

ARETHUSA: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SYRACUSAN
NYMPH IN COLONIZATION NARRATIVE, *CONSOLATIO*,
AND EPIC

by

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A THESIS

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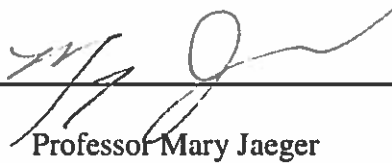
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Title: Arethusa: Representations of the Syracusan Nymph in Colonization Narrative,
Consolatio, and Epic

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Professor Mary Jaeger

By exploring representations of Arethusa, the Syracusan nymph and fountain, this thesis aims to broaden our understanding of the myth, which has primarily been considered within the context of Greek colonization narratives (e.g. Dougherty and Jones on Alpheus' journey as a colonization model and Eckerman on the link to the Panhellenic sanctuary at Olympia). This thesis both reviews the aforementioned scholarship and draws some preliminary conclusions about Arethusa's use in other genres, namely *consolatio* and epic. It is divided into three chapters. Chapter One provides a survey of the ancient sources and recent scholarship which address Arethusa's role in Greek colonization narratives, and the desire of both mainland Greece, and Sicily and Magna Graecia, to maintain a connection (both physical and metaphorical) between the two landmasses. The following two chapters address Roman reception of the Greek myth. Chapter Two examines how Seneca uses Arethusa in his *Consolatio Ad Marciam* to teach a Stoic lesson about parenting (and death). Chapter Three discusses how Silius Italicus, in his *Punica*, elevates Arethusa to become a figurehead of Syracuse and, when the city is sacked, a prize of Roman *imperium*.

Because the primary focus of this thesis is Arethusa's diverse tradition as represented in history and literature, Chapters Two and Three look closely at the intertextual relationships that Seneca and Silius Italicus make use of. Ultimately, the figure of Arethusa transcends genre and singular loyalty to either Greece or Rome: her fluidity and ability to metamorphose account for her many lasting traditions.

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It is well known that a project of this sort isn’t executed alone, and I am so grateful for the considerable help that I had.

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Introduction

Syracuse is Sicily's most famous city, and, as Cicero puts it in *In Verrem* 2.4.117.1-2, "the largest of Greek cities and the loveliest of all" (*urbem maximam Graecarum, pulcherrimam omnium*).¹ From its foundation in 734 BCE by Corinthian colonists, its history is mottled with great and terrible events. During the fifth century BCE, its power rivaled that of Athens and Sparta, and during the Peloponnesian War, the Athenian army made an expedition to Sicily (415-13 BCE), intending to conquer the island and bring it under Athenian rule. However the Syracusans and their allies destroyed the entire Athenian fleet, forced those who survived the battle to surrender, and imprisoned them in the city's limestone quarries. Thucydides described the Sicilian Expedition as "the greatest Hellenic achievement of any in this war, or, in my opinion, in Hellenic history; at once most glorious to the victors, and most calamitous to the conquered" (*ζυνέβη τε ἔργον τοῦτο [Ἑλληνικόν] τῶν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον τόνδε μέγιστον γενέσθαι, δοκεῖν δ' ἔμοιγε καὶ ὄν ἀκοῆ Ἑλληνικῶν ἴσμεν, καὶ τοῖς τε κρατήσασι λαμπρότατον καὶ τοῖς διαφθαρεῖσι δυστυχέστατον*, 7.87.5).² Syracuse is also famous for its tyrants, its most abhorred being Dionysius II, who ruled from 367-357 BCE, and then again from 346-344 BCE. Because of his despotic tendencies, the inhabitants of Syracuse forced him into exile twice. Differing from him in all respects was Hiero II, who oversaw a period of great prosperity from 270 BCE until his death in 215. Subsequently, Hiero's rule was transferred to his grandson Hieronymus, leading to the city's alliance with Carthage during the Second Punic War. The Roman general Marcellus conducted a siege on Syracuse from 214 onward, until the city was defeated

¹ All translations of the *Verrine Orations* belong to L.H.G Greenwood, with some modifications.

² Trans. Richard Crawley.

in 212. (Livy famously tells this story in books 23-25 of his *Ab Urbe Condita*.) During the Roman rule of Syracuse, Cicero famously prosecuted the corrupt governor Verres for his vile treatment of the city (70 BCE). After this time, Syracuse's appearance in the works of the major historians dwindled, but its glorious reputation was recalled in the works of later authors such as Ovid, Vergil, Strabo, Seneca, Silius Italicus, and Pausanias. It is in this illustrious city that the fountain of Arethusa, the subject of our study, emerges on the island of Ortygia, one of Syracuse's four districts.³

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* encapsulates the basic elements of the myth of Arethusa. Arethusa was an Achaian-born huntress who, when bathing in the Alpheus river, in the Peloponnese, caught the attention of the river god. He pursued her through Arcadia, intending to have intercourse with her, but she fled from him and prayed to the goddess Diana for help. Diana cast a cloud around her, but in Arethusa's fear, cold sweat ran down from her body and she was turned into a stream of water. Alpheus discarded his human form and pursued her as a river; Diana broke the earth, and Arethusa plunged downwards and emerged in Ortygia. Concerning sources for Arethusa's myth, Ovid is a good place to begin—his tale is engaging, thorough, and has been famous since antiquity. However he is not the first nor last author to tell Arethusa's story in his work, nor is his the only version. One of the major differences in the ancient sources is the question of whether or not Alpheus follows Arethusa to Sicily, and mingles his waters with hers in her fountain. This seems to be the case in the early sources, but this detail is called into question by later authors (Ovid is an example). Other sources draw a connection between Syracuse and the Panhellenic sanctuary at Olympia, by which the

³ The other districts are Achradina, Tycha, and Neapolis.

Alpheus River runs, claiming that a golden cup and dung originating from the sanctuary emerged in the fountain of Arethusa. But such changes in the myth's form can be expected. Arethusa's myth has evolved over centuries—from around the eighth century BCE to the second century CE—to fulfill a variety of purposes, and a variety of social needs.

G.S. Kirk explains myth as a “traditional tale,” first because the definition emphasizes the story-telling quality of myth, and second, because in order for a myth to become a myth, it must become traditional. Namely, it must resonate in some way with the societal collective in which it is told, and thus be told again, and so on. The word “collective” is important: although myths may be highly significant to individuals, they would not be told in volume without widespread appeal. However, the reason that a myth is important to a society is subject to change, and the same myth may be reinterpreted or used in many ways to express different societal perspectives and fill a variety of needs. This is evident in Arethusa: her role in history and literature is not static, but changes depending on how she might benefit author, patron, or audience. As Bruce Lincoln puts it, myth is a story told “to define, defend, reflect upon, romanticize, analyze, legitimate, exaggerate, mystify, modify and advance its own position, not to mention that of its practitioners” (1999:21). The myth of Arethusa is no exception. Like the course of Alpheus, Arethusa's story periodically disappears from the literary tradition only to reemerge, each time having undergone a metamorphosis.

Arethusa's counterpart in myth is Alpheus, the embodiment of the largest and longest river in the Peloponnese. (It must be noted here that the river and his personification are one and the same; that the Greeks would not have differentiated

between the river and the god. Nor, indeed, between the nymph Arethusa and the spring.) According to Pausanias, Alpheus exhibits a unique natural phenomenon.

φαίνεται δὲ ὁ Ἄλφειός παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους ποταμοὺς φύσιν τινὰ ἰδίαν
παρεχόμενος τοιάνδε: ἀφανίζεσθαι τε γὰρ κατὰ γῆς ἐθέλει πολλάκις καὶ
αὖθις ἀναφαίνεσθαι (8.54.2)

It is known that Alpheus differs from other rivers in exhibiting this natural peculiarity: he often disappears to reappear again.⁴

Parke and Wormell note that the myth that Alpheus pursues Arethusa underground to Sicily may be taken as an imaginative expansion of this natural occurrence.

The Greeks, owing to the frequent occurrence of limestone faults in their native land, were quite accustomed to the notion of rivers which disappeared at one place and reappeared again in quite another locality, even possibly emerging from under the sea floor as fresh water springs. (1956:68)

Rivers that could pass through another body of water without losing their potency were a known phenomenon: Pausanias names the rivers Nile and Jordan as exhibiting this truth (5.7.4). Later, Pliny the Elder writes “I do not suppose you will hesitate long about whether you believe there are rivers and a hidden sea underground” (*Non quidem existimo diu te haesitaturum an credas esse subterraneos amnes et mare absconditum*, 6.8.1), citing the disappearance and reemergence of the Tigris and Alpheus as evidence. The idea of Alpheus traveling underground was then not so unusual, although his journey was a particularly lengthy one.

⁴ Trans. Eckerman, from his 2013 article “Landscape and Heritage of Pindar’s Olympia.”

This thesis will not attempt to provide a complete catalogue of all of the sources that mention Arethusa and Alpheus's myth, but will instead focus on three contexts in which the nymph and the physical fountain appear. The early extant sources are usually interpreted in terms of Greek colonial desire, and a subsequent inclination on the part of the colonists in Sicily and Magna Graecia to make connections with their Hellenic identity. These narratives are also where much of the current scholarship on Arethusa is concentrated. Hence Chapter One will provide a review of both the early sources (a Delphic oracle recorded by Pausanias, Ibycus of Rhegium, Pindar, and Timaeus of Tauromenium), and the current scholarship, which reads colonization narratives in later versions of the myth. The remaining two chapters will cover Roman reception of the Greek myth. Chapter Two will address the role of Syracuse and Arethusa in Seneca's *Consolatio Ad Marciam*, written to comfort a grieving mother, and examine why the city and the nymph are fitting choices for the genre. Chapter Three will look primarily at Silius Italicus's *Punica*, and the changing role of Arethusa in the Syracusan landscape during its siege in the Second Punic War.

I have always been interested in considering the *purposes* of Arethusa's myth: why she was so important to Greek and Roman audiences alike, why her myth had such lasting power, and why it underwent such considerable metamorphoses. While this thesis is by no means a comprehensive study, I think that it is a good start to answering some of these questions.

