Reading Water in Ancient Poetics: From Metaphor to Hydropoetics

Boom, Frank van den

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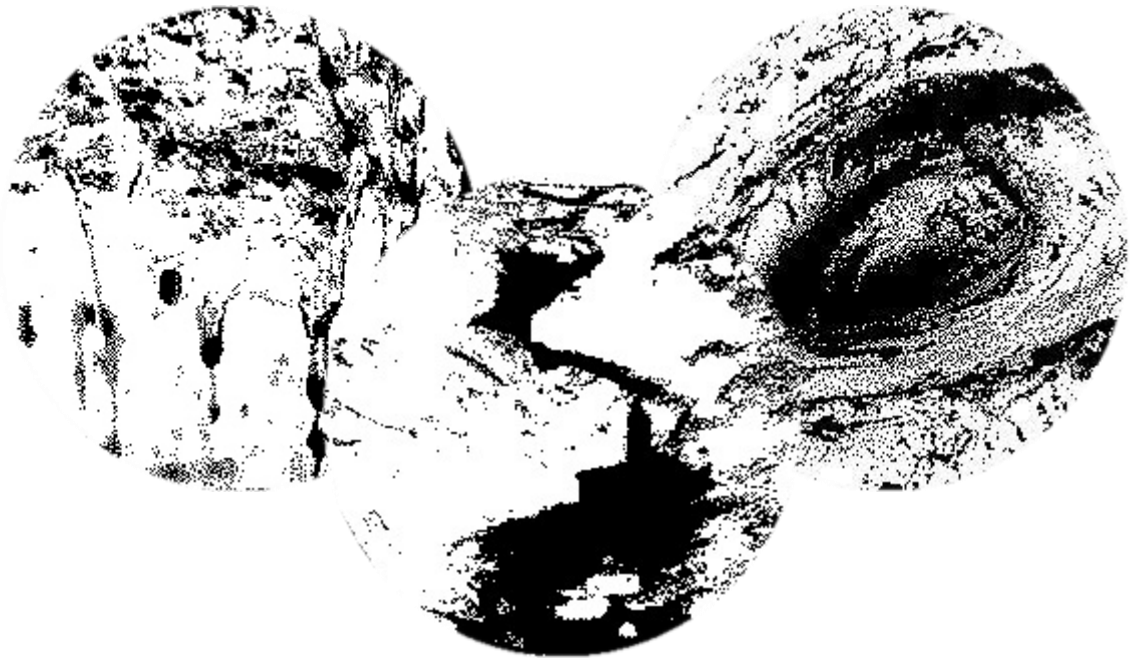
FROM METAPHOR TO HYDROPOETICS



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This Research Master's thesis was written to meet the requirements of two Research Master's programs at Leiden University: the Research Master's Classics and Ancient Civilizations (Classics Track) and the Research Master's Literary Studies. This thesis therefore formally constitutes as a "double thesis": one research project that has the length of two theses and that adheres to the specific thesis requirements of each program. The thesis was appointed one supervisor and one second reader from each program.

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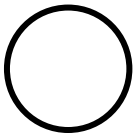
Word count (excluding front matter and bibliography): 55936

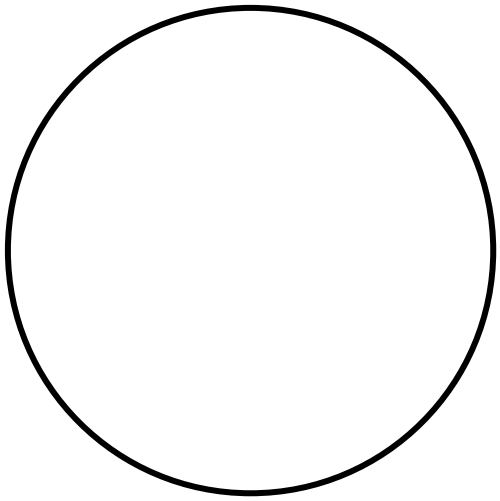
Contents

Acknowledgements

I have many people and many things to thank for their indispensable contributions to this thesis. I want to thank Casper and Frans Willem for their diligent supervision and inspiring feedback: their suggestions and advice have reverberated throughout the writing process as if we had talked for days. I want to thank Maria and Matthew for their time to read and assess my thesis along with Frans Willem and Casper. I want to thank my family, Hans, Erna, Jimmy, Anna, Teun and Suze for their love and care; Joris, Maura, Margot, Iris and Jessy for letting me spill out my thoughts and providing guiding lights when my head would eddy; Gijs for writing poetry together and helping me think through my position as an artist and writer; Josse and Victor for their joy and laughter at home; Fester, along with the poets affiliated with the FFÛH collective, for working together on a poetry collection about the sea. I want to thank the Atlantic Ocean at Furadouro in Portugal, the North Sea at Strandslag 11, the Witte Singel at the Leiden University Library, the rain above Zuiderpark in The Hague on the 18th of February 2024.

The Hague, 18th of July 2024





INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Reading Water in Ancient Poetics

If there is one thing that all humans on the planet have in common, it is an intimate familiarity with water. Its presence is a rudimentary condition for human life. We need to drink it to stay alive, our bodies use it for its most basic functions and reactions, it plays a crucial role in our hygiene. It is easy to forget the importance of water when it is at our disposal: a lasting lack of water immediately creates severe precarity. Human dependency on water has not only shaped an intimate physical familiarity with water, it has incited a *discursive* familiarity with water as well. In the many and variegated discourses that flow and have flown throughout the planet's societies and communities, water holds a significant position. Several religions have attributed deities to seas and rivers, there is an overwhelming amount of art and literature that deals with water bodies, island and coastal communities have based entire cultures on the ocean that surrounds them. Relevantly, there is a rich history of using water and its different formations in language too. Taking readily available examples from English, when one speaks a language perfectly they speak *fluently*, one can *draw* inspiration from a *source*, and one can be overwhelmed by a *wave* of emotion. Things that do not *seem* to be involved with water, like speaking, being inspired, or having emotions, are actually made understandable with the matter and motions – a flow, a source, a wave – that we know from our material dependency on water. Physical familiarity with water has incited our discursive familiarity with water, to the extent that it helps us think, express ourselves and formulate ideas.

Water is also widely apparent in the many cultural discourses of Greek and Roman antiquity. Anthropomorphic deities like Poseidon help to consider the powers of the oceans, seas and rivers are often thought to be inhabited by nymphs, and the idea that inspiration can be taken from a spring already broadly circulated throughout antiquity. Water is also occasionally used to reflect on language and literature: narratives are imagined to flow like a river or convulse like a whirlpool, the quality of poetry can be compared to the quality of a drinking source, and astounding aesthetic experiences are envisioned as floods and torrents. Ancient authors that theorize and reflect on the functions of literature, poetry and language in their texts, which can be described as *poetical* texts, occasionally employ such water bodies to write and think with. To what extent are these authors conscious about their dependency on water for their discourse? If they construct their ideas on the workings of language and literature using the material physique of water, do they reflect on the power of water to influence their ideas? And are the established reading methods for poetical texts that have been developed over centuries of classical scholarship, fit to work with the power that water has on poetical discourse?

For example, in the ancient Greek rhetorical treatise *On the Sublime* (Περὶ ὕψους), probably written in the 1st century CE, Longinus investigates literary passages for their extraordinary, overwhelming and magnificent moments, to understand what makes them sublime.[1] Within the treatise, there are many appearances of water bodies. Some of the passages that Longinus discusses, contain vast, stormy or parting seas (e.g. 9.5, 9.8, 10.4-6). But Longinus also often uses water terminology in his literary criticism to talk about an author's style or creative process (e.g. 9.13, 12.4, 13.1). Take for example this comment on Plato's creative indebtedness to Homer, expressed metaphorically as streams flowing from a spring.

> […] πάντων δὲ τούτων μάλιστα ὁ Πλάτων, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὁμηρικοῦ κείνου νάματος εἰς αὐτὸν μυρίας ὅσας παρατροπὰς ἀποχετευσάμενος.
>
> "Of all those authors it was above all Plato who channeled from that Homeric spring countless of side streams into his own work."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 13.3 (ed. Halliwell 2022)

Longinus' comment appears in his discussion on how authors can write sublimely through the imitation and emulation (μίμησίς τε καὶ ζήλωσις, 13.2) of their predecessors. He notes that Herodotus, Archilochus, Stesichorus and Plato all attain sublime qualities by taking inspiration from Homer, an author that Longinus finds exceptionally sublime. In order to explain how this process of imitation works, Longinus envisions Homer's works as a spring – the source of inspiration – and Plato's works as a piece of land perfused with waterways channeling from this spring. Longinus hereby places himself in a longstanding tradition where Homer is compared to Oceanus, the world-enveloping river which was believed to be the origin point – the spring – of all other rivers.[2] By doing so, the passage appears to set up a metaphorical relationship between water and literary text: different qualities of water can be interpreted as different qualities of text. In this case, the idea that streaming water has an origin point and directional flow, is used to think about the process of inspiration "flowing" from one work to the other. In other cases, Longinus equates water to text in order to discuss other aspects of literary works: the tempered sublimity of Homer's *Odyssey* is like Oceanus retreating into itself (9.13), Plato's writing is sublime while flowing noiselessly (13.1), Cicero's sublime is in a flood (12.4). As such, these

[1] The date and authorship of *On the Sublime* are highly debated, but it is generally considered to be the product of a 1st cent. CE author called "Longinus", also referred to as "pseudo-Longinus". See e.g. Halliwell (2022: x-xix) or De Jonge (forthcoming) for an elaborate consideration of the problem. As this thesis neither rests on nor deals with the identity of the historical author, I will for the sake of readability refer to the author simply as Longinus.

[2] For an overview of passages from Greek and Roman literature where Homer is figured as Oceanus, see Williams (1978: 98-99).

waters constitute Longinus' critical apparatus and are thus closely interwoven with his poetical discourse on the sublime.

Most interpretations of Longinus' water bodies follow the reading I set out above, where the emphasis lies on the function of the water body as metaphor. Scholars tend to focus on the manner in which such water bodies, in this case the side-channels and the spring, can be substituted for different concepts, in this case Plato and Homer, in order to make sense of the passage.[3] Take for example the way in which Stephen Halliwell describes the passage:

> "Plato's relationship to Homer is figured here in imagistic terms which connect with earlier passages of the treatise. From being a great open sea in his own right (12, 2) and then a silent stream (13, 1), Plato is now strongly troped as a piece of land […] irrigated by countless rivulets of Homeric inspiration, Homer himself being the supplying river or stream, which equates to a reduced version of his status as Ocean (9, 13), i.e. the river from which all water ultimately derives (*Il.* XXI 196-7)."
>
> Halliwell (2022: 221)

The mode of reading that Halliwell applies, becomes clear from the way in which he analogizes the water bodies to the authors they represent. "Plato's relationship to Homer is figured…" and "Plato is strongly troped as…" point to the idea that Plato and Homer are here expressed in metaphorical terms. Even more indicative of this idea is the manner in which Halliwell uses the verb *to be* in order to equate the water bodies to their respective authors. Plato *was* a great open sea and a silent stream, now figured as a piece of land that is irrigated by Homer who *is* the supplying river or stream. This mode of reading can be characterized as metaphorical because it substitutes the water bodies for what they *actually* are supposed to be: the authors and their writing.

It makes sense to follow this interpretation: Longinus' treatise and the passage in specific give more than enough reason to treat these waters metaphorically. Additionally, this reading yields better insight into Longinus' criticism and aesthetic values, or in other words, his *poetics*.[4] However, what happens when we treat these waters literally instead of metaphorically? One

[3] Besides Halliwell (2022: 221), see e.g. Hunter (2012: 43-45), Porter (2015: 360), Worman (2015: 257-258) or Doyle (1996: 328), who briefly mentions 12.4, where Cicero's sublimity is compared to a flood. In the translation that Doyle uses, the 'flood' is translated as 'expansive', bypassing the fact that there is water imagery there in the first place.

[4] This understanding of poetics is defined by Reed (2012: 1058) as the narrow sense of the term, where it "can designate the compositional principles to which a particular poet subscribes."

may first imagine that it would elicit a nonsensical interpretation: Plato would be digging out channels someplace from an actual spring that would happen to be called Homeric. However, that is not the type of literal reading I am aiming at. What happens if we treat these waters not only as representations of something else, but as representatives of themselves too? These side-channels and spring are surely metaphorical for the writings of Plato and Homer, but they *actually* are water bodies. By focusing only on what these waters metaphorically represent, one might forget that the text contains waters in the first place. Notwithstanding the benefits from metaphorical reading, what would it look like if we momentarily resist substitution, and investigate how Longinus' poetics are informed by the literal water bodies themselves?

When water is able to represent itself, we are faced with its matter. If one were to focus solely on the idea that Longinus' comment is about Plato and Homer, it may suddenly seem unimportant that it is bodies of water that provide us with the metaphor, instead of say, trees or buildings. Naturally, nobody would truly argue that the appearance of water in the text is unimportant. But privileging the metaphorical function of material imagery – its function to represent something else than its matter – can make us forget its materiality altogether. When paying attention to water's literality, its ability to represent itself, we are faced with its physical properties: its constitution as a river, a sea, a pond, a side-channel or a spring; its abilities to flow, erupt, fall, eddy, surge, crash, rise; its capacity to grant living species life and kill them at once. As a material, water has an incredibly wide array of complex agencies that structure all life on the planet, and influence human lives every second. Humans' intense familiarity and interactive experience with water turn it into an easily thinkable concept, that we can use to structure the world around us. Hence it makes sense that difficult topics such as poetics are phrased metaphorically in terms of water. But it is important to remember that those terms, when taken literally, also evoke an aquatic materiality that contributes to our understanding of a text. How does the material, watery flow from a spring into side-channels influence the poetics of Longinus' treatise?

Longinus is not the only author who uses water to express his poetics. And he is not the only author whose water bodies have garnered such substitutive, metaphorical readings. Long before Longinus, Callimachus wrote his *Hymn to Apollo* in which he compares a sea, a river and a spring to talk about the size and quality of good poetry.[5] In *Odes* 1.3, Horace writes about a cruel sea that Vergil is about to set sail on, where the sea can be interpreted as the epic *Aeneid* that Vergil is planning to write.[6] The sea as a metaphor for epic text is elicited also by Catullus' epyllion – his small epic – *Carmen* 64, where the manner in which he portrays the sea has been

[5] For metaphorical interpretations of the *Hymn to Apollo*, see e.g. Wimmel (1960: 59-65), Kohnken (1981), Calame (1993: 50-55), Asper (1997: 109-120), Traill (1998), Stephens (2015: 73). For a more extensive overview, see Chapter 1, which focuses on the *Hymn to Apollo* specifically, page 39, note 25.

[6] See e.g. Pucci (1992: 667-669), Clark (2004) or Harrison (2007: 8-10).

interpreted as his adaptation of the epic genre.[7] At Pindar's *Olympian* 6.85-86, the narrator drinks the waters of Thebes as a source of inspiration for his laudatory poems.[8] Various treatises on literary criticism, like Longinus', including those of Demetrius (*On Style*) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*On Composition*), occasionally use rivers to reflect on literary style and composition.[9] These examples are by no means exhaustive. However, all these authors use waters for their poetical discourse in such a manner, that they invite a metaphorical interpretation: the water can be substituted for properties of literary writing, in order to understand what poetics the author expresses. In many of these cases, there is a lack of interpretations that take the water body as a representative of itself. There is a trend then in reading ancient poetical discourses where the metaphorical qualities of water bodies are privileged. While this mode of reading is useful for better understanding the author's poetics, it can overshadow what the material properties of water contribute to the poetical constitution of the text. This is then the main question that this thesis concentrates upon: how does water contribute not only metaphorical meaning, but also material meaning to the understanding of Greek and Roman poetics?

I tend to the problem of investigating the breadth of "Greek and Roman poetics" a little later, but first I want to dwell on another issue. What exactly is material meaning within text? And what exactly is a material reading? How does it relate to literality? These are no easy questions to answer: it is dependent on how one defines literality, and how one defines metaphor, as well as figurality. As I show in this introduction, the theory of *hydropoetics* (Ryan 2022) can offer insights into how textual waters can produce meaning materially. Hydropoetics offers the idea that bodies of water have a creative agency, an independent "voice" that is able to represent itself in text. Through this *hydropoetical* concept of voice, it is possible to construct a concept of literality, that is guiding for reading the waters in ancient poetical discourses materially.

But it is important first to see why material readings of textual water bodies are warranted in the first place. The call for more material readings of water comes from the recently emergent field of *blue humanities*. Scholars within this field focus on the relationship between Earth's waters – from oceans to puddles and from steam to ice – and the cultural discourses that exist within the communities on this planet. At the core of blue humanities research lies an ecologically activist standpoint: analyses of water bodies and the cultural discourses surrounding them are highly attentive to the current-day threatened status and transformative physicality of the planet's waters. One of the central questions in the field is whether the

[7] See especially Harrison (2007: 2-4).
[8] See e.g. Worman (2015: 82-83).
[9] See e.g. Worman (2015: 282-293) and De Jonge (2021).

representations of water bodies in art and literature show awareness of the complex problems of the ecological crisis. Do these representations grant water the material agency that it has, or do they misrepresent it and forego the problematic position of water in the ecological crisis?

I want to explicate here my subscription to the blue humanities agenda, as well as the overarching framework of *environmental humanities*, which emphasizes the importance of conducting research into the relationship between cultural discourses and the ecological crisis. Above all, the ecological crisis does not merely call for technological innovation or political meandering, it calls for a thorough revision of how humans relate and have related to the rest of the material world. Especially in the societies of Western modernity, where industrialization and exploitative capitalism have come to be the norm, a deep-rooted anthropocentrism has reigned most political and cultural practices. The rest of the material world became the *environment*, that which surrounds humans as the background for their societal advancements.[10] This idea has legitimated the subjugation of so many nonhuman bodies, not in the least those of the aquatic world – marine species, coral reefs and river inhabitants, to name just some examples, suffer extreme losses due to the construct of human superiority. This construct is as much culturally and socially produced, as it is politically and economically. As such, the ecological crisis begs for humanities scholars from all disciplines to investigate how anthropocentrism and representations of the material world surge through the cultural discourses of their fields. It is to that extent that I am politically invested in my research question. Applying a material reading of water bodies in ancient poetical texts should not only serve a better understanding of the texts in question, it should offer reflection on how our reading practices of classical texts relate to the ecological crisis.[11] The fact that these texts are from a period of time that is vastly different from this era of ecological crisis, I address later.

This focus on the representation of water has led some blue humanities scholars to express critique on treating water as metaphor. Their concern is somewhat similar to what I stated above, that a metaphorical mode of reading can possibly overshadow what water can express materially. However, the concept of metaphor that underpins their critique, as well as the subsequent concept of literality, are not without problems. The main issue is that this concept of metaphor is so broad that it comes to denote the entire concept of figuration. Firstly, this critique on such an inherently human faculty is unsustainable. Secondly, it abolishes the distinction between literality and figurality, which problematizes the material readings that these scholars warrant. While I agree with the blue humanities scrutiny towards metaphorical

[10] The English word 'environment' derives from the French *environer*, meaning 'to surround'. In the word 'environment' thus hides an implication of distinguishing between a center and a periphery. Talking about the 'natural environment', for example, can thus connote an anthropocentrism in which human is taken as the center, whereas what is 'natural' is considered to be the appendant surroundings.

[11] For the relationship between the field of classics and the ecological crisis, see e.g. Schliephake (2020).

representations of water, I am not in favor of denouncing metaphor in its entirety. As my discussion in this introduction shows, such denunciation would be impossible. Alternatively, I subscribe to an understanding of metaphor through its distinction from metonymy, as theorized by Jonathan Culler (1981). Through this understanding, a material reading of water in text is still warranted, but it invites the benefits of metaphorical reading just as much. This understanding then also pivots our approach to materiality, and provides a key for understanding the theory of hydropoetics.

Metaphor and the Blue Humanities

In recent years, within the blue humanities, several critiques have surged on treating water as a metaphor. These critiques propelled out of Hester Blum's seminal article, "The Prospect of Oceanic Studies" (2010), which, as the title suggests, pertains to the metaphorization of the ocean in specific. Much of early blue humanities research focused on the ocean, as the field was still under development, bearing different concurrent names such as ocean(ic) studies, hydrocriticism, blue cultural studies or the oceanic turn.[12] Only later, scholars at the forefront of the field opened it up to include other water bodies as well, and the critique on metaphor followed suit.[13]

In her article then, Blum opens with the following bold statement:

> "The sea is not a metaphor. Figurative language has its place in analyses of the maritime world, certainly, but oceanic studies could be more invested in the uses, and problems, of what is literal in the face of the sea's abyss of representation."
>
> Blum (2010: 670)

Blum calls for more scholarly attention to what is literal about the sea. Scholars who study the sea within art and literature, have focused too much on its figurative representations – the manner in which the sea exists in discourses as metaphor. Consequently, Blum points to a lack of thought about what the sea can mean literally – not as a metaphor that represents something else, but as a matter that represents itself. The concern which Blum expresses, is that it has

[12] The special edition of *Proceedings of the American Language Association* in 2010, which includes Blum (2010), focuses entirely on the field of oceanic studies. For hydrocriticism, see the special issue by the *English Language Notes* in 2019, and especially the introduction by Winkiel (2019). For blue cultural studies, see Mentz (2009). For the oceanic turn, see e.g. Blum (2010: 671) or DeLoughrey (2016). The past year has seen two publications that attempt to wrap up these concurrent fields as introductions to the blue humanities: Oppermann (2023) and Mentz (2024).

[13] Important for including other water bodies into the theoretical approaches that were under development for studying the sea, were Chen et al. (2013) and Christian et al. (2017).

become so common for the sea to be treated figuratively, that it presents us with an "abyss of representation". The sea has figured in various Western cultural discourses as a representation for adventurous heroism, for colonial expansion and naval battles, or for philosophical, aesthetic and poetical contemplation.[14] The manifold and convoluted ways in which the sea has been appropriated as a metaphorical concept, create an abyss: a dangerous pitfall in which one can forget that besides those appropriations, the sea imports literal meaning into discourse as well. Blum states that through the process of metaphorization, "the actual sea has often been rendered immaterial" (670). As such, Blum's call for treating the sea literally becomes an act of facing its materiality, while treating the sea metaphorically can come to deny this materiality. How do the physical properties of a sea – its watery matter, circulatory motions, boisterous waves, multifaceted ecosystems, its size and finitude, its acidity and temperature – influence its meanings in cultural discourses?

Blum's adamance about being attentive towards the sea's materiality, originates from the ecologically activist standpoint that informs blue humanities research. The fact that our planet's water bodies are undergoing great physical changes in response to anthropogenic climate change, means that the manner in which humans think about water is in need of a rehaul. The oceans should not be thought of as an infinitely exploitable resource, rivers and lakes will more quickly evaporate or flood due to changing weather conditions, melting icecaps are endangering low-lying lands, ocean acidification is threatening countless of marine species, and our drinking reserves are shrinking at a dangerous pace. Not only does the changing physicality of the aquatic world beg new forms of understanding and representation, because these changes are human-induced, they beg a reimagined relationship between human and water too. Consequently, discursive representations of water that are not attentive towards the endangerment of the planet's waters, or, even propagate this endangerment, should be treated with the utmost scrutiny.

For example, in the same line as Blum, Patricia Yaeger (2010) claims that:

> "The sea functions in literature and culture as a trope instead of a biotic world or swarm of agencies. But even shadowy or unnatural tropes have real-world consequences. Figures of the boundless sea or the oceanic sublime encourage humans to treat it as an inexhaustible storehouse of goods."
>
> Yaeger (2010: 535)

[14] See e.g. Alaimo (2014: 193) and DeLoughrey (2017).

As Yaeger briefly expresses, the metaphor of the sea as a vast plane that stretches out to infinity, was popular in various Western literary and cultural discourses. It makes sense that this metaphor prevailed in many of these discourses, as the sea is so much larger than humans can wrap their minds around. The incredible size of the sea became useful for imagining the enormity of infinity. Thinking with such a water metaphor seems to harbor no ill intent, but still this metaphor is no proper representation of the sea, which is absolutely finite. Yaeger's argument is that, if this metaphor of endlessness swerves through our discourses, it can propagate the idea that the sea is an infinitely exploitable resource and a bottomless dumpsite. As we have become painstakingly aware, this idea has informed many anthropocentric practices of exploitative capitalism, which have come to overlook the material finitude of the seas. Hence, in this line of criticism, the metaphorization of water becomes suspect of conveying anthropocentric ideologies, because it would dematerialize the water into a misrepresentative concept far-removed from its material reality. However, it is important to note that the complicity of this widespread metaphor does not necessarily lie with those circulating it: it is only logical that the sea has been metaphorized in this way to conceptually structure the world. The danger rather springs from the fact that because this metaphor is a misrepresentation of the actual sea, it can start to legitimate the exploitative practices that benefit from this misrepresentation.

While Blum's and Yaeger's critique helps to sharpen the scrutiny towards representations of water that may be complicit in anthropocentric thought, it is not quite clear what type of metaphor they are averse against. After Blum's statement that the sea is not a metaphor, she follows up with criticism on "figurative language" in general. Yaeger too speaks of "tropes", as well as "figures" of the sea. Other scholars who have subscribed to their concerns appear to do the same.[15] Oppermann (2019) summarizes these scholars' position towards the metaphorization of water as follows.

> "The outline of this contention is that, instead of bringing humans closer to aquatic environments, visual images, narrative representations, and aesthetic expressions may create an unintentional self-distance to disconnect the human further from them."
>
> Oppermann (2019: 447-448)

Oppermann's summary shows that the critique on using water as a metaphor does not only pertain to metaphor as a rhetorical device in literary texts, but to a process of representation in

[15] Besides Blum and Yaeger, see e.g. Alaimo (2014: 193), who speaks generally of "the films, texts, and photography about the ocean".

general, which includes "visual images, narrative representations, and aesthetic expressions". These scholars' concept of metaphor then does not only designate the representation of the literal as figurative within text, but the representation of water in discourses in general. In other words, metaphor is not used *literally*, as a figure replacing what can be expressed literally. Metaphor is used *metaphorically*, to designate rather all modes of representation in discourse entirely. However, there is a problem with understanding metaphor so broadly, as it eventually comes to erase the distinction between literality and figurality. If this distinction is erased, it becomes difficult to answer to Blum's call for literal readings in the first place.

Using metaphor *metaphorically* to describe the process of representation in general, is an already longstanding trend which was identified by Jonathan Culler (1981: 209-233). He theorized two manners in which the term metaphor had come to be used: the *via rhetorica* and the *via philosophica*. On the one hand, the *via rhetorica* is the classical interpretation of metaphor as a rhetorical device that is reserved for a specific type of figurative expression within text. Ancient thinkers who wrote on metaphor helped to lay the ground for this understanding, treating it primarily as a rhetorical device that adds stylistic effect. Aristotle's technical explanation of metaphor through analogy at *Poetics* 1457b is exemplary for understanding metaphor as a substitution of the literal with the figurative. It is defined there as calling something by a different name (μεταφορὰ δέ ἐστιν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ), and, as he continues at *Rhetoric* 1405a, metaphor creates a stylistic surplus: it can add clarity, sweetness and strangeness (τὸ σαφὲς καὶ τὸ ἡδὺ καὶ τὸ ξενικὸν) to texts. While this sparked later authors like Cicero (*Orator* 27) and Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria* 8.6) to develop their own thoughts on metaphor, its status as a literary device with stylistic import remained persistent. This would be the use of the term metaphor in the narrow sense, or, in Culler's distinction, in the *literal* sense.

On the other hand, the *via philosophica* thinks of metaphor more broadly as figurative representation at large. In this sense, representation is a cognitive operation that humans use to structure perceptions into comprehensible concepts, a mental capacity of thinking something as something else. Interestingly, although this understanding of metaphor only gained traction in modernity, Aristotle is informative here too. Especially his qualification of metaphor as a type of "bringing-before-the-eyes" (πρὸ ὀμμάτων, *Rhetoric* 1411a25-b23), a figure for enlivening a concept in the mind of the audience, is influential for thinking about metaphor as a cognitive process.[16] So, the *via rhetorica* envisions metaphor as internal to text, as a figurative expression for what can (seemingly) be expressed literally. The *via philosophica*, however, takes discursive representation in general as the figurative expression of the outside world: representing water in our discourses is automatically metaphorical for what that water is in reality. The *via*

[16] See Chapter 2, page 90-91.

philosophica then imagines a discursively external perception and a discursively internal conception. There is an external referent that is perceived, a material body of water, and an internal concept of that water translated from the outside world into our discourses. An important distinction between the metaphor of the *via rhetorica* and the metaphor of the *via philosophica*, is that the former is constructed by the speaker or the author, while the latter is an inevitable cognitive process inherent to human thought. Under the *via philosophica*, whenever one perceives something, it is automatically metaphorized into a thinkable and communicable concept.

The problematic consequence of treating metaphor so broadly, is that any thought or language expression becomes metaphorical. Culler notes the same about the *via philosophica* as well:

> "Since to use language at all is to treat something as a member of a class, to see it as an instance of some category, language itself seems to be metaphorical."
>
> Culler (1981: 225)

Culler is correct in seeing that, in this line of thinking, our representation of the world in language would automatically be appropriative and transformative. The word that refers to an external referent is never the same as the referent itself. In that sense, there would be no way to think or write about water literally, or read it "materially." Once we subject it to the conceptual frameworks of thought and language, it will immediately lose its materiality. This is what scares blue humanities scholars about any form of representation, that it will inherently be a misrepresentation of the material world. Hence Oppermann states that figurative representation in its entirety "may create an unintentional self-distance" that removes humans from the material reality of water. However, if we follow that water should not be a metaphor, then we would have no option but to stop representing it in language whatsoever. It would lead us to conclude that the material world cannot ever be represented properly, and that we would have to desist from our faculties of thought and language in order to engage with the physical world "literally" in any way.

While this may be the logical conclusion to the *via philosophica*, it steers the blue humanities critique on metaphor in the wrong direction. By saying that water should not be metaphorized, that is, treated figuratively, it implies the impossibility of abandoning cognitive capacities that cannot be abandoned. Desisting from metaphorical interpretation, in favor of some literal interpretation of physical matter, would paradoxically entail the avoidance of engaging with the physical world altogether. It also overlooks the importance of water in

conceptually structuring the world around us. It is a material that humans are so intimately familiar with, it makes sense that it so abundantly appears in our discourses as metaphors. That does not automatically entail that the metaphorical use of water in itself is complicit in anthropocentrism. It would mean that every water metaphor, for example in ancient poetical discourse, is automatically suspect of anthropocentrism. This, in my opinion, is not what the blue humanities critique on metaphor should be veered towards. But it is the implication of treating metaphor as broadly as Blum does. Still, while her terminology is convoluted, I do not mean to denounce her call for facing water's matter altogether. There is still great importance in locating what processes of figuration harbor modes of anthropocentrism.

Metonymy, Literality, Materiality

This means that Blum's call for facing what is literal should be reassessed. It cannot be assessed by its opposition to their implied concept of metaphor, as it erases the idea of literality altogether. By looking more closely at their critique on figurative representation, it becomes clear that it is not this broad concept of metaphor, but rather some very specific qualities of metaphor these scholars are averse to. From their critiques then, it becomes clear that the qualities of metaphor they oppose, are best defined by their distinction from another kind of figuration: the metonymy. It is this conceptual pairing of metaphor and metonymy that is leading for my arguments.

Culler's work on metaphor is guiding in this respect too. His investigation did not only yield a problematization of the *via philosophica*, it offered insights into the relationship between metaphor and metonymy as well. Culler starts out from Stephen Ullmann's (1964) distinction between the two figures:

> "Ullmann distinguishes two types of imagery: the metaphorical, which is based on a relationship of similarity; and the metonymical, which is based on an external relationship of contiguity."
>
> Culler (1981: 211)

Ullmann distinguishes the metaphorical and the metonymical based on their respective relationships of similarity and contiguity. Let us see how these relationships are constituted by means of example. With metaphor, a concept that can be expressed literally, is substituted by or compared to a different figurative concept. The two concepts are sufficiently different, so that when the author creates the metaphorical relationship, some unforeseen resemblances emerge. Aristotle had already noticed this function of metaphor in his *Poetics* (1459a3-8), where he notes

that using metaphor properly means being able to see the similarity (τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν) between two different concepts.

For example, the concepts of "bedroom" and "pigsty" are dissimilar enough to register as different concepts, but when an author metaphorically relates them in a phrase like "their bedroom is a pigsty", it makes us aware of the resemblances between the two concepts. Both are spaces, and the pigsty is generally considered to be dirty, so a reader can come to understand that this particular bedroom is dirty too. This is the relationship of similarity that the metaphor constructs. The two concepts can be connected metaphorically because they bear some relationship of essence (Culler 1981: 212): both concepts are reduced to the essence that they both share, being dirty. Other potential aspects of both concepts are irrelevant for the construction of the metaphor. The relationship of similarity entails that the two concepts are connected based on their shared essential resemblance, and that dissimilar qualities are momentarily forestalled. This understanding of metaphor works for both the *via rhetorica* and *via philosophica.* In the *via rhetorica*, it is the author constructing the metaphor who is in control of bringing out these essences and forestalling irrelevant dissimilarities. In the *via philosophica*, it is the perceiver of the outside world who focuses on the essences relevant for their conceptual framework. Structuring perceptions into mental concepts requires highlighting some aspects of the perceived matter and foreclosing other aspects, in order to turn it into a comprehensible concept. In that sense, the perceiver becomes an author too, not of a metaphorical text in specific but of their own metaphorical conceptualizations.

Metonymy, on the other hand, is based on a relationship of contiguity. With metonymy, a concept is already contingent, "touching", with another concept, before any substitutive or comparative relationship between the two concepts is formed. Aristotle is perhaps not the most useful in this regard, since at *Poetics* 1457b, metonymy seems to be treated as a part of metaphor (which would attest to Aristotle's understanding of metaphor as in some way overlapping with figurative representation at large as well). One of the earliest definitions of metonymy (there called *denominatio*) comes from the anonymous treatise *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (ca. 80 BCE) at 4.32, where contiguity is formed when concepts are *propinquus* (neighboring) or *finitimus* (bordering). Culler's concept of contiguity is not very different, where the contingency of two metonymical concepts also constitutes a physical "bordering". For example, in the phrase "The Hague formed a new government", the city of The Hague is a substitute for the Dutch parliament that is seated there. However, this substitution is not a metaphor, as the concepts of "The Hague" and "the Dutch parliament" do not bear a relationship of similar essences. Their relationship is rather based on the city of The Hague spatially containing the Dutch parliament, hence their contiguity: both concepts are neighboring in that sense. The substitution is then not informed by a resemblance of essences brought forth by constructing the metaphor, but by a preexistent

contingent relationship between the two concepts. It is for that reason that Culler calls the relationship of contiguity "external", as it exists outside of the figurative construction. To that extent, the metonymy is also deemed "accidental" (Culler 1981: 211-212): the metonymical relationship between The Hague and the Dutch parliament is based on the mere accidental fact that the one is spatially contiguous to the other. Important for the understanding of metonymy, is that this external accidentality lies outside of the control of the author.

