



**Ingo Gildenhard**

**Virgil, *Aeneid*, 4.1–299**

Latin text, study questions, commentary  
and interpretive essays

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Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.1–299:

Latin Text, Study Questions,  
Commentary and Interpretative Essays

Ingo Gildenhard

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*For Alessandro*



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Finally, it gives me great pleasure to dedicate this volume to another inspiring critic, Alessandro Schiesaro, for now twenty years of friendship and support—as a surely inadequate, but perhaps not inappropriate, token of gratitude for someone who has pushed our understanding of Virgil’s Dido ‘further’ than anyone.



# 1. Preface

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For the years 2013–2015, lines 1–299 of *Aeneid* 4 form part of the OCR Latin A-Level specifications. According to the current Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, students are thus able to enjoy a portion of ‘the best book of the best poem of the best poet’!<sup>1</sup> One can see where Johnson is coming from, not least from the point of view of the ‘classical tradition’—that is, the impact and presence of ancient Greece and Rome, after the end of antiquity, down the centuries until the present day. For among other things, the fourth book of the *Aeneid* features three powerful forces in human experience—Love, Sex, and Tragedy—that, in their classical inflections, continue to ‘shape our lives’.<sup>2</sup> ‘Euge!’, then, as Minimus, the Latin-speaking Mouse of Roman Vindolanda would have put it, or, in English, ‘hooray!’<sup>3</sup>—even though the text is, apart from being ‘violently emotive’ also ‘undeniably difficult’.<sup>4</sup>

As with my little volume on Cicero’s *Verrines* 2.1.53–86 (an AS-level set text for 2012–14), which appeared last November, the initial impulse behind writing this textbook on *Aeneid* 4.1–299 was an invitation to speak at a conference for teachers on the available resources and ‘the latest thinking’ on the new set text.<sup>5</sup> Yet unlike the situation with Cicero’s *Verrines*—where

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1. Cf. John Dryden’s (1631–1700) famous appraisal of Virgil’s *Georgics* as ‘the best poem by the best poet.’ For Boris Johnson’s mischievous misprision, see the promotional video for CICERO, an acronym for *Certamen In Concordiam Europae Regionumque Orbis*, a competition (*certamen*) designed to further the peaceful harmony (*concordia*) of Europe (*Europae*) and the regions (*regionum*) of the world (*orbis*), at [www.ciceroconcordia.com](http://www.ciceroconcordia.com).
  2. See Goldhill (2004).
  3. To meet Minimus, go to <http://www.minimus-etc.co.uk/>.
  4. Horsfall (1995), p. 123.
  5. See I. Gildenhard, *Cicero, Against Verres, 2.1.53–86: Latin Text with Introduction, Study Questions, Commentary and English Translation* (Cambridge, 2011). The book is also freely available to read in its entirety at the publisher’s website (<http://www.openbookpublishers.com/product/96>) and at Google Books at <http://www.openbookpublishers.com>. The free interactive version with teachers’ comments is available at <http://openbookpublishers.theclassicslibrary.com/home/>

the aids available to come to terms with the set text proved rather scarce—introductions and commentaries on the *Aeneid* as a whole, and Book 4 in particular, are of course plentiful. Over the last seventy-five years or so no fewer than four special editions have appeared—by A. S. Pease (1935), R. G. Austin (1955, 2nd edn 1963), Keith Maclennan (2007) and James J. O’Hara (2011).<sup>6</sup> Each one has its particular areas of strength: Pease impresses with his careful and diligent collection of literary and historical data; Austin offers superb analyses of Virgil’s style and handling of the hexameter; Maclennan renders the text admirably accessible to students, while also drawing attention to the depth and complexity of Virgil’s poetry; and O’Hara compels with his concise explication of difficult grammar and determined distillation of the scholarly literature. Electronic resources, too, exist in abundance, most notably the remarkable ‘Vergil Project’ sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania at <http://vergil.classics.upenn.edu/>. Apart from offering a hyperlinked Latin text that provides handy reading assistance in the form of parsing each individual word, the website also features other helpful material such as a Concordance, electronic versions of the commentaries by Servius and Conington/Nettleship, and various translations (including the one by John Dryden).

In the light of such cornucopia, there was, arguably, no need to add a further resource to the list. I went ahead nevertheless, in part to experiment with a novel format designed specifically for the special challenges of the Latin A-level and its liminal position between school and university. Unlike standard commentaries, which principally aim at explicating difficulties and providing answers or solutions to questions or problems in the text, this textbook tries first and foremost to stimulate critical engagement with Virgil’s poetry. Given the manifold aids available elsewhere in terms of translations; basic introductions to Virgil, the *Aeneid*, and the wider historical context; vocabulary lists; definitions of technical terms; or guidance on matters to do with metre etc., I have dispensed with recapitulating basics in favour of the following:

- (a) *Latin Text*: going by my own experience and preferences, I assume that most users of this book will want to have their text in a separate volume (or window), to avoid flipping about or scrolling up and down. It seemed nevertheless advisable to re-print a plain text of the

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6. See Bibliography for details.

assigned passage here, for the sake of completeness and convenience and to facilitate checks and revision. The text here comes from the Latin Library (<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/>), with occasional adjustments.

- (b) *Study Questions*: a crucial feature of this textbook is the list of study questions as an intermediary stage between ‘text’ and ‘commentary’, designed to stimulate independent thought about Virgil’s poem and poetry. They are meant to draw attention to interesting or difficult features of the text (from grammar to syntax, from style to theme) and to indicate lines of enquiry worth pursuing further. As such, they are meant to function as gateways into critical dialogue with the *Aeneid*. Teachers may wish to pick and choose from the list for their work in class; but the questions are phrased and set up in such a way that they lend themselves to independent study as well, especially since the more technical ones find answers in the commentary. Many, however, are open-ended: they raise a problem or issue of interpretation that can never be satisfactorily exhausted or resolved, but merit ongoing discussion and controversy. In short, the Study Questions ought to facilitate engagement with Virgil’s text and its rich layers of meaning—perhaps also in ways that at times fall outside the constraints and conventions of ‘skool’ (as Nigel Molesworth would put it).
- (c) *Commentary*: the commentary itself, too, is designed in such a way as to open up avenues for dialogue and discussion. It includes basic explanation of the grammar and syntax and explicates, fairly systematically, the rhetorical fabric of Virgil’s text. The point here is not to spot yet another tricolon, alliteration, or chiasmus, or to suggest yet another (methodologically often dubious) correlation between sound and sense, but to train readers in recognizing such patterns as a matter of course and to suggest ways in which form and content interlock in Virgil’s poetry.

The emphasis throughout is on literary appreciation and an attempt to situate this part of the *Aeneid* within the Greco-Roman literary tradition and the wider historical context. This includes several attempts to show how Virgil rewrote Greek predecessors in ways that I hope will be illuminating also to students who have not (yet) studied ancient Greek. The extensive citation of Greek texts, also in the original, still calls for an explanation. The rationale is the same

that informs a course offered by the Department of Classics and Ancient History at Durham University for freshers who have not had any Latin or Greek tuition at school and are (at least initially and for whatever reason) disinclined to pick up either language at university. It is called ‘Language, Translation, Interpretation’ and is specifically designed to help students without knowledge of the ancient languages to engage with the primary sources in English translations—with the original Greek or Latin present as a reminder, occasional point of reference, and, perhaps, stimulant to enrol in a language module in future years. In the commentary, all citations from Greek *and* Latin are at any rate accompanied by a translation (unless the quotation comes from the set passage itself). Unless otherwise indicated, I have used the Loeb Classical Library editions for Greek and Latin texts and translations (though frequently adjusted).

With a student audience in mind, I have also cited other commentators and scholars more extensively than is common practice in the genre of the commentary, where mastery shows itself in the elegant wielding of the learned ‘cf.’ and a string of references. But such oblique pointers to primary sources or secondary literature are by and large meaningless for anyone who does not have access to a research library or JSTOR (short for *Journal Storage*, an on-line archive of academic journals, including back issues). I therefore routinely cite or summarize scholarship I refer to and when adducing a parallel passage (begin to) explicate the reason and the relevance. Technical details to do with style and metre, especially those that presuppose familiarity with the statistics of Virgilian usage, have been kept to a minimum (though are not passed over in silence altogether), and the notes tend towards the discursive and the open-ended. Again, the aim has been to go beyond, in as intelligible fashion as possible, the kind of thing that usually goes into a school commentary, to bridge the gap between A-level and the study of Latin literature at university level. But where the gap to be bridged seemed too wide, I have flagged up sections of the commentary with the tag ‘Extra Information’. These sections are printed in smaller font; the information therein tends to require extra initiative (such as reading a piece of Hellenistic poetry that Virgil may be alluding to) to be appreciated fully.

(d) *Essays*: while the commentary already tends towards the essayistic, the format of line-by-line analysis still imposes severe limits on the sustained discussion of a particular aspect or topic. I have therefore included lengthier and more coherent treatments of a range of topics that are of particular relevance for a sophisticated appreciation of Virgil's poetry in general and his Dido episode in particular: 1. Content and Form; 2. Historiographical Dido; 3. Allusion; and 4. Religion. The challenge I set myself here is to offer discussions of difficult and controversial aspects of the *Aeneid* in ways that are comprehensible, perhaps even enjoyable, to a student reader—or at least provide some suggestions for further thought and study.

Goold, in the Preface to his revised Loeb edition of Virgil, voices the opinion that 'in spite of the prodigious amount of commentary, annotation, and criticism written upon the three great works of the divine Mantuan [sc. Virgil], the reader may rest assured that the Latin text itself enshrines everything vital to its appreciation' (x). However appealing this idea might be, it is a half-truth at best. Some aspects of Virgil's poetry may indeed require little 'contextual' knowledge to be appreciated in their brilliance, notably the interlocking of content and form, which is a key theme of the commentary and explored in more sustained and systematic fashion in the first interpretative essay. But Virgil's aggressive rewriting of the historiographical tradition on Dido; his pervasive and sophisticated engagement with his literary predecessors, Greek (notably Homer and Apollonius Rhodius) and Latin (notably Lucretius and Catullus); or his distinctive dialogue with the religious realities of late Republican and early imperial Rome—all vital dimensions of his artistry—require the kind of commentary, annotation, and criticism that advocates of the divine artwork and its autonomy like to disparage. For better or for worse, a *historically informed* appreciation of classical texts remains an educational objective (while also being one of the most difficult and demanding things to achieve—but that in itself is a good reason to keep trying). At the same time, efforts to read the *Aeneid* historically should not get in the way of—indeed, should enhance—the text's *contemporary* relevance. The issues raised by the Dido episode—sexual ethics, the use and abuse of power, interaction with (and construal of) the other, imperialism, personal choice and historical necessity, or rhetorical spin in the (mis-)representation of facts, to name a few—continue to matter.



- (e) The book concludes with a bibliography that lists texts, translations, commentaries, introductions, and a selection of secondary literature, including all those items cited in the form of Author and Date in the Commentary and the Interpretative Essays.

## 2. Latin Text

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At regina graui iamdudum saucia cura  
uulnus alit uenis et caeco carpitur igni.  
multa uiri uirtus animo multusque recursat  
gentis honos; haerent infixi pectore uultus  
uerbaque nec placidam membris dat cura quietem. 5  
postera Phoebea lustrabat lampade terras  
umentemque Aurora polo dimouerat umbram,  
cum sic unaniam adloquitur male sana sororem:

'Anna soror, quae me suspensam insomnia terrent!  
quis nouus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes, 10  
quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!  
credo equidem, nec uana fides, genus esse deorum.  
degeneres animos timor arguit. heu, quibus ille  
iactatus fatis! quae bella exhausta canebat!  
si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet 15  
ne cui me uinclo uellem sociare iugali,  
postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit;  
si non pertaesum thalami taedaeque fuisset,  
huic uni forsant potui succumbere culpae.

Anna (fatebor enim) miseri post fata Sychaei 20  
coniugis et sparsos fraterna caede penatis  
solus hic inflexit sensus animumque labantem  
impulit. agnosco ueteris uestigia flammae.  
sed mihi uel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat  
uel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras, 25  
pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque profundam,  
ante, pudor, quam te uiolo aut tua iura resoluo.  
ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores

abstulit; ille habeat secum seruetque sepulcro.  
sic effata sinum lacrimis impleuit obortis. 30

Anna refert: 'o luce magis dilecta sorori,  
solane perpetua maerens carpere iuuenta  
nec dulcis natos Veneris nec praemia noris?  
id cinerem aut manis credis curare sepultos?  
esto: aegram nulli quondam flexere mariti, 35  
non Libyae, non ante Tyro; despectus Iarbas  
ductoresque alii, quos Africa terra triumphis  
diues alit: placitone etiam pugnabis amori?  
nec uenit in mentem quorum consederis aruis?  
hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello, 40  
et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis;  
hinc deserta siti regio lateque furentes  
Barcaei. quid bella Tyro surgentia dicam  
germanique minas?  
dis equidem auspicibus reor et Iunone secunda 45  
hunc cursum Iliacas uento tenuisse carinas.  
quam tu urbem, soror, hanc cernes, quae surgere regna  
coniugio tali! Teucrum comitantibus armis  
Punica se quantis attollet gloria rebus!  
tu modo posce deos ueniam, sacrisque litatis 50  
indulge hospitio causasque innecte morandi,  
dum pelago desaeuit hiems et aquosus Orion,  
quassataeque rates, dum non tractabile caelum.'

His dictis impenso animum flammauit amore  
spemque dedit dubiae menti soluitque pudorem. 55  
principio delubra adeunt pacemque per aras  
exquirunt; mactant lectas de more bidentis  
legiferae Cereri Phoeboque patrique Lyaeo,  
Iunoni ante omnis, cui uincla iugalia curae.  
ipsa tenens dextra pateram pulcherrima Dido 60  
candentis uaccae media inter cornua fundit,  
aut ante ora deum pinguis spatiat ad aras,  
instauratque diem donis, pecudumque reclusis  
pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta.  
heu, uatum ignarae mentes! quid uota furentem, 65

quid delubra iuuant? est mollis flamma medullas  
 interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus.  
 uritur infelix Dido totaque uagatur  
 urbe furens, qualis coniecta cerua sagitta,  
 quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit 70  
 pastor agens telis liquitque uolatile ferrum  
 nescius: illa fuga siluas saltusque peragrat  
 Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo.  
 nunc media Aenean secum per moenia ducit  
 Sidoniasque ostentat opes urbemque paratam, 75  
 incipit effari mediaque in uoce resistit;  
 nunc eadem labente die conuiuia quaerit,  
 Iliacosque iterum demens audire labores  
 exposcit pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore.  
 post ubi digressi, lumenque obscura uicissim 80  
 luna premit suadentque cadentia sidera somnos,  
 sola domo maeret uacua stratisque relictis  
 incubat. illum absens absentem auditque uidetque,  
 aut gremio Ascanium genitoris imagine capta  
 detinet, infandum si fallere possit amorem. 85  
 non coeptae adsurgunt turres, non arma iuuentus  
 exercet portusue aut propugnacula bello  
 tuta parant: pendent opera interrupta minaeque  
 murorum ingentes aequataque machina caelo.

Quam simul ac tali persensit peste teneri 90  
 cara Iouis coniunx nec famam obstare furori,  
 talibus adgreditur Venerem Saturnia dictis:  
 'egregiam uero laudem et spolia ampla refertis  
 tuque puerque tuus (magnum et memorabile numen),  
 una dolo diuum si femina uicta duorum est. 95  
 nec me adeo fallit ueritam te moenia nostra  
 suspectas habuisse domos Karthaginis altae.  
 sed quis erit modus, aut quo nunc certamine tanto?  
 quin potius pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos  
 exercemus? habes tota quod mente petisti: 100  
 ardet amans Dido traxitque per ossa furorem.  
 communem hunc ergo populum paribusque regamus

auspiciis; liceat Phrygio seruire marito  
dotalisque tuae Tyrios permittere dextrae.'

Olli (sensit enim simulata mente locutam, 105

quo regnum Italiae Libycas auerteret oras)

sic contra est ingressa Venus: 'quis talia demens

abnuat aut tecum malit contendere bello,

si modo quod memoras factum fortuna sequatur?

sed fatis incerta feror, si Iuppiter unam 110

esse uelit Tyrii urbem Troiaque profectis,

misceriue probet populos aut foedera iungi.

tu coniunx, tibi fas animum temptare precando.

perge, sequar.' tum sic excepit regia Iuno:

'mecum erit iste labor. nunc qua ratione quod instat 115

confieri possit, paucis (aduerte) docebo.

uenatum Aeneas unaque miserrima Dido

in nemus ire parant, ubi primos crastinus ortus

extulerit Titan radiisque retexerit orbem.

his ego nigrantem commixta grandine nimum, 120

dum trepidant alae saltusque indagine cingunt,

desuper infundam et tonitru caelum omne ciebo.

diffugient comites et nocte tegentur opaca:

speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem

deuenient. adero et, tua si mihi certa uoluntas, 125

conubio iungam stabili propriamque dicabo.

hic hymenaeus erit.' non aduersata petenti

adnuit atque dolis risit Cytherea repertis.

Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit.

it portis iubare exorto delecta iuuentus, 130

retia rara, plagae, lato uenabula ferro,

Massylique ruunt equites et odora canum uis.

reginam thalamo cunctantem ad limina primi

Poenorum exspectant, ostroque insignis et auro

stat sonipes ac frena ferox spumantia mandit. 135

tandem progreditur magna stipante caterua

Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo;

cui pharetra ex auro, crines nodantur in aurum,

aurea purpuream subnectit fibula uestem.

nec non et Phrygii comites et laetus Iulus incedunt. ipse ante alios pulcherrimus omnis infert se socium Aeneas atque agmina iungit. qualis ubi hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta deserit ac Delum maternam inuisit Apollo instauratque choros, mixtique altaria circum	140     145
Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt pictique Agathyrsi; ipse iugis Cynthi graditur mollique fluentem fronde premit crinem fingens atque implicat auro, tela sonant umeris: haud illo segnior ibat Aeneas, tantum egregio decus enitet ore.	150
postquam altos uentum in montis atque inuia lustra, ecce ferae saxi deiectae uertice caprae decurrere iugis; alia de parte patentis transmittunt cursu campos atque agmina cerui pulueralenta fuga glomerant montisque relinquunt.	155
at puer Ascanius mediis in uallibus acri gaudet equo iamque hos cursu, iam praeterit illos, spumantemque dari pecora inter inertia uotis optat aprum, aut fuluum descendere monte leonem.	
Interea magno misceri murmure caelum incipit, insequitur commixta grandine nimbus, et Tyrii comites passim et Troiana iuuentus Dardaniusque nepos Veneris diuersa per agros tectata metu petiere; ruunt de montibus amnes.	160     165
speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem deueniunt. prima et Tellus et pronuba Iuno dant signum; fulsere ignes et conscius aether conubiis summoque ulularunt uertice Nymphae. ille dies primus leti primusque malorum causa fuit; neque enim specie famaue mouetur nec iam furtiuum Dido meditatur amorem: coniugium uocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam.	170
Extemplo Libyae magnas it Fama per urbes, Fama, malum qua non aliud uelocius ullum: mobilitate uiget uirisque acquirit eundo, parua metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras	175

ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.  
 illam Terra parens ira inritata deorum  
 extremam, ut perhibent, Coeo Enceladoque sororem  
 progenuit pedibus celerem et pernicibus alis, 180  
 monstrum horrendum, ingens, cui quot sunt corpore plumae,  
 tot uigiles oculi subter (mirabile dictu),  
 tot linguae, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit auris.  
 nocte uolat caeli medio terraeque per umbram  
 stridens, nec dulci declinat lumina somno; 185  
 luce sedet custos aut summi culmine tecti  
 turribus aut altis, et magnas territat urbes,  
 tam ficti prauique tenax quam nuntia ueri.  
 haec tum multiplici populos sermone replebat  
 gaudens, et pariter facta atque infecta canebat: 190  
 uenisse Aenean Troiano sanguine cretum,  
 cui se pulchra uiro dignetur iungere Dido;  
 nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa, fouere  
 regnorum immemores turpique cupidine captos.  
 haec passim dea foeda uirum diffundit in ora. 195  
 protinus ad regem cursus detorquet Iarban  
 incenditque animum dictis atque aggerat iras.

Hic Hammone satus rapta Garamantide nympa  
 templa Ioui centum latis immania regnis, 200  
 centum aras posuit uigilemque sacrauerat ignem,  
 excubias diuum aeternas, pecudumque cruore  
 pingue solum et uariis florentia limina sertis.  
 isque amens animi et rumore accensus amaro  
 dicitur ante aras media inter numina diuum  
 multa Iouem manibus supplex orasse supinis: 205  
 'Iuppiter omnipotens, cui nunc Maurusia pictis  
 gens epulata toris Lenaeum libat honorem,  
 aspicias haec? an te, genitor, cum fulmina torques  
 nequiquam horremus, caecique in nubibus ignes  
 terrificant animos et inania murmura miscent? 210  
 femina, quae nostris errans in finibus urbem  
 exiguam pretio posuit, cui litus arandum  
 cuique loci leges dedimus, conubia nostra  
 reppulit ac dominum Aenean in regna recepit.

et nunc ille Paris cum semiuiro comitatu, 215  
 Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem  
 subnexus, raptu potitur: nos munera templis  
 quippe tuis ferimus famamque fouemus inanem.'

Talibus orantem dictis arasque tenentem 220  
 audiit Omnipotens, oculosque ad moenia torsit  
 regia et oblitos famae melioris amantis.

tum sic Mercurium adloquitur ac talia mandat:  
 'uade age, nate, uoca Zephyros et labere pennis  
 Dardaniumque ducem, Tyria Karthagine qui nunc  
 exspectat fatisque datas non respicit urbes, 225  
 adloquere et celeris defer mea dicta per auras.

non illum nobis genetrix pulcherrima talem  
 promisit Graiumque ideo bis uindicat armis;  
 sed fore qui grauidam imperiis belloque frementem  
 Italiam regeret, genus alto a sanguine Teucri 230  
 proderet, ac totum sub leges mitteret orbem.

si nulla accendit tantarum gloria rerum  
 nec super ipse sua molitur laude laborem,  
 Ascanione pater Romanas inuidet arces?  
 quid struit? aut qua spe inimica in gente moratur 235  
 nec prolem Ausoniam et Lauinia respicit arua?  
 nauiget! haec summa est, hic nostri nuntius esto.'

Dixerat. ille patris magni parere parabat  
 imperio; et primum pedibus talaria nectit 240  
 aurea, quae sublimem alis siue aequora supra  
 seu terram rapido pariter cum flamine portant.

tum uirgam capit: hac animas ille euocat Orco  
 pallentis, alias sub Tartara tristia mittit,  
 dat somnos adimitque, et lumina morte resignat.

illa fretus agit uentos et turbida tranat 245  
 nubila. iamque uolans apicem et latera ardua cernit  
 Atlantis duri caelum qui uertice fulcit,

Atlantis, cinctum adsidue cui nubibus atris  
 piniferum caput et uento pulsatur et imbri,  
 nix umeros infusa tegit, tum flumina mento 250  
 praecipitant senis, et glacie riget horrida barba.



hic primum paribus nitens Cyllenius alis  
 constitit; hinc toto praeceps se corpore ad undas  
 misit aui similis, quae circum litora, circum  
 piscosos scopulos humilis uolat aequora iuxta. 255  
 haud aliter terras inter caelumque uolabat  
 litus harenosum ad Libyae, uentosque secabat  
 materno ueniens ab auo Cyllenia proles.  
 ut primum alatis tetigit magalia plantis,  
 Aenean fundantem arces ac tecta nouantem 260  
 conspicit. atque illi stellatus iaspide fulua  
 ensis erat Tyrioque ardebat murice laena  
 demissa ex umeris, diues quae munera Dido  
 fecerat, et tenui telas discreuerat auro.  
 continuo inuadit: ‘tu nunc Karthaginis altae 265  
 fundamenta locas pulchramque uxorius urbem  
 extruis? heu, regni rerumque oblite tuarum!  
 ipse deum tibi me claro demittit Olympo  
 regnator, caelum et terras qui numine torquet,  
 ipse haec ferre iubet celeris mandata per auras: 270  
 quid struis? aut qua spe Libycis teris otia terris?  
 si te nulla mouet tantarum gloria rerum  
 [nec super ipse tua moliris laude laborem,]  
 Ascanium surgentem et spes heredis Iuli  
 respice, cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus 275  
 debetur.’ tali Cyllenius ore locutus  
 mortalis uisus medio sermone reliquit  
 et procul in tenuem ex oculis euanuit auram.  
 At uero Aeneas aspectu obmutuit amens,  
 arrectaeque horrore comae et uox faucibus haesit. 280  
 ardet abire fuga dulcisque relinquere terras,  
 attonitus tanto monitu imperioque deorum.  
 heu quid agat? quo nunc reginam ambire furentem  
 audeat adfatu? quae prima exordia sumat?  
 atque animum nunc huc celerem nunc diuidit illuc 285  
 in partisque rapit uarias perque omnia uersat.  
 haec alternanti potior sententia uisa est:  
 Mnesthea Sergestumque uocat fortemque Serestum,  
 classem aptent taciti sociosque ad litora cogant,

arma parent et quae rebus sit causa nouandis dissimulent; sese interea, quando optima Dido nesciat et tantos rumpi non speret amores, temptaturum aditus et quae mollissima fandi tempora, quis rebus dexter modus. ocius omnes imperio laeti parent et iussa facessunt.	290          295
At regina dolos (quis fallere possit amantem?) praesensit, motusque exceptit prima futuros omnia tuta timens. eadem impia Fama furenti detulit armari classem cursumque parari. saeuit inops animi totamque incensa per urbem bacchatur, qualis commotis excita sacris Thyias, ubi audito stimulant trieterica Baccho orgia nocturnusque uocat clamore Cithaeron.	          300



### 3. Study Questions

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#### ***Avant Propos: The Set Text and the Aeneid***

1. Would you start reading a novel with Chapter 4? To what extent, do you think, will your understanding and appreciation of the set text be compromised if you do not read the first three books (in English) first? (As Henderson puts it: 'Everyone should ask how come they're starting with Chapter 4 of a book, who's doing what to them this way...')<sup>7</sup>
2. How does 4.1–299 fit into the epic as a whole? Explore, in particular, connections between Books 1 and 4. But you may also wish to consider how the 'internal narrative' in *Aeneid* 2 and 3, in which Aeneas recounts the fall of Troy (Book 2) and his subsequent travels (Book 3) to his Carthaginian hosts (in particular Dido) resonates in, and impacts on, the events that unfold in *Aeneid* 4. Dido continues to haunt the narrative even after her suicide: where in the poem does she reappear or make her presence felt?
3. Shortly before being washed ashore in Libya, Aeneas lost his father Anchises. (See his lament at 3.708–15, the last major event in the story of his adventures he recounts to Dido.) Can what happens between Dido and Aeneas in Book 4 be attributed to the hero's recent loss of parental guidance?
4. What are the similarities, what the differences in the biographies of Dido and Aeneas before they meet each other? (Venus tells Aeneas/ us about

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7. Cf. Henderson (2006), p. 13, n. 19, on Austin writing his *Aeneid* 1 commentary after his *Aeneid* 4 commentary: '*Aeneid* I as "reprise" of *Aeneid* IV is a piquant trajectory—one followed by many a student/Latinist, for IV has been excerpted as the text set for early examination syllabuses so regularly that it always already *does* come first.'

Dido's history—or rather 'her-story'—at 1.335–70.) In what ways do Dido and Aeneas form a 'complementary couple'?

## 1–8: Sleepless in Carthage

5. The first word of Book 4 is the adversative particle *at*. Why does this surprise? What does Virgil achieve with this opening gambit?
6. The second word of Book 4 is the programmatic *regina*. What are the characteristics of a good monarch? Do the same criteria of excellence apply to kings and queens or is there a difference according to gender? To what extent is Dido's royal status (and the attending civic responsibilities) part of Virgil's characterization of the Carthaginian queen?
7. In monarchies today, too, potential tension between regal role-requirements and the quest for 'true' love and personal fulfilment is always there: compare Dido's and Aeneas's choices with the decision of Edward VIII to abdicate the throne so he could marry Wallis Simpson.
8. Scan the phrase *regina graui iamdudum saucia cura* (line 2) and analyse its design: how has Virgil arranged the nouns (*regina, cura*) and their attributes (*grauī, saucia*)? What is the force of *iamdudum* and how does the word order enhance its effect?
9. Map out the situations in which a character feels *cura* in the *Aeneid*. (You can use the Concordance function at the University of Pennsylvania's 'Virgil Project' (<http://vergil.classics.upenn.edu/>) to search for further instances of the word.) What are the different *types* of *cura* we encounter in the poem? Try to develop a typology (erotic, political, human, divine, self-centred, civic-minded etc.).
10. What type of ablative do you think *uenis* (2) is? Is it an ablative of place ('in her bloodstreams') or an ablative of instrument ('with her bloodstreams')? Do we need to decide? How does your sense of the grammar influence your interpretation of the text?
11. In the phrases *multa ... uirtus* (3) and *multus ... honos* (4) Virgil uses adjectives instead of adverbs: what is the rhetorical effect?

12. Virgil uses the two phrases *multa uiri uirtus* (3) and *multus gentis honos* (4) to specify why Dido swoons over Aeneas. Give the meaning of all four nouns with due consideration of their wider significance within Roman culture and explore the thematic affinities between the two nominatives (*uirtus, honos*) and the two genitives (*uiri, gentis*).
13. Identify the two figures of speech Virgil uses in the phrase *uiri uirtus*.
14. Discuss Virgil's use of *gens* in the *Aeneid*: where does it occur for the first time? Where else? Why is it such a key term?
15. What metaphors does Virgil use to describe Dido in the thralls of passion, both in the opening lines of Book 4 and elsewhere in *Aeneid* 1 and 4?
16. In Virgil's pathology of love, which of Dido's symptoms refer to the body, which to the mind?
17. Is it possible to associate the different metaphors that Virgil uses of Dido in love with different emotional responses he meant to trigger in the audience? Oliver Lyne, for instance, submits that 'wound imagery easily suggests sympathy. Wounds involve suffering, which we pity', whereas 'fire imagery is less sympathetic, potentially aggressive, and destructive' and therefore concludes: 'Virgil implies an antipathetic as well as a sympathetic aspect to Dido's violently passionate love'.<sup>8</sup> Do you agree?
18. Can you think of English expressions that are equivalent to Virgil's erotic images? What are the conceptions of love—from infatuation with another person to outright sexual desire—that inform the metaphors? Are they all reconcilable with one another? How does what Dido experiences relate to our notion of 'romantic love'?<sup>9</sup>
19. In what ways are the opening lines both retrospective and prospective, that is, point back to what happened in Book 1 and point forward to what will happen in Book 4?

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8. Lyne (1987), p. 121.

9. Love, while a seemingly universal phenomenon, manifests culturally specific inflections and therefore also has a history: see S. May, *Love: A History* (New Haven and London, 2011).

20. As the narrative unfolds, words that Virgil here uses metaphorically of Dido in love recur with a literal meaning to portray Dido's death: which ones are they?
21. Why do the *-e-* and the *-a* in *Phoeb-e-a* (6) scan long?
22. Discuss the verbal architecture of line 7: *umentemque Aurora polo dimouerat umbram*.
23. Scan line 8 (*cum sic unanimam adloquitur male sana sororem*) and discuss the thematic implications of the metrical peculiarity.

### 9–30: Sister Act I: Dido's Address to Anna

24. Outline the structure of Dido's speech. What devices does Virgil use to mark the different segments?
25. Compare and contrast Virgil's account of Dido's condition in lines 1–8 with Dido's own account in lines 9–30.
26. Sketch the thought-process that Dido goes through while talking to her sister. Why does she burst out in tears when she has finally reached the decision not to act on her love for Aeneas?
27. What, precisely, are the nightmarish visions (9: *insomnia*) that Dido says frighten her?
28. *armis* (11) comes either from *armus* ('shoulder') or from *arma* ('arms'). Which alternative do you prefer and why? Was Virgil perhaps deliberately ambiguous? If so, why?
29. On what grounds does Dido believe in Aeneas' divine lineage? (Cf. 12: *credo equidem, nec uana fides, genus esse deorum*.) Is her reasoning sound?
30. Why is it a bit strange that Dido endorses the principle that fear betokens degeneracy (cf. 13: *degeneres animos timor arguit!*)?
31. Lines 13–14 (*heu, quibus ille/ iactatus fati! quae bella exhausta canebat!*) feature several words that also occur in the proem (1.1–7). Which ones are they? And what is the effect of their recurrence here?

32. What are the *fata* (cf. 14: *fatis*) that Dido refers to? Who is her source of information?
33. Lines 15–19 contain one long conditional sequence. The protasis is made up of two *si*-clauses: *si...sederet* and *si...pertaesum...fuisset*. Discuss the switch in tense from imperfect subjunctive (*sederet*) to pluperfect subjunctive (*pertaesum ... fuisset*).
34. In line 17 (*postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit*), Dido mentions an earlier moment in her biography defined by the coincidence of love (*amor*) and death (*mors*). What is the significance of this thematic nexus for the plot of *Aeneid* 4?
35. Discuss the seemingly ambiguous syntax of *huic uni* in line 19.
36. What does the *culpa* consist in that Dido refers to (19)? How does Virgil's use of the word here affect our reading of 172 (*coniugium vocat; hoc praetexit nomine culpam*)?
37. What stylistic device does Virgil use in the phrase *miseri post fata Sychaei/ coniugis* (20–1) and to what effect?
38. Explain the subjunctives *optem* (24), *dehiscat* (24) and *adigat* (25).
39. Analyse the verbal architecture of line 26: *pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque profundam*.
40. What, exactly, does *pudor* mean (both in general and for Dido) and what are its *iura*? (27).
41. In line 27 Dido addresses her *pudor*. According to one scholar, 'the apostrophe distances *pudor* from her by turning it into another external force, which makes one wonder where her own *pudor*, previously a key internal attribute of her person, has gone'.<sup>10</sup> Discuss.
42. Explore the formal and thematic relationship between *impulit* (23) and *abstulit* (29).

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10. Gutting (2006), pp. 269–70.



43. In what ways is the last word of Dido's speech (29: *sepulcro*) programmatically significant?

### 31–53: Sister Act II: Anna's Reply

44. Outline the structure of Anna's speech. What devices does Virgil use to mark the different segments?

45. Identify the different arguments that Anna musters to convince Dido to give in to her feelings for Aeneas. What rhetorical devices does she use to make them sound compelling? *Are* they compelling? Does Anna truly understand her sister or the situation?

46. Anna acts as Dido's trusted confidant, but ends up giving her disastrous advice. At the same time, she faces the task of consoling and advising a sister who is dissolving in tears in front of her. What would your advice to Dido have looked like? Rewrite Anna's speech accordingly.

47. What type of ablative is *luce* (31)?

48. Parse *carpere* in line 32. Where in *Aeneid* 4 have you encountered the verb already? Discuss possible relations between the two occurrences.

49. How would you construe the genitive *Veneris* in line 33?

50. Assess Anna's suggestion that 'the dead do not (or cannot) care about what the living do' within the wider context of Book 4 and the *Aeneid* more generally. Is she correct? What is the presence of the dead in the world of the living in Virgil's epic?

51. In what sense is Africa a land rich in triumphs (37–8)?

52. Place the people who threaten Carthage according to Anna (lines 40–3) on a map.

53. How are we supposed to interpret Anna's (blatantly erroneous) belief that the arrival of Aeneas at Carthage owes itself to the intervention of *benevolent* divinities, in particular Juno (45–6)?

54. Discuss how Anna, on the formal level, relates Dido and Aeneas to Carthage in lines 47–9.
55. Where else in *Aeneid* 4 does a character use winter as an untoward season for setting sail (cf. 52–3) as an argument?
56. What type of ablative is *pelago* (52)?

### 54–89: ‘Crazy Little Thing Called Love’ (Queen)

57. Manuscripts and commentators disagree which text to read in line 54. Possible options are: (a) *his dictis incensum animum flammauit amore*; (b) *his dictis impenso animum flammauit amore*; (c) *his dictis incensum animum inflammauit amore*. Which one do you prefer and why?
58. Discuss the rhetorical design of lines 54–55, with special attention to the key nouns that Virgil brings into play (*animus, amor, spes, mens, pudor*).
59. Anna and Dido sacrifice to Ceres, Apollo, Bacchus, and Juno (58–59). Why are these divinities singled out? Are any members of the Olympic pantheon conspicuous by their absence?
60. Explain the datives *cui* and *curae* (59). What is the verb of the relative clause *cui uincla iugalia curae*?
61. ‘Dido does not learn from the sacrifices that her love for Aeneas is going to lead to a bad end.’<sup>11</sup> Do you agree or disagree? Justify your position.
62. Identify lexical and thematic parallels between the description of the sacrifices in lines 60–64 and the description of love-sick Dido in lines 66–67. What is their significance?
63. Discuss Dido’s religious efforts against your knowledge of Rome’s civic religion: what is the overall atmosphere generated by Virgil’s description?
64. Ponder the *aut* at the beginning of 62: what is its thematic effect?

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11. O’Hara (2011), p. 28.

65. Scholarly opinion is divided on what type of genitive *uatum* is, in the phrase *uatum ignarae mentes* (65): is it (a) a possessive genitive depending on *mentes* ('the ignorant minds of seers') or (b) an objective genitive depending on *ignarae* ('minds ignorant of the seers')? Give reasons for your preference.
66. *quid uota furentem,/ quid delubra iuuant?* (65–6): Why do vows and temples fail to benefit Dido? What does Virgil convey by portraying Dido as *furens*? Where else does he use this word or words that are etymologically related?
67. Parse *est* in line 66.
68. Identify the lexical and thematic reminiscences of 4.1–5 in lines 66–67: *est mollis flamma medullas/ interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus*. What is the dramatic effect of the repetitions?
69. Discuss the correspondences (both in terms of similarities and differences) between the 'stricken-hind' simile and the surrounding narrative. Does the implicit commentary on Dido's tragic love for Aeneas that is built into the simile reflect well or badly on Dido and Aeneas? Who comes off better?
70. Austin claims that the *pastor* did not mean to shoot the hind: '*coniecta* implies simply the act of shooting; the creature has not been aimed at'.<sup>12</sup> Agree or disagree, with reasons.
71. Why has Virgil situated the incident of the wounded hind on Mt. Dicte on Crete?
72. Of what is the shepherd *nescius* (72)?
73. Discuss the design of the clause *haeret lateri letalis harundo* (73).
74. Compare and contrast the advice Anna gives to her sister to detain Aeneas in lines 50–53 with Dido's actions in lines 74–85.

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12. Austin (1963), p. 45.

75. Analyse the overall syntax and rhetorical design of lines 74–79, with particular attention to the anaphora of *nunc* (74, 77).
76. Consider how Virgil places the underlined words in verse 76: *incipit effari, mediaque in uoce resistit*.
77. Parse *narrantis* (79).
78. What formal features in the phrase *suadentque cadentia sidera somnos* (81) reinforce its contents, i.e. the inducement of sleep?
79. Analyse the rhetorical design of *illum absens absentem auditque uidetque* (83).
80. What does the clause *infandum si fallere possit amorem* (85) mean, precisely?
81. Discuss the images Virgil uses to capture the effects of ‘Dido in love’ on her city-building project in lines 86–89. (You may wish to draw the abandoned construction site, in an attempt to visualize what Virgil conveys in words.)

## 90–128: Love and Marriage, or: A Match Made in Heaven

82. Where does Juno come from, all of sudden? When did she last make an appearance in the narrative? How does Virgil re-introduce her?
83. Explain the syntax of *Quam* (90) and *famam* (91).
84. What does *tali ... peste* (90) mean?
85. Discuss the design of 92: *talibus adgreditur Venerem Saturnia dictis*.
86. Analyse the structure and tone of Juno’s first speech (93–104).
87. How does Juno portray Venus and Cupid respectively in line 94?

88. In line 95, Juno specifies three reasons why the victory of Venus and Cupid over Dido is cheap: what are they? And how does Juno stylistically reinforce her accusation that Venus and her son performed an unsporting knock-out?
89. Explain the syntax of *me* and *te* in line 96.
90. The phrase *Karthaginis altae* (97), preceded by *moenia* (96), arguably recalls the concluding phrase of the proem, i.e. *altae moenia Romae* (1.7). What is the effect of this re-use of idiom from the opening of the epic here?
91. Juno asks Venus *quo nunc certamine tanto?* (98). This is arguably a good question: what in the world was Venus thinking when she decided to make Dido fall hopelessly in love with her hero? What is the point of driving the queen insane with passion? Is this really aiding Aeneas and his mission? Explore, with arguments.
92. On the face of it, the conditions that Juno offers Venus—joint rule of Carthage on equal terms (102–03)—seem attractive. But is what she proposes a plausible mode of government? Would you have entered into such an arrangement?
93. Identify the ways in which Juno insults Aeneas in lines 103–4. Why does she adopt the seemingly counterproductive strategy of spewing billingsgate at the offspring of the goddess with whom she wishes to strike up a partnership?
94. Explain the syntax of *locutam* (105).
95. Outline the structure of Venus' speech (107–114).
96. Parse *abnuat* and *malit* (108) as well as *sequatur* (109) and explore the syntax of *sed fatis incerta feror* (110).
97. What forms of socio-political organisation does Venus invoke with the phrases *misceri populos* and *foedera iungi* (112)?
98. Why is it funny that Venus appeals to *fas* (113)?

99. Outline the structure of Juno's second speech (115–27). Then deliver it (either by reciting Virgil's hexameter or in an English adaptation). Give special attention to impersonating Juno's royal and superior demeanour, without neglecting the fact that Juno is here trying to win over Venus to her plan.
100. Parse *uenatum* (117).
101. Why does Juno call Dido *miserrima* (117)?
102. How does the design of lines 120–22 reinforce the theme of a sudden storm of hail and thunder?
103. Analyse the design of 124–25: *speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem/ deuenient*, paying special attention to the implications of the postponed *et*.
104. Why does Venus smile in reaction to Juno's speech (128: ... *dolis risit Cytherea repertis*)?

## 129–172: The Hunting Party

105. 129–72 recount the events that Juno had anticipated in 117–27: compare and contrast the divine plan with how it unfolds.
106. Who is the goddess Aurora (129: *Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit*) and where else does Virgil mention her in *Aeneid* 4? Do the various instances add up to a pattern?
107. What are the formal means Virgil uses in lines 130–32 to enhance the sense of excitement felt by the party setting out for the hunt?
108. The rest of the hunting party is ready to go, but everyone is waiting for dallying Dido (133–35: *reginam ... cunctantem*): what is taking her so long?
109. Why is the phrase *stat sonipes* (135; of Dido's horse) paradoxical and potentially funny?

110. Compare and contrast Dido's entry at 4.136–37: *tandem progreditur magna stipante caterua/ Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo* with her earlier entry at 1.496–97: *regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,/ incessit, magna iuuenum stipante caterua* ('The queen, Dido, of surpassing beauty, approached the temple, with a larger throng of youths crowding around her').

111. In lines 138–39, Virgil uses 'gold' or 'golden' three times: *ex auro, in aurum, aurea ... fibula*. How do you call the figure of speech, in which the same word recurs in different cases? What are the thematic implications of Virgil's use of the device here?

112. 140: *nec non*—what is this rhetorical device called?

113. Why does Virgil underscore the outstanding beauty of Aeneas (141–42: *ante alios pulcherrimus omnis ... Aeneas*)?

114. What are the points of contact between the simile of Apollo (143–49) and the surrounding narrative?

115. Apollo is depicted as leaving Lycia in winter (143–44: *hibernam Lyciam ... deserit*). Why might the indication of the season be significant? Who else is on the move during this time of the year?

116. Lines 145–46 feature four *-que* (*mixtique, Cretesque, Dryopesque, pictique*): what words do they link, respectively?

117. Apollo seems to care a lot about his hair (147–48: *mollique fluentem/ fronde premit crinem fingens atque implicat auro*). Try to draw his hairdo—and ponder the gender-connotations of Virgil's idiom.

118. Line 149 (*tela sonant umeris*) introduces a sharp shift in tone, from the cosmetic obsession with hair to Apollo's deadly weaponry. To what extent does the 'soft/ tough' image of Apollo in the simile match the character and the role of Aeneas?

119. What type of ablative is *illo* (149)?

120. Identify the three elisions in line 151: *postquam altos uentum in montis atque inuia lustra*. Why are they thematically appropriate?
121. Analyse the balance of symmetry and movement that Virgil has built into the syntactical and metrical design of 152–53: *ferae saxi deiectae uertice caprae/ decurrere iugis*.
122. Scan lines 153b–55 and relate meter to theme:
- alia de parte patentis  
transmittunt cursu campos atque agmina cerui  
puluerulenta fuga glomerant montisque relinquunt.
123. Identify the main features in the character-portrayal of Ascanius built into lines 156–59.
124. Analyse the ‘sound-picture’ Virgil generates in lines 160–61: *Interea magno misceri murmure caelum/ incipit, insequitur commixta grandine nimbus*.
125. How does Virgil’s word order reflect the impact of the storm on the hunting party in lines 162–64?
126. What happens in the cave (166–68)? Do Dido and Aeneas emerge as a married couple? Does Virgil describe a wedding ritual or the parody of a wedding ritual? And if they did not get married, how would you describe their relationship?
127. Compare and contrast Dido’s and Aeneas’ encounter in the cave with that of Jason and Medea in Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 4.1128–69:

Immediately they prepared a mixing-bowl of wine for the blessed gods, as is proper, and following correct ritual procedure led sheep to the altar. On that very night they made ready a bridal bed for the girl in the sacred cave where Macris once lived ... Here, then, they prepared the great bed; over it they threw the gleaming golden fleece, so that the wedding night should be honoured and become the subject of song. And for them the nymphs gathered flowers of many colours and brought them cradled in their white breasts. ... Some were called daughters of the river Aegaeus, others haunted the peaks of mount Melite, and others were woodland nymphs from the plains. Hera herself, Zeus’ wife, urged them to come in Jason’s honour. To this day that holy cave is called the Cave of Medea, where the nymphs spread out fragrant linen and brought the marriage of the couple to fulfilment. ...



The crew ... to the pure accompaniment of Orpheus' lyre, sang the wedding song at the entrance of the bridal chamber. It was not in Alcinous' domain that the heroic son of Aeson [Jason], had wished to marry, but in the halls of his father after his return to Iolcus; and Medea also had the same intention, but necessity led them to make love at that time. But so it is: we tribes of woe-stricken humans never enter upon delight wholeheartedly, but always some bitter pain marches alongside our joy. Thus, though they melted in sweet love-making, both were fearful whether Alcinous' sentence would be brought to fruition.

128. Why is the day in which Dido and Aeneas meet in the cave the cause of death and evils (169–70): *ille dies primus leti primusque malorum/ causa fuit*?

129. What does Dido's *culpa* (172) consist in?

## 173–197: The News Goes Viral

130. Lines 173–83 contain a description of the personified concept *Fama*, to whom Virgil—following precedents in Homer and Hesiod—grants a divine lineage and existence. Try to draw the goddess on the basis of his verses. Inspiration could come from J. Paul Weber's painting, *Das Gerücht* ('The Rumour'), which is easily located via Google Images.

131. Explain the grammar and syntax of *qua* (174).

132. Why and how is fear (176: *parua metu primo...*) a factor in *Fama*'s growth?

133. In 178–81 Virgil provides a genealogy for *Fama*, putting her in the company of pre-Olympian monsters: how does his word order, syntax, and metre in these lines reinforce the theme of monstrosity?

134. What type of genitive is *deorum* in 178 (*Terra parens, ira inritata deorum*)?

135. ... *ut perhibent* ... (179): who are they?

136. Scan line 180 (*progeniuit, pedibus celerem et pernicious alis*): how does the meter reinforce the theme of speed (cf. *celerem*)?

137. Analyse the syntax of 181–83 (*cui, quot sunt corpore plumae,/ tot uigiles oculi subter (mirabile dictu),/ tot linguae, totidem ora sonant, tot subbrigit auris*): at what point does it break down and why?
138. Explain the grammar of *mirabile dictu* (182).
139. After small and fearful beginnings (176: *parua metu primo*), *Fama* in 187 is said to terrify great cities (*magnas territat urbes*). What is the source of the terror she spreads?
140. Analyse the rhetorical design of *tam ficti prauisque tenax quam nuntia ueri* (188): what does it tell us about the truth-value of *Fama*'s discourse?
141. In lines 189–97, Virgil summarizes what *Fama* says about Dido and Aeneas. Scholars have different opinions concerning the truth-value of her coverage. Here is Austin: 'it is true that Aeneas has come to Carthage, and that Dido is living with him; but *luxu* and *turpique cupidine captos* ('enthralled by vile passion') is a malicious twist to truth, and so is *immemores*'.<sup>13</sup> And here O'Hara: 'What in Rumor's report is not true? That Dido considers Aeneas her husband? That she neglects her kingdom (but see 261–64 for Aeneas supervising construction)? That they are captives of foul desire?'<sup>14</sup> Discuss.
142. 'What *Fama* spreads is "news", an up-to-date report about the private lives of two royal families.'<sup>15</sup> Imagine you are Lord Leveson in charge of an enquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of reporting news, have fielded testimony from Dido and Aeneas on *Fama*'s coverage of their 'cohabitation', and need to report your findings to Parliament: what would you say? What part of her coverage is true, what part distorted, what part 'in the public domain', what part an infringement of privacy legislation, from a contemporary point of view?
143. Analyse the stylistic design of 192: *cui se pulchra uiro dignetur iungere Dido*. Why is *Fama*'s spin on the facts so insidious?

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13. Austin (1963), p. 74.

14. O'Hara (2011), p. 42.

15. Hardie (2009), p. 107.

144. What are the associations *Fama* is trying to invoke with the term *luxu* (193)?

145. In line 195 (*haec passim dea foeda uirum diffundit in ora*) does *foeda* modify *haec* or *dea* or *ora*—or any two or all three?

## 198–218: In Dad I Tru\$t

146. Virgil begins this section with Iarbas' genealogy. What kind of ablative is *Hammon* (198)? And how does Iarbas' mother feature in the text?

147. Analyse the design of lines 199–202 (*templa Ioui centum latis immania regnis,/ centum aras posuit uigilemque sacrauerat ignem,/ excubias diuum aeternas, pecudumque cruore/ pingue solum et uariis florentia limina sertis*), with special attention to the three chiasmic patterns in the passage.

148. What is the position of Iarbas' hands as he prays to Jupiter (cf. 205: *manibus ... supinis*)?

149. Analyse the structure of Iarbas' prayer to Jupiter (206–18) and try to define the tone in which he presents his case to the supreme divinity (who also happens to be his father). What are the rhetorical devices, what the arguments he employs to stir Jupiter into action?

150. How does Iarbas gradually sap Jupiter of his powers in the rhetorical question at 208–10 (*an te, genitor, cum fulmina torques/ nequiquam horremus, caecique in nubibus ignes/ terrificant animos et inania murmura miscent?*)? (You may wish to pay attention to the distribution of Jupiter's agency across subordinate and main clauses.)

151. Iarbas notion that Carthage is a city of pitiful size (211–12: *urbem/ exiguam*) is at variance with the description of the building works undertaken by Dido, both at 1.365–66 and 4.88–89 (even if they are said to have ceased in the latter passage). What may account for the contrast?

152. What kind of ablative is *pretio* (212)?

153. Explore the implications of Iarbas' use of *dominus* with reference to Aeneas (214).

154. Catalogue and classify the insults that Iarbas hurls Aeneas' way in 215–17. What stylistic devices does he use to make his abuse even more cutting?
155. Explain the syntax of *raptō* (217).

## 219–37: Jupiter's Wake-up Call

156. How does Jupiter respond to Iarbas' prayer? Does he listen to his son?
157. Just like Iarbas in 209, Virgil calls Jupiter *Omnipotens* (220): is the epithet 'all-powerful' entirely justified? Put differently, in what ways are the powers of Jupiter limited in the *Aeneid*?
158. Identify the six imperatives in lines 223–26.
159. At 224–26, Jupiter gives Mercury the order to have a word with Aeneas: *Dardaniumque ducem Tyria Karthagine qui nunc/ exspectat fatisque datas non respicit urbes/ adloquere*. Analyse the design of these lines and try to describe the tone in which Jupiter comments on the Trojan leader's current doings.
160. At 4.227–31 (*non illum nobis genetrix pulcherrima talem/ promisit Graiumque ideo bis uindicat armis/ sed fore qui grauidam imperiis belloque frementem/ Italiam regeret, genus alto a sanguine Teucris/ proderet, ac totum sub leges mitteret orbem*) Jupiter comments to Mercury on what he claims to have been promised by Venus. The lines recall and rework 1.235–37, where Venus accosts Jupiter to remind him of what he had promised to her: *hinc fore ductores, reuocato a sanguine Teucris,/ qui mare, qui terras omnis ditione tenerent,/ pollicitus* [sc. es] ('you promised that from Teucer's restored bloodline should come leaders, who hold the sea and all lands under their rule...'). Compare and contrast the two passages and appreciate their humour!
161. Parse *Graium* (228).
162. Explore the significance of *gloria* (232), *laus* (233) and *labor* (233) in Rome's political culture and the significance of their use here.

163. What do you make of Jupiter's (rhetorical?) question that Aeneas lives it up in Carthage because he begrudges his son a glorious future? (234: *Ascanione pater Romanas inuidet arces?*)

164. Identify and comment on the metrical peculiarity in 235: *aut qua spe inimica in gente moratur*.

165. Analyse the stylistic design of *nec prolem Ausoniam et Lauinia respicit arua?* (236).

166. Parse *nauiget!* and *esto* (237).

## 238–258: Mercury Descending

167. Why is the tense of *parabat* (238–39: *ille patris magni parere parabat/imperio*) funny?

168. Compare Mercury's preparations for departure and subsequent descent at 4.239–58 with Homer's description of Mercury's Greek *alter ego* Hermes at *Odyssey* 5.43–54:

So he spoke, and the messenger, the slayer of Argus, did not disobey. Straightway he bound beneath his feet his beautiful sandals, immortal, golden, which were wont to bear him over the waters of the sea and over the boundless earth together with the breeze of the wind. And he took the wand wherewith he lulls to sleep the eyes of whom he wishes, while others again he awakens out of slumber. With this in hand the strong slayer of Argus flew. On to Pieria he stepped from the upper air, and swooped down upon the sea, and then sped over the wave like a bird, the cormorant, which in quest of fish over the dread gulfs of the unresting sea wets its thick plumage in the brine. In such fashion did Hermes ride over the multitudinous waves.

169. Identify the parallels between the situation of Aeneas in Carthage in *Aeneid* 4 and that of Odysseus on Ogygia in *Odyssey* 5 and consider the Dido episode against the Homeric model: what are the similarities, what the differences?

170. What type of ablative is *Orco* (242)?

171. What does *et lumina morte resignat* (244) mean and refer to?

172. 246–51: is Atlas a man or a mountain?

173. Austin does not much like the verses 248–51: ‘This description of Atlas (perhaps based on a painting) has power, but is out of place here, and the narrative would run better if it went straight on from 247 to 252. ... The repetition of *Atlantis* gives a curious prominence to the name, which does not seem to need such a stressing; and the similar rhythm of 248, 249, and 251 is noticeably monotonous (249 and 251 are identical, and in each the third-foot caesura is blurred by the monosyllable *et*, so that the effective caesura is in the fourth foot, as in 248)’.<sup>16</sup> Do you agree with Austin? Do you think that Virgil may have deleted the lines during a final revision? Can you think of arguments that would rehabilitate the lines as perfectly suited to their context—and to be kept at all costs?

174. Why does the *-e-* in *Cyllenius* (252) scan long?

## 259–278: Back to The Future

175. What does Mercury see (261: *conspicit*) upon touching down in Carthage? Why would he have deemed the sight scandalous? What stylistic devices does Virgil use to reinforce the atmosphere of scandal?

176. Mercury is supposed to deliver Jupiter’s message to Aeneas. But he does not simply reproduce Jupiter’s speech verbatim to the Trojan hero. What does he add, what does he leave out, what does he adjust? And why?

177. 261–64: Any comments on Aeneas’ sense of dress?

178. What type of dative is *illi* (261)?

179. Describe the tone of Mercury’s opening words to Aeneas (265–67: ‘*tu nunc Karthaginis altae/ fundamenta locas pulchramque uxorius urbem/ exstruis?*’) and perform them out loud.

180. What are the connotations of *uxorius* (266)?

181. Parse *oblite* (267).

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16. Austin (1963), p. 87.

182. In lines 268–70, Mercury reports that the message comes from Jupiter himself: how does he present the supreme divinity in his speech? Specifically, what stylistic devices does he use to underscore the grandeur of the father of the gods?

183. Parse *teris* (271).

## 279–295: The Great Escape

184. Draw the facial expression of Aeneas in the wake of Mercury's theophany as visualized by Virgil at 279–80: *At uero Aeneas aspectu obmutuit amens, / arrectaeque horrore comae et uox faucibus haesit.*

185. What do we learn about Aeneas' character and values from lines 281–82 (*ardet abire fuga dulcisque relinquere terras, / attonitus tanto monitu imperioque deorum*).

186. Here is what Austin takes away from Aeneas' reaction to the appearance of Mercury: 'In contrast to the impulsive, headstrong, passionate Dido, who has gone to all lengths to quell the still small voice of conscience, Aeneas at once recognizes its dictates, and he does not question obedience'.<sup>17</sup> Discuss.

187. Explain the subjunctives *agat* (283), *audeat* (284), and *sumat* (284).

188. What, precisely, does *ambire* (283) mean in this context, and what are its connotations? Does Virgil's use of this verb reflect well or badly on Aeneas?

189. How does the word order in 285–86 (*atque animum nunc huc celerem nunc diuidit illuc / in partisque rapit uarias perque omnia uersat*) reflect the theme, i.e. frantic activity in Aeneas' brain?

190. Explain the syntax of *alternanti* (287).

191. With reference to Aeneas' humming and hawing of what to do in 285–87, O'Hara poses the question: 'Is Aeneas' hesitation a result of concern for

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17. Austin (1963), p. 92.

breaking the news gently to Dido, or cowardice that worsens the situation by leading her to think he would leave without saying anything?<sup>18</sup> What do you think?

192. Explain the subjunctives *aptent* (289), *cogant* (289), *parent* (290), and *dissimulent* (291).

193. Analyse the orders Aeneas gives to his men at 289–91 (*classem aptent taciti sociosque ad litora cogant,/ arma parent et quae rebus sit causa nouandis/ dissimulent*): what does he ask his men to do and why?

194. Austin has the following comment on *optima Dido* (291): ‘*Optima* is heart-breaking in its context; ... It means what it says, that Dido was all the world to him; it is one of the tiny revelations of Aeneas’ true feelings, like *dulcis terras*, 281.’<sup>19</sup> Discuss.

195. What insights do lines 294–95 (*ocius omnes/ imperio laeti parent et iussa facessunt*) afford into how Aeneas’ men view their prolonged stay in Carthage?

## 296–299 (and beyond): Hell Hath no Fury Like a Woman Scorned

196. Discuss the implications of Virgil’s use of the word *dolos* (296) as an authorial comment on Aeneas’ speech to his men.

197. Explain the subjunctive *possit* (296).

198. Why is it Dido who ‘first’ (297: *prima*) divines what Aeneas and his men are up to?

199. Discuss the syntax of *omnia tuta timens* (298).

200. Analyse the stylistic design of 298–99: *eadem impia Fama furenti/ detulit armari classem cursumque parari*.

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18. O’Hara (2011), p. 52.

19. Austin (1963), p. 94.





## 4. Commentary

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### *Avant Propos: The Set Text and the Aeneid*

For the most part, *Aeneid* 1–4, a third part of the epic overall, is set in Carthage. In the larger scheme of things, this detour via Africa appears to be an accident. After the extended proem (1.1–33), Virgil begins his narrative proper *medias in res* with Aeneas and his crew on their way from Sicily to the Italian mainland. Yet the sight of the Trojan refugees about to reach their final destination stirs the hero's divine arch-enemy Juno, who already figured prominently in the extended proem, into action. The violent storm she unleashes with the help of the wind-god Aeolus does not end in the desired outcome (wrecking of the ships and mass drowning). But the Trojan fleet is blown well off course. When Neptune finally calms the cosmic commotion at 1.142, Aeneas and his men find themselves not in Italy, but near the recently founded city of Carthage in Northern Africa, ruled by Queen Dido, herself a recent exile from her native Tyre in Phoenicia. (In terms of geopolitics, the drift in the *Aeneid* tends to be from East to West.) There is irony to savour in the fact that Juno, who, in the proem, is presented as deeply worried about the future of her city Carthage (destined to be destroyed by Aeneas' people, the Romans), sets up the enmity between the two cities by causing Aeneas' tragic sojourn in Africa: thus are the inscrutable twists and turns of fate!<sup>20</sup>

The tragedy of Dido unfolds over the course of the rest of Book 1 as well as Book 4. In between, Aeneas takes on the role of 'internal narrator' at the welcome banquet laid on by Dido. He recounts the fall of Troy

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20. Fans of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series may wish to compare the irony that the evil wizard Voldemort helped to turn Harry into the hero who would ultimately defeat him by acting on a prophecy that predicted this outcome.

and his flight from the burning city (*Aeneid* 2) and tells of his subsequent travels and travails until his arrival at Carthage (*Aeneid* 3).<sup>21</sup> One of the interpretative challenges involved in reading an excerpt from *Aeneid* 4 is to see it in the context of what came before, especially in Book 1, and what follows after, especially in the remainder of Book 4. But you may also wish to ponder what the flashback in *Aeneid* 2 and 3, as well as explicit and implicit resonances of the Dido-episode in subsequent books of the epic, may have to contribute to our understanding of the set portion of text. For instance, Aeneas, in his account of the fall of Troy in *Aeneid* 2, makes much of the figure of Sinon, a treacherous Greek who persuades the gullible Trojans to breach their city walls to pull in the Wooden Horse; and in a sense, unbeknownst to him, Aeneas does something very similar in Carthage, employing his persuasive skills to gain entry into the heart of his hostess.<sup>22</sup> The outcome is in each case the same: Troy and Carthage end up in flames, and Aeneas leaves a conflagration behind him at the end of both *Aeneid* 2 and *Aeneid* 4. Is he another Trojan horse?

Likewise, the ghost of Dido and her tragic suicide haunt subsequent books. A particular poignant instance is the meeting of Dido and Aeneas in the Underworld at *Aeneid* 6.440–76. Just as the shadow of Ajax at *Odyssey* 11.541–67, who sulks speechless when his mortal enemy, still alive, appears in the world of the dead and tries to engage him in conversation, Dido refuses to respond to our hero and moves away in fraught and dignified silence, joining the shade of her former husband Sychaeus. Another moment of similar emotive power comes in *Aeneid* 11, when Aeneas covers the dead body of Pallas, the only son of his guest friend Euander, who got killed by Turnus, with magnificent pieces of garment made by Dido (11.72–5)—not unlike the one, perhaps even the same, he is wearing at *Aeneid* 4.262–64 (which is part of the set passage and discussed in detail below). The death of Pallas is by far the worst catastrophe that Aeneas suffers in the course of the poem. It turns him into a beast of sorts, leads to his performance of human sacrifice during the funeral of his fallen charge, and motivates the final scene of the epic: Aeneas kills Turnus in a fit of rage upon seeing Pallas' sword-belt on his prostrate enemy, which instantly wipes away any thought of mercy. By evoking Dido as Aeneas bends over the dead body of Pallas, Virgil,

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21. Compare Odysseus' account of his travels at the court of Phaeacia at *Odyssey* 9–12 before his onward travel to Ithaca.

22. For Aeneas as spin doctor in *Aeneid* 2 see Powell (2011).

among other things, subtly reminds us that the curse with which Dido sends Aeneas on his way at 4.590–629 is hitting home.<sup>23</sup>

But the most crucial part of the poem for appreciating the set text is of course Book 1. It sets the stage. To recapitulate briefly what happened after Aeneas' unplanned arrival in Africa, in the understanding that the following is no substitute for giving *Aeneid* 1 a quick (re-)read: Aeneas' divine mother Venus, none too pleased at seeing her son tossed all over the Mediterranean by a vindictive Juno, seeks out Jupiter to protest. The father of the gods reassures his daughter and unrolls a bit of the scrolls of destiny for her benefit, revealing the impressive future that lies in store for her city of Rome. He also sends down Mercury to ensure that the Trojans will receive a friendly welcome (a passage discussed in more detail below: also our set text features a Mercurial descent from Mt. Olympus at the bidding of Jupiter, at 4.238–78). But Venus, whether still worried or, on the contrary, reassured and hence keen on some vindictive mischief, also decides to meddle. She devises a scheme to have Dido fall madly in love with Aeneas, which involves her son Cupid (Aeneas' divine half-brother) impersonate Aeneas' son (and Cupid's nephew) Ascanius and, thus disguised, poison the queen during her welcoming cuddle with passionate desire for the Trojan hero. At the end of the Book, Carthaginians and Trojans settle down to a magnificent banquet, during which Aeneas tells the spellbound audience of their labours so far—an account Virgil reproduces in Books 2 and 3, where the narrative focus is thus inevitably squarely on Aeneas. But with the opening line of Book 4, the attention of the author switches decisively to Dido. *Aeneid* 4 is her book. And she owns her book like no other 'secondary' character. Even Turnus, the other principal adversary of Aeneas, does not dominate the narrative stretch granted to him in quite the same way. Dido truly is Aeneas' most significant other—a subversive figure with the potential to derail his destiny, the foundation of Rome, and the history of the world. As Alessandro Schiesaro puts it:

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23. See especially 4.617–18: ... *uideatque indigna suorum/ funera* ('let him see the wretched deaths of his friends'). Dido's garments are part of a tragic economy of gift exchange. See Quint (1993) 65: 'Dido in Book 1 receives the veil of Helen and the scepter of Ilione (647–55), Latinus in Book 7, a libation bowl of Anchises and the scepter and robes of Priam (244–48). These Trojan spoils carry with them a kind of curse, and their new possessors are condemned to play out the tragic roles for which the costumes fit them. Their cities now become new versions of the fallen Troy: Carthage's walls seem to be on fire with the flames of Dido's pyre (5.3–4); Laurentium's walls are literally burnt down (12.574f).'

Dido's challenge to the ostensible ideology of the *Aeneid* is more radical than the specific alternative she posits to Aeneas' itinerary: she stands in Virgil's poem as the most powerful incarnation of a radically alternative world-view. Thrown on the shores of a potentially hostile land, welcomed (not without divine intervention) by a generous and attractive queen whose fate is in many respects parallel to his own, Aeneas is faced—for the first time—with a real alternative to his life's business, the search of a new homeland for his displaced people. The false foundations which dotted his earlier wanderings, even the emotional encounter with Andromache's pathetic (and pathological) solution to a similar problem—how can the defeated Trojans construct a new Troy?—, were temporary, limited, and patently unviable detours. Carthage is different. There he can become the co-regent, effectively the king, of a prosperous new land; his people can merge with the locals; royal succession would be guaranteed by Ascanius, or, down the line, by the child he will eventually conceive with Dido, the queen he has fallen in love with: we can glimpse, tantalizingly, a totally different world-history. The text is ready to acknowledge how much Aeneas is tempted by this unexpected scenario: coming to Carthage on Jupiter's orders, Mercury finds him *fundantem arces ac tecta novantem* (260), forgetful (*oblitus*) of his reign and his mission (267).<sup>24</sup>

The overall structure of *Aeneid* 4 is tripartite. Virgil marks the beginning of each section with the quasi-formulaic phrase *at regina*, which draws programmatic attention to the protagonist of the book (Dido, *queen* of Carthage) and the adversative (cf. *at*) role she plays in the narrative:

1 (*At regina graui iamdudum saucia cura/ uulnus alit uenis...*)–295.

296 (*At regina dolos (quis fallere possit amantem?)/ praesensit...*)–503.

504 (*At regina, pyra penetrati in sede sub auras/ erecta ingenti taedis atque ilice secta/ intenditque locum sertis et fronde coronat/ funerea...* ('But the queen, when in the deepest recess of her home the pyre had been built skywards, enormous in size with pine logs and cut oak, hangs the place with garlands and crowns it with funeral boughs...'))–705.

As Quinn notes: 'The book is the shortest of the twelve and the most dramatic in form. A tripartite structure is more clearly discernible than in the other books: lines 1–295 recount the beginning of the affair; lines 296–503, the alienation; lines 504–705, the end of the affair—Aeneas' departure and Dido's suicide.'<sup>25</sup> He also notes that for each section the word following the phrase *at regina* (i.e. *gravi*, *dolos*, *pyra*) 'strikes the keynote of the ensuing action.'

24. Schiesaro (2008), pp. 206–07.

25. Quinn (1968), p. 135.

## Lines 1–8: Sleepless in Carthage

**1–2: At regina graui iamdudum saucia cura/ uulnus alit uenis et caeco carpitur igni:** the ‘at’ at the beginning startles. Rather than announcing a fresh start, the adversative force of the particle sets up a contrast to what immediately came before.<sup>26</sup> To appreciate its full force, it is therefore necessary to recall how Book 3 ended (3.716–18):

Sic pater Aeneas intentis omnibus unus  
fata renarrabat diuum cursusque docebat.  
conticuit tandem factoque hic fine quieuit.

[Thus father Aeneas, with everyone listening eagerly, was alone recounting the destinies ordained by the gods and was teaching of his travels. At last he fell silent and, having come to a stop here, rested.]

This marks the end of Aeneas’ narrative of the fall of Troy and his subsequent odyssey, which covered two full books (*Aeneid* 2 and 3). There can be few more apposite uses of *tandem* (‘finally’, ‘at last’). Virgil gives the finish triple emphasis: *conticuit, facto hic fine, quieuit*.<sup>27</sup> The silence that settles in has a funerary finality: the last event Aeneas has recounted before ceasing to speak is the death of his beloved father Anchises (3.708–11):

hic pelagi tot tempestatibus actus  
heu! genitorem, omnis curae casusque leuamen,  
amitto Anchisen; hic me, pater optime, fessum  
deseris, heu! tantis nequiquam erepte periclis!

[Here I, who have been driven by so many storms of the ocean, lose, alas! my father Anchises, solace of every care and contingency; here, best of fathers, you desert me in my weariness, snatched, alas! from such great dangers all in vain.]

The pathos is palpable—and chimes well with Dido’s own sense of abandonment and grief at the murder of her husband Sychaeus, which she voices at 4.15–29. Both characters are coping with traumatic bereavement when they meet, yet are forced to move on, driven by divine forces. Aeneas

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26. The most striking use of *at* as a keynote has to be the opening of Apuleius’ *The Golden Ass*: it is the first word of the novel, casting it as an already begun ‘conversation’ with the reader.

27. *facto hic fine* arguably refers both to the action *in* the poem (the deictic *hic* in a temporal sense: at this moment) and to this particular point *of* the poem, i.e. the end of Book 3 (*hic* in a spatial sense: at this point in the scroll).

continues on his way to Italy; and Dido is compelled to re-experience erotic desire. At the end of Book 1, she had requested of her host a comprehensive account of his labours (1.753: *a prima dic, hospes, origine nobis...*; ‘Tell us, guest, from the first beginning...’), forcing Aeneas to relive his grief (2.3: *‘infandum, regina, iubes renouare dolorem...; ‘Unspeakable is the grief you bid me renew, o queen...’*). He does so for two full books. But now, at the beginning of Book 4, it is Dido who is suffering from something that she cannot well put into speech, something *infandum* (see explicitly 4.85: *... infandum si fallere possit amorem*, with note below). And thus the ‘at’, a pointed antithetical gesture across book boundaries, fittingly cancels any premature sense of closure. Whereas Aeneas has finally come to a momentary rest, the opposite is true of Dido: we encounter her in a permanent state of restlessness. Contrast, especially, 3.718: *... quieuit* and 4.5: *nec placidam membris dat cura quietem*. The ‘at’ thus underscores the sense that Aeneas and Dido constitute a complementary couple. As Austin notes, ‘the strongly contrasting particle *at* not only shows that the story now turns from Aeneas and the Trojans to Dido, but also points the antithesis between Aeneas’ sufferings that are now past, a mere tale that is told (*conticuit tandem*, iii. 718), and Dido’s sufferings that are already beginning, between his composed silence and her agitation’<sup>28</sup>—though one may debate in what sense the trials and tribulations of Aeneas ‘are now past.’ A more ambivalent reading of *at*, which takes into account that the moment of closure Aeneas experiences at this stage is ephemeral, could start by considering to what extent Dido’s mental unrest highlights Aeneas’ failure to understand and communicate with the Carthaginian queen. Presumably, the last thing he wished to do is to mentally unsettle his gracious hostess.

[*Extra information*: especially for the history buffs among you, the end of *Aeneid* 3 is worth a closer look. In his account of how they sailed along the shore of Sicily, Aeneas mentions as the final two spots Lilybaeum (706) and Drepanum (707). They are situated on the western-most point of Sicily—virtually midway between Carthage and Rome. Intriguingly, Lilybaeum was founded by Phoenician settlers in the 8th century (under the name Motya); and, even more intriguingly, Lilybaeum and Drepanum were both sites of major military actions in the First Punic War (when this part of Sicily was a stronghold of the Carthaginians). In 250 BC a Roman Consular army led by Gaius Atilius Regulus Serranus and Lucius Manlius Vulso Longus put Lilybaeum under siege, which was, however, lifted after the battle

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28. Austin (1963), p. 25.

of Drepanum, in which the Romans suffered their one major naval defeat in the First Punic War (249 BC). Once Lilybaeum had fallen under Roman domination, it served Scipio Africanus Maior as boot camp and launching pad for the invasion of Africa towards the end of the Second Punic War (from 205 BC onwards). Add to this the etymological affinity of *Lilybaeum* and *Libya* (where Aeneas has now ended up on his Juno-triggered detour: cf. 3.715: *hinc me digressum uestris deus appulit oris*; ‘departing from there a god drove me to your shores’), the end of Book 3 obliquely prepares not just for the African setting of Book 4 but also prefigures the historical consequences of Aeneas’ legendary stay with Dido: the lethal enmity between Rome and Carthage and the series of Punic Wars.<sup>29</sup>

**1: regina:** After referring to the anonymous, ‘eager crowd’ that listened to Aeneas’ account at the end of Book 3 (cf. 716: *intentis omnibus*), Virgil, in the first line of Book 4, singles out the queen for exclusive attention. This is Dido’s book and with *At regina* Virgil uses an appropriate keynote. Significantly, he chooses to return our attention to Dido not by mentioning her name but her social role: she is a queen. The noun *regina* recalls Dido’s royal entry into the epic at 1.496–97: *regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido, / incessit* (‘the queen Dido, of surpassing beauty, approached the temple’). But the contrast between her first appearance and the state she is in when Book 4 opens is pointed and poignant: whereas she is ‘surrounded by a large throng of followers’ in Book 1 (1.497: *magna iuuenum stipante caterua*), at the beginning of Book 4 we encounter Dido all alone. And whereas Virgil invited us to observe Dido discharging her civic responsibilities when we first set eyes on the queen, we now see a helpless victim of uncontrollable desire, tossing about sleeplessly: the focus has shifted from her impressive public persona to her tormented inner self. Yet Virgil’s programmatic use of ‘*regina*’ at a moment when she is, above all, a woman madly in love serves as encouragement to appraise her not just as a desiring individual, but *as a queen*, that is, as someone who has a key social role to perform and may do so well or badly. The question of what makes a good king (or, more generally, leader) was a topic of hot debate in antiquity (it still is now), to which literary genres made important contributions. Reflections on excellence or shortcomings in leadership constitute an important facet of the political discourse of epic

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29. I owe this *Extra Information* section to John Henderson, who recommended its inclusion ‘to emphasise just how wide a range of registers the *Aeneid* spans—from pedantic aetiological-etymological scholasticism to searing hot erotics in a turn of the page/switch of a scroll—and how sheer the juxtapositions can be—a big part of Virgil’s ‘sheer’ audacity’ (*per litteras*).



poetry in particular, from Homer onwards.<sup>30</sup> Virgil's handling of the topic is characteristically complex, insofar as he invites his readers to assess his royal personnel against various and often conflicting benchmarks of excellence, deriving from literary predecessors (both Greek and Roman), philosophical discourse (in particular Stoicism), and lived experience, both republican and imperial. In the case of Dido, it is worth paying particular attention to her gender (and the difficulties this causes not least for male observers such as king Iarbas: see 4.206–18, discussed in detail below) and the potential conflict between her feelings for Aeneas and the role-expectations that come with being the royal leader of a young city and civic community in a hostile environment.<sup>31</sup>

**1: regina graui iamdudum saucia cura:** *regina* (a<sub>1</sub>) agrees with *saucia* (a<sub>2</sub>), *grau* (b<sub>1</sub>) with *cura* (b<sub>2</sub>). We thus have the following pattern: noun (a<sub>1</sub>) – adjective (b<sub>1</sub>) – adverb: *iamdudum* (c) – adjective (a<sub>2</sub>) – noun (b<sub>2</sub>). The arrangement artfully combines a parallel patterning in the way the two phrases *regina saucia* and *grau* *cura* interweave (a<sub>1</sub> b<sub>1</sub> c a<sub>2</sub> b<sub>2</sub>) with a chiasmic design in terms of grammatical categories (noun, adjective; adjective, noun). The set-up helps to foreground the adverbial modification of time at its centre (*iamdudum*), which reminds the reader of what happened before Aeneas started speaking: Dido has been burning with love ever since Cupid's stealth attack on the unsuspecting queen in the guise of Aeneas' son Ascanius in Book 1. See esp. 1.719–22: *at memor ille [sc. Cupido]/ matris Acidaliae paulatim abolere Sychaeum/ incipit et uiuo temptat praeuertere amore/ iam pridem resides animos desuetaque corda* ('But he [sc. Cupid], mindful of his Acidalian mother [sc. Venus], little by little begins to efface Sychaeus [i.e. Dido's deceased former husband], and attempts to incite with live passion her long-inactive soul and her heart that had unlearned to love'). The adverb, which means 'some while ago now', thus serves as bridge between Books 1 and 4 and, like *tandem* at the end of Book 3, mischievously underscores the length of Aeneas' narration.

**1: cura:** the meaning of *cura* ranges from 'anxiety' to a (public) 'task' or 'responsibility', to be carried out with diligence and care. Here the former

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30. Homer was considered the fountainhead of every conceivable type of discourse, including political theory, and his epics certainly portray key issues in politics in a proto-philosophical spirit. A good place to start from to explore this topic further is Murray (1965).

31. A good starting point for exploring Virgil's representation of Aeneas and Dido as king and queen against ancient discourses on kingship is Cairns (1989), esp. Ch. 1, 'Divine and Human Kingship' and Ch. 2, 'Kingship and the Love Affair of Aeneas and Dido.'

sense is of course paramount, but in signifying love pangs the term also evokes negatively its public-political meaning: Dido's real *cura* ought to be the prudent governance of her city's affairs. Some interesting passages to consider for the semantics of *cura* in the *Aeneid* include 1.227 (the first occurrence of the word in the epic, referring to the cosmic administrative responsibilities of Jupiter), 1.562 (Dido replying to Aeneas' impassioned plea for support: ... *secludite curas* ('set aside your cares'), which resonates ironically in the light of our passage), 1.662 (Venus imagining Juno preoccupied by anxiety, a passage cited and discussed below), 1.678 (Venus referring to Ascanius as *mea maxima cura*), and the trail of further instances of the word in Book 4 at lines 5, 59, 332, 341, 379, 394, 448 (*magno persentit pectore curas*, of Aeneas), 488, 521, 531, 551, and 608.