Chapter One: Greek Colonization Narratives

Greek colonization of Sicily began en masse in the eighth century BCE, and with it raised the question of Hellenic identity. Before traveling forth to found a new city, it was customary for Greek colonists to consult the Delphic oracle, who might give them practical information about where they should settle, and the manner in which it should be done. For the most part, these oracles seemed to represent blatantly colonial intentions, originating on the Greek mainland, to bring other, western, lands under their control. Irad Malkin suggests that these oracles also contributed significantly to the colonists' conception of themselves as self-consciously Greek, and once they had established their new city, were one of the avenues they used to differentiate themselves from Sicily's native populations. Thus the oracles represented movements and intentions traveling both from mainland Greece to Sicily and Magna Graecia, and vice versa. The myth of Arethusa, assuming a connection between Arethusa's spring in Syracuse and the Alpheus River in the Peloponnese, fulfilled a similar function. Accordingly, this chapter will begin by providing an overview of the Arethusa's early sources, beginning with a Delphic oracle recorded by Pausanias. Here I want to illustrate why Arethusa's myth was significant to and developed by populations on both sides of the Ionian Sea: in mainland Greece and Sicily and Magna Graecia alike. Then, in the final section of this chapter, I will review the arguments of two recent scholars, Carol Dougherty (1993) and Prudence Jones (2005), who identify colonial elements in much later versions of the Arethusa myth. In reading these analyses, it is important to remember that they represent *post eventum* reflections, and do not represent the

attitudes of the Greek colonists themselves. Nonetheless, they are valuable in their own contexts.

Part One: Early Sources

The earliest extant source for the Alpheus-Arethusa myth is embedded in one of the aforementioned foundation prophecies, a c. 735 BCE oracle recorded by Pausanias during the second century CE. Pausanias claims that when the god at Delphi, Apollo, sent Archias the Corinthian to found Syracuse, he included a description of Ortygia.

Ὀρτυγίη τις κεῖται ἐν ἠεροειδέι πόντῳ,
Θρινακίης καθύπερθεν, ἴν' Ἀλφειοῦ στόμα βλύζει.
μισγόμενον πηγαῖσιν ἐυρρείτης Ἀρεθούσης. (5.7.2)

An certain Ortygia lies on the misty ocean,
Over against Trinacria, where the mouth of the Alpheius bubbles
Mingling with the springs of broad flowing Arethusa.⁵

Joseph Fontenrose points out that Pausanias's is the only surviving account of the oracle, although Diodorus may have it in mind when he writes that Ortygia was named "by both oracles and men"(5.3.5).⁶ At any rate, the oracle's authenticity is disputed. Fontenrose denies the oracle's authenticity based on a comparative analysis of historical and legendary responses given by the Delphic oracle (1978:12); he argues that Ortygia and Arethusa received their names from Greek settlers, making it likely that the verses were composed sometime after the foundation of Syracuse in 734/3 BCE (1978:138). Larson notes Arethusa is a common spring name (Homer writes of an Arethusa on Ithaca, *Odyssey* 13.408), derived from the Greek verb ἄρδω, "to water,"

⁵ Trans. W. H. S. Jones and H.A. Ormerod, with some modifications.

⁶ Trans. C.H. Oldfather, "ὑπό τε τῶν χρησμῶν καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων."

(2001:214). Because of her name's Greek derivation, it seems likely that Arethusa was named contemporaneous to or after arrival of the Greeks, and not before. But H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell suggest that there is no reason to discount the oracle's authenticity, for a place as favorably situated as Syracuse—near a good harbor and a source of fresh water—must have been known by Greek explorers before the Corinthians settled the area. Ortygian Arethusa could even have been named after Euboian Arethusa when Chalcidian explorers surveyed the region before the foundation of Naxos in 735 BCE. (Parke and Wormell 1956:68).⁷

Determining the oracle's authenticity would prove that the Alpheus-Arethusa myth existed as a model for colonization before it happened, not merely after the event of colonization had already taken place. Larson asserts that Pausanias's Delphic oracle, if authentic, frames Arethusa and Ortygia as extensions of mainland Greece; that "the oracle serves an important dual purpose of establishing political claims and forging affective ties between old and new" (2001:214). Unfortunately, the authenticity of the oracle is near impossible to determine, forcing us to engage in hypotheticals. Certainly, Pausanias's Delphic oracle would have given the Corinthian colonists a good reason to found Syracuse near the spring of Arethusa, for they would have believed that the water rising there was part of the Alpheus River in the Peloponnese. Indeed, it might have been viewed as nonsensical (or even impious) to disregard the example set by Nature herself to extend Greek influence across the Ionian Sea. So if Pausanias' Delphic oracle was delivered to the Corinthians before the founding of Syracuse, the city's founding

⁷ The Euboian king Abas was allegedly the son of Poseidon and Arethusa. According to the story, Poseidon abducted Arethusa from Boiotia to Chalcis, where Hera turned her into a spring (Larson 2001:144). An early Delphic oracle refers to the Chalcidians as "the men who drink the water of fair Arethusa" (305).

would have been all but predetermined. The Corinthian colonists would have simply been following the course already established for them by the Greek river.

However, Irad Malkin writes that determining the authenticity of each oracle is less important than the Greek *practice* of consulting the oracle before sending forth colonists, and the resulting relationships between Delphi and the colonies. If one applies Malkin's approach to Pausanias's Delphic Oracle, it matters less that the description of Syracuse was spoken c. 735 BCE from the lips of the Pythia, and more that the colonists' connection with the Oracle, and the resulting attitudes toward Greek colonization and Panhellenic identity, were preserved and represented in later sources. Malkin speaks of ties forged and strengthened from both shores of the Ionian Sea: a triangular network between Greek city-states, their respective colonies, and Panhellenic sanctuaries such as Delphi and Olympia. And at least in the early extant early sources, the Alpheus-Arethusa myth seems to prove Malkin's hypothesis, because it appears to have been propagated by Greeks and Syracusans alike. The Delphic oracle recorded by Pausanias expresses a Greek colonial desire (either true to its c. 735 BCE date or retroactively, depending on its authenticity). But other accounts of the myth, written by poets and historians from Magna Graecia (Ibycus) and Sicily (Timaeus) or for Sicilian patrons (Pindar), reflect a desire originating in the colonies to link themselves with mainland Greece.

As the reader moves chronologically through time, Arethusa next resurfaces in the latter half of the sixth century, in a scholion on Theocritus which preserves a fragment of the lyric poet Ibycus of Rhegium. Where Theocritus mentions the Olympian cup, the scholiast quotes Ibycus: "they say that Alpheus came through the

sea”⁸ (24). Little can be extracted from the scholion concerning colonial attitudes toward the Greek mainland, but its existence confirms that the story was known in Magna Graecia during the time Ibycus was writing.

Pindar’s *Nemean I* is more telling. The odes of Pindar themselves, and especially the connection between Alpheus and Arethusa in *Nemean I*, represent the desire of the Sicilian-Greek elite to blend in with the Greek elite on the mainland, and prove their right to a Hellenic identity.

ἄμπνευμα σεμνὸν Ἄλφειοῦ,
κλεινᾶν Συρακοσσᾶν θάλας Ὀρτυγία,
δέμνιον Ἀρτέμιδος,
Δάλου κασιγνήτα, σέθεν ἀδυεπῆς
ῥυμνος ὀρμᾶται θέμεν
αἶνον ἀελλοπόδων μέγαν ἵππων, Ζηνὸς Αἰτναίου χάριν:
ἄρμα δ’ ὀτρύνει Χρομίου Νεμέα θ’ ἔργμασιν νικαφόροις
ἐγκώμιον ζεῦξαι μέλος.

Hallowed up-breath of Alpheos,
Ortygia, offspring of famous Syracuse,
couch of Artemis,
and sister of Delos, from you a sweetly worded
hymn issues forth to render
mighty praise for storm-footed
horses in honor of Zeus of Aitna;
and the chariot of Chromios and Nemea urge me to yoke
a song of celebration for victorious deeds.⁹

⁸ Trans. David A. Campbell, “φασὶ διὰ πελάγους Ἄλφειὸν ἦκειν . . .”

⁹ Trans. William H. Race, with some modifications suggested by Eckerman (2013). See his article “The Landscape and Heritage of Pindar’s Olympia” for analysis of Pindar’s use of the Greek word ἄμπνευμα.

Nemean I was written in honor of the chariot-racing victory that Hiero's general Chromios won at Nemea. Christopher Eckerman notes that in his ode "Pindar uses the myth of Alpheus and Arethusa to construct a link between Syracuse and Olympia for his colonial patron, Chromios of Syracuse/Aitna . . . although *Nemean I* was composed for a victory at the Nemean games" (2013:8). Hence Chromios benefits from a double connection here: his city has an obvious link to Olympia, and he himself won a chariot-race at Nemea. Both fulfill the same purpose of connecting him with mainland Greece, and demonstrating not only his familiarity with Greek cities and customs, but his ability to win commendation from the Greek elite. Larson notes that the presence of Sicilian elites at the Panhellenic Games demonstrate the desire of colonists to associate themselves with Hellenic cultural centers (2001:214). As Malkin put it, "One should not be surprised that the list of victors in the ancient Olympic and Pythian Games included so many Greeks from the west. They wanted that Greekness and enhanced the importance of the notion while practicing it" (2003:71).

The connection between Syracuse and Olympia is further illustrated by Timaeus of Tauromenium's fifth century account, later related by Polybius.¹⁰ According to Polybius, Timaeus defends the transference of the Alpheus river to Syracuse with an unusual occurrence: when heavy rains flooded the sanctuary at Olympia, the fountain of Arethusa disgorged dung from beasts recently sacrificed at a festival there, and a golden bowl which the Syracusans recognized as from Olympia (12.4d). This story is well-known; it is later picked up by Strabo, Seneca, and Pliny the Elder. Eckerman suggests that the story of Alpheus and Arethusa, and the analogous story of the Kephisos and

¹⁰ Timaeus's extant work is fragmentary; his arguments are preserved (and scathingly refuted) by Polybius approximately two centuries later.

Kastalia,¹¹ are “examples of the human imagination using geography to increase the importance of less prestigious sites through their relation to more prestigious sites” (2014:41). Syracuse, in fact, benefitted from double connection to the two most prestigious Panhellenic sanctuaries: Delphi and Olympia. The initial Delphic oracle pointed the Corinthians to Syracuse; the fountain of Arethusa physically connected the colony to Olympia. So the Syracusans did not amend the Alpheus-Arethusa myth to define Sicily in opposition to mainland Greece, but used it to hold onto their Greek identity.

Part Two: Later Colonial Readings

The Delphic Oracle recorded by Pausanias (now established to be of disputed authenticity) embeds the connection between Arethusa and Alpheus within Archias’s charge to found Syracuse. But it alone expresses *Greek* colonial intention; the other early sources originated in Sicily or Magna Graecia, and represent a later reaching back to mainland Greece, rather than an initial reaching out to uncolonized lands. Perhaps because of this, the two most prominent scholars who read Greek colonization narratives in Arethusa’s myth, Dougherty and Jones, do so in its later versions, using Pausanias and Ovid, respectively.

Dougherty suggests that the Alpheus-Arethusa myth should be considered through the lens of Greek marriage ideology. She argues that the “nexus of integration, acculturation, and violence makes marriage an apt metaphor for the colonial experience” (1993:65).

