When Catullus writes *si fas est*, he might be understood not only to mean 'if it is lawful', but also 'if it is *speak-able*' – in other words, 'if I may depart from a strict translation of my source'.

Ironically, this departure from Sappho may actually reflect a more profound engagement with the original poem than has been recognized. Sappho's poem is, as Leah Rissman has shown, full of latent Homeric resonances.[6] Perhaps Catullus deviates from the letter of his model in order to demonstrate his awareness of its deeper workings.

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[6] L. Rissman, *Love as War: Homeric Allusion in the Poetry of Sappho*, Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, Heft 157 (Königstein, 1983), 72–90.

AMPHRYSIA VATES (*AENEID* 6.398)

Virgil is known for the care with which he chooses his epithets, but one such choice has received too little attention: in *Aeneid* 6, as the Sibyl is about to respond to the boatman Charon's complaint about living people coming to the underworld, the poet calls her *Amphrysia uates* (6.398). Beginning with Servius, commentators have been roughly unanimous in their treatment of the word:

> Apollinea: et est longe petitum epitheton. nam Amphrysus fluuius est Thessaliae, circa quem Apollo spoliatus diuinitate a Ioue irato Admeti regis pauit armenta ideo, quia occiderat Cyclopas, fabricatores fulminum, quibus Aesculapius extinctus est, Apollinis filius, quia Hippolytum ab inferis herbarum potentia reuocauerat.

The literary history of the word, like its root meaning, provides no mystery: Callimachus (*Hymn* 2.48–9) was seemingly the first to connect this river with this episode, and the *Aeneid* passage under discussion is the first appearance of the adjective in Latin; the first reference to Apollo's connection with this place is also in Virgil, at *Georgics* 3.2: *pastor ab Amphryso*.[1] But if the basic sense and origin of the word have not caused any problems, its application here has.

To understand Virgil's choice of epithet, it is necessary to look more closely at the scene in which it appears. When Aeneas and the Sibyl approach Charon, he rebukes Aeneas and says that he did not happily transport Hercules or Theseus and Pirithous, and then mentions that the former took Cerberus, and the latter two tried to take Proserpina (6.392–7). The Sibyl is called *Amphrysia* just before offering the following response:

[1] On Virgil's allusion to Callimachus in the *Georgics* passage, see R.F. Thomas, *Virgil* Georgics *Volume 2: Books III–IV* (Cambridge, 1988), 37.

> ‘nullae hic insidiae tales (absiste moueri),
> nec uim tela ferunt; licet ingens ianitor antro
> aeternum latrans exsanguis terreat umbras,
> casta licet patrui seruet Proserpina limen.
> Troius Aeneas, pietate insignis et armis,
> ad genitorem imas Erebi descendit ad umbras.’ (6.399–404)

Scholars have rightly noted that this is a pivotal scene in the book, and so the reference to Apollo shows that the Sibyl has the authority to be here. As J.F. Miller has recently noted, this is one of two places in the underworld where the Sibyl is connected with a god, both times with Apollo: ‘The representative of Apollo, great Olympian deity, forcefully assures Charon that this man of *pietas* is not violently intruding into the Stygian realm’.[2]

Miller’s interpretation of the scene is correct, and reinforces an earlier interpretation by J.W. Zarker, who suggests that the Sibyl’s statement is meant to contrast Aeneas with other heroes who have come to the underworld, specifically Hercules and Theseus, who came with violent intentions, going so far as to suggest that we might think that the two earlier heroes came without the golden bough, which the Sibyl shows to Charon immediately after the above statement.[3] Aeneas’ proper behaviour is further highlighted when Theseus and Pirithous appear being punished in Tartarus (6.601, 617–8).

But Miller’s only explanation for why it is this particular epithet that Virgil chooses is that, ‘the epithet wittily draws attention to the river locating Apollo’s Thessalian adventure just when the Sibyl and Aeneas try to cross the river into the Underworld proper’ (Miller, 146). Is this unusual epithet meant only to make us think of Apollo and another river? Apollo could be connected with other rivers – like the Lycian Xanthus, as at *Aeneid* 4.143–9 – so why coin this new adjective to remind his readers of Apollo’s time spent serving Admetus?

