Francis Cairns

The Genre 'Oaristys'

Summary − This paper studies an ancient 'genre of content' exemplified in Greek and Roman poetry from Homer to Paulus Silentiarius and called here for convenience '*oaristys*' ('wooing'). Examples include Archilochus fr. 196a (one of the 'Cologne epodes'), Theocritus Idyll 27, Catullus 45 and various works of Propertius, Horace and Ovid. A 'generic formula' based on these examples is proposed and is then used to facilitate analyses of all these examples except Catullus 45, which will be treated separately in another publication. The paper concludes with a summarising discussion of the ethos of the genre.

(I.) Introduction

A study by me of Catullus 45 published in a forthcoming volume of essays[1] was in part devoted to placing that lyric within its ancient 'genre of content',[2] a genre whose name, if it had one in antiquity, is not known, but which for convenience I called '*oaristys*' ('wooing'). That term was applied by two early sixteenth-century printed editions to Theocritus[3] Idyll 27,[4] but seemingly without

---

[1] Viz. Catullus 45: The Wooing of Acme and Septimius, in: I. M. Le M. Duquesnay and T. Woodman (edd.), Perspectives and Contexts in the Interpretation of Catullus, Cambridge (ftc.). Of necessity some material in the initial paragraphs of the present paper is repeated in that study; this includes the generic formula, augmented here, however, by the topoi of Catullus 45. Similarly the final section of this paper is an enlarged version of the concluding section of my earlier paper. I am very much indebted to Mr I. M. Le M. Duquesnay for his comments on and additions to a prior draft. All errors and opinions are mine alone.

[2] I. e. genres of the type represented by the *propemptikon* and *komos* (*paraclausithyron*).

[3] The authorship of Idyll 27 is disputed: cf. now R. Kirstein, Junge Hirten und Alte Fischer: Die Gedichte 27, 20 und 21 des Corpus Theocriteum (Texte und Kommentare 29), Berlin - New York 2007 (hereafter Kirstein), 45/46 with bibliography. I have referred to it throughout as 'Theocritus Idyll 27' without thereby implying any verdict on the authorship question.

[4] On this topic see A. S. F. Gow, Theocritus, edited with a Translation and Commentary, 2 vols., Cambridge, ²1952 (hereafter Gow), I, xlv-vi, II, 485, and now Kirstein, 19; 24 – 30; and (more specifically on the title *oaristys*) 42/43. J. C. Scaliger mentioned the *oaristys* briefly in his Poetices Libri Septem (3, 102 ad init.) and referred to Theocr. Id. 27 as an example. But he linked the genre too closely with marriage and hence incorrectly advanced the dialogue between Hector and Andromache (Hom. Il. 6, 407 – 493) as his other example of it.

ancient authority. This lack of provenance must therefore be kept in mind,[5] and any suggestion inherent in the name *oaristys* that dialogue might be an essential feature of this genre should be discounted; but otherwise the name suits the genre well, since *oaristyes* consist of an erotic negotiation culminating in a description or implication, albeit sometimes remote, of sexual fulfillment.

All ancient genres derive ultimately from recurrent real-life social activities, speeches and situations; some, but not all, genres then entered the rhetorical sphere and were influenced by rhetoric. The fact that the *oaristys* developed and was practised outside the schools of rhetoric[6] should not reduce our confidence in its existence as a genre. That other well-known and copiously exemplified non-rhetorical genre, the *komos* (*paraclausithyron*), shares this characteristic, and indeed it too suffers some partial uncertainty over its nomenclature, but its existence is unchallengeable. As will become clear from the generic formula which follows, and as the present paper and my earlier study will, I hope, demonstrate, the *oaristys* was just as well recognized and understood by ancient poets and their audiences as the *komos*.

Scholarly essays and commentaries on the poems identified below as *oaristyes* have sometimes referred to one or two other passages or poems which belong to the genre,[7] but there is no overall treatment of the *oaristys* in print. For reasons of space and because of the themed nature of the volume in which it appeared, my study of Catullus 45 could not include such a treatment. Hence the present essay will attempt to make good this deficiency by giving a diachronic account of all the *oaristyes* identified as such below – with the exception of Catullus 45, for generic analysis of which the reader is referred to my earlier study. Prose *oaristyes* such as those of Longus' Daphnis and Chloe[8] will not, however, be taken account of. Although they show that some elements of the genre, in particular the lovers' oaths, were especially widely disseminated in

---

[5]   From a purely taxonomic viewpoint the medieval pastourelle is a specialised type of
      oaristys; cf. W. Theiler, Liebesgespräch und Pastourelle, in: Studien zur Textgeschichte
      und Textkritik. Günther Jachmann zur 50. Wiederkehr seiner Promotion gewidmet,
      Cologne 1959, 279 – 283 (repr. in Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur, Berlin 1970,
      442 – 446). However, its origins are uncertain (cf. M. Zink, Les Origines de la Pastourelle,
      Paris & Montréal 1972, Ch.1 = 9 – 16), and it is unlikely that it derives from any ancient
      genre.

[6]   Cf. F. Cairns, Generic composition in Greek and Roman poetry, Edinburgh 1972
      (hereafter Cairns, GC), General Index s. v. 'non-rhetorical genres'.

[7]   E. g. W. Kroll, C. Valerius Catullus, Leipzig 1923, 83; R. L. Hunter, A Study of Daphnis
      and Chloe, Cambridge 1983, 27/28; O. Vox, Carmi di Teocrito e dei poeti bucolici greci
      minori, Torino 1997, 363; R. G. M. Nisbet and N. Rudd, A Commentary on Horace Odes
      Book III, Oxford 2004 (hereafter Nisbet-Rudd), 133/134; Kirstein, 83 – 86.

[8]   Cf. for one of them (2, 39) Hunter (see n. 7), 27/28.

popular culture, nevertheless they do not add significantly to the documentation of the genre.

(II.) The Genre and its Elements

A number of members of the genre *oaristys* ranging in time from the homeric age to late antiquity can readily be identified in Greek and Roman poetry, viz.:

Homer Iliad 3, 424 – 448; Homer Iliad 14, 159 – 353; Homeric Hymn 5; Archilochus fr. 196a;[9] Theocritus Idyll 27; [Bion] 2; Catullus 45; Propertius 1, 10 (included genre[10]); Propertius 1, 13 (included genre); Propertius 2, 15; Horace Odes 3, 9; Ovid Amores 1, 5; Ovid Amores 3, 2; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 622 – 771; Paulus Silentiarius AP 5, 255.[11]

From this corpus the primary (essential) elements of the *oaristys* can be elicited. They are:

A1: the 'wooer'
A2: the 'wooed'
A3: a 'wooing'

The secondary (non-essential) elements of the *oaristys*, i. e. its common-places, can also be derived from this corpus. Naturally not all of them appear in every example of the genre, and, when they do occur, their order of appearance is not necessarily (or ever) the order in which they are listed below with their occurrences.[12] The task of identifying and distinguishing between the different *oaristys* topoi sometimes involves a degree of arbitrariness. This is neither surprising nor problematic: in the nature of things wooing is a continuous process, and we as critics are disadvantaged in that we have no rhetorical prescription to help confirm our surmises about which aspects of it were viewed in antiquity as most salient. In time greater experience of the *oaristys* and the analysis of further examples may suggest better distinctions and hence a revised topos list. For the moment (and with these provisos in mind) the following topos list can be proposed:

B1. The wooer's love / desire expressed in heightened / exaggerated terms, possibly involving death (B1*) / an oath (B1+) / an aspiration for perpetual love (B1%)

---

9   References to this fragment are to M. L. West, Iambi et Elegi Graeci Ante Alexandrum Cantati I, ²Oxford 1989.
10 On 'inclusion' cf. Cairns, GC, Ch. 7.
11 [Theocr.] Id. 20 appears to be a sophisticated member of the genre, but it is not included in this list, mainly because an adequate demonstration of its generic identity would extend this paper disproportionately.
12 On topoi and the kinds of originality in their use cf. Cairns, GC, Ch. 4.

Homer Iliad 3, 442 – 446; Homer Iliad 14, 294 – 296, 325 – 328; Homeric Hymn 5, 148%, 149 – 151, 151 – 154*; Archilochus fr. 196a. 35/36; Theocritus Idyll 27, 35/36+ (35%), 62*; [Bion] 2, 25/26; Catullus 45, 3 – 7*+% , 21/22; Propertius 1, 10, 5*, 10; Propertius 1, 13, 15 – 28 (17*, cf. 33); Propertius 2, 15, 1/2, 25 – 36%, 36 – 40*, 51 – 54*; Horace Odes 3, 9, 1 – 4, 5 – 8, 9 – 12*, 13 – 16*, 24%; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 1 – 4, 9 – 14, 33 – 40, 61/62+ (62%); Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 676/677, 680 – 692 (682/683+%); Paulus Silentiarius AP 5, 255 passim

B2. The good birth of the wooer / wooed

Homeric Hymn 5, 111/112, 131/132, 136 – 140; Archilochus fr. 196a, 10 – 12(?); Theocritus Idyll 27, 40 – 44 esp. 43; Catullus 45, 1, 22; Horace Odes 3, 9, 14[13]

B3. Divine influence on, or aid to, the wooer / wooed (normally of a love deity)

Homer Iliad 3, 424/425; Homer Iliad 14, 197 – 223; cf. 231 – 291, 352/353; Homeric Hymn 5, 45/46, 53, 143; Archilochus fr. 196a, 13, 15, 18; Theocritus Idyll 27, 15, 20, 56, 64;[14] Catullus 45, 8/9, 16/17, 19, 25/26; cf. 14; Horace Odes 3, 9, 17; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 45/46, 56 – 62; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 693/694

B4. The wooer / wooed compared to mythical / homeric or historical characters, including Paris / Helen (B4*)

Theocritus Idyll 27, 1/2*; [Bion] 2, 10*; Propertius 2, 15, 13/14*, 15/16; Ovid Amores 1, 5, 11/12; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 15 – 18, 29 – 32; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 669*, 670/671; Paulus Silentiarius AP 5, 255, 7 – 10

B5. The rival of the wooer / wooed, sometimes disparaged (B5*)

Homer Iliad 3, 428 – 436; Homer Iliad 14, 315 – 328*; Archilochus fr. 196a, 26 – 41*; Theocritus Idyll 27, 22/23*; [Bion] 2, 10/11; Propertius 1, 13, 2 – 12, 25 – 28, 34; Propertius 2, 15, 35; Horace Odes 3, 9, 2, 5/6, 9 – 16, 19 – 23; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 7/8; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 635 – 641, 672 – 674

B6. The virginity of the wooed

Homeric Hymn 5, 133; Archilochus fr. 196a, 6, 42; Theocritus Idyll 27, 7, 15, 20, 52, 65/66; [Bion] 2, 27 – 32; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 634 – 642, 668

---

[13] Add also that in the cautionary tale told by Vertumnus in Met. 14 the wooer Iphis is not of noble birth (699) while the wooed Anaxarete is (698).