¹¹ Kastalia was the prophetic spring of the Delphic oracle, Kephisos the underground river that fed her. Eckerman argues that “by manipulating their connection to the epichoric river-god, Kephisos, the Lilaians linked their comparatively insignificant, marginal polis with Apollo’s politically and culturally significant sanctuary at Delphi” (2014:40-41).

The Greek river's transoceanic travel from the Peloponnesus to Sicily prefigures the colonists' own western movement from Corinth; erotic conquest symbolizes a new political foundation, and the intermingling (μισγόμενον) of the two streams becomes an emblem for Greek and native interaction. (1993:69)

Dougherty points out that the word μισγόμενον, “mingling,” used in Pausanias's Delphic oracle to describe the integration of Alpheus and Arethusa's waters, can connote sexual intercourse.¹² Building on this, she argues that intermingling of Alpheus and Arethusa in Arethusa's spring represents intermarriage between Greek and native populations. However, this is not possible, for Pausanias makes it very clear that Arethusa is not a native Sicilian; she and Alpheus are both Greek. Even Arethusa's name is Greek, derived from the verb ἄρδω, “to water,” and was likely given to her by Greek settlers. According to Pausanias's account, Alpheus and Arethusa were originally both mortal hunters. Alpheus fell in love with Arethusa, but she was unwilling to marry and crossed the Ionian Sea to Ortygia; there she became a spring. And “Alpheus too was changed by his love into the river”¹³ (5.7.2). So Pausanias does not represent Alpheus and Arethusa in accordance with the standard colonization narrative: Alpheus is not the active colonizer and Arethusa the passive colonized. Rather their actions effect each other, and they both undergo metamorphoses. In fact, Arethusa is the one who affects change on Alpheus; because of his love (ἔρωτος), he becomes a river. So Pausanias at least, along with other Greek and Latin authors, has effectively “erased” whatever native identity Arethusa might have had.

¹² For the most part, the early extant sources do not use the kind of erotic language apparent in later versions. Words such as ἔρος and amor, which signify love or sexual love, begin appearing in Arethusa's myths from the Augustan Age onwards. The exception is in Theocritus, whose Daphnis, dying of love, bids “sweet Arethuse” farewell. (This does not mean that an early erotic version of the myth did not exist; other considerations, such as genre, could have prevented its transmission.)

¹³ Trans, W. H. S. Jones, “συμβῆναι δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἔρωτος καὶ Ἀλφειῶ τὴν ἀλλαγὴν εἰς τὸν ποταμόν.”

Changing contexts, Jones analyzes Arethusa's myth in light of later *Roman* colonization. She describes the myth as "a model for the event of colonization, an analogue in the natural world for a human activity" (2005:44). However from a Roman perspective, what exactly "the event of colonization" is becomes blurred, for Jones' primary literary source, Ovid, depicts Arethusa as running from Greece to a Roman *municipium*; an act of emigration, not colonization. Nevertheless, Jones identifies "colonial" words in Arethusa's speech in *Metamorphoses* 5.493-97, such as *patria*, *peregrina*, and *penates*.

Huc hospita veni.
Pisa mihi patria est et ab Elide ducimus ortus,
Sicaniam peregrina colo, sed gratior omni
haec mihi terra solo est: hos nunc Arethusa penates,
hanc habeo sedem.

I have come here as a stranger. Pisa is my homeland and I have my origins in Elis, as a foreigner I inhabit Sicily, but this land is more pleasing to me than every place; I, Arethusa, now have these household gods and this dwelling.¹⁴

Patria and *peregrina*, writes Jones, are indicative of Arethusa's legal status as a colonist, while *penates* "places her squarely in a Roman context" (2005:44).

In the translation of Arethusa's myth from Greek to Latin, the standard colonization narrative becomes distorted. The early sources from Greece, Magna Graecia, and Sicily represent a fairly straightforward narrative: Alpheus as a masculine, conquering force, by which the virgin spring Arethusa becomes civilized and

¹⁴ Trans. Prudence J. Jones.

productive. But Ovid's *Metamorphoses* post-dates Greek colonization of Sicily by at least seven hundred years, and, as a consequence of the shift in language and cultural paradigms between the Greek and Roman civilizations, uses words (such as those identified above) that embody distinctly *Roman* meanings and connotations. Thus when reading Ovid through a colonial lens, one must keep in mind how much the context in which the story is told has changed.

Jones writes "By the end of the passage, however, the nymph has become loyal to her new home. Like a colonist, she came as a foreigner, but has made this new place her permanent home" (2005:44). In keeping with the traditional colonization narrative, Ovid's Alpheus remains the impetus for migration, and Arethusa the object of his violence. But diverging from the standard narrative, Arethusa is not subjugated by a greater power. In fact, I would like to point out that by the time that Ovid wrote, both mainland Greece and Sicily were part of the *Imperium Romanum*, and had been for over one hundred and fifty years. By this time, presumably the cultural differences between the two lands had become less pronounced than they were during the time of Greek colonization, and most importantly, Arethusa already had a Roman identity. So although it is significant that she now holds *hos penates* and *hanc sedem*, she had made no change in political allegiance.

In short, I remain unconvinced by both Dougherty and Jones' readings of Greek colonial intent in later sources (Pausanias and Ovid). The only source that can truly confirm Greek colonial ambition is the Delphic oracle recorded by Pausanias; however it cannot currently be confirmed as authentic, nor denied. Thus the question remains open: did Arethusa's myth precede Greek colonization of Sicily, or was it developed

later as a justification *post eventum*? The myth's initial purposes remain hazy. But Archias' visit to the Pythia was, at least in retrospect, the first plot on a network connecting mainland Greece and its colonies; a network in which Alpheus and Arethusa's myth began to play a continually expanding role—and not only in the context of colonization.

Chapter Two: Seneca's *Consolatio ad Marciam*

Thus far we have reviewed Arethusa's story within the context of Greek colonization narratives. This chapter will then turn to the role of the physical fountain as a Syracusan landmark, and the intertextual tradition which makes use of it. A good example of this and the primary one which I will address here is Seneca's description of Syracuse in *Dialogi* 6.17.3-4, part of his *Consolatio ad Marciam*.¹⁵ Here Seneca makes allusions to Cicero's description of Syracuse in his *Verrine Orations* 2.4.117-119, to Cicero's description of Dionysius II in his *Tusculan Disputations* 5.57, and Ovid's telling of the nymph's story in *Metamorphoses* 5. I argue that in his *Consolatio ad Marciam*, Seneca evokes both the historical and mythical past to convey a Stoic message.

Few sources mention the fountain without its associated myth. However, even when Arethusa's story is not specified, the idea of the spring cannot be wholly divorced from the idea of the nymph. Even sources such as Livy (59 BCE-17 CE),¹⁶ Silius Italicus (c. 26-102 CE), and Annius Florus (no earlier than Antoninus Pius, 138-61 CE), who mention the Fountain Arethusa as a landmark within Syracuse's landscape during the Second Punic War, were not unaware of its implications. The first part of this chapter considers three such sources, which do not make explicit mention of the myth, but treat the fountain as a geographic marker and a site at which *mirari possis*, "you might marvel." Here I will address the relationship between Seneca's Syracuse and

¹⁵ Other examples of sources that treat the fountain as a landmark without explicit mention of the story are Livy, Silius Italicus, and Annius Florus. We will discuss Livy and Silius Italicus further in Chapter Three.

¹⁶ All dates, unless otherwise specified, are in accordance with the Oxford Classical Dictionary.

Cicero's (*Verrine Orations, Tusculan Disputations*) and how Seneca calls on Cicero to augment his city with people and events. The second part of the chapter will reintroduce Arethusa's myth as told by Ovid (*Metamorphoses*) and the Sicilian landscape which she, Persephone and Demeter inhabit. By integrating the historical and mythical contexts which Seneca makes use of in *Dialogi* 6.17.3-4, I want to shed light on his Syracuse, a place of great goods and terrible evils, and how and why this city befits a consolation.

Dating and Purpose:

The precise dating of the *Consolatio ad Marciam* is disputed: it is most commonly attributed to c. 40 CE, during the reign of Gaius (37-41 CE), though Jane Bellemore (1992) has more recently argued that the work be dated to the period of time between 34 and 37 CE, during the reign of Tiberius (14-37 CE).¹⁷ It is generally agreed to be Seneca's earliest work.

The formal purpose of the *Ad Marciam* was, naturally, to console Marcia, a Roman mother mourning the death of her son, Metilius. However, if this was Seneca's sole objective, why didn't his remarks take the form of a personal letter? As a genre of literature, *consolationes* were written to showcase the author's rhetorical abilities and ultimately benefits their individual careers. However Bellemore argues in addition that *Ad Marciam* was politically motivated; that it was a means for Seneca to gain favor in

¹⁷ Scholarship on the dating of *Ad Marciam* is more prolific than any other consideration of the text, see Grollios (1956), Basore (1965), Manning (1981), Bellemore (1992).

Tiberius's court and dissociate himself from the recently fallen Sejanus.¹⁸ This last argument is not contingent on an early dating. Zeph Stewart (1953) makes the argument that Seneca vehemently denounces Sejanus and Sejanus's *cliens* Satrius Secundus precisely *because* of ties linking him with a pro-Sejanus faction. However, Manning (1981) disagrees, upholding *Ad Marciam* as a genuine consolation also intended to be applicable to a wider audience. I agree for the most part with Manning, and add here that *Ad Marciam* is a platform upon which Seneca clearly and expressively articulates his Stoic beliefs.¹⁹

Seneca's description of Syracuse in *Consolatio ad Marciam* appears among *praecepta* relating to Marcia's situation.²⁰ Seneca compares the decision to bear children to the decision to visit Syracuse: "first inform yourself of all the disagreeable and all the pleasurable features of your future journey, and then set sail" (*omnia incommoda, omnes uoluptates futurae peregrinationis tuae ante cognosce, deinde ita nauiga, 17.2.1-3*).²¹ Hence, if one decides to go to Syracuse, or to parent, the responsibility for the outcome will fall on choice of the individual. Seneca writes:

Dicit omnibus nobis natura: "neminem decipio. Tu si filios sustuleris, poteris habere formosos, et deformes poteris. Fortasse multi nascentur: esse aliquis ex illis tam seruator patriae quam proditor poterit. Non est quod desperes tantae dignationis futuros ut nemo tibi propter illos male dicere audeat; propone tamen et tantae futuros turpitudinis ut ipsi

¹⁸ Bellemore argues that Seneca's use of Tiberius as "an exemplar to be emulated by Marcia" (222) supports an early dating.

