32 Ismario...mero: The wine Ulysses had had been given him by Maron, the priest of Apollo, at the sack of Ithamarus. Cf. Homer, Od. 9.196–8.

33 aetas: “youth.”

35-6 The hexameter is an aside of the poet, the pentameter the sequential thought addressed to her. Since the whole of this part of the poem must be read as a silent soliloquy, this interchange of voices gives a nice liveliness.

37 The garlands she wears as a banqueter have in the course of the evening wilted and drooped (demissae) and hang before her eyes (praependent) into the cup from which she drinks. The picture of fairly advanced drunkenness, the head rolling, indifferent to the obstruction of the untidy garland, is adroit.

38 deducta...voce: Ordinarily the epithet means “thin spun” or “delicate”; cf. Vergil, Ecl. 6.4–5. Here I should take it to mean “low” or “soft,” not, as Phillimore, “in a clear small voice.” The carmina must be the first half of this poem, which he may be presumed to have handed her freshly composed on a wax tablet (cf. Catullus 50.1–6).

39 “Let the table be more generously awash with spilled Falernian.” The abundance of references to wine spilt on the table in Roman writers is not to be taken as indication that the Romans were untidy drinkers; since the wine was ladled into the cups, it would be hard to avoid spilling a few drops in the process. On Falernian, considered the second finest of the wines of Italy, cf. Pliny, NH 14.62–3.

40 aurato...in calice: Commentators make this everything from a gold cup (Butler) to a glass cup through which the color of the wine shows (Rothstein), but it is simply a gilded cup.

mollius: “more sweetly”; i.e. the wine is to be less diluted; cf. Horace, Car. 1.7.19: moli...mero and Vergil, Geor. 1.341.

41 lecto recipit se: “retires to bed”; lecto is dative where we expect ad lectum or in lectum. Cf. e.g. 1.15.8; 2.19.13.

44 “A long availability makes men who are in constant attendance of little importance.” For the use of eleuut, cf. 2.34.57–8.

II.34. Introductory Note

Barth first suggested that this long, discursive, somewhat unsatisfying poem should be divided into two following line 24, and in this he has been followed by a few editors, notably BB and Barber, but division is neither necessary nor desirable. The poem begins as a reproach to a fellow poet, Lynceus, who has made advances to the poet’s mistress that are interpreted as a wish to steal her from him and ends with a catalogue of elegiac poets whom P. considers his literary precursors and a prayer for immortal fame in their company. Between these poles the talk ranges easily, centered always on poetry and poetic inspiration, and is shaped to show that P. considers his rival something of a pompous bore and a poet of dubious merits.

The incident from which the poem springs, the nature of Lynceus’ indiscretion, is not made absolutely clear, and the name is clearly a pseudonym. We gather from vss. 21–2 that he was somewhat drunk, so the occasion was probably a party. But we gather also that Lynceus presented himself to the world and his friends as a puritanical philosopher, so it was probably not a very rowdy party.
Attempts to identify him from what is said here of his poetry are futile; all we are
told is that he wrote tragedies (vs. 41).

I am unable to discover any clear pattern of structure in the poem. The first
twenty-four verses, dealing with the incident from which the poem originates,
can be subdivided into well marked stanzas: 8.4.8.4, but these are not of special
importance. The next twenty-verses (25–44) deal with the inadequacy of Lyncus’
accomplishments to fit him for love poetry and can be divided into stanzas of 8,
8 and 4 verses. The next twenty (45–64) discuss the training he will have to
undergo to become a love poet (possibly 6.4.6.4), the next sixteen (65–80) the
accomplishments of Vergil (2.8.2.4), and the final fourteen (81–94) the canon
of elegiac poets P. admires (4.8.2). We may see a rough symmetry of four long
paragraphs (24. 20. 20. 30), but each joins almost insensibly to the next.

II.34. Notes

1 faciem: “beauty”; cf. 2.2.3.
iam: “after this.”
Amori: i.e. think that his love for her will be a sufficient guard on her chastity. Cf.
Tibullus 1.6.51. As the development shows, P. has an extension of this thought
also in mind: one should not entrust one’s mistress to his dearest friend either, or
think that the love between friends will be a bar.

7 “as a guest there came to Menelaus’ hospitality a lover.” Note the emphatic
placing of hospes . . . adulter at the ends of the verse. The hospitium was a suite of
rooms, generally separated from, but communicating with, the rest of the house,
reserved for the use of guests. Menelaus is a dative of interest; ad Menelaum would
be more normal. For the story of Paris’ reception at the palace of Sparta and the
seduction of Helen, cf. Ovid, AA 2.359–372; Her. 16 and 17.

