CHAPTER

I

Reflexivity: allusion and self-annotation

> We should notice when the subject-matter of an allusion is at one with the impulse that underlies the making of allusions at all, because it is characteristic of art to find energy and delight in an enacting of that which it is saying, and to be rendered vigilant by a consciousness of metaphors and analogies which relate its literary practices to the great world.
>
> (Christopher Ricks, 'Allusion: the poet as heir', 209)

> Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear
> (Milton, *Lycidas* 6)

> . . . sweet enforcement and remembrance dear
> (Keats, *Ode to Psyche* 2)[1]

1   Incorporating the Alexandrian footnote

One may usefully identify a mannerism, by no means peculiar to Roman literature but especially well developed in Roman literature, whereby alluding poets exert themselves to draw attention to the fact that they are alluding, and to reflect upon the nature of their allusive activity. Certain allusions are so constructed as to carry a kind of built-in commentary, a kind of reflexive annotation, which underlines or intensifies their demand to be interpreted *as* allusions.

In its most basic form, the mannerism corresponds to the phenomenon which David Ross has labelled the 'Alexandrian footnote':[2] viz the

[1] I cite Keats's 'remembrance' of Milton after Hartman (1983), 217.
[2] Ross (1975), 78.

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signalling of specific allusion by a poet through seemingly general ap-
peals to tradition and report, such as 'the story goes' (*fama est*), 'they
relate' (*ferunt*), or 'it is said' (*dicitur*). Consider, for example, the opening
lines of Catullus 64, on the departure of the *Argo*:

> Peliaco quondam prognatae vertice pinus
> *dicuntur* liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas

> Once upon a time pine-trees, born on Pelion's peak, are said to have
> swum through Neptune's clear waters.

Not only is the poem's whole introductory section highly allusive, as was
established in a fine article by Richard Thomas, which traced references
in lines 1–18 to no fewer than five previous versions of the *Argo* story;[3]
but also, in line 2, the word *dicuntur* 'are said to have . . .' draws attention
to this very quality of allusiveness. 'Are said [in tradition]', but also,
specifically, 'are said [in my literary predecessors]': the hinted 'footnote'
underlines the allusiveness of the verses, and intensifies their demand to
be interpreted *as* a system of allusions.[4]

   And Ross's phrase 'Alexandrian *footnote*' catches it just right. *Dicun-
tur* is not of course a real footnote or scholium, such as one would find in
Crassicius' commentary on Cinna's *Zmyrna* or in Servius' commentaries
on Virgil; but it does very precisely mimic the citation style of a learned
Latin commentary.[5] What emerges, then, is a trope for the poet's allusive
activity, a figurative turn: the poet portrays himself as a kind of scholar,
and portrays his allusion as a kind of learned citation (citation, it may
be, with a distinctly polemical edge[6]). This figuring of allusion as scholar-
ly activity, which often encodes a statement of alignment with the
academic-poetic traditions of Callimachus and the Alexandrian library,
has been taken up by modern academic critics with (understandable)

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[3] Thomas (1982).

[4] So W.V. Clausen in *CHCL* 2.188; though for him the *gesture* towards allusive
complexity is the crucial thing in *dicuntur*, not the actuality of the demand.

[5] As e.g. in Servius on *Aen.* 1.242 *hi enim duo* [Aeneas and Antenor] *Troiam prodidisse
dicuntur secundum Livium . . .* 'for these two are said to have betrayed Troy accord-
ing to Livy . . .'.

[6] Thus Thomas (1982), 146 ' . . . to demonstrate the importance of the poet's models,
and often to indicate the superiority of his own treatment'. Other interpretative
nuances too can be read into the 'Alexandrian footnote'. On play between 'footnot-
ing' and 'distancing' see Horsfall (1990); response by Thomas (1993), 79–80.

enthusiasm, and has yielded a rich harvest of interpretation in recent years.

However, there are other ways too of metaphorizing allusion. The case-studies which follow will show two emphases. First, stress will be laid on the *range* of reflexive tropes used by Roman poets to describe and explore intertextual relations; second, whereas the *dicuntur* which is the 'signpost' of reflexive annotation in Catullus 64.2 is a sort of added, editorial intervention external to the events of the immediately surrounding narrative, the examples below will argue for the presence of signposting which is more deeply encoded, more fully integrated into its narrative contexts.