**2: *uulnus alit uenis et caeco carpitur igni*:** *uulnus alit uenis* and *caeco carpitur igni* are two carefully balanced clauses of three words each. Both feature the verb in the middle (*alit*, *carpitur*: Dido is the subject of both) and involve alliteration (*uulnus uenis*; *caeco carpitur*). But Virgil alternates the construction. The first clause consists of an active verb, a direct object (*uulnus*) and an ablative of either place or instrument (*uenis*: 'in or with her bloodstreams'), the second of a passive verb and an ablative of agency (*caeco igni*, as often in poetry without the preposition *a/ab*). *Caecus* has both an active (blind, i.e. unable to see) and a passive (hidden, i.e. invisible) sense. Here it is clearly the latter: the consuming fire of Dido's passion does its damage out of sight, more specifically in or through her bloodstreams. There is, then, a thematic link between the last word of the first clause (*uenis*) and the first word of the second clause (*caeco*). Virgil may be alluding to Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 4.1120: *usque adeo incerti tabescunt uolnere caeco* ('in such uncertain state they waste away with a wound invisible'). Appropriately, the line is part of his diatribe against love ('a romantic delusion') as opposed to sex ('a biological necessity'). And he certainly has in mind book 3 of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, which features Medea burning in secret love for Jason after being hit by one of Eros' arrows.<sup>32</sup>

The metaphorical wound of Dido here corresponds to the literal wound she inflicts upon herself at the end of the book. 4.689: *infixum stridit sub pectore uulnus* recalls both 4.2: *uulnus alit uenis* and 4.4: *haerent infixi pectore*, the latter also via the deer simile at 4.70–3. (See further below on **4: haerent infixi**.)

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32. For further discussion and other possible intertexts see Essay 5.3: Allusion.

Likewise, the metaphorical *caecus ignis* here has a real counterpart at the end of the book: the flames of Dido's funeral pyre. At 5.4–5 Aeneas gazes back from his departing ship to a Carthage aglow in flames: *quae tantum accenderit ignem/ causa latet* ('Which cause set ablaze so great a fire remains hidden'). In the case of the fire-imagery there is an intermediate stage: the literal fire of the funeral pyre not only harks back to the fiery passion from which Dido suffers at the beginning but also picks up the transformation of the fires of love into the fires of wrath midway through the book: see the 'black fires', the *atri ignes*, that animate her curse at 4.384, which will pursue Aeneas and his descendants.<sup>33</sup> The gradual transformation of metaphors of love into realities of death is one of the most haunting (and poetically brilliant) aspects of *Aeneid* 4. As Oliver Lyne puts it: 'These sequences of fire and wound images are fine examples of "linked imagery" ... They introduce among other things a sense of tragic inevitability. Dido's love wound is converted remorselessly and seemingly inevitably in the maintained imagery into the wound of her suicide; and the fire of her love is converted with similar but less sympathetic inevitability into the fires of her curse.'

[*Extra information*: in the lines that follow upon Dido stabbing herself, Virgil uses a simile to connect her suicide to the historical fate of her city (4.667–71):

lamentis gemituque et femineo ululatu  
 tecta fremunt, resonat magnis plangoribus aether,  
 non aliter quam si immissis ruat hostibus omnis  
 Karthago aut antiqua Tyros, flammaeque furentes  
 culmina perque hominum uoluantur perque deorum.

The palace rings with laments, sobbing, and women's shrieks, heaven echoes with loud wails—as if all of Carthage or ancient Tyre were collapsing under the onslaught of enemies and raging flames were rolling over the roofs of men and over the roofs of the gods.

As already Macrobius observed (*Saturnalia* 4.6), Virgil adapts the scene of lament and the illustrative simile from *Iliad* 22.408–11, where we have a similar intertwining of individual and city in the context of lament: Priam and the Trojan women mourn for Hector slain, in anticipation of the fall of their city:

ὄμωξεν δ' ἔλεεινὰ πατήρ φίλος, ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ  
 κωκυτῶ τ' εἶχοντο καὶ οἰμωγῇ κατὰ ἄστυ.  
 τῶ δὲ μάλιστ' ἄρ' ἔην ἐναλίγκιον ὡς εἰ ἅπαντα  
 Ἴλιος ὄφρουέσσα πυρὶ σμύχοιτο κατ' ἄκρης.

33. See Lyne (1987), p. 120, n. 31, with reference to Otis (1964), pp. 70–72 and others.

His father groaned piteously, and all around the people were given over to wailing and groaning throughout the city. To this it was most alike, as if all of proud Troy were smouldering with fire from top to bottom.

And, in the teeth of Jupiter's promise in *Aeneid* 1 that the Romans would come to enjoy an *imperium sine fine* (1.279: 'an empire without end'), Greek sources report that Scipio Africanus Minor was stirred into a moment of tragic reflexivity after his sack of Carthage in 146 BC, reciting two verses from the *Iliad*, in which Hector recognizes the inevitability of the fall of Troy (6.448–49):<sup>34</sup>

ἔσεται ἡμαρ ὅτ' ἄν ποτ' ὀλώλη Ἴλιος ἰσὴ  
καὶ Πριάμος καὶ λαὸς ἐϋμμελίω Πριάμοιο.

The day shall come when sacred Ilios will perish and Priam and the people of Priam with goodly spear of ash.

This is a particular striking instance of the way in which Virgil in the *Aeneid* intertwines Roman history and the literary tradition by means of an oblique allusion—behind the scenes as it were of the tragic plot that is centred in the gruesome transformation of erotic passion into bloody suicide and lethal hatred: in this epic, the personal is always already also political. Or, as Otis puts it: 'The wound and the flames that mark Dido's end, and proleptically Carthage's end as well (*flammae furentes*, 670), are thus the visible signs of an inner tragedy: the course of the book has developed Dido's private wound and private conflagration into a public catastrophe, foreshadowing a greater one to come.'<sup>35</sup>]

**3–4: *multa uiri uirtus animo multusque recursat/ gentis honos*:** there is a switch in subject from Dido to the contents of her thought. Two assets of Aeneas are foremost in her mind. Virgil captures them in the pair of grammatically identical phrases *multa uiri uirtus* and *multus gentis honos*, i.e. the excellence of the man (*uiri uirtus*) and the distinction of his lineage (*gentis honos*). (The *-que* after *multus* links *uirtus* and *honos*.) The polyptotic adjectives *multa* and *multus* that modify *uirtus* and *honos* stand in place of adverbs and combine with the frequentative verb *recursat* to highlight the obsessive nature of Dido's mental activity: Aeneas' manly qualities and family prestige render any peace of mind impossible.

[*Extra information*: the repetition of *multa/ multus* recalls both the beginning and the end of Book 1. See 1.3–5: *multum ille et terris iactatus et alto/ ui superum ... multa quoque et bello passus* ('much thrown around on sea and land by violence of the gods ... and also much enduring in war') and 1.749–50: *longumque bibebat amorem,/ multa*

34. See Polybius 38.21–2 and Appian, *Roman History* 8.19.132.

35. Otis (1964), p. 72.

*super Priamo rogicans super Hectore multa* ('she drank deeply of love, asking much of Priam, much of Hector'). Likewise, *recursat* harks back to 1.662: *urit atrox Iuno, et sub noctem cura recursat*, a parallel discussed in further detail below.]

**3: uiri uirtus:** an alliterative *figura etymologica*: *uirtus* is what distinguishes the *uir*.<sup>36</sup> Originally, *uirtus* seems to have indicated martial prowess above all. But in the course of the Roman assimilation of Greek philosophical thought, the semantics of the term expanded considerably, as *uirtus* became the preferred Latin term to render the Greek *arete*.<sup>37</sup> In this process it also became a generic designation for good qualities more generally. The English 'virtue', while deriving from Latin *uirtus*, inevitably carries moral connotations and hence does not capture the full semantic range of the Latin term very well. 'Excellence' (*uirtus*) or 'excellences' (*uirtutes*) is therefore frequently the better option in translating. (Not all excellences need have a moral dimension.)

**4: gentis honos:** in enjambment. The phrase yields a metrical pattern (– u u –) called the choriamb, which enhances its unity and impact. Both *gens* and *honos* are key components of the political culture of the Roman republic. Latin authors tend to contrast the *populus Romanus* with foreign people (*gentes*), but with reference to Rome itself the term *gens* invariably designates one of the noble families (*gentes*) that formed the traditional polycentric core of Rome's senatorial ruling elite:<sup>38</sup> Hence we have (say) the *gens Claudia* (giving us the Claudii), the *gens Cornelia* (to which the Cornelii belonged) or the *gens Fabia* (the kin-group of the Fabii). Julius Caesar and hence also his adopted son Caesar Octavianus (later to be known under the honorific name Augustus) were part of the *gens Iulia*, which famously derived its name from Aeneas' son Ascanius, also named Iulus, from Ilion, the Greek name of Troy (hence *Iliad*) and renamed Iulus after the fall of Troy.<sup>39</sup> During the years of the republic (and also, under slightly altered

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36. See esp. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 2.43: *appellata est enim ex uiro uirtus* ('for the word for excellence [*uirtus*] is derived from the word for man [*uir*]').

37. For a recent monograph on the term, see McDonnell (2006), though reviewers have argued that he unduly simplifies the evidence: see e.g. R. A. Kaster in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (02.08.2007).

38. For a splendid and exhaustive treatment of this difficult subject matter see Smith (2006).

39. Jupiter, in his magisterial unscrolling of destiny in Book 1, comments on this nomenclature as follows: *at puer Ascanius, cui nunc cognomen Iulol additur (Iulus erat, dum res stetit Iliad regno)...* ('But the boy Ascanius, now surnamed Iulus (Iulus he was, while the Ilian state stood firm in its kingdom)...').

circumstances, imperial times), members of the various *gentes* vied with each other for public offices (*honos/ honores*; the phrase *gentis honos* hints anachronistically at this key feature of Roman republican politics). In so doing, they could draw on the prestige of their *gens* in making themselves attractive to voters.<sup>40</sup>

[*Extra information*: Against this republican background of a plurality of *gentes*, Virgil throughout the *Aeneid* promotes a semantic reorientation of the term: from the proem onwards, he integrates the multiple *gentes* into a single overarching *gens*, the *gens Romana*. See his announcement at the end of his extended proem at 1.33: *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem!* ('So vast was the effort to found the Roman race!'). This shift from many aristocratic *gentes* to one Roman *gens* is programmatic: at various places in his epic, Virgil uses the language of blood-descent to intimate an overlap approximating identity between the family of Anchises and Aeneas (later called the *gens Iulia*) and the entire Roman people (conceived not as the *populus Romanus* but the *gens Romana*). This is spin, very much aligned to the ideological preoccupations of the Augustan principate, which it is important to bear in mind whenever Virgil uses *gens*.<sup>41</sup>]

Dido here repays Aeneas the compliment Aeneas had paid her in Book 1.609–10: *semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt, / quae me cumque uocant terrae* ('forever shall your honour, your name, and your praises abide, whatever lands summon me'), especially if one considers that *nomen* is a virtual synonym of *gens* (via the phrase *nomen gentile*: see e.g. 6.756–59).<sup>42</sup> She knows of his partly divine lineage: at 1.615–18 she addresses Aeneas as soon as she realizes who has just walked into her city as *nate dea* ('goddess-born') before displaying an impressively detailed knowledge of his parentage and the circumstances of his birth: *tunc ille Aeneas, quem Dardanio Anchisae / alma Venus Phrygii genuit Simoentis ad undam?* ('Are you that Aeneas, whom nurturing Venus bore to Dardanian Anchises by the wave of Phrygian Simois?').

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40. Hence the difficulties 'new men' (*homines noui*) such as Marcus Tullius Cicero faced, who hailed from the *gens Tullia*: they were called 'new' since they belonged to *gentes* that had no prior consulship to their credit.

41. See further Gildenhard (2007), esp. pp. 92–98.

42. The passage is important also to illustrate that Aeneas, from the beginning, considered his stay in Libya nothing more than an unforeseen, temporary sojourn—his ultimate goal is Italy, and he will travel on. He is, however, noticeably more reticent about his final destination here than he was at 1.380, when talking to his (disguised) mother Venus: *Italiam quaero patriam et genus ab Ioue summo* ('I seek Italy, my fatherland, and a race sprung from Jupiter most high').

**4–5: haerent infixi pectore uultus/ uerbaque:** Virgil here systematically inverts standard word order: the main verb (*haerent*) precedes the subjects (the alliterative *uultus uerbaque*) and the participle *infixi* precedes its adverbial qualification (*pectore*). *Vultus* (which, as *infixi* makes clear, is in the ‘poetic plural’) refers to Aeneas’ appearance, *uerba* to his speech: he is a handsome hero and a spell-binding speaker. Together, these two qualities affect Dido profoundly and stay fixed deep within her heart. *uerbaque* is another instance of enjambment. Yet unlike in lines 3–4, where the enjambment of *gentis honos* was set up by *multus*—which was left ‘dangling’ without referent in the previous line—*uerbaque* comes as a surprise. It is tagged on, without advanced warning, either as an afterthought or for special emphasis. The design could suggest that it does not really matter what, precisely, Aeneas is saying since Dido is anyway completely beholden, stunned by his striking good looks; or it could mean that the verbal stimuli outweigh the visual ones in importance. Virgil underlines the contrast between the stable presence of Aeneas’ appearance and the mellifluous nature of his discourse metrically: apart from *pectore*, the phrase *haerent infixi pectore uultus* is spondaic, whereas *uerbaque*, for a moment, picks up dactylic speed, which comes to a somewhat abrupt stop at the diaeresis after the first foot. Virgil’s lexical choices here recall 1.717–19, where Dido cuddles Cupid disguised as Ascanius: *haec oculis, haec pectore toto/ haeret et interdum gremio fouet, inscia Dido,/ insidat quantus miserae deus* (‘with her eyes, with all her heart Dido hangs on him and from time to time fondles him in her lap, unknowing how great a divinity sits there to her sorrow’). As planned by Venus, the physical affection Dido displays for Aeneas’ insidious ‘son’ has evolved into a mental obsession with the father.

*Vultus* and *uerba* is the third pair of words linked by *u*-alliteration in the opening lines, after *uulnus* – *uenis* and *uir* – *uir*tus. Virgil seems to be hinting at a thematic link between the *uulnus* of Dido and the *uir*tus, *uultus*, and *uerba* of the *uir* Aeneas—a nexus reinforced if we take into consideration the erotic *uenenum* (poison) that *Venus* ordered her son Cupid to assault Dido with fire and poison (cf. 1.688: *occultum inspiret ignem fallasque ueneno*; the poison metaphor continues at 1.749: *longumque bibebat amorem*).<sup>43</sup>

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43. For a word of caution on the possible etymological connection between *Venus* and *uenenum*, see O’Hara (1996), p. 106: ‘Due [another scholar] has suggested that the metaphor is underscored by a presumed connection between the words *Venus* and *venenum*, but this suggestion must remain tentative, since ancient awareness of the

**4: haerent infixi:** Virgil reuses *infixus* with reference to Dido's suicidal wound at 4.689: *infixum stridit sub pectore uulnus*. The lexical parallel thus constitutes another literalization of a metaphorical image as love turns into death. Both verbs also recur in the stricken-deer simile at 4.70–3: *quam [sc. ceruam] ... fixit/ pastor agens telis; ... haeret lateri letalis harundo* (again inverting subject and verb). The simile marks a midway stage in the gradual transformation of the metaphorical imagery at the opening of the book into deadly reality at its end: it is a narrative comparison, designed to illustrate Dido's pathological condition (and as such is a figurative use of language), but involves the actual wounding and killing of an animal.

**5: nec placidam membris dat cura quietem:** the subject (*cura*) recalls the *cura* of line 1, but the switch from ablative to nominative suggests a subtle increase in Dido's anxiety. The phrase *membris dat cura* separates the adjective *placidam* from the noun it modifies (*quietem*), generating a hyperbaton that is thematically appropriate: the unsettled word order enacts Dido's inability to achieve a restful state of mind. The opening five lines contain a veritable anatomy of Dido: after hailing her wholesale as queen (*regina*, 1), Virgil focuses in turn on her veins (*uenis*, 2), her mind (*animo*, 3), her heart or breast (*pectore*, 4), and the rest of her limbs (*membris*, 5).

[*Extra information:* Before moving on, it is instructive to set the opening five lines of *Aeneid* 4 against a passage from Book 1—a backward glance designed to illustrate how Virgil generates intratextual coherence and suggestive complexity by means of the strategic repetition of key words and phrases (1.657–63):

*at Cytherea nouas artes, noua pectore versat  
consilia, ut faciem mutatus et ora Cupido  
pro dulci Ascanio ueniat, donisque furentem  
incendat reginam, atque ossibus implicet ignem;* 660  
*quippe domum timet ambiguum Tyriosque bilinguis;  
urit atrox Iuno, et sub noctem cura recursat.  
ergo his aligerum dictis adfatur Amorem:*

But Venus revolves new designs, new schemes in her breast, how Cupid transformed in face and form may come instead of sweet Ascanius and by means of his gifts inflame the raging queen and embed the fire in her bones. In fact, she fears the uncertain house and the double-tongued Tyrians; black-billed Juno burns and at nightfall her anxiety rushes back. Therefore she addressed winged Amor with the following words...

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perhaps genuine connection between *Venus* and *venenum* is not clearly attested, and wordplay in Vergil here is not certain.'



Parallels to note include:

- (i) *At Cytherea* (1.657) correlates with *At regina* (4.1).
- (ii) *pectore uersat* (1.657) points to *animo ... recursat* (4.3) and *infixi pectore* (4.4)
- (iii) the sentence *incendat reginam, atque ossibus implicet ignem* (1.660) anticipates *regina ... uulnus alit uenis* [~ *ossibus*] *et caeco carpitur igni* (1–2) in the sense of ‘mission accomplished.’
- (iv) *sub noctem cura recursat* (1.662) prefigures the opening of *Aeneid* 4 more generally, with a specific lexical parallel in *animo ... recursat* (4.3): in both passages, it is night; *cura* (worry on behalf of Aeneas on the part of Venus, love of Aeneas in the case of Dido) causes emotional upheaval; and emotive thoughts assault the peace of mind of the character in question.

At the same time a displacement has occurred: because of the *cura* that Venus felt in Book 1, Dido feels *cura* in Book 4. The lexical reminiscences thus serve as a reminder that Dido’s pathological condition owes itself at least in part to a divine intervention and therefore encourage theological reflection about the interface between the divine and the human realm (as well as the ethics thereof).]

**6–7: postera Phoebæ lustrabat lampade terras/ umentemque Aurora polo dimouerat umbram:** Virgil here offers an elaborate description of dawn (or Dawn, the goddess Aurora, who is the subject of both *lustrabat* and *dimouerat*). Myth has it that Aurora fell in love with Tithonus, a mortal, son of the Trojan king Laomedon. She prevailed upon Jupiter to grant her beloved immortality but forgot to request eternal youth as well.<sup>44</sup> The lines feature two striking hyperbata: *postera ... Aurora* (‘the following dawn’) and *umentemque ... umbram*, the last linked by the *um*-alliteration and containing a touch of paronomasia that suggests a thematic affinity between *umens* and *umbra*. The symmetry of line 7 is striking: *umentem* and *umbram* frame the subject (*Aurora*) and the verb (*dimouerat*), with *polo*, in the ablative of separation, dead centre. *Aurora* and *dimouerat* thus function as buffers that keep the dewy (*umentem*) darkness (*umbram*) away from the sky (*polo*): in other words, Virgil reproduces on the level of verbal architecture the result of the action described in the line.

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44. Virgil hints at the mythic background later in the book. See 4.584–85: *Et iam prima nouo spargebat lumine terras/ Tithoni croceum linquens Aurora cubile* (‘And now early Dawn, leaving the saffron bed of Tithonus, was sprinkling the earth with fresh light’).

**6: Phoebea lustrabat lampade:** the phrase acquires formal coherence through alliteration (*lu-*, *la-*) and assonance (*-bea*, *-ba-*, *-pade*). *Phoebeus* means ‘of or associated with Phoebus Apollo; of Phoebus, belonging or sacred to him.’ It is formed as a calque on Greek Φοίβειος, which explains why the *-be-* is scanned as a long syllable: it represents a long syllable (the diphthong *-ει-*) in Greek. *lampas*, in the poetic sense that Virgil uses it here means ‘the light of the sun’; but its primary meaning is ‘torch’ or ‘fire-brand.’ As such the term could be taken to foreshadow the tragic turn of events, more specifically Dido’s funeral pyre. The last image that Aeneas catches of Carthage are the city walls aglow with the funeral flames of Dido at 5.3–4: *moenia respiciens, quae iam infelicis Elissae/ conlucent flammis* (‘looking back on the city walls, which now gleam with the funeral flames of unlucky Dido’). The primary meanings of *lustrare* are ‘to purify ceremonially with rituals usually involving a procession’ and hence ‘to walk around, to circle.’ Here it means ‘to spread light over or around, to irradiate’ (*OLD* s.v. 4), though MacLennan believes that the primary meaning also registers ‘because Dido feels in some way polluted by her feelings for Aeneas.’<sup>45</sup> This is an interesting suggestion, but the rising of the sun does not alter the religious quality or implications of Dido’s feelings, and the key thematic contrast here seems rather between night/ darkness/ secrecy/ solitude and day/ light/ confession/ company.<sup>46</sup>

**8: cum sic unanimam adloquitur male sana sororem:** The so-called *cum-inversum*—inverted because the background action (here: sunrise) comes in the main clause, whereas the main action (here: Dido approaching her sister to share confidences) is put in the subordinate *cum*-clause—is a favourite device of Virgil to enhance a dramatic scene.<sup>47</sup>

[*Extra Information:* two correlated instances of the *cum-inversum* occur at the beginning of the poem. See *Aeneid* 1.34–7: *uix e conspectu Siculae telluris in altum/ uela dabant laeti, et spumas salis aere ruebant/ cum Iuno, aeternum seruans sub pectore uulnus,*

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45. MacLennan (2007), p. 74.

46. Virgil here develops an idiom pioneered by Cicero, *de Republica* 6.17, where Sol is described as of such magnitude *ut cuncta sua luce lustret et compleat* (‘that he illuminates and fills all things with his light’) and Lucretius 5.693, where the sun is described as ‘illuminating lands and sky with oblique light’ (*obliquo terras et caelum lumine lustrans*).

47. For metrical devices underscoring Dido’s mental disposition see Austin (1963), p. 28: ‘the elision at the end of the second foot, and the absence of a third-foot caesura, give a metrical picture of urgency.’ (Note, however, that the elision occurs at the beginning of the third foot, though there is an elision at the end of the second foot in the previous line: *umentemque Aurora*.)

*haec secum [sc. dixit]...* ('Hardly out of sight of Sicilian land, they were spreading their sails onto the high sea and were gladly ploughing the foaming sea with brazen prow, when Juno, nursing an immortal wound in her breast, spoke thus to herself...'). The narrative stretch thus introduced, i.e. Juno's outraged soliloquy, her subsequent visit to the wind-god Aeolus, and the unleashing of the storm that will blow Aeneas' fleet off-course to Carthage, finds its conclusion at 1.223–26, with another *cum-inversum*: *Et iam finis erat, cum Iuppiter aethere summo/ despiciens mare ueliolum terrasque iacentis/ litoraue et latos populos, sic uertice caeli/ constitit...* The syntactic device thus frames the initial stretch of action, being first associated with Juno, the goddess of beginning, interference and obstruction, whose intervention verges on generating chaos but also provides dramatic energy, and then with Jupiter, the god of ending (cf. *finis*), entropy, settlement, ordaining, and order.]

**8: unanimam ... sororem:** Dido's sister (Anna, who is not named until the following line) appears out of nowhere, but Virgil obliquely stresses the strong attachment that unites the siblings by means of two formal instances of bonding: the adjective *unanimus* enacts its meaning by merging the two words *unus* and *animus* into one; and the elision of *unanimam adloquitur* practices bonding at the level of metre. The notion of two individuals being of one mind ultimately goes back to the Homeric ideal of 'likemindedness' (ὁμοφροσύνη) that forms the basis of Odysseus' and Penelope's perfect marriage. After Dido has mortally wounded herself on her funeral pyre, Virgil stages a last encounter between her and her sister Anna, using language that refers the reader back to the beginning of Book 4. Anna bedding her dying sister in her lap (686): *semianimemque ... germanam amplexa* ('embracing her dying sister') constitutes a tragic gloss on 8: *cum sic unanimam adloquitur male sana sororem*. Since Dido and Anna are each a *unanima soror* to the other, the phrase *semianimim germana* not only captures Dido's limbo state between life and death, but also the fact that Anna and Dido, who were unanimous, are split in half: half of Anna dies with Dido.<sup>48</sup>

**8: male sana:** a periphrastic, colloquial way of saying *insana*, though *male* seems more than a mere synonym for *non*: combined with *sana*, it is not simply a negation but produces a *contradictio in adiecto* or even an oxymoron. The phrase stands in predicative position to the subject of the *cum*-clause, i.e. Dido: 'she addressed her sister, in a state of ill-health/mentally disturbed.'

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48. For the dialogue with Catullus and Callimachus that is arguably built into Virgil's use of the adjective *unanima*, see Essay 3: Allusion.

The reference to Dido's psycho-pathological condition concludes the multi-faceted metaphors of love that Virgil has splashed across these opening lines. It will be useful to take stock of the images he uses here and elsewhere in *Aeneid* 1 and 4 to capture Dido's amorous feelings for Aeneas:

- (a) Wounds: 4.1: *saucia*, 4.2: *uulnus*, 4.69–73: the simile of the deer killed by an arrow. Note, though, that, in contrast to his counterpart Eros in Apollonius' *Argonautica* 3, Virgil's Cupid does not use arrows in inflicting a wound on Dido; bow and arrow imagery are displaced upon Aeneas: 'Virgil's Cupid is emphatically not an archer. That role is reserved for his half-brother: for Aeneas, here in 4.69ff.'<sup>49</sup>
- (b) Fire: 1.660: *incendat [sc. Amor] reginam atque ossibus implicet ignem* (1.660), 1.688 (Venus to Amor): *occultum inspiret ignem*, 4.2: *igni*, 4.68: *uritur infelix Dido*. At the end of the book, the hidden fire inside Dido will turn into the conflagration that engulfs her corpse on the funeral pyre.
- (c) Poison: 1.688 (Venus to Amor): *fallasque ueneno*, 1.750: *bibat amorem*, 4.2: *uenis* (hints at *uenenum*), 4.73: Cretans in stories hunt with poisoned arrows.
- (d) Pathologies of the body, i.e. infection and disease: 1.712: *pesti deuota futurae*, 4.8: *male sana*, 4.90: *tali persensit peste teneri*, 4.389: *aegra*.
- (e) Pathologies of the mind, i.e. madness: 1.659: *furentem*, 4.8: *male sana*, 4.69: *furens*, 4.78: *demens*, 4.301: *bacchatur*, 4.642: *effera*.

The metaphors point to different stages and aspects of erotic experience: the metaphors of wounding construe being in love as the outcome of an assault by Eros, Amor, or Cupid, the god of love, armed as he is with bows and arrows, though he also uses more insidious means to press his attack. Fire imagery, too, has associations with Cupid, the fire-brand or marriage torch, but the notion of a conflagration also refers to physiological symptoms of love (going hot and cold at the sight of the beloved, for instance). The idea of poisoning points to Cupid as an infiltrator who secretly enters the bloodstream—as do notions of ill-health (whether physical or mental).

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49. Lyne (1987), p. 195.

## Lines 9–30: Sister Act I: Dido’s Address to Anna

Not having slept during the night, Dido seeks out her sister Anna the following morning and tries to articulate her thoughts and feelings. Despite her emotional turmoil, her speech is well structured, in two different ways:

- (a) It comprises 21 lines in all, which fall into two halves of near-equal length (11/10), marked by two direct addresses to the internal audience, her sister Anna: *Anna soror* (9) and *Anna* (20). Those who count along and expect the second half to be precisely equal in length to the first half will thus be disappointed. In line 30, which could have been the 11th line of the second half, Dido has finished speaking and bursts into tears. But this slight imbalance and seemingly premature end to her speech may be an artistic effect designed to convey Dido’s emotionally unbalanced condition.
- (b) In thematic terms, the structure is tripartite, again in a symmetrical design (6/9/6):

1: 9–14: Dido’s attempt to articulate in words her thoughts and feelings about Aeneas

2: 15–23: Exploration of a ‘what-if’

3: 24–29: Rejection of the ‘what-if’

**9–14: ‘Anna soror, quae me suspensam insomnia terrent!/ quis nouus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes,/ quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!/ credo equidem, nec uana fides, genus esse deorum./ degeneres animos timor arguit. heu, quibus ille/ iactatus fatis! quae bella exhausta canebat!**

The opening segment of the speech comprises an attempt by Dido to articulate in words the impression Aeneas has made on her. In doing so, she repeats from a personal, subjective perspective what Virgil has just described from the external, objective perspective of the narrator. She is so overpowered by feelings and emotions (ranging from deep reverence to strong erotic attraction and incipient sexual desire) that she appears to be ‘gushing’, and her Latin is accordingly palpably out of control. Noteworthy features that underscore that Dido is here venting strong feelings include the sequence of exclamations introduced by *quae* (9), *quis* (10), *quem* (11), *quam* (11), *quibus* (13), *quae* (14); the overemphatic string *quis nouus hic* (10);

and the contorted expression *quem sese ore ferens* (11). Dido reaches the height of her pathos-dripping outburst with the exclamation *heu* (13), a profound expression of empathy for the trials and tribulations her hero has suffered, but also indicative of the profound yearning and passion-driven anxiety that she is experiencing herself this very moment, before she sobers down to a more measured mode of discourse from line 15 onwards.

**9: quae ... insomnia terrent:** paradoxically, *insomnium*, usually in the plural, can mean both ‘sleeplessness’ (*OLD* s.v. 1) and ‘an apparition seen in a trance or dream’ (*OLD* s.v. 2). Virgil may here play with both possibilities to convey a sense of Dido’s ‘altered’ state of mind: she cannot sleep and partly as a result begins to hallucinate as if dreaming. She hovers between wakefulness and sleep, a condition liable to blur any clear-cut boundary between what is based on ‘real’ sense perceptions and what are figments of the imagination. *terrent* raises similar issues of interpretation. It is a highly emotive verb and rather unexpected: why should Dido feel fear? She has fallen in love. But the notion that she experiences ‘erotic nightmares’ is in dramatic terms highly appropriate and psychologically insightful: it introduces at the outset a sinister note, as Dido confesses that her obsessive passion for Aeneas conjures up ghosts of terror, however erotically thrilling the experience may be. (Goold’s ‘what dreams thrill me with fears?’ captures the paradox nicely.) Specifically, Dido may here betray awareness of the impact these *insomnia* have on her resolve to remain faithful to her dead husband Sychaeus, and she fears the consequences. In other words, Dido is afraid of herself, afraid of what she will do: the verb thus carries a strong sense of foreboding of what will happen later in the book.<sup>50</sup>

[*Extra information:* One of Virgil’s models here is Apollonius, *Argonautica* 3. At 3.616–18 he describes Medea asleep, but worried for Jason: ‘As for the girl, deep sleep was furnishing relief from her troubles as she lay in bed. But soon deceptive, baleful dreams began to disturb her, as they do when a girl is in distress.’<sup>51</sup> And when she wakes up, Medea *soliloquizes* as follows (3.636–44):

‘δειλὴ ἐγών, οἶόν με βαρεῖς ἐφόβησαν ὄνειροι.  
 δεῖδια, μὴ μέγα δὴ τι φέρῃ κακὸν ἤδε κέλευθος  
 ἠρώων· περὶ μοι ξεῖνω φρένες ἠερέθονται.

50. See in particular 4.450–51, the moment when Dido embraces death: *tum uero infelix fatis exterrita Didol mortem orat* (‘Then, indeed, shocked and awed by her doom, luckless Dido prays for death’).

51. I cite the translation of William H. Race in the Loeb Classical Library edition (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2008).

μνάσθω ἔδον κατὰ δῆμον Ἀχαιίδα τηλόθι κούρην,  
 ἄμμι δὲ παρθενίη τε μέλοι καὶ δῶμα τοκήων. 640  
 ἔμπα γε μὴν, θεμένη κύνεον κέαρ, οὐκέτ' ἀνευθεν  
 αὐτοκασιγνήτης πειρώσομαι εἴ κέ μ' ἀέθλω  
 χραισμεῖν ἀντίασησιν, ἐπὶ σφετέροισι ἀχέουσα  
 παισί· τό κέν μοι λυγρὸν ἐνὶ κραδίῃ σβέσει ἄλγος.'

'Poor me! How these dire dreams have frightened me! I fear that this expedition of heroes will indeed bring some great harm—my mind is all aflutter about the stranger. Let him woo an Achaean girl far away among his own people, and let my care be for virginity and the home of my parents. Yet nevertheless, I will make my heart shameless and, no longer remaining aloof, will test my sister, to see if she will entreat me to aid in the contest because she is distressed for her sons—that would quench the terrible pain in my heart.'

There are, then, clear parallels in plot (a heroine in erotic distress, deciding to seek out her sister after a night of frightful visions), and Virgil's Latin obliquely recalls Apollonius' Greek also on the level of metre and diction. Compare the opening line of Medea's self-address with the opening line of Dido's speech to Anna:

δειλὴ ἐγών, οἷόν με βαρεῖς ἐφόβησαν ὄνειροι.  
 Poor me! How these dire dreams have frightened me!

*Anna soror, quae me suspensam insomnia terrent!*  
 Anna, my sister, what dreams frighten me with fears?

- **δειλὴ ἐγών [poor me]** ~ *Anna soror*: Medea's address to herself, i.e. δειλὴ ἐγών [poor me], has been replaced by Dido's address to her sister Anna (*Anna soror*) in the same metrical pattern.
- **οἷόν [how]** ~ *quae*: Instead of an adverb, Virgil uses an interrogative adjective (*quae* modifies *insomnia*: 'what dreams...'). Apollonius' Medea stresses the *degree* of her fear (how!); Virgil's Dido enquires into the *nature* of her frightening dreams.
- **με [me]** ~ *me*: in both Apollonius and Virgil, the direct object of the verb is the first person personal pronoun.
- **βαρεῖς [dire]** ~ *suspensam*: Apollonius here uses an adjective to modify the dreams; Virgil instead chooses to elaborate on Dido: *suspensam*, which means something akin to 'on tenterhooks' (see next note) modifies *me*.
- **ἐφόβησαν [have frightened]** ~ *terrent*: both authors use a verb with the basic meaning 'to frighten.' But Virgil shifts the tense from the past (ἐφόβησαν is a so-called aorist) to the present. Whereas Medea reflects on the nightmares from which she has just woken up, Dido (who has never fallen asleep) confesses to her

sister that she is being plagued by ‘nightmarish visions’ *at this very moment*. Virgil thereby achieves a heightened sense of urgency and immediacy.

- ὄνειροι [dreams] ~ *insomnia*: in line with the present tense, Virgil uses a term that can refer to visions in dreams or hallucinations while awake.]

**9: suspensam**: in predicative relation to *me*, meaning ‘in a state of anxious uncertainty or suspense, on tenterhooks’ (*OLD* s.v.).

**10: quis nouus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes**: The design is symmetrical: *quis nouus hic* agrees with *hospes* and *nostris* with *sedibus*, leaving the verb (*successit*) at the centre. (The position of *successit* between *nostris* and *sedibus* enacts its meaning, i.e. ‘has entered into.’) The use of *quis* as an exclamation together with the demonstrative pronoun *hic* makes a literal translation difficult: ‘What an unforeseen guest, this, who has entered our house!’<sup>52</sup> As Conington points out, Dido here quotes herself. See 1.627 (Dido speaking to Aeneas and his men): *quare agite, o tectis, iuuenes, succedite nostris* (‘Come therefore, young men, enter our halls’).

[*Extra information*: Virgil repeats the phrasing of 1.627 and 4.10 with minor variation at 8.123: *nostris succede penetibus hospes*. The speaker is Pallas, the son of Euander, addressing Aeneas—the same Pallas, in other words, who will go to war with the Trojan leader only to have his life cut short by Turnus. The correspondence in diction draws attention to parallels in plot, which are further underscored by the remarkable fact that the last time we hear of Dido is when Aeneas covers the corpse of Pallas with the cloak of gold and purple Dido had made him (11.72-5; for the cloak see below 4.262–64). Is Virgil hinting at the fact that playing host to Aeneas leads to tragedy and death? Or is the point of these parallels that Aeneas, just like Dido, is a tragic figure who deserves our respect and sympathy?]

**11: quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!**: syntactically, the line continues in apposition to *hospes*, giving two further specifications in different constructions: a present participle (*ferens*), followed by ablatives of quality (*forti pectore et armis*). The phrase *ore ferre* means ‘to exhibit or display in one’s features or expression’ (*OLD* s.v. *ferre* 9c). A painfully literal translation of *quem sese ore ferens* would go something like: ‘as whom (*quem*) displaying (*ferens*) himself (*sese*) in his mien (*ore*)!’ It may be significant

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52. Goold in the Loeb edition (‘Who is this stranger guest...?) and McLennan in his commentary (‘What a strange visitor...’) translate *nouus* with ‘strange’, but that does not seem quite right: Aeneas is no stranger to Dido; indeed, she is quite familiar with his background and story—but he arrived out of the blue.



that Virgil already used the expression *se ferre* during Dido's entrance into the narrative, more specifically the Diana-simile at 1.503–04: *talem se laeta ferebat/ per medios*. And it is certainly significant that a similar formulation recurs later on in the book when Dido wishes that Aeneas had made her pregnant before setting sail (4.327–30):

saltem si qua mihi de te suscepta fuisset  
ante fugam suboles, si quis mihi paruulus aula  
luderet Aeneas, qui te tamen ore referret,  
non equidem omnino capta ac deserta uiderer.

[If at least before your flight an offspring of yours had been conceived by me, if in my hall a little Aeneas were playing, who would bring you back in his mien, I would not seem entirely conquered and deserted.]

From a modern perspective, getting Dido pregnant before abandoning her would seem to heighten the sense of betrayal. But Dido is so obsessed with the Trojan hero that she would prefer a living reminder of their time together to being left all alone. The wish, of course, is perverse since it hints at incest, and Virgil continues the Homeric paradigm of 'sterile sex' for his protagonist during his travels.<sup>53</sup> But Dido cannot/ does not want to ever take her eyes off the Trojan hero.

[*Extra information:* Gutting points out a powerful Catullan intertext in 4.327–30: 'The phrase *paruulus Aeneas* is striking because it is a rare use of a diminutive adjective in Vergil's epic. The diminutive recalls the *paruulus Torquatus* of Catullus 61. There, the *paruulus Torquatus* exemplifies perfectly the use of children as tokens of the conjugal bond. Catullus explains that the child should be a replica of his father in order to serve as a sign to all of his mother's *pudicitia* (61.209–18). But in Dido's case, the typically conjugal desire for a child who looks like his father has become a facet of erotic desire.<sup>54</sup> And yet: if we take the genre Catullus is writing in seriously, then Dido is thinking of a wedding first of all, a proper and joyful union blessed with offspring—the problem is that she infects this Roman model of wedlock and procreation with the warped and disturbing desire worthy of a Cleopatra, who did indeed give birth to such a child, Caesar's ill-fated son Caesarion. Roman readers who pursued the implications of this intertext, then, would have ended up in uncomfortable territory.]<sup>55</sup>

53. According to Homer, Odysseus, despite sharing the bed with various immortals during his voyage (Circe, Calypso), does not sire any offspring; in an alternative tradition, however, he had a son by Circe, called Telegonos.

54. Gutting (2006), p. 268.

55. I owe the complications to John Henderson, *per litteras*.

**11: *quam forti pectore et armis!***: literally, this part of the sentence means ‘with how brave a chest and arms/ shoulders!’ *pectore* recalls 4.4: *haerent infixi pectore uultus*, but whereas in the earlier passage *pectus* means Dido’s heart, here *pectus* seems to be referring above all to Aeneas’ musculature, specifically his pects. *armis* could come either from *armus* (‘shoulder’) or, more likely, from *arma* (‘arms’). While *armus* is a possibility (Dido appreciating the buff chest and broad shoulders of her hero), *arma* yields a better meaning. Dido’s diction here (and elsewhere: see above all below on *heu, quibus ille/ iactatus fatis! quae bella exhausta canebat!*) recalls the language of the proem: if *armis* comes from *arma*, *forti pectore et armis* chiasmatically paraphrase Virgil’s keynote, which introduces his plot and his protagonist, i.e. *arma uirumque cano* (1.1), with *forte pectus* as a metonym, or *pars pro toto*, for *uir*. Dido’s appraisal of Aeneas is thus grounded in the poet’s reality, however much her overall picture may be distorted by the influence of Cupid.

**12: *credo equidem, nec uana fides, genus esse deorum***: *credo* introduces the indirect statement *genus esse deorum*, with *nec uana fides* [*sc. est*] inserted as a parenthetical exclamation. Dido’s assertion that she believes in Aeneas’ divine ancestry is strategically placed between her appreciation of his appearance (11) and a sympathetic recapitulation of and reaction to his tale of adventures (13–14): both his looks and his account of his deeds confirm his supernatural lineage, which she already took for granted at 1.615–18. The use of *fides* also subtly hints at the desirability of a third quality, in addition to appearance and bravery, namely trustworthiness and reliability in social relations—which Aeneas, from Dido’s point of view, ultimately reveals himself as conspicuously lacking. Her vote of confidence here functions as ironic foil for the aspersion she casts on Aeneas after she has heard the news of his imminent departure (4.365–67):

*nec tibi diua parens, generis nec Dardanus auctor,  
perfide, sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens  
Caucasus, Hyrcanaeque admorunt ubera tigres.*

[‘You do not have a divine mother nor is Dardanus the founder of your lineage, treacherous one, but rugged Caucasus on his hard rocks begot you, and Hyrcanian tigresses suckled you...’]

In the light of this radical change of heart, the parenthesis *nec uana fides* acquires a touch of tragic irony. Even if Aeneas remains of divine descent,

the *fides* ('trust') that Dido invests in Aeneas more generally (and not just his DNA) turns out to be *uana* ('misplaced'): he is not *fidus* ('trustworthy, loyal') but *perfidus* ('treacherous').

**13: degeneres animos timor arguit. heu, quibus ille:** a 'breathless', dactylic line. The gnomic formulation *degeneres animos timor arguit* is a curiously abstract and negative way of making the positive point that Aeneas has shown *no* fear and hence is *not* a 'degenerate.' (A *degener* is a person who has fallen short of the standards of excellence shown by his ancestors, indicating a worsening of the blood-line: put differently, Dido assesses Aeneas as living up to his illustrious ancestry.) This negative proof—*arguere*, in its basic sense, means 'to show, demonstrate', then also, in law court settings, 'to convict, prove guilty'—reinforces Dido's and Virgil's obsession with lineage: the theme of noble descent and ignoble disposition recalls *gentis honos* at 4.4 (though the causal link Dido asserts between a show of fear and degeneracy also comes as a bit of a surprise given that a few lines earlier she had confessed to be suffering from a significant amount of fear: *insomnia me ... terrent*). Still, by way of etymology, *degeneres* continues the thought that concluded the previous line, i.e. *genus esse deorum*, in a kind of chiasmic paronomasia: the prefix *de-* playfully alludes to *deorum* (though pointing downwards, rather than upwards), whereas *-generes* picks up *genus*.<sup>56</sup> As Henderson suggests (*per litteras*), it is almost as if Dido tries her best to think of ways to put Aeneas down, to diagnose some holes in his impeccable armour and appearance, but without apparent success. From her point of view, Aeneas will indeed come to oscillate sharply between someone of quasi-divine status and being a lowly brute (see the rhetorical bestialization she performs on her former lover at 4.365–67, cited in the previous note): the decisive criterion is the key Roman value of *fides* ('trustworthiness'), which he fails to live up to.

**13–14: heu, quibus ille/ iactatus fatis! quae bella exhausta canebat!** Dido continues to speak of Aeneas in an 'authorial' idiom and additionally assimilates Aeneas to the narrator. Her own assessment in *quibus ille iactatus fatis* matches that of Virgil (see *fato profugus* and *multum ille et*

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56. The term occurs one other time in the *Aeneid* (at 2.549, with reference to Neoptolemus) and, unsurprisingly, becomes a favourite of Lucan, who uses it 13 times in his *Bellum Civile*.

*terris iactatus et alto* at *Aen.* 1.2 and 1.3, respectively), and her *quae bella exhausta*, while referring to Aeneas' account of the sack of Troy, harks back to *Aen.* 1.1: *arma* [= *bella*] and 1.5: *multa quoque et bello passus* and anticipates *Aen.* 7.41 (Virgil addressing the Muse Erato): *tu uatem, tu, diua, mone. dicam horrida bella*). By referring to Aeneas' dinner performance with the verb *canebat*, Dido correlates his narrative with Virgil's own narration of the *Aeneid*: *arma uirumque cano* (*Aen.* 1.1). How does Dido know that Aeneas is tossed about by fate, given that she thinks of her own biography as shaped by fortune? She may have picked up a hint from Aeneas' discourse in Books 2 and 3, where *fata* figures prominently as a divine force shaping affairs in the human realm. Yet Dido, while adopting the idiom of historical necessity, remains unwilling to draw the necessary consequences.

**14: fatis:** *fatum* (or, as here, in the plural *fata*) is a key concept in Virgil's theology, which he introduces right at the beginning of his epic (1.2: *fato profugus*). Scholarship has been much preoccupied with sorting out how it works in the *Aeneid*, not least in relation to Jupiter. What has been somewhat overlooked in all this is that the notion of historical necessity implied by *fatum* was at variance with the conception of history that prevailed in republican times, i.e. an annalistic sequence of years, marked by the entry into office by publicly elected consuls (who gave their names to the year), with an open future. Rome's civic religion, tailored to maintaining the so-called *pax deorum*, i.e. 'peace with the gods', tried to ensure that this contingent future brought success and prosperity rather than defeat or disaster—but it was a continual process of negotiation with the supernatural sphere with an uncertain outcome. Those who invoked the concept of fate as supporting their own ambitions during the republic tended to be revolutionaries (followers of Catiline, for instance, who argued that Rome was heading towards an apocalyptic and preordained moment of crisis), warlords and potentates (such as Caesar or Octavian who liked to represent their rise to power as the fulfilment of destiny), or individuals with a passionate belief in their historical importance (notably Cicero, who, towards the end of his career, started to see a coincidence between his *fatum* and the *fatum* of the *res publica*, though he remained strictly opposed to any notion of historical necessity). Virgil's theology

is therefore indebted not primarily to the civic religion of the Roman republic but to this revolutionary, autocratic rhetoric.<sup>57</sup>

**14: quae bella exhausta canebat!:** Dido has a point: Aeneas' narration must have lasted well into the wee hours of the morning. Still, the attribute *exhausta*, which here has the sense of 'down to the bitter end', is highly ironic if one ponders the fact that *horrida bella* (*Aen.* 7.41) lie in store for Aeneas upon his arrival in Italy and Dido herself will curse the future city of Rome with the prospect of prolonged warfare against her avenger Hannibal (4.621–29).

**15–19: si mihi non sederet ... si non pertaesum ... fuisset, ... potui succumbere ...:** Lines 15–19 contain one long conditional sequence. The protasis consists of two asyndetic *si*-clauses (15: *si ... sederet*; 18: *si ... pertaesum fuisset*). The first is in the imperfect subjunctive (a present contrary-to-fact), the second is in the pluperfect subjunctive (a past contrary-to-fact). They share the apodosis, i.e. *potui*, which is in the perfect indicative (rather than the subjunctive) since it is one of those verbs that 'contain within themselves a subjunctive type of meaning (e.g. "could", "should").'<sup>58</sup> Scholars are divided on the meaning of the change in tense from imperfect to pluperfect subjunctive. Here is Gutting: 'Dido's first protasis is a statement that precludes infidelity to Sychaeus at the present time, but the second protasis only precludes infidelity in past time. The possibility of present infidelity is left open. Thus the change in tense reflects the incremental *paulatim abolere Sychaeum* begun by Cupid at 1.720. The apodosis, *huic uni forsitan potui succumbere culpae*, leaves no doubt of the cracks in Dido's fidelity.'<sup>59</sup> Contrast Maclennan, who offers a more innocent reading: 'The strength of feeling in this sentence is worth setting out. Dido could say in routine language, using the imperf. subj., *si non me taederet succumbere possem*—"If I were not weary, I could yield". Virgil gives her the intensive prefix *per-*; he suggests that the matter is over once and for all by using the pluperf. subj., intensifying that idea by *pertaesum fuisset* rather than *esset*.'<sup>60</sup> Who is right?

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57. See further Essay 4: Religion.

58. Morwood (1999), p. 116.

59. Gutting (2006), p. 269.

60. Maclennan (2007), p. 76.

**15–16: si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet/ ne cui me uincolo uellem sociare iugali:** *mihi*: a so-called ‘ethic dative’.<sup>61</sup> The *ne*-clause, which is the subject of the first *si*-clause with *fixum immotumque* as a predicative complement (‘if it were not planted in my mind as fixed and immovable that...’), specifies what Dido thinks she will remain unconditionally committed to. (*ali*)*cui* (*ali*- dropping out after *si*, *nisi*, *ne* and *num*) is the dative object, *me* the accusative object of *sociare*, which is a complementary infinitive with *uellem*. The generic reference to a comprehensive *aliquis* (‘anyone’) already prepares for the exception. In fact, *nomen est omen*: if one derives Dido from a Phoenician root, it means ‘Wanderer’ – suitably enough for someone forced into exile, but the exact opposite of anything *fixum immotumque* that remains settled and in place (*sederet*).<sup>62</sup>

**17: postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit:** *primus amor* refers to Dido’s feelings for her first husband Sychaeus or Sychaeus himself (‘my first love’). Virgil elides the direct object of *fefellit*, i.e. the personal pronoun *me*, on which *deceptam* depends. *morte* goes with both *deceptam* and *fefellit*, and there is a striking alliterative patterning that gives stylistic coherence to the entire formulation: *p-*, *p-*; *am-*, *mo-*; *fe-fe-*. Note also the paronomastic relation *amor* ~ *morte*. The intervening *deceptam* almost makes the two words merge into one another: *amor-de* [*cept*] *am-morte*. The phrasing is iconic, suggesting the tragic identity of love and death. In the figure of ‘Dido deceived’ the two coincide twice: her first husband is the victim of brutal murder; and her would-be husband causes her suicide. Lyne offers a nuanced interpretation of Virgil’s syntax and Dido’s psychology. He first notes that the idiom derives from funerary inscriptions where it takes two forms: ‘the bereaved are said to be cheated by the death of a loved one, and the dead persons themselves are said to have been cheated by death’ (31).<sup>63</sup> Then he points out that Virgil tweaks the commonplace in an interesting way: here it is the deceased (Sychaeus) who is thought to have deceived and cheated his surviving spouse by dying: “‘deceptam’ may legitimately be seen as reinforcing the action in ‘fefellit’: ‘deceptam fefellit’ = ‘decepit atque fefellit’” (31). He concludes: ‘By his death Sychaeus has cheated her as surely as, much more surely than he would have by leaving her for another woman. Such unfair (and perhaps largely unconscious) resentment

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61. See Morwood (1999), p. 10.

62. I owe this point to John Henderson.

63. Lyne (1989), pp. 31–32.

in the face of bereavement is something that I think we can all understand. Certainly Dido feels it, and Vergil's language extorts it for her' (32). There is yet another unconscious plot embedded in Dido's choice of idiom, to do with her description of her love and marriage to Sychaeus as *primus amor*. Tragically, the 'second love of her life', her *secundus amor*, will also deceive her and result in death, this time her own. Dido, of course, is unaware that her phrasing is both retrospective and proleptic: a case of tragic irony, here reinforced by the fact that she falls prey to the (subliminal) trickery of her own idiom, which too deceives her (cf. *fefellit*).

**18: si non pertaesum thalami taedaeque fuisset:** the verb of this second *si*-clause is the impersonal *pertaesum fuisset*, the pluperfect subjunctive of *pertaedet*, 'to fill with exceeding weariness or disgust.' The intensifying *per-*, which picks up *postquam* and *primus* from the previous line, and the etymological play in *per-taesum* ~ *taedae* are meant to emphasize Dido's tedium. But the intensification is arguably a feeble, rhetorical gesture, especially in the light of her subsequent confession that there is one (cf. *huic uni, solus hic*), who could rekindle positive associations of the wedding torch. Impersonal verbs of feeling have the person who feels in the accusative (remember the jingle *me piget, pudet, paenitet, me taedet et me miseret*; in our verse, a *me* has to be supplied mentally) and the object that causes the feeling in the genitive (here it is *thalami taedaeque*, i.e. sex and marriage). The three times in *Aeneid* 4 that Virgil uses the term *taeda*, the wedding torch, mark three important stages in the plot. See Hersch: 'In Book Four of Virgil's *Aeneid*, *taeda* surfaces three times; the first two *taedae* are unequivocally nuptial. At the beginning of the book, Dido tells her sister Anna that she is thoroughly tired of the "torch and the bridal chamber".'<sup>64</sup> Later, Aeneas quite specifically denies that any wedding occurred when he says, "I never held out the torches of a spouse, or entered into a pact!" [4.337–39] The third time Virgil uses *taeda* in Book Four, he does so in what appears to be a simultaneous wedding, suicide, and funeral: at the end of the book, Dido commits suicide surrounded by the trappings of an elaborate anti-wedding. Dido decorates the space with foliage and makes her pyre "huge with torches (perhaps pine-torches are meant here) and cut oak" [4.504–08].'

**19: huic uni forsitan potui succumbere culpae:** up to *succumbere*, it appears as if *huic uni* (words that are unspecific in terms of gender) refer to Aeneas,

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64. Hersch (2010), pp. 166–67.

as the one exception to Dido's earlier, comprehensive dismissal of 'anyone' (*cui*)—an impression perhaps reinforced by her use of the demonstrative pronoun in line 10 (*quis nouus hic ... hospes*). Hence *culpae* at the end of the line—the noun that *huic* and *uni* modify—comes as a surprise. Virgil's temporarily ambiguous syntax arguably reflects the movement of Dido's thought. She starts singling out Aeneas as the one man to whom she might yield before calling herself to order and recognizing that such a move would amount to an instance of wrongdoing (*culpa*). Support for this reading comes from line 22, where *solus hic*, which is all but synonymous with *huic uni*, indeed refers to Aeneas. *forsan* introduces a hedge: Dido confesses to her sister that if matters had turned out otherwise in her past and she had not committed herself to a life of chastity, then, perhaps (*forsan*), she might have given herself up to this one (*huic*)—but this one only (*uni*)—transgression (*culpae*). This, of course, is precisely what will happen: ironically, Dido's seemingly counterfactual musings prefigure the plot. It is noteworthy that she here acknowledges to Anna, and to herself, that the pull of desire she feels is a guilty pleasure and giving in to temptation an act of transgression or wrongdoing (*culpa*)—in contrast to her behaviour at 4.172, after the fateful encounter in the cave, where she re-evaluates her position: *coniugium uocat [sc. Dido], hoc praetexit nomine culpam* (see note *ad loc.*).

**20–22: Anna (fatebor enim) miseri post fata Sychaei/ coniugis et sparsos fraterna caede penatis/ solus hic inflexit sensus animumque labantem/ impulit:** the two names (*Anna*; *Sychaei*) are placed at the beginning and end of line 20—in antithetical correlation (Anna will pull Dido one way; Sychaeus another). Dido has reached the midway point of her speech, which she marks by a renewed address to her sister (*Anna*). We learn of Dido's past in Book 1.343–59, where Venus recounts her story to Aeneas: Dido's brother Pygmalion (hence *fraterna caede*) killed her husband Sychaeus out of greed, forcing her into exile from her home in Tyre. Dido's account of the murder is considerably more bloody, dramatic, and detailed than the one Venus gives to Aeneas at 1.348–50: *ille Sychaeum/ impius ante aras atque auri caecus amore/ clam ferro incautum superat* ('he [sc. Pygmalion], impious before the altars and blinded by lust for gold, stealthily overcomes unsuspecting Sychaeus with a sword'). Indeed, there are some incongruous touches: according to Venus, Pygmalion managed to hide the deed for long (1.351: *factum diu celauit*), which is difficult to reconcile with the notion that the



images of the household gods (*penates*) were splattered in blood as Dido would have it. One wonders whether her specific reference to the *penates* owes anything to the fact that her new object of adoration, Aeneas, is world-famous for carrying the *penates* of Troy out of the burning city—together with his father and his son. Arguably, his powerful *versus spondiacus* and its monosyllabic ending from the beginning of Book 3 (11–12: *feror exsul in altum/ cum sociis natoque, Penatibus et magnis dis*; ‘As exile, I am carried upon the high seas, with my comrades and son, my household gods and the great deities’) still resonates with the queen, as she empathizes away for love. If so, Dido’s foregrounding of her own desecrated household gods subtly hints at her exile from home and underscores the striking parallels in the biographies of herself and Aeneas.

**20: fatebor ... fata:** a *figura etymologica*.

**20–21: miseri post fata Sychaei/ coniugis:** another effective enjambment that may convey a hint of reluctance on Dido’s part to acknowledge her status as widow sworn to chastity: ‘after the death of wretched Sychaeus—my husband.’ Alternatively, we can read the enjambment as underscoring her persistent loyalty to her dead husband: ‘by placing **Sychaei coniugis** in enjambment Virgil makes Dido stress the idea of “husband”, and thus continue the process of attempting to persuade herself not to think of Aeneas so.’<sup>65</sup> Which reading do you prefer?

**22: post fata ... et sparsos fraterna caede penatis:** the *et* links *fata* and *penatis* (accusative plural = *penates*); the second clause ‘particularizes the meaning of *fata Sychaei* (*et* is often so used by Virgil in appending an explanation or an enlargement of a theme).’<sup>66</sup> Note the mimetic word order: the murderous actions of her brother have torn Dido’s household apart, and the notion of shattering something to pieces is hinted at by the hyperbaton: the phrase *fraterna caede*, an instrumental ablative going with *sparsos*, separates the participle (*sparsos*) from the noun it modifies (*penatis*).

**22: solus hic:** this picks up chiasmatically the *huic uni* of line 19, and obliquely hints at the fact that Dido had other options before Aeneas’ arrival, notably the local king Iarbas; but she rejected all suitors, making a lot of enemies in

65. Maclennan (2007), p. 77.

66. Austin (1963), p. 30.

the process—as Anna points out at 36-8 (*despectus Iarbas/ ductoresque alii...*). Her spotless record of having rejected all comers until Aeneas heightens her tragedy: so far Dido has been true to her word and proud of it!

**22–23: inflexit sensus animumque labantem/ impulit:** the design is chiasitic: verb (*inflexit*)—accusative object (*sensus*): accusative object (*animum labantem*)—verb (*impulit*). Overall, the phrase works up to a climax in three stages: (a) *inflexo* in its primary sense signifies ‘to bend, curve’; here it means ‘to cause to turn from one’s purpose, principles, or mode of life’ (*OLD* s.v. 3); (b) this sense of turning from what is right is picked up and reinforced by the attributive participle *labantem* (*labo*: to be unsteady, waver, falter); (c) then comes the finale (*impulit*): Aeneas has indeed overthrown the mind that was already faltering: ‘The run-on to *impulit*, followed by a strong pause, is characteristic of Virgil (cf. 72, 83, 261, 624 etc.) and very effective ...; Dido draws a deep breath before her explicit admission that she is in love.’<sup>67</sup> Note the perfect tense of *inflexit* and *impulit*: Dido, who previously talked about yielding to her passion in a present and past counterfactual condition, now owns up (cf. *fatebor enim*) to her altered mental disposition. She has become a person torn in two, being pulled this way by former loyalties and that way by overpowering attraction to Aeneas.

**23: ueteris uestigia flammae:** the phrase looks backward to the internal conflagration of Dido that opens Book 4 and forward to the conflagration of her corpse that opens Book 5 (3–4: *moenia..., quae iam infelicis Elissae/ conlucent flammis*).

**24-27: sed mihi uel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat/ uel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,/ pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque profundam,/ ante, pudor, quam te uiolo aut tua iura resoluo.** With *sed* Dido calls herself to order: yes, passions are stirring; but, so she reminds herself, she is under religious obligation not to break her vow of loyal chastity to her dead husband. The syntax of the period is as follows: the potential subjunctive *optem* (24) introduces a wish-clause that specifies two things that should happen (*uel dehiscat*; *uel adigat*) before she breaks her vow: the *prius* in line 24 is picked up by *ante ... quam* (note the tmesis, effected by

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67. Austin (1963), p. 31. Others, including Conington (1884), argue that *labantem* should be taken with *impulit* and construe the sense to be *animum impulit ut labaret*. Which reading do you find more compelling?

the direct address to *Pudor*) in line 27. It is a very elaborate way of saying ‘I’d rather die than fail to respect my sense of shame by being disloyal to my murdered husband.’ This passage is picked up in 457–65, i.e. shortly before her suicide, when Dido visits the marble chapel she had constructed in honour of Sychaeus and where she now hears his voice calling at night (460–61: *hinc exaudiri uoces et uerba uocantis/ uisa uiri, nox cum terras obscura teneret*; ‘thence she heard, it seemed, sounds and speeches of her husband calling, whenever dark night held the earth’): ‘As Sychaeus calls from the grave, he unexpectedly realizes the adynata which Dido relied upon in her initial oath (4.24-29).’<sup>68</sup>

**24: mihi:** a dative of disadvantage.

**24: tellus ... dehiscat:** the notion of the earth gaping open recurs in a simile in the Hercules and Cacus episode, where *terra dehiscens* (8.243) reveals the Underworld below.

**25: pater omnipotens:** Jupiter. *omnipotens* (‘all-powerful’) is the standard epithet of the supreme Olympian divinity in the *Aeneid*.

**26: pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque profundam:** the entire line stands in apposition to *ad umbras* (25): it specifies more precisely what kind of shades she means: those in the Underworld. *Erebus* is a Greek loanword in Latin, and several passages in Homer and Hesiod in particular come to mind. At *Iliad* 9.571–72, we learn that the Erinyes, the Avenging Fury, the divinity, in other words, who sees to it that violations of oaths or self-imprecations like the one Dido is here uttering do not go unpunished, dwells in Erebus. At *Odyssey* 11.563–64, Ajax, after being addressed by Odysseus, silently wanders off ‘into Erebus’ in a scene that Virgil rewrites in Book 6, with Dido taking the role of Ajax and Aeneas that of Odysseus. And Erebus is also the place where Father Sky kept his defiant sons Obriareus, Cottus, and Gyges in bondage, until Zeus released them so that they could aid the Olympians in their battle with the Titans (Hesiod, *Theogony* 616–86, esp. 669). In Greek, *erebos*, apart from specifying a location within the Underworld, means ‘shadowy darkness’, and the placement of *umbras* next to *Erebo* thus provides a neat Latin gloss on what Erebus signifies in Greek. Otherwise, the design of the verse is perfectly symmetrical, with a

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68. Schiesaro (2008), p. 107.

chiasmus of attribute (*pallentis*)—noun (*umbras*): noun (*noctem*)—attribute (*profundam*) framing the decisive cosmographic specification, *Erebo* (an ablative of place: in Erebus, i.e. the Underworld) further stressed by the caesura (hepthemimeres). A further stylistic touch is the alliteration of the two attributes *pallentis*—*profundam* placed at the beginning and the end of the line. Dido does not fool around: she calls herself to order, to re-bind herself to her vow of chastity, by the strongest possible means. (As Henderson puts it, *per litteras*, ‘putting the fear of Hesiodic Zeus up herself SHOULD work!’) But of course it doesn’t—and the consequences are indeed as dire as the self-imprecation designed to prevent them.

**27: pudor:** the basic meaning of *pudor*, which is here personified and addressed directly in an apostrophe, is a gender-neutral ‘sense of shame.’ It is clearly one of the key themes of the Dido episode: see also 4.55, and 4.322. The following considerations may serve as stimuli for further discussion of a complex term:

(a) *Pudor Personified:* The personification of *pudor* is a development of the Augustan period. Bendlin, in his *Brill’s New Pauly* entry on ‘Pudor’, points out that, unlike other personifications (such as *Pudicitia*, the personification of female chastity), *pudor* as a personification of human social behaviour never received a public cult, though Augustan poets often seem oblivious to this distinction.<sup>69</sup>

(b) *The Literary Background:* Virgil has crafted his text with the αἰδώς (the Greek equivalent of *pudor*, also meaning ‘sense of shame’) of Apollonius’ Medea in mind, and it is instructive to consider the relation between the maiden and the emotion in his Greek model, both for similarities and differences. After waking up from nightmares about Jason and what she might be doing on his behalf, Medea decides to consult her sister, but is checked by her sense of shame (*Argonautica* 3.646–55): ‘And she truly desired to visit her sister and crossed the threshold to the courtyard, but for a long time she remained there in the vestibule of her room, held back by shame (αἰδώς). She turned around and went back again, but once more came forth from within, and again shrank back inside. Her feet carried her back and forth in vein: whenever she started forth, shame (αἰδώς) held her back inside, but while restrained by shame (αἰδώς), bold desire kept

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69. <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/brill-s-new-pauly/pudor-e1014400>. See further Langlands (2006), esp. Ch. 1: ‘Sexual virtue on display I: the cults of *pudicitia* and honours for women.’

urging her on. Three times she tried, three times she halted. The fourth time she whirled back around and fell face down on her bed.’ Alerted to Medea’s crying, Chalciope then seeks out her sister, whereupon Medea experiences another struggle between shame (αἰδώς) and desire (3.681–87): ‘The girl’s cheeks blushed, and for a long time her virgin shame (αἰδώς) restrained her, although she longed to reply. At one moment her words rose up to the tip of her tongue, but at another fluttered deep down in her breast. Often they rushed up to her lovely lips for utterance, but went no further to become speech. At last she spoke these words deceitfully, for the bold Loves were urging her on.’ And finally, once back on her own, she decides to help Jason and sends shame packing, in a direct address (3.785–86): ἐρρέτω αἰδώς,/ ἐρρέτω ἀγλαΐη; ‘Away with Shame, away with glory!’ Despite the Apollonian model, it is important to note that αἰδώς and *pudor* are not entirely identical in meaning. As Collard puts it: ‘*Pudor* is a concept of moral restraint of far greater meaning than Greek αἰδώς. Its power within Dido increases her stature as a symbolic adversary to Aeneas. She is here invested with a peculiarly Roman quality: her humanity and sympathy for Aeneas are overlaid with a dignity of personal conduct appropriate to a Roman lady.’<sup>70</sup> This leads to the next aspect:

(c) *The Social and Cultural Logic*: *Pudor* is an emotion that ensures that our actions conform to what is acceptable behaviour, either by our own standards or those of others: ‘People feel *pudor* not only because they are seen, or fear being seen, by someone else, but also because they see themselves and know that their present behavior falls short of their past or ideal selves.’<sup>71</sup> Its remit of reference is broader than *pudicitia*, which, while deriving from *pudor*, has the more specific sense of ‘female virtue in sexual matters.’ But, as Kaster notes, in the case of women, *pudor* ‘was largely limited to a single frame of reference, the sexual: the *pudor* of women is, in effect, congruent with their *pudicitia*, or sexual respectability.’<sup>72</sup>

(d) *Dido as uniuira?*: Some scholars have tried to explain Dido’s feeling of *pudor* with the Roman ideal of a woman who only ever had one husband. But as O’Hara points out, such a contextual solution is far from straightforward: ‘Dido’s feelings also involve the Roman concept of *univiratus*, or a woman’s having only one husband for life, which in Vergil’s time was partly revered,

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70. Collard (1975), p. 145.

71. Kaster (1997), p. 5, and, in more detail, Kaster (2005), Ch. 2: ‘Fifty Ways to Feel Your *Pudor*.’

72. Kaster (1997), pp. 9–10.

partly ignored as old-fashioned. Only *univirae* could sacrifice to the goddess Pudicitia, but around the time of the posthumous publication of the *Aeneid* widows were strongly encouraged to remarry by the Augustan marriage laws of 18 BCE.<sup>73</sup> It is thus not entirely clear what aspect of yielding to her feelings for Aeneas provokes *pudor* and what, precisely, the laws (*iura*) of *pudor* are that Dido feels she would break. Her sister Anna, for instance, will argue shortly that giving in to her feelings should be no cause for *pudor* whatsoever. The different attitude of the two sisters suggests that Dido's *pudor* is to some extent self-made or perhaps even excessive—or is Anna simply shameless?

(e) *Rewriting History*: Personally, I believe the discussion could benefit from a shift in emphasis away from sexual ethics to what one might call the problem of 'literary slander.' I suspect that the complicated prominence of *pudor* in Virgil's text has a lot to do with the fact that this concept focalizes his outrageous rewriting of Dido's story: before Virgil—and for many authors after Virgil, who refused to give any credence to the Virgilian version—Dido was an exemplar of chastity, who preferred to commit suicide rather than remarry: in our historiographical sources, her own people tried to force her into an arranged marriage with Iarbas and she escaped from the imposition by taking her own life. Inverting this tradition, Virgil eroticizes the historical Dido in making her fall in love with Aeneas, which drives a wedge between the queen and her *pudor*, hitherto her hallmark quality: if in the historiographical tradition Dido kills herself to preserve her sense of shame, in Virgil she kills herself because she has lost her sense of shame and tries to regain at least some of it in a cataclysmic act of suicidal wrath.<sup>74</sup>

**28–29: ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores/ abstulit:** Dido's way of saying 'he was the first—and is going to be the last.' She returns to themes first broached in 16–17: *vinclo...sociare iugali* is picked up by *me sibi iunxit*, and *primus amor* by *meos...amores* and *primus*. Commentators note the 'convoluted word order' (such as the hyperbaton of *meos...amores* or the placement of *primus* outside the relative clause into which it belongs), which 'reflects Dido's confusion and agitation',<sup>75</sup> and the alliteration and enjambment in *amores/ abstulit*: as Maclennan notes, perceptively, 'Dido half

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73. O'Hara (2011), p. 23. See Pease (1935), p. 110 for further details.

74. See Essay 2: Historiographical Dido, for the full story.

75. O'Hara (2011), p. 24.

wishes this were true.<sup>76</sup> But Virgil, through verbal architecture, has already made clear that Dido is lying or, rather, deceiving herself—even before she bursts out in tears in the subsequent line. For in terms of verse design, lines 28–29 mirror lines 22–23 (*animumque labantem/ impulit*), an effect enhanced by the fact that no other line in the vicinity features a diaeresis after the first foot. This is hardly coincidental: the words in enjambment, i.e. *impulit* (subject: Aeneas) and *abstulit* (subject: Sychaeus), stand in antithetical relation to one another and the construction of the metre, as well as the homoioteleuton *-pulit/ -tulit*, subtly intimate that her assertion here is belied by her earlier confession that she has fallen for Aeneas.

**29: ille habeat secum seruetque sepulcro:** the accusative object of *habeat* has to be supplied from the previous sentence: *meos amores*; *sepulcro* is an ablative of place, set up by the alliterative sequence *secum seruetque sepulcro*. The anaphora of *ille* in lines 28 and 29 contrasts with Dido's use of the demonstrative pronoun *hic* to refer to Aeneas in lines 10 and 22 (and with *ille* in line 14), suggesting that Aeneas has already acquired a more urgent and immediate presence in Dido's heart than her dead husband. It is poignant that Dido's first speech in the Book ends with a reference to a tomb (*sepulcro*). In fact, whereas Dido tends to be deluded in matters of love, she sees remarkably clear in matters of death. Sychaeus has indeed preserved his affection for her, as *Aeneid* 6.473–74 illustrates: after her encounter with Aeneas in the Underworld, Dido recedes to a shady grove, *coniunx ubi pristinus illi/ respondet curis aequatque Sychaeus amorem* ('where Sychaeus, her former husband, devotes himself to her sorrows and gives her love for love').

**30: sic effata sinum lacrimis impleuit obortis:** Pease notes with reference to *lacrimis ... obortis* that 'the verb seems to imply that the tears came spontaneously, in spite of her intention, as opposed to the *lacrimis ... coactis* of Sinon (2, 196).'<sup>77</sup> He cites the ancient commentator Donatus for possible reasons: Dido may have been overwhelmed by the affectionate memory of her dead, yet faithful husband; or the tears could be interpreted as an index of the profound misery her determination to remain loyal to Sychaeus is causing her. The two reasons are not mutually exclusive and there may be others as well: the tears could perhaps also be taken as an indication of her dawning realization that she will soon abandon her resolve?

76. Maclennan (2007), p. 78.

77. Pease (1935), p. 113.

### 31–53: Sister Act II: Anna’s Reply

Dido has put her sister in an impossible situation. It does not require much intuition on Anna’s part to divine that what Dido *really* yearns for is to yield to her fatal attraction to the Trojan hero. At the same time, Dido has done her very best to close down this option. Her self-imprecation linked to an apostrophe of *Pudor* preemptively deprives Anna of much leeway in giving advice. In fact, at the end of her speech, Dido sidelined her partner and confidante, invoking *Pudor* personified and entering into an ‘unbreakable vow’, in a desperate attempt to prevent herself from succumbing to her irresistible passion: if she honours *Pudor* and remains loyal to Sychaeus, she lives; if she violates the terms of her vow, she dies. Anna, however, disregards both Dido’s personal scruples and the metaphysical obligations her sister has imposed on herself. She gives absolute priority to what she knows Dido longs for deep in her heart. Her reply, which is just slightly longer than Dido’s speech, falls into four parts of gradually diminishing length (8/6/5/4):

1: 31–38: Consideration of Dido’s (non-existent) love life, which falls into two halves of four lines each:

1.1: 31–34: Dido, Anna urges, deserves to experience love again and to have children and should quit wasting pieties on the ashes of her former husband.

1.2: 35–38: A quick, contrastive retrospective: Dido, while in mourning (*aegra*) understandably rejected her host of local suitors; but why fight genuine love?

2: 39–44: Strategic advantages of giving in to her feelings for Aeneas: he will protect Carthage from the many enemies that are threatening the city.

3: 45–49: Suggestion that the arrival of Aeneas at Carthage is part of a divine plan to ensure a glorious future for the city.

4: 50–53: Practical proposals of what to do to ensure divine support and get Aeneas to stay.

In formal terms, Anna’s basic strategy in the first two parts of her speech is the use of the rhetorical question. **1.1** comprises two rhetorical questions; **1.2** begins by stating facts, which yield a further rhetorical question (38: *placitone etiam pugnabis amori?*); and **2** inverts this pattern by beginning with a rhetorical question (39: *nec uenit in mentem quorum*



*conseris aruis?*) before stating the answer and concluding with another rhetorical question cast as *praeteritio* (43–44: *quid bella Tyro surgentia dicam! germanique minas?*). Throughout this section of the speech, then, Anna does not so much dispense advice as ask ‘how could you not act on your passion’? She then changes tack (3). After assuring Dido that there is no reason why she ought not to give in, but countless reasons why she should, Anna embeds Dido’s love within larger frames of reference: divine will and the prospect of a glorious future for Dido’s city Carthage owing to a marriage-alliance with Aeneas. Civic considerations already dominated in part 2, but are here turned from something negative (threats) to something positive (a vision of future greatness). As if Dido’s decision is by now a foregone conclusion, Anna ends her speech with practical advice on how to ensure the continuing goodwill of the gods and the continuing presence of Aeneas. Overall, then, she counters Dido’s commitment to the dead (and Death!), with an affirmation of Life, in all its facets, personal and political: fulfilling sex, a happy marriage, the joys of children, the prospect of being the reigning monarch of a powerful and prosperous city, future fame, and the blessing of the gods. She thus counters Dido’s final endorsement of social norms, backed by a religious resolution, with her own, countervailing invocation of a patriotic vision and a concluding appeal to the gods.<sup>78</sup>

In tragedy, confidants hardly ever give sound advice, however well-intentioned they may be. A good example of this dynamic is the speech of the nurse in Euripides’ *Hippolytus*, who also counsels Phaedra to act on her feelings and reveal her illicit desires to her stepson Hippolytus to disastrous results. What can be said for Anna is that she argues not in favour of a love affair, but a marriage alliance (grounded in love, to be sure).

**31–33: Anna refert: ‘o luce magis dilecta sorori: dilecta** (‘beloved’, sc. Dido) is in the vocative; *luce* is ablative of comparison after *magis* (‘more beloved than light’); *sorori* (= *mihi*), a dative of agency, is Anna herself. Anna’s keynote *luce*, which stands in stark antithesis to the last words of Dido’s speech, i.e. *sepulcro*, is programmatic. As John Henderson puts it (*per litteras*): ‘He’s dead; you’re not is the obvious way to knock closure with *sepulcro* | on the head.’

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78. I owe appreciation of this contrast to John Henderson.

**32: solane:** the particle *-ne* introduces a question. By singling out Dido with *sola*, Anna arguably picks up Dido's reference to Aeneas with *solus hic* in line 22, suggesting, however subliminally, that the two are made for each other.

**32: perpetua ... iuuenta:** an ablative of time: 'during your entire [for this sense of *perpetuus*, see *OLD* s.v. 1d: Dido is *not* eternally youthful] period of youth.' *maerens carpere*: *-pe-* scans long: *carpere* is second person singular future passive indicative of *carpo* (an alternative form to *carperis*); it has the intransitive sense 'to waste away' (*OLD* s.v. 7c), thus here: 'are you going to waste away?' Ironically, Virgil used the same verb in a similar sense at 4.2: the fact is that Dido *is* wasting away, though not 'in mourning' (*maerens* is a circumstantial participle).

**33: nec dulcis natos Veneris nec praemia noris?:** *noris* is the syncopated form of *noueris*, i.e. the second person singular future perfect active of *nosco*. *dulcis* (accusative plural; = *dulces*), which grammatically goes with *natos*, is most likely meant to modify *praemia* as well—just as *Veneris* could also be construed with both *dulcis natos* (see below) and *praemia*. The goddess of love clearly takes centre-stage in this verse, presiding over studiously ambiguous syntax and semantics. One way to construe the two accusative objects *dulcis natos* and *praemia* (with the genitive attribute *Veneris*) is as 'theme and variation', i.e. sweet sons *are* the rewards (*praemia*) of engaging in sexual intercourse (*Veneris*). On this reading, Anna would slyly cover up Dido's overwhelming erotic desire by downplaying the act, and emphasizing the socially desirable outcome, of sex, i.e. offspring. But one could read her rhetoric against the grain and see *dulcis natos* and *praemia Veneris* as two diverse notions, detailing two *distinct* functions of sex, i.e. reproduction and pleasure, in what would amount to a coy *husteron proteron*, in which she first refers to procreation and then hints at sexual gratification. After all, the phrase *praemia Veneris* leaves quite a bit to the (erotic) imagination: what exactly are 'the rewards of love/ Venus'?

There are further details to savour: while the genitive *Veneris* depends on *praemia* ('the rewards of love') the postponed *nec* (standard word order would be: *nec Veneris praemia*) does more than to provide 'metrical flexibility'.<sup>79</sup> For a fleeting moment, Virgil's design creates the impression

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79. O'Hara (2011), p. 24.

that *Veneris* modifies *dulcis natos*, with Anna asking her sister whether she will never have come to know ‘the sweet sons of Venus.’ Unbeknowst to either her or Dido, Dido of course *has* come to know *both* sons of Venus, i.e. Aeneas and Cupid (whom she fondled on her lap in the guise of Ascanius), rather well by now. (For the brother-act, see 1.664–69, where Venus addresses her son with *nate, meae uires, mea magna potentia, solus, / nate...* before enlisting him to help his brother: *frater ... Aeneas ... tuus.*) Virgil thus also plays with the double sense of *Venus*, which may either refer to the anthropomorphic goddess of love or signify, metonymically, the emotion/experience of ‘love’ (just like Ceres = ‘grain’ etc.). Anna most likely has the latter sense in mind, but we, the readers, are surely encouraged to activate the former sense as well. After all, Venus is a powerful presence in Virgil’s divine machinery and has already arranged for Dido to receive presents from Love. See 1.695–96 (*Iamque ibat dicto parens et dona Cupidol/ regia portabat Tyriis...*: ‘And now, obeying her word, Cupid went forth and carried the royal gifts for the Tyrians...’). In short, the phrase *praemia Veneris* is replete with dramatic (and tragic) irony.

**34: id cinerem aut manis credis curare sepultos?**: *cinerem* and *manis* (= *manes*) *sepultos* are the subject accusatives of the indirect statement introduced by *credis*. The pronoun *id*, which sums up the previous rhetorical question (is Dido to waste away her youth in mourning for her murdered husband?), is the accusative object of *curare* (here: ‘to pay heed to’). *manes*, *manium* (m. pl.) are primarily ‘the spirits of the dead’ or ‘the shade of a particular person’ (*OLD* s.v. 1b and c), but, as *sepultos* makes clear, Anna uses the word in the sense of ‘mortal remains’ (*OLD* s.v. 2), i.e. almost synonymously with *cinis*. This line is Anna’s answer to Dido’s closing sentence *ille habeat secum seruetque sepulcro*, which grants Sychaeus continuing existence in the hereafter. Picking up *sepulcro* with *sepultos*, Anna argues that Sychaeus is dead and buried and hence unable to concern himself with what Dido feels or does, either in terms of grieving for him or opting to enter into a new relationship. This position has affinities with Epicurean philosophy: Epicurus too maintained that our soul does not survive our body, consisting as it does of an agglomeration of atoms that simply disperse in death. But it turns out to be disastrously misguided in Virgil’s world.

