SHADES OF SIGNIFICANCE IN QUEVEDO'S INTERNAL HADES: ORPHIC RESONANCE AND LATIN INTERTEXTS IN THE LOVE POETRY

Isabel Torres
The Queen's University of Belfast

I

In a recent study of Quevedo's sonnet collection *Canta sola a Lisi y a la amorosa pasión de su amante*, Ignacio Navarrete states that the "crucial lesson of the cycle is the absence of an authentic poetic voice and the breakdown of Petrarchan rhetoric" (205). In a book which charts the self-conscious response of Spanish Renaissance poets and theorists to Petrarchism, it is not surprising that his analysis should culminate with an examination of Quevedo's mini-*canzoniere*. However, considered within the narrow confines of the Lisi cycle, his conclusions, while valid, are somewhat misleading. Quevedo's search for an "authentic poetic voice" is not restricted to the Lisi poems, but is an artistic concern which manifests itself throughout the entire amorous corpus. The focus of Quevedo's poetic assault is not exclusively Petrarchism. His amorous lyric constitutes a subversive manipulation of Petrarchan forms and themes in order to condemn the artificial conventions of courtly love; and, within this tradition, the Neoplatonic ideal which became grafted onto it in the sixteenth century.

Andrée Fahn Blumstein has emphasised the consequences of the courtly code for women: "The ideals of 'courtly love' with the restrictions and limitations they force upon women who must live up to them, reduce women to objects, abstract[ion]s, public figures, whose private emotions are not permitted honest expression" (3). In the courtly arena of the Spanish *cancioneros* women were victims at an elevated stake. They were victims of a genre over which they had no control, for it had little or nothing to do with them really. Their emotions were not permitted because they were irrelevant. However, the consequences of the code for the men, for whom the poetry was "relevant," are rarely considered. Can they not also be

considered "victims," but "victims" of their own creation? By the seventeenth century these male poets had begun to realise that they too had become no more than dehumanised symbols, subject to the rigid codes of their own work. The Spanish poet of the late Renaissance felt himself encarcerated on the one hand by a rigid erotic code of confused Petrarchism, (an impure blend of traditional Spanish and Italianate forms and motifs), and on the other hand by the poetic achievements of overwhelming predecessors. Garcilaso de la Vega is the obvious example in the vernacular. Through skilful imitation and reworking of Italian and Classical models, Garcilaso managed to liberate an authentic poetic voice within the codified convention, a voice which would echo through the subtextual chambers of subsequent Spanish lyric. For a seventeenth-century poet such as Francisco de Quevedo, "honest expression" in such a restrictive poetic environment was as illusory as the illusive and elusive *dama* whose love he apparently craved.

Quevedo's poetry demonstrates his recognition that the conventions of courtly love involved not only a suppression of sexual desires and an idealisation of sexual urges, but also a paradoxical denial of truthful articulation through poetry. As Olivares points out, the entire code may have become a "burden" by the seventeenth century (ch. 3, ii, 57-64), but the concept of forced silence weighed most heavily upon the mind of the eloquent Quevedo. In the work of a poet so intensely aware of the potential dismemberment of his artistic persona under the weight of established canonic forces, amorous *discreción* acquires a more sinister artistic significance. Through the elastic confines of his sonnet form he searches for a means of communicating the reality of passion; a means through which the poet/lover might achieve humanisation of the male symbol at least.

Quevedo's poetic quest, apparently, does not feature the Thracian bard whose significant subtextual presence in the work of both Petrarch and Garcilaso is crucial to any metapoetic interpretation of their amorous lyric.[1] Indeed we might say that Orpheus is conspicuous by his absence.[2] I would dare to suggest that that is the whole point. Poetic triumph for Quevedo could never involve an Orphic-inspired act of poetic metalepsis which worked so well for Garcilaso in Eclogue III. Rather than assume an Orphic voice, Quevedo goes to great lengths to distance himself from a mythical archetype

which, in terms of allusive reference, had become an integral component of the very poetic tradition whose stifling artificiality he wishes to expose. Quevedo evokes the myth explicitly just often enough for us to question its absence[3], and when it is evoked it is Orphic failure which is stressed and Orpheus rejected. Quevedo's aim would appear to be the dissolution of Orpheus as a credible model for the lover, and more significantly, for the poet of the seventeenth century.

The denigration of Orpheus, however, is not restricted to the primary level of narration. As Turner points out in his study of the Icarus myth, allusions to mythology become in the seventeenth century ever more complex and even obscure (103). The mythological drama of Orpheus, which encapsulates all the major Quevedesque contradictions (mortal love/death, loss/recovery, song/silence, shortlived success/unrelenting failure) gives rise to deliberately elliptical references beneath the surface text of many poems; mostly in poems in which the poet/lover confronts his own internal hell, and often in the context of a dream. However, as we shall see, Orphic presence in this Quevedesque Hades is appropriately insubstantial. As one of many mythological figments of the tormented poet/lover's imagination, Orpheus is displaced as the central authority on amorous suffering and his song is, therefore, rendered ineffectual.

This systematic diminution of Orpheus is based on Quevedo's awareness of historicity and his recognition of the distance which separates him from his models, even from Garcilaso for whom Orphic assumption was less problematic. Moreover, Quevedo's recourse to the Orphic myth is the key which unlocks and identifies the paradoxical nature of Quevedesque *aemulatio*.[4] If, as Barnard suggests, there is an element of implicit criticism or correction in Garcilaso's appeal to the myth, then we must expect a more radical and paradoxical treatment by Quevedo. In the sixteenth century Garcilaso's poetry poses the question: *Who is the better poet/lover, Orpheus or I?* and implicitly answers in favour of the creator. In a more complex illustration of competitive *aemulatio*, Quevedo, the consummate rhetorician, feels obliged to change the question. His poetry asks: *Who fails more convincingly as lover and poet, Orpheus or I?* and the subtextual response "condemns" Quevedo. Of course there is a blatant paradox underlying his love lyric, for he liberates

an authentic poetic voice just when he expresses the impossibility of doing so.

II

It seems appropriate to begin my study of Orphic "absence" in Quevedo's love poetry by reconsidering the two poems in which the Orphic myth is very obviously present: nos. 297 and 407. In the first of these Quevedo's poetic persona attempts to come to terms with himself as a failed Orpheus:

> A todas partes que me vuelvo veo
> las amenazas de la llama ardiente
> y en cualquier lugar tengo presente
> tormento esquivo y burlador deseo.
> La vida es mi prisión y no lo creo;
> y al son del hierro, que perpetuamente
> pesado arrastro, y humedezco ausente,
> dentro en mí propio pruebo a ser Orfeo.
> Hay en mi corazón furias y penas;
> en él es el Amor fuego y tirano,
> y yo padezco en mí la culpa mía.
> ¡Oh dueño sin piedad, que tal ordenas,
> pues del castigo de enemiga mano,
> no es precio ni rescate l'armonía.

This is one of a number of sonnets cited by Close to establish the influence of the Petrarchist tradition on Quevedo's love poetry (843-45). She gives as the "immediate precedents" of Quevedo's sonnet two poems by Marino. In the first of these the poet is capable of filling Hell with Love, in the second he addresses a friend, a "new Orpheus," capable of consoling the poet/lover with his song.[5] The essential difference between the Italian and Spanish poems, of course, is that the Orphic figure who alleviates Marino's poet/lover is an external soothing influence. The Orphic figure who fails to comfort Quevedo's poet/lover is the poet himself. Walters comments that by exploiting the Orphic myth as a source of identification, Quevedo intensifies the lover's torment: "The allusion to Orpheus in hell leads us to expect a mood of eventual or partial

alleviation: that the torment in the poet's heart...can be assuaged just as the torments of hell were suspended by the playing of Orpheus" (52). However, analogy with Orpheus is not made explicitly until verse eight, nor is it precisely an allusion to Orpheus *in hell*. Even if it were, the possibility of the final six lines of the sonnet "leading us to expect" anything at this late stage is highly unlikely.