¹⁹ It may be noted that while the Stoic tenets which Seneca upheld were similar in form to those of Zeno and Chrysippus, his employment of these tenets differed. Zeno and Chrysippus and their followers believed that true consolation lay in understanding the school of thought behind Stoic philosophy and reflecting this understanding in action; Seneca preferred to inspire his audience in support of the *conclusions* derived from Stoic thought, rather than their premises (Cooper 2006:42-55).

²⁰ See Grollios (1956), Manning (1981) for analysis of the *Ad Marciam*'s overall structure.

²¹ All translations of *Dialogi 6* are Basore's, with some modifications.

maledicta sint. Nihil uetat illos tibi suprema praestare et laudari te a liberis tuis, sed sic te para tamquam in ignem inpositurus uel puerum uel iuuenem uel senem; nihil enim ad rem pertinent anni, quoniam nullum non acerbum funus est quod parens sequitur.” Post has leges propositas si liberos tollis, omni deos inuidia liberas, qui tibi nihil certi spoponderunt. (17.6.5-7.10)

To all of us Nature says: “I deceive no one. If you bear sons, it may be that they will be handsome, it may be that they will be ugly; perchance they will be born dumb. Some one of them, it may be, will be the savior of his country, or as likely its betrayer. It is not beyond hope that they will win so much esteem that out of regard for them none will venture to speak evil of you; yet bear in mind, too, that they may sink to such great infamy that they themselves will become your curse. There is nothing to forbid that they should perform the last sad rites for you, and that those who deliver your panegyric should be your children, but, too, hold yourself ready to place your son upon the pyre, be he lad or man or graybeard; for years have nothing to do with the matter, since every funeral is untimely at which a parent follows the bier.” If, after these conditions have been set forth, you bring forth children, you must free the gods from all blame; for they have made you no promises.

In comparison to the potential goods and evils of child-bearing, many of the goods and evils of Syracuse are fixed firmly in the past: it is a place of great goods and terrible evils. According to Seneca, if a man chooses to visit Syracuse he will see such extreme marvels as Charybdis, “greediest of whirlpools” (*avidissimum maris verticem*), Arethusa, “most often famed in song” (*celebratissimum carminibus*), the Syracusan harbor, “of all havens the most peaceful” (*portum quietissimum omnium*), and the quarries, “where so many thousands of captives were confined in that natural prison, hewn out of solid rock to an unmeasurable depth” (*ubi tot milia captivorum ille excisis in infinitam altitudinem saxi nativus carcer incluserat*). Syracusan winters are “balmiest” (*tepidissima*) and “not a single day passes without the appearance of the sun” (*nullum diem sine interventu solis*). Moving on from the extreme goods, Seneca begins to address the extreme evils. The summers are “oppressive and unwholesome”

(*gravis et insalubris*), and most extreme of all, there the tyrant Dionysius will be found, “that destroyer of freedom, justice, and law, greedy of power, even after knowing Plato, and of life even after exile!” (*illic tyrannus, libertatis, iustitiae, legum exitium, dominationis cupidus etiam post Platonem, vitae etiam post exilium*).²²

I have several observations to make here. First, the times represented in Seneca’s description of Syracuse do not match the time in which he is writing. According to our discussion of dating above, Seneca wrote the *Ad Marciam* sometime between 34 and c. 40 CE. However, the events he alludes to in his description progress forward in time from the far mythical past (Arethusa, Charybdis) to the mid-fourth century BCE (367-357), during the reign of Dionysius II. (The tyrant to whom Seneca refers simply as “Dionysius” must be Dionysius II, because of his association with Plato.) Seneca writes to his audience *videbis* “you will see” in the future tense indicative mood, as if the goods and evils in his description are unmissable. The this true of the landmarks: the fountain, the harbor, the quarries, the city itself, and perhaps even true of the weather. But few of the *events* happened contemporaneously, and certainly none of

²² Si quis Syracusas petenti diceret: 'omnia incommoda, omnes uoluptates futurae peregrinationis tuae ante cognosce, deinde ita nauiga. Haec sunt quae mirari possis: uidebis primum ipsam insulam ab Italia angusto interscissam freto, quam continenti quondam cohaesisse constat; subitum illo mare inrupit et Hesperium Siculo latus abscidit. Deinde uidebis (licebit enim tibi auidissimum maris uerticem stringere) stratam illam fabulosam Charybdin quam diu ab austro uacat, at, si quid inde uehementius spirauit, magno hiatu profundoque nauigia sorbentem. Videbis celebratissimum carminibus fontem Arethusam, nitidissimi ac perlucidi ad imum stagni, gelidissimas aquas profundentem, siue illas ibi primum nascentis inuenit, siue inlapsum terris flumen integrum subter tot maria et a confusione peioris undae seruatum reddidit. Videbis portum quietissimum omnium quos aut natura posuit in tutelam classium aut adiuuit manus, sic tutum ut ne maximarum quidem tempestatium furori locus sit. Videbis ubi Athenarum potentia fracta, ubi tot milia captiuorum ille excisis in infinitam altitudinem saxi natuus carcer incluserat, ipsam ingentem ciuitatem et laxius territorium quam multarum urbium fines sunt, tepidissima hiberna et nullum diem sine interuentu solis. Sed cum omnia ista cognoueris, grauis et insalubris aestas hiberni caeli beneficia corrumpet. Erit Dionysius illic tyrannus, libertatis iustitiae legum exitium, dominationis cupidus etiam post Platonem, uitae etiam post exilium: alios uret, alios uerberabit, alios ob leuem offensam detruncari iubebit, arcesset ad libidinem mares feminasque et inter foedos regiae intemperantiae greges parum erit simul binis coire. Audisti quid te inuitare possit, quid absterrere: proinde aut nauiga aut resiste.' (17.2-6)

them were contemporaneous with the time Seneca was writing. Notably, a visitor to Syracuse during the mid-first century CE could not have witnessed the cruelties of Dionysius II, which took place almost four hundred years earlier. So not only does Seneca's description represent conflated time, it also represents abridged time, for his Syracuse belongs to the Greek past.

I will address the issue of conflated time first. Syracuse, as many have written, is a city with a grand, dramatic history, which has been the setting of great triumphs and crushing defeats. These events are naturally dispersed throughout time; Seneca brings them into a single experience. As a result, his Syracuse seems permanently inhabited by its mythical and historical personages; haunted by its most celebrated and damned. Let us return to the comparison that Seneca makes in *Ad Marciam*, which is the impetus for his description of Syracuse. Deciding to parent children, he claims, is like deciding to visit Syracuse: "You have now heard what may attract you, what repel you—now, then, either set sail or stay at home!" (*Audisti quid te inuitare possit, quid absterrere; proinde aut nauiga aut resiste, 17.5*) However, by conflating time, he seems to posit that making the decision to parent children is like making the decision to visit Syracuse *without knowing the time when one will enter*. Hence a visitor to Syracuse could end up in the far mythical past, having to skirt Charybdis, or during the Athenian expedition of the late fifth century BCE (415-413), facing imprisonment in the quarries, or in the mid-fourth century, subject to the tyranny of Dionysius II. In the same way, says Seneca, there can be no certainty of a child's appearance, natural ability, constitution, or length of life. The gods make no promises: parents must be prepared for all possibilities, and accepting of all outcomes.

But the balance between “what may attract you, what repel you” seems to tend more toward “what repel you.” Seneca does point out Syracuse’s marvels, but even these call forth troubling events. The fountain of Arethusa, while often described as beautiful, is associated with a rape, and the Great Harbor, *portum quietissimum omnium*, has seen fierce naval battles during the Greek-Punic Wars, the Athenian expedition, and the second Punic War. Syracuse *has* experienced periods of great prosperity, for example under the rule of Hiero II (270 to 215 BCE), but the city’s catastrophes are figured most prominently in its history. The preeminent good that Syracuse offers is its appearance: it is, as Cicero previously put it, “the largest of Greek cities and the loveliest of all cities” (*maximam Graecarum, pulcherrimam omnium, In Verrem* 2.4.117.1-2). But its beauty is counterbalanced by the magnitude of the tragedies that have taken place there, as if the price of extreme beauty is extreme suffering. With reference to Marcia’s situation, the greater a child’s virtues, the more his or her death induces suffering. Seneca does not deny the hardships of parenting, he only reminds us that it is a choice.

Second, time stops at the time of Dionysius II, even though there is more history to be accounted for: more goods and evils. Seneca completes a survey of Greek events in Syracuse, but elides the more recent (and equally applicable) Roman interactions. Why not mention the siege of Syracuse during the second Punic War (214-212 BCE), or the governorship of Verres (73-71 BCE), famously reviewed by Cicero in his 70 BCE prosecution speech? I argue that Seneca *does* refer to these events, although obliquely. And the way he does so is through that same Roman orator, Cicero.

But before expounding on how Cicero's Syracuse is evident in Seneca's, let us take pause and ask *why* Seneca made the conscious decision to leave out of his catalogue events in Syracuse that took place during the Roman period. Unfortunately, I pose a question which I am unable to answer definitively, or even make a satisfying attempt. However, the following may be considered. First, Seneca may have expected the Roman reader to complete the catalogue with his own knowledge of more recent history. Educated Romans would have been familiar with Cicero and Livy's historical accounts and hence may have read *Ad Marciam* with events such as the sack of Syracuse by Marcellus or Verres' corrupt governorship already in the forefront of their minds. Also plausible (and not mutually exclusive) is that Seneca held the Stoic tradition to which he was contributing as belonging foremost to the Greeks, and accordingly chose Greek examples to represent that philosophy. Finally, it is possible that Seneca wanted to universalize his scenario by using older examples from a more distant past.

Back to Cicero. We may recall that the city of Syracuse held a special significance for the orator, for it was there that he famously began his public career as a quaestor (from the verb *quaero*, to search for, although the actual job resembled that of a clerk). He writes in the *Tusculan Disputations* (45 BCE) how he rediscovered the tomb of Archimedes and restored to the Syracusans their great and forgotten heritage. Soon afterwards, he wrote and delivered the *Verrine Orations* (70 BCE), and was catapulted into eminence. Cicero, in turn, was an important figure for Seneca. Seneca, as James Ker put it, "emulate[d] Cicero in the arc of his career as orator, exile,

politician, philosopher, and martyr, but also rew[r]ote him in his studia" (2006:29).²³

And Cicero's stoic perspective was especially fitting for this *Consolatio*, for Cicero too had lost a child, prompting his foray into philosophy, and resulting in (among other works) the *Tusculan Disputations*. Stephen A. White remarks of the *Disputations*: "the entire work is in effect a sustained *consolatio* composed in the aftermath of a grave personal loss" (1995:226).