It is this distinction between the relationship of similarity and the relationship of contiguity as being either internal or external to the control of the author, that is especially relevant to the blue humanities critique on metaphor. The extent to which the author is in control of the figurative construct, is indicative for who or what is in charge of the production of meaning. As it is the author who decides in what essences lies the resemblance between two concepts, the surplus meaning that is created by using metaphor is mainly on behalf of the author. In the broad interpretation of metaphor too – thinking a perception as something else and turning it into a comprehensible concept – the translation from perception to conception and the surplus meaning that is created in the process, are on behalf of the perceiver's frame of reference.

This is then the quality of metaphor that blue humanities scholars are averse to. With the metaphorical appropriation of water into "visual images, narrative representations, and aesthetic expressions", the surplus meaning that is created is under the control of the one constructing the metaphor. To bring back Yaeger's example, if the sea metaphorically exists in our discourses as infinitely expansive, this meaning is imposed on the concept of the sea by those constructing and using the metaphor. One highlights the perceived element of the sea that it appears to be infinite (stretching beyond visibility), and thereby forestalls its known material finitude. This aspect of infinity stands in a relationship of similarity to the exploitative discourse of the sea as endless resource or bottomless waste site. Dissimilarities that would confront or dismantle this metaphor, such as the sea's material finitude, are rendered obsolete. The surplus meaning created by metaphor can thus harbor such anthropocentric ideologies, precisely because it is the framework of the author that decides what aspects of water are relevant and what aspects are not.

Conversely, when meaning is created by a metonymical relationship, the author is not in full control. Meaning is not produced by the author's projection of similarities and dissimilarities, it is produced by a preexistent relationship between the two concepts. They have an accidental contiguity that happens to exist externally from the author's framework. This metonymical relationship, to some extent, resists the ideological surplus of meaning that the author can insert into the figuration. The finite sea can be metaphorically substituted for an infinite expanse, where the author's perception of the sea as infinite is guiding. However, this is

not possible for relationships of metonymy. For example, in the metonymical expression "sailing the open waters" where "waters" is the substitute for "sea", there is a preexistent contiguous relationship between waters and sea – the one is materially made up of the other. In this case, the author's perception of the sea, and its possible ideological underpinnings, do not play a role in the figuration, as the material relationship between water and sea is formed independently from the author.

One could also say "sailing the asphalt" or "sailing the impending doom" or "sailing the open cardboard box". When taken as substitutes of the sea, these would rather be figures of metaphor instead of metonymy: there is no contiguous relationship between the sea and asphalt, impending doom or a cardboard box. The surplus meaning here is rather created by the author of the expression, who is in charge of bringing out the similarities between the sea and its metaphor. Each example raises highly different connotations and potentially imports ideological frameworks: treating the sea as asphalt may emphasize its overexploited state as transport route for innumerable cargo ships. Impending doom and cardboard box bring out entirely different connotations. This example reveals not only how the author brings about the surplus of meaning in metaphor, but there also seems to be no limit to what can act as metaphorical substitute. It is up to the conceptual ingenuity of the author to find and highlight resemblances between differing concepts, however far-removed they may seem. With metonymy, there is a limit, which is decided by the concepts themselves and to what extent they are contiguously related. Because of the sea's accidental watery materiality, in "sailing the open waters", the author cannot paste any other material onto it without changing the metonymy into a metaphor. To that extent, with metonymy, the material properties of the sea are guiding in the construction of its figuration, not the author only.

Pitching metaphor and metonymy against each other in this manner, reveals a new understanding of literality, by which we can also understand Blum's call for "facing what is literal about the sea." To recap, metaphor, in the manner criticized by Blum and affiliated scholars, seems to encompass all of discursive representation. However, as this is problematic for the concept of literality, a closer look at their critique reveals that they are averse to specific qualities of metaphor. These qualities include the possibility granted by metaphor for the author to import an ideological surplus of meaning into the figure. When an author can decide which aspects of water are relevant and which are not, the concept of water is assimilated by the author into their ideological framework. This process of figuration, of the manner in which water is represented, thus lies in the power of the author. Metonymy, however, invites a concept of figuration that abides by the blue humanities criticism much better. In metonymies, the water itself independently sets the limits for how it can be figured. It thus offers resistance to the extent to which the author can assimilate the water into a different concept. Because it is the water

itself that creates the limits of figuration, materiality is invited to play a role in the production of meaning. The literal then comes to mean the material resistance of the concept against an authorial process of figuration. If there are limits to the extent to which an author can figuratively represent water as something else entirely, the water starts to represent itself instead. Literality thus becomes the power of the concept to express its materiality.

Important about this pairing of metaphor and metonymy, is that they are not mutually exclusive. The extent to which an author metaphorically creates a figuration of water, and the extent to which the water metonymically guides its own figuration, are two poles of a spectrum. Water in literature will always be represented in a textual framework, so no matter how much the water can express itself literally, there will always be some process of metaphorical appropriation at work. Vice versa, when water appears in a text, it will always bear some literal reference to its material existence, no manner how strongly a metaphorical reading is begged by the text. It is therefore important not to privilege one figurative relationship and fully exclude the other. In fact, it is the middle ground between metaphor and metonymy, between the figural control of the author and that of the water, in which a working concept of hydropoetics can be found.

Hydropoetics

This distinction between metaphor and metonymy can offer a plausible reason for the plethora of metaphorical readings of waters in ancient poetical discourse. Culler notes that, because metaphorical meaning is coopted by the author and metonymical meaning is not, the study of metaphor is often privileged over the study of metonymy (Culler 1981: 211-212). The metaphor is a testimony to the creative ingenuity of the author, and has therefore often been regarded as the figure par excellence by which the author's artistic dexterity can be pinpointed. Because many readings of ancient poetical texts often revolve around understanding the author's aesthetic values and literary criticism, it makes sense that they focus on interpreting their water imagery as metaphorical. In that way, the metaphor of water as literary text becomes a creative expression of the author by which they convey their poetics. Alternatively, if the relationship between water and text can be read as metonymical, then the command of the author over the figurative process is lessened. The reason to think of the concept of text as water, is then guided by the contiguity of water to text, external from the author's authority. The author would be less in charge over the poetics that the text conveys, because the metonymy invites the materiality of the water body to also play a role in the constitution of this poetics.

Importantly, this would change the classical understanding of *poetics,* that is, as the aggregation of an author's aesthetic judgements.[17] If the water body is read as representative of itself and its relationship to text, it resists being read solely as a metaphorical vessel for the author's poetical values. The water would import material meaning into the production of the text's poetics. In other words, poetics would not only be a human effort any longer, it would just as much be a product of the water materially expressing it. The poetics of a text then comes to outgrow the figurative capabilities of the author. They are not the only authority on creating poetics, the water is just as much. To that extent, by its materiality, the water gains a certain independent power over the creation of the text it appears in, as it imports meaning that the author has no control over. In being responsible for creating meaning, the water to some degree gains the same qualities of authorship that the human author has too.

This watery authorship is in line with what John Charles Ryan (2022) has elaborated as the theory of hydropoetics. The theory was brought to life as a new way of reading waters that is "responsive to the urgencies of the Anthropocene era" (487), calling upon a "reverence" (Leopold 1977) that treats water as "[m]ore than an aggregate of chemical constituents or voiceless resource to be exploited for our desires" (486).[18] Ryan thus implicitly subscribes to the blue humanities agenda of scrutinizing representations of water that propagate its exploitation. In theorizing a reading strategy that opposes these representations, Ryan is quick to explicate why he specifically chose the term 'poetics' (hydro-poetics) for this strategy.

> "[T]his article suggests that the ancient idea of *poiesis* – of making, emerging, bringing forth – offers as a framework for understanding the lives of rivers. Understanding *poiesis* as transformation, I will use the term *hydropoetics* to point to a new outlook on water."
>
> Ryan (2022: 487)

Ryan bases his understanding of poetics on its etymological roots, the Greek term ποίησις, which is the noun form of the verb ποιέω (to do, make, bring forth, produce, act). The breadth and philosophical application of the term ποίησις in ancient Greece has inspired many modern theorizations of the word, and in recent decades the word has been used to consider the independent agency and creative powers of all physical beings.[19] Relevantly, ποιέω and its

[17] See page 13, note 4.

[18] Although Ryan was the first to develop a well-rounded theory around the concept of hydropoetics, he was not the first to coin and functionalize the term. See Božović (2017) and Miller (2018), who both conceptualize the term in line with Ryan's theorization.

[19] See e.g. Sha (2013) and especially pages 107-110 and the afterword by Plotnitsky (2013). See also e.g. Rigby (2004), Mules (2014) or Westermann (2020). An often referred to precursor of this

derivatives equally convey the act of making poetry (ποιητής meaning 'poet', ποίησις meaning 'art of poetry').[20] This has informed the notion of *poetics* as being the author's reflection upon the art of poetry. Within the concept of ποίησις then, its modern capacity to denote a self-determinant agency inherent to all bodies, comes to overlap with its rooted sense of producing poetry.[21] This turns our attention to artfulness and creativity as crucial constituents of the material agency of physical bodies. The "making, emerging, bringing forth" of rivers, which Ryan connects to ποίησις, can then be understood as an artistic process – what is emerging from or brought forth by water exists in the same realm as human cultural production, and more precisely in the realm of creating poetry. This double meaning of ποίησις works to shape the concept of hydropoetics as such, that it endows water with a self-determinant agency comparable to humans, but envisions this agency as a form of poetry specifically, which has so often been reserved for human capacities only.

The manner in which Ryan approaches the materiality of water, and the manner in which metonymical waters produce literal meaning, run apposite to each other. As literal meaning comes to be the material power of a concept to express itself, so too does hydropoetics imagine the materiality of water as poetically expressive. All the material complexities of water – its physical constitution as seas, rivers, springs or trickles, its properties of temperature, clarity, reflection, flow, rise or decline, its creation of sounds, sights, smells and tastes – become their poetical expressions. Relevantly, all of these material complexities relate to water metonymically: they are accidental contiguities to the matter of water itself. Water can thus be represented as one or more of these complexities, but their contiguous relationship shows that they belong to what the water can express literally. To that extent, what hydropoetics envisions as the material poetic expressions of water, are literal expressions. Literality and materiality, in that sense, start to overlap. The literal meaning of water comes to play a role when it is metonymically represented, that is, when it can represent itself, and what it can represent itself is what is contiguously related to it, that is, its material complexities.

Through the concept of hydropoetics then, the material contingencies of water are invited to play a role in the production of meaning. When we thus come to read the waters in ancient poetical discourse literally, it becomes an exercise in investigating whether the water is granted the power to express its materiality. When that is the case, its materiality becomes wrapped up in the poetics that the text conveys. Of course, part of the figurative process of using water imagery would be due to the author, but, the materiality that the water imports as literal is equally contributive to the text's poetics. This is then the manner in which hydropoetics can offer

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conceptualization of *poiesis* is Maturana's and Varela's (1980) notion of *autopoiesis*, which highlights the self-determinacy of bodily po(i)etic practices.

[20] See LSJ A4 s.v. ποιέω.

[21] For the ancient development of the concept of *poièsis*, see Martin (2020).

us a different insight into ancient poetics: that poetics is not a matter of aesthetic convictions unilaterally conveyed by the author, it is a co-constitutive process between the human author and the water bodies within the text.

I find it important to emphasize here that, although the concept of hydropoetics fares under the figure of metonymy, it does not banish metaphor from its reading strategy altogether. The human author still has a role in producing figurative expressions, even when the extent of this role is resisted by the water's materiality. Hydropoetics rather elicits an investigation into how both the human author and the water produce meaning codependently side by side – how, on the one hand, the human author can use their figurative abilities to metaphorically structure the text, and, on the other hand, how the water metonymically imports its materiality into the text. When both come to play a role in the process of figuration, the human author and the water become co-creators of the figure.

In that sense, both metaphor and metonymy can come to overlap in the same figure. Culler has termed this type of figure the *metonymically motivated metaphor.* Based on Gérard Genette's (1972: 41-63) analysis of metaphors in Proust, it is a figurative expression that at first seems to be only metaphorical, but is actually underpinned by a metonymical relationship. The expression has the form of a metaphor and is constructed in a way that suggests the author's ingenuity in metaphorically relating seemingly disconnected concepts. However, the essences on which the concepts relate are actually contiguous to each other, external from the author. While the figure is thus structured as a metaphor, the motivation of the author to conjure the figure is guided by a preexistent metonymical relationship. Both ingenuity and accident, the author's figurative capabilities and the matter's resistance to it, contribute to the figure. Metonymically motivated metaphors thus point to an interstice between the representational abilities of the author and those of the water. The author is able to figure the water as a metaphor for something else, another concept that might be seemingly unrelated. However, simultaneously, the water guides what that other concept can be, as it should be contiguously related in order for the figure to be metonymically motivated. Through the combination of metaphor and metonymy, both the author and the water gain authority over the production of the figure. In my application of hydropoetics, then, it is important to see where metaphor and metonymy overlap, where the author's and water's influence on the text overlap, in order to see how the text is constituted by both human and water.

From my discussion on metaphor and metonymy so far, I wish to extrapolate a larger aim of this thesis project, which is to see at what points the two major fields I work in, classics and blue humanities, can be of use to each other. I discuss how many interpretations of water in ancient poetical texts are based on metaphorical readings, which may privilege the author's figurative capabilities over the text, while potentially forgetting the materiality of the water. I

also discuss how some blue humanities scholars call for a kind of literal or material reading, in order to counter the misrepresentation of water that some metaphorical practices may incur. As I have shown, this call for a material reading can be understood as a call to seek out the metonymical relationships that underlie water's figuration within text. However, the blue humanities denouncement of metaphors in favor of water's materiality is unattainable: it is impossible to banish human language and cultural discourse altogether. So, both metaphorical and metonymical reading need to be attentive towards each other. Or, in other words, both the reading practices sustained by decades of solid classical scholarship, and those called forth by the blue humanities scholars invested in the proper representation of water, need to cooperate in order to understand better how water functions in ancient poetical discourses.

This aim somewhat verges towards a call for interdisciplinarity, and it may be read as such. It highly relates to my aforementioned political investment in reading these ancient texts materially. It may be easy to think that, because these texts are "ancient" in the sense that they were incepted thousands of years ago, they are not implicated in the seemingly far-removed problems of today, such as the ecological crisis. However, these texts are everything but ancient in the sense that they are being read, felt, reworked, analyzed and discussed today: they appear in ink before you as you read this thesis. Reading today what these texts have to say about the relationship between human and water, has effect on our conceptualization of our relationship to water at this moment. It is important to become attentive towards this reality of the ancient texts we read: if we ignore what material agency resides in these texts, we ignore the way in which they may play a role in our contemporary ecological crisis. And by effect, we may inadvertently effectuate the dismissal of cultural discourses that can be valuable for approaching the problems of today. Reading the involvement of classical texts in the ecological crisis offers one of numerable ways to counter what some classicists latently fear, that antiquity really is so ancient that its cultural discourses have no part in today's society. This is not the case, but the grounds for this statement depend not on ancient discourse itself, but on how we *read* it, and it is for this reason I am invested in seeing what blue humanities has to offer classical scholarship.

The other way around, as I show above, blue humanities scholarship could benefit from a reappraisal of figuration – it should not shun the reading practices that have, at least within classical scholarship, led to increasingly useful insights into the workings of water in ancient discourses. It should also not eliminate the author as a productive figure in the creation of text, as long as this author does not metaphorically appropriate the water to the extent that it is misrepresentative. Then again, the blue humanities' denunciation of metaphor is based on a convolution of terminology, so reinviting metaphor as a workable concept for the representation of water can be of help. Very recently, some blue humanities scholars have expressed similar concerns about Blum's and affiliated scholars' position on metaphor, Oppermann decisively

calling it a "misunderstanding" (2023: 23) of the concept. Blum's call for more literal readings makes sense considering the predominance of metaphorical readings she finds fault with, but that should not undercut the necessity of those metaphorical readings too. The layers of metaphorical meaning that various waters have accrued in ancient poetical discourses, which many classical scholars have scrutinously uncovered, are as important to our understanding of water as its material constitution is. Reading for the materiality of water can thus never entail a full disposal of its metaphorical functioning. The thorough reading methods of classical scholarship that have worked with ancient metaphors for centuries, can supply the blue humanities with a reappraisal of metaphor next to or in cooperation with materiality.

As such, this thesis works with the advancements of both fields that have built respectively on practices of metaphorical reading and metonymical reading. From this, and my discussion of the theoretical framework above, it should become clear what my methods for analyzing the texts of this thesis are. For each text, the point of departure is the appearance of water within the text. From there, I work with previous scholarship on the passage(s) to see how the water has been read metaphorically as a quality of text. In addition, I investigate to what extent the text also invites the water's materiality to play a role, through the potential metonymical underpinning of the water figure. This requires me to do close readings of the text and its waters, which will form the base of my method of reading. These close readings are highly informed by the attentiveness towards water's material agency and its potential suppression, as proffered by the proclivities of hydropoetics and the blue humanities framework. Sometimes, when necessary, these close readings will branch out into analyses of relevant etymology or narrative structures. But the key aim of these close readings is to broaden our understanding of water bodies as producing both metaphorical and material meaning. In investigating how both functions of meaning overlap, it is of most interest to see whether the water bodies in the texts exist as metonymically motivated metaphors: as figures in which there is a place for the author's figurative capabilities, as well as the water's material agency.

Thesis Structure

As my discussion of my methods and theoretical framework above shows, I am predominantly invested in conceptualizing a new way to read ancient poetics. This is also the reason why this research pertains to the breadth of Greek and Roman poetics, not because this is some easily defined uniform genre, but because the predominance of metaphorically reading water is so apparent for scholarship on ancient poetical texts in general. This inevitably entails that this thesis takes the ancient texts it discusses as case studies. It does not pretend to be an exhaustive overview of how water imagery is used in ancient poetical writings; in fact, the case studies may not seem at first sight to be in clear dialogue with each other. My analyses of these texts will only

proffer an alternative mode of reading poetics that may inform further research into the many and variegated poetical texts that have been written in Greek and Roman antiquity.

The texts that this thesis takes as case studies are the end of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, Longinus' *On the Sublime* and Catullus' *Carmen* 64. Even though they vary in genre, all these texts are poetical in the sense that they profess a poetics (in the narrow sense): the complex of the text's literary and aesthetic values about how (good) poetry functions. Each of these texts has garnered attention by scholars for the manner in which they use water imagery to express their poetics, and often this use is deemed as metaphorical. And finally, all these texts, in different ways, offer the idea that their waters can be read materially as well. They suggest reading their poetics in such a manner that the text's water is in part responsible for and representative of these poetics. In other words, each text suggests that their poetics can be read as a hydropoetics.

Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* was highly influential for the manner in which many later authors use water to express a poetics. At the end of this poem, Callimachus compares a sea, a river and a spring to discuss qualities of poetry. When later poets, like Propertius, wanted to convey their adherence to Callimachus' poetics, the use of water imagery to do so followed suit. Chapter 1 focuses on the manner in which Callimachus' waters have been read by scholars as metaphors for different qualities of text, and how the proliferation of his water imagery propelled the metaphorical reading of water in other poetical texts. The chapter zooms in more closely on how these metaphorical readings forestall the aspects of water that are deemed irrelevant, as discussed above, introducing the concepts of *topic* and *vehicle* to describe how this metaphorical reading can make us forget about the materiality of water. This process of forgetting water in the construction of metaphor has been termed *hydrophasia* (water-forgetfulness) by Cohen (2010). This concept will help to enrich in what way the metaphorical reading practices of Callimachus' waters, as well as those of his followers, diminish the material meaning of water. As the materiality of water is forgotten as a crucial element in the production of meaning, it leads to the conception of Callimachus' poetics as being only constructed by the author. This form of poetics, opposing the concept of hydropoetics, I theorize in the chapter as an *anthropopoetics*. The chapter will close with an alternative analysis of the *Hymn to Apollo*, which shows that the waters at the end can be read metonymically as well. Their material literality will come to contribute to the poetics expressed by the poem.

The manner in which Callimachus' waters can be read metonymically, is informative for my treatment of Longinus' waters as well, which form the main focus of chapter 2. The question central to this chapter, is how Longinus treats literary language and water as contiguous concepts. In discussing what sublime language is, at numerous occasions, water seems to play an important role. Longinus sometimes deems a literary passage sublime for its grand concepts, among which certain water bodies, endowing the grandeur of the concept with the power to

contribute to the sublimity of the passage. But he uses such grand waters himself in his critical commentary too, like the example quoted above, pointing to the potential sublimity of his own language. This entails that whenever Longinus uses water to metaphorize certain textual qualities, the water also functions literally, as a grand concept, which potentially adds sublimity to Longinus' own critical writing. The treatise thus blurs the lines between what the author and what the water contributes to sublime language. Because sometimes the matter seems to be responsible for the sublime, and sometimes the author's language, Porter's contention (2016) is that Longinus' sublime can be divided into a *material sublime* and an *immaterial sublime*. However, the chapter will show that this distinction is unsustainable, because of its equation of discourse to immateriality. Longinus' treatise shows that sublime language and watery materiality are intertwined to such an extent that language cannot be rendered immaterial. Longinus' treatise rather shows that sublime language and water are contiguous to each other in their shared materiality, inviting the water to play a role in the constitution of sublime language.

In the 64th poem of his collection, which chapter 3 concentrates on, Catullus associatively strings together several myths into a little epic. Especially in the opening myth of the Argonauts and the ekphrastically inserted myth of Theseus and Ariadne, the sea plays a prominent role. From the outset, the poem suggests that the associative and divisive structure of the poem is an effect of the divisiveness of the sea. The course of the poem's narrative is not so much guided by Catullus' imposed structure, but by the physically embodied power of the sea. At incisive points in the poem where the narrative turns from one myth to another, the sea shows forth its autonomous embodiment as deviatory and convulsive. The narrative thus starts to deviate as an effect of the sea. The hydropoetics of Catullus 64 thus exists particularly in the moments that the sea presents this materiality, which, as argued in the chapter, is an act of resisting its metaphorization. The poem also points to an aspect of hydropoetics that raises a problem for facing what is literal about water. When water evades our ability to metaphorically represent it, it retracts from our comprehension. When water represents itself, and we desist from translating it into a comprehensible concept, we get to face its literality, but there is the possibility that we do not understand it. Catullus 64 reflects on this aspect of reading literally, because later on in the poem, water rarely appears any longer. While the beginning of the poem offers reason to read the sea as a structural composer of the narrative, suggesting a hydropoetics, it is hard to extrapolate this from the rest of the poem where the water plays almost no part. Such retraction of water from our conceptual framework is precisely what constitutes its independent production of meaning. Facing the water's literality thus also requires its readers to desist from subjecting it to clear-cut analytical models and rationalization. It would be a

misrepresentation of the water's inherent unknowability, which is a challenge for the scholarly research, including my own, that is so invested in understanding water better.

Throughout these chapters, Callimachus, Longinus and Catullus each contribute different insights into the workings of hydropoetics. From these cases, it shows to what extent it is possible to read ancient poetical texts as established by a hydropoetics. They act as case studies, so, while my readings contribute to a different understanding of the case texts themselves, they should also invite future research into the many and variegated poetical texts of Greek and Roman antiquity that incorporate water bodies, to see if they abide by similar forms of hydropoetics. It may even invite to consider the poetical agency of other forms of matter besides water that are often used in poetical texts, such as mountains or trees. Conversely, while the theoretical framework of hydropoetics can offer new ways of reading these poetical texts, they equally respond to the efficacy and problems of this framework as well. As such, this thesis is positioned as much as a contribution to the classical interpretations of ancient poetical texts, as it is to the field of blue humanities in formulating new reading strategies for waters in art and literature.

1

FORGETTING WATER

Chapter 1: Forgetting Water

Introduction

One of the most famous and influential passages of Greek and Roman poetry is the end of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*. Water plays an important role in this passage. For both ancient and modern readers, it has been an authoritative guide for understanding the poem as well as Callimachus' aesthetic proclivities. In the passage, two deities, Apollo and Envy (Φθόνος), quarrel about the qualities of different bodies of water, but simultaneously, the quarrel appears to be about the qualities of different kinds of poetry.

> ὸ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὔατα λάθριος εἶπεν·
> «οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ' ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει.»
> τὸν Φθόνον ὠπόλλων ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὦδέ τ' ἔειπεν·
> «Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλά
> λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἕλκει.
> Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
> ἀλλ' ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
> πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.»
>
> "Envy secretly spoke into Apollo's ear: 'I do not admire the singer who does not sing as much as the sea sings.' Apollo kicked Envy with his foot and said: 'The stream of the Assyrian river is great, but it carries a lot of dirt from the land and sweepings in its water. Not from every source do the bees bring water to Deo, but from one that flows pure and undefiled from a hallowed spring, the small and choicest trickle.'"
>
> Callimachus, *Hymn* 2.105-112 (ed. Stephens 2015)

In one sense, it is not difficult to see that the passage sets up an analogy between water and poetry. Envy spurns authors who do not write as much as a sea, comparing the size of a sea to the size of a poem. Apollo picks up on the equation of water to text, and continues that large bodies of water, like the Assyrian river, are dirty, while small bodies of water, like small trickling springs, are pure. When reading these water bodies as different kinds of poetry, Callimachus expresses a preference for poems that are short and refined like a pristine spring, over poems that might be impressive in terms of length but are of a lesser quality. A seemingly irrelevant discussion about aspects of water suddenly reveals a literary theoretical depth about

Callimachus' poetics. It is for this reason that the passage has become so famous. Many later Latin and Greek authors have interacted with the Callimachean poetics in this passage in order to formulate the nature of their own poetry, be it in line with, in opposition to, or emulating Callimachus' aesthetic values.[22] Because of the passage's wide reception in antiquity, modern critics have been drawn to Callimachus' work time and again to better understand his poetical program and its influence on later authors. How exactly then the qualities of the waters in this passage are to be mapped onto Callimachus' poetics, has been subject of intense debate in the past decades. Is the sea to be read as the Homeric epics, whose length Envy takes as the only prerequisite for good poetry? What river is meant by the Assyrian river and does it refer to the style of the epic *Argonautica* by Callimachus' contemporary Apollonius Rhodius? What kind of textual 'faults' does the filthy refuse in the great river stand for?

It is this line of inquiry that has often been used to analyze the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*. Although scholars disagree on what aesthetic values are expressed precisely, there is a general consensus that these waters should be read as metaphors for text. This, however, should certainly not be the only line of inquiry for understanding such poetical passages. What the questions above reveal, which will be elaborated upon below through an examination of some of the literature on this passage, is an interpretative strategy that is highly focused on unraveling the author's poetics behind the metaphor of water. As outlined in the introduction, this strategy presumes a concept of poetics that can be loosely described as the complex of an author's literary and aesthetic values about how (good) poetry functions. This concept of poetics stands in stark contrast with the notion of hydropoetics, which treats water bodies inside texts as autonomous influences on the production of a text as equally important as any other influence, like the author's. However, common reading strategies for texts such as the *Hymn to Apollo* tend to solely read the waters as metaphors that represent the author's creative process, thereby occluding the possible reading of water's literality contributing to the production of the text. The main aim of this chapter is thus to identify the concept of poetics that the notion of hydropoetics strives to supplant, one that runs by an anthropocentric logic that hierarchizes the author's creative abilities over the water's. In the following I argue that this concept of poetics, which hydropoetics endeavors against, can be formulated as an 'anthropo-poetics'. After identifying how this anthropopoetics is established by the reading practices surrounding Callimachean water imagery, I show how the water metaphors in the *Hymn to Apollo* can be read as metonymically motivated. This lays the basis for an alternative, hydropoetical interpretation of the text, which

[22] For crucial studies on the reception of Callimachus by Roman authors, see Wimmel (1960) and Hunter (2006). For the reception of Callimachus by later Greek authors, see e.g. Pontani (2011) and De Stefani and Magnelli (2011).

does not exclude but rather proffer the material agency of the water to contribute to the poetics of the passage.

In building towards a notion of anthropopoetics, it is first important to investigate why the common practice of metaphorically reading waters can come to exclude water's creative agency from its scope. This type of metaphorical reading is very much in line with the privileging of metaphor that Culler identified, and that blue humanities scholars like Blum (2010) criticized for ridding water of its agency.[23] In order to further elaborate upon this type of metaphor, it is useful to invoke a particular construction of metaphor, the topic-vehicle construction, which lines up with the common interpretative strategy used to read Callimachean poetics. Specifically, this reading practice rests on a 'forgetting of water' has been given the term *hydrophasia* (Cohen 2010), and although the term has been introduced to discuss the disavowing misrepresentation of water in contemporary discourses more generally, it will be highly fruitful to reassess and apply the concept to this process of metaphorical reading.[24] How does the privileging of reading waters metaphorically lead to hydrophasia in the practice of interpreting ancient poetics? In answering this question, it will also become clear that metaphor can be contagious. Focusing only on the status of water as metaphorical for text in ancient poems is the result of a long process that begins with Callimachus' own interaction with past textual waters, moves through the Augustan poets that have so eagerly appropriated Callimachean aesthetic values, and ends up with the modern critics that still grapple with these texts.

Reading Topics and Vehicles

Let us first determine why the common manner of interpreting the end of the *Hymn to Apollo* could be characterized as a type of metaphorical reading. For that, I will take as a case example Williams' (1978: 85-97) interpretation of the passage from his commentary on the poem, as it is still a leading (and the only) commentary fully dedicated to the 113 lines of this hymn specifically. His interpretative style is indicative of many other earlier and more recent analyses of the passage.[25] From his commentary, it will become clear that this interpretative style is based

[23] For the Blue Humanities critique on metaphor, see Introduction, page 17-20; for Culler's explanation of the privileging of metaphor, page 26.

[24] Note that the term *hydrophasia*, although giving this impression, is not constructed as proper ancient Greek, but is an English compound. It consists of the English prefix 'hydro-' (as in hydrostatic or hydrophobic) and suffix '-phasia' (as in aphasia or paraphasia). The proper Greek term for forgetting water would rather be something like ὑδαταμνησία (non-existent). Because I am specifically invested in scrutinizing Cohen's term, I stick with the English *hydrophasia.*

[25] The debate on the meaning of the end of the *Hymn to Apollo* has been predominantly centered on unraveling Callimachus' poetical program, all taking the waters in the passage, explicitly or implicitly, to be metaphors for text in some manner. A selection of works that apply this reading strategy is Wimmel (1960: 59-65), Huxley (1971), Bundy (1972), Kohnken (1981), Bassi (1989), Bing (1993), Calame (1993: 50-55), Asper (1997: 109-120), Traill (1998), Ittzés (2002), Beer (2006), Cheshire (2008), Stephens (2015: 73). Asper (1997) is perhaps unique in this selection, for which see page 41, note 28. Not all of

on a type of metaphorical reading that favors the distinction between topic and vehicle, and induces hydrophasia.

Williams' interpretation of the end of the *Hymn to Apollo* is similar to the example summary I started this chapter with. It carefully takes into consideration how the waters of the passage are related to each other, identifying the sea, the Assyrian river and the spring as three separate entities of water that each represent a certain type of text or poetry (87): "[T]hree analogies are being used, and two standards of comparison, size and purity: *pontos* is large, and pure; the *potamos* is large, and impure; the spray from the *pidax* is small, and pure." Afterwards, Williams takes effort to show why πόντος (sea) must refer to the Homeric texts. With the use of earlier sources, Williams argues that πόντος should be equated to another body of water that played a large role in the Greek imagination: Ὠκεανός or Oceanus (88). This "oceanic" river was thought to surround the entirety of the inhabitable world, and the idea that Oceanus was the source of all other waters circulated throughout antiquity.[26] By extent, because Homer was often seen as the definitive source of inspiration that pervades through all subsequent literature, he was often compared to Oceanus and the authors walking in his footsteps as the rivers flowing from it.[27] Williams argues that πόντος should be read as a substitute of Oceanus and therefore as a substitute of Homer, which also leads him to reason why Apollo does not reproach Envy for his comment on πόντος specifically, but turns to comment on a ποταμός (river) instead (87). Apollo would not mean to disapprove of the Oceanus/πόντος that is Homer himself, but rather the authors represented by the water bodies originating from him. Williams conclusively reads in the passage that Envy lauds poets who write as much as Homer, but that Apollo nuances his statement by saying that it is not merely about reaching Homeric quantities. It is rather the qualitative use of Homer as a source that is more important: authors who are just focused on writing a lot will bring faults into their texts, while those who treat their sources more delicately write shorter but better poetry. According to Williams, these are the aesthetic values expressed by Callimachus in the passage.

Although the exact details of Williams' interpretation are not the most relevant for my argument – others before me have debated about specifics long enough – I do find it important to show how quickly the presence of water erodes from the argument. This erosion occurs precisely through the presumption that it is not necessary to critically engage with the metaphorization of the waters in this passage. In many of the interpretations, it is considered

these works focus solely on the *Hymn to Apollo* either, showing that the metaphorical reading strategy for demystifying Callimachus' aesthetic values runs over to other poetical passages as well.

[26] See e.g. Asper (1997:120-125), Jones (2005: 71-80), and Beaulieu (2016: 38-40).

[27] Williams (1978: 98-99) includes an appendix with passages that equate Oceanus to Homer. Xenophanes fr. 30 DK is mentioned (88) as a particularly salient example. See also Porter (2016: 276) and De Jonge (2021). It also reminds of the example of Longinus 13.3 discussed in the Introduction, page 12.

obvious that these waters cannot just represent water, they must represent something else.[28] As much is evident from Williams' characterization of the previous research on this passage.

> "Since Kuiper's day there has been no dearth of scholars anxious to solve the riddles, but some obscurities remain."[29]
>
> Williams (1978: 86)

Williams' use of the words "riddle" and "obscurities" reveals an approach to the passage that assumes two layers of meaning, one on the surface and one hidden in the dark, and it is up to the interpreter to demystify the text by uncovering the hidden layer. The first layer, in which we read about water, cannot be made sense of by itself and thus presents a "riddle." It rather functions to serve a second layer, which makes the passage pertain to poetry. By the increasing focus on disentangling the deeper layer, the surface layer slowly fades away from the discussion: it was useful to discuss the surface layer only to the extent that it helps us understand the deeper layer. How this relationship between these two layers is constituted, as presented by Williams' manner of interpretation, can be identified as a process of metaphorization.

As explained in the introduction, Culler identified that the process of metaphorization works by means of expressing (*via rhetorica*) or thinking (*via philosophica*) one concept in the terms of another concept.[30] In some traditions of metaphor studies, the concept that is rephrased in different terms, and the concept that supplies those terms, have respectively been called the *topic* (or tenor) and the *vehicle*.[31] These two terms have especially played a large role in what has come to be known as conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), which aligns with Culler's theorization of the *via philosophica*.[32] CMT more generally concentrates on the psychological implications that the *via philosophica* has: if the process of structuring perceptions into mental conceptions can be characterized as metaphorical, what does this say about human's cognitive

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[28] See page 39, note 25 with a list of references. Taking a sample from Traill (1998: 215): "Most scholars have understood Apollo's remarks about big rivers and drops of spring water to be really about the relative merits of long and short poems." Or see Calame (1993: 51) who summarizes the passage in a way that inherently intertwines water and poetics: "So the celebrated programmatic scene where, kicking Phthonos back, Apollo opposes the river-song to the poetic drops of water from a pure source is equally an echo of […]." Asper (1997: 110) does in fact clearly explicate how he will treat the water metaphor, even with the use of the theoretical distinction between tenor (topic) and vehicle (see below). However, in this explication lies also the exact problem: "Der oben skizzierten Problemstellung gemäß interessiert hier die Frage nach der genauen Stoßrichtung dieser Polemik, also nach dem *tenor* ihrer poetologischen Metaphorik, weniger als das Verständnis ihrer Metaphorizität." As will be shown in the rest of this section, this tendency to focus on the topic of the metaphor instead of the process of metaphorization itself is problematized.