Failure is clearly written into the beginning. *Wherever* he turns, *wherever* he is, he flounders in a downward spiral of fear and entrapment. We are not permitted to overlook the ubiquitous presence of raging flame, an infernal representative of a love which threatens to submerge him in a desire so insubstantial that unremitting torment is the agonising consequence of its mocking "presence" (1-4). A poem, built upon the traditional foundations of the theme of absence from the beloved, reaches us as a psychological experience verging on the psychotic. Rationality calls out for an explanation: I see but I do not believe ("veo" [1]), "no lo creo" [5]). But reason is obstructed (syntactically as well as semantically: "deseo" [4]) by a desire with no basis in reality and which can see only the conjurings of his imagined love. Surrounded by fire on all sides, "life" closes in and imprisons him (5). He looks back to the "singing prisoner of love in Garcilaso's fourth ode" (Close 845), where reason also struggled with desire, but the song which is short-lived for Garcilaso's poet/lover ("poco dura el canto" [7]) is a perpetual burden for Quevedo's (6-7). The lover in Garcilaso's poem sings while the disconcerting accompaniment of "grave hierro" reminds him that he is love's captive and that distraction can only ever be transient. For Quevedo's lover, the heavy irons represent the only song of which he is capable in his psychological prison. Rather than raising him up, his song (poetry) drags him down. He struggles to assume within the dungeons of himself a magical voice which should bring him comfort and inspire poetic confidence—the voice of Orpheus: "dentro en mí pruebo a ser Orfeo."

The poet/lover himself does not expect success. Not only is his attempt to emerge as the new Orpheus (he wants to *be* Orpheus, not be *like* him) undermined by the hesitancy of the effort ("pruebo"); but also by the rhyming pattern of the quatrains, which reveals the poet/lover's own lack of confidence in a triumphant identification. Orpheus' tragedy was also one of "presence" (3) becoming

"absence" (7). But it was just that—a tragedy. Orpheus does overcome hell and leave with his wife, but on condition that he not turn to look at her. He does turn, prompted by a desire which defies reason, and loses her. These elements of Orphic failure are expressed in the rhyming pattern of 1-8. The irrational desire ("deseo" [4], "no lo creo" [5]), prompting the glance ("me vuelvo veo"[1]), resulting in eternal lament ("perpetuamente"/humedezco ausente" [6/7]). This poem has been described as providing a "point of contrast" with the Orphic myth "with the result that there is a clear divergence from the essential point of the myth" (Walters 53). There is an obvious divergence of course: Orpheus initially conquers hell, Quevedo trying to be Orpheus fails to do so. But the "essential point" of the myth is in fact confirmed. Orphic suffering and loss are upheld. On one level the identification is with Orphic defeat not victory.[6] But on another level there can be no identification at all. Orpheus suffered and sang for a love that was reciprocated. Quevedo's poet/lover suffers and attempts Orphic song for a love which exists only within the confines of his own mind and heart.

The emotional whirlpool of the quatrains too quickly dissolves into the matter-of-fact sketching of his internal landscape in the tercets. Love is not the mischievous child Cupid but Pluto/the devil, whose tyrannical rule initiates and controls the Furies/fury of the Hades/hell into which his heart has been transformed. There he suffers within himself his own "culpa." He admits that he is condemned to hell for an offence which he has committed, and in verse 11 seems to accept responsibility for its creation. We are forced now to accept the bisociation of the pagan and Christian markers of this "hell." The Orphic allusion, the "furias," the "tirano," would imply a pagan Hades; but, of course, this might cloak and be representative of Hell as the place of castigation within a Christian framework (Schwartz 1993, 218). We can only speculate as to what the poet/lover has done to merit such punishment. Does he dare to love an unattainable *dama*, or does he dare to attain his beloved? Whatever his "culpa," acceptance of responsibility for it is short-lived. Love is deemed the pitiless instigator of his pain, the scapegoat for his recriminations and the enemy who executes his punishment (12-14). "Enemiga" must be feminine to complement "mano," but it is a disorientating female presence in this final tercet. Is the *dama* so insubstantial in this relationship that even when she

is deemed guilty she is not referred to, but inferred so elusively under cover of a feminine adjective, that her existence in the textual arena can be denied?[7]

The final line of Sonnet 297, under cover of a contemporary allusion to pirateering, evokes again (to revoke again) the Orphic myth: "no es precio ni rescate l'armonía". Unlike Orpheus whose music was rewarded with the rescue of Eurydice, and unlike Marino's poet/lover whose pain was eased by the "armonía" of his friend's music, Quevedo's poet/lover finds neither reward nor rescue in his poetry. The poet fails to find a voice to ease the poet/lover's pain. The double blow on which the sonnet ends takes amorous lyric a step closer to amorous tragedy.

It is a step which Quevedo takes in another poem, no. 452, "Si el cuerpo reluciente que en Oeta...". The labours of Hercules are nothing compared to the torment of the lover. If Hercules were to return to earth he would find monsters equal to those against which he had previously pitted his strength, but only in the poet/lover's heart (9-11). Smith (144-49), challenging Pozuelo's contention (193-95) that the sonnet is evidence of "Quevedo's physiological internalisation of passion, unknown to his predecessors," establishes the poem's place within the hermeneutic tradition, and cites as the main authority for it Seneca's *Hercules Oetaeus*. Quevedo's predilection for the work of Seneca has been well documented (especially by González de la Calle and Ettinghausen). It is significant that although we normally associate the Orpheus story with the accounts given by Virgil (*Georgic* iv, 454-503) and by Ovid (*Metamorphoses* x, 1-73 and xi, 1-66), shorter versions of the tale are also included in Seneca's tragedies: *Hercules Furens* 569-91 and *Hercules Oetaeus* 1061-89.[8] In the former, the second chorus narrates the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice; if Orpheus' music can overcome hell, then so too can the strength of Hercules. In the latter, which recounts the immolation of Hercules (the subject of Quevedo Sonnet 452), the chorus tells of Orpheus' initial triumph in the Underworld and places the emphasis on the power of Orphic music to alleviate the suffering of guilty sinners. However, when Orpheus loses Eurydice a second time his music cannot assuage his own grief: "sed dum respicit immemor / nec credens sibi redditam / Orpheus Eurydicen sequi / cantus *praemia* perdidit (1085-89, emphasis added). The potency of Orpheus' tragedy is that it repro-

duces itself. He loses Eurydice twice. In this respect Quevedo's Sonnet 297 does not negate the myth. However, Orpheus can be held accountable for disaster only on the second occasion. Quevedo's poet/lover must face the fact that he is responsible for his misery on two counts. The "double tragedy" for him is that he is both guilty lover and failed provider of musical relief.