Like Seneca, his predecessor Cicero does not hesitate to describe Syracuse in terms of superlatives. Cicero proclaims the city "the richest and fairest of all" (*omnium pulcherrimae atque ornatissimae* 2.4.115.6-7), and "so large that it is described as being four great cities joined together" (*ea tanta est urbs ut ex quattuor urbibus maximis constare dicatur*, 2.4.118.1-2). Cicero organizes his description by these "cities" (the Island, Achradina, Tycha, and Neapolis), and Seneca may refer to them when he says "you will see the great city itself, occupying a broader extent of territory than many a metropolis can boast" (*[videbis] ipsam ingentem ciuitatem et laxius territorium quam multarum urbium fines sunt*, 6.17.4.7-8). Superlatives fit Seneca's purpose, for they signify the highest degree of something, and Seneca's Syracuse is a place of extremes. But Cicero's purpose is not so different—he paints Syracuse as a brilliant backdrop, against which Verres' crimes appear undignified and offensive. Both use superlatives as

²³ Unspecific to Cicero, Seneca often incorporated material that he had read into his own writings. Ker points out that in letter 84, Seneca uses a variety of examples to represent the "gathering" and "distilling" processes: "so that whatever has been gathered in reading our pen may convert into our body/ a corpus" (*ut quidquid lectione collectum est stilus redigat in corpus*, 84.2), as "mixing those different droplets into a single flavor" (*in unum saporem varia illa libamenta confudere*, 84.5), as "taking everything from whatever model one likes and impressing one's form on it" (*omnibus quae ex quo voluit exemplari traxit formam suam impressit*, 84.8), and as joining *praecepta*, *artes*, and *exempla* into a *chorus* or *concentus ex dissonis* (84.10). For further discussion of this topic, see James Ker's essay "Seneca, Man of Many Genres."

means to ends; that parenthood is a mixture of goods and evils, that Verres defiled a city whose dignity even Marcellus respected.

When read together, Seneca and Cicero's historical narratives complement each other, resulting in one composite account. Beginning with the earliest historical events mentioned by Cicero, and traveling forward in time, the orator describes the naval battles of the Great Harbor; battles which Seneca elides when he calls the harbor *quietissimum*. According to Cicero, one of Verres' crimes was allowing a *pirate ship* to sail into the Great Harbor, and reach a spot "that the renowned fleets of Carthage at the height of her naval power, despite attempt after attempt in war after war, never succeeded in reaching . . . Only once within human memory had a fleet forced an entrance, the vast and mighty fleet of Athens with her three hundred ships—and it was defeated and crushed in that same harbor" (*quo neque Carthaginensium gloriosissimae classes, cum mari plurimum poterant, multis bellis saepe conatae umquam aspirare potuerunt . . . quo Atheniensium classis sola post hominum memoriam trecentis navibus vi ac multitudine invasit; quae in eo ipso portu loci ipsius portusque natura victa atque superata est, 2.5.97-8*). Next, Cicero references the quarries. We might recall that Seneca too writes of the quarries "where so many thousands of captives were confined in that natural prison, hewn out of solid rock to an unmeasurable depth" (*ubi tot milia captivorum ille excisis in infinitam altitudinem saxi nativus carcer incluserat*). However, Cicero mentions them not in the context of the calamitous Sicilian Expedition, but as "the prison constructed at Syracuse by the most cruel tyrant Dionysius" (*carcer ille qui est a crudelissimo tyranno Dionysio factus Syracusis, 2.5.143*). (Note Cicero's use of another superlative: *crudelissimo*). According to Cicero,

Verres, like Dionysius, used the quarries as a holding cell for Roman citizens who annoyed him. Next in the sequence of time, Cicero mentions King Hiero's house (2.4.118), remembering a time of greater prosperity, and finally, recalls the Roman sack of the city. Cicero's self-proclaimed purpose here is to compare Verres' treatment of the city with Marcellus's: the former, a civil servant, stripped it of treasures, and the latter, a conquering general, held it with respect. By putting Cicero's description of Syracuse in conversation with his own, Seneca further populates his Syracuse, not only with figures from the Greek past, but with Roman figures such as Marcellus, Verres, and Cicero himself.

The main place where Seneca and Cicero's accounts converge is in their descriptions of the tyrant Dionysius II. Cicero, in his *De Re Publica*, speaking through the figure of Scipio, names Syracuse "that illustrious city, which Timaeus says is the largest Greek city, and moreover the fairest of all, its citadel worthy of being seen, its harbors flowing in to the very bosom of the town and ramparts of the city, its wide roads, porticoes, temples, walls—[but] none of these brought it about, when Dionysius had the place in his grip, that it was a republic" (*urbs illa praeclara, quam ait Timaeus Graecarum maxumam, omnium autem esse pulcherrimam, arx visenda, portus usque in sinus oppidi et ad urbis crepidines infusi, viae latae, porticus, templa, muri nihilo magis efficiebant, Dionysio tenente ut esset illa res publica, 4.43*).²⁴ Later, in his *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero reiterates the dichotomy in Syracuse between beauty and tyranny. He writes "How beautiful the city, how richly provided with resources the State which

²⁴ Trans. Clinton Walker Keyes.

he [Dionysius] kept under the crushing weight of slavery!”²⁵ (*qua pulchritudine urbem, quibus autem opibus praeditam servitute oppressam tenuit civitatem!* 5.57.3-5). In these two statements, Cicero comments on the inefficacy of Syracuse’s beauties: the city itself, and its sites, “worthy of being seen,” could not ward off Dionysius’s tyrannical rule. Nor could they preserve the city as a Republic. Therefore the city’s loveliness makes its fate all the more pitiable.

We are already familiar with the motif of the beautiful city, inhabited by the oppressive ruler. But perhaps we have not yet considered the significance of Dionysius II’s inclusion in Seneca’s Syracuse. He is, after all, the only person *explicitly* placed there; others join him through allusion. When speculating on the object of Seneca’s veiled criticism, Nero is the obvious choice. Seneca was Nero’s tutor, and like Nero, Seneca’s Dionysius has an immoderate temper and a predilection for excess.

alios uret, alios uerberabit, alios ob leuem offensam detruncari iubebit,
arcesset ad libidinem mares feminasque et inter foedos regiae
intemperantiae greges parum erit simul binis coire. (17.5-6)

Some he will burn, some he will flog, some for a slight offense he will order to be beheaded, he will call for males and females to satisfy his lust, and to enjoy two at one time of his shameful victims will ill suffice for his royal excesses.

But a c. 40 CE date for *Ad Marciam* puts Nero at age three at the time of writing, disqualifying as a viable candidate. Tiberius is an option—he had not restored the Republic after Augustus’s death, as many had hoped—or Gaius, who was emperor during the most likely time period for *Ad Marciam*. As the intended recipient of Seneca’s statement does not bear heavily on the matter at hand, I will refrain from

²⁵ All translations of the *Tusculan Disputations* belong to J. E. King.

further speculation. However, it is very possible that Seneca included the figure of Dionysius II as a statement on the politics at the time, and I believe the subject merits further inquiry.

At this point, we will defer further discussion of the historical context which Seneca's description evokes. Let us move on to the mythical context, traveling even further into the past. Arethusa, of course, is the central figure of this thesis, and it is fitting to return to her.

As we may recall, Seneca includes the fountain in his catalogue of extreme marvels. He writes:

videbis celebratissimum carminibus fontem Arethusam, nitidissimi ac perlucidi ad imum stagni, gelidissimas aquas profundentem, siue illas ibi primum nascentis inuenit, siue inlapsum terris flumen integrum subter tot maria et a confusione peioris undae seruatam reddidit. (17.3.1-4.1)

You will see the fountain of Arethusa, most often famed in song, with its bright gleaming pool, transparent to the very bottom, and pouring forth its icy waters—whether it found them there where they first had birth, or yielded up a river that had plunged beneath the earth and, gliding intact beneath so many seas, had been kept from the contamination of less pure water.

Seneca posits two explanations for the origin of the fountain: first that it is a natural spring, and second, that the myth elucidated in *Metamorphoses* 5.573-641 is to some degree true, and that the water bubbling up in the fountain of Arethusa has its origin in the Peloponnese. According to Ovid, Arethusa was an Achaian-born huntress who escaped the lust of the river god Alpheus by traveling to Sicily in an underground channel. Arethusa's fountain is considered one of the great landmarks of Syracuse—Silius Italicus uses Arethusa as metonymy for Syracuse—making Arethusa a regular

inhabitant of the city. But her inclusion in Seneca's catalogue may appeal to Marcia as well, for Arethusa too has suffered losses, namely her homeland. As Jones mentioned in Chapter One, Arethusa has the status of a *peregrina*, a foreigner, in Sicily, though she claims to love her new country. By naming her fountain, Seneca identifies an empathetic figure in Syracuse's landscape—and another dichotomy between beauty and suffering. But Arethusa's story is also situated within the context of another loss, this one rather better known. I am referring, of course, to the rape and disappearance of Persephone.

In book five of the *Metamorphoses*, where the story of Arethusa appears, the Muses recount to Minerva the contest that took place between the themselves and the daughters of Pierus. The Muses' entry was a song in praise of Demeter, narrating how Persephone was taken by Hades, "beyond the city Corinthian men once built between two harbors, one large, one small"²⁶ (*qua Bacchiadae, bimari gens orta Corintho, inter inaequales posuerunt moenia portus, 5.407-8*) Ovid, like Seneca, compresses time here—although Persephone's abduction took place in the mythical past, presumably before the founding of Syracuse in the eighth century BCE, the modern city contextualizes the setting for the myth. Later, it is Arethusa who tells Demeter where her daughter is; during the course of her subterranean journey she glimpsed Persephone, "the proud consort of the proud ruler of the world of darkness" (*inferni pollens matrona tyranni, 5.508*). Thus the stories of Arethusa and Persephone are intertwined: during the course of her own metamorphosis, Arethusa sees the consequence of Persephone's, and aids in restoring her to the upper world. Demeter is even more of an empathetic figure

²⁶ All translations of the *Metamorphoses* are Humphries'.

to Marcia than Arethusa, for she too has lost a child, and Sicily suffers tremendously for her grief.

Persephone's story also serves the purpose of making Seneca's Syracuse cosmic, setting the city within the context of the seasons and the cyclical passage of time. However, Dionysius's tyranny is at odds with the natural ebb and flow established by Persephone's obligation: the winters are *tepidissima*, and the summers *gravis et insalubris*. Dionysius's tyranny is repugnant to the extent that it subverts the characteristics attributed to the seasons by Demeter and Persephone themselves.

