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Epic Catalogues and the Poetics of Mythmaking: *Ovid's* Metamorphoses *and Dracontius'* Hylas

Abstract

L'articolo prende in esame la funzione dei cataloghi epici come strumenti di mitopoiesi, concentrandosi sulle *Metamorfosi* di Ovidio e l'*Hylas* di Draconzio. Lungi dal rappresentare meri elenchi, i cataloghi si dimostrano strumenti narrativi che consentono al poeta di sperimentare con la tradizione mitologica. Nell'episodio ovidiano della caccia al cinghiale di Calidonia (*Met*. 8), l'esteso catalogo di eroi rappresenta un intervento consapevole sulle tradizioni epiche precedenti. Inserendo in posizioni chiave figure che hanno ruoli specifici nel mito epico, come Fenice, Acasto, Ceneo e Mopso, Ovidio si serve del catalogo per sottolineare la fluidità del mito e la sua apertura a riscritture autoriali. Il catalogo diviene quindi sede di dialogo intertestuale e di innovazione mitografica, e consente a Ovidio di esplorare, riorganizzare e anche correggere i suoi predecessori.

In età tardo-antica, Draconzio prosegue questa pratica mitopoietica nel suo *Hylas*, dove un catalogo delle trasformazioni di Giove – adattato dall'arazzo di Aracne di Ov. *Met*. 6 – è contenuto nel discorso di Venere a Cupido. Il riuso di materiale ovidiano sottolinea la persistente malleabilità del mito all'interno della struttura catalogica.

I cataloghi epici non sono strutture formali statiche, ma strumenti di creatività letteraria e di autorialità mitica attraverso i quali i poeti affermano la propria autorità, negoziano la tradizione, si fanno parte attiva nella continua costruzione della memoria culturale.

The paper examines how epic catalogues function as tools of mythmaking, focusing on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Dracontius' *Hylas*. Far from being mere lists, catalogues are shown to be dynamic narrative devices that enable poets to experiment with mythological tradition. In Ovid's Calydonian boar hunt episode (*Met*. 8), the extensive catalogue of heroes is a self-aware intervention into earlier epic traditions. By inserting in key places figures like Phoenix, Acastus, Caeneus and Mopsus, with distinct role in epic myth, Ovid uses the catalogue to comment on the fluidity of myth and its susceptibility to authorial redefinition. The catalogue thus becomes a site for intertextual dialogue and mythographic innovation, allowing Ovid to explore, reorder, and even correct his poetic predecessors.

Dracontius, writing in Late antiquity, continues this mythmaking practice in his *Hylas*, where a catalogue of Jupiter's transformations – adapted from Arachne's tapestry in Ov. *Met*. 6 – appears in Venus' speech to Cupid. This reuse of Ovidian material highlights the enduring malleability of myth through catalogic structure.

Epic catalogues are not static features of form, but instruments of literary creativity and mythic authorship – tools by which poets assert authority, negotiate tradition, and actively participate in the ongoing construction of cultural memory.

1. *Introduction: Epic Catalogue Poetry and Mythmaking*

The epic catalogue is a staple of ancient epic poetry – a feature meant to impress, by halting narrative progression and arresting audience attention. The function of a catalogue within an epic is multiple and complex, and affects the interpretation of epic narrative in many ways: for instance, it broadens the temporal and/or the geographical space of the narrative; it enhances the authority of the poet who is able to advertise his deep, even complete knowledge about a certain topic to his audience, let along his impressive mnemonic faculties; it may revisit main themes of the epic narrative more broadly, thus becoming a mirror of a broader unit or even the poem itself, and in doing so it both directs and challenges the audience's erudition and interpretative skills[1]. In the same context, the catalogue offers manifold possibilities for poetic innovation, usually in combination with other poetic structures, including the revision of established myth. This latter function is particularly at work in the Hellenistic and the Latin epic tradition[2].

Catalogue poetry of the Hellenistic (and Roman) type begins with the genealogical poetry of the Hesiodic tradition and evolves into poems with new elements and themes. While elegy and erotic poetry are the primary examples of Hellenistic catalogue poetry, the catalogue form also serves as the structural device for early poetic experiments in hexameter mythography. A celebrated such catalogue that rewrites national mythology, or rather mythochronology, is the catalogue of the Italian forces at the closing of *Aeneid* 7 (641-817). The portrayal of all fifteen (plus Camilla) Italian leaders participating in Turnus' war against Aeneas stresses the Gigantomachy theme; each leader is a hybrid of qualities that are mutually exclusive, thus reflecting in his (or hers – in Camilla's case) individuality a particularized and more tangible caption image of the cosmogonic strife that distinguishes the entire land of Italy prior to Aeneas' arrival. In addition, it is possible to distinguish three different groups of leaders with different ties to the Italian legendary tradition: a) the leaders with firm presence in the Aeneas legend, as recorded both in Vergil and earlier or contemporary sources (Mezentius, Lausus and Turnus, but also Cato and Clausus); b) leaders who are attested in the broader legendary tradition of Italy, but are not associated with the Aeneas legend beyond the Vergilian narrative (Catillus, Coras, Caeculus, Halaesus, Messapus); c) characters who have

[1] On the functions of the Homeric catalogues, see GAERTNER (2001), with earlier bibliography in the notes.

[2] For a recent, succinct introduction on catalogues in the ancient epic tradition see REITZ – LÄMMLE – WESSELMANN (2020).

never featured in the legendary tradition of Italy before Vergil, and for whom it is safe to conclude that they have been invented by the author of the *Aeneid* (Aventinus, son of Hercules, Oebalus, Ufens, Umbro, Virbius and Camilla)[3].

Ovid's catalogues, self-conscious of the long tradition they belong to, handle myth differently – in their composition they challenge established accounts by revising them and adding new details, thus testing the audience's mythological knowledge. In the words of Stratis Kyriakidis, the author of the classic study on the typology and structure of Latin epic catalogues, «poetry of all periods is bestrewn with proper names literature has found in myth, an inexhaustible source of material and inspiration. The poets who drew upon the various myths and mythological cycles may have differed from generation to generation in their approach; they had, however, to comply with a minimum of information concerning the story of each myth. This minimum information is related to and on many occasions encoded in the proper name(s) associated with the specific story»[4]. An outstanding case of an epic catalogue from the *Metamorphoses* will be my leading case study, the Calydonian catalogue in *Metamorphoses* 8. This catalogue has been inspired by Apollonius' *Argonautica*, an epic that to a less observant reader seems absent from Ovid's pool of subtexts. At the same time, the same catalogue is informed by Homeric narrative art, as it toys with the recollection politics of the Homeric Phoenix. In the conclusion of my paper I will discuss a second catalogue, the one of the women seduced by Jupiter as listed in Dracontius' *Hylas* vis-à-vis its primary source, Arachne's tapestry in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 6. I will show how Dracontius embraces Ovid's catalogue-making technology in his own experiment with mythmaking. On both occasions, we will observe the artistry of experimenting (by challenging and manipulating) established mythological tradition, in order to best advance authorial inventiveness.