This is not uncharted territory any more,[7] and I begin by drawing brief attention to two already-published examples of reflexive annotation. First, here is Ovid's Ariadne in the *Fasti*, facing the unwelcome sequel to an act of abandonment famously recounted in (again) Catullus 64:

> 'en iterum, fluctus, similes audite querellas.
>   en iterum lacrimas accipe, harena, meas.
> dicebam, *memini*, "periure et perfide Theseu!"
>   ille abiit, eadem crimina Bacchus habet.
> nunc quoque "nulla viro" clamabo "femina credat";
>   nomine mutato causa relata mea est'   (*Fast.* 3.471–6)

'Again, o waves, hear a like complaint! Again, o sands, receive my tears! I used to say, I remember, "Perjured and faithless Theseus!" He has gone; now Bacchus incurs the same charge. Once again I will cry, "Let no woman trust a man!" My case is a repeat; only the name has changed'

> atque haec extremis maestam dixisse querellis,
> frigidulos udo singultus ore cientem:
> 'sicine me patriis avectam, perfide, ab aris,
> perfide, deserto liquisti in litore, Theseu?

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[7] The first epigraph to my chapter, from Ricks (1976), 209, obliquely acknowledges an early debt of my own to a set of lectures heard in Cambridge in 1980. Ricks's distinctive emphasis upon self-referential tropes of paternity and inheritance in the allusions of the English Augustans is suggestively related to Roman allusive practice in Hardie (1993), 98–119.

> sicine discedens neglecto numine divum
> immemor a! devota domum periuria portas? . . .
> nunc iam nulla viro iuranti femina credat,
> nulla viri speret sermones esse fideles' (Catullus 64.130–5, 143–4)

And this last complaint did she mournfully utter, with chill sobs and tearful face: 'After carrying me off from my father's home, is this how you have left me, faithless, faithless Theseus, on the lonely shore? thus departing, all unmindful, without regard for the will of the gods, do you carry home the curse of perjury? . . . Henceforth let no woman trust a man's oath, or look for good faith in a man's speeches.'

In a now famous reading by Gian Biagio Conte, the word *memini* in the mouth of Ovid's Ariadne tropes the textual 'reminiscences' of Catullus 64 which inform her speech. Ariadne's 'memory' sets up some important tensions between narrative realism and intertextual continuity – tensions productively explored and theorized in Conte's monograph *Memoria dei poeti e sistema letterario* (for which this example becomes programmatic).[8] For now, I do no more than draw attention to the exemplification of my two chosen emphases. (1) The range of reflexive tropes used by Roman poets. (In this case, we find allusion figured, not as scholarship, but as memory – a metapoetic idea which may look back aetiologically to the mother of the Muses herself.[9]) (2) 'Signposting' of reflexive annotation which is more fully integrated into its narrative context than is that Catullan *dicuntur*. (*Memini* here is Ariadne's word, not the poet's. It is spoken 'in character'; and its operation as a signpost of reflexive annotation – its suspension of the artistic illusion – is covert rather than overt.[10])

My other preliminary example briefly revisits my own 1987 reading of the beginning of Ovid, *Amores* 2.6;[11] again a Catullan predecessor is involved.

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[8] Conte (1985) 35–45; tr. in Conte (1986), 57–69. Among later discussions which take their bearings from these pages see Barchiesi (1986), esp. 93–102 ('Arianna e il suo futuro: *Heroides* 10.81–98'); Miller (1993); and (most spaciously) Barchiesi (1993).

[9] Mnemosyne: suggestive here is Miller (1993), 159–60.

[10] Note the intertextual irony which locates in Ariadne at *Fast.* 3.473 the very quality of mindfulness (*memini*) so signally lacking in her earlier lover at his moment of perjury: Catull. 64.135 *immemor a! devota domum periuria portas.*

[11] Hinds (1987b), 7; cf. 17–20, which pages can now complement sections 1 and 2 here.

> psittacus, Eois *imitatrix ales* ab Indis,
>   occidit . . .

The parrot, winged imitator from the Eastern Ind, is dead . . .

