates traditional material and forms to adapt them to the expectations of a late fifth century AD audience. Popular contemporary genres include ekphrasis and invective, both of which have left a strong mark on the poem, raising questions about pragmatic and performative aspects. The dissertation argues that Colluthus' poem not only exemplifies the late antique obsession with visuality in general but that it also more particularly shows a number of pantomime-like features, raising the question of whether it could itself have been staged. In addition, the dissertation identifies a significant number of new intertexts showing, for example, that Colluthus read Claudian and that his engagement with the poetry of Nonnus is far more extensive than has so far been shown.