[14] In Theocr. Id. 27 Artemis too is invoked (16, 18) on the side of chastity, but she is also disdained and paid off (30, 63).

B7. Specific signals of the wooed's willingness (B7*) / unwillingness (B7+)

Homer Iliad 3, 428 – 436+; Homer Iliad 14, 329 – 336+, 337 – 340*; Homeric Hymn 5, 156+; Archilochus fr. 196a, 1 – 8+; Theocritus Idyll 27, 1+, 2+, 5+, 12+, 14+, 19+, 49+, 51+, 53+, 55+, 57+, 59+; Catullus 45, 10 – 16*, 20*, 23/24*; Propertius 2, 15, 5 – 10*+, 17 – 20*+; Ovid Amores 1, 5, 14 – 16*+; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 19+, 83/84*

B8. The initial physical juxtaposition of the wooer and wooed

Homer Iliad 3, 424 – 426; Homer Iliad 14, 297; Homeric Hymn 5, 81; Catullus 45, 1/2; Ovid Amores 1, 5, 17; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 1, 3; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 659

B9. Touching, kissing, embracing and other physical advances / contacts

Homer Iliad 14, 346; Homeric Hymn 5, 155; Archilochus fr. 196a, 42 – 53; Theocritus Idyll 27, 4/5, 19, 49 – 59; [Bion] 2, 23; Catullus 45, 1/2, 10 – 12; Propertius 1, 10, 5; Propertius 1, 13, 15/16; Propertius 2, 15, 5, 7 – 10 cf. 11; Horace Odes 3, 9, 2/3; Ovid Amores 1, 5, 19, 24 cf. 20; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 74 – 76 (cf. 19, 21 – 23, 26, 30); Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 658; Paulus Silentiarius AP 5, 255, 2, 3/4, 11, 13 – 16

B10. Eyes and vision

Homer Iliad 3, 427; Homer Iliad 14, 294; Homeric Hymn 5, 56, 84, 156, 182; Theocritus Idyll 27, 70; Catullus 45, 11/12; Propertius 1, 10, 6; Propertius 1, 13, 14/15; Propertius 2, 15, 11 – 24, esp. 12, 22, 23; Ovid Amores 1, 5 (*oculos*, 17; *vidi*, 19, 23); Ovid Amores 3, 2, 5/6, 13, 16, 28, 33 (cf. also 23, 67, 83); Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 653 (cf. 681/682); Paulus Silentiarius AP 5, 255, 1

B11. Dialogue between the wooer and the wooed

Homer Iliad 3, 428 – 446; Homer Iliad 14, 298 – 345; Homeric Hymn 5, 92 – 154; Archilochus fr. 196a, 1 – 41; Theocritus Idyll 27, 1 – 66; [Bion] 2, 27 – 32; Catullus 45, 2 – 7, 13 – 16; Propertius 1, 10, 6, 10; Propertius 1, 13, 17, 32; Propertius 2, 15, 3, 8; Horace Odes 3, 9; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 84(?)

B12. An element of deception in the wooing

Homer Iliad 14, 300 – 311, 329; Homeric Hymn 5, 108 – 142, 185/186; [Bion] 2, 6/7, 15 – 20, 27 – 32; Ovid Amores 1, 5, 15/16; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 643 – 653, 654 – 656

B13. Mutual desire / role-switch by wooer and wooed

Homer Iliad 14, 294; Homeric Hymn 5, 84, 143; Catullus 45, 20, 21 – 26 and passim; Propertius 1, 10, 2; Propertius 1, 13, 20; Propertius 2, 15, 8; Horace Odes 3, 9, 13; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 770/771; Paulus Silentiarius AP 5, 255 passim

B14. Invitation to a sexual liaison

Homer Iliad 3, 441; Homer Iliad 14, 314; Homeric Hymn 5, 149 – 154; Archilochus fr. 196a, 13 – 24, 35/36; Theocritus Idyll 27, 6, 11, 13, 24; [Bion] 2, 27 –
32; Catullus 45, 1 – 7 (implied) cf. 13 – 16; Propertius 2, 15, 8, 17 – 22; Horace
Odes 3, 9, 17 – 20; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 762

B15. Sexual consummation

Homer Iliad 3, 447/448; Homer Iliad 14, 346 – 353; Homeric Hymn 5, 157 –
167; Archilochus fr. 196a, 42 – 53; Catullus 45, 23/24 (implied); Propertius 1, 10,
5, 9; Propertius 1, 13, 15 – 20; Propertius 2, 15, 1 – 22 esp. 9; Ovid Amores 1, 5,
25; Ovid Amores 3, 2, 83/84; Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 770/771; Paulus Silentiarius AP 5, 255 passim

(III.) Analyses of Individual Oaristyes

Roughly chronological order will be followed in the subsequent discussions;
but within them (although not in the generic formula) precedence over Roman
elegy will be accorded to Horace Odes 3, 9 so that the elegists can be handled en
bloc.

Homer Iliad 3, 424 – 448

In this, the earliest surviving *oaristys*, Paris is the wooer (A1), and Helen the
wooed (A2). Their dialogue (B11) takes place in Helen's bedchamber, where
she 'welcomes' Paris after his duel with his rival (B5) Menelaus. Aphrodite
assists Paris in his desires (B3) by choreographing the scene and placing Helen
in a chair before Paris (B8, 424 – 426). Helen's reception of Paris consists of a
hostile tirade in which she declares that his rival Menelaus is a better man than
he is (B5; B7+, 428 – 436). She reinforces her verbal rejection of Paris by
turning back her eyes (B10; B7+, 427). Paris responds by brushing aside Menelaus' victory (438 – 440), and inviting Helen to go to bed with him (B14, 441).
Paris then makes the heightened assertion that he has never desired Helen so
much, not even the first time they made love (B1, 442 – 446):

οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ᾽ ὧδέ γ᾽ ἔρως φρένας ἀμφεκάλυψεν,
οὐδ᾽ ὅτε σε πρῶτον Λακεδαίμονος ἐξ ἐρατεινῆς
ἔπλεον ἁρπάξας ἐν ποντοπόροισι νέεσσι,
νήσῳ δ᾽ ἐν Κραναῇ ἐμίγην φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ,
ὥς σεο νῦν ἔραμαι καί με γλυκὺς ἵμερος αἱρεῖ.

The dialogue between Paris and Helen is followed by their love-making
(B15, 447/448). The strength of Helen's initial hostility to her lover is an

unusual factor in an *oaristys*, although others who are wooed show varying degrees of reluctance (cf. topos B7+). Presumably Helen's enhanced reluctance is intended to highlight the adulterous nature of her relationship with Paris, whereas situations in which the wooed might become the wife of the wooer call for less resistance on the part of the wooed. It is even more unusual for the wooed to derogate the wooer in comparison with another, rival suitor, as Helen does when she praises Menelaus over Paris (B5, 428 – 436). These lines should, then, be seen as a sophisticated variant of B5. But in other ways Iliad 3, 424 – 448 conforms fairly well to the standard pattern that manifests itself in later examples of the genre.

Homer Iliad 14, 159 – 353

Another scene of *oaristys* in the Iliad is the famous seduction of Zeus by Hera. Initially Hera is the wooer (A1): she decided at 14, 159/160 to seduce Zeus (A2). She takes further steps towards this end by beautifying herself (170 – 186) and by deceitfully (B12) acquiring Aphrodite's assistance (B3, 188 – 223)[15] through the loan of her *kestos* with its seductive powers. Because Hera is armed in this way, when Zeus sees her (B10, 294), she and Zeus switch roles (B13) and Zeus becomes de facto the wooer, feels desire for Hera, and expresses it in heightened terms (B1) similar to those in which Paris expressed his desire for Helen at Iliad 3, 442 – 446: Zeus wants Hera now as much as he did the first time they made love (294 – 296):

ὡς δ᾽ ἴδεν, ὥς μιν ἔρως πυκινὰς φρένας ἀμφεκάλυψεν,
οἷον ὅτε πρῶτόν περ ἐμισγέσθην φιλότητι
εἰς εὐνὴν φοιτῶντε, φίλους λήθοντε τοκῆας.

Zeus then stands before Hera (B8, 297) and asks her why she is there. Hera's response is a repetition of the same deceitful tale as she told to Aphrodite (B12, 300 – 311) – her pretence that she wants to bring together Oceanus and Tethys, who have ceased to have marital relations. As well as fulfilling its narrative functions and introducing a mildly humorous element which was absent in the Paris-Helen wooing,[16] this story enlarges on the topos (B3) of the erotic divinity who unites a pair of lovers: in her fabrication Hera becomes a substitute for Aphrodite, reconciling the old gods in the way Aphrodite herself 'reconciled' Paris and Helen – a sophisticated reflection by Homer on the conventions of the genre.

---

[15] She also gains the aid of Hypnos, but to sedate Zeus not to seduce him (231 – 291, 352/353).

[16] On humour as more germane to *oaristyes* involving divine rather than human characters, see below §IV.