Corinna's engaging *psittacus* is modelled on Lesbia's famous *passer* or
'sparrow'; and it is called an *imitatrix ales* by Ovid not just because, as a
parrot, its role in nature is to mimic, but because its role in the Latin
erotic tradition is to 'imitate' that particular bird celebrated by Catullus.
Again, the signposting is integral rather than added; and again a new
area of metaphorical analogy for the intertextual relation is opened up.
Opened up, perhaps – to take my earlier reading a stage further – into a
question. *Can* we indeed read the parrot as a poet-analogue embodying
the best of a *De imitatione*, or is the bird precisely constrained by its
physiology to stand for the opposite?[12] Will Ovid's poem be a paradigm
of creative imitation, or is there a danger that it will just 'parrot' its
predecessor?[13]

2 Tropics of allusivity

For the first of two more concentrated discussions of allusive self-
annotation, still staying with Ovid, I turn to the story of Narcissus and
Echo in the *Metamorphoses*. A suggestive book by John Hollander has
explored what Renaissance and post-Renaissance writers make of the
myth of Echo as a way of thinking about poetic language.[14] What may
now be noted is the extent to which they are preceded in this inquiry by
Ovid himself. Here is Narcissus, at the very moment of death for love of
his reflexion (*Met.* 3.499–501),

> ultima vox solitam fuit haec spectantis in undam:
> 'heu frustra dilecte puer!' totidemque remisit
> verba locus, dictoque *vale 'vale' inquit et Echo*

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[12] Cf. Myers (1990), 369n.8, 374.
[13] The programmatics of Ovid's parrot are taken up by Statius (*Silv.* 2.4) – and
probably by Petronius before him (fr.45 Müller[4], with Connors (1998), 47–9).
[14] Hollander (1981), x, modestly claims not to have the 'intuitive authority' to touch
upon echoes *within* Greek and Latin poetry; but his parenthetic mention (13) of Val.
Flacc. *Arg.* 3.596–7 as an 'allusive *vocis imago*' of Virg. *Ecl.* 6.44 ('*Hyla, Hyla*')
could not be more germane to the present discussion.

> His last words as he gazed into the familiar spring were these: 'Alas,
> dear boy, in vain beloved!'; the place gave back the self-same words.
> And when he said 'Farewell!' 'Farewell!' said Echo too

and here too, hovering between absence and presence, is the nymph
Echo, expressing her own frustrated love for Narcissus in the only way
she can. The last half-line offers an onomatopoeic depiction of an echo,
with the correption of the vowel in hiatus giving a fading effect to the
second *vale*: *valē valĕ*. But, more than this, the half-line constitutes an
allusion to a half-line in Virgil's *Eclogues*, which has the same fading
doubled *vale* (*Ecl.* 3.78–9):[15]

> Phyllida amo ante alias; nam me discedere flevit
> et 'longum, formose, *vale, vale,*' inquit, *'Iolla'*

> Phyllis I love beyond all; for she wept at my leaving, and said 'A long
> farewell, farewell, my lovely Iollas!'

As a character in Ovid's story, the nymph in *Met.* 3.501 echoes the *vale*
uttered by Narcissus; but the further reverberation which exists between
these two *vale*s and the two *vale*s uttered in the Virgilian poem casts Echo
in another role: through her name she becomes the annotator, precisely,
of an intertextual 'echo'.

And there may be a sequel, or rather an anticipation. This annotated
echo at the end of the Narcissus episode can be related, I think, to a very
recognizable but less obviously self-reflexive allusion at the very begin-
ning of the Narcissus episode.[16]

> namque ter ad quinos unum Cephisius annum
> addiderat poteratque puer iuvenisque videri:
> *multi illum iuvenes, multae cupiere puellae;*
> sed (fuit in tenera tam dura superbia forma)
> *nulli illum iuvenes, nullae tetigere puellae*   (Ovid, *Met.* 3.351–5)

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[15] By this period the normal pronunciation of the word was *valĕ*; so that in each pair
the first *vale*, in which the final vowel retains its original quantity under the ictus,
can be felt to be as instrumental as the second in setting up the special effect: cf.
Clausen (1994) on *Ecl.* 3.79.

[16] For the ready recognizability of this allusion cf. Rosati (1983), 28n.63 and Farrell
(1991), 12, each noting the suggestiveness of the Catullan flower (62.39 *ut flos*) *vis à
vis* the metamorphosis awaiting Narcissus.

For Narcissus had reached his sixteenth year and might seem either
boy or man. Many youths, many girls sought him; but in that delicate
form was pride so stiff that no youths, no girls touched him

> ut flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis . . .
> *multi illum pueri, multae optavere puellae:*
> idem cum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,
> *nulli illum pueri, nullae optavere puellae:*
> sic virgo, dum intacta manet, dum cara suis est . . .

