

Copyright Notice

Staff and students of this University are reminded that copyright subsists in this extract and the work from which it was taken. This Digital Copy has been made under the terms of a CLA Licence which allows you to:

- Access and download a copy
- Print out a copy

This Digital Copy and any digital or printed copy supplied to or made by you under the terms of this Licence are for use in connection with this module or course of study. You may retain such copies after the end of the course, but strictly for your own personal use.

All copies (including electronic copies) shall include this Copyright Notice and shall be destroyed and/or deleted if and when required by the University.

Except as provided for by copyright law, no further copying, storage or distribution (including by e-mail) is permitted without the consent of the copyright holder.

The author (which term includes artists and other visual creators) has moral rights in the work and neither staff nor students may cause, or permit, the distortion, mutilation or other modification of the work, or any other derogatory treatment of it, which would be prejudicial to the honour or reputation of the author.

Title of extract: **Allusion to Ovid and Others in Statius**

Name of Author: **Davis, P.J.**

Title/Author of book/edition (if applicable):

Name of Visual Creator or other acknowledgement (if applicable):

Journal details –title/Vol/Year (if applicable): **Ramus: Critical Studies in Greek and Roman Literature Vol 35 (2006)**

Publisher: **Aureal Publisher**

Pages scanned: **129 - 143**

Course of Study (Module name and number): **Myth in Greek and Roman Epic CLCS7006**

Name of Designated Person

authorising scanning: *E.L. Hamó*

Date authorised: 06.04.17.

Moodle/Powerpoint

ALLUSION TO OVID AND OTHERS IN STATIUS' ACHILLEID

P.J. Davis

It has become a commonplace of Statian criticism that, if *Thebaid* invokes Virgil as model,¹ then *Achilleid* sees Statius using Ovid.² Important work has been done in this field, most notably by Rosati and Hinds: Rosati has explored the relationships between *Achilleid* and several Ovidian texts,³ while Hinds has insisted on the centrality of *Metamorphoses* to understanding *Achilleid*: 'it is an epic: a markedly *Ovidian*, markedly *metamorphic* epic'.⁴ This essay aims to extend that discussion through consideration of the differences between Statius and his Ovidian models in his handling of a number of key episodes.

The most obvious connection between Ovid's works and Statius' *Achilleid* is the story of Achilles' rape of Deidamia, for these are the only extant classical poets to narrate the story at any length. That Statius' account actually alludes to Ovid's account in *Art of Love* is clear. For example, both poets use marked alliteration when describing Achilles' violence:

uiribus illa quidem uicta est, ita credere oportet:
sed uoluit uinci uiribus illa tamen.

(*Ars* 1.699f.)

She was overcome by strength (so we must believe), but she wanted to be overcome by strength.

Statius is more restrained, but still follows Ovid's example:

ui potitur uotis et toto pectore ueros
admoet amplexus.

(*Ach.* 1.642f.)⁵

He gains his desires by force and applies a true embrace with all his heart.

Note too that both texts evince concerns about Achilles' masculinity. Thus the teacher addresses Achilles:

quid facis, Aeacide? non sunt tua munera lanae;
tu titulos alia Palladis arte petes.
quid tibi cum calathis? clipeo manus apta ferendo est;
pensa quid in dextra, qua cadet Hector, habes?
reice succinctos operoso stamine fusos.
quassanda est ista Pelias hasta manu.

(*Ars* 1.691-96)

What are you doing Aeacides? Wool is not your duty; you will seek glory through another art of Pallas. What have you to do with baskets? Your hand is fit for carrying a shield. Why do you have an allotment of wool in the right hand by which Hector will fall? Throw away spindles tied with toilsome thread. It's the Pelian spear your hand should shake.

In *Achilleid*, it is Achilles himself who is troubled:

quonam timidae commenta parentis
usque feres, primumque imbelli carcere perdes
flore[m] animi? non tela licet Mauortia dextra,
non trepidas agitare feras?...
tu nunc tela manu, nostros tu dirigis arcus
nutritosque mihi scandis, Patrocle, iugales:
ast ego pampineis diffundere bracchia thyrsis
et tenuare colus (pudet haec taedetque fateri)
iam scio.

(*Ach.* 1.624-27, 632-36)

How long will you endure a fearful mother's fictions? Will you lose your soul's first flower in unwarlike confinement? Are you not allowed to carry Mars' weapons in your right hand, not harass trembling beasts? ...Patroclus, do you now aim my weapons with your hand, aim my bow, and mount the team I fed? But I already know (I am ashamed and disgusted to confess) how to extend my arms with vine-covered thyrsi and make the distaff thin.