From this point on the *oaristys* proceeds in fairly regular fashion. The dialogue (B11, 298–345) that has already begun continues. Zeus takes the initiative (313), sidelining Hera's pretended mission, and he invites Hera to make love with him (B14, 314). Zeus now asserts – in a varied and extended repetition of the topos which began the scene – the strength of his need for Hera (B1, 315–328): he has never desired any goddess or woman, or indeed Hera herself, as he now desires her. In this passage (in which Zeus' tactlessness, and his role as Hera's dupe, may also have humorous overtones) he catalogues the names and progeny of the most prominent of his former mistresses, Hera's rivals who are now disparaged (B5*), rolling the catalogue into his declaration of heightened love for her. Hera then makes a mock attempt to postpone their intercourse (B7+, 329–340), the poet emphasising once more her deceitfulness (B12, 329), before she agrees (B7*, 337–340). In a last initiative Zeus brushes aside her hesitation (342–344) and embraces her (B9, 346), and their sexual union follows (B15, 346–353) on a bed of vegetation within a golden cloud.

[Homer] Hymn to Aphrodite

In the *oaristys* of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite (1–167) the goddess fulfills two roles, that of wooer (A1) and that of the erotic divinity who assists the wooing (B3). This blending of personae parallels, and seems to comment on, the dual roles of Hera in Iliad 14 (see above). A further aspect of the Hymn may be connected with the *oaristys* of Iliad 14. The Hymn relates that Aphrodite had caused Zeus to have affairs with mortal women (36–39); hence Zeus retaliates by filling Aphrodite with desire for a mortal man (B3, 45/46, 53), specifically Anchises the wooed (A2). But the Hymn may also intend its hearers to reflect that Zeus fell victim to Aphrodite's *kestos* in Iliad 14, and to conclude that Zeus is settling that old score too. In acting as he does Zeus becomes, like Hera in Iliad 14, a substitute who takes over Aphrodite's normal role in *oaristys*, with the additional twist that he does so against Aphrodite herself.

Aphrodite sees Anchises (B10, 56) and falls in love with him. After bedecking herself (61–65), an action reminiscent of Hera's behaviour in Iliad 14, she comes and stands before Anchises at his steading (B8, 81). Anchises sees Aphrodite (B10, 84) and he too falls in love, so their inclinations have become mutual (B13) and, as was the case with Hera and Zeus in Iliad 14, their roles to some extent switch. Aphrodite now spins a deceptive tale to account for her presence and to motivate Anchises to make love to her (B12, 108–142). She claims to be the daughter of Otreus, king of Phrygia (111/112), who will send Anchises a rich dowry, and to have been brought by Hermes to be Anchises' wife (117–129). She thus asserts her nobility (B2, cf. also 136–140), as she

will later deduce Anchises' good birth from his appearance (B2, 131/132). Aphrodite also claims virginity (B6, 133, cf. also 118 – 120), a standard attribute of the wooed which here is amusingly both appropriate and inappropriate to Aphrodite's ambivalent and shifting status (below). Then Aphrodite 'put desire into Anchises' heart' (B3, 143), thus fulfilling her normal function as a love-goddess. The result is a full-blown role-switch (again B13), with Anchises becoming the wooer, and indeed expressing his desire in heightened terms (B1, 149 – 154), including the mention of marriage for ever (B1%, 148); no god or man will restrain him from making love with her (B14), and he is ready to die for the privilege (B1*, 151 – 154). Anchises now takes Aphrodite's hand (B9, 155), and their love-making follows (B15, 157 – 167). During it Aphrodite's turned-aside visage and downcast eyes (B10, 156) are mentioned. Her affectation of modesty is an etiolated remnant of the more frequently exemplified topos of the wooed's physical signals of unwillingness (B7+).

Once the wooing and winning is over, Anchises' subsequent awakening is not so comfortable. The narrative initially refers again to three topoi of the genre, this time out of context. Aphrodite stands (B8, 173) beside the bed on which Anchises has been sleeping, and he, now disabused, turns his eyes aside (B10, 182) and laments Aphrodite's deception of him (B12, 185/186). The Hymn then modulates into Aphrodite's mixed message to Anchises, partly of consolation, partly of prophecy and warning.

Archilochus fr. 196a

Another scene of *oaristys* appears in one of the epodes partially preserved in the Cologne papyrus of Archilochus, the similarity of which to Theocritus Idyll 27 was remarked on immediately after its discovery.[17] The surviving portion of fr. 196a begins as a dialogue (B11, 1 – 41) between the speaker, the wooer (A1), presumably Archilochus himself, and the wooed (A2), who is the virgin (B6, 42) sister of the speaker's former beloved Neobule. Clearly Archilochus had already in the lost beginning of the fragment begun trying to persuade Neobule's sister to have sex with him (B14) and the girl has been resisting (B7+, 1/2). She recognises Archilochus' desire (cf. B1, 3) but attempts to deflect his attentions further by praising Neobule's charms and recommending Neobule instead (3 – 8). The theme of the rival / former beloved (B5) thus appears, but in another unusual form, since here the wooed awards higher praise to a rival than to herself, an indication of her own unwillingness (B7+). However, Archilochus

---

[17] Cf. W. Theiler in: T. Gelzer, Archilochos und der neue Kölner Papyrus (Pap. Colon. inv. 7511), MH 32 (1975), 12 – 32, 29/30 n. 57; W. Theiler, Die Überraschung des Kölner Archilochos, MH 34 (1977), 56 – 71.

continues to pressure the virgin. He starts with what looks on the surface like
praise of Amphimedo, the dead mother of Neobule and her sister (10 – 12). But
it is very unlikely that this is really an example of B2, a laudation of the nobility
or good family of the wooed. For that to be the case Archilochus' failure to
mention their father Lycambes would be due simply to his dislike of Lycambes,
and the overall context would have to be complimentary. Rather, since the
context is uncomplimentary (see below), Archilochus' concentration on the
girl's mother has to be defamatory and an inversion of the topos: the omission of
the girls' father could be intended to suggest that Neobule and her sister had no
acknowledged father and so were the prostitute daughters of a prostitute;[18] or it
might suggest that the girls were really not their nominal father Lycambes'
daughters, so their mother was an adulteress.

Archilochus then promises the girl that he will stop short of full intercourse
with her (13 – 24, a modified version of B14). Of course by recounting the event
in detail, as he later does (below), he shames Neobule's sister almost as much as
if he had taken her virginity, while at the same time showing himself a man of
his word. Archilochus also declares that Neobule is now too old for him and has
lost both her looks and her reputation (26 – 41), thus derogating the wooed's
rival (B5*) and her entire family; and he expresses enthusiastically his desire for
sex with Neobule's sister (B14, B1, 35). Finally Archilochus tells his audience
that he satisfied his desire with her in the way he stipulated, providing many
details of his embraces of her (B15, B9, 42 – 53). One detail, his laying her down
among flowers (42/43), is reminiscent of the bed of grass and flowers which
sprang up to provide a bed for Zeus and Hera in Iliad 14, 346 – 349.

This account of the *oaristys* topoi of fr. 196a has already thrown up some
instances of their oblique use; yet another concerns B3, the helpful love deity.
No such divinity appears in person to assist Archilochus, but there are three
allusions to Aphrodite: θεῆς (13), τὸ θεῖον χρῆμα (15) and σὺν θεῷ (18). This
oaristys' distorted use of some topoi may be due to its unusual purpose:
Archilochus is setting out to defame Neobule, her sister and their whole family,
and to do this he distorts the genre into invective.[19] In a society where a
woman's youthfulness and virginity were essential prerequisites for marriage
Archilochus proclaims to the world that Neobule is no longer youthful. More-
over, even if the address to their mother is not a sly indirect characterisation of
the girls as whores, Archilochus makes it quite clear that he himself has had sex

---

[18]   In AP 7, 351 = Dioscorides 17 Gow-Page the daughters of Lycambes, into whose mouths
       the epigram is placed, assert that they were virgins, not (as Archilochus alleged) wanton
       women.
[19]   For similar iambic inversions of a laudatory genre (*propemptikon*) into invective cf. Hor.
       Epod. 10 and its Hipponactean (or Archilochean) model.

with Neobule in the past, and he also says explicitly that she takes many lovers (38), thus directly contradicting her sister's claim that Neobule is a virgin (6, cf. B6). Archilochus' further sexual success (albeit partial) with Neobule's sister, which this epode records, is meant to proclaim that the sister too is on the downward path towards complete loss of reputation: the moral is 'like elder sister, like younger sister'. It is easy to see why stories circulated in antiquity to the effect that Lycambes' daughters committed suicide as a result of Archilochus' defamatory verses.[20]

Theocritus Idyll 27

Idyll 27 is in some ways a close analogue of Catullus 45.[21] It has generally, but not universally, been regarded as non-Theocritean, and its date too has been disputed.[22] Notably Gow was sceptical about earlier scholars' ascriptions of it to Bion and Moschus. He was also cool about ascribing Idyll 27 to Nonnus, although he himself dated it 'perhaps … well inside the Christian era'.[23] However, two recent papers have, among other contentions, challenged Gow's dating. Trovati argued that Idyll 27 was composed by a contemporary of Bion,[24] and Sider, viewing the idyll as much more sophisticated than earlier scholarship had admitted, argued the case for his proposition that: 'The evidence against Theocritean authorship is at best circumstantial and cumulative, but not probative'.[25] These questions of date and authorship are clearly not fully resolvable on present evidence,[26] but it is encouraging that these two specialists have been willing to assert a Hellenistic date for Idyll 27 and to do so without bringing its generic identity into their arguments.