8 Colchis: “the Colchian woman,” i.e. Medea, who eloped with Jason. For the
pertinence of the exemplum, cf. 2.21.11–12.

9 Lyncus: vocative of Lyncus, a Greek name, presumably a pseudonym (cf.
2.21.1 Panthus and 2.22.2 Demophoon); it was the name of the Argonaut famous
for his sharpness of sight. We discover a bit later that this friend of P. is a poet
and philosopher, but it is not possible to identify him further. He appears only in
this poem. (Cf. J.-P. Boucher in REA 60, 1958, 307–22, who wishes to identify
him with L. Varrius Rufus, the friend of Vergil, but the evidence is flimsy.)

13 uel ferro pectus uel perde ueneno: a remarkable telescoping of two ideas, stab-
bhim through the breast and poisoning him; written out in full this might be:
uel ferro pectus traiue uel uitam perde ueneno.

14 tantum . . . modo: a separation of the normal tantummodo apparently unique in
classical Latin; cf. SB ad loc.

15 socium uitae: itae here = animae; cf. G. Williams in CR n.s. 8, 1958, 6–7.
corpus: sc. socium; perhaps rhetorical hyperbole.

16 “I admit you, dear friend, as master to all my possessions.”

17 lecto . . . solum, lecto . . . uno: Note the pathetic effect of this repetition.
derprecior: “I entreat you (to abstain) from . . .”

25 The shift in attitude that has encouraged editors to separate the poem into two
at this point really begins at 21, and the close connexion of 23–4 with 25 should
be self-evident. P. is mocking his friend’s rage or anxiety that he is too short.
rerum... uias: "the workings of the universe," i.e. natural philosophy.

terecit... carmina lecta: This is a famous crux; the reading of N suggests correction to Erecthei (so V2Vo), but no poet of this name is known, and no Athenian poet springs to mind as obvious from the context. The reading of the other principal MSS crethei suggests correction to Creteae, which might make sense as a reference to Epimenides but is apt to strike us as a bit abstruse. If it is accepted, we should probably change lecta, which in any case is not above suspicion, to plectri. Nairn (CR 13, 1899, 393) proposed Aratei... plectri, which is worth serious consideration, especially in view of 51-2 infra and 19.11; it seems likely that P. might balance Philetas and Callimachus against a near contemporary rather than against someone remote from them, and the popularity of Aratus in Rome was extraordinary.

uester... senex: disparaging. If Aratus is meant, he lived about seventy-five years.

 satius: "better"; cf. 2.25.11-14. The full construction would be: satius est ut imitere, but one expects the infinitive rather than ut. The verse as transmitted by the MSS is hopeless (tu satius memorem Musis imitere Philitan NPcorr.; tu satius Musis memorem imitere Philitan FLPAD), and scholarly efforts at emendation offer a variety of possibilities but nothing completely satisfying. To provide a readable text I have accepted SB's tu memor est satius: "it is better for you to be mindful to imitate Philetas in your poems," but more serious surgery may be required. For the use of Musis, cf. 3.1.10.

non inflati... Callimachi: Cf. Catullus 95.10: tumido... Antimachus; Quintilian, IO 12.10.16. For the crisp style of Callimachus, cf. 2.1.40 and note.

somnia: The Aetia of Callimachus was cast as a dream in which the poet was transported to Helicon and instructed by the Muses; cf. e.g. Anth. Pal. 7.42.

Aetoli... Acheloi: dependent on liquor in the pentameter. The river Achelous of Aetolia was a suitor for the hand of Deianira, the daughter of Oeneus.

magno fractus amore: both "broken by his vast love" (cf. e.g. 3.21.33) and "broken because of his vast love" with reference to the loss of his horn.

"and also how the deceiving water of the Maeander wanders through the fields of Phrygia and disguises its direction"; i.e. the loops of the Maeander are so convoluted that one cannot tell where the course is headed. Cf. Ovid, Meta. 8.162-6; Pliny, NH 5.113. This, taken with the preceding couplet, might suggest that Lyceus had written some sort of poem on geography; Roman poets were fond of writing about rivers, especially exotic rivers. For the change to the indicative in errat and decipit, cf. 2.16.29 and note.

suas decipit... uias: The effect is playful; the water deceives even itself. Cf. Housman in CR 14, 1900, 259.

The allusions here are to parts of the story of the Seven against Thebes.

Arion, Adrastus' marvellous horse with the power of speech and one human foot, was the offspring of Ceres and Neptune.

"grieving at the funeral of Archermus, though he was the horse that was victorious." Though no one else seems to have recorded the grief of Arion, the grief
of Achilles' marvellous horses at the death of Patroclus is a sufficient parallel for this touch. Cf. Homer, I. 17.426–55.