Although Statius' language differs markedly from Ovid's, the speakers' concerns are identical. Both are troubled by the fact that Achilles has become familiar with that quintessential female task, spinning thread. Ovid's teacher is astonished that Achilles is familiar with wool, baskets and spindles, while Statius' Achilles is embarrassed to acknowledge that now he knows about two female implements, the thyrsus and the distaff. Ovid's teacher insists that Achilles must take up shield and sword, while Statius' Achilles is concerned for his spear and bow and horses. But there is another connection too. Both speakers foreshadow the future, one with knowledge, one without. The teacher knows that in time Achilles will kill Hector; Achilles does not know that one day his imaginings will be realised: Patroclus will indeed use Achilles' weapons and so bring about his own and Hector's death. Ovidian apostrophe has become Statian soliloquy.

But there are also major differences. These passages are embedded in very different texts. Ovid's poem is of course a mock didactic poem on the subject of *amor*. This section forms part of the teacher's advice on persuading a girl to have sex, in particular the appropriate use of tears and force. If crying does not

work, the teacher suggests, you must take what she will not give (1.664). She may at first resist and call you 'shameless' (*improbe*, 1.665), but her resistance is really a sign that she wants to be overcome (*pugnando uinci se tamen illa uolet*, 1.666). If she gives kisses and fails to give the rest, then that's down to the lover's gaucheness. What's needed is force, because that's what girls really like: *uim licet appelles: grata est uis ista puellis* ('you may call it force: girls like that kind of force', 1.673). We should not forget that as well as meaning 'force', *uis* is also the Latin word for 'rape'. And that this is precisely what the teacher means is made clear by the examples of Phoebe and Hilaira, sisters raped by brothers Castor and Pollux:

uim passa est Phoebe: uis est allata sorori,
et gratus raptae raptor uterque fuit.

(*Ars* 1.679f.)

Phoebe suffered force: force was applied to her sister, and each rapist was pleasing to the girl he'd raped.

The extraordinary juxtaposition of the words *raptae raptor* makes the teacher's intent explicit: Phoebe and Hilaira were raped (*raptae*); Castor and Pollux were rapists (*raptor*).

If we turn, however, to the extended mythological example which is intended to prove the teacher's case, Achilles' rape of Deidamia, we do not find playful resistance overcome by force. The rape is more perfunctory than that:

forte erat in thalamo uirgo regalis eodem;
haec illum stupro comperit esse uirum.

(*Ars* 1.697f.)

By chance the royal virgin was in the same bedroom; she discovers that he is a man through violation.

Achilles' handling of Deidamia is not at all that recommended by the teacher: there is no vigorous horseplay here, there is no graduated application of force. Deidamia's response, by contrast, accords exactly with the teacher's doctrines: Deidamia wanted rape and rape made her fall in love with her attacker:

uiribus illa quidem uicta est (ita credere oportet),
sed uoluit uinci uiribus illa tamen.
saepe 'mane!' dixit, cum iam properaret Achilles;
fortia nam posita sumpserat arma colo.
uis ubi nunc illa est? quid blanda uoce moraris
auctorem stupri, Deidamia, tui?

(*Ars* 1.699-704)

She was overcome by strength (so we must believe), but she wanted to be overcome by strength. Often she said 'Stay', when Achilles was already hastening away; for, dropping the distaff, he had taken up brave weapons. Where is that force now? Why with charming words do you delay the author of your violation, Deidamia?

This Deidamia embodies the teacher's doctrines.⁶

How does Statius treat the rape? According to Aricò, Achilles and Deidamia remain faithful to their Ovidian prototypes, with Achilles following the teacher's prescriptions and Deidamia collaborating with his game.⁷ It would be more accurate to say that while the Statian Achilles follows some of the teacher's prescriptions and not others, the Statian Deidamia is wholly unlike her Ovidian counterpart. Some of Statius' language reminds the reader of the teacher's advice. Thus Achilles is described as *improbus* ('shameless', *Ach.* 1.569), a clear allusion to the imaginary girl's plea to her rapist-lover, *improbe*, at *Ars* 1.665. He does use some of the teacher's recommended devices: charm, song and praise.⁸ On the other hand, being dressed as a girl, he can hardly be said to follow the teacher's advice to dress in a simple, manly fashion (*Ars* 1.505-24); nor he does employ deception (*Ars* 1.631-58).

It is this absence of deception which most differentiates Achilles from the Ovidian teacher's implied students, for his passion for Deidamia is genuine: the Statian Achilles is no cynical game-player. This much is established through Statius' description of Achilles' first sight of Deidamia (1.283-317), with its allusions to Odysseus and Nausicaa in *Odyssey* 6 and Dido and Aeneas in *Aeneid* 1 and 4.⁹ Most telling is the description of the physical symptoms of Achilles' love:

hanc ubi ducentem longe socia agmina uidit,
trux puer et nullo temeratus pectora motu
deriguit totisque nouum bibit ossibus ignem.
nec latet haustus amor, sed fax uibrata medullis
in uultus atque ora redit lucemque genarum
tinguit et impulsam tenui sudore pererrat.
lactea Massagetae ueluti cum pocula fuscant
sanguine puniceo uel ebur corrumpitur ostro,
sic uariis manifesta notis palletque rubetque
flamma repens.