**35–38: esto: aegram nulli quondam flexere mariti, / non Libyae, non ante Tyro; despectus Iarbas/ ductoresque alii, quos Africa terra triumphis/ diues alit: placitone etiam pugnabis amori?**: *esto* (a third person singular

future imperative) has a concessive sense: ‘so be it!’ (*OLD* s.v. *sum* 8b). Anna uses the exclamation as proleptic point of departure for rehearsing Dido’s past opportunities to remarry, recalling the sequence of suitors she rejected, both in her native Tyre and then in Libya. Intriguingly, she thereby reaffirms the image of Dido perpetuated within the historiographical tradition, in which the queen features as a model of chastity. But Anna then goes on to clamour for fully embracing the Virgilian departure from the orthodox account, in which Dido and Aeneas never met: ‘Fair enough’, she says, ‘you didn’t love *those others*—but why deny yourself the second love of your life?’ Her chosen idiom subtly aligns itself to Dido’s: *nulli ... flexere mariti* picks up 22: *solus hic inflexit sensus...*

**35: aegram:** the predicative adjective refers to Dido: ‘you [a *te* is implied], in your sorrow, no wooer has been able to move.’ O’Hara asks: ‘in what way does Anna think Dido is “sick” (cf. *male sana* in 8)? With sorrow for Sychaeus? With disgust at her suitors...?’<sup>80</sup> But MacLennan, taking *aegram* closely with *quondam*, ingeniously suggests that Anna does not think of Dido as sick at all, but rather as cured by her new-found love for Aeneas: ‘formerly [*quondam*], when you were sick with grief (for Sychaeus)...’<sup>81</sup> The adjective may also recall 1.351–52 (from the account of Dido’s biography that Venus gives to Aeneas): ...*factumque diu celavit [sc. Pygmalion] et aegram/ multa malus simulans uana spe lusit amantem* (‘and for long he [sc. Pygmalion] covered up the deed [sc. of murdering Sychaeus] and by many a pretence cunningly cheated her, sick with love as she was, with empty hope’).

**35: mariti:** usually a *maritus* is a husband, but here the sense clearly is something akin to ‘wooer’ or ‘prospective husband.’ Anna continues to plant the idea of marriage in the mind of her sister by using a term that suggests a *fait accompli*.

**36: Libyae ... Tyro:** we may be dealing with a grammatical enallage: in form, *Libyae* is locative, though in terms of sense it is perhaps best understood as an ablative of place or origin (*Libya*), whereas *Tyro* is in form an ablative of place, though in sense a locative (*Tyri*). Tyre is Dido’s hometown in Phoenicia, which she fled after the murder of Sychaeus. The reference here is curious since, at least according to Venus, there was no time for entering

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80. O’Hara (2011), p. 24.

81. MacLennan (2007), p. 79.

into a new relationship there anyway: initially, Pygmalion covered up the crime, so Dido did not know that her husband was dead, and as soon as she found out through an apparition she fled the city (1.345–64). Anna must have known this (indeed, one could argue that the grammatical enallage surreptitiously highlights her ‘spinning’ of the facts), but her hyperbolic tweaking of the truth has a clear rhetorical purpose: it emphasizes the length of Dido’s refusal to get on with life and love, which has led to the indiscriminate rejection of both countrymen and foreign suitors. The implication is ‘enough is enough.’

**36: *despectus Iarbas*:** Virgil elides *est*—the form is the third person singular perfect indicative passive of *despicio*. Iarbas, a son of Jupiter, is the African king in control of the land on which Dido is building her city, and, as it turns out, none too pleased that she rejected him as a suitor. When he hears of her affair with Aeneas (which is adding insult to injury), he kicks up a royal fuss with his dad: see below 196–221.

**37–38: *ductoresque alii* [sc. *despecti sunt*], *quos Africa terra triumphis/diues alit*:** note the enjambment (*triumphis/diues*—‘rich in triumphs’) and the alliterative patterning that links the opening of the two verses (*ductores ~ diues; alii ~ alit*). The choriambic opening (*diues alit*), with its strong caesura in the second foot, brings to a close the thought that Anna introduced with *esto* in line 35 and which serves as negative foil for the rhetorical question that takes up the rest of the verse.

**37: *triumphis*:** The triumph is the quintessentially Roman victory ritual, involving the procession of the conquering general from the Campus Martius to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus (or Mars Ultor, in imperial times).<sup>82</sup> Even though the term can also denote ‘military victory’ more generally, its use here by Anna is curious and potentially contains another (historical) irony by evoking the Roman conquest of Africa and the many triumphal parades that ensued: Africa, on this reading, is rich in triumphs *for the Romans*. This at least is what Juno fears: see 1.21–2: *hinc populum late regem belloque superbum/uenturum excidio Libyae...* (‘from there a people, kings far and wide and proud in war, should come forth for the downfall of Libya’). Arguably, we are dealing with another instance in which Virgil reveals Anna as a person with limited

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82. For a recent discussion, see Beard (2007).

insight by giving her constructions and phrases that resonate with meanings she herself cannot possibly be aware of. Thematically, though, the reference to triumphs as a metonymy of military might is entirely appropriate: it anticipates Anna's next argumentative turn. She submits that giving in to her love for Aeneas is also a good move on Dido's part for strictly strategic reasons: the union would fortify the precarious position of Carthage in a supremely hostile environment.

**38: *placitone etiam pugnabis amori?*** *-ne* introduces a question. *placitus* is the perfect passive participle (though in sense active) of *placeo*: 'a love that is pleasing.' The combination of *placito amori* and *pugnabis* (linked by alliteration) generates a paradox that Dido is asked to resolve by discontinuing her fight against love and marks a subtle change in Anna's argument: after expressing sympathy for Dido's rejection of suitors while she was still *aegra* with grief for Sychaeus (even though, as she implies, there were good strategic reasons for accepting one of her African suitors), Anna now switches into exhortative mode. The strategic rationale for a powerful alliance still applies, while one of the reasons for not entering into one (the lack of a suitor for whom Dido harbours amorous feelings) has disappeared. In her argument Anna silently passes over two rather salient points: (a) in line with her own belief that the dead ought to have no bearing on the living (see line 34), she refuses to reckon with Dido's lingering feelings of loyalty to Sychaeus, making out as if her sister's renewed ability to love would enable her to enter into another marriage freely and happily; (b) Anna takes Aeneas' consent simply for granted, even though Aeneas has not presented himself *as* a suitor; this is a nice touch in terms of boosting the morale of her sister, but proves the fatal flaw in her approach to the problem. Indeed, in both respects, Anna profoundly (and deliberately?) misunderstands, or begs to differ from, her sister, for whom Sychaeus remains a powerful point of reference throughout and who intuitively knows very well that Aeneas will not, cannot stay for good: even while their affair is in full swing (to the point of Aeneas helping with the construction of Carthage), Dido remains ill at ease (see below on 4.298: *omnia tuta timens*).

**39: *uenit***: another instance where metre helps to clarify a point of grammar: *uenit* (with short *e*, as here) is the third person singular present indicative active; *uēnit* (with long *e*), is the third person singular perfect indicative active.

**39: quorum consederis aruis?:** ‘in whose lands you have settled.’ *Consederis*, the verb of the indirect question, is second person singular perfect active subjunctive of *consido*, here: ‘to settle as a colonist, to make one’s home’ (*OLD* s.v. 4). Note the second person singular: Anna’s focus remains exclusively on Dido, as she continues to marginalize both herself and the other Tyrian refugees. This stands in implicit contrast to the historiographical tradition against which Virgil is writing, where her fellow-travellers try to force Dido into a marriage alliance with a local ruler in the interest of communal safety.

**40–44: hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello,/ et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis;/ hinc deserta siti regio lateque furentes/ Barcaei:** situated on a map, the geographical references in this sentence look as follows:



Anna elaborates on the theme of disadvantageous location—wherever one looks, there are either enemies or wastelands around (*hinc, hinc*), and that is not even considering foes threatening from afar, i.e. Dido’s hometown Tyre, to which Anna alludes in the following sentence. As the map illustrates (if we want to presuppose that Anna operated with precise geographical

awareness), she begins in the south with the Gaetulian cities, then moves clockwise to the southwest (the Numidians), the east (the Syrtis), and the southeast (the desert and the Barcaeans). At the same time, this circular motion (cf. *cingunt*; the verb lacks an accusative object, which one could supply mentally (*te* or *nos*), though the absolute use perhaps enhances the ominous sense of being ringed in on all sides by hostile people and inhospitable landscape) is belied by her use of *hinc—hinc* as a structuring device. It suggests a bipartite division: the Gaetulian cities, the Numidians, and the Syrtis on one side, the desert and the Barcaeans on the other. As the map shows, this does not quite work since the Numidians and the Syrtis are located on opposite sides of Carthage. What are we to make of this geographical imprecision? Are we dealing with another subtle hint that Anna's point of view is not to be trusted in all details?

Another point of interest is the implied antithesis Anna creates between the isolated city of Carthage, governed by a lonely queen in the thralls of love, and the hostile and warlike people that threaten to overpower her on all sides. The rhetorical agenda behind this construct is obvious: the more feeble and vulnerable Dido considers herself to be, the greater the appeal of a powerful union with the Trojan hero. But it is, at least to some extent, a construct: in earlier portions of the epic, Virgil has dropped unmistakable hints that the Phoenician settlers fit right into their new environment. Already in the proem, Carthage is characterized as *diues opum studiisque asperrima belli* (14) and in the narrative proper it requires a divine intervention for the Carthaginians to put aside their ferocious hearts and for Dido to adopt a benevolent disposition towards the shipwrecked Trojans (1.302–04: *ponuntque ferocia Poenil/ corda uolente deo; in primis regina quietum/ accipit in Teucros animum mentemque benignam*; 'with the god willing it, the Punic people lay aside their savage hearts; above all the queen receives a gentle soul and friendly mind towards the Teucrians'). From the start of the *Aeneid*, the world-historical showdown between Rome and Carthage in the Punic Wars of the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC forms a wider historical horizon against which the epic action unfolds, and Virgil drops consistent reminders that he is here providing the aetiology for the most lethal military conflict Rome experienced in its rise to empire.

**40: Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello:** the adjective *Gaetulus* ('of the Gaetulians, Gaetulian') refers to the people that lived in the interior of North West Africa; there is a slippage from the topographical (*urbes*) to the



ethnic (*genus*), with *genus insuperabile bello* standing in apposition to the notional *urbes Gaetulorum*. (The reference to actual cities may surprise in this context, though see 1.578 where Dido mentions the woods *and cities* of Libya where Aeneas may have got lost.) Anna's idiom recalls many other passages in the *Aeneid* in which Virgil engages in ethnographic commentary. As here, this often involves reference to a city or a people/ ethnic community (*genus*) and an attribute in predicative position, rendered more precise by an ablative of respect, frequently indicating martial qualities. There are two instances of this in the extended proem, i.e. *Karthago ... studiis ... asperrima belli* (1. 13–14: 'Carthage, extremely stern in the pursuits of war') and *populum ... bello ... superbum* (1. 21: 'a people ... proud in war', i.e. the Romans). Another parallel passage that resonates strongly here is 1.339, where Venus (disguised as a Carthaginian maid) describes the inhabitants of Libya as a *genus intractabile bello*. (Virgil in general has a fondness for adjectives ending in *-bilis/-bile*; see below 4.53: *tractabile* and, perhaps most famously, 8.625: *clipei non enarrabile textum* (to convey the impossibility of putting into words the texture of images engraved on Aeneas' shield).

**41: Numidae infreni:** *Numida, -ae m.*, is a native of Numidia; Virgil calls them 'unbridled' (*infreni*) because of the way they ride their horses, their ethnic character, and their way of life (true to their name, they lead a 'nomadic' existence).

**41: inhospita Syrtis:** the reference to the Syrtis recalls the sea-storm in *Aeneid* 1 that wrecked Aeneas' fleet. Three of the ships were forced by eastern winds from the deep into shallows and sandbanks (*ab alto/ in breuia et syrtis*) where they remained stuck (1.110–12) until Neptun removed the accumulated sand (1.146: *et uastas aperit syrtis*). Here, the singular Syrtis may refer either to the two areas of sandy flats between Carthage and Cyrene to the East or 'the whole desert region adjoining the coast' (so the *OLD s.v. c*). Ancient etymologists connected the name with the Greek verb *suro*, 'to drag off by force', an aspect well brought out by the attribute *inhospita*.

**42–43: hinc deserta siti regio lateque furentes/ Barcae:** the information given under the second *hinc* forms a thematic chiasmus with the information given under the first *hinc*: after people (Gaetulians, Numidians) and place (Syrtis), we now get place (the desert region) and people (the Barcaeans). *Barca* is the Punic word for 'lightning', which comes out in their habit 'to rage and range far and wide.' *siti* is ablative (of cause) of *sitis, sitis*, f. Its

primary meaning is 'thirst' but here it has the transferred sense 'arid weather, drought.' The *Barcaeii* are the people of Barce, a city located in the Cyrenaica, close to present-day Tripoli. Virgil may have chosen this particular city since it calls up associations with the Carthaginian Barca family to which Hannibal belonged. *late furentes* ('raging far and wide') would certainly nicely describe Hannibal's actions in Italy during the Second Punic War.

**43–44: quid bella Tyro surgentia dicam/ germanique minas?:** Dido left Tyre with the state-treasure, much to the dislike of her brother. This is one of the reasons Aeneas and his men initially receive such a frosty welcome: the Carthaginians are expecting an attack from the sea, and would not at first allow Aeneas' men to land (see 1.540: *hospitio prohibemur harenae*). *Tyro* is ablative of origin ('arising from Tyre'). *germanus*: Pygmalion, brother to both Dido and Anna.

**44: germanique minas?:** one of the notorious half-lines in the *Aeneid*, evidence of the incomplete state the poem was in when Virgil died. Here a trailing-off halfway through the line would even be thematically appropriate: Anna, after all, is using the rhetorical device of *praeteritio*, where you mention something without elaborating on it since it would be unnecessary or inappropriate to do so.

**45–46: dis equidem auspicibus reor et Iunone secunda/ hunc cursum Iliacas uento tenuisse carinas:** apart from the main verb *reor* and the qualifier *equidem* that goes with it, the two verses consist of an indirect statement: *Iliacas carinas* is the subject accusative, *tenuisse* the verb, and *hunc cursum* its accusative object. The most striking features are the two ablative absolutes *dis auspicibus* and *Iunone secunda* that belong in the indirect statement but are pulled up front for emphasis. *auspex*, *auspiciis* denotes a religious functionary who gets information about the will of the gods from the behaviour of birds (flight or feeding patterns, cries), but can also have the more general sense of (divine) patron or supporter (*OLD* s.v. 3). The lines drip with unintended irony and are arguably the most blatant illustration that Anna hasn't a clue what she is talking about: Juno had no intention whatsoever of blasting Aeneas to Africa; she set out to sink his fleet. The arrival of Aeneas at Carthage is thus a complete accident, and not at all the result of purposeful divine planning: Juno (etymologized as 'helper') is here the exact opposite of *auspex* or *secunda*, and the wind that blew Aeneas Dido's way not a favourable (in Latin:

*secundus*, implied by Juno's attribute) breeze, but a destructive storm. This is already the second instance in which Anna makes a judgement upon a matter involving the sphere of the divine that turns out to be seriously mistaken, at least within the literary world of Virgil's epic. (The first came in line 34 where she dismisses the notion of a conscious afterlife.) By now her ignorance and naiveté are glaringly obvious: the advice she gives Dido is bound to be deeply flawed, or at least out of touch with the realities that apply in the *Aeneid*. But this is in keeping with her dramatic role: 'Anna's job is to voice seductive thoughts "for" Dido, to feed them to her: the *altera ego* says what's forbidden to the self' (Henderson, *per litteras*).

**47–49: quam tu urbem, soror, hanc cernes, quae surgere regna/ coniugio tali! Teucrum comitantibus armis/ Punica se quantis attollet gloria rebus!**  
 Anna concludes her exhortation with three exclamatory sentences (*quam ... urbem, ... quae ... regna! – quantis ... rebus!*) designed to entice Dido to yield to her passion by invoking grand prospects of the city and the fame that is bound to ensue for her from the liaison. Overall, the design is chiasmic: Anna begins with Dido and Carthage (*urbem, regna*) before adding a reference to Aeneas (*coniugio tali*); she then proceeds with another reference to Aeneas (*Teucrum [= Teucrorum] comitantibus armis*) before concluding with Carthage (*Punica ... gloria*). The chiasmus ensures that Aeneas ends up at the centre of Carthage and its imperial future. In the third colon, there is also a shift in perspective: in the first two cola Anna imagines what Dido will see (*cernes*); in the third, she states an objective prospect (*attollet gloria*).

**47–48: quam tu urbem, soror, hanc cernes, quae surgere regna/ coniugio tali!**  
 both *cernes* and *surgere* go with both exclamatory clauses: 'what a city you will [note the future tense] see rise here, what a kingdom [sc. you will see] rise with such a husband.' '*Hanc* is deictic, as Anna sweeps her hand towards the city.'<sup>83</sup> Anna systematically interrelates Carthage and Dido: *quam* (Carthage) *tu* (Dido) *urbem* (Carthage) *soror* (Dido) *hanc* (Carthage) *cernes* (Dido), a pattern reinforced by the elision of *tu* and *urbem*, which merges Dido with her city. *coniugium* (from *coniunx*: husband) signifies 'marriage' but may also mean husband. Anna dramatically places the ablative of cause that will enable Carthage's rise to imperial greatness in enjambment.

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83. Austin (1963), p. 38.

**49: *Punica se quantis attollet gloria rebus!***: almost a golden line: (a) *Punica* (b) *quantis* (c) *attollet* (a) *gloria* (b) *rebus*.

**50–51: *tu modo posce deos ueniam, sacrisque litatis/ indulge hospitio causasque innecte morandi***: *Tu posce—indulge—innecte*: Anna opts for a tricolon in these two verses, which details the three pieces of her advice: (1) get divine approval; (2) make Aeneas feel welcome; (3) entice him to stay. After line 47, this is the second time that Anna uses the (from a grammatical point of view unnecessary) second personal pronoun.

**50: *posce deos ueniam***: *posco*, construed with a double accusative, means ‘to demand something (here: *ueniam*) of someone (here: *deos*)’, or, in another idiom, ‘to ask someone (here: *deos*) insistently or authoritatively for a thing (here: *ueniam*)’: see *OLD* s.v. 2a. *uenia* has a double meaning: ‘permission’ and ‘forgiveness.’ Arguably, both of these meanings are here in play. See O’Hara: ‘Anna’s phrase *posce ueniam* captures the ambiguity at the heart of this scene, for *ueniam* can mean “leave” or “permission” to do something, with no connotation of wrong, or it can mean “forgiveness” for a wrong done. Anna, who is arguing that there is nothing wrong with yielding to a new love, must be thought to mean, “ask for permission”. But the other connotation of *uenia* suggests a different perspective, that perhaps Dido needs forgiveness for even being attracted to Aeneas, or wishing to break faith with Sychaeus.’<sup>84</sup> Indeed, just after Anna claimed that Aeneas has arrived as part of a larger divine plan, she has no reason to recommend to her sister to ask the gods for ‘forgiveness’; even ‘permission’ seems a bit too forceful given that, according to Anna, Dido would simply align herself with the will of the gods if she were to marry Aeneas. We have, then, yet another instance in which Anna’s discourse, upon inspection, yields a highly ironic layer of meaning of which the character herself is unaware.

**50: *sacrisque litatis***: the *-que* links the two imperatives *posce* and *indulge*. *lito* is a technical term of Roman religion, with a variety of specific meanings to do with the communication between humans and gods. Here it means ‘to offer by way of propitiation or atonement to obtain divine favour.’ In a way, it refers to the cult action (the performance of a sacrifice) that corresponds to, and should accompany, the prayer (a speech act) Anna has just referred to in *posce deos ueniam*. Pease argues that ‘the ablative absolute here expresses

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84. O’Hara (1993), pp. 105–06.

a condition; if the sacrifices have turned out favorably Dido may assume that the gods favor her course of action.<sup>85</sup> This, however, is a very innocent reading of Anna's rhetoric. It glosses over the grammatical ambiguity inherent in the ablative absolute construction, which Anna exploits to help her argument. In contrast, if one takes *sacris litatis* in a temporal sense (i.e. 'after divine favour has been obtained through sacrifices'), there is a nice—if somewhat rash—sense of progression built into her syntax. On this reading, Anna gives the impression that divine approval for her recommended course of action will certainly be forthcoming and she uses this (as it turns out erroneous) assumption as the basis for her advice on how best to retain Aeneas in Carthage.

**51: causasque innecte morandi:** the *-que* links the imperatives *indulge* and *innecte*. The basic meaning of *innecto* is 'to fasten, tie, bind.' Here it has the sense 'to weave plots or to devise reasons' (*OLD* s.v. 4). Dido should try her best to tie together a series of arguments why Aeneas ought to stay.

**52–53: dum pelago desaeuit hiems et aquosus Orion,/ quassataeque rates, dum non tractabile caelum:** another tricolon, in which the first and the second colon share one *dum*. The *-que* links *desaeuit* and *quassatae* [sc. *sunt*]. *desaeuio* means 'to work off rage', *pelago* is an ablative of place; the verb in the last colon/ the second *dum*-clause (*est*) is again elided. At 4.309–11, Dido uses the fact that Aeneas plans to depart outside the sailing season as evidence for his savage disposition towards her: *quin etiam hiberno moliri sidere classem/ et mediis properas Aquilonibus ire per altum,/ crudelis?* ('Even during winter do you actually hasten to labour at your fleet, and to travel across the sea in the midst of nothern winds, cruel one?') And she returns to the theme at 4.430, when she breathes to Anna, with gusto, of how she might trick Aeneas into staying: *expectet facilemque fugam uentosque ferentis* ('let him wait for an easy flight and favourable winds!'). Anna alternates references to the stormy seas (*pelago desaeuit hiems; quassatae rates*) and the stormy skies (*aquosus Orion; non tractabile caelum*), thus conveying a good sense of the entire cosmos in turmoil.

**52: aquosus Orion:** 'The setting of Orion in November marked the onset of stormy weather (*hiems*); such allusions are not simply learned ornament,

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85. Pease (1935), p. 128.

but a natural idiom, the stock-in-trade of any farmer or sailor.<sup>86</sup> A reference to stormy Orion would no doubt resonate with Aeneas, given his recent experience at sea. See 1.535 where Ilioneus blames the trouble of the Trojans on *nimbosus Orion* in his address to Dido. The parallel suggests that Anna has been eavesdropping.

## 54–89: ‘Crazy Little Thing Called Love’ (Queen)

This section can be divided into five parts of 2, 12, 6, 12, and 4 lines respectively:

(a) *Introduction*

54–55: Effect of Anna’s discourse on Dido

(b) *Efforts to Ensure Divine Support*

56–64: Dido and Anna endeavour to win the favour of the gods

65–67: Dismissal of ‘civic’ religion

(c) *The Pathology of Love Illustrated*

68–73: Wounded-hind simile

(d) *Dido’s Effort to Win over her Beloved*

74–79: Dido’s behaviour in the company of Aeneas

80–85: Dido’s behaviour when apart from Aeneas

(e) *The Impact of Love on Leadership*

86–89: Effect of Dido’s condition on the construction of Carthage

Virgil has designed a so-called ‘ring-composition’ both in terms of the length of the units and theme: (a) corresponds to (e) and (b) to (d). That places (c), which consists of the famous ‘wounded-hind’ simile at the centre of this segment. It is the first time Virgil uses this figure of speech in Book 4: the elaborated formal simile, the quintessential device of epic, could not deliver more impact.

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86. Austin (1963), p. 39.

**54–55: His dictis impenso animum flammauit amore/ spemque dedit dubiae menti soluitque pudorem:** line 54 contains textual issues. Manuscripts and commentators (from late antiquity to the present) disagree on whether Virgil wrote *impenso* or *incensum* and, with the latter, some read *inflammavit* instead of *flammauit*. Pease prints *his dictis incensum animum flammauit amore*, Austin follows the Oxford Classical Text (OCT) in printing *his dictis impenso animum flammauit amore* but actually prefers (with others) *his dictis incensum animum inflammavit amore*, MacLennan prints what Austin prefers, whereas O’Hara returns to the reading of the OCT. Austin justifies his preferences as follows: ‘The word *impensus* is not found elsewhere in Virgil, whereas *incensum* here would be very much in his manner (cf. 197); and although the fact Virgil does not elsewhere use *flammauit* transitively except in the perfect participle need not exclude *inflammavit* here, the intensive compound has more force.’<sup>87</sup> Consider also the resulting pattern of alternating *i*- and *a*-alliteration *incensum animum inflammavit amore* as well as the iconic, metrically motivated ‘touching’ of *animum* on each side by the two fire-terms *incensum* and *inflammavit*. Moreover, as Austin points out, ‘with that text, the caesura in the third foot is blurred by the elision, and there is none in the fourth foot, an unusual and very striking rhythm, giving a metrical picture of the inexorable spread of the fire in Dido’s heart.’<sup>88</sup> What can be said in favour of *impenso*? To begin with, Dido’s mind was already glowing with love even before Anna spoke; *incensum* hence seems somewhat tautological. In contrast, *impenso* would take the obvious for granted (that Dido was already on fire) and concentrate on the fact that Anna has managed to up the ante: the love that was already simmering in her veins is now kindled into a full-blown, excessive conflagration, a point stylistically reinforced by the hyperbaton *impenso...amore*. There is, moreover, a certain elegance to keeping *animum* unencumbered by any attribute—in line with the two accusative objects that follow, i.e. *spem* and *pudorem*.

Irrespective of the readings, Virgil uses a tricolon to describe the impact of Anna’s speech. In terms of wordage it is descending or anti-climactic: not counting *his dictis*, which goes with all three (unless it is monopolized by *incensum*), the first colon covers four and a half feet (*impenso ... amore*), the second three and a half (*spemque ... menti*), and the third two and a half (*soluitque pudorem*). But the gradual decrease helps to generate a growing

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87. Austin (1963), p. 40.

88. *Ibid.*

sense of inevitability as the fateful conclusion comes into ever-sharper focus. The concluding ‘punch-phrase’ is slimmed down to essentials: *soluitque pudorem*. It harks back to the end of Dido’s speech where she addresses *Pudor* in declaring that she would sooner die than violate ‘Shame’ and its laws (...*ante, Pudor, quam te uiolo aut tua iura resoluo*, 27). Virgil enhances the effect by arranging the third colon in chiasmic order to the first two, which ensures that the key concept of *pudor* occupies the emphatic final position: accusative object (*animum*)—verb (*inflammavit*), accusative object (*spem*)—verb (*dedit*), verb (*soluit*)—accusative object (*pudorem*). The opposed key words *pudorem* (55) and *amore* (54) rhyming at successive verse-endings further stress the instant U-turn effect. We have reached a watershed moment, a point of no return: Dido has dissolved her feeling of *Pudor*, she has become ‘shame-less.’

**56–64:** Once the dam has broken, the pace of the action picks up. These nine lines describe religious activities, first jointly undertaken by the two sisters (56–59), then by Dido alone (60–64). The switch is highly marked—see comments on 60—and coincides with a shift from entirely appropriate to somewhat inappropriate behaviour. The passage here has a correlate in 450–73.

**56–59: principio delubra adeunt pacemque per aras/ exquirunt; mactant lectas de more bidentis/ legiferae Cereri Phoeboque patrique Lyaeo,/ Iunoni ante omnis, cui uincla iugalia curae:** the tricolon *delubra adeunt—pacem exquirunt—mactant bidentis*, in which the last colon again stands in chiasmic order to the first two: accusative object (*delubra*) + verb (*adeunt*)—accusative object (*pacem*) + verb (*exquirunt*)—verb (*mactant*) + accusative object (*bidentis*), specifies the different stages of how to enter into (efficacious) communication with the gods: approach to the temple; utterance of a request; sacrificial slaughter as initial human overture in the desired exchange of services. A sacrifice is part of an economy, whereby humans invest time and material resources (victims for sacrificial slaughter are expensive) to court the gods, in the hope of getting something in return.<sup>89</sup> The syntax in these lines is straightforward, with Virgil privileging parataxis. We get three main clauses (the first and second linked by *-que*),

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89. Expressed in Latin the principle is the snappy *do ut des*, i.e. ‘I give [something] so that you may give [something in return]’—though this precise phrase is not attested in our sources.



the second and third juxtaposed asyndetically (*exquirunt; mactant*), an enumeration of four divinities, and a relative clause (*cui ... curae*), the only element of hypotaxis. The lines contain no participles – in contrast to 60–64.

**56: per aras:** *per* conveys the sense that the sisters are making the rounds of the altars, leaving no stone unturned.

**57: lectas de more bidentis:** *bidens, -ntis* f. is an animal for sacrifice, esp. a sheep. The term refers to the presence of two (*bi-*) prominent teeth (*dens*) indicating age (one or two years old). *bidentis* is the alternative accusative plural ending (= *bidentes*).

**58–59: legiferae Cereri Phoeboque patrique Lyaeo, / Iunoni ante omnis, cui uincla iugalia curae:** Anna and Dido appeal and make sacrificial offerings to Ceres, Apollo, Bacchus, and, above all, Juno, who receives syntactical elevation by means of the relative clause introduced by *cui*: the antecedent of *cui* is *Iunoni*, *cui* is dative of advantage, *curae* is a predicative dative with the verb ‘to be’; the verb (i.e. *sunt*) is elided. Apart from Juno—invoked as the goddess of marriage: cf. her instantiation as *Iuno Iuga*, hinted at in the relative clause—it is not entirely clear why Ceres, Apollo, and Bacchus are singled out, and commentators since antiquity have puzzled over this. While it is possible to find *some* source that connects each of the three to marriage individually (Pease offers a typically exhaustive survey of the evidence)<sup>90</sup>, often the connection does not compel. Moreover, this particular grouping is hard to parallel, not least because of a resounding silence: somehow Anna and Dido fail to sacrifice to Venus, a rather conspicuous oversight in this context, especially in the light of Anna’s earlier point that Dido deserves to enjoy the *praemia Veneris* (33).<sup>91</sup> (Unless there was no altar to Venus in the city: but what would that tell us about Carthage?)<sup>92</sup> Perhaps the late-antique commentator Donatus (cited by Pease)<sup>93</sup> has a point in

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90. Pease (1935), pp. 134–37.

91. Somewhat ironically, the only parallel passage routinely cited that mentions all three divinities comes from the *Pervigilium Veneris* (‘The Night-watch of Venus’): *Nec Ceres, nec Bacchus absunt, nec poetarum deus* (43). But this poem dates to the second or third century AD, and the author may well have fashioned this line with *Aeneid* 4.58 in mind, which would render the argument circular.

92. Terence, at *Eun.* 732, famously claimed *sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus*, i.e. without food and drink, love goes frigid, but one wonders what Ceres and Liber here do *sine Venere*.

93. Pease (1935), p. 135.

suggesting that Ceres stands for civic cohesion (grounded in law: see her epithet *legifera*, translated, arguably for the first time, from the Greek *thesmophoros*), Apollo for an auspicious future, and Bacchus for lasting *joie de vivre*. These aspects would of course also be very fitting in the context of a wedding, but they have a much broader remit; the choice of divinities thus arguably conveys a sense of Dido's civic responsibilities, with the queen trying to ensure that the pursuit of her amorous passion will not only result in personal fulfillment but a prosperous and enjoyable future for all of Carthage. In fact, the lines here resemble line 45 from Anna's speech: *dis equidem auspibus reor et Iunone secunda*, where Juno too is singled out specially (as goddess of marriage and patron goddess of Carthage), and Anna goes on to stress that a marriage liaison with Aeneas is auspicious both for Dido *and* her city. From this point of view, lines 58–9 describe the ritual deeds to match the words.

But the most compelling take on these lines, I find, is Henderson's (*per litteras*): 'I'd say the spray of divinities amounts to a smokescreen, hiding from themselves and one and all what this is all about, as if going the extra mile will make it right (cf. *per aras*). No sex, then—and even marriage as if an obligatory (*uincla...*) afterthought, though that is what's up-front. The slippage in the line from *legiferae* (from Greek *thesmophoros*) to "Lyaeo" (from Greek *luo* = *soluo*) amounts to further slippage from contract to release. Dido's game is to transfer from one bond to the next instantly, cemented for good. Juno's game is to we(l)d Aeneas to Carthage, with marriage as yoke (*iugum*) and—shackles. All above board? But *cura* is, plain to see, a see-through cover for *desire*; and ancient marriages were arranged between families, not love-matches.'

**60–64:** *ipsa tenens dextra pateram pulcherrima Dido/ candentis uaccae media inter cornua fundit/ aut ante ora deum pinguis spatiatur ad aras,/ instauratque diem donis, pecudumque reclusis/ pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta*: Line 60 marks the moment when the focus switches from the ritual actions that the sisters perform together to those that Dido performs alone. The plurals of 56–7 (*adeunt, exquirunt, mactant*) become singulars here (*ipsa ... Dido – fundit – spatiatur – instaurat – consulit*). On a superficial reading, one may get the impression that Virgil here simply fleshes out details of the general picture sketched in 56–9, with a specific focus on Dido. But that is not the case: the actions in 60–4 come *after* those in 56–9. Virgil hints at this with the adverb *principio* in line 56 (what we get

in 60–4 is the *'deinde'* as it were) but otherwise enters the new time-frame well-nigh imperceptibly: only with *aut* in line 62 does it become entirely obvious what is going on. This step forward in time and the attending switch from joint to individual action coincide with a shift from hopeful and orthodox supplication of the gods to the somewhat desperate performance of religious rites in the face of a distinct lack of divine enthusiasm.

**60–61: ipsa tenens dextra pateram pulcherrima Dido/ candentis uaccae media inter cornua fundit:** *pateram* is perhaps best taken *apo koinou* with the circumstantial participle *tenens* and the main verb *fundit*. Virgil already used the epithet *pulcherrima* when Dido first entered the narrative (1.496); he uses it later of Aeneas (4.141). MacLennan offers a nice appreciation of this 'moment of solemn beauty: Dido ... as queen and priestess (pouring the wine herself); the spotless white cattle, the understood temple-background.'<sup>94</sup> At the same time, it is somewhat peculiar that right after the sisters had sacrificed together to a comprehensive range of divinities, Dido is already at it again, and on her own. (This notion of inappropriate repetition, only obliquely intimated here, will become explicit with *instauratque diem donis* in 63: see below.) And not only that: the economic investment has noticeably increased, from sheep (57: *lectas de more bidentis*) to a white heifer (61: *candentis uaccae*), hinting at the fact, again rendered explicit shortly thereafter, that the initial offerings did not yield the desired results. Indeed, the way Virgil has constructed his vignette—choosing a very early stage in the process leading up to the sacrificial killing—leaves the felicity of the sacrifice open. As Servius points out *ad locum*, the pouring of the wine does not in itself constitute a sacrifice, but served to ascertain, by observation of how the animal reacted, whether or not the victim was well chosen (*non est sacrificium sed hostiae exploratio, utrum apta sit*).<sup>95</sup> Virgil does not specify whether this *uacca* actually proved *apta*, but the way in which he continues strongly suggests that Dido's ritual probing again may not have produced the hoped-for outcome. As Henderson points out (*per litteras*), Virgil also sets up a striking affinity between Dido and the victim: 'both are a stunning sight (*pulcherrima – candentis*), both are mature females (*uacca* not *iuuena*), they are out on public display, centre-stage, parading with nothing to hide (*media – ante ora*), and Dido is by proxy ripping open

94. MacLennan (2007), p. 83.

95. See also his note *ad Aen.* 6.244. Both are quoted by Pease (1935), p. 138.

her heart to show us, not to find out, what's beating there.' Indeed, as lines 66–7 make clear, Dido *is* the (sacrificial) victim: see commentary *ad locum*.

**61: *media inter cornua*:** both *media* (which is placed in the *middle* of the line) and *inter*, which is placed *between media* and *cornua*, enact their meaning at the level of verse design.

**62: *aut ante ora deum pinguis spatiatur ad aras*:** with the *aut* at the beginning of line 62, any sense of solemn and purposeful procedure starts to break down for good. This seemingly inconspicuous connective speaks volumes, by drawing attention to the increasingly random, indiscriminate, and desperate nature of Dido's ritual efforts—if the queen, so Virgil thereby suggests, is not trying to identify victims fit for sacrifice, she does something, anything, else, in this case approaching (*spatiatur*) altars that are already laden with offerings (cf. *pinguis*, which refers to the fat and blood of slaughtered victims). Commentators tend to read *spatiatur* straight: 'the verb signifies slow and dignified motion, that majestic gait (*incessus*) so dear to the Romans and proper for deities (l. 405) and monarchs';<sup>96</sup> 'of walking where it is the walk itself which is important, especially of the solemn gait appropriate to the approach of a temple'.<sup>97</sup> But I think the Scholia Danielis (cited by Pease *ad locum*) has a point when suggesting that Dido's movements betray an impatience caused by love. It is, to say the least, suggestive that Virgil has inverted normal ritual sequence by moving from a libation *at* the altar to moving *towards* altars (*ad aras*; set up by *ante ora deum*), at which, by all accounts, she has already sacrificed previously. Taken as a whole, then, and in context, this line conveys a sense of unfocused drifting from altar to altar (however solemn in gait Dido may be moving about) that contrasts sharply with the deliberate and purposeful *adeunt* in line 56.

**63: *instauratque diem donis*:** this phrase renders apparent the true degree of Dido's desperation. Literally, it means 'she renews each day with gifts.' But the verb *instaurare* is a technical term in Rome's civic religion, signifying 'to repeat a ritual or ceremony that was not correctly performed.' In other words, it refers to the option of repeating a ritual act of communicating with the gods once it has become apparent that the initial performance

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96. Pease (1935), p. 139.

97. MacLennan (2007), p. 83.

was in some way, intentionally or unintentionally, flawed and hence not efficacious.<sup>98</sup> Dido, however, clearly makes an extreme use of this option: for an unspecified period, she revisits the temples each and every day—not, presumably, because her previous sacrifices were marred by a procedural flaw, but because they did not produce the desired results. Repeated attempts to secure favourable omens formed part of the system of belief and practice that constituted Rome’s civic religion. A particularly striking instance (which ultimately failed) comes from Livy 41.14.7–15.1–4:

Cn. Cornelio et Q. Petilio consulibus, quo die magistratum inierunt, immolantibus Ioui singulis bubus, uti solet, in ea hostia, qua Q. Petilius sacrificavit, in iocinere caput non inuentum. id cum ad senatum rettulisset, boue perlitare iussus. [...] consul curam adiecit, qui se, quod caput iocineri defuisset, tribus bubus perlitasse negavit. senatus maioribus hostiis usque ad litationem sacrificari iussit. ceteris diis perlitatum ferunt, Saluti Petilium perlitasse negant.

[In the consulship of Gnaeus Cornelius and Quintus Petilius, on the day they entered into office, they offered one bull each in sacrifice to Jupiter, as is customary. In the victim that Q. Petilius sacrificed, no lobe was found on the liver. When this was reported to the senate, they ordered him to keep sacrificing bulls until he obtained favourable omens. [...] The consul [sc. Petilius] added to the anxiety; he reported that, as the lobe had been missing from the liver of his first victim, he had failed to obtain favourable omens from three further bulls. The senate ordered the sacrifices to continue with the larger victims until the obtainment of favourable omens. They say that in the sacrifices for the other divinities favourable omens were obtained, but that Petilius did not obtain favourable omens in those for Salus.]

Petilius died shortly thereafter. But his death does not expose the gods as unreliable or malicious—indeed, rather the opposite: they prove themselves reliable and honest partners in communication about the future, only in

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98. The cultural logic behind this practice is fascinating and tells us a lot about how the Romans construed their supernatural sphere. An *instauratio* ('repetition of a ritual') could be proactive as well as reactive. If a ritual was clearly disrupted, it could simply be repeated to pre-empt the displeasure of the divinities involved. (A good example is the festival of the Bona Dea in 62, which Clodius allegedly gate-crashed to spy on Caesar's wife: the priests ordered a repetition.) But it could also be reactive, to deal with cases in which the flaw had gone unnoticed and disaster had struck. *instauratio* thus enabled the Romans to explain failures and disasters without giving up on their belief in benevolent and supportive divinities. The (retrospective) argument after, say, a military disaster could always be that the rituals performed before the battle had been in some respect flawed (given the complicated rules, slips are easy to posit), meaning that the gods had no reason to lend their support in this particular instance. And a careful repetition of the ritual would ensure a restitution of the *pax deorum*.

this case they were unwilling to alter Petilius' unfavourable prospect. With Dido, we have a similar scenario: her repeated sacrifices (with subsequent inspection of the entrails), her decision to perform the entire ritual sequence herself (down to the menial pouring of the wine), her constant movements from one altar and statue to the next all combine to convey a sense of how *desperate* she is to receive a sign of divine reassurance—which is simply not forthcoming, despite her enormous investment.<sup>99</sup>

**63–64: *pecudumque reclusis/ pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta*:** the gap between *reclusis* and *pectoribus* (in the dative, to be construed with *inhians*, 'gazing intently at', 'casting longing eyes on') caused by the enjambment enacts the image of the breasts of the sacrificial victims split open for inspection. The hyperbaton in *spirantia consulit exta* produces a similar effect, articulating on the stylistic level the idea that Dido examines each bit of entrail separately. The scansion of *pectoribus* (the last syllable scanning long) and *inhians* (the first syllable scanning short) is unusual, but well explained and justified by Austin, who notes that the prosody 'seems plainly intended to suggest metrically Dido's lingering look at the *exta*.'<sup>100</sup> In fact, '*inhio* clashes with *consulo*—improper desire defacing ritual due process' (Henderson, *per litteras*).

Extispicy, the inspection of the still quivering (cf. *spirantia*) entrails (*exta*) of a recently slaughtered victim in order to find out the will of the gods, is a form of divination that the Romans adopted from the Etruscans, but which was practised in other areas of the ancient Mediterranean as well.<sup>101</sup> O'Hara likes to stress that 'we cannot see exactly what Dido sees', which is true enough, but hardly surprising:<sup>102</sup> the detailed description of (say) a liver still pulsating with blood (and perhaps missing a lobe) is not exactly an ecphrasis fit for inclusion in an epic. There are subtler ways to convey a sense of what the gods communicate to Dido. The overall thrust of the passage would seem to suggest that what Dido *sees* is not what she *wants* to see: hence the serial repetitions of the sacrificial offerings, as Dido again

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99. For those of you who want to learn more about Rome's civic religion (and Roman religion more generally) Beard, North, and Price (1998) offer a superb account of the material.

100. Austin (1963), pp. 43–44.

101. See the excellent website by Eleanor Robson, 'Sacrificial divination: confirmation by extispicy', *Knowledge and Power*, Higher Education Academy (2010) <http://knp.prs.heacademy.ac.uk/essentials/sacrificialdivination/>, which discusses the practice in ancient Assyria and includes some good illustrative material (including the sketch of a liver).

102. O'Hara (2011), p. 27. See also O'Hara (1993), p. 110 and O'Hara (1997), p. 251.

and again pours over the gory innards of victims in the search for a sign of divine approval—which is not forthcoming. Arguably, this is the essential point Virgil makes in this passage and he can make it without going into details about the innards that Dido looks at: all we really need to know about the fabric of the entrails she is inspecting is that she is searching in vain for supernatural support. With a view to the following verse and the mention of *uates* ('seer-prophets'), it is important to note that the inspection of entrails at Rome was the domain of the so-called *haruspices*, which were interpreters of internal organs and prodigies, such as lightning or monstrous births. Together with the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, who presided over the collection and the exegesis of Sibylline Oracles, and the augurs, who interpreted the behaviour of birds, the *haruspices* formed one of the three priestly colleges in charge of communication between the Roman *res publica* and the supernatural sphere. For an excellent survey and analysis of Rome's priestly colleges see Beard (1990).

**65–67: *heu, uatum ignarae mentes! quid uota furentem,/ quid delubra iuuant? est mollis flamma medullas/ interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus*:** after the nine-line built-up of religious suspense, these three lines explode: 'An exclamatory outburst from the narrator is a rare event in epic, reserved for high-octane moments of pressure on characters and readers alike to interpret key issues, including issues of interpretation (authority, character, theme...)' (Henderson, *per litteras*). Virgil has again opted for a tripartite structure, with a gradual increase in length across the segments, consisting of an exclamation (*heu ... mentes!*), a rhetorical question (*quid ... iuuant?*), and a concluding statement of fact (*est ... uulnus*) that sees right through the vitals of sacrificial victims to the vitals of Dido.

**65: *heu, uatum ignarae mentes!*:** Virgil concludes the description of religious activities on the part of the two sisters (and then Dido alone) with an exclamation in his own voice that includes an apostrophe of 'minds' (*mentes*). It is not immediately obvious whose minds are meant since *uatum* (the genitive plural of *uates*, i.e. 'prophet-poet') is syntactically ambiguous: it can depend either on *mentes* (a genitive of possession) or *ignarae* (an objective genitive). The former would mean 'alas, the ignorant minds of the prophets!', the latter 'alas, minds [sc. those of Anna and Dido] ignorant of the prophets!'. Commentators and translators are divided, but there is a tendency to favour the former, as do Goold in the Loeb ('Ah, the blind soul of seers') and MacLennan ('Virgil very suddenly turns to address the

interpreters—or rather their minds’).<sup>103</sup> O’Hara maintains that the syntax is deliberately ambiguous: ‘The reader’s difficulty in handling the syntax of the genitive *uatum* parallels the difficulty both Dido and the reader have in interpreting the entrails. Dido does not learn from the sacrifices that her love for Aeneas is going to lead to a bad end [but: doesn’t she?]; the reader does not learn exactly why this happens [but: don’t we?].’<sup>104</sup> In part, the way we read the text depends on our assessment of how precise (or imprecise) Virgil is with narrative details and key religious terminology. For the reading of Goold, Maclennan and others presupposes (a) that Dido relied on *haruspices* other than herself in her inspection of the entrails; and (b) that these—hitherto unnamed, unmentioned—*haruspices* are identical to the *uates* of line 65 despite the fact that, technically speaking, *haruspices* and *uates* go about divination in a radically different way and had a radically different cultural standing in Rome’s civic religion. If we assume both (a) that Dido consulted experts in extispicy (in the teeth of what Virgil’s text says, namely that she consulted the entrails herself) and (b) that Virgil here blithely ignored a key terminological and cultural distinction, then the syntax becomes indeed ambiguous and the construal of *uatum* as a possessive genitive becomes a distinct possibility. We are then free to imagine all sorts of scenarios.<sup>105</sup> Ambiguous syntax in itself of course is hardly surprising: Virgil has plenty of it. But here a bit more probing may resolve the ambiguity. From a thematic (rather than syntactic) point of view, the text raises two basic questions: (1) So far, Virgil has made no mention that Dido consulted with either *haruspices* or *uates*. So who are the *uates* mentioned here? (2) *uates* and *haruspices* were in the same business (figuring out—or, in the case of *uates*, having inspired knowledge of—what the gods have in mind for the future); but they used different channels of communication with the divine (*uates*

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103. Maclennan (2007), p. 84.

104. O’Hara (2011), p. 28.

105. See e.g. the fabrications of Austin (1963), p. 44: ‘Virgil means that nothing could really help Dido, for her offerings were no more than lip-service to the gods, and her soothsayers (*uates*) were powerless to diagnose and heal her mental disorder (*furentem*). We are not told what the omens were; presumably the *uates* were satisfied, or perhaps they deliberately produced the favourable signs that Dido so plainly desired; but at least she had formally expiated her fault... and that was the main thing.’ Are Dido’s offerings really no more than ‘lip-service’? Where are we told of *uates* trying to diagnose and heal Dido’s mental disorder—or that they interpreted omens, or, indeed, lied about what they saw? And one wonders how and where Dido formally expiated her ‘fault’ (whatever that may be in this context).



relied on divine inspiration, *haruspices* interpreted empirical signs from the gods, such as those found in the entrails of sacrificial victims) and had a different place and standing in Roman culture. Dido acted like a *haruspex*. Why does Virgil describe the divinatory practice of one type of religious specialist and then allude to another? Now, the notion that Dido has a crowd of (ignorant) *haruspices-uates* at her service has no support whatsoever in the text. But *uates*-figures of course do feature in the *Aeneid*—seer-prophets who have access to *fatum* (especially in the genitive plural there is a specious etymological link: *uatum* ~ *fatum*) and are hence able to predict the future. Three come to mind specially: Apollo; the Sibyl; and the narrator, who outs himself as a *uates* at *Aeneid* 7.41. This is rather illustrious company, and one may wonder why Virgil would here be making a throw-away gesture to the ignorant minds of prophets despite the fact that the authorial persona he adopts in the *Aeneid* is precisely that of a *uates*.<sup>106</sup> In the light of these considerations, it is arguably best to construe *uatum* as an objective genitive with *ignarae*. What Virgil seems to be saying is the following: (a) Anna and Dido wish to pursue a marriage alliance with Aeneas; (b) they approach the divinities to solicit their favour; (c) Dido on her own invests long and meticulous efforts to find some sign of divine approval by means of extispicy—apparently, without success; (d) Virgil steps back from this scene and comments with a tragic exclamation on the ignorant minds of the two sisters: they could only embark upon this course of action and they could only harbour the hope of receiving divine benediction because they are ignorant of *fatum* and the poet-prophets (*uates*) who pronounce it.<sup>107</sup>

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106. One *haruspex* appears in the *Aeneid*, the venerable Etruscan Tarchon, who backs Aeneas against Turnus. See 8.498 and 11.739. He is a figure quite different from (if genealogically related to) the specialist entrail-inspectors (*haruspices*) of historical times. For one, Virgil assimilates him to a *uates* (seer-prophet) by having another figure of privileged insight into the workings of the divine (Euander) note that he sings of fate (8.499: *fata canens*).

107. The strong line taken here should not obscure that distinguished scholars have argued the opposite case, with reference to further evidence. See e.g. Conington (1884), p. 256, who concedes the force of the parallels at 4.464 and 8.627, before continuing: ‘But the ordinary interpretation, “vatum mentes”, is clearly right, confirmed as it is by Apuleius, Met. 10. 2, “Heu medicorum ignarae mentes”, where the reference is to the powerlessness of physic in the case of love, and by Sil[sius Italicus] 8. 100, “Heu sacri vatium errores”, also an imitation of this passage.’ But are these parallels from other authors really more conclusive than evidence from the *Aeneid* itself, especially since imitation does not necessarily require slavish imitation? (One should at least entertain the possibility that Apuleius and Silius could have—deliberately or unintentionally—misread Virgil.)

Confirmation that this is the right interpretation comes from 8.626–28, where we meet a character (Vulcan) who is *not* ‘ignorant of the prophets’ — and hence can prefigure the future: *illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos/ haud uatum ignarus uenturique inscius aeui/ fecerat ignipotens...* (‘There the story of Italy and the triumphs of Rome had the Lord of Fire fashioned, not ignorant of the prophets or unknowing of the age to come...’). Here there can be no doubt that *uatum* is an objective genitive, and the anonymous *uates* here are presumably the same as the anonymous *uates* in Book 4 and form the human equivalent to the *Parcae* of the proem. Interestingly, 4.464–65 suggest that Dido has heard prophecies of *uates* and chose to ignore them. These predictions come back to haunt her: *multaque praeterea uatum praedicta priorum/ terribili monitu horrificant* (‘and in addition many a prediction of the prophets of old terrifies her with fearful boding’). On the divine level, of course, the rough and ready history of Carthage and Rome has always been known: it is one of the reasons why Juno is so upset. See 1.22: *sic uoluere Parcas*.

The pathos Virgil packs into the apostrophe is appropriate: in a universe in which the larger plot is already fixed, the ritual efforts of the sisters to enter into communication with the gods to receive support for a course of action that would go against fate is bound to be futile. This also makes sense in how the text continues: *quid uota furem, quid delubra iuuant?* In the world of the *Aeneid* key religious practices and institutions that normally shape interaction between humans and gods *and are designed to enable humans to have a say in how history unfolds* by winning over divinities with gifts and sacrifices are rendered at least to some degree impotent: however many white heifers Dido may sacrifice and however many livers she peruses for divine approval, the gods, in Virgil’s literary cosmos, will not give their support to a course of action that would involve a departure from what is predetermined by fate. (Note, though, that Virgil never says that they send Dido signs that lie!) But to know about *fatum*, you had better get to know what the *uates* have to say — however imperfect and misleading some of their utterances may turn out to be.<sup>108</sup>

**65–66: quid uota furem, quid delubra iuuant?:** *uota* and *delubra* are the subject of *iuuant*, *furem* is the accusative object (‘one, who...’); *quid* is an accusative of respect (‘in what respect/ how...?’). The reference to *uota* and

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108. For this complication see O’Hara (1990), a book best read in conjunction with the review by Alessandro Schiesaro in *Classical Philology* 88 (1993), pp. 258–65.

*delubra* sums up Dido's religious efforts, which Virgil renders void with a pointed rhetorical question: someone out her mind (*furens*) will not be able to enter into meaningful communication with the gods or respond to the supernatural intelligence to be gathered from extispicy. (Divinely inspired madness for the purpose of divining the future—such as the one the Sibyl experiences when possessed by Apollo—is different.)

The verb *furo* ('to be out of one's mind', 'to rage') and the noun *furor* are key terms in Virgil's poetry; they designate excessive emotions (such as erotic passion or violent hatred) that render an agent incapable of rational thought and action and are associated with disorder and transgression. This is the first time in the book that Virgil diagnoses Dido as suffering from outright insanity (a diagnosis deftly prepared for by *ignarae mentes*: Dido's *mens* is not just ignorant, but also addled, *a-mens*), but from now on these and related lexemes (such as *furibunda* or *furiae*) will accompany her till the bitter end: Virgil again calls her *furens* three lines later (68), and drops frequent reminders of Dido's mental state throughout the rest of the book, at lines 91 (*furor*), 101 (*furor*), 283 (*furens*), 298 (*furens*), 376 (*furiae*), 433 (*furor*), 465 (*furens*), 501 (*furores*), 548 (*furens*), 646 (*furibunda*), and 697 (*furor*). Dido is by no means the only character to come under the sway of *furor* in the poem: other *furibund* figures include Juno, Turnus, as well as Aeneas. It is also a quality that occurs in vistas that look forward to historical Rome. Jupiter, for instance, when unscrolling the fates to Venus in Book 1, famously announces that under Caesar the temple of Janus will be closed, with a gruesomely personified *Furor* chained and locked up within—a (partisan) reference to the end of a century of civil bloodshed that associates the Augustan regime with overcoming the insane rage that had torn apart Rome's civic community for over a century, in analogy to the control Jupiter exercises on the *furor* of Juno, who wreaks similar havoc in Virgil's literary universe.<sup>109</sup> One should beware, however, of drawing too facile and schematic an opposition between *furor*, violence, and disorder on the one hand and self-control, peace, and order on the other, not least in the light of how the poem ends: Aeneas kills Turnus *furiis accensus et*

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109. See 1.294–96: *Furor impius intus/ saeva sedens super arma et centum uinctus aënis/ post tergum nodis fremet horridus ore cruento*; 'within, impious Rage, sitting on savage arms, his hands fast bound behind with a hundred brazen knots, shall roar in the ghastliness of blood-stained lips.' The reference to the temple of Janus blurs the distinction between external and internal warfare in ways that readers with traditional-republican allegiances would not have appreciated.

*iral terribilis* (12.946–47: ‘ablaze with fury and terrible in his wrath’).<sup>110</sup> This raises the question to what extent Virgil conceives of civilization (or specifically Roman civilization, destined as it was to acquire imperial sway across the globe) as ultimately grounded in foundational acts of ‘furious’ violence.

Some further points: ‘madness’ has its generic home in tragedy, from which it entered the epic tradition in full force.<sup>111</sup> It is also a quality aristocratic regimes tend to associate with ‘the rabble’ and its supposedly violent-revolutionary disposition (as does Virgil in the simile at 1.149–50: *saeuitque animis ignobile uulnus, iamque faces et saxa uolant* (*furor arma ministrat*) (‘the base rabble rage angrily, and now firebrands and stones fly: madness furnishes arms’). In late-republican Rome, charges of insanity were also the stock-in-trade of political invective, not least Cicero’s, who routinely accuses his adversaries (senatorial peers all) of being mentally deranged.<sup>112</sup>

**66–67: est mollis flamma medullas/ interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus:** note that *est* is not a form of *sum/ esse*, but is the third person singular present indicative active of *edo, esse, edi, esum*: to eat (away), to devour. Scanning of the line reveals that *mollis* (with long *-is*) modifies *medullas*, which is reinforced by the elegant alliteration and the pleasing pattern of vowels: the phrase features all five exactly once. Alliteration (*uiuit ... uulnus*) also underscores thematic coherence in the second clause. The phrasing here picks up the imagery of ‘internal emotional bleeding’ in lines 1–2: *saucia, uulnus, alit* (cf. *uiuit*), *uenis* (cf. *medullas*), *caeco* (cf. *tacitum igni*). But there is also a shocking continuity in imagery from the sacrificial victims slaughtered on the altars to find out the will of the gods to Virgil’s depiction of Dido: *mollis medullas* recalls the *spirantia exta* that Dido is inspecting and the opened up chests of the sheep (63–63: *pecudum reclusis pectoribus*) are picked up by the reference to the chest of Dido (*sub pectore*). Put differently, Virgil continues to assimilate Dido to a sacrificial victim. Instead of inspecting the entrails of animals, she ought to inspect herself. He thereby also turns himself into a *haruspex* who performs extispicy on his character, inviting us to join him in his exercise of invasive ethopoeia: the

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110. Does Virgil thereby imply that his hero is flawed and the killing unjust and unjustified? Or does he want to suggest that at times the maintenance of order and the restitution of justice may require ‘furious’ actions?

111. The standard treatment is Hershkowitz (1998).

112. See Gildenhard (2011), pp. 324–26, 328–30.

same surgical operation that Dido performs on the innards of the *uaccae* she sacrifices to learn about her future, the narrator performs on the innards of Dido for his audience. What does he show and what do we learn, not least about us? Are we just as eager as Dido (cf. *inhians*) to find out what the future (of the narrative) holds? Or do we rather adopt the know-it-all posture of the omniscient *uates* for whom the future holds no secrets?<sup>113</sup>

**68–69: *uritur infelix Dido totaque uagatur/ urbe furens*:** the image is shocking—the queen is on the loose in the city, driven all but insane by her passion. *uritur* pulls out all the stops—the *ignis caecus* has burst forth, the queen is on fire. It is a major step forward from the metaphorical fire of love at the beginning of the book to the funeral pyre at the end. Other features to note include the alliteration and assonance in *ur-i-tur* ~ *uaga-tur* ~ *ur-be* ~ *f-ur-ens*; the sudden switch in epithet from *pulcherrima* (60) to *infelix* (or, to put this in generic terms, from love elegy to tragedy);<sup>114</sup> the gradual increase in Dido’s drifting (from the purposeful *adeunt* to the more random *spatiatur* to the utterly aimless *uagatur*); and the circumstantial participle *furens* (‘in a state of madness’, ‘out of her mind’).

**69–73: *qualis coniecta cerua sagitta,/ quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit/ pastor agens telis liquitque uolatile ferrum/ nescius: illa fuga siluas saltusque peragrat/ Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo*:** from Homer onwards, similes likening figures and phenomena in the human sphere to aspects of the animal kingdom or the world of nature more generally are an established stylistic feature of epic.<sup>115</sup> The basic point the simile is designed to illustrate is the way in which ‘wounded’ Dido moves about the city: *uagatur* (68) ~ *peragrat* (72). But the hermeneutic challenge (or opportunity) created by the simile does not stop here. There are many further points of contact or correspondence between the world

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113. You may enjoy reading W. H. Auden’s poem ‘Secondary Epic’ (1959), which mocks the pretension of Virgil’s *uates*-persona since it turns him into a retrospective prophet at the service of Augustus and his regime: ‘No, Virgil, no:/ Not even the first of the Romans can learn/ His Roman history in the future tense,/ Not even to serve your political turn;/ Hindsight as foresight makes no sense.’

114. *infelix* is of course Dido’s standard epithet: apart from here, Virgil also uses it at 1.712, 749; 4.450, 529, 596; and 6.456.

115. In his first simile at 1.148–56, Virgil inverts the conventional dynamics of comparison by using a simile drawn from the socio-political sphere (a mob at the brink of violence calmed down by a senior authority figure) to illustrate events in nature (the winds whipping up a storm being called to order by Neptune).

of the narrative and the world briefly invoked in the simile that are worth identifying and discussing. In this case, the interface between narrative and simile is particularly complex. Victor Pöschl suggests the following multi-layered interpretation: ‘the deer simile has a threefold function: (1) It makes the queen’s roaming more explicit (this is the original function of a simile in Homer—clarification of an exterior event); (2) it reveals Dido’s state of mind (clarification of an inner event); (3) it foreshadows her tragic end (symbolic prediction) through content, key, and pathos of the movement.’<sup>116</sup>

This is a good starting point for untangling further correspondences between the world of the similar and the world of the surrounding narrative—an exercise, in which each word and phrasing deserves consideration. To begin with, *incautam* is a curious touch. Why does Virgil appear to apportion part of the blame for getting shot to death to the poor creature? And is there an equivalent to the unwary behaviour of the hind in how Dido has conducted herself? Is Virgil perhaps suggesting that Dido was too susceptible to the charms of Aeneas and should have been more on her guard? At the same time, *procul* and *incautam* stand in latent contradiction to one another: the hind, presumably, would have had to be super-cautious to elude a herdsman shooting (at her?) from afar. Furthermore, the portrayal of the *pastor* in the simile likens him to Aeneas. But what are the precise correspondences between the herdsman and Aeneas? The one who has so far been shooting at deer in the *Aeneid* is the Trojan hero, who killed seven of them right after being washed ashore in Libya, one for each of his ships: see 1.184–93, especially 1.189–91: *ductoresque ipsos primum, capita alta ferentis/ cornibus arboreis, sternit, tum uulgus et omnem/ miscet agens telis nemora inter frondea turbam* (‘first he brings to the ground the leaders themselves, carrying their heads high with branching antlers, then he routs the crowd and the entire herd, driving them with his arrows amid the leafy woods’). In hindsight, these lines acquire a proleptic force, though Aeneas focused on stags.

**69: qualis coniecta cerua sagitta:** *qualis* introduces the simile. *cerua*, which is in the nominative (with a short *-a*), is framed by the ablative absolute *coniecta ... sagitta* (both with a long *-a*).

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116. Pöschl (1962), p. 81.

**70–72: quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit/ pastor agens telis liquitque uolatile ferrum/ nescius:** the antecedent of *quam* is *cerua*; *incautam* is an adjective in predicative position ('which, unwary, ...'). The design is intricate: the accusative objects and verbs form a chiasmus, with the subject at the centre: (a) *quam incautam* (b) *fixit* (c) *pastor agens telis* (b) *liquit* (a) *uolatile ferrum*. (The *-que* in *liquitque* links *fixit* and *liquit*.) Virgil also achieves an interlacing of words referring to the hind (*quam, incautam*) and the action of getting pierced with an arrow from afar (*procul, fixit*); and he uses two emphatic instances of enjambment to foreground the shepherd and his actions (71: *pastor agens telis*) as well as his state of mind (72: *nescius*). The position of the adverb *procul* enacts what the word means: it is placed at some distance from the verb it modifies (*fixit*)—as does the preposition *inter*, which stands *between* the two words it governs, i.e. *nemora* and *Cresia*. On Virgil's choice of a shepherd as the shooter, see Anderson: 'It might seem odd that Vergil used the word *pastor* here rather than a noun like *venator*, for the shepherd shooting arrows is an unexpected image. However, the word-choice, I believe, is deliberate, designed to recall the simile of the shepherd in 2.304ff. No longer the unwitting spectator and victim of fiery fury, Aeneas has now become the unwitting perpetrator of the same, the innocent agent of all that he abhors. Entirely against his will, half-ignorant to the very end, he destroys the woman he loves, leaving her to the agonies of the fury he has caused, ultimately to the suicide which is implied in this very simile. After he abandons Carthage and looks back from the sea at the flames that rise from the pyre, where she lies pierced by his own sword, he does not know the reason for the fire (*causa latet* 5.5), but he has heavy forebodings. How far he has moved into the bitter world of reality from that pastoral innocence! How little he understands the destructive consequences of his actions!'<sup>117</sup>

**72: nescius:** what is the shepherd *nescius* of? Here is Lyne, taking issue with Austin among others, who have the tendency to exculpate the shooter: 'Our hunting shepherd is not, as is often implied, totally "ignorant", "nescius", of his actions (how could he be?). He has, Vergil tells us, been vigorously and purposefully hunting the hind: "quam ... agens telis" ["which, hunting with darts"]. What he is ignorant of is that one of his shafts has struck: that he has hit the "cerua", that the "cerua" in fact carries a lethal wound

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117. Anderson (1968), p. 9.

inflicted by him.<sup>118</sup> Is Virgil thereby suggesting that Aeneas has been preying on Dido, while at the same time failing to realize that he is affecting her profoundly? To what extent do the two verbs *fixit* (he pierced her) and *liquit* (and left her) mirror Aeneas' arrival at and departure from Dido's Carthage? (One important difference is that the shepherd does not pursue the hind because he does not realize that his arrow has hit the mark; Aeneas, of course, leaves Dido knowing full well the extent to which she has fallen in love with him. As 5.5–7 shows, he and his men had a good idea of how far she might go: *duri magno sed amore dolores/ polluto notumque, furens quid femina possit,/ triste per augurium Teucrorum pectora ducunt*; 'but the harsh pains once great love has been profaned and knowledge of what a woman can do in frenzy, lead the hearts of the Trojans amid sad forebodings.')

**72–73: siluas saltusque peragrat/ Dictaeos:** the assonance in the hendiadys *siluas* and *saltus* (s\*I\*\*s), the pattern of vowels (*i, a; a, u*), with the last syllable of *siluas* being picked up by first syllable of *saltus*, and the fact that both nouns are in the plural generates a plangent picture of tragic desperation as the wounded hind roams far and wide through the woods and groves on Mt. Dicte without being able to shake off the lethal arrow in her side. Cf. also the intensifying *per-* in *peragrat*. *Dictaeus* refers to Mt. Dicte on Crete; Virgil places the geographical specification, which is more precise than the earlier *nemora inter Cresia*, in enjambment. The continuing emphasis on the Cretan setting is remarkable and has long puzzled commentators. Austin suggests that "'Cretan" in itself has no special significance here, except that the Cretans were famous archers',<sup>119</sup> Horsfall thinks that Virgil has chosen Crete because the inhabitants of the island were notorious for using *poisoned* arrows,<sup>120</sup> and Morgan argues that the Cretan setting reminds Virgil's readers of animals who there find a herbal *cure* for poisoned arrows.<sup>121</sup> The herb is called *dictamnus*, 'dittany' (and associated with Mt. Dictys), and thought to have 'the power to draw poisoned and barbed arrows from a wound.' As Morgan goes on to point out, 'Virgil's readers are going to be

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118. Lyne (1987), p. 196.

119. Austin (1963), p. 47.

120. Horsfall (1995), p. 124, n. 13.

121. Morgan (1994), pp. 67–68 with reference to Cicero, *de Natura Deorum* 2.126: *auditum est ... capras autem in Creta feras cum essent confixae uenenatis sagittis, herbam quaerere quae dictamnus uocaretur, quam cum gustauissent sagittas excidere dicunt e corpore* ('it has been reported ... that wild goats in Crete, when pierced with poisoned arrows, seek a herb called dittany; when they have eaten of it, so people say, the arrows drop out of their bodies') and Pliny, *Natural History*, 8.97 and 26.142.



reminded of this potency when Venus herself culls the herb from Crete and gives it invisibly to Aeneas where he lies wounded. The arrow slips easily from his flesh, pain vanishes, and strength is restored. (12.423).’ In the context of *Aeneid* 4, of course, the invocation of a possible cure inevitably highlights the terminal nature of Dido’s condition.

Rebecca Armstrong, ingeniously, argues further that the Cretan setting reinforces a programmatic if oblique association between Dido and Cretan heroines that Virgil validates throughout the episode, in particular Ariadne but also, more surprisingly or, indeed, shockingly, Pasiphae, the notoriously adulterous wife of the Cretan king Minos who fancied intercourse with bulls. (See Virgil, *Eclogue* 6, for a take on this. At *Eclogue* 6.52, Pasiphae is in an almost identical condition as the Dido-hind: *a, uirgo infelix, tu nunc in montibus erras.*)<sup>122</sup> Virgil may well have chosen this mountain for its mythological resonances: Mt. Dicte is, famously, the birthplace of Zeus/Jupiter, the divinity in charge of the *fata*; and it is also associated with the goddess of hunting Artemis/Diana, to whom Dido is compared when she first enters the epic (1.494–504), as well as one of her favourite nymphs, i.e. Britomartis or (renamed) Dictynna: see Callimachus, *Hymn to Artemis* 190–200.

**73: Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo:** the abrupt caesura in the third foot, reinforced by asyndeton, sets up the punchline in a highly effective way: despite all her efforts to rid herself of the fatal arrow, the hind fails and falters. There is a powerful and brutal finality to the measured phrase *haeret lateri letalis harundo*. Alliteration (*ha-*, *ha-*) and assonance (*-re-*, *-run-*) link the framing words *haeret* and *harundo* and alliteration and vowel-patterning (*a, e, i; e, a, i*) link the central *lateri* (scanning short, short, long) and *letalis*, whereas *lateri* stands as dative object to *haeret* and *letalis* modifies *harundo*: an intricate design that conveys a tragic sense of (non-)closure. The wound is fatal, but the process of dying will be prolonged, an ominous image that stands in poignant parallel to what will unfold with Dido in the rest of the book. After *sagitta*, *tela*, and *ferrum*, *harundo* is the fourth term Virgil uses to denote the fatal arrow.

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122. Armstrong (2002), pp. 330–31. For what Cretan women get up to in Latin poetry, see Armstrong (2006). I owe these references to John Henderson.

74–79: *nunc media Aenean secum per moenia ducit/ Sidoniasque ostentat opes urbemque paratam,/ incipit effari mediaque in uoce resistit;/ (77) nunc eadem labente die conuiuia quaerit/ Iliacosque iterum demens audire labores/ exposcit pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore*: this passage of six lines, divided into two blocks of three lines each marked by the anaphora of *nunc* at the beginning of lines 74 and 77 (italicized), details Dido's conduct in the presence of Aeneas before we return to Dido on her own in lines 80–85. 74–76 cover the daytime activities, 77–79 describe the evening entertainment. Throughout, the syntax of the passage is predominantly paratactic (the main verbs are underlined), but Virgil has slightly altered the rhetorical design as he moves from daytime to evening. In 74–76 we get four main verbs (*ducit*—*ostentat*; *incipit*—*resistit*), of which the first two and the last two are linked by *-que* (*Sidoniasque; mediaque*), whereas *incipit* follows on *ostentat* asyndetically. In 77–79, we get a tricolon (*quaerit*—*exposcit*—*pendet*), with all verbs linked by *-que* (*Iliacosque; pendetque*).

The switch from simile back to narrative is abrupt, especially since the creature hunted in the simile (the hind/ Dido) has turned into a huntress of sorts: after performing the rites, seeking in vain to ascertain a promising future and wandering aimlessly through the city, Dido now pursues her object of love with great purpose—and does so rather successfully.

**74: *media Aenean secum per moenia***: a mimetic design: Aeneas and Dido are placed in the middle of *media ... per moenia*. The lexeme *moenia* almost invariably recalls the last line of the proem, the *altae moenia Romae* (1.7): the foundation of Rome (as it may be worth recalling) will not happen until several hundred years after Aeneas' arrival at Latium according to Virgil's chronology of Rome's prehistory, but is the ultimate telos of his quest. Here it carries a latent accusatory charge: Aeneas ought not to be sightseeing among the walls of Carthage; he should see to his mission, which will eventually result in the walls of Rome. Given the close identification of Dido and Carthage, the vignette here also reinforces the notion that Dido/ her city is about to fall: Aeneas has infiltrated the protective walls, he is inside her defences, in her marrow (*media/ medulla*) and she is now trying to get inside *his*, making him part of her, turning his-story (Rome) into her-story (Carthage).

**75: Sidoniasque ostentat opes urbemque paratam:** the first *-que* links *ducit* (74) and *ostentat*, the second *-que* *opes* and *urbem*. Virgil has arranged attributes and nouns chiasmically: (a) *Sidonias* (b) *opes* (b) *urbem* (a) *paratam*. The adjective *Sidonias* refers to Sidon, a city in Phoenicia; the phrase *Sidonias ... opes* harks back to 1.363–64 (Venus recounting Dido's flight): *portantur auaril Pygmalionis opes pelago; dux femina facti* ('the wealth of greedy Pygmalion is carried overseas, the leader of the deed a woman'). *opes* and *urbs* thus refer to Dido's past and future, and, together, are meant to extend a welcoming and inviting hand to Aeneas in what amounts to a sales-pitch: wealthy Carthage, so Dido implies, is ready (*paratam*) for him. Dido retains the same spirit of remarkable generosity (though now reinforced by amorous passion) that animated her invitation to the shipwrecked Trojans to stay, before she had even set eyes on Aeneas (1.572–73: *uultis et his mecum pariter considerare regnis? urbem quam statuo uestra est...* 'Or do you wish to settle with me on even terms within these realms? The city I build is yours...').

**76: incipit effari mediaque in uoce resistit:** the verse-design reflects and reinforces the meaning of individual words: we have *incipit* at the beginning; *media* in the middle; and *resistit* at the end—enactment at its finest. The asyndetic continuation of the main clauses with *incipit* conveys a sense of the mental effort Dido has to make to muster sufficient courage to address Aeneas, only to break off midway. Put differently, she acts like a tongue-tied teenager in love.

**78–79: Iliacosque iterum demens audire labores/ exposcit:** (a) *Iliacos* (b) *iterum* (c) *demens* (b) *audire* (a) *labores*—the symmetrical design and the vast hyperbaton *Iliacos ... labores*, together with the enjambment of *exposcit* and the caesura after it, helps to highlight Dido's insanity: out of her mind (*de-mens*, placed conspicuously at the very centre of the design), she asks for a repeat of *Aeneid* 2. (A reference to a re-run of Iliadic material also brings to mind the fact that Virgil, in the *Aeneid*, re-works Homer: 'The *Aeneid* makes us listen to the *Iliad* on re-wind, too, through all 12 books of re-run; and everything in the poem renews and tells otherwise another re-reading of the *Iliad*.)<sup>123</sup> In the light of the impact her obsession has on her own city, it is ironic but fitting that Dido prefers a re-run of the fall of

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123. Henderson, *per litteras*. He refers us to A. D'Angour, *The Greeks and the New: Novelty in Ancient Greek Imagination and Experience* (Cambridge, 2011), Ch. 1.

Troy to another account of Aeneas' travels (the subject of *Aeneid* 3). As lines 86–89 make clear, the *labores Carthaginienses* have ceased, while she listens on an endless loop to repetitions of Aeneas' *Iliad*. In the light of how Aeneas reacted to the first request to tell his tale (2.3: *Infandum, regina, iubes renouare dolorem*; 'O queen, you bid me to renew grief that is unspeakable') Dido is indeed *demens* to ask for a repeat if she wishes to endear herself to her host. Aeneas, however, seems to oblige willingly. (Here as elsewhere in the opening of Book 4, he leads a very shadowy existence in the narrative and hardly figures as an independent agent.)

**78–79: iterum audire – pendetque iterum:** the reiteration of *iterum* (in chiasitic variation with the verbs it modifies) is another instance of enactment: Virgil twice uses the word that signifies 'again'.

**79: pendetque ... narrantis ab ore:** English uses the same idiom: 'to hang on someone's lips'; *narrantis* is present active participle, modifying an understood genitive *Aeneae*, which depends on *ore*. A striking and compelling parallel is Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 1.36–7: *pascit amore auidos inhians in te, dea, uisus/ eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore* ('he [sc. Mars] pastures on love his greedy sight while gazing on you, goddess [sc. Venus], and the breath of him, as he is reclining, hangs from your lips').

**80–81: post ubi digressi, lumenque obscura uicissim/ luna premit suadentque cadentia sidera somnos:** a long 'atmospheric' *ubi*-sentence sets the scene before the focus returns to Dido. It is designed as a tricolon, with the two *-que* (after *lumen* and *suadent*) linking the three verbs: *digressi* [sc. *sunt*], *premit*, *suadent*. *obscura* is the result of the action (*lumen premere*: to dim the light). Line 81 is entirely dactylic, rushing everybody off to sleep—*somnos* is the telos of both the verse and the action it describes and the sense of falling asleep (or coming to the end of the hexameter) is deftly enacted by the soothing coincidence of word accent and ictus in the final three words, linked by *s*-alliteration (*suadentia, sidera, somnos*) and the fact that the rhythm slows down: the two syllables of the last word and foot (*somnos*) are both long. In the speedy opening part, the vowel piano in *cadentia sidera* (*a-e-i-a-e-a*) reflects the quickly falling stars and acts as foil to the heavy 'os' in *somnos*.<sup>124</sup> Virgil repeats *suadentque cadentia sidera somnos* verbatim from

124. See further Austin (1963), p. 47: 'Note the varied vowels, the repeated *s* sounds, the gentle assonance of "suadentque cadentia", ... The rhythm of 81 itself suggests sleep...

2.9, perhaps a bit tongue-in-cheek: there the words are uttered by Aeneas in the attempt to dissuade Dido from insisting on hearing the bitter tale, if to no avail; here the phrase occurs quite properly after the narration has come to an end—though sleep is of course the last thing on Dido’s mind after another evening of ‘sexy epic recitation’ by her beloved Aeneas.

**82–83: sola domo maeret uacua stratisque relictis/ incubat:** the *sola* marks an emphatic return to Dido (‘she alone’); *uacua* modifies *domo*. Dido throws herself onto the couch that Aeneas has just left and broods there, an action reflected in the enjambment of *incubat*, which takes the dative (*stratis relictis*). For a moment *stratis relictis* may look like an ablative absolute (‘after the couches have been emptied’, i.e. after everyone else has departed) before the first word of the subsequent line clarifies the construction. Dido’s practice of lying down on the couch recently abandoned by her beloved Aeneas is a poignant articulation of her yearning for his presence and for intimate, physical contact.

**83: illum absens absentem auditque uidetque:** the *-que* after *uidet* links *audit* and *uidet*; the *-que* after *audit* is technically speaking redundant.<sup>125</sup> The pleonastic polyptoton *absens absentem* constitutes a powerful and poignant paradox, which exposes as hallucination Dido’s sense that Aeneas remains present. Both circumstantial participles have concessive force: ‘Dido, even though she is physically distant from him (*absens*), hears and sees him (*illum*), even though he is physically distant (*absentem*).’ The verbs *audit* and *uidet* are arranged climactically: one may conceivably hear someone who is not physically present; but one certainly cannot see such a person, at least by means of ordinary sight. With the concluding *uidetque* we have firmly entered Dido’s fevered imagination.

**84–85: aut gremio Ascanium genitoris imagine capta/ definet:** the *aut* constitutes an abrupt temporal and chronological break, as the action described must refer to another (moment in the) day: it can certainly not refer to the evening in which she remains left behind alone. Most likely, the moment in the day when she cuddles with Ascanius is anyway not

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with no strong caesura, and the regular diminishing of the three final words.’

125. See Austin (1963), p. 48: ‘This use of double *-que* is a mannerism of high epic style, very common in Virgil, Lucan, and Statius; it is never found in classical prose. It goes back to Ennius, who took it over from Homer’s use of τε ... τε.’ Within the assigned passage, double *-que* also occurs at 94 (*tuque puerque tuus*) and 146 (*Cretesque Dryopesque*).

the evening: otherwise one would wonder about Aeneas' lack of parental supervision. Still, the image unsettles: Dido, *demens* as she is, is increasingly getting out of control. In metrical position and effect (in enjambment, caesura after first foot) *detinet* (85) mirrors *incubat* (82), underscoring the switch in focus—from Dido sleeplessly brooding on her bed to fondling Ascanius in her lap. The passage belongs into a sequence that begins at 1.717–22 and ends at 4.327–30.