The problem with substituting external reality with a mythical allegorical landscape which is then internalised, is ultimately one of responsibility. Sonnet 297 demonstrates that in such an autocratic poetic environment assumption of an external poetic persona, such as the Orphic, will function only as a restriction. On this occasion the *feigning* of poetry will not be liberating (Smith 149). The dilemma of the courtly lover in the seventeenth century will only be confronted, challenged and expressed by a relevant poetic voice. This involves paying homage to but yet invalidating out-moded Orphic assumptions. The "dilemma" which the poet/lover must confront is an overwhelming desire to unite his hell with the dama's heaven. Haunted by a literary tradition which espouses the superiority of spiritual union and by a wavering rational belief that this might be true, he finds both literature and reason contradicted within him by an emotional urge to find a valid place for the body in the poetic scheme of things.

In madrigal no. 407, an imitation of a madrigal by Grotto (Fucilla 207) and often dismissed by commentators (Walters 51), the poet exploits the hell/heaven antithesis in a hypothetical context which depends explicitly upon Orphic allusion as self-justification of frustrated desire:

> Si fueras tú mi Eurídice, oh señora,
> ya que soy el Orfeo que te adora,
> tanto el poder mirarte en mí pudiera
> que sólo por mirarte te perdiera;
> pues si perdiera la ocasión de verte,
> perderte fuera así, por no perderte.
> Mas tú en la tierra, luz clara del cielo,
> firmamento que vives en el suelo,
> no podía ser que fueras
> sombra, que entre las sombras asistieras;
> que el infierno contigo se alumbrara;
> y tu divina cara,

como el sol en su coche,
introdujera auroras en la noche.
Ni yo, según mis sentimientos veo,
fuera músico Orfeo;
pues de amor y tristeza el alma llena,
no pudiera cantar, viéndote en pena.

The poetic persona attempts to engage his beloved in a mythical fantasy in which she will play the role of Eurydice to his Orpheus. There would be no pretence involved on his part. As a poet who worships her, he *is* an Orpheus (1-2). As a Eurydice, the beloved must be kept from the gaze of the lover, who need only look at her to lose her. Working from this mythical premiss, Quevedo exploits the sexual euphemism inherent in the verb "perder." He states that the desire he feels for *his* Eurydice is such that a single glance would be enough to *lose* her (3-4). Within this disorientating poetic jigsaw (the three principal and ambiguous verbs "perder," "mirar" and "ver" are continually repeated to produce a confusing alliterative effect), the task is to find the correct meaning for an appropriate context.[9]

So we can read verse 5-6 on two levels: either we accept a straightforward interpretation of both "perder" and "ver" and believe that the lover is simply stating the obvious; if he were not to see her at all, he would in effect lose her anyway. Alternatively, we can accept the sensual overtones of "ver" (5), rhyming with a sexually euphemistic "perder" (6) and view the lover's statement as justification of the desire implicit in 3-4: consummation of his love would also in a sense result in the *losing* of his beloved. The deliberately baffling disorder of the verse obscures the sexual intent. Its unmasking invalidates the lover's previous Orphic stance. Moreover, dwelling on the sexual implications of "perder" distances the poem from the mythical word-play and diminishes the pathos of Orpheus' loss of his beloved. Filtered through such an ambivalent poetic lens, the events of the Orphic legend undergo a distortion of emphasis. The second loss of Eurydice has now more to do with irrational desire, (with the "tantus furor" of Virgil *Georgic* iv, 495) than with the frustrated lament of the constant lover. Orpheus is diminished in a process of reverse and perverse identification. The poet/lover is *not* an Orpheus because he loves his Eurydice any

less, but because he desires her more. By not looking at Eurydice Orpheus could have saved her. Whether the poet/lover looks at his beloved or not, *loss* of her is inevitable.

That the poet is more Orpheus than Orpheus is implicitly suggested. That his beloved is more beloved than Eurydice is made explicit in the eulogy of 7-14. It is wondrous enough that such beauty resides on earth, but it is inconceivable to imagine such divinity in hell. The fate of Eurydice cast back into hell as a shade could never be that of his radiant *dama*. Just as the sun's light overwhelms the darkness of night, the poet/lover's Eurydice outshines her mythical counterpart. The thought that his beloved might ever suffer Eurydice's fate convinces the poet/lover that at least as Orpheus "músico" he would be a failure. That he cannot sing with Orphic song is a demonstration of the depth of his love, as her suffering would stifle his creativity (15-18). However, despite the evocation of the soul in 17, the re-emergence of "ver" recalls its earlier ambivalent context and forces us to question the validity of his spiritual assertion.

He cannot be an Orpheus because he is more passionate than Orpheus and suffers more in the allegorical hell of an unfulfilled relationship. She cannot be Eurydice because she is more beautiful and cannot be contained in hell. Assertions, designed to praise the beloved and glorify the poet/lover, misfire and elucidate the real state of the affair beneath the fantasy. A chasm, as wide as Hades itself, separates lover and beloved. In this poem Quevedo confronts again the fact that a poetic voice resonant with traditional mythical correspondences is powerless to alleviate his metaphorical hell. Meanwhile, the beloved looks down from the heaven in which he, as exponent of the courtly tradition, must place her. In no. 407 he tries to turn the concept of a failed Orphic voice on its head. Instead he becomes a victim of his own success. In fact, in his own mythical fantasy, he plays the role of the trapped Eurydice much better than his ethereal beloved ever could.

III

The two poems which we have considered make explicit the failure of an Orphic-inspired poetic voice to reconcile the conflicting

demands of body and spirit and convey the poet's belief that only the physical "expression" of love will render poetic expression successful. We might expect then that the liberation of the body, previously imprisoned in the stifling courtly/Petrarchan tradition, will result in the liberation of an authentic poetic voice. However, in an attempt to alleviate sexual tension, Quevedo's poetic persona takes refuge in self-deluding hypothesis and fantasy. In the fantastical environment of the dream world desire *is* made explicit and the body "freed," but there is no *real* contamination of heaven by hell and therefore no *real* infringement of the courtly code. The poet confronts and exposes the subconscious and (thus far in our discussion) subtextual physicality of his passion, but in a contrived illusory context. In no. 337 "¡Ay Floralba!" the retelling of the dream revives both the ecstasy of the dream itself and the despair felt at its inevitable conclusion. Although it is generally true that "imagined intercourse gives him no consolation" (Olivares 74), this poem is an exception to the rule, as fantasy does provide *limited* relief. Mostly, however, Quevedo's dreams are not erotic wish-fulfilments, but rather provide powerful nightmarish equivalents to the ancient mythical *katabasis*. When the imaginative impulse is self-consciously harnessed by the poet in this manner, we witness the gradual displacement of Orpheus as archetypal model for the poet/lover, as more appropriate inhabitants of Hades begin to crowd him out. [10]

Sonnet 359 (according to Fucilla [196] a free imitation of Petrarch CCXXVI), conveys the horrors of night for the solitary lover. Sleep, which closes his eyes to the beloved, is a barrier between them harsher than death itself. Frustrated carnal desire, which reveals itself in the "battlefield" of the bed by night, relieves itself in tears by day. Unremitting desire provokes an irreconcilable breach between body and soul. The pain inflicted by absence from the beloved is made harder to bear by the realisation that by abandoning himself to the needs of the body he is being abandoned by the soul: "Desierto estoy de mí, que me ha dejado / mi alma propia en lágrimas deshecho" (3-4). Even after death Orpheus continued to sing and emitted his soul with his song: "Eurydicen vox ipsa et frigida lingua, / a miseram Eurydicen! anima fugiente vocabat" (*Georgic*, iv, 325-26). The poet/lover also loses his soul with his lament, but he does so *before* death and without the comfort of immortal song. When he intimates that he will lament forever

("Lloraré siempre mi mayor provecho" [5]), we know that this must be limited by mortality; for it is the expression of a body bereft of a soul. The disintegration of the soul overwhelmed by sorrow forces him to confront the utter desolation of his one-dimensional existence. However, Sonnet 358 conveys most powerfully the consequences of spiritual exhaustion for the poet/lover:

A fugitivas sombras doy abrazos;
en los sueños se cansa el alma mía;
paso luchando a solas noche y día
con un trasgo que traigo entre mis brazos.
Cuando le quiero más ceñir con lazos,
y viendo mi sudor, se me desvía,
vuelvo con nueva fuerza a mi porfía
y temas con amor me hacen pedazos.
Voyme a vengar en una imagen vana
que no se me aparta de los ojos míos;
búrlame, y de burlarme corre ufana.
Empiézola a seguir, fáltanme bríos;
y como de alcanzarla tengo gana,
hago correr tras ella el llanto en ríos.