(*Ach.* 1.301-10)

When from afar the boy, fierce and previously untroubled by emotion, saw her leading her column of companions, he stiffened and drank unfamiliar fire in all his bones. Nor does his drink of love lie hidden, but the torch shaken within his marrow appears upon his face and countenance and stains the brightness of his cheeks and roams over them with light

sweat when they are affected. Just as when the Massagetae darken cups of milk with crimson blood or ivory is corrupted with purple, so the sudden flame revealed by different signs turns pale and red.

That Achilles' love is not of the kind characteristic of *Art of Love* is underlined by the density of erotic language derived from the *Aeneid*. Thus *bibit ossibus ignem* ('drinks fire in bones') combines *ossibus implicet ignem* (*Aen.* 1.660, 'entwines bones with fire') with *longumque bibebat amorem* (*Aen.* 1.749, 'drank a deep drink of love'); *fax uibrata medullis* ('torch shaken within marrow') recalls the marrow-devouring flame of *Aen.* 4.66 (*est mollis flamma medullas*, 'flame devours the soft marrow'), while the description of Achilles' blush and its accompanying similes recall this passage from *Aeneid* 12:

...flagrantis...genas, cui plurimus ignem
subiecit rubor et calefacta per ora cucurrit.
Indum sanguineo ueluti uiolauerit ostro
si quis ebur, aut mixta rubent ubi lilia multa
alba rosa...

(*Aen.* 12.65-69)

...burning cheeks, a deep blush cast up fire and ran over her heated countenance. Just as if someone were violating Indian ivory with bloody purple, or white lilies redden when mixed with many a rose...

Essential to both similes is the contrast between red and white. While Statius replaces Virgil's lilies combined with roses with milk stained with blood, he preserves his staining of ivory, even choosing a similarly moralistic verb, using *corrumpitur* ('is corrupted') instead of *uiolauerit* ('violating').

That Statius alludes to *Aeneid* 1, 4 and 12 is clear. It is also clear that he alludes to passages concerned with the physical symptoms produced by love in Dido and Lavinia. That Dido is afflicted with sexual passion is obvious. At this point in the narrative Lavinia too is overcome by love, for, as Lyne argues,¹⁰ Virgil's choice of language here recalls the relationship between Dido and Aeneas. But what is most striking about Statius' description of the onset of Achilles' passion is the fact that it employs language which recalls Virgilian accounts not of male but of female sexual passion. It is not only his clothing that feminises Achilles. Clearly he is not the kind of student envisaged by the Ovidian teacher in *Art of Love*.

What then of the rape? Although Statius devotes more lines to the setting, he allocates even fewer lines than Ovid to the rape itself (1.642f.). More important is the aftermath, for where Ovid briskly removes the young rapist from the scene (1.701f.), Statius allows Achilles the chance to defend himself:

ille ego (quid trepidas?) genitum quem caerulea mater
paene Ioui siluis niuibisque immisit alendum
Thessalicis.

(Ach. 1.650-52)

I am he (why are you afraid?) whom my sea-green mother almost bore to
Jupiter and gave to Thessalian woods and snows for rearing.

Achilles' boastful tone here is reminiscent of the boasts of rapist Apollo in
Metamorphoses, particularly of Apollo's conceited words when he encounters
Daphne in *Metamorphoses* 1:

nescis, temeraria, nescis,
quem fugias, ideoque fugis: mihi Delphica tellus
et Claros et Tenedos Patareaque regia seruit;
Iuppiter est genitor.

(Met. 1.514-17)

You do not know, rash girl, you do not know whom you flee, and that's
why you flee: the land of Delphi and Claros and Tenedos and Patara's
kingdom serve me; my father is Jupiter.

—and Leucothoe in *Metamorphoses* 4:

'ille ego sum' dixit 'qui longum metior annum,
omnia qui uideo, per quem uidet omnia tellus,
mundi oculus: mihi, crede, places'.

(Met. 4.226-28)

'I am he,' he said, 'who measure out the long year, who see everything,
through whom the earth sees everything, the world's eye: believe it, I
like you.'

Note too that the first words of Achilles' speech (*ille ego*, 'I am he') recall the
opening words of Apollo's approach to Leucothoe.¹¹ The reminiscence is ap-
propriate not only because Apollo rapes Leucothoe, but also because he ap-
proaches her in female dress, disguised as her mother, Eurynome.

But more important than Achilles' attempt at self-defence is his subsequent
behaviour. While Ovid's Greeks seem to whisk Achilles off to Troy immedi-
ately after the rape, the Statian Ulysses does not reach Scyros until after
Pyrrhus' birth. How does this affect matters? First, there is an opportunity for
Achilles to respond to the fact of Deidamia's pregnancy: we see him working
with Deidamia to secure the nurse's cooperation, for she is overcome not only
by the girl's prayers, but by the prayers of both (*precibus quae uicta duorum*,

1.670). Unlike most of Ovid's divine rapists, Achilles does not abandon the
young woman to her fate. Second, after his identity has been uncovered,
Achilles immediately confronts Lycomedes and announces that he is his son-in-
law, that he has had sex with Deidamia and that they have a child. And why
does Achilles act like this? Because of his enduring love for Deidamia: *haesit et*
occulto uirtus infracta calore est ('he stopped and his manhood was broken by
his passion', 1.888). This is not the Ovidian Achilles.