**84: genitoris imagine capta:** *capta* is in the nominative modifying the subject of the sentence, i.e. Dido. The sense of the participle is causal—Dido cuddles Ascanius *because* he resembles his father. Beyond its literal meaning, the phrase *genitoris imago* resonates powerfully within the memorial culture of republican and early imperial Rome. *Imago*, or, in the plural, *imagines* were the wax masks of deceased former magistrates that hung in the *atria* of noble houses and were donned by actors during the funeral processions of deceased members of the family who had held public office. This was one of the most remarkable rituals of the Roman republic, designed to celebrate family-achievement and lineage.<sup>126</sup> Virgil may also obliquely hint at Lucretius' 'genetic' explanation of family-resemblance across generations in his account of sexual procreation in *De Rerum Natura* 4.1209–1230.

**85: infandum si fallere possit amorem:** the formulation recalls the opening words of Aeneas' narrative at 2.3–5: *Infandum, regina, iubes renouare dolorem,/ Troianas ut opes et lamentabile regnum/ eruerint Danaï...* ('Unspeakable grief, O queen, you order me renew, how the Greeks overthrew Troy's wealth and pitiable kingdom...'). Both the attribute *infandum* and the phrase *fallere amorem* raise tricky problems of interpretation. *infandum* is a term of disapproval a bit stronger than a literal translation with 'unmentionable' (Maclennan) or 'beyond all utterance' (Goold) would seem to suggest: something *infandum* is 'too horrible or shocking to speak of, unspeakable, monstrous, accursed' (*OLD s.v.*), and one therefore wonders about focalization: is it Dido who conceives of her *amor* as *infandus* (and why? should she?) or is this a comment on the part of the narrator, who here clarifies to his readers that Dido's inability to speak at line 76 (*incipit effari, mediaque in voce resistit*), which there refers simply to her nervousity in the presence of her beloved Aeneas, has a more troubling dimension: she is

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126. The second-century BC historiographer Polybius (a Greek hostage in Rome) gives an account of the ritual at 6.53–54. See further Flower (1996).

not just unable to speak, but unable to confess her love since (she knows/ wrongly feels that?) it is, literally, *unspeakably* monstrous. *fallere amorem* is Dido's futile response to exercise control over an *amor* that is *infandus*. What does *fallere* refer to here? At least three possible interpretations come to mind, depending on what precisely *fallere* and *amor* are taken to mean. MacLennan argues that Dido here tries to delude herself: '... in fondling Ascanius she wants to persuade herself that she is merely expressing maternal affection for her friend's child, which is something acceptable and mentionable.'<sup>127</sup> This downplays *amor* as an independent force, which O'Hara maintains when suggesting that 'Dido tries to cheat *her love* by displaying affection for his son Ascanius as a substitute for Aeneas.'<sup>128</sup> But in what way does Dido think she can deceive her love by cuddling Ascanius in her lap, especially since she is attracted to the child in the first place because of his strong resemblance to his father? Both the 'incubation' of Aeneas' couch and the cuddling of his son are, in the first instance, strategies of getting closer to the man himself. One could consider reading *amorem* with a capital A (*Amorem*), especially since the scene here strongly recalls 1.683–88 (part of Venus instructions to Cupid): *tu faciem illius noctem non amplius unam/ falle dolo, et notos pueri puer indue uultus,/ ut, cum te gremio accipiet laetissima Dido/.../cum dabit amplexus atque oscula dulcia figet,/ occultum inspires ignem fallasque ueneno* ('For only a single night impersonate in deceit his form and, boy that you are, don the familiar face of the boy, so that when Dido, exceedingly happy, receives you in her lap, gives you hugs and imprints sweet kisses, you may breathe into her a hidden fire and beguile her with poison'). It is as if Dido is keen on another dose of Love. Conversely, one could argue that the scene in Book 4 is an attempt to invert the deception: whereas in Book 1 Cupid/ Amor impersonates Ascanius to push Dido towards Aeneas, in Book 4, Dido tries (of course unsuccessfully) to cheat Amor by channeling her affection away from Aeneas towards Ascanius. If that seems too contrived, one could understand *fallere* in the sense of 'to conceal the nature of, to disguise': rather than referring to Dido's attempt to deceive herself or her love, the clause would then refer to her attempt to displace her (seemingly compulsive) 'public display of affection' onto the boy to keep her true passion a secret.<sup>129</sup>

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127. MacLennan (2007), p. 87.

128. O'Hara (2011), p. 30.

129. The other passage to bear in mind here is 4.296: *quis fallere possit amantem?*

**86–89:** *non coeptae adsurgunt turres, non arma iuuentus/ exercet portusue aut propugnacula bello/ tuta parant: pendent opera interrupta minaeque/ murorum ingentes aequataque machina caelo*: Virgil describes the disastrous effects of Dido in love on her city-building project, emphasized by the anaphora of *non* (italicized), in two tricola, one consisting of verbs, the other of nouns: (a) *adsurgunt turres—iuuentus exercet—parant* (note the switches in subject; the third is only implied, i.e. the anonymous collective – hence the switch to plural – of Carthage’s citizens); (b) *opera—minae—machina* (all ‘hanging’ on *pendent*). *non ... adsurgunt* in particular underscores the neglect, given that it harks back to 1.437 when Aeneas, upon seeing the building-site, exclaims: *o fortunati, quorum iam moenia surgunt!* (‘O the happy ones, whose walls are already rising!’) The *iam* makes it clear that Aeneas thinks comparatively – Carthage’s walls are *already* rising, the walls of his own city (cf. 1.7: *altae moenia Romae*) not yet. Especially with this line resonating here, the passage subtly intimates that two sets of walls have ceased to make progress: the future of both cities, Carthage *and* Rome, lies forgotten. With *coeptae turres, portus aut propugnacula ... tuta, opera interrupta, minae murorum ingentes*, and *aequata machina caelo* Virgil uses grandiose images to convey both, the vast scale of the building project and a sense of its unfinished state. The emphasis is almost exclusively on the development of the cityscape (including the harbour and fortification) rather than the civic community, with the exception of *non arma iuuentus/ exercet*.<sup>130</sup>

**87: portusue:** the *-ue* links *non ... exercet* and *parant*.

**88: pendent opera interrupta:** in ironic analogy to 79, where Dido hangs (*pendet*) on the lips of Aeneas narrating, the building works now ‘hang’ – in the sense of: ‘are suspended’ – as well.

**88–89: minae murorum ingentes:** a contorted way of saying ‘walls (*muri*) that are huge (*ingentes*) and menacing (*minaces*).’ Virgil has chosen to turn one of the attributes (*minax*) into a noun (*minae*), quaintly modified by the second attribute (*ingens*) that in sense goes with *muri*: ‘the huge threats of walls.’ Why? One possible answer could be that *minae*, inevitably, invokes the future (threats are inherently prospective) and hence draws attention

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130. The wording also recalls Laocoon’s assessment of the wooden horse at 2.46: *haec in nostros fabricata est machina muros* (‘this has been built as a war-machine against our walls’).



to the *incomplete* state of the building works. The *m*-alliteration in *minae murorum* is continued by *machina*.

**89: *aequataque machina caelo*:** *caelo* serves as pointer to where the narrative will continue at 90.

## 90–128: Love and Marriage, or: A Match Made in Heaven

After a day-by-day, even hour-by-hour unfolding of events in Books 1–4.53, narrative time has started to drift a little after Anna’s speech. The conversation between the two sisters took place ‘the morning after’ Aeneas’ arrival and first narration of his adventures during the welcome festivities. But from then on, it is difficult to keep track of how many days have been passing by. Going by the (imprecise) temporal markers in 63 (*instauratque diem donis*) and 82–85, it is just about possible to cram the action of *Aeneid* 4.1–89 into three days:

Day 1: conversation between Anna and Dido; initial sacrifices

Day 2: renewal of sacrifices; raging through the city; sightseeing with Aeneas; second evening banquet; Dido being left behind alone

Day 3: cuddling time with Ascanius

But that does not account for the atmosphere of indefinite drift that Virgil has created. In particular, the comment on the abandoned building works in 86–89 that concludes this section, implies that more time has elapsed than a three-day period. Still, it is important to bear in mind that Aeneas both arrives and departs during the same non-sailing season. What has he been up to while we learn about Dido in love? We only get glimpses of him, in very passive roles: in 74, he is the accusative object (*Aenean*), whom Dido leads through the city; in 79 he is ‘he, who narrates’ at the behest of Dido; and in 83 he is ‘absent’ (*illum ... absentem*). It is almost as if Virgil gives his protagonist a break, after three full books in the narrative limelight. (Homer, too, has long stretches in which Achilles and Odysseus all but disappear from view.) Still, developments have reached something of an impasse, and in such situations the epic poet has at his disposal a reliable source of new narrative stimuli: the gods. The action now shifts back to the divine plane, with Juno, the goddess of

conjugal bonds, (who has faded from the narrative after derailing the fleet of Aeneas at the very beginning of the epic) accosting and confronting Venus, the goddess of erotic passion. The two scheming divinities, one more deceitful than the other, engage in a battle of wits. Each one walks away in the belief to have fooled the other. Only Venus, of course, is right: whereas Juno dominates the conversation (she gets two speeches), the goddess of love knows that she will emerge victoriously in the end. She has, after all, been briefed in the workings of destiny by none other than Jupiter (see *Aeneid* 1.223-96) and uses this privileged insight into the plot to play cat and mouse with Dido and her divine patron Juno. Here is the section in outline:

- 90–92: Juno seeks out Venus
- 93–104: Juno’s first speech
- 105–07a: Venus’ hidden thoughts (1)
- 107b–114a: Venus’ response
- 114b–127a: Juno’s second speech
- 127b–128: Venus hidden thoughts (2)

Hera/ Juno soliciting the help of Aphrodite/ Venus has an epic history, starting with *Iliad* 14, the famous ‘Deception of Zeus’, where Hera uses the girdle of Aphrodite to seduce her husband into some truly extraordinary sex, so as to use his post-coital slumber to meddle in the Trojan war against his will.

[*Extra information*: the most salient model for this encounter between Juno (the goddess of marriage) and Venus (the goddess of love and erotic desire) is Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 3.49–111, which features a conversation between Hera (the Greek equivalent of Juno), Athena, and Aphrodite (the Greek equivalent of Venus). The parallels, set out by Nelis and Hall, are as follows:<sup>131</sup>

- 1 The opening gambit includes a sarcastic comment: compare *Aeneid* 4.93–95 (Juno speaking) with *Argonautica* 3.51–54 (Aphrodite speaking, slyly hailing Hera and Athena as goddesses who ‘excel all others’ — a malicious if veiled allusion to the judgement of Paris).

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131. For discussion of this relationship see Nelis (2001), p. 147 and Hall (2011), pp. 624–27. Hall argues for the presence of a hitherto underappreciated allusion to Sappho in the passage. More generally, Feeney (1991) is indispensable for any scene in the *Aeneid* that involves the gods.

- 2 Juno/Hera explains the situation: compare *Aeneid* 4.96–104 with *Argonautica* 3.57–75.
- 3 Venus/ Aphrodite yields to the higher authority of Juno/ Hera: compare *Aeneid* 4.107–14 with *Argonautica* 3.79–82.
- 4 Juno/ Hera suggests a plan to which Venus/ Aphrodite agrees: compare *Aeneid* 4.115–28 with *Argonautica* 3.84–110. Ironically, in Apollonius, this plan consists in Aphrodite calling upon Eros to enchant Medea with desire for Jason – exactly what Venus, in Virgil, then does also to Dido, much to the displeasure of Juno. Viewed intertextually, Venus clearly has learned a trick or two from past encounters with the queen of the gods.

The passage from Apollonius contains further material not included in Virgil's rewrite (notably a complaint by Aphrodite that her son Eros is unruly). And, of course, in Virgil the power relation is inverted: in Apollonius, Hera and Athena are in charge and Aphrodite does their bidding (see esp. 3.100); in Virgil, Venus pulls the strings and is secretly in charge (see esp. 4.128). This manifests itself not least in a slippage in plot: in Apollonius, Hera first engineers Medea's infatuation with Jason with the help of Aphrodite and Eros and then orchestrates a proper wedding when the need arises (in *Argonautica* 4, discussed below). But when Juno approaches Venus in Virgil, the erotic assault on the heroine is already a *fait accompli*: in the *Aeneid*, Venus is a step ahead in the divine power struggle. In intertextual terms, then, it is payback time: this is *not* the *Argonautica*, where Aphrodite stands for sex and little else; this is the *Aeneid*, where Venus, apart from sex and erotic attraction, also figures as the mother of the founding-hero of the Roman people, as the daughter of Jupiter, as mistress of fate.]

**90–92: *Quam simul ac tali persensit peste teneri/ cara Iouis coniunx nec famam obstare furori/ talibus adgreditur Venerem Saturnia dictis***: a difficult set of verses, with untidy word-order, possibly reflecting Juno's flustered state of mind:

- (a) The basic structure is a subordinate clause introduced by *simul ac* ('as soon as') with *cara Iouis coniunx* (91) as subject and *persensit* (90) as verb, followed by the main clause in 92 (with *Saturnia* as subject and *adgreditur* as verb).
- (b) Within the *simul-ac*-clause, *persensit* introduces an indirect statement that falls into two parts linked by *nec. quam* and *famam* are the subject accusatives, *teneri* and *obstare* the infinitives.
- (c) *Quam*, the subject accusative of the first part of the indirect statement introduced by *persensit*, is a connecting relative pronoun (= *eam*): the referent is Dido.

**90: tali persensit peste teneri:** note the alliterative pattern *ta-, pe-, pe-, te-teneri*, which shares its first syllable with the last syllable of the preceding word (*peste*) and rhymes with *tali* (*tali—teneri*) thus relates on the sound level to the paraphrase of the force that is doing the holding. In the light of our discussion of time, the *per-* in *persensit* is important: it underscores that it dawns on Juno *gradually* what is going on and as soon as (*simul ac*) she has become fully conscious of the dirty trick Venus and her son have been playing on Dido, she takes action. *pestis* is a very strong term: it signifies a fatal disease of epidemic proportions, but can also refer by way of personification to a baneful individual (Cicero uses it of Catiline, for instance) or ruin and destruction more generally. Here it refers either to Dido's love-sickness or Cupid (whom Juno calls *magnum et memorabile numen* a few lines later) or both. The wording recalls 1.712 where the phrase *pesti deuota futurae* ('doomed to impending ruin'), in apposition to *infelix* no less, turns Dido metaphorically into a sacrificial victim about to be slaughtered—just before she unwittingly embraces Cupid disguised as Ascanius. Henderson, *per litteras*, proposes Catullus 76.20 as salient model: *eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi!* ('Get me rid of this pernicious pest!').

**91: famam obstare furori:** iconic word order in which *fama* (Dido's sense of her reputation, or, indeed, the reputation she has hitherto enjoyed in the historiographical accounts) stands in the way of (*obstare*) *furor* (the insane passion that she suffers from *in Virgil*): the two nouns of the antithesis, kept apart from each other by *obstare* (which thereby enacts its meaning) are linked by alliteration.

**91–92: cara Iouis coniunx ... Saturnia:** Juno has been absent from the narrative for a while, and upon her re-entry Virgil goes out of his way to stress her important position within the Olympic pantheon: she is the wife of Jupiter and the offspring of Saturn. Both her marriage to the ruler of gods and men and her ancient lineage mark her as Venus' superior in the divine hierarchy, but Venus manages to counterbalance inferior power and prestige with superior knowledge and potential for mischief.

**92: talibus adgreditur Venerem Saturnia dictis:** another symmetrical line, with *talibus* modifying *dictis*, and the verb *adgreditur* correlating with the subject *Saturnia*. This places *Venerem*, the accusative object of *adgreditur*, smack in the middle, reproducing on the level of verse design the scenario

of Venus being ‘cornered’ by Juno, but also emphasizing her central role in what is unfolding on the level of plot: despite the fact that she is in the ‘oblique’ accusative and Juno holds, from a grammatical point of view, the subject position, Venus is clearly pulling the strings here.

## 93–104: Juno’s first speech

Juno’s first speech falls into two halves of 6 lines each: **93–98** comprise a disapproving commentary on what Venus has been up to; **99–104** follow this up with a proposal of peace and alliance.

**93–95: egregiam uero laudem et spolia ampla refertis/ tuque puerque tuus (magnum et memorabile numen),/ una dolo diuum si femina uicta duorum est:** Juno chisels her opening, a conditional sequence, into the air with meticulous deliberation and emphasis, verse by self-standing verse: 93 contains the main clause (apodosis); 94 contains a magnificent elaboration of the subject implied in *refertis*; 95 contains the *si*-clause (protasis). Some editors, however, (including Conington and Pease) prefer to read *nomen* instead of *numen* and to punctuate differently:

egregiam uero laudem et spolia ampla refertis  
tuque puerque tuus; magnum et memorabile **nomen**,  
una dolo diuum si femina uicta duorum est.

We would then be dealing with two sentences roughly equal in length: the first, consisting of a main clause only, comes to an end after *tuus*; and *magnum et memorabile nomen* (with the verb *erit* understood) becomes the apodosis of the conditional sequence (‘it will be a great and memorable exercise of divine power, that...’). Which reading do you prefer and why?

**93: egregiam uero laudem et spolia ampla refertis:** *refertis* is the 2nd person plural present indicative active of *refero*. Its accusative object is presented chiastically: adjective (*egregiam*), noun (*laudem*), noun (*spolia*), adjective (*ampla*). The entire phrase, but in particular the attributes, are dripping with sarcasm, as Juno uses technical language to refer to the success of Venus’ limey plot: *laus* at Rome is primarily associated with excellence in the public sphere, *spolia* are ‘the spoils of (military) victory’, and *referre* is a standard verb used to describe the return of a triumphant general. This sarcastic praise for a conquest that could not have been easier to achieve may deliberately recall *Iliad* 5, where Aphrodite saves Aeneas from Diomedes,

though not without being wounded in the process, leading to much lament. 'Juno's mocking description of Venus' psychological conquest of Dido in martial terms thus not only insults Venus for directing her powers against an overmatched opponent but also reminds her of her earlier failure on the literal battlefield.'<sup>132</sup> And, as John Henderson points out, *per litteras*, 'it also reminds us that all this typologically prefigures the Roman obliteration of Carthaginian Carthage (before the Julian and Augustan re-foundation as Roman Carthage). This love tragedy soups and serves up superpower struggle on the world stage: but in Virgil's hands, the rights and wrongs are inextricably tangled beyond chauvinist simplification from the start. Juno isn't wrong, then—especially in claiming that this (first third of *arma uirumque*) is a sordid story out of keeping with epic decorum, a lapse into Hellenistic romance and the theatre of boudoir persecution of the femme fatale. What a mess the *Aeneid* is making of getting from Troy to Rome—wrong continent, wrong genre... correct: it's an *ordeal*.'

**94: tuque puerque tuus (magnum et memorabile numen):** Juno does not give her rival a lot of verse-space; after the monosyllabic *tu* at the outset, she devotes the rest of the line to an appreciation of Cupid. He may be Venus' boy, but proves to be a divinity of extraordinary and 'numinous' power (*magnum numen*). *Numen* stresses the efficaciousness of divine power; it can either denote a divinity in its own right (as here: in Juno's phrasing, Cupid is a *numen*) or refer to the ability of gods to influence events or indeed govern the entire cosmos. Later on in our passage, Mercury will refer to Jupiter as *deum...regnator, caelum et terras qui numine torquet* (4.268–69). *Numen* is a key concept in the religious infrastructure of Virgil's epic more generally, from the proem onwards. Indeed, Juno's words here specifically recall Virgil's famous address to, and questioning of, the Muse at 1.8–11: *Musa, mihi causas memora, quo numine laeso/ quidue dolens regina deum tot uoluerit casus/ insignem pietate uirum, tot adire labores/ impulerit* ('Tell me, o Muse, the reasons, wherein thwarted in will or why angered, did the queen of the gods drive a man outstanding in piety, to traverse so many perils, to undergo so many toils?'). Ironically, Juno, who was the object of theological commentary by Virgil in the proem, has now turned into the commentator: she grudgingly concedes that Cupid has usurped what ought to be her narrative. Whereas Virgil is asking the Muse to recount the

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132. Hall (2011), p. 625.

memorable reasons for Juno's hostility towards Aeneas (1.8: *memora*), Juno here recognizes that what Cupid did to Dido is at least as memorable (cf. *memorable*). There is also the additional irony that the issue of theodicy, which Virgil raises in the proem (the implication of his question to the Muse is that Juno's actions are not just, given Aeneas' outstanding *pietas*), here recurs in a slightly different key, insofar as it registers negatively. Juno does not seem interested in justice at all. For her, this is a matter of power and the pursuit of selfish interests. She does not remonstrate with Venus that Dido suffers unfairly. Rather, she mocks her counterpart for a cheap victory. The difference between the human and the divine perspective is telling: mortals have much at stake in the justice of the gods; the gods themselves, however, arguably nothing.

**95: *una dolo diuum si femina uicta duorum est*:** The protasis of the explanatory *si*-clause here comes after the apodosis (*refertis*). Juno points out that Dido never had a chance, whether in terms of ontology and gender (a mortal *femina* vs. immortal *diui*) or number (two against one: Virgil stresses the contrast by placing *una* and *duorum* at either end of the verse). As Conington observes: 'The words are chosen so as to be as sarcastic as possible; the triumph is of two over one, of gods over a mortal, and that not even a man but a woman.'<sup>133</sup> Austin notes the intricate, antithetical design: '*una* contrasted with *duorum*, *dolo* paired with *victa* and completing its sense, *diuum* contrasted with *femina*.'<sup>134</sup> The phrase *dolo diuum ... duorum* (an ablative of means) is nicely held together by alliteration and homoioteleuton of the genitive phrase (*-um*), though *duorum* elides with *est*.

**96–97: *nec me adeo fallit ueritam te moenia nostra/ suspectas habuisse domos Karthaginis altae*:** *fallit* (impersonal, to be construed with *me*: 'It does not escape me...') introduces an indirect statement, with *te* as subject accusative and *habuisse* as infinitive; *domos* (with *suspectas* in predicative position: 'in suspicion') is the accusative object of *habuisse*. *ueritam* is a circumstantial participle agreeing with *te* (you, in fear of...), taking *moenia nostra* as accusative object. With the phrasing *moenia nostra ... domos Karthaginis altae* Juno co-opts for Carthage what Virgil, in the proem, marked out as the destiny of Rome: the telos of Aeneas' efforts (even though he doesn't build them himself) are the *altae moenia Romae* at 1.7

133. Conington (1884), p. 148.

134. Austin (1963), p. 51.

(‘the walls of high Rome’). In both passages, we are dealing with a so-called transferred epithet: the attribute *altus* would go more naturally with another noun (*moenia* or *domos*) than the one it modifies grammatically (*Romae* or *Karthaginis*), though the transference invites us to think of, literally, ‘high walls’ and of, figuratively, ‘exalted Rome or Carthage.’ It is a nice touch that in the formulation Juno here ‘pinches’ from Virgil, the transference does not work so well: ‘high’ is much better suited as an attribute of ‘walls’ than of ‘homes’. Juno’s Carthage thus emerges as an inferior alternative, a perverse rival to Rome also on the stylistic level. That Juno mentions *moenia* (modified by the proud-possessive-protective *nostra*) in the same breath arguably highlights her rhetorical gaffe. But we may pardon the goddess for not being in top form, given her state of emotional distress: after all, the fear of Carthage she here projects onto Venus (*ueritam te...*), she herself suffers from because of Rome (cf. 1.23: *id metuens* [sc. *Iuno*], with *id* referring to the future destruction of Carthage by the Romans).

**98: *sed quis erit modus, aut quo nunc certamine tanto?*** Juno has reached the mid point of her speech; after her sarcastic opening and confrontational ‘the game’s up: I know what this is all about’, she changes tack. In a more conciliatory vein, she begins to question the point and purpose of the scheming, enquiring into the limit of what she considers an excessive use of divine force. She then poses, in a sentence that fittingly lacks a verb such as *tendimus*, the open-ended question what all that strife and meddling is supposed to achieve: ‘whither (*quo*) now [do we go from here] in this rivalry (*certamine tanto*)?’ These are good questions, as Juno here picks up on a potential flaw in Venus’ machinations: what precisely is Venus trying to achieve by driving Dido into erotic insanity? Yes, ensuring a friendly welcome for Aeneas was important; but one would have thought that Venus’ ultimate goal (getting Rome underway) would have been better served by a more reserved type of hospitality so that Aeneas and his men could be back on their way to Italy soon. As it turns out, the reduction of Dido to a state of hopeless passion is now derailing the founding of two great cities: Carthage and Rome. Juno, for her own selfish interests to be sure, tries to offer a way out of the deadlock. (More generally speaking, Venus has seemingly gained very little from unleashing the powers of her son to the fullest extent or even caused significant damage: not only has she further delayed Aeneas on his travels; the tragic break-up and ensuing hatred, resulting in a vicious curse further empowered by Dido’s suicide, cause



much suffering for Aeneas and Rome in the future. She of course knows, after her consultation with Jupiter, that matters will turn out well in the end: *imperium sine fine* and all that. But in the form of Hannibal especially, Dido's wrath will continue to haunt her Romans, almost bringing them to their knees.)

**99–100: quin potius pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos/ exercemus?:**

Juno concludes the first half of her speech with an open-ended question, suggesting to Venus how immoderate and pointless her attack on Dido has been so far (see above on 98); and she opens up the second half of her speech with a concrete proposal, which she casts as a question—though note that *quin* ('why don't we...?') introduces questions 'equivalent to commands or exhortations': OLD s.v. A1. Juno wraps her offer to Venus in impressive rhetoric: *pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos* is chiasmic in terms of grammar (noun: adjective; adjective: noun). Further links between the two phrases include a *figura etymologica* reinforced by alliteration in *pacem* ~ *pactos* (which comes from *paciscor*, 'to negotiate, agree on, settle') and the assonance *ae-*, *-nae-* in *aeternam* and *hymenaeos*.

**100–101: habes tota quod mente petisti:/ ardet amans Dido traxitque per**

**ossa furorem:** *petisti* = *petiisti*. Juno pretends that Venus' scheming does not extend beyond making Dido fall madly in love with Aeneas and that she therefore has achieved everything she ever desired. (Cf. *tota ... mente*; the placement of *tota* outside the relative clause into which it belongs emphasizes the comprehensive wish-fulfillment that Juno, in an act of strategic incomprehension, projects onto Venus.) *per ossa* harks back to both *uenis* (4.2) and, especially, *medullas* (4.66). Note the *husteron proteron* in line 101: Juno first foregrounds that Dido is 'on fire' with love (cf. *ardet* in the exposed front position), before stating the cause: she has drawn in the insane passion through her bones.

**102–103: communem hunc ergo populum paribusque regamus/ auspiciis:**

*regamus* is an exhortative subjunctive ('let us rule'). the *-que* links *communem* (in the predicative position, modifying *populum*) and *paribus auspiciis*. The two phrases indicate how Juno intends to rule with Venus, namely 'together and sharing power equally', with *communem* identifying the basic principle ('jointly') and *paribus auspiciis* specifying the precise terms ('equally'). What looks like a generous proposal is in fact both insidious (*communem*) and

deeply problematic in terms of practical arrangement (*paribus auspiciis*). The Scholia Danielis (cited by Pease<sup>135</sup>) put the finger on the problem by asking whether *communem* means that Juno offers Venus joint rule of her city Carthage or that Tyrians and Trojans will have merged into one *populus*. The former of course all but implies the latter: a joint rule of the two goddesses will ultimately result in a joint people. Juno never spells this out (she only mentions marriage of their two princely and principal charges), but in effect she here suggests for Carthage what has been pre-scripted for Italy: the ethnic merging of the Trojan refugees with the indigenous population. In other words, she here again plots to derail *fatum* and the founding of Rome. *paribus auspiciis* too is far from unproblematic. *Auspicium* is, in the first instance, 'the practice of augury from the behaviour of birds' or 'information about the future gleaned from the behaviour of birds', but also refers more generally to the legitimate power invested in a Roman general: 'the commander-in-chief alone had authority to take the *auspicia*, in virtue of his *imperium*, and so the *auspicia* could themselves be regarded as a symbol of *imperium*.'<sup>136</sup> There is considerable humour in the fact that Juno, a goddess, uses a technical term of Rome's civic religion that refers to a practice designed to figure out the will of the gods. Taken literally, with *paribus auspiciis* Juno proposes that each goddess has to consult the other on anything before taking any action and that the opinion of each has exactly equal weight. It is an interesting question of how they would have worked this in practice. Rome's political culture was quite good at sharing power: for instance, when both consuls were together on campaign, the right to take auspices (and decide on a course of action) alternated between them on a daily basis. But this sort of collegial arrangement is fraught with problems and can break down easily (Eteocles and Polynices also initially agreed to rule in alternating years: we all know what happened at the moment the regime was supposed to change hands for the first time), and one wonders whether it would have been practicable here. In Augustan Rome, especially, after a century of civil bloodshed had proven the difficulty of sharing power, the mode of government that Juno evokes with *communem* and *paribus auspiciis* would probably have been deemed doomed to failure. 'Yet this fake deal also test runs the solution for Rome—Italia in the *Aeneid*'s finale AND the way that models of mutual

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135. Pease (1935), p. 167.

136. Austin (1963), pp. 53–54.

treaty and partial/ phased/ wholesale incorporation developed within Italy in history; in Virgil's day, the challenge was how to project civil relations out to communities outside Italy (such as Roman Carthage). Juno wouldn't be the only one fudging and manoeuvring over this politics, in Rome or in other centres. No doubt you have to get past hate to make any of it work; one way to do that is to agree to treat the past and its conflicts as tragedy, as miscommunication, as cock-up' (Henderson, *per litteras*).

**103–104: liceat Phrygio seruire marito/ dotalisque tuae Tyrios permittere dextrae:** Dido, the subject of *liceat* ('let her/ may she...'), is otherwise effaced; the *-que* links *seruire* and *permittere*; *dotalis* (in predicative position) continues the idea of *marito* and modifies *Tyrios*—'to hand over the Tyrians to your right hand as dowry.' Juno here introduces the human analogue to the divine power-sharing she proposed previously: the linking of Dido and Aeneas in wedlock. She seems here to assume that the purpose of Venus' intervention was to have Dido fall in love with Aeneas to get them married and now playacts as if she is willing to go along with the plan—however bitter it may be. When she utters the phrase *Phrygio seruire marito* she is best imagined as spitting in disgust: *her* queen (*regina*) and leader (*dux*), and thus also herself, enslaved—and to an effeminate, 'slavish' Phrygian on top! (Given that 'Phrygian' is a stock Roman term for 'slave', Juno phrases her irritation by means of a striking paradox: I am willing, she says, to enslave my Dido to a slave.)<sup>137</sup> But the show of contempt, apart from being presumably genuine, also has a rhetorical point: Juno hams it up to show how much she is (apparently) yielding.

## 105–114: Venus' reply

105–107 contain some authorial comments on what Venus is thinking. Her speech falls into three parts:

107–109: a conciliatory opening which, however, already introduces a touch of reservation in the *si*-clause.

110–112: explicit articulation of doubts: Jupiter may not be willing to go along with Juno's proposal.

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137. I owe this point to John Henderson, *per litteras*.

113–114: exhortation to Juno that it is her responsibility to solve that problem; reiteration of her willingness to go along with Juno’s plan.

It is noteworthy that Venus here brings into play two categories that go right to the heart of Virgil’s theology of history and how his characters position themselves and their experiences within a wider, temporal horizon: *fortuna* (109) and *fata* (112). Dido conceives of herself as a figure under the sway of fickle fortune (see esp. 1.628–29, with its striking reminiscences of the proem: *me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores/ iactatam hac demum uoluit consistere terra* ‘Me, too, has a like fortune driven through many toils, and willed to find rest at last in this land’), whereas Aeneas is of course a figure of fate. As Quint has pointed out, the *Aeneid* tends to associate the losers of history with *fortuna* and the winners with *fatum*; but in aesthetic terms the tragic figures of fortune arguably prevail over the characters who carry destiny on their shoulders: ‘Fortune denotes short-term contingency as opposed to the historical long run that is Fate. History’s losers only have the short term and must make the most of it. Their fortunes become personalized, allowing for the assertion of selfhood and the willfulness that make Dido and Turnus the most vivid characters in the poem.’<sup>138</sup>

[*Extra information*: Some of the formulations in this passage recall the encounter between Hera and Aphrodite (the Greek counterparts of Juno and Venus) in *Iliad* 14, where Hera approaches Aphrodite to borrow her girdle of erotic desire so she can lull her husband into a post-coital slumber in order to abet the Greeks. (Since Aphrodite of course favours the Trojans, Hera tells her a cock-and-bull story about needing the girdle to reconcile the estranged couple of Oceanus and Tethys.) Venus’ references to *factum*, *fortuna*, and *fata* are similar to her musings on fate and wish-fulfilment at *Iliad* 14.194–96:

Ἥρη πρέσβα θεὰ θύγατερ μεγάλοιο Κρόνοιου  
αὔδα ὅ τι φρονέεις· τελέσαι δέ με θυμὸς ἄνωγεν,  
εἰ δύναμαι τελέσαι γε καὶ εἰ τετελεσμένον ἔστίν.

‘Hera, reverent goddess, daughter of great Cronos, speak what is on your mind; the heart bids me to **fulfil** it, if **fulfil** it I can, and if it is something that has **fulfilment**.’

*telos*, which means ‘end’, ‘purpose’, or ‘final cause’ (from which comes teleology), is a Greek equivalent to *fatum*. After Hera has taken up this invitation to speak and has voiced her request, Aphrodite replies in language that has affinities with Venus’

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138. Quint (1993), p. 93.

conciliatory opening gambit at *Aeneid* 4.107–09 as well as her subsequent point that Juno is Jupiter’s husband and ought to put the case to him. See *Iliad* 14.211–13:

Τὴν δ’ αὖτε προσέειπε φιλομειδῆς Ἀφροδίτη·  
οὐκ ἔστ’ οὐδὲ ἔοικε τεὸν ἔπος ἀρνήσασθαι·  
Ζηνὸς γὰρ τοῦ ἀρίστου ἐν ἀγκοίνῃσιν ἰαύεις.

Laughter-loving Aphrodite answered her: it is not to be nor is it seemly that I say no to your speech; for you sleep in the arms of Zeus the mightiest.

Bear in mind Aphrodite’s ornamental epithet ‘laughter-loving’ (φιλομειδῆς). She will do it justice in Virgil at 128 below; and unlike in Homer, she is not to be deceived.]

**105–107: Olli (sensit enim simulata mente locutam,/ quo regnum Italiae Libycas auerteret oras)/ sic contra est ingressa Venus:** *olli* is an archaic form of *illi*, which Virgil had already used of Venus addressed by Jupiter at 1.254 (*olli subridens hominum sator atque deorum...*): ‘We are reminded of that conversation about the Roman future, as Venus conceals from Juno the knowledge that she has learned from it’.<sup>139</sup> Virgil may have opted for these archaizing touches to suggest divine gravity. *sensit* introduces an indirect statement; the subject accusative (*eam*, sc. Juno) is elided, just like the *esse* that completes *locutam*. *quo* introduces a purpose clause (‘in order to’). The subject of *auerteret* is Juno; in prose, the accusative of direction *Libycas oras* would normally have taken the preposition *ad*. The chiasmic design of *regnum Italiae Libycas oras* stylistically underscores the intended redirection, with the two geographical markers juxtaposed in the centre and Italy yielding to Libya (note the homoioteleuton *-cas, -ras*).

**107–109: ‘quis talia demens/ abnuat aut tecum malit contendere bello,/ si modo quod memoras factum fortuna sequatur?:** *talia* refers to the terms that Juno is offering. *abnuat* and *malit* are present subjunctives. Since *Iliad* 1, nodding (*ab-nuat*) is a trademarked way of Olympian divinities to signal assent (or as here dissent) from above. See also 1.250 (Venus addressing Jupiter): *nos, tua progenies, caeli quibus adnuis arcem...* (‘but we, your offspring, to whom you grant the citadel of heaven...’). After Juno’s second speech, Venus indeed *adnuat* (128). When Venus asks *quis ... demens* (‘who is so insane as to...’) a wry smile may well play around her lips given that Dido has just been diagnosed as *demens* (78). *bello* picks up Juno’s

139. O’Hara (2011), p. 32.

*certamine tanto* (98), but drops any hint of euphemism: Venus recognizes that she must choose between Juno's proposal or outright warfare. The way she wriggles out of this dilemma is deft indeed: the rhetorical question introduced by *quis* implies the negative answer ('no-one is so mad as to pick a fight with you, Juno') that Juno wants to hear, but Venus instantly if surreptitiously qualifies her apparent consent by adding a *si*-clause (*si modo = utinam*: 'if only'), in which she feigns concern that fortune, despite her hopes, may not favour the course of action (*factum*) that Juno has in mind (*quod memoras*). *factum*, the 'antecedent' of *quod*, is placed after the relative clause, generating an ironic juxtaposition, reinforced by alliteration, of *factum* and *fortuna*: by itself *factum*, the perfect participle of *facere*, signifies a deed or action that has already happened ('a fact'), but together with the preceding relative clause it refers to a 'planned action', i.e. something in the future. And while in other contexts divinities operate on the principle of *dictum factum* ('no sooner said than done'), here Venus reminds Juno that *in principle* the future is contingent insofar as it requires the smile of fickle *fortuna* to actually come about—'in principle', since she by now knows full well that the future of Rome is no longer up for negotiation, but pre-scripted, and hence, in its essentials, removed from the realm of fortune. In other words, Venus knows very well that what Juno here plans will never become a *factum*. To some degree Virgil, the retrospective prophet, has eliminated contingency from his literary universe, tracing a story that is in outline historically predetermined—which in this case means that Juno will not be able to shape history the way she wants. With her maliciously double-layered and disingenuous gesture to *fortuna*, Venus reminds Juno that the successful execution of her scheme is not entirely up to them, but also secretly mocks her antagonist in the full knowledge that her scheming will be in vain.

**110: *sed fatis incerta feror si...***: as Pease notes 'the grammatical construction of *fatis* is hard to explain.'<sup>140</sup> One possibility is to take *fatis* with *feror* (note the alliteration), i.e. 'I am carried along by the fates' (giving Juno the impression that she bows to the destiny her counterpart has determined), with *incerta* (perhaps to be understood in a concessive sense) setting up the *si*-clause, i.e. '(even though) uncertain, whether...' One could, perhaps, also take *fatis* with *incerta*: 'uncertain of the fates, I am carried along (by

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140. Pease (1935), p. 171.

your proposal, not knowing) whether...’—although ‘we lack other cases of such an ablative dependent upon *incertus*, our nearest analogy perhaps being the ablative with *callidus* and *peritus*’.<sup>141</sup> It is maybe best to take *fatis* with the entire phrase *incerta feror*, in the sense of ‘as someone ignorant of destiny I am carried along by it.’ The syntactical ambiguity involving *fatis* (which is in itself an irony to savour: grammatical indeterminacy around a concept that signifies predetermination) is thematically fitting: Venus is trying to be evasive, and well she might. That she is carried along by the fates is true enough (who isn’t), but that she is ignorant of either the fates or Jupiter’s will is a bald-faced lie: in *Aeneid* 1, she visited Jupiter who assured her that the *fata* would remain unmoved. See esp. 257–58 (Jupiter speaking): ‘*parce metu, Cytherea: manent immota tuorum/ fata tibi...*’ (‘Spare your fears, Lady of Cythera; the fates of your kin remain unmoved...’). What is more, he also revealed that even Juno would eventually come round to favouring her ‘race’ (*gens*): see 1.279–82. To be knowledgeable of the future sure is a nice position to be in: here, her superior insight into the *fata* enables Venus to be simultaneously smug and coy.

**110–112: si Iuppiter unam/ esse uelit Tyriis urbem Troiaque profectis,/ misceriue probet populos aut foedera iungi:** the *-que* after *Troia* links *Tyriis* and (*Troia*) *profectis* (‘those, who have departed from Troy’) the *-ue* after *misceriue* links *uelit* and *probet*, the *aut* coordinates *misceri* and *iungi*. The binary phrasing (*Tyriis & Troia profectis; uelit & probet; misceri & iungi*) and the different types of connectives (*-que, -ue, aut*) mirrors on the formal level both the theme of the *si*-clause (the potential merger of Tyrians and Trojans) and Venus’ simulated uncertainty about the precise terms of such a merger. Venus’ train of thought proceeds from the city (*unam*: ‘one only’, ‘a single one’), that is to be shared by Tyrians and Trojans (the datives *Tyriis ... Troiaque profectis* refer to the respective origins of the ethnic communities of Dido, i.e. the people from Tyre in Phoenicia, and of Aeneas, i.e. those who departed from Troy), to an inevitable consequence of this sharing: some sort of merger or bond between the two peoples. Venus invokes two models: a ‘biological’ one (*misceri*), and a legal one (*foedera iungi*). She thereby signals awareness of two different ways of conceiving of a socio-political entity, nicely

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141. *Ibid.*

contrasted by means of the chiasmus (a) *misceri* (b) *populos* (b) *foedera* (a) *iungi*: as an ‘ethnic’ community, in which the members are thought to be linked by intermarriage and blood-descent, or as a ‘civic’ alliance, in which the members participate on the basis of some sort of legal-contractual arrangement (such as citizenship). The two are of course not mutually exclusive. Here the merger of two peoples is only mooted as a hypothetical possibility; but the theme dominates the second half of the *Aeneid*, which revolves around the merging of Trojans and Latins, again at the level of a royal couple (Aeneas and Lavinia) and two entire peoples. There, too, Virgil uses both ethnic and legal terminology to describe the union. (See e.g. 12.191: *foedera*). An idiosyncratic notion of Roman ethnicity also informs Virgil’s reconfiguration of the *populus Romanus* as *gens Romana* (*uel Iulia*): see note on 4: **gentis honos**.

**113–114: tu coniunx** [sc. Iouis es], **tibi fas** [sc. est] **animum temptare precando./ perge, sequar**: another guileful utterance: as Virgil’s readers know full well from Book 1, Venus has no scruples whatsoever to approach Jupiter and ask him for reassurance and support.<sup>142</sup> Venus’ use of *fas* is another instance of a divinity bandying about Roman religious terminology: the term refers to divinely sanctioned law, and Venus hilariously implies that her accosting Jupiter would constitute an instance of *nefas* (something that is prohibited by religious law). She effectively shifts full responsibility for the success of the plan onto Juno (who has a notoriously stormy relationship with her husband), rhetorically underscoring her devious proposal with the solemn and emphatic polyptoton *tu ~ tibi* and the laconic exhortation and promise that concludes her speech (*perge, sequar*).

**114: tum sic excepit regia Iuno**: the phrasing recalls 107: *sic contra est ingressa Venus*; now Juno takes over (cf. *excepit*) again. The epithet *regia* underscores her superior position in the Olympic hierarchy anew and has proleptic force: the opening of her speech is marked by ‘royal’ pomposity and self-importance.

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142. The irony becomes even more marked if we factor in the ‘Deception of Zeus’ in *Iliad* 14, where Hera requests the loan of Aphrodite’s girdle to seduce and befuddle her husband—though the last word of the line (*precando*), perhaps deliberately, puts the emphasis on rhetoric rather than sex as a means of persuasion.



## 115–27: Juno’s second speech

After briefly dealing with Venus’ speech, Juno proceeds to outline her plan for getting Aeneas and Dido into wedlock. The speech is well-structured, but there is a slight shift from measured exposition, where sections come to a close at the end of a verse, to a more animated, enjambed mode of speech that matches Juno’s mounting excitement as she works up to the triumphant finale in line 127: *hic hymenaeus erit*:

115–116: Preamble, consisting of a reply to Venus’ concerns and an exhortation designed to ensure Venus’ full attention (2 lines).

117–119: Description of the context in which the goddesses should strike: Aeneas and Dido go hunting (3 lines).

120–122: Juno’s interference: she plans to conjure up a storm (3 lines).

123–125a: The consequences: everyone scatters, and Dido and Aeneas, all by themselves, seek shelter in a cave (2+ lines).

125b–127a: Bingo: Juno will see to sex and marriage (2+ lines).

**115–116: ‘mecum erit iste labor. nunc qua ratione quod instat/ confieri possit, paucis (aduerte) docebo:** Juno reacts to Venus’ feigned doubts and duplicitous humility with some reassuring verbal strutting: *mecum erit iste labor* means something akin to ‘Don’t you worry, I’ll take care of that!’ Her use of the future tense (*erit*) is telling. She has absolutely no intention to consult with Jupiter any time soon. Far from clearing her plan with her husband beforehand, she clearly intends to let him know only after the liaison between Dido and Aeneas is already a *fait accompli* (if at all: in the end he finds out about what is going on from his son Iarbas). The tone is both matey and dismissive, as Juno instantly moves on. With *nunc* her attitude changes as she sets out methodically (*qua ratione*) and briefly (*paucis*) what the two goddesses ought to do on their own and right away (*quod instat*, contrasting with *iste labor*). There might be a touch of the ‘schoolmistress’<sup>143</sup> about the way she speaks, but I wonder whether the imperative *aduerte* is really ‘peremptory’ ‘as if Venus might not be paying attention’<sup>144</sup>: such an aggressive stance could backfire. Perhaps Juno is rather being chummy and conspiratorial?

143. Pease (1935), p. 173.

144. Maclennan (2007), p. 91.

**117–119: uenatum Aeneas unaque miserrima Dido/ in nemus ire parant, ubi primos crastinus ortus/ extulerit Titan radiisque retexerit orbem:** *uenatum* is the accusative of the supine, expressing purpose ('in order to...') with a verb of motion (*ire*). The *-a* of *una* scans long: it is an adverb meaning 'together with'. Juno mentions Aeneas only by his bare name, without ornamental epithet, whereas Dido receives an attribute in the superlative (for a similar snide innuendo see line 124). But what is the force of *miserrima*, which recalls and stands in implicit contrast to the *pulcherrima* Virgil uses elsewhere)? Is it an expression of pity ('my poor, love-sick Dido')—or contempt ('that Dido, love-sick to the hilt')? Is it accusatory, directed against Venus ('Dido, whom you have reduced to such a sorry state of wretchedness')? Or is it proleptic, as the Scholia Danielis would have it: 'Dido—most wretched in that she is about to lose her reputation for chaste loyalty to her dead husband and has to enter into wedlock with that Phrygian cast-away of yours'? The *ubi*-sentence is an elaborate and memorable way of saying 'tomorrow at sunrise': *primos* modifies *ortus*, and *crastinus* modifies *Titan* (= *Sol*), which produces an interlaced patterning of a<sub>1</sub> (adjective: *primos*) a<sub>2</sub> (adjective: *crastinus*) b<sub>1</sub> (noun: *ortus*) c (verb, placed in enjambment) b<sub>2</sub> (noun: *Titan*). *extulerit Titan radiisque retexerit* features alliteration (*ra-*, *re-*), assonance (*ex-*, *-tex-*; *-tu-*, *Ti-*, *-ta-*), and homoioteleuton (*-erit*, *-erit*). The *-que* links *extulerit* and *retexerit*. Usually it is the narrator who establishes the setting with evocative descriptions (cf. 4.6–7 above), so this underscores Juno's powers: she is here taking control of Virgil's narrative. What follows is *her* plot: here she outlines what she will then proceed to put into practice, in what amounts to giving Venus (and Virgil's readers) an advanced 'performance script' that allows us to appraise later on how well she manages to execute her plan.

**120–122: his ego nigrantem commixta grandine nimbum,/ dum trepidant alae saltusque indagine cingunt,/ desuper infundam et tonitru caelum omne ciebo:** after a sneak-preview of the day's divertissements, Juno moves on to an elaborate weather forecast. The hyperbaton of subject (120: *ego*) and accusative object (120: *nigrantem ... nimbum*) and the corresponding verb (122: *infundam*) is as big as Juno's ego. The word order of *nigrantem commixta grandine nimbum* is iconic: the hail is contained within the black cloud. In Book 1, Juno enlisted Aeolus to unleash a storm. In Book 7, she will enlist the Fury Allecto to unleash hell on earth. The thunderstorm here is her own creation, and while the imagery is impressive (both here

and when Virgil describes the actual event), the spot of bad weather pales in comparison to the cosmic upheaval caused by the winds and the fury: despite her grandiose rhetoric, the passage also underscores the limits of Juno's powers.

**121: dum trepidant alae saltusque indagine cingunt:** after Juno has spoken of gathering her black cloud, she effectively delays how she will unleash it with a retarding *dum*-clause. *alae* are the hunters on horseback who 'bustle' (*trepidant*) about to stir up the game and, in doing so, form a circle around the hunting grounds. *indago*, *-inis*, f. means 'a ring of huntsmen or nets thrown round a wood, etc., to prevent the escape of game': *OLD* s.v. 1a.

**122: desuper infundam et tonitru caelum omne ciebo:** after the delay, *desuper* marks a startling return to the weather. Juno plans to underscore her deluge with a suitable soundtrack that will rattle heaven. Note the two elisions *infundam et* and *caelum omne*, giving metrical support to the theme of pouring rain and resounding thunder.

[*Extra information:* what causes thunderstorms? They are frightening, and are often taken as a means of the gods to communicate with humans. To combat this notion, Lucretius, in the final book of his *De Rerum Natura*, an account of the world grounded in Epicurean physics (Epicurus was an atomist who dismissed divine interference in human affairs as noxious superstition), devotes a lengthy discussion of what natural phenomena might cause thunderstorms, trying to dispel any irrational fear of them. Some of the language is quite close: with Virgil's phrase *caelum ciere*, cf. e.g. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 6.376: ... *tempestasque cietur turbida caelo*.]

**123: nocte tegentur opaca:** again an iconic arrangement, in which the phrase *nocte ... opaca* in framing/ embracing does to the verb what the verb means: 'they will be covered by dark night.'

**124–125: speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem/ deuenient:** the hyperbaton of *speluncam ... eandem* is a beautiful case of iconic word order: Dido and Aeneas will end up inside the same cave, just as the noun and the attribute 'embrace' the pair in the verse. The postponed *et* has a double effect: (a) it generates the momentary impression that Dido is the *dux* (an effect reinforced by alliteration); and (b) it separates the adjective that identifies Aeneas (*Troianus*) from the noun that indicates his leadership abilities (*dux*). Both the elevation of Dido and the slighting of Aeneas that the word order entails are of course fully in line with how

the speaker (Juno) sees matters more generally. The postponed *et* thus underpins a beautifully subtle piece of ethopoiea. (The use of *dux* here also harks back to 1.364, where Venus, after recounting Dido's departure from Tyre, notes: *dux femina facti*—a challenging formulation that gives Dido a masculine role.) *deuenient*, effectively placed in enjambment, is in the future indicative. On the diaeresis after *deuenient* see Austin: 'the pause is effective; Juno waits a moment to let Venus appreciate her plot to the full.'<sup>145</sup>

**125–127: *adereo et, tua si mihi certa uoluntas,/ conubio iungam stabili propriamque dicabo; hic hymenaeus erit:*** Juno captures her own involvement in a tricolon: *adereo—iungam—dicabo*; the verb of the *si*-clause (*est*) is elided. *conubio iungam stabili* is another instance of mimetic word-order and verse-design reinforcing meaning: *iungam* is placed between and hence 'links' *conubio* and *stabili*. Some have suspected line 126 here as a repetition of 1.73, where Juno promises one of her nymphs to Aeolus, in return for unleashing the sea-storm that was supposed to sink Aeneas' fleet. But the re-use may also be part of Virgil's characterization of Juno: to cause chaos and thwart fate she resorts to the resources that she has at her disposal as the goddess of marriage. At the same time, the comparison with 1.73 illustrates the irregular nature of Juno's plan. In Book 1, Juno gives Aeolus the following promise (71–73):

Sunt mihi bis septem praestanti corpore nymphae,  
 quarum quae forma pulcherrima, Deiopea,  
 conubio iungam stabili propriamque dicabo.<sup>146</sup>

[I have fourteen nymphs of outstanding beauty, of whom I shall link who is most beautiful in appearance, Deiopea, [to you] in stable wedlock and will give her over [to you] as your own.]

Since Juno addresses Aeolus, *tibi* is easily understood with *iungam* and *dicabo*. In Book 4, however, matters are less clear. Juno obviously intends to link Dido and *Aeneas* in wedlock and will give over Dido to *Aeneas* as his own. But the person whom she addresses here, as the equivalent to Aeolus, is *Venus*. The awkward syntax thus continues her policy of

145. Austin (1963), p. 57.

146. She follows this up with two lines in which she promises Aeolus that the marriage will be ever-lasting (he gains a consort for life) and produce beautiful offspring: *omnis ut tecum meritis pro talibus annos! exigat et pulchra faciat te prole parentem* (1.74–75). These aspects are—perhaps ominously?—absent from Juno's plan here.

marginalizing and eliding the Trojan hero, and it even generates an interesting ambiguity: is she giving over Dido to Aeneas or to his mother Venus (or both)?

The fuzziness of Juno's discourse continues to the very end. What initially may look like a sharp and unambiguous punchline—*hic hymenaeus erit*—is anything but: does she mean 'Hymenaeus [i.e. the god of wedding] will be here [*hic* = adverb]'? Or does she mean 'This [*hic* = demonstrative pronoun] will be their marriage'? The former reading seems feeble; but if the meaning is supposed to be the latter, the use of the singular *hymenaeus* is unusual. (In the singular, *hymenaeus* tends to mean 'wedding song'.) The lack of precision may be Virgil's way of having Juno drawing unwittingly attention to the dodginess of her plan.

**127–128: non aduersata petenti/ adnuit atque dolis risit Cytherea repertis:** *Cytherea* is one of Venus' cult titles, deriving from the worship she received on the Aegean island of Cythera. Venus, of course, is not fooled by the peace offer and sees through Juno's guile. But she is quite happy to play along. Recent commentators (Pease, Austin, MacLennan, O'Hara) are unanimous in taking *dolis ... repertis* to mean something akin to 'after Juno's guile had been discovered' (ablative absolute) or '(she smiled) at Juno's guile discovered' (as ablative object with *ridere*). But this interpretation yields a feeble sense: already after Juno's first speech, which ended with the proposal of marriage, Virgil tells us that Venus was not fooled for a second (105: *sensit* [sc. Venus] *enim simulata mente locutam...*), so why would he repeat this point here, as if Venus had not seen through Juno all along and only discovered her treacherous intentions now? True, Juno's second speech lays out her precise strategy, but that in itself is a problem: what Venus has just learned is not so much that Juno is deceitful, but how she intends to put deceit into practice. And this is exactly what makes Venus smile: she laughs at the trickery that Juno has devised (for *reperio* in the sense of 'to make up, devise, intent', see *OLD* s.v. 6). Why should she? Well, the goddess of erotic desire can hardly keep a straight face when the goddess of lawful marriage engineers a romp in a cave that is to be dressed up as a legitimate wedding (though it will be anything but). Moreover, Venus knows full well that this sexual encounter may just prove disastrous for Dido (as it does)—and thus further Aeneas' destiny, getting him back on the road to Rome. It is an insidious, even

perverse sense of humour that Venus puts on display here—but perfectly in character.<sup>147</sup>

## 129–172: The Hunting Party<sup>148</sup>

After the divine interlude the action switches back to the human plane. The basic structure of the section is as follows:

129: Indication of time

130–50: Preparation for the hunt and departure

130–35: Nameless attendants from Carthage

130–32: The youth and Massylian horsemen

133–35: Punic princes

136–39: Queen Dido

140–41a: Aeneas' companions, above all his son Iulus/ Ascanius

141b–50: Aeneas, including simile that compares him to Apollo, correlating with the Dido-Diana simile in Book 1.494–504.

151–59: The hunt

151–55: General activities

156–59: Ascanius/ Iulus enjoying the hunt

160–72: The perfect storm

160–64: Scattering of the companions

165–72: The encounter in the cave

In broad outline, 129–172 recount the events that Juno had anticipated in 117–127, but the match is uneven. In particular, Virgil elaborates on the preparation for the hunt (the one and a half lines 117–18: *uenatum Aeneas unaque miserrima Dido/ in nemus ire parant* prefigure 130–50) and the hunt itself (the one line 121: *dum trepidant alae saltusque indagine cingunt* prefigures 151–59). More intriguingly, Virgil manages to keep Juno's notion that a 'marriage' is in the works resonant throughout. He follows up the programmatic announcement '*hic hymenaeus erit*' with subtle hints that assimilate the proceedings to a Roman wedding ceremony, leading up to the climax in the cave. 'Echoes of wedding language and imagery' include 133: *thalamo*; 133: *cunctantem*; 137–39: Dido's incongruously ornate dress;

147. On Venus' smile see further Konstan (1986).

148. In 1945 a mosaic illustrating the hunt was discovered at Low Ham in Somerset. For a picture, see R. P. Wright, 'Roman Britain in 1945: I. Sites Explored; II. Inscriptions', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 36 (1946), p. 148, Plate 11. For discussion see Anderson (2006).

142: *iungit*; perhaps also 165: *dux*.<sup>149</sup> Possibly, Virgil encourages the reader to recall the ‘long poems’ by Catullus (61–68) and in particular Catullus 61, the famous wedding poem, which features many thematic parallels to this section of *Aeneid* 4, most conspicuously perhaps the belated appearance of the ‘bride’/ Dido.<sup>150</sup> These persistent hints open up various avenues of interpretation: (i) to begin with, they serve as subtle reminders that Juno is orchestrating events in the background for a specific purpose; (ii) at the same time, the oblique and refracted gestures to a proper Roman wedding ceremony cannot help but highlight that the ‘wedding’ that is unfolding here is profoundly distorted and deeply flawed: if *hic hymenaeus erit* (127) stands at the beginning of the section, death (*letum*) and evil (*mala*) mark the end: *ille dies primus leti primusque malorum/ causa fuit* (169–70);<sup>151</sup> (iii) more specifically, the conflation of a hunt and a wedding produces jarring results, as it brings into close contact two cultural spheres that are often configured as diametrically opposed: if wedding and marriage revolve around a domestic union for the purpose of procreation, hunting is about going off into the wild for the purpose of killing. Likewise, hunting in ancient thought is a sexually charged activity, but the erotics associated with hunting are of the violent, transgressing kind, as opposed to the civilized values that inform proper marital arrangements. In English, as John Henderson reminds me, ‘venery’ traditionally covers both hunting and sex.

The joining of Carthaginians and Trojans in the hunt extends the theme of union beyond the two leaders to include two ethnic groupings: the two mingle, and Virgil uses the language of social ties (4.142: *infert se socium*) in the run-up to the physical mingling in the cave, thus recapitulating the two modes of civic and ethnic union that the two goddesses voiced in their plotting. The intermingling of Carthaginians and Trojans raises the question whether Virgil uses the occasion to demarcate ethnic differences. But at least on the level of the entourage, similarities outweigh differences: in fact, Virgil opts for studied symmetry in how he presents the two peoples. At first sight the same does not quite apply to the same degree to the two leaders: here differences dominate, also on the syntactical level. As Syed points out:<sup>152</sup>

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149. Caldwell (2008), *passim*, with the quotation from p. 426.

150. See Catullus 61.76–100, which also features a reference to the  *pudor*  of the bride (83).

151. The sentence reads like Virgil’s response to Juno’s pronouncement:  *ille*  picks up  *hic* ; the perfect  *fuit*  contrasts with the future  *erit* ; and the emphasis on  *letum*  and  *mala*  underscores that Juno’s perverse idea of a marriage will lead to tragedy and death.

152. Syed (2005), p. 101.

The description of Dido's appearance in lines 133–39 starts out with Dido as the grammatical object, being awaited by her companions (4.133–34: *reginam ... expectant*). She is the subject of hardly a single active verb, excepting the (ironically) deponent *progređitur* in 4.136. For the most part, she is watched for (4.134: *expectant*), surrounded (4.136: *stipante*), clothed (4.137: *circumdata*), her hair tied (4.138: *nodantur*), her brooch clasping her dress (4.139: *subnectit*). By contrast, Aeneas and Apollo to whom Aeneas is compared, are insistently active, they are the subjects of active verbs in the passage: Aeneas joins Dido (4.142: *infert se socium*) and unites his companions with hers (4.142: *agmina iungit*). In the simile, Apollo leaves Lycia (4.144: *deserit*) and comes to Delos (4.144: *invisit*). He renews dances (4.145: *instaurat*), he walks (4.147: *graditur*), he presses his locks (4.148: *premit crinem*) and braids them with gold (4.148: *implicat auro*). Just so, Aeneas, too, walks (4.149: *haud illo segnior ibat*).

There is, then, a much greater emphasis on Aeneas in this section, who re-enters the text with a vengeance. But on inspection, the differentiation between Dido and Aeneas is perhaps less marked than Syed makes it out to be. It is true that Dido, throughout this passage, remains strangely out of focus and her agency marginalized. But this does not square at all with Syed's conclusion that 'Dido is the object of the reader's gaze.' Instead, Virgil directs the attention of his audience onto Aeneas, his comparandum Apollo, and Ascanius/ Iulus: they are the protagonists in the unfolding drama of the hunt and regain the narrative limelight. And there are subtle touches through which Virgil breaks down any stark opposition between the Trojan hero and the Phoenician queen: many of the thematic concerns that dominate the stretch on Dido, in particular 'gold' and 'hair' recur in the simile that compares Aeneas to Apollo. Also in light of the fact that we later meet Aeneas as if dressed for a Punic catwalk, with a cloak aflame in Phoenician gold and purple (4.261–64), we may legitimately wonder whether his attire here does not provide a fitting match for that of the queen. And as for syntax, just as Dido, Apollo, too, struts about in a deponent: *graditur* (147). The passage, then, seems studiously ambiguous about the countervailing dynamics of assimilation and differentiation.

**129: Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit:** this is Virgil's equivalent to Juno's *ubi primos crastinus ortus/ extulerit Titan radiisque retexerit orbem* (118–19). He had already used Aurora to indicate daybreak at 6–7 (*postea Phoebæa lustrabat lampade terras/ umentemque Aurora polo dimouerat umbram*). The goddess of Dawn will again mark the beginning of a day at 584–85 (which is set up by a reference to her in 568, within a speech by Mercury): *Et*



*iam prima nouo spargebat lumine terras/ Tithoni croceum linquens Aurora cubile* ('And now early Dawn, leaving the saffron bed of Tithonus, was sprinkling the earth with fresh light'). Virgil thus uses Aurora three times in *Aeneid* 4 to indicate the beginning of a day: the first day is Dido's first day in love; on the second day, the fateful encounter in the cave takes place; and on the third day, Aeneas departs. Moreover, over the course of the book Aurora gradually morphs from a personified concept into a mythological character. At 6–7 there is hardly any hint of her involvement with Tithonus; here, at 129, *surgens* and *reliquit* refers to her daily departure from the bed of her aging husband, for whom she requested immortality, while forgetting to ask for eternal youth as well; and at 584–85, the sad story of a love-quest that went tragically awry is alluded to explicitly, with *linquens* harking back to (and providing a gloss on) *surgens* and *reliquit* in 129. In a sense, then, the repeated references to Aurora and the ever more concrete allusion to her myth offer a cosmic correlate to the evolving tragedy of Dido.

**130–139:** The Carthaginians (and, notably, Dido) get themselves ready for the hunt. The section falls into three parts:

130–32: Out come the youth (3 lines)

133–35: The Carthaginian nobles and her horse wait for dallying Dido (3 lines)

136–39: Dido's entrance (4 lines)

**130–132: it portis iubare exorto delecta iuuentus,/ retia rara, plagae, lato uenabula ferro,/ Massylique ruunt equites et odora canum uis:** Three 'excited' lines that describe how the Carthaginian hunting party bustles from the gates. Several formal features magnify the sense of jostling excitement and expectation:

- 1) The missing verb: whereas the *delecta iuuentus* (130) 'comes forth' (*it*) and the *Massyli equites* (132) 'rush out' (*ruunt*) together with the hounds, the three pieces of equipment mentioned in line 131 (*retia, plagae, uenabula*), which are also in the nominative, lack a verb. Given that these are inanimate objects, it is difficult to construe them either with *it* or with *ruunt*, and one has mentally to supply something like *portantur* ('are brought').
- 2) Word order: the monosyllabic verb at the outset (*it*) instantly emphasizes motion and conveys something of the hustle and bustle of the hunting party: everyone is eager to get going. (The

English expression ‘tally ho!’ generates a similar effect.) See also below on *stat sonipes* (135).

- 3) Ictus, accent, and monosyllabic verse ending: the concluding phrase of 132 is agitated by a clash between ictus (*odóra canúm uís*) and accent (*odóra cánum uís*), in addition to featuring a highly unusual monosyllabic line ending. The two aspects go together as Austin explains, as part of a little disquisition on word accents in Latin more generally:<sup>153</sup>

A glance at any page of Virgil shows two normal patterns in the last two feet, either that of *delecta iuventus*, or that of *venábula ferro*: i.e. the last word is a disyllable or a trisyllable, and the last two feet are shared between two words only. Thus the metrical beat or ‘ictus’, in a normal ending, falls on the same syllable as that which bears the accent of the spoken word; for that accent falls on the penultimate syllable of all disyllabic words, and of all longer words if that syllable is long, but on the antepenultimate of trisyllabic or longer words if the penultimate is short; and this rule gives *delécta iuvéntus*, *venábula férro*, with word-accent and ictus coinciding. When the normal end-pattern is disturbed, the rhythm is disturbed too, so that there is no longer this coincidence: the ictus falls thus, *odóra canúm vis*, but the accent thus, *odóra cánum vis*, and so with an abnormal end-pattern an abnormal rhythm is obtained. The line has a bustling, agitated close instead of a calm, smooth one, and the metre itself shows the excitement of the scene, with the hounds poking about vigorously and appearing in unexpected places.

Monosyllabic verse-endings are always very dramatic: cf. e.g. 1.105: *insequitur cumulo praeruptus aquae mons* (‘down in a heap comes a sheer mountain of water’) which also features the same sequence of adjective, genitive attribute, noun.<sup>154</sup> In both cases, Virgil enhances the effect by stepping down the number of syllables in the words that precede the climactic monosyllable: 3 (*odora/ praeruptus*): 2 (*canum/ aquae*): 1 (*uis/ mons*).

**130: iubare exorto:** an ablative absolute; *iubar* signifies the radiance of heavenly bodies, here the sun. The party sets out ‘at sunrise.’

153. Austin (1963), pp. 61–62.

154. Horace makes fun of this feature at *Ars Poetica* 139: *Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus* (‘The mountains will give birth, there will be born a ludicrous mouse’).

**131: retia rara, plagae, lato uenabula ferro:** a surprising asyndetic continuation of *delecta iuuentus*, specifying some items of accoutrement that are carried out for the hunt: two different kinds of nets (*retia rara* are ‘broad-meshed’ to channel the game in a certain direction; *plagae* are nets for trapping) and spears with broad blades (*lato...ferro* is an ablative of description).

**132: Massyli ... equites:** the Massyli are another ethnic grouping in Northern Africa, apparently on friendly terms with the Phoenician settlers—in contrast to the hostile people mentioned by Anna in 40–43. The priestess supposed to have supplied Dido with a counter-spell to love is ‘of Massylian race’ (4.483: *hinc mihi Massylae gentis monstrata sacerdos*). The most famous member of the tribe in historical times was king Massinissa, the first king of Numibia, who lived during the time of the Second Punic War, starting out as an ally of Carthage but then switching sides and playing a key role in the battle of Zama (202 BC), which ended the war. The Roman general Scipio nevertheless refused to pardon his wife, the Carthaginian princess Sophonisba; to avoid the humiliation of being paraded in a Roman triumph, she committed suicide. For those who know their Roman history Sophonisba and the fate of Carthage more generally beckon on the historical horizon and in turn foreshadow Dido’s tragic end within the *Aeneid*.

**132: odora canum uis:** Virgil uses a transferred epithet: the hounds, not the *uis*, are ‘keen-scented’ (*odora*). The phrasing has precedents in Homer, Ennius, and Lucretius.<sup>155</sup>

**133–135: reginam thalamo cunctantem ad limina primi/ Poenorum exspectant, ostroque insignis et auro/ stat sonipes ac frena ferox spumantia mandit:** in direct antithesis to the eagerness of the rest of the party and the hounds, Dido lingers (*cunctantem*) in her chamber (*thalamo*), holding up proceedings. Both the lingering and the term Virgil uses for ‘chamber’ hint at the Roman wedding ritual. The reluctance of the bride to enter into the house of her husband on the day of her marriage, as a preliminary step towards her first experience of sexual intercourse, is a key theme of Catullus’ wedding poems designed to highlight her modesty and her virginity (see especially Catullus 61 and 66, but the whole bloc of Catullus’

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155. See Pease (1935), pp. 182–83.

long poems comes into play here).<sup>156</sup> And as Austin points out, ‘Virgil’s choice of the word *thalamus* is significant (he could have written *tecto*)’<sup>157</sup>: in a transferred sense, *thalamus* means ‘bridal-bed’ or ‘wedlock’—as in 4.18 above.<sup>158</sup> Its use here seems to imply that Dido has become a bride—but one wonders about focalization: does Dido already conceive of herself as a bride and display bridal hesitation before the upcoming ‘wedding’? Or is she simply busy with her toilette, and the oblique reference to her as a bride is Virgil’s way of emphasizing that Dido, unknowingly, prepares for (another) wedding experience? But the ‘wedding associations’ of *cunctantem* and *thalamo*, once put together, are somewhat disturbing: after all, what is Dido doing dallying *in* the wedding chamber? Far from highlighting her sense of shame (*pudor*, *pudicitia*) or virginity, her prolonged presence in the room marked for encounters of the carnal kind would seem to suggest that sex is on her mind and that she longs for the physical consummation of her visceral passion in a way that is supposedly entirely alien to innocent brides.<sup>159</sup> Alternatively, we could read the moment of hesitation as ‘a last saving instinct, a natural pull back to the safety of her home and her goals before she enters upon her hard *fata*.’<sup>160</sup> Whatever the answer, the leading men of the Carthaginians (*primi/ Poenorum*: a phrase linked by alliteration across the enjambment) patiently wait for her; her horse, too, ‘stands’ (*stat*, another monosyllabic beginning that ‘stands’ in contrast to the *it* in line 130), but does so impatiently: see below on 135.

**134–135: *ostroque insignis et auro*:** the phrase describes Dido’s horse, but the referent does not become clear until the following line. For a moment one could therefore assume that Dido is meant, especially since both the purple and the gold evoke her hometown of Tyre—which was famous for the sea snail from which the purple dye was extracted and which she fled on ships laden with gold. The joke continues in line 136, where Virgil

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156. For the topos, in Catullus and elsewhere, see Hersch (2010), pp. 144–48.

157. Austin (1963), p. 62.

158. Caldwell (2008), p. 428 points out that the sinister connotations of the term increase significantly if we bear in mind what this loanword from the Greek means in Greek: ‘Moreover, *thalamus* is doubly resonant, in that it also assumes the meaning “tomb”, especially in Greek; the conflation of the elements of nuptial and funeral ritual is especially prevalent in Greek tragedy, often involving the girl who fails to make the transition to marriage.’

159. ‘Supposedly’ since the reluctance of the bride, at least according to Catullus, may well be faked.

160. Segal (2000), p. 94.

switches the subject, almost imperceptibly, from the horse (*mandit*) to Dido (*proreditur*).

[*Extra Information:* Here is the opening of the excellent Wikipedia entry on ‘Tyrian Purple’, which includes discussion of the biology of the sea snails, the chemistry behind the secretion used to make dye, and the snails’ contribution to cultural history:

Tyrian purple (Greek, πορφύρα, *porphyra*, Latin: *purpura*), also known as royal purple, imperial purple or imperial dye, is a purple-red natural dye, which is extracted from sea snails, and which was possibly first produced by the ancient Phoenicians. This dye was greatly prized in antiquity because it did not fade but became more intense with weathering and sunlight. Tyrian purple was expensive: the 4th-century-BC historian Theopompus reported, ‘Purple for dyes fetched its weight in silver at Colophon’ in Asia Minor. The expense meant that purple-dyed textiles became status symbols, and early sumptuary laws restricted their uses.]<sup>161</sup>

**135: stat sonipes ac frena ferox spumantia mandit:** *sonipes* is a combination of *sonus* + *pes*, i.e. a creature that makes a noise with its feet, especially a horse. Virgil may be cracking a bit of a joke here by combining this metonymy for horse with the verb *stat*. The two verbs (*stat*, *mandit*) frame the line; note also the alliteration (*stat sonipes ... spumantia; frena ferox*). Cicero calls ‘f’ a *lettera insuauissima* (‘a most unpleasant letter’) at *Orator* 163, and the *f*-alliteration, reinforced by the assonance of *fre-fer-* and *spumantia mandit* here perhaps conveys something of the impatient chomping of the horse.

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161. It is worth citing the passage in Athenaeus that preserves this tidbit from Theopompus since it brings out the negative political ideology of the colour purple as a sign of luxury, debauchery, and moral decay that leads to tyranny and civil war. See *The Learned Banqueters* 12.526c: ‘According to Phylarchus, the Colophonians originally practiced harsh social discipline, but after they ran aground on the reef of luxury and became friends and allies of the Lydians, they went out with their hair elaborately decorated with gold jewelry... The fact that they got drunk at all hours made them so depraved, that some of them had never seen the sun rise or set. They also passed a law—still in effect in our time—that pipe-girls, harp-girls, and all entertainers of this sort were to be paid to work from dawn until noon, and from then until dusk; after that, they spent the rest of the night getting drunk. Theopompus in Book XV of the *History* says that 1000s of them wandered around the city wearing sea-purple robes. Even kings did not have much fabric of this sort in that period, and they went to great lengths to obtain it; for purple dye cost its weight in silver. So since they lived this way, they became enmeshed in tyranny and civil war, and were ruined along with their country’ (trans. by S. D. Olsen in the Loeb Classical Library edition, Cambridge, MA, 2010).

**136–137: tandem progreditur magna stipante caterua/ Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo;** Dido finally issues forth, but she remains strangely oblique throughout this passage: Virgil mentions the *delecta iuuentus* (130), the *Massyli equites* (132), the *primi Poenorum* (133–34), the *Phrygii comites* (140), Iulus/ Ascanius (twice in the nominative: 140, 156), and Aeneas (also twice in the nominative: 142, 150), whereas Dido registers only as an absent queen (*reginam...expectant*) and an implied subject (*progreditur*). See also below on 138–39. This is very much in contrast to her magnificent entrance in Book 1, to which Virgil here gestures (1. 496–97):

regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,  
incessit, magna iuuenum stipante caterua.

[The queen, Dido, of surpassing beauty, approached the temple, with a large throng of youths crowding around her.]

In this earlier scene, which is followed by a simile that compares Dido to Diana, Aeneas lurks in the shadows and watches. In our passage, which includes a simile that compares Aeneas to Apollo, the positions are reversed: Dido is out of the limelight for the time being, whereas Aeneas and his son are very much in it. After Juno's performance script, which foregrounded Dido, this comes as a bit of a surprise. Virgil, it seems, deliberately inverts the emphases and preferences of the goddess.

**137: Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo:** Virgil often construes perfect passive participles with a direct object as if they had a reflexive-active (or Greek middle) sense, as here *circumdata*: Dido has surrounded herself with a Sidonian (= Phoenician) riding-cloak that sports an adorned border (*picto...limbo*). The two phrases are interlaced according to the pattern adjective<sub>1</sub> (*Sidoniam*), adjective<sub>2</sub> (*picto*), noun<sub>1</sub> (*chlamydem*), noun<sub>2</sub> (*limbo*).

**138–139: cui pharetra ex auro [sc. est], crines nodantur in aurum,/ aurea purpuream subnectit fibula uestem:** Dido's disappearing act continues: we get her at the beginning of 138 in the dative of ownership (*cui*), but the focus is on her golden bow, her hair (literally 'tied into gold'), and her golden buckle that clasps her purple-dyed cloak: the polyptoton *ex auro, in aurum, aurea* that dominates the tricolon, together with the reference to the purple colour of her cloak, gives the impression that Dido is decked out like a Christmas tree but remains strangely out of focus herself—in contrast,

as we shall see, to Aeneas. In terms of plot, one begins to understand why her companions were in for such a long wait, though Dido's sense of dress is clearly out of kilter: hunting is dirty business, whereas she is clothed as if for a beauty pageant. The *chlamys*, though, a Greek type of cloak, is an appropriate hunting garment, and the quiver recalls her special association with the goddess of the hunt, Diana: see 1.500–01: *illa [sc. Diana] pharetram/ fert umero gradiensque deas supereminet omnis* ('she carries a quiver on her shoulder and, striding along, surpasses all the other goddesses in height'). (The lines are from the simile that accompanies the entry of Dido into the poem and powerfully resonates in the passage here: see below.) Ironically, the golden display strongly recalls Dido's dead husband Sychaeus. See Book 1.343–44 (from Venus' speech to Aeneas, instructing him about Dido's past): *huic coniunx Sychaeus erat, ditissimus auri/ Phoenicum* ('Her husband was Sychaeus, richest in gold of the Phoenicians'). After his murder by Dido's brother Pygmalion, Sychaeus appears to his wife in a vision, showing her the place of his hidden treasures (359): *ignotum argenti pondus et auri* ('a secret mass of gold and silver'), which Dido then loads on a ship and flees (362–64): *nauis, quae forte paratae, corripunt onerantque auro; portantur auaril/ Pygmalionis opes pelago* ('ships, which by chance were ready, they seize and load with gold; the wealth of greedy Pygmalion is carried overseas'). So in essence, Dido is here wearing the treasures of her dead husband to impress her would-be new consort.

[Extra information: As for the gold, to top it all off, line 138 is a so-called 'golden line', a *uersus aureus*, i.e. it features the pattern adjective<sub>1</sub> (*aurea*) adjective<sub>2</sub> (*purpuream*) verb (*subnectit*) noun<sub>1</sub> (*fibula*) noun<sub>2</sub> (*vestem*), though it ought to be noted that 'the term was not used in antiquity.'<sup>162</sup> Such golden lines are comparatively speaking uncommon in the *Aeneid* and could be considered an Alexandrian-neoteric mannerism. So from the point of view of genre, Dido is not really dressed here as befits an epic protagonist.<sup>163</sup> Likewise, the passage recalls two passages in Callimachus, in which the Alexandrian poet describes the golden regalia of Artemis (*Hymn* 3.110–12):

Ἄρτεμι Παρθενίη Τιτυοκτόνε, χρύσεια μὲν τοι  
ἔντεα καὶ ζώνη, χρύσειον δ' ἐζεύξασο δίφρον,  
ἐν δ' ἐβάλευ χρύσεια, θεή, κεμάδεσσι χαλινά.

162. O'Hara (2011), p. 35. He references John Dryden's Preface to his *Sylvae* (1685).

163. For more statistics and general information on the golden line and the history of scholarship on it, see the excellent Wikipedia entry on 'Golden Line' ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden\\_line](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_line)).

Artemis, Lady of Maidenhood, Slayer of Tityus, *golden* were your weapons and your belt, and *golden* the car you yoked, and you put *golden* bridles, goddess, on your deer.

and Apollo (*Hymn* 2.32–5):

χρύσεια τῶπόλλωνι τό τ' ἐνδυτὸν ἢ τ' ἐπιπορπίς  
 ἢ τε λύρη τό τ' ἄεμμα τὸ Λύκτιον ἢ τε φαρέτρη,  
 χρύσεια καὶ τὰ πέδιλα· πολὺχρυσος γὰρ Απόλλων  
 καὶ πουλυκτέανος·

*Golden* is the tunic of Apollo, his mantle, his lyre, his Lyctian bow, and his quiver. *Golden*, too, are his sandals; for rich in *gold* is Apollo and also in possessions.