By evoking Ovid's accounts of Arethusa and Persephone, Seneca populates his Syracuse not only with male, historical personages but female, mythical ones as well. He broadens the scope of the tragedies that have taken place there: near destruction in the jaws of a sea monster, military defeats, misgovernment, and losses of all kinds. In a final analogy, I posit that Seneca personifies Syracuse as a mother, who has lived countless lifespans and borne witness to wretched suffering. In comparison with the suffering that has taken place in Syracuse, Marcia's suffering is small. The example of Syracuse reminds her of *what could have been*, and leaves her with a broader perspective on the uncertainties of parenting. Chance befalls everyone, and she is not alone in her fate. Syracuse is named by history and myth as the setting for the greatest and most terrible events, and it represents both the actuality and possibility of suffering. Marcia has entered into an agreement with Nature in full knowledge of its terms, and must bear the consequences gracefully. Thus Seneca's final message is a Stoic one; that death must be expected, and not feared.

Chapter Three: Silius Italicus's *Punica*

This third and final chapter will consider the Syracuse of the Second Punic War, as related by Silius's *Punica*, with emphasis on the period of time leading up to and surrounding its capture.²⁷ Although we have seen hints of this Syracuse in Cicero's *Verrine Orations*, in his comparison between Verres and Marcellus, we have not yet considered it in its own context.

Arethusa has always been a constant in Syracuse's landscape, but her role changes when the city goes to war. Silius evokes her five times throughout the course of his *Punica*, and four times in Book Fourteen, which tells the events of the war that took place in Sicily. No other author makes such extensive use of the fountain, and in such a specific way—Arethusa appears as the titular figure of Syracuse who literally animates its landscape and intensifies the events that take place there. Both her own actions and the events that take place around her recall her intertextual tradition, reminding the reader that although she is bounded by space, her life has spanned the city's entire history. She was present when the Corinthians came to found Syracuse, when Daphnis invented pastoral poetry, during the reigns of kings and tyrants, and even after the siege of Syracuse, the subject matter represented in Book Fourteen. Silius reaps the benefits of her experiences, and uses her presence to encapsulate Syracuse's reputation, and contextualize the Roman siege of Syracuse amongst the city's grand historical and mythical events. Furthermore, when Silius uses Arethusa as metonymy for Syracuse, their respective historical and literary traditions become conflated. So when Marcellus

²⁷ The *Punica* is Silius's only extant work. At over 12,000 lines long, it is the longest Latin poem from antiquity. It is dated to the period of time between the late 80s to 96 CE.

captures the city he holds both in one: the loveliest city and the loveliest fountain.

Ultimately, Arethusa and Syracuse become trophies—means to augment Rome’s glory, rather than their own.

The beauty of Syracuse is a constant motif throughout this thesis. In his *Verrine Orations*, Cicero calls Syracuse “the richest and loveliest of all” (*omnium pulcherrimae atque ornatissimae* 2.4.115.6-7), and “the largest of Greek cities and the loveliest of all” (*urbem Syracusas maximam esse Graecarum, pulcherrimam omnium*, 2.4.117.1-2). In his *De Re Publica*, through the figure of Scipio, Cicero suggests that Syracuse’s beauty is an older motif dating back to Timaeus, whom he quotes when he refers to Syracuse as “that illustrious city, which Timaeus says is the largest Greek city, and moreover the fairest of all” (*urbs illa praeclara, quam ait Timaeus Graecarum maxumam, omnium autem esse pulcherrimam*, 4.43). Seneca too describes the city in terms of superlatives, although the effect is not always positive (Charybdis is *avidissimum*): Arethusa is *celebratissimum*, the Syracusan harbor *quietissimum*, the Syracusan winters *tepidissima*, and so on. Silius picks up this idea of the unmatched city. When the Roman siege of Syracuse has been brought to completion, and despite the genius of Archimedes, Syracuse has truly fallen, Marcellus observes the city he has brought to its knees.

Totum, qua uehitur Titan, non ulla per orbem
tum sese Isthmiacis aequassent oppida tectis.
tot delubra deum totque intra moenia portus,
adde fora et celsis suggesta theatra columnis
certantisque mari moles, adde ordine long
innumeras spatioque domos aequare superbas
rura. quid, inclusos porrecto limite longis
porticibus sacros iuuenum certamine lucos?

quid tot captiuis fulgentia culmina rostris
 armaque fixa deis, aut quae Marathonius hostis
 perdidit aut Libya quae sunt aduecta subacta?
 hic Agathocleis sedes ornata tropaeis,
 hic mites Hieronis opes; hic sancta uetustas
 artificum manibus. (14.641-54)

In all the earth round which the Sun drives his chariot no city at that time could rival Syracuse. So many temples had she, so many harbors within the walls; market places also, and theaters raised upon lofty pillars, and piers that strove with the sea, and an endless succession of palaces whose spaciousness defied the competition of country-houses. Then were spaces devoted to athletic contests of youth, enclosed by a long vista of far-stretching colonnades; and many lofty buildings adorned with the beaks of captured ships; and armor fixed on temple-walls, either taken from the Athenian enemy or brought across the sea from conquered Libya. Here stood a building adorned with the trophies won by Agathocles, and there was displayed the peaceful wealth of Hiero; and here the handiwork of famous artists was consecrated by antiquity.²⁸

Here Syracuse appears just as splendid as ever, combining reminders of its present glory with monuments to its remarkable past. Clearly the city's infrastructure is notable: it holds temples, harbors, markets, theaters, piers, palaces, *gymnasia*, and other impressive buildings. But rivaling Syracuse's infrastructure, and augmenting it, is the city's grand reputation, commemorated by trophies of its past victories. The captured beaks and armor recall the failed Athenian expedition, which has its own literary tradition among the Greek historians. As Thucydides puts it, the expedition "was the greatest Hellenic achievement of any in this war, or, in my opinion, in Hellenic history; at once most glorious to the victors, and most calamitous to the conquered" (*ζυνέβη τε ἔργον τοῦτο [Ἑλληνικὸν] τῶν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον τόνδε μέγιστον γενέσθαι, δοκεῖν δ' ἔμοιγε καὶ ὄν*

²⁸ All translations of the *Punica* belong to J. D. Duff.

ἀκοῆ Ἑλληνικῶν ἴσμεν, καὶ τοῖς τε κρατήσασι λαμπρότατον καὶ τοῖς διαφθαρεῖσι
δυστυχέστατον, 7.87.5).²⁹ In his *Verrine Orations*, Cicero notes that the Athenians were
the only enemies to have ever entered into the Great Harbor—save for a pirate ship
under Verres—and they were thoroughly defeated in that same place (2.5.98). The
spoils of war also bring to mind Agathocles’ invasion of Libya during the Sicilian Wars,
and his victory over the Carthaginians during another time the city was under siege.
Finally, the “peaceful wealth of Hiero” (*mites Hieronis opes*, 14.653) is reminiscent of a
prosperous time in the not so distant past. Hiero maintained a friendship with the
Romans for most of his life, until his death in 215 BCE. The passing of rule to his
tyrannical grandson Hieronymus, a fifteen-year-old boy, and Hieronymus’s subsequent
death at the hands of conspirators, were the circumstances immediately preceding
Marcellus’s siege of Syracuse.

As Marcellus gazes at the conquered city, he realizes the great power that he
yields. “A sign from him would determine whether those royal walls should remain
standing or vanish utterly before the morrow dawned” (*inque suo positum nutu, stent
moenia regum, an nullos oriens uideat lux crastina muros*, 14.668-9). The city is no
longer autonomous, its buildings and its reputation no longer its own. Instead, it is a
trophy of Marcellus and Rome, and completely subject to their power. Marcellus
“groaned aloud because of his excess of power, and shrank back from what he might
have done” (*ingemuit nimio iuris tantumque licere horruit*, 14.670-1). He decides to
save the city, and hence become its second founder (*servando condidit urbem*, 14.681).

²⁹ Trans. Richard Crawley.

Silius was not the first to write of the view Marcellus saw when looking out over the conquered city, his tears, and his final decision. A similar passage appears in Livy, which was likely Silius's model for his own account.

Marcellus ut moenia ingressus ex superioribus locis urbem omnium ferme illa tempestate pulcherrimam subiectam oculis uidit, inlacrimasse dicitur partim gaudio tantae perpetratae rei, partim uetusta gloria urbis. Atheniensium classes demersae et duo ingentes exercitus cum duobus clarissimis ducibus delati occurrebant et tot bella cum Carthaginensibus tanto cum discrimine gesta, tot tam opulenti tyranni regesque, praeter ceteros Hiero, cum recentissimae memoriae rex, tum ante omnia quae uirtus ei fortunaque sua dederat beneficiis in populum Romanum insignis. ea cum uniuersa occurrerent animo subiretque cogitatio iam illa momento horae arsura omnia et ad cineres reditura, priusquam signa Achradinam admoueret, praemittit Syracusanos qui intra praesidia Romana, ut ante dictum est, fuerant, ut adloquio leni perlicerent hostes ad dedendam urbem. (25.24.11-15)

Marcellus, on entering the walls and from the higher ground viewing one of the most beautiful of all cities in that age lying before his eyes, is said to have wept, partly for joy over his great achievement, partly for the ancient glory of the city. The sinking of the fleets of the Athenians and the destruction of two mighty armies along with two very distinguished generals came to his mind, and so many wars waged with so great a risk against the Carthaginians; tyrants and kings, so many and so wealthy, above all Hiero, a king vividly remembered and also, above all that his own merit and success had given him, conspicuous for his favors to the Roman people. Since all that came to mind and the thought suggested itself that now in the course of an hour everything there would be inflamed and reduced to ashes, before advancing his standards into

Achradina, he sent forward the Syracusans who had been within the Roman lines, as has been said before, in order to entice the enemy by mild words to surrender the city.³⁰

The parallels between the two passages, the accounts of Silius and Livy, are indisputable. By referencing the Athenian Expedition, the wars with Carthage, and Hiero, they both recall the city's glorious past. And they both culminate in Marcellus's decision to save the city, reminding the reader that all of that glory now belongs to Marcellus; that his is an act of mercy. But it is also an act of gain. In Livy's account, the Syracusan assembly that announces their surrender to Marcellus is well aware of how their city might benefit Rome. They want to save Syracuse, so that the city might become a lasting monument of their and Rome's greatness for future generations. So their proposal to let Syracuse stand plays on the view that Marcellus saw as he looked over the conquered city.

gloriam captae nobilissimae
pulcherrimaeque urbis Graecarum dei tibi
dederunt, Marcelle. quidquid unquam terra mari-
que memorandum gessimus, id tui triumphi titulo
accedit. famaene credi uelis quanta urbs a te capta
sit, quam posteris quoque eam spectaculo esse, quo
quisquis terra, quisquis mari uenerit nunc nostra
de Atheniensibus Carthaginensibusque tropaea,
nunc tua de nobis ostendat incolumesque Syracusas
familiae uestrae sub clientela nominis Marcellorum
tutelaque habendas tradas? (25.29.5-7)

The glory of capturing the most notable and most beautiful of Greek cities the gods have given to you, Marcellus. All that we have ever

³⁰ All translations of Livy belong to Frank Gardner Moore.

accomplished on land and sea that is worthy of record is added to the distinction of your triumph. Would you wish men merely to believe that tradition as to the greatness of the city you have captured, rather than it be a sight even to posterity, a city which shall show to every man who comes by land or seam at one spot our trophies won from the Athenians and the Carthaginians, at another your trophies won from us, and that you hand over Syracuse intact to your house, to be kept under the clientship and tutelage of those who bear the name Marcellus?

