OVID'S HOUSE OF SLEEP (*MET.* 11.573-673)

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The house of Sleep is a remarkable episode in book eleven of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* that combines the themes of imagination, poetry, and performance (among others). It appears as an inset episode within the larger narrative of the transformation of Ceyx and Alcyone into halcyon birds. And, in constellation with other episodes of the poem that touch on sleep, dreams, the underworld, and poetry, it offers insight into Ovid's craft and the interpretation of his text. In this thesis, I explore different aspects of the house of Sleep in order to show its significance for reading Ovid's poetry. Ultimately, I argue that Ovid offers the figure of Morpheus as a way of interpreting his poem as a live performance. The consequence of this is the kind of poetic vitality that is at the core of ancient texts.

La maison du Sommeil est un épisode remarquable du onzième livre des Métamorphoses d'Ovide qui rassemble entre autres les thèmes de l'imagination, de la poésie et de la performance. Cet épisode se trouve au sein du récit de la transformation de Ceyx et Alcyone en oiseaux alcyons. Avec les autres extraits de ce poème qui concernent le sommeil, les rêves, l'enfer, et la poésie, celui-ci offre une compréhension d'Ovide exerçant son métier, ainsi que l'interprétation de son texte. Dans ce mémoire, j'analyse différents aspects de la maison du Sommeil afin de démontrer son importance pour la lecture de la poésie d'Ovide. Finalement, je soutiens qu'Ovide propose la figure de Morpheus afin que le lecteur puisse interpréter son poème comme une performance en direct. Ceci apporte par conséquent un genre de vitalité poétique qui est au cœur des textes anciens.

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INTRODUCTION

The house of Sleep is a remarkable episode in the eleventh book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In it, Ovid describes a cavernous space that is filled with dreams. His description of the space establishes it as an underworld, while his description of the dreams shows how he reworks the tradition of dream visions in ancient poetry. The dreams come to symbolize Ovid's innovative poetry and one dream in particular, Morpheus, appears as an actor who improvises his performance. With him, Ovid offers a unique way of looking at the text as a spontaneous event. In other words, the text becomes as unpredictable as an improv performance in that instead of remaining fixed, it can respond to different situations in different ways. Ovid is able to accomplish this by incorporating multiple meanings into the language of his text that can be drawn out by close study. He also uses Morpheus to capture the unpredictable factors that add meaning to the text at the point of reception. With such a vision of texts, Ovid is able to ensure his continued vitality in his poetic afterlife since this kind of spontaneity is precisely what makes human life unique.

The house of Sleep episode appears in book eleven of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, within the narrative of Ceyx and Alcyone (*Met*. 11.266-748).[1] Their story begins when Peleus comes to Ceyx, the king of Trachis, to seek refuge after he has killed his brother. Ceyx receives him while lamenting for his own brother, Daedalion, whom Apollo recently transformed into a hawk. After Ceyx has recounted his story to Peleus, the narrative is interrupted by a messenger who reports

[1] Griffin (1981) notes that this is the longest story of the entire poem, occupying 482 lines – 50 lines more that the second longest, the Phaethon legend in books one and two (*Met.* 1.747-2.400 = 432 lines). I should also note that, in constructing the Ceyx and Alcyone narrative, Ovid draws on a number of different sources including Nicander of Colophon's *Metamorphoses* (for the general myth) and a non-extant Hellenistic version for the house of Sleep (from which scholars think Lucian also draws in constructing his own Sleep narrative in his *True Histories* (ii.32-5)). On Ovid's sources for this episode, see Gresseth (1964), Fantham (1979), Bömer (1980), and Griffin (1981).

that a wolf is attacking Peleus' herd of cattle. This interruption opens up a short digression about the transformation of the wolf into stone. Most importantly, it adds to Ceyx's distress after the loss of his brother. He resolves to consult an oracle in order to find out why he is being so disturbed. Instead of going to the closer oracle at Delphi (for the road was being blocked by the highway robber Phorbas), he decides to travel to Claros, where he can consult another oracle of Apollo. Before he sets off, his wife Alcyone begs him not to go, or at least to take her with him, since she foresees that he will die on the voyage (she is prophetic). Despite his wife's warnings, Ceyx decides to make the voyage alone; but as soon as he has set off, his ship is overcome by a storm. Ovid paints a vivid picture of the storm scene that tragically ends in Ceyx's death. Meanwhile, Alcyone is waiting for him to return home, and offering prayers to Juno in order to ensure his safe return. These futile prayers annoy Juno, so she decides to send her messenger Iris to the god of sleep in order to ask him to send a dream vision to Alcyone that will reveal the fate of her husband to her. This commences the house of Sleep episode.

Iris crosses the sky and descends to Sleep's house, which is located in a cave in the land of the Cimmerians. Ovid offers a lengthy description of the entrance to the house of Sleep that is filled with underworld symbolism and intertextual references to previous poetic underworlds. This is what I examine in **the first chapter**, where I analyze the underworld symbols of the land of the Cimmerians, the absence of the sun, the river Lethe, and the poppies and other herbs that surround the entrance to the cave. After the underworld ekphrasis, Iris approaches Sleep and conveys Juno's message that he send a dream vision of Ceyx to Alcyone. She then quickly departs because she can already feel the soporific effects of Sleep taking over her limbs. Next, Sleep selects one of the dreams from among his thousands of offspring who can fulfill Juno's order. At this point, Ovid offers names and describes three of Sleep's sons: Morpheus, who

imitates humans; Icelos/Phobetor, who imitates animals; and Phantasos, who imitates everything else that does not have a soul. These dream names and their descriptions are analyzed in **the second chapter** in order to show that the dreams symbolize Ovid's craft of creating poetic fictions. More specifically, Morpheus' name signals his representation of Ovid's *Meta**morph**oses*.

After Sleep sends Morpheus on the mission, he falls back asleep and Morpheus flies to Trachis to visit Alcyone. He puts on the full appearance of Ceyx, and even imitates his mannerisms and the sounds of his voice, though he makes sure to appear as the shipwrecked version of Alcyone's spouse in order to convince her that it is truly him. In typical dream vision fashion, he stands at the head of her bed and announces himself to her. He explains that he has died in a shipwreck, so her prayers to Juno are useless, but she might still retrieve his body and give it a proper burial. In **the third chapter**, I discuss Morpheus' improvised performance, which offers a way of seeing Ovid's text as a living entity that is defined by its unpredictability. After Morpheus delivers his monologue, he takes off and leaves Alcyone to marvel and lament at his disappearance. Alcyone explains her sad vision of Ceyx to her servants and then flees the palace for the sea shore where she had last seen him when he departed. While she is looking out at the sea, she sees a corpse drifting towards the shore. When it gets close enough, she realizes that it is Ceyx's corpse and, in a moment of desperation, she jumps off the breakwater in order to kill herself and join him in death. At that moment, she is transformed into a halcyon bird, and she flies to Ceyx, whom the pitying gods also transform into the same kind of bird. And so the story ends with the couple reunited as halcyons.

Scholars have variously interpreted this episode, as well as the inset house of Sleep episode. Otis (1970) first suggested that the Ceyx and Alcyone story represents the tragedy of the

human condition in the face of the destructive power of nature.[2] According to his analysis, the house of Sleep episode is a kind of comic relief in the overall tragic narrative; Ovid adds this moment of relief in order to devalue the typical role of the gods in epic narratives.[3] Likewise Galinsky (1975) finds the Sleep episode "full of Ovidian whimsy and ingenuity. It is the counterpart to the description of the storm and offsets the pathos of the conclusion of the episode."[4] By contrast, Fantham (1979) takes the episode more seriously and offers an analysis of Ovid's sources for it,[5] as well as the poetic necessity of his innovativeness in creating the chain of messengers from Juno to Alcyone. She suggests that Ceyx or his own ghost could not appear to Alcyone since his soul (*anima*) needed to remain within him until the end of the story when he is transformed into the bird: "the soul must not leave the body, [but] it has to be present in the corpse for the possibility of metamorphosis."[6] Burrow (1999) counters Fantham's point by noting the transformation of Narcissus into a flower while his soul admires itself in the underworld (*Met.* 3.502-10).[7] He also offers an excellent analysis of Ovid's poetics of imitation: both how he imitates (and signals his imitation of) his predecessors and how episodes like his house of Sleep mark a rupture of the tradition that is so radical that his future imitators must take it into account.[8] Following Burrow, Hardie's (2002) account of the episode emphasizes its metapoetic significance: he finds Morpheus to be an image of the poet, like Orpheus (*Met.* 10.1-

[2] Otis (1970) 231-61.

[3] Otis (1970) 257-8.

[4] Galinsky (1975) 146.

[5] In addition to Fantham's study of the episode's sources, Gresseth (1964) offers an analysis of Ovid's sources for the myth of Alcyone, and Griffin (1981) studies his sources for the entire Ceyx legend.

[6] Fantham (1979) 344.

[7] Burrow (1999) 277.

[8] Burrow (1999) 271-87. Burrow's essay is one of the most important sources of inspiration for my own reflections on Ovid's attention to his readers' reception of his poetry.

11.66) and Pygmalion (*Met*. 10.243-97).[9] He argues that Morpheus represents the poet's power over the imagination of his readers, that is, the power of illusion to trick the mind of the beholder.[10] The Sleep episode, then, is one of many that comes back to the theme of illusion and deception ("absent presences," in his study). Hardie's argument follows the same lines as Tissol (1997), who claims that the episode reveals how Ovid's agile style reflects the metamorphic content of his poem.[11] He asserts that Ovid uses various forms of puns, wordplay, and irony in order to draw readers into the text when they notice the ambiguity of his language and reflect on the ambiguity of his theme of metamorphosis.[12] Burrow also implies that if Ovid has a didactic purpose in the *Metamorphoses*, it is to have readers accept the flux and disorder of the universe upon which we set tenuous rules (like ambition, reputation): "Ovid perceived in narrative structure, no less than in wit, an opportunity to embody metamorphosis and flux in the experience of his readers."[13]

From this survey of the literature, we can notice some trends and clarify the originality of this project. There was debate over the seriousness of the episode (comedy/tragedy), though scholars now seem to be moving towards a position that takes Ovid's comic wit as a mark of his poetic seriousness – that is, we can appreciate the puns and lighter stylistic effects as part of

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[9] Hardie (2002a) 277.

[10] Hardie (2002a) 272-82.

[11] Tissol (1997) 72-84. I should note that Tissol, among others, reads the house of Sleep in parallel to the other three great personifications of the poem: Envy (*Invidia – Met*. 2.708-832), Famine (*Fames – Met*. 8.777-878), and Rumour (*Fama – Met*. 12.39-65). Lowe (2008) offers a detailed study of these personification, plus the personification of the Furies in both Ovid's poem and Vergil's *Aeneid*.

[12] Compare Ahl (1985), who provides a detailed study of the puns and wordplay in Ovid's poem, though only briefly mentions the house of Sleep episode (59-60). In another essay, he also argues that Ovid uses language as a way to decentralize and pluralize meaning (1988: 17-43). Michalopoulos (2001) also attends to Ovid's wordplay in his study of etymologies in the *Metamorphoses*. So too does Lateiner (2013), who analyzes the wordplay in the episode to show that Ovid is mocking, rather than glorifying, Ceyx and Alcyone's love – a point made by Otis (1970), Hardie (2002a), and Rudd (2008).

[13] Tissol (1997) 88.

Ovid's overall poetics of metamorphosis. Concerning the house of Sleep in particular, the general consensus is that it is a metapoetic moment in the poem. This is a consensus that I will not dispute, though I push the interpretative consequences of Morpheus' performance further than any previous study in the scholarship.[14] I also have not encountered a study that analyzes the underworld aspects of the house of Sleep as closely as I do, nor the significance of the dream names in the episode.[15]

Ultimately, I hope to show how seriously Ovid responds to the poetic tradition, especially the underworld and dream precedents of Homer and Vergil, in his creation of the house of Sleep. The house of Sleep offers a different way of thinking about the poetic trope of *katabasis* (κατάβασις, descent to the underworld): the descent to sleep and dreams becomes analogized to being immersed in fiction. And, coming out of the house of Sleep, Morpheus' innovative performance of fiction offers a different way of thinking about texts: Ovid reveals the spontaneous, live aspect of reader response that is essential to the continued vitality of the poet and his text. As much as Ovid draws on his poetic predecessors and responds to the same desires for poetic glory, he also goes one step further than them in creating the new cosmological space of the house of Sleep that carries great metapoetic consequences for how we read Ovid's poetry, or any poetry before and after him.

[14] A number of scholars note Morpheus' performative or acting abilities: Fantham (1979), Tissol (1997), Burrow (1999), Hardie (2002a), Von Glinski (2012). This aspect of Morpheus' role in the episode is essential for the argument I make in the third chapter (see pages 66-88).

[15] The references gathered in Bömer's (1980) commentary on the episode come closest, and he suggests some interpretative consequences of the episode (388-429), though more recent studies have added many thoughtful insights that are not found in his commentary.

CHAPTER 1: THE UNDERWORLD ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE OF SLEEP

Ovid makes key intertextual connections at the entrance to the house of Sleep in order to establish the space as an underworld. He uses a variety of techniques for making intertextual links: sometimes he makes direct references to specific antecedents, while at other times he alludes to a general atmosphere or a common meaning of a symbol.[16] In this chapter, I explore these different kinds of connections by going through the main symbols that appear in the passage, including the absent sun, the river Lethe, the poppies and other herbs. Overall, Ovid presents a consistent vision of the underworld, while at the same time he changes certain aspects of the tradition to make them fit in the Sleep episode. From this conclusion, we can start to imagine the consequences of Ovid's conception of Sleep's house as the underworld. Ovid suggests a parallel between going to sleep/Sleep and descending into the underworld so that dreams become a way of thinking about poetry.[17]

1.1 OPENING TOPOGRAPHY

In the first five lines of the passage that lead into the house of Sleep (*Met*. 11.592-6), Ovid makes intertextual connections to Homer, Hesiod, and Vergil, as well as the often overlooked mention of the underworld in Apollonius' *Argonautica*. By surveying these epic predecessors, Ovid is clearly appealing to underworld topography in his opening description of the house of Sleep. This opening will set the tone for the rest of the passage in which Ovid continues to display underworld symbolism that draws on his predecessors.

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[16] See Thomas (1986) for a schema of different kinds of intertextual references. On varieties of intertextuality in Latin poetry, see among others Conte (1986), Edmunds (2001), Farrell (2005), Fowler (1997 and 2000), Hardie (1993, 2002a), Hinds (1998), Smith (1997), West and Woodman (1979).

[17] I explore this further throughout the other two chapters. In this chapter, I focus on the parallels between the underworld and Sleep's house to establish the grounds for making the comparison between dreaming and fiction.

As we saw in the introduction, Ovid presents the house of Sleep in the middle of the Ceyx and Alcyone narrative. Juno sends Iris to Sleep in order to have him arrange for a dream vision of Ceyx to appear to Alcyone (*Met*. 11.583-91). When Iris arrives at Sleep's dwelling, Ovid pauses the narrative and offers a description of the house of Sleep.[18] The opening of his description reads as follows (*Met*. 11.592-6):

> *Est prope Cimmerios longo spelunca recessu,*
> *mons cavus, ignavi domus et penetralia Somni,*
> *quo numquam radiis oriens mediusve cadensve*
> *Phoebus adire potest: nebulae caligine mixtae*
> *exhalantur humo dubiaeque crepuscula lucis*
>
> There is a cave with a long opening near the land of the Cimmerians, a hollow mountain, the house and sanctuary of slothful Sleep, where the Sun is never able to go with its rays, not when it rises, at midday, or at sunset; clouds mixed with fog are exhaled from the ground, as is the twilight of uncertain light

The first thing that stands out in these opening lines is the location of the house of Sleep near the land of the Cimmerians. This location clearly recalls Odysseus' journey to the same place in order to perform his *nekyia* in *Odyssey* 11. That book opens with the following description of the place where Odysseus travel (*Od*. 11.14-9):

> ἔνθα δὲ Κιμμερίων ἀνδρῶν **δῆμός** τε πόλις τε,
> ἠέρι καὶ νεφέλῃ κεκαλυμμένοι: οὐδέ ποτ᾽ αὐτοὺς
> ἠέλιος φαέθων καταδέρκεται ἀκτίνεσσιν,
> οὔθ᾽ ὁπότ᾽ ἂν στείχῃσι πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα,
> οὔθ᾽ ὅτ᾽ ἂν ἂψ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἀπ᾽ οὐρανόθεν προτράπηται,
> ἀλλ᾽ ἐπὶ νὺξ ὀλοὴ τέταται δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι
>
> There is the land and the city of the Cimmerian men, covered with mist and clouds; the shining sun never looks down upon them with its rays, not when it goes towards the starry sky, nor when it turns back to the earth from the sky; instead deadly night stretches over the cowardly mortals

[18] I examine the house of Sleep as an ekphrasis that responds to Vergil's ekphrastic underworld in the third chapter (see pages 66-88).

Odysseus' destination is the land and city of the Cimmerians (Κιμμερίων ἀνδρῶν δῆμός τε πόλις τε).[19] Ovid's placement of Sleep's house *prope Cimmerios* refers to the same location. We can note the homophony of Homer's δῆμός (*Od*. 11.14) and Ovid's *domus* (*Met*. 11.593).[20] We can additionally note that both passages describe the place as cloudy and out of reach of the sun. In Homer, the fogginess of the space is in the first part of the description (ἠέρι καὶ νεφέλῃ κεκαλυμμένοι – *Od*. 11.15). Ovid presents it later (*nebulae caligine mixtae/exhalantur humo dubiaeque crepuscula lucis – Met*. 11.595-6), after he has described how the place is inaccessible to the sun: *quo numquam radiis oriens mediusve cadensve/Phoebus adire potest* (*Met*. 11.594-5). Ovid specifies that the sun (Phoebus) does not shine there at sunrise (*oriens*), midday (*medius*), or sunset (*cadens*). These details match Homer's description of the sun never looking down with its rays when it is rising or setting (*Od*. 11.15-8). The similarity of location and imagery suggest that Ovid is directly alluding to Homer's underworld at the entrance to his house of Sleep.

The Homeric lines that describe the sun's absence from the land of the Cimmerians (*Od*. 11.15-8) also contain an intertextual link to the *Theogony*, where Hesiod similarly describes the house of Night and her children, Sleep and Death, as sunless (*Th*. 758-61):

> ἔνθα δὲ Νυκτὸς παῖδες ἐρεμνῆς **οἰκί**᾽ ἔχουσιν,
> Ὕπνος καὶ Θάνατος, δεινοὶ θεοί: οὐδέ ποτ᾽ αὐτοὺς
> Ἠέλιος φαέθων ἐπιδέρκεται ἀκτίνεσσιν
> οὐρανὸν εἰς ἀνιὼν οὐδ᾽ οὐρανόθεν **καταβαίνων**
>
> There the children of dark Night have their rooms, Sleep and Death, terrible deities; the shining sun never looks upon them with its ray when it rises to the sky nor when it descends from it

[19] The scholia on this line suggests that the land of the Cimmerians is located by the ocean and is wintry; that Herodotus say the Cimmerians were driven out by the Scythians [Hdt. 1.15.1], while others claim that they live in the west; and that, in any case, the poet condescends/gives them a bad reputation by asserting that they live in darkness (*Od*. 11.14 Dindorf 479).

[20] Compare also the opening of *Odyssey* 24, when Hermes leads the suitors past the land of dreams (δῆμον ὀνείρων – *Od*. 24.12) in order to reach the afterlife (*Od*. 24.1-14).

Line 760 repeats *Od.* 11.16, while line 761 points to the sun's rising and setting at *Od.*11.17-8. The connection between Homer and Hesiod is clear: both describe the underworld as a sunless place. Since both poets are drawing on the oral tradition that stands behind them, their common description of it as such a dark, gloomy place may reveal the common conception of the underworld. Homer locates it in a dark and distant land, while Hesiod applies the image of darkness to the children of Night. Both descriptions make the underworld a place of the unknown where the hero or poet descends (note Hesiod's use of the verb καταβαίνω at line 761) in order to obtain something new (knowledge, experience, etc.).

We should also note that Hesiod locates the house (οἶκος – *Th.* 758) of Night in Tartarus (*Th.* 745). Ovid evokes the same domestic space with the house of Sleep: his Latin *domus* translates Hesiod's Greek οἰκί', in addition to resounding with Homer's δῆμός, as I noted above. With one word (*domus*), Ovid gestures to both poets. Further, it is significant that Hesiod identifies Sleep and Death as the inhabitants of this sunless house. Earlier in the poem, Hesiod catalogues Night's children (*Th.* 211-25). In one line, he includes Sleep and Death, along with a crowd of dreams, among Night's offspring (καὶ Θάνατον, τέκε δ' Ὕπνον, ἔτικτε δὲ φῦλον Ὀνείρων – *Th.* 212).[21] Hesiod's connection of Sleep, Dreams, and Death is thus another important antecedent for Ovid's depiction of the house of Sleep as an underworld.[22]

In addition to Homer and Hesiod, Apollonius's description of the underworld also provides a model for Ovid's house of Sleep. In his *Argonautica*, Apollonius describes the cave of Hades. It is one of the landmarks that the heroes of the Argo sail past on their way to Colchis.

[21] The same connection between Sleep and Death appears in the *Iliad*, when the two brothers act as psychopomps for Sarpedon (*Il.* 16. 681-3). Compare also Sleep's quasi-psychopomp role in *Aeneid* 5.835-61 (discussion in next chapter, see pages 41-5).

[22] See Ziogas (2013) on the connection between Ovid and Hesiod.

Because they do not need to descend into the underworld on their journey, Apollonius just describes the entrance to the cave. But this is all we need in order to compare it with the entrance to the house of Sleep. Apollonius' presents it as follows (Apoll. Rh. 2.734-9):

> ἐκ δ᾽ αὐτῆς εἴσω κατακέκλιται ἤπειρόνδε
> κοίλη ὕπαιθα νάπη, ἵνα τε σπέος ἔστ᾽ Ἀίδαο
> ὕλῃ καὶ πέτρῃσιν ἐπηρεφές, ἔνθεν ἀυτμὴ
> πηγυλίς, ὀκρυόεντος ἀναπνείουσα μυχοῖο
> συνεχές, ἀργινόεσσαν ἀεὶ περιτέτροφε πάχνην,
> ἥ τε μεσημβριόωντος ἰαίνεται ἠελίοιο
>
> Out of this, in the plain, there lay a glen that was hollow underneath, where the cave of Hades was, covered by wood and rocks, from which a frozen breath is exhaled from the chilly opening, always forming a shining frost that melts when the sun passes noon

Apollonius locates the cave of Hades in a cold, dark space, hidden by wood and rocks (ὕλῃ καὶ πέτρῃσιν ἐπηρεφές). He suggests that it is out of reach of the sun by describing the frost on the edge of the cave: the cold air exiting the cave creates frost on the rim that is only melted by the midday sun. The cold air coming out of the cave recalls Ovid's *nebulae caligine mixtae / exhalantur humo dubiaeque crepuscula lucis* (*Met*. 11.585-6), as well as the foggy atmosphere in Homer (*Od*. 11.15). The specification that the sun melts the frost at midday gives an idea of how remote this place is. It also links back to the time specifications that Homer and Hesiod make in their underworld descriptions. In Apollonius' poem, we thus have another underworld that is in the background for the topography that Ovid uses in his house of Sleep.