2. *Ovid's Calydonian Episode and the Homeric Phoenix's* *Meleagris*

The tale of Meleager is traditionally held to be older than the Homeric epics on account of the inclusion of a version thereof in *Iliad* 9. Scholarship has amply discussed the structure of the Meleager epic, agreeing that the story as survived in the literary tradition reflects two different versions, the folk and the epic one. The folk version

[3] On the anatomy of the Italian catalogue in terms of mythography and Italian ethnography, see HORSFALL (2000, esp. 414-22), with ample earlier bibliography.
[4] KYRIAKIDIS (2007, 84); Kyriakidis, however, does not study the Calydonian catalogue.

emphasizes the folktale element of the firebrand as a life-token, and centers on the internal dilemma of Althea, to avenge the death of her brothers or spare the life of her son. This account is recorded in detail in Ps.-Apollodorus (1, 8, 1-3) in the Greek tradition and in the second half of the Meleager story as reported in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (8, 445-546) in the Latin tradition. The earliest account of the epic version is Homer, *Iliad* 9, 524-99, and the plot is a duplicate of the story of Achilles, as it means to serve as paradigm for the Greek hero: Meleager is wronged and deprived of his prize; he becomes angry and withdraws from fighting for his native Calydon against the army of his uncles, the Curetes of Pleuron. He rejects all pleas to assist his countrymen, but when he finally does change his mind, after his wife's appeal, it is too late: he cannot save his fatherland[5].

In both versions of the Meleager tale the first half is occupied by the Calydonian hunt. In the earliest surviving account of the tale in *Iliad* 9, the hunt receives only cursory mention, just long enough to explain that this occasion led to the civil war between Meleager and the Curetes. Further, Phoenix, Achilles' elderly companion, who narrates the story, is not explicit about his own participation in the event (*Il*. 9, 523-32):

πρὶν δ' οὔ τι νεμεσσητὸν κεχολῶσθαι.
Οὕτω καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν
ἡρώων, ὅτε κέν τιν' ἐπιζάφελος χόλος ἵκοι·
δωρητοί τε πέλοντο παράρρητοί τ' ἐπέεσσι.
Μέμνημαι τόδε ἔργον ἐγὼ πάλαι οὔ τι νέον γε
ὡς ἦν· ἐν δ' ὑμῖν ἐρέω πάντεσσι φίλοισι.
Κουρῆτές τ' ἐμάχοντο καὶ Αἰτωλοὶ μενεχάρμαι
ἀμφὶ πόλιν Καλυδῶνα καὶ ἀλλήλους ἐνάριζον
Αἰτωλοὶ μὲν ἀμυνόμενοι Καλυδῶνος ἐραννῆς,
Κουρῆτες δὲ διαπραθέειν μεμαῶτες Ἄρηϊ.

Until this moment, no one took it ill

[5] The bibliography on the Homeric story of Meleager is vast. Outstanding analyses are KAKRIDIS (1949, 11-42); WILLCOCK (1964, 147-53); LOHMANN (1970, 254-65); VOSKOS (1974), advancing the most detailed and largely convincing unitarian reading of the Meleager story, which may profitably be employed to serve the perspective of neo-analysis; BREMMER (1988, 37-56); SWAIN (1988, 271-76); ALDEN (2000, 179-290); GROSSARDT (2001, 285-90), a full study of the Meleager legend, including a very useful graph of motifs in literature; BURGESS (2017, 51-76), advancing a narratological reading from the perspective of oral theory; KRETLER (2018, chap. 2), arguing for Phoenix experimenting with genre and transforming in his version the epic character of the *Iliad* into a tragedy. For commentary, see HAINSWORTH (1993, 130-40).

> that you should suffer anger; we **learned this**
> **from the old stories** of how towering wrath
> could overcome great men; but they were still
> amenable to gifts and to persuasion.
> Here is **an instance I myself remember**
> **not from our own time but from ancient days**:
> I'll tell it to you all, for all are friends.
> The Kouretes were fighting a warlike race,
> Aitolians, around the walls of Kalydon,
> with slaughter on both sides: Aitolians
> defending their beloved Kalydon
> while the Kouretes longed to sack the town.[6]

3. *Why is Phoenix in Ovid's Calydonian Expedition?*

Phoenix does not clarify that he recalls an event from his own personal experience; he simply notes that he has an ancient story in his mind (l. 523), which may well imply that he has heard it from someone else, for it was not a new story (at the time he himself narrated it to Achilles); rather, it was a story that had been circulating as an oral epic poem of the κλέα ἀνδρῶν tradition (as lines 520-21 communicate). This poetically conscious description of the tale has been employed to substantiate the existence of a **Meleagris**, an epic poem on Meleager, and also its primacy over the *Iliad*[7]. Also, Phoenix's confession that he is relating a *traditional memory* (an account of the Calydonian hunt as fashioned by oral tradition) has led to his exclusion from the catalogue of the epic warriors who took part in the boar hunt, the prelude to the events of the **Meleagris** as reported in *Il.* 9, 529-99. Phoenix himself says very little about the hunt itself: he refers explicitly to the cause (Artemis grew angry on account of Oeneus' failure to honor her properly and send a wild boar to destroy his vineyards) and seems more concerned to identify the argument over the spoils of the hunt (γέρας) as the cause for the civil war between Meleager's people and the Curetes, than to narrate in detail the *athla* of the hunt (*Il.* 9, 543-49):

> τὸν δ᾽ υἱὸς Οἰνῆος ἀπέκτεινεν Μελέαγρος,
> πολλέων ἐκ πολίων θηρήτορας ἄνδρας ἀγείρας
> καὶ κύνας· οὐ μὲν γάρ κε δάμη παύροισι βροτοῖσι·

[6] Here and below, translation by FITZGERALD (1974).
[7] Especially in earlier decades; see HEUBECK (1984, 129) for bibliography and discussion.

τόσσος ἔην, πολλοὺς δὲ πυρῆς ἐπέβησ᾽ ἀλεγεινῆς.
ἡ δ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ αὐτῷ θῆκε πολὺν κέλαδον καὶ ἀϋτήν,
ἀμφὶ συὸς κεφαλῇ καὶ δέρματι λαχνήεντι,
Κουρήτων τε μεσηγὺ καὶ Αἰτωλῶν μεγαθύμων.