The Syracusans make their intentions very clear. If Marcellus spares Syracuse, their reputation, and their most beautiful city, is his. There again is the idea of pulchritude—Syracuse as the loveliest city with the greatest and most glorious history. This idea appears in Cicero, in Silius, and now in Livy, as a way to aggrandize Marcellus, and expand the scope of Rome’s power and glory. But it also serves as a way to connect Syracuse and Arethusa. Cities are often personified as beautiful women—Rome is personified as Roma—and the emphasis on Syracuse’s beauty by multiple authors makes it easier for Silius to conflate the two, and he does in the middle of Book Fourteen. So let us rewind the clock, before the capture of the city, before the siege, and before Marcellus makes his way to the island of the three capes, to the beginning of Book Fourteen, to contextualize within this loveliest city the many traditions of Arethusa, and how she herself comes to represent Syracuse.

Book Fourteen begins with a brief history of the island. This comprises both fact and myth: Silius first relates how the island was formed “pushed forth by Neptune’s trident” (*caeruleo propulsa tridente, 14.13*). He notes that Sicily is known for agriculture, and famous for its poets who “make the sacred groves re-echo with song and Helicon resound with the Muse of Syracuse” (*sacras qui carmine siluas, uique Syracosia resonant Helicon camena, 14.29-30*). Then he describes how Cyclopes and Laestrygonians once ruled the island, then the Sicani, and the Sicels, and among them

settlers of Cretan and Phrygian ancestry. But amongst the cities that these peoples built—Egesta, Elyma and Zancle—Silius introduces the city of Syracuse itself, unmatched by others in splendor.

sed decus Hennaeis haud ullum pulchrius oris,
quam quae Sisyphio fundavit nomen ab Isthmo
et multum ante alias Ephyraeis fulget alumnis.
hic Arethusa suum piscoso fonte receptat
Alpheon sacrae portantem signa coronae. (14.50-54)

But the land of Henna can boast nothing more beautiful than the city which has built herself a name from the Isthmus of Sisyphus, and outshines all the other cities by reason of its Corinthian inhabitants. Here Arethusa welcomes her loved Alpheus to her waters abounding in fish, when he comes bearing trophies from the sacred games.

It is well-attested that when Silius went to write his epic, he drew on many rich traditions, for by virtue of the time period in which he was writing, many were available to him. This passage evokes several traditions which we have already discussed: Syracuse as the loveliest city, and as the city founded by Corinthian colonists, the fountain's ancient connection to the Panhellenic sanctuary at Olympia, and the evolution of the myth to include a romantic component. Silius consciously recalls these traditions in order to build on them, for his epic will encapsulate all others. Arethusa serves as a link between texts; a totalizing figure, who is able to bring multiple traditions into a single story. In much the same way that Marcellus annexes Syracuse's glory to enhance his own, Silius annexes Arethusa's expansive use throughout time to make his epic all-encompassing. This, I contend, is one of the reasons that Arethusa is

introduced alongside Syracuse, as the city's figurehead, and, as we shall see later, its personification.

One of Silius's confluences of Arethusa's traditions may be seen in the placement of the story of the Olympian cup alongside the later romantic myth. In Silius's account, Alpheus bears trophies to Arethusa, almost as gifts for his beloved. This is analogous to the story told by Timaeus of Tauromenium: when the sanctuary at Olympia flooded, dung and a golden cup were carried into the fountain of Arethusa. This connection between Olympia and Syracuse allowed Greek colonists to access and gain status from their Hellenic identity. Later, the myth evolves to serve as an example of true love. Ovid writes in his *Amores* "Wasn't it true love for the Arcadian virgin that drove Alpheus to flow to alien shores?"³¹ (*quid? non Alpheon diversis currere terris virginis Arcadiae certus adegit amor? 3.6.29 f*). But in his introduction of Syracuse and Arethusa, Silius uses *receptat*, a present finite verb, and *portantem*, a present participle, to express a single temporality. Neither the conveyance of trophies from Olympia into the fountain nor Alpheus and Arethusa's shared love has been limited by time: Silius brings them together to exist contemporaneously. Even in the present, before the commencement of the siege, Arethusa continues to receive Alpheus, *suum Alpheon*, and his trophies from the Olympic games.

Duff's translation of *suum Alpheon* in the passage above is not strictly literal: "her own Alpheus" would be truer to the text than "her loved Alpheus." However his translation nods to the tradition which depicts the two as lovers. Exemplifying this tradition is an undated, anonymous epigram preserved in the Palatine Anthology, which

³¹ Trans. A. S. Kline.

describes Alpheus as “a bridegroom conducting the current of his love in a self made channel” (*νυμφίος αὐτοκέλευθος ἔων ὀχνηγῶς ἐρώτων*, 9.362) and Arethusa as “clasping like a bride thy Olympian stream in the sweet bonds of her embrace” (*οἶα δὲ νύμφη νυμφίον ἀμφιχυθεῖσα περίπλοκον ἠδέϊ δεσμῶ*, 9.362).³² (The author of the epigram puns on the word *νύμφη* here, which can mean a nymph, bride, or any nubile woman). And when barbarians invade the Peloponnese, Alpheus is forced to restrain his waters, tainted with blood, from flowing into the fountain of his beloved. This epigram reverses the established course of Alpheus: he has long flowed in one direction, either because of colonial desire (in the early sources) or love (in the later ones). In the past, whatever fell into Alpheus’s waters—blood, dung, a golden cup—the river carried to Arethusa. But in the Palatine Anthology, Alpheus demonstrates his love by protecting Arethusa from his blood-stained waters. His lust does not lead to force, but his care leads to restraint.

Silius’s account is not so explicit, and the personification of Alpheus and Arethusa’s relationship is more nebulous. But I do find merit in Duff’s translation of *suum Alpheon* as “her loved Alpheus,” for a love story between Arethusa and Alpheus is attested, and its inclusion fits with Silius’s intent to be all-encompassing. By placing the romantic narrative in direct communication with the story of the golden cup (the dung has been omitted), Silius conflates narratives from different time periods, written for different purposes.³³ The two uses are separated by more than several centuries, but Silius recalls them out of their contexts and joins them, in a manner that displays his own skill as a poet, and sets the stage for the events about to take place in Sicily.

³² Trans. W. R. Paton.

³³ The epigram is undated, but early sources for Arethusa generally did not use such erotic language.

For one progressing through the *Punica*, it soon becomes apparent that Silius intends Arethusa to be more than a symbol of Syracuse, evocative of tradition, and a figure whom he uses to augment his poetic power. In relating the events just prior to Marcellus's first attack, Silius makes Arethusa a stand-in for Syracuse, allowing her to transcend her status as a nymph specific to one part, and become the personification of the whole city. As a result, nymph and city become conflated into one entity.

atque ubi cuncta uiro caedesque exposita tyranni ambiguaeque hominum
mentes, Carthaginis arma quos teneant et quanta locos, quod uulgu
amicum duret Troiugenis, quantos Arethusa tumores concipiat perstetque
suas non pandere portas, incumbit bello ac totam per proxima raptim
armorum effundit flammato pectore pestem.

And when he has heard all—the murder of the tyrant, the division of opinion among the people, the number of the Carthaginian troops and the points occupied by them, what cities remained friendly to the Romans and how Syracuse, puffed up with pride, obstinately refused to open her gates—then Marcellus took the field in indignation and speedily poured forth all the horrors of war upon the surrounding country.

Duff seems to find Silius's use of "Arethusa" as "Syracuse" so evident that he does not bother to translate it in a manner which preserves the nuances of why Silius chose Arethusa to represent Syracuse, and what that representation entails. To begin with, Silius may be picking up on Arethusa's numismatic tradition: her head, often surrounded by swimming dolphins, was depicted on Syracusan coins from the end of the sixth to the fourth century BCE. According to Jenkins, "the nymph and her attendant dolphins remain one of the constant themes of the Syracusan coins, and one which was capable of infinitely varied treatment and expression" (1976:20). Culminating in the works of Eukleidas, Euainetos, and Kimon, the Arethusa coins are considered to be

among the most beautiful of the Greek series.³⁴ The coins illustrate the nymph's importance to Syracuse, for its citizens chose her as an emblem of their city. But Silius may also be evoking Arethusa's literary tradition, where she appears not infrequently as an object of address. When relating his journey after the fall of Troy to the Carthaginians, Aeneas speaks to the fountain directly: "here Alpheus, Elis' river, forced secret passageway underneath the sea, and mingles now with your mouth, Arethusa, in these Sicilian waves" (*Alpheum fama est huc Elidis amnem occultas egisse vias subter mare, qui nunc ore, Arethusa, tuo Siculis confunditur undis. 3.694-696*).³⁵ In book five of the *Punica*, Silius refers to Hieron II as "your king, Arethusa" (*rex, Arethusa, tuus, 5.490*). And in Nemean 1, Pindar calls on Arethusa as the inspiration for his ode.

Hallowed spout of Alpheos,
Ortygia, offspring of famous Syracuse,
couch of Artemis,
and sister of Delos, from you a sweetly worded
hymn issues forth to render
mighty praise for storm-footed
horses in honor of Zeus of Aitna;
and the chariot of Chromios and Nemea urge me to yoke
a song of celebration for victorious deeds.³⁶

We have seen this ode before, illustrating the desire of the Sicilian elite to connect with their "Greekness." But the invocation of the nymph also serves another purpose. According to Larson, "in the odes of Pindar . . . an individual nymph is elevated to represent the city itself; she personifies at once the land, its familiar topographical

³⁴ For more detail on the Arethusa coins, see Barclay (1963), Kraay (1976) and Jenkins (1976).

³⁵ Trans. Allen Mandelbaum.

³⁶ Trans. William H. Race, Pindar's Greek may be found in Chapter One.

features, and the local myth genealogy” (2001:37). Silius’s Arethusa may fulfill a similar role. She is able to encapsulate the great history and myth surrounding Syracuse in a single figure, and she blends her own traditions with those of Syracuse, resulting in a city that displays both human and divine characteristics. Syracuse walks the line between mortal and immortal—its inhabitants pass on, its infrastructure undergoes attack, but the heart of the city endures—it feels, it acts, it is changeable. As its personification, Arethusa provides access to these more lively qualities. The loveliest city is epitomized in the loveliest nymph, and their double tradition results in the most splendid trophy for Marcellus and Rome. Arethusa *is* Syracuse, with all that it evokes, but she also makes Syracuse more than Syracuse, that is, more than its infrastructure and history. She literally enlivens the city, and augments its entity to become all-encompassing.