Moving from the Greek to the Latin poetic tradition, the entrance to Vergil's underworld also serves as a source of inspiration for Ovid's house of Sleep. Book six of the *Aeneid* describes Aeneas' descent to the underworld. Before descending, his guide the Sibyl requires that he perform a number of tasks, such as burying his crew member Misenus and obtaining the golden

bough. After accomplishing these, he goes with the Sibyl to a cave where they make sacrifices and then enter the underworld.[23] Vergil describes the cave in the following way (*Aen*. 6.237-42):

> *spelunca alta fuit vastoque immanis hiatu,*
> *scrupea, tuta lacu nigro nemorumque tenebris,*
> *quam super haud ullae poterant impune volantes*
> *tendere iter pennis: talis sese halitus atris*
> *faucibus effundens supera ad convexa ferebat.*
> *[unde locum Grai dixerunt nomine Aornum]*
>
> There was a deep cave, huge with a wide opening, rugged, protected by a black lake and the shadows of the grove, over which nothing could fly without punishment, stretching its path on its wings; such a vapour, pouring itself out of the black jaws, was born to the upper vault. [From this the Greeks named the place Birdless]

The entrance to the underworld is a dark cave that emits poisonous vapour. In the first line (*Aen.* 6.237), we can note the similarity to the opening line of Ovid's house of Sleep (*Met*. 11.592): both are *spelunca* with wide entrances (Vergil's *vastoque…hiatu* and Ovid's *longo… recessu*).[24] We can also notice the similarities that Vergil's cave has with Apollonius': both are hidden by trees and associated with vapour.[25] The air that comes off of the lake around Vergil's underworld associates the place with death, since it kills any bird that breathes it in when it flies over.[26] Ovid omits this detail from his house of Sleep, since Iris seems to fly there herself (*Met*. 11.590-1). Regardless, like in his Greek predecessors Vergil provides a model of the underworld that Ovid evokes in his description of the house of Sleep.

In the opening lines of his description of the house of Sleep, Ovid appeals to the topographical models of the underworld that are found in the Greek and Latin poetic tradition.

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[23] On Vergil's description of Aeneas and the Sibyl going into the underworld through a dark path and then encountering the gates of hell (*Aen*. 6.268-94), see chapter 3, pages 66-9.

[24] Bömer (1980) lists other caves with wide entrances that can be compared with this one (397).

[25] Nelis (2001) notes Vergil's debt to Apollonius' description of the entrance to the underworld (244-6).

[26] I discuss this further below (page 24, note 41).

He makes direct reference to Homer and Hesiod by locating Sleep's *domus* in the land of the Cimmerians where the sun does not shine. He also alludes to Apollonius' and Vergil's descriptions of the entrance to the underworld as a fog-covered cave. By appealing to these literary precedents, Ovid makes it clear that the house of Sleep is an underworld space. This is significant because he is suggesting that going to sleep and dreaming are like a descent into the fictional underworld of poetry. Dreams become like a poetic journey or a fictional narrative that explores the unknown realm of the afterlife.

1.2 LETHE

In this section, I focus on the literary history of Lethe – the next clear sign of the underworld in the house of Sleep. Varro's etymological explanation of Lethe links it with death, though there are a number of Greek and Latin literary sources for Lethe's association with the underworld. Hesiod, Plato, and Vergil stand out as the most important antecedents. By the time Ovid evokes it, the river Lethe is a well-established part of the underworld's topography.[27]

After noting the absence of potential sleep disruptors (*Met*. 11.597-601),[28] Ovid mentions the river Lethe in the following lines (*Met*. 11.602-4):

> *muta quies habitat; saxo tamen exit ab imo*
> *rivus aquae Lethes, per quem cum murmure labens*
> *invitat somnos crepitantibus unda lapillis*

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[27] I hope to correct the view that Ovid is only summoning Vergil's underworld to mind when he mentions Lethe. See, for example, the commentaries by Hill (1999) and Murphy (1979). By contrast, Bömer (1980) mentions Lethe's connection to book five of the *Aeneid*, as well as Lucian's *True Histories* (2.33), but does not specifically connect Ovid's Lethe with Vergil's (even though he otherwise notes Ovid's indebtedness to Vergil's underworld) (399-400).

[28] The most notable feature of these five lines is their negative significance: they describe the absence of any noise around the entrance to the house of Sleep. The repetition of words of negation (*non*, *nec*) in these lines emphasize this negative aspect. Tissol (1997) argues that this negative space connects the house of Sleep with chaos, which represents the raw material for creation in Ovid's poem (76-7). This is one aspect that he claims gives the episode metapoetic significance. On chaos in the *Metamorphoses*, see also Tarrant (2002).

Otherwise, the absence of birds may refer to Aornus/Avernus. The goose is a political reference, connecting (or dissociating?) the house of Sleep with Roman history. Bömer (1980) connects the absence of animals to Sleep's power over animals in the *Aeneid* (3.147, 4.525ff, 8.26f) (399).

> Silent rest dwells [here], except for a stream of Lethaean water that comes out of a deep rock, through which a wave flows with a murmur and beckons sleep on the rattling pebbles

The waters of Lethe produce the only noise in the house.[29] They provide a soothing atmosphere – a locus amoenus – for sleep/Sleep.[30]

Varro offers an explanation of Lethe that connects it to the underworld as the place of death. He suggests that it is the root word for *letum*, one of the Latin words for death. In his *De Linguae Latina*, Varro briefly mentions this etymology in order to explain a common funeral announcement. He is explaining a line from Ennius that uses the demonstrative *ollus* (with an 'o') instead of the more common *illus* (with an 'i'). He offers one example of the feminine *olla* being used during elections. He then provides another example of the masculine form (*DLL*. 7.3.42):[31]

> *alterum apparet in funeribus indictivis, quo dicitur "Ollus leto datus est," quod Graecus dicit λήθῃ, id est oblivioni*
>
> The other shows up in funeral announcements, where it says, "That one was given to death," which Greek calls *lethe*, that is from oblivion

Varro asserts that the Latin word for death (*leto* – from *letum*) is effectively a transliteration of the Greek word λήθη (*lethe*), which he states means oblivion/forgetfulness. He could be suggesting that the Greeks use *lethe* as a euphemism (or dysphemism?) for death, whereas the

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[29] I should note that the *murmur* mentioned in these lines suggests an intratextual connection with Ovid's house of Fama (as I noted in the introduction: page 9, note 11), where there is no rest or quiet space, nor great clamour, but instead a small murmur like the waves of the sea or the rumbling of thunder (*Met*. 12.48-52): *nulla quies intus nullaque silentia parte, / nec tamen est clamor, sed parvae* ***murmura*** *vocis, / qualia de pelagi, siquis procul audiat, undis / esse solent, qualemve sonum, cum Iuppiter atras / increduit nubes, extrema tonitrua reddunt*. In both scenes, Ovid draws attention to the aural as well as visual atmosphere of the space. Gladhill (2013) finds political resonances in the murmur in Fama's house by connecting it to the murmur that Neptune quells in the first book of the Aeneid (*Aen*. 1.204-8) (309-12).

[30] Bömer (1980) notes that these lines are a "Topologie des locus amoenus" (400).

[31] There could be some irony in Varro's quotation that points out the one who has died with the demonstrative *ollus*, but leaves him unnamed. In a culture obsessed with immortal glory – that is, having one's name live on in fame after death – to be forgotten after death is one of the worst things that could happen.

Latin word (*letum*) simply means death without the euphemism. Alternative, he could be pointing out the connection between forgetfulness and death that can be traced all the way back to Hesiod.

In Hesiod's *Theogony*, Lethe is an underworld deity who embodies forgetfulness. Hesiod names her as one of the children of Strife (Ἔρις), who is another offspring of Night (*Th*. 226-7: αὐτὰρ **Ἔρις** στυγερὴ τέκε μὲν Πόνον ἀλγινόεντα / **Λήθην** τε Λιμόν τε καὶ Ἄλγεα δακρυόεντα – "Hateful Strife bore painful Work, Forgetfulness, Hunger, and tearful Pains").[32] We know from the passage above (*Th*. 758-61) that the house of Night, where Sleep and Death dwell, is located in the underworld. Hesiod thus connects Lethe to the underworld through her genealogy. But it is important to note that he does not connect her name to the rivers of the underworld. Rather, she remains the embodiment of forgetfulness in Hesiod's poem.

Lethe's non-river identity in Hesiod is significant because she is also absent from Homer's description of the underworld in books ten and eleven of the *Odyssey*. In book ten, Circe identifies the other underworld rivers of the Acheron, Pyriphlegethon, Styx, and Cocytus in her instructions to Odysseus on how to get to the underworld (*Od*. 10.513-4: ἔνθα μὲν εἰς

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[32] The list of Strife's children continues on (Hes. *Th*. 228-32):

> Ὑσμίνας τε Μάχας τε Φόνους τ᾽ Ἀνδροκτασίας τε
> Νείκεά τε ψευδέας τε Λόγους Ἀμφιλλογίας τε
> Δυσνομίην τ᾽ Ἄτην τε, συνήθεας ἀλλήλῃσιν,
> Ὅρκον θ᾽, ὃς δὴ πλεῖστον ἐπιχθονίους ἀνθρώπους
> πημαίνει, ὅτε κέν τις ἑκὼν ἐπίορκον ὀμόσσῃ
>
> Fights, Battles, Murders, the Slaughter of men, Quarrels, Lying Words, Disputes, Lawlessness, Mischief, used to each other, Oath, who does the most harm to earthly men, whenever someone willingly takes a false oath

All of Strife's children, Lethe/Forgetfulness included, carry a negative connotation. There is tension in the fact that at the beginning of his poem, Hesiod suggested that both political leaders and poets obtain the give of sweet (and deceptive?) speech from the Muses (daughters of Memory), and political leaders use this to solve quarrels, while poets sing about glorious feats of old (i.e. battle victories) in order to help people forget their sorrows (*Th*. 1-103). Perhaps, insofar as it concerns poetry and creative production, Hesiod is suggesting that Strife and her progeny are a good source of inspiration.

Ἀχέροντα Πυριφλεγέθων τε ῥέουσιν / Κώκυτός θ', ὃς δὴ Στυγὸς ὕδατός ἐστιν ἀπορρώξ – "there the Pyriplegethus and the Cocytus, which is actually a limb of Styx's water, flow into the Acheron"). But Lethe is never mentioned as a deity or river in either of the Homeric poems. This evidence suggests that Lethe's earliest function in the Greek imagination was as a conceptual deity – that is, representing a conceptual connection between sleep, death, and forgetfulness. It is important to keep in mind that this conceptual connection carries a negative connotation, as Lethe's dreadful siblings in Hesiod suggest.[33]

Plato is the first to mentione Lethe as an underworld river. He makes this connection only once, in the myth of Er.[34] At the end of book ten of the *Republic,* Socrates recounts the story of Er, who seemed to have died during battle, but later awoke and told of his journeys in the afterlife where he witnessed the transmigration of souls.[35] After observing the souls being judged and sent to different parts of the underworld, he comes to the end when souls are choosing their next lives (*Rep*. 10.620a-e). He describes the last leg of the souls' journey as follows (*Rep*. 10.621a-b):

> πορεύεσθαι ἅπαντας εἰς **τὸ τῆς Λήθης πεδίον** διὰ καύματός τε καὶ πνίγους δεινοῦ: καὶ γὰρ εἶναι αὐτὸ κενὸν δένδρων τε καὶ ὅσα γῆ φύει. σκηνᾶσθαι οὖν σφᾶς ἤδη ἑσπέρας γιγνομένης παρὰ **τὸν Ἀμέλητα ποταμόν**, οὗ τὸ ὕδωρ ἀγγεῖον οὐδὲν στέγειν. μέτρον μὲν οὖν τι τοῦ ὕδατος πᾶσιν ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι πιεῖν, τοὺς δὲ

[33] Lethe seems to maintain this role in Greek poetry up until the fourth century, when Plato transforms her into an underworld river. For example, in an epigram by Simonides that claims to have been inscribed on the tomb of Anacreon, the halls of Lethe symbolize the (again sunless) underworld (ὅτι λείπων / ἠέλιον **Λήθης** ἐνθάδ' ἔκυρσε **δόμων** – "when he left the light and met the house of Lethe there": Anth. Gr. 7.25.5-6). There are a few lines containing Lethe in Greek tragedy (eg. Eur. *Or*. 213; Soph. fr. 670 Radt) that do not indicate either way that Lethe is a river or goddess. Aristophanes seems to be the first to give her a topographic identity: in the Frogs, he refers to the plains of Lethe (τὸ Λήθης πεδίον – *Fr*. 186).

[34] Notably, it is absent from Socrates' description of the underworld's topography in the *Phaedo*. Like Homer, he mentions four other underworld rivers: Oceanus, Acheron, Pyriphlegethon, and Stygion/Cocytus (*Phd*. 112e-113c).

[35] Interpreting this story through an Ovidian lens, we might imagine that Er falls asleep and is dreaming during his journey to the afterlife. Like we do as readers of the scene in Ovid, Er gets to peek behind the scenes and witness how creation (which is really transformation) happens.

> φρονήσει μὴ σῳζομένους πλέον πίνειν τοῦ μέτρου: τὸν δὲ ἀεὶ πιόντα πάντων ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι
>
> All the souls go to the plain of Lethe through a heat that is both stifling and terrible: for [the plain] was empty of trees and such things that the earth grows. Then, when it was already becoming evening, they make camp beside the river of Carelessness, the water of which no vessel can hold. Then it was necessary for everyone to drink some measure of the water, but the souls that were not saved by good judgment drank more than the measure, and always drinking forgot everything

Socrates (relating what Er said) first identifies the plains of Lethe (τὸ τῆς Λήθης πεδίον), where the river of Carelessness (τὸν Ἀμέλητα ποταμόν) is located. He explains that, as part of the process of metempsychosis, all souls are required to drink from the river in order to erase their memories of their past lives and start anew in their next lives. Er notes that some souls who lack wisdom (φρονήσει) drink more than others, and so their memories are completely wiped out. He implies that others who are wiser drink less and thus retain some recollection of their past. This difference is important for the lesson that Socrates draws from Er's story. When he is done recounting the tale, he says to Glaucon (*Rep*. 10.621b-c):

> καὶ οὕτως, ὦ Γλαύκων, μῦθος ἐσώθη καὶ οὐκ ἀπώλετο, καὶ ἡμᾶς ἂν σώσειεν, ἂν πειθώμεθα αὐτῷ, καὶ **τὸν τῆς Λήθης ποταμὸν** εὖ διαβησόμεθα καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν οὐ μιανθησόμεθα
>
> Thus, Glaucon, the story was saved and not destroyed, and it might save us, if we should believe it, we will both cross the river Lethe well and not pollute our souls

Here, Socrates renames the river from which the souls drink as the river of Lethe (τὸν τῆς Λήθης ποταμὸν).[36] He exhorts Glaucon to take heed of Er's story so that they might preserve themselves and cross the river with unpolluted souls. Socrates suggests that Er's story contains

[36] Perhaps, having crossed it in his narrative, Socrates has already forgotten the name he used previously. Notably, Socrates' switch marks the fact that Plato is changing the tradition. Ovid similarly draws on literary tradition but changes certain elements to create his own narratives. Socrates' forgetfulness may also be pointing to the power of storytellers like Er to cause forgetfulness in their listeners (see page 19, note 32 on Hesiod above). Ovid likewise points to the deceptive power of poetry in the Sleep episode, as well as in the Argus story that I discuss in the next chapter (pages 48-9).

some wisdom (φρόνησις) that will help them in their afterlives. Perhaps it teaches them to drink enough from the river to cleanse their souls, but not so much that they erase all of their memories. This interpretation accords with the vision of philosophy that Socrates offers in other dialogues such as the *Phaedrus*, *Meno*, and *Phaedo*. In those dialogues, Socrates similarly describes the immortality of the soul, and demonstrates that philosophy is a process of recollecting what one's soul saw/knew in a previous incarnation. It thus makes sense for Socrates to exhort Glaucon to preserve the wisdom gained from Er's story in order to use it in the future.[37]

Vergil draws on the myth of Er in his depiction of the underworld and in Anchises' speech about the transmigration of the soul. He mentions the river Lethe three times in *Aeneid* 6. It first comes up when Aeneas has just met his father Anchises. After describing their initial greetings, Vergil (partially) focalizes the scene through Aeneas' gaze and introduces the river Lethe (*Aen*. 6.703-9):

> *Interea videt Aeneas in valle reducta*
> *seclusum nemus et virgulta sonantia silvae,*
> ***Lethaeumque** domos placidas qui praenatat **amnem**.*
> *hunc circum **innumerae** gentes populique volabant:*
> *ac veluti in pratis ubi apes aestate serena*
> *floribus insidunt variis et candida circum*
> *lilia funduntur, strepit omnis **murmure** campus*
>
> Meanwhile, in a remote valley Aeneas sees a secluded grove and bushes sounding in the wood, and the river Lethe that swims in front of calm houses. Countless tribes and nations fly around this river: just as when bees sit in various flowers in meadows on a clear summer day, and are poured out from bright lilies, the whole field sounds with a murmur

[37] After Plato, Lethe has a meagre presence in Greek literature. The one notable exception is Apollonius' mention of her in his description of Aethalides, son of Hermes, who has the power of never forgetting (Apoll. Rh. 1.643-5). In a certain way, Apollonius accepts Plato's view of forgetfulness in the afterlife (i.e. that going to the underworld involves losing one's memories). Aethalides, who never forgets – not even in the afterlife – stands out as an ideal philosophical soul according to the Platonic model.

Vergil clearly locates the river Lethe in the underworld. His description of the area around the river is quite different from Er's. There is much more activity and much more life (especially plant life) around Vergil's river than there was on the desert-like plains of Lethe in Er's story.[38] Despite this difference, Vergil is drawing on Plato's model of the afterlife.[39] This becomes clear when Anchises explains to Aeneas why the souls (*innumerae gentes populique*) are flocking around the river *Aen*. 6.713-5):

> *animae, quibus altera fato*
> *corpora debentur,* ***Lethaei ad fluminis undam***
> ***securos*** *latices et longa* ***oblivia*** *potant*
>
> the souls, who are owed other bodies by fate, drink careless waters and long forgetfulness at the water of the river Lethe

Anchises explains that the souls drink in carelessness (*securos*) and forgetfulness (*oblivia*) by drinking the water of Lethe. He evokes the same process of transmigration that Plato describes in the myth of Er.[40] In both accounts, the souls in the underworld must drink from the river before they return to their bodies. Anchises adds to his explanation of this process at the end of his speech (*Aen*. 6.748-51):

> *has omnis, ubi mille rotam volvere per annos,*
> ***Lethaeum ad fluvium*** *deus evocat agmine magno,*
> *scilicet immemores supera ut convexa revisant*
> *rursus, et incipiant in corpora velle reverti*

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[38] Notice especially the *innumerae gentes populique*: Ovid uses the same adjective (*innumerae*) to qualify the herb around the doorway of the house of Sleep (*Met*. 11.606). Although it is only one word, Ovid could be using the adjective again to connect his house of Sleep to the underworld. I discuss this further in the section on "other herbs" below (section 1.4, pages 30-6).

[39] Servius notes that this passage begins Vergil's long digression about the Platonic doctrine of the soul (*Ad. Aen*. 6.703): *hirmos est hoc loco, id est unus sensus protentus per multos versus: in quo tractat de Platonis dogmate, quod in Phaedone positum est περὶ ψυχῆς, de quo in georgicis strictim, hic latius loquitur* – "*hirmos* is in this place, that is one idea extended through multiple verses, in which he reflects on Platonic doctrine, which is laid down in the *Phaedo* about the soul, about which he spoke briefly in the *Georgics*, but here speaks more widely."

[40] O'Hara (1996), citing Norden (1981), suggests that Vergil etymologically connects his Lethe with Plato's Ἀμέλητα ποταμόν and τῆς Λήθης ποταμὸν through the adjectives *securos* and *oblivia* (176).

> All these souls, when they have turned the wheel through a thousand years, a god calls to the river Lethe in a great troop, so that they, surely forgetful, might see the lofty vault again, and begin to want to return to bodies

In these lines, Anchises offers more details about what happens to souls at their end of their journey through the afterlife. Most notably, drinking from the river Lethe makes the souls forgetful (*immemores*) so that they can return to the *convexa supera* and begin to want to be returned to their bodies.[41] These details differ slightly from the myth of Er.[42] Nonetheless, Vergil uses the river Lethe in the same way as Plato does: to cause forgetfulness in the process of reincarnation. Most important for us is that Vergil specifically locates the river Lethe in the underworld. This location is recalled when Ovid describes the river Lethe running through the house of Sleep.[43]

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[41] The *convexa supera* is the same place that the vapour rising from the cave at the entrance to the underworld carried birds (or anything unwittingly flying over the lake) (*Aen*. 6.239-41). The lake, as a potentially spurious line informs us, is called *Aornus* (birdless) by the Greeks. This name suggests some wordplay with one of the Latin names for the underworld *Avernus* that Vergil uses earlier (*Aen*. 6.118, 126, 201, 564) (O'Hara 1996: 168-9). This wordplay connection gives us further grounds for comparing the birds' ascent from *Aornus* to the *convexa supera* to the souls' ascent from *Avernus* to the same place. Vergil seems to imply that this *convexa supera* is an intermediate state between the earth and the underworld, or life and death. Perhaps this intermediate space is the celestial fire from which all life springs that Anchises mentions at the beginning of his speech (*igneus est ollis vigor et caelestis origo / seminibus* – "The seeds have fiery strength and a celestial origin" (*Aen*. 6.730-1)). This has resonances with Middle Platonic cosmology – compare, for example, Apuleius' *De deo Socratis*.

[42] For example, in the myth of Er, the souls fall asleep after drinking the waters of Lethe/Ameletes, then there's an earthquake, then they get sent up like shooting stars to their births (ἐπειδὴ δὲ κοιμηθῆναι καὶ μέσας νύκτας γενέσθαι, βροντήν τε καὶ σεισμὸν γενέσθαι, καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἐξαπίνης ἄλλον ἄλλῃ φέρεσθαι ἄνω εἰς τὴν γένεσιν, ᾄττοντας ὥσπερ ἀστέρας – "When they were sleeping and it was the middle of the night, there was thunder and an earthquade, and suddenly from there one was born in one place, another in another, up to their birth, like shooting stars" (*Rep*. 10.621b).

[43] Vergil mentions Lethe one other time in the Aeneid, at the end of book five when Sleep murders Palinurus on the way to Italy (*Aen*. 5.835-61). I discuss this passage further in the next chapter. Here, I note that Sleep uses a branch dripping with Lethean dew in order to put Palinurus to sleep: *ecce deus ramum **Lethaeo rore** madentem / vique soporatum Stygia super utraque quassat / tempora* – "Behold, the god shakes a branch dripping with Lethaean dew and sleep-inducing with Styx's power over both of his temples" (*Aen*. 5.854-6). These lines evoke Lethe's connection to underworld water – a common connection in Latin literature. Sleep's use of Lethean waters explains why Palinurus offers a different account of his death when Aeneas meets him in the underworld (*Aen*. 6.337-83): he has forgotten how he died. These lines also associate Sleep with the god Hermes/Mercury, who regularly carries a sleep-inducing wand and also acts as a psychopomp. In the next chapter, I explore the significance of the similarities between Mercury and Sleep as storytellers in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (pages 48-9).

Overall, Lethe has a rich literary history that extends beyond Vergil's mention of the river in *Aeneid* 6. Lethe is connected to death, the underworld, and sleep in authors ranging from Hesiod to Varro. When Ovid mentions the river of Lethean water in the middle of the house of Sleep, he is showing off his learning and using it as a symbol of the underworld. He is also appealing to the connections between Sleep and forgetfulness that are especially noticeable in Hesiod and Plato. Going to sleep or being told a sleep-inducing story is akin to taking a sip of Lethe's waters and descending into the realm of dreams, where our imaginations allow us to forget some things but remember others as we explore the unknown.

1.3 POPPIES

Lethe does actually come up again in the *Georgics*, where Vergil uses the adjective *Lethaeum* twice in association with poppies. Poppies are the next underworld symbol that appear at the entrance to the house of Sleep, so let us turn to them now. In ancient literature, poppies have a symbolic function in the epic simile that Homer uses and Vergil echoes. They are also a symbol of death and the underworld, not only because of their lethal properties (i.e. as the source of opium), but also through their association with the goddess Ceres/Demeter. Evidence from Ovid's *Fasti* sheds light on the mythical and ritual significance that poppies have in relation to this goddess.