What then of Deidamia? In the Ovidian teacher's argument she serves to il-
lustrate the claim that women enjoy rape, for we are told that Deidamia wanted
to be overcome by force and that she longed for her rapist to stay with her on
Scyros (*Ars* 1.699-702). As we might expect, the case of the Statian Deidamia
is more complex.

Consider the issue of masculinity. Ovid's teacher comments: *haec illum*
stupro comperit esse uirum ('she discovers that he is a man through violation',
1.698). In the case of the Ovidian Achilles rape and masculinity are inextricably
combined: it is through rape that Achilles proves and through rape that Dei-
damia discovers his manhood. As we have already seen, his masculinity is an
issue for the Statian Achilles, for he links rape with being a man. Indeed he
concludes his soliloquy with the words: *teque marem (pudet heu!) nec amore*
probabis? ('Will you not prove that you are male—for shame!—through love?',
1.639).¹² But it is not an issue for the Statian Deidamia, for she has already
grasped that her guest is a man:

at procul occultum falsi sub imagine sexus
Aeaciden furto iam nouerat una latenti
Deidamia uirum.

(Ach. 1.560-62)

But from afar Deidamia alone had recognised Aeacides in secret love as a
man hidden beneath the appearance of a false sex.

It is not through violation that Deidamia realises that Achilles is a man, but
through her own perceptive intelligence.¹³ That she should do so is vital to the
narrative, for it is only in this way that Statius can avoid the possibility that
readers might view Deidamia's passion as homoerotic.¹⁴

What then of wanting to be forced? As we have seen, the teacher could hardly
be more explicit: the Ovidian Deidamia wanted to be overcome by strength (*Ars*
1.700). There is no suggestion in Statius' narrative that Deidamia wanted to be
raped. Indeed in this poem there is only one character who wishes to be forced
and that is Achilles himself:

mulcetur laetumque rubet uisusque proteruos
obliquat uestesque manu leuiore repellit.

aspicit ambiguum genetrix cogique uolentem
iniecitque sinus.

(Ach. 1.323-26)

He is caressed and blushes with pleasure and slants wanton glances and pushes away the clothes with lighter hand. His mother sees that he is ambiguous and wanting to be forced and throws the garments on him.

As Dilke points out, the phrase *cogique uolentem* ('wanting to be forced') alludes to the Ovidian account of Deidamia's rape.¹⁵ The language used here to describe the interplay between Thetis and her son suggests nothing so much as lovers' games, for there are caresses, blushes and wanton looks, culminating in the desire to be forced and, finally, action. Indeed the language of this passage suggests that dressing Achilles in women's clothing is a kind of rape.

That the Statian Deidamia was not willing to be forced is clear both from the prelude to the rape and her reaction. First of all, Statius takes care to separate the innocent flirting of boy and girl from the rape itself. Indeed Deidamia herself attempts to prevent their relationship from advancing beyond innocent play:

iam iamque dolos aperire parantem
uirginea leuitate fugit prohibetque fateri.
sic sub matre Rhea iuuenis regnator Olympi
oscula securae dabat insidiosa sorori
frater adhuc, medii donec reuerentia cessit
sanguinis et uersos germana expauit amores.

(Ach. 1.586-91)

With a virgin's fickleness she flees him just when he is preparing to reveal the deception and forbids him to confess. So under mother Rhea the young ruler of Olympus gave deceitful kisses to his unsuspecting sister, still her brother, until respect for their shared blood gave way and the sister feared that their love had been transformed.

The phrase *uirginea leuitate* ('with a virgin's fickleness') hardly suggests responsible behaviour. On the other hand, preventing Achilles from revealing his masculinity also prevents him from making sexual advances. But the simile makes plain that the balance of responsibility in this affair lies with Achilles, for the description of Jupiter's behaviour (*oscula...dabat*, 'was giving kisses') corresponds precisely to that of Achilles in the preceding lines (*mille per oscula laudat*, 'praises her though a thousand kisses', 1.576). In that case, the adjectives prove particularly telling, for Jupiter's kisses are *insidiosa* ('deceitful'), while Juno remains *secura* ('unsuspecting').

Note too that Statius changes the location of the rape. The Ovidian Deidamia is raped in her own bedroom (1.697). A reader of *Art of Love* who was inclined

to defend Achilles might take up the teacher's suggestion that Deidamia really wanted to be forced, that her 'no' was really 'yes'. No such excuse is open to the Statian Achilles, for the rape takes place at a Bacchic festival immediately after a soliloquy in which Achilles urges himself to rape Deidamia (1.624-39). And this Deidamia responds, not by wanting to repeat the experience, but by loud protest:

uidit chorus omnis ab alto
astrorum et tenerae rubuerunt cornua Lunae.
illa quidem clamore nemus montemque repleuit.