> ut vidua in nudo vitis quae nascitur arvo . . .
> *hanc nulli agricolae, nulli coluere iuvenci:*
> at si forte eadem est ulmo coniuncta marito,
> *multi illam agricolae, multi coluere iuvenci:*
> sic virgo dum intacta manet, dum inculta senescit

> (Catullus 62.39, 42–5, 49, 53–6)

As a flower grows up secretly in an enclosed garden . . . many boys,
many girls desire it; when the same flower sheds its petals, nipped by a
fine nail, no boys, no girls desire it: so a maiden, while she remains
untouched, the while is she dear to her own . . .

As an unwedded vine which grows up in a bare field . . . no farmers,
no oxen tend it: but if perchance it be joined in marriage to the elm,
many farmers, many oxen tend it: so a maiden, while she remains
untouched, the while is she ageing untended.

Commentators have repeatedly remarked on the fact that *all* the lan-
guage in Ovid's episode of Narcissus and Echo is suggestively suffused
with local verbal responses and 'echoes' – not just the actual conversa-
tions between Narcissus and Echo. Here, in the opening account of how
the young Narcissus spurns his suitors, is a pair of echoing lines (*Met.*
3.353, 355);[17] and, more than that, these lines constitute an intertextual
echo of a pair of echoing lines in a marriage hymn of Catullus (62.42, 44);
and Catullus' echoing lines are themselves in echoing responsion with
another pair of echoing lines within the Catullan marriage hymn itself
(62.53, 55). Even before her entry into the Ovidian story, the figure of
Echo has already made herself heard, albeit less explicitly than in *Met.*

[17] Thus far Rosati (1983), 28, in an excellent discussion: 'i vv. 353 e 355 . . . introduc-
ono un motivo che, semanticamente e formalmente, costituisce la chiave di lettura
dell' intero episodio.'

3.501: echo as the trope of mannered repetition, within texts and be-
tween texts.

There is another way of looking at this too. If we turn things around,
and take our bearings here from the Catullan text rather than from the
Ovidian one, a competing (or complementary) trope may emerge.
Catullus 62 is a *tour de force* of amoebean poetry, with lines 42/44 in
strict responsion with lines 53/55. By eliciting such a close response at
Met. 3.353/355, Catullus' pairs of lines in effect transmit their
amoebean pattern from the text to the intertext: viewed from a Catul-
lan (as opposed to an Ovidian) vantage-point, the relationship figures
itself not as echo, but as a kind of intertextual modulation of
amoebean song.[18]

Of course, it is Ovid who has made this Catullan vantage-point
available. It is not surprising that the poet reprimanded as *nimium
amator ingenii sui*[19] should provide so many good examples of allusive
self-annotation. However, Ovid has no monopoly on the mannerism;
and the second of this section's two case-studies turns to the more darkly
exuberant tropes of Lucanian allusivity. Ever since the publication of
Emanuele Narducci's article 'Il tronco di Pompeo' in 1973, the following
correspondence has been a *locus classicus* for discussion of Lucan's
intertextual engagement with Virgil:

> hunc ego, fluminea deformis truncus harena
> qui iacet, *agnosco* . . .   (Lucan 1.685–6)

Him I recognize, that disfigured trunk lying upon the river sands

> . . . iacet ingens litore truncus,
> avulsumque umeris caput et sine nomine corpus
>   (Virgil, *Aen.* 2.557–8)

He lies a mighty trunk upon the shore, the head torn from the
shoulders, a nameless corpse.

The mutilated trunk of Pompey in *De Bello Civili* 1 alludes to the
mutilated trunk of Priam in *Aeneid* 2. However, what gives this corre-
spondence its real edge is that the trunk of Priam in *Aeneid* 2 seems *already*

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[18] Discussion with Patricia Rosenmeyer and Charles Witke in 1990 helped this para-
graph.
[19] Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.88 'too much in love with his own talents'.

itself to be an allusion to the trunk of Pompey. On the interpretation famously recorded by Servius on *Aen.* 2.557, it was from Pompey's death and mutilation that Virgil drew his Priam vignette in the first place:

> **iacet ingens litore truncus:** Pompei tangit historiam, cum 'ingens' dicit, non 'magnus'

> . . . saying '*ingens*', not '*magnus*', he touches upon the story of Pompey [the Great].