Otherwise, in Latin literature, Lethe is generally associated with underworld water in Catullus, Propertius, Tibullus (and pseudo-Tibullus/Lygdamus), Horace, and Ovid's own love poetry. The most significant mention of Lethe is in Propertius, when Cynthia explains that she and other dead spirits visit the land of the living at night as dreams, but are required to return to the pool of Lethe at dawn (*luce iubent leges Lethaea ad stagna reverti* – "The laws order that they return to the Lethaean pool at light" – Prop. 4.7.91). Cynthia makes dreams into underworld visions – an idea that Ovid uses in the house of Sleep, and that also is found in Lucretius (see chapter 2, pages 61-2). She also has Lethe represent the underworld as a whole – this occurs elsewhere in Greek and Latin poetry and is in the background of Ovid's mention of Lethe in the house of Sleep.

After his description of the river Lethe inside the house of Sleep, Ovid moves to the entrance of the cave where poppies and other herbs are growing (*Met*. 11.605-7):

> *ante fores antri fecunda papavera florent*
> *innumeraeque herbae, quarum de lacte soporem*
> *Nox legit et spargit per opacas umida terras*
>
> Before the cave's entrance fruitful poppies flourish, as do countless herbs, from the moist milk of which Night gathers and sprinkles sleep through dark lands

These lines describe the area around the entrance to Sleep's cave. It is decorated with poppies and other herbs. I discuss the poppies in this section, and the other herbs in the next.

Poppies are typically associated with death and the underworld in two ways in ancient literature. In the first place, they are used in an epic simile found in Homer and Vergil. The simile visually compares the drooping head of a dying soldier to a poppy weighed down by rain. Homer uses it in *Iliad* 8, when one of Priam's sons (Gorgythion) is struck down by an arrow (*Il*. 8.300-3). Homer describes Gorgythion's death in the following way (*Il*. 8.306-8):

> μήκων δ᾽ ὡς ἑτέρωσε κάρη βάλεν, ἥ τ᾽ ἐνὶ κήπῳ
> καρπῷ βριθομένη νοτίῃσί τε εἰαρινῇσιν,
> ὣς ἑτέρωσ᾽ ἤμυσε κάρη πήληκι βαρυνθέν
>
> His head fell to one side like a poppy in a garden that is heavy with fruit and spring shows, so his head weighed down by his helmet sunk to one side

This simile imagines Gorgythion's head sinking down like a poppy flower that is too weak to hold its head up after the rain. Vergil appeals to the same image when he describes the death of Euryalus in *Aeneid* 9. Euryalus is killed while on his night mission with Nisus. At one point, they become separated and Euryalus is taken and stabbed in the chest by the Rutulian Volcens. Vergil describes him dying in the following way (*Aen*. 9.433-7):

> *volvitur Euryalus leto, pulchrosque per artus*
> *it cruor inque umeros cervix conlapsa recumbit:*

> *purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro*
> *languescit moriens, lassove papavera collo*
> *demisere caput pluvia cum forte gravantur*
>
> Euryalus is rolled into death, and blood goes through his beautiful limbs, and his fallen neck lies back on his shoulders: just as when a purple flower cut by the plough droops as it dies, or poppies let their heads sink on their weary necks when they are by chance weighed down by the rain

Vergil has not exactly copied Homer's simile. In place of one flower, he compares Euryalus' drooping head to two dying flowers: a purple one cut by a plough and poppies weighed down by the rain.[44] Despite this difference, the distinctiveness of the poppy image clearly evokes the Homeric model.[45]

This simile presents a striking image of a falling soldier, but it also carries greater meaning. I think the poppy symbolizes the soldiers' death. This meaning comes out of the poppy's second main use in ancient literature as a symbol of the underworld. Poppies signify the underworld because they are the source of a potentially lethal drug (opium) – a function of the flower that was known in the ancient world,[46] and it plays a role in the mythical connection between the poppy and Ceres/Demeter.

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[44] Servius' comment on this passage suggests that the purple flower is a hyacinth, so that Vergil is alluding to the story of his metamorphosis. The poppy (μήκων) also has a metamorphosis story associated with it – see page 30, note 52. Vergil may also be drawing on Catullus' image of his former lover as a flower with its head cut off (Catul. 11.21-4): *nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem, / qui illius culpa cecidit velut prati / ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam / tactus aratro est* – "May she not look back at my love as before, which has fallen because of her error just like a flower in the farthest meadow after it has been cut by the passing plough."

[45] It is significant that, shortly after these lines when both Nisus and Euryalus have been killed, Vergil pauses his narration to memorialize the pair in his poetry (*Aen*. 9.446-7): *Fortunati ambo! si quid mea carmina possunt, / nulla dies umquam memori vos eximet aevo* – "Fortunate pair! If my songs have some power, no day will ever remove you from time's memory." Euryalus' death that is conceptualized with a "forgetful" poppy is memorialized in Vergil's poetry (itself connected to monuments – see chapter 3, pages 71-6). In other words, the symbol for forgetfulness becomes an instrument for memory. Vergil seems to be responding to the tension in the poet's relationship between memory and forgetting that goes back to Hesiod (see page 19, note 32 above).

[46] Pliny connects poppies to narcotics in his *Natural History* (20.76, 20.119). This significance of poppies seems to be behind Vergil and Ovid's references to sleep-inducing and/or Lethaean poppies: eg. *Georg*. 1.78: *Lethaeo perfusa papavera somno* ("poppies soaked in Lethaean sleep"); 4.545: *inferias Orphei Lethaea papavera mittes* ("send Lethaean poppies as funerary sacrifices to Orpheus"); *Aen*. 4.486: *spargens umida mella soporiferumque papaver* ("sprinkling moist honey and sleep-inducing poppies").

The poppy was one of the symbols of the goddess of agriculture. We find evidence of this symbolic association in ancient art,[47] as well as in ancient poetry that refers to the goddess. For example, at the end of Theocritus' poem about the *Harvest Feast* (θαλύσια), the narrator offers a prayer to Demeter, ending in the following lines (Theoc. 7.155-7):

> βωμῷ πὰρ Δάματρος ἀλῳάδος; ἇς ἐπὶ σωρῷ
> αὖθις ἐγὼ πάξαιμι μέγα πτύον, ἁ δὲ γελάσσαι
> δράγματα καὶ μάκωνας ἐν ἀμφοτέραισιν ἔχοισα
>
> At the altar of Demeter of the thrushing floor, on whose heap [of grain] may I plant a great winnowing-fan again, and may she laugh, holding sheaves and poppies in both hands

In these lines, Theocritus refers to Demeter's essential role in the harvest that the poem celebrates. In the final lines, the goddess is depicted holding the fruits of the harvest (δράγματα) and poppies (μάκωνας). This depiction may refer to a statue of the goddess that was used during the festival.[48] This passage shows that poppies were a symbol of Demeter.

This symbolic association is also found in Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter*. At one point in this poem, Demeter interrupts a group of men who are cutting down a tree in her sacred grove. She appears to the men in the likeness of her priestess carrying poppies (Call. *H*. 6.42-4):

> αὐτίκα Νικίππᾳ, τάν οἱ πόλις ἀράτειραν
> δαμοσίαν ἔστασαν, ἐείσατο, γέντο δὲ χειρὶ
> στέμματα καὶ μάκωνα, κατωμαδίαν δ' ἔχε κλᾶδα
>
> Immediately, she made herself like Nikippa, whom the town established as the public priestess, and she grasped wreathes and poppies in her hands, and held a branch on her shoulder

Like in Theocritus, Demeter appears holding poppies and other crops. A statue of Demeter could, again, be behind this image of Demeter. Callimachus could also be referring to the ritual

[47] Merlin (2003) cites statues/figurines, funerary reliefs, pottery, jewelry, etc.

[48] Cholmeley (1901).

decoration and function of the priestess. The latter may be more plausible given that we have evidence poppies were involved in Demeter's ritual worship.

Ovid suggests a mythical and ritual connection between poppies and Demeter in his *Fasti*. As part of his explanation of the festival for Ceres (*Cerialia Ludi*), Ovid recounts the rape of Proserpina (Persephone, daughter of Ceres/Demeter).[49] At one point during her search for her daughter, Ovid narrates that Ceres met with the old man Celeus and his daughter (*Fast*. 4.509-14). Celeus invites Demeter home with them and tells her that his son is home sick and cannot sleep (*Fast*. 4.515-6). Then, Ovid relates (*Fast*. 4.531-6):

> *illa soporiferum, parvos initura penates,*
> *colligit agresti lene papaver humo.*
> *dum legit, oblito fertur gustasse palato*
> *longamque imprudens exsoluisse famem;*
> *quae quia principio posuit ieiunia noctis,*
> *tempus habent mystae sidera visa cibi*
>
> About to enter the small house, she picks a mild, sleep-inducing poppy from the ground. When she picks it, it is said that she tasted it with her forgetful palate and thoughtlessly ended her long fast. Because she first set aside her hunger at night, initiates make sure the stars are visible when they eat

Ceres picks a poppy to bring to Celeus' son to help him sleep, but inadvertently eats some of it herself. It is as though the poppy preemptively affects her forgetful palate (*oblito… palato*). In consuming the poppy, Ceres breaks the fast that she had been on since she started to search for her daughter.[50] Ovid uses this story to explain the ritual practice of initiates (*mystae*) eating at

[49] See Hinds (1987) for a study of this story, Ovid's retelling of it in book five of the *Metamorphoses*, and his Greek models (the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, Callimachus' version of this hymn).

[50] Notably, Ovid describes Ceres' fast as a *longam… famem*. This might be a reference to Callimachus and his *Hymn to Demeter*, not in relation to fasting, but in relation to poetic technique, since Callimachus was **fam**ously opposed to long, epic poetry (*longam fam**a**m*) in favour of shorter, denser poems.

night. There is evidence that poppies were used in the Eleusinian mysteries.[51] Most importantly for us, this example shows one way that poppies were associated with Ceres, whose daughter is the queen of the underworld.[52] From this, we can conclude that poppies are connected with sleep (*soporiferum*), as well as the underworld.

Ovid's placement of poppies at the entrance to the house of Sleep alludes to the connections that they have with sleep and death. Not only do Homer and Vergil use the poppy to symbolize the death of a soldier, but Ovid himself also connects the poppy to sleep, Ceres, the underworld, and mystery rites. When Ovid mentions the poppies in the house of Sleep, he signals the common range of significance that the flower has. Especially because of their connection with forgetfulness in Ovid's story about Ceres, we can see the poppies as another marker of fictionality like the river Lethe. Crossing over such symbols in the narrative signals that we as readers are entering into the realm of imagination.

1.4 OTHER SLEEP-INDUCING HERBS

Ovid mentions other herbs growing around the entrance to the house of Sleep (*innumeraeque herbae, quarum de lacte soporem / Nox legit et spargit per opacas umida terras*

[51] Merlin (2003). Ovid notes that Celeus' house is the location of the contemporary Eleusis where the cult of Demeter celebrated their mysteries (*Fast*. 4.507-8).

[52] Servius offers a couple of different explanations for the connection between Ceres and poppies in his comment on line 1.212 of the *Georgics*. The line from Vergil mentions the *Cereale papaver*. Servius explains, *CEREALE PAPAVER vel quod est esui, sicut frumentum; vel quod Ceres eo usa est ad oblivionem doloris: nam ob raptum Proserpinae vigiliis (agitata) gustato eo acta est in soporem: vel quia Meconem Atheniensem dilexerit Ceres et transfiguratum in papaverem tutelae suae iusserit reservari; vel quia pani aspergatur* – "The Poppy of Ceres either because it is for for food, since it is a grain; or because Ceres used it to forget her pain (for disturbed by the rape of Proserpina, she was driven from wakefulness into sleep by tasting it); or because Ceres loved the Athenian Mecon and order him (transformed into a poppy) to be preserved by her own protection; or because it was sprinkled on bread." Servius offers four different explanations for Vergil's description: either he calls it Ceres' poppy because she is the goddess of agriculture; or because Ceres used the poppy to relieve the pain of her daughter's rape by putting herself to sleep; or because Ceres created the poppy by transforming her lover Mecon (μήκων, the Greek word for poppy); or because poppies are sprinkled on bread (connected to her agricultural role). The second example is perhaps most significant because it corresponds to Ovid's tale, though Servius more explicitly connects Ceres' consumption of the poppy with her own pain (rather than accidentally tasting it).

– "countless herbs from the moist milk of which Night collects and sprinkles sleep through dark lands" – *Met*. 11.606-7). Bömer (1980) suggests that the herbs are "mehr oder weniger poetisches Flickwort" (401), but there are both intertextual and intratextual connections that add meaning to these lines.[53] In particular, there are connections to witchcraft and the underworld in both the *Aeneid* and the *Metamorphoses*. I end this section and chapter with a discussion of the connections between the house of Sleep and the underworld that Ovid presents in book four. Ovid's creation of multiple underworld spaces suggests that the underworld is an ideal place of creative imitation, a place from which "the narrative energies of epic come often as pulses of energy."[54] Ovid draws attention to his imitation of both poetic models, as well as material models, the consequence of which we shall see in the final chapter.

The first passage to consider comes from book four of the *Aeneid*, when Dido mentions the same poppies we saw in the last section, as well as some other magical symbols. This passage comes near the end of the book when Dido is speaking to her sister Anna. She has resolved to die but is determined to hide this from her sister. In order to do so, she invents a cover-up about a magic ritual that she will use to dispel Aeneas from her thoughts. The ritual, she explains, was shown to her by a Massylian priestess (*Aen*. 4.483-6):

> *hinc mihi Massylae gentis monstrata sacerdos,*
> *Hesperidum templi custos, epulasque draconi*

[53] I noted above (page 23, note 38) that Ovid may be gesturing to the *innummerae gentes populique* that Aeneas sees flocking around the river Lethe in Vergil's underworld (*Aen*. 6.705). Vergil uses the adjective only one other time, in book eleven (*Aen*. 11.203-9), when he describes the countless funeral pyres that the Latins build (*Latini / **innumeras** struxere pyras – Aen*. 11.203-4) to burn the excess of dead they have after battle (*nec numero nec honore cremant – Aen*. 11.208). Because this example is also from a death/funerary context, there may be a connection between it and the *innummerae gentes populique* that Ovid picks up on, though he uses the adjective frequently throughout his works (I count that he uses it 28 times). The most notable instance is his description of the entrances to the house of Fama as *innumeros aditus* (*Met*. 12.45).

[54] Burrow (2002) 279 citing Hardie (1993) 57-87.

> *quae dabat et sacros servabat in arbore ramos,*
> *spargens umida mella soporiferumque papaver*
>
> Here, I was shown the priestess of the Massylian people, the guardian of the temple of the Hesperides, who used to give the dragon food and protect the sacred branch in the tree, sprinkling moist honey and sleep-inducing poppies

Dido identifies the priestess as the guardian of the temple of the Hesperides (the daughters of the evening star). She used to feed the snake (Ladon), who traditionally guarded the golden apples (Hes. *Th*. 333-5, Apollon. 4. 1396-9).[55] She also used to protect the sacred bough on which the golden apples grow. This branch may be connected with the golden bough that Aeneas needs to collect before entering the underworld (*Aen*. 6.136-9). In this case, the Massylian priestess would act as a Sibyl-like figure who guards the entrance to the underworld and uses her magic to control monsters like Cerberus.[56] One of the most famous stories concerning the golden apples is the story of Hercules' eleventh labour, when he is sent to steal the apples from the Hesperides. This quest takes place right before his twelfth and final labour of retrieving Cerberus from the underworld. If we imagine the Massylian priestess as a Sibyl figure, Hercules and his final two labours become a model for Aeneas' journey to the underworld.[57]

The final line of the passage quoted above is perhaps the most important for explaining the *innumerae herbae* in Ovid's house of Sleep. Dido comments that the priestess scatters liquid honey and the soporific poppy (*spargens umida mella soporiferumque papaver – Aen*. 4.486).[58]

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[55] On the past tense of the verbs *dabat* and *servabat*, Pease (1967) notes that, "If this priestess was already at Carthage, as 4, 509 indicates, putting her art at the service of lovers, is it … because the slaying of the serpent by Hercules (cf. Apoll. Rh. 4, 1400-1405) had left her without occupation" (393).

[56] Pease (1967) briefly mentions the Sibyl's charming of Cerberus (*Aen*. 6.420-3) as one of the models for the priestess' ability to put the snake to sleep (397). He focuses more on Medea's drugging of the Colchian snake during Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece as a model for this passage (more on this below).

[57] Nelis (2001) notes the parallels between the journeys of Aeneas, Jason, and Hercules in relation to their golden symbols (240-1).

[58] Pease (1967) notes that this line is perhaps the most puzzling of this passage, since it causes the interpretive crux: why would the priestess want to put the snake that is helping her guard the apples to sleep? (397-8).

This action calls to mind Ovid's description of liquid Night sprinkling sleep over the lands using the milk of different herbs (*innumeraeque herbae, quarum de lacte soporem / Nox legit et spargit per opacas umida terras – Met.* 11.606-7). The repetition of the verb *spargo*, the adjective *umida*, and the presence of sleep in both (*soporiferum* and *soporem*) signal a connection between the two passages. Night's power in Ovid can be seen as a kind of magic much like the priestess'. This connection to magic brings up the passage's further connections to Medea.

Ovid tells the story of Medea earlier in his poem (*Met*. 7.1-424). She first helps Jason win the Golden Fleece by sprinkling a Lethaean drug on the serpent (*hunc postquam sparsit Lethaei gramine suci* – "after this, he sprinkled [it] with an herb of Lethean juice" – *Met*. 7.152). She then performs rejuvenations and murders with more of her magical herbs (*Met*. 7.224-349), before, she reaches Athens where she tries to kill Theseus by using a special poison (*Met*. 7.406-15):

> *huius in exitium miscet Medea, quod olim*
> *attulerat secum Scythicis aconiton ab oris.*
> *illud Echidnaeae memorant e dentibus ortum*
> *esse canis: specus est tenebroso caecus hiatu,*
> *est via declivis, per quam Tirynthius heros*
> *restantem contraque diem radiosque micantes*
> *obliquantem oculos nexis adamante catenis*
> *Cerberon abstraxit, rabida qui concitus ira*
> *inplevit pariter ternis latratibus auras*
> *et sparsit virides spumis albentibus agros*
>
> For his death, Medea mixes the aconite she had once brought back with her from Scythian shores. They remember that this [aconite] arose from the teeth of the Echidnaean dog: there is a blind cave with a shadowy opening, there is a path down, through which the Tirynthian hero dragged Cerberus with chains bound by adamant, though he resisted and twisted his eyes against the day and the shining rays, and, excited with wild anger, evenly filled the air with his three barks and sprinkled the green fields with white foam

The herb that Medea uses is said (*memorant*) to have grown from Cerberus' poisonous saliva that dripped onto the ground when Hercules dragged him out of Hades.[59] This refers to the same story of Hercules' final labour that I mentioned above. The poisonous herb (*aconiton*) that is sprinkled (*sparsit*) on the land connects it to Nox's herbs and those of the Massylian priestess. On top of this, this passage serves as another underworld model for the house of Sleep. Like the house of Sleep, there is a cave (*specus* vs. *spelunca*) with a shadowy opening (*tenebroso… hiatu* vs. *longo recessu*). Ovid also uses the phrase *est via declivis*, which is the exact phrase used to describe the path down to the underworld in book four (*Met*. 4.432).

Ovid offers a vision of the underworld in book four of the Metamorphoses (4.432-80). This is the first time that he presents the underworld in the poem.[60] In this instance, Juno descends in order to send a Fury to torment Ino and Athamas. Ovid is reworking *Aeneid* 7, when Juno summons the Fury Allecto (*Aen*. 7. 286-341). But he also presents a unique vision of the underworld. He describes it in the following terms (*Met*. 4.432-45):

> ***Est via declivis*** *funesta nubila taxo:*
> *ducit ad infernas* ***per muta silentia*** *sedes;*
> *Styx* ***nebulas exhalat*** *iners****,*** *umbraeque recentes*

[59] Ovid's description of Cerberus being dragged out has certain parallels with the allegory of the cave in Plato's *Republic* (*Rep*. 7.514a-517e). Cerberus is dragged out (*abstraxit*), unwilling (*restantem*), and he turns his eyes away from the daylight of the upper world (*contraque diem radiosque micantes*) even though he is bound by adamant chains (*nexis adamante catenis*). This recalls the prisoners that Socrates describes who live in the cave that has a large opening to the light (ἐν καταγείῳ οἰκήσει σπηλαιώδει, ἀναπεπταμένην πρὸς τὸ φῶς τὴν εἴσοδον ἐχούσῃ μακρὰν παρὰ πᾶν τὸ σπήλαιον – *Rep*. 514a). They are held in bonds (ἐν δεσμοῖς) and cannot turn their heads around to look at anything but the shadows cast on the wall in front of them (κύκλῳ δὲ τὰς κεφαλὰς ὑπὸ τοῦ δεσμοῦ ἀδυνάτους περιάγειν – *Rep*. 514b). The prisoner who is released from these bonds is forced to stand up and painfully look up towards the light (ὁπότε τις λυθείη καὶ ἀναγκάζοιτο ἐξαίφνης ἀνίστασθαί τε καὶ περιάγειν τὸν αὐχένα καὶ βαδίζειν καὶ πρὸς τὸ φῶς ἀναβλέπειν, πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ποιῶν ἀλγοῖ – *Rep*. 515c). He is then dragged up with force to the outside world (εἰ δέ, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, ἐντεῦθεν ἕλκοι τις αὐτὸν βίᾳ διὰ τραχείας τῆς ἀναβάσεως καὶ ἀνάντους, καὶ μὴ ἀνείη πρὶν ἐξελκύσειεν εἰς τὸ τοῦ ἡλίου φῶς, ἆρα οὐχὶ ὀδυνᾶσθαί τε ἂν καὶ ἀγανακτεῖν ἑλκόμενον – *Rep*. 515e-516a). The difficultly of the ascent out of the underworld is something that the Sibyl also warns Aeneas about (*sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras, / hoc opus, hic labor est – Aen*. 6.128-9). But it is striking that Ovid describes Cerberus' ascent in almost the exact same terms as Plato's prisoner.

[60] Other underworlds in the poem include: when Proserpina is snatched by Hades in the Muse's hymn in book 5 (*Met*. 5. 341-571); Orpheus' descent to the underworld to seek Eurydice (*Met*. 10.1-77), Aeneas and the Sibyl's descent during Ovid's "little Aeneid" (*Met*. 14.101-53).

*descendunt illac **simulacraque** functa sepulcris:*
pallor hiemsque tenent late loca senta, novique,
qua sit iter, manes, Stygiam quod ducat ad urbem,
ignorant, ubi sit nigri fera regia Ditis.
mille capax aditus et apertas undique portas
urbs habet, utque fretum de tota flumina terra,
sic omnes animas locus accipit ille nec ulli
exiguus populo est turbamve accedere sentit.
errant exsangues sine corpore at ossibus umbrae,
parsque forum celebrant, pars imi tecta tyranni,
*pars aliquas artes, antiquae **imitamina** vitae.*

There is a path down that is cloud with deadly yew trees: it leads to the infernal place through muted silence; the lazy Styx exhales clouds, and new shadows descend there, images that have completed their burial rites. Paleness and winter widely hold the rough place, and the new shades do not know where the path is that leads to the Stygian city, where black Dis' wild kingdom is. The spacious city has a thousand entrances and open gates everywhere, just as the sea accepts the rivers from the whole earth, so this place accepts all souls and is neither too small for any people nor senses the crowd that approaches. The bloodless shadows wander without bodies or bones, part of them visit the forum, part the homes of the deep tyrant, and part other arts, imitating their previous lives

Ovid pictures the underworld as a dark and silent city that is filled with shades who imitate their past lives. We can note the similarities to the house of Sleep: both are quiet spaces (*per muta silentia = muta quies habitat*); both are cloudy (*nebulas exhalat = nebulae caligine mixtae / exhalantur…*); and the figures that populate both are described as images (*simulacra = somnia… simulacraque naufraga fingant*) that imitate (*antiquae imitamina vitae = somnia quae veras aequuant imitamine formas*).[61] In addition to these parallels in the vocabulary Ovid uses, similar actors feature in both: Juno is the main *auctor* who uses the underworld forces (Furies, dreams) to affect people in the upper world; and Iris plays a role in both as Juno's assistant, either receiving her after her descent (*Met*. 4.479-80) or acting as her messenger to the house of Sleep.