These gestures would certainly be thematically appropriate and enriching in a passage that, by means of allusions to Book 1.494–504, correlates Dido with Diana/Artemis and Aeneas with Apollo.<sup>164</sup> The result is something one may call intertextual cross-dressing: ‘The queen of Carthage proceeds to the hunt resplendent in finery from various corners of the Callimachean wardrobe, matched with consummate skill by her Roman dresser.’<sup>165]</sup>

**140: nec non et Phrygii comites et laetus Iulus/ incedunt. ipse ante alios pulcherrimus omnis/ infert se socium Aeneas atque agmina iungit:** the litotes *nec non* marks the switch from Phoenicians to Trojans. Virgil’s design nicely conveys a sense of hierarchy and importance: in a first step he introduces the anonymous collective and Iulus, who is singled out by name, but is syntactically situated at the same level as the *comites* (see the coordination by *et...et...*). They enter the scene together, in enjambment: *incedunt*. Then there is a slight pause, signalled by the caesura (a trithemimeres), which ‘marks the moment of their waiting for Aeneas to take up his position.’<sup>166</sup> Then Aeneas steps forward to take his place next to Dido and to join their forces. *agmina* refers to the Carthaginians and the Trojans who have come from separate quarters and are here joined together into one troop by Aeneas. Dido is nowhere to be seen, though some translations obfuscate her eclipse. Goold, for instance, renders the lines thus: ‘Aeneas himself, goodly beyond all others, advanced to join *her* and unites his band with *hers*.’ ‘Her’ and ‘hers’ are not in the Latin. The verse design enacts the central and conspicuous leadership role of Aeneas. The design

164. Clausen (1987), p. 60.

165. Reed (1995), p. 95.

166. Austin (1963), p. 64.



is chiasmic with Aeneas as pivot—verb: *infert*, accusative object: *se socium*, subject: *Aeneas*, accusative object: *agmina*, verb: *iungit*—and thereby mirrors on the figurative level what happens at the level of plot: the intermingling of the two peoples around Aeneas who stands at dead centre. One could imagine that the meeting of the two groups resulted in a huge hullabaloo, but Virgil suggests otherwise: the two elisions (*socium Aeneas; atque agmina*) enact the smooth joining of forces by the joining of words. If one sees the preparations for the hunt as the distorted and distorting performance of a wedding ritual, *agmina iungit* recalls 126: *conubio iungam stabili*.

**141–142: ipse ante alios pulcherrimus omnis/ infert ... Aeneas:** Aeneas' entry into the narrative here is modelled on Dido's entry in Book 1 and its accompanying simile (see below). Cf. esp. lines 1.496–97: *regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Didol incessit*, 501: *gradiensque deas supereminet omnis* (of Diana), and 503: *talem se laeta ferebat*. Parallels include the epithet *pulcherrimalus* (as W. Clausen puts it: 'Dido and Aeneas are thus beautifully paired'),<sup>167</sup> the effective use of enjambment for a verb of entry (*incessit, infert*), and the notion of excelling *all* others, with *omnis* positioned for emphasis in the last foot of the line. While the adjective *pulcherrimus* helps to correlate Dido's entry in Book 1 with the scene here, it otherwise strikes an odd note: apart from underscoring that Dido has remained entirely faceless in the verses devoted to her (her last ornamenting epithet came in 117, where Juno called her *miserrima*), 'outstanding beauty' is an attribute better suited to erotic contexts than the hunt. In fact, it is an epic topos that goddesses work some cosmetic magic on their favourite heroes before crucial encounters with a girl: Athena prettifies Odysseus before his encounter with Nausicaa; Hera prettifies Jason before his encounter with Medea; and Venus, in Book 1, had rendered Aeneas stunning to behold before he left his protective cloud to meet Dido (1.586–91). While Virgil mentions no divine intervention here, his use of *pulcherrimus* constitutes a gesture to this commonplace.<sup>168</sup>

**143–149: qualis ubi hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta/ deserit ac Delum maternam inuisit Apollo/ instauratque choros, mixtique altaria circum/ Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt pictique Agathyrsi;/ ipse iugis**

167. Clausen (1987), p. 23.

168. In his version of the Medea myth in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid sends this tradition up by suggesting that Jason was particularly beautiful when he met Medea '*casu*'—by chance.

**Cynthi graditur mollique fluentem/ fronde premit crinem fingens atque implicat auro,/ tela sonant umeris:** The Apollo-simile interrupts the plot and transports the reader into the realm of the gods. The tricolon is an operative principle throughout: we get three geographical locations (*hibernam Lyciam, Xanthi fluenta, Delum maternam*), three main verbs in the opening sequence (*deserit, inuisit, instaurat*), three types of companions (*Cretes, Dryopes, picti Agathyrsi*), three main verbs in the closing sequence with Apollo as subject (*graditur, premit, implicat*)—though, perhaps for the sake of variation, with a fourth tagged on but with a change in subject (*sonant*). In pairing Dido with Diana and Aeneas with Apollo by way of similes Virgil follows a pattern set by Apollonius who likens Jason to Apollo at *Argonautica* 1.307–09 and Medea to Artemis (the Greek equivalent to Diana) at 3.876–84. (Virgil inverts Apollonius’ sequence of male—female.) Here is *Argonautica* 1.306–11, details of which Virgil preserved in his own simile:

Ἦ, καὶ ὁ μὲν προτέρωσε δόμων ἔξ ὄρωτο νέεσθαι.  
οἶος δ’ ἐκ νηοῖο θυώδεος εἶσιν Ἀπόλλων  
Δῆλον ἀν’ ἠγαθέην ἢ Κλάρον, ἢ ὄγε Πυθῶ  
ἢ Λυκίην εὐρεῖαν ἐπὶ Ξάνθοιο ῥοῆσι—  
τοῖος ἀνὰ πληθὺν δήμου κίεν, ὄρωτο δ’ ἀυτῆ  
κεκλομένων ἄμυδις.

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[He spoke and went forth from his home to make his departure. And as Apollo goes from his fragrant temple through holy Delos or Claros, or through Pytho or broad Lycia by the streams of Xanthus, so he went through the crowd of people, and a shout went up as they cheered with one voice.]

**143: qualis ubi:** ‘as when...’ *qualis* translates οἶος in the Greek, but *ubi*, which introduces an emphasis on a precise moment in time, has no equivalent in Apollonius. It sets up the highly resonant *hibernam*: see next note.

**143: hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta/ deserit:** *hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta* translates almost verbatim Apollonius, *Argonautica* 1.300: ἢ Λυκίην εὐρεῖαν ἐπὶ Ξάνθοιο ῥοῆσι, i.e.:

Λυκίην (*Lukiên*) > *Lyciam*  
εὐρεῖαν (*eureian*) ~ *hibernam*  
Ξάνθοιο (*Xanthoio*) > *Xanthi*  
ῥοῆσι (*rhoêsi*) > *fluenta*

Three items are all but identical (indicated by ‘>’). Virgil, however, changes the attribute of Lycia (signalled by ‘~’). Instead of εὐρεῖαν (‘broad’) we

get *hibernam*, an adjective here used instead of an adverb: it signifies the moment in time when Apollo leaves Lycia, i.e. ‘in winter.’ See Weber: ‘Lycia is not Apollo’s “winter home” [Austin (1963) 64]; on the contrary, it is the place in Asia that in winter the god *leaves behind* for Greece.’<sup>169</sup> The adjustment seems minor; but it is fraught with meaning, as it interrelates the simile with a wide range of key thematic concerns in *Aeneid* 4. To begin with, the thought that Apollo leaves Lycia in winter (as Weber goes on to point out) surprises: ‘it is an unfamiliar Apollo who joins his worshippers in the dead of winter. ... the presence of the visitors named in 4.146 actually rules out winter rites on Delos. The god whose epiphany coincides with winter is rather Dionysus, winter being the season when this god renews his biennial dances on Parnassus and, probably, on Cithaeron as well’ (324).

The theme of ‘abandoning a place in winter’ is a charged theme in the context of *Aeneid* 4, ominously proleptic of what Aeneas will do later on in the book. The reference to winter not only recalls the end of Anna’s speech, where she suggests to Dido that she should use the time of the year as an argument for Aeneas to stay (4.51–53), but also sets up 309–11 (Dido’s outraged confrontation with Aeneas upon finding out that he will even brace the winter-storms to get away from Carthage as quickly as he can): *quin etiam hiberno moliri sidere classem/ et mediis properas Aquilonibus ire per altum,/ crudelis?* (‘Even in the winter season you hasten to get your fleet ready and to travel across the sea in the midst of northern gales, cruel one?’).<sup>170</sup> Virgil’s use of the verb *deserit* (‘he abandons’), which he placed for special effect in enjambment (followed by a weak diaeresis after the first foot), is equally charged and it, too, features prominently in Dido’s confrontation with Aeneas. See 323: *cui me moribundam deseris hospes?*, as well as Dido’s concluding self-portrayal at 330 as *capta ac deserta*. A look at the Apollonian model is again instructive: in the *Argonautica*, the god simply ‘goes’ (309: εἶσιν).

**144: Delum maternam ... Apollo:** Delos was the island on which Leto gave birth to her twins Diana and Apollo. The position of the attribute after the noun it modifies generates a chiasmus with *hibernam Lyciam* in the previous line, mirroring the dynamics of ‘departure’ (*deserit*) and ‘arrival’ (*inuisit*). Virgil identifies the subject (Apollo) only at the very end

169. Weber (2002), p. 324.

170. See also 4.193, from *Fama*’s song: *nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa, fouere*.

of the second verse of the simile, though the geographical locations, and in particular the phrase *Delum maternam*, already provide fairly decisive clues. Virgil has changed the attribute of Delos from ἡγλαθήην ('most holy', an attribute used of places under divine protection) in Apollonius to *maternam*. The emphasis on returning to a maternal location may aid in the subtle assimilation of Apollo to Dionysus that pervades the simile.<sup>171</sup> The purposeful direction of Apollo's travels in Virgil contrasts sharply with the somewhat haphazard enumeration of cult locations in Apollonius and thereby enhances the parallels between Apollo's actions in the simile and Aeneas' action later on in the narrative.

**145: *instauratque choros*:** *choros instaurare* means 'to renew the dance.' This is a further hint of a Dionysiac presence in the simile: 'the god who, after an absence abroad in Asia, returns to the Greek land of his mother and there sets his votaries to dancing ... — this god is first and foremost Dionysus.'<sup>172</sup>

**145–146: *mixtique altaria circum/ Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt pictique Agathyrsi*:** the *-que* attached to *mixti* links *instaurat* and *fremunt*; the *-que* attached to *Dryopes* links *Cretes* and *Dryopes*; the *-que* attached to *picti* links *Dryopes* and *Agathyrsi*. The *-que* attached to *Cretes*, in contrast, despite scanning long, does not link anything and is thus strictly speaking superfluous. (Converting the *-ques* into '*ets*', one would get *et Cretes et Dryopes et picti Agathyrsi*.) Who are the people that participate in Apollo's rites? Cretes are inhabitants of the island of Crete, a straightforward designation. The Dryopians and Agathyrsians, on the other hand, here 'make their debut in Latin verse': Weber (2002) 328. Pease describes the Dryopians as 'a rude and predatory tribe',<sup>173</sup> whereas the Agathyrsians are, according to Weber, 'obscure barbarians.'<sup>174</sup> He notes: 'this heterogeneous mélange of mainstream and marginal Greeks mingling with outlandish foreigners has no place in the elitist cult of Apollo. Such retinue of polyglot worshipers would rather be at home in the ecumenical milieu of Dionysus' (325–26). He points out other Dionysiac touches, including the etymology

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171. Weber (2002), p. 323.

172. *Ibid.*

173. Pease (1935), p. 193.

174. Weber (2002), p. 325, with particular reference to Euripides' *Bacchae*. He goes on to show that the ritual dancing here mentioned fits Dionysus far better than Apollo (324–25).

of both Dryopians and Agathyrsians,<sup>175</sup> the modifier of the Agathyrsians, that is, *picti* ('whether this word refers to tattooing or to some other means of coloring the skin or hair, painted or tattooed devotees are out of place in the cult of Apollo': 328); the verb *fremunt*, which recalls Dionysus' epithet Bromius;<sup>176</sup> and the neologistic licence and dithyrambic flair of the verse design, with the extra *-que* scanned long in the second arsis. (The overemphatic polysyndeton arguably also underscores the action of the verbs: *mixti* and *fremunt*, the mixing and crowding around the altar.)

**147: ipse:** picks up Apollo.

**147: iugis Cynthi:** Dionysus, too, is a mountain god.<sup>177</sup>

**147: graditur:** 'in 1, 501 the same verb is used of his sister Diana in her rites on Cynthus.'<sup>178</sup> See also 1.312 (of Aeneas): *ipse uno graditur comitatus Achate* ('he himself strides forth, accompanied only by Achates').

**147–148: mollique fluentem/ fronde premit crinem fingens atque implicat auro:** Virgil lavishes as much attention on Apollo's hairdo as he did on Dido's. *crinem* is the accusative object of both *premit* and *fingens* (an 'apo-koinou' position), as well as *implicat*, and all three verbs address the quality captured in the attribute of *crinem*, i.e. *fluentem*: Apollo puts his hair in order (*premit*) by shaping (*fingens*) his flowing locks with soft foliage (note the alliteration *fluentem—fronde—fingens*) and braiding it (*implicat*) with a golden diadem. The Dionysiac touches continue: *mollis* is, as Weber points out, 'virtually a vox propria for objects connected with Dionysus.'<sup>179</sup> He also provides the following analysis of the participle *fingens*, which turns out to be syntactically and thematically 'camp': 'The effeminacy implicit in *molli* ... is further suggested by the *fingens* in the next line. This participle acquires a degree

175. *Dryopes*: 'the Dryopians share with Dionysus nomenclature connecting them with trees in general and with the oak [*drus*, in Greek] in particular' (329); *Agathyrsi*: 'the etymology of which, as it is explained by one Pisander in Stephanus Byzantius (s.v.), would make of these people "the right thyrsic ones"' (328). (A *thyrsos* is a staff wreathed by ivy carried by Dionysus and his followers.)

176. Weber (2002), p. 329: 'In the realm of diction, Virgil's verb *fremere* is something of a vox propria for the Bacchic roar, recurring in this connection not only in the *Aeneid* (7.389), but also in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (3.528). Indeed, *fremere* is probably cognate with Greek <*bremein*> and, hence, with Dionysus' epithet Bromius.'

177. Weber (2002) pp. 329–30, 332–33.

178. Pease (1935), p. 195.

179. Weber (2002), p. 330.

of emphasis from being somewhat superfluously appended to a clause that is already complete both syntactically and semantically. ... *Aeneid* 4.148 is ... unique in Latin verse for not applying *fingerē* of setting the hair either to a woman or to a male of precarious masculinity. Here *fingerens* combines with *molli* in the preceding line to frame *fluentem/ fronde premit crinem*, and both words together imbue the intervening expression with a strong suggestion of effeminacy that is at once alien to Apollo and intrinsic to Dionysus.<sup>180</sup>

**149: tela sonant umeris:** a sudden shift in tone from the peaceful imagery of the previous lines, especially if one recalls *Iliad* 1.43–47.<sup>181</sup>

Ὦς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος, τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,  
βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων χωόμενος κῆρ,  
τόξ' ὤμοισιν ἔχων ἀμφηρεφέα τε φαρέτρην· 45  
**ἔκλαγξαν δ' ἄρ' οἴστοι ἐπ' ὤμων** χωομένοιο,  
αὐτοῦ κινήθέντος· ὃ δ' ἦϊε νυκτὶ εὐοικῶς.

[Thus he [sc. Chryses] spoke in prayer, and Phoebus Apollo heard him.  
Down from the peaks of Olympus he came, irate at heart,  
bearing his bow on his shoulder and his covered quiver. 45  
*The arrows rattled on the shoulders of the angry god,*  
while he was moving, and his coming was like the night.]

This is Apollo's highly dramatic entry into Western literature, and Virgil seemingly lifts and translates a key component from Homer's description of the wrathful divinity striding down from Mt. Olympus to shoot his plague-bearing poisoned arrows into the camp of the Greeks. In Virgil, the reference to the arrows of destruction rattling in the quiver on Apollo's shoulders comes as an unpleasant surprise after the peaceful scenes of dancing and hair-dressing—a dark reminder that both the god and the hero he is meant to illustrate may have a baleful impact on those around them. Specifically, it recalls the deer-simile at 4.69–73, where a *pastor*, who represents Aeneas, mortally wounds a deer with his arrows. The sudden switch in theme from celebration to death in the simile thus mirrors on the micro-level the progression from what is supposed to be a wedding (127: *hymenaeus*) but actually is the beginning of a tragic plot that leads to misery and death (169–70: *ille dies primus leti...*). With supreme economy Virgil thereby recapitulates the Homeric paradox that the god of brightness

180. *ibid.*, p. 331.

181. See Conington (1884), p. 266: 'The image is from Il. 1. 46 ... though the nature of the motion is different.'

and light (see his epithet Phoebus) may also resemble darkness and night, that the god of healing may cause a plague. For the first appearance of the divinity in Western literature, the terms of entry are fittingly complex and problematic, setting the tone for what was to follow.

[*Extra Information*: The question whether the passage from *Iliad* 1 is ‘relevant’ here triggered a little tussle between the two Virgilian scholars Oliver Lyne and Nicholas Horsfall. Lyne offers the following interpretation of our passage:<sup>182</sup>

Aeneas is armed for Apollo, armed for the hunt. But Apollo in arms is surely too significant and ominous a figure to perform merely this function: poets introduce him in warlike as opposed to peaceful guise with deliberation, and for awesome purposes. Added to which, the arms here in question are particularly sinister arms, for this is Apollo from a most sinister source. A highly disturbing allusion is in fact operating. ‘Tela sonant umeris’ is a translation of Hom. *Il.* 1.46. And *Il.* 1.46 describes *Apollo the plague-bringer*, describes, to be precise, the very means by which Apollo delivered plague. In *Iliad* 1 Apollo came down from Olympus to punish the Achaeans with plague, and ‘his arrows’, the instruments of that plague, ‘clashed on his shoulders’ as he descended—a striking, ominous, and memorable moment: ἔκλαγγεσαν δ’ ἄρ’ οἴστοι ἐπ’ ὤμων, ‘tela sonant umeris.’ Vergil’s simile therefore culminates in a recall of this most memorable moment, the advent of the divine plague-bringer. So the allusion (assuming it to be such) intimates the suggestion: *Aeneas the plague-bringer*. Aeneas a plague-bringer?

Nicholas Horsfall reviewed Lyne at *Classical Review* 38.2, 243–45, and objected: ‘L.’s hunt for allusions comes up with answers of varying credibility: I can see why he finds the Homeric plague god behind *Aen.* 4.143ff., but not here alone we might pause to ask “is that association actually relevant?”, “does it make sense, or serve any real purpose?” and above all, “can we believe that that is what V. himself wanted us to conclude?”.’ To which Lyne responds: ‘We have no evidence for what Vergil wanted us to conclude—beyond the text. The question is pointless and evades the interest[ing] fact in the text. “Is that association actually relevant?” Why shouldn’t it be, unless we have preconceptions about what Vergil “intends” to be relevant?’<sup>183</sup> What are we to make of this? Horsfall’s question ‘is that association actually relevant?’, far from being ‘pointless’ (as Lyne would have it), strikes me as a good one—as a challenge to the reader who has this association to make it ‘relevant’ (whatever this is taken to mean: ‘relevance’, too, is under continual negotiation as the history of engaging with Latin texts amply shows) by offering a good argument in its favour (and the criteria for what counts as ‘good’ are of course also to some extent in flux). Conversely, Horsfall seems to rule out relevance in part by failing

182. Lyne (1987), p. 124.

183. Lyne (1994), p. 199.

to see any point or purpose, in part by appealing to the poet *behind* the text as a decisive instance of critical authority. Yet I agree with Lyne that the reference to *Iliad* 1 (if it is one) makes a *lot* of sense and serves a very real purpose: for starters, it renders Virgil's text more resonant with meaning, makes for a perfect fit with the overarching dynamics of this section, and enhances the complexity and appeal of his artistry. Put differently, if Virgil did not want his readers to have this association and consider it relevant, he *should* have.]

**149–150: *haud illo segnior ibat/ Aeneas, tantum egregio decus enitet ore:***

Virgil foregrounds two points of comparison, juxtaposed asyndetically: the graceful energy that animates Aeneas' movements (emphasized by means of the litotes *haud segnior*); and his beauty. *illo* is ablative of comparison and refers to Apollo; in the second clause the comparison is understood: so much (*tantum*) beauty shines forth from the face of Aeneas as (*quantum*) shines forth from that of Apollo. (a<sub>1</sub>) *tantum* (a<sub>2</sub>) *egregio* (b<sub>1</sub>) *decus* (c) *enitet* (b<sub>2</sub>) *ore*, i.e. attribute<sub>1</sub> attribute<sub>2</sub> noun<sub>1</sub> verb noun<sub>2</sub>, almost forms a 'golden pattern'. Note the enjambment of *Aeneas*; the name serves as pivot between the two clauses of which he is the subject.

**151: *postquam altos uentum in montis atque inuia lustra: uentum, sc. est,*** i.e. the third person singular perfect indicative passive of *uenio*, here used impersonally ('they came'). The preposition *in* modifies both *altos montis* and *inuia lustra*. The line features three elisions (*postquam altos, uentum in, atque inuia*), where the space between words disappears: is this, perhaps, Virgil's way of emphasizing by formal means the pathless thickets into which the company moves? Along those lines, note the clash of accent and ictus in both *altos* and *montis*—a formal feature arguably used to underscore their steepness. The ascent into the mountains surprises: Juno, in her masterplan, had twice mentioned 'groves' as venue for the hunt (see 118: *in nemus ire parant*; 121: *saltusque indagine cingunt*) and there are other incongruous touches, such as hunters on horseback (135, 156–57), including Ascanius, who enjoys himself 'in the middle of the vale' (156: *mediis in uallibus*). Weber explains the unexpected mountain setting as a means of sustaining affinities between Aeneas and Dionysus: 'As Dionysus is a mountain god who hunts, Aeneas is a hero who hunts in the mountains' (333), or, more specifically, 'Aeneas is the Virgilian counterpart of Euripides' Dionysus, as both the hunter who survives the hunt and a stranger newly arrived from Asia. His advent, like that of Dionysus, leads to the death of the reigning monarch' (334).



**152: ecce:** the particle—a colloquialism integrated into high poetry by Virgil—marks a moment of transition, from preparation to the actual start of the hunting.<sup>184</sup>

**152–153: ferae saxi deiectae uertice caprae/ decurrere iugis:** Virgil interlaces words modifying the hunted animals (*ferae—deiectae—caprae*: note the hyperbaton of attribute (*ferae*) and noun (*caprae*), effectively placed at the end of the line) with words describing the topography (*saxi—uertice*). The result is a combination of symmetry and order on the level of form that generates a moment of suspense before the sudden resolution in the subsequent lines: *decurrere* (= *decurrerunt*) *iugis*. The placement of *deiectae* between the genitive attribute (*saxi*, here used as a synonym of *montis*) and the noun on which it depends (*uertice*) enacts its meaning and prepares for the main verb (*de-iectae ~ de-currere*): the mountain goats are separated from ('driven off') their usual haunts on the rocky mountain-crags.

**153–155: alia de parte patentis/ transmittunt cursu campos atque agmina cerui/puluerulenta fuga glomerant montisque relinquunt:** the subject of all three clauses (*transmittunt, glomerant, relinquunt*) is the much-delayed *cerui* (corresponding in metrical position to the *caprae* in line 152). There is a sharp change in rhythm from 154, where all the feet, except the fifth, are spondaic, to 155, where all the feet, except the fourth, are dactylic. In each case the rhythm is thematically appropriate: first, the deer crowd together; then they take off. Virgil further enhances the speed of their flight by a *husteron proteron*: logically, the deer must first leave the mountains before they can rush across the plain, but Virgil has inverted the natural order to convey a 'head-over-heels' impression. Compare, for instance, *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act 3, Scene 10: 'The Antoniad, the Egyptian admiral,/ With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder.' (The logical sequence would require 'they turn the rudder and fly.')

Other unsettling features include the hyperbata *patentis ... campos* (which 'opens' up a space for the words of movement *transmittunt* and *cursu* that Virgil places within the 'open ... fields') and *agmina ... puluerulenta* (reinforced by the verse break). The sequence of attribute—noun : noun—attribute is chiasmic, an

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184. *Ecce* occurs 37 times in the *Aeneid*: for what it is doing in the epic, see the nuanced discussion by Dionisotti (2007). Our instance receives mention on page 80, 'when Dido's hunt moves from brilliant show into action'; more generally: 'insofar as it [sc. *ecce*] has a definable meaning, it is that of expressing immediacy and engagement, in relation to happenings, people or thoughts, whether visible or not' (p. 83).

effect reinforced by the chiasmic symmetry of verb (*transmittunt*)—ablative (*cursu*)—accusative object (*campos*) : accusative object (*agmina*)—ablative (*fuga*)—verb (*glomerant*). The excitement of the verse design calms down and resolves itself in the final colon, which is simplicity itself: *montisque [= montesque] relinquunt*.

**156–159: at puer Ascanius mediis in uallibus acri/ gaudet equo iamque hos cursu, iam praeterit illos,/ spumantemque dari pecora inter inertia uotis/ optat aprum, aut fuluum descendere monte leonem:** To end his description of the hunt, Virgil includes a vignette of Ascanius, who displays the exuberant enthusiasm of youth, both in how he hustles and bustles around the hunters on his high-spirited horse and in his heroic fantasizing. (*acri*, prominently placed at the end of the line, harks back to Ascanius through the alliteration, but modifies *equo*; *acri/ gaudet equo* is a highly effective verse break, with the enjambment followed by a choriambic phrase.) The passage forms a tricolon, organized around the three main verbs *gaudet—praeterit—optat*. *optat* introduces an indirect statement that falls into two parts, linked by *aut*: the first revolves around a boar—note the awe-inspiring hyperbaton *spumantem ... aprum*, the second around a lion (also marked by a hyperbaton, though a less impressive one: *fuluum ... leonem*). Ascanius' fascination with hunting will play a major role in the second half of the poem, where his shooting of a treasured stag is one of the main reasons why war breaks loose: see 7.475–510. Ascanius is also notably, if not surprisingly, absent from Juno's script.

**156: mediis:** true to its meaning, the word is placed plumb in the middle of the line.

**158: pecora inter inertia:** the preposition *inter* ('between'), true to its meaning, is placed *between* the two segments of the phrase it coordinates. *iners* here means something akin to 'unadventurous' or 'harmless', i.e. not suited to test the mettle Ascanius thinks he has.

**158: uotis:** in the dative, with *dari*: '... may be granted to his vows.' *Votum* is a technical term of Rome's civic religion and usually involves a promise to a god in return for his or her aid, especially in situations of military crisis. Here the term ironically ennobles Ascanius' day-dreaming and wishful thinking.

**The Perfect Storm:** the concluding part of this section consists of thirteen lines, falling into three blocks of roughly equal length:

160–164: The storm starts; everyone is running for cover (5 lines)

165–168: Dido and Aeneas ‘happen’ to find themselves in the same cave and have sex (4 lines)

169–172: The disastrous consequences (4 lines)

**160–164: Interea magno misceri murmure caelum/ incipit, insequitur commixta grandine nimbus,/ et Tyrii comites passim et Troiana iuuentus/ Dardaniusque nepos Veneris diuersa per agros/ tecta metu petiere; ruunt de montibus amnes:** these lines fulfill Juno’s announcement in 120–24. See in particular the repetitions (with variation) of *nigrantem commixta grandine nimbum* (120) ~ *commixta grandine nimbus* (161) and *tonitru caelum omne ciebo* (122) ~ *magno misceri murmure caelum* (160). Overall, the design of 160–64 is systematically chiasitic: clause 1: subject (*caelum*) and verb (*incipit*), clause 2: verb (*insequitur*) and subject (*nimbus*), clause 3: subject (*Tyrii comites, Troiana iuuentus, Dardanius nepos*) and verb (*petiere*), clause 4: verb (*ruunt*) and subject (*amnes*). In his coverage of personnel and weather conditions Virgil has achieved ‘asymmetrical balance’: three clauses (1, 2, and 4) are about the weather and its consequences, one clause (3) is about the personnel, but the number of subjects for each of the two topics is identical: *caelum, nimbus, amnes*—Carthaginians, Trojans, Ascanius.

**160–161: Interea magno misceri murmure caelum/ incipit, insequitur commixta grandine nimbus:** *magno misceri murmure* is a magnificent instance of onomatopoeia, combining *m*-alliteration with assonance (*-ri, mur-, -mur-, -re*) and a deft mixing of vowels, all of which are present: *a, o, i, e, i, u, u, e*. The formulation recalls Virgil’s description of the cave of the winds, which are said to roar around their prison *magno cum murmure montis* (1.55), before they are set loose at Juno’s behest. Again the goddess takes control of the weather, infringing upon a domain where her husband Jupiter is nominally in charge, and unleashes chaos and destruction.<sup>185</sup>

**161: incipit, insequitur:** the asyndeton emphasizes the speed with which the cloud gathers—it is there in an instant: *insequitur* thus does what it means: it follows immediately upon what precedes, without room for a

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185. For a discussion of the cave of the winds, see Essay 1: Content and Form.

connective. The alliterative beat *in-, in-* reinforces the effect. (See already 1.104–05: *tum prora auertit et undis/ dat latus; insequitur cumulo praeruptus aquae mons*; ‘then the prow turns and exposes the ship’s side to the waves; down in a heap follows a steep mountain of water.’)

**162–164: et Tyrii comites passim et Troiana iuuentus/ Dardaniusque nepos Veneris diuersa per agros/ tecta metu petiere; ruunt de montibus amnes:** Virgil accounts for all parties of the hunt mentioned before, i.e. the Carthaginians, the Trojans, and Ascanius (= *Dardanius nepos Veneris*), though he devotes significantly more space to the entourage than Juno did in her preview, who dismissed it with two words (123: *diffugient comites*). He also introduces an element of variation: when describing the preparations for the hunt, he wrote of Carthage’s *delecta iuuentus* (130) and Aeneas’ Phrygian companions (140: *Phrygii comites*); here the Carthaginians (from Tyre) are the companions (*Tyrii comites*), and the Trojans the youth (*Troiana iuuentus*). The ‘confused’ word order is not dissimilar to the design Virgil used to describe the hunted beasts in flight at 153–55. Note the hyperbaton, reinforced by enjambment, of *diuersa ... tecta*, enacting the notion of ‘being scattered’ all across the fields (*per agros*, deftly placed between) and the two adverbial modifications sprinkled in at the beginning (*passim*) and the end (*metu*). (Cf. 153–55: *cursu* and *fuga*.) The main verb (*petiere* = *petierunt*: ‘a perfect of sudden action’<sup>186</sup> is long in the coming. Just as *incipit* and *insequitur* in 161, *petiere* and *ruunt* are juxtaposed asyndetically—a startling effect enhanced by the preceding polysyndeton *et ... et... -que*.

**165–166: speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem/ deueniunt:** an almost verbatim repetition of 124–25: *speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem/ deuenient*; only the future *deuenient* has become a present (*deueniunt*). See above for comments on the design. Virgil’s closest Greek model for the encounter in the cave is Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 4.1128–69, which describes the consummation of the marriage between Jason and Medea (also in a cave). But in Apollonius, the situation is quite different: the Argonauts have reached the land of the Phaeacians, ruled by king Alcinous and his wife Arete, hotly pursued by the enraged Colchians. In desperation, Medea pleads with Arete not to be handed back over to the Colchians to take her back to her father’s home (4.1014–28), mentioning

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186. Austin (1963), p. 68.

in passing that she has so far retained her virginity (4.1024–25). But when Arete presents Medea's case to her husband, Alcinous, who is disinclined to offend either Zeus or Aeetes with a partial judgment in favour of Medea, makes his judgment dependent on Medea's virginity (or lack thereof): 'If she is a virgin, I direct that she be returned to her father; if, however, she is sharing a bed with a husband, I will not separate her from her spouse, nor will I hand over to enemies any child she may be bearing in her womb' (1006–9). Thereupon he falls asleep, giving Arete the opportunity to inform the Argonauts of her husband's intent. Thus put into the picture, Jason and Medea do not hesitate for an instant to get the wedding ceremony and the physical consummation of their marriage underway (4.1128–69):

Immediately they prepared a mixing-bowl of wine for the blessed gods, as is proper, and following correct ritual procedure led sheep to the altar. On that very night they made ready a bridal bed for the girl in the sacred cave where Macris once lived ... Here, then, they prepared the great bed; over it they threw the gleaming golden fleece, so that the wedding night should be honoured and become the subject of song. And for them the nymphs gathered flowers of many colours and brought them cradled in their white breasts. ... Some were called daughters of the river Aegaeus, others haunted the peaks of mount Melite, and others were woodland nymphs from the plains. Hera herself, Zeus' wife, urged them to come in Jason's honour. To this day that holy cave is called the Cave of Medea, where the nymphs spread out fragrant linen and brought the marriage of the couple to fulfilment. ... The crew ... to the pure accompaniment of Orpheus' lyre, sang the wedding song at the entrance of the bridal chamber. It was not in Alcinous' domain that the heroic son of Aeson [Jason], had wished to marry, but in the halls of his father after his return to Iolcus; and Medea also had the same intention, but necessity led them to make love at that time. But so it is: we tribes of woe-stricken humans never enter upon delight wholeheartedly, but always some bitter pain marches alongside our joy. Thus, though they melted in sweet love-making, both were fearful whether Alcinous' sentence would be brought to fruition.

Yes, we may share Apollonius' sentiment and sympathise with Jason and Medea that they did not have the palace wedding both of them dreamed of. Arrangements are indeed a bit makeshift and premature and the mingling in the cave perhaps not quite what Jason and Medea had in mind for their first night together. And yet: we get a proper wedding ritual, nymphs honouring the bride in joyful humour at the behest of Hera, and Hera herself overseeing the proceedings and giving her blessings. The

Golden Fleece, too, one would have assumed, is a reasonable substitute for a wedding couch, and the music (Orpheus' lyre!) is of the finest quality. The contrast to the illicit romp we get in *Aeneid* 4, where Dido and Aeneas, sweaty from the hunt and drenched by the sudden downpour, just 'happen' to find themselves all alone, with Juno's nymphs howling on top of the mountain, could not be starker. It is the difference between a one-night stand motivated by sudden opportunity and overwhelming passion and deliberate and purposeful, if somewhat reluctant, entry into the bonds of marriage according to proper ritual protocol: Jason and Medea 'get legal'; Aeneas and Dido do not.

**166–168: prima et Tellus et pronuba Iuno/ dant signum; fulsere ignes et conscius aether/ conubiis summoque ulularunt uertice Nymphae:** upon the arrival of Dido and Aeneas in the same cave, Virgil shifts the focus back to the sphere of the divine—a euphemistic side-stepping of what, precisely, the pair get up to in the cave. Instead, we get a cosmic spectacle, put on by Tellus, Juno, Aether, and the Nymphs, that mimics aspects of a wedding ritual. Here are three assessments:

Austin: 'Virgil thus makes the wedding ritually correct, as one would expect him to. But it remains a supernatural ceremony, and an uncanny one for all its seeming correctness.'<sup>187</sup>

Moles: 'For her own purposes Juno desires the union of the two lovers to be a permanent marriage: this does not amount to an objective statement of the nature of their union. While the divine responses to the "wedding" are indeed ritually correct the *emotional* effect is of a ghastly parody of the norm, suggesting rather that this marriage presided over by Juno is not a true marriage at all.'<sup>188</sup>

'Vergil's passage suggests either a wedding or a parody of a wedding, and the event is described in such a way that it is hard to know what is really happening.'<sup>189</sup>

You may (or may not) wish to use these views as points of departure in developing your own reading of the text.

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187. Austin (1963), p. 69.

188. Moles (1984), p. 52. See also Pöschl (1962), p. 82: 'But the signs, multiplied by earth tremor... are not those of a gay wedding feast, but are rather related to the epiphanies of the gods of the nether world.' He notes that 'here begins the activity of Fama, which as an inescapable, growing demoniacal power, somewhat like another Allecto, announces and sets off the tragic development.'

189. O'Hara (2011), p. 38.

**166–167: Tellus ... fulsere ignes et conscius aether:** a presence of Earth (or Mother Earth) nicely complements the presence of *aether* and the flashes of lightning that come down from the sky—but neither Tellus nor Aether are standard divinities in the context of a Roman wedding.<sup>190</sup>

**166: pronuba Iuno:** a *pronuba* was ‘a married woman who conducted the bride to her bridal chamber’ (*OLD* s.v.). It derives from *nubo*, to marry, and is hence etymologically related to *conubium* (see below, 168). Here the term is used as an epithet of Juno, clearly in her self-assigned role as assistant in the wedding she plans, stages, but arguably fails to execute properly. Juno is thus portrayed as present during the cave-encounter in her ritual function as goddess of marriage. Intriguingly, however, *pronuba* is not attested as an attribute of Juno before our passage (though later becomes common in Virgilian imitators, from Ovid onwards). This raises the question: ‘does Virgil use the epithet *Pronuba* in an ironic sense?’<sup>191</sup>

**167: dant signum:** they give a/ the sign—for what?

**167–168: fulsere ignes et conscius aether/ conubiis:** possibly a hendiadys (= *fulsit ignibus aether*).<sup>192</sup> *fulsere* = *fulserunt*, i.e. third person plural perfect indicative active of *fulgeo*. *consciis* is ‘a witness’, and Virgil links the witnessing and what is being witnessed through alliteration: *consciis—conubiis*. The enjambed *conubiis* correlates with the enjambed *dant signum* in the previous line, almost as if the two form a complete sentence (*dant signum conubiis*). The clause picks up 4.126 from Juno’s speech: *conubio iungam stabili*. (Virgil had already used the plural of a single marriage at 3.319.)

**168: summoque ulularunt uertice Nymphae:** *ulularunt* = *ululauerunt*; *ululo*, which is an onomatopoeic word, here means ‘to howl in religious excitement’: *OLD* s.v. 2c. Significantly, the corresponding noun makes an appearance at 4.667–68 (the collective response to the news of Dido’s suicide): *lamentis gemituque et femineo ululatu/ tecta fremunt, resonat magnis plangoribus aether* (‘the palace rings with lamentations, sobbing, and the howling of women, heaven echoes with loud wails’). As such, it foreshadows Virgil’s comments in the

190. See Hersch (2010), pp. 266–67.

191. Hersch (2010), p. 193, in the context of a broader discussion of the attestations of *pronuba* in Latin literature from Plautus onwards.

192. Pease (1935), p. 207.

subsequent lines that the event in the cave, whatever it was, inaugurated a plot that would end in death (*leti...causa*). Virgil's lexical intertwining of sex and death has a proto-Freudian ring to it.

**169–170: ille dies primus leti primusque malorum/ causa fuit:** the transition from the flashes of lightning and the howling nymphs of the previous lines to the sober and brutal assessment of the consequences is stark, especially since Virgil states the consequences (death and evils) before giving the reasons, which follow in lines 170–72. (This inversion, of course, also enables the close proximity of sex and death discussed above, and suggests that the event in the cave itself, and not just what it does to Dido, causes what follows.) Virgil stresses that his narrative has reached a tragic turning point (in Aristotelian terms: *peripeteia*) through the reiteration of *primus*, which is perhaps best understood adverbially and indicating 'degree rather than chronology', i.e. 'that day before all others.'<sup>193</sup> For the encounter in the cave clearly has a prehistory: it is not that Dido's condition changes; rather, the physical consummation of her passion entails a change in her behaviour, which has tragic consequences.<sup>194</sup> As John Henderson points out (*per litteras*), the Homeric word for this notion, which would turn into a cliché of tragic historiography, is *arche-kakos*, i.e. 'the beginning of evil.' One also wonders when the evils are supposed to have run their course. Do they end with Dido's suicide? Or with the end of the *Aeneid*? With the historical fulfilment of Dido's course in the figure of Hannibal? Or with the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC? Virgil's formulation is open-ended in terms of chronology and endows Dido's and Aeneas' romp in the cave with world-historical significance, along the lines of William Butler Yeats, *Leda and the Swan*, 19–21, which traces the destruction of Troy and the subsequent murder of Agamemnon back to a divine orgasm: 'A shudder in the loins engenders there/ The broken wall, the burning roof and tower/ And Agamemnon dead.'

**170–172: neque enim specie famaue mouetur/ nec iam furtiuum Dido meditatur amorem:/ coniugium uocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam:** Dido comes out. She no longer has any regard for appearances (*specie*) or for what people say (*fama*, which sets up the personified entry of the

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193. Pease (1935), p. 209.

194. Virgil uses a similar formulation in *Aeneid* 7, with reference to Ascanius' shooting of the pet-stag that stirs the Latins to pick up arms: *quae prima laborum/ causa fuit* (481–82) ('this was the first cause of travails').



concept, i.e. *Fama*, in 173). Considerations of face or reputation no longer bother her: she lives her love out in the open and calls it marriage.<sup>195</sup> Note the gradual increase in agency: Virgil starts out with a negated passive (*neque ... mouetur*) and continues with a negated deponent (*nec iam ... meditatur*), which together serve as foil for two verbs in the active: *uocat*, *praetexit*. The diaeresis after *uocat* is unusual: a caesura in the third foot (after *hoc*, in this case) is far more frequent. There is, then, a ‘premature’ shift from a description of what Dido is doing to a critical evaluation of her action, from a ‘subjective’ to an ‘objective’ point of view. At the same time, one could construe *hoc* both with *coniugium* (neuter accusative singular) and *nomine* (neuter ablative singular), especially since *coniugium* lacks a predicative complement: ‘she calls this marriage, and with that name covers her *culpa*.’ *hoc*, then, functions as a marked pivot between Dido’s lie or self-delusion (*coniugium*) and the authorial assessment (*culpam*). There is a shift from the dactylic *coniugium uocat* to the heavily spondaic *hoc praetexit nomine culpam*, reinforced by the complete coincidence of accent and ictus in each word after *uocat*. As Moles puts it: ‘Virgil’s words clearly imply that Dido is behaving badly and knows it: she “is no longer influenced by appearances or reputation; no longer is it a secret love she practises. She *calls* it marriage—with this *name* she *conceals* her “*culpa*”’. Dido, now shameless, *says* something... which is not true. Virgil draws a clear contrast between Dido’s *outward* behaviour and the *inner* reality.<sup>196</sup> The two key nouns *coniugium* and *culpam* frame the line and are linked by alliteration. The verb *praetexo* [*prae + texo*], here in the figurative sense of ‘to cloak (with)’ (OLD s.v. 2b), links sex and death in the Dido episode insofar as it recurs at 4.500 (Anna not realizing that her sister is about to commit suicide): *non tamen Anna nouis praetexere funera sacris/ germanam credit* (‘yet Anna does not believe that her sister cloaks her death with these new rites’).

What does the *culpa* consist in? Moles has an excellent discussion of the various possibilities that have been suggested, including the popular view that the *culpa* lies in her disloyalty to Sychaeus, her reneging on her oath of eternal faithfulness.<sup>197</sup> But, he argues, ‘this makes no sense in context. To defend herself against criticism Dido calls her “*culpa*” a “*coniugium*”.

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195. *furtiuus* in the sense of ‘stealthy’ or ‘clandestine’ is also used of love-affairs by Catullus 7.8 and occurs in other love poets as well (OLD s.v. 2a), though it is difficult to say whether it has a distinct generic flavour here. If it does, the adjective marks a switch from ‘elegy’ to ‘tragedy.’

196. Moles (1984), pp. 48–54.

197. *Ibid.*, pp. 51–52.

Her “*culpa*” cannot be disloyalty to Sychaeus, for *any* association with a man, whether licit or illicit, *necessarily* involves abnegation of her oaths to Sychaeus and to protest that her association with Aeneas was a “*coniugium*” does nothing at all to meet that charge, as indeed Dido herself has already recognized (*Aen.* 4.15–19).’ The right answer, according to Moles, is that the *culpa* ‘consists in the *illicit* nature of her love-making with Aeneas, which Dido, to defend her reputation, tries to present as proper “*coniugium*”.’ This generates a powerful split in perceptions (or versions) of reality. Dido may be dishonest in trying to cover up her sexual misdemeanour, but Juno certainly is of the considered opinion that the act of intercourse that took place in the cave represents a proper marriage (see *Aeneid* 4.99, 103–4, 125–27), for which she has even solicited the agreement of Venus. So what is missing? Most importantly, as Moles makes clear, the consent of the supposed groom. Even if one were to assume that the sex-act could serve as substitute for the speech-act (the equivalent of the ‘I do’ in a modern wedding), for it to be felicitous would seem to require mutual consent. And Aeneas himself never regards his fling in the cave (and whatever commingling and cohabitation comes after) as a *coniugium*. See esp. 4.338–39 (Aeneas speaking to Dido): *nec coniugis unquam/ praetendi taedas aut haec in foedera ueni* (‘I never held out the torch of a bridegroom or entered into such a contract’).

## 173–197: The News Goes Viral

173–77: Introduction to *Fama* (5 lines)

178–83: Parentage and appearance (6 lines)

184–88: Generic description of her movements (5 lines)

189–95: The rumours she spreads of Aeneas and Dido (7 lines)

196–97: Pinpointing a specific target: Iarbas (2 lines)

The term *fama* has already made an oblique appearance at 170 (*neque enim specie famaue mouetur*, sc. Dido). Now *Fama*, as goddess, enters the epic for good. Even after her first intervention, she remains a latent presence, not least at the end of Iarbas’ prayer to Jupiter (if unanswered, he implies, Jupiter is nothing more than an idle rumour, a *fama inanis*: 218) and in the form of the *fama melior* of 222 that Aeneas and Dido have become oblivious to. In Dido’s case, it would seem to refer to her unblemished reputation that she needs for effective civic leadership; in his case it refers, as Jupiter’s

subsequent address to Mercury makes clear, to the future *gloria* that comes with the founding of Rome and the Roman people (see 232: ... *tantarum gloria rerum*). Personified *Fama* then reappears: in reporting news of Aeneas' intention to leave, she triggers the same reaction in Dido as she triggered in Iarbas when she reported that Dido and Aeneas are staying together (4.298–300: *eadem impia Fama...*). She makes two further interventions later in Book 4: at 556–59, she takes delight in bringing news of Aeneas' impending departure to Dido in a dream appearance; and at 666 she glories in spreading news of Dido's suicide through the stricken city.

There are some precedents for this figure. Two are particularly noteworthy: *Iliad* 4.439–43, where Strife (Eris) grows from small beginnings until her head reaches heaven; and Hesiod, *Works & Days* 760–64, where Rumour is explicitly identified as a pernicious goddess.<sup>198</sup>

Homer, *Iliad* 4.439–43:

ὦρσε δὲ τοὺς μὲν Ἄρης, τοὺς δὲ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη  
 Δεῖμός τ' ἠδὲ Φόβος καὶ Ἔρις ἄμοτον μεμαυῖα,  
 Ἄρεος ἀνδροφόνουιο κασιγνήτη ἑτάρῃ τε,  
**ἦ τ' ὀλίγη μὲν πρῶτα κορύσσεται, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα**  
**οὐρανῷ ἐστήριξε κάρη καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαίνει.**

[The Trojans were urged on by Ares, and the Greeks by flashing-eyed Athene, and Terror, and Rout, and Discord that rages incessantly, sister and comrade of man-slaying Ares; *she at first rears her crest only a little, yet thereafter plants her head in heaven, while her feet tread on the earth.*]

Hesiod, *Works & Days* 760–64:

ὦδ' ἔρδειν· δεινὴν δὲ βροτῶν ὑπαλεύεο **φήμην**·  
**φήμη** γάρ τε κακὴ πέλεται κούφη μὲν ἀεῖραι  
 ῥεῖα μάλ', ἀργαλέη δὲ φέρειν, χαλεπὴ δ' ἀποθέσθαι.  
**φήμη** δ' οὐ τις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται, ἦντινα πολλοὶ  
 λαοὶ **φημίξουσι**· θεὸς νύ τις ἔστι καὶ αὐτή.

[Act this way. Avoid the wretched *talk* of mortals. For *talk* is evil: it is light to raise up quite easily, but it is difficult to bear, and hard to put down. No *talk* is ever entirely gotten rid of, once many people *talk* it up: it too is some god.]

198. See also Homer, *Iliad* 2.93 and *Odyssey* 24.413 (for the workings of rumour). For a survey of earlier authors as well as imitators of Virgil (from Ovid onwards) see Pease (1935), pp. 211–13.

Yet despite these parallels in earlier literature, the entry of *Fama* into Virgil's narrative comes as a surprise: 'For the modern reader *Fama* seems to spring from the poet's head as the first circumstantially elaborated personification set to work within the action of a human narrative.'<sup>199</sup> She is a fascinating figure in her own right, as the personification of a phenomenon we are all familiar with, that is, rumour and gossip, often malicious: in that sense *Fama* is, as it were, Virgil's equivalent of the modern tabloids, not least in how she delights in (illicit) sex, scandal, and sensation.<sup>200</sup> But there is another, 'metapoetic' side to her: besides her activities on the level of plot *within* Virgil's epic world, she has also strong affinities with the poet of the *Aeneid* (hence 'metapoetic'), who is trying to spread his 'epic news' far and wide. Philip Hardie magisterially sums up the double nature of our goddess, also bringing out the gender-angle to her function and portrayal: 'The personification of *Fama* in Book 4 of the *Aeneid* (173–97) is a Hellish female monster, the embodiment of the unattributable and irresponsible voices of the multitude, the many-headed beast, who thrives on distortion and defamation, as she spreads a malicious version of the behaviour of Dido and Aeneas. At the same time *Fama* is a figure for the ambitions of the male epic poet and for the fame that he confers on his subject-matter and on himself.'<sup>201</sup>

**173–174: Extemplo Libyae magnas it Fama per urbes,/ Fama, malum qua non aliud uelocius ullum:** *Libyae magnas it Fama per urbes* is another instance of iconic word order: subject (*Fama*) and verb (*it*) are placed right in the middle of the phrase that refers to the sites through which *Fama* moves, an effect reinforced by the ensuing hyperbaton *Libyae magnas...urbes*. Note the epanalepsis ('taking up again, repetition') of *Fama*, which is strictly speaking unnecessary from the point of view of syntax, but generates a great rhetorical effect.<sup>202</sup> The relative pronoun *qua* is in the ablative of comparison (dependent on *uelocius*); the antecedent is *Fama*; the verb (*sc. est*) is elided. Virgil's identification of *Fama* as a *malum* no doubt recalls the *malorum* of line 169.

199. Hardie (2009), p. 108.

200. The nickname of the now defunct *News of the World*, for instance, was 'News of the Screws': see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-14070733>.

201. Hardie (2009), p. 67, with a more detailed discussion at pp. 116–25 ('The Sublime and Grotesque Body of the Poet').

202. Another famous instance of this trope occurs at the very end of the *Aeneid*. Just before Aeneas deals Turnus the fatal blow he tells his foe that the one who is going to kill him is Pallas, the son of Euander whom Turnus had slain before: 12.948–49: *Pallas te hoc uulnere, Pallas/ immolat et poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit*.

**175–177: mobilitate uiget uirisque adquiret eundo,/ parua metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras/ ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit:**

The three lines portray the exponential growth of a rumour, which gains in power as it is spreading. The basis of *Fama*'s strength is hence her mobility, which Virgil states as a matter of principle (*mobilitate uiget*) before glossing it further (*uirisque adquiret eundo*). (*uiris* is the accusative plural of *uis* and forms an alliterative *figura etymologica* with *uiget*.) After this 'theoretical' perspective, he goes on to illustrate the phenomenon with a striking image: from small beginnings (cf. *parua*), *Fama* soon takes flight and eventually stretches from earth to heaven.

[*Extra information*: Hardie points out that Virgil has modelled his portrayal of *Fama* in part on Lucretius' description of the thunderbolt: '*Fama* is introduced as an agent in motion through the world of human society (173: *magnas ... per urbes*). But in the manner of her motion she allusively embodies a force in the natural world, the Lucretian thunderbolt: with lines 174–5 compare [Lucretius'] *De Rerum Natura* 6.177 (wind in clouds creating thunderbolt) *mobilitate sua feruescit* 'it grows hot through its own motion', 340–2 (thunderbolt) *denique quod longo uenit impete, sumere debet | mobilitatem etiam atque etiam, quae crescit eundo* | *et ualidas auget uiris et roborat ictum* 'then too as it advances with a long-continued moving power, it must again and again receive new velocity, which increases as it goes on and augments its powerful might and strengthens its stroke.'<sup>203</sup> He sums up: 'Allusively [i.e. if we read Virgil's *Fama*-passage with Lucretius' thunderbolt-passages in mind] *Fama* is a natural force, translated to the theatre of human actions and words.' This raises the question: why does Virgil cast his character as 'thunderbolt-*Fama*'? What are the affinities, what the differences between Virgil's *Fama* and Lucretius' thunderbolt? Why does he model his divine force on a natural force? (Lucretius, it is worth recalling, writes a poem that explains the world by way of Epicurean physics, i.e. atomic motions. He programmatically eliminates any possibility of divine intervention in human affairs.) Is it meaningful that Lucretius' thunderbolt flashes from Heaven to Earth, whereas *Fama* moves from Earth to Heaven?]

**176: parua metu primo:** fear is a quality that Virgil associates with *Fama* throughout the passage. But there is a curious reversal: to begin with (*primo*: perhaps best taken adverbially), *Fama* is small because of fear, but as she grows she starts to terrify: see esp. 187: *et magnas territat*

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203. Hardie (2009), p. 71. (Note that the bolding of *auget* in Lucretius points to *uiget* in Virgil. One could further argue that Virgil, with *adquiret*, economically sums up the three Lucretian verbs *sumere*, *crescit*, and *auget*, just as he contracts the phrase *ualidas ... uiris* into *uiget*. Lucretius' prolixity is of course part of his message: it conveys something of the difficulty of harnessing all the atoms that go into the making of a thunderbolt; Virgil's divine agent can operate more organically.)

*urbes*. But why should Virgil foreground fear, either that of *Fama* herself or that caused by her? The dynamics that enable her success and sway are perhaps not dissimilar to what animates Freddy Krueger, the child murderer from Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, who, though dead, comes to haunt those who give credence to his continued existence, by which he transforms from a nightmare into a reality. Likewise with *Fama*: in terms of physique, she is a repulsive monster; but her frightening powers gain in force only by people engaging with her—by perpetuating what they hear and believing what she says. Or, as John Henderson has it (*per litteras*), '*Fama* is just like any lively classroom/ supervision/ seminar discussing the *Aeneid*.'

A further consideration is the continuing relevance of the Lucretian intertext: as Philip Hardie has pointed out, *Fama* in Virgil corresponds to *Religio* in Lucretius; and the prime function of *religio*, according to Lucretius, is the generation of (unjustified) fear of the gods: '*Religio* and *fama* go together, *DRN* [sc. Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*] 1.68–9 (*Religio*'s weapons of terror) *quem neque fama deum nec fulmina nec minitanti | murmure compressit caelum* 'he [sc. Epicurus] was quelled neither by stories about the gods, nor by thunderbolts, nor by the heaven with its threatening rumble.'<sup>204</sup> In general, Virgil 're-mythologizes' Lucretius' mechanical universe, which is devoid of meaningful religious agency: according to the philosophy of Epicurus, which Lucretius professes, the gods live carefree lives in so-called 'intermundia', i.e. 'between worlds', and take no interest in human affairs. *Fama* is an extreme case: Virgil not only revalidates divine agency as an important factor in the human sphere, but even turns an abstract concept ('rumour') into a powerful, supernatural agent.<sup>205</sup>

**177: *ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit***: the design of the verse is chiasmic: *ingreditur* correlates with *condit*, *solo* with *inter nubila*; and the accusative object of the second verb (*caput*; 177) stands at the centre of the arrangement (not unlike *uiris* in 175).

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204. Hardie (2009), p. 72. See also p. 93: 'The unpacking of *Religio* into *fama* (*deum*), *fulmina*, *minitans murmur* provides us with an identikit for *Fama*: her name, the meteorological phenomenon with which she is allusively identified, and the hostile mutterings that are her mode of operation.'

205. Ironically, *Fama* goes on to stimulate religious doubts in at least one character in the poem, i.e. Iarbas: see below on 4.198–218. In other words, she has the same effect as Epicurus, throwing into question the notion of a universe governed by divine forces.

## 178–181:

*illam* **Terra parens ira inritata** deorum  
*extremam*, ut perhibent, Coeo Enceladoque *sororem*  
**progeniuit**, *pedibus celerem et pernicibus alis*, 180  
*monstrum horrendum, ingens*, ...

The basic syntax of these lines is simple: accusative object (*illam*) subject (*Terra*) verb (*progeniuit*). But Virgil manages to ‘inflate’ this basic structure to convey something of *Fama*’s monstrous nature. His basic technique is to add a predicative complement (*extremam ... sororem*) and two appositional phrases (*pedibus celerem et pernicibus alis* and *monstrum horrendum, ingens*) to *illam* to expand *Fama*’s presence throughout these verses (see the parts in italics). In comparison, the presence of *Fama*’s mother (see the bits in bold) dwindles in importance. Two hyperbata reinforce the effect of monstrosity, ensuring that both the figure of *Fama* and Virgil’s verse-design and syntax are terribly ‘out of shape’: (i) *Terra parens ... progeniuit* (reinforced by the front-position of *illam*); (ii) *extremam ... sororem*. Rhythm, too, matches theme: line 180, which describes *Fama*’s swiftness, is almost entirely dactylic (the exception being the fourth foot), whereas the subsequent verse has a horrendously spondaic opening: *monstrum horrendum ingens*. (Note the two elisions, which generate a monstrous agglomeration.) Virgil further enhances the impression of speed in line 180 by means of alliteration (*progeniuit, pedibus, pernicibus*) and preference for the ‘light’ vowels e and i, especially in the central portion *pedibus celerem et pernicibus*—in contrast to the heavy *mons-*, and *hor-* and the plodding homoioteleuton *-strum, -dum* (which impacts despite the elision) in line 181.<sup>206</sup>

**178: Terra parens, ira inritata deorum:** the mother of *Fama* is Earth, who brought forth *Fama* because she was angry at the gods (*deorum* is an objective genitive dependent on *ira*; the paronomasia *ira inritata* almost amounts to a specious *figura etymologica*).

**179: extremam, ut perhibent, Coeo Enceladoque sororem:** *Fama* figures here as the last of the giants. Her brother Enceladus already figured at 3.578–62: *fama* (sic!) has it, so Aeneas says while recounting their adventures on Sicily, that Jupiter struck Enceladus low with his thunderbolt and then piled Mt. Etna on top of him. In Greek mythology, Coeus is one of the Titans, but the

206. Cf. Aeneid 3.658 (of Polyphemus): *monstrum horrendum informe ingens...*

1st-century AD mythographer Hyginus (writing in Latin) includes him in a list of giants. He is the obscure father of Leto/ Latona, the famous mother of Apollo and Diana. Ovid makes fun of his obscurity at *Metamorphoses* 6.185–86 (Niobe speaking): *nescio quoque audete satam Titanida Coeo/ Latonam praeferre mihi...* ('dare to prefer to me the Titan-daughter Latona, born from some Coeus or other...').

**179: ut perhibent:** this vague reference to 'hearsay', by which the author both acknowledges his use of sources and distances himself from their truth value, is particularly appropriate in the present context: Virgil is picking up rumours on Rumour.

**180: progenit, pedibus celerem et perniciousibus alis:** Fama is swift on the ground (*pedibus*) and in the air (*perniciousibus alis; perniciousibus, -icis*: 'swift', 'agile'). The verse enacts the quality: 'note the swift rhythm and the hard, clattering consonants',<sup>207</sup> notes Austin, referring to the preponderance of dactyls and the alliteration plus assonance of *pro-*, *-ge-*, *pe-*, *ce-*, *pe-*, *-ci-*.

**181–183: cui, quot sunt corpore plumae, tot uigiles oculi subter (mirabile dictu), tot linguae, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit auris:** Virgil seems to be saying that *Fama* has as many (*quot*) feathers on her body as she has eyes (*oculi*), tongues and mouths (*linguae, ora*), and ears (*auris*). In the *quot*-clause an *ei* (matching *cui*) needs to be supplied mentally, just as the verb [sc. *sunt*] needs to be supplied in the first *tot*-clause: *cui, quot [ei] sunt corpore plumae, tot uigiles [sunt] oculi subter*. In the second and third segment of the tricolon Virgil gradually abandons this construction. A break in syntax ('anacoluthon') ensues: we are notionally still in the relative clause introduced by *cui*, but have to assume a shift in the *kind* of dative (from dative of possession to the ethical dative) in the second segment to stay within this construction; and there is a complete break in syntax in the third segment.<sup>208</sup>

207. Austin (1963), p. 72.

208. See further Hardie (2009), pp. 99–100 who points out that a variant of this construction recurs at *Aeneid* 7.325–26 when Virgil describes the Fury Allecto: *cui tristia bella | iraeque insidiaeque et crimina noxia cordi*, which in turn points back to Ennius' representation of *Discordia* ('Strife') in his epic *Annales*, fragment 220–21 in Skutsch's edition: *corpore tartarino prognata Paluda uirago | cui par imber et ignis, spiritus et grauis terra* ('a maiden in a military cloak, born with hellish body, of equal proportion with water and fire, air and heavy earth'). *Discordia*, like *Fama* an outbirth of chthonic divinities, is of obvious relevance to the *Fama*-episode and her personified appearance in Ennius may have had



–*cui ... tot uigiles oculi subter [sunt]*, with *cui* a dative of possession

–*[cui] tot linguae, totidem ora sonant*, with *cui* an ethical dative

–*[quae] tot subrigit auris*, with the notional relative pronoun in the nominative since *Fama* is the subject of *subrigit*, though it is perhaps better to assume that Virgil does not continue with the relative clause at all.

One could consider the anacoluthon a deliberate rhetorical effect: ordinary syntax is incapable of describing this extraordinary creature. And in one sense, the image seems reasonably straightforward: rumour flies, after all, (hence the feathers) and needs the specified organs to spread effectively. Problems arise because of the *subter*, which seems designed to specify where, precisely, the watchful eyes are located: one each under each feather? And are we supposed to imagine that the same applies to tongues, mouths, and ears? Visualized, this would turn the underside of each feather into a full-blown face—a seemingly grotesque idea.

One solution would be to say, with Dyer, that the first and second *tot*-clauses do not refer to *Fama's* physique at all, but to the fact that as she flies, below her (*subter*) human beings watch and chatter, feeding her as she flies by and pricks her ears.<sup>209</sup> Dyer thus construes (and hence punctuates) the *cui* differently, as a connecting relative that belongs into the *quot*-clause only: *cui quot sunt...*, i.e. ‘How many feathers she has, so many watchful eyes there are ... etc.’ I am not convinced: this reading would rather reduce *Fama's* monstrosity, which Virgil has underscored so much. One could, however, ponder a deliberate ambiguity, insofar as *Fama* is both a goddess and the sum-total of all human gossip-mongers, not least since Virgil emphasizes the need for our collaboration with *Fama* for her to grow and succeed. The open-ended construction may therefore gesture to the fact that the concentrated assemblage of eyes, tongues and mouths, and ears on her body has a numerical, if dispersed, equivalent of individual eyes, tongues, mouths, and ears among us humans: she is not unlike Thomas Hobbes’ Leviathan, who, in Abraham Bosse’s famous frontispiece, emerges

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archetypal status for Virgil. See Hardie (2009), p. 101: ‘Ennius’ *Discordia* was perhaps the original embodiment in Roman poetry of the monstrous sublime, her impact heightened by the judicious obscurity of her elemental body’ with a more detailed discussion following on pages 103–07, drawing in part on Feeney (1998), pp. 109–11.

209. Dyer (1989). He argues that this interpretation would go some way towards explaining Virgil’s preference for *mirabile dictu* over *mirabile uisu* (though this can be accounted for in other ways: see note *ad loc.*). Cf. critically Hardie (2009), pp. 95–96.

from the earth as a monstrous creature put together of many individual human beings.

**182–183: tot uigiles oculi .../ tot linguae, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit auris:** within the basic tricolon marked by the anaphora *tot, tot, tot*, Virgil introduces an element of variation in the second colon, following up the *pars pro toto*, i.e. *linguae*, with the *totum*, i.e. *ora*, which enables him to slip in another reference to the innumerable devices of communication that *Fama* has at her disposal.

**182: mirabile dictu:** *dictu* is an ablative supine: ‘marvellous to relate.’ Virgil does not say *mirabile uisu*, i.e. ‘marvellous to behold.’ Why does he put the emphasis on verbal, rather than visual representation? Most obviously, perhaps, this is about *Fama*, after all, etymologically related to *fari*, to speak, so Virgil, within his visualization/ personification of the abstract concept, points to its primary meaning and mode of operation.

**184–188:** After a portrait of the figure, we get a description of her activities, both during nighttime (184: *nocte uolat*) and daytime (186: *luce sedet*). (The two verse openings correspond to each other syntactically and metrically.) After taking two lines each to describe *Fama* during night (184–85) and day (186–87), Virgil sums up his general description of the monster in 188, before focusing on her actions in the case at hand.

**184–185: nocte uolat caeli medio terraeque per umbram/ stridens, nec dulci declinat lumina somno:** the two verses describing *Fama* at night revolve around the present participle *stridens*, which stands like an emphatic pivot between ‘she flies’ (*uolat*) and ‘she does not sleep’ (*nec ... declinat...*). *medio* enacts its meaning ‘midway between’ twice: it is placed in the middle of the line and in the middle of its two genitive attributes *caeli* and *terrae* (linked by the *-que*). The effect is enhanced by how Virgil frames the line: *nocte* is picked up by *per umbram*.<sup>210</sup> *per umbram* could go either with *uolat* (as a pleonastic reinforcement of *nocte*) or with *stridens*. If one construes *per umbram/ stridens*, *stridens* most likely signifies the whirring sound of her wings as she flies through the dark; if *stridens* stands without any circumstantial qualification it may also refer to *Fama*’s screeching.

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210. Mercury, who is, in many ways, chthonic *Fama*’s Olympian double, is also depicted as flying midways between sky and earth: *terras inter caelumque uolabat* (256).

**185: *stridens, nec dulci declinat lumina somno***: a heavily spondaic line (with the exception of the fifth foot). The soothing alliterative assonance *dulci decli-* and the coincidence of accent and ictus in *declinat lumina somno* would lull any reader to sleep, but not *Fama*! (Note that accent and ictus also coincide in *stridens* and *nec*—there is, then, a real tension in this verse: the opening, with its emphasis on screeching and the negation, renders the potential resolution hinted at in the second half ineffectual.)

**186–187: *luce sedet custos aut summi culmine tecti/ turribus aut altis, et magnas territat urbes***: as in the night part, Virgil uses two verbs linked paratactically: *sedet* and *territat*. The *aut...aut* (with the second postponed) coordinates *summi culmine tecti* and *turribus altis*. *Fama* is always on her guard (cf. *custos*), keeping under surveillance both private dwellings (*tecta*) and public fortifications (*turres*), and always choosing the most advantageous, i.e. highest, spot from which to keep watch. (Virgil emphasizes this especially in the phrase *summi culmine tecti*: she sits on the highest point of the highest roof.)

**188: *tam ficti prauique tenax quam nuntia ueri***: *tenax* and *nuntia* stand in apposition to the (implied) subject of *uolat, declinat, sedet, and territat*, i.e. *Fama*. The design is chiasmic, with the objective genitives framing the adjective and the noun on which they depend (both of which have a verbal force: ‘grasping’ (*tenax*); ‘announcing’ (*nuntia*): (a) *ficti prauique* (b) *tenax* (b) *nuntia* (a) *ueri*. It is, however, slightly unbalanced because of the two negative genitives dependent on *tenax*: with *Fama*, it seems, for each bit of the truth we get two bits that are freely invented (cf. *ficti*) or distorted (cf. *prau*).

**189–197**: After the generic description of who *Fama* is, what she looks like, and how she operates, Virgil proceeds to specify what she does with regard to Dido and Aeneas. The section falls into two parts: we first get the general dissemination of the news (189–95); then, after spreading the news far and wide, *Fama* proceeds to target Iarbas, knowing full well that he will find the rumours particularly upsetting (196–97). Overall, she conveys the impression that Dido and Aeneas have become, to echo Horace, ‘two pigs in the sty of Epicurus’, giving themselves over to a life of luxury and

sex, slaves of their desires: 'Dido's court', *Fama* intimates, has become 'the location for a(n) ... attempt to realize an Epicurean life.'<sup>211</sup>

**189–190: haec tum multiplici populos sermone replebat/ gaudens, et pariter facta atque infecta canebat:** *replebat*—*canebat* is an unusual rhyme. *canere* is also what the epic poet (and his internal narrator Aeneas) do. So why does Virgil choose this charged word here? Is he suggesting an analogue between *Fama* and epic poetry, or, indeed, the problematic truth-value of his (and Aeneas' narration) and that of the monster? Austin observes that the assonance in *facta* ~ *infecta* and *replebat* ~ *canebat* 'effectively suggests the way in which *Fama* keeps hammering away remorselessly.'<sup>212</sup>

**190: gaudens:** in terms of syntax, verse position, scansion, and rhetorical function, *gaudens* mirrors *stridens* in line 185.

**190: pariter facta atque infecta:** it is the perfect mixture of truths and falsehoods that makes rumour so insidious: Virgil enacts the mixture by way of the two elisions in *fact(a)atqu(e)infecta*. In what *Fama* says, it is impossible to draw a line between what is true and what is false. And consider what she says: is not everything true in one way or another? Sure, she gives the facts an insidious spin, but she does not utter an outright lie. See the allegorical generalization by Hardie for whom *Fama* 'represents the power of the spoken word to exceed the truth while yet remaining anchored to it.'<sup>213</sup> He points out the affinity with the rhetorical trope of hyperbole, which, as he shows in his monograph, is absolutely fundamental for Virgil's aesthetics. What do you make of such (rather disturbing) parallels between *Fama* and Virgil's epic song?

**191–194: uenisse Aenean Troiano sanguine cretum,/ cui se pulchra uiro dignetur iungere Dido;/ nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa, fouere/ regnorum immemores turpique cupidine captos:** the verses, which contain '*Fama*'s song', are in indirect speech, dependent on *canebat*: the two main verbs are *uenisse* (with the subject accusative *Aenean*) and *fouere* (with the implied subjects Aeneas and Dido).

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211 Hardie (2009), p. 71. See also Pease (1935), pp. 36–38 and Dyson (1996), both cited by Hardie.

212. Austin (1963), p. 73.

213. Hardie (1986), p. 274.

**191: Troiano sanguine cretum:** Virgil is much concerned with ‘blood-descent’ — it is a key theme of his epic and governs the interface between the world of the epic and the wider historical context, i.e. the principate of Augustus, not least since it is a Virgilian innovation. Lineage allows Virgil to centre the story of Rome in the one *gens* to which Aeneas and Iulus, Julius Caesar and Caesar Octavianus belong—even though, as John Henderson rightly reminds us (*per litteras*) ‘adoption, along with other relations (affinal, fostering, alliance...), turns out to be cardinal in the perpetuation of Rome and Roman tradition: Octavian, *Claudius* Marcellus, Agrippa, Pallas—all the social sons of the *pater patriae* throughout the *gens Romana*. Within the idea of blood-descent, the crucial clash will be thoroughbred Iulus, Trojan on both sides, so “autochthonous” vs. the hybrid Italian-Trojan son of Aeneas and Lavinia. This is the excruciation of “dynastic royalty”, and Augustans knew that already.’ The first time the idiom of blood-descent enters the epic is in the extended proem (1.19–20: *progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci/ audierat* [sc. Juno], *Tyrias olim quae uerteret arces*; ‘Yet in truth she had heard that a race was springing from Trojan blood, to overthrow some day the Tyrian towers’); it then recurs at prominent places throughout, not least in Venus address to Jupiter in *Aeneid* 1 (235–37: *hinc fore ductores, reuocato a sanguine Teurci ... pollicitus* [sc. *es*, i.e. Jupiter]; ‘you promised that from Teucer’s restored blood-line should come leaders...’) and the so-called ‘parade of heroes’ towards the end of *Aeneid* 6.

**192: cui se pulchra uiro dignetur iungere Dido:** Virgil nicely interlaces the two lovers, in what could be seen as an enactment of *iungere*: Aeneas (*cui*) Dido (*se pulchra*) Aeneas (*uiro*) Dido (*dignetur... Dido*). *uiro* (‘as a husband’) complements *cui*. But *Fama* picks on ‘beautiful Dido’ (note the hyperbaton), especially by her choice of verb: *dignetur*, in nice assonance with Dido, slyly refers to her earlier refusal to entertain proposals of renewed wedlock; that she deems the foreign cast-away proper husband-material must grate with the local dignitaries who suffered the indignity of rejection when they went wooing.

**193: nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa** [sc. *sit*], **fouere:** *Fama* uses a slyly contrived expression. Literally, she says that ‘Dido and Aeneas keep the winter warm between them’, but what she really means is that ‘all winter long, Dido and Aeneas keep *each other* warm’, in what is a thinly veiled allusion to sex and postcoital hugging. The formulation, together with *luxu* (see below), is designed to generate envy in those left out in the cold.

**193: luxu:** *luxus* refers to ‘soft or extravagant living’, or ‘(over-)indulgence’: *OLD* s.v. 1. It is a life-style often associated with effeminacy and the perceived decadence of the East. At Rome, the term had a stellar career in stories of decline that set in over the last centuries of the republic, with the influx of wealth and the apparent loosening of the martial-marital ethos that supposedly made Rome great. One influential representative of this view is Sallust, both in his *War Against Jugurtha* and the *War Against Catiline* (53.5). The theme of luxury certainly plays a key role in Iarbas’ reaction: below 198–218.

**194: regnorum immemores:** that this is not simply *Fama*’s point of view becomes manifest at 221, where Aeneas and Dido are described in the authorial voice (or perhaps through the eyes of Jupiter) as *oblitos fama[e sic!] melioris amantis* (‘lovers forgetful of their better reputation’). Epic is a ‘genre of memory and remembrance’ through and through, from Homer onwards: the basic premise of the *Iliad* is Achilles’ choice of a short life in return for everlasting fame in Homeric song (the Greek term is *kleos*) over a long life in forgettable obscurity. And, in the *Odyssey*, the memory of his wife and home in Ithaca sustains Odysseus on his travels and protects him from all temptation (even the option of acquiring a divine consort, Calypso, and the attendant prospect for immortality): the basis of his *kleos* (‘immortal fame’) is, not least, a successful *nostos* (‘return home’). The theme of forgetting is central to the episode of the ‘Lotus-eaters’ (*Odyssey* 9.91–104), where some of Odysseus’ men eat of the sweet-tasting lotus and become mindless (or, in Latin, *immemores*) of their desire to return to their native island. In the *Aeneid*, memory and forgetting operate in an even more complex key, as Aeneas has to overcome his memories and allegiances to the Trojan past to facilitate and found the Roman future. In Carthage, this basic storyline of the epic has reached a temporary dead end.

**194: turpique cupidine captos:** *turpis* is ‘morally depraved.’

**195: haec passim dea foeda uirum diffundit in ora:** this line, which concludes the general section of *Fama*’s newsreel correlates in diction and meaning with the initial verse, i.e. 189: *haec tum multiplici populos sermone replebat*. Note the identical openings (*haec*, followed by an adverbial qualification of time (*tum*) or space (*passim*), the similar meanings of the verbs (*replebat*, *diffundit*) and the well-nigh synonymous formulations

*multiplici populos sermone* and *uirum ... in ora*. The adjective *foeda* could modify either *haec* ('these foul things'), or *dea* ('the foul goddess'), or *ora* ('the foul lips of men'); most naturally, it is an epithet of the goddess purely on the basis of proximity in the verse, but the various grammatical possibilities are by no means mutually exclusive. Arguably, the range of options is deliberate, designed to convey something of *Fama's* infectious power: the rumours (*haec*) the foul (*foeda*) goddess (*dea*) spreads are foul (*foeda*) and those who listen to her and disseminate her rumours further become 'foul-mouthed' (*foeda in ora*) as well.

**196: protinus ad regem cursus detorquet Iarban/ incenditque animum dictis atque aggerat iras:** after the shot-gun approach indicated by *passim*, *protinus* conveys a clear sense of purpose and direction. *Fama's* plan unfolds in three steps, with the first (accusative object: *cursus* and verb: *detorquet*) standing in chiasmic order to the second (verb: *incendit* and accusative object: *animum*) and third (verb: *aggerat* and accusative object: *iras*) cola of the tricolon. *detorqueo* here means something akin to 'she changes her path so as to seek out specifically king Iarbas.' Iarbas was the African king who granted Dido the land on which to build her city and became one of her suitors; he did not take kindly to being rejected (Anna singles him out at 36–7 from among the other African princes: *despectus Iarbas/ ductoresque alii*), much less to hearing about her willingness to enter into a liaison with a Trojan refugee instead: this was adding insult to injury. *Fama* knows how best to stir up trouble.

**197: dictis:** best taken *apo koinou* with both *incendit animum* and *aggerat iras*.

**197: aggerat iras:** *aggero, -are, -avi, -atum* [*agger + o*] here means 'to reinforce, intensify': *OLD* s.v. 6a. Iarbas was already aggrieved by Dido's rejection of his advances.

## 198–218: In Dad I Tru\$t

**198–202:** The five lines provide a brief introduction to Iarbas (*hic*), his lineage, and his extraordinary devotion to Jupiter. The flashback (cf. the perfect *posuit* and the pluperfect *sacraverat*) serves as explanatory foil for his outrage at the news about Dido that *Fama* brings his way.

**198: Hic Hammone satus rapta Garamantide nympa:** born, i.e. son, of Hammon (in the ablative of origins). Hammon, a Libyan deity, was identified with Greek Zeus and Roman Jupiter (a phenomenon called ‘syncretism’: various cultures are claimed to call the same divinity by different names). The mother remains virtually anonymous (an odd Garamantian nymph) and is deprived of active participation in the procreation—a point nicely reinforced by the ablative absolute construction *rapta ... nympa* and Virgil’s choice of *satus*, the perfect passive participle of *sero*, ‘to sow’, which reduces the importance of the nymph to providing a vessel for Jupiter’s seed: syntax and lexicon reinforce Virgil’s callous account of Iarbas’ parentage.

**199–202: templa Ioui centum latis immania regnis,/ centum aras posuit uigilemque sacrauerat ignem,/ excubias diuum aeternas, pecudumque cruore/ pingue solum et uariis florentia limina sertis:** *templa ... centum ... immania, centum aras* is one of the most impressive accusative objects in the entire poem. Note the chiasmus (a) *templa* (b) *centum* (b) *centum* (a) *aras*. The word order enacts the deliberate placement (cf. *posuit*) of the temples in his expansive kingdom: Virgil intersperses the phrase that signifies the temples (*templa*), their number (*centum*), and their size (*immania*) with references to their dedicatee (*Ioui*: ‘for Jupiter’) and their position (*latis ... regnis*). Here it sounds as if Hammon situated the temples at various places *throughout* his realm; but the fact that he prays in front of altars (plural) in 204 would seem to suggest that some, if not all, are concentrated in one location.

We move from temples to the altars in the temples to the fire on the altars: a gradual, climactic narrowing of focus, even though the tense (*sacrauerat* is pluperfect, *posuit* perfect) would seem to suggest that Hammon first dedicated the ever-watchful fires before constructing the buildings in which to house them.<sup>214</sup> *excubias ... aeternas* stands in apposition to *uigilem ... ignem* (explaining its function), with a chiastic inversion of attributes and nouns: (a) *uigilem* (b) *ignem* (b) *excubias* (a) *aeternas*. *pingue solum* and *limina* are either further accusative objects with *sacrauerat* or, more likely, nominatives with the verbs (*erat, erant*), elided. Overall, the nouns in the second half of the description pick up the accusative objects in the first half in inverse order, creating the pattern abc ~ cba: (a) *templa* (b) *aras* (c) *ignem*; (c) *excubias* (b) *solum* (a) *limina*. The thresholds (*limina*) refer to the entrance to the temples (*templa*); the ground (*solum*) that is fat with the blood of

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214. See O’Hara (2011), p. 42.



sacrificial victims harks back to the altars where the beasts are slaughtered (*aras*); and at the centre, as we have seen, *excubias* articulates the purpose of the fire (*ignem*).

**202: uariis florentia limina sertis:** another Virgilian word-picture, with the varied garlands ‘wreathed around’ the *florentia limina.serta, -orum* n. comes from *sero, (serui), sertus*, ‘to wreath’, which is not to be confused with *sero, seui, satus*, ‘to sow’, which Virgil used in 198 (see above on *satus*).