Now this [sc. great boar], Meleagros, the son of Oineus killed
by gathering men and hounds from far and near.
So huge the boar was, no small band could master him,
and he brought many to the dolorous pyre.
Around the dead beast she [sc. Artemis] set on
a clash with battlecries between Kouretes
and proud Aitolians over the boar's head
and shaggy hide.

Indeed, post-Homeric literary tradition denies Phoenix a place in the roster of the participants in the hunt. The Calydonian hunt has had a long tradition in antiquity, literary and artistic alike, and the central focus in this tradition was the detailed list of the heroes who participated in it. There was a list of heroes in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, which is preserved only in meagre fragments, and we know of enumerations of Calydonian hunters in poems by Bacchylides – whose *Ode* 5 emphasizes the panhellenic character of the hunt expedition and refers summarily to the hunters as «the best of the Achaeans» (l. 111), identifying by name only the two Thestiades killed subsequently by Meleager (ll. 127ff.) – and Stesichorus (*POxy* 2359 from *Syotherai*, referring to the hunters by their place of origin: Locrians, Achaians, Dryopes, Boeotians and Aeolians)[8]. Fragments 530-31+531a Collard-Cropp of Euripides' lost *Meleager* most likely come from the list of the hunters: they name Telamon, Atalanta, Ancaeus and the Thestiades. There were no doubt lists of the Calydonian hunters in circulation in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, but the earliest extant literary catalogue is recorded in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid identifies at least 38 heroes[9], making it the lengthiest enumeration surviving. Three additional literary catalogues should be added to the list: Hyginus (31 names), who most likely was influenced by

[8] On the Calydonian hunt in the *Catalogue*, see MARCH (1987, 41-42); on Meleager's epic treatment by Stesichorus see GARNER (1994); on *POxy* 2359 see BARRETT (1972).
[9] The total number of participants might be up to 41, depending on the exact number of siblings mentioned only with their patronymic: see PAPAIOANNOU (2017, 250-56).

Ovid[10], Ps-Apollodorus, offering a total of 22 names and dating to the early imperial period, and the 2nd-century CE geographer Pausanias (16 names)[11]. To those literary catalogues we should add the catalogue tied to the depiction of the Calydonian hunt on the widely known François Vase (c. 570-560 BCE; Florence, Museo Archeologico inv. 4209). The Vase depicts twenty hunters, most of them in pairs, and their dogs, with the names of men and dogs inscribed next to each figure. Only eight of the twenty hunters identified on the crater feature in Ovid's catalogue. Given the date of the Vase, this catalogue is the earliest one available in extant form[12].

My study takes start from the observation that Phoenix participates in Ovid's version of the Calydonian hunt[13], even though he seems to be absent not only from Homer's account of the events at Calydon that led to the **Meleagris**, but also from the surviving Greek catalogues of the imperial Ps.-Apollodorus and the archaic François Vase, which probably are informed of, if not by, Homer. One should not exclude the possibility that Phoenix's presence in Ovid's catalogue may go back to some Greek tradition, now lost. Still, Phoenix may have never been a member of the Calydonian hunters, and his presence in Ovid's list may be due to Ovid's fondness for improvisation and for philological commentary on earlier authors. I would like to suggest that the composition of the Calydonian catalogue offers Ovid an opportunity to engage in an ingenious dialogue with the Greek epic tradition and introduce corrective touches. The integration of Phoenix in Ovid's catalogue could be explained in light of this very policy of model criticism, not least because an epic catalogue is prime ground for the exercise of intertextual politics.

According to Adrian Hollis, «the [Calydonian] boar-hunt itself […] is perhaps the most strictly epic passage in all the *Metamorphoses*; we are not even spared a full-scale catalogue of heroes as a preliminary (298-328)»[14]. In narratives of epic enterprises a detailed catalogue of the participants in the heroic deed is expected, since it is typically «one of the most venerable and characteristic features of epic poetry»[15]. In the

[10] Apart from the fact that all hunters listed in Hyginus' catalogue are present in Ovid's catalogue, the influence of the *Metamorphoses* on Hyginus is extensive throughout the *Fabulae*; also, Ovid is named as a source in Hyginus' text. On the influence of Ovid on Hyginus see FLETCHER (2013, 149-56).

[11] Ov. *Met*. 8, 298-328; Hyg. *Fab*. 173-74; Apollod. 1, 8, 2; Paus. 1, 42, 6; 8, 45, 6-7. The full literary tradition of the names of the Calydonian hunters across time is recorded in BÖMER (1977, 108-111).

[12] On the François Vase and the archaic epic tradition, see STEWART (1974); on the inscriptions accompanying the character depicted on the François Vase, see WACHTER (1991).

[13] On Ovid's appropriation of the Homeric version of the Meleager episode, including a metaliterary reading of Phoenix's role, see BOYD (2017, 87-105; revised version of BOYD 2015).

[14] HOLLIS (1970, 68-69 on 8, 260-546).

[15] HOLLIS (1970, 73 on 8, 298-328).

Metamorphoses the epic character of the catalogue is further enhanced by its uniqueness: it is the only heroic catalogue proper included in an epic poem that records an unprecedented high number of catalogues and lists[16]. What, further, makes the Calydonian heroes catalogue even more memorable is its *philologically minded* texture. This means that its composition relies not only on earlier traditional versions of the participants' list, but also on other heroic catalogues from other epic adventures. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to approach the Calydonian hunters' catalogue as a type of an *Ur-heroic* catalogue, a point of reference for earlier epic poems. In the following pages I shall show how the construction of an epic catalogue alludes to the ongoing fluidity that underscores the politics of epic (and epic myth) composition. Following up on Phoenix's unexpected presence among the hunters, I shall discuss the composition dynamics behind the inclusion of three additional heroes in the Calydonian catalogue, namely Acastus, Caeneus and Mopsus.

4. *The Poetics of the middle*

Ovid's version of the Calydonian Catalogue runs as follows (*Met*. 8, 298-317):

> *Diffugiunt populi nec se nisi moenibus urbis*
> *esse putant tutos, donec Meleagros et una*
> *lecta manus iuvenum coiere cupidine laudis:* 300
> *Tyndaridae gemini, praestantes caestibus alter,*
> *alter equo, primaeque ratis molitor Iason,*
> *et cum Pirithoo, felix concordia, Theseus*[17]*,*
> *et duo Thestiadae prolesque Aphareia, Lynceus*
> *et velox Idas, et* ***iam non femina Caeneus****,* 305
> *Leucippusque ferox iaculoque* ***insignis Acastus***
> *Hippothousque Dryasque et cretus Amyntore* ***Phoenix***
> *Actoridaeque pares et missus ab Elide Phyleus.*

[16] KYRIAKIDIS (2007) discusses most of the catalogues in the *Metamorphoses*; longer catalogues, however, including the Calydonian catalogue, are excluded.