(Ach. 1.643-45)

The whole chorus of stars saw from above and the tender-hearted Moon's horns blushed. Deidamia filled forest and mountain with her shouting.

This is not a woman wanting to be forced. This interpretation is confirmed, moreover, by Achilles' own words to Lycomedes: *quid enim his obstare laceratis, / qua potuit nostras possessa repellere uires?* ('What could resist these arms of mine, how could she, in my possession, repel my strength?', 1.904f.). Note too that far from saying *mane* ('Stay!', *Ars* 1.701) to Achilles as he leaves, this Deidamia begins three successive lines (940, 941, 942) with the word *i* ('Go!').¹⁶ The language of Achilles and Deidamia seems chosen to rebut the Ovidian teacher's account of Deidamia's rape and, by implication, of the nature of female sexuality.

At this point it is worth noting that while the Statian account of Achilles' rape of Deidamia seems to take issue with the version propounded in *Art of Love*, it actually has much in common with the rape stories found in *Metamorphoses*. First and most obviously, the tone is serious, not jocular.¹⁷ Second, there are common narrative elements: the girl's silence and sense of guilt or shame¹⁸ and the rapist's use of disguise.¹⁹ Third, there are particular connections, additional to those mentioned above, with the story of Leucothoe in *Metamorphoses* 4: the Bacchic context, the rapist being disguised as a woman and paternal anger against the girl (actual in Ovid, averted in Statius). This is perhaps not surprising if we recall that *Metamorphoses* and *Achilleid* are generically related as variants of epic, while *Art of Love* is a bizarre hybrid, a didactic elegy. The substance of Statius' account of Deidamia's rape may be drawn from *Art of Love*, but the treatment is more closely aligned with *Metamorphoses*.

If we turn to Statius' treatment of Ulysses, the primary model can only be the Ovidian Ulysses. Here is his account of the exposure of Achilles' identity in *Metamorphoses* 13:

praescia uenturi genetrix Nereia leti
dissimulat cultu natum, et deceptat omnes,
in quibus Aiaceum, sumptae fallacia uestis.

arma ego femineis animum motura uirilem
 mercibus inserui, neque adhuc proiecerat heros
 uirgineos habitus, cum parmam hastamque tenenti
 'nate dea,' dixi, 'tibi se peritura reseruant
 Pergama! quid dubitas ingentem euertere Troiam?'
 iniecique manum fortemque ad fortia misi.

(Met. 13.162-70)

His mother, daughter of Nereus, having foreknowledge of his future death, disguises her son by means of clothing, and the garment trick deceived everyone, including Ajax. To stir up his masculine spirit I put weapons in with the feminine rewards, and not yet had the hero cast off his maiden's attire, when I said to him as he held shield and spear: 'Goddess-born, doomed Pergamum keeps itself for you! Why hesitate to overthrow huge Troy?' I claimed him and sent the brave man to brave deeds.

Thus Ulysses neatly sums up the plot of *Achilleid*. As Dilke points out, his two-line speech has its Statian equivalent when Ulysses urges Achilles to take up arms (*Ach.* 1.867-74). 'Why linger?' (*quid haeres?*, 1.867), he says, 'when Pergamum itself and its doubtful walls are already nodding to you' (*ipsaque iam dubiis nutant tibi Pergama muris*, 1.871).

But if the Ovidian Ulysses is Statius' primary model, it is a model that he rejects, for immediately after his *Achilleid* summary the Ovidian Ulysses argues: *ergo opera illius mea sunt* ('therefore his deeds are mine', *Met.* 13.171). We should recall that this account of the uncovering of Achilles is embedded in a highly tendentious speech in which this is one of the most tendentious arguments. The Statian Ulysses raises just this issue, his responsibility for Achilles' achievements, and takes a contradictory stand:

nec nostrum est, quod in arma uenis sequerisque precantis;
 uenisses.

(*Ach.* 2.41f.)

It is not my doing that you come to arms and follow our prayers; you would have come.

The Statian Ulysses may be as clever and successful as his Ovidian equivalent, but he is less dishonest, for he is willing to acknowledge that it was the hero's innate character that took Achilles to Troy, not Ulyssean cunning.

At this point it is worth reconsidering Hinds's claim that *Achilleid* is 'a markedly Ovidian, markedly metamorphic epic'. That *Achilleid* is Ovidian in its use of Ovidian texts as models and in its exploitation of such characteristically Ovidian themes as rape and sexual ambiguity is clear.