P.J. Smith's penetrating analysis of this sonnet demonstrates how "stylistic detail and allusive reference combine to suggest a poetic persona which may be read only in the knowledge of contemporary poetics" (155). He looks to contemporary Italy (to Marino) and to classical Rome (to Virgil and Propertius) for illustrations of the theme of "the embracing of shadows." The heroic antecedent which Smith finds in both Marino and Virgil is that of Orpheus and Eurydice. After Orpheus has turned to gaze at Eurydice, she speaks and then vanishes like smoke into thin air. Orpheus is left grasping at shadows with much still to say (Virgil, *Georgic*, iv, 499-502 and Marino, *Sampogna*, "idilii favolosi", I, p. 16). As Smith points out, the Orphic passage from *Georgic* iv is echoed in *Aeneid*, iv, 390-91. Dido, just prior to her suicide, leaves Aeneas hesitating and wishing to say more. However, Smith does not dwell on the possibility of elegiac resonance (in Propertius iv, 7, the poetic persona envisages the appearance of Cynthia's shade to him in a nightmare setting and makes futile attempts to embrace the insubstantial image) and, more significantly, he overlooks an earlier echo of the *Georgic* pas-

sage in Virgil's epic. In *Aeneid* ii, Aeneas is the Orphic figure who escapes from the burning inferno that is Troy, closely followed by his wife Creusa. Aeneas fails to look back and at some point "loses" his wife.[11] As he searches frantically for her, her ghost appears and allays his distress. Then the image fades, leaving him weeping and with much to say. Three times he tries in vain to cast his arms around her neck and three times the wraith eludes him, like airy winds or the melting of a dream: "ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum; / ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago, / par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno" (Aen., ii, 792-94). In fact Virgil repeats ii, 792-94 at *Aeneid*, vi, 670-72, when Aeneas meets the shade of his father Anchises in the Underworld. He pleads to be allowed to grasp his father's hand and implores him not to slip from his embrace, but in vain. The repeated attempts of Quevedo's poet/lover to bind in his embrace the elusive and insubstantial image (1-8), would seem to have more in common with the taciturn hero Aeneas than with the Thracian bard Orpheus. If we accept that Virgil in certain circumstances informs his depiction of Aeneas with his own earlier presentation of Orpheus—for instance that the Aeneas of Book Two is Orpheus without the Orphic voice—then Quevedo's recourse to the myth via the epic might be viewed as yet another instance of the poet undermining the success of a poetic voice burdened by traditional resonance.

In another sonnet, 448, "Si mis párpados, Lisi, labios fueran," Quevedo treats the conventional amorous topos of silent rhetoric. The authoritative source for the topos is Ovidian (*Amores*, i, iv), but Smith (168) believes that in the presentation of himself as the authentic sincere lover, the poetic persona "assimilates himself to an ideal of heroic *gravitas*" which takes Aeneas as its model. It is perhaps difficult to accept that Quevedo might wish to assimilate his poet/lover to Aeneas, the archetypal emotional coward. Virgilian pathos throughout the epic allows us to question if the construction of Rome was worth the destruction of love, of Dido, of Aeneas' own inner well-being. But Quevedo's poetic persona is like Aeneas in that in pursuit of an ideal he becomes its victim. Smith quotes from Sonnet 322 in opposition to his previous statement: "If Quevedo's persona is often mute, it can also be vociferous. Silence is inhuman and love must be expressed: 'Arder sin voz de estrépito doliente/no puede el tronco duro inanimado'." But in this rejection

of silence, Smith fails to see the possibility of rejection of Aenean silence specifically, in other words of Aenean *gravitas*. As Dido pleads with Aeneas not to abandon her, Fate and the gods conspire to block his ears and "dehumanise" him. He becomes the "tronco duro," whose top aspires to heaven, but whose roots are secured in hell (*Aen.*, iv, 439-49). If Quevedo's lover is like Aeneas, it is not because Aeneas is an ideal hero, but precisely because he is not. It is Aenean contradiction and human weakness, the Aenean negation of Orpheus (Segal 50-51), which inform the Quevedesque voice.

Let us return briefly to consider the implications of epic resonance in sonnet 358, "A fugitivas sombras." The poem clearly expresses the inevitable result of attempting to circumvent an abstract code by finding sexual fulfilment in the darkness of imaginative realms. What he finds when he delves beneath the surface of courtly love's charade is an ever more elusive and insubstantial reality. The effort of sustaining illusion becomes too much. The exertions of the lustful lover are futile and he is defeated by an image which recoils in the presence of such "perspiring" passion (6). Emotional devastation (he is literally "shattered" [8]) provokes a determination for revenge; but the mocking, phantom image will not leave his sight.[12] This Eurydice/Creusa/Anchises/Cynthia figure does not fade from his sight until it has witnessed the triumph of its trickery. Only then does it flee. In the final tercet the poet/lover attempts to follow but cannot. Like Orpheus he collapses in frustrated lament. But the tears which accompany the poet/lover's lament form rivers to continue the pursuit. In this respect the classical resonance is again Aenean. In *Aeneid*, vi, Aeneas meets Dido in the Underworld. She turns from him in hatred and flees back into the shadows. But she has already witnessed his distress. Aeneas, shocked by her unjust fate, "follows" her with tearful eyes: "nec minus Aeneas casu percussus iniquo/prosequitur lacrimis longe et miseratur euntem" (*Aen.*, vi, 475-76). Exact analogy is not intended. The only pity which Quevedo's lover feels is for himself. The intangible unreality of the dream culminates in tears of frustration, not sorrow. But such multiple classical allusion reinforces the nightmare environment with Stygian gloom. The classical subtext which informs the demented voice of the poetic persona is one of futile effort and irrevocable loss. On a metapoetic level Quevedo exploits, somewhat ambivalently, the tra-

ditional image of the river as symbolic of the collective advance of poetry.[13] He seems to suggest artistic frustration at the futility of his own contribution, while simultaneously indicating a determination to succeed. And there *is* a measure of success here. Skillful emulation of his models reveals what is unique to Quevedo's text alone and goes some way towards the liberation of his individuality as a poetic creator. Orphic tragedy is subtly pitted against a three-fold Aenean tragedy and is reduced. The process of classical diminution is complete when both Orphic and Aenean tragedy are contrasted with that of the obsessive poet/lover who loses what he has never had the chance to possess.