[61] Burrow (2002) also connects the two episodes and argues that Ovid uses *imitamen* (a word he coins) to signal a ritual context and his conscious imitation of Vergil (274-8).

Based on these similarities, we can say that Ovid's house of Sleep is a revision/alternative vision of the underworld that he presents earlier in the poem.

Perhaps the greatest significance to be drawn from this parallel is the urban context that Ovid's description of the underworld suggests for the house of Sleep. Ovid describes the underworld in book four as a city (*urbem* – line 437, *urbs* – line 440) where the shades imitate their past lives by parading in the forum, visiting the emperor's house, and practicing their other arts (*parsque forum celebrant, pars imi tecta tyranni, pars aliquas artes, antiquae imitamina vitae – Met*. 4.444-5). I discuss the intermedial consequences of such references in Vergil and Ovid at length in the third chapter. Here, I will note that Vergil alludes to Roman state funerals and the statue gallery in the Forum of Augustus at the end of *Aeneid* 6. Ovid picks up on these allusions in *Metamorphoses* 4 by mentioning the forum and emperor's house. By making these places grammatically parallel to *aliquas* ***artes***, Ovid draws attention to the craftsmanship that went into the construction of these spaces. This craftsmanship can be seen in parallel to Ovid's own. In other words, Ovid is making a connection between his text and the material arts that are found in Rome. This material connection is just as important in the house of Sleep episode as it is in Ovid's underworld of book four. We will see the full interpretative consequences of this in the final chapter. But first we will look at Ovid's description of the dreams in the house of Sleep to see further intertextual connections and fill out the metapoetic significance that dreams have in Ovid's poem.

CHAPTER 2: DREAM NAMES

The names and descriptions of Sleep's children, the dreams Morpheus, Icelos/Phobetor, and Phantasos, reflect Ovid's art of imitation and creation. Starting from one of the earliest appearances of Sleep (Hypnos) in Homer's *Iliad*, ancient authors often connect Sleep to the themes of naming and likeness. Ovid employs these themes in his description of the dreams (*Met*. 11.633-43). In this chapter, I examine each of the dreams that Ovid names, drawing out their etymological significance as well as the intertextual allusions that Ovid's descriptions of them contain. Vergil and Homer end up being Ovid's two most important sources, though he also alludes to Lucretius, Ennius, and Euripides, among others. Throughout, Ovid uses the dreams and their names to reflect on his own craft.

2.1 SLEEP

Ovid's description of the dreams appears in the house of Sleep (*Met*. 11.633-43). As we saw in the previous chapter, Ovid begins this episode by describing the entrance to the house of Sleep with symbols that establish it as an underworld (*Met*. 11.592-615). After this, he describes Iris entering the house and approaching the god of sleep in order to convey Juno's message to send a dream vision of Ceyx to Alcyone (*Met*. 11.616-29). Iris then quickly departs and Sleep selects a dream to fulfill Juno's order (*Met*. 11.629-32). At this point, Ovid pauses the narrative in order to offer the following description of the dreams (*Met*. 11.633-43):

> *At pater e populo natorum mille suorum*
> *excitat artificem simulatoremque figurae*
> *Morphea: non illo quisquam sollertius alter*
> *exprimit incessus vultumque sonumque loquendi;*
> *adicit et vestes et consuetissima cuique*
> *verba; sed hic solos homines imitatur, at alter*
> *fit fera, fit volucris, fit longo corpore serpens:*
> *hunc Icelon superi, mortale Phobetora vulgus*
> *nominat; est etiam diversae tertius artis*

> *Phantasos: ille in humum saxumque undamque trabemque,*
> *quaeque vacant anima, fallaciter omnia transit*
>
> From the population of his thousand sons, the father excited Morpheus, the crafter and imitator of shapes: no one else was more skilled than him at expressing the walk, appearance, and sound of speaking; he also added the clothes and the most customary words to him. But he imitated only men, while another became wild animals, birds, a snake with a long body; him the gods call Icelos, while the mortal crowd call him Phobetor. And there was a third of these various arts: Phantasos; he easily transforms into earth, rock, water, bush, whatever is empty of soul

This is the first time Ovid establishes the familial relation between Sleep (*Somnus*) and the dreams (*somnia*). He describes Sleep as the father (*pater*) of thousands of sons (*natorum mille suorum*).[62] This familial connection indicates an etymological connection since family ties are commonly used to describe the etymological relation between words. There is evidence that ancient etymologists like Varro employed the language of family relations for words.[63] By calling them father and sons, Ovid is pointing to the etymological connection between *Somnus* and *somnia*.[64]

Ancient Greek and Latin authors associate Sleep with etymology, resemblance, and metamorphosis. He appears in ancient literature less frequently than one might expect given the

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[62] It is perhaps notable that Ovid never directly calls Morpheus, Icelos/Phobetor, or Phantasos a dream (*somnium*). Instead, this nominal association is implied from the rest of the passage: i.e. Juno's orders to send *somnia* (*Met.* 11.588); the empty *somnia* around Somnus (*Met.* 11.614) that Iris has to sweep aside in order to approach the god (*Met.* 11.617); Iris' repetition of Juno's orders for *somnia* (*Met.* 11.626). When Somnus finally comes to selecting one of his sons to fulfill Juno's command (*Met.* 11.633ff.), it is clearly understood that the crowd of his thousands of sons (*populo natorum mille suorum*) are the dreams.

[63] Varro, *DLL* 8.2.4: *Ut in hominibus quaedam sunt* ***agnationes*** *ac* ***gentilitates****, sic in verbis: ut enim ab Aemilio* ***homines*** *orti Aemilii ac* ***gentiles****, sic ab Aemilii nomine declinatae voces in* ***gentilitate*** *nominali: ab eo enim, quod est impositum recto casu Aemilius, orta Aemilii, Aemilium, Aemilios, Aemiliorum et sic reliquae eiusdem quae sunt* ***stirpis*** – "As in men there are certain relatives and kinships, so there are in words: as men born from Aemlilius are Aemiliuses and his kin, so words in name-based kinship decline from the name Aemilius: for from him, because Aemilius was set in the right [nominative] case, arose Aemilii [genitive], Aemilium [accusative singular], Aemilios [accusative plural], Aemiliorum [genitive plural], and the rest that are from the same stock."

[64] Both words derive from the proto-Italic *swe/opno- (sleep) and *swe/opnjo- (dream) (de Vaan 2008: 573-4), and these forms come from a proto-Indo-European root *suépno-/*suopno-, from which the Greek ὕπνος (*hypnos*, sleep) also stems (de Vaan 2008: 573, and Beekes and van Beek 2010: 1535).

prominence of dream visions in ancient literature and cultural life.[65] But he does have a few notable appearances that shed light on Ovid's depiction of him. Particularly noteworthy are his two most lengthy appearances in the *Iliad* (*Il*. 14.231-91, 352-61) and the *Aeneid* (*Aen*. 5.835-871).[66]

Sleep's most prominent appearance in the Homeric poems occurs in book fourteen of the *Iliad* (*Il*. 14.231-91, 352-61). Hera wishes to help the Greek side in the Trojan War, and so devises the plan of distracting Zeus by getting him to sleep with her. In order to accomplish her plan, she visits Sleep on the island of Lemnos and asks for his help. At first he is hesitant because, as he explains, he helped Hera put Zeus to sleep once before and it very nearly destroyed him. But after bargaining to obtain the nymph Pasithea as a wife (in addition to Hera's original offer of a throne and footstool[67]), Sleep agrees to the plan. They fly to Mount Ida where Zeus is overseeing the war. Once there, Sleep hides in a tree, while Juno proceeds to the peak of the mountain to find Zeus and execute her plan. Sleep's hiding spot is described as follows (*Il*. 14.286-91):

> ἔνθ' Ὕπνος μὲν ἔμεινε πάρος Διὸς ὄσσε ἰδέσθαι
> εἰς ἐλάτην ἀναβὰς περιμήκετον, ἣ τότ' ἐν Ἴδῃ
> μακροτάτη πεφυυῖα δι' ἠέρος αἰθέρ' ἵκανεν·
> ἔνθ' ἧστ' ὄζοισιν πεπυκασμένος εἰλατίνοισιν

[65] On dreams in antiquity: Cancik (1999), Harris (2009), Harrisson (2013).

[66] Aside from these two appearances, both Homer and Hesiod identify Hypnos as the brother of Thanatos (Θάνατος, death) (Hom. *Il*. 16.454, 672, 682; Hes. *Th*. 756-9). As we saw in the previous chapter, Hesiod also describes Hypnos and Thanatos, along with a crowd of dreams (φῦλον Ὀνείρων), as children of Night (Νύξ, Nyx) (Hes. *Th*. 212). Hypnos also briefly appears in Apollonius' *Argonautica*, when Medea calls on him to help her enchant a snake (Apollon. 4.146). In Latin literature, Somnus appears alongside *Somnia* in the crowd of Night at the conclusion of one of Tibullus' elegies (Tib. 11.1.90); he similarly shows up at the end of one of Propertius' poems with *Sopor* (Prop. 1.3.45); and he is mentioned in the middle of a poem by Lygdamus (pseudo-Tibullus) (Lygd. 4.55).

[67] It is perhaps worth noting that the Greek words for throne (θρόνος) and footstool (θρῆνυς) are both relate to the Latin *forma*, which is one of the key words associated with dreams in this passage (*Met*. 11.613, 626), and is especially relevant for Morpheus, whose name is derived from the Greek word for form, μορφή. (For more on the etymological significance of Morpheus' name, see section 2.2 below.) Although Ovid probably was not aware of this etymology, this creates another intertextual link that could be worth exploring further.

ὄρνιθι λιγυρῇ **ἐναλίγκιος**, ἥν τ᾽ ἐν ὄρεσσι
χαλκίδα κικλήσκουσι θεοί, ἄνδρες δὲ κύμινδιν

Sleep stayed there before Zeus' eyes saw him, going up into a tall pine tree, which then, having grown tallest on Ida, reached the aether through the air. There he sat, covered by the pine branches, like the shrill bird in the mountains that the gods call khalkis, but men call kymindis

This passage associates Sleep with both likenesses and naming techniques. First, when he is hiding in the tree, he is described as "like a shrill bird" (ὄρνιθι λιγυρῇ ἐναλίγκιος – *Il*. 14.290). The word for likeness, ἐναλίγκιος, comes from the verb ἐναλίνω, which means to engrave or inscribe. These are both activities that imply creating likenesses of words in different media (e.g. inscribing letters on stone or wood).[68] We can also notice that ἐνα**λίγ**κιος resembles the adjective **λιγ**υρῇ, which describes the bird Sleep resembles. The repetition of the syllable -λίγ- reflects the activity described. In other words, likeness of the form (the letters, syllable) reflects likeness of content (Sleep being like a bird). This parallel between form and content may explain the choice of the adjective: for we can imagine Sleep keeping as quiet as possible as he hid from Zeus rather that singing shrilly.[69] Most importantly, in his earliest appearance in ancient literature, Sleep is already connected to the themes of likeness and semiotic subterfuge.

The bird that Sleep resembles also links the god to naming techniques. In the final line quoted above (*Il*. 14.291), the bird is given two names: one that the gods use (χαλκίς, *khalkis*), and one that mortals use (κύμινδις, *kymindis*). As Janko explains in his commentary on these lines, κύμινδις was the standard name for a kind of owl common to the area, while the divine name χαλκίς refers to a story about a girl named Khalkis or Kombe whom Hera transformed into

[68] For a discussion of the intermedial consequences of this etymology, see next chapter, pages 66-88.

[69] Janko (1992) notes that the particular kind of bird (κύμινδις, an Ionian owl with an Anatolian name) was known for its shrill call (196).

an owl.[70] Janko suggests that Homer tells us the divine name as a way of alluding to the gods' omniscience: "gods alone can recognize the owl as the girl Khalkis." He further comments that, "The allusion is witty, because Sleep disguises himself as a bird that is only disguised as a bird, and is really a person." This kind of witty etymologizing hints at a story of metamorphosis and is precisely what makes Sleep a fitting progenitor for the metamorphic dreams in Ovid. As further evidence that this example connects to etymology, we can notice that Socrates cites the same line in the *Cratylus* in order to show that Homer was aware of correct names: Socrates and Hermogenes agree that the name the gods use must be the correct one (Pl. *Crat*. 392a). It could be the case that Ovid is referring to both Homer, as the model for Sleep, and Plato, as the model for his naming techniques. It is clear that likeness, etymology, and metamorphoses are built into Sleep's literary history.

Vergil similarly links Sleep to etymology and likeness in the *Aeneid*. He appears at the end of book five, when Aeneas and his crew are sailing to Italy (*Aen*. 5.827-71). It is the middle of the night when all of the crew is asleep except Palinurus; Sleep visits him to put him to sleep and throw him overboard. His action fulfills the sacrificial loss that Neptune earlier explained to Venus was necessary to ensure the crew's safe journey (*Aen*. 5. 814-5).[71] Vergil describes his appearance as follows (*Aen*. 5.838-42):

> *cum levis aetheriis delapsus* ***Somnus*** *ab astris*
> *aera dimovit tenebrosum et dispulit umbras,*

[70] Janko (1992) 196-7. He indicates that this Khalkis was the mother of the Kouretes, after whom Euboean Khalkis was named. Moreover, he notes that the earliest coins of Khalkis were impressed with a hawk-like bird, perhaps as a symbol of the metamorphosis story. The scholia further suggest that Khalkis is the mother of the Korybantes, and some say she is only seen at night, others that she is an owl that Hera transformed (*Il*. 14.291 Dindorf 48). .

[71] Notably, this is not explicitly stated in the narrative. Instead, Neptune explains to Venus that one death is necessary in order for the ship to cross to Italy (*Aen*. 5.814-5): *unus erit tantum amissum quem gurgite quaeres; / unum pro multis dabitur caput* – "There will be thus lost whom you will seek in the sea / one head will be given for many." But nobody explicitly gives Sleep the mission to kill Palinurus. Instead, he simply enters the narrative by floating down from the aetherial stars (*aetheriis… astris* – *Aen*. 5.838) – see next footnote.

> *te, Palinure, petens, tibi* ***somnia tristia portans***
> *insonti; puppique deus consedit in alta*
> *Phorbanti* ***similis*** *funditque has ore loquelas*
>
> Then gentle Sleep, having descended from the aetherial stars, pushed the darkness out of the air and dispelled the shadows, seeking you, Palinurus, carrying gloomy sleep to innocent you. The god sat on the edge of the ship in the likeness of Phorbas and poured these words from his mouth

Sleep descends from the aetherial stars,[72] pushes shadows out of the air,[73] and brings a bad night's sleep to Palinurus. He appears on the ship bearing the likeness of Phorbas, another of the crew members.[74] Like Homer, Vergil associates Sleep with deceptive likenesses (*similis*) and etymology (*Somnus… somnia*).

Sleep's appearance to Palinurus echoes Homer's association of Sleep with likenesses. In the last lines quoted above, Vergil describes Sleep as resembling Phorbas when he comes to sit on the edge of the ship and speak with him (*Aen*. 5.841-2: *puppique deus consedit in alta /*

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[72] *Aetheriis… astris*: we might interpret this location as the realm of the gods where Sleep could have received the orders to kill Palinurus. Or, this location might gesture to the *convexa supera* where Anchises indicates that souls dwell before being reincarnated (*Aen*. 6.750-1) (see discussion of the *convexa supera* in the previous chapter, page 24, note 41). If the latter is the case, Sleep's appearance to Palinurus would be like the souls returning from the underworld. Notably, the image of Anchises visits Aeneas in a similar way earlier in book five (*Aen*. 5.722-3): *visa dehinc caelo facies delapsa parentis / Anchisae subito talis effundere voces* – "Then the appearance of his father Anchises, having descended from the sky, suddenly poured out such words." Both likenesses (*similis, facies*) descend (*delapsus, delapsa*) from above (*aetheriis… astris, caelo*). Ovid re-envisions this, so that the dream ascends from the underworld-like house of Sleep. This vision corresponds more closely with Ennius' dream vision of Homer's appearance (*simulacra, speciem*) that arises from the underworld (Lucr. *DRN* 1.120-6). I discuss this passage further below (pages 61-2).

[73] Ovid uses the same verb to describe Iris pushing the dreams out of the way when she arrives in the house of Sleep (*Met*. 11. 616-7): *Quo simul intravit manibusque obstantia virgo / Somnia* ***dimovit*** – "As soon as she entered, the virgin pushed aside the dreams that were in the way with her hands." The dreams in Ovid stand in place of the shadows (*tenebras… umbras*) in Vergil – the same kind of shadows that populate Vergil's underworld (see especially all of the *umbrae* in the passage *Aen*. 6.264-94).

[74] It could be worth noting that Phorbas is also the name of the highwayman who is blocking the route from Trachis to Delphi at the time when Ceyx wishes to embark on his journey to consult the oracle (*Met*. 11.410-14), so he decides to travel to Claros instead. As Fantham (1979) has pointed out, Ovid has other reasons for making Ceyx go to the oracle at Claros: it was the home of Nicander, the author of his own *Metamorphoses* from which Ovid drew much of his material for the Ceyx and Alcyone narrative, so Ceyx traveling there is a way for Ovid to refer to his source subtly (332-3). But, by adding a Phorbas into the narrative, Ovid could also be hinting at this episode in Vergil as another of his sources. In fact, the roadblock suggests that Phorbas represents an alternative tradition that Ovid will not pursue. We should also note that Phorbas, like the dreams in Ovid, has a Greek name.

Phorbanti ***similis*** *funditque has ore loquelas*). Just like in the passage from Homer, Sleep takes on a different appearance in order to accomplish his mission. Whereas in Homer this meant hiding like a bird to avoid being seen by Zeus, in Vergil Sleep alters his form so that he can appear before Palinurus without him realizing that he is the god of sleep. The latter model most closely resembles what Morpheus does when he appears to Alcyone as her husband Ceyx.[75] In fact, Ovid uses the same adjective *similis* when he describes Morpheus taking on Ceyx's appearance: *in faciem Ceycis abit sumptaque figura / luridus, exanimi* ***similis****, sine vestibus ullis* – "he donned the appearance of Ceyx, and with the shape assumed, he was ghastly, like the dead, without any clothes on" (*Met*. 11.653-4).[76] Ovid is building off of the association between Sleep, dreams, and likenesses/deceptive appearances that Homer and Vergil make.

In the Sleep episode at the end of book five, Vergil also hints at an etymological link between the god, *Somnus*, and dreams, *somnia* by using both terms in this passage. Servius' commentary on line 840 (*te, Palinure, petens, tibi somnia tristia portans*) helps to explain this point. He clarifies how Vergil uses each -*somn*- word (*Ad. Aen*. 5.840):

> *SOMNIA soporem. Bene autem discernit ista Vergilius, ut 'Somnum' ipsum deum dicat, 'somnium' quod dormimus, 'insomnium' quod videmus in somnis, ut "sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia manes"*
>
> "*Somnia*" means sleep. Vergil distinguishes this well, since he calls the god himself "*Somnus*" (Sleep), "*somnium*" (sleep) what happens when we sleep, and "*insomnium*" (dreams) what we see in our sleep, as in "but the shades send false dreams to the sky"

[75] Though it is important to note that in his previous two roles, Sleep appears undercover to a wakeful individual in order to put them to sleep, whereas in Ovid Morpheus appears disguised as Ceyx to Alcyone when she is sleeping. Alcyone's vision of him more closely resembles other dream visions like Achilles' dream of Patrocles or Aeneas' dream of Hector than Sleep's appearance in poetry. Ovid is combining both models (Sleep's appearances and dream visions) in the house of Sleep episode.

[76] Recall that Anchises' *facies* appeared to Aeneas (*Aen*. 5.722-3) (page 43, note 72 above).

Servius explains the threefold distinction that Vergil makes: he uses *Somnus* to describe the god; *somnium* for dreamless sleep; and *insomnium* to describe dreams, which appear to us while we are sleeping. One of Servius' earlier comments further clarifies the distinction he sees between *somnium* and *insomnium* (*Ad. Aen*. 3.151):

> *IN SOMNIS multi hic distingunt et volunt unam partem esse orationis, id est vigilantis: nam quemadmodum videbat lunam infusam fenestris? multi 'in somniis' dicunt, ut sit conlisio, quomodo 'peculi' pro 'peculii'. multi 'in somniis' legunt et posterioribus iungunt: unde et visi: et corpus somno vinci volunt, mentem vero vigilare et meminisse omnium. ideo etiam dormiens de luna scire potuit.*
>
> "*In somnis*": many distinguish this and want it to be a single word, that is about wakefulness: for how does one see the moon pouring in through the windows? Many say, "*in somniis*," so that there is a collision, in they way that "*peculi*" is for "*peculii*." Others read "*in somniis*" and join it to what comes next: whence it is also seen: and they want the body to be conquered by sleep but the mind awake and remembing everything. Thus someone sleeping is able to recognize the moon

Servius asserts that Vergil has a special use of the phrase *in somnis*, meaning "in dreams" rather than "in sleep," as we might expect based on the meaning of *somnium* as sleep from the previous quotation (*Ad. Aen*. 5.840). He clues into this meaning of the phrase based on Vergil's use of *insomnia* (neuter plural of *insomnium*) to describe Dido's nightmares (*Aen*. 4.9), and the false dreams that exit through the gates of ivory (*Aen*. 6.896). Servius quotes the latter line in explaining our line from the end of book five (*Aen*. 5.840) in order to show that Sleep is bringing sleep (*somnia*) to Palinurus rather than dreams (*insomnia*). At the end of book five, Sleep's function is simply to make Palinurus fall asleep so that he can push him overboard. He would not bring other dreams with him since he himself is the dream.[77] This evidence from Servius shows

[77] We should also note that Aeneas meets Palinurus' shade again in the underworld (*Aen*. 6.337-83) (as I noted in the previous chapter, page 25, note 43). When Aeneas asks him what happened, Palinurus gives an alternative explanation for his death that does not mention anything about seeing Phorbas (Sleep) and falling asleep. Instead, he tells a story about losing the rudder, being dragged by the South Wind, and finally being stabbed to death by a cruel people (*Aen*. 6.349-61). I think Palinurus' alternate telling of events can be linked to dreams: Sleep puts him to sleep

that Vergil uses the full semantic range of *somnus* and its etymological kin in order to imagine the different functions of sleep/Sleep in the narrative. Ovid picks up on these different functions: he re-imagines Sleep as distinct from the different types of dreams that populate his house.

From this brief look at the literary precedents for Sleep, the background is set for Ovid to draw on Sleep's thematic associations with naming and resemblance. He does this in our passage when he starts off by referring to Sleep as the etymological father of Morpheus, Icelos/Phobetor, and Phantasos. Ovid's description of these dream figures further reveals that he is drawing attention to their etymological and intertextual significance. For Ovid, the dreams' names are a way of creating a unique intertextual link. Just as words stem from other words, so too do poems grow out of others poems. Ovid uses the names of the dreams to guide his readers through his poetic predecessors.