But we should also observe that Ovid does not provide *Achilleid*'s only models. I have already argued that the description of the onset of Achilles' passion for Deidamia alludes to Virgil. There are of course other Virgilian allusions.²⁰ Thus Feeney and Heslin point out that the similes comparing Achilles to Apollo (*Ach.* 1.165f.) and Deidamia to Diana (*Ach.* 1.294f.) recall similarly paired similes in the *Aeneid* when Dido is compared to Diana (*Aen.* 1.498-502) and Aeneas to Apollo (*Aen.* 4.143-49).²¹ We might also add that the description of Achilles before the comparison with Apollo (*Ach.* 1.161f.) recalls the description of Aeneas after his Apollo simile (*Aen.* 4.149f.). But these allusions to the Dido-Aeneas relationship do more than enrich the poem's allusive texture, for they point to the ultimate end of the Achilles-Deidamia relationship: the hero will leave, choosing war over love. Just as Aeneas obeyed Mercury's command *heia age, rumpe moras* ('Come on, quick, break delay!', *Aen.* 4.569), so Achilles will ultimately obey Ulysses' order: *heia, abrumpe moras!* ('Quick, break off delay!', *Ach.* 1.872).

Catullus 64 also provides a key intertext, as Hinds points out.²² Indeed the final line of Book 1 *inrita uentosae rapiebant uerba procellae* ('the windy storms snatched away his vain words', 1.960) virtually quotes Catullus' *irrita uentosae linquens promissa procellae* ('abandoning his vain promises to the windy storm', 64.59). Allusion to Catullus 64, a poem whose central subject is the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and the prospective birth of Achilles, is hardly surprising. But for our purposes it is more important to note that Statius' virtual quotation sets up an analogy between Achilles and Theseus, for theirs are the words snatched away by the windy storm. Here too we have a hero who abandons love for a life of heroic action. Note that this is an analogy which is sustained elsewhere in *Achilleid*. Thus Thetis refers to Theseus as one of the Argo's crew at 1.72 and 1.157. Statius also refers explicitly to Theseus' killing of the Minotaur as one of the subjects of Achilles' song: *quanto circumdata nexulruperit Aegides Minoia brachchia tauri* ('with how strong a grip Aegeus' son surrounded and broke the Minotaur's arms', 1.191f.).²³ We can reasonably infer that this Achilles is aware of Theseus' treatment of Ariadne and the last line of Book 1 implies that he chooses to follow Theseus' example.

But it is not only as betrayer of Ariadne that Theseus is important. One curious aspect of *Achilleid* is the frequency of its references to Amazons. Thetis expresses concern to Lycomedes that her imaginary daughter shuns marriage 'Amazon-style' (*Amazonio...ritu*, 1.353). The narrator likens Lycomedes' daughters to Amazons when they enter the dining hall (1.758-60) and when they dance (1.833). Three references to Amazons may not seem many, but in a poem of this length, a poem which is entirely Amazon-free, three are a lot. Thetis' description of her 'daughter's' rejection of marriage as Amazon-like can readily be interpreted as foreshadowing Achilles' ambiguous sexual status: Amazons are quasi-masculine females, while Achilles is to become a quasi-feminine male. But how do Lycomedes' daughters resemble Amazons? They are not quasi-masculine; they show no aversion to marriage.²⁴

To answer this question we need to turn, I suggest, to *Thebaid* 12, and the description of Theseus' return from his conquest of the Amazons:

ante ducem spolia et, duri Mauortis imago,
uirginei currus cumulataque fercula cristis
et tristes ducuntur equi truncaequ bipennes,
quis nemora et solidam Maeotida caedere suetae,
gorytique leues portantur et ignea gemmis
cingula et informes dominarum sanguine peltae.

(*Theb.* 12.523-28)

Before the leader are led the spoils and, image of harsh Mars, virgin chariots and floats piled with crests and gloomy horses and broken axes, with which they were accustomed to cut forests and solid Maeotis, and light quivers are carried and belts fiery with gems and shields ugly with the blood of their mistresses.

Here is the entry of Lycomedes' daughters:

subeunt, quales Maeotide ripa,
cum Scythicas rapuere domos et capta Getarum
moenia, sepositis epulantur Amazones armis.

(*Ach.* 1.758-60)

They enter, as on Maeotis' banks, when they have ravaged Scythian homes and captured cities of the Getae, Amazons lay aside their weapons and feast.

In one sense, these two entrances could hardly be more different, since *Thebaid*'s Amazons are defeated, while *Achilleid*'s are victorious. Note, however, that these two passages have two elements in common: emphasis on the separation of these women from their weapons and Statius' only references to lake Maeotis.

But in *Thebaid* 12 Statius singles out one Amazon for special treatment, Hippolyte, just as in *Achilleid* he singles out one of Lycomedes' daughters, Deidamia. Consider the parallels between them. Hippolyte is pregnant to Theseus; Deidamia has borne a child to Achilles. Theseus will abandon Hippolyte in favour of heroic exploits and other women; Achilles will abandon Deidamia in favour of the Trojan war and other women, captives like Briseis and warriors like that other Amazon, Penthesilea.²⁵

But Theseus is not the only example of a faithless male which Catullus 64 provides, for the opening lines suggest that the poem's principal subject will be Jason and the Argo's journey (64.1-18). Just as Catullus had pinpointed that voyage as a turning-point in human history, so too does Thetis:

eunt tutis terrarum crimina uelis,
ex quo iura freti maiestatemque repostam
rupit Iasonia puppis Pagasaea rapina.