[29] Williams is referring to Koenraad Kuiper's discussion of the passage in his *Studia Callimachea* (1896: 219-220).

[30] See Introduction, page 20-21.

[31] See e.g. McGlone and Manfredi (2001), Friedman (2012), Taira and Kusumi (2012).

[32] See e.g. Black (1962: 17), Ricoeur (1975: 74), Lakoff and Johnson (1980), or Kövecses (2017).

processes? Specifically in this line, metaphor acts as a way for humans to rephrase difficult, abstract concepts into more easily thinkable concepts. In our case, understanding the abstract concepts of literature is quite laborious, but once it is portrayed in terms of something we physically encounter on a daily basis, such as water, they can suddenly become graspable.

In Williams' interpretation of the *Hymn to Apollo*, it is very clear that water is taken as a vehicle to explain the topic of poetry. How a poem functions is difficult to discuss in terms of itself, but we can better approach the question once we can describe the style of a poem as flowing like a river, bombastic like a wild sea, or delicate like a trickling spring. The relationship between the topic and the vehicle is generally formed by our familiarity with the conceptual structures of the vehicle that can be mapped onto the still less familiar topic. Within the 'water is text' metaphor, Callimachus' readers understand the differences between a river and a spring, while the aesthetic differences between a longer poem and a shorter poem are not as straightforward. The two aspects that water as the vehicle here provides, which Williams called the "two standards of comparison" (above), are 'purity' and 'size': we understand instinctively that a river is large and impure, while a spring is small and pure. Hence the topic of poetry is now enriched with the terminology supplied by the water-vehicle: just like a large river and a small spring, a long poem contains impurities while a short poem does not.

This understanding of metaphor presupposes that one would need 'familiar' aspects of the vehicle to map onto the 'unfamiliar' aspects of the topic, and this characterizes an asymmetry that is inherent to this type of metaphor. This *metaphorical asymmetry* is constituted by what has been termed the *salience imbalance* between the topic and the vehicle.[33] If one finds that a property connected to a certain concept fits that concept easily, we say that that property is of high salience for that concept. For example, we can easily fit the property of 'purity' to the concept of 'water' because of our physical familiarity with water, and so 'purity' is taken as a very salient property of water. Compare that to calling a text pure: the property of 'purity' is quite puzzling when connected to the abstract concept of 'text' *an sich*. 'Purity' is a low salience property for the concept of text. When water is thus used as a metaphor for text, we turn the properties that are salient in our conceptualization of water into newly salient properties for our conceptualization of text as well. If we understand that a text can be pure just like water is pure, we enrich our comprehension of the concept by adding salient terminology to it. Hence, as Deane (1993: 112) sums up, "metaphor is a naturally asymmetric process that maps salient information about the vehicle onto the topic."

What the idea of salience imbalance shows, is that the distinction between concepts as topic and vehicle is guided by the reader's preconceptions of them. Whether properties are taken

[33] See e.g. Tversky (1977), Ortony (1979).

as salient for a certain concept is very much decided by the cultural conventions, epistemological apparatus and ideological perspective of the reader. This can be understood as a reformulation of how Culler described metaphor as two dissimilar concepts being brought together by an author who forges a relationship of similarity between them.[34] Keep in mind that an author in this sense is as much an actual author of a text as it is a reader that 'authors' their mental conceptions and interpretations. The similarity that is created is also based on a mapping of salient features on a topic for which that feature is not salient. The salience imbalance between the two concepts is what constitutes their original dissimilarity. The consequent relationship of similarity that an author brings about through the metaphorical connection of the two concepts, hinges on this salience imbalance: it dichotomizes the two concepts into their role as topic and vehicle, making one forget other features of the vehicle that can still play a role in the production of meaning.

Many readers of the *Hymn to Apollo* will agree with Williams that 'purity' and 'size' are the salient properties of water that are mapped onto their concept of text. However, those are not the only properties of water expressed in the passage. Take for example the first argument by Envy, who states that he disapproves of poets who do not sing as much as the sea sings. Williams takes for granted the implications of the verb ἀείδει (to sing) being predicated of the subject πόντος. Naturally, he recognizes the grammatical construction, but he does seem to distort the rich and vivid image of a sea singing. Williams' summary of Envy's utterance is as follows: "Phthonos [Envy] condemns the poet whose song is not *even* as great (οὐδ' ὅσα) as the sea" (87). His description is somewhat misleading as it posits that the song itself is compared to the sea, although a more close representation of the Greek would be that Envy condemns "the poet whose song is not even as great as the *sea's* [song]." It is rather the poet than the poem that is compared to a singing sea. This is not to say that Williams fails to acknowledge this: later on he uses this as an argument for identifying the sea as Homer. However, it is indicative for the omission of the singing sea as equally a valuable contribution to understanding the passage as the qualities of 'size' and 'purity'. I argue that this is due to the fact that for many readers of the passage, 'singing' is taken as a much less salient property of their concept of water than 'size' and 'purity'. In establishing then what exactly is metaphorically transferred from the vehicle of water to the topic of text, the 'singing' property of water is left aside as it does not coherently map onto the concept of text. This point will be of importance later when I give a hydropoetical interpretation of the passage.

This shows that, even though the vehicle supplies the terminology for understanding the topic, our preconceived notions of the topic reversely guide what properties of the vehicle we

[34] See Introduction, page 24.

deem useful for understanding the metaphor. The main focus for many readers of the *Hymn to Apollo* has been to 'unriddle' Callimachus' aesthetic values about writing, and by consequence, 'text' is taken as the topic that guides what properties of the water-vehicle can serve their understanding of 'text', and what properties cannot. This is in line with what several scholars of metaphor have concluded about the vehicle's metaphor-relevant meanings. Taira and Kusumi write:

> "[T]he vehicle in metaphor comprehension enhances the metaphor-relevant meaning, whereas the vehicle suppresses the metaphor-irrelevant meaning."[35]
>
> Taira and Kusumi (2012: 254)

By effect, metaphorically reading the waters in the *Hymn to Apollo* passage foregrounds certain aspects of water while omitting others. Turning a concept into a metaphorical vehicle thus always entails that some aspects of that concept, however significant, are diluted to be as illustrative or explanatory for the topic as possible. In other words, a concept has to be reduced to vehicle in order for the metaphor to work. All properties of water that a reader might conceptualize – its flow or its convulsions, its waves or its ripples, its opacity or viscosity, its abundance or its scarcity, its abilities to affect us emotionally or aesthetically – its entire arsenal of entanglements with the physical and our conceptual worlds, has to be reduced to the properties of 'size' and 'purity' in order for its metaphorization as 'text' to hold. I repeat Williams, "*pontos* is large, and pure; the *potamos* is large, and impure; the spray from the *pidax* is small, and pure," but I add that a sea, a river and a spring are also so much more than that.

Hydrophasia

In this process of metaphorical reading, as identified in the common manner of interpreting Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, potentially significant properties of water have to be forgotten. It is this forgetfulness of water, brought about by this reductive mode of representation, that can be labeled *hydrophasia*.[36] The term was introduced by Cohen (2010) to discuss how 20th century interpreters of some English novels would systematically overlook the importance of their "oceangoing themes" and rather take terrestrial spaces such as the city, the nation or the colony to be their defining themes.

[35] See also Glucksberg (2003) on the similar "dual reference function" of vehicles in metaphor.
[36] On the etymology of the term, see page 39, note 24.

> "This disregard [in English novel studies] for global ocean travel even where it is a work's explicit subject matter is so spectacular that it might be called hydrophasia. The syndrome is part of a pervasive twentieth-century attitude that the photographer and theorist Allan Sekula has called "forgetting the sea" (48)."
>
> Cohen (2010: 658)

Cohen refers to a chapter from Sekula's *Fish Story* (1995) in which he attempts to identify "the totalizing ambition of the classical maritime view" (48). Sekula dissects several artistic discourses, such as Dutch 17th century painting, and some modern political strategies of capitalization and colonization, to show how viewing the sea from a panoramic position asserts dominance. This panoramic view physicalized when the oceans of the planet were transformed, as it were, into land: into maritime highways for containerships, "territories" that are subsumed into nations, routinized trade routes for enslaved peoples. Being able to conceptually turn waters into conquerable land was and still is a key to obtaining and maintaining political power.[37]

Cohen thus opens her chapter with the famous claim by Francis Bacon that the invention of the nautical compass (besides gunpowder and the printing press) would change the world more than any empire had.[38] Indeed the nautical compass increasingly enabled seafarers to treat the ocean like a terrestrial plane with clear-cut paths and intersections. The dangers of the unpredictable turns and motions previously inherent to sea travel were being replaced with the politically powerful security and reliability of linear, land-like travel over a flat and controlled surface, and the technological developments for seafaring in the centuries to come would only speed up this replacement.[39] The panoramic, "safe" representation of the seascape, then, asserts its transformation from unknowable and dangerous matter into knowable and conquerable territory.[40] Forgetting water, for Cohen and Sekula, is not only about a simple omission of water from discourse altogether, but also about a simplifying misrepresentation of its properties. In that sense, hydrophasia seems to be constituted by the same structures of metaphorization as set out above. Viewing (or reading) the seas as conquerable lands, highways or nations is a

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[37] See e.g. DeLoughrey (2010) and Connery (2010).

[38] Cohen (2010: 657) is referring to the *Novum Organum*, or *The New Organon* by Francis Bacon (1620). For the direct reference, see the edition by Anderson (1960: 118).

[39] Chambers (2010: 681): "[I]f […] the sea is the royal highway of the West, for the rest of the world the sea is more about depth than extension." Lombardi-Diop (2008: 168): "The sea, in its spatial dimension, is a flat and homogenous stretch of water. Yet, in its depth, it reveals the discontinuities of real time events."

[40] A parallel can be found in DeLoughrey's (2010: 704) naming of certain ocean representations as *aqua nullius* (the water of nothing): "a space of transit in which the sea is barely present, subsumed by the telos of masculine conquest and adventure."

process of metaphorization that reduces the water to the properties that are merely relevant for its conceptual territorialization. Surely, Cohen invoked the term hydrophasia to discuss the ignoring or omission of water in the reading styles of English novel studies, but her reference to Sekula shows that the forgetting of water can also be constituted by a metaphorical reduction of water's properties. This is the type of hydrophasia I deal with.

As outlined in the introduction, several scholars have problematized the process of metaphorizing waters, especially in the context of the ecological crisis.[41] The territorialization, industrialization and capitalization of the oceans have been forceful proponents of the ecological crisis: they constitute a hierarchical relationship between human and water, characterized by the exploitation and exhaustion of the planet's water bodies. I repeat here the example that Yaeger (2010) used to criticize on the metaphorization of the sea: the representation of oceans as flat conquerable expanses instead of a deep distorting physicality plays a role in establishing a hierarchy between human and ocean. What lies beneath the ocean surface has become an "infinite" warehouse of consumable inhabitants, and an "infinite" repository for human waste. I mark the word infinite, because it is becoming painfully clear that humans are exceeding the amounts of consumption and waste that defy the once seeming "infinity" of the oceans. As Yaeger argues, in many metaphorical representations of the oceans, to which we can add Sekula's totalizing panoramic view as well, the idea of the "infinite" ocean crops up, which thereby forgets the ocean's finiteness and can stimulate our conceptualization of the oceans as limitless food source and bottomless dump site. In this sense, such metaphors of water can contribute to the capitalist strategies and political agendas averse to destabilizing the anthropocentrism of the ecological crisis. This specific process of reductive water metaphorization, hydrophasia, and the reading strategies that surround them, can thus become complicit to the reification of human's superior position over water.

To return to the *Hymn to Apollo*: in describing what is happening in the common interpretation of the end of the poem, I believe the term hydrophasia is highly applicable. However, of course, I do not claim that there is a direct link between the ancient 'water is text' metaphor and the misrepresentation of water in the modern discourses that propel the problems of the ecological crisis. But there are some ramifications of hydrophasia Cohen left for others to explore, which will be fruitful for my argument, and yet will also bring this ancient poetical treatment of water closer to the ecological crisis.

Cohen consciously chose for a medical nomenclature, as a variation on disorders such as aphasia or paraphasia, hence her designation of hydrophasia as a "syndrome." There are two implications of this etymology that productively set the concept of hydrophasia askew. Firstly,

[41] See e.g. Blum (2010), DeLoughrey (2017) and Oppermann (2019: 447-448), and a discussion of their critique on metaphor in the Introduction, page 17-20.

whereas Cohen introduced it to elucidate a conventional attitude, disorders such as aphasia rather designate an involuntary lack of language capabilities. Secondly, the syndromic nature of language disorders with the -phasia suffix make it seem as if hydrophasia is an isolated phenomenon, noninfectious and noncommunicable. However, the forgetfulness that hydrophasia originally denotes, is in fact a product of larger anthropocentric constructs that are by essence culturally transferable, hence Cohen's designation of hydrophasia as attitudinal as well. These two implications also proffer the question whether volition, and by extent responsibility, should play a role in our concept of hydrophasia. Perhaps it is in order to recharacterize hydrophasia not as a *syndrome* but rather as a *symptom*, not of a noncommunicable, involuntary disorder but of a contagious, reproductive and mimetic disease, for whose contagion to others we are responsible. I argue that the reproductivity of hydrophasia is mainly due to its constitution as a process of metaphorization. Metaphors are, just like any other form of communication, highly contagious, both as explanatory models, when we become accustomed to understanding a concept in terms of another concept, and as literary tropes, which authors repeatedly appropriate for their own usage. Representing waters as metaphors can thus become normalized, inducing the reification of reading practices that are pervaded by hydrophasia. What the following section will illustrate, is that the reproduction of the 'water is text' metaphor, not only in Callimachus but in his predecessors and successors as well, is indicative of the virality of hydrophasia.

The Contagion of Metaphor and Reproducing Forgetfulness

The end of the *Hymn to Apollo* is by no means an isolated instance. It is not the only passage in the Callimachean corpus in which we can read waters metaphorized for the expression of aesthetic values.[42] Additionally, the Callimachean corpus is also not isolated with regards to its metaphorical usage of waters. Many studies into Callimachus have shown how his language and poetic imagery are indebted to his literary predecessors such as Homer, Hesiod and the archaic lyrical poets, and stands in relation to his contemporaries such as Apollonius Rhodius and Theocritus.[43] On top of that, the incredibly extensive interaction with Callimachus by later poets, especially from the Augustan era such as Virgil, Horace, Ovid and Propertius, show his poetry to be pivotal for the transmission of poetical ideas and virtues.[44] This is clear also from more

[42] See e.g. the δρόσος (dew) in Callimachus *Aetia* fr. 1.33, or the initiation of Hesiod at the Hippocrene in *Aetia* fr. 2.4. See also Crowther (1979).

[43] The entire collection of Callimachus' *Hymns* in itself frequently alludes to the famous Homeric hymns, which many of the studies note *passim*, see e.g. Stephens (2015) or more specifically Harder (2018). For Callimachus' indebtedness to Hesiod and Pindar for the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*, see e.g. Worman (2015: 78-81). For a general study on Callimachus' interaction with other contemporary poets, see Cameron (1995).

[44] For relevant literature, see page 38, note 22.

literary-critical treatises that occasionally use Callimachean water metaphors to express their aesthetic values, for example in Longinus' *On the Sublime* which will be discussed in chapter 2. To show the contagiousness of the 'water is text' metaphor throughout this literary lineage, and by extent the hydrophasia pervasive in metaphorical reading, it is important to trace the predecessors and appropriations of the metaphor before and after Callimachus. It is not my intent to map out an entire semantic field of the poetical uses of waters, but I will take as exemplary the development of the metaphor from several verses of the Corpus Theognideum (6th cent. BCE), through Callimachus' *Epigram* 28, to the famous opening of Propertius 3.1 (ca. 20 BCE). Together they show how water is turned into a metaphorical "code" for poets to express their aesthetic values. This induces in readers an interpretative style that rids the waters of other significant properties, and as such hydrophasia is developed and reified with every step of reception.[45] This reification reverberates through and is reciprocal of our modern reading practices, for which Fantuzzi's article (2011) on Callimachus' authorship will be taken as example.

Fantuzzi's intention with his article is to show how Callimachus' presentation of the different voices in his *Hymns* is part of his strategy to strengthen his own authority over the text. While the majority of Fantuzzi's article deals with identifying this strategic polyphony in Callimachus' *Hymns*, he starts out by discussing Callimachus' *Epigram* 28 and its intertextuality with verses 579-582 and 959-962 from the Corpus Theognideum.[46] By doing so, he shows how Callimachus appropriates the language of this earlier source to express his aesthetic values with, and how this appropriation works to validate his own authority in asserting these values. Water plays a significant role in these passages.

> ἐχθαίρω τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικόν, οὐδὲ κελεύθωι
> χαίρω τίς πολλοὺς ὧδε καὶ ὧδε φέρει,
> μισέω καὶ περίφοιτον ἐρώμενον, οὐδ᾽ ἀπὸ κρήνης
> πίνω· σικχαίνω πάντα τὰ δημόσια.
> Λυσανίη σὺ δὲ ναιχὶ καλὸς καλός — ἀλλὰ πρὶν εἰπεῖν
> τοῦτο σαφῶς, Ἠχώ φησί τις «ἄλλος ἔχει».

[45] I take the word "code" from Hunter (2006: 2), which conceptually comes close to the idea of a reifying continual metaphorization: "Particularly when the key question for critics of Latin poetry was the attitude of the poets to traditional Roman values and the poetry which enshrined them, and hence to the 'regime' and its values, Callimachus seemed to offer a code through which such matters could be discussed."

[46] The Corpus Theognideum denotes the collection of verses once ascribed to the archaic poet Theognis (6th cent. BCE). Only a number of poems in this corpus is believed to be by the hand of Theognis himself, while the rest of the verses, among which those discussed here, are held to be suspect.

> "I hate cyclic poetry, and I do not enjoy a road that carries many travelers this way and that way, and I hate the lover who darts around, and I do not drink from a public fountain: I dislike everything that is common. And Lysanies, you are indeed handsome. But before I have repeated 'handsome,' Echo's 'and some . . . one else's' cuts me of."
>
> Callimachus, *Epigram* 28 (ed. Pfeiffer 1949)

The epigram has some similarities to the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*, particularly with regards to its overt statement: I hate cyclic poetry. Callimachus most probably refers to the poems from the epic cycle, that are largely built around the mythological narratives of the Homeric epics.[47] Callimachus follows up with other annoyances that emerge from the vulgarity of clichés. Hence we come to understand why Callimachus would hate cyclic poetry: the argument is that just like the path that is often trodden, the boy who is often frequented and the water source that is often drunk from, cyclic poetry has become trite.[48] The specific concepts used to convey this idea – the path, the boy and, relevant for our purposes, the water – are no inventions by Callimachus himself. The epigram is highly reminiscent of the following verses from the Corpus Theognideum.

> Ἐχθαίρω κακὸν ἄνδρα, καλυψαμένη δὲ πάρειμι
> σμικρῆς ὄρνιθος κοῦφον ἔχουσα νόον.
> Ἐχθαίρω δὲ γυναῖκα περίδρομον ἄνδρα τε μάργον,
> ὅς τὴν ἀλλοτρίην βούλετ' ἄρουραν ἀροῦν.
>
> "I hate a bad man, and I pass by having covered myself, paying as little attention to him as a small bird. And I hate a woman who goes around, and a mad man who wants to plow the field of another."
>
> *Corpus Theognideum* 579-582 (ed. Hudson-Williams 1979)

> Ἔστε μὲν αὐτός ἔπινον ἀπό κρήνης μελανύδρου,
> ἠδύ τί μοι ἐδόκει καὶ καλὸν ἦμεν ὕδωρ.
> νῦν δ' ἤδη τεθόλωται, ὕδωρ δ' ἀναμίσγεται ἰλύι·
> ἄλλης δὴ κρήνης πίομαι ἢ ποταμοῦ.

[47] See e.g. Sistakou (2015).

[48] It is relevant to note here that the κέλευθος can also designate a "sea path" or a voyage over the sea (see LSJ AII s.v. κέλευθος). When Callimachus finds the much taken path trite, this could also mean a sea voyage, which would further strengthen the metaphorical link between water and text.

> "While I myself drank from the black-watered spring, I thought the water was sweet and good. But now it has already turned dirty, and the water has been mixed with mud: I will drink from another spring rather than a river."
>
> *Corpus Theognideum* 959-962

Fantuzzi (2011: 431) rightly points out that *Epigram* 28, both in ideas and in diction, is greatly indebted to these verses. The former verses seem to inform the priamel format of the epigram as well as offer the concepts of promiscuity and adultery, while the latter verses deal with the concept of drinking clean or dirty water. For Fantuzzi, it is of particular relevance that Callimachus uses these concepts for his aesthetic values specifically to convey authority: by embedding his poetical statements in *sententiae* already several centuries old, Callimachus legitimizes his views by means of an older author with well-circulated ideas.[49] I will come back to this point later.

It is first important to see what happens to the representation of water in the translation from the latter verses of the Corpus Theognideum to Callimachus' epigram, and how Callimachus' own appropriation of the concept affects the reading practices of his poetics in general. These Theognidean verses present a logic of water purity that is recognizable in the *Hymn to Apollo* as well. The poet's persona enjoys the pure water of a spring, which becomes impure because of its contamination with dirt. The impure spring is then compared to the water of a river, and the narrator thus decides to find another source of water. Solely based on the poem itself, there is no indication that these verses are to be read metaphorically, and if one chooses to do so, it will be based on external factors. This has not stopped ancient and modern critics to interpret the waters and their purity as metaphors. Even before Callimachus, it had possibly already become common to interpret this poem as metaphorical for the narrator's love life, where drinking would be a metaphor for having romantic relations, the purity of water for monogamy, and its impurity for promiscuity.[50] Callimachus' epigram itself can serve as evidence for this: the fact that the promiscuous boy and the water source are mentioned in so close proximity might point to an earlier tradition in reading these Theognidean verses as metaphors for a love affair. If there was no such earlier tradition, then it at least certainly highlights Callimachus' own proclivity to read the verses metaphorically.

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[49] Fantuzzi (2011: 432): "This credo thus takes on the obviousness of traditional and self-evident ethical behaviors—which had been also sanctioned by the most famous archaic gnomic poet."

[50] Fantuzzi (2011: 431, n.3): "This passage has often been interpreted in an erotic sense, with the muddying of the water signifying infidelity, the spring a faithful lover, and the river a promiscuous one." See also Cameron (1995: 389-391).

However, Callimachus does not implement these ideas from the Theognidean verses into his epigram in a straightforward manner. Surely, his epigram strongly links the concepts of promiscuity and drinking from an often frequented source of water, but these concepts together (alongside that of the oft-trodden path) all ultimately tend to Callimachus' denunciation of cyclic poetry. He thereby transforms his predecessor's concept of water impurity to not (only) be a metaphor for infidelity, but for creative triteness as well. Hence, we move from the metaphor of 'water is lover' to the metaphor of 'water is text', where the vulgarity of the source of water comes to stand in for the vulgarity of the cyclic poems. Independently from the question whether reading the Theognidean waters metaphorically originated with Callimachus or not, it is clear that Callimachus' *own* interpretation of these waters as metaphorical prompted his transformation of them into metaphors for text. To rephrase, based on the Theognidean verses themselves, it is difficult to pinpoint any topic that the supposed water-vehicle expresses. However, Callimachus shows that any hint of that water being a vehicle, even though the topic was perhaps unknown, is enough to inspire his own metaphor with water in its role as vehicle. As we have seen previously to what extent metaphorizing water can exclude some of its properties, it is now becoming clear how this exclusion can be a consequence of literary reception. Callimachus' imitation and transformation of the Theognidean verses elicits copying the "vehicularized" status of water, even though the verses themselves give no indication to be read metaphorically. It is Callimachus' own interpretation of the Theognidean water as metaphorical that informs its metaphorization as text in *Epigram* 28. In this step of reception, the water seem to progressively lose the ability to refer to itself, and seems to grow in its role of vehicle.

Mind the fact that I write about Callimachus' interpretation of these Theognidean verses as if only this effectuated the 'water is text' metaphor in the epigram, while in fact, this is dependent on our modern interpretation of Callimachus' waters as metaphorical. Acknowledging or misrecognizing the ability of water to refer to itself remains a practice of interpretation. As such, we can identify in Fantuzzi (2011) how the transformation of the water metaphor from the Corpus Theognideum to Callimachus engenders hydrophasia in his manner of reading. Similar to Williams (1978), Fantuzzi summarizes the relationship between Callimachus' epigram and the Theognidean verses in a particular way that is forgetful of water's imprint on the texts.

> "By paralleling promiscuous lovers with traditional Cyclic poetry under the sign of excessive easiness, and uncommon paths with uncommon sources of inspiration as satisfactory difficulty, Callimachus illustrates the desirability of his poetics through the desirability of some widely

> shared feelings in human life that had already found poetic validation in Theognis."
>
> Fantuzzi (2011: 431)

I have no trouble agreeing with Fantuzzi on his recognition of the functioning parallels in the epigram: just like I set out above, the concepts of promiscuity, the worn down path and the oft-frequented source of water are all linked to the triteness of cyclic poetry. But what is noteworthy about Fantuzzi's description is the manner in which he addresses these three concepts: while the concepts of promiscuity and (un)conventional path-taking are mentioned literally, the water source is already represented in its metaphorical status as a "source of inspiration." Apparently, Fantuzzi deems it unnecessary to elaborate upon the intricacies of Callimachus' appropriation of the waters from the Theognidean verses, let alone explicate how or why these waters function metaphorically as sources of inspiration in the first place. For Fantuzzi as well, the metaphorical status of water as a vehicle has already become so obvious that it is not worth mentioning.

In the rest of his analysis, it becomes clear that Fantuzzi is solely concerned with Callimachus' translation of the erotic paradigm from the Corpus Theognideum to his poetical program, bypassing the fact that it is the logic of water that mediates this translation.

> "Our pseudo-Theognidean Callimachus expresses a new metaliterary voice, which raises the ethical-erotic priamel of Theognis to the intellectual level of poetics."
>
> "In parallel with the erotic (universal) and poetical (particularized) options […]."
>
> Fantuzzi (2011: 431, 432)

Tracing how Callimachus appropriates the Theognidean erotic concepts, Fantuzzi considers them to be universal ideas (for an ancient reader) that legitimize the acclaim of Callimachus' poetics. However, it is the Theognidean waters from verses 959-962, which express the ubiquitous experience that drinking pure water is good and drinking dirty water is bad, in which the denunciation of promiscuity, and by extent the denunciation of cyclic poetry, actually finds its claim to universality. Moreover, Fantuzzi's designation of the erotic and the poetical respectively as universal and particularized finds resonance in the salience imbalance inherent to the relationship between topic and vehicle. Cyclic poems (text) are taken here as topic, to which the salient, "universal" properties of the expressed erotic values can be applied. Fantuzzi thus seems to analyze the poem primarily as a metaphor with cliché texts as topic and

promiscuity as vehicle. However, the underlying water-vehicle that serves to explain and justify the universality of denouncing both cliché texts and promiscuity, is now omitted from the argument. It seems self-explanatory, even redundant to explicate that the waters in these texts function in this manner, which hides the scope of influence these waters can have, and hinders any critical interaction with or recharacterization of their role.

Fantuzzi's hydrophasia in his reading of Callimachus is then to some extent reciprocal of Callimachus' reading of the Corpus Theognideum. Callimachus narrows down the Theognidean waters to become metaphors for romantic relations, and reiterates their vehicularized status for his own topic of text. In this translation, the wide range of water's potentially significant properties erodes away. Fantuzzi, in his turn, builds his argument on the metaphorical qualities of Callimachus' waters as well, but refrains from explicating how exactly they are transferred from the Corpus Theognideum to Callimachus. This only pushes the reader further to forget water's potentially critical influences on the text, which start to fade away from the possible manners in which to read these texts. This gradual erosion, which develops every time the metaphor is reiterated and the reduction of its constituents are taken for granted, shows why the "disorder" of hydrophasia should not be considered noncommunicative but rather contagious. Once the metaphorization of water is taken as self-evident, it reproduces throughout the various chains of its reception, and with every infection it becomes increasingly easy to forget that water is more than a metaphor. As viral as (literary) language is, so too the hydrophasia that pervades this language and the manners in which we read it.

Hydrophasia, *primus ego*, Anthropopoetics

An important step in the reception of Callimachus, still for modern readers of Callimachus as well, is the appropriation of his poetics by the Latin poets of the Augustan age.[51] Especially Callimachus' predilection for shorter, refined, authentic poetry over longer, unrefined, unoriginal poetry was remodeled to pertain to specific genres: epic would be criticized while lyric and elegy were lauded. Propertius is often mentioned as one of the most intimate interactors with Callimachean poetics, and his *Carmen* 3.1 is a clear example, in which Callimachus' metaphorization of water is imitated as well. On top of that, Propertius' engagement with the Callimachean waters reveals another dimension to the workings of hydrophasia: the vacant space that is left by the diminishment of water's significant properties, is filled by the creative authority of the author.

[51] The reception of Callimachus has been crucial for our understanding of his poetry because it has been transmitted so fragmentarily. Hunter (2006: 1-6) explains how the appropriation of Callimachus by later authors has clouded many critics' views on properly reconstructing Callimachus' poetry based on the fragments themselves.

Callimachi manes et Coi sacra Philetae,
in vestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus.
primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos
Itala per Graios orgia ferre choros.
dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro?
quove pede ingressi? quamve bibistis aquam?
A valeat, Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis.

"Callimachean spirits and graces of Philetas of Cos, I beg you, allow me to go to your grove: I am the first to enter as a priest from the pure fountain, to present the Italian rites in Greek rhythms. Tell me, in what cave did you both spin out your song? On what foot did you enter? Which water did you drink? Begone whoever keeps Phoebus in battle!"

Propertius, *Carmina* 3.1.1-7 (ed. Heyworth 2007)

By now, tellingly, the waters in these verses should come across as familiar. The famous opening of Propertius 3.1 engages twice with Callimachean waters: the pure fountain and the drinking source both remind of the *Hymn to Apollo* as well as *Epigram* 28. It is clear that Propertius is indebted to Callimachus for the metaphorical use of these waters. Just as Callimachus transformed his predecessors' waters into metaphors for text, so Propertius appropriates the metaphor to express his own Callimachus-inspired poetics. We might recognize a slight reapplication of the metaphor that differs from Callimachus' use (it is hard to know for certain since the Callimachean corpus is so fragmentary). Especially verse 7 shows Propertius' generic preferences.[52] By calling out the poets who keep Phoebus (Apollo), the god of poetry, stuck in battle, Propertius is reproaching the epic genre, which is epitomized by its wars and bloodshed. It was a more generally held position among the Augustan poets that the epic genre was not to be trifled with without taking Callimachus' aesthetic prescriptions into account, which led some poets, like Horace and Propertius here, to denounce the epic genre altogether, and others, like Virgil and Ovid, to embark on an epic that could still live up to Callimachean standards.[53] It is debatable whether Callimachus would have rebuked the entire genre of epic so

[52] Note the similarities between this verse and the second verse of the *Hymn to Apollo*: ἐκὰς ἐκὰς ὅστις ἁλιτρός ("away, away, whoever is a sinner"). This is another example of how a Callimachean expression that functions in a religious paradigm (those who are averse to Apollo should go away), but is appropriated by Propertius to pertain to a generic paradigm (those who use Apollo for epic should go away).

[53] While in the non-epic works by Virgil, like the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, and by Ovid, like the *Amores*, the Callimachean influences are overt by their generic constitution, their epic works – Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* – both grapple with unifying their length and themes with Callimachus' poetical

vigorously himself, or whether his criticism on long and unpolished poetry referred to a more general, genre-transcending style of writing, or to the writings of a specific (group of) author(s). The former view, however, enabled poets like Propertius to profess their *recusatio* of the epic genre and appreciation of lyric and elegy.[54] Consequently, there is also a transformation in what the waters in the opening of Propertius 3.1 represent: the fountain of which Propertius presents himself as priest, and the source from which Callimachus has drunk (framed in a rhetorical question), are no metaphors for refined poetry in general, but of lyric and elegy in specific. Although this a transformation of what *type* of text the waters represent, the anchoring point for Propertius is still Callimachus' metaphorization of water as 'text'. Hence we see again how, through the spread and subsequent recharacterization of Callimachean poetics, the vehicularized representation of water is reiterated again.

Propertius certainly benefitted from presenting the pure water as metaphor for a specific genre. As he chose himself to write in the elegiac genre, reading Callimachus' water imagery as an approval of elegy serves to validate Propertius' own literary program. This strategic elation of Propertius' authorial persona is clearly apparent in his use of the *primus ego* motif as well (verse 3). This motif consists of the author's self-presentation as being the 'first' to accomplish some literary achievement, thereby framing their authenticity as self-evident.[55] Here, Propertius presents himself as the first priest of the pure spring, or as the first poet fully dedicated to the lyric/elegiac poetics of Callimachus, and the first to bring these Greek ideas into Latin verse. Most tellingly, Propertius' use of the *primus ego* motif highlights an important dynamic between the figure of the author and the metaphorized spring. The opening of 3.1 offers a picture not only of the reified 'water is text' metaphor and the consequent hydrophasia, but of the position of the *ego* in relation to the metaphor as well. The intratextual interaction between the *ego* and the *fons* (spring) is pointedly indicative of how hydrophasia effectuates a hierarchy between water and human-author.

Note the emphatic position of *primus ego* in verse 3. The positional 'primacy' of the word *primus* self-referentially underlines its denotation: it is the first word in the verse, and it means 'first' as well. In this manner Propertius calls great attention to his authenticity. As we move along in the verse, a tension arises between the emphatic *ego* and the *fons* through their physical motions embedded in the verb *ingredior* (to go in, to enter, to begin) and the preposition *de* (away from). The verb *ingredior* has two functions in the sentence: it brings about its meaning

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style and diction. On the *Aeneid* and Callimachus, see e.g. George (1974). On the *Metamorphoses* and Callimachus, see e.g. Van Tress (2017).

[54] The term *recusatio* is used to describe the poetic refusal to write in a certain genre, most often epic. Besides Callimachus' own *Hymn to Apollo* and *Epigram* 28, some of the most famous *recusationes* appear in Horace's *Carmen* 1.6 and Catullus 68. See also El-Nowieemy (2001).