The artistic and amorous limbo in which Quevedo's seventeenth-century poet/lover finds himself is perfectly captured in sonnet 356. The poetic persona fluctuates between wakefulness and sleep in the no-man's-land of dawn:

> Cuando a más sueño el alba me convida,
> el velador piloto Palinuro
> a voces rompe al natural seguro,
> tregua del mal, esfuerzo de la vida.
> ¿Qué furia armada, o qué legión vestida
> del miedo, o manto de la noche escuro,
> sin armas deja el escuadrón seguro,
> a mí despierto, a mi razón dormida?
> Algunos enemigos pensamientos,
> cosarios en el mar de amor nacidos,
> mi dormido batel han asaltado.
> El alma toca al arma de los sentidos;
> mas como Amor los halla soñolientos,
> es cada sombra un enemigo armado.

The sonnet elaborates the metaphor of the body as a ship which is assailed by piratical, amorous thoughts. The soul finds itself powerless to resist alone and calls on the senses for help; but they have been paralysed by sleep. The tension between combatant soul and somnolent body is anticipated in the opening quatrain. The soul is Palinurus, the vigilant helmsman of the "ship," which in response to the dawn's invitation to sleep, awakens the body from the death-like torments of night and advocates life.

Quevedo's attraction towards the figure of the Virgilian Palinurus has already been proven by Smith in his discussion of this poem (149-54). Smith concludes that "the reader's own erudition is the instrument required to escape the confusion he or she feels when the poem is read in isolation from its allusive context" (153). What the reader must not do, however, is underestimate the erudition or literary culture of Quevedo himself. If we assume, and I believe we can, complete familiarity on Quevedo's part with Virgil, then we can arrive at a more complete reading of this sonnet.

Palinurus' story is told in two parts in the *Aeneid*. In Book v he dominates the opening as the reliable helmsman who keeps both ship and Aeneas on the right course. At the end of this book, when Aeneas has re-established his position at the head of his people and Palinurus is now dispensable, he is approached by the god Sleep (disguised as Phorbas). He is urged to rest from his journey, but resists. Sleep then sheds the dew of Lethe upon him and he is cast into the sea. The crew do not hear his cries for help and sail on. In Book vi, Aeneas meets Palinurus' ghost in the Underworld. The shade recounts the circumstances of his death, how he almost made it to shore, but was mistaken for valuable booty by savage natives and murdered. Deprived of burial rites he must roam Hades as a restless shade. He begs either for burial or that he might cross the Styx with Aeneas. He is rebuked by the Sibyl for his arrogance, but is given aetiological comfort. His name will be perpetuated in the name of a headland, the *Capo de Palinuro*.

Within the context of the *Aeneid*, Palinurus' fate is important because it reveals again that tension between the public and private voice of Virgil. The loss of Palinurus at the end of *Aeneid* v demonstrates to some extent where Virgil's priorities lie. The book could have ended with Anchises' revelation of Rome's greatness, or with Neptune's magnificent sea-cortège, but it does not. It ends on a muted tragic note of human sacrifice. "Unum pro multis dabitur caput" is foretold at v, 815, and at v, 845 "pone caput" reveals that the head to roll for many will be that of Palinurus. As if this were not sufficient cause for pathos, Virgil ensures a sympathetic response through self-reference. He conflates in the story of Palinurus the deaths of Aristaeus' two victims, Orpheus and Eurydice.

The textual correspondences are incontrovertible and fully elucidated by A. M. Crabbe. It remains only for me to sum up the main

points of her article. The final loss of Eurydice informs the loss of Palinurus in *Aeneid*, v. The associations of "Somnus" and "Nox," as well as an echoing of "natantia lumina" (*Georgic*, iv, 496 and *Aeneid*, v, 856), alert us to the fact that the author is about to enter into intertextual dialogue with himself. When Palinurus tells his story in *Aeneid*, vi, he associates himself both with Orpheus and Eurydice. In that he faces death twice and loses out the second time, he is like Eurydice. However, the violent nature of this second death relates him to Orpheus. When he is set upon as he tries to leave the sea and mutilated, we are reminded of Orpheus' mutilation at the hands of the Thracian women. The word "prensantem," occupying the same position in the line at *Aeneid*, vi, 360 and *Georgic*, iv, 501, signals the switch from Eurydice to Orpheus in Palinurus subtextual analogy. Virgil exploits his own Orphic drama to intensify the pathos of the Palinurus episode by association.

If Quevedo recognised the importance of the Orphic *katabasis* for the Palinurus episode, then he must also have recognised the infinite allusive possibilities of presenting the lover's soul as the tragic helmsman. As we have seen already, in Quevedo's internal Hades, Orpheus and Eurydice are often overshadowed as amorous authorities by more suitable shades. In this poem the allusive presence of Palinurus (and conspicuous "absence" of Orpheus) suggests that spiritual collapse might be interpreted as the necessary sacrifice of a lover crippled by carnal desire; or indeed of a poet seeking a valid poetic voice.

It is evident that immersion in hypothesis and/or fantasy fails to provide a solution to the major amorous and artistic preoccupations of Quevedo's poetic persona. Those poems which most violently lay bare the anguish of the frustrated lover, do so by revealing that the outcome of inner conflict is not a straightforward victory of senses over reason, which would open up the possibility of sexual union; but rather the disintegration of the soul, which leaves the lover so self-absorbed in his own infernal tragedy that he even appears to lose sight of his amorous objective. The poetic response is a more radical harnessing of the imaginative impulse.

IV

In the magnificent Sonnet 472, entitled "Amor constante más allá de la muerte," the poet/lover, in order to give meaning to a "spiritless" existence, performs an amazing *volte-face* and abandons reason altogether:

> Cerrar podrá mis ojos la postrera
> sombra que me llevare el blanco día,
> y podrá desatar esta alma mía
> hora a su afán ansioso lisonjera;
> mas no, de esotra parte, en la ribera,
> dejará la memoria, en donde ardía:
> nadar sabe mi llama la agua fría,
> y perder el respeto a ley severa.
> Alma a quien todo un dios prisión ha sido,
> venas que humor a tanto fuego han dado,
> medulas que han gloriosamente ardido,
> su cuerpo dejará, no su cuidado;
> serán ceniza, mas tendrá sentido;
> polvo serán, mas polvo enamorado.

It would be a redundant task to retrace the steps of so many critics who have so ably analysed this sonnet in the past. My intention is to focus on the Propertian-inspired self-conscious poetics which inform it and to read it as an externalisation of the theme which I have termed the "internal Hades." It is a poem in which the poet/lover finds temporary release from the amorous hell where he condemned a love which raged in search of sexual fulfilment, and where his voice struggled to free itself of restraining fetters.

The "meaning" of the first quatrain has never been in doubt. Death will mean separation from the body of a soul which, now free, will go on to enjoy the better life for which it has always yearned. The "mas no," which opens the second quatrain, has been perfectly described by Olivares as an "act of defiance." From anticipation of a Christian and spiritually exclusive paradise, we are hurled rebelliously into a pagan afterlife, in which the memory of a complete love experience (corporeal as well as spiritual), can survive death. But this is not a sudden descent into Hades. In retrospect the pagan subtext of the first quatrain should have prepared

us for it. The implicit contrast evoked by the latinate "sombra" (death) and "el blanco día" (life), does not work in a Christian context, suggesting Hell rather than Heaven. But it does convey the Renaissance concept of a Graeco-Roman Underworld which encompasses in darkness both Tartarus and Elysium. Indeed the sonnet opens with what was considered a crucial stage in Roman burial rites, the closing of the corpse's eyes (Toynbee 43). But we cannot overlook the importance of vision in an amorous context. We have seen the frustration of the lover whose eyes, closed in sleep, temporarily deprived him of seeing his beloved. Eyes which are closed in death signal the infinite torture of eternal *ausencia*. The metaphorical torment of the internal Hades is rendered useless by death and the lover must revolt.