(*Ach.* 1.63-65)

The lands' crimes travel by means of sails in safety, since that time when, with Jason's rapine, the Pagasacan ship burst through the sea's laws and distant majesty.

But here the language alludes not to Catullan epyllion, but to Senecan tragedy,²⁶ for Thetis' language recalls that of the Argonautic odes in Seneca's *Medea* (e.g. with *iura freti* ['the sea's laws'] cf. *foedera mundi* ['laws of the world', *Med.* 335]; *rupit* ['burst through'] recalls *rupit* at *Med.* 302; with *freti maiestatemque repostam* ['and the sea's distant majesty'] cf. *mare sepositum* ['the sea set apart', *Med.* 339]; and with *Iasonia...rapina* ['with Jason's rapine'] cf. Jason described as *raptor* ['plunderer', *Med.* 613]) and so reminds us of Jason's relationship with that play's heroine. Chiron too refers to the Argonautic expedition (1.156-58), but more telling is Ulysses' defence of the Trojan war:

raptam Scythico de litore prolem
non tulit Aeetes ferroque et classe secutus
semideos reges et ituram in sidera puppim.

(*Ach.* 2.75-77)

Aeetes did not endure the theft of his child from Scythia's shore and followed with sword and fleet the demigod kings and the ship destined to go to the stars.

Ulysses can remind Achilles of Jason's theft of Medea from Colchis, but we readers can supply the other half of the story, his abandonment of Medea in Corinth. Here too we have a hero who will desert wife and offspring, yet another model for Achilles.²⁷

What follows from all of this? Hinds's claim that *Achilleid* is 'a markedly Ovidian...epic' is clearly true, for *Achilleid* is notable for its engagement with Ovidian texts and issues. It is particularly striking, however, that the poem's central characters simultaneously recall their Ovidian prototypes and differ markedly from them. Allusion to Ovid enables Statius both to locate characters like Achilles, Deidamia and Ulysses within the tradition and to highlight the distinctiveness of his own treatment of them. Indeed the true models for Achilles are provided by the lesser intertexts: Catullus, Virgil, Seneca and Statius himself. Indeed, *Achilleid*'s account of the relationship between Achilles and Deidamia seems designed as a rejection of values and principles advanced by the teacher in Ovid's *Art of Love*.²⁸