[55] Consider e.g. Horace 3.30.13-14: *princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos* | *deduxisse modos* ("I am the first to have brought the Aeolian song into Italian verse"). See also e.g. Crowther (1978).

of 'to begin' as it reigns the infinitive *ferre* ("I am the first to begin carrying…"), but it also retains its etymological meaning of 'going' (*gradior*) 'in' (*in*). In its first meaning, it stresses the *ego*'s authenticity even further: the *ego* is not only "the first to carry…" but "the first to *begin* carrying…". In its second meaning, the motional aspect of the verb is foregrounded, which stands in stark contrast with the motional aspect of the preposition *de* (away from). Focusing on this motional aspect, the *ego* is seen *going into* something (the *nemus*, grove, an often spatialized concept for Callimachean poetics), *away from* the spring. Surely, the meaning of the sentence is not solely focused around the *ego* moving away from the spring, as the notion of the *ego* being the *sacerdos* (priest) of the spring is apparent as well, but the verbal juxtaposition of *ingredior* and *puro de fonte* does highlight an opposition between the *ego* and the *fons* with regards to their physical motion. Combining these two notions of *ingredior*, both further emphasizing the status of the ego-poet and conveying his move away from the *fons*, seems to show us an intratextual parallel to the human-water dynamics of hydrophasia: as the poet physically moves away from the source of water, having reduced it into a metaphor for his poetical purposes, he can now boast his own authorial identity as the first to translate and appropriate Callimachus and his metaphors in this manner. In replicating the forgetfulness of water necessary for its metaphorization, the poet is enabled to now physically and critically *move away* from the water to construct his poetics around his own elated *ego*. In other words, the space for signification that is left by forgetting the water can be readily filled by the author to claim authority over the creation of his text. Hydrophasia thus not only propagates the diminishment of water's potentially significant roles in the constitution of the text other than metaphorical, it also foregrounds the superior position of the human-author as the only active force behind writing.

This is then the extent to which hydrophasia enables what I call an "anthropopoetics." In contrast to the theory of hydropoetics, in which water materially contributes to the creation of a text, an anthropopoetics highlights a poetics in which only human forces are considered authorial. But as the above shows, such an anthropopoetics also works precisely because of its exclusion of other potential forces in the creation of the text, such as water's. The waters are retained in their roles as metaphors for text to ultimately serve the conceptualization of exclusive human authorship. It might seem unremarkable that an author frames themselves as the sole force behind their writing, but it is remarkable that this happens through the suppression of other physical constituents in the text. Anthropopoetics is thus not merely a poetics governed by human creativity, it is a poetics governed by an anthropocentrism that hierarchizes human over other forces.

As we have seen how hydrophasia spread through the repeatedly imitated metaphorization of water, the hierarchies behind anthropopoetics are just as viral as well. Looking back through Propertius on Callimachus, his *Hymn to Apollo* and *Epigram* 28 are

characterized by the hierarchization of human authorship over the textual waters as well. Williams (1978) and the reading practice he stands for mainly concentrate on finding Callimachus' authorial voice behind the watery "riddles" at the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*. Focusing exclusively on the expression of Callimachus' aesthetic values centralizes his poetical voice while shutting out the water's. Fantuzzi (2011) recognized how Callimachus' strategic presentation of other voices also ultimately serves the elation of his own authority. Fantuzzi notes about Callimachus' reception of the Corpus Theognideum that Callimachus sought "poetic validation" for his criticism on cyclic poetry. And surely, the metaphorization of the Theognidean waters in *Epigram* 28 served Callimachus' own bold authorial voice: "I hate cyclic poetry." The idea of anthropopoetics, whereby the author's poetics is constructed through the superiority of their authorship, is apparent in these poems and the interpretations thereof just as much. As such, as Callimacheanism spread throughout the ancient literary world, so too did the formalization of anthropocentrically constructing poetics.[56] The textual waters kept being reiterated in their role as metaphors, their ability to non-metaphorically represent themselves as influential on the text kept being forgotten, and so the idea that poetics are only constructed by human creative endeavors is reified. It even shimmers through the classical definition of the term 'poetics' that I reflect on in the introduction and that I utilize throughout this chapter as well. When I speak of 'Callimachean poetics' as the aggregate of Callimachus' aesthetic values for creating text, this can equally well be characterized as a 'Callimachean anthropopoetics,' because it by definition overrules the idea that anything else but the human author has authority over the text. This definition of poetics as anthropopoetics is reinforced every time ancient authors imitate Callimachus' formal approach in expressing his poetical statements in water metaphors. And it is equally reinforced by the modern critics who keep taking the anthropocentrism of these strategies for granted when attempting to demystify an author's poetics.

Relevantly, the distinction between anthropopoetics and hydropoetics brings back to mind the distinction between metaphor and metonymy as theorized by Culler.[57] In this distinction, metaphor enables the author to connect two dissimilar concepts into a figure and create a relationship of similarity between them. In this figurative construction, the concepts have no independent power to guide how the figure is constructed: the author has all the power to figure the concepts into topic and vehicle, without there being any restraints apart from the author's own creative abilities. The suppression of the concepts' agency in guiding the figuration is a clear expression of anthropopoetics. With metonymy however, the relationship between the figured concepts is not forged by the author, it exists independently from them, in a relationship

[56] It might well be possible that the anthropocentric construction of poetics is much older than Callimachus, perhaps dating back to the earliest formations of author-centered poetical reflection. This is a tentative statement though, and it falls outside of the scope of my analysis.

[57] See Introduction, page 22-26.

of external contiguity. When a figuration of water is based on a metonymical relationship, it means that the author is creatively working with what the water materially has to offer: the metonymical relationship constitutes that water is figured as something that it is materially related to. Because this relationship is external to the author, it removes some of the creative powers of the author and transfers it to the water, by which it can guide its own figurative representation, or in other words, represent itself. When the poetics of a passage is constructed in this manner, and the creative power over the text is not coopted by the author, but shared by the author and the figures of water, we are dealing with a hydropoetics rather than an anthropopoetics.

Hydropoetics in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*

How could one read Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, to return to our first case, as well as the lineage of the 'water is text' metaphor preceding and succeeding it, and interpret it as a hydropoetics instead of an anthropopoetics? It would require not forgetting the materiality of the water that is implicated in the metaphor. It begs for a mode of reading that does not yield to the tendency to substitute the waters in the text for different concepts, as the articles by Williams and Fantuzzi exemplified. That does not mean we ought to deny that these waters act as metaphors altogether: as we have seen, the ancient texts themselves make a metaphorical reading sensible. However, they have the potential to induce hydrophasia, sometimes laying bare an anthropocentric poetics. Is it possible to alter the mode of metaphorical reading so that hydrophasia is not the consequence, and see how not only the author, but the water itself is responsible for the poetical constitution of the text? Let us focus specifically on the metaphorization of the spring as a source of inspiration, the πῖδαξ in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*. I repeat the end of the poem for clarity's sake.

> ὸ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὔατα λάθριος εἶπεν·
> «οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ' ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει.»
> τὸν Φθόνον ὠπόλλων ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὧδέ τ' ἔειπεν·
> «Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλά
> λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἕλκει.
> Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
> ἀλλ' ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
> πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.»
>
> "Envy secretly spoke into Apollo's ear: 'I do not admire the singer who does not sing as much as the sea sings.' Apollo kicked Envy with his foot

> and said: 'The stream of the Assyrian river is great, but it carries a lot of dirt from the land and sweepings in its water, and not from every source do the bees bring water to Deo, but only from that which flows pure and undefiled from a hallowed spring, the small and choicest trickle."
>
> Callimachus, *Hymn* 2.105-112

Importantly, when we trace the spring metaphor to its earliest extant formations, it becomes clear that it is possible to interpret it as metonymically motivated. As explained in the introduction, when a water metaphor is underpinned by a metonymical relationship, the construction of the figure is guided by the material contiguities of the water.[58] If we can establish that this 'water is text' metaphor is metonymically motivated, this can productively pivot our reading of the *Hymn to Apollo* to see how the waters materially contribute to the poetics of the text. It also alters our understanding of metaphor, not as the substitution of a subservient water vehicle with a superior topic, but as a cocreation of both the author and the water.

How and where did the literary-critical metaphor of the spring as source of inspiration form? To start off, it is important to note that the beginnings of ancient Greek literary criticism are as old and as obscure as the beginnings of ancient Greek literature itself, and as such, the two can hardly be seen as separate modes of cultural production. In fact, the earliest notes of literary criticism did not evolve in abstract technical treatises, but in poetry itself. It is of little use to outline here what does and what does not fall under literary criticism, but it is indicative that early forms of self-reflection within poetry, such as poetic self-validation, belatedness to past sources, or consciousness about technique and construction, happened through metaphor. Nancy Worman, in her book *Landscape and the Spaces of Metaphor* (2015), has shown how various literary discourses were cast in spatial and material metaphors from their very early formations.[59] She argues that the specific spaces and matters used to metaphorically construct theoretical discourse, were those already commonplace in literary tradition, such as meadows, groves, springs or mountain tops.

> "[R]epresentations of rural landscapes shape theory because the metaphorical spaces that they delimit are so deeply rooted in poetic convention and in famous places of pilgrimage and invention with many layers of cultural accretion."
>
> Worman (2015: 2)

[58] See Introduction, page 24-26.

[59] For the specific use of river metaphors to construct theoretical and rhetorical discourse, see also e.g. De Jonge (2021) in regards to literary criticism and Hunter (2012) in regards to Plato.

Worman herself takes as an example the metaphor of the spring as an encoded place of poetic inspiration, like those in Callimachus, the Corpus Theognideum and Propertius. While the Corpus Theognideum serves as a clear intertextual model for Callimachus' use of the spring metaphor, one of the earliest conceptions of the spring as having inspiratory qualities in Greek literature is found in the opening of Hesiod's *Theogony*.

> Μουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ' ἀείδειν,
> αἵ θ' Ἑλικῶνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τε ζάθεόν τε
> καί τε περὶ κρήνην ἰοειδέα πόσσ' ἀπαλοῖσιν
> ὀρχεῦνται καὶ βωμὸν ἐρισθενέος Κρονίωνος.
>
> "Let us start to sing from the Heliconian Muses,
> who hold the great and holy Mount Helicon,
> and around the purple spring on tender feet
> dance and around the altar of the mighty son of Cronos."
>
> Hesiod, *Theogony* 1-4 (ed. Solmsen 1990)

Hesiod's use of the spring here does not appear to be a critical metaphor. The spring is rather part of the material scenery that adorns the invocation of the Muses: they dance around and bathe (5-8) in the spring of the hallowed Mount Helicon. The passage does work with the concept of inspiration: it was not uncommon for a poet to call upon the Muses for guiding inspiration when writing their poem (consider the famous opening of Homer's *Iliad*). As these deities were known for their powers to endow artists with creativity, Hesiod's portrayal of the Muses in the spring confers onto this place the inspiratory qualities for which these deities are known. As Worman shows (2015: 81-84), Pindar uses a similar image of drinking from a spring, by which he has taken inspiration from Hesiod, and simultaneously converted the image of drinking from a spring into a metaphor for taking inspiration from a past source. Importantly, it is thus not Pindar who authored the figuration of the spring as a source of inspiration. He may have been one of the first to pick up on it, but before him there was a preexistent relationship between the concept of inspiration and the concept of the spring, as the material world of Hesiod's *Theogony* presented them as spatially contiguous through the figures of the Muses.

As such, following Worman's contention, before there were clear-cut technical terms for an author to discuss their sources of inspiration, Hesiod's text provided a physical matter with which to think about this difficult concept. Thus, Worman argues, this time taking the metaphorical image of the path as an example:

> "Literary critical and theoretical discourse is thus shaped by shared conventions and framed from the outset as poetic and metaphorical. That is, "style in writing" (tenor, ground, target) takes shape as a figurative discourse, as, say, a straight or winding "path" (vehicle, figure, source). Before it is analyzed in itself, it is expressed as metaphor."
>
> Worman (2015: 2-3)

Worman's invocation of metaphor terminology shows her sensibility towards the blurring effect this type of metaphor has on the topic-vehicle construction. Whereas usually, the vehicle can be substituted to express the topic concept literally, in this case, the vehicle was already used to express the topic before there was a literal counterpart in place to substitute the vehicle with. In other words, what is presented as the metaphorical vehicle, can actually be interpreted as the literal expression of the topic. As the use of the spring as a source of inspiration predates any extant abstract terminology, the spring is not the metaphorical vehicle which expresses the abstract topic of inspiring text, the spring becomes a literal expression of inspiring text. Consequently, the distinction between topic and vehicle becomes unproductive, and it changes the type of metaphor we are dealing with.

To clarify how this happens, it is useful to explain the term that is used by Max Black (1962) to discuss this type of metaphor: the *catachresis*. With catachresis, or with a catachrestic metaphor, the figurative concept can certainly be recognized as metaphorical for some literal substitute, but this literal substitute in fact does not exist.[60] The textbook example is the *table leg*. It is evident that this expression makes use of a vehicle domain, that of (human or animal) *body*, to explain a concept within the domain of *table*: the vertical support beams that act as undercarriage for the table top. However, as my description of the concept exposes, there is no literal way to express the concept of *table leg*. That vertical beam supporting the table top *is* a leg. Because there is no literal counterpart for the seemingly figurative concept, the catachresis undermines the understanding of metaphor as solely substitutive: the figurative is no replacement for the literal, the figurative rather *is* the literal. This too displaces the binarization of domains into topics and vehicles: the (human or animal) *leg* has become so internalized by the topic of *table* that it can hardly be recognized as a vehicle whatsoever. This does something

[60] The manner in which Black (1962) theorizes *catachresis* is different from how the rhetorical term was used in antiquity. The term κατάχρησις, or *abusio* in Latin, rather designated the semantic stretching of a word to fit the context in which the term would actually not be grammatically appropriate. See Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 8.6.24, where he gives the example of Vergil's *Aeneid* 2.15-16, in which it is said that a wooden horse is built. The word used for the verb 'building', *aedificant*, is strictly speaking only correct when applied to houses or similar buildings. As Vergil applies it here to a horse, Quinitilian finds that he stretches the meaning of *aedifico*, which he thus deems a form of κατάχρησις or *abusio*. This understanding of *catachresis* is not wholly unrelated to Black's conception, but it is worth noting the difference.

fascinating to the two domains: instead of the *leg* being a property of humans and animals that is lent to describe the table, the *leg* is rather a shared property by humans, animals and tables. In the same way, the spring as a metaphorical source of inspiration can be understood as a catachresis too. Because the use of the spring metaphor predates abstract terminology to discuss inspiration, there appears to be no literal counterpart for the seemingly figurative spring. As Hesiod conferred onto the space of the spring the hallowed inspiration of the Muses, the spring was internalized as a material component of the concept of inspiration. In other words, if the concept of *spring* metaphorically expressed (inspiring) *text* before there was a terminological substitute, the figurative qualities of the spring become literal constituents of the *text* domain. It suggests that, just like the *table* literally has a *leg*, the (inspiring) *text* literally is a *spring*.

As such, instead of interpreting Callimachus' waters with a mode of metaphorical reading based on the topic-vehicle construction, it is possible to interpret them as metonymically motivated metaphors, so that their materiality starts to play a role in constituting the poetics of the passage. At the outset of the *Theogony*, the spring became encoded as a space of inspiration. Consequently, authors who employed the spring to comment on their belatedness to their predecessors, did not invent this construction themselves. Callimachus' spring is thus not a metaphor in the rigid sense, where, to bring back Culler's terms, Callimachus highlights a relationship of essences between the dissimilar spring and the concept of inspiration. Rather, because Hesiod imagined the hallowed source as being spatially contingent to the inspiratory Muses, a contiguous relationship between the water source and inspiring text is already in place. The two have become materially related. This entails that the spring, independently from Callimachus' figurative abilities, inherited the quality of being inspiring. As such, the spring metaphor in the *Hymn to Apollo* is underpinned by a metonymical relationship. Just like this metaphor is catachrestic, in the sense that taking water from a spring is *literally* inspiring, this literality comes from a metonymical relationship between the spring and the concept of inspiration.

When we look at Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* in this manner, the waters start to play a different role, besides their functions as metaphors. Taking water from a spring is not merely metaphorical for taking inspiration from another text. Taking water from a spring is literally inspiring itself as well. When Callimachus writes that the bees only carry water to Demeter from the purest of springs, this is not only metaphorical for Callimachus' aesthetic values to work with small and refined poetry, the pure water of the spring is also a material source of inspiration. In terms of salience, this adds onto the properties that Williams had recognized as being important for the 'water is text' metaphor. Whereas he argued that the properties of size and purity were the salient properties of water active in the construction of the metaphor, the metonymical underpinning of the water imagery shows that 'being inspiring' is as equally a salient property

for the spring. Through its indebtedness to the material world of the *Theogony*, the spring has received as a contingent feature the quality of being inspiring as much as it has the quality of being small and being pure.

Importantly, the inspiratory quality of the spring makes the passage start to reflect back on itself. The water of the spring truly has inspired Callimachus: it is the very matter that he chose to write about. Taking water from the spring is not only metaphorical for taking inspiration to write refined and delicate poetry: the water from the spring *is* the inspiration. The end of the *Hymn to Apollo* thus starts to attest to the agency that water can have in guiding the author's writing. As the bees take water from the spring to Demeter, so too does Callimachus quite literally take water to employ it in his poetry. It has inspired him to construct this water in a variation of formations, a large sea that is portrayed as singing, a grand river that carries bits of refuse, and the very hallowed spring itself. It has inspired him to express his poetic values in terms of water. But, instead of this expression being suppressive towards the water's agency, where its contingent properties are forgotten, it is now presented as the very inspiring matter itself that constructs Callimachus' poetics.

As such, it becomes clear that the water from the spring, with its sway of inspiration that influences the author, portrays its agency as a creative influence over the text: it presents itself as a material source from which Callimachus can tap, which shows that Callimachus is not the only one responsible for creating the text, the sources that he is indebted to, are as well. This creative agency that the spring portrays, is also reflected by the aforementioned quality of the sea as singing. Williams underlined this quality to support his argument that the sea should be read as a metaphor for Homer: the sea is imagined as having a poetic voice, which metaphorically relates it to Homer, who is more often figured as Oceanus, and naturally has a poetic voice as well.[61] However, notwithstanding the possible accuracy of this interpretation, the image of a sea singing is rich and vivid on its own just as much. Importantly, one could switch the metaphor around. In Williams' reasoning, the singing sea would be a metaphor for a poet, and the question that emerges is: what does the singing sea say about that poet? The answer is: because Homer is often equated to Oceanus, this singing sea points to the poet it metaphorizes as being Homer. But it is possible to turn the question around: what does it say about the water that it is imagined as a singing poet, instead of the other way around?

Envisioning the water as having a poetic voice, puts up a comparison between the water's agency and that of the poetic human. The construction of the sentence does so formally as well: Envy compares the quantity of a poem uttered by a singing human (ἀοιδός) to that of a singing sea. This leads us to view human and water has having a similar poetic agency: both have the

[61] For Homer and Oceanus, see page 40, note 27.

ability to produce song and poetry. For humans, one can make sense of this intuitively, as the ability to write poetry and sing are qualities usually ascribed to humans. When imagining water as having these same qualities, however, it opens up an array of different capabilities that would usually not be ascribed to water. It therefore envisions the human poet and the water as being equals: the water is not the object matter fully subjugated to the authorial will of the human writer. Both have poetic voices that stand next to each other and that, as Envy shows, can be compared to each other.

Most importantly, if the sea can produce poetry like an ἀοιδός, does it also in part produce the poem in which this singing water appears, the very end of the *Hymn to Apollo* itself? I argue that, especially in combination with the inspiring spring, it is possible to view the passage in this manner. The catachrestic construction of the spring as the inspiring source text shows that the spring *is* itself an inspiring source text. It gives Callimachus a variety of textual water bodies to structure his poetical world with. It is not difficult to see this gift of inspiration as the song or text that the water itself produces: just like the Muses sing to give inspiration to their poets (see again the opening of the *Iliad*), a watery source of inspiration can be considered singing as well. As if the water sang to Callimachus, like a Muse would do, giving him the matter to compose the passage with. As such, both through the inspiring spring and the singing sea, the passage plays with the poetical abilities of the water, which prompts us to compare the creative agency of the water in constructing the poetics of the passage, to that of Callimachus himself.

This acknowledgement that water has a poetic voice and a degree of authorship over the text it is a part of, comes close to the essence of hydropoetics. Ryan (2022: 487) argues that one of the primal features of hydropoetics is that it asks of readers to listen to the voice that water speaks to us, rather than to treat it as a lifeless object that only serves human endeavors, or even as a passive vehicle for humans to paste their preconceived notions upon. Especially this latter treatment of water is apparent in the substitutive type of metaphorical reading that leads to hydrophasia, where a vehicularized water body is reduced to the properties a reader deems essential for the topic that the water metaphorizes. In that case, the voice of the water is not heard, that is, the reader does not listen properly to every aspect that the water has to offer. When the voice of the water is dismissed, it paves the way to think about text as a human construction only, and the poetics of a text as being only a complex of the author's aesthetic values and judgements.

However, against such an anthropopoetics, a hydropoetical reading of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* reveals that there is actually room to think about the water as authorially contributive to the passage. It contributes to the passage as a material source of inspiration for Callimachus, resulting in its physical formations within the passage; and this watery matter can be imagined as poetically vocal just like the water of the sea is imagined as singing like a human poet. As such,

the water, as it were, writes the passage together with Callimachus, being an inspiring source for the author as well as a poetically active matter that sings along with him and creates a physical imprint on the text. This cocreative relationship between Callimachus and the water, then, comes to fruition in the very passage of the *Hymn* that reflects on creating poetry. This all the more prompts a reading of Callimachean poetics as being partially constituted by the matter of water as well, turning the poetics of the passage into a hydropoetics.

It is important to stress that this hydropoetical interpretation of the passage does not oppose the treatment of the waters as metaphors in its entirety. Metaphorical interpretations of the passage are still insightful for explaining the refuse of the large river, the quarrel between Envy and Apollo, or the appearance of the bees – these are aspects that, admittedly, a hydropoetical interpretation in this case is not fit to rationally explain. Then again, that is not the aim of such an interpretation, and, multiple interpretations can exist side by side to enrich an elusive passage such as the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*. It also does not tend to still unresolved questions, such as what Assyrian river Callimachus refers to and why it is mentioned here specifically. Still, what I find most important is to highlight what anthropocentrism can emerge if one interpretative style, and in particular that of reading poetical metaphors of water substitutively, has grown out to be the norm.

The workings of anthropopoetics, then, as seen in this chapter, run eerily parallel to the workings of the ecologically disruptive anthropocentrism in modern Western cultural discourse and political action. Some of the current reading practices of ancient poetics that reify the hydrophasia apparent in these discourses, come close to such anthropocentrism. This is then what the concept of hydropoetics strives to supplant. As turning poetics into anthropopoetics highlights the human author as creatively superior over their textual waters, it also propagates the conceptual and physical superiority of humans over water. The notion of hydropoetics, then, is able to subvert the creative superiority of the author, and recognize as part of water's agency an inherent and equally valuable capability to create the text they are represented in. When the hydropoetics of a text can be recognized and made functional, human's claim to conceptual and physical superiority over water becomes subverted as well.

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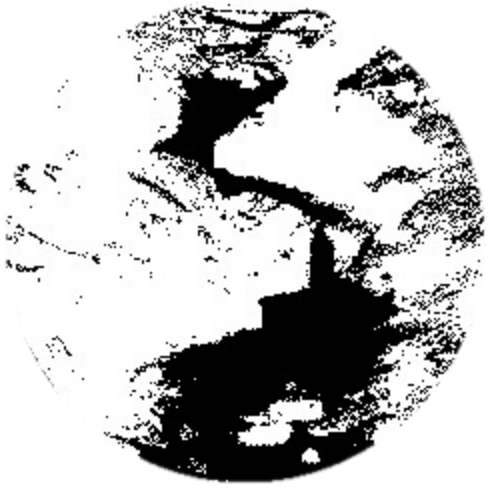


GRAND WATER

Chapter 2: Grand Water

Introduction

Longinus' *On the Sublime* is considered to be a difficult rhetorical and literary-critical treatise. The position and function of matter, and water in specific, within the treatise are at least as hard to grasp. In the introduction, I lifted a tip of the veil of Longinus' use of water in his poetical discourse. At section 13.3 of the treatise, Longinus presents us with the image of side-channels running from a spring, to explain how Plato channeled inspiration for his works from Homer. The image, as well as other examples of water imagery in Longinus' criticism, have been predominantly interpreted as metaphorical.[62] From this I raised the question if and how the waters in the treatise can also contribute literal, material meaning to the poetics of the text. In this chapter, this question will be approached by investigating to what extent the water metaphors in the text are metonymically motivated. Is the metaphorization of water to properties of text informed by an externally contiguous relationship, independent from the author? As explained in the introduction, if the water independently guides its figuration in the text, this attests to the water's agency to cocreate the text together with the author, establishing a form of hydropoetics.[63] I argue that it is possible to read Longinus' treatise in this manner as well, next to the existing interpretations of the text that have focused on reading Longinus' material imagery as metaphorical. However, because the treatise, its terminology, and its rhetorical and philosophical ideas are quite difficult, the text demands that we first properly get our bearings.

More than anything else, *On the Sublime* is a rhetorical treatise. It focuses on the topic of τὸ ὕψος, which literally means 'height' or 'elevation', but is employed as a literary-critical term for a certain 'height' of literature, modernly translated as 'the sublime'. In the treatise, Longinus discusses numerous passages and authors from classical Greek literature (and some Roman authors) to analyze what makes them have this 'height' – what makes them sublime. The treatise is addressed to Longinus' dear and learned friend Postumius Florus Terentianus, to whom he can be brief about how he generally defines τὸ ὕψος.

> γράφων δὲ πρὸς σέ, φίλτατε, τὸν παιδείας ἐπιστήμονα, σχεδὸν ἀπήλλαγμαι καὶ τοῦ διὰ πλειόνων προϋποτίθεσθαι, ὡς ἀκρότης καὶ ἐξοχή τις λόγων ἐστὶ τὰ ὕψη, καὶ ποιητῶν τε οἱ μέγιστοι καὶ

[62] See Introduction, page 13, note 3.
[63] See Introduction, page 28-29.

> συγγραφέων οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ἢ ἐνθένδε ποθὲν ἐπρώτευσαν καὶ ταῖς ἐαυτῶν περιέβαλον εὐκλείαις τὸν αἰῶνα.
>
> "As I am writing you, dearest friend, being well-versed in your education, I am virtually unburdened from exhaustively setting out that the sublime is some excellence and preeminence of language, and that most poets and prose authors are superior for no other reason than this, and endowed their life with fame."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 1.3 (ed. Halliwell 2022)

The sublime is a certain ἀκρότης (excellence) and ἐξοχή (preeminence) of λόγοι (words, language). When language attains these sublime qualities, it can have a certain overwhelming, awe-inspiring and sometimes frightening effect on their audience (1.4). The largest part of the treatise is dedicated to how authors can reach this excellent and preeminent writing, by looking at examples from Greek literary past. Longinus distinguishes between five sources of sublimity that authors can turn to in order to make their text sublime (8.1): grand conceptions, vehement emotion, literary figures, noble diction and elevated composition. The latter three of the five sources are based on the author's literary and rhetorical τέχνη (skill, technique), which can be learned and consciously employed. The former two are more difficult to learn as a proper skill, and the first source of the sublime, the author's grand conceptions, requires the author to have a certain innate geniality and align their minds with grand ideas.

This first source of the sublime is especially relevant for this chapter: in the section of the treatise where Longinus discusses how the power of grand conceptions (τὸ περὶ τὰς νοήσεις ἀδρεπήβολον) can make a text sublime (9-15), he cites and comments on a number of passages that portray physically enormous and overwhelming matter, such as stormy or parting seas (9.8, 10.4-6), vast skies (9.6, 15.4), or sundering landscapes (9.6).[64] These conceptions then, although they are molded in the genial mind of the author, find their origin in physical matters external from the author. Boisterous seas and raging wildfires are awe-inspiring and wondrously threatening, which means that their inclusion in literary texts may produce an equally awe-inspiring effect on their audience. At the same time, in discussing these passages, Longinus is also always focused on the manner in which the conception is represented, and what literary techniques the author has used in order to figure the conception and make it sublime. This raises the question: do these grand conceptions attain their sublimity because of some inherent

[64] That is not to say that all grand conceptions find their origins in matter, such as the examples given. There are passages which contain grand conceptions of divinity (9.5, 9.8), heroism (9.10) or disease (10.1) – concepts whose origins are perhaps more abstract.

grandeur of the matter itself? Or are the techniques of the author to represent the conception responsible for making the text sublime? This chapter shows that, at least when it comes to water, both are true. While Longinus' treatise is ultimately focused on the sublime in qualities of literary representation, when waters are involved, the sublimity of the text is often established in part also by some material grandeur of the water body itself. This also redirects our attention to Longinus' own use of waters in his critical discourse: if certain awe-inspiring water bodies can make text sublime because of their inherent grandeur, does Longinus' use of those water bodies as critical terms make his own treatise sublime as well?

Material and Immaterial Sublime?

The question posed above has been approached differently as well. One scholar who has written extensively on the topic of matter in Longinus' treatise, is James Porter (2016: 382-411). He too recognizes a tension running through the treatise when it comes to matter, leading him to state that there are two modes of the sublime apparent in Longinus.

> "[W]e could say that the literary sublime comes in two flavors in Longinus: either it is a reveling in the material qualities of language; or else it is an experience of the material shackles of language when they are being lifted and transcended."
>
> Porter (2016: 400)

The reveling in the material qualities of language is part of what Porter calls the "material sublime" while the break from and transcendence over these material qualities as shackles is part of the "immaterial sublime" (390-397). In general, the material sublime attributes the effect of sublimity to the overwhelming and wondrous qualities of grand matters, such as natural objects with expansive heights or infinite surfaces. With the immaterial sublime, as Porter characterizes it, the effect of sublimity rather occurs when these matters are in some way transcended (391). Longinus specifically uses the sublime as a concept to comment upon literary language, so Porter does not discuss the material and immaterial sublime to suggest that Longinus deals with a sublimity of the physical world. Porter rather uses the opposition of material and immaterial to discuss how Longinus envisions certain functions of language and meaning.

At first sight, it makes sense that Porter thinks about Longinus' views on literary language in terms of material and immaterial. The terminology that Longinus uses to discuss the sublime, as well as sublime passages, often bear reference to grand physical properties. The very word τὸ ὕψος itself literally refers to physical 'height' or 'elevation'. Other words that Longinus uses in

connection to the sublime have a similar material root, such as τὸ μέγεθος (largeness, greatness, 9.1) or τὸ ὑπερφυές (growing above, enormity, 1.4).[65] Besides that Longinus' terminology for the sublime is inherently material, the workings of the sublime are often thought of as material as well: sublime orators show their power like a flash of lighting (δίκην σκηπτοῦ, 1.4), sublimity can induce in the audience an "outer body" experience (ἔκστασις, 1.4), it can flow and flood like a great stream (12.4, 13.1, 35.4) or spread like a wildfire (12.3). Porter shows that, because matter is so involved in theorizing the workings of literary language, language in Longinus can be thought of as something material in itself (398-399). Porter's work, as well as that of Worman (2015), show to what extent language was conceived of as material in various ancient literary discourses.[66] As such, the concept of the material sublime is fruitful for understanding Longinus, as his language of the sublime is inextricably bound to physical matters.

What is problematic about Porter's analysis of matter in Longinus, is his opposition of the material sublime to the immaterial sublime. The materiality that Porter correctly recognizes in Longinus' language, is, according to him, sometimes also shackling, resulting in an attempt to pull away from and transcend these material qualities of language (400-403). The idea is that, in the immaterial sublime, thought or meaning in some way transcends the materiality of language. Porter characterizes immateriality as "the highest reaches of thought" (401) and distinguishes the "matter of language" with the "immateriality of meaning" (402). To explain this distinction between language as material and meaning as immaterial, Porter discusses some figures of speech that Longinus comments upon. He takes as an example the figure of hyperbaton (402, referring to *On the Sublime* 22), where a word group in a sentence is split apart by the interjection of other words. The hyperbaton would stretch the matter of language to such an extent that it tries to break free from it, rendering the meaning created by the figure immaterial. Because figurative meaning is taken as something immaterial, it implies that the matter of language is non-figurative, or literal. One could think of a form of language without the hyperbaton, a literal language, which would represent its matters in a literal way. Opposed to that is the figurative language of the hyperbaton, where the figurative device would contort the matters of language in such a way that they are transcended and left unmeaningful. Meaning would become immaterial, because it is not the matters of language but the figuration of the author that produces meaning.

From a different angle, surely, the "height" or "elevation" of τὸ ὕψος sometimes refers to a divine elevation that reminds of the Platonic transcendence of the soul (*On the Sublime* 7.2).[67]

[65] For other (material) terminology related to τὸ ὕψος, see e.g. Heath (2012: 12) or Porter (2016: 398).
[66] See Chapter 1, page 59-61.
[67] See De Jonge (Forthcoming) who notes that many of the terms related to τὸ ὕψος depend on vertical motion, inherited from Plato's notion of the elevation of the soul. This verticality can be interpreted in the same dual manner as τὸ ὕψος, where it both attests to a physical movement and, in its Platonic sense, to

Additionally, the outer body experience of the audience (ἔκστασις, 1.4) as well as the loftiness of thought that sublime authors are to reach (μεγαλοφροσύνη, 9.2), seem to attest to a certain transcendence over language as well. Τὸ ὕψος then, even though the concept is inherently material, seems to refer to a 'height' towering above materiality as well. Its reference to a preeminence of language seems to overshadow its denotation of physical height. However, precisely because the term is inherently material, it is unproductive to think of these transcendental qualities of τὸ ὕψος as immaterial in the first place. The outer body experience is induced by the sublime because it has an effect on the body of the audience, and the elevated soul of the author is still conceived of in terms of a physical elevation. This is what the conceptual opposition between materiality and immateriality shows too, that *im-materiality* is always negatively defined in its negation of materiality. The concept of immateriality cannot exist without its origination from materiality. In the same sense, the transcendental qualities of τὸ ὕψος (the immaterial sublime) cannot exist without its inherent origins in the physicality of 'height' (the material sublime).

Porter appears to acknowledge the interdependency of the material sublime and immaterial sublime, but the manner in which he characterizes this interdependency still maintains a crude binary of matter and immateriality.[68] He ultimately concludes that the Longinian sublime is best defined as a "vacillation" (397, 402), a moving back and forth, between the material sublime and the immaterial sublime. He considers them to be two poles of a spectrum, in which the Longinian sublime sometimes swerves towards one end and sometimes towards the other. But the sublime never fully reaches one end or the other: full transcendence over the matters of language is never possible, as the sublime always bears reference to the material origins of its terminology. Still, the problem of conceptualizing this movement of the sublime as a vacillation, is that it upholds the materiality of language and immateriality of meaning as dichotomous concepts. Whenever the sublime swerves towards immaterial transcendence, it attempts to negate what the materiality of language contributes to the sublime. Although Porter admits that this attempt never fully succeeds, the concept of vacillation still presupposes that moving towards transcendent meaning entails pulling away from material language: it presupposes a mutually exclusive relationship between them.

Through Porter's understanding of Longinus' sublime hyperbaton, it is clear that this mutually exclusive relationship applies to a concept of literality and figuration as well. According

a transcendence over physicality. But while Plato's philosophy is based on the immateriality of this transcendence, Longinus' treatise never lets the reader forget the material roots of τὸ ὕψος for a long time. On the philosophical inheritance of Longinus from Plato, see e.g. Lamb (1993) or Innes (2002).