[17] Theseus and Pirithous are absent/present in the catalogue of Argonauts, and therefore memorable: they do not actually join the Argonautic expedition but their absence is noted: they are mentioned by name in the middle of the catalogue of Argonauts (Ap. Rh. 1, 101-104), along with the reason for their inability to participate – they are jointly engaged in their adventurous descent to Hades (implicitly noted by Ταίναρον, at Ap. Rh. 1, 103, a traditional entrance to the Underworld). It is likely that one or more catalogues of Argonauts prior to Apollonius included them, and Apollonius wishes to set the record straight.

Nec Telamon aberat magnique creator Achillis
cumque Pheretiade [*Admetos*] *et Hyanteo Iolao* 310
inpiger Eurytion et cursu invictus Echion
Naryciusque Lelex Panopeusque Hyleusque feroxque
Hippasus et primis etiamnum Nestor in annis,
et quos Hippocoon antiquis misit Amyclis,
Penelopaeque socer cum Parrhasio Ancaeo, 315
Ampycidesque sagax *et adhuc a coniuge tutus*
Oeclides [*Amphiaraus*] *nemorisque decus Tegeaea Lycaei.*

The people flee, not feeling safe outside
the city walls. Then Meleager gathers
a chosen troop of young men who crave fame:
the twins of Tyndareus, one amazing
in boxing gloves, the other on his horse;
Jason, the first ship's builder; Theseus
with his Pirithoüs, a happy coupling;
the two sons born from Thestius; Lynceus
and speedy Idas, sons of Aphareus;
Caeneus, no longer female; fierce Leucippus;
Acastus, skilled with spears; Hippothoüs
and Dryas; Phoenix, whom Amyntor fathered;
the twins of Actor; Phyleus, sent from Elis;
Telamon and the great Achilles' father;
Admetus and Boeotian Iolaüs;
speedy Eurytion; racing-champ Echion;
Narycius; Lelex, Hyleus, Panopeus;
fierce Hippasus; Nestor, still in his prime;
Hippocoön's sons, sent forth from ancient Sparta;
the one whose son Penelope would wed;
Arcadian Ancaeus, the seer Mopsus,
Amphiaraüs (still safe from his wife),
and Atalanta, jewel of Arcadia[18].

Phoenix does not distinguish himself in the hunt; yet he deservedly (and deliberately) receives prominence because he is the agent through which the epic of the *Meleagris* enters the Homeric epic tradition. Phoenix is set at the end of the tenth line of the overall

[18] Here and below, translation by McCarter (2022).

twenty-line long catalogue, and this placement exactly in the middle alerts the studied reader. In the structure of Latin poetry, middles are very important and are meant to be noticed. Their role is pivotal, for they bring to the surface themes and concepts that are key for interpreting the framing narrative more broadly[19]. In the Calydonian catalogue the placement of Phoenix in the middle of a catalogue set in a typical epic episode which in turn occupies the middle of *Metamorphoses* 8, the middle book of Ovid's epic, is hardly fortuitous, but rather proves to be a section particularly receptive to metaliterary discourse and creative intertextual discussion with earlier poetry. The conspicuous placement of Phoenix, an outstanding literary character, to be encountered exclusively in *Iliad* 9[20], certainly directs critical attention to the Homeric text and Phoenix's function in the epic as a self-projection of the Homeric epic poet. In this respect, Homer's Phoenix pairs with Nestor, a very special kind of storyteller, repeatedly acknowledged by critics to function in the place of the Homeric narrator or an epic singer, such as Phemios or Demodokos[21]. Achilles' elderly companion, however, differs from Nestor, in that the Nestor's stories develop around events from his own personal youth experiences; further, Nestor's own active participation, or at least eyewitness testimony, is outlined emphatically at the beginning and the end of each narrative[22]. Phoenix delivers just one paranarrative in the *Iliad*, the Meleager episode (*Il*. 9, 529-99), and he narrates his recollections as a distant memory (μέμνημαι τόδε ἔργον ἐγὼ πάλαι οὔ τι νέον γε ὡς ἦν, ll. 523-4), but, as noted earlier, he is not clear on his own participation in the deed. What is more, even if we agree that Phoenix relates from personal experience, he pointedly removes himself from the narrative. This distancing from the heroic deed is worth commemorating and the transformation of the epic exemplum into a parable that offers instruction on duties, civic and moral, inspires Ovid creativity, as to include Phoenix among the participants of his own account of the

[19] On the significance of epic middles, see CONTE (1992); FOWLER (2000); KYRIAKIDIS – DE MARTINO (2004).

[20] The Homeric essence of the Ovidian Phoenix is further specified through the mention of his father (307, *cretus Amyntore Phoenix*), because the father-son relationship furnished the nucleus of a highly dramatic story (a proto-adultery drama in a way), and for this reason, is all the more memorable: Phoenix seduced his father's concubine at the instigation of his mother. When Amyntor found this out, he punished his son by cursing him with infertility. The story is related in the *Iliad* in detail (9, 444-95); it is a story about Phoenix, that inevitably contextualizes the hero even before he delivers his own story, which notably in the Ovidian (or rather, the non-Homeric) version is revisited in another problematic parent-son relationship, between Althea and Meleager, which the knowing Homeric reader promptly recalls. On the significance of Phoenix's personal story in the thematic and structural context of the Meleagris and the Iliad overall, the best discussion is SCODEL (1982).

[21] Thus for instance DICKSON (1995, 37); MARKS (2008, chap. 5).

[22] On the texture of Nestor's paranarratives, see ALDEN (2000, 76–82).

Calydonian hunt. Even though we may not exclude that Phoenix is indeed reporting a true story and that an actual, pre-Homeric epic about an angry Meleager was the source for the *Iliad*'s angry Achilles, it is more likely that Phoenix invents Meleager's withdrawal in order to pursue this analogy[23]. By emphasizing Meleager's role as a warrior, instead of the hunt and the hero's subsequent death, the Homeric Phoenix modifies a traditional tale to suit his immediate rhetorical needs. He knows and expects knowledge of the Calydonian hunt and of the quarrel over the spoils (the boar) and the subsequent battle between Meleager and his uncles, but neither element of the Meleager *fabula* is made explicit. Phoenix actually focuses on Meleager's angry withdrawal over Althaia's curses, not Althaia's anger at the death of her brother, which subsequently led to her causing the death of her son.