He does so by externalising the motif and thus making it positive in the concrete pagan landscape of quatrain two. When he finally leaves the "Hades" of life and crosses over to the Hades of death, he will justify his earthly suffering by carrying the fire of love beyond the grave. But there is a double defiance in this quatrain. He does not simply defy Christian death by insisting on the survival of corporeal sentiment, but he also defies the pagan law of death which he has chosen to embrace. He refuses to obliterate memory in the waters of the River Lethe.[14] Quevedo demonstrates similar insolence in the face of death in Sonnet 460, "Si hija de mi amor mi muerte fuese" in which the poet imagines love, in all its spiritual purity and in all its infernal desire (13), surviving infinitely in a pagan afterlife. The infernal poet/lover finally secures his heaven in a non-existent realm of darkness. A similar paradoxical resolution of the hell/heaven anthithesis, involving "memoria" takes place in Sonnet 479, "No me aflige morir". The tercets read:

> Señas me da mi amor de fuego eterno,
> y de tan larga y congojosa historia
> sólo será escritor mi llanto tierno.
> Lisi, estáme diciendo la memoria
> que, pues tu amor la padezco infierno,
> que llame al padecer tormentos, gloria.

The poet is convinced that the flame of love cannot be extinguished by death. But what he envisages is not the survival of love in an

eternal Elysium, but the continuance of love's suffering in a never-ending hell. The tone is again triumphant for frustration is minimalised and failure prevented in this sonnet by the poet/lover's confidence in a functioning poetic voice. The poetic "llanto" will externalise and thereby eternalise the "larga y congojosa historia" of the poet's love. Memory has a crucial role to play in this poetic process (12). It must record and transform this love experience into a versification of love which has the objective distancing power to convert hell into heaven.

In relation to these other sonnets the poet's insistence on the survival of "memoria" in no. 472 ("Cerrar podrá mis ojos") might now allow us to identify a three-fold defiance in the conceit of the second quatrain.[15] It is possible that the poetic persona is not only suggesting the persistence of love beyond death, but also the eternal nature of his love's poetics. Smith, and more recently Navarrete, see in Quevedo's sonnet an echo of the dedicatory lines of Garcilaso's Eclogue III: "Y aun no se me figura que me toca / aqueste oficio solamente en vida; / mas con la lengua muerte y fría en la boca, / pienso mover la voz a ti debida." But while Smith (175) identifies an implicit Orphic resonance which enhances the poetic persona and converts the poem into an Horatian poetic monument, Navarrete (224-25) sees the Garcilasian echo as a bridge text to Petrarch's evocation of Orpheus in *sestina* 332 which deals not with the immortalising effects of poetry, but with poetic failure. Their conflicting opinions are quite easily reconciled. Evocation of Orphic failure need not preclude intimations of Quevedesque success. Indeed I would suggest that the contrary is the case. Quevedo has been at great pains to discredit and shake off the Orphic baggage handed down to him through a Courtly/Petrarchan tradition which he finds artistically claustrophobic. In this "crypto-Orphic" poem (Navarrete 225) he finally does just that, substituting Garcilaso's Orphic model for a Propertian subtext which more appropriately endorses his characteristically paradoxical statement of artistic triumph.[16]

José Luis Borges (61) identifies Propertius, I, 19, 6 "ut meus oblito pulvis amore yacet" as a possible antecedent of Quevedo's final line. This elegiac resonance adds a crucial dimension to the concept of immortalising art: Naumann elaborates upon Borges' observation in a lucid discussion of the parallel obsessions with

death, life's transience and with the power of love (which must break death's law) which preoccupy Propertius and Quevedo. He focuses particularly on elegy, 1, 19, in which Propertius exploits the mythological example of Protesilaus, who sought to be allowed to return as a shade from the dead to see his beloved wife Laodamia. Naumann sees in this mythological allusion the "key" to what Quevedo is claiming for himself; but in Quevedo everything else is stripped away to reveal his awareness of death and his perception of love as fire.

However, if Quevedo did have this elegy in mind, then he would have known that it is a cunningly contrived exploitation of the *carpe diem* theme. Propertius knows that death when it comes will not be bitter, for *his* love will be eternal. However, he has less confidence in Cynthia's constancy. The poem ends on a surprising *volte-face*. It is better to make the most of their love while they are still alive: "quare, dum licet, inter nos laetemur amantes: / non satis est ullo tempore longus amor " (25-26). Quevedo chose not to undercut his sentiment with such levity; but could he trust the erudite reader of the seventeenth century to display similar restraint? It is a question worth asking, if impossible to answer for certain. Naumann prefers to ignore it. He also ignores a more relevant concern of Propertius' poetry, which I believe Quevedo could not: the elegist's poetic self-consciousness.[17]

Propertius was well aware of the immortalising power of poetry. He refers to it in Book I, 7, 5, 24; Book III, 1, 34-38; and Book IV, 1, 64. He is particularly aware that it is his fate to write love poetry (as opposed to epic), which will not only bring him renown, but also glorify Cynthia (see Book II, 1, 3, 5, 10, 12, 13(b), 24(a), 30, 34(b); Book III, 2, 3, 9, 24). In Elegy III, 2, 17-27 he states explicitly that his poetry will be an everlasting monument to her beauty. The elegy opens with an evocation of the magical qualities of Orpheus' music and conveys Propertius' confidence that his music will command similar respect. In fact he had already intimated as much in Elegy I, 18 in which, by subtly evoking Virgil *Georgic*, iv, 527, he acquires Orphic stance for himself.

Without wishing to dispute that the "pulvis erit" sentiment of Quevedo 472: 14 is informed by Propertius i, 19, I would suggest that the force which moves the sonnet has a different Propertian inspiration; that Quevedo also had in mind Propertius II, 13(b). As

in Quevedo 472, the elegy opens with the poetic persona anticipating the day when death may close his eyes: "quandocumque igitur nostros mors claudet ocellos." He proceeds to instruct Cynthia in the arrangement of his obsequies. He wants no processions, no trumpets, no offerings of wealth. The greatest gift which he can offer Proserpine is his art: "sat mea, sat magnaest, si tres sint pompa libelli, / quos ego Persephonae maxima dona feram." When the funeral pyre has made him ash, when the "servus amoris" is little more than shivering dust ("horrida pulvis"), he is confident that his poetry will render his sepulchre as famous as that of any soldier.

In order to achieve the powerful poetic vision of sonnet 472, Quevedo looks back to Garcilaso Eclogue III, but looks beyond him. It is a clever response to what Bloom has termed the "anxiety of influence." He places Garcilaso's Orphic inspired declaration of artistic triumph within the context of a literary tradition for which it is a standard topos. The Quevedesque lover's affirmation of eternal love (which is also the poet's proclamation of a poetic voice which will transcend time), finds its major precedent in the self-conscious poetics of a pagan poet, who would never have understood that expression of human love must involve suppression of human desire.

However, Sonnet 472 is but a climactic moment in Quevedo's search for a valid mode of expressing realistic sentiment. It is a metaphysical argument which cannot be sustained. Quevedo is aware that a triumph which is in fact an evasion of reality (just as immersion in the dreamworld is) can only signal the failure, not the success, of his poetic voice. This awareness intensifies the anguish of his verse. After all, it is anguish, born of a sense of failure, which has traditionally been declared the hallmark of his lyric. It is Quevedesque anguish which his poetic voice has immortalised.