[68] Porter even brings up the conceptual dependency of im-materiality on materiality himself (2016: 401-402). The difficulty in Porter's theory comes not from his acknowledgment of this dependency – I think he is correct in his analysis to that point – but from the lack of problematizing this dependency for maintaining the binary of materiality and immateriality in itself.

to Porter, in the figure of the hyperbaton, the sublime does not emerge from the matters of language, but from the author straining them to the point where language might break. In this view, the sublime is then a product of the figurative meaning created by the author using the hyperbaton. Characterized as immaterial, the figurative meaning of the hyperbaton tries to negate the matters of language, which implies that these matters are non-figurative, or literal. So, following Porter, within the production of the sublime, the attempt of meaning to pull away from language, is just as much an attempt of figuration to pull away from literality.

Although Porter does not act on the implications of his analysis, it shows that he is dependent on some substitutive concept of metaphor. In Porter's understanding of the material and immaterial sublime, figurative meaning does not emerge from or engage with the matters of language, these are the shackles that the author needs to transcend in order to create meaning. This resonates with Culler's insights in metaphor, as discussed in the introduction. In principle, metaphor is based on the author's reduction of a literal concept to certain essences, so that it becomes similar to a different concept (Culler 1981: 211-212). A relationship of similarity between dissimilars is wrought by the author. In this understanding, a metaphor is attributable to the figurative powers of the author, as the metaphorized concept itself does not guide how it is figured: what it means literally has no influence on what it means metaphorically. In Porter's understanding of Longinus then, what language means literally is shackling. The sublime author would need to break free from the shackles of literality in order to create figurative meaning.

I disagree with Porter that this is how language and meaning should be conceived of in Longinus' treatise, as it is based on a substitutive concept of metaphor that treats literality and figuration as mutually exclusive. In general, Porter's terminology for the immaterial sublime being shackled by, pulling away from, or shunning matter, suggest an inferiority of matter that does not fit at all the power that Longinus ascribes to matter in language. I argue that in Longinus, when an author sublimely uses a figurative device, this is not an attempt to negate some literal language, it is an engagement with the matter of language at hand. Similarly, when Longinus seems to emphasize the transcendental qualities of τὸ ὕψος, he does not impinge upon the rejection of the material origins of the term. It is rather that both layers of the term cooperate to shape the concept of the sublime. In that sense, I argue it is best to move away from the mutual exclusivity of language and meaning, and the substitutive concept of metaphor that founds it, imposed by the dichotomy of the material and immaterial sublime. Rather, it is best to leave aside this dichotomy entirely, and investigate how sublime authors in Longinus actively engage with their matter instead of retracting from it. This entails working with a different concept of metaphor as well, not one where the author is fully in charge of making meaning, but where the engaged matter influences meaning as well.

Water in *On the Sublime*

Porter created some difficult depths for us to dive in, but I meant to address his ideas early on, so that we can now resurface and focus on Longinus' waters anew. Let us simply start by seeing where in the treatise water appears. The lion's share of the waters in the treatise is in the discussion on how grand conceptions can make a text sublime (9-15). These water bodies appear in the text on two different levels, with one exception: within the passages that Longinus quotes, and within Longinus' criticism. In this section of the treatise, Longinus quotes and comments on literary passages from classical Greek prose and poetry authors, ranging from Sappho to Demosthenes, while most come from the works of Homer. In most cases, Longinus investigates how the grand conceptions in these passages make them sublime. Some of these passages contain large and overwhelming water bodies (9.5, 9.8, 10.4-6), and in these cases, Longinus' commentary seems to suggest that these waters are part of the passage's grand conceptions. However, Longinus also concentrates on how the author has figured these passages in order to make them sublime. At 10.4-6 for example, discussed below, three authors describe the grand conception of a stormy sea, but only Homer is able to figure it in a sublime manner. To repeat the question stated above: does the grand conception of an impressive body of water make a passage sublime because of some inherent grandeur of the water itself? Or are the techniques of the author to represent the water responsible for making the text sublime?

The majority of the treatise's water bodies, however, come as literary-critical terms used by Longinus to designate certain qualities of writing or the creative process (3, 9.13, 12.4, 12.5, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 32.1, 33.5): these waters form a part of Longinus' critical terminology. These include Plato's side-channels from the Homeric source of inspiration (13.3), or Cicero's sublimity being like a flood (12.4). On the one hand then, as a grand conception, water can be part of a text's sublime content, but on the other hand, water can metaphorically describe what the sublime is too. While the distinction between these two levels is a handy starting point, it also immediately raises a question, which I posed above too: if certain water bodies can make text sublime because of their inherent grandeur, does Longinus' use of those water bodies as critical metaphors make his own treatise sublime as well? It has been argued that Longinus often attempts to adhere his own writing to the sublime criteria that he delimits.[69] In other words, Longinus often tries to write sublimely himself as well, which shows that Longinus often engages in "self-exemplification".[70] In that sense, it is probable that Longinus' use of gushing rivers and floods to describe the sublime, is an attempt to incorporate the grand conceptions of his sublime predecessors into his own writing as well. If Homer's conception of an overwhelmingly

[69] See e.g. De Jonge (In preparation) and De Jonge (Forthcoming).

[70] For the use of the term self-exemplification, see Halliwell (2022: xlviii) and as a precursor Blume (1963). There is a long-standing modern tradition of praising Longinus' writing for attaining its own sublimity, for which see Hertz (1983: 579) and Walsh (1988: 252).

dangerous sea is sublime, then why would Longinus' conception of a mighty flood not be sublime too?

The analysis closes off by investigating the exception at 35.4. The rivers that Longinus mentions there are not a part of a sublime passage discussed by Longinus, nor do they seem to be part of Longinus' critical apparatus. He refers to a number of rivers that physically exist in the outside world: the Nile, the Rhine, and the Danube. Still, it has been convincingly argued that these rivers can be interpreted as metaphors.[71] However, next to this metaphorical interpretation, the fact that Longinus calls upon these physically existent rivers by name is of great importance for understanding what materiality they contribute to the passage. The section by itself is exceptional in Longinus' treatise, as it momentarily strikes a philosophical note to explain why humans are instinctively attracted to the extraordinary (περιττόν), beautiful (καλόν) and great (μέγα) things in life, such as grand rivers. This passage and its use of waters, as well as the other instances discussed below, show how water is attributed the power to influence the text it is a part of, suggesting that Longinus' treatise can be interpreted as working with a form of hydropoetics.

Grand Conceptions

As the first two parts of this analysis are focused on passages from the treatise's section on grand conceptions (9-15), it is useful to first take a closer look at the context of this section. As shortly mentioned, in section 8.1, Longinus categorizes sublime language as having five sources. The latter three of those sources are brought forth by literary techniques (διὰ τέχνης): the shaping of figures (τῶν σχημάτων πλάσις), a noble diction (ἡ γενναία φράσις), and an honorable and elevated composition (ἡ ἐν ἀξιώματι καὶ διάρσει σύνθεσις). The first two sources of the sublime do not spring from the quality and right usage of learnable techniques, but rather from the author's genial disposition: the power of grand conceptions (τὸ περὶ τὰς νοήσεις ἀδρεπήβολον) and vehement and inspiring emotion (τὸ σφοδρὸν καὶ ἐνθουσιαστικὸν πάθος). Longinus uses these five sources to structure the remainder of his treatise.[72] He abides by this structure fairly well, but in the section on grand conceptions (9-15), literary techniques and figurative devices sometimes still play a role in making a passage or author sublime. Conversely, emotions and grand conceptions are not necessarily rejected when Longinus focuses on the sublime use of certain literary techniques (16-43). Additionally, a well-defined separate section on the second source of πάθος is hard to recognize.[73]

[71] See De Jonge (2021: 156-159).

[72] For a detailed analysis of the structure of *On the Sublime*, see e.g. Innes (1995) or Halliwell (2022: xx-xxv).

[73] For a discussion on the treatment and place of πάθος by Longinus, see e.g. Bompaire (1973) and Halliwell (2022: xxiv-xxv).

Following Longinus' categories, on the one hand, then, sublime language is a product of literary techniques that an author can learn to employ, but it is also a product of the author's conceptions and state of mind. If the author wants to have grand conceptions, they cannot have petty or slavish ideas or habits and should be above all high-spirited (9.3-4). It requires the author to have their mind in tune with "greatnesses" or "grand things" (τὰ μεγέθη) and have "noble inclination" (γενναίου παραστήματος).

> Οὐ μὴν ἀλλ᾽ ἐπεὶ τὴν κρατίστην μοῖραν ἐπέχει τῶν ἄλλων τὸ πρῶτον, λέγω δὲ τὸ μεγαλοφυές, χρὴ κάνταῦθα, καὶ εἰ δωρητὸν τὸ πρᾶγμα μᾶλλον ἢ κτητόν, ὅμως καθ᾽ ὅσον οἷόν τε τὰς ψυχὰς ἀνατρέφειν πρὸς τὰ μεγέθη καὶ ὥσπερ ἐγκύμονας ἀεὶ ποιεῖν γενναίου παραστήματος.
>
> "But as the first source, which I call loftiness by genius, of the others holds the most important part, it is necessary here too, even though this is something gifted rather than acquired, to nurture the soul as much as possible towards grand things and always, as it were, impregnate it with a noble inclination."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 9.1

Importantly, different from reaching sublime language by literary techniques, the sublimity of grand conceptions is something that is gifted (δωρητόν) to the author rather than acquired (κτητόν). Longinus' terminology of receiving and acquiring gives insight into the power that he grants the author in producing sublime effects. Some grand things apparently need to be received by the author from a source that lies outside of the author's control: a geniality that is nurtured as an innate talent or *gift*.

Hence Longinus calls this first source of the sublime τὸ μεγαλοφυές, 'that which is lofty by nature' or 'by genius'. This distinction between a sublime writing that is gifted and that is acquired, hinges on the tradition of distinguishing between φύσις and τέχνη as two opposing faculties of artistic creation. Whereas φυσις designates the author's innate and uncontrollable genius or talent, τέχνη represents learnable and controllable artistry and skill.[74] With Longinus' categories, both faculties bring about sublimity, but they differ with regards to the conscious power that the author has to employ them. The uncontrollability of φύσις turns it into something that the author needs to receive, while τέχνη can be cultivated under the control of the author.

[74] For an extensive list of ancient authors weighing the importance of φύσις and τέχνη in the creation of literature, see Halliwell (2022: 91-92).

As such, sublimity by τέχνη lies within the powers of the author, while sublimity by φύσις is external to them.

In section 2 of the treatise, Longinus explains why both faculties of creativity need to cooperate in order for the sublime to emerge.[75] The innate genius supplied by φύσις is viewed by Longinus as the principal element of creativity that prompts sublime writing. This principal element emerges uncontrollably: it is a matter of good fortune (ἡ εὐτυχία, 2.3). However, bringing this talent into good practice and deciding what is the proper degree, time and use for this talent is something that should be guided by methods of τέχνη. Whereas φύσις comes from good fortune, Longinus designates τέχνη as the faculty of good judgement (ἡ εὐβουλία, 2.3) by which an author should decide how a spontaneous burst of inspiration should be applied. The methods of τέχνη can be learned and controlled by the author. An author thus needs both uncontrollable genius, as well as the τέχνη to control that genius. In practice, this entails that an author may impulsively have a grand idea or thought supplied by their genius, but that idea should be represented with the right literary techniques in order for their writing to become sublime.

Importantly, Longinus uses a highly telling metaphor that shows us how he envisions the geniality of φύσις as a force that is external from the author.

> […] καὶ ὡς ἐπικινδυνότερα αὐτὰ ἐφ᾽ αὐτῶν δίχα ἐπιστήμης ἀστήρικτα καὶ ἀνερμάτιστα ἐαθέντα τὰ μεγάλα, ἐπὶ μόνῃ τῇ φορᾷ καὶ ἁμαθεῖ τόλμῃ λειπόμενα· δεῖ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ὡς κέντρου πολλάκις, οὕτω δὲ καὶ χαλινοῦ.
>
> "[…] and grand things are more dangerous when left by themselves, without expertise, unstable and unballasted, left to their own course and with unmanageable temerity: for they often require a spur as much as they require a bid."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 2.2

The grand things (τα μεγεθη) that are gifted to the author by their genius, can become dangerous when they are not guided by the expertise of the author. Otherwise these grand things take their own course, become unstable and show forth a temerity. But Longinus uses metaphorical terms from horseback riding to explain that the uncontrolled genius needs to be stimulated by the

[75] The idea that a good author needs to be endowed with φύσις and well-versed in τέχνη is well attested in literary criticism predating Longinus. Some famous examples are Plato *Phaedrus* 269d, Aristotle *Poetics* 1451a24, Horace *Ars Poetica* 408-418 (using the Latin equivalent terms of *ars* and *ingenium/natura*) and Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 2.19 (*doctrina* and *natura*).

author too. Just like a horse, the grand things of innate talent sometimes need the bid to be reined in, and sometimes they need the spur to be excited. Just like the skilled jockey knows when they best need the bid or the spur, so does the expert author know when to restrain or accelerate what their genius brings about. What this metaphor shows, is that the grand things of spontaneous genius, even though they are inherent to the author, are portrayed as a force that is external from them.[76] A horse too presents the jockey with a force that needs to be reckoned and engaged with. So does the author have to use their τέχνη to engage with the grand ideas that are gifted to them. When done right, and the writing methods and literary techniques of the author are in tune with the force of greatness that φύσις grants them, the author can produce sublime text.

It is important to note here that, although the horseback riding metaphor presents the gifts of φύσις as external to the author, this does not entail that φύσις can be equated to grand things existent in the physical world. It might be tempting to do so, because in other contexts, φύσις can come to conceptualize some form of nature or the physical world.[77] Because the workings of φύσις are here metaphorically presented as a horse – a material other body that the author engages with – it may lead one to view φύσις as a representation of the physical world entirely. The grand things of φύσις would be material objects from the physical world that would inspire the author with their grandeur, and that the author would subject to their techniques of literary representation. However, this would be a misconception of the complexity of the term φύσις, and it would go against Longinus' primal understanding of φύσις as being the innate geniality of the author. To that extent, the external force of φύσις does not exist in its material externality from the author, it rather exists as the gift of grand ideas being outside of the *control* of the author. The horseback riding metaphor points to the required balance between the literary techniques within the power of the author, and the power of grand ideas that enter the author from outside. On the other hand, this does not necessarily mean that those grand ideas cannot bear reference to physical matters whatsoever. We will see how the grand conceptions that are gifted to the author consist of water bodies as well. My argument is still focused on how the water's materiality contributes to the sublimity of a text, but it is important to emphasize that this materiality cannot be seen as separate from its conceptualization by the author.

That being said, Longinus' understanding of φύσις and τέχνη can help us understand why the first source of sublime writing, grand conceptions, is rather something that is gifted to (δωρητόν) rather than acquired by (κτητόν) the author. The idea that a grand conception comes from outside of the author's controllable techniques, shows that it is an external force that the

[76] This distinction between an external and internal force to have "poetic and rhetorical influence over the consciousness" of the author has been characterized too by Halliwell (2012: 335-337) as a topical component of ancient literary criticism in general.

[77] See LSJ II1, IV2, IV3, V s.v. φύσις.

author has to engage with. To that extent, to give a tentative answer to the question I posed above, whether the author is in full control of the sublime, or whether grand conceptions exert some independent influence over the sublimity of the passage too, the latter certainly seems to hold some truth. When the author receives a great thought, the inception of that thought is not in their control. This entails that not only the author, but the grand idea as well is to some extent responsible for importing sublimity into the text.[78] If that grand idea bears reference to a matter such as water, then how does the water contribute to the sublimity of the text?

Homer and the Boisterous Sea

An example from 10.4-6 is insightful. In this section, Longinus discusses three authors who have each described a stormy sea in their own particular fashion: the anonymous poet of the *Arismapeia*, Aratus and Homer (*Iliad* 15.624-628). Longinus considers Homer's description of the stormy sea sublime, because, unlike the other two, Homer does not limit the danger of the sea but tailored his language in such a way that it replicates and reinforces this danger. The grand conception of the stormy sea is thus endowed with the appropriate use of language, making the passage sublime. This fits the context of section 10 of the treatise, in which Longinus is specifically focused on how writing becomes sublime when grand subjects are properly combined with their most connected elements (τῶν ἐμφερομένων ... τὰ καιριώτατα) into a single body (ἔν τι σῶμα). The specific combination of the conception of the stormy sea with the appropriate literary techniques, makes the passage sublime. As I argue, the appropriateness of the technique used by Homer is in part guided by the conception of the stormy sea, which shows to what extent the sea, besides Homer, is responsible for the sublimity of the passage.

> «ἐν δ' ἔπεσ', ὡς ὅτε κῦμα θοῇ ἐν νηὶ πέσῃσι
> λάβρον ὑπαὶ νεφέων ἀνεμοτρεφές, ἡ δέ τε πᾶσα
> ἄχνῃ ὑπεκρύφθη, ἀνέμοιο δὲ δεινὸς ἀήτης
> ἱστίῳ ἐμβρέμεται, τρομέουσι δέ τε φρένα ναῦται
> δειδιότες· τυτθὸν γὰρ ὑπὲκ θανάτοιο φέρονται.»
> […]
> ὁ δὲ ποιητὴς οὐκ εἰς ἅπαξ παρορίζει τὸ δεινόν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἀεὶ καὶ μόνον
> οὐχὶ κατὰ πᾶν κῦμα πολλάκις ἀπολλυμένους εἰκονογραφεῖ. καὶ μὴν τὰς

[78] Sometimes, Longinus even verges to the point where a grand idea does not even have to be textually represented in order to add its sublimity to a passage, which is for example underlined by Longinus' comment that the silence of Ajax in Homer's *Odyssey* (11.563-564) attains sublimity while remaining unexpressed (φωνῆς δίχα, 9.2). See also Doran (2015: 58): "If sublimity is primarily a quality of mind – the "echo of a noble mind" (9.1) – then the techniques for its expression are only incidental to the mental state itself; that is to say, no mere technical brilliance can substitute for a lack of mental greatness or nobility of soul."

προθέσεις ἀσυνθέτους οὔσας συναναγκάσας παρὰ φύσιν καὶ είς ἀλλήλας συμβιασάμενος, «ὑπὲκ θανάτοιο», τῷ μὲν συνεμπίπτοντι πάθει τὸ ἔπος ὁμοίως ἐβασάνισε τῇ δὲ τοῦ ἔπους συνθλίψει τὸ πάθος ἄκρως ἀπεπλάσατο καὶ μόνον οὐκ ἐνετύπωσεν τῇ λέξει τοῦ κινδύνου τὸ ἰδίωμα «ὑπὲκ θανάτοιο φέρονται».

"*He fell upon him, like when a wave falls upon a speedy ship, furious and fed by the winds under the clouds; the ship is completely covered in froth, and the terrible breath of the wind roars in the sails; and the fearful sailors tremble in their hearts, for just by a bit are they delivered from-under death.*

[…]

Homer does not limit the danger all at once, but depicts the sailors as always about to perish, with every wave again and again. And truly, by unnaturally compressing and forcing together prepositions that do not exist as compound, *from-under death*, Homer distorted the word to befit the incident, and with the contraction of this word he portrayed the incident in a superb manner, and he almost pressed into his diction the property of danger, *being delivered from-under death*."

Longinus, *On the Sublime* 10.5-6

The dangerous sea in the passage is invoked by Homer as a simile: Hector is ragingly attacking the Greeks, which is compared by Homer to the crushing waves of a sea spilling over a ship and its sailors. Longinus is not predominantly interested in the figure of the simile, so I will leave this element of the passage to be discussed a little later.[79] First, it is clear that there is a tension running through Longinus' criticism of the passage, as outlined at the beginning of the chapter: does the sublime here for Longinus emerge from the grand conception of the boisterous sea, or from Homer's magnificent literary techniques in representing this sea? There is one word that Longinus concentrates on, which shows us that the answer to this question is both. It is the contraction of two prepositions, ὑπό and ἐκ into ὑπέκ, together denoting a motion "from-under". Longinus recognizes that this verbal compression is not made unconsciously: the word appears right at the moment that the stormy ocean is about to crush the ship with its waves. Only at the last moment do the sailors escape their death. Longinus notes that, on a formal level, the

[79] See Halliwell (2022: 192): "It is notable that the technique of quotation serves to isolate the vehicle of a simile in this way as a piece of narrative in its own right, thereby bracketing its status as a comparandum."

contracted ὑπέκ seems to imitate the danger of the scene: the two prepositions crushed together parallels the image of the ship on the verge of being crushed by the immense waves of the sea.

Now, one could be inclined to think that the passage reaches its sublimity only because of Homer's inventiveness in figuring the scene with this technique, ascribing the sublime purely to Homer's use of language by contracting ὑπέκ. However, Longinus explains the passage in a way that shows that the physical danger of the sea itself certainly has a role in conveying sublimity. Longinus specifically lauds Homer for not παροριζειν τὸ δεινόν, for not delimiting or containing the terror. This phrasing suggests that there is a danger beforehand, a material quality of the sea that *seems* in some way to exist prior to its figuration, and it is up to the author to decide how to engage with this quality. For Longinus, it is a question of delimitation: does the language resist the sea from portraying its danger, or is it allowed to ragingly spill over into the text? Applying the concepts of metaphor and metonymy can help us answer this question.

Longinus sees a similarity between the grand conception of the dangerous sea, and the language that Homer uses to describe the scene. The enormous boisterous waves almost crash upon the ship of the sailors, nearly crushing them while they can barely escape. Longinus notices that Homer, likewise, crushes his diction too by compressing together ὑπό and ἑκ, just like the waves nearly crush the sailors. Two levels of meaning then emerge: on the literal level, the scene portrays the grand conception of a wave almost crushing a ship. On the figurative level, the author crushes his diction in a similar manner. As such, a metaphorical relationship emerges between the grand conception of the passage and the use of language that constructs this conception. The contracting motion of the two prepositions becomes metaphorical for the crushing motion of the sea. Furthermore, the danger of the scene (πάθος) that the boisterous sea creates, is also metaphorized by the dangerous compression of the language. That this relationship is metaphorical, that is, in Culler's understanding, based on resembling essences highlighted by the author, is emphasized by Longinus too. Homer stretches his diction in such a way that it is likened to (ὁμοίως) and coincides with (συνεμπίπτω) the danger of the passage. There is a clear relationship of similarity that Longinus recognizes between the grand conception and its figurative representation. Furthermore, this metaphor is attributed to the figurative capabilities of Homer. He is envisioned by Longinus as being in charge of the compression of ὑπέκ in order to create the metaphor.

However, Longinus' explanation of the figurative language shows that he is aware of a contiguity between the use of language and the dangerous sea as well, making their relationship metonymical too. The main reason to interpret the figurative use of language as metonymically motivated, is that the grand conception of the sea within the passage elicits the contraction of ὑπό and ἑκ. This becomes most clear when Longinus explains that Homer does not limit the danger of the sea. This danger is brought forth in the passage as a material quality of the

boisterous sea, threatening the lives of the sailors on board their ship with its crushing waves. As mentioned, the phrasing of "not limiting the danger" suggests that there is a δεινός quality of the sea with which Homer is to engage. He can use techniques to represent the sea that would either limit its danger or enhance it. The authors with which Longinus compares Homer, Aratus and the author of the *Arismapeia*, have limited the danger by not using the appropriate representational techniques. As such, the grand conception of a dangerous sea to some extent guides what form of figurative representation is appropriate. The relationship between the crushing waves of the sea and the crushing of ὑπό and ἑκ is thus not purely metaphorical, as Homer cannot simply apply any figurative device to represent the crushing of the waves. It is specifically the contraction of ὑπό and ἑκ that is already contiguously related to the dangerous, crushing waves. As the sea is not limited in its dangerous qualities, it is allowed to spill over into the text and inform what figurative representation suits its danger best.

So, while the passage might seem to be only metaphorical, it is metonymically motivated as well. Not only Homer decides what figurative language fits the passage best, Longinus shows that the dangerous sea requires an equally dangerous figure of speech – a figure that in its dangerous qualities, is contiguously related to the sea. The passage becomes sublime because Homer has recognized what the danger of the sea was, and instead of holding it back, he imposed the same danger on his language, thereby enhancing it. So, the figuration of ὑπέκ becomes a metonymically motivated metaphor. It is metaphorical to the extent that Homer made the figurative language of the passage mimic the dangers of the crushing sea. But it is metonymical to the extent that the specific figure of speech is a consequence of the danger that the sea in the passage presents. Both the figurative capabilities of Homer and the material danger of the sea are responsible for creating the crushing of ὑπό and ἑκ into ὑπέκ.

Not only Homer, but the sea too has authorship over the figuration of the passage. That Homer has this authorship is perhaps an open door, but it is important to note that my analysis is not aimed at lessening his creative input into the passage. The entire scene of the sea attacking the sailors with its storms is still a simile for Hector attacking the Greeks, and this simile surely is the product of Homer's figurative capabilities. However, for the contraction of ὑπό and ἑκ in specific, Longinus' terminology gives another reason to endow not only Homer but also the sea with authorship over this figure. Looking at the words with which Longinus describes how Homer has created this figure of speech, it seems to strike a resemblance with the way in which the sea is about to crush the ship under its waves. Homer violently forced the prepositions together (συμβιασάμενος) and he smashed the idea of danger onto his diction (ἐνετύπωσεν). As Homer's violence against language and the violence of the sea against the sailors comes to

overlap, Homer and the sea start to act as analogues of each other.[80] It is imaginable how the sea almost violently forced together the sailors and their ship, smashing its waves on them. Similarly, Homer smashed this same danger, proffered by this grand conception, into the diction of the language. In this sense, the literal layer of the sea threatening the sailors, and the figurative layer of the author threatening his language, start to become porous. As a result, the distinction between Homer and the sea is blurred: both the sea and the author appear to share authorship over the text.

Reading the relationship between the dangerous sea and Homer's figure of speech as a metonymically motivated metaphor, also fits the context in which the passage appears. As mentioned, section 10 appears in the larger discussion of grand conceptions. The section specifically focuses on how sublimity emerges when grand conceptions are properly combined with their most connected elements (τῶν ἐμφερομένων ... τὰ καιριώτατα) into a unified body (ἔν τι σῶμα). When taking a closer look at how Longinus introduces section 10, it appears that a grand conception's most connected elements are those that are contiguously related to them.

> οὐκοῦν ἐπειδὴ πᾶσι τοῖς πράγμασι φύσει συνεδρεύει τινὰ μόρια ταῖς ὕλαις συνυπάρχοντα, ἐξ ἀνάγκης γένοιτ᾽ ἂν ἡμῖν ὕψους αἴτιον τὸ τῶν ἐμφερομένων ἐκλέγειν ἀεὶ τὰ καιριώτατα καὶ ταῦτα τῇ πρὸς ἄλληλα ἐπισυνθέσει καθάπερ ἔν τι σῶμα ποιεῖν δύνασθαι·
>
> "Surely then since all subjects are naturally accompanied by constituents that exist together with the subject matter, it should necessarily follow that a cause of the sublime is to always select the most appropriate of these intrinsic constituents, and to be able to bring them in combination with each other and make them, so to speak, into a single body."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 10.1

As Longinus states, for every subject (πρᾶγμα) there are some parts (τινὰ μόρια) that exist or originate together (συνυπάρχοντα) with the subject matter (ταῖς ὕλαις). When an author can pick out and combine the most principle or appropriate (τὰ καιριώτατα) of these parts that the

[80] The analogization of Homer and the sea in the passage, transport Homer from his position as author *over* the text to a position as author *within* the text. As his force of writing overlaps with the force of the sea, Homer's authorship is envisioned as internal to the text rather than external. This is also apparent from 9.11, where Longinus comments on the rage of Hector being compared to that of Ares at *Iliad* 15.594-604. Here, Longinus states that, in the way that Homer has written the passage, Homer can himself like raging Hector be compared to Ares, by which the poet's authorship is imagined as internal to the text. See also Guerlac (1985: 275).

subject matter carries within (τῶν ἐμφερομένων), sublimity is created. Evidently, the language that Longinus uses comes close to our understanding of contiguity. Every subject matter has inherently related concepts that originate with it, that are a part of it and that are carried within the subject matter. These associations or not created by the author but exist separately from them, and they are rather selected and combined by the author. Longinus' explanation comes very close to the process of creating a metonymical figure: the metonymy is based on figuring a concept as a different but contiguously related concept. Such contiguities are for example constituted by what parts (τινὰ μόρια) a concept is made up of or carries within (τῶν ἐμφερομένων). Although these contiguous concepts exist externally from the author, Longinus does not forget that the abilities of the author to combine these elements play a role as well. Combining contiguous elements highlights their similarities, and produces a unification, as it were, into a single body (ἕν τι σῶμα). The metaphorical abilities of the author are thus apparent in Longinus' description as well.

It makes sense then that Longinus treats Homer's exemplum by the same guidelines. Homer is responsible for the appropriate combination of the grandly dangerous sea with its figurative representation, but this combination works because the sea constitutes what representation is appropriate. This is also underlined when we take into account how Longinus envisioned grand concepts to be something that is gifted to (δωρητόν) rather than acquired by (κτητόν) the author, and the relationship between φύσις and τέχνη on which it depends. As noted, grand conceptions are gifted, in the sense that they emerge from the giftedness or talent of the author. They spring from the geniality of the author, which they do not have under control. This means that the dangerous sea in 10.4-6 should not be mistaken for a physically material water body that influences the passage: as Longinus' discussion shows, a grand conception still originates spontaneously in the elevated mind of the author. So, the dangerous sea still exists as a grand conception of Homer's genius.

However, the grand conceptions that φύσις grants, as argued above, presents authors with an external force that needs to be engaged with: the great things of φύσις sometimes need the spur and sometimes the bid. It is clear in 10.4-6, also from Longinus' comment that Homer does not delimit the danger, that the threat of the sea has been given the spur instead of the bid. Although the sea within the text is a conception of Homer, it still bears reference to the physical qualities of the sea. As such, the danger of a boisterous sea does input its material formations into its conception: it is the crushing motion of the sea's tumultuous waves that informs Homer's figurative language. The conception's reference to the materiality of the sea is therefore important for the construction of the passage. By recognizing and selecting the figurative language that befits the danger of the sea, Homer is the one who can amplify this materiality. As such, both Homer and the sea work together to create the sublime figure in the passage.

Longinus' Watery Criticism

If Longinus recognizes how grand conceptions of a boisterous water body, along with the right figurative representation, can make a text sublime, how does this relate to Longinus' own use of water in his criticism? If he uses a water body to figuratively describe a creative process or textual quality, is it possible to understand those waters also as grand conceptions that make Longinus' own treatise sublime? I argue that it is. Most of Longinus' water metaphors (3, 9.13, 12.4, 12.5, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 32.1, 33.5) appear in the section on grand conceptions. So, passages such as those from Homer at 10.4-6 with its sublime boisterous sea are fresh in the reader's mind. This can prompt the reader to compare Longinus' water bodies to those that appear as grand conceptions in the passages he discusses. The waters that Longinus uses as metaphor for sublime writing not only act as the figurative devices that result from Longinus' τέχνη, but as grand conceptions, they influence the creation of the figure externally from Longinus too. This results from two things, firstly that Longinus' water metaphors are metonymically motivated, and secondly from Longinus' own interpretations of the workings of metaphor. These show that, when it comes to Longinus' own use of water, the position of the author and that of the water are blurred once more, only this time it pertains to Longinus himself.

By means of example, let us start by taking a look at some of Longinus' own water imagery within the section on grand conceptions.

> ὅθεν ἐν τῇ Ὀδυσσείᾳ παρεικάσαι τις ἂν καταδυομένῳ τὸν Ὅμηρον ἠλίῳ, οὗ δίχα τῆς σφοδρότητος παραμένει τὸ μέγεθος. […] ἀλλ᾽ οἷον ὑποχωροῦντος εἰς ἑαυτὸν Ὠκεανοῦ καὶ περὶ τὰ ἴδια μέτρα ἠμερουμένου […].
>
> ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐν ὕψει τὸ πλέον ἀποτόμῳ, ὁ δὲ Κικέρων ἐν χύσει […].
>
> ὅτι μέντοι ὁ Πλάτων (ἐπάνειμι γάρ) τοιούτῳ τινὶ χεύματι ἀψοφητὶ ῥέων οὐδὲν ἧττον μεγεθύνεται […].
>
> […] πάντων δὲ τούτων μάλιστα ὁ Πλάτων, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὁμηρικοῦ κείνου νάματος εἰς αὐτὸν μυρίας ὅσας παρατροπὰς ἀποχετευσάμενος.
>
> "So one can compare the Homer of the *Odyssey* to the setting sun, whose grandeur remains without the intensity. […] Like Oceanus retreating into itself and confining itself within its own boundaries…"

> "He [Demosthenes] is often great in a precipitous sublime, Cicero in a flood."
>
> "But Plato, to come back to him, acquires no less magnitude with such a soundless gush of a stream."
>
> "Of all those authors it was above all Plato who channeled from that Homeric spring countless of side streams into his own work."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 9.13, 12.4, 13.1, 13.3

In all the examples, Longinus makes use of water as a metaphor for a quality of text or a creative process. Cicero's sublimity is in a flood (ἐν χύσει), Plato's writing is a soundless gush of a stream (τοιούτῳ τινὶ χεύματι ἀψοφητὶ ῥέων), and Homer is a spring (νάματος) from which to make inspiratory side channels (παρατροπὰς).[81] Other examples include Homer being equated to Oceanus (9.13), the world-enveloping river from which all other water bodies originate, and Archilochus as a flood sweeping everything away (33.5). The water metaphor is predominantly used by Longinus to convey positive criticism and pronounce something sublime, as is also clear from his extension of the metaphor when denouncing bad, tumid writing as "arid" (ξηρός, 3.3-3.4). Why would Longinus use water for these metaphors specifically? Are they the result only of his ingenious figurative imagination, or are there particular qualities inherent to these waters that show us why Longinus' has chosen them to construct his metaphors?

At first, the range of examples reveals a metaphorical field in which Longinus seems to take water as a vehicle and text as its target topic, but it is more complicated than that. What textual qualities the water bodies quoted above are supposed to metaphorize, is difficult to uncover. This is largely due to the fact that Longinus is seeking to describe a textual quality that has no fixed terminological precedent, namely the quality of sublimity. The lack of abstract terminology to connect to the sublime, point to a concept of metaphor, in which there seems to be no literal counterpart to the figurative speech. As mentioned, Longinus uses a wide array of matters to describe and conceptualize the sublime, and the very concept of τὸ ὕψος is rooted in a material sense of "height" as well. One may consider certain metaphorical implications of this height as immaterial, such as the divine height or loftiness of thought that sublime authors may reach. But the term τὸ ὕψος, as well as other sublime terms like τὸ μέγεθος (largeness) and τὸ ὑπερφυές (growing over, enormity), show that the sublime never ceases to sustain a material quality. In the same sense, Plato's sublime writing expressed as a soundless gush, or Cicero's

[81] For other references to the flow of rivers being used as metaphors for the flow of text, see Halliwell (2022: 214).

sublimity as a flood, depend on the same material roots as Longinus' other sublime terminology. With a lack of supplementing abstract terminology, either from the inextant literature on τὸ ὕψος before Longinus or from his own treatise, it is difficult to substitute Longinus' water metaphors for some literal terms. In the same way that there is no more literal way to say that the sublime is a certain "height" of literature, it seems as if there is no more literal way to express Plato's writing as a soundlessly gushing stream or Cicero's sublimity as a flood.