2.2 MORPHEUS

Morpheus is the first of Sleep's sons whom Ovid names, and he is the one who ultimately executes Juno's mission and informs Alcyone of her husband's death. Ovid's description of Morpheus has programmatic significance for the poem. It also contains allusions to the dream visions in Homer and Vergil. Ovid presents a chain of intertextual connections through Vergil and Homer that ultimately leads back to his poem. He is filtering the epic tradition of dream through his house of Sleep.

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with a wand dripping with Lethaean water (*ecce deus ramum Lethaeo rore madentem / vique soporatum Stygia super utraque quassat / tempora* – "Behold, the god shakes a branch dripping with Lethaean dew and soporific with Stygian power over each of his temples" – *Aen.* 5.854-6), so that he forgets what actually happened and instead dreams up another version that he narrates to Aeneas and the Sibyl. Dreams are again a way of telling stories about the unknown, like we saw in the previous chapter. Palinurus' death also contains certain parallels to Ceyx's: both die at sea and both appear as visions (a shade, a dream) to request their own burial. (N.b.: Polymestor, whom I discuss at the end of the chapter, can be added as a third model for this kind of death and re-visitation – see page 65-6.) Ovid uses both the Sleep episode at the end of *Aeneid* 5 and the Palinurus episode in *Aeneid* 6 as his models for the house of Sleep.

Ovid introduces Morpheus in the following way (*Met.* 11.633-5):

> *At pater e populo natorum mille suorum*
> *excitat artificem simulatoremque figurae*
> *Morphea*
>
> But the father, from the population of his thousand sons, arouses
> Morpheus, the crafter and imitator of shape

Ovid describes Morpheus as the crafter and imitator of shape (*artificem simulatoremque figurae*).[78] As many commentators have pointed out, this suggests the etymological meaning behind his name: *Morphea* is the accusative singular form of what would be a third declension noun μορφεύς, derived from the noun μορφή (morphe, form).[79] The noun form μορφεύς would be used to describe someone acting with respect to the root noun μορφή, just as the noun χαλκεύς (coppersmith) is to the noun χαλκοῦς (copper coin).[80] Hence Morpheus would be the one acting on or in relation to forms, and could be translated roughly as "Former" or "Crafter of form." So when Ovid describes Morpheus as the crafter and imitator of shape (*artificem simulatoremque figurae*), he is glossing the etymological meaning of the name.

It is curious that Ovid uses a Greek name, rather than its Latin equivalent, *forma*. There seem to be a couple of explanations for this. First, Morpheus (*morf-*) is an anagram for its Latin

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[78] Bömer (1980) asserts that *artificem simulatoremque* is an instance of hendiadys, so that it ought to be translated as "skilled imitator," rather than craftsman (*artificem*) and imitator (*simulatorem*) (408). An *artifex* denotes a type of material artistry. For example, Cicero uses it to describe famous painters (*Fam*. 5.12.7): *illi artifices corporis simulacra ignotis nota faciebant* – "Those painters make image of unknown bodies known." This is the main way that Ovid uses it elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*: cf. 6.615, 11.169, 12.398, 13.551, and 15.218. I discuss the material, intermedial importance of Morpheus' imitation in the next chapter (67-89). As an adjective, *artifex* can also carry a negative connotation, as in Propertius' advice that his lover spurn makeup (Prop. 1.2.8: *nudus Amor formam non amat artificem* – "Naked Love does not love a false appearance"). Similarly, *simulator* seems mostly to denote a negative imitator: a pretender or counterfeit, who *dis*simulates, as we would say in English, or acts ironically, as the Greeks say according to Cicero: *in omni oratione simulatorem, quem* εἴρωνα *Graeci nominarunt, Socratem accepimus* – "In all of his speeches, we accept that Socrates is a liar, which the Greeks call irony" (Cic. *Off.* 1.30.108).

[79] On the etymology of μορφή, see Frisk (1960) 257-8. Commentators such as Tissol (1997), Michaelopoulos (2001), Hardie (2002a), etc. note the etymological gloss that Ovid makes.

[80] Χαλκοῦς is a substantive form of the adjective χάλκεος, so the analogy is not exact, but the idea is clear.

equivalent *forma*.[81] For Ovid, who is ever fond of word play, the Greek name offers a subtle way of implying the connection between the Greek and Latin words. And, indeed, the two are etymologically related: the Latin *forma* is either a loan word from Greek via an intermediary language like Etruscan, or it is directly related to μορφή.[82] Although Ovid may or may not have been aware of such etymological connections, his choice of the Greek word nevertheless suggests that he has the relations between Greek and Latin words in mind.

But perhaps the most important reason for Ovid's choice of Morpheus' name is that it rings with programmatic significance.[83] His name is at the root of the title of Ovid's poem, meta*morph*osis. As this title indicates, the poem is about changing shapes (*in nova fert animus mutatas dicere* ***formas*** */ corpora* – "my soul comes to speak about forms changed into new bodies" – *Met*. 1.1-2). This is one of Morpheus' main skills as he is able to take on the appearance of any person, while the other dreams are able to change into animals and landscapes. Altogether, the dreams represent the transformations that take place in the poem. By giving Morpheus such a programmatic name, Ovid is drawing attention to the fact that the dreams represent the poem itself.[84]

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[81] Ahl (1985) 59-60.

[82] Through the transformation *merg^{wh} ->> *g^{wh}erm -> *g^{wh}orm -> form-: Beekes and van Beek (2010) 969-70, de Vaan (2008) 233-4.

[83] Noted by most commentators, eg. Ahl (1985), Tissol (1997), Burrow (1999), Hardie (2002a), Von Glinski (2012). Several commentators also suggest that Morpheus is also a play on Orpheus, who is another "image of the poet" in the poem, and whose tale that also involves the underworld (Eurydice) ends at the opening of book 11 (*Met*. 11.1-66).

[84] Or, perhaps we might say that Morpheus represents the kind of transformation that can happen through imitation. There is ancient evidence that actors could be carried away in their imitations and overtaken by the character they played. For example, Lucian describes a mime imitating Ajax's madness only to become mad himself through the performance (*Salt*. 83):

> ὀρχούμενος γὰρ τὸν Αἴαντα μετὰ τὴν ἧτταν εὐθὺς μαινόμενον, εἰς τοσοῦτον ὑπερεξέπεσεν ὥστε οὐχ ὑποκρίνασθαι μανίαν ἀλλὰ μαίνεσθαι αὐτὸς εἰκότως ἄν τινι ἔδοξεν… Καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα οἱ μὲν ἐθαύμαζον, οἱ δὲ ἐγέλων, οἱ δὲ ὑπώπτευον μὴ ἄρα ἐκ τῆς ἄγαν μιμήσεως εἰς τὴν τοῦ πάθους ἀλήθειαν ὑπηνέχθη

We find evidence that dreaming represents the experience of fiction at the beginning of Ovid's poem, when Mercury sings Argus to sleep (*Met*. 1.668-723).[85] Argus is the hundred eyed monster that Juno sets up to guard over Io, Jupiter's lover who was turned into a cow. Jupiter sends Mercury to kill Argus. In order to accomplish this mission, Mercury approaches him disguised as a shepherd playing Pan's pipes and captivates him with the music, but he is only able to put some of his eyes to sleep. So he then turns to storytelling, relating how Pan invented the pipes. He is barely halfway through the story when he notices that Argus' remaining eyes have succumbed to sleep. He immediately makes sure that Argus is sleeping and then kills him, thus fulfilling Jupiter's order.[86] This episode demonstrates the power that poetry can have over its audience: it is able to lure listeners to sleep, and perhaps into a state of dreaming. We can imagine that when Argus falls asleep, the stories that Mercury was about to tell (*Met*. 1.700-12) become his dreams. The episode suggests a parallel between stories and dreams, since both rely on the suspension of disbelief and use the imagination. Since this programmatic episode (in which storytelling becomes dreaming) happens near the beginning of the poem, I think we can

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> For portraying Ajax maddened just after his defeat, he went beyond all bounds so that it seemed likely to some that he was not acting madness but that he was mad himself… And some marvelled at this act, some laughed, and some suspected that perhaps he had been carried away into the reality of suffering because of his excessive imitation

This example (also noted by Coleman (1990) 68) suggests the transformative power of acting: playing a character can change one's self. We might also compare Plato's discussion of the effects of mimesis in *Republic* 3, or Aristotle's discussion of habituation in the *Nicomachean Ethics* – both authors suggest that imitation can have powerful, transformative effects. Morpheus (and the other dreams to a lesser extent) symbolizes this type of transformation that can happen through imitation. Ovid's poem of metamorphosis could be pointing to some important ethical consequences.

[85] On the metapoetic significance of this episode in Ovid in relation to Apuleius' metamorphoses, see Lev Kenaan (2004).

[86] Note the connection between sleep, oblivion, and death. The connection between Argus and death is present in the city of Rome itself, with the Argiletum, one of the main streets that led into the Forum where judgments over death were made. Vergil explains that the name means the death of Argus, one of King Evander's early visitors whom he killed and commemorated by naming the street after him (*Aen*. 8.345-6): *nec non et sacri monstrat nemus Argileti / testaturque locum et letum docet hospitis Argi* – No less did he point out the grove of sacred Argiletum, and gave the place as evidence that related the death of his guest Argus."

imagine the entire poem as a dream narrative. Then, when we come to the house of Sleep and Ovid reveals the artistry (*artificem simulatoremque figurae*) behind the production of dreams, we get a glimpse of his own artistry in constructing the poem. Ovid draws attention to the similarity of the dreams and his stories by giving Morpheus such a programmatic name.

After Ovid introduces Morpheus, he states (*Met.* 11.635-8):

> *non illo quisquam sollertius alter*
> *exprimit incessus vultumque sonumque loquendi;*
> *adicit et vestes et consuetissima cuique*
> *verba*
>
> No other is more skillful that him at expressing the walk, the look, and the sound of speaking; he adds both the cloths and the most customary words to him

Here, Ovid highlights Morpheus' ability to embody the gait, appearance, and voice of a person, in addition to his/her wardrobe and typical vocabulary. These are all typical features we use to distinguish someone, and they represent the core of the actor's craft.[87] We get to see Morpheus' craft in action a few lines later when he dons the appearance of Ceyx in order to fulfill his role for Alcyone (*Met*. 11.653-7):

> *in faciem Ceycis abit sumptaque figura*
> *luridus, exanimi similis, sine vestibus ullis,*
> *coniugis ante torum miserae stetit: uda videtur*
> *barba viri, madidisque gravis fluere unda capillis.*
> *tum lecto incumbens fletu super ora profuse*
>
> He takes on the appearance of Ceyx and, with the shape assumed, ghastly, like the dead, without any clothes, he stands before the bed of his sad wife. A wet beard appeared on the man, and heavy water flowed from his wet hair. Then, leaning on the bed, with tears pouring over his face…

[87] Morpheus' actor quality is pointed out by Fanthan (1979), Tissol (1997), Burrow (1999), Hardie (2002), Von Glinski (2013).

Here, Morpheus takes on the full appearance of Ceyx, modeling himself after what he would look like dead (*exanimis*) because he wants to convince Alcyone that he has in fact died. He even attends to the fine detail of appearing without any clothes on (*sine vestibus ullis*), even though we know from above that he is perfectly capable to imitating these as well (*Met*. 11.637). He is playing the perfect actor who suits every part of his appearance to his role.[88]

Ovid's description of Morpheus is intertextually connected to the dreamlike shade that Juno fashions in order to distract Turnus in book ten of Vergil's *Aeneid*. Before I describe this, I ought to note that the *Aeneid* contains plenty of dream visions that are conceptually similar to Morpheus' appearance to Alcyone. In fact, dream visions as such are a literary trope that go all the way back to Homer. In book two of the *Iliad*, Zeus sends a bad dream (οὖλον ὄνειρον) to Agamemnon in order to deceive him (*Il*. 2.1-47). Following Homer's example, dream visions feature regularly in Greek and Latin literature, with some notable examples such as Hecuba's dream of Polydorus in Euripides' *Hecuba* and Ennius' dream of Homer that Lucretius revisits at the start of his *De rerum natura*.[89] Ovid himself also uses the trope three other times in the *Metamorphoses*: first, in book nine (*Met*. 9.686-701) Ligolus' wife/Iphis' mother dreams of Isis and her procession of deities (*pompa comitata sacrorum*); and then twice in book fifteen, when the deified Hercules appears twice to Myscelus, ordering him to found Croton (*Met*. 15.1-59), and when Aesculapius appears to an unidentified Roman (a reader? Rome herself?), giving instructions about how to cure the plague (*Met*. 15.651-664).[90] But no text, to my knowledge,

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[88] I explore this further in the next chapter, 77-81.

[89] I discuss these examples below, page 62-6.

[90] There are three other instances of dreaming in the *Metamorphoses* that involve dreaming a scene rather than having a specific person/god (or procession of them) appear before one's bed and eyes (*ante torum, ante oculos*). In book seven, Aeacus, the father of Achilles, dreams of ants crawling over an oak tree (Jove) that transform into humans (viz. the Myrmidons, from the Greek word for ant, μύρμηξ, myrmēx); he then awakes to find his plagued population renewed (*Met*. 7.634-42). In book eight, after he is infected by Famine (*Fames*), Somnus visits

contains more dream visions of the kind that Morpheus is modeled after than the *Aeneid*. I count eleven times in Vergil's epic, including Sleep's appearance at the end of book five, where either a dead relative or deity appears (or is said to have appeared in a dream). Here is a list of all eleven instances:

1.353-6: **Sychaeus**: Venus tells Aeneas of how an image (*imago*) of Dido's dead husband, Sychaeus, came to her in a dream (*in somnis*)

2.268-97: **Hector**: Aeneas tells of how Hector appeared in a dream before his eyes (*in somnis… ante oculos… visus*) on the night Troy was destroyed

2.771-95: **Creusa**: Aeneas tells of how an image (*simulacrum, umbra, imago*) of his wife, Creusa, appeared before his eyes (*visa… ante oculos*)

3.147-79: **Penates**: Aeneas tells of how the sacred *effigies* of the gods and the Penates appear before his eyes in a dream (*visi ante oculos…in somnis*)

4.351-5: **Anchises**: Aeneas tells Dido that he is often warned by the image of his father Anchises in his dreams (*imago… in somnis*)

4.553-70: **Mercury**: the *forma* of Mercury returns to Aeneas in his dreams (*visa… in somnis*) (having already appeared to him waking around *Aen*. 4.244)

5.636-8: **Cassandra**: Iris tells the Trojan women that an image of Cassandra appeared to her when she was sleeping (*per somnum… imago… visa*)

5.719-45: **Anchises**: a vision of Anchises appears to Aeneas at night (*visa… facies*)

5.835-61: **Somnus**: he appears to Palinurus under the guise of Phorbas (*Somnus… somnia… similis*)

7.415-57: **Calybe**/**Allecto**: the Fury appears before Turnus' eyes while he is sleeping, first as an old priestess, Calybe (415-44), and then (after he angers her) as herself (445-59) (*facies, vultus, ante oculos*)

8.26-65: **Tiberinus**: the river god appears (*visus*) to Aeneas while he is sleeping and offers him proof that he's not a false dream (8.42: *ne vana putes haec fingere somnum*)

Erysichthon and makes him dream of feasts (*Met*. 8.823-27). And in book nine, Byblis dreams of sleeping with her brother, only to lament the fact/deed upon waking and question the nature/purpose (lit. weight, *pondus*) of dreams (*Met*. 9.686-701).

There are a few patterns that emerge from this list. In terms of vocabulary, Vergil uses the phrases *in somnis* and *ante oculos* most often to describe the context of the dream. He normally expresses the dream's appearance with a passive form of the verb *video*, to see (e.g. *visus*/he appeared, *visa*/she appeared, *visi*/they appeared). He also uses the range of dream and image vocabulary that we see in Ovid's house of Sleep: e.g. *imago*, *simulacrum*, *umbra*, *vultus*, *facies*, *similis*, *forma*. In terms of narrative themes, almost all of the dream visions in the *Aeneid* seem to appear in the narrative on their own accord – that is, they are not sent by someone like Sleep but instead simply show up in dreams.[91] This can be contrasted with the elaborate chain of command in Ovid. But, in general, dreams in the *Aeneid* function similarly to how Morpheus appears as a vision of Ceyx to Alcyone: they come to warn or urge or in some other way influence the narrative through the character they appear before. Lastly, aside from Dido's nightmares described as *insomnia* (*Aen*. 4.9, 4.466), there are no other dreams in the *Aeneid* aside from these eleven Morpheus-like dream visions.[92] Thus we can say that the dream visions in the *Aeneid* exhibit a typical pattern that Ovid draws from in his creation of Morpheus.

While the dream visions of the *Aeneid* clearly serve as a model for Ovid's Morpheus, there are also significant parallels between him and the dream-like image of Aeneas that Juno fashions in book ten of the *Aeneid*. The context is the middle of the fighting between the Trojans and the Latins. Vergil turns the focus of the narrative from the battlefield to an exchange

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[91] There are two (or, one-and-a-half) exceptions: 1) in book four, Mercury is first sent to Aeneas by Zeus (*Aen*. 4.240) and then an vision of him reappears in Aeneas' dreams (*Aen*. 4.555) – this is what I am counting as a half-example because it is not actually Mercury who appears in the dream but an image of him; and 2) Allecto is sent by Juno to stir up trouble (*Aen*. 7.323-40), and Turnus is one of the characters she infects when she appears as a dream to him (*Aen*. 7.406-74).

[92] Interesting to note: Dido compares herself in her dreams to Orestes on stage (*Aen*. 4.471-3: *aut Agamemnonius scaenis agitatus Orestes, / armatam facibus matrem et serpentibus atris / cum fugit ultricesque sedent in limine Dirae* – "or like when Agamemnon's son Orestes driven on stage flees his mother armed with torches and black snakes and the vengeful Furies sit on the threshold"). This provides further grounds for comparing dreaming to acting, which I discuss in the next chapter (67-89).

between the gods: Juno asks Jupiter if she might withdraw Turnus from the battle and delay his death. When Jupiter assents, Juno descends to the battlefield where she creates the following dream-like distraction to lead Turnus out of danger (*Aen*. 10.636-42)

> *tum dea nube cava tenuem sine viribus umbram*
> *in faciem Aeneae (visu mirabile monstrum)*
> *Dardaniis ornat telis, clipeumque iubasque*
> *divini adsimulat capitis, dat inania verba,*
> *dat sine mente sonum gressusque effingit euntis,*
> *morte obita qualis fama est volitare figuras*
> *aut quae sopitos deludunt somnia sensus.*
>
> Then, out of a hollow cloud, the goddess made a thin shadow without strength into the appearance of Aeneas (an amazing sight to see) with Dardanian weapons, and she copied the shield and crest of his divine head, and gave it empty words, and gave it sound without mind, and fixed the walk of him going, like one who has met with death is said to flutter about shapes, or like the dreams that deceive sleepy senses

Juno creates a shadow (*umbram*) that looks like Aeneas, has his armour, and imitates the sound of his speech and his walk. The overlap between these features and those of Morpheus that we saw above is notable:

- first, both take on the appearance of whoever they are imitating (*Aen*. 10.637: *in faciem Aeneae* = *Met*. 11.653 *in faciem Ceycis*);
- second, Juno's phantom imitates Aeneas' dress (armour: *Aen.* 10.638-9) just as Morpheus imitates Ceyx's lack of dress (*Met.* 11.654: *sine vestibus ullis*);
- third, both imitate the words/vocabulary (*verba*) and the sound of voice (*sonum*), though there is some difference in the quality of the two (see below);
- fourth, both take on the walk/gait of their model (*Aen*. 10.640: *gressus… euntis* = *Met*. 11.636: *incessus*).

These parallels show significant overlap between the two passages. In addition to this overlap, Vergil explicitly compares Juno's shadow to a dream that deceives our sleeping senses (*Aen.* 10.643: *aut quae sopitos deludunt somnia sensus*). This comparison marks a clear point that Ovid builds on in constructing his character. Ovid models his dream (Morpheus) after the dream-like vision of Aeneas.

Juno's dream-like image also refers back to the shade of Aeneas that Apollo creates in book five of the *Iliad*. There, during the middle of Diomedes' *aristeia* while he is attacking Aeneas, Apollo snatches Aeneas out of the battlefield and puts him safely in a temple in Troy. At the same time he fashions an image (εἴδωλον, *eidōlon*) to fill in for Aeneas in battle (*Il*.5.445-53):

> Αἰνείαν δ᾽ ἀπάτερθεν ὁμίλου θῆκεν Ἀπόλλων
> Περγάμῳ εἰν ἱερῇ, ὅθι οἱ νηός γε τέτυκτο.
> ἤτοι τὸν Λητώ τε καὶ Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα
> ἐν μεγάλῳ ἀδύτῳ ἀκέοντό τε κύδαινόν τε:
> αὐτὰρ ὃ **εἴδωλον** τεῦξ᾽ ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων
> αὐτῷ τ᾽ Αἰνείᾳ **ἴκελον** καὶ τεύχεσι τοῖον,
> ἀμφὶ δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ **εἰδώλῳ** Τρῶες καὶ δῖοι Ἀχαιοὶ
> δῄουν ἀλλήλων ἀμφὶ στήθεσσι βοείας
> ἀσπίδας εὐκύκλους λαισήϊά τε πτερόεντα
>
> Apollo set Aeneas away from the crowd in the sanctuary of Pergamus, where his temple was built. There Leto and Artemis the shooter of arrows healed and glorified him in the great inner sanctuary. Meanwhile Apollo of the silver bow fashioned an image like Aeneas himself and with his armour, and around this image the Trojans and the divine Achaeans cut at each other's shields made of ox-hide that encircled their chests and the fluttering light shields

Apollo creates an image (εἴδωλον) that is like (ἴκελον, *ikelon*) Aeneas in his armour.[93] In creating this, Apollo's intention is opposite to Juno's: instead of seeking to protect Aeneas'

[93] We should note that this line in the *Iliad* serves as the model for the opening words of Vergil's *Aeneid*: *arma virumque cano*. Vergil translates the Greek weapons (τεύχεσι) into Latin (*arma*), and the named character (Αἰνείᾳ)

enemy, Apollo uses the image to protect Aeneas. Despite this difference, the fact that both deities fashion an image of Aeneas on the battlefield marks a clear connection between the passages.

Most importantly in relation to Ovid, the adjective ἴκελον (*ikelon*) that describes Apollo's image creates a subtle link between this passage and Homer and Ovid's description of Morpheus and his brothers. Icelos, after all, is one of the names of the second dream that Ovid describes in the house of Sleep. With this connection, we can see Ovid's poetics of imitation at work. He models his description of Morpheus after Juno's image of Aeneas (*Aen*. 10.636-42). This image is in turn modeled after Apollo's image of Aeneas (*Il*. 5.445-53).[94] And Apollo's image contains a link (ἴκελον) to Ovid's next idea (Icelos). Ovid creates an intertextual chain that goes back through the poetic tradition from Vergil to Homer, and then forward to the next idea in his poem.[95] Morpheus is thus a model for Ovid's imitation of his predecessors: Ovid guides his readers through the poetic tradition in such a way that brings them back to his own poem.

Thus, the first dream that Ovid describes is full of significance. In the scene, Morpheus **acts** as an imitative artist (*artificem simulatoremque figurae*). At the level of the text, he symbolizes the poem (*Meta**morph**oses*). Within the poetic tradition, he represents Ovid's reading of his predecessors. Bringing these levels of significance together, we can see that Morpheus represents Ovid's art of creative imitation: that is, a fine balance of repetition and innovation. In the next chapter, I argue that it is this fine balance that allows Ovid to live on through his poetry.

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into the main character (*virum*) of his song. His song can thus be seen as a likeness (ἴκελον). In other words, through the intertextual connection to the *Iliad*, Vergil is pointing to the ontological status of his own poetry as fiction. Ovid implies the same when he models Morpheus after Aeneas' shade and gives another of the dreams the name Icelos. The dreams are fictions like poetry or poetry is a fiction like our dreams.