The inclusion of Phoenix, further, in the Calydonian episode may deceive the Ovidian reader into approaching the Meleager narrative recorded in the *Iliad* as Phoenix's own *personal* memory[24]. Subsequently, by revising the Calydonian hunt in detail, Ovid cleverly avoids replicating Homer. At the same time, he produces an explanation for the Homeric Phoenix's silence on his personal contribution to the deed: the hero is nowhere to be accounted for during the actual hunt – his whereabouts are never reported in the *Metamorphoses* text. Ever a keen reader of Homer, Ovid interprets the Homeric Phoenix's recollection of an event from the distant past as a recollection of a personal *experience* rather than of an auditory memory, in order to bolster the credibility of the Homeric **Meleagris**, and at the same time he nods to the tradition and admits that Phoenix may have never actually participated in the deed.

The Homeric Phoenix's revising the traditional Meleager narrative betrays, from a narratological point of view, Ovid's awareness of the interfusion of the Homeric poet and the intradiegetic epic narrator Phoenix, and his desire to emulate the narratological tactics of that emblematic Homeric narrator, first, by treating with the mind of a philologist a generically conventional detail of the Meleager *fabula* – the catalogue of the participating heroes, like every epic catalogue a fluid unit, subject to ongoing revision and amplification – and secondly, by stressing the participation of Phoenix in

[23] On the traditionality of Phoenix's story and its narratological construction in the Iliadic account, see BURGESS (2017).

[24] In my view, Homer's Phoenix was not an actual participant in the Calydonian episode, but he heard of it from oral tradition – some other oral epic composition; this view seems compelling in light of the identification of Phoenix with the Homeric narrator.

the hunt, in order to ascertain his eye-witness testimony and first-hand knowledge of the events at Calydon.

5. *Acastus*

Similarly to Phoenix, the hero mentioned in the same metrical place in the line immediately prior, Acastus, is another unexpected inclusion to the Calydonian catalogue, another hero who is not included in any other literary enumeration of the participants in the hunt. Acastus serves to facilitate Ovid's dialogue with the Argonautic tradition more generally, and specifically with Apollonius' epic, the other surviving great heroic epic of the Greek tradition.

In their recent discussion, Gildenhard and Zissos have proven that Ovid's Calydonian catalogue essentially has become a welcoming host for the Argonauts, since at least eighteen of the total 38 heroes named in the Ovidian catalogue of Calydonian hunters are heroes attested in the Hellenistic version of the Argonauts catalogue recorded in Apollonius of Rhodes' book 1[25]. The inclusion of Acastus, being the son of Pelias, and Jason's cousin, enhances the 'Argonautic' character of the Calydonian catalogue[26]. Further, Ovid may have been specifically drawn to the prominence of Acastus in Apollonius' catalogue of Argonauts. In that enumeration Acastus occupies, jointly with Argus, the prominent terminal position. Their addition to the catalogue is amplified by conspicuously more detailed information compared to the information provided for any other participant in the expedition. Apollonius' catalogue initially enumerates 53 Argonauts (Ap. Rh. 1, 23-223), then appends the pair Argus and Acastus (1, 224-27), who join the group at the last minute, after the initial group has departed from Iolcus and reached the shore of Pagasae where the Argo was stationed. Their belated arrival is subsequently reported in the narrative proper at Ap. Rh. 1, 321-26, in a passage that pays very detailed attention to the starkly different ambiance of the pair (the fine and elegant clothes of Acastus is the exact opposite of the bull hide that Argus wears[27]), which, among other things, secures prominence for the two heroes in the readers' memory. It may be even noted that Acastus' elegant and dainty attire, which is least

[25] GILDENHARD – ZISSOS (2017, esp. 227-37); also HOLLIS (1970, 73 on 8, 298-328).

[26] The structure and composition of the Calydonian catalogue have been recently discussed in Papaioannou 2017, and so is the discussion of Acastus' significance in the catalogue and the recollection of the complex interaction with the Argonautic tradition overall.

[27] Ap. Rh. 1, 324-26: Δέρμα δ' ὁ μὲν ταύροιο ποδηνεκὲς ἀμπέχετ' ὤμοις | Ἄργος Ἀρεστορίδης λάχνῃ μέλαν, αὐτὰρ ὁ καλὴν | δίπλακα τήν οἱ ὄπασσε κασιγνήτη Πελόπεια.

suited for a pioneering and dangerous expedition such as the Argonautic journey, underscores his ill-fitted presence in the epic more broadly and points, for the well-read reader, at once to the incongruity of Acastus and Jason joining forces in this monumental enterprise, in light of Medea's grim homicide of Acastus' father following the completion of the expedition and the return of the heroes to Iolkos[28].

The significance of Acastus' inclusion registers additionally from the fact that he and Argus are essentially redundant as crew members. This redundancy is indicated by the surprise with which the other Argonauts greet the arrival of Acastus and Argus (1, 321-23): Jason needs a 52-member crew for his ship, 50 to row, one to act as cox (Orpheus) and one as navigator (Tiphys); the catalogue proper, from first-mentioned Orpheus up to the Boreads, who close the catalogue prior to the arrival of Acastus and Argus (and excluding Jason), accounts for 52 men exactly[29]. The redundant appendix of this couple serves additionally Apollonius' conscious transgression of the perfect, geographically determined, *periplous* structure, that the serial arrangement-introduction of the Argonauts follows (in obvious imitation of the comparable structure of the catalogue of the Greek warriors in *Iliad* 2). Ovid's inclusion of Acastus and his placement not at the end but at the centre of the Calydonian catalogue should be read as a statement of allegiance to this poetics of fluidity, the ability of the epic catalogue to violate structural norms and narrative traditions, and to replace closure with non-closure. From an additional perspective, by this odd addition Apollonius comments on the potential fluidity of the seemingly formalised mechanism of epic catalogue closure, or, alternatively, on the significance of the occupant of the last place of an epic catalogue, and the politics that dictate the selection thereof. The Calydonian catalogue in fact pointedly reserves for the closing place Atalanta, the only woman hunter and, as it will become clear later in the narrative, the cause for the civil war between Meleager and his uncles, which led to the death of both parties and the transformation of the triumphant epic expedition into a tragedy in all accords.

[28] The incongruity of this alliance between Acastus and Jason is revisited by Valerius Flaccus, who in his effort to comment on and resolve it, transforms it correctively into an abduction of young Acastus following Jason's beguiling persuasion; cf. Val. Fl. 1, 164ff., with the comments of ZISSOS (2008) and KLEYWEGT (2005).