**203–205: isque amens animi et rumore accensus amaro/ dicitur ante aras media inter numina diuum/ multa Iouem manibus supplex orasse supinis:** The basic structure of the sentence consists of *is* (203) ... *dicitur* (204) ... *Iouem supplex orasse* (205): ‘he is said to have beseeched Jupiter as suppliant.’ Then we get further specifications of why he did this (he was *amens animi* and *rumore accensus amaro*), where he did it (*ante aras, media inter numina diuum*), how he did it (*manibus supinis*) and with what frequency or intensity he did it (*multa*: perhaps best taken as an adverbial accusative). These verses ironically recall and invert 1.48–49 (Juno speaking): *et quisquam numen Iunonis adorat/ praeterea aut supplex aris imponet honorem?* (‘And will any still worship Juno’s divine powers or humbly lay sacrifice upon her altars?’) If there a goddess feels she needs to assert herself to avoid a crisis of recognition and identity, here Iarbas demands the same of Jupiter.

**203: amens animi et rumore accensus amaro:** commentators read the striking phrase *amens animi* (where *animi* is either a locative or a genitive of reference or specification) as a Virgilian response to Lucretius’ phrase *mens animi* (*De Rerum Natura* 3.615, 4.758 etc.), in which *mens* designates ‘the intellectual rather than the emotional side of *animus*.’<sup>215</sup> If that is the case, it would imply that Iarbas, whose *animus* has lost (*a-*) its *mens*, is now ruled entirely by his passions. *accensus* picks up the metaphors of fire from 197: *incenditque animum*. This is the first of a series of revelations that cause the recipient to lose his/her mind and burst into fiery passion. See below 279 (Aeneas in shock at Mercury’s epiphany and reacting to his message): *obmutuit amens* and 281: *ardet abire fuga*; and 300–01 (Dido reacting to *Fama*’s news that Aeneas is getting his fleet ready): *saeuit [sc. Dido] inops animi totamque incensa per urbem/ bacchatur*.

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215. Hardie (2009), p. 72.

**204: ante aras media inter numina:** a replay of the scene we get at 62, where it is Dido who *ante ora deum pinguis spatiatur ad aras*. The verse features another *media* in the middle, and another *inter* ‘between’ the two components of the phrase it governs, here reinforced by *ante aras*. As behooves a preposition meaning ‘before’, *ante* comes before the noun it governs. For *numen/ numina*, see above on 4.94.

**205: manibus ... supinis:** Iarbas prays with his hands turned upwards, i.e. towards the divinity he is trying to reach.

**206–218:** Iarbas’ prayer to Jupiter falls into three parts:

206–210: Opening remarks that issue a challenge to Jupiter (5 lines)

211–214: Dido’s past misbehaviour (4 lines)

215–219: Her current licence and its religious implications (4 lines)

**206–210:** Iarbas begins with two questions of roughly equal length, in which he poses a dilemma: either Jupiter sees what is going on with Dido and Aeneas, or there is no point in worshipping him; but if he is aware of what is going on, so the implication, his inaction is disgracefully negligent given the dutiful veneration he receives. Jupiter is thus placed in an impossible position: the way Iarbas frames the situation, he cannot plead ignorance and hence is undoubtedly guilty of negligence. In essence, the fact that these going-ons can happen without any sign of divine disapproval or intervention suggests that the economy that sustains religious worship has broken down, and Iarbas puts it to Jupiter that it is in the god’s own interest to restore it.

**206–208: Iuppiter omnipotens, cui nunc Maurusia pictis/ gens epulata toris Lenaeum libat honorem,/ aspicias haec?:** overall, the rhetorical force of the sentence is finely calibrated between respect for the god and outrage at his inactivity. Iarbas begins in prayer-mode, with a vocative (*Iuppiter*) and honorary epithet (*omnipotens*) as if to invoke the divinity or address him in a hymn. The relative clause, however, already introduces a subtle switch in focus. In a hymn, this construction is often used to detail the powers and achievements of the divinity invoked. But Iarbas does not retain Jupiter in the subject position—instead, he, with a whiff of indignation, puts on record what he and his people are doing *for* Jupiter (the relative pronoun *cui* is in the dative of advantage). Then comes, effectively placed in emjambment,

the choriambic punchline: *aspicis haec?* Only now it becomes manifest that we are not dealing with a respectful invocation but a question that challenges Jupiter as potentially remiss in his oversight of human affairs.

*omnipotens* is a standard epithet of Jupiter, but Iarbas here uses it with a special edge: given that Jupiter is assumed to be all-powerful (an erroneous assumption, as we shall see), the question whether he sees what happens in Carthage becomes rhetorical; and as a rhetorical question it carries a bitter accusation: you see this—and do nothing? The very fact that Iarbas *questions* whether Jupiter has been paying attention puts an oblique questionmark over the supreme divinity's epithet *omnipotens*. In articulating frustration with divine inaction in the face of injustice, Iarbas touches upon a problem that haunts many religious belief-systems: if gods or God are/ is all-powerful, how come that there is perceived injustice and evil in the world? Iarbas adds a second aspect to his accusation: in the relative clause introduced by *cui* he underscores the material investment that he and his people have devoted to ensuring Jupiter's approval and support. There is a clear implication here that in the economy of exchange and services that tends to inform many religious transactions (sacrifice and worship in return for divine benevolence, according to the logic of *do-ut-des*, i.e. 'I, the human, give [something] in order that you, the god, give [something] in return': see above Footnote 89), Jupiter miserably fails to uphold his part of the bargain.

**206–207: ...cui nunc Maurusia pictis/ gens epulata toris Lenaeum libat honorem...:** the force of the *nunc* is either that now, i.e. under the rule of Iarbas, the people of Mauretania (*Maurusia* is the Greek name for the region of North-West Africa) have started to worship Jupiter whereas they did not do so before, or that the worshipping is going on at this very moment, i.e. is concurrent with Iarbas' prayer.<sup>216</sup> *pictis ... toris*: translators and commentators are virtually unanimous in thinking that the phrase refers to 'couches decorated with *embroidered* covers', but my colleague Dr Clemence Schultze, an expert in ancient clothing, assures me that they are mistaken. *pictus*, she argues, simply means 'decorated' and here refers most likely to woven, figurative decoration, rather than embroidery (which apparently was very rare compared to weaving patterns and figures). Cf. 1.708: during Dido's banquet, the Trojans are 'summoned to decline on

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216. See Pease (1935), p. 230.

decorated couches' (*toris iussi discumbere pictis*). Note the regular pattern of attributes (*Maurusia, pictis, Lenaeum*) and nouns (*gens, toris, honorem*), nicely interlaced in the first two cases, which are organized around the participle *epulata*. (As often, the deponent past participle here expresses an action that started in the past but continues contemporaneously with the action of the main verb.) *Lenaeum ... honorem* is a contrived way of saying 'an offering of wine' (*Lenaeus, a, um* = Bacchic, from Greek *Lênaios*, in turn derived from *lênos*, which means 'wine-press'), but note the nice alliteration *Lenaeum libat* that ensues. *libare* is a ritual action, the pouring of wine in honour of the god.

**208–210: an te, genitor, cum fulmina torques/ nequiquam horremus, caecique in nubibus ignes/ terrificant animos et inania murmura miscent?:** after already getting into Jupiter's face with the importunate question *aspicis haec?*, Iarbas now becomes even more aggressive. He could have made it clear that the question is entirely rhetorical (with the implied answer from Jupiter being 'of course I do') by following it up with a request for a divine intervention to right the wrong. Instead, he leaves the answer open and posits the stark alternative that *either* Jupiter sees what is going on *or* he is impotent. As with the first rhetorical question, the set of beliefs behind this rhetorical posture seems to be the following:

- (i) Jupiter, far from being impotent, is omnipotent (at least that is what Iarbas calls him);
- (ii) he hence sees exactly what is going on (which turns *aspicis haec?* into a rhetorical question);
- (iii) he does nothing about it—despite the worship he receives from his son and his people.

As the following narrative makes clear, the presuppositions that inform the prayer are not aligned with the realities of Virgil's literary world: (i) is only partially correct (Jupiter is *neither* impotent *nor* omnipotent); (ii) is incorrect; and (iii) is both moot (since (ii) is incorrect) and ironic: Jupiter will react to Iarbas' prayer, but not out of a concern for Iarbas, but for Aeneas and his destiny! In other words, Iarbas, just like Anna, is a minor character who thinks about the gods and engages in religious activities while being shown up by the poet as profoundly misunderstanding the supernatural realities that apply within the narrative universe of the *Aeneid*.

The *an*-sentence pursues the implications of Jupiter *not* seeing what is happening at Carthage. If that were the case, Iarbas argues, the meteorological phenomena that tend to be seen as expressions of his will, are in fact devoid of meaning, and the religious awe they trigger beside the point. Iarbas raises the possibility of absence of divine purpose in the universe (which implies that one may well cease to pay attention to divinities or try to interact with them) by means of one subordinate clause (*cum fulmina torques*) and three main clauses: *te nequiquam horremus*; *caeci in nubibus ignes terrificant animos*; and *inania murmura miscent* (with the subject remaining *caeci in nubibus ignes*). Jupiter retains meaningful agency in the *cum*-clause, but the three main clauses then gradually proceed to cancel it out. Each contains a term that evokes a world defined by supernatural indifference: *nequiquam*, *caeci* ('blind' in the sense of 'random', i.e. without point or purpose), and *inania*. Iarbas thus removes Jupiter from the scene bit by bit. In the first colon, which also includes a direct address in apostrophe (*genitor*), he juxtaposes a frightening action undertaken by Jupiter (*cum fulmina torques*: second person singular) with fear on the part of humans (*horremus*: a generic first person plural, 'we humans'). The second person personal pronoun *te*, which is the accusative object of *horremus* and harks back to *torques*, functions as link between the *cum*-clause and the main clause. In the second and third main clause, matters look very different. We get the same natural phenomenon, but without reference to divine agency. And Iarbas pointedly shifts from the personal 'you—we' to the third person plural: *ignes terrificant animos*. While *terrificant* picks up *horremus*, Iarbas no longer presupposes a relationship between Jupiter and humanity. Instead of considering lightning (*ignes*) and thunder (*murmura*) the result of divine action (Jupiter throwing his thunderbolts *for a reason*), Iarbas gives a 'natural' explanation: they become meteorological occurrences that are devoid of intention (cf. *caeci*) and purpose (cf. *inania*). (The breaking apart of *fulmen*, i.e. thunder-bolt, into bolt (*ignes*) and thunder (*murmura*) hints at a quasi-scientific approach to a phenomenon often endowed with religious import. Virgil/Iarbas here use/s the idiom of Epicurean physics as elaborated by Lucretius in the *De Rerum Natura*.)

**208: genitor:** the meaning is both generic and specific: Iarbas, after all, *is* the son of Jupiter.

**210: murmura miscent:** an onomatopoetic phrase.

**211–214: femina, quae nostris errans in finibus urbem/ exiguam pretio posuit, cui litus arandum/ cuique loci leges dedimus, conubia nostra/ reppulit ac dominum Aenean in regna recepit:** In four verses Iarbas presents his take on the affair between the Carthaginian queen and the Trojan castaway, reminding Jupiter of what happened when Dido arrived in the region. He outlines the background in a series of relative clauses (*quae, cui, cui*), framed by the exposed subject *femina* and the rest of the main clause (*conubia nostra ... recepit*). The last line of this account features a nice antithesis between *reppulit* at the beginning of the verse (in enjambment and followed by a very effective diaeresis after the first foot) and *recepit* at the end: linked by alliteration, the two verbs refer to diametrically opposed actions on Dido's part.

His prayer has intriguing parallels with the accusations Dido levels at Aeneas when she hears of his preparations for departure (4.373–75): *eiectum litore, egentem/ excepi et regni demens in parte locaui;/ amissam classem, socios a morte reduxi* ('I welcomed him, a castaway on the shore, a beggar, and madly gave him a share in my kingdom; his lost fleet I rescued, his crews I saved from death'). She prefaces these observations with an invocation of the gods as guardians of justice (371–72: *iam iam nec maxima Iuno/ nec Saturnius haec oculis pater aspicit aequis*; 'Now neither mighty Juno nor the Saturnian father looks on these things with righteous eyes!'), but then goes on to mock the notion that Aeneas' desire to leave Carthage has been kindled by a messenger from Jupiter, endorsing in the process a quasi-Epicurean conception of the gods as tranquil beings uninterested in human affairs (376–80), only to follow up on this with a renewed appeal to *pia numina* to shipwreck Aeneas on his way to Italy (382–84): just like Iarbas, Dido, too, is confused about the supernatural forces at work in the (literary) world she inhabits.

**211: femina:** Dido, of course, but Iarbas cannot bring himself to call her by her name; instead he spits out the generic 'a woman'.

**211: nostris errans in finibus:** Just as Dido has come wandering around in Iarbas territory, so *errans* has roamed into the midst of *nostris ... in finibus*. Note that Iarbas uses an ablative, rather than an accusative of direction, emphasizing the haphazard and random nature of Dido's movements.

**211–212: urbem/ exiguam:** 'to be contrasted with the *ingentia ... moenia* of 1, 365–366 and the *minae ... murorum ingentes* of 4, 88–89. Perhaps Iarbas had

not lately seen the city which had risen so rapidly, or else he wished to disparage the upstart town or to emphasize the smallness of the tributary territory upon which its economic life depended.<sup>217</sup> A third possibility is perhaps even more likely: he knows full well what Carthage has been turning into, but feels betrayed, and is unwilling to acknowledge that a woman has had the better of him.

**212–213: litus arandum ... loci leges:** Iarbas continues to deprecate Dido's achievements: after his reference to the supposedly small size of the city, he laughs at her people ploughing the shore (not the most fertile of soils) and highlights that he has dictated the terms on which she can use the land. From a legal point of view, he considers himself her overlord.

**212: pretio posuit:** the phrase puts the emphasis on Dido's mercenary, rather than military, *modus operandi* in taking possession of the land: she purchased (*pretio* is an ablative of price), rather than conquered, her kingdom. Austin detects 'snarling contempt'<sup>218</sup> in the *p*-alliteration. Virgil may here be hinting at the reputation of the Phoenicians and Carthaginians as nations of traders.

**214: dominum Aenean:** *dominum* is best taken predicatively: 'Aeneas as (her) lord.' *Dominus* (unlike *uir*) is a marked term: like Juno at 4.103 (*liceat seruire marito*), Iarbas diagnoses a servile streak in Dido, implying that she has willingly become Aeneas' slave. These internal perspectives on her status and condition contrast sharply with Virgil's systematic use of *regina* throughout the book. Dido thereby turns into a challenging paradox: she belongs to both the highest and the lowest category of human beings, nominally a queen, but, according to some of her fellow-characters, thinking and acting like a slave. The formulation also stands in implicit contrast to *conubia nostra* and suggests that Dido has got a worse deal by choosing Aeneas over himself.

**215–217: et nunc ille Paris cum semiuiro comitatu/ Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem/ subnexus, raptu potitur:** the design is similar to 211–14: Iarbas begins with a contemptuous reference to Aeneas (*ille Paris*; cf. *femina* in 211), which he pads out with a prepositional phrase (*cum ...*

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217. Pease (1935), p. 233.

218. Austin (1963), p. 77.

*comitatu*) and a lengthy participle construction (*Maeonia ... subnexus*; cf. the relative clauses in 211–213) before the main verb of the sentence (*potitur*). Dido is reduced to the level of spoils, *raptum*. (Like *uti, frui, fungi, and uesci, potiri* takes an ablative object.)

**215: ille Paris:** Iarbas construes an analogy: as Paris is to Helen and Menelaus, so Aeneas is to Dido and himself. In each case, the rightful husband had his wife stolen by an unwarlike Trojan prince. The notion that Aeneas is ‘another Paris’ recurs as an insult in the second half of the poem: see 7.321: *Paris alter*; 7.363; 9.138–39. This, as John Henderson points out (*per litteras*), is ‘part of an all-pervasive typological struggle for the roles of Trojans and Achaeans in Virgil’s re-make of the *Iliad*, which eventually casts Aeneas as Achilles, and his victim Turnus as Hector—*mutatis, however, mutandis*.’

**215: cum semiuiro comitatu:** ‘with his entourage of eunuchs.’ *semiuir* (put together from *semi-* and *uir*) seems to be a Virgilian neologism, but he relies on a more general discourse: ‘This particular taunt was made by Greeks and Romans against various Oriental peoples, from the Persian Wars onward, including the Trojans.’<sup>219</sup> The verse design adds to the effect: ‘the rhythm produced by the four-syllable line-end *comitatu*, with clash of ictus and accent in the fifth foot ..., adds to the “foreign” sound of the line.’<sup>220</sup> The construal of the other as ‘foreign’, ‘feeble’, and ‘effeminate’, as both threatening and inferior, is an insidious if widespread rhetorical technique. The insults also continue the oblique affiliation of Aeneas with Dionysus: ‘Iarbas’ allegation that the entourage accompanying Aeneas is male only in part (*cum semiuiro comitatu*) applies quite literally to Dionysus, whose *thiasos* in fact consists partly of men, partly of women.’<sup>221</sup>

**216: Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem/ subnexus:** the *m*-alliteration, combined with the assonance *crinemque madentem* (one can almost feel the oil dripping), nicely conveys disgust. The Maeonian mitre or ‘Phrygian cap’ again evokes associations of an Eastern locale (Maeonia refers to Lydia, a region situated next to Phrygia) and Dionysus: it is a ‘headgear so typical of Dionysus that in Propertius, the god Vertumnus claims that donning a mitre will allow him to pass for Dionysus [Prop.

219. Pease (1935), p. 235.

220. O’Hara (2011), p. 44.

221. Weber (2002), p. 336.



4.2.31]. ... Iarbas' mockery of Aeneas for hair damp with perfume is paralleled in Pentheus' ridicule of Dionysus for the same affectation.<sup>222</sup> Some editors prefer to read *subnixus* instead of *subnexus*, which would (literally) heighten the insult.

**217–218: nos munera templis/ quippe tuis ferimus:** Iarbas construes an antithesis between Aeneas (*ille*) and himself (*nos*): Aeneas takes possession of what is not his (*raptō*), whereas Iarbas offers gifts (*munera*) to the supreme divinity. At the end of his prayer, he thus returns to his personal relationship with Jupiter, underscored by the alliterative attribute of *templis*, i.e. *tuis*. For *quippe* see Austin: 'Like *scilicet* and *nimirum*, it is often ironical, as here; it should probably be taken closely with *tuis*, although its effect colours the tone of the whole sentence.'<sup>223</sup>

**218: ferimus famamque fouemus inanem:** the *f*-alliteration, combined with homoioteleuton (*-mus ... -mus*), again may convey a sense of irritation. *Fama*'s news induces Iarbas to reduce Jupiter to the level of a rumour (*fama*), and one that is *inanis* on top. Iarbas thereby continues his Epicurean/Lucretian deracination of divinely animated nature into atmospheric phenomena. Put differently, he is supplying the Epicurean physics to match Dido's pseudo-Epicurean ethics. (*inane* is the technical term for the void through which Epicurus' atoms move; Iarbas had already used the adjective at 210 above: *inania murmura*.)

## Jupiter's Wake-up Call

Jupiter does indeed heed Iarbas' prayer—just not in the way Iarbas intended him to. Far from engaging with the concerns voiced by his son, Jupiter decides that it is time to issue a wake-up call to our forgetful hero Aeneas, and he instructs his underling Mercury, traditionally responsible for delivering messages from the divine to the human sphere, to pay a visit to Carthage and get destiny back on track. The structure of this section is as follows:

219–222: Narrative (3 lines)

223–237: Jupiter's speech to Mercury (15 lines)

222. *Ibid.*

223. Austin (1963), p. 80.

223–226: Jupiter’s order to Mercury (4 lines)

227–231: Appraisal of Aeneas’ failure to live up to expectations (5 lines)

232–236: Expression of bafflement at said failure (5 lines)

237: Concluding order to be conveyed to Aeneas (1 line)

There is an important Homeric model for this scene: in *Odyssey* 5, Zeus, after having been visited by an upset Athena pleading on behalf of her hero Odysseus, who is held captive on the island of Ogygia, against his wishes, by the nymph Calypso, addresses Hermes with the order to visit Calypso to get Odysseus’ voyage home underway (*Odyssey* 5.28–42):

ἦ ῥα, καὶ Ἑρμείαν, υἱὸν φίλον, ἀντίον ἠΰδα·  
 “Ἑρμεία, σὺ γὰρ αὐτε τὰ τ’ ἄλλα περ ἄγγελός ἐσσι,  
 νύμφη ἐυπλοκάμῳ εἰπεῖν νημερτέα βουλήν, 30  
 νόστον Ὀδυσσηὸς ταλασίφρονος, ὧς κε νήηται,  
 οὔτε θεῶν πομπῇ οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων·  
 ἀλλ’ ὅ γ’ ἐπὶ σχεδίῃς πολυδέσμου πῆματα πάσχω  
 ἥματί κ’ εἰκοστῷ Σχερίην ἐρίβωλον ἴκοιτο,  
 Φαιήκων ἐς γαίαν, οἳ ἀγχίθειοι γεγάασιν, 35  
 οἳ κέν μιν περὶ κῆρι θεὸν ὧς τιμήσουσιν,  
 πέμψουσιν δ’ ἐν νηὶ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαίαν,  
 χαλκόν τε χρυσόν τε ἄλις ἐσθῆτά τε δόντες,  
 πόλλ’, ὅσ’ ἂν οὐδέ ποτε Τροίης ἐξήρατ’ Ὀδυσσεύς,  
 εἷ περ ἀπήμων ἦλθε, λαχῶν ἀπὸ ληίδος αἴσαν. 40  
 ὧς γὰρ οἱ μοῖρ’ ἐστὶ φίλους τ’ ἰδέειν καὶ ἰκέσθαι  
 οἶκον ἐς ὑψόροφον καὶ ἐῆν ἐς πατρίδα γαίαν”.

[He spoke, and said to Hermes, his son: ‘Hermes, for you are also at other times our messenger, declare to the fair-tressed nymph our fixed resolve, the return of steadfast Odysseus, that he may return with guidance neither of gods nor of mortals, but that on a well-constructed raft, suffering woes, he may come on the twentieth day to deep-soiled Scheria, the land of the Phaeacians, who are near of kin to the gods. They shall show him honour with all their heart, as if he were a god, and shall send him in a ship to his native land, after giving him stores of bronze and gold and clothing, more than Odysseus would ever have won for himself from Troy, if he had returned unscathed with his due share of the spoil. For in this wise it is his fate to see his friends, and reach his high-roofed house and his native land.’]

This section is also in part a re-run of the narrative sequence in *Aeneid* 1 that unfolds after the storm. There, too, Jupiter’s attention is drawn to what is going on in Libya (see 1.226: *Libyae defixit [sc. Iuppiter] lumina regnis*); Venus

appears in order to remonstrate with him on behalf of her son; and Jupiter, after unscrolling the scripts of destiny for the benefit of Venus, sends down Mercury to ensure that fate takes its course (1.223–304).

**219–221: Talibus orantem dictis arasque tenentem/ audiit Omnipotens, oculosque ad moenia torsit/ regia et oblitos famaе melioris amantis:** some commentators take *audiit* (= *audiuit*) to mean ‘answered’; but this would seem to imply that Jupiter listened to, agreed with, and acted on the contents of Iarbas’ prayer. As it turns out, however, he only uses him as an ‘alarm bell’ that alerts him to the fact that Aeneas’ historical mission is currently on hold in Carthage. He does not seem to care a jot for Iarbas’ own grievances and desires. Hence a simple ‘heard’ might convey a better sense. Virgil’s use of the epithet *Omnipotens* in the narrative harks back to Iarbas’ use of the term at the beginning of his prayer (206: *Iuppiter omnipotens...*), just as *oculosque ad moenia torsit/ regia* picks up *aspicis haec?* in 208. The reiteration of *omnipotens* is either affirmative (‘yes, Jupiter is indeed all-powerful’) or slightly ironic (‘he who got hailed as “All-Powerful”’)—or both. Virgil/ Jupiter appraises the walls of Troy differently from Iarbas: *regia*, in emphatic enjambment underscores Dido’s royal-imperial ambition (and the scope of her construction site). Jupiter first casts his gaze on the royal walls (*ad moenia ... regia*) and then the lovers (*amantis* is accusative plural: = *amantes*). The *et* thus links *moenia* and *amantis*, and both accusatives are governed by the preposition *ad*. The phrase *famae melioris*, which is dependent on *oblitos*, introduces an interesting twist: apparently, there is *fama*, in the sense of rumour, and then there is *fama melior*, i.e. fame. Aeneas’ *fama melior* is the equivalent to the *fama* (in the sense of ‘good reputation’) that Dido begins to disregard after the encounter in the cave (170: *neque enim specie famaue mouetur*).

**222: tum sic Mercurium adloquitur ac talia mandat:** with Jupiter’s address to Mercury (who just happens to be around to do the supreme divinity’s bidding), compare 4.8: *cum sic unaniam adloquitur male sana sororem* (Dido addressing her sister Anna).

**223: ‘uade age, nate, uoca Zephyros et labere pennis:** four imperatives (or ‘bossy forms of the verb’), i.e. *uade*, *age*, *uoca*, *labere* (of the deponent *labor*) and one vocative, i.e. *nate*, in the opening line: Jupiter takes charge, and no mistake. *uade* and *age* are best taken together as a colloquial ‘off you go’, which gives the command a tripartite structure. *zephyri* are the western

winds, though it is not entirely easy to correlate geography and favourable flying conditions: how do you best get to Carthage from Mt. Olympus via Mt. Atlas? Here is Henderson (*per litteras*) on the sound effect: ‘just say the w-w-word (*ua-uo*) “Zephyros” and hey presto! you’re gliding: soft sound for soft puff.’

**224–226: Dardaniumque ducem Tyria Karthagine qui nunc/ expectat fatisque datas non respicit urbes/ adloquere:** the *-que* after *Dardanium* links *labere* (223) and a fifth imperative, i.e. *adloquere* in 226, of which *Dardanium ducem* is the accusative object. Virgil used *adloqui* of Jupiter addressing Mercury in 222 (*tum sic Mercurium adloquitur*) and the reiteration reinforces on the lexical level the ‘chain of command’: Jupiter > Mercury > Aeneas. Jupiter fills the hyperbaton between the accusative object *Dardanium ducem* and the verb *adloquere* with a relative clause that contains his appraisal of what he considers disgraceful behaviour. Syntax reinforces sense: by pulling the specification (in the locative) *Tyria Karthagine* out of the relative clause into which they belong (the relative pronoun *qui* is in post-positive position), Virgil generates a particularly jarring juxtaposition of *Dardanium ducem* and *Tyria Karthagine*: what, so Jupiter implies, has a Trojan leader got to dally in Tyrian Carthage? Likewise, *Karthagine* stands in contrast to the *urbes* that the *fata* have granted to Aeneas and his descendents upon his arrival in Italy: Lavinium, Alba Longa, Rome. Dido’s city is thus poised midway between a reference to Aeneas’ past, i.e. Troy (founded by Dardanus), and a reference to Aeneas’ future. (Cities—and not Iarbas’ aggrieved feeling of justice or Dido’s sense of shame—concern Jupiter.) Another dramatic moment in these lines comes at the end of 224, which, unusually, concludes with the two monosyllables *qui nunc*: ‘...who now’—does what, precisely? Line break, 227: *expectat*, i.e. ‘wastes his time’.

**226: et celeris defer mea dicta per auras:** the *et* links *adloquere* and Jupiter’s sixth imperative, i.e. *defer*. The word order again creates an iconic enactment of the sense, with *defer mea dicta* ‘passing through’ *celeris ... per auras*. Pease notes ‘the figurative transfer of speed from the messenger to the medium through which he passes’,<sup>224</sup> but the *celeris auras* may also pick up *Zephyros* in 223.

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224. Pease (1935), p. 241.

**227–231: non illum nobis genetrix pulcherrima talem/ promisit Graiumque ideo bis uindicat armis/ sed fore qui grauidam imperiis belloque frementem/ Italiam regeret, genus alto a sanguine Teucri/ proderet, ac totum sub leges mitteret orbem:** the syntax is difficult: *illum*, together with its predicative complement *talem*, is the accusative object of *promisit* and *uindicat*;<sup>225</sup> but *promisit* also introduces the indirect statement that begins with *sed fore* (= *futurum esse*; the subject accusative, which is also the antecedent of the generic *qui*-clause, i.e. *eum*, is implied). The *non* in 227 negates *talem*: ‘not as such a one (read: not as a slothful womanizer forgetful of his destiny) did his pretty mother promise him to me...’; the striking hyperbaton of *non ... talem* underscores the perceived difference between Venus’ promise and current realities. Jupiter here presupposes that Aeneas’ mother Venus (= *genetrix pulcherrima*) at one point vouched for her son to him (= *nobis*). We may be dealing with an ironic reflex of the scene in Book 1.235–37, where Venus accosts Jupiter to remind *him* of a promise he made to *her*: *hinc fore ductores, reuocato a sanguine Teucri,/ qui mare, qui terras omnis dicione tenerent,/ pollicitus* [sc. *es*] (‘you promised that from Teucer’s restored blood-line should come leaders, who hold the sea and all lands under their rule...’). The parallels in terms of syntax, lexicon, and theme are striking:

1.235: *hinc fore ductores...qui* ~ 4.229: *sed fore, qui*

1.235: *reuocato a sanguine Teucri* ~ 4.230: *genus alto a sanguine Teucri*

1.236: *qui mare, qui terras omnis* ~ 4.231: *totum ... orbem*

1.236: *dicione tenerent* ~ 4.231: *sub leges mitteret*

1.237: *pollicitus* ~ 4.228: *promisit*

The joke is multilayered: in Book 1, Venus quotes Jupiter back at himself. Here Jupiter recalls Venus recalling what he himself had promised at an earlier occasion and turns things around in such a way that his original promise to her, of which she reminded him in Book 1, now sounds like her promise to him.

**228: Graiumque ideo bis uindicat armis:** Jupiter refers to the rescue operations Venus performed on the battlefield of Troy (*Iliad* 5.311–18) and

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225. Note that Virgil switches from the perfect (*promisit*) to the present tense (*uindicat*), for greater vividness or, as MacLennan (2007), p. 108 suggests, because ‘the effect of her actions still continues’.

during the sack of the city (see *Aeneid* 2.620, 665). *Graium* (= *Graiorum*) is Virgil's preferred form of the genitive plural.

**229–231: *sed fore qui grauidam imperiis belloque frementem/ Italiam regeret, genus alto a sanguine Teucrici/ proderet, ac totum sub leges mitteret orbem***: Jupiter anticipates Aeneas' future in Italy (as well as Italy's future) in a tricolon: ...*regeret*, ...*proderet* (= *propagaret*), ...*mitteret*. Italy, placed in enjambment (*Italiam*), comes with a massive predicative complement, designed chiasmically: (a) *gravidam* (b) *imperiis* (b) *bello* (a) *frementem*. It is unclear to what moment in time Jupiter's striking image of an Italy 'pregnant' with military commands (*imperia*) and 'buzzing' with war refers: to the time of Aeneas' arrival in Italy or to Italy as the future centre of a world-empire (or both)? Jupiter, of course, condenses several centuries of Roman history in the figure of Aeneas.

**230–231: *genus alto a sanguine Teucrici/ proderet***: Jupiter again employs the idiom of blood-descent and racial founding, which (as here) has the tendency to blur the distinction between the *gens* of Aeneas and the *gens Romana*: the *gens* is both specifically the *gens Iulia* and more generally the people of Rome. As we already had occasion to note, the first time Virgil introduces the theme of 'Trojan blood-descent' focused in the figure of Aeneas is in the proem. See 1.19–20: *progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci/ audierat* [sc. Juno]. Jupiter thus casts his accusatory assessment in the idiom of the proem (*progenies* and *genus* are virtual synonyms), suggesting an affinity between the author and the supreme divinity of the Olympic pantheon.

**231: *totum sub leges mitteret orbem***: Jupiter here prefigures the 'Roman mission statement' that Anchises will pass on to his son in *Aeneid* 6.847–53, esp. 851–53:

tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento  
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem,  
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.

[you, Roman, be mindful to rule the peoples with the power to command (these shall be your arts), to impose traditional order upon peace, to spare the vanquished, and to war down the proud.]

The image combines imperial conquest on a cosmic scale (*totum ... orbem* is a hyperbole) with the imposition of legal order (*sub leges*): Roman

civilization and its worldwide spread are, seemingly paradoxically, grounded in superior violence and a commitment to law. Readers of the *Aeneid* debate furiously whether the *Aeneid* has Aeneas fail to live up to the mission statement at the death (of beaten and pleading) Turnus that concludes the poem.

**232: si nulla accendit tantarum gloria rerum/ nec super ipse sua molitur laude laborem,/ Ascanione pater Romanas inuidet arces?:** in the two parts of the *si*-clause, Aeneas is the understood accusative object of *accendit* (sc. *eum*) and the emphatic subject (cf. *ipse*) of *molitur*. This sequence, in which Aeneas first figures as an absent presence and then comes fully into focus, serves as foil for the main clause where Jupiter remonstrates that at least Aeneas' role as father ought to get him going: he insidiously implies that Aeneas dallies with Dido since he begrudges his son his stellar future. *gloria* and *laus* represent the core desire of Rome's ruling elite: immortality through fame, involving the public recognition of praiseworthy deeds on behalf of the community. These ambitions sustained and defined the political culture of the Roman republic and continued to play a decisive role in imperial times even though the presence of a *princeps* put a glass ceiling on what heights of *gloria* (in particular) other members of the ruling elite could reach. Jupiter refers to the glory that will accrue to Aeneas if he pursues his destiny. *tantae res* refers to both his epic quest in the *Aeneid* and its aftermath, the history of Rome. He again uses the language of the (extended) proem: *labor* is a leitmotif since 1.10–11 (...*tot adire labores/ impulerit*) and *molitur*, together with *tantarum* and *Romanas*, echoes the final line (1.33): *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*. But Jupiter observes that Aeneas' current conduct suggests that he could not care less for core Roman values, that he has morphed, at least temporarily, from a proto-Roman into an anti-Roman character. (Though Aeneas is by no means averse to *labor*: see 235 below; he just misapplies his efforts.)

**233: super ipse sua molitur laude laborem:** the preposition *super* governs the ablative phrase *sua laude*. Pease notes that '*super ... sua ... laude* is interlocked with *ipse ... molitur ... laborem*',<sup>226</sup> which, among other things, generates the thematically effective juxtapositions of *ipse* and *sua* and of *laude* and *laborem*. (The alliterated *laude laborem* almost verges on a specious *figura etymologica*: *labor* tends to entail *laus*.)

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226. Pease (1935), p. 243.

**234: *Ascanione pater Romanas inuidet arces?***: the particle *-ne* attached to *Ascanio* signals the question. Again Jupiter interlocks syntactic units: *pater ... inuidet* is situated between *Ascanione ... Romanas ... arces*. This spacing is iconic especially since other stylistic devices suggest that ‘Ascanius’, ‘Roman’, and ‘citadels’ form a unity: *Romanas* modifies *arces* and *Ascanione* and *arces* are linked by alliteration and assonance; but the supposed envy (*inuidet*) of father (*pater*) Aeneas breaks this unity apart. Jupiter’s insinuation is spiteful not least since Aeneas elsewhere takes loving care of his offspring.

**235: *quid struit?***: after Iarbas’ prayer, in which he expresses outrage at the supposedly Epicurean leisure that Dido and Aeneas indulge in, this question comes as a bit of a surprise. Clearly, what Jupiter sees (220–21: *oculosque ad moenia torsit/ regia...*) does not correspond in every respect to what *Fama* reports (and Iarbas mindlessly reiterates). Apparently, Aeneas, far from being idle, is hard at work in building up Carthage! Later on we learn that Jupiter’s gaze captures the truth better than *Fama*’s gossip: see below, 259–71.

**235: *aut qua spe inimica in gente moratur***: there is a hiatus (absence of elision) between *spe* and *inimica*. The description of the Carthaginians as a *gens inimica* recalls the fact that earlier on Jupiter had dispatched Mercury to suppress their warlike spirit (1.302–303: *et iam iussa facit* [sc. Mercury], *ponuntque ferocia Poenil/ corda uolente deo*; ‘Instantly, he carries out the order, and at the will of the god, the Carthaginians soothe their savage hearts’) and also foreshadows the inveterate enmity between Carthage and Rome in historical times.

**236: *nec prolem Ausoniam et Lauinia respicit arua?***: Jupiter continues to use charged language, not least from the proem, foregrounding Aeneas’ final destination by means of the chiasmus (a) *prolem* (b) *Ausoniam* (b) *Lauinia* (a) *arua*: references to *Ausonia*, a poetic name for Italy, recur throughout the prophetic utterances in *Aeneid* 3; and *Lauinia ... arua* recalls the very beginning of the *Aeneid*, i.e. 1.2–3: *Lauiniaque uenit/ litora*. The geographical specification ‘Lavinian’ refers to the town of Lavinium, which Aeneas is destined to found and name after his Italian wife Lavinia. Jupiter’s discourse thus spans the entire epic (and beyond), looking backwards to the prophetic proem and forward to events in Italy that are recounted in the second half of the epic, as well as ‘*Aeneid* 13’.



[*Extra information*: as you know, the poem comes to an abrupt end with Aeneas' killing of Turnus, at 12.952. It does not include the narrative material that would go into a 'happy end', such as Aeneas' marriage to Lavinia and his founding of Lavinium. Dissatisfied with this (lack of) closure, a Renaissance scholar, Maffeo Vegio (1407–1458), added a further book to the epic, a sequel known as *Aeneid* 13, which contains all the good stuff that happened after the final showdown between Turnus and Aeneas.<sup>227</sup>]

**237: nauiget!**: a subjunctive of command: 'let him set sail!': 'the chief point in Jupiter's command, emphasized by its position in the line, yet entirely omitted by Mercury in 4, 265–276.'<sup>228</sup>

**237: haec summa est, hic nostri nuntius esto**: *esto* is third person singular imperative of *sum*; *nostri* is the genitive of *nos* (Jupiter uses the so-called 'majestic plural'): 'let this be the message from Us'. He here sums up and crosses his 'ts': see the assonance in *nostri nuntius esto*.

## 238–258: Mercury Descending

Mercury's departure is closely modelled on those of his Homeric counterpart Hermes at *Iliad* 24.339–48 and *Odyssey* 5.43–54. This allusive engagement has attracted critical comment since antiquity: see Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 5.6.11–12. In the *Iliad*, Zeus sends Hermes to make sure that Priam will arrive safely at the tent of Achilles to ransom the body of his son Hector (*Iliad* 24.339–48):

Ὦς ἔφατ', οὐδ' ἀπίθησε διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης. αὐτίκ' ἔπειθ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια, τὰ μιν φέρον ἡμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρῆν ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῆς ἀνέμοιο· εἶλετο δὲ ῥάβδον, τῆ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει ᾧν ἐθέλει, τοὺς δ' αὐτε καὶ ὑπνώοντας ἐγείρει· τὴν μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχων πέτετο κρατὺς Ἀργειφόντης. αἴψα δ' ἄρα Τροίην τε καὶ Ἑλλήσποντον ἴκανε.	340       345
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[So he spoke, and the messenger, the slayer of Argus, did not disobey. Straightway he bound beneath his feet his beautiful sandals, immortal, golden, which were wont to bear him over the waters of the sea and over

227. See the bilingual edition (Latin text/ English translation) by Michael C. J. Putnam for the *I Tatti Renaissance Library* (Harvard University Press) or (for the Latin text only) <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/vegius.html>.

228. Pease (1935), p. 246.

the boundless earth together with the blasts of the wind. And he took the wand wherewith he lulls to sleep the eyes of whom he wishes, while others again he awakens out of slumber. With this in his hand the strong slayer of Argus flew, and quickly came to Troy and the Hellespont.]

The first time we meet Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, he lives the life of a castaway on the island of Ogygia, the dwelling place of the nymph Calypso, who is madly in love with the hero and wishes to make him her husband (a proposition that includes the offer of immortality). However, Odysseus, far from jumping at this opportunity, just wants to go home. Sure, he sleeps with the nymph; but for the rest of the time, he just sits forlorn on the shore, gazing out upon the waves, and weeps. Zeus sends down Hermes to let Calypso know that she has to let Odysseus go (*Odyssey* 5.43–54; the speech that precedes the following passage is cited above, on *Aeneid* 4.219–37):

ὡς ἔφατ', οὐδ' ἀπίθησε διάκτορος Ἀργεῖϊφόντης. αὐτίκ' ἔπειθ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα, ἀμβροσία χρύσεια, τὰ μιν φέρον ἡμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρῆν ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῆσ' ἀνέμοιο.	45
εἶλετο δὲ ῥάβδον, τῇ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει, ὧν ἐθέλει, τοὺς δ' αὖτε καὶ ὑπνώοντας ἐγείρει· τὴν μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχων πέτετο κρατὺς Ἀργεῖϊφόντης. Πιερίην δ' ἐπιβάς ἐξ αἰθέρος ἔμπεσε πόντω·	50
σεύατ' ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ κῦμα λάρω ὄρνιθι ἐοικώς, ὅς τε κατὰ δεινοὺς κόλπους ἄλως ἀτρυγέτιο ἰχθῦς ἀγρώσσων πυκινὰ πτερὰ δεύεται ἄλμη· τῷ ἵκελος πολέεσσιν ὀχήσατο κύμασιν Ἐρμῆς.	

[So he spoke, and the messenger, the slayer of Argus, did not disobey. Straightway he bound beneath his feet his beautiful sandals, immortal, golden, which were wont to bear him over the waters of the sea and over the boundless earth together with the breeze of the wind. And he took the wand wherewith he lulls to sleep the eyes of whom he wishes, while others again he awakens out of slumber. With this in hand the strong slayer of Argus flew. On to Pieria he stepped from the upper air, and swooped down upon the sea, and then sped over the wave like a bird, the cormorant, which in quest of fish over the dread gulfs of the unresting sea wets its thick plumage in the brine. In such fashion did Hermes ride over the multitudinous waves.]

The final passage that ought to be compared with Mercury's departure is *Aen.* 1.297-304, which describes his first mission:

Haec ait, et Maia genitum demittit ab alto,  
 ut terrae, utque nouae pateant Karthaginis arces  
 hospitio Teucris, ne fati nescia Dido  
 finibus arceret: uolat ille per aëra magnum 300  
 remigio alarum, ac Libyae citus adstitit oris.  
 Et iam iussa facit, ponuntque ferocia Poeni  
 corda uolente deo; in primis regina quietum  
 accipit in Teucros animum mentemque benignam.

[This he says and sends the son of Maia down from the sky that the lands and towers of newly-built Carthage may open in welcome to the Teucrians and Dido, ignorant of fate, may not keep them away from her realm. He flies through the wide air on the oarage of his wings and quickly stands on the shores of Libya. At once he carries out the orders and, with the god willing it, the Punic people lay aside their savage hearts; above all the queen receives a gentle soul and friendly mind towards the Teucrians.]

Several features are worth noting. To begin with, in *Aeneid* 1 Virgil covers the plot elements very briskly: we neither get Jupiter's order to Mercury in direct speech nor Mercury's preparation for departure. Details of the voyage are likewise skipped over, and the god carries out his orders unseen: unlike Aeneas, Dido does not become the beneficiary of a theophany as Mercury simply ensures that the disposition of the Carthaginians (and especially their queen) corresponds to Jupiter's will, without the recipients of divine attention being any the wiser that a god has manipulated their outlook.

[*Extra information:* As Hardie points out, Mercury is '*Fama's* good double'.<sup>229</sup> He elaborates: '*Fama* and Mercury are related as two divinities of the word: both fly freely through the air on the horizontal and vertical axes, both easily span the gap between heaven and earth, and reach still further into the underworld (Mercury as psychopomp, *Fama* through her chthonic origin). There is a strong polarization between *Fama* as a divinity of the perverted word, and Mercury as the embodiment of the rational *logos* of Jupiter, but this is a dichotomy that is not in the end maintained. Mercury's final message to Aeneas is a defamation of Dido as tendentious as *Fama's* initial report of her and Aeneas' behaviour, 4.569–70 *uarium et mutabile semper | femina* "woman is always an unstable and changeable thing".<sup>230</sup>]

**238: Dixerat:** the Latin equivalent, also metrically, of the Homeric ὦς ἔφατ' ('thus he spoke').

229. Hardie (2009), p. 75.

230. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

**238–239: ille patris magni parere parabat/ imperio:** the hyperbaton of the possessive genitive *patris magni* and the noun on which it depends, i.e. *imperio* (in enjambment no less), emphasizes the weight an order by Jupiter carries. (Though, as we shall see, it is not that Mercury jumps into action.) *patris* is both specific (Jupiter sired Mercury with Maia) and generic (he is called father of gods and humans). The insistent *p*-alliteration, which frequently conveys a sense of movement, here also contains a hint of retardation: by far the most prominently placed item in the sequence *patris, parere, parabat*, which continues with *primum* and *pedibus* in 239, is the one in the middle, i.e. *parabat*. (Note also the assonance in *imperio*, which integrates this key term into the sequence of words connected via alliteration.) *parere parabat* is a witty paronomasia, combining *paro, parere* ~ to obey with *paro, parare* ~ to prepare, get ready. Teenagers faced with a parental request are particularly well placed to appreciate the joke in *parabat*. The tense (imperfect) adds to the humour: is it durative (meaning that Mercury is taking his time to get ready)? Or is it iterative (after *Iliad* 24, *Odyssey* 5, and *Aeneid* 1, this is already the *fourth* time he is heading off on such a mission in high literature)? Or is it both (faced with *yet* another such request, who could blame Mercury for dragging his feet a bit)? Comparison with the Homeric models reinforces the sense that the Virgilian divinity dallies just a little: οὐδ’ ἀπίθησε διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης./ αὐτίκ’... (‘the messenger, the slayer of Argos, did not disobey. Straightaway...’). In contrast, Mercury here proceeds very deliberately. In both Homer and Virgil, we get a detailed appreciation of Mercury’s special attributes, especially his winged shoes and his magic wand, and his functions. He is a god who operates at interfaces, acting as messenger between mortals and immortals and negotiating the boundary between life and death, the upper and the underworld, and, relatedly, being awake and being asleep.

**239–241: et primum pedibus talaria nectit/ aurea, quae sublimem alis siue aequora supra/ seu terram rapido pariter cum flamine portant:** these lines are very closely modelled on Homer, *Odyssey* 5.44–46, which makes the departures and additions particularly marked (strike-through indicates words left out by Virgil):

(1) *pedibus talaria nectit/ aurea* ~ ὑπὸ ποσσίν ἐδήσατο ~~κατὰ~~ πέδιλα,/ ~~ἀμβρόσια~~ χρύσεια:

*pedibus* ('on his feet'): ὑπὸ ποσσὶν  
*talaria* ('the winged sandals'): πέδιλα  
*nectit* ('he binds'): ἐδήσατο  
*aurea* ('golden', modifying the sandals): χρύσεια

The translation is almost verbatim, with some minor tweaks: Virgil inverts the order of verb (*nectit*/ ἐδήσατο) and accusative object (*talaria*/ πέδιλα) and economizes on the number of attributes of Hermes' / Mercury's sandals, only taking over one out of three: he retains 'golden' (*aurea*/ χρύσεια), placed in enjambment, but does without an equivalent for καλὰ ('beautiful') and ἀμβρόσια ('divinely excellent').

- (2) *quae sublimem alis siue aequora supra/ seu terram rapido pariter cum flamine portant* ~ τὰ μιν φέρον ἡμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρῆν/ ἡδ' ἐπ' ἀπειρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῆς ἀνέμοιο· ('which were wont to bear him both over the sea and over the boundless earth together with the breeze of the wind');

*quae* ('which'): τὰ.  
*sublimem alis* ('him high on wings'): μιν [= him]  
*siue...seu...* ('either...or...'): ἡμὲν ... ἡδ'... ('both... and...')  
*aequora supra* ('over the sea'): ἐφ' ὑγρῆν  
*terram* ('earth'): ἐπ' ἀπειρονα γαῖαν  
*rapido...cum flamine* ('with the swift breeze'): ἅμα πνοιῆς ἀνέμοιο ('with the breeze of the wind')  
*pariter* ('as'): no equivalent  
*portant* ('bear'): φέρον

Virgil here follows Homer in minute detail, to the point of imitating the variation in the correlating particles: *siue ~ seu*: ἡμὲν ~ ἡδ'. But as with the sandals, he suppresses a Homeric epithet: his Mercury flies over the *earth* (*terram*) plain and simple, whereas Homer's earth (*gaian*) is ἀπειρονα ('boundless'). Conversely, he adds two components: in place of the plain Homeric μιν ('him', i.e. Hermes), Virgil uses the predicative attribute *sublimem*, which he further qualifies and explains via an ablative of means: *alis* ('on his wings'). There is, then, an added emphasis on Mercury's sky-high altitude in Virgil: the god is soaring in an awe-inspiring, 'sublime' sort of way.<sup>231</sup> Likewise, Virgil adds the adjective *rapido* as an attribute

231. See Hardie (2009), pp. 78–79 on the 'sublimity of Mercury's flight': 'As often in the Augustan poets it is difficult to judge whether *sublimis* has a purely spatial meaning, or whether it connotes "sublimity"... Mercury's rangings are the mythological equivalent

to *flamine* and changes the construction slightly by means of *pariter*: in Homer, Hermes flies ‘with the breeze of the wind’ (ἄμα πνοῆς ἀνέμοιο), which could be taken to mean that it is the breeze that carries him and his winged-sandals only keep him in the air, rather than providing significant forward-motion. Virgil eliminates this ambiguity: in his epic, Mercury’s flying equipment operates at a speed *equal to* (*pariter*) a powerful (cf. *rapido*) gust of wind (*flamine*). Overall, then, we here have the Olympic motto *citius, altius, fortius* (‘faster, higher, stronger’) applied to the realm of intertextual poetics: Roman-Virgilian Mercury surpasses his Greek-Homeric counterpart Hermes in speed, height, and flying ability: *imitatio et aemulatio*, the two principles by which authors situate their works vis-à-vis their predecessors, at their finest!

**242–244: tum uirgam capit: hac animas ille euocat Orco/ pallentis, alias sub Tartara tristia mittit,/ dat somnos adimitque, et lumina morte resignat:** the three lines of Virgil rework two formulaic lines from Homer (see *Iliad* 24.344–345; *Odyssey* 5.47–48; *Odyssey* 24.1–5):

εἴλετο δὲ ῥάβδον, τῇ τ’ ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει,  
ὦν ἐθέλει, τοὺς δ’ αὖτε καὶ ὑπνῶντας ἐγείρει·

[And he took the wand wherewith he lulls to sleep the eyes of whom he wishes, while others again he awakens out of slumber.]

Again, the parallels are striking—as are the differences:

*tum uirgam capit* (‘Then he takes his wand’): εἴλετο δὲ ῥάβδον (‘And he took the wand’)

*hac* (‘with this’): τῇ (‘wherewith’)

*animas ille euocat Orco/ pallentis* (‘he calls pale ghosts from Orcus’): no Homeric equivalent

*alias sub Tartara tristia mittit* (‘and sends others down to gloomy Tartarus’): no Homeric equivalent

*dat somnos adimitque* (‘gives and takes away sleep’): ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει,/ ὦν ἐθέλει, τοὺς δ’ αὖτε καὶ ὑπνῶντας ἐγείρει (‘he lulls to sleep the eyes of whom he wishes, while others again he awakens out of slumber’)

*et lumina morte resignat* (‘and unseals the eyes in/ from death’): no Homeric equivalent.

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of the sublime flight of the mind of Lucretius’ Epicurus, who reaches from earth to heaven in the proem to Book 1 [sc. of the *De Rerum Natura*] ...’ The fact that Virgil deliberately added the word to his Homeric model would seem to support the ‘strong’ reading Hardie argues for.

Following Homer, Virgil opts for a parenthetical elaboration of Mercury's wand (*uirgam/ ῥάβδον*). But he alters his model in two ways: he streamlines presentation of the one area of Hermes' responsibility that Homer foregrounds, i.e. the two states of consciousness 'asleep' and 'awake'; and he adds an elaborate description of a second function associated with his wand, i.e. patrolling the crossings between the living and the dead.<sup>232</sup> Hermes in his role as *psychopompos*, i.e. as guide (*-pompos*) for souls (*psycho-*) of the dead, is a frequent presence in Greek literature, in particular Greek tragedy and Orphic writing, but also in Homer. At *Odyssey* 24.1–5 Hermes acts in his role as guide to the Underworld for the shades of the recently murdered suitors. Yet whereas the Homeric Hermes summons the souls of the suitors to lead them down into the Underworld, Virgil's Mercury also calls souls up from out of the Underworld. This part is truly difficult to comprehend. To begin with, the emphasis Virgil places on Mercury as a god who calls shades up from out of the Underworld (*Orco* is an ablative of separation) baffles: there tends to be rather little traffic in this direction. So what does Virgil refer to? Are those the shades of the deceased that visit the living during dreams or visions? Are we dealing with a reference to necromancy, as Pease supposes?<sup>233</sup> Or is Virgil thinking of reincarnation along Orphic-Pythagorean lines? (This doctrine, of course, plays an important role in *Aeneid* 6, where Aeneas encounters the souls of great Romans about to re-enter life on earth.) And secondly, it is unclear what the phrase *et lumina morte resignat* means. There are three options: (i) 'and he unseals eyes in death'; this would imply a reference to the Roman custom of opening the eyes of the dead on the funeral pyre: see Pliny, *Natural History* 11.150. (ii) Conversely, Servius believes that *resignat* here has the same meaning as *claudit*, i.e. that it refers to the custom of closing the eye-lids of the deceased. (iii) 'and he unseals eyes from death,' taking *morte* as an ablative of separation. As O'Hara notes, 'the rendering "unseals from death" would return to the idea of 242 *animas ille euocat Orco*,

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232. Again, Virgil's departure from Homer, which enables him to associate Mercury with the pits of Hell as well as with the heights of heaven supports Hardie's argument that Virgil is striving for a sense of the 'cosmic sublime' in this passage, with a figure who measures out the entire universe (cf. Longinus, *On the Sublime*) over and above his (suddenly seemingly banal) Greek model—were it not for the fact that 'Virgil's Homer had been consecrated through centuries of cosmological allegorizing interpretation' (John Henderson, *per litteras*). From this point of view, Virgil reinforces through a strategic lexical choice a specific dimension of meaning in—or a way of reading—Homer that turns him into the archegete of the cosmological sublime.

233. Pease (1935), p. 249.

or refer mysteriously to some aspect of existence in the underworld.<sup>234</sup> Recent translators and commentators show a marked preference for (i), but I think (iii) deserves serious consideration, not in least in the light of *Aeneid* 6.748–51 (the end of Anchises’ account of reincarnation):

has omnis [sc. animas], ubi mille rotam uoluere per annos,  
 Lethaeum ad fluuium deus euocat agmine magno,  
 scilicet immemores supera ut conuexa reuisant 750  
rursus, et incipiant in corpora uelle reuerti.

[All these souls, when they have rolled the wheel of time through a thousand years, the god summons to the river Lethe in a vast throng, so that, without recall, they may revisit the vault above again, and conceive of the wish to return into bodies.]

**242–243: animas ... pallentis:** cf. 4.25–26: *ad umbras/ pallentis umbras Erebo*, where *pallentis* figures in the same metrical position and thematic context as here.

**243: alias sub Tartara tristia mittit:** the design suggests the unconditional speed with which Mercury dispatches the dead into Tartarus: note the dactylic *Tartara tristia mittit*, reinforced by alliteration and assonance (*tar-, -tar-, tris-, tia, mit-, -tit*). The fact that the last three words only contain the vowels *a* and *i* enhances the effect. One may usefully compare the demythologizing account of death (and the subsequent dismissal of any descent into the Underworld) in Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*. See especially 3.966: *nec quisquam in barathrum nec Tartara deditur atra* (‘no one ever falls into the deep pit or black Tartarus’) and 1012: *Tartarus horriferos eructans faucibus aestus* (‘Tartarus belching horrible flames from its throat’), where ‘hell (its monsters) is (just) a horrible belching noise’ (Henderson, *per litteras*).

**245–246: illa fretus agit uentos et turbida tranat/ nubila:** *illa*, which is in the ablative dependent on *fretus*, is still the wand (*virgam*, 242). With *agit uentos* Virgil reinforces the point that his Mercury does not drift in the winds—he *drives* them. The design of *turbida tranat/ nubila*, enacts the idea of Mercury passing, or, literally, swimming, *through* the clouds.

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234. O’Hara (2011), p. 47.



**246–251: iamque uolans apicem et latera ardua cernit/ Atlantis duri caelum qui uertice fulcit,/ Atlantis, cinctum adsidue cui nubibus atris/ piniferum caput et uento pulsatur et imbri,/ nix umeros infusa tegit, tum flumina mento/ praecipitant senis, et glacie riget horrida barba:** the main verb of the sentence is *cernit* (with Mercury as subject). There are two accusative objects: *apicem et latera ardua*; they come with a possessive genitive, i.e. *Atlantis duri* (247), reiterated without attribute in the following line: *Atlantis*. Each of the genitives serves as the antecedent of a relative clause (with the relative pronoun in postpositive position): *caelum qui uertice fulcit*; *cinctum adsidue cui nubibus atris* etc. The first is straightforward. The second causes the same sort of problem as the relative clause Virgil uses to describe *Fama* at 181–183 (also introduced by *cui*): the construction seems to change after *imbri*: what follows could be taken as a tricolon of main clauses in anakoluthon. (This parallel in extraordinary syntax is not a coincidence: it further helps to correlate *Fama* and Atlas as two complementary monsters.) Virgil at any rate only loosely connects the different elements of the enumeration:

- (a) *caput pulsatur*
- (b) *nix tegit*
- (c) *flumina praecipitant* (linked to the preceding by *tum*)
- (d) *riget barba* (linked to the preceding by *et*; the sequence ‘verb—subject’ inverts the order in the previous three clauses)

Overall, Virgil has created an anthropomorphic landscape that plays on correspondences between Atlas the man, and Atlas the mountain. While Atlas certainly is a geological formation to begin with, it is possible to identify humanoid parts, which come gradually into focus, without Atlas ever ceasing to be also a mountain: *vertex*, *caput*, *umeri*, *mentum*, and *barba*. Virgil also calls Atlas a *senex*. Austin notes the progressive personification: ‘from using *vertex* and *caput*, which suit the mountain as well as the human figure, Virgil passes to purely human features in *umeros*, *mento*, *barba*, while the mountain has become a *senex*.’<sup>235</sup> For the wider significance of Atlas in the set passage see Hardie:<sup>236</sup>

Mercury’s descent is interrupted by the striking picture of the man-mountain Atlas. This apparent digression may also be integrated into the

235. Austin (1963), p. 87.

236. Hardie (1986), p. 278.

wider context. Atlas is the measure of the vertical distance between heaven and earth that Mercury has to cover; he occupies the space which *Fama* threatened to infect. He, like *Fama*, is a giant, and, like *Fama*, he has his head in the clouds, but, unlike *Fama*, he reaches beyond the clouds to touch and support the heavens themselves. Atlas is a giant who has been immobilized and rendered safe; from hubristic sky-reacher he has been transformed into a stable prop of the established order, a guarantee of cosmic cohesion. ... The descent of Mercury thus represents a reversal of the ascent of *Fama*, the reimposition of Olympian order in a space which has been threatened by an evil chthonic power.

**247–248: Atlantis duri – Atlantis:** a gemination as with *Fama* at 173–174: *Extemplo Libyae magnas it Fama per urbes, / Fama, malum qua non aliud uelocius ullum*. Atlas, one of the first of the Titans (see e.g. Hesiod, *Theogony* 507–511), just as *Fama* was the last (179: *extremam*) of the Giants, belonged to the generation of primordial, and often monstrous, divinities that preceded the Olympian order. After the so-called Titanomachy (the battle between Titans and Olympians), Atlas was forced as punishment to support the vaults of heaven on his shoulders, stationed in Northwestern Africa. In certain versions, he was said to have been petrified into the mountain range, which Virgil here (re-)personifies. Titanic and Olympian lineages of course intersected in complex ways, and Aeneas himself happens to be a distant descendant of Atlas—as we learn in Book 8, where Aeneas draws on this ancestral connection to plead kinship bonds with Euander, a settler on the future site of Rome, to whom he appeals for help (8.134–41):

Dardanus, Iliacae primus pater urbis et auctor, Electra, ut Grai perhibent, <b>Atlantide</b> cretus,	135
aduehitur Teucros; Electram maximus <b>Atlas</b> edidit, aetherios umero qui sustinet orbis. uobis Mercurius pater est, quem candida Maia Cyllenae gelido conceptum uertice fudit;	
at Maiam, auditis si quicquam credimus, <b>Atlas</b> ,	140
idem <b>Atlas</b> generat caeli qui sidera tollit.	

[Dardanus, the first father and founder of the city of Ilium, born (as Greeks recount) of Electra, daughter of Atlas, came to the Teucrians. The mightiest Atlas who sustains the heavenly spheres on his shoulder, sired Electra. Your ancestor is Mercury, whom fair Maia once conceived and gave birth to on the icy peak of Mt. Cyllene. But Maia, if we believe at all in what we have heard, Atlas brought forth, the same Atlas, who holds up the stars of heaven.]

**247: caelum qui uertice fulcit:** *caelum* belongs into the relative clause introduced by *qui*: it is the accusative object of *fulcit*.

**248–249: cinctum adsidue cui nubibus atris/ piniferum caput et uento pulsatur et imbri:** the relative pronoun *cui* is in the dative of reference ('for whom'); the subject of the relative clause is *caput*, which is modified by the participle *cinctum* and by the adjective *piniferum*. *nubibus atris* is an ablative of agency with *cinctum* (as often in poetry without the preposition *a/ab*); *et uento et imbri* are also ablatives of agency (again without preposition) with *pulsatur*. *adsidue* is an adverb (with *cinctum*), meaning 'constantly'.

**250–251: flumina mento/ praecipitant senis:** Virgil seems to be referring to glaciers, i.e. 'frozen rivers' that hang down from Atlas' chin: *senis* is genitive singular of *senex*, dependent on *mento*.

**252–253: hic primum paribus nitens Cyllenius alis/ constitit:** a nice image: Mercury first poises himself on his wings *paribus nitens ... alis*, before touching down, if only for a moment (or a metrical foot: after the diaeresis after *constitit* he is instantly on his way again).

**252: Cyllenius:** the *e* scans long since it represents an 'êta' in Greek (which is naturally long): see e.g. *Odyssey* 24.1: Ἐρμῆς ... Κυλλήνιος. Again below 258: *Cyllenia proles*. The name derives from his place of birth, i.e. on top of Mt. Cyllene in Arcadia. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil uses it only in this passage here, though three times (see also 258 and 276), in what is a learned ('Alexandrian') joke, as *Aeneid* 8.138–141 (cited above) makes clear: Maia, daughter of Atlas, who got turned into an icy mountain, gave birth to her son on an icy mountain, and Mercury in *Aeneid* 4 pays a brief visit to his grandfather, with a brief touch-down on top of him. Grandfather and grandson thereby enact a nice contrast between (Olympian) mobility and (Titanic) fixity. For those not up on their mythological geography, Virgil kindly offers a pointer in 258: *materno ueniens ab auo Cyllenia proles*.

**253–255: hinc toto praeceps se corpore ad undas/ misit aui similis, quae circum litora, circum/ piscosos scopulos humilis uolat aequora iuxta:** The lines rework *Odyssey* 5.50–53:

Πιερίην δ' ἐπιβάς ἐξ αἰθέρος ἔμπεσε πόντω·  
 σεύατ' ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ κῦμα λάρω ὄρνιθι ἐοικώς,  
 ὅς τε κατὰ δεινούς κόλπους ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτιο  
 ἰχθῦς ἀγρώσων πυκινὰ πτερὰ δεύεται ἄλμη·  
 τῷ ἵκελος πολέεσσιν ὀρήσατο κύμασιν Ἐρμῆς.

[On to Pieria he stepped from the upper air, and swooped down upon the sea, and then sped over the wave like a bird, the cormorant, which hunting fish over the dread gulfs of the unresting sea wets its thick plumage in the brine. In such wise did Hermes ride upon the multitudinous waves.]

*hinc* ('hence [sc. from Atlas]'): Πιερίην δ' ἐπιβάς ('stepping on Pieria')  
*toto ... corpore* ('with his whole body'): no equivalent  
*praeceps* ('sheer down'): no equivalent  
*se...misit* ('he sent himself'): ἔμπεσε ('he swooped down')  
*ad undas* ('to the waves'): πόντω ('upon the sea') and σεύατ' ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ κῦμα ('he then sped over the wave')  
*auti similis* ('like a bird'): λάρω ὄρνιθι ἐοικώς ('like a bird, the cormorant')  
*quae* ('which'): ὅς ('which')  
*circum litora, circum piscosos scopulos* ('round the shores, round the fish-haunted cliffs'): τε κατὰ δεινούς κόλπους ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτιο ἰχθῦς ἀγρώσων ('hunting fish over the dread gulfs of the unresting sea')  
*humilis uolat aequora iuxta* ('flies low near the water'): πυκινὰ πτερὰ δεύεται ἄλμη ('wets its thick plumage in the brine')  
*haud aliter* ('even thus'): τῷ ἵκελος ('in such wise')

Which image is the more successful? Homer gives the kind of bird; the reference to hunting fish introduces purpose into its flight; and the wetting of the wings with brine adds a bracing note of excitement. In contrast, Virgil's unidentified fowl seems to circulate pretty aimlessly, and one does not quite understand why it is skirting the waves, though the attribute of the cliffs, i.e. *piscosos*, at least hints at hunting: these are good grounds for fishing. For etymological reasons, *humilis* (from *humus*) strikes an odd note with *aequora iuxta*, even though it correlates well and antithetically with *sublimem* in 240. Where Virgil arguably has the edge is the bold image of Hermes plunging himself headlong down towards the sea *praeceps se ... misit*, though ἔμπεσε πόντω ('...he swooped down upon the sea') is full of drama as well. In terms of ornamentation, Virgil's lines for once are pretty flat: there is the repetition of *circum*, conveying a sense of the ceaseless circling, but overall that isn't a patch on Homer's deft handling of alliteration—see in particular κατὰ δεινούς κόλπους ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτιο ('over the dread gulfs of the unresting sea,' where the

depth of the sea is further emphasized by the rhythm  $\delta\epsilon\iota\nu\acute{o}\nu\varsigma\ \kappa\acute{o}\lambda\pi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ ) and  $\pi\upsilon\kappa\iota\nu\acute{\alpha}\ \pi\tau\epsilon\rho\acute{\alpha}$  ('thick plumage')—as well as the beautiful chiasmic design that concludes the simile: (a)  $\tau\acute{\omega}$  ['to it']  $\acute{\iota}\kappa\epsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  ['equal,' modifying Hermes] (b)  $\pi\omicron\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\sigma\iota\nu$  ['many,' modifying waves] (c)  $\delta\acute{\chi}\eta\sigma\alpha\tau\omicron$  ['went over,' the verb taking Hermes as subject] (b)  $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$  ['the waves'] (a)  $\text{Ἑρμῆς}$  ['Hermes'].

**256: *terras inter caelumque*:** *inter* again does its meaning proud, sitting snugly between the two nouns it governs.

**257: *litus harenosum ad Libyae*:** the preposition *ad*, which governs the accusative phrase *litus harenosum*, is in striking postpositive position, perhaps enacting the helter-skelter speed with which Mercury arrives at his destination.

**258: *materno ueniens ab auro Cyllenia proles*:** Virgil, like Homer, concludes his description with the god in the nominative, but he uses a learned paraphrase. *Cyllenia proles*, i.e. Mercury, corresponds to  $\text{Ἑρμῆς}$  ('Hermes') at *Odyssey* 5.53, also at line-end. As pointed out above, the *materno...auro* is Atlas, the father of Maia, mother of Mercury. For *Cyllenia*, see above **252: Cyllenius**.

[*Extra information:* It is neat and tidy to think of *Aeneid* 1–6 as 'Virgil's *Odyssey*' and of *Aeneid* 7–12 as 'Virgil's *Iliad*', developing, in chiasmic sequence, the two opening words of the poem: *arma* = war = *Iliad*; *uirum* = the man and his travels = *Odyssey*. But as Knauer has shown, matters are much more complex: the *Aeneid* sustains a parallel with the *Odyssey* all the way through.<sup>237</sup> It is easy to forget, in the excitement over Odysseus' travel adventures, which are narrated in Books 9–13, that the poem ends in mass-slaughter on Ithaca and the outbreak of civil strife: in the last scene of the poem Athena borrows the thunderbolt of Zeus to break up civil war between the families of the murdered suitors and Odysseus and his family. Put differently, at the end the *Odyssey* stages an *Iliad* at home, turning external warfare into civil conflict—a constellation of particular relevance to Virgil and his readers. The simultaneous presence of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the second half of the *Aeneid* underscores the ambiguous status of Aeneas, as both a foreign arrival in Italy and a proto-Roman returnee.]

237. See Knauer (1964) (in German) and (1965) (in English). His studies mark a watershed in our appreciation of the literary relationship between Virgil and Homer. For the Odyssean plot of the *Aeneid*, see more recently Cairns (1989).

## 259–278: Back To The Future

Mercury touches down in Carthage to pass on Jupiter's orders and get (Aeneas') destiny back on track. The Homeric model is Hermes' appearance to Calypso in *Odyssey* 5, telling the nymph that she has to let the hero go. There is, then, a shift from the clinging host in Homer to the lingering guest in Virgil. (One could have imagined a divine messenger appearing to Dido: but she is cut off from communication with Olympian divinities and later on also doubts that Aeneas has been the beneficiary of a genuine theophany: see 4.379–80.) Mercury displays notable independence in his address to Aeneas: far from repeating Jupiter's discourse virtually word for word (as some characters in Homer are wont to do who act as messengers), he gives his speech an idiosyncratic spin. In part, he is reacting to the shocking scene he encounters at Carthage. For far from being idle, as *Fama* had it, Aeneas is in fact hard at work at building a city—just not the one he is supposed to. Mercury takes in the proceedings in lines 259–265a; bursts into speech (and Aeneas' sight) in lines 265b–276a; and abruptly disappears again at lines 276b–278.

**259: ut primum alatis tetigit magalia plantis:** *magalia* (here in the neuter accusative plural, object of *tetigit*) are 'North African huts, of lowly and temporary character', here, specifically, 'the first rude and hasty dwellings of the immigrants, not yet replaced by the newer houses which are in the next line represented as under construction. For this contrast of the temporary and the permanent styles of building, cf. 1.421.'<sup>238</sup>

**260–261: Aenean fundantem arces ac tecta nouantem/ conspicit:** the present participles *fundantem* and *nouantem*, which form a chiasmus with their accusative objects (*arces*, *tecta*) beautifully capture Aeneas misplaced energies: far from lording it over Dido as *dominus*, as Iarbas supposes, he is doing her work. (The following lines show that he is amply rewarded for his efforts.) The correlation of *Aenean* and *conspicit* at the beginning of two successive lines nicely underscores what catches Mercury's eyes upon touching down: that the proto-Roman hero lays the foundations of Carthage. (The enjambment of *conspicit*, following suddenly upon the heavily spondaic line 260, which labours just as much as Aeneas, and the diaeresis thereafter, convey something of the shock value.)

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238. Pease (1935), pp. 260–61.

**261: conspicit:** after *cernit* in 246, Virgil switched into the past tense, first the perfect (253: *constitit*; 255: *misit*, both placed dramatically at the beginning of a verse), then, to emphasize the duration of the flight, the imperfect (256: *uolebat*; 257: *secabat*, both placed soothingly at the end of a verse). Now he is back to the present. *conspicit* recalls both *cernit* (in terms of semantics) and *constitit* (in terms of alliteration and assonance, scansion, and placement in the verse).

**261–264: atque illi stellatus iaspide fulua/ ensis erat Tyrioque ardebat murice laena/ demissa ex umeris, diues quae munera Dido/ fecerat, et tenui telas discreuerat auro:** the *-que* after *Tyrio* links *erat* and *ardebat*, which takes *laena* as subject; *munera*, which is the antecedent of *quae* but has been attracted into the relative clause, stands in apposition to *laena* ('the coat glowed, a gift, which...': *quae* is in the neuter accusative plural). *Diues*, pulled up front before the relative clause in which it belongs, modifies *Dido* (note the paronomasia created by the alliteration *diues Dido*). After the initial focus on Aeneas' activity, we get a detailed account of the hero's ornate apparel, specifically his sword (*ensis*) and cloak (*laena*). A *laena* is a thick woollen cloak; depending on design it could be used in a military context or for representational purposes; here it is clearly an Eastern luxury item that assimilates Aeneas to Dionysus (and Antony): 'luxurious robes dyed crimson or yellow and trailing down to the feet are thoroughly typical of Dionysus and so figure repeatedly in descriptions of the god' – as well as the Roman who went East and promoted himself as Dionysus reborn, that is, Mark Antony.<sup>239</sup> A sword studded with precious gems (*iaspis* is jasper, a loanword in Latin; more generally *ia* with vocalic *i-a*, as in *Iarbas*, is un-Roman stuff) and a purple cloak shot through with threads of gold are items designed for ostentatious display rather than everyday use: that Aeneas actually wears them while building the city would seem to suggest that he oversees the building efforts, rather than getting his own hands dirty in the trenches. The cloak will reappear at 11.72–75, as one of the garments Aeneas uses to cover the corpse of his protegee Pallas, the son of Euander:

tum geminas uestis auroque ostroque rigentis  
extulit Aeneas, quas illi laeta laborum

239. Weber (2002), pp. 337–38. See Plutarch's *Life of Antony*, which was one of Shakespeare's primary sources for his *Antony and Cleopatra*.

ipsa suis quondam manibus Sidonia Dido  
fecerat et tenui telas discreuerat auro.

[Then Aeneas brought forth two garments stiff with gold and purple, which Sidonian Dido, glad of the labour, had once made for him herself with her own hands, interweaving the web with fine gold.]

The death of Pallas fulfills part of the curse Dido utters before her suicide where she wishes Aeneas to see the shocking deaths of his friends (4.617–18: *uideatque indigna suorum/ funera*). That Dido's garments should reappear at this moment of utter despair hints at the efficaciousness of her imprecation.

**261: illi:** dative of possession.

**262: Tyrio ... murice:** the *murex* is the sea-snail out of which purple dye was extracted; the best and most expensive variant came from the snails whose habitat was Dido's native Tyre in Phoenicia. See above **134–135: ostroque insignis et auro.**

**262–263: laena/ demissa ex umeris:** the placement of *demissa ex umeris* in enjambment nicely enacts the way the coat is hanging down from Aeneas' shoulders.

**264: et tenui telas discreuerat auro:** Dido had interwoven (*discreuerat*) the fabric (*telas*) with finely spun gold (*tenui auro*).

**265: continuo inuadit:** Mercury displays a decisiveness that startles. Without hesitation (*continuo*) he attacks (*inuadit*) if with words. The forceful approach corresponds to the shock and disgust at what he is seeing. Virgil does not even comment on the fact that a theophany has occurred, though he will remark on Mercury's disappearance (below, 276–78).

**265–267: 'tu nunc Karthaginis altae/ fundamenta locas pulchramque uxorius urbem/ extruis?':** Pease cites the insightful comment of the Scholia Danielis on the first two words of this sentence: '*tu' inuectio est, et 'nunc,' id est, hoc tempore, quo tibi navigandum vel pro tua spe laborandum est ('tu' is an invective attack, and "nunc" means "at the very moment when you ought to be sailing or exerting yourself on behalf of your own future" ').*<sup>240</sup> *Karthaginis*

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240. Pease (1935), p. 264.



*altae/fundamenta*: the placement of *fundamenta* in the line under *high* Carthage iconically mirrors the actual architecture by means of verse design.

**266: uxorius:** ‘too much beholden to his woman/ wife.’ A passage in Dio Cassius suggests that accusations of enslavement to a foreign woman formed an important theme in Octavian’s propaganda warfare against Mark Antony and Cleopatra in the run-up to the battle at Actium in 31 BC (50.26.5–27.1):<sup>241</sup>

... τῆ δὲ γυναικὶ δουλεύων τόν τε πόλεμον καὶ τοὺς κινδύνους τοὺς ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς αὐθαιρέτους καὶ καθ’ ἡμῶν καὶ κατὰ τῆς πατρίδος ἀναιρεῖται, τί λοιπὸν ἄλλο πλὴν ἀμύνασθαι καὶ τοῦτον μετὰ τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ἡμῖν προσήκει; μήτ’ οὖν Ῥωμαῖον εἶναί τις αὐτὸν νομιζέτω, ἀλλὰ τινα Αἰγύπτιον, μήτ’ Ἀντώνιον ὀνομαζέτω, ἀλλὰ τινα Σαραπίωνα.

[... but being a slave to that woman, he undertakes the war and its self-chosen dangers on her behalf against us and against his country. In view of all this, what is left to us but the duty of fighting him, together with Cleopatra, and repelling him? Therefore let no one count him a Roman, but rather an Egyptian, nor call him Antony, but rather Serapion.]

Mercury, in other words, joins in the ethnic abuse that Aeneas suffers from several other characters in the poem (notably Iarbas and Turnus), who cast him as an effeminate Easterner who lacks proper virility and heroic stature. In contrast to the human characters, however, who believe to have pinpointed ‘the essence’ of Aeneas, Mercury knows that his present condition is simply a momentary aberration: Aeneas has slipped into ‘un-Roman’ behavioural patterns, prefiguring in myth the historical liaison between Mark Antony and another African Queen, i.e. Cleopatra. This wider horizon endows Mercury’s wake-up call with special urgency, at least for Virgil’s readers: Aeneas, the ancestor of Octavian, is running the danger of turning into a prototype of Mark Antony.

**267: heu, regni rerumque oblite tuarum!:** *oblite* is the vocative form of the masculine singular perfect participle of *obliuiscor*, i.e. *oblitus*; it governs the two objective genitives *regni* and *rerum tuarum*. Mercury here reuses the idiom of 221, where Jupiter’s eyes fall on *oblitos famae melioris amantis*.

241. See Syed (2004), p. 188, cited by O’Hara (2011), p. 49. Translation by Earnest Cary in the Loeb Classical Library, 9 volumes, Greek texts and facing English translation (Cambridge, MA, 1914–1927). This is now in the public domain. See: [http://penelope.uchicago.edu/ezphost.dur.ac.uk/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius\\_Dio/home.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/ezphost.dur.ac.uk/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius_Dio/home.html)

**268–270: ipse deum tibi me claro demittit Olympo/ regnator, caelum et terras qui numine torquet,/ ipse haec ferre iubet celeris mandata per auras:** after giving Aeneas the treatment on his own account, Mercury moves on to report why he has come in the first place: Jupiter sent him. Mercury gives the king of the gods appropriate prominence: note the pattern *ipse*—*regnator*—*ipse* at the beginning of the three verses, a quasi-hymnic design reinforced by the massive hyperbaton *deum* (= *deorum*) ... *regnator* (the noun on which the objective genitive depends). *regnator* is etymologically related to *regnum* (267), so Mercury here obliquely hints at the affinity of Aeneas and Jupiter, as prospective and present rulers of empire and cosmos.

**269: caelum et terras qui numine torquet:** *qui* is in postpositive position.

**270: ipse haec ferre iubet celeris mandata per auras:** *iubet* introduces an indirect statement: the implied subject accusative is *me* (easily supplied from the previous clause in which *me* is the direct object of *demittit*), the infinitive is *ferre*, which takes *haec ... mandata* as accusative object. *mandata* harks back to the beginning of Jupiter's speech at 222: *ac talia mandat*, reinforcing the (erroneous) impression that Mercury has just delivered a *verbatim* message from Jupiter. The phrasing *celeris* (= *celeris*) ... *per auras* generates a similar effect: it harks back to 226 (Jupiter speaking): *et celeris defer mea dicta per auras*. Mercury reuses this and other Jovian speech-fragments to underscore that what he has just said is a faithful reproduction of what he was told by Jupiter. But the switch from compound verb (*defer*) to simple (*ferre*) and the elegant switch from *mea dicta* to *mandata* gives the game away even here: Mercury does not consider Jupiter's speech unalterable gospel.

**271: quid struis?:** Jupiter's question precisely: see 235 above: *quid struit?*.

**271: aut qua spe Libycis teris otia terris?:** *teris* is the second person singular indicative present active of *tero*. Note the mocking homoioteleuton *Libycis*—*teris*—*terris*, with the last two items also featuring an alliterative paronomasia as well as a *figura etymologica*: see Varro, *de Lingua Latina* 5.4.21: *Terra dicta ab eo, ut Aelius scribit, quod teritur. Itaque tera in augurum libris scripta cum R uno. ('Terra is called like this, according to Aelius, because it is trodden upon. This is why in the books of the augurs tera is written with one R only.')*. *otium*, here in the accusative plural (*otia*), means 'leisure'. In recasting 235 of Jupiter's speech (*aut qua spe inimica in gente moratur?*) Mercury suppresses Jupiter's anticipation of future historical hostilities between Rome and

Carthage and falls back into Iarbas' perspective, disregarding for a moment the fact that Aeneas is busy at work building up Carthage. So the sense of *otia* here is probably something akin to 'idling away time better spent on advancing your own mission.'