[94] Aeneas' appearance in Homer is not described in terms of a dream, unlike his appearance in the *Aeneid*, which makes an explicit comparison between the image and dreams (*Aen*. 10.642). I think this signals that the *Aeneid* is a necessary intertextual step between Ovid's dreams and the dream-*like* (ἴκελον) images in the *Iliad*.

[95] This is the kind of tight poetic interlacing that Ovid and his Alexandrian predecessors were masters of – see Hinds (1998).

Before we get to that, let us look at the significance of the other dreams that appear in the house of Sleep.

2.3 ICELOS/PHOBETOR

Ovid has already introduced us to the second dream in the house of Sleep: the gods call him Icelos, but mortals Phobetor (*Met*. 11.640-1). Like Morpheus, Ovid's description of this dream associates him with the themes of etymology, likenesses, and metamorphosis. In this section, I examine two significant likenesses (ἴκελος, εἴκελος) in the *Odyssey*, as well as the famous dream of Homer that stands at the start of the Latin poetic tradition. Ovid responds to Lucretius' depiction of Ennius' dream by creating a new explanation for dreams and a new way of mastering the poetic tradition.

Ovid's brief descriptions of Icelos/Phobetor reads as follows (*Met*. 11.638-41):

> *sed hic solos homines imitatur, at alter*
> *fit fera, fit volucris, fit longo corpore serpens:*
> *hunc Icelon superi, mortale Phobetora vulgus*
> *nominat*
>
> But he imitates men alone, while another becomes wild animals, birds, and a serpent with a long body: this one the gods call Icelos, the mortal crowd call him Phobetor

In contrast to Morpheus who imitates humans, Icelos/Phobetor imitates animals. Ovid offers a few examples of the kinds of animals he can imitate: wild beasts, birds, and a snake.[96] These represent all animals. We can infer this categoric representation from the two other dreams that Ovid describes as covering a general category. As we have seen, Morpheus imitates only

[96] Icelos/Phobetor's ability to imitate these different animals recalls the other animal shape-shifters of the *Metamorphoses*, including Proteus, Erysichthon's daughter, Achelous, Thetis, and Periclymenus. We can also note that Lucian describes a pantomime's ability to transform into beasts and birds, as well as trees, women, or men (*Salt*. 57). For more on the pantomime resonances of the dreams, see the discussion in the next chapter, (esp. pages 76-88).

men/*solos homines*[97] (*Met*. 11.638), and Phantasos, as we shall see, is anything inanimate/*quaeque vacant anima* (*Met*. 11.643).

As we noticed above, Icelos' mortal name is drawn from the language of Homer.[98] The name *Icelon* (as it appears in the Latin line) is the transliterated masculine accusative singular form of the Greek adjective ἴκελος, which is a poetic and Ionic form of εἴκελος, meaning like or resembling. Both forms are etymologically related to the noun εἰκών (image/statue),[99] the verbs εἰκάζω (to imagine or represent by images), and ἔοικα (to be like).[100] And both forms appear in the Homeric poems more frequently than anywhere else.[101]

We have already seen one instance of Homer's use of ἴκελος to describe the shade of Aeneas (*Il*.5.450). There are two other instances of εἴκελος that are worth examining in relation to Ovid's description of the dream; both appear in the *Odyssey*.[102] First, in the *nekyia* of book

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[97] It is significant that Ovid specifies only men (*homines*) and not women (*feminas*). This could correspond to the Roman *imagines*, which were masks of office-holding *male* ancestors. In the next chapter, I discuss how both Ovid and Vergil gesture to the *imagines* (pages 71-76).

[98] Michaelopoulos (2001) suggests that Ovid includes the etymology of his name in the meaning of the verb *imitatur* that appears two lines before Icelos is named and that has Morpheus (*hic*) as a subject rather than Icelos (*Met*. 11.638). Although it is clear that Icelos' name is clearly a reflection of this aspect, all of the dreams are involved in imitating, as is distinctly noted at two other times previously in the house of Somnus (*Met*. 11.613 and 11.626), and we have just seen Morpheus described as an imitator (*artificem simulatoremque figurae*). Thus I think it makes more sense to say that *imitatur* is adding further etymological significance to its referent, Morpheus, as well as the dreams in general, rather than Icelos. It seems better to think about the significance of Icelos' name in relation to the description Ovid offers of his imitation of various animals and his double naming.

[99] Icelos' connection to εἰκών (image, statue) may gesture to other media, as do Morpheus' acting abilities. I further discuss the episodes intermedial associations in the next chapter, 67-89.

[100] These stem from an Indo-European root *ueik-, which means 'resemble': Beekes and van Beek (2010) 380-2.

[101] Forms of ἴκελος appear nineteen times in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and forms εἴκελος appear sixteen times. After that, the most frequent user of the adjectives is Apollonius at 25 times in total (in imitation of his epic model), followed by Hesiod (15 in total), and then there is a sparse scattering (one or two uses) across the works of Herodotus, Plato, Aristophanes, Greek lyric poets, the Homeric Hymns, as well as Theocritus and Callimachus.

[102] There are a few other interesting instances that could be significant. In the *Iliad*, the dancing floor on the shield of Achilles is describes as like (ἴκελος) one that Daedalus built (*Il*. 18.591); and in book twenty-four Iris is described as rushing to the sea floor like a led weight to talk to Thetis (*Il*. 24.80). In the *Odyssey*, Hermes is described like (ἴκελος) a bird flying across water (*Od*. 5.54); Odysseus takes a drug made from a flower that is like (εἴκελος) milk (*Od*. 10.305) and that has a divine name: μῶλυ δέ μιν καλέουσι θεοί - "the gods call it moly" (*Od*. 10.305); Odysseus' comrades fall out of their ship like (ἴκελος) sea-crows (*Od*. 12.418; 14.308); the strings of Odysseus' bow

eleven, after a speech from his mother Anticlea, Odyssey tries to embrace her, but she eludes him like a shadow or a dream (*Od*. 11.206-8):

> τρὶς μὲν ἐφωρμήθην, ἐλέειν τέ με θυμὸς ἀνώγει,
> τρὶς δέ μοι ἐκ χειρῶν σκιῇ **εἴκελον** ἢ καὶ ὀνείρῳ
> ἔπτατ᾽
>
> Three times I sprang forward, and my spirit urged me to grasp [her], but three times like a shadow or even a dream she flew from my hands

The comparison of Anticlea to a shadow or a dream (σκιῇ εἴκελον ἢ καὶ ὀνείρῳ) draws attention to her uncertain epistemological status. Scholars have debated over whether or not Odysseus actually descends into the underworld in book eleven, or if he merely summons ghosts up to talk to him. The general consensus (if there is one) seems to be that if he does descend, it is only clear from the end of the book when he sees the shades of Orion, Hercules, and sinners like Sisyphus (*Od*. 11.568-635).[103] Anticlea, by contrast, is one of the first to appear. Because her form (ghost, soul, shade?) is not described until these lines where Odysseus compares her to a shadow or dream, she serves as one example of the ambiguity of the episode. After all, if she appears *like* a shadow or dream, what exactly is she when Odysseus is speaking to her? Ovid responds to this ambiguity in a way by making the dreams resemble dead shades when Morpheus takes on the appearance of Ceyx.

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sound like (εἴκελος) a bird (*Od*. 21.411), the same bird that Athena disguises herself as (εἴκελος) after she intervenes in the battle of the suitors (*Od*. 22.240). Among these examples, the theme of artistry and deception is important (Daedalus, Hermes, the drug, Athena), as is the theme of birds (Hermes, Odysseus' comrades, the bow, and Athena's costume).

It could also be important to consider the differences between ἴκελος and εἴκελος within the Homeric poems. A brief glance suggests that ἴκελος is generally used for comparisons of women (Athena, Briseis, Aphrodite, Iris, Kassandra, Penelope, Artemis), or comparisons based on weakness (*eidolon* of Aeneas, Patrocles like a little girl, Odysseus like a beggar, Odysseus' companions falling out of his ship); while εἴκελος seems to be used for masculine comparisons of strength (Idomenus, Hector, and Ajax like boars and flames with respect to their strength). The instances of both in the *Iliad* seem much clearer cut along these lines, while the instances in the *Odyssey* seem much more difficult to categorize. I'm not sure if this is significant or has any bearing on Ovid's choice of Icelos instead of Eikelos.

[103] On Odysseus' nekyia/katabasis, see for example Clark (1979), Dova (2012).

The second instance of εἴκελος is from book twenty of the *Odyssey*, when Penelope explains the haunting dreams that she has of Odysseus. This episode takes place after she has described the dream in which an eagle spoke to her after killing twenty geese (*Od*. 19.508-53).[104] Following her recollection of this dream, she offers her account of the gates of horn and ivory through which true and false dreams pass (*Od*. 19.560-8). After this, both she and Odysseus go to bed and have dreams or dream-like visions. First Athena appears to a sleepless Odysseus (*Od*. 20.1-55). Then Penelope awakens from a dream and laments her situation (*Od*. 20.56-84). In that lamentation, she explains that a likeness (εἴκελος) of Odysseus lay beside her during the night (*Od*. 20.87-90):

> αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ καὶ **ὀνείρατ**᾽ ἐπέσσευεν κακὰ δαίμων.
> τῇδε γὰρ αὖ μοι νυκτὶ παρέδραθεν **εἴκελος** αὐτῷ,
> τοῖος ἐὼν οἷος ἦεν ἅμα στρατῷ: αὐτὰρ ἐμὸν κῆρ
> χαῖρ᾽, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἐφάμην **ὄναρ** ἔμμεναι, ἀλλ᾽ **ὕπαρ** ἤδη
>
> But a spirit sent evil dreams to me. For again during the night his likeness lay beside me, just as he was when he went with the army: and my heart rejoiced, since I thought it was not a dream, but reality

This passage assimilates the likeness (εἴκελος) of Odysseus to the dreams (ὀνείρατα) sent by an unknown/unnamed god (perhaps Zeus or Sleep). This connection between likeness and dreams brings us back to Ovid. He draws on Homer's example when he names one of the dreams Icelos (likeness). He is pointing to the fact that Homer uses the adjective to describe Penelope's dream.

[104] If we imagine this dream according to Ovid's schema, it would have been Icelos/Phobetor who appears as all of these animals. We also ought to note the avian theme in the Sleep and dreams that appear in Homer's poems: Hypnos appears like an owl; Penelope dreams of geese and an eagle. Ovid may be responding to this by first having Morpheus fly to Alcyone (Met. 11.650-2) and then having Ceyx and Alcyone transform into the halcyon birds (*Met.* 11.731-48). Homer also mentions Alcyone and hints at the metamorphosis story behind her name (*Il*. 9.561-4): τὴν δὲ τότ᾽ ἐν μεγάροισι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ / Ἀλκυόνην καλέεσκον ἐπώνυμον, οὕνεκ᾽ ἄρ᾽ αὐτῆς / μήτηρ ἀλκυόνος πολυπενθέος οἶτον ἔχουσα / κλαῖεν ὅ μιν ἑκάεργος ἀνήρπασε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων – "Once in the palace her father and lady mother called her Alcyone [halcyon/sea-bird], a eponymous name since her mother, having the lot of a much-sorrowing sea-bird, cried for her when far-reaching Phoebus Apollo snatched her."

Ovid also suggests a Homeric model and an association with etymology when he assigns Icelos another, mortal name. As we saw in the lines quoted above, the imitator of animals is named Icelos by the gods, but mortals call him Phobetor (*hunc Icelon superi, mortale Phobetora vulgus / nominat*: 11.639). The name Phobetor derives from the Greek verb φοβέω, to put to flight or frighten, and so would translate as something like "Frightener."[105] We have already seen one example of a figure who has two names: Sleep hides like a bird that the gods call *khalkis*, but men call *kymindis* (*Il.*14.291: χαλκίδα κικλήσκουσι θεοί, ἄνδρες δὲ κύμινδιν).[106] As that example showed, the different names reveal different aspects of the figure, especially the gods' privileged knowledge of that bird. The same is true of Icelos/Phobetor's two names. To the gods, he is Icelos because they (e.g. Juno, Sleep) are the ones who create dreams and likenesses, and know that they are such. Mortals like Alcyone, by contrast, can mistake a dream for reality and become frightened or otherwise disturbed by it: hence the name Phobetor. Ovid is pointing to the difference between the divine and human perspectives in relation to the production and reception of dreams. Notably, he aligns both himself (as the poet) and the reader with the divine, knowing perspective. In this way, he is gesturing to the task that Lucretius gives himself in his *De Rerum Natura*.

[105] N.b. Phobetor, as a figure, is not otherwise attested to in Greek and Latin literature. The closest equivalent for his name in Greek is the neuter noun φόβητρον (*phobetron*), which means scarecrow or terror more broadly, and in the plural can refer to the tragic masks of the Furies. Thus Phobetor too carries a connection to the stage, which I will discuss next chapter (67-89). It could also be significant that scarecrows and masks suggest that he is imitating human shapes rather than animals. Ovid could be gesturing to the process of metamorphosis: that animals were previously humans and vice versa.

[106] Bömer (1980) points out other examples of this "alte epische Formel": eg. *Il.*1.403-4, 2.813-4, 20.74; *Od.*10.305, 12.60-1 (409). O'Hara (1996) lists Latin dual names, most of which contrast the Greek and Latin names rather than the names used by gods and mortals (88-92).

In his didactic poem, one of the first tasks that Lucretius sets out for himself is to correct the ignorance of the human race about dreams and the afterlife (*DRN* 1.102-28).[107] One of the main obstacles to his task is the poetry that falsely depicts the nature of these things. He identifies the Latin poet Ennius as one of the main culprits, since he sang of the underworld and described Homer coming to him in a dream (*DRN* 1.120-6):

> *etsi praeterea tamen esse Acherusia templa*
> *Ennius aeternis exponit versibus edens,*
> *quo neque permaneant* ***animae*** *neque corpora nostra,*
> *sed quaedam* ***simulacra*** *modis pallentia miris;*
> *unde sibi exortam semper florentis Homeri*
> *commemorat speciem* ***lacrimas effundere*** *salsas*
> *coepisse et rerum naturam expandere dictis.*
>
> And moreover Ennius set down in his eternal verses that there are Acherusian temples, where neither our souls nor our bodies remain, but instead some pale image of our very ways; he remembered that the appearance of ever-flourishing Homer came to him from there, beginning to pour down salty tears and explain the nature of things in his words

According to Lucretius, Ennius described the underworld (*Acherusia templa*) as a place where images (*simulacra*) dwell and whence the likeness (*speciem*) of Homer appeared to him in order to explain the nature of things (*rerum naturam*). This passage establishes that Lucretius is directly responding to Ennius in his poem, since he offers an alternate account of the nature of things. He will assert that the underworld is nothing but a fiction of the poets, made up to arouse

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[107] Lucretius compares being in a state of ignorance to being in a dream. At the end of book three, he explicitly employs dreaming as a metaphor for being in a state of ignorance (3.992-1023). He also anticipates this comparison in his description of the state of human life that Epicurus entered into (1.62-3): *Humana ante oculos foede cum vita iaceret / in terris opressa gravi sub religion* – "When human life lay foully before the eyes, pressed down on earth under heavy religion." As we saw above with the list of examples from the *Aeneid*, *ante oculos* is commonly used to describe the appearance of dream visions. Ovid uses the same verb *iaceo* to describe the empty dreams lying around in the house of Somnus (*Met.* 11.614). *In terris* occupies the same metrical position where we often find *in somnis*. And *sub religione* echoes *sub imagine* that is regularly used to describe things that happen in a dream state such as the effects of the other personifications (both *Invidia*/Envy and *Fames*/Famine act *sub imagine*: *Met*. 2.804 and *Met*. 8.824, respectively), as well as the actions of the dreams in our passage (*Met.* 11.627). These parallels, along with his later explicit comparison, offer support for interpreting the passage where Lucretius introduces Epicurus as a dream. As such, it becomes another important moment in poetry that can be reinterpreted in light of the dreams in Ovid's house of Sleep.

fear of death. He will also explain that dreams, such as Ennius' dream of Homer, are the mind's revision of *simulacra* that are perceived while awake (*DRN* 4). According to Lucretius, neither dreams nor the underworld need to be feared. Proper knowledge (provided by Lucretius' poem) releases humans from such fears.

Just as Lucretius responds to Ennius, Ovid responds to Lucretius' account of dreams and their place in the poetic tradition. There are a few parallels that connect this passage from Lucretius to Ovid's house of Sleep. For example, Ovid has Iris describe the dreams as *simulacra* in her speech to Sleep (*Met*. 11.628). He also has Morpheus put on the appearance of pouring down tears (*fletus quoque fundere veros / visus erat* – "He also seemed to pour down real tears" – *Met*. 11.672-3), which corresponds to Homer's appearance to Ennius (*lacrimas effundere salsas* – *DRN* 1.125).[108] These parallels are important because Ovid is offering a different account of dreams and a different account of the poetic tradition. Ovid envisions both dreams and the poetry that it represents coming out of the house of Sleep. He filters the poetic tradition from Homer to Ennius to Lucretius through his new explanation of dreams. Just as Morpheus' name hinted at the programmatic significance of this episode, so too does Icelos/Phobetor's, as it situates Ovid's poem in the poetic tradition.

2.4 PHANTASOS

In this section, I look at the third and final dream that Ovid describes: Phantasos, who imitates inanimate things. Like Icelos/Phobetor, Ovid's description of him is brief. Nonetheless, it reveals aspects of Ovid's naming techniques and his imitation of his predecessors. After considering the etymological significance of his name, I look at an example from Euripides'

[108] Vergil also uses this image of the weeping dream figure to describe Hector's appearance to Aeneas (*Aen*. 2.268-97). Ovid is drawing from both Lucretius and Vergil in his depiction of Morpheus.

Hecuba that connects dreams with actors, leading us into the next chapter where I examine the resonances between the house of Sleep and the Roman stage.

Ovid identifies Phantasos in the following three lines (*Met*. 11.641-3):

> *est etiam diversae tertius artis*
> *Phantasos: ille in humum saxumque undamque trabemque,*
> *quaeque vacant anima, fallaciter omnia transit*
>
> And there is a third of this diverse art: Phantasos. He easily passes into earth, a rock, a wave, a bush, whatever is without a soul

With humans and animals taken care of by the other dreams, Phantasos provides the background/setting for dreams by imitating things like earth, rocks, water, and shrubs.[109] Ovid takes care to connect him to artistry as he did with Morpheus (the ***arti****ficem simulatoremque figurae*) by calling Phantasos the third of this various artistry (*diversae tertius artis*). We can notice some metapoetic wordplay in the adjective *diversae*, the perfect passive participle of the verb *divertere* (to divert, separate), since at its root is the verb *vertere* (to turn, change), which is one of the key terms of metamorphosis that Ovid uses. Ovid also emphasizes the deceptive nature of Phantasos' imitations with the adverb *falliciter* (deceptively, falsely). This again recalls Morpheus' description as a *simulator* (imitator, pretender, deceiver). It also connects all of Somnus' sons in this passage through its alliterative resonance with their names: ***f****alliciter*, **Ph**antasos, **Ph**obetor, Mor**ph**eus.

The name Phantasos derives from the Greek verb φαίνω (to appear), which also gives rise to words like φαντασία (appearance, faculty of imagination) and φάντασμα (apparition, phantom, dream). The former (φαντασία) is one of the key terms of ancient poetic theory/literary criticism,

[109] I should also note that Socrates uses the example of prophetic oak trees and rocks right before he compares texts to paintings (Pl. *Phae*. 275b-c). I discuss Socrates' vision of texts further in the next chapter (page 82-3).

and it is commonly used to described the vividness (ἐναργεία, *enargeia*) that ancient authors employ to make their narratives come to life before their reader's mind's eye (*ante oculos mentis*).[110] By naming one of Somnus' dream sons after this important term, Ovid signals that he is engaging in literary criticism in this passage. The latter term (φάντασμα) provides another connection to dreams in ancient literature. In particular, it connects Ovid's dream characters to Hecuba's dream at the beginning of Euripides' eponymous play about her.

Euripides' *Hecuba* opens with a prologue delivered by the ghost (εἴδωλον, *eidōlon*) of Polydorus, one of Hecuba's sons who was sent away to Thrace in order to avoid the dangers of the Trojan War only to be murdered by his host Polymestor. He starts off the play by describing what has happened to him: after Polymestor killed him, he threw his body into the sea; Polydorus has returned to foreshadow his need for burial (21-52).[111] He returns in the form of a φάσμα or φάντασμα that haunts his mother Hecuba's dreams (**φάντασμα** δειμαίνουσ' ἐμόν – "maddened by my appearance" – line 54; δείμασι, **φάσμασιν** – "fears, visions" – line 70). We can link the root of these words for dream apparitions to Phantasos' name. This terminology for dreams emphasizes their visuality. We can also compare Polydorus' on-stage appearance to Morpheus' role in Ovid's narrative, since both represent dead shades visiting loved ones to ask for burial. But perhaps the more accurate comparison would be of the actor who played Polydorus to Morpheus who plays Ceyx, since both take on the appearance and imitate the character's shade who appears in the play. This comparison finally brings us to the focus of the next chapter,

[110] Most recently on phantasia in ancient poetics: Sheppard (2014). On ancient literary criticism, see also Ford (2002), Fowler (1991), Webb (1999, 2009), Bartsch and Elsner (2007).

[111] He explained that he (i.e. his body) will appear on shore so that he can obtain a proper burial. I take this to mean that the shade signals the need rather than actually requests the burial. No speech is mentioned in relation to his apparition (φάντασμα); it is only described in visual terms.

where I argue that Morpheus ought to be interpreted as an actor who represents a particular kind of textuality.

One final remark before we turn to this: the phrase Ovid uses to describe what Phantasos imitates – *quaeque vacent anima* – is worthy of note. In light of the Lucretius we saw above (*DRN* 1.120-3), this phrase brings up the question: what are any of these dreams (*somnia vana*, as Ovid calls them at *Met*. 11.614) but bodiless and soulless imitations (*simulacra sine animis*)? This question becomes all the more pertinent for all of the dreams in the passage when Ovid describes Morpheus' imitation of Ceyx when he is about to appear before Alcyone as *ex**animis** similis* (*Met*. 11.644). The dreams have external form that makes them able to imitate other shapes, but they lack the *animae* or inner essence that is normally indicated by the name – the only thing that remains constant through metamorphosis (*in nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora – Met*. 1.1-2). For the dreams, even their names point to their existence as only external appearances (*simulacra*). But it is also through their names that Ovid creates links to his poetic predecessors. This suggests a different kind of metamorphosis: not the change of spirit from one body into another, but the change of poetry from one poet to the next. The dreams are the nominalization of Ovid's approach to poetic imitation and transformation.

CHAPTER 3: LIVING IMAGES OF TEXTS

The house of Sleep is an ekphrasis that ultimately refers to improvisational acting. Through such an intermedial gesture, Ovid situates literary culture within a broader system of performance such as drama and mime. Its ekphrastic resonance situates the house of Sleep within the tradition of *Aeneid* 6 in particular, but whereas Vergil's underworld is a static ekphrasis of monuments, Ovid moves from static images to lifelike actors. This move has important consequences for how we interpret the text. In particular, Morpheus' role as an improvisational actor offers a way of imagining the text as having the quality of live performance, as well as creating performance spaces beyond the confines of the page. This view of the text counters the common idea that texts are static imitations. Rejecting such a view, Ovid uses Morpheus to show that the poet and the text can live on through spontaneous performance.

3.1 EKPHRASIS

In this section, I consider the ekphrastic parallels between Vergil's underworld and Ovid's house of Sleep. Both authors use visual language and deictic markers that clearly establish both episodes as ekphrases.