University of Tasmania

NOTES

1. The truth is more complex than this, for *Thebaid* also employs Ovidian models. See A. Keith, 'Ovidian Personae in Statius's *Thebaid*', *Arethusa* 35 (2002), 381-402. Conversely, and this will be important for my argument, *Achilleid* also employs Virgilian models.
2. See, for example, A. Barchiesi, 'La guerra di Troia non avrà luogo: il proemio dell'*Achilleide* di Stazio', *AION(filol)* 18 (1996), 45-62, at 56-59, who discusses Ovidian allusions in the poem; E. Fantham, 'Statius' Achilles and his Trojan Model', *CQ* 29 (1979), 457-62, at 457 ('the relaxed tone, the gentle irony and open humour take us into Ovid's world'), and '*Chironis exemplum*: On Teachers and Surrogate Fathers in *Achilleid* and *Silvae*', *Hermathena* 167 (1999), 59-70, at 60 ('Statius, so close to Ovid in command of language, word play and ironic or playful tone'); D. Feeney, '*Tenui...latens discrimine*: Spotting the Differences in Statius' *Achilleid*', *MD* 52 (2004), 85-105; P. Hardie, *The Epic Successors of Virgil* (Cambridge 1993), 63 n.8; P.J. Heslin, *The Transvestite Achilles: Gender and Genre in Statius' Achilleid* (Cambridge 2005), 73: 'It is fitting that the Latin generic model for the *Achilleid* will be Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, given that the extant part of the *Achilleid* is a metamorphic tale of Achilles' transformation from wild boy to girl to young warrior'.
3. G. Rosati, 'L'*Achilleide* di Stazio: un'epica dell'ambiguità', *Maia* 44 (1992), 233-66. Rosati discusses the thematic similarities between the transvestite Achilles' love for Deidamia and a number of episodes in *Metamorphoses*: Myrrha's illicit love for her father, the disguised Jupiter's encounter with Callisto and the story of the sexually ambiguous Iphis. He also considers Achilles' departure from Deidamia in the light of similar stories in *Heroides*, most notably *Heroides* 13, Laodamia's letter to Protesilaus. It would be difficult, however, to argue that Statius alludes to these episodes.
4. S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry* (Cambridge 1998), 136f. Emphasis is original.
5. The phrase *potitur uotis* ('he gains his desires') is also Ovidian, for it is used at *Met.* 11.265. Feeney (n.2 above), 93, notes that 'these very words were used...to describe Peleus' conquest of Thetis'.
6. For more detailed discussion of this passage, particularly its sexual punning and political implications, see P.J. Davis, *Ovid and Augustus: A Political Reading of Ovid's Erotic Poetry* (London 2006), 94f.
7. G.L. Aricò, 'L'*Achilleide* di Stazio: tradizione letteraria e invenzione narrativa', *ANRW* II.32.5 (Berlin 1986), 2944: 'Ma le insidiae...e la tecnica stessa della seduzione si pongono sulla linea della strategia suggerita da Ovidio al suo *amator*...Deidamia è investita di una nuova forma di collaborazione a questo *lusus*'.
8. For Achilles' charm see 1.567 (*blande*) and cf. *Ars* 1.273, 362, 619, 663; for song see 1.572-75 and cf. *Ars* 1.596; for praise see 1.576 (*laudat*) and cf. *Ars* 1.621.
9. For this see Feeney's excellent discussion (n.2 above, 88-91).
10. R.O.A.M. Lyne, *Words and the Poet: Characteristic Techniques of Style in Vergil's Aeneid* (Oxford 1989), 81f.
11. The phrase *ille ego* is common enough, with the PHI disk listing forty-five examples. In this case it is the context that secures the allusion.
12. Heslin (n.2 above), 275, points to the significance of the fact that Achilles continues to wear women's clothing after the rape: 'Rape, that Ovidian signifier of maleness, has surprisingly limited repercussions for Achilles' own identity.'
13. Cf. M. Silveira Cyrino, 'Heroes in D(u)ress: Transvestism and Power in the Myths of Heracles and Achilles', *Arethusa* 31 (1998), 207-41, who claims that Statius follows Ovid's example and locates 'this initial, pivotal moment of Achilles' unmasking as a man and his rape of Deidamia during a ritual of Bacchus' (235).
14. Cf. Ovid's treatment of Iphis and Ianthe at *Met.* 9.666-797 where the risk of female homosexuality is ultimately averted. For discussion of the relevance of Iphis and Ianthe to *Achilleid* see Rosati (n.3 above), 248.
15. O.A.W. Dilke (ed.), *Statius: Achilleid* (Cambridge 1954), 107: '*cogique volentem*...may have been inspired by Ov. *A.A.* 1.666, 700, a passage dealing with Achilles and Deidamia.'
16. The triple repetition may also allude to Catullus 64, as Heslin (n.2 above, 142) points out.
17. Rape stories in *Metamorphoses* are not without jocular moments, most notably at 1.510f., but such moments are rare.

18. *Ach.* 1.918 (shame), 1.668 and 671 (silence); cf. Daphne's guilt at *Met.* 1.547 (*qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram*, 'destroy by transformation the beauty which has made me too pleasing') and Callisto's silence and shame at *Met.* 2.450 (*sed silet et laesi dat signa rubore pudoris*, 'but she is silent and by blushing gives signs of the injury to her shame').
19. Cf. Jupiter as Diana with Callisto, Jupiter as bull with Europa, Apollo as Eurynome with Leucothoe and the list of divine disguises on Arachne's tapestry at *Met.* 6.103-20.
20. For similarities in treatment of the opening storm (or non-storm) of *Aeneid* and *Achilleid* see Aricò (n.7 above), 2933f., and Heslin (n.2 above), 106-09.
21. Feeney (n.2 above), 89f.; Heslin (n.2 above), 93-101.
22. Hinds (n.4 above), 124-29. For Statius' use of Catullus 63 and 64 see M. Lauletta, 'L'imitazione di Catullo e l'ironia nell'*Achilleide* di Stazio', *Latomus* 52 (1993), 84-97.
23. The extraordinary use of tmesis in 1.192 deserves mention: the cutting of the word *Minotaurus* represents the breaking of the creature's arms.
24. The argument of Rosati (n.3 above, 240) that Achilles is attracted by Deidamia's somewhat masculine energy ('anzi, è proprio il carattere ambiguo di quella bellezza, non una grazia morbida e delicata, ma piuttosto tendente a una certa mascolina energia, a esercitare un fascino irresistibile sul giovane eroe') seems to me mistaken. At 1.290-92 the narrator emphasises the beauty of all Lycomedes' daughters, likening Deidamia's superior beauty to that of Diana and Venus. It is true that he compares her to Minerva, but only to a Minerva stripped of her warrior (i.e. masculine) attributes (1.299f.). The claim that hers is 'una bellezza...ermafroditica' seems to me unsupported by the evidence.
25. Heslin's argument (n.2 above, 153) that the behaviour of Lycomedes' daughters at the banquet is indeed Amazonian supports my case.
26. On Statius' exploitation of another Senecan tragedy in *Achilleid* see Fantham (n.2 above, 'Statius' Achilles').
27. The poem proposes yet another model for Achilles' behaviour: Paris. For this see Heslin (n.2 above), 176.
28. I would like to thank Jessica Dietrich and the anonymous reader for *Ramus* for their incisive comments on this essay.