39 *non Amphitreae*: As transmitted in the MSS the beginning of this verse is unmetrical: *nōn Amphitreae*. It can be mademetrical by reversal of the two words, but the horror that results, with the monosyllable *non* falling in isolation before the penthemimeral caesura, has discouraged editors from this expedient. It seems to me possible that the text might have read *non tamen Amphiarai* with synizesis of the last two vowels of the name. P. is fond of this device with the oblique cases of Greek proper nouns (cf. on 40 infra), and the adjective *Amphiareus* is both awkward and unexampled elsewhere. *tamen* might have fallen out because of the *am* in the first two letters of the name.

40 Capani: For such synizesis, common in P. with Greek names, cf. e.g. 2.1.69.

41 *et*: connecting to what precedes.

*Aeschyleo* ... *coturno*: A variety of possibilities is available; we may take this with *uerba* (so Butler) "verse shod with the buskin of Aeschylus," as a descriptive ablative modifying the subject of *desine*, or as a Propertian dative with *componere*.

43 "begin now to compress your verses on a small lathe." The figure is almost intolerably dense, an example of P.'s precept. The lathe itself is to be tight, perhaps in allusion to the elegiac form, and the lines are to be carved and shaped on it, in allusion to the brilliant finish admired in this sort of poetry. For the figure, cf. Horace, *Epist. 2.3.441; Laus Pisonis* 96.


46 *recta puella*: "a girl with a good figure"; cf. Catullus 86.1–2.

47–50 A parenthesis, which has been criticized as intolerably awkward, since *harum nullæ* in 51 must connect with *recta puella* in 46. Mueller proposed to transpose these four verses to a place after 54, but the transposition is not wholly satisfying, and the passage does not then read perfectly smoothly. I have therefore elected to leave the text as transmitted.

47–8 On the technique of breaking young oxen, cf. Columella 6.2.3–5. They were bound in pairs with ropes around their horns to low rafters in such a way that they might have some slight liberty, as when harnessed to the yoke, but could not fight or interefere with one another.

52 "nor why the moon should wax and wane for her brother’s horses." As the moon gradually approaches the sun, it wanes (being at the full when opposite the sun) until it passes under the sun, at which time it is invisible from earth for one day. As it recedes from the sun, it waxes. I take *fraterris . . . equis* to be dative of interest; one might take it as ablative of cause.

53 *restabimus undas*: so Wassenberg for the unintelligible *restabit erumpnas* of FLP (N leaves a blank after *restabit*, while Δ has *restauerit undas* obviously a copyist’s correction). Wassenberg’s is the best correction available and seems very likely right. *alliquid restabimus* = "we shall survive as something"; cf. 4.7.1. For the change to the indicative, cf. e.g. 2.16.29.

57 *mixtas inter . . . puellas*: "among girls who crowd around me."

58 *quo tibi nunc elevor*: "for which I am now disparaged by you."
Notes: Book Two

59 me iuuet: jussive: “let it please me.”
hesterinis positum . . . corollis: probably the sense is rather “fallen asleep still wearing yesterday’s garland” than “bedded down on yesterday’s garlands.” Cf. Vergil, Ecl. 6.14–17.

60 “since the god who is unerring in his aim has wounded me to the marrow.” Cf. 1.9.17–22. For ad ossa in the sense usque ad ossa, cf. 2.7.18.

61-2 The allusion is clearly to a separate poem Vergil is to write celebrating the victory of Octavian over Antony and Cleopatra in the naval battle of Actium, not to the description of the shield of Aeneas in which the battle appears (Vergil, Aen. 8.671–728), though P. may have had some knowledge of Vergil’s design for the Aeneid.

custodis . . . Phoebi: There was a temple of Apollo on the headland of Actium, and Octavian credited the god with assistance in his victory. Cf. 4.6.27–58.

64 iactaque . . . moenia: We may take moenia as a metonymy and translate: “the city founded . . .” or take it literally and translate: “the walls built . . .” The slight zeugma here: suscitat arma / iactaque . . . moenia is very effective, as one gets a mental image of the walls raised out of the earth by the power of the poet.

65-6 This couplet enjoyed remarkable fame in antiquity. Cf. Donatus, Vita Verg. 30 (Hardie); Codex Salmasianus, Anth. Lat. 1.264 (Riese p. 214).

67-76 In these verses P. describes the Eclogues of Vergil, poems approaching the elegiac vein and much admired for their finish and elegance. P.’s admiration for these is implicit in the way he remembers details from the individual poems, usually not entirely correctly, and weaves them together, a subtle and delicate device.

67-8 The reference is to Eclogue 7, but there the setting is the bank of the Mincius (near Mantua) and the shepherds in the song contest, Corydon and Thyris, are described as Arcades ambo; cf. Vergil, Ecl. 7.1–13.

67 subter pineta: Vergil never sets a bucolic poem in a pine grove.