At the entrance to the underworld in *Aeneid* 6, Vergil leaves some clues that the entire episode is a cosmological ekphrasis. After invoking the gods, mute shades, Chaos, and Phlegethon (*Aen*. 6.264-5), he describes Aeneas and the Sibyl making their way to the underworld on a path that is shrouded in darkness like a shadowy path through the woods (*Aen*. 6.268-72):

> *Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram*
> *perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna:*
> *quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna*
> *est iter in silvis, ubi caelum condidit umbra*
> *Iuppiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem*

> They walked, hidden under lonely night, through the shadows and the empty halls of Dis and the hollow kingdom: like a path in the woods under the spiteful light of a doubtful moon, when Jupiter hides the sky with shadows, and black night takes the colour away from things

Vergil offers a visual description of the first steps of Aeneas' and the Sibyl's journey. He focuses on how their path looks, with its shadows, dim lighting, and dark colouring. As we saw in the first chapter, ancient authors commonly describe the underworld in terms of darkness and the absence of the sun. This was one of the indicators that Ovid's house of Sleep is an underworld space, since an atmosphere of uncertain light covers the entrance (*Met*. 11.595-6: *nebulae caligine mixtae / exhalantur humo dubiaeque crepuscula lucis*). This time around, the important thing to note is that both authors use visual language to indicate that these episodes are ekphrases.

The ancient definition of ekphrasis included both descriptive passages in texts, as well as textual descriptions of works of art.[112] The term has come to denote the latter, more specific trope, but both the general and specific meanings are active in the passages I am dealing with. In fact, both Vergil and Ovid move from broader visual description of topography towards a more specific visual medium of art. In the lines quoted above (*Aen*. 6.268-2) Vergil begins to paint the broader, topographic description. He first identifies a space, the *domos Ditis* and *inania regna* that he visualizes through the path simile, with its dim lighting and dark colouring. Following this introduction, Vergil includes other visual markers of space (deictic markers) in his description of the gates of the underworld (*Aen*. 6.273-94). He identifies locations such as the entryway (*vestibulum ante – Aen*. 6.273), threshold (*adverso in limine – Aen*. 6.279), centre (*in*

[112] On ancient ekphrasis, see Bartsch and Elsner (2007), D'Angelo (1998), Dinter (2013a), Fowler (1991), Gladhill (2012), Goldhill (2007), Leach (1974), Putnam (1998a and b), Thomas (1983), Tissol (1997), Walker (1993), Webb (1999 and 2009), Wheeler (1995), and Zanker (1981).

medio – *Aen*. 6.282), and doors (*in foribus* – *Aen*. 6.286).[113] As we saw in the first chapter, Ovid too presents a topographic description of the entrance to the house of Sleep, with symbols like the river Lethe and the poppies and innumerable herbs. He also uses similar deictic markers: for example, *ante fores* (*Met*. 11.605), *in limine* (*Met*. 11.609), and *at medio* (*Met*. 11.610). The description of the topography is complemented by such deictic markers, which guide the mind's eye of the reader over the different sections of the each scene. This visual guidance allows readers to assign a specific location to each of the features identified: in Vergil, these are the monsters that populate the entryway, whereas in Ovid, they are the underworld symbols and the dreams.

Both Vergil and Ovid also use visual language of shapes (*formae*) and images (*imagines*) to portray the monsters, on the one hand, and the dreams, on the other. Vergil, for example, describes the first group of monsters that includes Sickness, Old Age, Hunger, etc. as terrible shapes to see (*terribiles visu formae* – *Aen.* 6.277). The vocabulary of shape again appears in his description of the monster Scylla as *bi**formes*** (*Aen*. 6.286) and Geryon as the ***forma** tricorporis umbrae* (*Aen*. 6.289). These visual monsters are the formidable forms that Aeneas would have tried to stab, if the Sibyl had not advised him that they were merely the shapes of empty images (*Aen*. 6.290-4):

> *corripit hic subita trepidus **formidine** ferrum*
> *Aeneas strictamque aciem venientibus offert,*
> *et ni docta comes tenuis sine corpore vitas*
> ***admoneat** volitare **cava** sub **imagine formae**,*
> *inruat et frustra ferro diverberet umbras*

[113] Such indicators of domestic space (vestibule, doorway, etc.) suggest that Vergil's underworld (or at least the entrance) is a house, like Sleep's in Ovid. I should note that Vergil continues to use similar deictic markers throughout *Aeneid* 6, as he creates a kind of mental map for his readers. See Feldherr (1999) on mapping Vergil's underworld; and Dinter (2013a) 129 n. 41 for some terms that suggest that all of *Aeneid* 6 is an ekphrasis.

> Here suddenly nervous with fear, Aeneas snatches his sword and offers his unsheathed blade to those approaching, and if his learned companion had not warned him that these thin lives without bodies fly in the hollow image of shape, he would have rushed and vainly struck the shadows with his sword

Here, Vergil depicts Aeneas' and the Sybil's reactions to the monsters that they see. Aeneas is scared by the shapes, while the Sibyl demonstrates her knowledge of the underworld when she explains that they are merely hollow images (*cava… imagine*) rather than real threats.

There are clear connections in this passage to Ovid's description of the dreams that dwell in the house of Sleep. First, we can recall that Ovid uses the same adjective (*cavus*) as the Sibyl to describe Sleep's house as a hollow mountain (*mons cavus* – *Met*. 11.592). He also similarly describes the dreams as imitating various shapes (*varias imitantia formas* – *Met*. 11.613), and using images to do so (*imagine* – *Met*. 11.587; *sub imagine* – *Met*. 11.627). These parallels show that the monsters at the entrance to Vergil's underworld are visual models for the dreams in Ovid's house of Sleep. Both Vergil and Ovid use descriptive, visual language to depict their underworld spaces. This makes both passages cosmological ekphrases of a sort.

3.2 Statues in Vergil

Despite these stylistic similarities, there are a number of differences between the two episodes. Notably, Vergil's underworld is an ekphrasis of monuments. Both the opening and close of his underworld (as well as some points in between) make reference to statues. In this section, I show how Vergil's underworld can be interpreted as a static, monumental space.

The monsters at the entrance to Vergil's underworld can be seen as statues. Not only does Vergil use visual language like *forma* and *imagine* to describe them, but the word for monster (*monstra* – *Aen*. 6.285) is etymologically related to a verb that is used for showing: *monstrare*. Both *monstra* and *monstrare* derive from the verb *moneo* (to advise, remind), which

Vergil uses in the passage when the Sybil warns (*ad**mone**at* – *Aen*. 6.293) Aeneas about the images. *Moneo* also serves as the root for one of the Latin words for statue: *monumentum*. The opening of Vergil's underworld is a kind of ekphrasis of monster statues.

Vergil also evokes statues towards the end of Aeneas' visit to the underworld. After Aeneas and the Sybil have gone through the main sights of the underworld (*Aen*. 6.295-678), they finally meet Aeneas' father Anchises, who offers them a long speech. First he explains the transmigration of souls (*Aen*. 6.724-51);[114] then he identifies the souls who will become Aeneas' descendants and other Roman heroes (*Aen*. 6.756-886). Anchises' description of these souls calls to mind the Roman practices of the *pompa funebris* (funeral procession) and the *laudatio* (praise speech) that were performed with *imagines* (ancestral masks).

Imagines were unique political symbols in Roman society.[115] In brief, they were realistic wax masks of office-holding ancestors that were kept on display in the *atria* of Roman homes when they were not being worn by actors at public funerals.[116] At home the *imagines* were a way of advertising a family's status. The atrium was the central room where most activity took place including the reception of visitors, and so having the *imagines* on display there served as a visual

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[114] See discussion in the previous chapter, pages 20-25.

[115] *Imagines* is the nominative plural form of the term *imago*, which has a range of meanings. Habinek (2005) asserts that, "The mimesis of the deceased seems to be the core meaning of *imago*, with the death mask serving as a reminder of that performance" (124). But Latin authors also use *imago* to describe art (statues, paintings), figures of speech, mental images (both dreams and ideas), mirror images, underworld creatures, constellations, and the ancestral masks. A few authors suggest that an *imago* is an inferior version of its original – eg. Cic. *Orat*. 8, Quint. *Inst*. 10.2.11. Ovid, in the *Tristia*, refers to his *carmina* as an *imago* of himself that is better than any artistic representation (e.g. statue, signet ring) (*Tr*. 1.7.9). He also suggests that performance can bring an *imago* to life in his *Heroides*: Laodamia describes the wax image of her lover as nearly as good as the real thing when she says, *crede mihi, plus est, quam quod videatur, imago; / adde sonum cerae, Protesilaus erit* – "Believe me, this image is more than it seems; add sound to the wax and it would be Protesilaus" (*Her*. 13.155-6). I further discuss Ovid's vivification of images below (section 3.3, pages 76-80). Daut (1975) offers a study of the material uses of *imago*. See also Flower's (1996) study of the *imagines* (ancestral masks).

[116] Flower (1996) 2. Much of the information in this paragraph come from her study of the *imagines*, as well as the entry on the *imagines maiorum* by Keirdorf (2015) in *Brill's New Pauly*.

reminder of the family's status.[117] The *imagines* were also used to show off status at the funerals of the elite.[118] Funerals for state officials consisted of two main public events: 1) a parade (*pompa funebris*) of "musicians, dancers, actors wearing the *imagines*, professional mourners, friends, and relatives"[119] that would proceed from the home to the Forum, where 2) a funeral speech (*laudatio*) would be performed that praised the deeds of the deceased and all of his ancestors (who were present as the actors wearing the *imagines*). In addition to these two main functions, *imagines* were also used as the models for statues of ancestors that were erected throughout the city. The most famous such collection is the gallery of *Summi Viri* (Roman heroes) in the Forum of Augustus, that was completed in 2 B.C.E.[120] The *imagines* and statues made from them evidently memorialized the dead, but it is important that this took place through public display and performance. The visual, performative aspect of the *imagines* made them symbols not only of the past, but also of the Roman contemporary political culture that hinged on status, which was largely determined through genealogy (i.e. the precise thing that *imagines*

[117] Compare Höcker (2015): he identifies a *lararium*, where the *imagines* were stored alongside the ritual/spiritual statues/icons of the *lares familiares* and *penates*. By contrast, Flower (1996) insists that the *imagines* were kept in a separate cupboard (called the *armaria*) and had nothing to do with cult worship practices, which would take places at shrines (*lararia*?) located in a more interior, private place in the house (eg. *Penetralia*?). We should keep note that Ovid describes Sleep's house, in which the *somnia-imagines* are found, as both a *domus* and *penetralia* (*Met*. 11.593). He could be offering a different localization of the *imagines* in the Roman house that either connects them with religious worship *or* reduces the household gods to the status of dreams.

[118] The most detailed account of the Roman funeral practices is in Polybius' *Histories* (6.53-4).

[119] Flower (1996) 92. Flower notes that it is not certain whether the *imagines* in the funeral procession would act out the ancestors and introduce themselves, or wear placards (*tituli*) indicating their identity to the spectators. In comparison, when the *imagines* were stored at home, they bore *tituli* as a means to identify them, and similarly the statues found in the Forum of Augustus were fashioned with an *elogia* inscribed in bronze that identified them and listed their offices and important deeds.

[120] The date is significant: Ovid (exiled from Rome in 8 C.E.) would have been in Rome to see the finished product, while Vergil (who died in 19 B.C.E.) may have influenced the start of the Forum's construction (as early as the late 20s B.C.E). On the possible intermedial connection between the Forum of Augustus and *Aeneid* 6, see Rowell (1942) and Flower (1996) 109-14.

represented).[121] The *imagines*, thus, were important political symbols in the late Roman Republic and early Empire when Vergil and Ovid composed their poetry.

As I noted above, Anchises' speech resonates with the *pompa funebris* and the *laudatio*.[122] We can imagine the shades he describes to Aeneas as the *imagines* at the funeral. Anchises further gestures to Roman commemorative practices at the end of his speech. After he has gone through Aeneas' progeny up to Vergil's contemporaries, Anchises predicts the future skills of the Romans and others (*Aen*. 6.847-53):

> *excudent alii **spirantia** mollius **aera***
> *(credo equidem), **vivos** ducent de **marmore vultus**,*
> *orabunt causas melius, caelique meatus*
> *describent radio et surgentia sidera dicent:*
> *tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento*
> *(hae tibi erunt **artes**), pacique imponere morem,*
> *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*
>
> Others will strike gently breathing bronze (I certainly believe), lead living faces out of marble, plead cases better, map the courses of the sky with a compass, and tell of the stars' rising. You, Roman, remember to lead people with authority, (these are your arts), enforce the custom of peace, spare those subjected to you, and destroy those who are proud

In the first two lines, Anchises mentions statues made of bronze (*aera*) and marble (*marmore*). These same materials were used to make the statues of the *Summi Viri* in the Forum of Augustus.[123] Given that these lines come immediately after Anchises' description of the same men who were memorialized in that Forum, we can interpret this as an intermedial gesture – i.e.

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[121] Flower (1996) emphasizes the contemporary political relevance of the *imagines* throughout her book.

[122] See Flower (1996) 109-14, especially the additional references at 110 n.91; and Dinter (2013a). Flower (1996) explains how Vergil incorporates the two events of the funeral in one scene (another instance of hendiadys) by having Anchises offer his commentary on each figure (what would normally take place at the end of the *laudatio*) while they proceed in parade-like fashion before him and Aeneas (who acts as spectators) (110).

[123] Shaya (2013), Rowell (1941).

Vergil wants his readers to call the Forum of Augustus to mind when they read these lines.[124] Notably, he assigns the production of such statues to others (*alii*), who also excel in oratory and astronomy (*Aen*. 6.849-50).[125] By contrast, the Roman skills (*artes* – *Aen*. 6.852) centre on politics (*regere imperio, imponere morem, parcere, debellare*). Just as Anchises exhorts a Roman to remember (*memento*) such skills for ruling, the statues (*monumenta*) that he gestures to in the first two lines serve as a visual reminder of Roman political power. In other words, Anchises caps his *laudatio*-like speech with visual reminders that reenforce his political message.

The most curious feature of the statues that Anchises evokes in the passage quoted above is their animate nature: the bronze statues are breathing (*spirantia* – *Aen*. 6.847) and the ones made out of marble have living faces (*vivos… vultus* – *Aen*. 6.848). Such animation poses a problem of interpretation, since statues are commonly depicted as static, or perhaps lifelike, but not living and breathing. Vergil even appeals to the static nature of statues earlier in book six when he describes Dido's stone-like response to Aeneas' entreaties. Aeneas catches a glimpse of her shade in the fields of mourning, and after he speaks his final words to her, Vergil describes Dido in the following way (6.469-71):

> *illa solo **fixos** oculos aversa **tenebat***
> ***nec** magis incepto vultum sermone **movetur***
> *quam si dura silex aut **stet** Marpesia cautes*
>
> She, turned away, held her eyes fixed on the ground, and did not move her face at the start of his speech any more than if hard granite or a Marpesian rock stood still

[124] Dinter (2013a) frames this point in terms of intermediality, but Rowell (1941) and Flower (1996) also express a similar idea.

[125] Servius assigns a geographic location to each of these arts (*Ad. Aen*. 6.847): *et per aes Corinthios indicat, per marmor Parios, per actionem causarum Athenienses, per astronomian Aegyptios et Chaldaeos* ("with bronze he gestures to Corinthians; marble, Parians; legal action, Athenians, and astronomy, Egyptians and Chalcidians").

In the final line, Vergil compares Dido to hard granite (*dura silex*) or a Marpesian rock (*Marpesia cuates*). His mention of these two materials recalls the two (bronze – *aera* and marble – *marmore*) from the end of Anchises' speech. And the Marpesian rock, in particular, refers to the same kind of Parian marble that would have been used to carve the statues found in the Forum of Augustus.[126] The force of Vergil's comparison of Dido to such hard rocks lies in the motionlessness of statues made out of these materials. The verbs and participles in the passage underscore this static aspect: Dido holds (*tenebat*) her eyes fixed (*fixos*), while her face is unmoved (*nec… movetur*), like a statue that stands still (*stet*). Thus Vergil presents an image of a static statue from earlier in the book that stands in direct contrast to the living statues that Anchises evokes at the end of the book. The contrast begs the question: what is the difference between the two? Why are some of Vergil's statues static while others are animate?

Evidence from Vergil's *Georgics* offers one solution to this problem. At the beginning of the third book of that poem, Vergil conjures up the image of a temple of Caesar that would be made from marble (*G*. 3.13: *templum de marmore*) and surrounded by statues made out of the Parian stone (*G*. 3.34-6):

> ***stabunt*** *et Parii lapides,* ***spirantia*** *signa,*
> *Assaraci proles demissaeque ab Ioue gentis*
> *nomina, Trosque parens et Troiae Cynthius* ***auctor***
>
> And Parian rocks will stand, living signs, the offspring of Assaracus and the name of the people descended from Jove, and Tros, the father and the Cynthian, the founder of Troy

The statues that Vergil describes in these lines are both standing (*stabunt*) and breathing (*spirantia*). This brings together the two opposing images of statues from *Aeneid* 6. These statues

[126] Servius explains the meaning of *Marpesia cautes* in his note on this line: *nam cautem Marpesiam Parium lapidem dicit; Marpessos enim mons Pari est insulae* – "By Marpesian rock he means Parian stone: for Marpessus is a mountain on the island of Parus."

are also ancestral statues that represent the same Trojan heritage of Caesar that Anchises traces out in *Aeneid* 6. Vergil further connects the two passages by adding a reference to the underworld in the lines that immediately follow (*G*. 3.37-9):

> *Inuidia infelix Furias amnemque seuerum*
> *Cocyti metuet tortosque Ixionis anguis*
> *immanemque rotam et non exsuperabile saxum*
>
> Unhappy Envy fears the Furies, the sever river Cocytus, the twisted snakes of Ixion and his massive wheel, and the unconquerable rock [of Sisyphus]

In these lines, Vergil names or alludes to the underworld symbols of Envy, the Furies, the river Cocytus, and two of the famous underworld sinners, Ixion and Sisyphus. Such a gesture to the underworld links the opening *templum* of *Georgics* 3 to the underworld of *Aeneid* 6, and his description of the *spirantia* statues (*Georg*. 3.34) connects to the living statues at the end of Anchises' speech (*Aen*. 6.847). These connections provide grounds for using the material in *Georgics* 3 to help interpret the lines in *Aeneid* 6. I think the most important thing to observe from the connection is the ideological potential that both contain. Because both are images of the ancestors of Caesar, both contain the potential to glorify (or perhaps subtly subvert) him as a ruler. The *spirantia* in both passages could be a gesture towards the "living memory" of Caesar and his line in the Roman Empire.[127] Or, they could be a gesture towards the deification and thereby eternal life of the Roman Emperors. Such immortality would stand in contrast to Dido's merely mortal shade in the underworld. Unlike Dido who stands fixed, Caesar and his line live on as gods. Vergil represents them as lifelike statues in order to highlight their continued life after death either in memory or as gods.[128]

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[127] Gowing (2005) discusses the endurance of Republican memory in the Imperial period.

[128] Compare Dinter (2013a), who explains the living statues at the end of Anchises' speech as Vergil drawing attention to his skills at ekphrasis: "through the way he describes artefacts made from bronze and marble as

Vergil gestures to statues throughout his underworld. The way he describes the gates at the entrance to the underworld makes it so that they can be seen as a monument of monsters. In the middle of Aeneas' tour of the underworld, Vergil compares Dido's shade to a motionless statue. And Anchises refers to lifelike bronze and marble statues at the end of his speech that recalls the *pompa funebris* and *laudatio*. Vergil's underworld is an ekphrasis of statues that have varying degrees of realism.

3.3 Actors in Ovid

Ovid offers an alternative interpretation of the breathing statues that we find in Vergil's texts. As we saw above, the dreams in Ovid respond to the shades that populate Vergil's underworld. We also noticed that Ovid uses the same vocabulary of images and visuality (*imagine*s, *formas*) that Vergil does. But rather than ending with a vision of living statues, Ovid truly gives life to the *imagines* when he describes the dreams as actors. Morpheus in particular conveys all of the traits of a good actor since he imitates not only the appearance, but also the habits and speech of the character he portrays. In this section, I show how Ovid transforms Morpheus from a static appearance, into a moving mime, and then into a fully vocal actor.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the descriptions Ovid offers of Morpheus characterize him as an actor.[129] Perhaps it would be useful to review the two main passages in which Ovid describes him before proceeding. First, there is the description of him that Ovid

breathing he even explicitly touches on *enargeia*, the power of a medium to create a vivid presence, which has been dubbed 'the heart of ekphrasis'" (130). Evidently, I think Vergil is doing more than this.

[129] Among others, Hardie (2002a) and Tissol (1997) briefly note Morpheus' actor qualities. See also Curley (2013) on Ovid and tragedy and Wiseman (2008) 210-30 for a discussion of the relationship between Ovid's poetry and the Roman stage. Notably Wiseman suggests that an earlier passage from book eleven of the *Metamorphoses* (the story of Peleus and Thesis – *Met.* 11.257-65) alludes to stage performance, perhaps mime or satyr play.

offers when he introduces and names Morpheus along with the other dreams Icelos/Phobetor and Phantasos (11.634-8):

> *excitat artificem simulatoremque figurae*
> *Morphea: non illo quisquam sollertius alter*
> *exprimit incessus vultumque sonumque loquendi;*
> *adicit et vestes et consuetissima cuique*
> *verba; sed hic solos homines imitatur*
>
> He arouses Morpheus, the crafter and imitator of shape: no one else is more skilled than him at expressing the walk, face, and sound of speaking; he adds both the clothes and the most customary words to him; but he only imitates men

After this, Ovid also describes the backstage preparations that Morpheus makes in order to appear before Alcyone (11.653-7):

> *in faciem Ceycis abit sumptaque figura*
> *luridus, exanimi similis, sine vestibus ullis,*
> *coniugis ante torum miserae stetit: uda videtur*
> *barba viri, madidisque gravis fluere unda capillis.*
> *tum lecto incumbens fletu super ora profuso*
> *haec ait:*
>
> He changes into the appearance of Ceyx and, with the shape assumed, he stands ghastly, like the dead, without any clothes, before the bed of his miserable wife; a wet beard appears on him, and heavy water flows from his wet hair. Then, leaning on the bed with tears pouring down his face, he speaks the following…

In both of these passages, Ovid describes Morpheus like an actor who puts on a costume and performs on stage. Morpheus adopts not only the appearance, but also the habits and diction of the character he is portraying.

The first thing to note is Morpheus' imitation of the appearance of the character he represents. Ovid uses a range of visual words to describe this aspect of Morpheus' craft: *vultum*, *vestes*, *faciem*, *figura*, *similis*, *videtur*. We can recall the similar visual terms that Vergil used to describe the shades (*umbras*) and monsters (*monstra*) at the entrance to his underworld: *forma*,

imagine, etc. With the variety of words he uses to describe Morpheus' appearance, Ovid emphasizes the visuality of his representation that responds to Vergil's underworld shades. But this visual aspect is the most static, statuesque (*monumentalis*) of Morpheus' acting abilities.

Morpheus takes on more life in his imitation of the mannerisms or body language of characters he plays such as their walk (*incessus*) and the requisite tears pouring down his cheeks that he shows to Alcyone (*fletu super ora profuso*). These characteristics additionally associate Morpheus with the medium of mime/pantomime.[130] This medium was a popular form of entertainment in the ancient world. Mimes would act out popular myths in the street, on stage, or in the symposium. They also accompanied readings of poetry. We have evidence that mimes performed Ovid's poetry (*Tr*. 2.519-20), even though he claims (perhaps ironically) that this was never his intention (*Tr*. 5.7.25-8). And, as Ismene Lada-Richards (2013) has explained in her work on Ovid and pantomime (122),

> infinitely more important than any changes of mask or costume would have been the pantomime's body language and the modifications of his gestural vocabulary by means of which the trained dancer would have been able to signpost his journey between the characters he was called upon to represent within each *fabula*[131]

This explanation gives us the significance of Morpheus' ability to imitate mannerisms. By noting Morpheus' skill at imitating body language, Ovid may be signaling a mime performance. The details in Morpheus' description would act as guidelines for the mime's gestures. It is important to note that mimes improvised much of their performance following the story or general stage directions, much like Morpheus does in fulfilling Juno's orders.[132] So in addition to visual masks

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[130] Fantham (1989) notes that there was no distinction between mime and pantomime: in the ancient world, it seems that mime was a generic category that included any narrative entertainment using the media of song, dance, and speech that did not fall under the categories of tragedy and comedy (154). Marshall (2006) echoes this claim. For the association of Ovid and pantomime, see Galinsky (1996) 265-6 and Lada-Richards (2013).