The beginning of Idyll 27 is lost, but its surviving portion consists first of a long stichomythic dialogue (1–66, B11) in which a cowherd, Daphnis (A1), woos a shepherd girl, Akrotime (A2), and then of a brief narrative coda (67–71b). *Oaristys* topoi appear thick and fast. Lines 1/2 find the pair referring to

---

[20] For the Hellenistic and later epigrams about Archilochus and the Lycambids, which start with AP 7, 351 = Dioscorides 17 Gow-Page (above n. 18), and for other ancient 'evidence' about the interactions between them and Archilochus, including the alleged suicide of the family, cf. G. Galán Vioque, Dioscórides Epigramas. Introducción, edición crítica, traducción y comentario filológico, Huelva 2001, 234–236.

[21] Cf. Kirstein, 83–85 with bibliography at 83 n. 238, noting also (85) the similarities between Id. 17 and Long. Daphnis and Chloe 2, 39, 1–4.

[22] Cf. most recently on these questions the survey of Kirstein, 45/46.

[23] Gow, 2, 485.

[24] Cf. G. Trovati, Gli ultimi sviluppi della poesia bucolica greca, Acme 54 (2001), 35–72 (47).

[25] D. Sider, Theokritos 27: Oaristys, WJA 25 (2001), 99–105 (99).

[26] Cf. e.g. Vox (see n. 7), 362/363, not reaching a firm conclusion.

Paris and Helen (B4*). The additional relevance of this comparison is made explicit in line 1: not only were Paris and 'prudent'(!) Helen an archetypal pair of lovers, but in his youth Paris was, like Daphnis, a cowherd. This annotation suggests that the poet of Idyll 27 was self-consciously learned, so the comparison may well be a specific generic allusion to Iliad 3, 424–448, the Homeric prototype of the *oaristys.* Daphnis begins his physical approaches to Akrotime (B9) by kissing her (4/5), and he places his hand on her at 19. These actions are accompanied by the boy's veiled invitations to sex (B14, 6, 11, 13). The girl resists (B7+) in different ways, verbal (1, 3, 12, 14) or both verbal and physical (5, 19 [threatened]). At line 7 she emphasises her virginity (B6), a theme picked up by the youth at 15, and more obliquely at 20. The love-gods (B3) are invoked by the boy: he warns Akrotime against 'the wrath of the Paphian' (15) and tells her that she will not escape Eros (20). In response Akrotime claims the protection of the virgin goddess Artemis (16, 18), an association amusingly turned against her later in argument by Daphnis (30).

The topos of the wooer's rivals (B5*) crops up at 22–24. Daphnis says he fears that Akrotime's father may give her to an inferior husband, and she retorts that she has many suitors, possibly an allusion to Archilochus fr. 196a, 38. At this Daphnis explicitly declares himself to be one of those many (24, B14)! As their talk of marriage develops, Akrotime presses Daphnis for commitments. He first reacts by offering her his possessions (34), and then, when she asks him to swear that 'once we have made love you will not go off and leave me against my will' (35), the cowherd formally swears: 'by Pan himself' (B1+%, 36). Next comes discussion of Akrotime's father and of the family backgrounds of the pair, with Daphnis naming his own father and mother, and also the father of Akrotime (40–44). Both of the young people are declared to be 'of good stock' (B2, 43), a rusticised version of the generic topos appropriate to their social status, but possibly also a debt to Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, 111/112 and 136–140, where the disguised Aphrodite claims noble descent.[27]

At line 46 of Idyll 27 Akrotime in effect capitulates, and the remainder of the idyll progresses towards its final scene, the narrated sexual consummation of the pair (B15, 67/68). This progress and the consummation itself reintroduce with variation many of the generic topoi already featured in lines 1–45. Thus Aphrodite (B3) resurfaces, this time as the dedicatee of Akrotime's virgin *mitra* (56), which Daphnis will offer to the goddess, and Aphrodite features again at 64 as the promised recipient of a sacrifice. Eros (B3) too reappears at 64, and he

---

[27] The mention of the family in both passages was noted by Sider (see n. 25), 102 n. 13. It may be worth adding that ἐξ εὐηγενέων (Id. 27, 43) is reminiscent of Θέμις ἠϋγενής (HH 5, 94), one of the goddesses to whom Anchises compares Aphrodite.

is also vowed a sacrifice, while Artemis, who earlier was brandished by Akrotime against Daphnis, is now brushed off with a brief apology (63). In addition, the earlier emphasis on Akrotime's virginity (B6) is repeated at 52 as the seduction proceeds, and it is reversed at 65/66 just before she becomes a woman:

KO. παρθένος ἔνθα βέβηκα, γυνὴ δ᾽ εἰς οἶκον ἀφέρπω.
ΔΑ. ἀλλὰ γυνὴ μήτηρ τεκέων τροφός, οὐκέτι κώρα.

All this is not to say that Akrotime yields to Daphnis instantly and fully. Her prior resistance to him (B7+) renews itself, although less convincingly, in a stream of protests and objections: she complains that he is touching her breasts (49, 51 – also B9); that he is damaging various articles of her clothing as he removes them (53, 55, 59); that someone is coming (57); and that he is full of promises, but she wonders whether he will fulfill them (61). A last, emphatic repetition comes in Daphnis' continued heightened expressions of love. Earlier he had sworn perpetual fidelity to Akrotime (B1+%, 35/36). Now he adds that other standard variant of this topos: he wishes he could give her his soul, and so in effect claims that he would be willing to die for her (B1*, 62).

Daphnis' sexual progress from touching Akrotime's breasts to his placing her naked on the ground is described in all its details (B9, 49 – 59). This is again reminiscent of the final section (42 – 53) of Archilochus fr. 196a, but direct influence is once more uncertain, particularly since Idyll 27 concentrates more on the removal of Akrotime's clothes, whereas Archilochus was mainly interested in describing his diverse modes of handling the girl's body. Two of the details in the two poems are, however, fairly close. Archilochus lays the girl down amid flowers (i. e. on the ground) and puts his soft cloak (?) around her (42 – 45), while Daphnis has Akrotime on the ground (but in a dry stream-bed, 53) and places a soft skin beneath her (54). Finally Daphnis and Akrotime reach sexual intercourse (B15, 67/68): ἀνίστατο φώριος εὐνή (68). An interesting variant of topos B10 surfaces after their love-making: Akrotime goes off either 'with downcast eyes' (70)[28] or (perhaps better) with the reading of the MSS,[29] viz. ὄμμασιν αἰδομένη: 'showing *aidos* in her eyes (?)'. Whichever reading we adopt, the similarity to and differences from Helen's turned-back eyes at Iliad 3,427, the downcast eyes of Aphrodite in the Hymn to Aphrodite (156) and the turned-aside eyes of Anchises in that same Hymn (182) are noteworthy.

---

[28] This is Gow's translation of Hermann's emendation αἰδομένοις.
[29] I. e. C and D. On their disputed relationship cf. Sider (see n. 25), 99 n. 2; on these and other Theocritean MSS (and early printings) cf. Kirstein, 17 – 30, 42.

[Bion] 2

[Bion] 2 features a singer (Lycidas) and another character (Myrson) who requests a song from him. Only lines 21–32 are concerned with the actual wooing of Deidameia (A2) by Achilles (A1), dressed as a girl but with a man's sexual needs (21). But Myrson, in his request to Lycidas for the song, mentions the deceits embodied in the tale (B12), namely the disguise of Achilles (7, later amplified in lines 15–20) and the concealment of their affair from Deidameia's father (6).[30] Moreover Lycidas starts his song at line 10 with mention of Helen's abduction by Paris (B4*, cf. Theocritus Idyll 27, 1), and he appends a reference to the wooed's rival in that myth (B5, 11). The entire fragment may therefore be considered an *oaristys*. Achilles' constant attentions to Deidameia as he woos her (22–25) include kissing her hand (B9, 23), and the intensity of his desire is conveyed in πάντα δ᾽ ἐποίει / σπεύδων κοινὸν ἐς ὕπνον (B1, 25–26). Achilles' speech, which begins at line 27 and which presumably initiates a dialogue (B11), continues until the fragment breaks off at 32; it is also deceptive (B12) in that Achilles is exploiting his pretended femininity to persuade Deidameia to share a bed with him (B14). The speech, and the preceding description of Achilles' appearance, cross-dressing, and activities as a girl (15–20), exhibit the humour also found in some other *oaristyes*. Deidameia's virginity (B6), assured by the myth and setting, is doubly assured by the fact that the girls in Lycomedes' *gynaikeion* sleep only with one another! This has the further paradoxically amusing effect of making the other girls Achilles' potential rivals (B5).

Catullus 45

Because a full treatment of Catullus 45 as a member of the genre *oaristys* is appearing elsewhere (see n. 1 above), discussion of it is omitted here.

Horace Odes 3, 9

Odes 3, 9 is the first *oaristys* in dialogue form throughout (B11). Horace was obviously aware of Catullus 45 as a lyric predecessor; but presumably there were *oaristyes* in archaic Greek lyric, elegy and iambic poetry which exploited dialogue, in addition, of course, to Archilochus fr. 196a,[31] the only surviving *oaristys* from that period. Semonides fr. 14 West certainly hints further in this

---

[30] Line 31 contains the word δολία, which appears again to embody this theme, but the beginning of the line is unmetrical and corrupt.

[31] Pace Nisbet-Rudd, 134, who exclude this poem from consideration, remarking that it offers 'nothing directly comparable'.

direction, as may other lyric sources lying behind Longus' Daphnis and Chloe.[32] Their loss therefore constitutes a serious gap in the literary record.

Odes 3, 9 is clearly more complex than the generic norm, with certain of its elements appearing in modified or inverted guises. Its protagonists, Horace the wooer (A1) and Lydia the wooed (A2), are not current lovers but former, seemingly mutual (B13), lovers.[33] Moreover, they are both at present actively engaged in love affairs with others, and each proclaims his or her infatuation with their current partner. So in effect the central stanzas consist of two additional included *oaristyes* in which Horace woos Chloe (9 – 12) and Lydia woos Calais (13 – 16). This multiplicity of *oaristyes* creates paradoxes: it blurs the wooer/wooed distinction between Horace and Lydia, and it results in Horace and Lydia each praising the other's rival (B5), a situation so far encountered only in Iliad 3, 424 – 448 and up to a point in Archilochus fr. 196a. However, as if Horace realised that he could go too far in defying his readers' generic expectations, he adds at the end of the ode another, compensatory twist which partially renormalises the generic situation (see below). The role alterations and amalgamations, generic inclusions, and temporal shifts found in Odes 3, 9 (for the ode handles wooing with respect to the past, the present and the future) are, in their complexity and innovativeness, typical of Horace's generic practice in the Odes; and inevitably they make it even more difficult to see Odes 3, 9 as closely related to Catullus 45.