V

Quevedo's systematic indictment of the courtly love/Petrarchan tradition finds its most harrowing expression in Sonnet 485. The poem reveals the devastating consequences of trying to express human desires within a dehumanising system:

En los claustros de l'alma la herida
yace callada; mas consume, hambrienta,
la vida, que en mis venas alimenta
llama por las medulas extendida.
Bebe el ardor, hidrópica, mi vida,
que ya ceniza amante y macilenta,
cadáver del incendio hermoso, ostenta
su luz en humo y noche fallecida.
La gente esquivo y me es horror el día;
dilato en largas voces negro llanto,
que a sordo mar mi ardiente pena envía.
A los suspiros di la voz del canto;
la confusión inunda l'alma mía;
mi corazón es reino del espanto.

In this sonnet the poet laments the enduring presence of love's wound beyond a metaphorical death-in-life. The traditional motif of the wound inflicted by Cupid's arrow, so abstract as to be almost meaningless by the seventeenth century, acquires a full, gruesomely threatening significance. It is an imperceptible wound which lurks in the cloisters of the soul; but its malignancy extends beyond the poet/lover's spiritual life to infect and devour his whole being. Once again, as in 472, soul, veins and marrow are united in an internally combustible love experience, and the end result is "ceniza." But this is not immortal ash, rather it is the ash which results from the extinction of love and life. However, the death knell is premature. "Yace" (2) is undercut by "callada." Love is not entirely dead. It lies silenced in a death-like state. In a vicious circle of interdependence, unreciprocated passion continues to hunger for "life," just as life continues to be sustained by hope of requited love. "Callada," past participle as well as adjective, reveals the poetic persona's awareness that he has had a part to play in his own destruction. Not only has he fuelled the fire of passion, but he has steadfastly refused or been unable to alleviate love's force by expressing it. But a fire which invades his spirit and extends through the marrow of his veins will not be contained. He may silence the wound, but he cannot conceal its outer effects. These are outlined in quatrain two.

The contrary disease of love forces the poet/lover to quench his thirst in a fire that will destroy him and reduce him to ash. Images of hunger and thirst, exploited by Quevedo in other poems

for their sexual connotations, are here given an added fatal dimension. The lover who hungers and thirsts in vain for sexual satisfaction, inevitably wastes away for want of sexual sustenance. The logical and linguistic outcome of all-consuming fire and unsatiated sexual appetite is emaciated and enamoured ash: "ceniza amante y macilenta" (Snell 201). A fire of such volcanic proportions cannot be repressed. It must erupt and, when it does, the effect is both magnificent and ravaging. The lover's passion displays itself in a glorious blaze, but it is unreciprocated and turns back within the lover. Externalisation of passion fails and exhibits its failure in the charred, negated existence of the lover. But even if the outward light of love fades, if hope fades, the frustration of love defies extinction. The Etna, the volcano/tomb of his inner being has erupted and burned out. But volcanic passion still lives dormant and threatening within him. In Sonnet 293, "Ostentas, de prodigios coronado," the poet/lover envies Etna its powerful display of the fire which rages secret within it. He wishes that he too might erupt in defiance of *discreción* and make manifest his own suppressed Enceladic hell. In Sonnet 485 we move a step beyond that "eruption". We might say that Sonnet 485 is a monument to the desolation and chaos which is left behind.

However, the tercets seem to deny the possibility of a comforting poetic memorial. The frustrated lover penetrates and takes refuge in an emotional jail of his own making. He embraces *ausencia*, now definitive solitude. The Petrarchan motif of the beloved as the divine sun to which the poet/lover aspires is chillingly reversed. There can be only terrifying light for one whose failed aspirations have condemned him to a non-existence in infernal darkness. The fire he feels releases a voice which manifests his "ardiente pena." Identifying its nocturnal and infernal resonance, he terms it a "negro llanto." The poetic persona cannot resist the Phlegethon-like lament which flows from the dark abyss of his own internal Hades. But he is convinced of the failure of that lament to elicit response. In "sordo mar" Quevedo encapsulates the indifference of Lisi, and evokes the traditional image of the river of life swallowed up in the sea of death. But we also recall the lover of Sonnet 358 who, in emulation of Aeneas in the Underworld, pursues the elusive and insubstantial image of his beloved with the river of his tears: "y como de alcanzarla tengo gana,/hago correr

tras ella el llanto en ríos." (13-14). But the real nature of the failure which is conveyed here can only be understood when we contrast Quevedo's lines with those of Garcilaso, Eclogue III, 245-48: "...'Elisa,' a boca llena / responde el Tajo, y lleva presuroso / al mar de Lusitania el nombre mío, / donde será escuchado, yo lo fío." Garcilaso, confident of the enduring value of his poetry, envisages a natural world responding to Nemoroso's lament and carrying the name of Elisa (and therefore his name also) to the "mar de Lusitania" and beyond. The pre-text is the Orphic call and echo of *Georgic*, iv, 524-27. Quevedo, on the other hand, by inverting his Garcilasian model, undermines his verse with that awareness of himself as a failed Orpheus which he made explicit in Sonnet 297. He envisages only a deaf reception for his poetic voice, swallowed up and lost in a "sordo mar." Of course, Quevedo's voice is not the amorous "canto" of his predecessors, but an infernal wailing which signifies that access to his "heaven" has been denied him.

Sobejano (1971, 459-92) believes that the "direct source" of the poem is not Petrarchan but Virgilian. He identifies certain parallels between Quevedo's poem and verses of *Aeneid* iv. The first quatrain is shown to be an imitation of *Aeneid*, iv, 65-67, 1-2, and 101. Verses 10-11 of "En los claustros" is revealed as a reworking of *Aen.* iv, 438-39. Sobejano points out that the imitation does not follow the order of the model. What he does not mention is that the verses which Quevedo chooses to evoke from *Aeneid* iv, identify his poet/lover with the abandoned and rejected Dido, rather than with the heroic Aeneas. Dido is the wounded victim; she is the one who burns, the one who is reduced to ash on the burning pyre (a symbol of her frustrated love) and she is self-condemned to Hades. Moreover, Dido in *Aeneid* iv, is rarely silent. Quevedo rejects the taciturn Aeneas and chooses Dido now as the perfect paradigm of a love that is expressive and desperate, but doomed to failure from the moment of its conception.

Of course the verse which closes Quevedo's sonnet, with its reference to the "reino del espanto," once again evokes Garcilaso to bring before us that elusive constant of Quevedo's amorous verse: the Orphic myth.[18] We have come full circle now in our discussion since the Orphic failure of Sonnet 297. We have seen that in Quevedo's amorous lyric the consolation of an eternal Orphic song cannot withstand confrontation with the reality of the historical moment.

Acknowledging the inadequacy of his codified language to express the frustration of unrequited love, Quevedo's poetry stresses the amorous and poetic failure of Orpheus. The dissolution of Orpheus as a model for the seventeenth-century poet/lover is grounded in Quevedo's awareness that Orpheus' song is born of death. For when Orpheus loses Eurydice to Hades a second time, he clings to a song which will reiterate persistently the loss which he has suffered. Rather than providing consolation, the Orphic song for Quevedo implies constant confrontation with the object of desire. However, Quevedo's devaluation of the myth reveals its own intrinsic irony. The attempted displacement of Orpheus from the poet/lover's autonomously created and Cupid-governed internal Hades (in favour of more significant classical shades), leads to an uncompromising admission of the poet's failure to express, at least in historically valid terms, an all-encompassing love experience. Yet this expression of unrelenting failure, intensified by classical resonance, constitutes the liberation of the poetic voice from the conventional fetters of the courtly code. Paradoxically, the process of Orphic denial results in the construction of a memorialising literary artefact, which extends beyond the historical moment of origin. The name of Quevedo's Lise, a clever anagrammatic confusion of Laura and Elisa, has continued to resound through the echo chambers of literary criticism, in spite of and indeed, because of, the anguished reservations of her creator.