Just like we have seen with Callimachus' water bodies, Longinus water metaphors appear to be metonymically motivated. Longinus was most definitely aware of Callimachus' use of waters to designate literary qualities (which is also apparent from 35.4 discussed below). As explained in chapter 1, the idea that a spring can be used figuratively as a source of inspiration, originated from Hesiod's opening of his *Theogony*, in which the Muses dance around the hallowed spring of Mount Helicon.[82] As the Muses were considered to be the deities responsible for giving poets inspiration, their inspiratory powers were conferred onto the spring that Hesiod portrayed them around. By presenting the Muses and the spring as spatially related, Hesiod laid the basis for a contiguous connection between the water of a spring and the concept of inspiration. As such, when the spring is metaphorized as a source of inspiration by later authors such as Callimachus, these metaphors can be understood as metonymically motivated: through their contiguity, the spring and the concept of inspiration are in a metonymical relationship.

When Longinus is using the Homeric spring at 13.3 to discuss Plato taking inspiration from Homer, Longinus is placing himself in the same tradition as Callimachus did. That is not to say that Longinus agrees with Callimachean poetics (he does not, see below), but he does make use of the same metaphorization of the spring as a source of inspiration. Standing in the same tradition, Longinus' use of this metaphor equally dates back to Hesiod's primal conferral of the concept of inspiration onto the spring.[83] So, just like Callimachus' spring, Longinus' Homeric spring becomes metonymically motivated as well. The same goes for the equation of Homer to the world-enveloping Oceanus from which all rivers spring, which Longinus employs at 9.13 (and which seems to play a role in the Homeric spring of 13.3 as well).[84] Most famously, the *Iliad* is the earliest extant text that states that Oceanus circles around the world and supplies all other rivers, seas, springs and wells with water (*Iliad* 21.195-197). Homer is thus metaphorically figured as Oceanus to convey the idea that his epics have inspired all later forms of writing. But because this all-providing element of Oceanus comes from Homer's text itself, the two become

[82] See Chapter 1, page 60-62.

[83] Halliwell (2022: 221) is wary of equating the imagery of taking inspiration from Homer as a river does from Oceanus, to the imagery of taking inspiration as drinking from a spring, as Porter does (2016: 360). Still, although the specific image of 'drinking' might not be applicable to Homer's metaphorization to Oceanus, both the image of taking inspiration from Oceanus and from a source rely on the same overarching imagery of using water as a metaphor for inspiring text.

[84] On Homer and Oceanus, see Chapter 1, page 40, note 27.

metonymically related. The former appears as a part of the latter. Metaphorizing Homer as Oceanus then is also metonymically motivated: the two are contiguously related because the characterization of Oceanus as all-providing is a part of Homer's text. Finally, this also goes for Plato's writing portrayed as a silent stream (13.1). It is not for any reason that Longinus chose this metaphor: the figure of the silent stream itself appears in Plato's writing too as a noiseless stream of oil, at *Theaetetus* 144b.[85] Here too, using the metaphor of the silent stream to talk about Plato's sublimity, is metonymically motivated, because the silent stream itself is a part of Plato's texts.

So, Longinus is very conscious about the water metaphors that he uses. The silent stream is not just a metaphor for Plato's sublimity, it is motivated by the actual conception of the silent stream apparent in Plato. This metaphor is not just brought to life by Longinus, as if he would be able to substitute the water for any other metaphorical matter. The noiselessly flowing stream is important as an independent conception contiguous to the work of Plato. In this lies what meaning the silent stream in Longinus imports by itself, from its metonymical relationship with Plato's writing. This relationship exists externally from Longinus, so again, it becomes clear that this water metaphor is metonymically motivated, and that both Longinus and the silent stream cocreate the full meaning of the figure together. The same then applies to the metaphor of Homer as Oceanus at 9.13. On top of that, by constructing the metaphor in this way, Longinus is ticking off some of his own sublime criteria. Just like Homer was able to select what figurative representation would best fit the danger of his grand sea, so has Longinus selected the appropriate conceptions of waters for the texts they are metonymically related to, thereby adhering to the sublime combination of grand conceptions and their contiguously connected elements (10.1). On top of that, section 13 specifically focuses on how the sublime can be reached through the proper imitation and emulation (μίμησίς τε καὶ ζήλωσις) of previous authors. If Longinus metaphorizes Plato's sublimity by using a water body from Plato's own text, he is himself partaking in the imitation and potentially sublime emulation of his predecessor.

From the manner in which Longinus constructs his metaphor, it becomes clear that the model of metaphor where water is used as purely substitutive is inapplicable to Longinus. This is also evident from Longinus' own understanding of metaphor (32.1), which is envisioned as a very material practice in the first place. It is not understood as the author's power to substitute one concept for any other concept. It is rather understood as a mode of physical transportation, where both the literal and the figurative layer of meaning are imagined as physical spaces. This understanding of metaphor depends on the very physicality of the process of metaphorization itself too. It is perhaps trite, yet still important, to emphasize here the etymological roots of the

[85] See especially Hunter (2012: 7, in particular n. 28).

word *metaphor* and the physicality that it expresses: it comes from the verb μεταφέρω, which compounds the verb φέρω and the prefix μετα-, together meaning "to carry across" or "to transfer". The verb μεταφέρω along with its noun form μεταφορά were surely used by ancient authors in their theoretical sense from early on, but the physical foundations of the term strengthen Worman's (2015) contention that material figuration preceded abstract literary discourse.[86] In order to describe the process of metaphor itself, ancients first relied on the physical movement of carrying something across to something else. Physical transportation is thus key to understanding this material view on metaphor, and this is sustained by Longinus' own concept of metaphor, as well as one of the primal theoreticians on metaphor, Aristotle.

In his *Rhetoric*, most notably at 1411a25-b23, Aristotle comments that metaphor is a process of bringing something πρὸ ὀμμάτων, "before the eyes", using the expression seven times.[87] I quote the first one by means of example.

> Αἰσίων δέ, ὅτι εἰς Σικελίαν τὴν πόλιν ἐξέχεαν· τοῦτο γὰρ μεταφορὰ καὶ πρὸ ὀμμάτων.
>
> "And Aision [said] that they had poured out the city into Sicily: for this is a metaphor, and [it is] before the eyes."
>
> Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1411a25-26 (ed. Ross 1959)

The quality of metaphor to put something before the eyes emphasizes its ability to physically transport something to the recipient. The image of the city "pouring out" (ἐξέχεαν) is metaphorical as it uses water terminology to describe the dispersion of the city of Athens into Sicily during the Sicilian Expedition. But, according to Aristotle, this metaphor does not abstract the material image of a poured out city, it rather transports it to a different physical place: in front of the recipient's eyes. Aristotle's metaphor here rather materializes the scene instead of dematerializing it: the physicality of pouring is lent to the dispersion of the city in order to construct a material reality before one's eyes. In this sense, instead of pulling us away from matter, metaphor is able to bring matter closer to us.[88] This is also a counterargument against Porter's distinction between material language and immaterial meaning. Metaphorical meaning

[86] See e.g. Isocrates, *Euagoras* 9.9 or Plato, *Timaeus* 26c. See also Worman (2015: 8): "[T]his spatialization of metaphor constitutes a crucial aspect of its double role in the ancient imagery, since landscape metaphors both serve as indicators of style and are themselves envisioned as creating spaces and moving from one place to another."

[87] Aristotle's use of the phrase πρὸ ὀμμάτων has led scholars to conceive of it as a theoretical notion of "bringing-before-the-eyes", amongst others a function of metaphor that is related to Aristotle's concept of ἐνέργεια or "actualization", for which see Newman (2002).

[88] For Aristotle's theory of metaphor and its influence on contemporary theories of metaphor, see e.g. Kirby (1997) or Newman (2002).

is not immaterial, it is the result of the physical transportation of matter to the space in front of the reader's eyes.

In Longinus, there is a vivid example of his understanding of metaphor at 32.1, which not only builds on Aristotle's concept of metaphor, but highlights Longinus' conscious usage of immense water bodies as metaphors as well.

> ὁ τῆς χρείας δὲ καιρός, ἔνθα τὰ πάθη χειμάρρου δίκην ἐλαύνεται, καὶ τὴν πολυπλήθειαν αὐτῶν ὡς ἀναγκαίαν ἐνταῦθα συνεφέλκεται.
>
> "And the right moment for the use [of metaphor], is when the emotion is driven forth like a winter-stream, and draws along a great number of metaphors as a necessity thereupon."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 32.1

For Longinus, an author can reach sublimity when they use the right amount of metaphor proportionate to the intensity of the emotion expressed. First of all, there is again a great emphasis on the physical transportation of metaphor from one place to another: it is drawn along (συνεφέλκεται) by emotions that are driven forth (ἐλαύνεται). This physical vehement with which metaphor thus acts, resonates with the vivacious quality of placing before one's eyes that Aristotle attributed to metaphor.[89] Secondly, the materiality of metaphor is reflexively emphasized by the passage, as Longinus describes the process metaphorically: the driving force of the emotion is like a winter-stream (χειμάρρου).[90] This reimagines the movement of metaphor, being dragged along in this stream, not simply as a transferal from an origin to the recipient's eyes, but as a flowing force that fluidly pushes the metaphor to the recipient. Interestingly, this also reminds of Aristotle's first case of metaphor being πρὸ ὀμμάτων, where he takes water imagery, the "pouring out", as an example. It is perhaps too flimsy to argue that Longinus has consciously noticed this example and thus used streaming water to describe the process of metaphor himself, but the similarity is certainly remarkable. The proper sublime use of vivacious metaphors thus equally becomes an expression of watery flow, and precisely because Longinus makes use of the opportunity to metaphorically explain this process in watery terms, he seems to par his own language to the criteria he is delimiting. To rephrase Longinus,

[89] The vehement with which the transportation of metaphor is described, runs parallel to the vehement of transportation as an effect of the sublime on the recipient, as apparent in Longinus' use of sublime effects such as ἔκστασις. For the overlaps in modes of transportation at the textual level and the recipient's level (and additionally the author's level), see De Jonge (2019).

[90] The image of the winter-stream being compared to oratory has a longstanding tradition, and occurs at Demosthenes *De Corona* 18.153 too, Demosthenes being for Longinus the exemplum of sublime usage of metaphors. See Halliwell (2022: 333-334).

the use of metaphor should come at the flow of an emotional discharge, like a winter-stream – and it is exactly the invocation of the winter-stream metaphor that immediately points the reader to the potential sublimity of Longinus' own use of metaphor.

This also invites a reconsideration of Longinus' use of other water metaphors, such as those in sections 12 and 13. When Longinus uses water metaphors to describe Cicero's and Plato's sublimes, according to his own understanding of metaphor, the water is physically transported, that is, driven forth like a winter-stream into the text. Now, with the idea in place that the use of metaphor can become sublime as a materialization of flowing water itself, one might ask whether Longinus' water metaphors are themselves to be considered a product of a sublime water flow? With the use of these metaphors, is Longinus' treatise itself flowing with emotion like a winter-stream, making these metaphors necessary consequences of an emotional discharge? Can Longinus' use of these metaphors be considered a winter-stream, just as sublime as Cicero's flood and Plato's silent stream? I am perhaps not that interested in whether Longinus meets his own standards for sublimity, but it is highly telling that Longinus prompts to consider his very treatise by the same watery materiality as the sublime authors he discusses.

These two layers of Longinus' water metaphors show that the distinction between what the author and what the water contributes to the figuration in the text, becomes blurred. Because the water metaphors that describe authors' sublime qualities are no invention of Longinus, but are informed by the conception of the water in the writing of those very authors, they can be regarded as metonymically motivated. The figurative meaning of the metaphor is not only guided by Longinus, but by the sublimity that those water bodies obtain from their conception by Longinus' sublime predecessors. Additionally, Longinus' own understanding of metaphor as a physical flow of water, shows that his metaphors do not dematerialize the waters but rather "flow" them into the text. This reflexively underlines the watery materiality that is caught within the metaphors. Both the water's matter, that sublimely flows into Longinus' metaphors, as well as their accreted sublimity through their conceptions in earlier authors like Homer and Plato, add to the creation and sublimity of the metaphors.

This shows again that Longinus envisions author and water as both having shared responsibility over the creation of a sublime figure. Now through Longinus' own water metaphors, it becomes clear that he does not only apply this to his sublime predecessors like Homer, but to his own authorship as well. The treatise thereby starts to reflect on its own creation and potential sublimity. On a broader level then, Longinus imagines his own treatise to be influenced by matters external to his control. The water metaphors, incited by Longinus but cocreated by the conception of the waters itself, show that he abides by his own sublime criterium of balancing φύσις and τέχνη. Longinus' metaphors reveal that he has acquired the literary techniques to sublimely engage with the grand conceptions that are gifted to him. Like a

jockey perfectly in tune with their horse, Longinus is in tune with what the grand conceptions of waters have to offer him.

Celebrating Grand Water

The idea that grand waters have influence over the creation of sublime text as well as over Longinus' own treatise, is also underlined by section 35. It is a remarkable and unique part of the treatise, as Longinus momentarily strikes a philosophical note to explain why humans are naturally awestruck by the exceptional (περιττόν), great (μέγα) and beautiful (καλόν) things in life. Longinus takes this short detour to answer the question why a faulty and inaccurate author can still be sublime, while the infallible author often falls short of sublimity (35.2). Longinus finally answers that while perfection may be impervious to critique, this does not bring about a feeling of wonder. It is rather greatness in literature, in spite of any inaccuracies, that elicits wonder (35.5). To clarify, Longinus explains why small streams do not evoke wonder, although they are useful and clear, and large rivers do.

> ἔνθεν φυσικῶς πως ἀγόμενοι μὰ Δί' οὐ τὰ μικρὰ ῥεῖθρα θαυμάζομεν, εἰ καὶ διαυγῆ καὶ χρήσιμα, ἀλλὰ τὸν Νεῖλον καὶ Ἴστρον ἢ Ῥῆνον, πολὺ δ' ἔτι μᾶλλον τὸν Ὠκεανόν […].
>
> "So, by some nature, by Zeus, are we made to wonder not at the small streams, although they are clear and useful, but at the Nile, the Danube or the Rhine, and above all, Oceanus."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 35.4

With regards to the other instances in the treatise, these water bodies are quite unique. Neither do they appear as part of a passage that Longinus discusses, nor are they obviously used by Longinus as literary-critical metaphor. These waters appear to refer to physical water bodies: Longinus imagines how humans in the outside world do not marvel at small streams but at large rivers. Additionally, the Nile, Danube and Rhine specifically refer to existing geophysical rivers, and in this line Oceanus too attains the impression of reality. As such, Longinus here attributes the origin of wonder to the material enormity of these rivers. While sublimity is not explicitly mentioned in the passage as τὸ ὕψος, Longinus does relate the sense of wonder to the experience of the sublime (1.4). To that extent, this passage uniquely points to the idea that physical matter can attain grandeur and evoke in its onlookers a feeling of sublime wonder by itself, and not necessarily as a textual conception. Still, it would be rash to immediately conclude that the sublime for Longinus thus exists outside of literature as well. Artistic representation still always

plays the leading role in creating the sublime, as the rest of the treatise attests to. But in this passage too, while it does not look like it at first sight, these water bodies can be interpreted as metaphors too. Again, one can see the duality underlined of Longinus the author using these waters as metaphors for text on the one hand, and these waters representing themselves as material and wondrously enormous entities on the other hand.

De Jonge (2021: 156-159) has convincingly shown that the water bodies in this passage are very similar to those at the end of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*. In fact, the passage can clearly be read as a response to the poetics expressed by Callimachus in his *Hymn to Apollo*.[91] As discussed in chapter 1, Apollo finds that large bodies of water like the "Assyrian river" carry with them a lot of refuse, while small, trickling springs contain pure water. This has been predominantly read as metaphorical for Callimachus' poetics: that large or bombastic poetry is quick to contain faults, while small and refined poetry can be more easily polished and perfected. The spring is therefore to be preferred over the large river or sea. Longinus, however, does not agree. This section of his treatise is precisely dedicated to the question how imperfections do not impede the sublime, while authors with perfect accuracy often fail to write sublimely. So Longinus flips Apollo's statement around: those small, trickling streams might be clear and useful, they are not marvelous like large rivers are, even though they can be muddy and opaque. Sublime authors like Plato and Demosthenes become sublime despite, or perhaps precisely because of their lack of perfection (De Jonge 2021: 157-158). This is why Longinus also prefers the wonderous rivers like the Nile, Danube and Rhine over the small streams. Furthermore, the phrasing suggests that Longinus here is using Oceanus as a metaphor for Homer again: more marvelous even than these three rivers is Oceanus.[92] The superiority of Oceanus points back to the idea that all other water bodies receive their water from Oceanus, which played a role in constructing the metaphor of Plato making side-channels from Homer's spring (13.3). With the equation of rivers and floods to the sublimity of authors like Plato and Cicero, one can interpret these rivers too as sublime authors who flow forth from Homer.

It is clear that the context of the section and the treatise at large prompt this metaphorical reading, and it properly explains Longinus' decision to use these water bodies as an example here. However, the philosophical discursion that precedes these rivers also prompts a reading where the waters retain their reference to the geophysical water bodies. Additionally, it is still up to debate why it is specifically the Nile, the Danube and the Rhine that are mentioned here. Their locations are well spread-out, flowing in the corners of the Roman world, which might convey a sense of totality: every water body from the Rhine to the Nile comes from Oceanus, or, every author from Plato to Cicero derives from Homer. The mentioning of the Danube and the

[91] For the relationship between Longinus and Callimachus, see e.g. Hunter (2009: 159).
[92] See De Jonge (2021: 158) and Porter (2016: 360-381).

Rhine are atypical in this regard: these do not have many cultural associations built up by Greek literary past, while the Nile accreted many discursive layers in Greek literature as its delta was much closer to (and for a period of time at the center of) the Greek world.[93] The Danube and Rhine speak more to the Roman reader who may know that these rivers lie within the confines of the Roman empire. Choosing these rivers specifically then may attest to Longinus' Romanity.[94] But I argue that there is more to be said about the fact that Longinus here chooses to explicitly name these existent rivers. Longinus' comments that directly precede these waters are insightful in this regard.

> […] ἡ φύσις οὐ ταπεινὸν ἡμᾶς ζῷον οὐδ᾽ ἀγεννὲς ἔκρινε τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ᾽ ὡς εἰς μεγάλην τινὰ πανήγυριν εἰς τὸν βίον καὶ εἰς τὸν σύμπαντα κόσμον ἐπάγουσα, θεατάς τινας τῶν ἄθλων αὐτῆς ἐσομένους καὶ φιλοτιμοτάτους ἀγωνιστάς, εὐθὺς ἄμαχον ἔρωτα ἐνέφυσεν ἡμῶν ταῖς ψυχαῖς παντὸς ἀεὶ τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ ὡς πρὸς ἡμᾶς δαιμονιωτέρου. Διόπερ τῇ θεωρίας καὶ διανοίας τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπιβολῇ οὐδ᾽ ὁ σύμπας κόσμος ἀρκεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς τοῦ περιέχοντος πολλάκις ὅρους ἐκβαίνουσιν αἱ ἐπίνοιαι, καὶ εἴ τις περιβλέψαιτο ἐν κύκλῳ τὸν βίον, ὅσῳ πλέον ἔχει τὸ περιττὸν ἐν πᾶσι καὶ μέγα καὶ καλόν, ταχέως εἴσεται πρὸς ἃ γεγόναμεν.
>
> "*Phusis* decided that we humans are no based or ignoble creatures, but, bringing us into life and into the entire cosmos as if it were some great festivity, for us to be some spectators of and most eager competitors in her games, she directly instilled in our souls the unconquerable desire for everything that is endlessly greater and more divine than ourselves. That is why the entire cosmos does not satisfy the human faculties of speculation and intellect, but our thoughts often exceed the limits of the world, and if one looks at life all around and sees to what extent the extraordinary, great and beautiful is best in all regards, it soon becomes clear what we were born for."
>
> Longinus, *On the Sublime* 35.2-3

[93] Still, Longinus is not isolated in using these specific rivers. Compare e.g. Demetrius *On Style* 121, where the Danube, Nile and sea (not the Rhine) are mentioned. See also De Jonge (2021: 158, n. 11).

[94] It is difficult to make conclusions about the identity of the author of the treatise, as the authorship and date of *On the Sublime* are not evidenced. Still, most scholars agree that the treatise was written in the first century CE, when the Roman Empire was fully present in the Mediterranean world. It is very probable that the author of the treatise, who by his admiration of and identification with Greek literary past, in some way had to deal with the Roman imperial context in which his treatise was produced.

Longinus envisions φύσις as the origin point or begetter of humans, as a force that has brought us into existence. Besides having created us, φύσις apparently consists of or produces "games" (τῶν ἄθλων). What those games are exactly only becomes clear through the role that humans have in them: φύσις has created humans with a dual function to be not only spectators of (θεατάς) but also competitors in (ἀγωνιστάς) her games. The designation of human as a natural spectator suggests that the games of φύσις are to be understood as the encounter with the marvelous sublime objects of the physical world: the large waters, the erupting volcanoes and the raging wildfires.[95] But what this section adds, is that humans do not only desire to spectate these games of the physical world, but compete in them as well. At first sight, one may think that these roles are mutually exclusive. While the spectator is passive and compliant, the competitor is active and confrontational. The former has no influence on the spectacles they are beholding, while the latter actually partakes in them. Still, Longinus marries these two positions into one natural characteristic of human beings.

What exactly then is competitive about marveling at beautifully immense rivers? Longinus uses a specific word to describe the world into which φύσις has placed the human species: Φύσις has brought humans into life (εἰς τὸν βίον) and the entire cosmos (εἰς τὸν σύμπαντα κόσμον) as if it were a πανήγυρις.[96] This word can generally mean 'assembly', but it carries some varying connotations. The word is made up of the constituents παν-, meaning 'total' or 'entire', and -ηγυρις, which derives from ἀγορά . The ἀγορά formed the central node of the Greek πόλις where most political, commercial, religious and festive activities would take place. As such, the word πανήγυρις can denote a political assembly where the city's course of actions was debated and decided upon, but it can equally denote the assembly of crowds for religious festivals or celebrations.[97] Both interpretations of the word can play a role in Longinus' description of the cosmos as a πανήγυρις. The festive connotations of the word envision the collection of humans and the rest of the physical world into life as joyful and convivial. It also points to the celebratory character that ancient Greek games would have, by which we can understand that the spectating and competing role of humans in φύσις' games is equally festive. On the other hand, the political connotations of the πανήγυρις convey the idea that φύσις' games can be taken as a kind of debate, as if the convivial congregation of humans and the physical world is also a matter of using

[95] The idea that spectating the marvels of the physical world is an inherent part of human existence, has been expressed before Longinus several times, for which see Russell (1964: 165-166). Take for example Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.140: *Sunt enim ex terra homines non ut incolae atque habitatores sed quasi spectatores superarum rerum atque caelestium, quarum spectaculum ad nullum aliud genus animantium pertinet.* "For humans do not spring from the earth as inhabitants or dwellers, but as a kind of spectator of superior and celestial things, the sight of which pertains to no other species than humans."

[96] For the use of the πανήγυρις as a metaphor for other aspects of life within philosophical discourse, see Halliwell (2022: 373).

[97] See LSJ A s.v. πανηγύρις.

one's (political) voice.[98] This gathering in the cosmos can thus not only be imagined as celebratory, but as vocal and discursive as well.

The idea of the cosmos as a πανήγυρις – festive and vocal – becomes especially interesting when we consider that it is not just humans who are invited: it is the entirety of the cosmos, which entails that the wondrous rivers that are taken as an example of φύσις' spectacles, become vocal as well. The πανήγυρις points to a certain form of discursive engagement between human and water, by which we are prompted to envision the games of φύσις as pertaining to this discursive engagement as well. The idea that humans are born into this world as competitors and spectators of these games, shows how we should envision this discursive engagement between humans and water. On the one hand, the competitive side highlights a certain discursive confrontation between humans and water. Imagined as both having a voice, the human voice and the water's voice would be in competition with each other, where the one would try to overshadow the other. On the other hand, spectatorship points to the human's more submissive role, in which the human voice would desist from competing and let the water's voice say what it has to say. This is what the connotations of the πανήγυρις bring forth, and it lines up with the dynamics between author and water that are apparent in the previously discussed parts of Longinus' treatise. To what extent does the author engage with water as a competitor, trying to appropriate it into a workable metaphor that is different from what the water itself can bring into discourse? And to what extent does the author spectate the waters instead, letting it use its voice, listening to it, and selecting what contiguous connotations it has to offer? As I have argued, Longinus deems it sublime when the author does both. This passage then reinscribes this double role of the author as a natural characteristic of humans in general, to be both competitors and spectators in the game of engaging with grand matters.

This duality is underlined also by the rest of the philosophical discursion. It is emphasized when Longinus locates in the human character an insatiable desire for things greater and more divine than ourselves. On the one hand, this attests to a power of things external to us that can outgrow our capabilities. Humans may be good at using their voice to represent grand things, but the grandeur of those things can also elude and overshadow our conceptual abilities. On the other hand, Longinus states that the entirety of the cosmos is not enough to satisfy the human faculties of θεωρία (speculation) and διάνοια (intellect). So in a different way, the grand matters of the cosmos are also not grand enough for our mental capabilities. Humans can foster even

[98] This interpretation is strengthened by the affiliation of the semantic field of ἀγορά with speaking and giving speeches. The word ἀγορά can also transferably indicate the business conducted on the agora, amongst which is the act of public speaking itself (LSJ AIII1 s.v. ἀγορά). This also informs the verb form ἀγορεύω, which means 'to speak in public', 'proclaim' or more generally 'to speak'. Additionally, from the word πανήγυρις derived a specific genre of oration, namely the πανηγυρικός λόγος, or the panegyric, which comprises of epideictic speeches delivered at religious festivals, games or other solemn occasions.

larger and more immense conceptions than the cosmos has to offer: our ἐπίνοιαι (thoughts) often pass beyond the confines of the world. For Longinus then, the cosmos is more grand and divine than our thinking, and simultaneously not grand enough for our thinking. Although somewhat paradoxical, it explains the human desire for grand things as unconquerable (ἄμαχον): there is a desire to engage with a grandeur that exceeds us, but this desire will never be satiated as we find that our thoughts can always conceive of something even more grand. The paradoxical simultaneity of this reinstates the position of humans as both competitors in and spectators of grandeur, on the one hand attempting to exceed it while simultaneously letting it exceed them.

In this manner, this passage reinvokes the simultaneity of activity and passivity that we have seen on many levels in the treatise so far. It is apparent in Longinus' comments on imitation and emulation (μίμησίς τε καὶ ζήλωσις, 13.2), where Longinus uses the metaphor of the silent stream to discuss Plato's sublimity. This metaphor is constructed by Longinus' observation that Plato uses the silent stream in his writing himself, establishing a contiguity between the stream and Plato which is external to Longinus (spectating) but which he readily uses to imitate and potentially emulate Plato (competing). It is apparent in Homer's contraction of ὑπέκ, which is guided by the danger of the sea upon which Homer imposed no limits (spectating): he rather let it inform the metaphorization of his language to the sea (competing). It is apparent from Longinus' discussion of φύσις and τέχνη, where the former is established by good fortune (spectating) and the latter by good judgement (competing). In the same manner, giving a horse the spur incites it to carry on by its own force (spectating) while reining it in gives the jockey control over its power (competing). And even in Longinus' own understanding of metaphor, while it is in the author's control to metaphorically represent water (competing), metaphor becomes sublime when it is also a product of the flow of water itself (spectating). Naturally, I make harsh distinctions here between what would be the author's active form of competing, and what would show their passive role of spectatorship, but the point is that Longinus finds an author sublime when both roles are apparent simultaneously. The sublime author can perfectly balance between showing forth their own voice, wielding their literary techniques and figurative capabilities, and letting the water they engage with speak for itself, so that both author and water become synergetic in the process of writing.

Coming back to the rivers that follow up on his philosophical notes, Longinus again exemplifies precisely what this combination of competition and spectating entails. The rivers that Longinus mentions can both be interpreted as metaphors and as literal references to geophysical rivers. On the one hand we see the figurative capabilities of Longinus to metaphorize water into qualities of writing, in this case sublime texts that flow forth from Homer. This would highlight the competitive element of being in a πανήγυρις with these rivers: Longinus can

showcase his authorial powers to metaphorize these waters for his intents and purposes. But simultaneously, the fact that these rivers are called by their name prompts to treat them literally as well. The very use of their proper nouns, the Nile, Rhine, Danube and Oceanus, emphasize that these waters are no abstract conceptions of the author. Compare this to the fact that the small and clear streams that Longinus opposes these rivers to, do not carry a specific name or exist in a specific locale. These are abstract streams that are invoked precisely for their smallness and clarity, relating to the same properties of Callimachus' trickling spring in his *Hymn to Apollo*. Instead of continuing with the image of a river and an explanation of why a river is more grand than a stream, Longinus finds it enough to merely invoke the names of some of the great rivers of the Roman world. Longinus does not reduce or appropriate these rivers into comprehensible properties or discursive connotations: the grandeur of these rivers is all in their names. It is perhaps the most essential way to let a matter speak for itself, to call it by its name and let this invocation be a testimony to its grandeur.[99]

There is then also something honorific about letting these river names convey their grandeur by themselves. This is underlined by the preceding phrase, where Longinus praises the extraordinary, the great and the beautiful things in life. Once you notice their grandeur, it becomes clear that we were born to engage with them. Longinus' laudatory tone exemplifies that the engagement between humans and the grand matters of the cosmos should be of honorific nature as well. This is what the idea of the cosmos as a πανήγυρις emphasizes as well. As mentioned, the word makes us think of the world as a political stage for humans and other matters alike, but it can also mean a festive assembly for religious celebrations. As much as the cosmos is a place for physical bodies to raise their voices and listen to others, it is as much a place for celebration. Relevantly, the word was also used to designate the style of laudatory speech, the πανηγυρικός λόγος (panegyric speech), that was given at religious festivals. When Longinus is himself striking this laudatory note, it is almost as if he himself is giving the panegyric speech that would perfectly fit the context of the πανήγυρις. In his invocation of the rivers one can surely see Longinus' metaphorical skills, his active participation in the games of φύσις, and simultaneously his role as a spectator in letting these waters represent themselves. But above all, this hard distinction between activity and passivity becomes less clear when one realizes that, in the end, engaging with grand waters in this manner is an honoring celebration of the cosmos in its own right. For Longinus, it is a festive and intimate game between himself and these rivers, where it eventually does not matter who is winning – the engagement itself is the celebration.

[99] Isabelle Stengers (2015: 43) highlights the importance of naming an entity for not reducing it to precepts of logical systematization: "To name is not to say what is true but to confer on what is named the power to make us feel and think in the mode that the name calls for."

Longinus' Waters and Metaphor

It is to this extent that section 35 holds a special position in the treatise, as it lays some of the theoretical foundations for Longinus' literary-critical observations. The passage shows that sublime authors who engage with grand matters in their texts, attest to a celebration of the grandeur of these matters. This engagement, at first sight, seems to be purely based on metaphorization, where the sublime would be a consequence of the author's figurative techniques to portray the water for their own intents and purposes. However, all the examples above reveal to what extent author and water are envisioned by Longinus as cocreators of the sublime. When waters are involved, the author – either Longinus himself or someone Longinus comments upon – leaves room for the water they engage with to contribute its materiality to the text. As author and water both create the sublime, synergy is established: sublime writing becomes a festive interaction between author and matter.

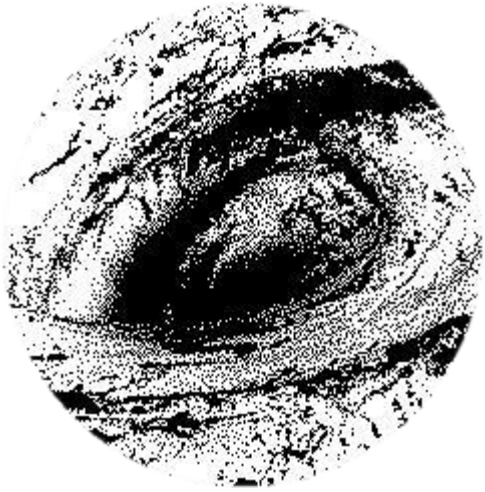
To end this chapter, it is important to understand that a concept of language and meaning emerges from Longinus treatise, that is radically different from the one proposed by James Porter. Section 35 prompted me to write a bit more freely on the effects of physical matter on sublime writing, but it is still important to emphasize Longinus' first definition of the sublime, that it is a preeminence and excellence of language. So, let us not forget that the grandeur that Longinus attributes to, for example, the Nile, Danube, Rhine and Oceanus, is only converted into the sublime within their textual representation. However, as my analysis shows, even though the waters in Longinus treatise are always mediated by literary representation, their reference to their physical grandeur plays a large role in guiding the sublime meaning that emerges from this representation. To that extent, the creation of this meaning should not be understood as immaterial – as an attempt of the author to transcend the matters of language into some immaterial sublime realm. Their figurative devices and abilities to metaphorize matters do not entail a dematerialization of the matter that is represented. Sublime meaning and the matters of language are rather coextensive to the point where a distinction between meaning and language cannot be upheld. Longinus understanding and usage of water metaphors attest to this as well. His metaphors do not dematerialize the water, they invite the water to contribute its grand materiality to the construction of the figure. This figuration of water is not an unshackling, shunning or betrayal of its materiality, it is a celebration of it.

As such, the concept of language and meaning, as well as the concept of metaphor, that emerge from *On the Sublime*, offer an alternative to the metaphor that many blue humanities scholars are averse to. Blum (2010) was adamant about not treating waters as metaphors only, precisely because they would reduce them into an immaterial concept.[100] She wrote that water

[100] See Introduction, page 18.

would be rendered immaterial when subjected to the processes of figuration she recognized in recent criticism (2010: 670). Longinus' treatise shows that literature and its varying figurations of water do not necessarily have to lead to this dematerialization. Within the figurative conceptualization of water, its materiality can resonate through to the point where it influences how it is conceptualized. Its matter thus plays an important role in its conceptualization for literary writing. This is then also the extent to which Longinus' treatise lays a sturdy foundation for an understanding of hydropoetics. When Longinus himself listens to the materiality that a grand water body has to offer, the water is invited to contribute to the treatise together with Longinus. Longinus uses an array of water metaphors to profess his poetics of the sublime, but because those metaphors are in part also informed by the literal properties and contiguities of the water, Longinus' poetics are not only constituted by himself but by the water as well. Writing waters for Longinus becomes a matter of celebration, a festive engagement with beautiful and awe-inspiring grandeur. In line with the terminology of hydropoetics, water thus attains a poetical voice in Longinus' treatise, writing along with Longinus to create the poetical values and literary criticism that *On the Sublime* has to offer.

3



DIVISIVE WATER

Chapter 3: Divisive Water

Introduction

The first 15 verses of Catullus 64 introduce the myth of the Argonauts, seemingly setting up for an epic poem about the seafaring heroes. They course over the blue surface, speed on the mighty Argo, churn through the waves – reading it for the first time, one might surely expect the narrative of the poem to work through the famous sea journey for the Argonauts to reach the golden fleece (1-5). But a sea journey is never without peril, and traversing the blue in a straight line is virtually impossible: the sea can be deceptive. The text of Catullus 64 does not let the Argonauts reach the golden fleece at all; it rather stops narrating their journey altogether. After 15 verses, what seemed to be the opening of the Argonautic adventure, suddenly only functions as a timestamp for a different myth, the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. We end up with a freeze frame of the mortal Argonauts, among whom Peleus, looking out onto the sea and seeing a group of nymphs, including Thetis, come to the surface.