[29] Cf. VIAN (1974, 13-14 n. 3), citing Eur. *Hyps.* fr. I ii ll. 20f. p. 26 Bond and Apollod. 1, 9, 16, on the total number of crew, rowers and all, needed to man Argo (52, plus Jason, the leader of the expedition); also CARSPECKEN 1952, 41-43 and CLAUSS (1993, 28 n. 13). Vian attributes Apollonius' decision to append the particular pair to the end of the catalogue to the direct influence of a certain poet Demagetos – this information is recorded at schol. *ad* Ap. Rh. 1, 224-26α Wendel.

6. *Caeneus and Mopsus*

The hero featuring at the end of line 305, right above Acastus, in the same metrical position, Caeneus, is another remarkable hero in the Calydonian catalogue. A fascinating character, on account of his transsexuality (and in Ovid also for his miraculous transformation into an avian, later in *Metamorphoses* 12), Caeneus famously fought with distinction in the Centauromachy. He is mentioned already in Homer, by Nestor who in his youth witnessed the battle between the Centaurs and the Lapiths (*Il*. 1, 261ff.), and who names Caeneus among those 'mightiest' of warriors who fought and defeated the Centaurs. Then, Caeneus is present also in Hesiod, in the *ekphrasis* on the *Shield of Herakles*, depicting the Centauromachy (*Sc*. 178ff.). Hesiod is also the first to refer to Caeneus' transsexuality, reporting it in all evidence in the *Catalogue of Women*. Caeneus' death at the hands of the Centaurs is mentioned also in Pindar (fr. 166 Maehler: «Caeneus, struck by the green fir-trees, cleft the ground with his foot, where he stood, and passed beneath the earth»), while the first preserved literary mention of Caeneus' death is found in Acusilaus, who says that Caeneus died after the Centaurs beat him 'upright' (ὄρθιον) into the ground and sealed him in with a rock[30]. Caeneus' death in the Centauromachy becomes particularly popular in Late archaic and Early classical art[31]. Caeneus is one of the earliest mythological figures in ancient Greek art that can be securely identified, as his peculiar death in the Centauromachy was alike unique and popular. One of the earliest depictions is the François Vase (side B, to the left: a part of scene where three centaurs, Hylaios, Agrios and Hasbolos, are pounding Caeneus, Καινεύς, into the ground), which as noted above features one of the earliest iconographic depictions of the Calydonian hunt and the earliest surviving version of a Calydonian catalogue of participants[32]. Like the

[30] Acus. fr. 22 Toye = 22 Fowler; see FOWLER (2013, 159-60). GANTZ (1996, 280-81) discusses the versions of both Acusilaus and Pindar.

[31] The *LIMC* catalogues 83 examples, organized as follows: Caeneus battling with one Centaur (1-8), two Centaurs (9-66), three or more Centaurs (67-76), uncertain (77-78) or lost (80-83); see LAUFER (1990, 885).

[32] FOWLER 2013, 159. The only event concerning Caeneus' epic performance found in ancient Greek iconography is his participation in the Centauromachy. The earliest depiction, from the mid-late seventh century BC, is the bronze relief from Olympia, where two Centaurs hammer Caeneus, partially sunken, into the ground with tree trunks. Some of the best known artistic representations of Caeneus' death scene include: an Attic lekythos, ca. 500-490 (Louvre CA 2494), depicting Caeneus fighting with a Centaur, a work by Diosphos Painter; an Attic red figure stamnos attributed to the Kleophrades Painter from ca. 490-480 BCE (Louvre G55), depicting Caeneus hammered into the ground by a pair of Centaurs wielding rocks and tree-branches; a 6th cent. BCE Attic black figure amphora depicting Caeneus on the

Calydonian heroes, the Centauromachy participants depicted, including Caeneus, are identified by name. This depiction of Caeneus is the first to identify Caeneus by inscription.

Hesiod's text, the lengthiest literary source surviving, reports a catalogue of the Lapith warriors which includes Mopsus, the son of Ampycus from Titaresos. This is the earliest source that pairs Mopsus and Caeneus. This pairing receives prominence in Ovid's version of the Centauromachy, because Mopsus becomes the witness and commentator[33] to Caeneus' unique transformation into a *unica aves* – a witty self-referential comment, by which Ovid underscores the inventiveness and exclusive paternity of this otherwise unattested transformation, and no less a distinct acknowledgement of Caeneus' uniquely fluid, traditionwise, gender identity.

In Apollonius Rhodius, the Argonauts' catalogue includes Coronus, Caeneus' son, whom Apollonius (following Homer) describes as a son inferior to his heroic father (1, 57-58), but Caeneus is absent/present, for the mention of Coronus gives the poet a pretext to devote a full six verses to repeat the tradition about Caeneus impenetrability, and report on the heroic fighting and death by the Centaurs (1, 59-64). Yet, Ovid's pairing of Mopsus and Caeneus continues in a way, also in Apollonius' narrative, for in the catalogue of the participating heroes Mopsus is mentioned immediately after Caeneus' son Coronus, whom he accompanies (1, 65-68). What is more, the *Argonautica* furnishes the epic setting for Mopsus to die – he succumbs to a snakebite (4, 1502-536). His misfortune is reminiscent of that of Philoctetes which eliminates him from the greater part of the Trojan war and excludes him from the *Iliad*, but more important for the present argument is the unheroic nature of his death, fitting nicely within the mockery that underlines both the Calydonian narrative and the Centauromachy narrative in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (12, 522-33):

> *Exitus in dubio est: alii sub inania corpus*
> *Tartara detrusum silvarum mole ferebant;*
> *abnuit Ampycides medioque ex aggere fulvis*
> *vidit avem pennis liquidas exire sub auras,* 525
> *quae mihi tum primum, tunc est conspecta supremum.*

ground being attacked by a Centaur about to hurl a large boulder (now in the British Museum B 176); a detail from a Lycian sarcophagus, dating from the 5th cent. BCE and made out of Parian marble, found in the Royal Necropolis of Sidon (Lebanon) (Istanbul Archaeological Museum 369); for the latter three, see LAUFER (1990, n. 35, 80, 59 respectively).

[33] Nestor, the narrator of the Centauromachy in Ovid, was also a witness to Caeneus' being attacked by the Centaurs and suffering many blows which nonetheless failed to penetrate his body (*Met.* 1, 172-73).

Hanc ubi lustrantem leni sua castra volatu
Mopsus et ingenti circum clangore sonantem
adspexit pariterque animis oculisque secutus
"o salve," dixit "Lapithaeae gloria gentis,
maxime vir quondam, sed nunc avis unica, Caeneu!"
Credita res auctore suo est: dolor addidit iram,
oppressumque aegre tulimus tot ab hostibus unum.