Notes

[1]For Garcilaso's manipulation of the myth of Orpheus in his work see Paterson, Barnard and Cruz (esp. ch. 5, 91-123).

[2]The absence of the Orphic myth in Quevedo's poetry has been commented upon by many Renaissance scholars who have approached his love poetry expecting to find it there. Gareth Walters concludes that "popular myths such as those of Orpheus and Icarus do not appeal to Quevedo" (163).

[3]Cabañas (70, 108, 113, 125, 135-39, 192) cites seven poems on the Orphic theme in Quevedo (in which there is sustained reference to the myth) and five of these are love poems. The poems in question are nos. 297, 299, 321, 390, 407. More recently Lía Schwartz has provided a more detailed

survey of Orphic evocation in these same poems ("Versiones de Orfeo"). All references to Quevedo's poetry are taken from Blecua's edition.

[4]I am indebted to the terminology of G.W. Pigman who distinguishes between *imitatio* and *aemulatio*, as the two major categories of imitation. He does, however, recognise the fluidity of their dividing boundaries. The analogies, images and metaphors which were used by Renaissance theorists to discuss imitation are classified by Pigman into the following three areas: transformative, dissimulative and eristic. The first class refers to the successful transformation of a model; the second is concerned with concealing the relationship between text and model; while the third reveals a struggle with the model for pre-eminence, a struggle in which the model must be recognised to assure the text's victory. As an eristic relationship between text and model is integral to identifying *aemulatio*, it is clear that it is not in Quevedo's interests to conceal his sources.

[5]Close cites both Marino poems taken from *La Lira, Rime del Cavalier Marino* (Milan 1617), Part 1, 212, 240.

[6]Segal suggests that Orpheus' failure in Virgil is due to his embodiment of "an aspect of poetry that is tragically self-indulgent, centered upon itself and upon the personal emotion of the poet, prodigally passionate" (22). The courtly love poet might reasonably expect to find a prototype here.

[7]In no. 467 Lisi is most certainly the "enemiga" who has despised the heart which burns for her, and denied pity to the one who laments her. The poet/lover retaliates and imagines a reciprocated hell of reciprocated desire. Revenge (albeit in fantasy) will indeed be sweet.

[8]Orpheus has a less prominent role to play in the *Medea* 301-79, 579-699. However, the depiction of Medea throughout (her sinister magical power over the natural world) might be compared with the enchanting music of Orpheus. Segal also identifies Thyestes and Hippolytus as anti-Orphic figures of Senecan drama (103-117).

[9]The presentation of the relationship in terms of a dense linguistic labyrinth was a stylistic technique favoured by *cancionero* poets. Consider the opening of the following canción by Diego de San Pedro: "El mayor bien de quereros / es querer un no quererme, / pues procurar de perderos / será perder el perderme." See Whinnom (73-81).

[10]In no. 366 "Soñé que el brazo de rigor armado," the torment of unrequited love is displaced into a nightmare setting in which the lover's death-in-life becomes an actual death inflicted by Filis. We might argue that the heaven/hell antithesis recalls its mythical origins in this sonnet, but Orphic lament would be ludicrously inappropriate in this setting. The voice which accompanies the poet/lover from the hell of his fantasy to the hell of his reality, is not magically harmonious, but distressingly "ronca." We might

compare Sonnet 368, "Qué imagen de la muerte rigurosa," in which the image of death is not sleep but something much more terrifying—an infernal spectre which emerges from his subconscious during sleep and wreaks revenge on behalf of his "ungrateful" beloved.

[11]Heurgon (267-68) makes the interesting point that Aeneas' wife was actually called Eurydice, not Creusa. Virgil, who had to choose between the two equally authorised names, was forced by the use of Eurydice in *Georgic iv*, to choose Creusa in the *Aeneid*.

[12]Plato, in his *Symposium* (179 D-E), also inclines towards Orphic failure and stresses the illusory nature of Orpheus' action. He sends him back unfulfilled from Hades, in the company of a phantom of Eurydice in place of his real wife. As Segal points out (17), Plato thus underlines the inadequacy of poetry to represent reality.

[13]Garcilaso's manipulates a similar image in Canción 3: 53-65. Paterson (32) comments on Garcilaso's reworking here of the Phanocles' ending of the Orphic myth.

[14]Critics are divided as to whether this allusion is to the River Styx or to the Lethe. Olivares, who believes that in the context of memory retention the poet alludes to the Lethe, says that "it also functions as synecdoche to include the river of death" (131, n. 16). Amedée Mas (293) believes that Quevedo's expression is deliberately vague so as to encompass both rivers.

[15]The conceit itself has provoked various critical responses from which one can draw the following conclusion. An obsessive metaphor of Quevedo's poetry is given an original treatment by the poet himself when it becomes a metaphysical conceit. Thus it can succeed where metaphor failed in the liberation of a unifying poetic voice. The problem with the "metaphysical voice" which Quevedo finds to express this union is that its validity depends upon its expression of an argument which violates logic. The illusion of a logical argument progressively worked out is also undercut by the circular rhyme scheme of the tercets (CDCDCD) which reveals that, despite the poet's proclamation of an externalised eternal and unified love experience, he is not really deceiving himself at all. The argument, and consequently the voice which expresses it, is therefore fallacious.

[16]This triumph of love, in its totality and of an eternal art which expresses it, is anticipated by the anniversary Sonnet 471. There is a contradictory tension in 471 which can only be resolved if the tercets are given a metapoetic interpretation. The poet aspires to spiritual ascent, but he will not find eternal fire in heaven. His awareness of his infernal fate is betrayed by the emphasis on all-consuming fire in the final tercet, as well as "marchita," with its latent connotations of a sexual *carpe diem*. However, the immortality of his love is guaranteed in another more positive way. "En l'alma impresa" (11) might be an echo of the *tabula rasa* on which experi-

ence begins to make its mark. It may also be an echo of Garcilaso Sonnet V in which the poet, imbuing his poem with Orphic resonance, makes clear from the outset that the beauty of the beloved is the inspiration for an eternal art. But Quevedo cannot resign his lover to idealistic transcendence of the physical. The beauty of the beloved inspires a fire which he nourishes in the centre of his physical being (5-6) and which, he knows, will transcend mortality. Manipulation of the Garcilasian pre-text acknowledges Quevedo's faith in the immortalising poetic process. But his art, distinct from that of his predecessors', provides the only earthly guarantee that his love, in all its contradictory complexity, can live forever.

[17]Lía Schwartz Lerner, observes that the originality of the Quevedesque voice lies in his imaginative rereading of both the Petrarchists and Latin elegists (1992, 23; 1993, 206-07).

[18]Sobejano traces echoes of the final line of Garcilaso's Orphic sonnet 15 through the work of various Renaissance poets. Referring to Quevedo's reference in 485 he comments: "Desmitologizando un mitema, Quevedo regenera en forma lo decaído a fórmula" (1992, 267).

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