> *illa, atque <haud> alia, viderunt luce marinas*
> *mortales oculis nudato corpore Nymphas*
> *nutricum tenus exstantes e gurgite cano.*
> *tum Thetidis Peleus incensus fertur amore,*
> *tum Thetis humanos non despexit hymenaeos,*
> *tum Thetidi pater ipse iugandum Pelea sensit.*
>
> "On that day, and no other, the mortals saw with their eyes how the sea nymphs stood up from the white whirlpool, exposing their bodies as far as their nipples. Then for Thetis Peleus is said to have burned with love, then Thetis did not despise a human marriage, then to Thetis the father (Jupiter) himself felt that Peleus should be married."
>
> Catullus 64.16-21 (ed. Fordyce 1968)

The remainder of the poem, which is some 400 lines, rather seems to take the wedding of Peleus and Thetis as its mythical red line, but the spin-off from the Argonautic proem to the wedding is only the first example of a number of divisive turns and embedded digressions within the poem.[101] After the wedding scene has been introduced (16-49), a marital seat part of the wedding's décor is described, embroidered with a depiction of Theseus and Ariadne, leading into

[101] For a proper overview of the structure of the poem, see Quinn (1973: 298-299).

an ekphrasis about the desolation of Ariadne so lengthy and winding (50-264) the reader might forget that the poem was about a wedding in the first place. Having returned to the wedding (265-322), the gods arrive at the party, among whom the Parcae, who begin to weave and prophesy about the life of Achilles – the future son of Peleus and Thetis – and, ominously, the cruelties he will commit during and after the Trojan war, such as the ordering of Polyxena's death (323-381). Finally, the poem fully steers off into a reflection by the narrator on humankind's decline into impiety (382-408). How the myths of Catullus 64 relate to each other has been a matter of continual debate, but it is certainly evident that the marriage of Peleus and Thetis does not hold good fortune: Theseus leaving Ariadne, Achilles killing Polyxena, the decline of humankind – they all have a similar imprint of moral degradation.[102] As such, it has been argued that Catullus 64 runs by a cyclical chronology, in which each myth seems to be a transformation of the same pattern.[103] Each transformation can be characterized as a deviation: every time the narrative of the poem associatively flows into a new myth, the reader's expectations of a linearly unfolding mythical narrative are defied.

In this chapter, I argue that the water bodies in Catullus 64 are implicated in the deviating character of the poem's narrative. It is to this extent that the poem works with a concept of hydropoetics, as the water in the poem is seen to creatively influence the poetic structure of the text. The extent and consequences of this implication are already foreshadowed in the anaphora quoted above in verses 19-21. *Tum Thetidis… tum Thetis… tum Thetidi* – the anaphora marks the poem's first surprising narrative turn, from the story of the Argonauts to that of Peleus and Thetis. This anaphora is programmatic for the construction of the poem.[104] Firstly, the anaphora is constituted by a repetition of identical words at the beginning of a verse, *tum* in this case. But *tum* is also followed by a second column of *nearly* identical words, forming a polyptoton: *Thetidis, Thetis* and *Thetidi* convey the same proper name, but each instance is different with respect to case. In this sense, the anaphora formally deviates as well. The repetition of the name forebodes the similarities that the various myths of the poem show, but its transformation points to the divisive character of the narrative in which these myths are structured.

The implication of water in the deviating structure of the narrative is apparent from the anaphora too. Thetis is a sea nymph, and if there is anything that can be deviating and

[102] See e.g. Bramble (1970), Weber (1983), Laird (1993), Gaisser (1995), Warden (1998), DeBrohun (2007), Wasdin (2017). See especially Bramble (1970) about the pattern of moral degeneration within the poem.

[103] See e.g. Bramble (1970), Gaisser (1995: 579-580), and more generally about the structure of repetitive patterning in the text, Warden (1998).

[104] Gaisser (1995: 585) relevantly points out that the anaphora creates a narrative pause that makes the reader question their position: "where are we, and what time is it?"

misleading, it is the flows of the sea.[105] Illustrative for the role of water in the poem's structure, is the nymph's characteristic trait of a double physicality.[106] This double physicality is constituted by the idea that a nymph relates to the sea both metaphorically and metonymically. On the one hand, nymphs are anthropomorphized things – a tree or a spring or a sea. In this sense, Thetis is (a metaphor for) the sea. On the other hand, nymphs are simultaneously humans that intimately interact *with* the thing they represent. They dance around their hallowed tree or bathe in their springs. Similarly, Thetis and the sea nymphs 'stand up' (*exstantes*) from the depths, and they have human bodies with human nipples (*nudato corpore*…*nutricum tenus*). They interact with the sea as separate embodiments. As such, they are presented as spatially contiguous to the sea, rather than only being metaphors of the sea. Thetis and the sea nymphs are thus figurations *of* the sea that simultaneously exist as materially contingent *to* the sea. In other words, their relationship to the sea is both metaphorical and metonymical. Consequently, when an author chooses to metaphorically figure the sea as a nymph, this figuration is underpinned by the material contiguity that the sea and this humanoid creature have. The author is not fully in charge of creating the surplus of meaning, the preexistent contiguity between nymph and sea (well-established in the realm of Greek mythology) guides their figurative relationship as well, showing their power to create the figure together with the author.

Important for my reading of Catullus 64, adding on to the exposition of metaphor and metonymy by Culler, is that the material contiguity of two metonymically related concepts, requires that those concepts exist as separate embodiments.[107] Conversely, as a metaphor, the nymphs blend into the sea: for as long as the figurative construction holds, they are a figure *existing as* the sea. Surely, the construction of a metaphor requires too that the figured concepts are dissimilar as well, but the relationship of similarity that the author sets up between them can momentarily cause otherwise salient features of the concepts to be forgotten in order for them to blend together. However, when one recognizes that the metaphorization of a nymph to the sea is metonymically motivated, it requires them to rather split the humanoid nymph and the sea into separate embodiments again, as two entities that *interact with* each other instead of *exist as* each other. Their distinct features are rather highlighted than polished away: the sea exists as water body, with whirlpools and a foamy color, and the nymphs exist as humanoids, with nipples

[105] See e.g. DeLoughrey (2017: 33): "Unlike terrestrial space […] the perpetual circulation of ocean currents means that the sea dissolves phenomenological experience and diffracts the accumulation of narrative." See also Boelhower (2008: 91-93), Chen et al. (2013) or DeLoughrey (2020).

[106] See e.g. Larson (2001: 1-60), as well as the telling definition by Malkin (2016): "A varied category of female divinities anthropomorphically perceived as young women (the word *nymphē*, means also 'bride'). They inhabit and animately express differentiated nature." Note the duality of inhabitation, as a mode of connection between separate entities, and expression, as the metaphorization of "nature" through human animation.

[107] See Introduction, page 23-24.

and the ability to stand up. It is this physical distinction that establishes their ability to be materially contingent, to "touch" each other.

This dual nature of Thetis as metaphorical and metonymical to the sea is exemplary for the function of water in Catullus 64. At various points in the poem, water is also understood as a metaphor for text. For example, as we will see, the manner in which the Argonauts traverse the sea can become metaphorical for how an author traverses the narrative of their writing: the sea journey then becomes a metaphor for the journey of producing text, with the sea as a metaphor for the textual matter that the author works with. However, when the sea *only* exists as a metaphor for text, its material complexities and salient properties can become forgotten. The opening of Catullus 64 plays with this idea by offering a subtle critique on the manner in which the Argonauts seem to territorialize the sea by their heroic journey. They metaphorically transform the sea into a flat, land-like surface for their narrative to unfold upon. This coincides with the metaphorization of the sea as a woman, towards whom the text suggests the Argonauts act sexually transgressive. We will see how the text subtly points to the unsustainability of reductively metaphorizing concepts such as water or woman, polishing away their distinctions and embodied forces, in order to supply the violence and transgression of typical heroes. The text does so by showing at incisive moments how metaphorized bodies can suddenly step out of their metaphorical role and rather present their distinct and empowered physicality. To point again to the example above: both the nymphs and the sea suddenly are no longer only metaphors of each other, but powerfully show their independent embodiments. This moment is incisive as it charts the deviation of the narrative away from the Argonauts. The arguments below will show how the independent physicality that the sea suddenly presents, establishes this diverting narrative turn. A similar case will be made for the episode of Theseus and Ariadne.

The text of Catullus 64 thus shows the unsustainability of a type of narrative construction that is only based on metaphor. When the author is fully in charge of reducing the matters of the text into metaphors that supply the linear unfolding of narrative, it puts the author in a superior position over the matter that is narrated. Such an author-centered type of writing proffers the idea of an anthropopoetics: only the author influences the creation of the narrative, and the narrated matter is metaphorized so that only its features important for the telos of the narrative are meaningful. Catullus 64, however, is not interested in such an anthropopoetical construction of narrative. At the end of the argument, we will see how the narrator of the poem situates himself in between a position of power and powerlessness. His power exists in his ability to construct metaphors productive for the narrative, while his powerlessness exists in his desistance to coopt this construction: specifically the sea is granted the physical power to divert the narrative, while the narrator simply follows along with this flow, resulting in the associatively constructed poem of Catullus 64. As the sea is granted the power to supply this

flow, the text shows how an anthropopoetical mode of writing can be replaced with a functional hydropoetics.

Towards the end of the chapter, another significant aspect of hydropoetics will emerge. I find it important to stress upfront that my analysis of the poem runs into a difficulty. While I argue that water plays a crucial role in the narrative structure of the poem, this is only evident from the two episodes of the Argonauts and of Theseus and Ariadne. After the Theseus and Ariadne ekphrasis, water simply makes much less appearances. With this I do not mean to immediately unscrew the foundations of my argument: it is merely that the poem in its entirety does not only and fully abide by my analysis. In a sense, the water retracts from the remainder of the poem, textually and as a structuring principle, which, when I first wrote this chapter, confronted my abilities to rationally explain the workings of the poem. Interestingly, the very divisive character of water that informs the poem, suddenly deceived me in my role as reader and as analyzing author. But if anything, hydropoetics is not about being able to rationalize water: that would imply that I as an interpreter of water would subject it to the very processes of metaphorization that I have been criticizing in my thesis so far. As Ryan relates, hydropoetics is about *hearing* the voice of water instead of *giving* it voice. In other words, it is not about metaphorizing water into a rationally understandable concept, it is about listening to what the water can offer us beyond what we can comprehend.[108] Similarly, the narrator of Catullus 64 does the same by recognizing both the power of his own authorship and that of the water. The water informs the structure of the poem in a way that defies the narrator's power to rationally construct a linearly unfolding story. In the same way that the water deviates his narrative, so does the water's retraction from the poem deviate the narrative that I present here. In that sense, the concept of hydropoetics critically questions me as an author working with water as much as it does the authors that I have discussed. But before I get ahead of myself, let us first see how Catullus 64 itself is informed by a hydropoetics.

The Argonauts and the Sea

The opening passage of the poem, which relates a portion of the Argonauts myth, shows us in more detail how the narrator, at first, sets up a tight metaphorical relationship between water, text and female body. However, towards the end of this passage, this metaphorical relationship will be broken, and both the female body and the sea gain their independent embodiments again, of which I lifted the tip of the veil above. At the turn to Peleus and Thetis, we see how the water is not only metaphorical anymore, but independently shows its agency to influence the course of the narrative. As the sea starts to form into a convulsive eddy, one can think of the narrative

[108] See Ryan (2022: 487).

turn to comply with this motion of the sea. The Argonauts myth is not continued linearly, the narrative rather flows into a new myth, that of Peleus and Thetis. But in order for the sea to do this, it has to resist the metaphorization it was subjected to earlier. As such, the opening shows the reader the poem cannot make do with metaphorization only.

Peliaco quondam prognatae vertice pinus
dicuntur liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas
Phasidos ad fluctus et fines Aeeteos,
cum lecti iuvenes, Argivae robora pubis,
auratam optantes Colchis avertere pellem
ausi sunt vada salsa cita decurrere puppi,
caerula verrentes abiegnis aequora palmis
diva quibus retinens in summis urbibus arces
ipsa levi fecit volitantem flamine currum,
pinea coniugens inflexae texta carinae.
illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten;
quae simul ac rostro ventosum proscidit aequor
tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda,
emersere freti candenti e gurgite vultus
aequoreae monstrum Nereides admirantes.

"There was a time they say that the pines born on the top of mount Pelion swam through the fluid waves of Neptune to the river of Phasis and Aeetes' borders, when chosen young men, oaks of the Argive youth, strove to fetch the Colchian golden fleece and dared to course the saline depths with their fast ship, sweeping the blue surface with their fir-wooden palms, for whom the goddess, who holds the fortress at the top of the city, herself made the ship soar with light wind, having weaved the pine into fabric and binding it into a bending keel. That ship was the first on its course to explore the wild sea. As soon as it cleaved the windy surface with its prow, and the waves distorted by the rowing turned white with foam, then emerged from the glistening whirlpool of the sea the oceanic faces of the Nereids, who wondered at this apparition."

Catullus 64.1-15

Before the poem introduces Peleus and Thetis as main characters, it presents us with an image of the Argonauts and their ship interacting with the sea. The abundance of watery language and seafaring terms clearly puts the sea in a prominent position. While at first sight, the relationship between the Argonauts and the sea might not seem problematic, the passage has some overtones of violence and excessiveness. Already in the first four verses, the text subtly evokes the idea that the Argonauts, who traditionally were the first humans to ever venture out onto the sea by ship, perhaps do not belong in this marine world. The first scene shows us how pine trees from mount Pelion are now, in the form of the ship of the Argo, coursing through the sea. However, the text omits that these pine trees were felled for the purpose of seafaring and merely paints the picture of their logs "floating" (*nasse*) in the sea. The sense that these trees do not belong in the water is brought forth by the text's emphasis on their place of origin, as well as its distance from the outlands to which they are taken.[109] *Prognatae*, then, not only denotes an origin but conveys the idea of descendance too, which makes the contrast with the ultimate *fines* to which the trees have to swim even more stark: these trees were born as land dwellers. Then, in verse 4, when the Argonauts are introduced, the first thing they are compared to are oak trees. This suggests that the Argonauts can be seen as the uprooted, displaced, terrestrial logs that now have to float through the waves.[110] These first verses already raise the question, should these land dwelling humans venture out onto the mighty sea in the first place?[111]

The following verses also subtly problematize the dynamic between the Argonauts and the sea. Their intention behind daringly sailing the blue is not explicitly heroic: the heroism in going after the golden fleece lies in Jason's rightful reclamation of the throne of Iolcos. However, the passage only focuses on their acquisition of the golden fleece from Colchis. That this acquisition is somewhat morally dubious, is highlighted by the Argonauts' *audacia* (*ausi sunt*, "dared to") with which they speed over the sea. The concept of *audacia* itself captures the thin line between a positive and a negative sense of "boldness", and it places the Argonauts on a dangerous threshold from being heroically courageous to showcasing a disdainful temerity.[112] The concept of *audacia* here is certainly not solely positive, which is evident from the several violent representations of sailing and rowing. In verse 13, the oars of the Argonauts make the

[109] See e.g. Bramble (1970: 36-37).

[110] For the idea that the pines are emphasized as "living creatures", which may strengthen their equation to the Argonauts, see Quinn (1973: 300).

[111] Bramble (1970: 37): "Land has been joined with sea [...] and the result, to say the least, is perturbing."

[112] See e.g. Bramble (1970: 35-36), and especially note 3 on page 36 on the negative implications of *audacia*. Compare also the bifold lemmatization of L&S s.v. *audacia*. The word *avertere* which is used to explicate the Argonauts' acquisition of the golden fleece, holds similar double connotations, taking on either a more neutral meaning, such as 'to carry off (as spoils)' (preferred by Fordyce 1968: 278), or a more negative meaning, such as 'to steal' (pointed out as a possible translation by Quinn 1973: 301). Thomson (1997: 394) designates the acquisition of the golden fleece as a "heroic robbery", underlining both the positive and negative characterization of *avertere*.

waves of the sea *torta*, which generally bears the meaning of being 'twisted' or 'winded', but also of being 'tortured' or 'tormented'.[113] The sea being swept (*verrentes*) by the oars in verse 7, although a little less violent, also imports the idea of impelling or coercion.[114] Additionally, the fir-wood palms (*abiegnis palmis*) with which the sea is swept, call back to the discrepancies between land-dwelling wood and the marine world.[115] So too does the image of the ship cleaving (*proscindere*) through the sea like a plough not only emphasize the physical contortion of the sea by the ship. It also strengthens the idea that the human sailors truly belong on the land: they even split the sea with their ship as if they furrow their land with a plough. Subtly, but clearly, the Argonautic sea journey is not only heroic, but is critically underpinned by suggestions of violence and physical transgression against the sea.

I want to linger on one verse in particular, verse 11, which shows best the essence and ramifications of the text's suggested critique on the Argonauts' relation to the sea. The verse is difficult to translate, partly because of the polysemy of the words *rudis* and *imbuere*, but also because of the metaphorical relationship between Amphitrite (Neptune's wife and a sea goddess) and the sea. The passage shows that this metaphorization works both ways: we can read Amphitrite as metaphorical for the sea, but we are also encouraged to read the sea in the rest of the passage as a metaphor for the female body. Furthermore, the verse shows us that the metaphor extends to encompass the text itself as well. Let us explore the possible readings.

> *illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten;*
>
> "That ship was the first on its course to explore the wild sea."
>
> Catullus 64.11

The text seems to prefer that we read *Amphitriten* as a metaphor for the sea: the ten preceding verses deal primarily with images of seafaring, so it would make sense to read this verse accordingly: the Argonauts explored the sea. Consequently, *rudis* would take on its physical denotation of 'wild' or 'rough' and *imbuit* would make sense in its tropical meaning 'to initiate' or 'to explore'.[116] Following this, the sentence would be translated as: "That ship was the first on its course to explore the wild sea." Within this meaning lies the text's subtle problematization of the Argonauts' sea journey. The *audacia* of treading the open ocean

[113] See e.g. L&S IB1 compared to IIA s.v. *torqueo*. Burton (1894) emphasized the violence of the verb beautifully with his translation "oar-tortured."

[114] See especially L&S IIA and IIB s.v. *verro*.

[115] See Bramble (1970: 36) on the *palmae* hitting the sea: "[T]he contrast between *caerula … aequora* and *abiegnis … palmis* effects an unnatural combination of land with sea: two elements which were previously distinct have now been mixed together."

[116] See e.g. L&S I s.v. *rudis* and L&S IIB2 s.v. *imbuo*.

concerns a confrontation with and overcoming of the "wild"; the word *rudis* equally evokes the notion of being 'untried', which suggests that the initiation of the sea is about making known what is still unknown.[117]

In this line, the Argonautic primal sea journey, as an extension of terrestrial exploration onto open water, reminds us of the territorializing effects of the invention of the nautical compass, as discussed in chapter 1.[118] Turning the *rudis* sea into a terrestrial plane makes it permeable, knowable and thus conquerable. With a ship as a plough, it metaphorically changes the sea from a dangerous and uninhabitable space into resourceful, agricultural land to be exploited by land-dwellers (*rudis*, when applied to land, can come to mean 'uncultivated' or 'untilled' too). Such a form of territorialization is a process of metaphor: it enables the reduction of the sea to properties that are only relevant for its figuration as land – its flatness, permeability and reliable safety. It is the *audacia* of treating the sea in this metaphorical manner that the text puts up for debate. Surely, there may be heroism involved in the Argonauts' venture, but the sense that they change the unknown sea into known territory highlights their abilities to force the sea into a metaphor for land.

The suggestion that the Argonauts are able to do this, points to the idea that they have qualities of authorship. Just like an author is able to create metaphor, and shape the metaphorized concept to their will, so do the Argonauts have the ability to change the concept of the sea from unexplored and obstructive, to traversable and compliant: the text shows that they have no trouble sweeping its waves and contorting its waters without any resistance. In this sense, the Argonauts are instantiated as the authors of their own narrative. They have the power to remove the obstructions of the sea in order to reach their narratological *telos* of the golden fleece. The water of the sea thus presents itself as a physical and a narratological hindrance that the Argonauts as narrators are to overcome. This leads to the idea that the Argonauts to some extent represent the narrator of the poem, and the water they are sailing as the potential narratological obstructions that the narrator has to work with.[119]

Why does the text elicit this reading? It is no Catullan invention to play with the Argonauts as reflections of the narrator. One of Catullus' predecessors, Apollonius Rhodius, in his epic telling of the myth, hints that the actions of the Argonauts say something about the poetics of the text.[120] In that epic too, the sea can often be read to cause hindrances for the Argonauts to overcome and complete their teleological narrative. There, the Argonauts time and again barely

[117] See e.g. L&S IB s.v. *rudis*. See also Fordyce's (1968: 279) interpretation of the verse and his comment on the pointed "innocence of the sea" within the verse.

[118] See Chapter 1, page 45-46.

[119] This in part rests on the more traditional metaphor of seafaring as writing, for which see Harrison (2007: 3), as well as Cody (1976: 82-87) and Steiner (1986: 71-75).

[120] See e.g. Clare (2002: 9-32) and Van den Boom (Forthcoming).

escape from the dangers of the sea until they heroically reach the golden fleece and bring it along with Medea back to Iolcos. The conquest of the dangerous sea exemplifies what makes Apollonius' version of the myth epic: their heroic deeds are typical for the epic genre that Apollonius worked with. Importantly, however, Catullus 64 is not an epic. It seems to start off as an epic, but its countless deviations as well as its brevity (only 400 somewhat verses) have brought interpreters to deem it an *epyllion*: a small epic in form, still written in the typically epic dactylic hexameter, but thematically and structurally much more akin to Alexandrian themes and styles.[121] Because Catullus was keen on transforming his epic predecessor into a new format, it makes sense that he uses the Argonautic myth to reflect on the poetics of his own poem. What kind of narrative does the myth of the Argonauts entail for the poem? The rest of the poem shows that Catullus is not at all interested in finishing this teleological epic narrative: the poem rather deviates into an array of different myths. As such, the Argonauts will be dropped from the poem entirely, and their story will be discontinued in favor of a different style of writing that suits Catullus' generic preferences better. Additionally, this requires that the obstructions of the sea are not heroically overcome: they are rather posited as incisive moments of intervention in the construction of the poem.

How does the passage, and verse 11 in specific, show Catullus' consciousness about the construction of the poem, and how is the sea involved? Harrison has argued (2007: 3) that the terms that denote the concept of 'coursing' – *decurrere* ('to course'), *currum* ('chariot', 'ship'), *cursu* ('course') – relate back to the verb *currere* ('running') and its use for the advancement of narrative.[122] This elicits the metaphor of the ship as a pen that 'runs' over the paper and writes the narrative, as it crosses over the surface of the sea. The triple use of the word *aequor* underlines this reading, as it can generally denote any flat surface, not only of the sea.[123] As such, the flatness of the sea suddenly starts to overlap with the flat surface of writing material too. On top of that, *prima* in verse 11, pointing to the fact that the Argo was the first ship to set sail, reminds of the *primus ego* motif, as if the ship and its sailors are in some sense the *ego* who were the first to produce this type of text. The *primus ego* motif highlights Catullus' self-proclaimed

[121] As a matter of fact, the word *epyllion* was not used in antiquity to designate a specific genre or style of writing. From being invented as a pejorative for "minor" epics in the 19th century to being theorized as a specific Greek or Roman genre, the term is in itself an anachronism, for which see Masciadri (2012). For its applicability to Catullus 64 and the problems that arise from its designation as an epyllion, see Trimble (2012). This of course does not entail that Catullus was not engaging in the innovation of epic and other generic trope. For the idea that the innovation of the epyllion is an extension of Callimachus' poetics of brevity (Callimachus' *Hecale* is also often considered an epyllion), see Quinn (1971: 297). For a more general overview of Catullus' relationship with Callimachus, which may equally act as a basis for Catullus' inventive character, see especially Knox (2007).

[122] See Harrison (2007: 3). The word also looks forward to the twelvefold repeated *currite* in the Parcae episode (327-381), where it is applied to the threads and spindle that create the *textum* ('text' and 'something woven'). See e.g. Wasdin (2017: 184-188).

[123] This point was also made by Harrison (2007: 3).

authenticity to work with these epic themes in an epyllion-style manner, but it also reminds of the way in which this claim to authenticity in Propertius 3.1 lead to an anthropocentric poetics.[124]

These elements suggest that the Argonauts and their journey are reflections of the narrator and his journey of writing. But simultaneously, the text also subtly criticizes the Argonauts' reliance on the metaphorization of the sea into land. So as the Argonauts become a reflection of the narrator, the idea emerges that the narrator is also implicitly criticizing his own style of writing. The journey of the Argonauts is to some extent violent against the sea, turning it into a metaphor for easily traversable land: a flat and compliant *aequor*. This would entail that the journey of the narrator in writing this passage is equally violent towards the sea. This is true to the extent that the narrator also metaphorizes the sea into an *aequor*, representing the flat writing surface the narrator would need to linearly narrate the Argonautic myth. This reflects back on the Argonauts' initiation of the *rudis* sea as well. The properties of being wild and rough are overcome by the Argonauts, turning the sea into an explorable, flat *aequor*. In the same way, the narrator polishes over the roughness and wildness of the sea by metaphorizing it into an *aequor*. As such, the writing of the narrative of the Argonauts, relying on the metaphorization of the sea, appears to territorialize the sea as much as it is suggested that the Argonautic exploration of the sea does.

Verse 11 also shows us that the metaphorization of the sea does not only pertain to writing. In the translation of the Argonauts "being the first to explore the wild sea", it is possible to interpret it as the narrator treating the sea in the same manner. However, the sea is represented by a female character: Amphitrite, a sea goddess who is the wife of Neptune. An alternative translation of the sentence would thus be:

> *illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten;*
>
> "That ship was the first on its course to taint untried Amphitrite."
>
> Catullus 64.11

Suddenly, the verse does not only pertain to the territorialization of the sea, it can be interpreted as a territorialization of Amphitrite as well. This gives the Argonauts' exploration sexually transgressive overtones. *Rudis*, now applied to a human figure, can take on the meaning of 'wild', 'rude' and 'uncultivated' (although denotative layers of 'unused', 'untried' or 'new' still sound through). The literal implications of *imbuit* even further sexualize the scene: 'moisten', 'stain',

[124] See Chapter 1, page 53-56.

'touch', 'taint' (and here too, aforementioned meanings such as 'initiate' still resound). As such, the sea being explored by the ship, is suddenly pictured as a young or uncultivated woman who is wettened or tainted by the Argonauts. The same problems apparent in the relationship between human and sea are transposed to the relationship between the male Argonauts and the female body. They treat her rashly, they were the first to cultivate and initiate her, and furthermore, they sweep her, contort her, *plough* her.[125] Again, this violence relies on the metaphorization of Amphitrite to the sea: both become oppressed extents of each other, because they metaphorically overlap.

By this double reading of Amphitrite, the passage thus sees the Argonauts territorializing the sea and the Argonauts territorializing woman. It then adds on to these violent dynamics a metaphorical layer of the process of writing itself as well, turning the creation of the Argonautic passage into a form of territorialization too. This manner in which the text is written so far, thus includes the very process of metaphorizing water to woman and water to text. The very act of metaphorization is what transposes the dynamics of violence and excess from one relationship to the other. Water, text and female body become metaphorical amalgamations of each other, which unilaterally links the suppression of one body to that of the other. As the Argonauts conquer the sea, so too the female body is conquered, so too the narrative is conquered. All three are encaged by the same dominant force, which polishes away their differences. This is then what initiating *rudis Amphitrite* is also about: both the incongruencies of the female body and the water body are smoothed over into one body, and this unification happens through the respective violation of both bodies. We come to understand the oppression of the female body in terms of a territorializing sea journey, and we come to understand the exploration of the sea as a violently masculine sexual conquest. On top of that, we come to understand the creation of the very passage in the same terms. The remainder of the passage will now show that such metaphorization, especially on the basis of a form of subjugation, cannot be the only function of these bodies.

In verses 14-15, the passage resolves with a physical split between the sea and female body: they are no longer only metaphors of each other, but show that they have distinct embodiments, respectively as female humanoids and body of water. Whereas Amphitrite stood in as a metaphor for the sea, the Nereids that now follow raise their humanoid bodies with humanoid faces from the water. Most astonishingly, they look back (*admirantes*). This act of looking does not conform to the Argonauts speeding violently across Amphitrite. The nymphs,

[125] See e.g. Fordyce (1968: 279) or Thomson (1997: 395), who point out that *proscindere* was used in technical treatises on agriculture to designate a first ploughing of virgin soil. Not only does this strengthen the idea that the sea was untried and the Argo was the first ship to set sail (like Fordyce and Thomson point out), it also reinforces the sexualization of Amphitrite as a virgin who the Argonauts can supposedly "touch" (*imbuit*) for the first time (*prima*).

watching back, opposing the Argonauts, have a framework of their own too, a sense of wonder, a judgement about the *monstrum* that is the Argo. They portray very human properties that are distinct from the sea. The sea too, instead of being turned into a flat, land-like *aequor*, suddenly presents its *rudis* nature: it starts to form whirlpools (*gurges*). The very properties that were metaphorically reduced to establish the linear narrative of the Argonauts, now start to show again. Consequently, the water and the female body are not *only* metaphorical of each other anymore, they are split into separate entities – the Nereids *and* the sea.

The sudden resistance of the sea against metaphorization, also means that the style of writing that supplied this metaphorization is met with resistance. The outset for a linear narration of the myth of the Argonauts, as is suggested by the opening of the poem, was established by the metaphorization of the sea into a land-like writing surface. However, as the linear narration of the Argonautic journey is discontinued and disappears from the poem, so too does the territorializing writing style that accompanied it, along with the very metaphorization of water to the text being written. That the water resists its positioning as the solid foundation of linear mythical narration, becomes equally clear at the moment the female body splits from the sea, and the water becomes a water body once again. At that moment, the distinction of water body and female body is twice emphasized by the phrase *e gurgite* (from the whirlpool), where the preposition *e(x)* highlights the bodies' separation. The specific term *gurges* ('abyss', 'whirlpool', 'eddy') then highlights the convulsive and abyssal qualities of the sea, which stand in stark contrast to the much more compliant *unda* and *aequor* of the preceding verses. It shows that the sea is resistant against a territorializing seafaring/writing, and it posits the sea not as a backdrop for seafaring/writing, but as a whirling and dangerous current that can divert a narratological vehicle from its linear course. It begs for a manner of writing that cannot turn water solid, but that has to abide by its *rudis* autonomy. And so the Argonautic journey is forestalled, along with the linear progression of its mythical narrative, the violent territorialization of the sea it requires, and the water's status as *only* metaphorical with the text and the female body.

To this extent, the sea can be seen to influence the structure of the poem. As it changes from a compliant *aequor* into a convulsive *gurges*, its newly attained physique resists being metaphorized into a flat, writable surface for a linear epic narrative to be written upon. As the sea starts to convulse, the narrative as it was written so far diverts. Just like a whirlpool can divert a linearly traveling ship from its projected path, so too does it divert the narrative of the poem from its projected telos. Instead of the narrative continuing the Argonautic journey, it spins off into the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. This moment of deviation is materialized with the sea changing from a compliant *aequor* into a deviating *gurges*, which shows that the structure of the poem at this point abides by the material formation and motion of the sea. Furthermore,

the change from *aequor* to *gurges* also charts the change from a sea that is metaphorized into explorable land, the female body, and a flat writing surface, into a material force that resists this metaphorization. It becomes a water body that is distinguishable from the human bodies of the nymphs, it resists its image as flat and land-like, and by extent, the sea can act on the text not only as a figuration of it, but as a distinct body that can interact with it and influence it. By changing the course of the narrative, the sea shows forth properties of authorship that would usually only be ascribed to the human narrator. This aligns with the notion of hydropoetics that water can attain a poetic voice that cocreates the text alongside the author: just like an author can incisively change the course of a narrative, using their poetic voice, so too is the sea here imagined as being able to. This shows that at this point the poem is constructed by a hydropoetics, and we will see that this hydropoetics plays a role in the ekphrasis of Theseus and Ariadne as well.

Theseus and Ariadne

The marriage of Peleus and Thetis is somewhat similar to how the problems between the Argonauts and the sea unfolds. It begins as a seemingly unproblematic wedding. The narrator praises the heroic context of the nuptial ceremony (22-24), the supreme deity rejoices (25-27), even Tethys and Oceanus give their parental approval (28-30). As the guests arrive, the wedding still seems to forebode an auspicious outcome: the attendees have left their lands uncultivated, even the plough that had worked so hard in the previous passage has been put to rest (38-42). But the embroidery on the marital seat reveals an entirely different picture: if the marriage is going to work out anything like the story of Theseus and Ariadne has unfolded, it will not end well.

The ekphrasis of the coverlet of Theseus and Ariadne (50-264) is so lengthy and winding, the reader might think the text has made a similar turn as it had done after the Argonauts, dropping Peleus and Thetis from the poem altogether.[126] However, they will return, only after about 200 verses in which the disdainful story of Theseus and Ariadne, portrayed on the marital seat, suggests a rough future for the newlyweds.[127] The story is itself narrated in quite a winding manner: first we see how Ariadne is left on the shore while Theseus speeds away in his ship (50-75), then we flash back to Theseus' journey to Crete and his escape from the Minoan labyrinth (76-115), after which we see Ariadne on the beach again soliloquizing about her unfortune (116-201) and praying for Theseus' punishment, whose inflicted forgetfulness leads his father Aegeus to commit suicide (202-250). What will become clear from the beginning scene, is that the image

[126] See e.g. generally Laird (1993). See Gaisser (1995: 588-589) on the omission of references to the material *opus ipsum* of the ekphrasis, which works to decouple the depiction on the marital seat from the narrative it produces.

[127] See e.g. Bramble (1970: 34).

of Theseus sailing away while Ariadne gazes at the ship, reminds the reader of the Argo sailing away from the text while the Nereids stare at it.[128] However, importantly, now this gaze is not admiring any longer: Ariadne gazes with a broken heart. Her sadness, sexualized in various ways, becomes interconnected with the water. First a metaphor between water and female body appears to be established again, while later, in Ariadne's speech, the two are separated again as particular embodiments. This reveals again how the sea, as well as Ariadne, reclaim their power against their metaphorization.

The first verses of the ekphrasis show that the myth of Theseus and Ariadne is reminiscent of the Argonautic opening.

> *Namque fluentisono prospectans litore Diae*
> *Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tuetur*
> *indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores,*
> *necdum etiam sese quae visit visere credit,*
> *utpote fallaci quae tum primum excita somno*
> *desertam in sola miseram se cernat harena.*
>
> "For Ariadne, looking out from the flow-echoing shore of Naxos, sees Theseus disappear on his fast ship, holding in her heart untamable furies, and she is even yet to believe that she sees what she sees, since she has just woken up from deceitful sleep, only then realizing she has been miserably deserted on the lonesome sand."
>
> Catullus 64.52-57

First and foremost, the word *fluentisono* (wave-sounding) is highly telling. The shore that Ariadne is standing on, is producing some kind of flowing sound.[129] From the context of the scene it makes sense that the shore is taken to echo the sound of the sea it borders. The passage already points towards the ability of the sea to be vocal. This vocality of the sea was already seen at the end of the Argonautic episode: as the sea influences the narrative of the poem, it shows forth a poetic voice comparable to that of the author. Furthermore, the fact that the first verse of the passage contains a reverberation of watery sound, can also be interpreted as a rehearsal of the manner in which the sea appeared in the previous episode. The sea as the reader has come to know it in the previous episode, is now echoed throughout the story of Theseus and Ariadne. Not only is the flowing sound of the sea physically echoed over the shore, it textually echoes the

[128] See e.g. Gaisser (1995: 595).
[129] See *TLL* s.v. *fluentisonus*.

sea as it appeared in the Argonautic episode: at first as a metaphorical construct under the yoke of violent sailors, but at last as an embodied force of deviation. The text already points out to us that a similar sound of the sea will repeat in this episode too. Theseus' linear narrative will be met with the divisive motions of the sea as well.