Odes 3, 9 begins with Horace reflecting on the time when he and Lydia were a pair; he asserts that he was then happier and more flourishing than the Great King of Persia (1 – 4).[34] This expression is a variant on topos B1 (the wooer's love/desire expressed in heightened/exaggerated terms); and it might just possibly have been inspired by Catullus 45's references to remote countries. It is combined with two other *oaristys* topoi, first the rival (B5), spoken of in a way that might imply 'many rivals' (*nec quisquam potior*, 2), and second the physical contacts between the wooer and wooed (B9). Both topoi are developed in original ways: Horace reflects on the time when Lydia's 'more successful' (B5, 2) lover, i. e. her current lover, was only potentially Horace's rival, and when it was Horace, not his rival, who placed his arms around Lydia's neck (B9, 2/3). In the next stanza Lydia responds with an exaggerated expression similar to that of Horace in the first stanza (B1, 5 – 8). But Lydia substitutes for a foreign potentate a revered figure from Rome's early history: she claims that,

---

[32] For the presence of Sappho in particular cf. Hunter (see n. 7), 62/63, 73 – 76.

[33] Such temporal switches are a recurrent generic phenomenon – a 'formal' (i. e. grammatically describable) 'alteration': cf. Cairns, GC, 127/128.

[34] Cf. Nisbet-Rudd, 135 on line 4, noting that *beatus*/μακάριος were stock epithets of the Great King.

when Horace was in love with 'no other' and Chloe was not preferred to her
(another reference to a rival (B5, 5/6)), she (Lydia) 'flourished with more
renown than Roman Ilia' (7/8). There are elements of covert humour here in the
description of 'Lydia' ('the Lydian girl') as more celebrated than 'Roman' Ilia
(the mother of Romulus). In antiquity the Etruscans were incorrectly believed to
have been immigrants from Lydia. Since Horace's patron Maecenas was an
Etruscan who self-consciously constructed himself as such, the idea of a 'Lydian
girl' being more famous than 'Roman Ilia' was probably intended to amuse
Maecenas.[35] It also perhaps flatters Horace qua poet, since it would make
Horace superior to Ennius, who had sung of Ilia.

At line 9 – in the first included *oaristys* – Horace turns to his current
situation: he reiterates a version of topos B1 (the wooer's love/desire expressed
in heightened/exaggerated terms), but this time in connection with his present
girl friend, Chloe. The topos appears in one of its standard forms: Horace will
die for Chloe if doing so will ensure that his 'soul' (i. e. his beloved Chloe)
survives (B1*, 11/12). This is not quite identical to Daphnis' wish to give
Akrotime his soul at Idyll 27, 62, but it is along similar lines. Lydia then in the
second included *oaristys* caps Horace's account of his present love with her own
current infatuation. The love shared by Lydia and her present lover Calais is
explicitly flagged as mutual (B13, 13), no doubt in sly opposition to Horace's
current relationship where he is 'ruled' (9) and so is very much the wooer.
Lydia's Calais is given a patronymic and ethnic. Nisbet and Rudd take this to
imply that Calais '(unlike Horace) comes of good family'.[36] Such nomenclature
was the standard way of representing a Greek as a free citizen of his city, but no
more; so this contrast should not be over-stressed. Nisbet and Rudd also
compare Idyll 27, 43 – 45; the comparison is appropriate, although such claims
are actually a more widespread *oaristys* topos (cf. B2). Finally Lydia again
outbids Horace by asserting that she will die not once to ensure Calais' survival
(B1*, 15/16) but twice.[37] Venus (B3) then enters the picture when Horace asks
(B14, 17 – 20) how Lydia would react if their *prisca Venus* (17) were to bring
them together again. Lydia replies with a *comparatio in deterius* of Horace with
his rival, her present lover (B5, 21 – 23), but she leaves the door open to a
reconciliation (24). The ode thus ends with an invitation (B14) to a renewed

---

[35]   This approach might alleviate some of Nisbet-Rudd's apparent unease about these lines
       (136 on lines 7/8). For some further examples of the impact of Etruria and of Maecenas'
       Etruscan self-construction on Augustan poetry, cf. F. Cairns, Sextus Propertius: The
       Augustan Elegist, Cambridge 2006 (hereafter Cairns, SPAE), esp. Ch. 8.
[36]   Nisbet-Rudd, 133.
[37]   This is possibly an imitation of Acme's out-bidding of Septimius' declaration of love in
       Cat. 45.

relationship and an implication that their sexual liaison might not just be renewed (B15), but be perpetual (B1%, 24). This ending to some extent resolves the generic complexities of Odes 3, 9 by partially renormalising the including *oaristys* of Horace and Lydia.

Roman Elegy: Propertius 1, 10, 1 – 10; 1, 13, 7 – 32; 2, 15

Roman elegy handles the *oaristys* in complex and sophisticated ways. One might have expected that the three Propertian elegies which exploit the genre (1, 10, 1, 13, and 2, 15) would provide elegiac analogues to the lyric *oaristys* of Catullus 45. It is clear, however, that a lost source for these elegies had already transformed some facets of the genre, and had differentiated it from its epic, lyric and bucolic predecessors. That source can be identified with some confidence. Propertius 1, 10, which in overall terms is *erotodidaxis*,[38] but which includes an example of *oaristys* (lines 1 – 10), and Propertius 1, 13, in which *oaristys* is even more prominent, both address a 'Gallus' who is also the addressee of 1, 5 and 1, 20. Several scholars, including myself, have argued that this Gallus is Propertius' predecessor in elegy, the poet, soldier, and first Roman 'prefect' of Egypt, C. Cornelius Gallus.[39] The *oaristys* passages of Propertius 1, 10 and 1, 13 provide significant material for that argumentation.[40] In 1, 10, 1 – 10 Propertius relates how he witnessed love-making between Gallus and a *puella*, and the same scenario recurs in 1, 13. Since it is unlikely that anyone in Propertius' social circle would in real life have had sexual intercourse while a friend looked on, and since it is even more unlikely that Propertius would have claimed to have witnessed his friend having sex in real life, a number of scholars, starting with Franz Skutsch, have correctly seen in 1, 10 and 1, 13 references to Propertius reading a poem or poems by Cornelius Gallus in which Gallus gave an account of his own love-making.[41]

---

[38] The standard treatments of *erotodidaxis* in ancient poetry are still A. L. Wheeler, Propertius as Praeceptor Amoris, CP 5 (1910), 28 – 40; id., Erotic teaching in Roman elegy and the Greek sources. Part I, CP 5 (1910), 440 – 450; id., Erotic teaching in Roman elegy and the Greek sources. Part II, CP 6 (1911), 56 – 77; cf. also Cairns, GC, Index of Genres and Examples, and General Index s.v. *erotodidaxis*.

[39] Cf. Cairns, SPAE, Chh. 3 – 6; 12 for bibliography and arguments.

[40] Re Gallan input into Prop. 2, 15 cf. also the quadrisyllabic pentameter ending *coniugium* at 2, 15, 28 and the Greek trisyllabic pentameter ending *thalamo* at 2, 15, 14, with Cairns, SPAE, 156, 185.

[41] This suggestion was first made by F. Skutsch, Gallus und Vergil. Aus Vergils Frühzeit. Zweiter Teil, Leipzig and Berlin 1906, 144/145; it has subsequently been reinforced by other scholars aware of Skutsch's insight, and it has been put forward as a new proposal by yet others unaware of the bibliography. For further discussion of the Gallan inspiration of Prop. 1, 10 and 1, 13, cf. Cairns, SPAE, 116 – 118.

This view can be underpinned through examination of the relevant passages of 1, 10 and 1, 13, which are indubitably two variations on a single source. Their verbal/conceptual congruities are manifold. They start off with:[42]

1, 10	1, 13
testis (1)	*me … teste* (14)
lacrimis (2)	*flere* (16)
morientem (5)	*animam deponere* (17)
Galle, puella (5)	*Galle, puella* (4)
complexa … puella (5)	*vinctum … collo* (15),
	iniectis … manibus (16),
	complexus … vestros (19)
vidimus (6)	*vidi ego* (14, 15)

Rather than being wholly the product of Propertian self-imitation these features seem likely to embody two different Propertian interactions with his Gallan model or models. In particular the further congruities of the culminating couplets of the two descriptions argue for this. Their pentameters are a close match both verbally and in sense:

> *tantus in alternis vocibus* **ardor** erat (1, 10, 10)
> *tantus* erat **demens** *inter utrosque* **furor** (1, 13, 20)

But their hexameters, although they continue to present a close verbal similarity, are conceptually diverse; so they presumably reflect two different imitations/emulations by Propertius of one or two items from Gallus' account(s) of his own love-making:

> non *tamen a vestro* **potui** SECEDERE *lusu* (1, 10, 9)
> non *ego complexus* **potui** DIDUCERE *vestros* (1, 13, 19)

Gallus' lost account, doubtless part of his elegiac Amores,[43] will have contained dialogue and sexual activity in combination. Propertius 1, 10 has Gallus speaking during intercourse:

> *cum te complexa morientem, Galle, puella*
>   *vidimus et longa* **ducere verba** *mora* (1, 10, 5/6)

and explicit dialogue between the two lovers during their love-making comes at 1, 10, 9/10:

---

[42] See also Cairns, SPAE, Index of Gallan Words and Concepts under the appropriate terms.
[43] For a reassertion that Amores was Gallus' title cf. Cairns, SPAE, 230–232.