**272–276: *si te nulla mouet tantarum gloria rerum/ [nec super ipse tua moliris laude laborem,]/ Ascanium surgentem et spes heredis Iuli/ respice, cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus/ debetur.***: the final part of Mercury's speech remains fairly close to Jupiter's wording and ideas, but also significant alterations on the level of detail:

232: *si nulla accendit tantarum gloria rerum* ~ 272: *si te nulla mouet tantarum gloria rerum*

233: *nec super ipse tua molitur laude laborem* ~ 273: *nec super ipse tua moliris laude laborem* [though most editors and commentators consider this line an interpolation]

234: *Ascanione pater Romanas inuidet arces?* and 236: *nec prolem Ausoniam et Lauinia respicit arua?* ~ 274–276: *Ascanium surgentem et spes heredis Iuli/ respice, cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus/ debetur.*

Specifically, Mercury drops Jupiter's invidious speculations about the psychology behind Aeneas' dallying with Dido (some sort of resentment over his son's future career in Italy) and takes exactly the opposite approach: he presents the filial prospects (*spes heredis Iuli* more likely refers to the hopes Iulus harbours, rather than the hopes others have invested in him) as a prime motivating factor. The placement of *Ascanium* and *Iuli* at the beginning and the end of the line hints at the temporal development: Ascanius as Iulus will fully come into his own in Italy. These departures from Jupiter's script also enable Mercury to streamline Jupiter's rhetorical questions (*inuidet? respicit?*) into one imperative: *respice!* Overall, Mercury's version is much more economical and to the point: in the main clause, we get two sturdy phrases as accusative objects (*Ascanium surgentem, spes heredis Iuli*) followed by the verb (*respice*) in enjambment, attached to which is a relative clause that repeats this pattern with slight variation: *regnum Italiae* and *Romana tellus* are two resonant and compact subjects (the chiasmic placement of the geographical indicators reproduces the stylistic effect of Jupiter's *prolem Ausoniam* and *Lauinia arua* in 236); the verb, *debetur*, is again placed in enjambment. Mercury thereby neatly turns Jupiter's somewhat

idle rhetorical questions into a powerful image of the future and a command. What he leaves out, though, is the concluding order (237: *nauiget!*).

**277: *mortalis uisus medio sermone reliquit*:** an elegant if abrupt ending: adjective + noun (accusative object), adjective + noun (ablative of time), verb. Mercury's is indeed a *sermo interruptus*: he does not even pass on Jupiter's command to set sail (237: *nauiget!*), perhaps because he knows or suspects that what he has said is quite enough to get Aeneas going. *medio*, here as elsewhere, is placed in the middle of the verse.

**278: *et procul in tenuem ex oculis euanuit auram*:** Mercury comes out of nowhere and vanishes again into thin air: no wonder Aeneas is under shock.

## 279–295: The Great Escape

As Hardie notes, 'the effect of Mercury's first message on Aeneas had been similar in its incendiary emotional effects to the effect of *Fama*'s words on Iarbas'<sup>242</sup>—as well as, one may add, to the effect of *Fama*'s words on Dido (see below 298–301). Aeneas now too has lost his mind (he is *amens*: 279) and he is on fire (*ardet*: 281): two pathological conditions that also characterize 'Dido in love.' The section falls into unequal parts:

279–282: First reactions (4 lines)

283–287: Aeneas ponders possibilities (5 lines)

288–294a: Aeneas calls his men and instructs them of his intentions (6+ lines)

294b–295: His men gladly obey (1+ line)

Some stylistic features go across section divisions, such as the striking *a*-alliteration that runs throughout Aeneas' reaction (all words come at the beginning of the line):

279: *At* (followed by *Aeneas*, *aspectu*, and *amens*, to set the tone)

280: *arrectaeque*

281: *ardet abire*

282: *attonitus*

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242. Hardie (2009), p. 78.

283: *heu quid agat?* (as well as *ambire*)

284: *audeat adfatu?*

285: *atque animum*

For a full seven lines Virgil maintains the image of Aeneas' hair standing on ends and his mouth and eyes open in shock and astonishment, silently screaming *Ahhhhh!*, while various thoughts rush through his head (summed up in 285–86, i.e. when the sequence of verses starting with *a-* comes to an end). The one exception, 283: *heu quid agat?*, is a nice break in the pattern that signals the gradual transition from shock to thought. There is a touch of closure to the pattern in the rhyming line endings *sumat* (284) and *uersat* (286).

**279–280: At uero Aeneas aspectu obmutuit amens,/ arrectaeque horrore comae et uox faucibus haesit:** Virgil uses a tricolon to describe Aeneas' reaction to the theophany: he is speechless (*obmutuit*), his hair stands on end (*arrectae* [sc. *sunt*] *comae*), and his tongue is stuck in his throat (*haesit*). It is a very vivid image, worth visualizing, though also fairly formulaic: cf. 2.774 (= 3.48): *obstipui steteruntque comae et uox faucibus haesit* and 12.868, which is identical to 4.280.

**279: amens:** commentators play down the full force of the attribute ('bewildered rather than frenzied, as noted by Conington.<sup>243</sup> I am inclined to disagree: there is a striking sequence from Iarbas (203: *amens animi*) via Aeneas here to Dido just below (300: *saeuit inops animi*) that emphasizes loss of rational faculties in response to news from *Fama* (Iarbas, Dido) or Mercury (Aeneas). Aeneas' is clearly the most muted response, but 'bewildered' does not quite capture his state of holy horror (cf. *horrore* in the following line) that overpowers the reasoning part (*mens*) of his brain.

**281–282: ardet abire fuga dulcisque relinquere terras,/ attonitus tanto monitu imperioque deorum:** *dulcis* (= *dulces*) ... *terras*, as a periphrasis of Carthage, makes it clear that Aeneas enjoyed himself in Carthage, and there is a striking contrast between his pleasurable experience and his desire to abscond (cf. *fuga*): he is torn in two. The design of the massive and momentous *tanto monitu imperioque deorum* is chiasmic and climactic:

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243. Pease (1935), p. 268.

Aeneas is left in no doubt, this admonition (*monitu*) amounts to an order (*imperio*). Note also the assonance *attonitus tanto monitu*. The awkward notion of receiving an ‘order to flee’, which amounts to a contradiction in terms (obeying an *imperium deorum* has positive connotations; absconding in flight is shameful), revisits the paradox that defines Aeneas from the outset: he is *fato profugus*, exiled by fate (1.2). What looks like running away is actually an imposition to move history forward. The problem of a hero turning his heel is particularly acute in Book 2, where Aeneas does his excruciating best to explain and justify why he left his native Troy in a moment of dire need. He is far less eloquent with Dido—and much more eager to flee (a.k.a. ‘to follow fate’) once more.

**283–284: heu quid agat? quo nunc reginam ambire furem/ audeat adfatu? quae prima exordia sumat?:** *agat*, *audeat*, and *sumat* are ‘indirect deliberative subjunctives’: the poet—hence indirect (direct deliberative subjunctives would be in the first person: *quid agam?* etc.)—is describing the deliberations that pass through the mind of his character. The hyperbaton *quo ... adfatu* is as gigantic as Aeneas’ aporia and embarrassment are excruciating. Aeneas already knows exactly what the outcome of the encounter will be: Dido will ‘make a scene’, ‘fly off the handle’ or, indeed, ‘go crazy’ (*furem*). He is not far off the mark: primed by *Fama*, Dido becomes *furens* (298).

**283: ambire:** *ambire* means, literally, ‘to go around, to surround’, ‘to approach’, but is also a technical term for ‘going around and canvassing (or, indeed, buying) support before elections.’ The Romans had laws *de ambitu*, designed to punish excessive use of this practice. From early on, some readers have therefore felt that Virgil’s use of the term here is meant to present his hero in an unfavourable light. Others disagree. See e.g. Austin: ‘literally, “to canvass”, a good word here, but Page is wrong in thinking that it “hints at cunning and treachery”’; the sense of pleading or persuading is uppermost.<sup>244</sup> In turn, O’Hara reverts to Page’s view, taking it for granted that *ambire* ‘hints at cunning and treachery.’<sup>245</sup> Etc. Whatever the precise semantic charge—and this is a great topic for debate!—Aeneas is thinking of ways to get Dido to see matters from his point of view, knowing full way that he is embarking upon a mission impossible.

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244. Austin (1963), p. 93.

245. O’Hara (2011), p. 51.

**285–286: atque animum nunc huc celerem nunc diuidit illuc/ in partis que rapit uarias perque omnia uersat:** the word order in the tricolon *diuidit, rapit, uersat* mimics the frantic thoughts that rush through Aeneas' mind: *nunc huc* 'separates' *animum* from its attribute *celerem* (here used instead of the adverb) just as *diuidit* splits *nunc* and *illuc*. As opposed to the very specific *nunc huc – nunc illuc* in 285, 286 contains two more comprehensive expressions: *in partis* (= *partes*) *uarias* and *per omnia*. Note that the *-que* after *partis* links *diuidit* and *rapit*, though the *in* goes with *partis*; the *-que* after *per* links *rapit* and *uersat*.

**287: haec alternanti potior sententia uisa est:** *alternanti*: present active participle of *alternare* ('to oscillate') in the dative, modifying an implied *ei*, dependent on *uisa est*: 'to him, as he was oscillating [one could imagine mentally supplying an accusative object: *sententias*, i.e. between 'two alternatives'], this seemed the better course of action.' What are the two alternatives? His subsequent instructions to his men make it clear that Aeneas ponders whether he should (a) just approach Dido, come clean, and try to reason with her (cf. *ambire*); or (b) do this, but not before telling his men to get everything ready for an immediate departure. He opts for the latter course of action, though as it turns out he never gets the chance to break the news to Dido first: she cottons on to what is afoot and, enraged, goes for him.

**288–294:** Virgil devotes 13.5 feet to the orders Aeneas gives to his men, but 20.5 feet to his ruminations of how best to break the news to Dido: preparing to be off is straightforward; telling Dido about it is not.

**288: Mnesthea Sergestumque uocat fortemque Serestum:** *Mnesthea* is a Greek accusative form (Latin would be *Mnestheum*). Austin draws attention to the 'internal or "leonine" rhyme' *Sergestum ~ Serestum*.<sup>246</sup> Here are some prosopographical details on the names:

- Mnestheus: 'Mnestheus is the most frequently mentioned of Aeneas's lieutenants (23 times as compared with 21 for Achates), but has the rather shadowy personality of all such satellites.'<sup>247</sup> He was the legendary/ alleged Trojan ancestor of the *gens* of the *Memmii*.
- Sergestus: 'a member of the deputation to Dido (1, 510), commander

246. Austin (1963), p. 94.

247. Pease (1935), p. 272.

in the regatta [in *Aeneid* 5] of the ship Centaurus (5, 121–122), which ran aground (5, 204; 5, 221–222).<sup>248</sup> At 5.121, Virgil reminds his readers that Sergestus was the legendary/ alleged Trojan ancestor of the *gens Sergia* (*domus tenet a quo Sergia nomen*): her most notorious member was none other than L. Sergius Catilina, i.e. the conspirator Catiline, but the *gens* also produced illustrious members. See Pliny, *Natural History* 7.104, on M. Sergius in particular: he was twice captured by Hannibal and was twice able to flee, lost his right hand on campaign, but kept fighting with his left hand four times until he had equipped himself with an iron-replacement, and was all in all wounded twenty-three times. (I owe the reference to John Henderson.)

- Serestus: ‘thrice (9.171=9,779=12,549) described as *acer* and coupled with Mnestheus (with whom he is also linked here and in 12, 561). He participated in the deputation to Dido (1, 611), commanded a ship (5, 487), set up a trophy (10, 541), and occasionally appeared in other connections.’<sup>249</sup>

For the significance of this verse (and its catalogue of names) within the *Aeneid* as a whole see Henderson (*per litteras*): “Mnestheus” presumably “comes to mind” when Aeneas is “mindful” of his men—given the connection with Greek *mnaomai* [‘to remember’]. Saying the name out loud makes him and us “recall” the flowery [a Greek word for flower is *anthos*] *Aeneid* 1.510: **Anthea Sergestumque uidet fortemque Cloanthum** AND its repetitious rhyme 1.611–12, ... *Serestum* |, ... **fortemque** Gyan **fortemque** Cloanthum. And this gets him and us back to where we were before winter off-duty “up the Nile with Cleo” [sc. Cleopatra, as the contemporary typological equivalent to Dido], and all those nights of talk and heat. The names here stand as a synecdochic recall of both those roll calls, as well as prequels for all their later exploits, all the way to the repeat line(-up) of 12.561: *Mnesthea Sergestumque uocat fortemque Serestum* (where we are called to remember back to *Aeneid* 4 where they came in, in readiness to wipe out another city, not Dido’s Carthage but the civilian population of an Italian town, along with even its name...).’

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248. *Ibid.*, p. 273.

249. *Ibid.*



**289-291: classem aptent taciti sociosque ad litora cogant,/ arma parent et quae rebus sit causa nouandis/ dissimulent:** Aeneas' order to his comrades includes four parts: *aptent*, *cogant* (linked by the *-que* attached to *socios*), *parent* (in asyndetic sequence), and *dissimulent* (linked to *parent* by *et* in 290). They are all in the (indirect) jussive subjunctive (matching the indirect *deliberative* subjunctives in 283–84), dependent on an implied verb of command. The four aspects of Aeneas' order operate at two different levels: the first three (*aptent*, *cogant*, *parent*) enumerate the practical things that the men should get underway. Aeneas covers this aspect with three straightforward di-syllabic words, without particular emphasis. The fourth is different: *dissimulent* concerns the way in which they should go about their business and implies deceit. The verb has twice as many syllables as the other three and stands in an emphatic position in emjambement, reinforced by the choriambic shape and the caesura that follows. 'Do this, this, and this. But, above all, be sly about it and tell no one why you are doing it!'

**289: taciti:** an adjective in place of an adverb. It anticipates *dissimulent*.

**290: arma parent:** *arma* has the double meaning of 'gear' and 'weapons'. Aeneas refers to the former, but the latter may resonate as well.

**290: quae rebus sit causa nouandis/ dissimulent:** *quae* introduces an indirect question (hence the subjunctive *sit*) dependent on *dissimulent*. The formulation *res nouare*, 'to alter circumstances radically' recalls the phrase *res nouae*, which in the conservative society of ancient Rome did not possess a positive ring. It meant 'revolution', i.e. the destruction of the traditional socio-political order. The radical touch is appropriate in the situation: Aeneas' about-face could not be sharper and causes Dido's world to collapse. As 292 (*tantos rumpi non speret amores*) makes clear, nothing in his behaviour towards Dido hinted at the threat of departure, much less a headlong flight; everything pointed to a permanent union. What Aeneas plans, in other words, is a 180° turnaround, out of the blue—and he knows it. The lines have given rise to different readings, more or less favourable to Aeneas. Here, for instance, is Horsfall: 'the balance of 291 shows that this secrecy is not so much aimed at Dido as (unsuccessfully) at town gossip (cf. 296f.). Aeneas himself, since *optima Dido* ... has no idea of what is up, will try

to find the right moment to break the news (293–94).<sup>250</sup> This interpretation brings out well how Aeneas presents his plans to his men. But we may wonder whether Virgil's ethopoia is as innocuous as all that—does use of a verb that implies dissimulation not also capture an inherent ambiguity in his actions towards Dido? Sure, he tells his men that he will approach her when the moment is right; but what would a right moment look like? And would Aeneas have found it? His plan anyway goes awry: Dido, so *Fama* ensures, gets wind of events, quite apart from the fact that Aeneas turns out to be stunningly naive in his assumption that Dido harbours no suspicion (see below on 296–98). Moreover, the *dolos* in line 296 is most naturally taken as an *authorial* comment on Aeneas' plans for the departure, so irrespective of his intention of breaking the news gently at an opportune moment, he is tainted with treachery. As one would expect, Dido, in her address, begins by charging him with, precisely, dissimulation (4.305–06):

'dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide, tantum  
posse nefas tacitusque mea decedere terra?  
...'

[Did you really hope to be able to cover up such an outrage, treacherous one,  
and depart from my land in silence?]

to which Aeneas responds briefly, denying the charge, at 4.337–38: *neque ego hanc abscondere furto speravi (ne finge) fugam* ('I did not hope—to conceal this flight in stealth'). Aeneas here is disarmingly—or callously—honest, conceding that his departure is a flight (a frank assessment of the situation and his own perception of it as 281 makes clear: *ardet abire fuga*), but denying that he wanted to depart in secret (also true, in the light of a literal reading of 291–94). The scenario he clearly had in mind was to get everything *secretly* ready for an immediate departure, break the news to Dido as gently as possible, and then get out of dodge, in a peculiar mixture of strategic dissimulation (and careful planning) and genuine integrity of character. (In contemporary terms, Aeneas is not someone who would have broken up with his girlfriend by sending a text-message; he would have dropped by at an opportune moment to end the relationship in person, though with a mate waiting outside in a car, with the engine running.)

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250. Horsfall (1995), p. 131.

**291–294: sese interea, quando optima Dido/ nesciat et tantos rumpi non speret amores,/ temptaturum aditus et quae mollissima fandi/ tempora, quis rebus dexter modus:** Virgil continues in indirect speech (which explains the subjunctives *nesciat* and *speret* in the *quando*-clause), but the implied verb switches from one of command to one of plain speech as Aeneas tells his men what *he* plans to do while *they* get the fleet ready: *sese* is subjective accusative and *temptaturum* [sc. *esse*] the corresponding infinitive, separated from each other by a massive hyperbaton. *temptaturum* takes a direct object (*aditus*: in the accusative plural) as well as two indirect questions, enumerated asyndetically: *quae mollissima fandi tempora* [sc. *sint*], *quis rebus dexter modus* [sc. *sit*]. The hyperbaton and the elisions arguably underscore Aeneas' sense of unease. Ironically, his thoughts are reflected in Dido's plea to Anna to seek out Aeneas again to see whether anything can be done to change his mind at 4.421–423: *solam nam perfidus ille/ te colere, arcanos etiam tibi credere sensus;/ sola uiri mollis aditus et tempora noras* ('For that treacherous man befriended you alone, to you he confided even his secret thoughts; you alone know how to mooch up to the big guy at schmooze time').<sup>251</sup>

**291–292: quando optima Dido/ nesciat et tantos rumpi non speret amores:** as the following lines make clear, Aeneas is, of course, utterly mistaken—and hence emerges as potentially naïve, or self-deceived. To begin with, he underestimates the powers of love in general (see 296: *quis fallere possit amantem?*) and Dido's sense of foreboding and suspicion in particular (see 298: *omnia tuta timens*). Secondly, he underestimates the talent of *Fama* to pick up and disseminate sensational news (see 298–299: *eadem impia Fama furentil detulit armari classem cursumque parari*). And thirdly and conversely, he vastly overestimates the ability of himself and his men to disguise their preparation for departure. What is Virgil telling us about his hero by thus emphasizing his lack of shrewdness?

**291–292: quando optima Dido/ nesciat:** it is only now that Aeneas comes clean with his mates: he has not yet told Dido, their host and his lover, that he is going to ditch her. Not that they care: as 295 makes clear (cf. *laeti*), they are only too glad to be off.

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251. These lines offer surprising, retrospective insight into some of the complex comings and goings at Dido's palace while the relationship was in full swing: Anna apparently played a key role as confidant and go-between, somehow getting to know Aeneas better than Dido. In some mythic variants, Anna even follows Aeneas to Italy.

**291: optima Dido:** '*Optima* is heart-breaking in its context; ... It means what it says, that Dido was all the world to him; it is one of the tiny revelations of Aeneas' true feelings, like *dulcis terras*, 281.'<sup>252</sup> True, but we here also get a hint of the line he will take later on, the timeless 'look, it's me, not you—you are *optima* and all, and I love you dearly, but I got to find my own *fatum*, indeed am compelled to do so by the gods.' The choice of the epithet thus focalizes not just Aeneas' 'true feelings' and his genuine dilemma, but also issues of sincerity (or dishonesty). We may also wonder about Virgil's authorial strategy: Aeneas has been strangely absent from the narrative so far: we have seen him resplendent during the hunt, obliquely active in the cave, mentioned by *Fama* and Iarbas, but 'Aeneas the man' has remained elusive. We get no insight into the mind of the hero while the affair is on; Aeneas only re-enters the narrative when, for him, the affair is over. There is, then, a narrative gap that could presumably be filled with volumes.

**292: tantos rumpi non speret amores:** the design emphasizes *tantos* by means of the hyperbaton, but ironically underscores that the love, however great, is shattered by way of the words that keep *tantos* and *amores* apart: *rumpi non speret*.

**294–295: ocius omnes/ imperio laeti parent et iussa facessunt:** everyone instantly (*ocius omnes*, linked by alliteration) hustles to carry out the orders. There is no retarding *parere parabat* (see above 238) here. On the contrary: everyone seems overjoyed that Aeneas has finally come to his senses. As Austin puts it: 'Note how uneasy Aeneas' men have plainly been in Carthage, and compare their simple alacrity with his worried indecision: *they* have no problems like his to complicate their little world.'<sup>253</sup> The contrast between the leader and the led pervades the entire epic, and often involves a related contrast between complexity and simplicity. Virgil constantly emphasizes how difficult it is to be a leader. It involves cares and requires skills in decision-making (and decisiveness). The verses here at any rate portray reaching a decision as vastly more difficult than carrying out an order. In Virgil's conception of leadership dissimulation also plays a role: a good leader does not share every worry he has with his troops.

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252. Austin (1963), p. 94.

253. Austin (1963), p. 95.

## 296–299 (and beyond): Hell Hath no Fury Like a Woman Scorned

Dido somehow ‘divines’ (297: *praesensit*) what Aeneas has in mind, loses control of her rational self (she is *furens* and *inops animi*), and rages (300: *saeuit*) and raves (301: *bacchatur*) through the city, before accosting Aeneas (from 305 onwards). What is the source of her premonition? She seems to rely on her own intuition, and *Fama* does the rest.

**296: At regina:** the phrase introduces the middle section of the book. It echoes 4.279: *At uero Aeneas*, harks back to the keynote of the book (4.1: *At regina*) and points forward to the third occurrence of the phrase at 4.504.

**296: quis fallere possit amantem?:** *amantem*: ‘someone in love’; *possit* is in the potential subjunctive.

**297–298: motusque exceptit prima futuros/ omnia tuta timens:** *prima* could be taken either as an adjective instead of an adverb (‘instantly’) or as a predicative to the subject, i.e. Dido, in the sense of ‘she found out first of all.’ There is a similar ambiguity in *tuta* (with a short *a*): it could modify either *omnia* (neuter accusative plural) or the subject of *timens*, i.e. Dido (feminine nominative singular). The former would mean ‘(already) fearing everything even while *it* was (still) safe’, the latter ‘(already) fearing everything even while *she* was (still) safe.’ Pease registers that some editors have endorsed the second possibility but notes that ‘that explanation violates all the ancient understandings of the line and lacks appropriateness in the context.’<sup>254</sup> All subsequent editors (Austin, MacLennan, O’Hara) concur. Austin suggests that ‘Virgil thus makes it clear that Dido in her inmost heart was never free from self-blame.’<sup>255</sup> Conversely, one could argue that she (quite rightly) knew never to trust Aeneas fully. The phrase harks back to 1.583 (Achates to Aeneas, commenting on how Dido is receiving his lost comrades with warm welcome): *omnia tuta uides, classem sociosque receptos*. See also 4.373: *nusquam tuta fides*. Cf. Propertius 2.12.11–21 (about Cupid and his arrows): *ante ferit quoniam tuti quam cernimus hostem/ nec quisquam ex illo uulnere sanus abit* (‘he strikes when we think we are safe before we even see the enemy. And no one thus struck departs in good health’).

254. Pease (1935), p. 277.

255. Austin (1963), p. 96.

**298–299: eadem impia Fama furenti/ detulit armari classem cursumque parari:** *eadem* and *impia* both modify *Fama* (i.e. ‘the self-same accursed creature who had already spread the news of the liaison’). She conveys her news with some exquisite rhetorical ornamentation as if to mock the queen: note the chiasmus (a) *armari* (b) *classem* (b) *cursum* (a) *parari*, with the two nouns linked by alliteration (*classem*, *cursum*) and the two verbs by homoioteleuton (*armari*, *parari*).

\* \* \*

NB: The set passage stops here. But the following lines set the tone for the rest of the book, which is assigned in English translation. I have therefore extended the commentary until 303:

**300–301: saeuit inops animi totamque incensa per urbem/ bacchatur:** the image of Dido in torment raging through her city collapses the boundary between wilderness and civilization: the queen exhibits the savage, out-of-control, and insane demeanour of a Maenad in the city itself. Both *saeuit* and *bacchatur* (each prominently placed at the beginning of the line) are striking: *saeuio* evokes the savagery and rage of beasts, natural forces, or violent passion, whereas *bacchatur*, which corresponds metrically to *praesensit* in 297: three long syllables, placed in enjambment, followed by a trithemimeral caesura, suggests that Dido behaves like a Maenad in the entourage of Bacchus, in her raving rampage through her city. The fact that the narrative proper and the simile share the verb *bacchatur* reinforces the assimilation. Virgil uses *bacchatur* again at 4.666, right after Dido has thrown herself on Aeneas’ sword, with *Fama* as subject: *concussam bacchatur Fama per urbem* (where *concussam ... per urbem* mimics 300: *totamque ... per urbem*).<sup>256</sup> A Bacchant in the thrall of divine furor is everything a Roman senator is not: his stately comportment sharply contrasts with the frenzied

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256. Also: *Aeneid* 6.78 and Appendix Virgiliana, *Ciris* 167: *infelix uirgo tota bacchatur in urbe* and 480. To gauge the meaning of the verb in a civic context, Cicero’s speeches offer good illustrative material. See in *Catilinam* 4.11: *cerno animo sepulta in patria miseris atque insepultos aceruos ciuium, uersatur mihi ante oculos aspectus Cethegi et furor in uestra caede bacchantis* (‘In my mind’s eye I see the pitiful heaps of citizens lying unburied upon the grave of our fatherland; there passes before my eyes the sight of Cethegus and the insanity of him as he raves like a Maenad upon your corpses’) or *de Haruspicum Responso* 39 (on Clodius): *... tum baccharis, tum furis, tum das eas poenas quae solae sunt hominum sceleri a dis immortalibus constitutae* (‘... then you are raving like a Bacchant, then you rage insanely, then you suffer the only punishment ordained by the immortal gods for human crime’).

behaviour associated with being possessed by divine madness; and his reasoning faculty are the exact opposite of a mind in the grip of ecstatic intoxication.

**301: qualis commotis excita sacris/ Thyias:** *sacris* refers to ‘either the “rites” in the abstract, or, more probably, the actual “symbols” or emblems of the god, brandished in ecstasy.’<sup>257</sup> A Thyias is a Maenad, i.e. one of the female followers of Bacchus. The designation derives from a Greek equivalent of *bacchari*, i.e. *thuein*, ‘to rush violently.’ The word seems to have been introduced into Latin by Catullus. See 64.391–92: *saepe uagus Liber Parnasi uertice summo/ Thyadas effusus euantis crinibus egit* (‘Often Bacchus roaming on the topmost summit of Parnassus drove his Thyiads, shouting and with their hair flowing’).

**302–303: ubi audito stimulant trieterica Baccho/ orgia nocturnusque uocat clamore Cithaeron:** *stimulant* and *uocat* lack a direct object (such as *eam*)—a nice touch that reinforces the numinous powers of the god. The revels and the mountain do not bother to spur on or call this particular Thyiad; rather, they constitute a force field into which the Thyiad is attracted like a magnet, losing control of her ego and rational agency.

**302: audito ... Baccho:** an ablative absolute.

**302–303: trieterica.../ orgia:** *trieterica* means ‘literally “held every third year”, that is, “in alternate years” by our reckoning; the ancient system of reckoning was inclusive, so that in a given group of years ABCD the festival would be held in the years A and C, the latter being the “third year” inclusive of A.’<sup>258</sup>

**303: nocturnus ... Cithaeron:** *nocturnus* (‘at night’) is an adjective used in place of an adverb. Cithaeron is a mountain range between Boeotia and Attica and the site where Pentheus met his doom, being torn limb from limb by the women of Thebes (including his mother and aunt), after they had been turned into raging followers of Dionysus. (Virgil compares Dido to Pentheus at 4.469.) We are entering the terrain of tragedy.

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257. Austin (1963), p. 97.

258. *Ibid.*

# 5. Interpretative Essays

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## 5.1 Content and Form

Virgil's genius manifests itself not least (some would argue: above all) in his supreme mastery of his chosen metre and, especially, in how he uses metre and formal aspects of his poetry more generally to enhance his thematic concerns. Much of Virgil's sophistication in interrelating content and form eludes the casual reader, and even scholars in their commentaries frequently do little more than scratch the surface of what can be discovered. This is curious: unlike other aspects of Virgil's poetry, the appreciation of formal artistry requires comparatively little prior knowledge; it is more a matter of sensibility and imagination. All you need to do is to take a good hard look at the text (which includes scanning the hexameters) and to ponder how the design reinforces theme. Just Do It! (As Nike would put it.) There is a lot to be noticed and enjoyed.

To give you some idea of the returns that sustained attention to Virgil's poetry at the formal level (metre, verse design, lexical choices, syntax) can yield, I here offer discussions of two passages, one from Book 1, the other from Book 6. They are meant as illustrations of what a close reading of Virgil's poetry can unearth and as encouragement to subject the verses from *Aeneid* 4 to similar scrutiny (or, as the case may be, interpretative overkill).

### *Aeneid* 1.52–59: The Cave of the Winds

The first scene of actual narrative in the *Aeneid*, which kicks in after the extensive proem (*Aen.* 1.1–33), features Aeneas and his men setting out from Sicily for the Italian mainland. The sight of Aeneas about to reach his destination, however, mightily displeases Juno who sees her divinity



under threat if one of her adversaries were to succeed in his quest against her wishes. So she decides to interfere. Determined to sink Aeneas' fleet, she pays a visit to Aeolia, where the wind-god Aeolus resides, ruling the storms, which are imprisoned in a cave. Virgil's description of the 'Cave of the Winds' includes the following line (*Aen.* 1.53):

luctantis uentos tempestatesque sonoras      -- | -- | -- | -- | - u u | --

[The struggling winds and the noisy storms]

Here is Austin's comment:<sup>259</sup>

A fine line, showing metrically and linguistically the noise and straining of the imprisoned winds:

- the massive spondees (the maximum number possible),
- the struggle of ictus and word-accent,<sup>260</sup>
- the huge stretch of *tempestatesque* from the third to the fifth foot,
- the highly charged epithet *sonoras* ending the line

— all combine to form a memorable sound-picture.

This is not a bad trawl of observations. But the first principle of reading Virgil holds that there is always more to see. It would indeed not be difficult to add further points:

- (a) The first word of the line, i.e. *luctantis* ('struggling'), contains a hint of enactment within itself: in the way Virgil has positioned *luctantis* within the verse, the word does exactly what it means: it struggles. The 'struggling winds' are thus a particularly striking contribution to the 'struggle between ictus and word-accent' spotted by Austin.
- (b) The line is chiasmic in design: attribute (*luctantis*) noun (*uentos*) noun (*tempestates*) attribute (*sonoras*).
- (c) The opening phrase *luctantis uentos* contains all five vowels of the alphabet in topsy-turvy sequence: *u, a, i, e, o*. This enacts on the

259. Austin (1971), p. 44, layout adjusted.

260. Let me spell this out: in *luctantis*, the ictus falls on *luc-* and *-tis*, the word-accent on *-tan-*; in *uentos*, the ictus falls on *-tos*, the word accent on *ven-*; in *tempestatesque*, the ictus falls on *-pest-* and *-tes-*, the word-accent on *-tat-*; in *sonoras* ictus and word-accent coincide on *-nor-*.

atomistic level of the individual letter the notion that the winds are forces of chaos—a point that acquires further depth if we recall the powerful reminiscences of Lucretius that Virgil has built into this passage.<sup>261</sup> For Lucretius operates with a conception of the universe as consisting of elementary particles; his poem *De Rerum Natura* correlates the construction of the world out of atoms and the construction of poetry out of letters on a grand scale.

But this is by no means the end of the matter. The full picture only comes into view once we consider the line as part of the larger block of verses to which it belongs. Here is Virgil's description of the Cave of the Winds in its entirety—and how it scans (*Aen.* 1.52–59):

52	[Aeoliam uenit.] hic uasto rex Aeolus antro	- uu   - uu   ]   [ - -   - -   - uu   - x
53	luctantis uentos tempestatesque sonoras	- -   - -   - ]   [ -   - -   - uu   - x
54	imperio premit ac uinclis et carcere frenat.	- uu   - uu   - -   - -   - uu   - x
55	illi indignantes magno cum murmure montis	- -   - -   - ]   [ -   - -   - uu   - x
56	circum claustra fremunt; celsa sedet Aeolus arce	- -   - uu   - ]   [ -   - uu   - uu   - x
57	sceptra tenens mollitque animos et temperat iras.	- uu   - ]   [ -   - uu   - ]   [ -   - uu   - x
58	ni faciat, maria ac terras caelumque profundum	- uu   - ]   [ uu   - -   - -   - uu   - x
59	quippe ferant rapidi secum uerrantque per auras.	- uu   - uu   - -   - -   - uu   - x

*Key to scanning symbols:*

- = Syllables scanning long
- u = Syllables scanning short
- x = The last syllable of the hexameter, which can be either short or long (*anceps*)
- | = Demarcating the six feet of the hexameter
- ] | = Weak break in sense, whether caesura (in the middle of a foot) or diaeresis (at the end of a foot)
- ] | [ = Strong break in sense, whether caesura (in the middle of a foot) or diaeresis (at the end of a foot)

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261. See Hardie (1986), pp. 90–97.

*Translation:*

She [sc. Juno] came to Aeolia. Here in a vast cavern, king Aeolus keeps under his command the struggling winds and the roaring storms, and binds them with fetters and prison. They, in their anger, with mighty moans of the mountain, bluster around their enclosure. Aeolus sits in his high citadel, holding his sceptre, soothing their passions and tempering their rage. If he did not, they would surely carry off in utmost speed the seas and lands and the high heaven, and carry them through the air.

Virgil's description of the cave of the wind begins after the strong diaeresis at the end of the second foot in line 52: there is a marked break between *Aeoliam uenit* and the subsequent excursus of interest to us here, which begins with *hic* in 52 and ends with *auras* in 59. The first thing to note is that the eight lines that partake in the description fall into four pairs of corresponding verses:

- the second half of 52 (*hic uasto rex Aeolus antro*) correlates with the second half of 56 (*celsa sedet Aeolus arce*)
- 53 correlates with 55
- 54 correlates with 57
- 58 correlates with 59

This leaves only the first half of 56, i.e. *circum claustra fremunt*, without a counterpart. (There is a good reason for this: see below.) Let's take a look at each of the pairs in turn:

## (a) 52b and 56b:

The second half of line 52 (... *uasto rex Aeolus antro*) correlates with the second half of line 56 (... *celsa sedet Aeolus arce*) in both content and metrical design. In both lines, Aeolus appears in the same position, occupying the fifth foot of the verse by himself. Each time he is framed by an ablative phrase, with the attribute bridging the third and fourth foot (*uasto, celsa*) and modifying a noun in the sixth foot (*arce, antro*)—a correspondence enhanced by the fact that *arce* and *antro* are linked by alliteration and what could be called 'topographical antithesis': they relate to each other as polar opposites, housing, as they do, the contrary forces of cosmos (Aeolus on his citadel, *celsa arx*) and chaos (the winds in their cave, *uastum antrum*).

## (b) 53 and 55:

*luctantis uentos tempestatesque sonoras* (53)

*illi indignantes magno cum murmure montis* (55)

Both lines scan exactly the same, with a weak caesura in the third foot (the technical term is ‘penthemimeres’):

-- | -- | - ][ - | -- | - uu | - x

This is again thematically fitting: both lines are about the same subject matter, namely the winds that strain in the cave, struggling to break free. Indeed, 55 is in many ways an elaboration on 53. Thus *indignantes* picks up *luctantes*: present participles both, *luctantes* describes the physical effort of the winds, whereas *indignantes* refers to their mindset. Virgil thereby supplies first an objective, and then a subjective, perspective on these natural forces, increasing the sense of personification and also providing a reason for why they struggle: *indignantur ergo luctantur*. Just as *luctantes*, *indignantes* features a clash between ictus and word accent (the ictus falling on *-dig-* and *-tes*, the accent on *-nan-*); and in stretching across three feet (first, second, beginning of third), an effect enhanced by elision with *illi*, the four syllable word recalls a similar verbal monstrosity in line 53, i.e. *tempestatesque*. Likewise, *sonoras* finds further articulation in *magno cum murmure montis*: both the attribute and the ablative phrase refer to the clamour caused by the winds. In all, then, line 55 is a magnificent continuation of the sound-picture initiated in line 53, especially in the combination of *m*-alliteration with assonance (*ma-*, *-um*, *mur-*, *-mur-*, *mon-*).<sup>262</sup>

(c) 54 and 57:

*imperio premit ac vinclis et carcere frenat* (54)

*sceptra tenens mollitque animos et temperat iras* (57)

- uu | - uu | -- | -- | - uu | - x (54)

- uu | - ][ - | - uu | - ][ - | - uu | - x (57)

While the lines do not scan exactly the same, they are still very much alike from a metrical point of view. The only differences are: (a) 54 is spondaic in the third foot, whereas 57 is spondaic in the second foot; and (b) 57 has two weak caesuras: in the second foot (after *sceptra tenens*) and the fourth foot (after *animos*).<sup>263</sup> In both lines, the fourth, fifth, and sixth foot scan

262. The alliterative patterning starts with *illi indignantes* and continues in the following line (56) with *circum claustra*.

263. One could posit a (very) weak diaeresis in 54 after *premit*.

identically, and both lines, in their mixture of dactylic and spondaic feet (3:2, not counting the *anceps*) contrast sharply with the pair of 53 and 55 where the correlation is distinctly different: one dactylic foot (the fifth) to four spondaic ones. This contrastive correspondence on the level of metrical design has a correspondence on the thematic level: the spondaic pair of 53 and 55 is all about the winds, building up anger and energy as they strain against their prison (hence spondees are fitting, conveying a sense of the angry straining); 54 and 57 is all about Aeolus, as he controls and calms down the winds (hence dactyls suit, conveying a sense of the resolution of the penned-up energy and anger).

A sense of resolution also operates in 54 and 57 on the levels of sound and syntax. The defining feature is parallelism: in 54, we get two syntactical units in which a phrase in the instrumental ablative (*imperio; uinclis et carcere*) is followed by the verb (*premit; frenat*); in 57, we get two syntactical units in which the verb (*mollit; temperat*) is followed by the accusative object (*animos; iras*). (This leaves out *sceptra tenens*, to which I shall return shortly: it is the cherry of the line.) In all, the parallel design underscores the activity of Aeolus, which consists in defusing the violent uproar of the storms. The vowel pattern in *mollitque animos et temperat iras*, i.e., *o - i - a - i - o* and *e - e - a, - i - a*, enhance the effect in their symmetry and similarity, and so does the assonance in *mol-*, *-mos* and *-rat*, *-ras*. The two lines feature complementary approaches: 54 is all about physical force and the application of violent means of restraint (*premere, frenare; uincla, carcer*); 57 is all about affecting the mind-set of the storms, soothing their passions and adjusting their outlook (*mollire, temperare*). This pair of verses thus features a shift in emphasis that corresponds to the shift from an objective (53: *luctantes*) to a subjective (55: *indignantentes*) perspective on the winds.

More generally, line 53 finds its resolution in 54 and 55 in 57: the chiasmic-spondaic straining of 53 (*luctantis uentos tempestatesque sonoras*) yields to parallel constructions and the dactylic release of 54: *imperio premit ac uinclis et carcere frenat* (two units in which an instrumental ablative is followed by a verb); and the spondaic straining of 55 (*illi indignantes magno cum murmure montis*) yields to the dactylic release of 57: *mollitque animos et temperat iras* (two units in which a verb is followed by its accusative object, thus correlating chiasmically with its 'partner-verse' 54).<sup>264</sup> Moreover, the presence of the winds diminishes over the course of

264. The gender of the two nouns *animos* (masculine) and *iras* (feminine), moreover, mirrors the gender of the nouns in 53, i.e. *uentos* (masculine) and *tempestates* (feminine).

those five lines. In 53, the winds and storms are mentioned explicitly and come with modifying attributes (*lucantis, sonoras*); in 55, they are referred to with the demonstrative pronoun *illi*; and in 57 we only get a partial perspective of their mindset (*animos*) and their emotional state (*iras*), each without a modifier: the storms seem to lose their ferocity together with their attributes.

So far, we have left the opening of 57, i.e. *sceptra tenens*, out of consideration. To see what it is doing we need to get the entire sentence into view, beginning in the second half of 56:

... celsa sedet Aeolus arce (56)

sceptra tenens mollitque animos et temperat iras. (57)

The sentence consists of a tricolon: *sedet, mollit* (the *-que* after *mollit* links *sedet* and *mollit*) and *temperat*. The initial colon, from *celsa* to *tenens*, clearly stands apart in sense and syntax from the second and third (which are by and large identical in design). Yet overall it has the same arrangement of verb followed by noun (or here nouns: the subject *Aeolus* and the ablative of place *arce*) as *mollitque animos et temperat iras*. But it also contains the participle phrase *sceptra tenens*, which inverts this pattern: here we get the noun (the accusative object *sceptra*) first and the verb second (the present participle *tenens*). In terms of syntactic order, *sceptra tenens* is thus set apart from the rest of the sentence, an effect enhanced by the metre: *sceptra tenens* forms a metrical unit all its own, a so-called choriambus (– u u –). Significantly, the other line in the pair (i.e. 54) opens with a word, *imperio*, that by itself also scans as a choriambus: *im-* is long by position, *-per-* and *-i-* are short, and the final *-o* is again long. By metrical design Virgil thus suggests an affinity between *imperio* and *sceptra tenens*. This is again borne out on the thematic level: the word *imperio* (an ablative of means or instrument: ‘by his power of command’) and the phrase *sceptra tenens* (‘holding the sceptre’, as the symbol of his power of command) are virtual synonyms of one another.

Virtual, but *not* precise synonyms: for *imperium* is just as quintessentially Roman as *sceptra* is quintessentially Greek. *Imperium*, from which the English ‘empire’ derives, initially signified the right and power of the Roman magistrate to issue orders and to enforce obedience (during the late republic and early principate it then acquired the geographical meaning of empire, i.e. the region over which Rome exercised the right and power of command). The *imperium* wielded by the high magistrate of the *res publica*

in the field epitomizes the Roman politics of power. The term notably recurs in the famous ‘mission statement’ in *Aeneid* 6.851–53 (Anchises speaking to his son, but here addressing his son’s ‘race’, the Romans, in their entirety):

tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento  
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem,  
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.

[you, Roman, be mindful to rule the peoples with the power to command  
(these shall be your arts), to impose traditional order upon peace, to spare  
the vanquished, and to war down the proud.]

In contrast, *sceptra* is a loanword in Latin, deriving from the Greek *skêptron*. Virgil seems to have been the first Latin poet to use it. The most famous sceptre in all of Greek literature is the sceptre of Agamemnon in Homer’s *Iliad*, which can boast of an exceedingly illustrious pedigree provided by Homer himself when he mentions the sceptre for the first time: Hephaestus wrought the sceptre for Zeus, but Zeus passed it on to Hermes (Mercurius in Latin), Hermes to Pelops, Pelops to Atreus, Atreus to Thyestes, and Thyestes to Agamemnon (*Iliad* 2.100–09). It is surely the sceptre of Zeus that Virgil wishes to evoke, especially since Aeolus was put in charge of the winds by Jupiter: see 1.60–63, cited below. One may note in passing that the Homeric-Odyssean counterpart of Virgil’s Aeolus, while also being put in charge of the winds by Zeus, does not wield a sceptre at all: see *Odyssey* 10.1–27. In all, then, Virgil associates Aeolus with the exercise of power, drawing on both Greek and Roman concepts, symbols, and traditions of rule.

(d) 58 and 59

ni faciat, maria ac terras caelumque profundum  
quippe ferant rapidi secum uerrantque per auras.

– uu | – ][ uu | – – | – – | – uu | – x  
– uu | – uu | – – | – – | – uu | – x

With the three previous pairings (52 ~ 56; 53 ~ 55; 54 ~ 57) at least one line from another pair intervened. With the two concluding lines Virgil discontinues this pattern, not least to achieve a sense of closure. There are two further changes: a switch from indicative to subjunctive; and the first instance of hypotaxis in the passage, the conditional sequence introduced by *ni*. Aeolus’ presence in these two concluding verses is reduced to the

opening two words *ni faciat*; but the protasis exercises control over the magnificent apodosis that follows. Metre again enhances theme: *ni faciat* is a choriambus, and thus recalls *imperio* in 54 and *sceptra tenens* in 57: indeed *ni faciat* refers to the exercise of the power he wields, which finds (symbolic) articulation in his *imperium* and his holding of the sceptre. After the trithemimeres it is all over to the winds who are counterfactually imagined to sweep chaotically through the cosmos the way they sweep through the two lines: without break.

After this detailed analysis of the four line-pairings, we can now put the entire passage back together and see how the individual components work as a whole. What should already be self-evident is that the prevailing theme of the passage consists in the uneasy relation between Aeolus, the ruler of the winds, and the winds, his unruly subjects. Here are the verses again, with those parts highlighted in bold that concern Aeolus and those in italics that concern the winds:

<b>hic uasto rex Aeolus antro</b>	52
<i>luctantis uentos tempestatesque sonoras</i>	53
<b>imperio premit ac uinclis et carcere frenat.</b>	54
<i>illi indignantes magno cum murmure montis</i>	55
<i>circum claustra fremunt; celsa sedet Aeolus arce</i>	56
<b>sceptra tenens mollitque animos et temperat iras.</b>	57
<b>ni faciat, maria ac terras caelumque profundum</b>	58
<i>quippe ferant rapidi secum uerrantque per auras</i>	59
SED PATER OMNIPOTENS...	60

In quantitative terms, the distribution of verse-time given to Aeolus and the winds is fairly balanced. 53 is entirely devoted to the winds, 54 entirely to Aeolus; one-and-a-half verses devoted to the winds follow (55–56a), followed by one-and-a-half verses devoted to showing Aeolus forcing the winds into submission (56b–57). The final two lines, however, are almost entirely given over to the winds—but they describe a counterfactual scenario. Overall Aeolus does come out on top, but he is *almost* blown away. He gets additional attention in line 52, which also functions as the keynote, and this ensures that Aeolus dominates both the beginning and the end of the first six lines dedicated to description, in a structural enactment of the relationship that applies between him and the winds: he sits on top and controls the end, whereas the winds are imprisoned in the middle.



The overall *architecture* of this block of verses (and the metaphor from the sphere of the visual arts seems entirely appropriate here) thus reflects the fetters (*vincla*) and the cave (*antrum*) that function as prison (*carcer*) of the winds, giving special prominence to who is in charge.

This structural enactment finds further amplification if we expand our analysis beyond purely quantitative considerations and bring considerations of quality into play. For while the winds get almost as much verse-time as Aeolus, that does not mean that they are his equals in terms of grammar and syntax. On the contrary: while Aeolus, when present, is present only in the subject position, the position of the winds alternates: initially, they are objects (53); then they become subjects (55–56b); but ultimately end up as objects again (57). Extrapolated, this distribution of subject and object positions assumed by Aeolus and the winds looks as follows:

- 52b: Aeolus (subject)
- 53: The winds (direct object)
- 54: Aeolus (subject)
- 55: The winds (subject)
- 56: *The winds (subject)* and Aeolus (subject)
- 57: Aeolus (subject) and the winds (direct object)
- 58: Aeolus (subject of *ni*-clause) and the winds (subject of main clause)
- 59: The winds (continuing subject of main clause)

Presented like this, the most interesting line is 56. Here, exceptionally, both the winds and Aeolus feature as subjects of a main clause: Virgil stages a moment of struggle in which the winds and Aeolus clash head-on. Two formal features reinforce the confrontation: as you will recall, the first half of 56 (*circum claustra fremunt*) is the only portion of the entire passage that is not tied into a correlation: it stands out and apart, unfettered if you will, and this is exactly the location in the overall design where the winds assert themselves most forcefully in their quest for freedom. And right after *fremunt*, we get the only truly strong caesura in the entire passage—Virgil, in other words, has inserted the most dramatic break at the metrical level at the most dramatic moment: will the winds break out, one is forced to ponder during the milli-second of suspense generated by the powerful penthemimeres, before one reads on and receives reassurance that Aeolus continues to succeed in holding the

winds in check, suppressing the uproar, calming down the destructive emotions, and, in general, returning the winds from agents of their own to the status of (accusative) objects.

Still, those one-and-a-half lines of syntactical empowerment that Virgil grants the winds (as well as the level of attention they receive, which is almost equal to that of Aeolus) is typical of the *Aeneid* more generally and Virgil's other poetry as well. He here offers a vignette of a pattern that shapes and recurs throughout the entire narrative, with a force of chaos challenging and threatening to overpower—always almost but never quite succeeding—a force of cosmos. Aeolus and the winds thus have counterparts in Jupiter and Juno, Aeneas and Dido, Aeneas and Turnus, Hercules and Cacus, or Apollo and the monstrous Egyptian divinities as well as Octavian and Cleopatra as depicted on the shield of Aeneas in Book 8. Virgil operates with a typological view of the world that has affinities with Manichean thought or the Chinese concept of yin and yang—though one should avoid oversimplification: the description of the cave of the winds precedes the successful bullying with bribery of Aeolus by Juno, who induces the wind-warden to unleash his charges from their prison to wreak havoc on Aeneas and his fleet.<sup>265</sup>

Still, in the end, cosmos comes out on top (this time). But make no mistake: those winds are powerful and their control requires constant effort and vigilance. Again, Virgil's syntax enacts both aspects. The power of the winds rattles the mountain, which manifests itself in the ambiguity of reference: the genitive *montis* at the end of line 55 could go either with *magno cum murmure* in 55 or *circum claustra* in 56. It is perhaps best construed as belonging to both, a position of *apo koinou* that hints at the way the mountain groans and rattles under the impact of the straining winds enclosed therein. As for the effort: lines 52–57 contain one finite verb of which the winds are subject: *fremunt* (56). In contrast, Aeolus is the subject of five finite verbs: *premit* (54), *frenat* (54), *sedet* (56), *mollit* (57), *temperat* (57): keeping those winds in check takes some doing!<sup>266</sup> And our final image, if in a hypothetical scenario, is of the winds returning the cosmos to chaos. Ultimately, what keeps them in check is not Aeolus at all, a minor divinity of the pantheon: it is Jupiter himself, the omnipotent

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265. The classic study of Virgil's cosmos is Hardie (1986). See also Quint (1993).

266. The winds have the upper hand in terms of participles: *luctantis* (53) and *indignantēs* (55) versus *tenens* (58). The three participles are linked by assonance: *-tan-, -tis, -nan-, -tes, te-, -nens*.

divinity to rule them all and bind them all. And so the subsequent four verses are dedicated to his overlordship (*Aen.* 1.60–63):

sed pater omnipotens speluncis abdidit atris,  
hoc metuens, molemque et montis insuper altos  
imposuit regemque dedit, qui foedere certo  
et premere et laxas sciret dare iussus habenas.

[But the omnipotent father hid them in dark caves, fearful of this, and piled high mountains on top of them and established a king who, under fixed contract, knew how to tighten and let loose the reins at command.]

The Cave of the Winds thus emblematically encapsulates the poetic vision (and the poetics) that informs the *Aeneid* as a whole. In Virgil's literary cosmos the forces of chaos constantly lurk under the surface and strive to assert themselves, frequently succeed in doing so, but are ultimately forced into submission again in indignant defeat. Indeed, a striking lexical reminiscence links the cave of the winds to the very last line of the epic. The portrayal of the winds as *indignant*es subtly prefigures the death of Turnus at 12.951–52:

ast illi soluuntur frigore membra  
uitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras.

The last line scans – uu | – uu | – uu | – – | – uu | – –, with the spondaic fourth foot (*indig-*, with the word continuing with a third long syllable *-na-*) enacting the momentary struggle of Turnus to cling to life before he breathes his last. But whereas in *indignant*es the clash between ictus (*-dig-*, *-tes*) and word-accent (*-nan-*) is absolute, the same is not the case with *indignata*: true, the ictus on *in-* is out of line with the accent, but in the case of *-na-* ictus and word-accent mercifully coincide. The energy of the epic is finally spent—though very little is truly resolved.

## ***Aeneid* 6.5–12: The leader and the led, or Aeneas and his men at Cumae<sup>267</sup>**

*Aeneid* 6 opens with the arrival of the Trojan fleet on the Italian shore, in the vicinity of Cumae, a Greek settlement to the northwest of Naples, famous for its legendary oracle. At this point Aeneas and his crew part company. Virgil first lingers on the crew (*A.* 6.5–8):

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267. The following is based on Gildenhard (2007), pp. 89–91.

iuuenum manus emicat ardens  
 litus in Hesperium; quaerit pars semina flammae  
 abstrusa in uenis silicis, pars densa ferarum  
 tecta rapit siluas inuentaue flumina monstrat.

[The band of young men darts eagerly onto the Hesperian shore; some seek the seeds of fire hidden in veins of flint; some ravish the woods, the thick homes of wild beasts, and point out newly-discovered streams.]

The lines invoke a charming scene of buzzing excitement: the young men jump onto the land, fetch wood and water, light fires and marvel at the landscape. Note how Virgil breaks down the crowd:

- (a) we first get the collective: *iuuenum manus emicat*
- (b) this *manus* is broken down into two parts: *pars—pars*
- (c) but Virgil uses a tricolon to describe the activities of the two *partes*:  
*quaerit pars—pars rapit (et) monstrat* (the design between the first and the second and third colon is chiasmic: verb—subject : subject—verb(s)).

The emphasis is on proliferation and differentiation of groups of individuals who remain entirely faceless. The activities the men engage in are utterly banal, concerning the basic needs of daily life. The quotidian and unremarkable efforts have their counterpart in the indeterminate geography: the woods and rivers that form the backdrop to their doings remain unnamed. Virgil has chosen plain paratactic syntax to describe their hustle: *emicat - quaerit - rapit - monstrat*. What is almost entirely absent from these lines is alliteration. This makes sense: alliteration links words and phrases and underscores thematic coherence by means of stylistic coherence. But Aeneas' crew-members are all over the place as they rove through the landscape and chatter excitedly. In this light, his use of *recherché* images to describe the objects of their attention resonates with good-humoured irony:

- (a) *semina flammae abstrusa in uenis silicis*
- (b) *densa ferarum tecta, siluas*

The phrase *inuentaue flumina monstrat* brings the excitement to a close by means of a descending number of syllables 4 (*inuentaue*), 3 (*flumina*),

2 (*siluas*).<sup>268</sup> The note of closure sets the scene for a switch in focus (A. 6.9–12):

at pius Aeneas arces quibus altus Apollo  
 praesidet horrendaeque procul secreta Sibyllae,  
 antrum immane, petit, magnam cui mentem animumque  
 Delius inspirat uates aperitque futura.

[But faithful Aeneas heads for the citadel over which high Apollo presides and the distant and secluded recess—a vast cave—of the dread Sibyl, into whom the Delian seer breathes an enlarged mind and soul and reveals the future.]

The opening *at* sets up a contrast between these four lines and the previous ones that operates on several levels. To begin with, there is the distinction between Aeneas in the resplendent glory of his epic epithet *pius* and his faceless men. While they collectively go on a random ramble through the indistinct landscape of Italy, taking care of subsistence with practical skills, Aeneas' movements are oriented towards a higher goal. With purpose he seeks out (*petit*) a specific location of supreme religious import, the cave of the Sibyl at Cumae. Later on in the text it becomes clear that Aeneas is not alone in his quest, but Virgil for the time being chooses to suppress his entourage.<sup>269</sup> What we get is (regal) power in search of (divine) knowledge.

Virgil underscores the distinction between the leader and the led through a variety of stylistic devices. The horizontal topography mapped out in the previous lines yields to vertical imagery that functions both on the literal and the metaphorical level. Terms such as *arces*, *altus*, *praesidet* and *antrum* suggest, not unlike the Cave of the Winds, which also features the contrast of *arx* and *antrum*, a natural architecture that stretches from the top to the bottom of the universe. This architecture finds its social correlative in hierarchies of power, especially the power Apollo wields over the Sibyl. In terms of syntax, there is a switch from parataxis to hypotaxis. In contrast to the sequence of four main verbs used of the crew, Virgil uses only one verb with reference to Aeneas—*petit*—perfectly suited to convey a clear sense of purpose and direction; yet this main clause is embedded within a hypotactic environment. The plain subject—object formations Virgil used of the crew give way to an elaborate construction dominated by two

268. For the same somnoric design see 4.81 discussed above.

269. Aeneas' companions suddenly enter the picture at 6.34 when the verb switches to plural, at which point we also learn that the hero had sent Achates ahead of him to announce his arrival to the Sibyl: *praemissus Achates* (34).

subordinate clauses that specify complex relationships of domination as well as the existence of something above ordinary human experience: the cave of the Sibyl belongs into the world of the gods. *a-* and *-p-*alliteration (*Aeneas, arces, altus, Apollo, antrum; pius, praesidet, procul, petit*) as well as *m-* and *n-*assonance (*antrum, immane, magnam, mentem, animum*) reinforce the thematic concerns on the acoustic level.

In all, the design of the verses devoted to Aeneas reinforces issues of power and knowledge, hierarchy and order, participation in divine wisdom and orientation in time and space—the building blocks, in short, of a political theology in which two figures assume positions of special prominence: the king, a privileged representative of his community; and the prophet, who functions as intermediary between the human and the divine sphere. The characters who take up these positions in the poem, namely Aeneas and the Sibyl, have counterparts outside the text: Augustus and Virgil.

## 5.2 Historiographical Dido

It is a sober truth: most of the literary production of Greek and Roman antiquity has vanished beyond recovery. Before the advent of printing and the possibility of mass production or, more recently, the IT-revolution and the attendant explosion in storage capacity, the transmission of a Greek or Latin text depended on its being painstakingly transcribed by hand, word for word, copy for copy. The labour-intensity of this process entailed a high degree of discrimination: premodern cultures picked and chose those texts for copying and transmission that they wished to preserve and cultivate for a particular purpose, consigning others, which they considered less important, to the margins. Copies of those works that did not attract continuous attention mouldered away in libraries or private collections before eventually disappearing altogether. Canons, like our canon of classical texts, are thus invariably selective. As a result, those texts that have survived in full exercise a special power over our minds and imagination. They continue to speak loud and clear—indeed often louder and clearer than they did initially since alternative voices that once challenged or even contradicted them have long since been silenced.

Canonical texts frequently determine which mythic variant or interpretation of a legendary figure enjoy hegemonic status within a cultural tradition—even when the version they broadcast constituted, at the time of composition, a sharp departure from orthodoxy. It is of course the case that *the 'correct' version of a traditional story does not exist*: authors working with legendary tales had sufficient creative license to give their subject matter the spin and imprint that suited their purpose. Yet despite the fact that myth-historical material offers a fluid medium for the literary imagination at play, authors frequently endowed their literary works with a claim to (some kind of) truth. Virgil is no exception: the *Aeneid* presents itself as (a version of) history—articulated of course by means of the conventions of the genre, i.e. epic. The chosen genre meant, for instance, that Virgil could include anthropomorphic divinities among his cast of characters without raising the eyebrows of his audience: the Olympic gods are a conventional feature of the epic genre after all, and for his early readers their appearance as such did not necessarily compromise the historical or referential value of his narrative. But ancient commentators considered other aspects of his literary world profoundly problematic precisely because the *Aeneid* operates under the pretense of presenting a historical account. The fourth-century

commentator Servius, for instance, rebuked Virgil for including episodes—such as the transformation of Aeneas' ships into sea-nymphs at *Aeneid* 9.77–122—that blatantly defy basic principles of empirical plausibility and are thus evidently bogus. Unlike anthropomorphic divinities, marvellous metamorphoses, at least according to some readers, violated the historical decorum of the epic genre. (This is part of the reason why Ovid's decision to write an entire epic entitled *Metamorphoses*, which postures as a world *history* from the beginnings of the universe down to his own times, is so outrageous.)

Criticisms such as Servius's drives home the point that the *Aeneid* was expected to conform to certain standards of empiricism and veracity. And in practice Virgil's epic taught generations of Roman school children (something about) their history: a repository of facts and figures about the Roman past, idiosyncratically plotted, to be sure, but of (some) historical value.<sup>270</sup> This, one could be forgiven to assume, holds especially true of the Dido episode. In Book 4, after all, Virgil offers a mythic aetiology ('an explanation of the causes') of indisputably historical events: Rome's enmity with Carthage and the protracted struggle between the two cities over supremacy in the Western Mediterranean in the third and second century BC. This struggle produced one of the most lethal foes Rome ever had to face: Hannibal. He is the avenger whom Dido conjures as part of her suicide curse at *Aeneid* 4.607–29. The meeting between Dido and Aeneas thus prefigures and explains important events in Roman history and therefore, by implication, stakes a claim to historical truth. But if one sniffs around in the margins of the canonical mainstream, it is still just possible to discover an alternative tradition—a tradition, in fact, that claims that Virgil made this part of his epic all up, in defiance of the truth. What I would like to do in this essay is to look at some little-read authors (some of whom have only survived in fragments or later summaries), who allow us to get a sense of this alternative tradition. Not all of them are easy to get hold of, and I have therefore cited the key texts or passages both in the original and in translation to facilitate further engagement with this fascinating if obscure material.<sup>271</sup>

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270. A 'compare-and-contrast' exercise concerning the historical value of the *Aeneid* and W. C. Sellar's & R. J. Yeatman's *1066 and All That: A Memorable History of England, comprising all the parts you can remember, including 103 Good Things, 5 Bad Kings and 2 Genuine Dates* (Methuen Publishing, 1930), could produce interesting results.

271. I nevertheless proceed selectively. For a more comprehensive account and more detailed discussion of this alternative tradition, see Lord (1969), as well as Horsfall (1990), Hexter



Let us begin with Macrobius, an intellectual snob from late antiquity, and author of the *Saturnalia*, ‘an encyclopedic compilation quarried from mostly unnamed sources ... and cast as a dialogue that gathers together members of the Roman aristocracy prominent in the late fourth century, along with their learned entourage, to discuss matters ridiculous and sublime, and above all the poetry the Virgil.’<sup>272</sup> Eustathius, one of the speakers in the dialogue, has the following to say about Virgil’s account of Dido (*Saturnalia* 5.17.4–6):<sup>273</sup>

...bene in rem suam vertit quidquid ubicumque invenit imitandum; adeo ut de Argonauticorum quarto, quorum scriptor est Apollonius, librum Aeneidos suae quartum totum paene formaverit, ad Didonem vel Aenean amatoriam incontinentiam Medae circa Iasonem transferendo. quod ita elegantius auctore digessit, ut *fabula lascivientis Didonis, quam falsam novit universitas, per tot tamen saecula speciem veritatis obtineat et ita pro vero per ora omnium volitet*, ut pictores fictoresque et qui figmentis liciorum contextas imitantur effigies, hac materia vel maxime in effigiandis simulacris tamquam unico argumento decoris utantur, nec minus histrionum perpetuis et gestibus et cantibus celebretur. tantum valuit pulchritudo narrandi ut *omnes Phoenissae castitatis conscii, nec ignari manum sibi iniectisse reginam, ne pateretur damnum pudoris*, coniveant tamen fabulae, et intra conscientiam veri fidem prementes malint pro vero celebrari quod pectoribus humanis dulcedo fingentis infudit.

[...he nicely adapted to his own purposes whatever he found that was worth imitating, from any and every source, going so far as to virtually shape the whole of the *Aeneid*’s fourth book on the model of Book 4 of the *Argonautica* by Apollonius, assigning to Dido or Aeneas the unrestrained love that Medea bore for Jason. Our author treated that theme so subtly that *the story of Dido lost in passion, which everyone knows is not true, has for so many generations now maintained the appearance of truth, and so flits about on the lips of men as though it were true*, that painters and sculptors and the weavers of tapestries use this above all as their raw material in fashioning their images, as though it were the unique pattern of beauty, and it is no less constantly celebrated in the gestures and songs of actors. The story’s beauty has had such power that though *everyone knows of the Phoenician queen’s chastity and is aware that she took her own life to avoid the loss of her honor*, they nonetheless wink at the tale, keep their loyalty to the truth to themselves, and prefer to celebrate as true the sweetness that the artist instilled in human hearts.]

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(1992), and Davidson (1998).

272. R. A. Kaster, ed., Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, 3 vols, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA, 2011), vol.1, p. xii.

273. Text and translation are from Kaster’s Loeb edition (see previous note).

This remarkable text voices pronounced anti-Virgilian sentiments while acknowledging the well-nigh irresistible power and beauty of his poetry: Macrobius' character begins by blaming Virgil with a large-scale act of 'plagiarism': the poet, he claims, modeled his Dido episode on Apollonius Rhodius' account of Jason and Medea in *Argonautica* 4. (The Greek poet lived in the first half of the third century BC.) This, to be sure, is standard fare in ancient literary criticism. According to Donatus' *Life of Virgil* 46, detractors accused the poet already during his lifetime of thieving from Homer. (Virgil is said to have rebutted such charges of literary theft by claiming that it is easier to steal the club of Hercules than a line from Homer.) But then Macrobius' speaker ups the ante. In construing the encounter between Dido and Aeneas in analogy to Medea and Jason, Virgil, he submits, showed a brazen disregard for historical truth. What is more: *everyone* (he claims) knows that Virgil's version does not correspond to the facts and is, indeed, a *fraudulent* fiction. Switching to a 'reader-response' perspective, Macrobius' character proceeds to comment on the seductive allure that Virgil's poetry exercises over the minds of those who get swept away in his narrative. The *Aeneid* (and *Aeneid* 4 in particular) is so sweet and compelling from a human-interest point of view that readers gladly connive in Virgil's distortions of the truth. Against their better judgment and knowledge, they suspend their commitment to historical veracity, preferring instead to celebrate as true what is mere invention.

Virgil, according to Macrobius, is thus little better than his figure of *Fama*. In fact, the formulation that Virgil's made-up story *pro vero per ora omnium volitet* ('flits about on the lips of men as though it were true') recalls Virgil's characterization of *Fama* as 'clinging to the false and wrong, yet heralding truth' (*Aeneid* 4.188: *tam ficti prauisque tenax quam nuntia ueri*) and *Aeneid* 4.195: *haec passim dea foeda uirum diffundit in ora* ('these things the foul goddess spreads everywhere upon the lips of men').<sup>274</sup> Still, both for readers weaned on Virgil or for us who are fully aware of the great pliability of myth, the idiom of truth in the cited passage may well baffle. As Kaster quite rightly remarks in a footnote of his Loeb edition, Macrobius

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274. Both passages play off an epitaph of Ennius (239 – c. 169 BC): *nemo me lacrimis decoret nec funera fletu/ faxit. cur? uolito uiuos per ora uirum* (*Varia*, 17-18 Vahlen<sup>2</sup>) ('Let none honour me with tears nor prepare my funeral while weeping. Why? I fly alive on the lips of men'), which Virgil already imitated at *Georgics* 3.9: *... uictorque uirum uolitare per ora* ('[a path must be attempted whereby I may] fly victoriously on the lips of men').

here ‘speaks, a bit oddly, as though there were a “true” story of Dido independent of the poetic version.’<sup>275</sup>

Intriguingly, however, there arguably was—at least for some readers. A contemporary of Macrobius, the church father Jerome (347–420), gives us a hint of this alternative tradition, which preserved the ‘true’ story of Dido. In his treatise *Against Iovinianus*, he has the following to say about the foundress of Carthage (*Adversus Iovinianum* 1.43 = *Patrologia Latina* 23. 310):

Dido, soror Pygmalionis, multo auri et argenti pondere congregato, in Africam navigavit, ibique urbem Carthaginem condidit, et cum ab Jarba rege Libyae in conjugium peteretur, paulisper distulit nuptias, donec conderet civitatem. Nec multo post exstructa in memoriam mariti quondam Sichaei pyra, maluit ardere quam nubere. Casta mulier Carthaginem condidit...

[After Dido, sister of Pygmalion, had collected a great weight of gold and silver, she sailed to Africa and there founded the city of Carthage. When she was sought in marriage by Iarbas, king of Libya, she put off the wedding for a little while until she had founded her city. Not long after, having erected a pyre to the memory of her former husband Sychaeus, she preferred ‘to burn rather than to marry.’ A chaste woman founded Carthage...]

Many of the plot elements will be familiar to readers of Virgil. In both authors, Dido is the sister of Pygmalion and the former wife of the deceased Sychaeus, arrives in Africa on ships laden with riches (in particular gold), founds the city of Carthage, is wooed by the local king Iarbas, and ends up committing suicide after erecting a pyre under false pretense. But Jerome’s version of course features a glaring absence. Where in the world is Aeneas in *his* story? How could Jerome pass over the Virgilian protagonist in complete silence? Why is he not even worth a mention? And doesn’t Dido’s erotic escapade with the Trojan prince fatally compromise her reputation as a ‘chaste woman’ (*casta mulier*)? Jerome, clearly, neither cares for the *Aeneid* nor seems to be worried about upsetting readers familiar with Virgil’s version of Dido. His heroine dies without having met Aeneas and with her reputation and sense of shame intact. Indeed, according to Jerome, Dido committed suicide not because she lost her *pudor*, in an act of wrathful vengeance, madness, and regret, but in order to *preserve* her chastity and to remain loyal to her dead husband.<sup>276</sup>

275. Kaster (2011), vol. 2, p. 409, n. 62.

276. Jerome is by no means the only church father who hails Dido as an *exemplum castitatis*, a paragon of chastity. See also Tertullian (c. 160 – c. 225 AD), *De Monogamia* 17.

Jerome—he, that is, who carried his library of pagan classics with him on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem and suffered from nightmares in which he saw himself getting whipped by Christ for the inordinate pleasure he took in Cicero’s prose style (‘You are a Ciceronian, not a Christian’, the son of God rebukes him while administering the punishment, combining the whipping with a good tongue-lashing)—Jerome of course knew his Virgil inside out.<sup>277</sup> The fact that he could conceive of Dido as a *casta mulier*, a model of chastity, in the teeth of *Aeneid* 4 is remarkable. It demonstrates that he considered an alternative variant of the Dido-story more plausible, more historical, more serious than the one we find in Virgil.

Jerome’s rejection of Virgil’s Dido in the *Adversus-Iovinianum* passage works by implication only. He just ignores *Aeneid* 4 as if it had never been written, much less enshrined in the Roman school curriculum. The anonymous author of the following epigram from the so-called *Appendix Planudea* is less reticent (= *Anthologia Graeca* 16.151):<sup>278</sup>

Ἀρχέτυπον Διδούς ἐρικυδέος, ὧ ξένε, λεύσσεις,  
 εἰκόνα θεσπεσίῳ κάλλει λαμπομένην.  
 τοίη καὶ γενόμην, ἀλλ’ οὐ νόον, οἷον ἀκούεις,  
 ἔσχον ἐπ’ εὐφήμοις δόξαν ἐνεγκαμένη.  
 οὐδὲ γὰρ Αἰνεῖαν ποτ’ ἐσέδρακον, οὐδὲ χρόνοισι 5  
 Τροίης περθομένης ἤλυθον ἐς Λιβύην·  
 ἀλλὰ βίας φεύγουσα Ἰαρβαίων ὑμεναίων  
 πῆξα κατὰ κραδίης φάσγανον ἀμφίτομον.  
 Πιερίδες, τί μοι αἰνὸν ἐφωπλίσασθε Μάρωνα;  
 οἶα καθ’ ἡμετέρης ψεύσατο σωφροσύνης. 10

[You see, traveler, the original portrait of famous Dido, an image gleaming with divine beauty. And such a one I was, and did *not* have the mind of which you hear, having attained a good reputation on account of honourable deeds. For I never laid eyes on Aeneas, and I did not come to Libya at the time Troy was sacked. Rather, to eschew an enforced marriage with Iarbas I stuck the double-bladed sword through my heart. Muses, why did you equip dread Virgil with weapons against me? How he has lied about my prudence!]

277. Jerome, *Epistle* 22.30. For an English translation of this fascinating letter see *The Christian Classics Ethereal Library* at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.v.XXII.html>.

278. The *Appendix Planudea* is a collection of Greek epigrams and poems compiled by the Byzantine scholar Maximus Planudes, who lived from c. 1260 to c. 1305 (hence *Planudea*). The poems were mostly written much earlier. They then got attached, or appended (hence *Appendix*), to another collection of such poems, which is today known under the name of *Greek Anthology* (or *Anthologia Graeca*).

The poem imagines a scenario in which a traveler comes by a visual representation of Dido (a statue or painting) that portrays her as she *really* was (that seems to be the meaning of the Greek Ἀρχέτυπον, from which the English word ‘archetype’ derives). The portrait then begins to address the viewer in Dido’s voice, claiming for her(self) an unblemished reputation, on the grounds that she committed suicide to avoid being wedded by force to her African suitor Iarbas. In essence, we here have the same variant that Jerome, too, endorses. But in our epigram, Dido does not simply assert an alternative truth; she also aggressively defends herself against perceived Virgilian slander. What we read in the *Aeneid*, she points out, is all wrong: on simple chronological grounds, she could never have met the Trojan hero. In lines that are reminiscent of Macrobius’ point that Virgil’s poetry is emotionally and aesthetically so compelling that readers are willing to take his malignant inventions for the truth, the speaking portrait ends with blaming the Muses for aiding Virgil in his smear campaign. Virgil, in short, is a seductively persuasive liar!

An anonymous author rendered a version of this Greek epigram into Latin. The translation was at some point ascribed to the poet Ausonius (c. 310–395 AD) and transmitted as part of his *oeuvre* (hence pseudo-Ausonius, *Epigrams* 118):<sup>279</sup>

ILLA ego sum Dido, uultu quem conspicis, hospes,  
 assimilata modis pulcraque mirificis.  
 talis eram, sed non Maro quam mihi finxit erat mens  
 uita nec incestis laesa cupidinibus.  
 namque nec Aeneas uidit me Troïus umquam 5  
 nec Libyam aduenit classibus Iliacis,  
 sed furias fugiens atque arma procacis Hiarbae  
 seruaui, fateor, morte pudicitiam,  
 pectore transfixo, castus quod perculit ensis,  
 non furor aut laeso crudus amore dolor. 10  
 sic cecidisse iuuat: uixi sine uulnere famaе,  
 ulta uirum positis moenibus oppetii.  
 inuida, cur in me stimulasti, Musa, Maronem.  
 fingeret ut nostrae damna pudicitiae?  
 uos magis historicis, lectores, credite de me 15  
 quam qui furta deum concubitusque canunt  
 falsidici uates, temerant qui carmine uerum  
 humanisque deos assimilant uitiiis.

279. The Latin text is available in Heathcote William Garrod’s *The Oxford Book of Latin Verse* (Oxford, 1912).

[That one, which you look at, traveler, am I, Dido, reproduced in wonderful ways and beautiful. I was such a person, and did not possess the mind that Maro [sc. Virgil] invented for me nor was my life tarnished by illicit desires.<sup>280</sup> For Trojan Aeneas never saw me nor reached Libya with his Trojan fleet, but fleeing the furies and the arms of pushy Iarbas, I preserved—I confess—my sense of shame through death, with my heart stabbed through, which a chaste sword struck, not madness or raw grief after my love suffered harm. Thus it pleases to have fallen: I lived without any damage to my reputation, and having exacted revenge, after construction of the walls, met my death.

Jealous Muse, why did you goad on Virgil against me so that he invented damages to my sense of shame? *You, readers, believe rather the historians about me than the lying poets who sing of secret affairs and the sexual liaisons of the gods, who besmear the truth in their poems and assimilate the gods to human sins.*]

This Latin translation follows the Greek original fairly closely, but concludes with an interesting elaboration (put in italics): Dido pleads with us readers to believe the story that *the historians* tell about her and not the one promulgated by ‘the lying poets’. She uses a generic plural and generalizes in what amounts to a wholesale condemnation of the poetic—and in particular epic—tradition of anthropomorphic divinities, but pointedly uses the term for poets that Virgil used of himself, i.e. *uatis*. Indeed, the phrase *falsidici uates* (‘lying poets’) is a malicious transmogrification of the Virgilian phrase *fatidici uates* (‘poet-prophets of historical destiny’) at *Aeneid* 8.340.

Who, exactly, are the historians we are supposed to consult? A passage in an anonymous treatise that we are unable to date with precision entitled *De Mulieribus* (‘On Powerful Women’) contains a decisive piece of information:<sup>281</sup>

Θειοσσω. ταύτην φησὶ Τίμαιος κατὰ μὲν τὴν Φοινίκων γλῶσσαν Ἐλίσσαν καλεῖσθαι, ἀδελφὴν δὲ εἶναι Πυγμαλίωνος τοῦ Τυρίων βασιλέως, ὅφ’ ἦς φησι τὴν Καρχηδόνα τὴν ἐν Λιβύῃ κτισθῆναι· τοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς ὑπὸ τοῦ Πυγμαλίωνος ἀναιρεθέντος, ἐνθεμένη τὰ χρήματα εἰς σκάφας μετὰ τινων πολιτῶν ἔφευγε, καὶ πολλὰ

280. Virgil’s full name was Publius Vergilius Maro.

281. The standard treatment of the *De Mulieribus* is D. Gera, *Warrior Women: The Anonymous Tractatus de Mulieribus* (Leiden, 1997). Since the author of the treatise here cites or summarizes the Greek historiographer Timaeus, the text is also available in Brill’s New Jacoby project, a re-edition of the collection of the fragments of the Greek historians by the German scholar Felix Jacoby (1876 – 1959), *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, under BNJ 566 F 82 (where BNJ = Brill’s New Jacoby; 566 = the number of the historian, i.e. Timaeus; F = fragment; 82 = the number of the fragment). I cite the BNJ text and translation (slightly adjusted).

κακοπαθήσασα τῆι Λιβύηι προσηνέχθη, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Λιβύων διὰ τὴν πολλὴν αὐτῆς πλάνην Δειδῶ προσηγορεύθη ἐπιχωρίως. κτίσασα δὲ τὴν προειρημένην πόλιν, τοῦ τῶν Λιβύων βασιλέως θέλοντος αὐτὴν γῆμαι, αὐτὴ μὲν ἀντέλεγεν, ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν πολιτῶν συναναγκαζομένη, σκηψαμένη τελετὴν τινα πρὸς ἀνάλυσιν ὄρκων ἐπιτελέσειν, πυρὰν μεγίστην ἐγγὺς τοῦ οἴκου κατασκευάσασα καὶ ἄψασα, ἀπὸ τοῦ δώματος αὐτὴν εἰς τὴν πυρὰν ἔρριψεν.

[Theiosso: Timaios says this was what Elissa was called in Phoenician—she being the sister of Pygmalion, king of Tyre. And he says that she founded Carthage in Libya. When her husband was killed by Pygmalion, she put her possessions on shipboard and fled with some of the citizens, coming to Libya after great hardship. Because of her extensive wanderings, she was called ‘Deido’ by the Libyans in their local language. Once she had founded the aforementioned city, the king of Libya desired her as wife, but she refused him. She was, however, pressured by her citizens. On a pretext of performing a ritual to free herself from her oaths (not to marry), she constructed a large pyre by her house; when it had been lighted, she threw herself from her abode onto the pyre.]