Additionally, the deviating progression of the ekphrasis is further highlighted by its temporal situatedness. Keeping in mind that this story is depicted on a coverlet for a wedding occurring in the age of the Argonauts, it is somewhat strange that the marital seat depicts a scene of seafaring, while the first ever sea journey, that of the Argonauts, has not even finished yet. So it has been argued that the temporal context of the marital seat defies the traditional mythical chronology, in which the primal journey of the Argonauts precedes the story of Theseus and Ariadne by a long stretch.[130] By defying this chronology, it all the more underlines that the poem does not abide by a linear progression. The temporal context situates the Theseus and Ariadne story as simultaneous to that of the Argonauts. As such, in the very echo of the sea, we can vaguely hear the Argonautic story playing simultaneously in the distance, from the moment we step into the myth of Theseus and Ariadne.

The story continues by further tying Theseus and Ariadne to the Argonauts and the sea on a thematical level.

> *Immemor at iuvenis fugiens pellit vada remis,*
> *irrita ventosae linquens promissa procellae.*
> *Quem procul ex alga maestis Minois ocellis,*
> *saxea ut effigies bacchantis, prospicit, eheu,*
> *prospicit et magnis curarum fluctuat undis,*
> *non flavo retinens subtilem vertice mitram,*
> *non contecta levi velatum pectus amictu,*
> *non tereti strophio lactentis vincta papillas,*
> *omnia quae toto delapsa e corpore passim*
> *ipsius ante pedes fluctus salis alludebant.*
> *Sed neque tum mitrae neque tum fluitantis amictus*
> *illa vicem curans toto ex te pectore, Theseu,*
> *toto animo, tota pendebat perdita mente.*

[130] For further arguments in favor of Catullus' perturbation of mythical chronology, see e.g. Weber (1983), Gaisser (1995: 592-593), DeBrohun (2007: 299-300), who also note that the wedding between Peleus and Thetis rather traditionally preceded the Argonautic journey, further complicating the mythical chronology of the poem. For an alternative interpretation of the ekphrasis as proleptic, thus circumventing a self-contradictory chronology, see Wasdin (2017).

> "But the negligent young man flees while beating the sea with his oars, leaving his hollow promises to the windy storm. From the seaweed Ariadne looks out for him in the distance with sad little eyes, like a statue of a bacchant, looking, alas, and swelling with great waves of sadness, her delicate turban no longer holding her blond hair, her chest no longer covered up, first concealed by light clothing, her milky breasts no longer contained by the well-rounded band, all of these having fallen from her entire body, scattering before her feet, while the waves of salt played with them. But no longer then caring for the change of her turban or her flowing clothes, did she, from her entire heart, with her entire spirit, with her entire forsaken mind, gaze at you, Theseus."
>
> Catullus 64.58-70

Several images of the passage bring back to mind the relationship between the Argonauts and the sea. As Theseus negligently leaves Ariadne, he beats the water with his oars, which reminds of the manner in which the Argonauts swept the sea.[131] Because Theseus does so while leaving Ariadne, it connects his violence against the sea with his injustice against Ariadne.[132] The idea emerges that Ariadne and the sea are in similarly violated positions. This is strengthened by the remainder of the passage, in which we see Ariadne's body gradually merging with the water. At first, her immovable fury is evoked by her likeness to a stone bacchantic statue, but, as she is already gazing from the seaweed, she slowly melts into a sea-like fluid. Her sorrows become swelling waves, her human-wrought clothing leaves her body, and the liquidity of her lacteous breasts is emphasized. As Ariadne's upper body is laid bare, the reader is reminded of the Nereids who similarly exposed themselves from the water *nutricum tenus*, "as far as their nipples." On top of that, the sexualization of Ariadne's watery body suggests a recall to the manner in which oceanic Amphitrite was violated by the Argonauts. The consequence of Theseus' sea journey, Ariadne's violation, thus initiates again the metaphorical link between the oppressed female body and the sea. The sea appears to become a metaphor for Ariadne, and Ariadne for the sea. Consequently, with Theseus' beating the waves with his oars, Ariadne takes every blow, as her body and the water's appear to blend into one. How can Ariadne and the sea resist this metaphorization, and reclaim their power as distinct bodies?

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[131] Fordyce (1968: 286) notes that *immemor* (58) not simply denotes absentmindedness but "indifference to one's obligations, ingratitude or treachery." The word emphasizes the injustice of Theseus' actions towards Ariadne.

[132] See e.g. Konstan (1977: 40), who contrasts the injustice of Theseus against Ariadne with the preceding announcement of the narrator that the ekphrasis is going to be about *heroum … virtutes* (51), which ironically twists any of Theseus' "heroic virtues" (among which one could count seafaring) into acts of impiety. See also Bramble (1970: 34).

Before the text attends to these questions, it first points us to the manner in which Theseus' journey can also be understood as analogical to a territorializing way of writing, similarly to the Argonauts' journey. This analogy appears when the narrator relates how, after Theseus journeyed to Crete and defeated the minotaur, he managed to escape the Minoan labyrinth.

> *Nam velut in summo quatientem brachia Tauro*
> *quercum aut conigeram sudanti cortice pinum*
> *indomitus turbo contorquens flamine robur*
> *eruit (illa procul radicitus exturbata*
> *prona cadit, late quaevis cumque obvia frangens),*
> *sic domito saevum prostravit corpore Theseus*
> *nequiquam vanis iactantem cornua ventis.*
> *Inde pedem sospes multa cum laude reflexit*
> *errabunda regens tenui vestigia filo,*
> *ne labyrintheis e flexibus egredientem*
> *tecti frustraretur inobservabilis error.*
>
> "For just like an uncontrolled whirlwind on the top of mount Taurus uproots an oak, shaking its branches, or coniferous pine, its bark sweating, twisting the trunk with a gust (thrusted far out by the roots, falling forwards, breaking everything on its broad way), so too Theseus cast down the mastered body of the beast, fruitlessly throwing about its horns in the vain winds. Then he turned back uninjured and with much praise, leading straight back his wandering tracks by means of a thin thread, to make sure no overlooked error would prevent him from leaving the winding palatial labyrinth."
>
> Catullus 64.105-115

After killing the Minotaur, Theseus begins on his journey out of the labyrinth, following a thread (*filum*) so he does not get lost. As has been argued extensively, Theseus' pathfinding along the thread is a crystal clear marker for a metapoetical reading.[133] Both the production or weaving of thread have been widely recognized as metaphors for textual creation, which is underwritten by the fact that the word 'text' has its etymological roots in the Latin verb *texere*, 'to weave'.[134] A

[133] See e.g. Laird (1993: 28) or Wasdin (2017: 184-187).
[134] On the early Greek usage of weaving to describe poetry, see e.g. Snyder (1981).

textum, the Latin word for text, is quite literally 'something woven'. Catullus 64 establishes this connection between weaving and textual creation at two points. Firstly, the text at this moment in the poem *is* something woven: what we read is the description of an embroidery on the marital seat of Peleus and Thetis. Secondly, the Parcae, who join the wedding later, will begin to spin thread while simultaneously prophesying about Peleus' and Thetis' future son Achilles and the Trojan Wars. Their production of thread and of text come to overlap as well.[135] So here it makes sense to read Theseus' path through the labyrinth by thread metaphorically, as a narratological path winding through a mythical labyrinth. Similarly to the Argonautic ship then, Theseus and his journey come to stand for writing too, and for Theseus too this writing, just like his journey, is implicated in his acts of injustice against Ariadne.

What is remarkable about Theseus' thread, is that it prevents him from *error* ('error', but more literally 'wandering') when going through the labyrinth. With Theseus' path and the Argonauts' path both as metaphors for writing, the ease to linearly traverse the labyrinth reminds of the Argonauts' ease with which they sped over the sea by ship. Both the thread and the ship would see to it that there is no room for the traveler to aberrate. This reflects back on the metapoetical layer of the text too. The manner of writing exemplified by the Argonautic and Theseus' journeys, becomes fixedly teleological in its attempt to avoid *error*. The Argonauts are irrevocably determined to reach the golden fleece, and similarly, Theseus is determined to leave the labyrinth and return home. If a narrative complies to the projected *telos* of these myths, there cannot be any *errores*. Although the narrative may be winding, it does end up right where it sets out to be. However, this happens with disregard of what suffers from this teleological onset. Rough seas need to be smoothed out with violent oar sweeping, and Ariadne needs to be left behind in order for Theseus' narrative to be completed. This is what Theseus' thread represents: a cheat out of the labyrinth, or in terms of narrative, a clear-cut path towards the myth's *telos*.

The analogy can be furthered. As the sea and the labyrinth both act as narratological hindrances, they become coextensive of each other too. Just like a spun thread tries to cancel out the deviancy of a labyrinth, so does a ship attempt to overcome the deviancy of the sea. They can be (narratologically) deceptive, and cause their travelers to stray from their telic paths. This analogy reminds us that the mythical stratification of the poem is highly labyrinthine as well, in the same manner as it is misleading like a deviating sea.[136] Thus, the text reaches a similar point here as it did right before the Argonauts were dropped from the poem. Theseus seems to be able to speed through the labyrinth and cross the ocean, with the same ease as the Argonauts did,

[135] See e.g. again Laird (1993: 25-28) or Wasdin (2017: 185-188). See also verse 9-10, and Fordyce (1961: 279) of the Argonautic opening of the poem, where Athena is seen to weave the pine wood of the ship's keel into fabric, which carries similar metapoetical overtones.

[136] See e.g. Gaisser (1995: 580): "Catullus' masterpiece is both a web and a labyrinth." On the metaphorical usage of labyrinths, also for the circuity of texts, see e.g. Doob (1990: 64-94).

hitting the water and hurting Ariadne to reach Athens again. But this compulsive avoidance of aberration represents the type of writing that nullifies the inherent properties of the labyrinthine sea. So, the sea and Ariadne will show Theseus that what he neglected will come back around.

In the following section of the myth, the text returns to Ariadne (the manner in which this return happens will be addressed below). She and the sea will slowly start to become their own embodiments once again, finding the power to resist Theseus' violent sea journey and the territorializing writing he has come to represent. The confluence of their bodies is first emphasized again, as Ariadne runs into the waves and her wet face is highlighted (128-131). But then Ariadne starts her soliloquy, and the recuperation of her physical voice elicits the vocalization of her embodiment and the sea's too. Ariadne fulminates about Theseus' injustice. With the increase in her anger, she is suddenly faced with the realization that the relationship between Theseus and the sea is deeply implicated in his wrongdoing. The sea is no longer one with the body of Ariadne, it becomes complicit with Theseus' actions. She angrily asks:

> "[…] *quod mare conceptum spumantibus exspuit undis,*
> *quae Syrtis, quae Scylla rapax, quae vasta Charybdis* […]*?"*
>
> "What sea conceived you and spit you out of its foaming waves, what Syrtis, what ferocious Scylla, what great Charybdis…?"
>
> Catullus 64.155-156

Enraged with fury, Ariadne invokes the mythically monstrous regions of the seas as the forebearers of Theseus. It gives a picture of the sea unlike what we have seen so far: its cruelty and ruthless peril take the foreground to designate the treachery of Theseus. As if he has learned from its divisive nature how he could impose a similar deviation on Ariadne's journey, while he himself has been able to subdue the sea's divisiveness with his thread-following ship.

This idea is repeated once more later on in the speech, when Ariadne considers her options of escape. Here, the cruel and deviating properties of the sea are taken as hindrances for Ariadne's mobility, which relates back to the fact that Theseus' imposed this hindrance on her.

> *Nam quo me referam? Quali spe perdita nitor?*
> *Idaeosne petam montes? At gurgite lato*
> *discernens ponti truculentum dividit aequor.*
> *[…]*
> *Praeterea nullo colitur sola insula tecto,*

nec patet egressus pelagi cingentibus undis.

> "For where should I go? What hope do I forsakenly count on? Should I opt for the Idaean mountains? But the divisive surface of the cruel sea with its broad eddies lies in between. […] Above all this lonely island is inhabited by no dwelling, and the enclosing waves of the sea foreclose departure."
>
> Catullus 64.177-179, 184-185

The dysfunction in Ariadne's and the sea's relationship clearly comes to the fore in this passage. Having split her body from the sea's, she is faced with the physical reality that the sea presents to her. The sea *is* divisive and cruelly immobilizing. She is aware of the fact that she has no ship, no (narratological) device to overcome the wild and dangerous sea. She cannot write her way through the labyrinthine sea. For her, the sea with its *lato gurgite* is dangerous and impermeable like a Syrtis, a Scylla or a Charybdis. She briefly compares Theseus' acts of injustice to these monstrous representations, but here it becomes painfully clear that for a heroic man like Theseus, the divisive sea is conquerable. Thus, Ariadne's speech establishes a bifold embodiment of the sea, dependent on how Theseus or Ariadne relates to it. For Theseus, the *rudis* sea and its divisive and monstrous qualities are conquerable, effaceable, writeable for his narrative. His hierarchical position to the sea effectively nullifies its powers to deceive. Ariadne, on the other hand, is highly aware of the sea's deception, and by consequence of her desolation, understands that she cannot metaphorize the sea into a traversable and writeable surface.

However, her acknowledgement of this confronting materiality of the sea, and her consequential immobility, bring about an empowerment that raises her voice, as well as the sea's, to a level that destabilizes the hierarchical position of Theseus. For having realized that her voice is the only instrument of power that remains, she is able to call upon the divine gods to twist the proposed narrative telos that Theseus strives for, and this too happens by the physical instantiation of water. Theseus had hoped to reach Athens safely and hoist the white sails to signal to his father, Aegeus, his safe return. However, Ariadne's prayers are heard and, by divine will, Theseus forgets to take down the dark sails of his ship. Upon seeing these sails, Aegeus commits suicide and the prospective outcome of Theseus' narrative is overturned (202-250). The moment when Ariadne is done with her speech and her query is being fulfilled, is described as follows.

Has postquam maesto profudit pectore voces,
supplicium saevis exposcens anxia factis,

annuit invicto caelestum numine rector;
quo motu tellus atque horrida contremuerunt
aequora concussitque micantia sidera mundus.

"After she poured these words from her sad chest, anxiously demanding a punishment for his cruel deeds, the heavenly leader nodded by his unsurpassable command; at that move, the earth and the horrible sea quaked and the sky shook its glowing stars."

Catullus 64.202-206

As Ariadne expresses her desire for punishment, the entire world shakes at Jupiter's consent. The sea is invoked again as part of the worldly convulsion that blanks Theseus' memory, with an emphasis on its *horrida* qualities that call back to its *truculentum* power of deviation. So, Theseus cannot complete his journey in the manner he desired: he cannot forcefully enact his supposed ability to violently cross the sea and cross Ariadne, without its labyrinthine deception to retribute his actions at last.

That this deviation is not only Ariadne's or Jupiter's wish, but part of the sea's vocalization as well, becomes clear from the verb used to describe Ariadne's speech act, *profudit*. Even though the verb can be taken transferably to denote a verbal 'pouring out' of lamentation, its appearance here at the moment the sea imposes its physicality onto Theseus, turns our attention to the watery physicality of this 'pouring out' as well.[137] The voice and language that Ariadne has found to deploy punishment on Theseus, suddenly changes her relation to the sea into a functional synergy, eliciting the voice of the water, the 'pouring out', to be equally implicated in the desire to retributively change the course of Theseus' narrative. And so, just as the sea showed forth its powers to discontinue the journey of the Argonauts for their effacing way of seafaring/writing, here too Theseus' narrative journey is contorted by the neglected physicality of the sea.

As such the creative agency of the sea to act on the course of the narrative is highlighted once more. It was already foreshadowed by the opening of the ekphrasis with *fluentisono*, evoking the idea that the voice of the sea will resound through the episode. The structure of the ekphrasis, with its flashbacks and embedded speeches, is convulsive and divisive like the sea shows itself to be. Additionally, Theseus' proposed narrative is overturned by Ariadne and her prayer, which is materialized by the quaking of the sea. Again, the motions of the narrative comply with the motions of the sea, which endows it with authorial characteristics that underline the poem's hydropoetics.

[137] See e.g. L&S IB2 s.v. *profundo* for the denotation of casting out or bringing forth sound, voice, words or ideas.

The (Im)mobile Narrator

What the myths of Catullus 64 have shown us so far, is a clear opposition between two manners of writing. On the one hand, there is the territorializing way of writing, characterized by heroic, violent masculinity and a disproportionate facilitation of the *telos*. This is the type of textual creation that is represented by the male characters and their instruments within the mythical narratives discussed. The fact that this territorializing writing holds the power of metaphorization, is highly dangerous for its victims. The hierarchical position of a superior party over an inferior party enables the superior to spread out this position to oppress other parties too. For example, as the female body is marked by male oppression, the same hierarchy translates onto the oppressive dynamics between sea and land-dweller. Both leave a mark of oppression that works to put female and water in the same inferior position, turning them into oppressed metaphors of each other. Vice versa, it figures male and land-dweller into the same superior position. This is why the text works with such tight metaphorical connections between the figures of the male heroes, land-dwellers, and the teleological narrator. It is because of the superior positioning in one dynamic that enables the translation into the same superior position in another dynamic. By consequence, this metaphorical expansion of power works to binarize each dynamic into a hierarchy. All bodies in the inferior position become metaphors of each other precisely by the salient notion of being oppressed: Amphitrite, Nereids, Thetis, Ariadne, sea, female, a neglected narrated. This very hierarchical binarization then, is a product of the territorializing writing exemplified by the superior figures within the myths.

Then there is another writing, proffered by the physical powers and, importantly, physical variegation of oppressed bodies. This writing does not emerge from the metaphorically amalgamated water body, female body, narrated body. So perhaps it is more correct to say: there are many more ways of writing, as each rather finds its origins precisely in the distinct physicality of each body. We can thus decide to focus specifically on the physical qualities of the water, and see how it strives to materially influence the course of the narrative, as I do in my analysis to extrapolate the text's hydropoetics. But it remains important to realize that, in order to counter an oppressively metaphorizing way of writing, it is impossible to foreclose metaphorization altogether. By effect, the text of Catullus 64 also needs the metaphorical links to show the reader how the water body and the female body are oppressed in a similar manner, only then to let them break in favor of the negation of this oppression.

By consequence of my arguments, the position of the narrator of the entire poem is in question. Within the dynamic of human and sea, we have seen a clear altercation between a territorializing writing and a hydropoetical writing. What is the role of the human narrator within this altercation? When the text transitions from Theseus' escape from the labyrinth (quoted above) to Ariadne's speech, we see the narrator neatly positioning himself in between

the two modes of writing, in between the metaphorization of the sea, and his desistance to let the literality of the sea write the text further. I begin with the already quoted last lines of Theseus' escape.

> […] *ne labyrintheis e flexibus egredientem*
> *tecti frustraretur inobservabilis error.*
> *Sed quid ego a primo digressus carmine plura*
> *commemorem, ut linquens genitoria filia vultum* […].
>
> […] to make sure no overlooked error would prevent him from leaving the winding palatial labyrinth. But why should I relate more, having digressed so far from the first myth, about how the girl left her father's sight […]."
>
> Catullus 64.114-117

Right in between the figures of Theseus and Ariadne, the narrator breaks character to comment upon the progression of the text: he has surely strayed far from the beginning of the poem. Telling about this interference is the narrator's implicit contrasting with Theseus' thread-like, teleological path/narrative. Whereas Theseus was able to avoid *error*, the narrator did aberrate from the primal myth.[138] Thus the narrator is not interested in linearly shaping the course of the poem like the Argonauts or Theseus are doing, along with the oppressive metaphorization that it requires.

His position is more affiliated with Ariadne and the sea, although of course, he is not oppressed like them: it would be futile to argue that the narrator is not to some extent in charge of producing this labyrinthine mythical stratification himself. Still, in opposition to Theseus' avoiding of *error*, the narrator embraces the quality of aberrating as being productive. He acknowledges the fact that his poem has become a stream of digressions. Ironically too, he uses a praeteritio to continue digressing even further. The narrator questions why he should tell more about Theseus and Ariadne, only to continue relating the myth in several more paragraphs. In this manner, the narrator welcomes wandering, erring and digressing as inherent parts of textual production, showing that he is not the sole authority over the course of the narrative.[139]

[138] See e.g. Gaisser (1995: 601) or Wasdin (2017: 185). Fordyce (1968: 294), Quinn (1973: 319) and Thomson (1997: 408) all attempt to rationally explain the narrator's intervention by arguing that the *primum carmen* cannot mean the actual first myth of the poem, the Argonauts, but rather points to the beginning of the ekphrastic exposition on Theseus and Ariadne. I see no reason why this would be the case, as the episodes prior to the ekphrasis are equally as digressive as the ekphrasis itself is.

[139] Somewhat apposite to my argument is DeBrohun (2007: 294), who identified in Catullus 64 that "the poet-narrator is alternately ostentatiously passive and insistently assertive."

There is room for others to claim that authorial space, and as we have seen, that room is readily claimed by some oppressed voices, among which prominently the water's. In terms of mobility, the narrator claims an in-between position that does not subscribe to Theseus' excessive and harmful mobility, nor to Ariadne's initial immobility. The narrator still moves by the lines of the text, but accepts to wander about as not to force the text into a damaging straightjacket.

As such, the narrator still needs to be an active participant in the creation of the text, and hence be mobile to accommodate its progression. If one were to take the narrator as the only creator of the text, it would align with the territorializing way of writing exemplified by Theseus and the Argonauts. The narrator would forget that the water onto which they spin out the narrative is not a metaphor for a flat surface to write upon, not a mere backdrop for their will to play out. However, the narrator still needs to be mobile in order for human writing to occur. They need some metaphorization in order to create narration: the water needs to appear in a certain representation to be an intratextual body in the first place. In other words, the narrator does need a ship, they need some thread to lay out a path, they need to metaphorize the water into a somewhat permeable and malleable body to traverse. However, as long as the narrator's mobility is not overstepped, a new space opens up for the *rudis* water to confront the ship or the proposed thread of the narrator. It will cause the narrator to wander about, and to stray from the path in unforeseen, labyrinthine ways. Or, phrased differently, it puts the water in a position of authorship, as its physical properties work to create the text alongside the narrator. In Ryan's terms, the narrator and the water come to operate with a similar poetic voice, both bringing to the creation of the poem their writerly capabilities: a humanly discursive force that brings out the metaphorical conceptualization of water within the text, and a watery, physical force that imports its materiality to creatively influence the text. With a human narrator aware of the poetical abilities of water, we have in Catullus 64 a vivid example of how a text can be constituted by a highly functional hydropoetics.

I want to add a final note on the remainder of the poem, for it might offer a last, different layer to the poem's hydropoetics. The remainder of the poem still abides by the deviating narrative established by the myths discussed in this chapter. However, the textual appearances of water bodies will decrease in number in the myths to come. The prophecy of the Parcae, among the divine guests of the wedding, about Peleus' and Thetis' son Achilles, follows the pattern of moral indictment against the violent masculinity of the future Greek hero, which one may interpret as similar to that of Theseus and the Argonauts. There are some water bodies that are implicated in this violence: the Phrygian rivers become red with the corpses of the fallen Trojans (344), as well as the Scamander and the Hellespont who are the witnesses (*testes*, invoking the act of looking once more) to Achilles manslaughter (356-360). Another victim, Polyxena, equally watery by her blood, recycles the pattern of the oppressed female/water body.

This time, however, there seems to be no resolving resistance from the water. The poetical structure of this mythical instance is rather cyclical, established by the twelvefold repetition of the phrase *currite ducentes subtegmina, currite, fusi*: "run, guiding threads, run, spindle". It highlights the instantiation of spinning wool, introduced with Theseus' use of thread out of the labyrinth, as a figure of the cyclical production of text, rather than water. After the Achilles episode, the narrator ends with a reflection on the impious decline of humankind. In this final passage, water makes no appearance at all.

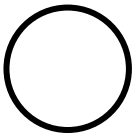
I am going to admit that I have a hard time reconciling the slow retraction of the water from the text with the argument I have proposed. More specifically though, this reconciliation is not impossible – my analytical side is inclined to argue that the verbal repetition of the guiding threads and spindles takes over the role of the water in establishing poetical cyclicity, but that this verbal repetition is still watery to the extent that it relates back to the Thetis anaphora. Or, that the gradual disappearance of water from each mythical cycle imports an even higher pattern of degradation, that not only each myth follows this pattern, but that in the variation of each myth this pattern works through as well. The disappearance of water and the resistant force it showed against the Argonauts and Theseus, would then point to an even grander form of degeneration, in which water loses its voice altogether.

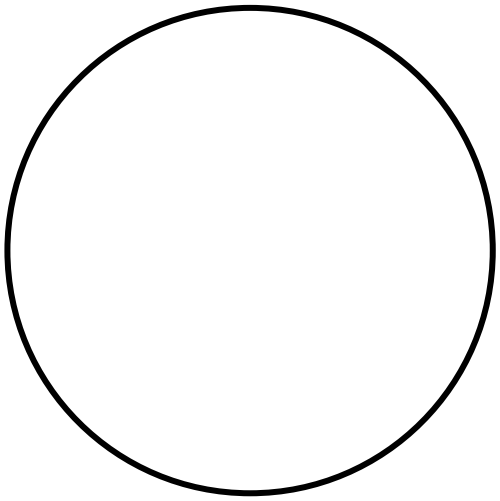
But I find this reading of the later passages thin, and I do not want to attempt such a *waterproof* interpretation, as it would force the poem and its waters into the very straightjacket that the narrator so elegantly avoided. In that sense, I am on as equally thin ice as the Argonauts and Theseus; I may be unjustifiably ignoring the material complexity of the water in order for it to fit into my understanding of it. Rather, as readers, we may do justice to the hydropoetics of the text by also letting ourselves be confronted with this very baffling materiality of the water, which in the remainder of the poem is simply but inexplicably retracting from our views. So, I will resist attempting to fully clarify to you this unresolved problem. But, I am keen on emphasizing that the water's withdrawal powerfully constitutes its embodiment and its relationality to my readerly embodiment. It is the very foundation of the concept of hydropoetics: when we *give* voice to the water we are projecting onto it our own comprehensible language, but when we *hear* the water's voice we must accept that we cannot fully disclose its language. This inherent withdrawal of the water from a human rational framework is occurring precisely here between me as a reader, and the water gradually retracting from the text. It has left its structural and deviating marks on the text, and I was able to disclose some of its creative agency in doing so, but now the water confronts me with one last act of deviation: its ebbing away from the text and my frame of understanding.

As such, my hydropoetical interpretation of the poem questions my own interpretative methods, with which I have approached Catullus 64, as well as the other texts discussed in this

thesis. I find it important to note that in this regard my readership and my authorship overlap. How I read the texts of Callimachus, Longinus and Catullus and how I interpret the waters that appear in them, extends into the analyses of their texts that I have written down in this thesis. I write about the textual water bodies that they employed in their works, but as I reproduce and analyze them in my writing, I am implicated in the same questions of authorial superiority and metaphorization that I brought to their texts. I write water as much as they have. Have I myself interpreted the waters of the ancient texts in this thesis too narrowly? Have I metaphorized them into workable concepts that deny their inherent incomprehensibility? Or does my representation of water take into account its evanescent and ebbing qualities? Do my methods of reading water, which I have built on the theory of hydropoetics, do justice to what this theory proposes to do: read and approach textual waters as having a poetic agency that goes against their subsumption into rationalizing frameworks and misrepresentation as inert and passive bodies? These are difficult questions to answer in a clear-cut manner: I pose them to point out that my position as an academic reader and analyzer of water is as much implicated in the problems of authorship and anthropocentrism that I have set out above.

At least the water's disappearance from the remainder of Catullus 64 prompts me to consider these questions. I have come to acknowledge it as highly powerful that the water ebbs away from the text, because it highlights that the water's initial appearances in the text cannot be scrutinized in such a way that the entire poem starts to make sense. This attests to the polysemy and multi-interpretability that texts inherently have, and that readers should not be quick to deny. Otherwise, the text loses its very power to carry out a multiplicity of meanings to different readers in various ways. So, while Catullus 64 might abide by a hydropoetics in some ways, it can abide by different poetics in other ways. In this lies the power of water, that it cannot be fully grasped, rationally conceptualized and only metaphorically represented: it remains a fluid that will slip through our fingers, change forms in unforeseen ways, take us along in its unpredictable flows or divert our paths without us knowing. So am I as a reader forced to go along with the convulsive flows of the sea in Catullus 64, just like the narrator allowed, eventually leading to the point where the water has retracted from the poem, and the text is open for different interpretation once more.





FINAL REMARKS

Final Remarks

How does water contribute not only metaphorical meaning, but also material meaning to the understanding of Greek and Roman poetics? Throughout the thesis, it has become clear that the texts of Callimachus, Longinus and Catullus all in some way elicit a reading in which water has a material influence on the creation and structure of the text. Trickling water from springs is not only metaphorically inspiring, it is physically inspiring when it offers an author its water to compose the text with. Seas are not merely metaphorical for compliant subject matter, readily available for the author to flatten out and unfold their journey upon, they are materially resistant, boisterous and deceptive. They can steer a narrative from its course like a human poet. They can sing like a human poet. Moreover, water can structure language like a human poet: its flows can push forth metaphors, magnificent authors can flood with sublimity, and the waves of the sea can help to crush two words into one. In these texts, waters can be interpreted as poetically agent, as showing forth qualities of poetic authorship that are traditionally reserved for humans only. The authors of these texts share their creative responsibility over the text's production together with the water, so that it can be understood not only as a human product, but as a cocreation between human and water.

Although these three texts act as case studies, they might point to a broader ancient tradition of thinking with water to construct poetics. That material imagery in general and water imagery in specific were widely used in Greek and Latin poems and treatises that reflect on poetics, was already clear from several studies. However, what I have shown for Callimachus, Longinus and Catullus, is that this water imagery is often interpreted with modes of metaphorical reading that solely focus on the creative contributions of the author, while the water itself is excluded as an agent factor within the production of the text. So, as these three texts make it possible to see how the creative agency of water influences the creation of the text, this suggests that other texts that subscribe to a broader ancient tradition of using water to think and construct poetics, could potentially prompt a similar reading. Water might be more widely envisioned in antiquity as an embodied force that physically influences creative processes, suggesting perhaps a more extensive basis for understanding water in ancient poetical texts as forming a hydropoetics.

To some degree at least, it incites to consider how the traditional notion of ancient poetics, as the aggregate of an author's aesthetic values and judgements about the functions of poetry, has been generally centered around the author. The reading practices that have evolved from this notion may benefit from new interpretative methods that work to decenter the author, and include nonhuman matters within the text as creative agents that operate on the same level as

the human author. These methods can contribute to displacing the anthropocentrism underlying an author-centered understanding of ancient poetics. As poetical texts from Greek and Roman antiquity can prompt to read their poetics as authorially produced by nonhuman matter, it may even point to the necessity of better aligning our understanding of ancient poetics to the manner in which these texts envisioned the active participation of nonhuman matter in their construction. This would require a better grasp on if and how ancient authors imagined the physical matters they represent in their texts as engaged in writing together with them. Are there other matters and spaces, besides water bodies, that are also thought of as materially influential on poetics, such as the mountains, trees, pathways and groves that often appear in ancient poetical writing? Can these matters only be understood as metaphors, or do they also invite interpretations that recognize their poetical voice?

Investigating whether in antiquity there were cultural discourses that decentralize human as superior to other matters, such as water, is important for approaching the problems of the ecological crisis in our day and age. Whereas Greek and Roman antiquity has often been coopted as the cradle for current-day Western societies, it is crucial to understand that their cultures offer highly different and variegated worldviews that can oppose modern Western thought and discourse. Especially with regards to something as detrimental as the anthropocentrism that has propelled the ecological crisis, various ancient cultural complexes may offer alternative modes of thinking through the position of human on the planet. If they can help to displace the anthropocentrism rooted in the cultural developments that have contributed to the ecological crisis, classical antiquity starts to speak to the problems of our current times in a whole new manner. In this sense, the texts discussed in this thesis invite to read their poetics in such a way that they dismantle anthropocentrism and show forth the creative agency of water, which makes us attentive to the manners in which anthropocentrism within our contemporary discourses can be subverted. Can we start listening to the water bodies pervasive in our surroundings and throughout our cultural expressions, and see to what extent they have the power to displace the notion of the superior human?

It is no easy task to theorize and bring to practice methods of reading that require closely listening to physical matters of which we do not speak the language. When investigating the power of water to show its poetical voice, to independently contribute its materiality to our cultural discourses, to resist being subsumed into our conceptual frameworks, we have to come to terms with the fact that we cannot physically hear the water speak. Acknowledging that water has a poetic power entails that we may not be able to fully understand or interpret it. This presents a problem for academic scholars who are invested in investigating the representational agency of water, and are used to building their investigation on methods of rational explanation and rigid analytical scrutiny. Their analyses can quickly become bound to represent the waters

they read within the scientific models and conceptual frameworks provided by the disciplines they work in. But the ability of water to import its complex and evasive materiality and represent its own voice, undercuts the efficacy of academic rigor by resisting its appropriation into the straightjacket of analytical logic. Water and its fluid constitution begs for a mode of scholarship that acknowledges this resistance, that is equally fluid and open so as not to forcibly metaphorize water into a solid and rationally understandable concept. But, grappling with something that is inherently ungraspable is difficult, and it requires attention and humility. If scholars become too keen on attempting to understand water perfectly, they are effectively waterproofing their analysis, as well as the variegated texts they appear in.

To that extent, water and text have a certain fluidity in common. Water's fluidity exists in its physical property of being in a constant ungraspable flux, a text's fluidity exists in its polysemy and multi-interpretability. For every rigorous analysis of either water or text, counterarguments can be found. Water can be defined as an ocean, a sea, a river, a lake, et cetera, but finding where one formation ends and another begins is extremely difficult; the physical distinctions between ice, water and steam are equally porous. In the same way, defining markers that scholars place on texts, whether it involves genre, stylistic register, narrative composition, pragmatics, allegory, et cetera, can almost always be met with resistance from counterarguments. A text is always open for differing and sometimes defying interpretations, showing the inherent fluidity and porosity of text as well.

I end on this last comparison between water and text to highlight once more to what extent humans are reliant on their engagement with water for structuring their worlds. It may in this sense even help to construct potential fluid reading methods that abide by the porosity and incomprehensibility of both water and text. It can help to make us humble in the face of what we cannot rationally explain. Once we acknowledge this humility, and once we become attentive to the ways in which water inhabits and powerfully influences ancient and our own cultural discourses beyond our knowledge practices, we can come to understand that we do not think and write about water, we think and write *with* water.

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