> *non tamen a vestro potui secedere lusu*
> *tantus in **alternis vocibus** ardor erat.*

alternis vocibus has troubled some commentators because the concept is intro-
duced here suddenly and without explanation; this is simply due to the fact that
an ancient audience would have expected dialogue in an *oaristys* since it is a
topos of the genre (B11).[44] The two couplets quoted are, of course, also replete
with other abbreviated *oaristys* topoi: *complexa* (5) indicates the lovers'
embrace (B9); *morientem* (5) alludes, although obliquely and out of context, to
the death motif (B1*) as well as implying that intercourse (B15) is on-going,
something later made explicit in *lusu* (9);[45] and *vidimus* points to the vision/eyes
topos (B10) – although here the topos is transferred to a third party, Propertius.
The love of Gallus and his *puella* is mutual (B13, *vestris … in lacrimis*, 2) and it
is heightened and impassioned (B1, 10).

Elegy 1, 13 contains Propertius' second rewriting of Gallus' poetic account(s)
of his own love-making. *Oaristys* features in it more largely (7 – 32), with the
greatest concentration of its topoi coming in lines 13 – 26, although again the
overall genre is *erotodidaxis*. If O's reading *verbis* in line 17 can be justified,[46]
Gallus once more speaks there (*optatis … verbis*), and the girl's words are
mentioned later (*illa suis verbis*, 32). So 1, 13 would, like 1, 10, involve dialogue
between the lovers (B11), and this, along with 1, 10, 10's *alternis vocibus* and
the topical nature of dialogue in the genre, would further argue that there was
dialogue in Cornelius Gallus' *oaristys* elegy (or elegies) too. Doubtless the other
oaristys elements which recur in Propertius 1, 10 and 1, 13 were also present in
Gallus. The instances in 1, 13 are: exaggerated claims about the intensity of
Gallus' love and about Gallus' happiness in love (B1, 15 – 28), including the
death motif (B1*, 17, cf. also, although obliquely, *periturus*, 33); the lovers'
touching and kissing (B9, *vinctum … collo* (15), *iniectis … manibus* (16)); their
mutual love (B13, *inter utrosque furor*, 20); their sexual intercourse (B15, 15 –
20, esp. 18 with its erotic aposiopesis: *et quae deinde meus celat, amice,
pudor*);[47] vision, again transferred to Propertius (B10, 14, 15); and the girl's
rivals in love (B5, 2 – 12, 25 – 28, 34). It may be noteworthy that pallor (13, 7)

---

[44] For another view of *alternis vocibus*, cf. J.J. O'Hara, The New Gallus and the *Alternae Voces* of Propertius 1, 10, 10, CQ 39 (1989), 561/562.

[45] Cf. R. Pichon, Index verborum amatoriorum, repr. Hildesheim 1966 (= De sermone amatorio apud Latinos elegiarum scriptores, [Diss.] Paris [1902], 75 – 303), 191/192 s. v. *ludere*.

[46] With the humanist emendation *labris* printed by some editors the phrase would refer to the standard topos of lovers' transfer their souls; but the apparent conceptual confluence of Prop. 1, 10, 5/6 and Prop. 1, 13, 17 enjoins caution.

[47] Here the 'shame' is that of the onlooker, as it was of the wooed in Theocr. Id. 27.

and tears (10, 2; 13, 16) appear in the *oaristys* for the first time in these two elegies, as they were probably prefigured in Gallus. Their introduction may be part of the same process of elegiac transmutation and refinement of traditional *oaristys* topoi seen in other aspects of 1, 10 and 1, 13, namely the transference of 'vision' and shame to a third party, the indirect use of the death motif, the complete absence of divine assistance (B3), and the collapsing of the extended wooing of some earlier examples into a more economic description limited to the preliminaries to sex and the actual sexual act.

In Propertius 2, 15 the poet (A1) appropriates to his own *persona* at least some elements from the Gallan *oaristys*[48] poem or poems that he had already exploited in 1, 10 and 1, 13 when writing about Gallus' love-life. But 2, 15 is lengthier, and it is an *oaristys* throughout. After the initial couplet's heightened expressions of Propertius' love (B1, 1/2) for Cynthia (A2) dialogue (B11) surfaces early in line 3's *multa … narramus verba*: cf. *verba* (1, 10, 6); *alternis vocibus* (1, 10, 10); *verbis* (1, 13, 32). The importance of dialogue for this elegy is confirmed later when Propertius repeats the words of sexual invitation to him from Cynthia (B14, 8). She uttered this invitation even though she is the wooed, which indicates that, at least for this brief moment, their love was mutual (B13). Propertius' sexual success (B15) is made immediately clear in the first couplet and is then reiterated in 3/4:

> quam multa apposita narramus verba lucerna
>   quantaque sublato lumine rixa fuit.

The sequence 'with the lamp to hand' (3), i. e. when they were at supper, and 'with the lamp removed' (4), i. e. after supper, is an unmistakable reference to sexual intercourse, confirmed, if confirmation is needed, by his later mention of the *figurae Veneris* at line 9. Much of the elegy is devoted to the details of Propertius' night of love, sometimes hinted at indirectly. Lines 5 – 10 and 17 – 20 narrate or imply a number of signs of Cynthia's willingness (B7*) or unwillingness (B7+), as she practices her coquetry upon her infatuated lover. When Cynthia is willing, the pair's embraces and kisses (B9, 5, 7 – 10[49]), and various sexual positions (9, cf. 11) are featured; her unwillingness takes the form of 'covering up' (6, 17).

Cynthia's intermittent wish to be covered leads Propertius to a passionate enunciation of the vision topos (B10, 11): he wants to see Cynthia naked as they make love (cf. also *oculi*, 12; *viderit*, 22; *oculos*, 23). Two Homeric/mythical

---

[48]   Thus Propertius 'becomes' Gallus in 2, 15, as he 'becomes' Gallus' mythological/literary lovers Milanion in 1, 1 and Acontius in 1, 18.

[49]   For *oscula* (10) with the meaning *labra*, *ora*, cf. P. Fedeli, Properzio: Elegie Libro II Cambridge 2005, (ARCA 45), 448 on lines 5 – 10.

paradeigmata (B4) are introduced to underline Propertius' wish (13 – 16). The first (13/14) involves the generically prominent Paris and Helen, the second (15/16) Selene and Endymion. At lines 17 – 22 Propertius modulates into verbal 'invitations' (B14) to naked love-making; these have to do not with his past night of love but with the future of his affair with Cynthia, and they involve threats of violence should she be uncompliant. That may be another new feature in *oaristys*, again possibly an elegiac innovation, although it must be remembered that Akrotime accused Daphnis of handling her roughly in Idyll 27 (53, 55, 59). Propertius' invitations then turn into heightened aspirations for, and declarations of, his love for Cynthia (B1, 23 – 50); they parallel and amplify the first couplet, and they presumably exculpate his threats by implying that they were fuelled by passionate love. The declarations involve *adynata* in the natural world (31 – 36), and (very largely) the death motif (B1*), which appears in a number of oblique forms: Propertius will live and die in Cynthia's love (36); he will achieve immortality if he enjoys many such nights with Cynthia (39); and finally death provides the pretext for the '*carpe diem*' epilogue of lines 51 – 54.[50] Another motif prominent in the centre of the elegy is Propertius' aspiration for the perpetuity of his affair with Cynthia (B1%, 25 – 36). En passant the notion of a rival (B5) to Cynthia is briskly rejected at 35. It is interesting and a mark of Propertius' wish for a permanent relationship with Cynthia that his lengthy declarations (innovatively) follow, instead of preceding, their love-making. The effect of removing them from the preliminaries to love-making is also, and paradoxically, to reduce the verbal aspect of the initial section of the *oaristys* in Propertius 2, 15 and to privilege physical love-making over talking at that point. The reversed positioning of these elements in Propertius 2, 15 might reflect Gallan influence, but it could equally well be an original contribution by Propertius.

Roman Elegy: Ovid Amores 1, 5; 3, 2

The next stage in the reductive process seen in Propertius is visible in the first Ovidian example of *oaristys*, Amores 1, 5, which in part imitates Propertius 2, 15[51] and in part, no doubt, the lost *oaristys* poem(s) of Cornelius Gallus. Amores 1, 5 confines itself (after eight lines of scene-setting) to describing sex between Ovid (A1) and Corinna (A2), the culmination of which is signalled by the erotic aposiopesis *cetera quis nescit?* (B15, 25); thus Amores 1, 5 omits

---

[50] It is not clear whether the reference to the bones of the dead at Actium (44) is intended as a further manifestation of this topos.

[51] Cf. J. C. McKeown, Ovid Amores: Text, Prolegomena and Commentary: in four volumes, II: A Commentary on Book One, Leeds 1989 (ARCA 22), 103/104.

entirely the preliminary dialogue usually found in the genre. This omission should probably be related to the physical and temporal settings of the elegy: Corinna visits Ovid in his house at mid-day, which she would hardly have done for any purpose other than love-making. Ovid further explains his omission of the standard preliminaries of the *oaristys* when he compares Corinna to Semiramis and Lais (11/12, B4). These were courtesans, amateur and professional respectively; so Ovid is discreetly characterising Corinna too as a courtesan who has come[52] by appointment for one purpose only. In this situation a preliminary dialogue would have been otiose, but Corinna nevertheless puts up a simulated half-hearted resistance (B12; B7*+, 14 – 16) to Ovid's efforts to strip her. This is probably meant to be a courtesan's teasing equivalent of the token resistance made by certain of the women wooed in other examples of *oaristys* (cf. B7+). Like Propertius at various points in 2, 15, Ovid expatiates on the physical charms of Corinna, but he does so in two more concentrated passages (9 – 12, 17 – 23). Propertius' enthusiastic physical description of his girl-friend amplified the standard expressions of love or desire uttered by lovers in the *oaristys* (B1); Ovid's similar description substitutes for it. Vision (B10) is prominent in *oculos ... nostros* (17) and *vidi* (19, 23), the latter an exact verbal reprise of the Gallan-Propertian uses (above);[53] and vision was already prominent by implication in the extended discussion (3 – 8), tinged with typical Ovidian irony and sleight-of-hand, of the appropriate light conditions in which to receive *verecundae puellae*! Touching (B9) is explicit in *tetigi* (19) and *pressi* (24, cf. *premi* (20)); and *pressi* is a direct homage to Propertius/Gallus.[54] Moreover Ovid includes the position topos (B8) by having Corinna 'stand' in front of him (17), but he displaces it: she does so once he has stripped her, not on her first arrival. The displacement gives the topos greater prominence and so underlines Ovid's amused comment on it.