It's not certain that
he died. Some said the tree-pile plunged his body
to gaping Tartarus. Mopsus denied this.
He saw a gold-winged bird fly from the pile
up to the crystal air. I saw it too –
that was the first and last time ever. Mopsus
watched as it gently hovered round the camp,
its screeches loud. His eyes and mind both trailed it.
'Hail, Caeneus!' he said. 'Glory of the Lapiths!
The greatest man once – now a matchless bird!'
This story was believed due to its source.
Grief fueled our rage, and we could scarcely bear
that one man had been crushed by countless foes.

Caeneus' inclusion in the Calydonian catalogue tempts the readers to sort out in chronological sequence the three leading collective epic expeditions prior to the Trojan war in ancient myth, and Mopsus and Caeneus are the catalysts for this ranking. Thus, the Calydonian hunt, where both Mopsus and Caeneus are present, safe and sound, comes first, the Centauromachy, in the course of which Caeneus dies and Mopsus is by his side to witness and ascertain, is the next epic conflict; and the Argonautic expedition, where Mopsus, accompanying now Caeneus' son, Coronus, dies, closes the sequence. The infusion of the Argonautic catalogue in the Calydonian catalogue, and the placement side by side of Caeneus and Mopsus causes all three legendary epic expeditions to be jointly present and interacting, drawing on the fluidity of oral epic narrative and the malleability of myth[34].

[34] On diachronically observed variations of rival oral traditions, see ALONI (1986, 51-67); BURGESS (2002, 234-45); MARKS (2002, 2003).

7. *Coda: Correcting Ovid's Cataloguing in Dracontius'* Hylas

The intertextual interaction between epic catalogues continues throughout antiquity, thus becoming a marker of studied acknowledgement of an epigone's literary ancestors and their claim to recognition and participation in mythmaking. A representative example from the Late epic tradition is Dracontius' experimentation with Ovid's catalogue-making[35].

In the Minerva *vs*. Arachne episode at the opening of *Metamorphoses* 6, 1-145, the two contestants compete in mythmaking, which structurally develops in the form of the catalogue. Arachne's tapestry is a classic case of a *mise-en-abyme*[36]. Against Minerva's list of heroes/heroines who received punishment for *hybris*, Arachne pits a series of rapes involving an Olympian and some nymph or mortal woman (*Met*. 6, 103-128). This catalogue is considered by many to stand in allegorically for the *Metamorphoses* itself, and the opening section thereof is a list of Jupiter's affairs, nine in total (ll. 103-114).

Maeonis elusam designat imagine tauri
Europam: verum taurum, freta vera putares;
ipsa videbatur terras spectare relictas
et comites clamare suas tactumque vereri
adsilientis aquae timidasque reducere plantas.
Fecit et Asterien aquila luctante teneri,
fecit olorinis Ledam recubare sub alis;
addidit, ut satyri celatus imagine pulchram
Iuppiter inplerit gemino Nycteida fetu,
Amphitryon fuerit, cum te, Tirynthia, cepit,
aureus ut Danaen, Asopida luserit ignis,
Mnemosynen pastor, varius Deoida serpens.

Arachne weaves Europa when the bull's
form tricked her. You would think the bull and sea
were real. She seems to gaze back at the land,
to call her friends, to draw her feet away
from leaping waves whose touch she fears. She shows

[35] On Ovid's presence in the subtext of Dracontius' *Hylas*, see PAPAIOANNOU (2023).
[36] A reference study is HARRIES (1990). On weaving and poetics across classical literature, see SCHEID – SVENBRO (1996,131-155 on the weaving metaphor and poetics in Roman poetry).

> Asterië gripped by a grappling eagle
> and Leda prone beneath swan wings. She adds
> how Jove, cloaked by a satyr's form, filled lovely
> Antiope with twins. How he took you,
> Alcmena, as Amphitryon. How he
> tricked Danaë as gold, Aegina as fire,
> Mnemosyne as a shepherd, and the daughter
> of Ceres as a dappled snake.

This catalogue was lifted by Dracontius, the 4th century CE poet from North Africa, and became part of the shorter of his three *epyllia*, titled *Hylas*. This 160-odd-lines poem relates, yet another time, the famous story of Hylas' rape by the Hamadryads. Throughout the classical tradition, originally recorded in Apollonius and Theocritus, Hylas' rape is the outcome of the Hamadryads' sudden infatuation with his beauty as soon as they see him leaning over the spring to draw water. In Dracontius, this infatuation is not spontaneous: it is the punishment inflicted on the leader of these nymphs, Clymene, for recounting to her company (and hence propagating) the story of Venus' humiliation after being caught in the act with Mars – a story originally recorded in *Odyssey* 8. Dracontius' Venus desires the punishment of Clymene and pleads with her son, Cupid, to help her extract it (*Romul*. 2, 45-64). Before she states her request, Venus extolls the power her son has over the Olympians, specifically Jupiter, who once possessed by love may do anything, even undergo transformation, to satisfy his erotic passion. To make her argument convincing Venus lists Jupiter's erotic adventures and reaches back to Ovid for inspiration. Seven of the eight love affairs attributed to Jupiter by Dracontius' Venus, which in her opinion were initiated by Cupid, are identical to seven of the eight mistresses attributed to Jupiter in Arachne's tapestry. Dracontius' passage in question runs as follows (*Romul*. 2,19-27)[37]:

> *Audeo, si cupias ipsum flammare Tonantem*
> *et dominum caeli facie vestire iuvenci* 20
> *oblitumque poli rursus mugire per herbas*
> *confessum per prata bovem: cadat aureus imber,*
> *divitias ut tecta pluant; sit fulminis ales*
> *ipse sui, satyrus, cycnus, Latonia, serpens;*
> *Alcmenam galeatus amet mucrone coruscet* 25

[37] The parallels have duly been noted in BOUQUET - WOLFF (2002, 245-46 n.15).

> *et clipeo rutilante tonet, dum miles adulter*
> *coniungat noctes subtracta luce dierum.*
>
> I will dare, if you wish to inflame the Lord of Thunder himself and clothe the ruler of heaven with the appearance of a bull and to make him, oblivious of the firmament, moo again and again in the grasslands, revealing his bovine form through the meadows. Let him fall as golden shower and let the roof rain down riches. Let the same god become the bird of his own lightning, a satyr, a swan, the daughter of Latona, a serpent. Make him love Alcmene with a helmet on his head, let him brandish the sword and sound his gleaming shield, while, as an adulterous soldier, he makes the nights join together by suppressing the light of the day[38].