[131] N.b. Lada-Richards attributes this idea to Webb (2008).

[132] More on this below, section 3.4, pages 80-8.

and statues, Ovid's gesture to mime performance brings another kind of representation into the consideration of this passage. Morpheus becomes more and more lifelike in his imitation.

With the addition of voice (*sonumque loquendi… consuetissima verba*), Morpheus becomes a fully embodied actor. He finally has all of the features that an actor needs to play a role on stage because he is able to imitate all of these external aspects of human life (appearance, mannerisms, voice). Morpheus becomes a realistic imitation much like Laodamia's *imago* that would be brought to life with the addition of voice (*crede mihi, plus est, quam quod videatur, imago: / Adde sonum cerae, Protesilaus erit – Her.* 13.155-6).[133] Morpheus is the most skilled at imitating men (*homines imitatur*) because he is able to copy not only their appearance (*imago,* etc.), but also their habits and voice.

Morpheus' ability to imitate human life is precisely what Horace identifies in his *Ars Poetica* as the essential skill that an artist/playwright/craftsman needs in order to create realistic characters (*AP* 317-8):[134]

> *Respicere exemplar uitae morumque iubebo*
> *doctum imitatorem et uiuas hinc ducere uoces*
>
> I will suggest that a learned imitator look at the model of life and mores, and lead living voices from this

These lines offer some parallels to what we have seen in Ovid and Vergil. Horace's injunction to a learned artist (*doctum imitatorem*) evokes Ovid's description of Morpheus as a crafter and

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[133] See page 71, note 115.

[134] Compare the repetition of *mores* in his instructions on what will produce an approving audience for one's creations (156-7): *Aetatis cuiusque notandi sunt tibi* ***mores****, / mobilibusque decor naturis dandus et annis* – "You must know each's age and *mores*, and an appropriate mobility must be given to their nature and years." Compare also the metatheatrical appeal to imitating appearance and *mores* that we find in Plautus' *Amphitruo* (265-6): *et enim vero quoniam* ***formam*** *cepi huius in med et* ***statum****, / decet et facta* ***mores****que huius habere me* ***similes*** *item* – "And since I even took on his shape and status, it was fitting that I have his same deeds and *mores* too." *Mores* seems to be the typical term used to describe the non-visual features that Ovid lists (i.e. gestures, sound, vocabulary).

simulator who imitates men (*artificem simulatoremque… hominess imitatur – Met.* 11.634-8). Both Horace and Ovid describe an imitator (*imitatorem, imitatur*), and both identify the skills required for an imitator to bring his imitation to life. In particular, both authors suggest that the imitative artist needs to go beyond the mere appearance (*imago, vultus*) by studying the habits and speech of his character. In addition to this parallel to Ovid, Horace's instruction to create living voices (*vivas… ducere voces*) echoes Anchises' vision of living faces carved out of marble (*vivos ducent de marmore vultus*). Both Horace and Vergil's Anchises emphasize lifelikeness or realism (*vivas, vivos*) in representation. But whereas Anchises' lifelike representations are appearances (*vultus*), Horace's are voices that bring images to life.

Ovid follows Horace's model for lifelike representation when he gives Morpheus not only the look (*vultus*, etc.), but also the mannerisms (*mores*) and speech (*sonum… verba*) of his character. In doing this, he moves beyond the static, though lifelike, images that populate Vergil's underworld. He offers a unique vision of animate actors in the house of Sleep. This gives us a different way of thinking about the text.

3.4 PERFORMANCE

As we saw in the previous chapter, Ovid indicates that Morpheus is a symbol for the text through his meta**morph**ic name. There I also suggested that Ovid's presentation of the Argus story in book one parallel fiction and dreaming so that Ovid's poem becomes like a dream narrative from the beginning. As a symbol of the text, Morpheus embodies the unpredictability of performance that gives a text life. In this way, he can be seen as a response to previous conceptions of the text as a static object. Ovid offers a different vision of texts that corresponds to his poetry of metamorphosis.

Texts and their relation to memory can and have been variously interpreted in the classical tradition at least since Plato.[135] Plato first offers the idea that texts are deceptively lifelike imitations in the *Phaedrus*. Towards the end of the dialogue, Socrates tells Phaedrus about the exchange between the Egyptian god Theuth, who made many discoveries and presented them to the king Thamus in order to gain his approval (*Phaedr*. 274c-274e). When it comes to his invention of the alphabet and writing, Theuth claims that he has discovered a great cure for memory and wisdom, but Thamus quickly curbs his enthusiasm by saying (*Phaedr*. 275a):

> τοῦτο γὰρ τῶν μαθόντων **λήθην** μὲν ἐν ψυχαῖς παρέξει μνήμης **ἀμελετησίᾳ**, ἅτε διὰ πίστιν γραφῆς ἔξωθεν ὑπ᾽ ἀλλοτρίων τύπων, οὐκ ἔνδοθεν αὐτοὺς ὑφ᾽ αὑτῶν ἀναμιμνῃσκομένους: οὔκουν μνήμης ἀλλὰ ὑπομνήσεως φάρμακον ηὗρες
>
> This will produce forgetfulness in the souls of learners through the neglect of memory, since because of their trust in external writing from foreign stamps, they will not remember within themselves: thus you have not found a cure for memory, but for reminding

Thamus argues that, given that memory is something that exists in the soul, texts as external embodiments of ideas do not serve memory as such. Rather, they can only act as reminders for the things one truly knows in one's soul. Having true knowledge in one's soul is one of the criteria for wisdom, and Thamus asserts that writings only produce the semblance of wisdom rather than the real thing (*Phaedr*. 275a-b). Socrates then expands on Thamus' point by claiming that writings do not produce wisdom because they cannot take part in discussion (dialectic, διαλεκτική). He describes writing in the following ekphrastic terms (*Phaedr*. 275d):

> δεινὸν γάρ που, ὦ Φαῖδρε, τοῦτ᾽ ἔχει γραφή, καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς ὅμοιον ζωγραφίᾳ. καὶ γὰρ τὰ ἐκείνης ἔκγονα ἕστηκε μὲν ὡς ζῶντα, ἐὰν δ᾽ ἀνέρῃ τι, σεμνῶς πάνυ σιγᾷ.

[135] Ford (2002) offers an account of the pre-Platonic development of literary theory. On the rise of written culture from oral performance, see the collection edited by Yunis (2013). Lowrie (2009) also discusses the difference in writing and its origins in chapter 1 of her book (1-23).

> ταὐτὸν δὲ καὶ οἱ λόγοι: δόξαις μὲν ἂν ὥς τι φρονοῦντας αὐτοὺς λέγειν, ἐὰν δέ τι ἔρῃ τῶν λεγομένων βουλόμενος μαθεῖν, ἕν τι σημαίνει μόνον ταὐτὸν ἀεί
>
> Writing has this sort of terrible thing, Phaedrus, and is truly like a painting. For the offspring of the latter stand as though living, but if you ask something, reverently [they remain] in perfect silence. The same thing happens with writings: you would think that they know something when they speak, but if, wanting to learn, you ask something of what is written, the text always only signifies the very same thing

Socrates compares writing to a painting, whose "offspring" (ἔκγονα, i.e. the figures in paintings) stand as though they are alive, but always remain silent. Writing is like this, Socrates says, insofar as it appears intelligent, but it always signifies the same thing. This image, combined with Thamus' argument that writings are mere reminders, serves as a warning against the belief that writing contains any sort of permanent wisdom. As an intermedial instrument, it cannot offer the stability of the intangible world of the ideal forms. But also, as a static medium, it cannot offer the wisdom that comes from engaging in dialectic. Thus writing, for Socrates and Thamus, is a limited medium that can only, at best, serve as a reminder of knowledge and a starting point for discussion.

In Rome, writing was viewed differently. There is evidence in the Latin poetic tradition that writing was seen as a permanent way to memorialize one's identity.[136] In particular, Latin poets use epigraphy (writing on stone) as a metaphor for the durability of writing. This metaphor may be behind Vergil's gesture towards statuary (*Aen.* 6.847-8) that we saw above. There is also

[136] This view of writing may be connected to the "epigraphic habit" in the late Roman Republic and Roman Empire that MacMullen (1982) first identified. Interpretations of the evidence vary (compare Meyer (1990), Woolf (1996), Ramsby (2005, 2007)), and describing Latin inscriptions as evidence of a particularly Roman "epigraphic habit" may not be the most useful or accurate way of thinking about them. But what is important is less such speculations about how the culture at large viewed inscriptions than how Latin authors/poets used inscriptions as a metaphor for their writings. I do not think that the latter ought to be read in isolation from the former, but my focus is on the literary debates over texts.

evidence of its prevalence in love elegy[137] and in the poetry of Horace, who at one point describes his poetry as an everlasting monument (*Odes* 3.30):[138]

> *Exegi* ***monumentum aere*** *per****ennius***
> *regalique situ pyramidum altius,*
> *quod non imber edax, non Aquilo inpotens*
> *possit diruere aut* ***innumerabilis***
> *annorum series et fuga temporum.*
> *Non omnis* ***moriar*** *multaque pars mei*
> ***vitabit*** *Libitinam; usque ego postera*
> *crescam laude recens, dum Capitolium*
> *scandet cum tacita virgine pontifex.*
> ***Dicar****, qua violens obstrepit Aufidus*
> *et qua pauper aquae Daunus agrestium*
> *regnavit populorum, ex humili potens*
> *princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos*
> ***deduxisse*** *modos. Sume superbiam*
> *quaesitam meritis et mihi Delphica*
> *lauro cinge volens, Melpomene, comam*
>
> I have built a monument that is more enduring than bronze and loftier than the regal site of the pyramids, which neither the greedy rain, nor the wild north wind is able to destroy either through the countless succession of years and the flight of time. I will not die entirely and a large part of me will avoid Libitina; continuously into the future I will rise, recently praised, while the priest climbs the Capitoline with a silent maiden. I will be spoken of, where the furious river Aufidus resounds and where Daunus, lacking in water, ruled over a rustic people, strong from low origins, first to have led Aeolian song in Italian verses. Take pride that has been earned by merit and crown my hair willingly with the Delphic laurel, Melpomene

In this ode, Horace describes his own literary creation as a monument that is meant to provide him with immortality.[139] Both Habinek (1998) and Lowrie (2009) draw attention to the

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[137] Ramsby (2005, 2007); Dinter (2013b); Lowrie (2009); Habinek (1998).

[138] The first ten lines are quoted in Woolf (1996) and discussed by Lowrie (2009), who links them to a couple of lines from Ennius (117-22) and the end of Ovid's poem (*Met*. 15.871-9) (374-7). Habinek (1998) also discusses Horace's monumentalization (110-11).

[139] On memory and memorialization in Horace's poetry, see Thom (2008), in addition to Habinek (1998) and Lowrie (2009) from the previous footnote. Lowrie (2009) notes that Ford (2002) details the poet's use of the monument image in Simonides, Bacchylides, and Pindar (117 n.59). Compare also Livy's description of his history as a visual

performative aspect of this immortality: by linking his poetry to a monument, Horace brings the performance context of inscriptions to mind.[140] As Habinek (1998) explains (111),

> The verb *dicar* reminds us that Roman inscriptions frequently exhorted the passerby to stop and read. By reading aloud, as was characteristic of the ancients, the reader quite literally speaks or gives voice to the one commemorated by the monument. Thus the monumentality of Horace's accomplishment paradoxically is what guarantees its continuing vitality. But the paradox is no paradox at all if we keep in mind that the monument only functions properly in the context of a living, reading, interpreting community

The idea is that inscriptions offer both material and rhetorical durability: stone guarantees that the writing will endure through time, and the performance and re-performance of the words guarantees that the author's name and ideas will last. By comparing his poetry to such inscriptions, Horace would thus ensure his own immortality.

This view that writing in stone is a means to immortality is perhaps best captured in the epitaph of Ennius.[141] It reads (out loud?) as follows (quoted at Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* 1.15.34):

> *Aspicite, o cives, senis Enni* ***imaginis formam****:*
> *Hic vestrum pinxit maxima facta partum*
> *Nemo me lacrimis decoret nec funera fletu*
> *Faxit. Cur?* ***volito vivus per ora virum***
>
> Look, citizens, at the shape of the image of old Ennius: he composed the greatest deeds of your fathers; may no one decorate me with tears nor make a funeral with cries. Why? I fly, living, through the mouths of men

This epitaph epitomizes the idea that the poet, after death, lives on through the repeated performance of his writings/words. We can note the use of *imaginis formam* in the first line. This emphasizes the visuality of the text that comes from the monument's materiality. As we saw above, both Vergil and Ovid used the same visual language to describe the shapes in their

monument in the preface to his *Ab urbe condita* (10). Feldherr (1998) argues that Livy is responding to Thucydides' description of his *Histories* as a possession for all time (Thuc. 1.22).

[140] See also Barchiesi (2002) on Horace's textual performance of lyric poetry.

[141] Lowrie (2009) also discusses Ennius' epitaph (esp. in ch 1: 1-23).

underworld spaces. We can also note that the epitaph uses the same adjective *vivus* that we saw in Vergil and Horace to describe realistic representation. In Vergil, Anchises imagined statues having a life-like appearance (*vivos… vultus*); Horace recommended giving characters life-like speech (*vivas… voces*). In Ennius' epitaph, by contrast, *vivus* describes the continuing vitality of the poet after his death. He continues to live on "through the mouths of men" – that is, through others reading his words (on the monument and of his poems). Reading the inscription is a way of imagining the repeated performance of poetry. And this performance is what gives the poet a kind of life after death – or makes him "life-like"/realistic after death. Overall, we might say that in contrast to Plato, for whom the repetition of the text's words marks a *lack* of vitality, for the Roman epigraphic mindset exemplified by Horace and Ennius, the (ritualistic?) reiteration of writing on stone is a way of ensuring that one's memory is fixed and lives on.

I think that Ovid goes one step further than the monumental inscriptions (such as Ennius', that are evoked by Vergil and Horace), and in doing so he offers a solution to Plato's criticism of texts as lifeless monuments.[142] With Morpheus as a symbol for his poetry, Ovid captures both the performative aspect of texts, as well as the spontaneity of interpretation. The former aspect

[142] I should note that Ovid does also include the belief in inscribed writing as an enduring medium in his story of Ceyx and Alcyone: at one point, Alcyone wishes for a tombstone on which her name can be joined to her husband's (*Met*. 11.704-7). But he ends the *Metamorphoses* in a way that directly responds to Horace's and Ennius' *monumenta* (noted by, for example, Lowrie (2009), Farrell (1999), Barchiesi (2002)). The final two lines read as follows (*Met*. 15.878-9): *ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama, / siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam* – "I will be read by the mouths of the people, and I will live on through all ages in fame, if the predictions of the vates are true." Lowrie (2009) explains, "He owes his future immortality to his writing… and to the free and uncontrollable speech that is *fama*… Ovid's vision for his poetry trumps Augustus' own self-representation [i.e. monuments in the Forum of Augustus]… Ovid ascribes to himself not only poetic immortality of the sort that monuments offer the emperor, but also freedom. It resides in the people and they exercise it by performing poetry anew by reading" (382). Lowrie finds Ovid's continuing vitality in the freedom of reading. I would perhaps like to make a more radical point than this with Morpheus: it is not only that speech (*fama*) cannot be controlled by the Emperor, but it cannot even be controlled by the poet. Ovid can suggest that he will live on, but this only happens if his prediction (*vatum praesagia*) comes true. His vitality hinges on unpredictable future readings of his works – the future of his text needs to be spontaneous/unpredictable in order to make it life-like.

responds to the Latin poetic tradition of Ennius, Vergil, and Horace, who imagine texts as lifelike monuments that call out for their re-performance. The latter marks Ovid's distinct vision of texts.

As we have seen, Morpheus is an actor. With him, Ovid evokes the context of the theatre where poetry can live on through by being re-performed. But even more than this, Morpheus is the kind of actor who can improvise on a theme. In the Sleep episode, Morpheus puts on a show for Alcyone that follows the guidelines set out by Juno rather than a specific written script. In this way, he is like the actors of Atellan comedy (*fabula Atellanae*) or mime, who would improvise most of the action in a skit under the guidance of some general stage directions.[143] There were stock characters to play in these skits: in Atellan comedy, for example, there were the characters Maccus, the dunce/clown; Bucco, the glutton/braggart; Dorsennus, the schemer/glutton; and Pappus, the old man.[144] There were also some standard skits that the surviving titles hint at: "Pappus the Farmer," "Maccus the Maid," "Bucco Adopted," "The Twin Dossenuses," etc.[145] With stock characters and situations, the actors in such performances did not have to make everything up on the spot. Likewise, Morpheus has Ceyx as the model for his character. He has to modify his appearance to make him seem dead, but otherwise he uses Ceyx's customary voice and mannerisms to model his imitation. Beyond the general outline of character and the stage directions that guide them, the key thing about both Morpheus and the Atellan actors is their ability to perform spontaneously and respond to a given situation as required.

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[143] See Blänsdorf (2015) on Atellan comedy and Furley (2015) on mime. Furley (2015) in particular cites the evidence that we have from papyri that shows the stage directions the actors/mimes would follow in their improvisations. There is also a brief discussion of both genres in Marshall (2006) 5-8, 274-5.

[144] Blänsdorf (2015). Compare the list in Marshall (2006) 5: Maccus, the clown; Bucco, the fool; Dossenus the glutton; Pappus, the old man; and Manducus, the ogre.

[145] Marshall (2006) 5-6.

This improvisational ability is what makes Morpheus distinct as a symbol for the text. Rather than repeat the same scripted (inscribed) words over and over again, Morpheus offers a vision of the text as something that can be read aloud, but also improvised; there can be a repeat performance, but it is always new. This way of looking at the text puts emphasis on the role of the reader in bringing it to life. The reader not only gives voice to the poet's words, but also brings his/her own experience and context to give meaning to the text.[146] But it is equally important to see that Ovid incorporates a kind of flexibility into the text itself. Morpheus points to the text's ability to respond differently to different contexts.[147] The idea is that not only does reader-reception vary, but the text itself is not fixed. Instead, it contains a multiplicity of meanings that spontaneously arise ("improvise") in different contexts. Ovid's use of puns and wordplay – language that can have multiple meanings – hints that the text contains multiple layers of meanings.[148] And Morpheus emphasizes the random aspect that is involved in drawing these meanings out.

One necessary counter-argument to my claim about the text's flexibility is that, although from the internal narrative perspective Morpheus improvises his performance, from the external perspective of the reader, Morpheus does actually always say the same thing. After all, we have a fixed text of book eleven of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (manuscript variants notwithstanding), in

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[146] This is a reader-response idea: see Edmunds (2001) 44: "the reader performs the meaning of the text."

[147] This is something like Bakhtin's dialogism. On Bakhtin and interpreting classical texts, see the collection edited by Branham (2002), especially the chapter on Ovid by Tissol (137-157).

[148] On the relationship between the text's multiple form and content, see Ahl (1985, 1988), Tissol (1997), Michaelopoulos (2001). Compare also Barthes' comments on Greek tragedy in his "Death of the Author" essay (1993) 495: "la nature constitutivement ambiguë de la tragédie grecque; le texte y est tissée de mots à sens double, que chaque personnage comprend unilatéralement (ce malentendu perpétuel est précisément le 'tragique'); il a y cependant quelqu'un qui entend chaque mot dans sa duplicité, et entend de plus, si l'on peut dire, la surdité même des personnages qui parlent devant lui : ce quelqu'un est précisément le lecture (ou ici l'auditeur)." I would add that different readers bring out different meanings.

which Morpheus speaks the same thirteen lines to Alcyone. While this is true, I do not think it decisively devalues the point. In fact, perhaps the manuscript tradition provides some evidence for the claim I think Ovid is making. Scribes made copies of the text that ultimately derive from the text that Ovid wrote, but the varieties that come out in their reproductions show the unpredictability of reception. An analogous transformation also happens through translation. Morpheus says the same thing in Latin and English (for example), but it is also not the same because words carry different connotations in different language communities. This example only hints at the multiplicity of *meaning* that a text can produce. Once it falls into the hands of readers, the possibilities for the text's variation in meaning are near endless. The point is that texts change physically, semantically, etc. Morpheus as an emblem of the text points to this changeability.

The flexibility of the text that Morpheus represents is also what gives it its "life." The written text is not a living organism, but just as Morpheus is as lifelike a representation of the dead (*exanimis*) Ceyx, so the text that changes is "alive." This vision of the text is different from the kind of monumental afterlife or living memory that the Latin tradition from Ennius through Horace appeals to. By drawing attention to the random/spontaneous aspect of reception, Ovid makes his text more lifelike. Ovid's vision of the improvisational text also responds to the Platonic view of texts as lifeless repetitions. Instead of always saying the same thing and being unable to respond to questioning, lifelike texts contain multiple meanings that can offer different responses. Ovid's depiction of Morpheus captures this idea that texts, like improv actors, can spontaneously perform. It is through this unpredictable performance that the poet is able to live on.

CONCLUSION

The house of Sleep is a complex reworking of the epic themes of heroic descent and dream visions through which Ovid offers a distinct vision of poetry and performance. In the first chapter, we saw how Ovid uses traditional symbols of the death and the underworld in order to establish that the house of Sleep is an underworld space. He makes connections to the underworlds found in Homer, Hesiod, Plato, Apollonius, and Vergil, as well as the underworld that he previously presented in book four of his poem. By establishing Sleep's house as an underworld, Ovid implies that the heroic descent to the underworld is like falling asleep and dreaming things beyond the normal bounds of reality – i.e. the realm of fiction.

In the second chapter, we saw the metapoetic consequences of this parallel between descent and dreaming. Sleep and all of his children (the dreams) are associated with the themes of likenesses and deceptive appearances through their names and intertextual connections. Each of the named figures in the episode plays a different role in the stagecraft of the episode. And Morpheus in particular stands out as a metapoetic symbol of the text since his name resonates within the title of the poem. Alongside Morpheus, we also considered the significance of the Mercury and Argus episode in book one of the poem: the narrative spell that Mercury casts over Argus makes it possible to conceive of the entire poem as a dream narrative. Both fiction and dreams allow us to explore unknown or impossible worlds through our imaginations. With the house of Sleep as the source of dream fictions, Ovid suggests that creative inspiration comes from our subconscious in ways that perhaps cannot be controlled by, for example, Lucretian understanding of the nature of things.

In line with this idea that poetic inspiration is uncontrollable, Ovid also incorporates the uncontrollable, unpredictable aspect of reception into his text. In the third chapter, we saw how

he makes the house of Sleep not only a topographical ekphrasis like the underworld of *Aeneid* 6, but also an intermedial play on acting and mime. Morpheus is again the title character, whose ability to perform Juno's orders on the spot offers a way of interpreting texts. In particular, Morpheus allows us to see that the interpretation of a text is a spontaneous event that hinges on the reader's or audience's reception. So, rather than imagining the text as a lifelike statue or everlasting monument, he emphasizes the reception that gives a text life and meaning. With Morpheus, Ovid is able to master the poetic tradition in a different way: not only does he filter all dream visions and subsequently all poetic narratives (like Vergil's, Lucretius', Ennius', and Homer's) through his house of Sleep, but he also trumps their poetic afterlife by imbuing his text with a different kind of vitality. Ovid's house of Sleep can thus be seen as one of the most important moments in the *Metamorphoses* since it offers so much intertextual and programmatic significance.

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