Servian interpretations are not always to be taken at face value; but Narducci's documentation of the early-established conjunction of Pompey and Priam in the exemplary repertoire combines with Angus Bowie's recent arguments from the internal Virgilian context to offer compelling support to this long-favoured hunch.[20]

Now, after noting the basic affinity between these two passages in which a *truncus* lies (*iacet*) upon a shore, Narducci immediately goes on to suggest a more profound affinity between the Virgilian passage and the *later* Lucanian passage, at 8.698–711, in which the trunk of Pompey is actually present in the narrative – rather than merely prophesied, as in the Lucan 1 passage. But my interest here is in the Lucan 1 correspondence itself, a paradigm case of reflexive annotation. 'Him I recognize,' cries the frenzied matron who is the author of the grim civil war prophecies at 1.678ff., 'that disfigured trunk lying upon the river sands': *hunc ego . . . agnosco. Whom* does she 'recognize'? As a prophet, she recognizes Pompey, of course, who will lie decapitated where the river Nile meets the sea twenty months and seven books of *De Bello Civili* later. But as a reflexive annotator, engaged in another kind of vatic interpretation,[21] she recognizes Priam – dramatizing our own realization, as readers, that we too have seen this decapitated trunk before: in the second book of the *Aeneid*.

Allusion troped as recognition, a signpost integral to the narrative: but we can press Lucan's reflexive annotation a little harder. How does one 'recognize' a corpse which is 'nameless', a *sine nomine corpus*? On an

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20 Narducci (1979), 44–7, with Cic. *Tusc.* 1.85–6 and *Div.* 2.22; Manil. 4.50–65, esp. 50 and 64; Bowie (1990). See also Moles (1983).
21 On associations between prophetic and poetic vision in Lucan cf. O'Higgins (1988), 208–26; Masters (1992), index s.v. *vates*. For vocabulary of recognition in more straightforward Roman discussions of allusion, cf. chapter 2, section 2.

intertextual reading, Virgil's *sine nomine* deepens the paradox of Lucan's
agnosco;[22] and also, *agnosco* exerts its own interpretative pressure on *sine
nomine*, so that we may begin to wonder whether Virgil's phrase is itself
already a reflexive annotation of his own pre-Lucanian borrowing from
Roman history. A corpse without a name, says Virgil – is it Priam, or is it
Pompey? Who can tell the difference? And we, as readers of Virgil, whose
trunk should *we* recognize in the *Aeneid* 2 passage? Priam's, which lies *in*
the text, or Pompey's, which lies *behind* it? 'Recognition' is all very well;
but in this case it is no more than the prelude to interpretation.

Let me risk one final application of pressure. The Lucanian trunk is
deformis, 'deformed', 'disfigured' – but also, perhaps (through word-
play), characterized by *shifts* of form or figure: from Pompey to Priam,
and back again to Pompey. The Virgilian trunk, in contrast, is *ingens*,
'mighty' – but also, perhaps, through Virgil's favourite etymology from
*ingenens (cf. *gigno*), 'in-born', 'innate': innate to Priam . . . or to Pom-
pey?[23]

3   Reversing the trope

Where is an inquiry like this to proceed next? The assumptions behind
my category of 'reflexive annotation' perhaps need to be tested within
some larger theoretical perspectives. I could shift the balance of power
away from the poet and towards the reader, and argue that, for all the
intense authorial control which it presupposes, allusive self-annotation,
like any other aspect of poetic meaning, is always, in practice, something
(re)constructed *by the reader* at the point of reception.[24] This could lead
to a more radical formulation, namely that *all* allusions, at the moment
in which they are apprehended as such, incorporate an element of
self-annotation, in that just to recognize an allusion, any allusion, is to
hear in it the affirmation 'Yes, I *am* an allusion' – within, or besides, all
the other things which it may be saying.

Another way to test the assumptions behind my discussion thus far is

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[22] A moment of 'allusività antifrastica', and a complement to Narducci's exploration
of the related paradox of recognizability at Lucan 8.710–11.
[23] On this etymology as underlying Virgilian uses of *ingens* see Mackail (1912), picked
up by Ross (1987), index s.v. '*ingens*'; cf. Keith (1991).
[24] On the interpretative issues thus raised, cf. (more fully) chapter 2, section 5.