There is a much more important thematic element underlying the term: Apollo’s time spent near the Amphrysus has a double connection with the underworld, specifically with people coming back from the underworld. First, as commentators since Servius have all noted, Apollo had to serve Admetus as a herdsman as punishment for killing some of the Cyclopes who make Zeus’s thunderbolts. Apollo had done this because Zeus had blasted his son Asclepius for bringing one or more people back from the dead.[4] Secondly (and this is unremarked upon by commentators), because Admetus treated Apollo well, the latter allowed him to stay alive if he could find another to die for him; Admetus’ wife Alcestis volunteered, and was then brought back from the underworld by Hercules.[5]

The epithet *Amphrysia* thus has multiple resonances in this passage: it underlines Apollo’s connection with the underworld, including the fact that he has some power over it, and may also suggest that he has learned his lesson, and thus it sets up the Sibyl’s forceful response to Charon. Aeneas is not going to do anything untoward, and is not going to try to take anyone or anything out of the underworld – and what better way to assure Charon of this than to highlight Apollo’s connection

[2] J.F. Miller, *Apollo, Augustus, and the Poets* (Cambridge, 2009), 146–7.

[3] J.W. Zarker, ‘Aeneas and Theseus in *Aeneid* 6’, *CJ* 62 (1967), 220–6, at 223–4.

[4] Apollod. *Bibl*. 3.10.4 provides the extra detail that, if not for Latona’s entreaty, Zeus would have sent Apollo to Tartarus.

[5] For the sources for and variations in these myths, see T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources* (Baltimore, 1993), 91–2, 397.

with the underworld, and the punishment he received for not playing by the rules?[6] The epithet *Amphrysia* serves thus as a reminder of Apollo's power and the Sibyl's authority, but also of Apollo's previous connection with sending pious people to the underworld. In short, no other epithet could as simply and effectively draw attention to Apollo's connections with the underworld as *Amphrysia*.

There may be other connotations. As Miller (136) notes, the Sibyl has a connection with both Apollo and Diana, most obviously when she is called *Phoebi Triuiaeque sacerdos* (6.35). While the connection with Diana appears to fade in the underworld, with the exception of allusions to Hecate, the epithet *Amphrysia* offers an oblique connection with Diana, since her follower Hippolytus was the most famous of those brought back to life by Asclepius. As Virgil says later in his account of the Hippolytus myth (*Aen*. 7.761–82), he was brought back *Paeoniis reuocatum herbis et amore Dianae* (769).[7]

There may be one final hint that we should be thinking about the story of Apollo and Asclepius. At the end of the tour of Tartarus and just before Aeneas and the Sibyl enter Elysium (where we are again reminded of her connection with Apollo: *Phoebi longaeua sacerdos*, 628), they see Theseus being punished, and one Phlegyas warns them, *'discite iustitiam moniti et non temnere diuos'* (620). As Servius tells us (*ad* 618), *Phlegyas autem, Ixionis pater, habuit Coronidem filiam, quam Apollo uitiauit, unde suscepit Aesculapium. quod pater dolens, incendit Apollinis templum et eius sagittis est ad inferos trusus*.[8] The scene is striking not only because of the ominous warning, but also because Virgil seems to have been the first to include Phlegyas in the underworld.

The story of Apollo and Asclepius involves the underworld and multiple instances of punishment, and contrasts with Aeneas' famous *pietas*. Just as Aeneas and the Sibyl are about to enter the underworld proper, Virgil uses – even invents – an epithet that highlights both Apollo's connection with the underworld and the fact that Aeneas is going to the underworld for all the right reasons.[9]

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[6] At 6.687–8 Anchises suggests that it is a mark of Aeneas' piety that he has come: *uenisti tandem, tuaque exspectata parenti | uicit iter durum pietas?*

[7] Love may be another theme. At *Hymn* 2.47–9, Callimachus says that Apollo was in love with Admetus, and it is Diana's love for Hippolytus that leads to Asclepius bringing him back, and then Apollo's love of his son that leads to his killing the Cyclopes who made the thunderbolts used to kill that son. Apollo's love for Admetus led Apollo to aid him in marrying Alcestis, and her love for her husband led her to die in his stead.

[8] Servius *ad* 618 also notes that *Phlegyas* could be an accusative plural, and Zarker (n. 3), 225 argues that the *Phlegyas* of 618 refers to the Lapiths Ixion and Pirithous. If this is true, then the point still holds, because it is then Theseus who speaks the line about learning not to spurn the gods, thereby further highlighting the difference between Aeneas and Theseus, one of the people about whom Charon complained.

[9] J.J.H. Savage, 'The Cyclops, the Sibyl and the poet', *TAPhA* 93 (1962), 410–42, at 416–26 unconvincingly argues that the epithet *Amphrysia*, as part of the whole Tartarus scene, is meant to show that Apollo is a model to Augustus, with the Cyclopes as enemies of the state. Thus Aeneas and the Sibyl must pierce the walls built by the Cyclopes (630–1) in order to reach Elysium.