Galaesi: The Galaesus is a river of southern Italy near Tarentum, famous for the excellence of the sheep that pastured along it. It was celebrated by Vergil in Geor. 4.125–48 and by Horace, Car. 2.6. The Romans thought of this part of the world as idyllic, but Vergil does not mention it in the Eclogues.

68 attritis . . . harundinibus: “with much rubbed pipes.” The epithet conveys three things: the mode of playing (cf. Vergil, Ecl. 2.34), that the pipes are a homely and unpretentious instrument, and that the music (and poetry) has been worked to a high finish.

69 In Ecl. 3.70–71 ten apples are sent as a love gift to a boy, Amyntas, but in Theocritus 3.10 ten apples are sent to Amaryllis.

70 In Ecl. 2.40–42 Corydon has two young wild goats he is saving for the boy Alexis, but in Theocritus 3.34–6 a goat with a pair of kids is being kept for Amaryllis.

impressis . . . ab iberibus: “fresh from the udder which it has sucked” (BB).

71 felix: probably to be taken as addressed to Vergil, whom P. thinks of as assuming
where Corydon withdraws to the lonely mountain woodland to make his complaint, would also suit the notion that the Hamadryads should praise his song. But it is obvious that here P. is speaking rather of Vergil, that though Vergil may have given up the bucolic, still the Nymphs praise these poems.

77 *Ascrei ueteris*. . . . *poetae*: i.e. Hesiod, whose home was Ascrea in Boeotia. His precepts on agriculture are embodied in the *Works and Days*. Cf. 2.10.25–6 and Vergil, *Geor.* 2.176.

79 *docta testudine*: “to the accompaniment of a skilled lyre,” i.e. one played with accomplishment, but poem and accompaniment are not distinguished from one another; cf. 2.30.16. Traditionally a tortoise shell was used as the sounding box of the lyre.

80 *impositis temperat articulis*: “modulates with the placing of his fingers.”

81 *non tamen haec*: i.e. his own sort of poetry. Though P. recognizes the loftier purpose of the *Georgics*, still this does not lessen the pleasure to be derived from amatory poetry.

83–4 “nor has the melodious swan here given way at the untalented song of the goose because he was inferior in inspiration—although he be of less volume.” The reference is to Vergil, *Ecl.* 9.35–6, where one of Vergil’s shepherds, Moeris, says that he does not seem to himself to sing anything worthy of Varius or Cinna, but to squawk like a goose among clear voiced swans. The text printed here embodies three changes from the MS tradition: *hic* (Lachmann) for *his* O, and *ut sit* (Korsch) for *aut sim* O. These will give an intelligible text, though not an easy one.

85–6 The allusion is to P. Terentius Varro Atacinus, a younger contemporary of Catullus who translated the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius into Latin. About his love poetry we know little, but cf. Ovid, *Tr.* 2.439–40.

85 *haec quoque*: i.e. amatory poetry, as also in 87 and 89 *infra.*

86 *perfecto . . . Iasone*: “when he had completed his *Argonautae*.” The name of the hero is put for the title of the poem.

86 *Leucadiae*: almost certainly a pseudonym alluding to the Leucadian rock from which Sappho is supposed to have thrown herself into the sea when her love for Phaon was unrequited; cf. e.g. Ovid, *Her.* 15. Thus the name is a doublet with Catullus’ Lesbia.


88 *quis*: = *quibus*: “through which.”

89 *Calui*: Cf. on 2.25.4.

91–2 Cornelius Gallus, 69–26 B.C., the friend of Vergil to whom he dedicated the tenth *Eclogue*, was first prefect of Egypt. After being disgraced and stripped of his honors by Augustus, he killed himself. He was a gifted poet and is said to have written four books of elegies. His mistress was celebrated under the name of Lycuris, a pseudonym referring to Parnassus, one of the mounts of inspiration and the Muses; she is identified as Cytheris, a freedwoman of Volumnius Eutraperius, an actress who had earlier been the mistress of Antony.

91 *modo*: “just recently.”

92 *formosa . . . Lycorde*: ablative of source, to be taken closely with *ulnera* in 92. Gallus may in his poems have spoken of bathing his wounds in the Permessus; cf. 2.10.25–6 and Vergil, *Ecl.* 6.64. If so, this would be a literary conceit, possibly doubled by the notion of Lethe as the water of forgetfulness.
93 *uiuet*: This is the conjecture of Barber for *etiam* in the MSS (*Miscellanea Properziana* 1957 p. 22). The verse can hardly do without a verb, and this seems appropriate and likely on palaeographical grounds (*uiu* will have fallen out after *quin* and *et* been emended to *etiam* to fill out the metre by a subsequent copyist).

94 *Fama*: Cf. 3.1.9–10.