Ovid's second *Amores* example of *oaristys*, 3, 2, contrasts with *Amores* 1, 5 in that there is no description at all of love-making in it. Ovid seems to have decided to separate out erotic 'dialogue' and love-making in his two *oaristys* elegies of the *Amores* and to apportion topoi more closely associated with sexual fulfillment to 1, 5, and topoi connected with preliminary wooing to 3, 2. In the latter elegy Ovid is sitting in the crowded Circus Maximus beside a young woman whom he wishes to seduce. She is clearly designated as a *meretrix*: she comes alone to the Circus; she wears *pallia*, Greek dress appropriate to her occupation, and she is unveiled (see below); so she may well be attending the

---

52   Cf. Pichon (see n. 45), 289 s. v. *venire*.
53   Cf. also Cairns, SPAE, Index of Gallan Words and Concepts s. v. *video* etc.
54   Cf. Prop. 2, 15, 42, although in a different context.

games for pick-ups. Ovid, then, has reasonable hope of success. Amores 3, 2 might in the hands of a lesser master have consisted of dialogue (B11). But in Ovid's hands the 'dialogue' is so one-sided that it is in effect a monologue: Ovid makes all the running, while the girl says nothing, or at most one line (84, see below). So, although we constantly expect Ovid's words to elicit a reply from the girl, they never, or almost never, do. This de facto substitution of monologue for expected dialogue is typical of Ovid's ironic humour, here at his own expense. Along with the absence of actual love-making in Amores 3, 2, it is intended to leave us unsure whether Ovid's efforts will be as successful as he hopes. The 'dialogic monologue' is a literary tour de force since Ovid succeeds in introducing into it many of the topoi found in the dialogue portions of other *oaristyes*.

Ovid starts off by revealing his physical position: he is sitting (*sedeo*, 1) in the Circus (B8), not, he hastens to add, because he is a fan of chariot racing but because he wants to talk (3, a hint of B11, the dialogue, in this case manqué) and sit (*sederem* [3], again B8) with the girl, and to let her know that he loves her (B1, 1–4). This declaration of love is followed by various further ploys and arguments: Ovid declares that he wants to look at her (5/6: *tu cursus spectas, ego te; spectemus uterque / quod iuvat, atque oculos pascat uterque suos*, B10); cf. also *conspecta* (13) and *spectat* (16) in Ovid's aspiration to be a charioteer and his self-comparison with Pelops. Ovid perceives that the girl favours one of the charioteers, but he copes with this hint of a rival (B5, 7/8) by a heightened declaration of love in which he says that he himself would become a charioteer to win the girl's favour (B1, 9–14), and in which by implication he compares the girl flatteringly to Hippodameia (B4, 15–18). At this point the girl appears to shrink away from Ovid (B7+, 19), but he counters with increased attentions to her, including showing simulated concern for her comfort. Ovid pretends to think that her neighbours on the other side and in the row behind are crowding her and so touching her (21–23, a projection of his own wish: cf. B9), and he asks them not to do so (24). Ovid then declares that the girl's *pallia* are trailing on the ground (25/26). He picks them up, the nearest he can contrive to touching her person (cf. B9, 26); this allows him to catch a glimpse of her legs[55] (B10: cf. the indirect confirmation of this in 28 *spectes* and direct confirmation in 33 *non visis*), and to pile on more flattery in the form of compliments on her legs (27–34). These compliments again include flattering mythological comparisons (B4, 29–32): first with the legs of Atalanta (29/30) in risqué terms which again hint

---

[55] Some of the tricks played by Ovid here, along with their intentions and results, are set forth explicitly in AA 1, 135–170 where Ovid's 'pupils' are being instructed to employ them; cf. A. S. Hollis, Ovid: Ars Amatoria Book I, Oxford 1977, 58–63.

at his wish to touch – and do more to – the girl (cf. B9), and second with the legs of Diana in terms only deceptively more wholesome (cf. 31 *succinctae*). Ovid follows up these compliments with further expressions of his amatory fervor (B1, 33 – 40, with much prominence given to heat as a metaphor for love); these culminate with his brushing away of (no doubt imaginary) dust from the girl's dress (B9, 41/42).

Next comes a description of the procession, with its statues of the gods, entering the Circus (43ff.). Ovid dismisses many of these gods as irrelevant to his current quest (47 – 54). But he prays to the first of them, Victoria, that his love will be victorious, and to the last of them, Venus, that he will conquer the girl (B3, 45/46; 56/57). The ancient pseudo-etymologies linking *Venus* with *vinco* and *Victoria* are overt and meaningful here.[56] Venus' statue, so Ovid asserts, nods its agreement, and Ovid asks the girl to add her promise to that of Venus (58 – 60), claiming that she will be to him a goddess greater than Venus! Ovid then (cynically) swears an oath by all the gods whose images are present that he wants the girl to be his mistress for ever (B1%, 61/62). More concern for the girl's comfort (63/64, her legs are again to the fore) precedes a vivid description of the chariot race (65 – 82), during which Ovid becomes a rabid supporter of the charioteer favoured by the girl – an ironic reversal of his stance in the initial couplet where he expressed his indifference to racing but nevertheless wished victory for her favoured charioteer, and an equally ironic follow-up to his subsequent fantasy self-identification with that charioteer (7 – 18). The recall of the chariots at one point (75) provides Ovid with a pretext for inviting the girl to lean on his breast: otherwise, he says, her hair will be disturbed[57] by the togas being waved about by the excited spectators. This invitation is meant to give Ovid another opportunity to touch the girl (B9, 74 – 76); her response to it is not recorded, but from this point on, as they watch the race together, Ovid starts to speak of her as his *domina*, not in aspiration as earlier at 18, 57, and 62, but by implication as a fact (80, 81); this may mean that she complied with his invitation. The girl's favourite is victorious (81/82) and at the end of the elegy Ovid receives, or thinks he has received, the girl's agreement (B7*, 83/84) to his sexual proposition (B14) in the form of a promise conveyed by her smile and a flash of her eyes (cf. B10). Unfortunately the end of the elegy brings with it two perplexities.[58] First, is *hoc* in the final line (*hoc satis est, alio cetera redde loco*, 84) a nominative pronoun and the subject of *est*,

---

[56]   Cf. R. Maltby, A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies, Leeds 1991 (ARCA 25), s. vv. *Venus*; *Victoria*.

[57]   Hence she is unveiled, another confirmation of her *meretrix* status (see above).

[58]   Presumably all would have been clear when Ovid recited the elegy.

or is it an ablative pronominal adjective in agreement with *loco*? Second, is the line spoken (or thought) by Ovid or by the girl? If by Ovid, it means either: 'This is enough for the moment' or 'Enough in this place', 'give me the rest' (i. e. complete sexual satisfaction – with *cetera* in the same sense as at Amores 1, 5, 25) 'elsewhere'. This would imply that Ovid is sanguine about the future outcome of his enterprise, although we, as sceptical readers, may be less sanguine. If the girl speaks, she means either: 'That is enough for now' or 'Enough in this place', 'tell me the rest elsewhere'; in that case the expected dialogue element (B11) has emerged after long tantalisation, and a further meeting between the pair is implied. Ovid, then, has grounds for hope, although one suspects that events may take a more mercenary turn than he might have wished.

Ovid Metamorphoses 14, 622–771

Ovid's hexameter Metamorphoses also features an *oaristys*, the wooing of Pomona by Vertumnus. Although this long passage cannot be examined here in detail, a brief analysis of its *oaristys* topoi is feasible. After sketching Pomona's arboricultural obsessions (623–633), Ovid describes her parallel obsession with preserving her virginity (B6, 634–642): she resists all attempts by Vertumnus' rivals, i. e. satyrs and so forth (B5, 635–641); and even Vertumnus, who is in love with her, is unsuccessful. So he adopts many disguises (B12, 643–652) in order to gaze on Pomona's beauty (B10, 653: *ut caperet spectatae gaudia formae*). Finally he disguises himself as an old woman (again B12, 654–656), enters her orchard, praises its produce and her, and kisses her (B9, 658), before sitting on the ground (B8, 659) and beginning his wooing. First he presses Pomona in general terms to abandon her wish to remain a virgin (B6, esp. 668), using the analogy of a 'married' vine and elm which are part of her orchard (661–669), and then comparing her in the number of her wooers – again (potential) rivals of Vertumnus (B5, 672–674, cf. 677) – to the mythical and Homeric heroines Helen (B4*, 669), Hippodameia[59] and Penelope (B4, 670/671). Next Vertumnus, exploiting his disguise as an old woman and as such a match-maker, starts to plead his own case. He begins at line 675 to urge Pomona to accept his advice on a choice of spouse, and he verbalises the 'old woman's' affection for Pomona ambivalently so that it also expresses his own love for her (B1, 676/677: *hanc audire voles, quae te plus omnibus illis, / plus, quam credis, amo*). The disguised Vertumnus next advances his own merits openly in a discourse which in effect constitutes a further heightened declaration of his love

---

[59] Cf. Ov. Am. 3, 2, 15/16.

for Pomona (B1, 680–692): Vertumnus is no gadabout; he does not fall in love with a girl the moment he sees her (cf. B10, 681/682: *nec … / quam modo <u>vidit</u>, amat*); and Pomona will be his first and last love (B1%, 682/683) – not quite an oath but approaching one (cf. B1+). Vertumnus is good-looking and talented, and he will do everything she tells him; they have shared interests; Pomona should beware of offending the gods by obduracy (cf. B3). This last point is then illustrated by the tale of Iphis and Anaxarete (698–761), after which (still disguised) Vertumnus exhorts Pomona to unite with him (B14, 762). He then reverts to his true form, their desire becomes mutual, and she complies (B13; B15, 770/771).