Venus/Dracontius mentions eight cases of seduction involving the transformation of the supreme god: Europa (in the form of a bull), Danae (in the form of golden shower), Asterie (in the form of an eagle), Antiope (as a satyr), Leda (as a swan), Callisto (in the form of Diana-*Latonia*), Proserpina (in the form of a snake), and Alcmene (in the form of Amphitruo, Alcmene's husband). Only Callisto is not part of the Ovidian catalogue, Dracontius' model, but her exclusion is informed by the Ovidian narrative, as her seduction is reported in detail in *Met*. 2, 401ff., immediately after the conclusion of the Phaethon episode. Dracontius' dialogue with Ovid's Arachne is affirmed by the mention of Minerva immediately afterwards, as a potential victim, who will experience transformation of her gender from masculine to feminine (*Romul*. 2, 28-30) – Minerva, both contestant and judge of her rivalry against Arachne, a rivalry for artistry, composition, and, not least, interpretation of earlier myth.

Dracontius' "editing" of the Ovidian Arachne's pictorial catalogue of Jupiter's lovers in light of Arachne's authorial symbolism might have been inspired by Sidonius Apollinaris, who in mid-5th century Gaul celebrated the wedding of his friend Polemius to Araneola by composing an epithalamium which echoes in different respects Ovid's description of the rivalry between Athena and Arachne[39]. In the poem, the bride, Araneola, whose name means 'the little spider', takes the part of her homonymous Ovidian weaver both as an actual weaving artist – as she is portrayed weaving an imperial robe for her father with tales taken from Ovid – and as a meta-poet, by intervening herself in the Ovidian "text" of Arachne. A better weaver than Minerva

[38] My translation.

[39] See the detailed edition by RAVENNA (1990, esp. *ad vv.* 174ff. on Araneola's depiction of Jupiter's mistresses on her artwork), and, more recently, ROSATI (2004, 17-20).

herself (146-49), Araneola weaves on the mantle «all the famous tales of old-time marriages» (l, 159, *quod priscis inlustre toris*).
The catalogue culminates with a list of Jupiter's amorous affairs (*Carm*. 15, 174-80):

> *Iamque Iovem in formas mutat quibus ille tenere*
> *Mnemosynam, Europam, Semelen, Ledam, Cynosuram*
> *serpens, bos, fulmen, cygnus, Dictynna solebat.*
> *Iamque opus in turrem Danaae pluviamque metalli*
> *ibat et hic alio stillabat Iuppiter auro,*
> *cum virgo aspiciens vidit Tritonida verso*
> *lumine doctisonas spectare libentius artes*.
>
> The weaver likewise changes Jove into the shapes in which he was wont to embrace Mnemosyne, Europa, Semele, Leda, Cynosura, becoming serpent, bull, lightning, swan, and Dictynna. Then the work passed into Danae's tower and the rain of metal; and here Jupiter was dripping with another kind of gold when the maiden, looking at Tritonis, saw that the eyes of the goddess were averted and that she was gazing with more pleasure at the arts that give forth learned utterance.[40]

Araneola depicts five of Jupiter's paramours compared to the Ovidian Arachne's nine. Two of the five, Europa and Leda, feature also in Ovid's model. Cynosura is Callisto, because the latter was the one seduced by Jupiter in the form of Dictynna/Diana. Should this be so, the plights of Semele and Callisto, which have been mentioned in detail earlier in the *Metamorphoses* (Books 3 and 2 respectively), are echoed by Dracontius' Clymene, who likewise inserts Callisto in her list of nine paramours. Still, Sidonius' catalogue contains two studied errors: first, he seems to have confused Mnemosyne, the fifth mistress, with Proserpine, for the latter was the one seduced by Jupiter in the guise of a snake, while to the former the great god appeared as a shepherd. Yet, the confusion is probably deliberate (and playful), for the two women appear on the same line in the catalogue of Ovid's Arachne: *Mnemosynen pastor, varius Deoida serpens*, «as a shepherd he [deceived] Mnemosyne, as a particolored snake Proserpina (*Deois*)» (*Met*. 6, 114).
Second and more intriguing, even though the mention of Dictynna leaves little choice but to identify Cynosura with Callisto (and specifically the Callisto of the *Metamorphoses*, since the name Dictynna is used for Diana in Ovid's epic only in the

[40] Translation by ANDERSON (1936).

Callisto episode, *Met*. 2, 441), the selection of the name Cynosura is likely dictated by the poet's desire to display *eruditio* and playfully tamper with the Ovidian Arachne's catalogue. The name is not a common one: the only nymph Cynosura recorded in Greek myth is Zeus' nurse, her identity noted in an ancient scholium to *Odyssey*: τὸν Δία ἐν Κρήτῃ τεχθέντα δύο νύμφαι ἐκεῖσε ἀνέτρεφον, καὶ ἡ μὲν Ἑλίκη ὠνομάζετο, ἡ δὲ Κυνόσουρα («after Zeus was born in Crete, two nymphs nursed him there, and the one was named Helike, the other Cynosura», schol. *ad* Hom. *Od*. 5, 272 Dindorf). Identifying Cynosura with Zeus' unknown nurse rather than with famous Callisto requires deep knowledge of Zeus' mythology and Homeric scholarship at once, while it introduces an obscure name into mainstream myth as alternative to that of Callisto.

8. *Conclusion*

I hope to have shown how the composition of epic catalogues is simultaneously an experiment with intertextuality and acknowledgement of the methodology of mythmaking (or rather, myth-editing), presupposing constant employment and revision of material outside a standard story's strict narrative boundaries. The malleable texture of a catalogue and the absence of a single correct version offer the epic poet the flexibility to add and subtract elements, and, in doing so, combine myths and create new versions of old ones, challenge parallel accounts and rewrite mythology. Ovid's composition of the Calydonian catalogue becomes an opportunity to study how mythological accounts, literary, oral and artistic, interact and inform (as well as correct) each other. The catalogue of the Calydonian hunters operates at once as an assessment of the Homeric Phoenix's narratological credibility, a platform for the integration of the Argonautic myth inside the *Metamorphoses* mythological cosmogony along with acknowledgment of the Apollonian version as the canonical one, and a play with mythochronology centered on determining the sequence of three legendary epic expeditions. Dracontius' list is in conscious dialogue with Ovid and applies a minor correction to an established account of the Arachne artistic craftwork contesting its permanence which so emphatically had been projected in Ovid's Arachne narrative, where the catalogue of Jupiter's conquests is a piece of iconographic artwork, thus enforcing metapoetically its permanence in the mythological tradition.

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