Like Pindar, Vergil too looks to Arethusa for inspiration. In his *Eclogues*, he requests that she help him write a poem for Gallus, who is “dying of unrequited love” (*indigno cum Gallus amore peribat, 10.10*).

Extremum hunc, Arethusa, mihi concede laborem:
pauca meo Gallo, sed quae legat ipsa Lycoris,
carmina sunt dicenda neget quis carmina Gallo?
sic tibi, cum fluctus subterlabere Sicanos,
Doris amara suam non intermisceat undam. (*Eclogues 10.1*)

Arethusa, Sicilian Muse, allow me this last labour:
a few verses must be sung for my Gallus,
yet such as Lycoris herself may read. Who’d deny songs
for Gallus? If you’d not have briny Doris mix her stream

with yours, when you glide beneath Sicilian waves.³⁷

Although the use of Arethusa as a muse is rare (in fact, the word *musa* does not appear in Vergil's Latin; the addition of "Sicilian Muse" is Kline's interpretation) her invocation is appropriate based on her knowledge of Sicilian subjects—as part of the island's landscape, she bears witness to all of its happenings—and particularly her experience with pastoral love. In Theocritus's *Idyll 1*, when Daphnis himself "was pining away" (*ἐτάκετο*, 1.66), he bids farewell to Arethusa (1.17).³⁸ Silius too includes a Daphnis in his *Punica*, "a name famous in ancient times" (*deductum ab origine nomen antiqua*, 14.462), who fights in a naval battle before the fall of the city. But "how much greater the fame gained by his ancestor who was content with a shepherd's life!" (*at princeps generis quanta maiora paravit intra pastorem sibi nomina!* 465-6). When the former Daphnis "played on his pipe of seven reeds and charmed the trees, the Siren never sent forth her wonted song over the sea at the same time; Scylla's dogs were silent, black Charybdis was motionless, and the Cyclops on his rocky heights loved to hear to joyful strain" (*ille ubi septena modulatus harundine carmen mulcebat siluas, non umquam tempore modum Siren adsuetos effudit in aequore cantus, Scyllaei tacuere canes, stetit atra Charybdis, et laetus scopulis audiuit iubila Cyclops*, 14.471-5). But nature does not mourn the later Daphnis's death. The rocks of the Cyclopes, once charmed by his ancestor's song, weep instead for another fallen soldier, the youth Podaetus. And along with them, Arethusa weeps too.

illum, ubi labentem pepulerunt tela sub undas,

³⁷ Trans. A. S. Kline.

³⁸ We might also consider Arethusa's role as a witness in Book 5 of the *Metamorphoses*, where she tells Demeter that during the course of her subterranean journey she has seen Persephone in the underworld.

ossa Syracosio fraudatum naufraga busto,
fleuerunt freta, fleuerunt Cyclopa saxa
et Cyane et Anapus et Ortygie Arethusa. (14.512-515)

When he fell, and the fatal weapon sank him beneath the wave and cheated his sea-tossed bones of a grave in Syracuse, he was mourned by the straits and the rocks of the Cyclopes; Cyane and the river Anapus and Ortygian Arethusa wept for him.

By drawing Vergil and Theocritus together and into his epic, creating a triangle of pastoral references, Silius demonstrates another facet of Arethusa: the gentle, empathetic figure of the bucolic tradition. She is no longer prideful and unyielding, (*quantos tumores concipiat*), the personification of a city prepared for war, but she witnesses tragedy and is moved by it. Her act of weeping may respond to her previous invocations: although it is not triggered by this Daphnis's death, her tears remember another Daphnis who called out to Arethusa in miserable love, and the Gallus whose fate is twin with Daphnis's. Silius makes it clear that Arethusa is not merely a feature of Syracuse's topography; she is an alive and dynamic part of the city's past, present, and future.

As Syracuse's titular figure, and its personification, Arethusa is among those whom Marcellus invokes when he swears that his advance into Syracuse is a last resort.

Quae cernens ductor, postquam immedicabile uisum seditio, atque ultro bellum surgebat ab hoste, testatus diuos Siculorum amnesque lacusque et fontis, Arethusa, tuos, ad bella uocari inuitum (quae sponte diu non sumpserit, hostem induere arma sibi), telorum turbine uasto adgreditur muros atque armis intonat urbi. (14.292-8)

Marcellus saw all this: and, now that the rebellion seemed a thing past mending and the enemy were beginning a war unprovoked, he called the gods of Sicily to witness, with the rivers and lakes and Arethusa's spring,

that he was challenged to war against his will, and forced by the enemy to don those arms that he had long refused to put on.

Although Duff translates *fontis, Arethusa, tuos* as “Arethusa’s spring,” a more accurate translation would be “your spring, Arethusa.” Once again, Silius is addressing Arethusa directly, and in the same manner as in Book Five when he refers to Hieron II as *rex, Arethusa, tuus*. In both cases Silius places *Arethusa* in the vocative case after the noun and before the possessive adjective. Here Silius repeats what Marcellus might have said as he made his oath; addressing the nymph who has seen so much of everything: love, death, and war. When swearing oaths, gods often invoke the River Styx. But it is worth noting that Arethusa too is fed from an underground river, and Marcellus chooses her to attest his oath. Drawing her interpretation from Ovid, Horsnaes notes “the flight below the earth provides her [Arethusa] with chthonic aspects” (2000:48)

The role that Silius grants Arethusa in the Syracusan landscape is expansive and ever-changing. Livy, in his account of the Second Punic War, treats Arethusa primarily as a landmark around which the battle is arranged. But Livy knew of the fountain’s fame, and that his readers might recall the verses it had been celebrated in to supplement their reading of his text.³⁹ Cicero, writing earlier than Livy but on a later subject matter (namely Verres’ treatment of Syracuse, which he compares to its sack during the Second Punic War) approaches Arethusa in much the same way. But Silius does much more with Arethusa than his historical models: he personifies Arethusa so that Syracuse and its surroundings come alive. Arethusa loves, she is stubborn, she epitomizes the city, she is addressed, she inspires, she sees the misfortunes of men and

³⁹ Livy uses Arethusa as a marker around which the events of the Roman sack of Syracuse are arranged, see Jaeger’s “Once More to Syracuse: Livy’s Perspective on the Verrines” for a comparison of the use of the fountain between Livy and Cicero.

women and weeps for them, and she bears witness to their promises and deeds. She is not the only minor deity who inhabits Syracuse—Silius names Cyane and Anapus—but Silius elevates Arethusa above all others, and in a totalizing impulse, evokes her many traditions to contextualize and make significant the events of the Second Punic War. But, much like Ovid's Arethusa, whose story is told in the *Metamorphoses*, Silius's Arethusa also becomes subject to a more potent power. Only this time Arethusa cannot outrun her pursuer; Marcellus takes her, and what was once hers becomes his and Rome's. The interactions between Marcellus and Arethusa represent the blending of their two respective cities, the fusing of the states of Syracuse and Rome. All of her history—everything that she encapsulates—now serves the Roman state, and she herself represents the conquered bride of the Roman general.

Conclusion

At the core of the Alpheus-Arethusa narrative lies the relationship between mainland Greece and Syracuse; and the relationship between Corinth and Syracuse, the political entities which Alpheus and Arethusa represent. The majority of the ancient sources build on the geographic link established by the Delphic oracle: that Alpheus crosses the Ionian Sea and emerges in the fountain of Arethusa. (Some sources, such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, play with the established Greek narrative and allow Arethusa to escape Alpheus.) But the myth is reinterpreted and reused in multiple ways to suit multiple positions. Chapter One has considered the role of Arethusa in colonization narratives, representing both Greek colonial desire, and subsequent desire in the colonies to associate themselves with the Greek elite. Chapter Two has demonstrated how Syracuse is truly a city of extremes. By recalling its historical and mythical past, Seneca, in his *Consolatio Ad Marciam*, uses it to represent the cosmic risk of bearing children. Arethusa is included amongst the great goods and evils of Syracuse, and much like Marica, and the city itself, is a beautiful figure who has undergone great suffering. (Here we see a precursor to Silius Italicus's use of Arethusa, which conflates Arethusa and Syracuse's historical and literary traditions into a single amalgamation.) As an embodiment of extremes, she appears as an empathetic figure in the Syracusan landscape. Finally, Chapter Three explores the personification of Syracuse as Arethusa in Silius Italicus's *Punica*, and the use of their joint tradition to augment the glory of Marcellus and Rome. Silius's Arethusa is an all-encompassing figure, who recalls her own diverse historical and literary traditions both to display Silius's poetic ability, and to contextualize the city about to fall.

The scope of this thesis, while sufficient, is not all-encompassing, and there are many aspects of the myth which are worthy of further consideration. Examples of this include Moschus's use of Arethusa as an identifier for the poet Bion, who drank of the spring (Homer, in contrast, drank at Pegasus' fountain), and Larson's hypothesis that in early versions of the myth Alpheus pursued Artemis, not Arethusa to Sicily (2001:214). Additionally, one might examine more thoroughly the depiction of Arethusa on Greek coins.

I would like to conclude by positing a second metamorphosis of Arethusa. In the early Greek sources, Arethusa is used to define the relationship between Syracuse and mainland Greece. But with the translation of the myth from Greek to Latin, Arethusa begins to express another political relationship: that of Syracuse and Rome. After her physicality changes from nymph to spring, her political allegiance shifts from Greek to Roman (depending on the author who is representing her). As Jones points out in Chapter One, once she comes to the Roman *municipium* she herself becomes Roman; she holds "these household gods and this dwelling" (*hos penates, hos hanc sedem, Metamorphoses 5.496-7*). Sicily is often seen as a "meeting place" between Greek and Roman powers, who both, at some time, attempted to bring the island under their control. Arethusa too is representative of that "meeting place;" she is significant to both groups alike. She has come under the rule of both Greece and Rome, in her both Greek and Roman elements are represented, and she pays homage to both in her history and literature. I would argue that it is Arethusa's ability to metamorphose that has allowed her myth to retain its popularity for such a broad expanse of time. But Arethusa's identity is not merely two-pronged. Much like Sicily's three capes, or the Trinacria on

its flag, her identity is three-pronged. One must not forget that she is a Sicilian nymph, and holds allegiance also to her island, and most of all to her city. She may be found even now in that city of extremes, the setting of great victories and defeats, where figures such as Dionysius and Hiero exerted their rule, the mathematical genius Archimedes spent his time, and Cicero first came as quaestor. Foremost, she belongs to Syracuse, the most beautiful city.

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