AP 5, 255 (Paulus Silentiarius)

Oaristys survived into late antiquity. An epigram of the Byzantine poet Paulus Silentiarius (AP 5, 255) is, like Amores 1, 5, a description of love-making, but, as in Catullus 45, Propertius 1, 10, and Propertius 1, 13, the poet is not one of the lovers but an 'onlooker'. Paulus' epigram was clearly conceived within the *oaristys* tradition; and there is a close, although indirect, connection between it and the Propertian examples of the genre. Their uses of topos B10 reveal this clearly: AP 5, 255 begins: εἶδον ἐγὼ ποθέοντας (1), while Propertius 1, 10, 6 stresses in *vidimus* (the authorial plural) that Propertius 'saw' Gallus and his mistress in the act of intercourse, and Propertius 1, 13, 14 repeats this stress in *vidi ego*, the exact equivalent of εἶδον ἐγώ. Again, although there is no third party 'observer' in Propertius 2, 15, Propertius nevertheless places special emphasis over fourteen lines (9–24) on the visual delights of Cynthia's nude body, an emphasis imitated by Ovid in Amores 1, 5, and possibly anticipated by Cornelius Gallus. This is exactly the emphasis that begins Paulus Silentiarius' epigram, which also shares with Amores 1, 5 its lack of dialogue. However, the closeness in these respects of these different examples of *oaristys* is not due to Paulus having been acquainted with Roman elegy; nor is it determined purely by generic convention. Rather a Greek predecessor (or predecessors) of Gallus must have featured a similar emphasis, and so influenced both Gallus and Paulus Silentiarius. If that predecessor was an epigrammatist, he could have been Philodemus,[60] if an elegist, perhaps a poet of Hellenistic subjective elegy.[61] Other *oaristys* topoi are present too: heightened descriptions of the lovers'

---

[60] Cf. e. g. AP 5, 213 for similar stress on the visual in an erotic context.
[61] For a new possibility in this area cf. A. M. Morelli, Sul papiro di Ossirinco Liv 3723. Considerazioni sui caratteri dell'elegia erotica ellenistica alla luce dei nuovi ritrovamenti papiracei, RFIC 122 (1994), 385–421; J. L. Butrica, Hellenistic erotic elegy: the evidence of the papyri, PLLS 9 (1996), 297–322.

(mutual, B13) love (B1, passim), including their exchange of clothes (5 –10) and the terms 'unendurable madness' (1), 'insatiable' (3), and 'limb-devouring famine of incurable love-madness' (11/12); reversed comparisons of the lovers with a Homeric hero (Achilles, whose own *oaristys* is [Bion] 2, also with its heavy element of cross-dressing – see above) and with a god (Apollo) (B4, 7 – 10); and the lovers' kisses and embraces (B9, 2, 3/4, 11, 13 – 16).

(IV.) The Ethos of the Genre Oaristys

The analyses of individual *oaristyes* in § III permit some more general conclusions about the ethos of the *oaristys*. It is an inescapable fact that personal interactions, particularly those involving sexuality, can easily evoke humour and irony in both participants and observers. This perhaps makes it more surprising that within the body of *oaristyes* studied here the tone and intent incline on balance much more to the serious than to the humorous. Elements of humour certainly appear widely and they are not to be dismissed, but in essence the *oaristys* is not a genre intended to provoke laughter. This overall assessment of the genre contributed in my earlier essay to its conclusion that there is no generic basis for regarding Catullus 45 as anything other than a sincere portrait of mutual love. The remarks which follow expand and supplement the argumentation presented there about the ethos of the *oaristys*.

The earliest extant *oaristys* (Homer Iliad 3, 424 – 448) contains what are clearly advanced topical variations upon earlier, lost *oaristyes*: the wooed (Helen) is not a virgin (plausibly the generic norm) and she displays not just reluctance (again probably the norm, especially when the wooed are virgins) but downright hostility to her wooer, Paris. Moreover her high praise of his rival, Menelaus, is also generically abnormal and probably reflects Menelaus' status as her lawful husband; it is paralleled only in Horace Odes 3, 9. These features not only reveal Homer's generic sophistication; they also underline the narrative significance of this particular scene. By Book 3 both the Greeks and the Trojans are weary of the long war, and both sides are hopeful that the duel between Menelaus and Paris will resolve the conflict once and for all. Paris' preservation by Aphrodite temporarily frustrates that purpose, but the shared desire for peace persists. It will lead before long to the proposal of Antenor that Helen and the goods which came with her be given back to the Greeks (Iliad 7, 350/351), to which Paris responds that he is willing to give back the goods, but not to restore Helen (362 – 364). The *oaristys* of Iliad 3, in which Paris professes a desire for Helen even greater than when they first made love, both illustrates and motivates his refusal, a decision which will carry the day among the Trojans and which will lead to the fall of Troy.

Homer's second *oaristys* (Iliad 14, 159 – 353) certainly contains humorous elements, but it plays an equally significant role in the epic narrative. It is of course a cause for amusement that the greatest of the gods is cozened by his own wife, who has frequently been the target of his abuse, hostility and infidelity; and it is equally amusing that Hera's trick is sexual and that she manages to enlist the unknowing help of Aphrodite, whose interests in the Greek-Trojan conflict are diametrically opposed to her own. But Hera has a serious purpose in seducing and then sedating Zeus – to allow Ares and Poseidon to turn the tide of war in favour of the Greeks. That purpose Hera achieves, but only temporarily, and her success has a major unexpected and unwelcome outcome for the Greeks. Similarly in Homeric Hymn 5 the spectacle of Aphrodite being herself the victim of love, and even being reduced to passing herself off as a virgin in order to ensnare Anchises, is humorous, but once again the effects of her actions are not. Anchises anxiously asks Aphrodite whether he will in future be impotent (188 – 190) and she replies in the negative (193 – 195), so in this version he is not thus afflicted. This settled, the emphasis turns to the future Aeneas (196) and (after a digression) to his upbringing. The notion that the Hymn was written to celebrate the *aetion* and ancestry of a dynasty of Aeneiadae ruling in the Troad in the poet's time has more to commend it than has sometimes been thought, and it has recently again been accorded the prominence which it deserves.[62]

So far the *oaristyes* discussed in relation to humour have been those of gods and heroes. The descent to human level in Archilochus fr. 196a is not accompanied by increased humour. Archilochus' ultimate ploy in his attempts to persuade the girl might raise a smile, but his attack on Neobule and the suspicion that he is setting out to blacken the reputation of her virgin sister too, and indeed of her whole family, are not amusing, and they transform the epode into a malignantly serious enterprise. With Theocritus Idyll 27 touches of humour do become more numerous, but the seduction – with a view to marriage – of a country girl by a cowherd, although of no great moment for the universe, is a serious enough business for the rustic pair. [Bion] 2's encounter between Achilles and Deidameia again has its intrinsic light-hearted aspects, which its poet exploits ingeniously; but there is nothing to say that it did not end on a more serious note similar to that of Homeric Hymn 5, i. e. anticipation of the birth of Neoptolemus, ancestor of the royal house of Epirus. Also on the Greek side although much later, AP 5, 255 (Paulus Silentiarius), no doubt following a

---

[62] For this theory, and for bibliographical reference to criticism of it, cf. M. West, Homeric Hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer, Cambridge MA - London 2003 (Loeb Classical Text), 15, and (in extenso) A. Faulkner, The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite: Introduction, Text, and Commentary, Oxford 2008, 3 – 18.

lost Hellenistic model, concentrates on the intensity of the lovers' feelings and the visual interest of their activities.

The Roman *oaristyes* overlap to some extent in their tone and intent with their Greek predecessors, although there is a greater tendency towards certain features already present in the Greek examples, namely emphasis on the strength of the wooer's attachment (B1) and an ironic and humorous approach to love. Passionate love and humour/irony are, of course, inherently inconsistent, and this causes some *oaristyes* to feature only one of them. Thus heightened emotion is completely absent from Horace Odes 3, 9, and this permits Horace to project an ironic and self-deprecatory view of himself as a lover and to conduct his wooing via a cynical and coolly speculative negotiation with Lydia rather than via an expression of ardent passion for her. Similarly Ovid's two *oaristyes* in the Amores are to different degrees detached and cynical. Amores 1, 5 is motivated not by grand passion but by calculating lust; and Amores 3, 2 is doubly cynical and amusing, a pick-up 'by the book' in the Circus of a prostitute there to be picked up. Contrariwise Propertius 2, 15 is all passion for Cynthia.

When humour and passion do appear in tandem their spheres of action are carefully distinguished. In Metamorphoses 14, 622 – 771 the devices used by Vertumnus to conduct his wooing will raise smiles among readers, but his obsessive love for Pomona is unalloyed by any trace of humour. Again Propertius 1, 10 and 1, 13 manage to combine a high level of emotion with a certain dash of irony by sharply discriminating the two antipathetic elements. Propertius portrays the love between Gallus and his girl as sincere and profound, and since he himself is also a lover, he has a strongly positive view of it. The irony derives solely from the strange situation in which Propertius finds himself, namely that he is acting as 'teacher of love' to his own poetic master and patron, Cornelius Gallus. In sum, then, a poet who is himself the wooer may in an *oaristys* make fun of his own feelings and his own expressions of them or he may adopt a cynical attitude towards love. But where a poet is not the wooer in the *oaristys*, he may certainly smile at some of the interactions of the wooer and wooed, but he will not mock the feelings or behaviour of the lovers, nor will he express cynicism about love.

Francis Cairns
The Florida State University, USA /
Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge, UK
fcairns@fsu.edu