With Timaios (or, in Latin spelling, Timaeus), we are leaving behind the world of late antiquity. The Greek historiographer lived from 356-260 BC, i.e. about three hundred years before Virgil! And his account of the Dido story clearly stands behind, but in essential details differs radically from, the one we find in the *Aeneid*. In both authors Dido is also known as Elissa; in both authors, she lived in the city of Tyre in Phoenicia; in both authors, she is the sister of Pygmalion; in both authors, Pygmalion killed her husband; in both authors, she collected possessions and assembled a group of citizens after the killing, fleeing her hometown and arriving as an exile in Libya; in both authors, she founded the city of Carthage; in both authors, a local king desired her to be his wife; in both authors, she refused to yield; in both authors, she decided to commit suicide; in both authors, she concealed her purpose behind fake-preparation for a magic ritual that involved construction of a pyre. But here the parallels end: in Timaeus, she commits suicide because she is determined to *preserve* her oath of chastity to her murdered husband; in Virgil, she commits suicide at least in part because she *violated* her oath of chastity to her murdered husband. Accordingly, in Timaeus the pretext for building the pyre consists in the apparent need to perform a ritual that would have freed her from the obligations of her oaths not ever to remarry, whereas in Virgil it is to rid herself of her fateful love for Aeneas.

One may legitimately wonder: what about Aeneas? Why doesn't Timaeus mention him? For those steeped in the chronology of Greek myth that Timaeus presupposes the answer is straightforward: Dido and Aeneas could not have met since they lived about three centuries apart! The best evidence for this salient detail comes from another obscure and difficult source, the *Philippic History* of the first-century BC historian Pompeius Trogus, a contemporary of Virgil's, which has only survived in the form of extracts by Justin (who may have lived in the late second century AD) entitled *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus*. At 18.4.1–6.8, Justin recounts the story of Dido, in the Timaeian tradition, according to the following chronology:<sup>282</sup>

- 1195 BC: The founding of Tyre
- 1194 BC: The fall of Troy; Aeneas travels West
- c. 830 BC: King Mutto of Tyre dies, having appointed as his heirs his son Pygmalion and his daughter Elissa (a.k.a. Dido); Pygmalion becomes sole king and murders Elissa's husband (their uncle) Acherbas because of his wealth
- c. 815 BC: Elissa/ Dido flees Tyre with Acherbas' riches and reaches Libya
- 814 BC: The founding of Carthage
- 753 BC: The founding of Rome

According to this timeline, Aeneas had long traveled past the African shores before Dido ever set foot on them. In order for the two to meet, Virgil had to predate her arrival in Libya by roughly four centuries! Here we have the final piece of evidence we need to put Virgil in the dock for theft and slander—or to use a literary-critical, rather than legal idiom, cooption and correction, appropriation and adaptation. Perhaps following Naevius (c. 270–201 BC), who wrote a poem about Rome's first war with Carthage, the *Bellum Punicum*, which might have included a meeting between Dido and Aeneas, Virgil took over the basic plot of the Dido story from the Greek myth-historical tradition represented by Timaeus

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282. For the Latin text see O. Seel, *Iuniani Iustini Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum Pompei Trogi* (Stuttgart, 1972); for a translation see J. C. Yardley, *Justin: Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus*, American Philological Association Classical Resources, Series 3 (Atlanta, 1994).



and adjusted orthodox chronology so he could engineer a love affair between Dido and Aeneas, thereby turning the traditional reputation of the queen, who was renowned for her unconditional loyalty and chastity, on its head.<sup>283</sup>

It is time to summarize the most important of our findings so as to set the stage for further discussion:

1. Besides Virgil's account of Dido another, older version of her story circulated in antiquity, which can be traced back to the Greek historiographer Timaeus who wrote in the third century BC.
2. Virgil crafted his figure of Dido with the Timaeian version in mind, but altered it (perhaps following Naevius) in such a way that Dido could welcome Aeneas at Carthage and fall madly in love with him: instead of a queen who prefers to burn rather than marry, we get a woman on fire with love who throws oaths and caution to the wind in succumbing to illicit sexual desires.
3. Virgil's radical revision of the Dido-myth eventually came to eclipse the original variant, owing to the tremendous success enjoyed by the *Aeneid* from the day it was first published until today. But some readers in antiquity resisted the allure of Virgil's poetry. And with a bit of sleuthing and rummaging around in the debris of literary history, we are still able to recover a Dido untainted by Virgil's lurid imagination. It is a Dido that appealed to a range of authors who considered the Timaeian variant to be historically accurate, indeed true—as opposed to Virgil's account, which they dismissed as freely invented.
4. No one, however, disputes that *Aeneid* 4 offers extraordinary poetry of tremendous power and appeal. Virgil's transformation of a Dido renowned for exceptional chastity into a Dido who (momentarily) lost her sense of shame is masterful (if 'untrue'). Arguably, knowledge of the Timaeian tradition makes the text even more fascinating: part of Dido's mental struggle against the temptation

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283. The evidence for the possibility that Virgil followed the precedent of Naevius is considered by Horsfall (1990), pp. 138–39. Hexter (1992), p. 367 notes that 'stories about Aeneas varied widely and drastically during Virgil's lifetime, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writing in Greek at Rome, noted already ca. 7 B.C.E. (e.g., *Roman Antiquities* 1.48–49, 53.4, 72–73). Neither Dionysius (1.47–53) nor another contemporary of Vergil, Livy, writing in Latin (*Ab urbe condita*, 1.1), includes a Carthaginian stopover on Aeneas' way from Troy to Italy.'

that Aeneas presents can be read as an attempt to resist what Virgil is doing to her: she clings with all her might to her previous identity and unblemished reputation, but ultimately can't but yield to the poet and his hero.

5. The recovery of the 'historical' Dido raises complex issues worth exploring further, revolving around (changing) notions of historical veracity, poetic license, the power of canonical texts, the seductive allure of great poetry, the question of historical justice for legendary characters, and the potential opposition of truth and beauty. Let the debate begin!

### 5.3 Allusion

Literary texts point beyond themselves in ways intimately related to how language works more generally. Any use of language is to some extent a *re-use*: ‘Whenever we describe the world, consciously or unconsciously we measure our descriptions against previous descriptions of the world. The words which we use have always been used before; we never have a monopoly on their contexts and connotations.’<sup>284</sup> This does not mean that we simply have to re-mouth what others have mouthed before. In creative literature especially, the inevitability of having to rely on already established linguistic and literary conventions ‘is complicated by a high level of linguistic and literary self-awareness on the part of the individual language-user—in texts and traditions in which authors and readers, not content to be acted upon passively by tradition, seek to shape and define it to their own specifications.’ Tradition may stifle as well as enable originality.

In various ways, literary texts that belong to the same cultural tradition are in conversation with each other. They draw on, and in turn contribute to, a stock of linguistic conventions, widely shared commonplaces (so-called *topoi*), and ideas. Then again, authors may enter into allusive dialogue with specific predecessors, in a process that involves both imitation (*imitatio*) and emulation (*aemulatio*)—and in turn become subject to the same procedure at the hands of their successors. For the literary critic, it sometimes proves difficult to decide whether the simultaneous presence of a given formulation, image, or idea in two authors evinces allusive dialogue or rather betokens an independent tabbing of a common repository of poetic idiom and imagery.

Various modes of intertextual sharing characterize all literary traditions. But in the quality and density of its allusive texture, Latin literature stands apart. One of the reasons is its pronounced bi-cultural outlook. From the start, authors composing literary texts in Latin (a practice that started in earnest in the third-century BC—i.e. very late: half a millennium after the Homeric poems were codified in writing) participated in the creative negotiation and transformation of *two* cultural traditions—the Greek and the Roman. (Yes, there was Roman culture before there was Latin literature.) In the not-too-distant past, many classicists tended to consider the reliance

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284. This quotation and the next come from the opening paragraph of S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext. Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry* (Cambridge, 1998), p. xi. It is an excellent (if demanding) exploration of the topic of this essay.

of Latin authors on Greek models a deficiency and looked down upon their texts as derivative and second-rate. This overlooks the fact that the very process of domesticating and transforming the literary heritage of another culture in Latin was an unprecedented phenomenon of signal importance. As Denis Feeney puts this absolutely essential point: 'In creating a national literature in the vernacular on the model of another national literature, these denizens of the overlapping cultures of central and southern Italy were engaged in an undertaking which no one in the Mediterranean had ever contemplated before, but which became a paradigm for later literary history. The invention of Roman literature is one of the most extraordinary events in history....'<sup>285</sup>

Because of its inherently dialogic nature, some of the finest Roman poetry resembles a palimpsest, i.e. a manuscript that has been written on more than once, with the earlier writing incompletely erased and often legible underneath the new text, or, to use another (and better) metaphor, a symphony. In addition to the poet's own voice, the voices of predecessors (Greek as well as Roman) frequently resonate in a Latin poem. Whether they are present subliminally or invoked explicitly (perhaps only to be silenced), such further voices have the potential to enrich the meaning of a text immeasurably. And there are few texts in which the presence of allusive voices is quite so prominent as the *Aeneid*.

Virgil's epic constitutes a watershed in Latin literary history. The *Aeneid* subsumes the entire previous tradition of Greek and Latin literature. Conversely, as a text that acquired quasi-canonical status while still in the making and became an instant classic upon its posthumous publication, it exercised a profound influence on all contemporary and subsequent poets.<sup>286</sup> Most obviously, Virgil's epic is a rewriting, in Latin, of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Virgil 'footnotes' both Homeric epics in his opening phrase *Arma uirumque cano*. *Arma* ('arms') recalls the battlefields of the *Iliad*, whereas *uirum* ('man', in the accusative) 'translates' the first word

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285. D. Feeney, *Literature and Religion at Rome: Cultures, Contexts, and Beliefs* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 53—another highly recommended book, not least for its ability to render difficult subject matter accessible and entertaining.

286. For a pre-publication write-up see Propertius 2.34.65–6: *cedite, Romani scriptores, cedite, Graei! nescio quid maius nascitur Iliade* ('Make way, Roman writers, make way, Greeks! Something greater than the *Iliad* is being born'). For Virgil's epic successors (and their struggle to step out from under the overpowering shadow of Virgil's achievement) see the stellar study by P. Hardie, *The Epic Successors of Virgil: A Study in the Dynamics of a Tradition* (Cambridge, 1993).

of the *Odyssey*, i.e. Ἀνδρα/ *Andra* ('man', also in the accusative)—though *Arma* also picks up *Andra* via assonance, whereas the entire phrase *arma uirumque cano* ('of arms and the man I sing') metrically mirrors the opening imperative of the *Iliad*, i.e. Μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ (Mênin aeide thea; 'Of the wrath sing, goddess'). Built into this mirror effect, however, is also a Virgilian assertion of difference, and perhaps even a claim to superiority: Homer calls upon a goddess, a Muse, to sing, thus turning himself into a mouthpiece of the divinity; in contrast, Virgil states that *he* is doing the singing (*cano*). The switch from the imperative in Homer to the indicative in Virgil signals a significant difference in the authorial *persona* adopted by the two poets. 'Virgil' is far more 'present' in his narrative than 'Homer'. True, a few lines later he too musters the help of the Muse (1.8: *Musa, mihi causas memora...*). But even here Virgil foregrounds his own role as poet to a far greater degree than the poet of the *Iliad*: the Muse is ordered to remind *him* (*mihi*) and he tells *us*.<sup>287</sup>

Virgil's reworking of Homer operates at various levels, from the large-scale to the minute. It involves structural parallels in the overall design, but never without complications. Virgil, for instance, systematically undoes the separation of 'war in a foreign country' (*Iliad*) and 'homecoming' (*Odyssey*) achieved by the Homeric epics and conflates the two in what amounts to a programmatic mess. An example: for Turnus, what transpires in the second half of the *Aeneid* is an Iliadic invasion (with Aeneas and his Trojans playing the role of the Greeks); for Aeneas, in contrast, it is an Odyssean homecoming (with Turnus and the Latins playing the role of Penelope's presumptuous suitors, trying to prevent him from claiming his birthright, land, bride, and all).<sup>288</sup>

Then there are typological affinities between Homeric and Virgilian figures. Many characters in Virgil resemble, though never fully replicate, one or more characters in Homer. Aeneas both is, and is not (like) Achilles and Odysseus. Turnus both is and is not (like) Hector. And Dido brings to mind an entire host of Homeric predecessors, in particular Calypso, Nausicaa, and Circe. (And as we shall see, other women from myth and history join those from Homer in Virgil's mirror cabinet, refracting Dido one way or another.) Then again, one and the same Homeric character may

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287. The opening of the *Odyssey* starts paving the way for Virgil's subjective stance. It begins Ἀνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, i.e. 'Tell me, Muse, of the man...'.  
288. See further above Commentary on 4.258.

function as an archetype for more than one figure in Virgil. For example: in different ways, both Aeneas *and* Turnus recall Achilles.

Virgil's engagement with Homer further involves the repetition of so-called 'type-scenes'—scenes that recur with a certain frequency and often follow an established pattern. A good example from the set passage is Mercury's descent from Mt. Olympus to carry out some business of Jupiter's in the human sphere. We get such a descent at *Iliad* 24.339–48, *Odyssey* 5.43–54, *Aeneid* 1.297–304, and *Aeneid* 4.238–58, with the last one unfolding against the horizon of the earlier three.<sup>289</sup>

Then again the presence of Homer in Virgil may manifest itself in the recurrence of a specific word or phrase that adds unexpected colour and complexity. An intriguing instance from the set passage occurs at *Aeneid* 4.149, in the simile that compares Aeneas to Apollo. The phrase *tela sonant umeris* ('arrows rattle on [Apollo's] shoulders') arguably recalls Homer's description of Apollo at the outset of the *Iliad*, where the deity, who knows how to make an entry, takes wrathful strides down from the peaks of Olympus while 'the arrows rattled on the shoulders of the angry god, as he moved': *Iliad* 1.46–7). What happens if we read the *Aeneid* passage with the *Iliad* passage in mind? In Homer, the arrows of Apollo will bring the plague upon the Greeks. Does that turn Aeneas—whom the simile compares to the (Homeric?) Apollo—into a bringer of plague as well?<sup>290</sup>

Homer, then, is Virgil's most important interlocutor. But he is by no means the only Greek author whose presence is felt in the text. In *Aeneid* 4, Greek tragedy (and its Latin adaptation by Roman republican playwrights) resonates with particular force, both on the general level of genre and in terms of allusions to specific plays.<sup>291</sup> And as the late-antique commentator Servius has it, in what amounts to a ham-fisted hyperbole, 'all of *Aeneid* 4 is based on Book 3 of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*', where a youthful Medea is made to fall madly in love with Jason.<sup>292</sup> While Servius' comment is in various ways misguided—much of what happens in *Argonautica* 3, for instance, such as the stealth-attack by Eros/Cupid, finds a rerun already in *Aeneid* 1, and much of what happens in

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289. See further above Commentary on 4.149.

290. Scholarly opinion is divided: see the commentary *ad locum* for details and further discussion.

291. For a highly stimulating treatment see Hardie (1997).

292. See Servius on *Aeneid* 4: *Apollonius Argonautica scripsit et in tertio inducit amantem Medeam; inde totus hic liber translatus est.*

*Aeneid* 4 (such as the ‘marriage’ in the cave) is in part modelled on events in *Argonautica* 4—the Medea of *Argonautica* 3 is an important point of reference for the Dido of *Aeneid* 4.

The imagery Apollonius uses to explore the consequences of Eros’ assault on Medea stands behind Virgil’s idiom at the beginning of the book. ‘The arrow burned deep in the girl’s heart, like flame’, writes Apollonius, (3.286–87: βέλος δ’ ἐνεδαίετο κούρη/ νέρθεν ὑπὸ κραδίῃ φλογὶ εἴκελον) and compares the way Medea flares up in love to a woman who kindles a fire at night—‘such was the destructive love which coiled around her heart and burnt there in secret’ (3.296–97: τοῖος ὑπὸ κραδίῃ εἰλυμένος αἴθετο λάθρη/ οὖλος ἔρωος). For readers familiar with Apollonius, Virgil’s scenario of a heroine being stricken (4.1: *saucia*, 4.2: *uulnus*, 4.4: *infixi*) by Cupid beneath the heart (4.4: *pectore*) that kindles fires of love (4.2: *igni*) which burn away in secret (4.2: *uenis*; *caeco*) has the unmistakable ring of a *déjà vu*—and reinforces the intertextual relationship between Apollonius’ Medea and Virgil’s Dido.

Apollonius’ contemporary and rival Callimachus plays a more oblique, but equally important role in the allusive symphony of *Aeneid* 4. His presence is often ‘mediated’ by Catullus’ earlier engagement with Callimachus. Thus, throughout the Dido episode Virgil repeatedly gestures to Catullus 66 and, via Catullus 66, to Callimachus. Catullus 66 ‘translates’ into Latin the so-called ‘Lock of Berenice’ (or, in Latin, *Coma Berenices*) by Callimachus, which is the climactic finale to Callimachus’ most influential poetry book entitled *Aetia* (‘Origins’). It offers a commentary on the marriage between King Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his sister Berenice (Callimachus’ very own queen) from the point of view of a lock of the queen’s hair: for shortly after their wedding, Ptolemy had to absent himself in warfare and the forlorn newly-wed decided to vow to sacrifice one of her locks should her husband return safe and sound. This lock, once dedicated to the gods, disappeared and was later spotted by the astronomer Conon as a constellation in the sky. (Yes, those Alexandrian poets liked it contrived: their playful sophistication is an acquired taste.)

From the very beginning of his career as a poet, Virgil took a keen interest in Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice (and its rendition into Latin by Catullus). And allusions to Catullus 66, which is a poem about sex (lawful and illicit), marriage, faithful spousal devotion, and the abomination of

adultery, but rehearses these themes within wider historical and cosmic settings, and with specific reference to an African queen, recur throughout the story of Dido and Aeneas. Here is the evidence:

(i) From the *Eclogues* to the *Georgics* to the *Aeneid* (and beyond):

'In narrating the death and catasterism of Julius Caesar in *Metamorphoses* 15, Ovid alludes to the Callimachean Lock of Berenice... But the conversion of the Lock of Berenice into the *sidus Iulium* is not an Ovidian innovation. Jeff Wills points to the parallels between the opening of Catullus 66 and the sudden appearance to the stargazing Daphnis of the *Caesaris astrum* at *Eclogue* 9.46–8. At the beginning of the *Georgics* the poet [sc. Virgil] foresees the possibility of a catasterism of Octavian himself, a *nouum sidus* that likewise alludes to the *Coma Berenices*. When in *Aeneid* i Jupiter reassures Venus that she will carry Aeneas "*sublimen ... ad sidera caeli* (i.259–60), this will be a repetition of what she had previously done for the Lock of Berenice (Cat. 66.63–4).'<sup>293</sup>

(ii) *Aeneid* 4.8: *unanimam ... sororem*:

At the opening of *Aeneid* 4, Dido visits her sister Anna, her 'other half'. Virgil uses the striking attribute *unanimus* to characterize the close relationship of the two sisters, before narrating their conversation, which revolves, centrally, around the question as to whether Dido ought to stay faithful to her deceased first husband or pursue a marriage with Aeneas. Compare Catullus 66.79–86 (the speaker is the lock of hair, giving advice to recently married girls and sharing thoughts on adultery – in parallel to Dido's self-imprecation should she become unfaithful to her deceased husband):<sup>294</sup>

nunc vos, optato quas iunxit lumine taeda,  
 non prius unanimis corpora coniugibus  
 tradite nudantes reiecta ueste papillas,  
 quam iucunda mihi munera libet onyx –  
 vester onyx, casto colitis quae iura cubili.  
 sed quae se impuro dedit adulterio,  
 illius – a! – mala dona levis bibat irrita pulvis:  
 namque ego ab indignis praemia nulla peto.

293. Hardie (2006), p. 35, with reference to Wills (1998), pp. 289–90.

294. I cite the text and translation (slightly adjusted) of J. Godwin, *Catullus, Poems 61–68, edited with introduction, translation and commentary*, (Warminster, 1995).



[You, whom the wedding-torch has joined with its longed-for light, do not now surrender your bodies to your concordant spouses casting aside your clothes and baring your nipples, before the onyx [a type of vase used to store ointments, in this case for hair] pours pleasing gifts to me, the onyx belonging to you who observe the laws in chaste marriage. But as for the woman who has given herself to filthy adultery, let the powdery dusk drink up her evil gifts—ah!—and render them futile.]

The fact that *unanimus* in Catullus refers specifically to a couple of ‘sibling spouses’ would seem to make it an appropriate point of reference for a passage in which siblings (Anna and Dido) argue about spouses—especially in light of the fact that the notion of legitimate sex between a married couple is shortly afterwards followed with a curse on those who commit adultery, in parallel to Dido’s self-imprecation should she become unfaithful to her deceased husband.

(iii) *Aeneid* 4.66–67: *est mollis flamma medullas/ interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus:*

If the previous instance could perhaps be dismissed as a lexical accident, these lines quite forcefully recall Catullus 66.23–24 (the Lock speaking, commenting on the separation of her mistress from her beloved husband):

quam penitus maestas exedit cura medullas!  
 ut tibi tunc toto pectore sollicitae  
 sensibus ereptis mens excidit!

[How deep did emotion eat out the sad marrow of your bones! How then when you were troubled with all your heart you lost your senses and fell unconscious!]

Virgil’s *est mollis flamma medullas* reworks Catullus’ *maestas exedit cura medullas* in allusive variation: the verb is the same, though Virgil uses the simple rather than the composite. *flamma* and *cura* are virtually synonymous (especially in the light of *Aen.* 4.1–2 where Dido is said to be afflicted by the *cura* and the *caecus ignis* in her veins) and occur in the same metrical position. And *mollis ... medullas* recalls *maestas ... medullas* (same case, same metrical position of *medullas* at the end of the line), with Virgil retaining the soft and plangent *m*-alliteration. (Virgil also keeps Catullus’ emphasis on sadness in Catullus’ *maestas*, which he initially loses with his choice of *mollis* as attribute of *medullas*, by endowing Dido with her standard epithet *infelix* in line 68.)

(iv) *Aeneid* 4.321–33 (Dido speaking): *te propter eundem/ extinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam,/ fama prior* ('because of you my sense of shame has been lost and that prior stellar reputation by which alone I was approaching the stars'):

Dido here holds Aeneas' accountable for destroying her only hope of undergoing a notional 'catasterism', i.e. the metamorphosis of a human being into a heavenly body. The somewhat baffling formulation *qua sola sidera adibam* resonates powerfully if we set this desire in the context of other such ascents or apotheoses: that of Berenice's lock, that of Caesar, that of Aeneas, that of Augustus...

(v) *Aeneid* 4.357 (Aeneas speaking in his address to Dido in which he tries to justify his departure): *testor utrumque caput* ('I swear by both our lives'): *utrumque* is most likely to be understood as *meum et tuum*. It recalls Catullus 66.40: *adiuro teque tuumque caput* ('I swear by you and by your head'). As Lyne comments: 'At a morally crucial juncture Aeneas has appealed to Dido's head; and the appeal is quietly but (as will emerge) importantly intertextual with Catullus.'<sup>295</sup>

(vi) *Aeneid* 4.492–93 (Dido speaking to Anna): *testor, cara, deos et te, germana, tuumque/ dulce caput* ('I call the gods to witness and you, dear sister, and your dear life'):

This, again, recalls Catullus 66.40: *adiuro teque tuumque caput*.

(vii) The pattern culminates in 4.693–705, the very end of the Book, where Dido, too, has a lock of hair severed:

Tum Iuno omnipotens longum miserata dolorem difficilisque obitus Irim demisit Olympo quae luctantem animam nexosque resolveret artus.	695
nam quia nec fato merita nec morte peribat, sed misera ante diem subitoque accensa furore, nondum illi <i>flauum</i> Proserpina <i>uertice crinem</i> abstulerat Stygioque <i>caput</i> damnauerat Orco.	
ergo Iris [...]	700
deuolat et supra <i>caput</i> astitit. 'hunc ego Diti sacrum iussa fero teque isto corpore soluo':	702

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295. Lyne (1994), p. 190.

sic ait et dextra *crinem* secat, omnis et una  
dilapsus calor atque in uentos uita recessit.

[Then almighty Juno, taking pity on Dido's drawn-out agony and painful dying, sent Iris down from Olympus to release her struggling soul and the bonds of her limbs. For since she perished neither according to fate for by a death she deserved, but wretchedly before her day and in the heat of a sudden frenzy, Proserpina had not yet taken from her head the golden lock and consigned her life to the Stygian Underworld. Therefore Iris [...] flew down and halted above her head. 'This offering, sacred to Dis I take as bidden and release you from this body': so she spoke and severs the lock with her hand, and all the warmth dissipated all at once and her life vanished into the winds.]

As Lyne notes, comparing *Aeneid* 4.698 with Catullus 66.62: *deuotae flauu uerticis exuuiae* ('the votive spoil of a blonde head'), 'both Berenice and Dido are not only blondes but "flauae"'.<sup>296</sup> He offers the following overall interpretation of the pattern, which sets up a family-resemblance between Dido and Berenice, the wife of Ptolemy, both royalty from Africa (191–92): 'The magnificent Queen of *Aen.* Book 1 is reduced to death agonies. Venus is causally involved in her death, as imagery, if nothing else, tells us. In these death agonies a lock of Dido's fair hair has to be cut from her head and devoted to the god of Death, Dis, and thus and then she can die. Now consider the fate of her intertextual counterpart, Berenice. A lock of her fair hair is also cut, but it is honoured by Venus, it is placed in the bosom of Venus (66.56, 'et Veneris casto collocat in gremio'), and it is made a star in heaven by, if the text is correctly emended, the direct agency of Venus. 66.59–62:

inde Venus uario ne solum in lumine caeli  
ex Ariadnaeis aurea temporibus  
fixa corona foret, sed nos quoque fulgeremus  
deuotae flauu uerticis exuuiae...

Then Venus, lest alone in the varied light of heaven the golden crown from Ariadne's temples should find a place, but that we also might shine forth, the votive spoil of a blonde head...

And the catasterized lock tells of all this fantastic felicity to the living and reigning Queen Berenice. The courtly dazzle of the intertext, Berenice's and her lock's magnificent triumph, the honouring of Berenice by Venus,

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296. Lyne (1994), p. 191. See already Skulsky (1985), p. 451.

underscores the tragedy of Dido's text, Dido destroyed by Venus, and the text of her death-dedicated lock; the intertext works here in a way comparable to a Homeric "contrast simile".'

(viii) There is a sequel in *Aeneid* 6, when Aeneas meets Dido in the Underworld. At this moment, Virgil makes him 'quote' Catullus 66. Compare Catullus 66.39–40 (the Lock speaking):

invita, o regina, tuo de vertice cessi,  
 invita: adiuro teque tuumque caput.

[O queen, against my will I left your head, against my will: I swear by you and by your had.]

with *Aeneid* 6.458–60 (Aeneas speaking):

per sidera iuro,  
 per superos et si qua fides tellure sub ima est,  
 inuitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi.

[By the stars I swear, by the gods above and if there is any honesty under the earth below, against my will, queen, I left your shores.]

*inuitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi* replicates almost verbatim *inuita, o regina, tuo de uertice cessi*. The only differences are the switch in gender (the Lock is feminine, hence *inuita*; Aeneas is male, hence *inuitus*) and the shift in location from *uertice* to *litore*. Yet both *uertice* and *litore* are ablatives of separation with *cessi*, are identical from the point of view of prosody, and occur in the same position in the verse. Moreover, whereas the Lock, now a 'new star' (*sidus nouum*: 66.64) swears by her former owner and place of residence (*adiuro teque tuumque caput*), Virgil makes Aeneas swear, first and foremost, 'by the stars' (*per sidera iuro*), that is, the kind of object that the Lock of Berenice has turned into. Here is Susan Skulsky's take on this remarkable passage: 'We have been told that Aeneas' Roman mission will result in his ascent to the stars; Jupiter assures Venus: "*sublimen ... feres ad sidera caeli/ magnanimum Aenean*" (1.259f.). Dido had told Aeneas that because of her affair with him she could no longer look forward to the astral immortality of the virtuous: "*extinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam, fama prior*" (4.322 f.). Now, attempting to reassure Dido as he swears by the stars (6.458) and uses the words of the constellation *Coma Berenices*, he instead unwittingly emphasizes the contrast between his success and

her ruination.<sup>297</sup> Moreover, Callimachus' queen is the distant ancestor of Cleopatra. The allusive dialogue thus also sustains a typological relationship between the mythic Dido and the historical Cleopatra, who figures prominently on the shield of Aeneas in Book 8 and is another *femme fatale* out of Africa, who committed suicide.

As for Latin authors: apart from Catullus, the other Latin poet of special importance for *Aeneid* 4 is Lucretius—as Philip Hardie above all has worked out in a series of incisive studies, spanning by now over a quarter of a century.<sup>298</sup> More generally, the *Aeneid* also engages, subsumes, and marginalizes Roman republican epic, most of which is now lost to us.<sup>299</sup>

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As the previous pages ought to have shown, a rich network of allusions to Greek and Roman predecessors renders Virgil's poetry vibrant with meaning for those familiar with his models and sources. Unfortunately, Virgil made little allowance for the restrictions of a modern school syllabus. To appreciate the intertextual dimension of the *Aeneid* requires a certain willingness to read around in unassigned authors and see how they figure in Virgil's text. To go in search of allusions is not unlike a treasure hunt—one can end up empty-handed (grasping at straws) or discover richly rewarding intertexts. For those tempted to embark on allusive adventures traditional commentaries offer good starting points, by way of what we may call 'cf.-gestures.' Cf. is short for *confer*, i.e. the second person singular present imperative active of *confero*, *conferre*, 'bring together', 'to compare.' These commands to compare tend to be followed by a list of references and sound bites. In the second part of this essay, I want to illustrate what sort of thing one can discover if one follows the lead of such a commentary entry, in the spirit of a 'Do-It-Yourself Guide' to intertextual reading. Our point of

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297. Skulsky (1985), p. 449. Note in this context that at Catullus 66.26 the Lock hails her former owner as *magnanimam*.

298. See especially Hardie (1986) and (2009). I make extensive use of his work in the commentary, especially in the sections on *Fama* and *Atlas*.

299. Some bibliography: see Goldberg (1995) on Livius Andronicus, Naevius, and, yes, Cicero; Horsfall (1990) on Dido in Naevius; Gildenhard (2007) on Virgil and Ennius; and the essays in Boyle (1993) for a full-scale survey of epic writing in Rome before and after Virgil.

departure is the comment by Pease on *saucia* in *Aeneid* 4.1–2: *At regina graui iam dudum saucia cura/ uulnus alit uenis...*<sup>300</sup>

With this use of *saucia* cf. also Enn. *Med.* 254: *Medea animo aegro amore saevo saucia*; Catull. 64, 250: *multiplies animo voluebat saucia curas*; Lucr. 4, 1048: *mens unde est saucia amore*; Tib. 2, 5, 109: *iaceo cum saucius*; Ov. *H.* 5, 152: *e nostro saucius igne fuit*; 12, 57: *ut positum tetigi thalamo male saucia lectum*; Sil. 2, 422: *ipsa pyram super ingentem stans saucia Dido*.

*Step 1: Decode the information*

Before we can act on the instruction to compare, we need to know what Pease would like us to compare Virgil's use of *saucia* with. If we unpack his information, here is what we get:

(i) **Enn. *Med.* 254: *Medea animo aegro amore saevo saucia*** ('Medea, sick at heart, wounded by savage love')

Enn. = Quintus Ennius (c. 239–169 BC)

*Med.* = His tragedy *Medea*, which has only survived in fragments.

254 = the number of the fragment in the edition of Ennius by J. Vahlen: *Ennianae poesis reliquiae: iteratis curis recensuit Ioannes Vahlen*, Leipzig 1903. Since this is a fragment from one of Ennius' tragedies, it also appears in the frequently cited edition of the fragmentary Roman playwrights by O. Ribbeck: *Scaenicae Romanorum poesis fragmenta: tertiis curis recognouit Otto Ribbeck*: vol. 1: *tragicorum fragmenta*, Leipzig 1897, in which it is number 213. But the standard edition of Ennius' tragic fragments is now the one by H. D. Jocelyn: *The Tragedies of Ennius: The Fragments edited with an Introduction and Commentary*, Cambridge 1967, in which this line is numbered 216.

(ii) **Catull. 64, 250: *multiplies animo voluebat saucia curas*** ('she kept turning over in her heart her manifold worries, stricken')

Catull. = Gaius Valerius Catullus (c. 84–c. 54 BC)

64, 250 = A reference to his Poem 64, verse 250. 64, Catullus' longest poem, is a so-called 'epyllion' ('a little epic in the polished, Alexandrian manner')

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300. Pease (1935), p. 85.

(iii) **Lucr. 4, 1048:** *mens unde est saucia amore* ('whence the mind is wounded with love')

Lucr. = Titus Lucretius Carus (c. 99–c. 55 BC)

4, 1048 = A reference to Book 4, verse 1048 of his only surviving work, the didactic epic in six books on the philosophy of Epicurus entitled *De Rerum Natura* ('On the Nature of Things')

(iv) **Tib. 2, 5, 109:** *iaceo cum saucius* ('when I lie wounded...')

Tib. = Albius Tibullus (c. 55–19 BC)

2, 5, 109 = The reference is to Book 2, Poem 5, verse 109 of his collection of love elegies

(v) **Ov. H. 5, 152:** *e nostro saucius igne fuit* ('he was wounded from our fire'); **12, 57:** *ut positum tetigi thalamo male saucia lectum* ('...when I touched the prepared bed in my chamber, badly wounded...')

Ov. = Publius Ovidius Naso (20 March 43 BC–17/18 AD)

*H.* = *Heroides*, a collection of fictional letters by abandoned heroines from myth (with the exception of Letter 15, which is by 'Sappho' to Phaon), written in elegiac couplets. Scholars have found it impossible to reach an agreement on the precise dating of individual poems; the first collection may have appeared around 15 BC. The references are to Letter 5 (Oenone to Paris), though modern editors consider the couplet 151–52 spurious, and Letter 12 (Medea to Jason).<sup>301</sup>

(vi) **Sil. 2, 422:** *ipsa pyram super ingentem stans saucia Dido* ('wounded Dido herself standing on top of an enormous pyre...')

Sil. = Silius Italicus (c. 28–103 AD)

2, 422 = The reference is to Book 2, verse 422 of his epic poem *Punica*. Silius' theme is the Second Punic War, with a special focus on the two generals Hannibal and Scipio Africanus.

As it turns out, then, Pease instructs us to look (selectively, to be sure) at nothing less than the entire history of Latin literature from archaic times (Ennius) till the imperial age (Silius). His passages come from more than two centuries worth of Latin poetry. Some of his authors preceded Virgil (Ennius,

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301. Ovid's *Heroides* collection also includes a letter from Dido to Aeneas (7)—a brilliant take on *Aeneid* 4 from Dido's point of view!

Catullus, Lucretius); some were his contemporaries (Tibullus, Ovid); one came after (Silius Italicus). With reference to the second category, it is unclear whether the texts by Tibullus and Ovid were already in circulation by the time Virgil wrote the opening line of *Aeneid* 4—which complicates any argument about influence either way. The generic spectrum is equally impressive: Pease’s passages come from tragedy, neoteric epyllion, didactic poetry, love elegy, fictional letters, and epic. These are already interesting results: the survey of authors and texts shows that Virgil shared his idiom of erotic passion with other poets across a wide chronological and generic range. But there is more to be discovered. Determined intertextualists will sleuth a bit further.

*Step 2: Check out the texts*

(i) Ennius: The line from Ennius’ tragedy *Medea*, which is a Latin adaptation of Euripides’ *Medea*, comes from the famous proem in which Medea’s nurse laments the voyage of the Argo and the mission of the Argonauts to bring the Golden Fleece to Greece. It ended up in disaster for her mistress (Ennius, fr. 208–16 Jocelyn):<sup>302</sup>

utinam ne in nemore Pelio securibus  
 caesa accidisset abiegna ad terram trabes,  
 neue inde nauis inchoandi exordium  
 cepisset, quae nunc nominatur nomine  
 Argo, quia Argiui in ea delecti uiri  
 uecti petebant pellem inauratam arietis  
 Colchis, imperio regis Peliae, per dolum.  
 nam numquam era errans mea domo efferret pedem  
*Medea animo aegro amore saeuo saucia*

[If only in Pelion’s woods the firewood timbers, cut down by axes, had not fallen to the ground and from there the undertaking had not begun to begin the ship, which now is named Argo, because sailing in it chosen Argive men were seeking the golden fleece of the ram from the Colchians, at the command of King Pelias, through guile. For then never would my mistress, misguided, have set foot away from home—*Medea sick at heart, wounded by savage love.*]

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302. This is the opening of the play. The high number of the fragment may hence surprise. It results from the fact that fragments are counted across plays, which Jocelyn arranges in alphabetical order from *Achilles* (1–10) to *Thyestes* (290–308) followed by the *incerta* (fragments that cannot be assigned to a specific play). The *Medea* fragments are 208–45 (and may come from two different plays).



(ii) Catullus: *carmen* 64 is an epyllion on the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, including an extended *ecphrasis* ('the description of an image in words') of the figure of Ariadne, shortly after she had been abandoned by Theseus (64.249–50):

quae tum aspectans cedentem maesta carinam  
multiplices animo volvebat saucia curas

[She meanwhile, gazing sadly out at the departing ship, kept turning over in her heart her manifold worries, stricken.]

(iii) Lucretius: in his didactic epic *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius gives an account of the world from the point of view of Epicurean physics, which includes a diatribe against the foolishness of love as opposed to the (intensely pleasurable) physics of sex. Our line comes from a passage where Lucretius describes the physiology of sexual desire at the onset of puberty. After some comments on wet dreams (1030–36), he moves on to what amounts to the first surviving description of an erection and ejaculation in Latin (4.1037–48):<sup>303</sup>

Sollicitatur id <in> nobis, quod diximus ante,	
semen, adulta aetas cum primum roborat artus.	
namque alias aliud res commovet atque lacessit;	
ex homine humanum semen ciet una hominis vis.	1040
quod simul atque suis eiectum sedibus exit,	
per membra atque artus decedit corpore toto	
in loca conveniens nervorum certa cietque	
continuo partis genitalis corporis ipsas.	
irritata tument loca semine fitque voluntas	1045
eicere id quo se contendit dira libido,	1046
idque petit corpus, mens unde est saucia amore.	1048

[That seed is stirred in us whereof I spoke before, when first the age of manhood strengthens our limbs. For one cause moves and rouses one thing, a different cause another; from a human being only a human's influence stirs human seed. And as soon as it issues, roused from its abode, it makes its way from out the whole body through the limbs and frame, coming together into fixed places, and straightway rouses at last the reproductive parts of the body; these places are stirred and swell with seed and there arises the desire to expel the seed towards the object to which fierce passion is moved and the body seeks that body, by which the mind is smitten with love.]

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303. I cite the text and translation (slightly adjusted) of C. Bailey, *Titī Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex, edited with Prolegomena, Critical Apparatus, Translation, and Commentary*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1947).

In his commentary on the passage, R. D. Brown postulates that with the 'trenchant phrase' *saucia amore* Lucretius recalls the fragment from Ennius' *Medea* that we just considered but at the same time 'pointedly applies the image to love in general rather than to tragic or unrequited love, which is its usual application.'<sup>304</sup> In what is otherwise a passage characterized by an arch-clinical tone, the poetic metaphor provides an unexpected climax to the account of the physiological processes triggered by sexual desire. Lucretius' purpose is to cure the mind from love—and his sly reuse of tragic diction is a pointed reminder that what is, from his point of view, romantic rubbish, can have dire consequences.

(iv) Tibullus: *Elegy* 2.5, designed as a hymn to Apollo, celebrates the induction of the son of Tibullus' patron Messalla into the priesthood responsible for the preservation and exegesis of the Sibylline Books, the so-called *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*. The poem includes quotations from a prophecy by the Sibyl, in which she foretells the story of Rome. The subject matter, then, could not be more Virgilian, and the *Aeneid* beckons in the background of this poem, even though chronological difficulties arise. As Maltby explains: 'The arrival of Aeneas in Italy and the early origins of Rome were of course also the subject of Virgil's epic poem, the *Aeneid*. This was not published in its final form until 16 BC, three years after Virgil's death. Tib. is known to have died shortly after Virgil and certainly before 16 BC ... Similarities between the two treatments nevertheless suggest that Tib. could have heard pre-publication recitations of parts of the work.'<sup>305</sup> In essence, the work is a version of the story of Aeneas from the point of view of elegy and written for someone who did not belong to the circle around Augustus and his 'patron of the arts' Maecenas. Dido does not make an appearance, even though Tibullus refers to 'resolute Aeneas' as 'flitting Love's brother' (39–40: *Impiger Aenea, uolitantis frater Amoris, / Troica qui profugis sacra uehis ratibus....* ; 'Flitting Love's brother, resolute Aeneas, whose nomadic boat transported Trojan relics...').<sup>306</sup> And towards the end

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304. R. D. Brown, *Lucretius on Love and Sex. A Commentary on De Rerum Natura IV, 1030-1287 with Prolegomena, Text, and Translation* (Leiden, 1987), p. 191.

305. Maltby in the Oxford World's Classics edition (see note 307), p. 120.

306. *Profugis* perhaps presupposes knowledge of (a version) of the opening of the *Aeneid*. See 1.1–2: *Arma uirumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris / Italiam fato profugus Lauiuaque uenit.*

of the poem, Tibullus makes a pitch for general disarmament, in which our phrase occurs (2.5.105–10):<sup>307</sup>

pace tua pereant arcus pereantque sagittae,  
 Phoebæ, modo in terris erret inermis Amor.  
 ars bona: sed postquam sumpsit sibi tela Cupido,  
 eu heu quam multis ars dedit ista malum!  
 et mihi praecipue, *iaceo cum saucius* annum  
 et (faueo morbo cum iuuat ipse dolor).

[With your consent may bows be banned and arrows banned,  
 Phoebus, so Love may wander Earth unarmed.  
 Skill's fine, but after Cupid took up arms himself,  
 alas that skill produced such punishment—  
 and mostly mine—while wounded I have lain a year  
 and clung to sickness while my pain was joy.]

(vi) Ovid: I'll set aside the passage from Letter 5 as most likely an interpolation. Conversely, for his Letter 12 from Medea to Jason, Ovid has picked a critical moment: when penning the epistle Medea has already been ditched by Jason, so he could marry Creusa, the daughter of king Creon of Corinth, but has not yet committed infanticide. In our passage, Medea recalls how she felt about the Greek hero after the meeting in which Aëtes has challenged Jason to embark upon a mission impossible to secure the golden fleece, much to the grief of his daughter (*Heroides* 12.55–58).<sup>308</sup>

quam tibi tunc longe regnum dotale Creusae  
 et socer et magni nata Creontis erat!  
 tristis abis; oculis abeuntem prosequor udis,  
 et dixit tenui murmure lingua: 'uale!'  
 ut positum tetigi thalamo male saucia lectum,  
 acta est per lacrimas nox mihi, quanta fuit.

[How far away then from your thought were Creusa's dowry-realm, and the daughter of great Creon, and Creon the father of your bride! With foreboding you depart; and as you go my moist eyes follow you, and in faint murmur comes from my tongue: 'Fare well!' Laying myself on the ordered couch within my chamber, grievously wounded, in tears I passed the whole night long.]

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307. I cite the text and translation of the brand new Oxford World's Classics edition of Tibullus: *Tibullus, Elegies, with Parallel Latin Text. A New Translation by A. M. Jaster with an Introduction and Notes by Robert Maltby* (Oxford, 2012).

308. I cite text and translation (slightly modified) of the Loeb Classical Library edition: *Ovid I: Heroides and Amores*, trans. by G. Showerman, 2nd edn, rev. by G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA, 1977).

In intertextual terms, this passage gestures to both Medea's youthful past (as recounted by Apollonius Rhodius in *Argonautica* 3) and her criminal future (as dramatized by Euripides in his tragedy *Medea*, a play in which she visits gruesome retribution on Jason, Creusa and Creon). As such, it bears a striking resemblance to the situation of Dido at the opening of *Aeneid* 4: she, too, is rendered sleepless by love (like the youthful Medea of Apollonius), but will soon turn her mind to exacting revenge along the lines of the mature Euripidean Medea.

(vii) Finally, Silius Italicus. The passage comes from the description of the 'Shield of Hannibal', which is modelled on Virgil's description of the Shield of Aeneas in *Aeneid* 8 and contains, among other things, a rewrite of *Aeneid* 4—from a Carthaginian point of view! (Silius Italicus, *Punica* 2.406–25).<sup>309</sup>

Condebat primae Dido Carthaginis arces,  
instabatque operi subducta classe iuventus.  
molibus hi claudunt portus, his tecta domosque  
partiris, iustae Bitia venerande senectae.  
ostentant caput effossa tellure repertum 410  
bellatoris equi atque omen clamore salutant.  
has inter species orbatum classe suisque  
Aenean pulsum pelago dextraque precantem  
cernere erat. fronte hunc avidae regina serena  
infelix ac iam vultu spectabat amico. 415  
hinc et speluncam furtivaque foedera amantum  
Callaicae fecere manus; it clamor ad auras  
latratusque canum, subitoque exterrita nimbo  
occultant alae venantum corpora silvis.  
nec procul Aeneadum vacuo iam litore classis 420  
aequora nequicquam revocante petebat Elissa.  
*ipsa, pyram super ingentem stans, saucia Dido*  
mandabat Tyriis ultricia bella futuris;  
ardentemque rogam media spectabat ab unda  
Dardanus et magnis pandebat carbasa fatis. 425

[Dido was shown building the city of infant Carthage; her men had beached their ships and were busily engaged. Some were enclosing a harbour with piers; to others dwellings were assigned by Bitias, a righteous and venerable old man. Men pointed to the head of a warhorse which they had found in the soil when digging, and hailed the omen with a shout. Amid these scenes

309. I cite and text and translation of J. D. Duff's Loeb Edition: *Silius Italicus, Punica, with an English Translation* (Cambridge, MA, 1934).

Aeneas was shown, robbed of his ships and men and cast up by the sea; with his right hand he made supplication. The hapless queen looked eagerly upon him with unclouded brow and with looks already friendly. Next, the art of Gallicia had fashioned the cave and the secret tryst of the lovers; high rose the shouting and the baying of hounds; and the mounted huntsmen, alarmed by a sudden rainfall, took shelter in the forest. Not far away, the fleet of the Aeneadae had left the shore and was making for the open sea, while Elissa was calling them back in vain. *Then Dido by herself was standing wounded on a huge pyre*, and charging a later generation of Tyrians to avenge her by war; and the Dardan, out at sea, was watching the blazing pile and spreading his sails for his high destiny.]

Visiting the works from which Pease gleaned his parallels produces pleasing results: all have some pertinence for our appreciation of the figure of Dido in *Aeneid* 4. Several of the texts employ the image of being stricken by love with reference to an abandoned heroine (Medea in the case of Ennius and Ovid, Ariadne in the case of Catullus), whose mythic CV boast striking parallels to that of Dido. The exceptions are Lucretius (but he at least *gestures* to Ennius' Medea by his use of tragic idiom) and Tibullus (who applies the image to his own, elegiac self in what emerges as an act of intertextual emasculation, in light of the fact that the metaphor elsewhere applies to women). In a final step, we can now ask what each of these authors may contribute to our appreciation of *Aeneid* 4 if we elevate them to the status of voices in or on Virgil's poetry.

*Step 3: Interpret the texts as being in dialogue with one another*

What do we gain by 'activating' Virgil's predecessors Ennius, Catullus, and Lucretius in our reading of *Aeneid* 4.1–2? We can formulate this question in terms of authorial intent, assuming that Virgil alludes to all three passages. (This is tantamount to saying that he would like to encourage his audience (us) to read his text with these earlier passages in mind.) But we don't have to. We can pose the question without the need to posit authorial intent by asking, simply, whether our understanding of Virgil's text is enriched if we recall comparable uses of *saucius* as a term to signify 'stricken with love' in earlier authors. And if we approach this question from our perspective as readers, we can easily extend our intertextual range to Virgil's contemporaries and successors as well. Virgil himself could not have alluded to them, of course, but their poetry may nevertheless help to

illuminate his, not least because they may allude to him and thereby offer a comment on the *Aeneid*.

Now as we have seen in the first half of this essay, Virgil models the opening of *Aeneid* 4 on Apollonius Rhodius' treatment of Medea in Book 3 of his epic *Argonautica*. An allusion to the opening of Ennius' tragedy *Medea* would thus strengthen the presence of this mythic figure in the opening verses and reinforce the sense that Virgil assimilates Dido to Medea. She is (as it were) present, via Apollonius, in her epic incarnation as a youthful maiden madly in love and, via Ennius, in her tragic incarnation as a bitter and abandoned wife, full of hatred and set on revenge. The double allusion thus elegantly and with supreme economy prefigures what will happen to Dido in the course of *Aeneid* 4. Just like Medea, she will turn from someone smitten in love under the compulsion of Eros/ Cupid into a disillusioned *femme fatale* out to exact retribution from the lover who dumped her. The implications are ominous. Suddenly, the prospect of murder is in the air. Medea, after all, first slaughtered her brother to aid the escape of the Argonauts from Colchis and then, once her relationship with Jason soured, the children they had in common. It is significant (and strengthens the case of an allusion to Ennius at the outset of the book) that Dido moots precisely such atrocities as a missed opportunity later on (*Aeneid* 4.600–02):

non potui abreptum diuellere corpus et undis  
 spargere? non socios, non ipsum absumere ferro  
 Ascanium patriisque epulandum ponere mensis?

[Could I not have seized him, torn him limb from limb, and scattered the pieces on the waves? Could I not have put his comrades to the sword, and Ascanius himself, and served him up as a meal at his father's table?]

The *sparagmos* of Aeneas that Dido here envisages evokes Medea's murder and dismemberment of her brother Apsyrtus (as well as *sparagmoi* from tragedy, such as that of Pentheus by his mother Agave and her fellow maenads). Notoriously Medea threw the skewered limbs of Apsyrtus into the sea bit by gory bit on the Argonauts homeward journey to slow down the pursuers. The most prominent model here is Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 4. The murder of Ascanius that Dido here imagines recalls Euripides' and Ennius' *Medea*, who killed her children by Jason in an act of vengeance—like another homicidal mother of Greek myth, Procne, who serves as mythic model for the final brutality: Procne slaughtered her son

Itys and dished him up to his father Tereus, to avenge the rape her husband had perpetrated on her sister Philomela. An allusion to Medea's criminal record as archived in Apollonius, Euripides, and Ennius at the beginning of *Aeneid* 4 thus emerges as a programmatic invocation of a mythic role-model for Dido that later in the book finds more explicit recognition.

The reference to the epic and tragic Medea built into the opening lines of *Aeneid* 4 thus functions like an intertextual risk alert, putting the reader on guard that the love plot may take a tragic, even murderous turn. The allusion to Catullus 64 works in similar fashion. Again, we are pointed to a heroine, Ariadne, whose story evinces intriguing points of contact with that of Dido. But if we recall Catullus 64.249–50 when reading *Aeneid* 4.1–2 we get an instant glimpse not of how it *could* end (as with Medea) but how it actually *will* end. Catullus here describes Ariadne gazing after the departing ships of her former lover Theseus, whom she once rescued from mortal danger. This of course is exactly the situation Dido will find herself in towards the end of *Aeneid* 4. And we may recall that Ariadne in Catullus 64 sends a vicious curse after Theseus as punishment for his treachery (189–201), which, like the curse Dido calls down on Aeneas, turns out to be efficacious, resulting in the death of his father Aegeus. Again, an allusion to Catullus 64 and the figure of Ariadne at the outset of *Aeneid* 4 foreshadows the terms of the book's tragic end and its unfortunate consequences.

Via Ennius and Catullus, then, we can add the tragic figures of Medea and Ariadne to the host of intertextual ghosts from Greek and Latin literature that haunt Virgil's figure of Dido. They join Calypso, Nausikaa, and Circe from the *Odyssey*, the youthful *epic* Medea of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, and the historical Queen Berenice (from Callimachus via Catullus) as well as her distant ancestor Cleopatra as points of comparison and contrast. And we may well put Dido in front of further intertextual mirrors. As Alessandro Schiesaro puts it:<sup>310</sup>

More space for Euripides' Medea among Dido's intertextual ancestors is surely needed. But there are in fact more than two texts at stake: if Dido's (literary) family-tree is to be investigated thoroughly in search of connections with Medea, both ascendants and descendants must be included. As we have seen, it is important both to analyze the Medeas who offer Dido a model—Euripides', Apollonius', Ennius'—and those who recognize Dido as a model, Seneca's, but especially Ovid's (nor should Hosidius Geta and Dracontius be ignored). The heuristic value of this retroactive form of intertextuality will

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310. Schiesaro (2008), p. 222.

be no less noteworthy, for it may well show that such exceptional readers of Virgil were disposed to acknowledge the similarities between the two characters.

Seneca (c. 4 BC–AD 65), Hosidius Geta (late 2nd–early 3rd century AD), and Dracontius (c. 455–c. 505) all composed plays or poems about Medea, but did so with explicit or implicit reference to Virgil's Dido, offering a retrospective commentary—a tradition that begins in earnest with Ovid's *Heroides*.

The same applies to Tibullus 2.5 and, especially, Silius Italicus. On the level of diction, his line *ipsa, pyram super ingentem stans, saucia Dido* ('Then Dido by herself was standing wounded on a huge pyre') refers to Virgil's metaphorical use of *saucius* in the opening line of *Aeneid* 4; but the scene depicted on Hannibal's Shield comes from the end of *Aeneid* 4, when Dido is also *literally* wounded. Silius thus neatly captures, in one line, the programmatic transformation of metaphor into reality, of mythic love into historical hatred, that unfolds in the course of Virgil's epic. Pointedly, he inscribes a re-run of the entire Dido episode on the shield of Hannibal, the nameless avenger whom Dido conjures in a horrifying curse before committing suicide. Silius' *Punica* thus emerges as the sequel to the *Aeneid*, along the lines of *The Empire Strikes Back*. And just as Hannibal challenges the descendants of Aeneas on the historical battlefield, Silius throws down the gauntlet to Virgil in the arena of epic poetry. (We all know, of course, which city ultimately ended up in ashes and which poet has retained a stranglehold on school syllabuses—but Hannibal gave the Romans a good innings...)

Lucretius, finally, works differently. If we want to activate the wider context in which he uses *saucius* in the *De Rerum Natura*, one could argue that the opening line of *Aeneid* 4, read intertextually with Lucretius, points to the fatal dynamic of love which culminates in the sexual encounter in the cave. Yet perhaps more importantly, he offers an 'alternative voice': Epicurean philosophy offers a 'scientific' explanation of love and sex, designed to help us combat irrational desires and emotions (as opposed to the natural enjoyment of sex and the impulse to procreate)—in other words, an antidote to the experience at the very heart of the lives of Ennius' Medea, Catullus' Ariadne, and Virgil's Dido (among others). But it is an alternative voice, evoked, it seems, only to be silenced as irrelevant.

I have not even begun to explore all possible variations. Whatever we make of this symphony of allusions (if allusions they are), of further voices and interpretive possibilities, the foregoing should have illustrated that



Virgil's *Aeneid* exists within a wider literary universe. His poetry invites rides on the intertextual roller-coaster, which, it is true, can have a dizzying effect. At times it becomes difficult to know when to stop, and after a few rounds of heady exhilaration that sick feeling in the stomach kicks in when one has gone a loop too far. So let's break right here (for now) before we spin entirely out of control...

## 5.4 Religion

The *Aeneid* is chockfull of religious images and ideas. In the course of the epic, we encounter the anthropomorphic divinities of Greek and Roman myth as well as deified concepts; reflections on the ethics (or lack thereof) of divine behaviour; various types of religious practices or speech-acts (rituals, sacrifices, modes of divination; prayers, curses, oaths); priests, prophets, and other religious functionaries like entrail-inspectors; numinous spaces, buildings, or objects (landscapes, sites, temples, altars); concepts to do with the supernatural organization of history and time (*fatum, fortuna*); and glimpses of the beyond, in particular the otherworldly topography that dominates the central Book 6, which features Aeneas' descent into the Underworld. Yet arguably in no other book, with the possible exception of *Aeneid* 6, does religion play such a prominent and complex role as in *Aeneid* 4. Religious subject matter is ubiquitous here, both in the passage assigned in Latin (4.1–299) and the rest of the book (which is to be read in English). But to come to critical terms with this aspect of Virgil's text is not easy. At first sight, the religious dimension of *Aeneid* 4 may well seem to resemble a dog's breakfast. Virgil brings into play ideas from different spheres of thought and experience, both Greek and Roman, some with a primarily literary pedigree, some firmly grounded in cult practice and the civic religion of the Roman commonwealth. Each of these spheres operates according to its specific cultural logic. And frequently the logic of one sphere is incommensurate with, or even contradicts, that of another. It is hence not instantly obvious how the different elements cohere (if they do so at all).

### 1. Taking stock

A first step towards trying to make sense of the text is to identify (and differentiate between) the diverse spheres of religious thought and practice on which Virgil draws and to take stock of where and how religion—here loosely defined as any figure of thought that implies the existence of supernatural beings or forces—surfaces in the narrative. Roughly, and with due awareness of inevitable overlap, we could distinguish the following:

**A:** The divine machinery of the literary imagination (especially Greek epic and tragedy):

**A1:** Gods appearing as agents in the narrative

**A2:** Reference to their mortal offspring (heroes)

- A3:** Allusions to Olympian divinities on the part of the poet (e.g. in similes or allusions)<sup>311</sup>
- A4:** Personifications of natural phenomena or concepts; references to mythic cosmology
- B:** Religious beliefs, modes of worship, and other forms of religious communication entertained or practiced by humans
- B1:** References to household gods or shades of the deceased
- B2:** References to religious functionaries, temples, ritual occasions or speech-acts that involve the supernatural sphere (sacrifices, wedding ceremonies, funerary rites; prayers, curses, oaths)
- B3:** Belief in the divine guardianship of justice
- B4:** Commitment to *pietas* (and be it via the epithet *pious*)
- C:** Idiom that alludes to the civic religion of Roman republican/ early imperial society
- D:** Anticipation of the future: practices of divination, figures endowed with knowledge of things to come, unsolicited signs that forebode future events
- E:** Theological figures of thought that organize historical time (*fatum, fortuna*)
- F:** Philosophical theology (e.g. Epicureanism)
- G:** Magic

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311. In *Aeneid* 4, some Olympian gods feature as agents in the narrative (notably Iris, Juno, Jupiter, Mercury, and Venus), some appear in other capacities. Apollo (at 4.143–49) and Bacchus (at 4.301–03) are the subjects of similes. Anna and Dido sacrifice to Juno (of course), but also Ceres, Apollo, and Dionysus (4.58–9). Dionysus/ Bacchus also receives allusive acknowledgement elsewhere and has anyway a pervasive, subliminal presence in the narrative. The Apollo-simile at 4.143–49, for instance, features many an incongruous touch that recalls Bacchus (see commentary *ad loc.*), and at 4.469 Virgil compares Dido’s deranged state of mind to that of ‘raving Pentheus’ as he sees the bands of the Bacchantes (*Euiadum ueluti demens uidet agmina Pentheus*)—a line that gestures to tragedies, in the tradition of Euripides’ *Bacchae*, about the encounter between Dionysus and Pentheus, the king of Thebes, who fatally tries to thwart the triumphant homecoming of his divine cousin. (The allusion may be to a Roman adaptation, as opposed to the Greek original—or indeed to several plays, Greek and Latin, at once.) Book 4 is tragic terrain, after all, and it is therefore fitting that the patron deity of the genre should hover in the background of the action. Other aspects of Dionysus, in particular his association with Eastern luxury and Marc Antony, add further nuances of meaning, explored in more detail in the commentary.

Re-reading *Aeneid* 4 with this rough-and-ready grid in mind, we can pick out the following verses as involving or implying a supernatural sphere:

- 6–7: The appearance of Aurora signals daybreak. [A4]
- 12: Dido believes in Aeneas' divine lineage. [A2]
- 14: Dido sympathizes with the travails imposed upon Aeneas by the *fata*. [E]
- 21: Reference to the household gods (*Penates*) that resided in the home Dido shared with Sychaeus. [B1]
- 24–29: Dido calls down divine punishment upon her should she violate her oath of loyalty to Sychaeus (this includes being swallowed up by the earth and being struck by Jupiter with lightning). [B2]
- 34: Anna dismisses the notion that Sychaeus' shades (*manes*) take any interest in what Dido is doing. [B1/F]
- 45–46: Anna proclaims that Aeneas arrived at Carthage owing to divine favour and Juno's aid (*dis auspibus, Iunone secunda*). [C]
- 56–59: Anna and Dido perform prayers and sacrifices to solicit the favour of the gods. [C]
- 60–64: Dido performs further rites and engages in extispicy to divine the future. [B2/C/D]
- 65–66: Virgil, in an authorial exclamation, refers to prophets (*uates*) and follows this up with two rhetorical questions about the futility of *uota* and *delubra*. [B2/C/D]
- 90–128: Interlude in Heaven: Juno accosts Venus to arrange a marriage between Aeneas and Dido. [A1]
- 129: Aurora appears. [A4]
- 143–149: Simile comparing Aeneas to Apollo with oblique allusions to Dionysus. [A3]
- 166–168: The encounter in the cave, witnessed by Tellus, Juno Pronuba, Aether, and Nymphs. [A1/ A4/ B2]
- 173–197: *Fama*, her nature, genealogy (offspring of Terra), and intervention in the case at hand. [A4]

- 198: Iarbas' parents (Jupiter and a Garamantian nymph) [A2]
- 198–218: Description of Iarbas' 100 altars dedicated to his father Ammon (a.k.a. Jupiter) and prayer to Jupiter, which ends in a quasi-Epicurean questioning of divine efficaciousness. [B2/F]
- 219–237: Jupiter's reaction to Iarbas' prayer and his order to Mercury. [A1]
- 238–258: Mercury gets himself ready and flies to Carthage, via the man-mountain Atlas. [A1/ A4]
- 259–278: Theophany of Mercury before Aeneas and delivery of the message from Jupiter. [A1]
- 282: Aeneas is stricken by the *imperium deorum*. [A]
- 298–299: *Fama* brings Dido the news of the Trojans' preparation to leave. [A4]
- 301–304: A simile compares Dido's raging through Carthage to a Maenad on Mt. Cithaeron under the influence of Bacchus. [A3]
- 331: Under the impact of Jupiter's commands (*Iouis monitis*), Aeneas remains committed to his plan to depart despite Dido's desperate appeal. [A/ B]
- 340: Aeneas refers to the *fata* as the force that drives him against his will. [E]
- 345: Aeneas recalls Grynean Apollo and the Lycian oracles (of Apollo) bidding him to seek Italy. [D]
- 350: Aeneas appeals to *fas* (divine law). [C]
- 351–53: Aeneas claims to be haunted at night by the troubled ghost of his father Anchises. [B1]
- 355: Aeneas refers to Italy as *fatalia arua*. [E]
- 356–59: Aeneas recounts the theophany of Mercury and the orders of Jupiter. [A]
- 365: Dido denies Aeneas' divine lineage (*nec tibi diua parens*). [A2]
- 371–72: Dido denies that *maxima Iuno* or Jupiter could possibly approve of Aeneas' demeanor. [B3]

- 376–80: Dido scornfully quotes Aeneas' religious justification for leaving Carthage back at him: with reference to *augur Apollo, Lyciae sortes*, and Jupiter's messenger Mercury, she mockingly dismisses the idea that gods get involved in human affairs, in proto-Epicurean fashion. [C/D/ F]
- 382: Dido articulates the wish that Aeneas will suffer shipwreck—*si quid pia numina possunt*. [B2/ B3]
- 385–87: Dido threatens Aeneas that after her death, her shade will haunt him wherever he goes to avenge the injustice [*dabis, improbe, poenas*]; she will take delight in hearing of Aeneas' punishment when the report reaches the Underworld. [B1/ B2/ B3]
- 393: Aeneas is called *pius*. [B4]
- 396: Despite his wish to linger with Dido, Aeneas is mindful of the *iussa diuum* and returns to his fleet. [A/ B]
- 412: The narrator addresses Amor in an authorial comment on Dido's disturbed frame of mind when she watches the preparations of the Trojans to leave (*improbe Amor, quid non mortalia pectora cogis!*). [A1]
- 427: Dido, speaking to Anna, denies that she ever unsettled the Shades of Anchises or committed any other hostile act towards Aeneas, in the context of wondering why he proves so intractable. [B1]
- 440: Aeneas remains unmoved by the pleading of Anna on behalf of her sister because of the fates and a god: *fata obstant, placidasque uiri deus obstruit auris*. [E/ A]
- 446: Simile of the oak tree, the roots of which reach down into Tartarus. [A4]
- 447: Virgil refers to Aeneas as *heros*. [A2]
- 450: Dido begins to pray for death *fatis exterrita*. [E]
- 452–54: During sacrifice some dreadful omens occur: as Dido puts her offerings on the altar, the holy water darkens and the poured wine changes into loathsome gore. [C/ D]
- 460–68: Dido has dreadful visions: at night, she hears her husband calling; an ill-boding owl settles on the housetops; many old

prophesies of *uates* terrify her; while asleep, Aeneas appears in her nightmares. [B1/ D]

- 469–73: Simile that compares Dido to Pentheus in the thralls of Bacchus-induced insanity and Orestes, after the matricide, who is hounded by the Furies and the ghost of his mother, while avenging fiends (*Dirae*) crouch on the threshold. [A3]
- 483–98: Dido tells Anna of an encounter with a priestess (*sacerdos*) who guards the garden of the Hesperides, who is skilled in magic, above all in how to rid oneself of, or induce, erotic attraction, but also in meddling with nature and ghostly or unnatural phenomena more generally; as if following the priestess' instructions she asks Anna to construct a pyre. [B2/ G]
- 499–521: Once the pyre is in place, surrounded by altars, Dido, whom Virgil now also designates as 'priestess' (*sacerdos*), calls in a thundering voice upon three hundred gods, specifically Erebus, Chaos, threefold Hecate, and triple-faced Diana; she also wields the paraphernalia of magic rites: water, venomous herbs collected by moonlight with brazen sickles, and a love charm from the brow of a newly born colt. The passage ends with her again calling on the gods and the stars as witnesses of her doom and praying 'to whatever power, righteous and mindful, watches over lovers unjustly allied' (*tum, si quod non aequo foedere amantis/ curae numen habet iustumque memorque, precatur*). [A/ B2/ B3/ C/ G]
- 554–70: While Aeneas slumbers on his ships (which are ready to depart), he has a vision of a god who resembles Mercury in every respect; the divinity calls him mad to put off his departure while the winds are favourable and warns him of Dido (his speech contains the memorable sexist phrase *uarium et mutabile semper/ femina*; 'A fickle and changeful thing ever is—woman'). [A1]
- 574–75: Aeneas exhorts his men with reference to his vision of *deus aethere missus ab alto* ('a god sent from high heaven') adding *sequimur te, sancte deorum,/ quisquis es, imperioque iterum paremus ouantes* ('We follow you, holy among gods, whoever you are, and again joyfully obey your command') and asking him for succour during the voyage. [A1/ B2]

- 584–85: Dawn (Aurora) rises again, leaving the bed of Tithonus. [A4]
- 590: Dido becomes aware of the fact that Aeneas has left and exclaims ‘*pro Iuppiter!*’ [B2]
- 596: Dido asks herself whether her impious deeds (*facta impia*) are catching up with her. [B3]
- 598: A scornful reference to the trustworthiness of Aeneas and his alleged transport of *patrios Penates*. [B1]
- 605–29: Dido utters a horrific curse that begins with the invocation of various divinities: Sol, Juno, Hecate, the Avenging Furies (*Dirae ultrices*), and the gods of Elissa dying (*di morientis Elissae*). She asks them to turn their divine power and attention (*numen*) to the evils she has suffered and to visit as much ill-luck upon the accursed head of Aeneas (*infandum caput*) as the ordinances of Jupiter (*fata Iouis*) allow. Dido then invokes eternal hatred between the people of Carthage and of Aeneas (i.e. the Romans) and prays for an avenger to rise from her ashes (a prophetic anticipation of Hannibal). (From the point of view of efficacious communication with supernatural powers, it is important to note that both parts of her curse—that concerning the destiny of Aeneas in the rest of Virgil’s poem as well as that concerning Roman history—are fulfilled.) [B2/ B3/ E]
- 634–40: Dido proceeds with her scheme of suicide; in her address to Barce, the nurse of Sychaeus, she asks her to tell Anna to purify herself ritually with river water and to bring sacrificial victims and offerings ordained for atonement. Barce, too, is asked to veil her temples with a pure chaplet (*pia uitta*) since Dido is now minded to carry out the rites of Stygian Jupiter. [B2/B4]
- 651–53: At the opening of her suicide speech Dido recalls happier times *dum fata deusque sinebat* (‘while the fates and god allowed’). She then calls her life over—having finished the course granted by Fortune, the goddess of happenstance (*quem dederat cursum Fortuna, peregi*)—and anticipates her majestic shade to travel beneath the earth (*et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago*). [E/ B1]



- 662:** At the conclusion of her suicide speech, Dido refers to the light of her funeral pyre, which Aeneas will behold from the sea, as *omina* (omens) of her death. [C/ D]
- 666:** After Dido has stabbed herself, *Fama* rages through the stricken city (*concussam bacchatur Fama per urbem*). [A4]
- 671:** The raving of *Fama* is compared to an army that is sacking a city and setting it afire so that the flames engulf the houses of men and the temples of the gods (*culmina ... deorum*). [A/ B2]
- 678:** Anna exclaims that Dido should have shared her suicide plans with her, so she could have joined her sister in death (*eadem me ad fata uocasses*). [B1]
- 680–81:** Anna recalls how she herself has built the pyre and called upon the paternal divinities (*patriosque uocauit uoce deos*). [B2]
- 693–705:** Despite being mortally wounded, Dido is unable to die owing to a religious law: since she is perishing neither by fate nor by a death she had earned (*nec fato, merita nec morte peribat*), but rather prematurely in a sudden fit of *furor*, Proserpina, the queen of the Underworld, refuses to take a golden lock off her, as a ritual prerequisite of consigning her head to the Stygian Orcus. Accordingly, Dido's struggling soul is unable to free itself from her body. Eventually, Juno takes pity on her protégé and sends down Iris, who cuts the lock and consecrates it to Dis, the god of the Underworld. This sets Dido's soul free from her body, and her life vanishes into the winds.<sup>312</sup> [A/B1/E]

## 2. The supernatural coordinates of Virgil's literary cosmos

One popular move in religious studies is to differentiate between various discursive spheres or systems of thought. Virgil's contemporary Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BC), for instance, used the notion of a *theologia tripartita* ('tripartite theology') to distinguish the mythical theology of the

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312. See the note in Goid's Loeb edition (vol. 1, p. 471): 'Before sacrifice a few hairs were plucked from the forehead of the victim, and as the dying were regarded as offerings to the nether gods, a similar custom was observed in their case. Proserpine evidently being unwilling to perform this service for the suicide Dido, Juno takes pity on her and sends Iris to do it.'

poets from the natural theology of the philosophers and the civil theology of the people. Each, he claimed, had its own protocols of how to conceive of (and represent) the supernatural sphere and its divine inhabitants. This approach may be useful at times. But it does not really help us here. For Virgil clearly combines elements from all of these systems of thought or belief, as well as several others besides. What Varro, for one, tried to keep tidily distinct, Virgil cheerfully commingles. What we need is a perspective that enables us to come to critical terms with a literary world in which logically frequently incompatible ideas about the divine co-exist side by side.

Now the purpose of much religious effort concerns the position of the individual or the civic community in time and space. Human beings have only limited (if any) control over the future and their environment more generally—though we like to think that we can make provisions for the future, even while we remain acutely aware of the fact that ‘tomorrow’ *may* turn out to be ghastly, whatever our precautions. The next accident, the next human-made disaster, the next defeat in war, the next natural catastrophe is sure to happen—we just do not know when. To deal with this condition of uncertainty, which is a human universal, many cultures in history have posited the existence of supernatural agents or forces to whom they ascribe some control over the future. If such agents are willing to engage with mortals meaningfully (listening to their prayers, paying attention to their sacrifices), the future becomes open to a certain amount of purposeful planning and management. Even if the supernatural agents are taken to be disinterested in interaction with mortals (or as actively causing havoc in the human sphere), their existence imposes some kind of form upon an otherwise amorphous domain of risk and uncertainty, rendering it more intelligible if not more manageable.

The possibility of destructive divinities, who are driven by spiteful emotions or pursue their own selfish agendas, already points to the fact that the degree to which religious systems (are thought to) succeed in reducing contingency may differ significantly: it very much depends on the conception of the world and of the divine that they presuppose. Very schematically, we can posit the following spectrum of possibilities, which ranges from chaos at one extreme to the complete elimination of contingency on the other—with various stages in between:

Conception of the world/ the gods	Degree of predictability	Degree of efficaciousness of religious efforts on the part of humans
A realm of chaos	Zero	Zero
A domain governed by Fortuna 1 (whimsical)/ by willful divinities pursuing their own agenda	Low	Low
A domain governed by Fortuna 2 (meritocratic)	Medium	Medium
A domain that offers the possibility to enter into quasi-contractual relationships with supernatural beings	High	High
A domain of predetermination in which everything is always already fixed	Absolute (with the requisite insight/ hindsight)	Zero

At one extreme, there is chaos—which is tantamount to a world without any pattern whatsoever, a world, in which anything may happen to you at any time. (It is a world, in other words, one cannot really live in.)

The second possibility—a world under the reign of *fortuna* (conceived as whimsical) or populated by divinities who do what they like and are liable to experience (and act on) unpredictable bouts of emotions (such as envy or hatred)—has some affinities with chaos. It is almost impossible for mortals to get whimsical fortune or egocentric divinities to enter into reliable relationships according to laws of reciprocity (worship, sacrifice, or obedience to divine law in return for supernatural support).

Matters improve if we conceive of *fortuna* not in terms of happenstance and luck, as a force, in other words, that distributes her gifts according to her whim and will, without any regard to merit, but as a divine agent who dispenses her favours to those who have earned them according to some criterion of merit. Consider, for instance, the adage *fortuna fortes adiuvat*—‘fortune favours the brave.’ It implies a willingness on the part of *fortuna* to enter into a ‘cause-and-effect’ economy that gives us purchase on the future. If the condition applies that *if* one is brave, *then*

fortune will lend her support, we are able to shape our destiny at least to some extent.

Then again, some cultures developed belief-systems that posit the existence of divinities willing to enter into quasi-contractual relationships. The gods of Rome's civic religion are a good example. In return for certain forms of religious observance, they lent their support to the civic community as it marched forward in time. The Romans invested a significant amount of effort in maintaining good relations with their divinities, keeping them benevolently predisposed towards their *res publica*—a condition they called *pax deorum*, i.e. 'peace with the gods.' It signified a state in which the divinities would not cause wilful havoc and disaster. This peace needed careful attention and cultivation and could of course break down at any time (through an involuntary slip in a ritual procedure, for instance), at which point the Roman gods tended to send warning signs that a potential disaster was afoot since the peace was broken. Rome's civic religion thus enabled a certain amount of planning security for those involved in managing the affairs of the commonwealth.<sup>313</sup>

Intriguingly, Rome's ritual repertory included ceremonies, which, once properly performed and executed, were thought to *ensure* divine support. A notable example is the *deuotio*, in which a Roman magistrate turned himself or a fellow-citizen into a sacrificial victim of sorts before going out to meet his death in battle: *if* the ritual was flawlessly executed and *if* the dedicatee actually got himself killed, *then* the assumption was that the gods would grant victory to the Roman army. It is useful to think of this ritual in economic terms. In return for what is a truly remarkable degree of divine support in as unpredictable a situation as a battle, (someone in) the civic community had to pay the ultimate price. (And nothing is more costly than a human life.) Divine support, and in particular *predictable* divine support, does not come cheap.

Finally, there is complete predetermination—a world in which everything is already fixed before it actually happens, without any freedom or contingency. (It is also a world impossible to live in since any meaningful concept of agency—or moral choice—would disappear on both the divine and the human level.) Since nothing can be altered in such a world, endeavours to enter into communication with the gods in

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313. For a brief survey of Rome's civic religion, with much further bibliography, see Gildenhard (2011), pp. 246–54.

an effort to shape the future are pointless. The degree of efficaciousness of religious efforts on the part of humans plummets back to zero. For in such a system, the gods too have become disenfranchised: they no longer are meaningful agents with the power to impact on how history unfolds.

Remarkably, the *Aeneid* explores the entire spectrum of possibilities sketched out in the table and several others besides. The epic features its fair share of whimsical divinities, in particular Juno, who pursues Aeneas with her wrath out of selfish motives, to the point of collapsing the cosmos back into chaos.<sup>314</sup> At the same time, Virgil endorses a notion of predetermination. *fatum* (or, in the plural, *fata*), looked after by Jupiter, are at the heart of his theology of history. Large portions of the story that the *Aeneid* tells are already prescribed before they unfold. Virgil's literary world thus combines chaotic unpredictability with predetermination, ultimately subsuming the former under the latter. Juno and Jupiter complement each other: the plot of the *Aeneid* requires Juno's futile struggles against what has been preordained, and the story not coincidentally ends when Jupiter manages to reconcile Juno with the impositions of fate. The inexorable unfolding of fate also aligns Virgil's epic history with the reality of the Augustan principate, which is the ultimate historical telos of the narrative. The poet's investment in destiny, it may be worth pointing out, is fundamentally alien to the civic religion and political culture of the Roman republic, which conceived of the future as contingent and of history as open-ended.<sup>315</sup>

In addition to operating with the notional extremes of utter chaos and absolute order, Virgil validates an intermediary domain of controlled contingency. Not everything in the history he tells has already been fixed in stone (or on the scrolls of fate). The moment in *Aeneid* 4 when this becomes most apparent is at the very end of the book, when Virgil explains why Dido suffered such a drawn-out death: Proserpina refused to welcome her in the Underworld since her suicide was not in accord with her destiny, apart from being unearned (696: *nam quia nec fato, merita nec morte peribat...*). It took pity on Juno's part to end her struggles, as she sends down Iris to perform euthanasia. Dido's relationship with

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314. See Essay 1: Content and Form on the destructive winds she unleashes in Book 1.

315. See Gildenhard (2007), pp. 84–86 (for Ennius and his 'republican' conception of epic history in the *Annals*) and pp. 98–102 (for Virgil's 'Augustan' conception of epic history in the *Aeneid*).

Aeneas never had a future: it violated fate. But the death-scene suggests that the affair did not have to end in suicide. Virgil thereby validates the principles of independent agency and (moral) accountability at both the human and the divine level—within the severe restrictions imposed by historical necessity.

What has a fairly circumscribed presence in Virgil's narrative is the conception of history as a realm of contingency over which divine beings exercise control—and which human beings have the power to shape at least to some extent by entering into efficacious interaction with the gods. But this conception of the world, which underwrote Rome's civic religion and the political culture of the Roman republic, is not entirely absent either. Ironically, it informs the religious efforts of Anna and Dido at the beginning of *Aeneid* 4. Their visit to the temples, their investment in prayers and sacrifices, their attempt to solicit divine approval for their course of action and, more generally, Dido's desire to divine what the future holds (and her endeavours to persuade the gods with lavish gifts to shape the future to her liking) match quite closely the actions that a magistrate of the Roman republic would have performed before a major decision (such as when to engage in battle). And Virgil seems to imply that the divinities with whom Dido interacts respond honestly to her enquiry, though they are (of course?) forced to give a negative answer.

Willful divinities, the inexorable unfolding of destiny, a precious margin of contingency in divine and human affairs, a brief recognition of the principle and protocols of the civic religion of the Roman republic (which just manages to underscore that this system of religious thought and practice has little relevance in Virgil's epic world)—these, then, are the supernatural coordinates within which Virgil's human characters are forced to operate.

### 3. Religious agency

They do so on very different terms and with varying degrees of insight and success. Take Aeneas, for example. Despite his pronounced *pietas*, he is the victim of divine persecution: Juno pursues him with her wrath. Paradoxically, he is also the carrier of fate. This has its advantages. When he loses the plot, Jupiter tends to sort matters out, to get him (and destiny)

back on track. Aeneas is far from perfect as a religious agent, not least since at times (as in Carthage) he becomes oblivious to his preordained historical mission. Yet he is a privileged character nevertheless: whereas Dido has to browse through bloody entrails to figure out the will of the gods, Aeneas receives instructions of what to do straight from the boss, by special delivery. (Mercury provides the ancient equivalent of an airmail service.) Also elsewhere in the poem, Aeneas is the privileged beneficiary of divine insight and information, notably in Book 6.<sup>316</sup> His understanding of fate and the divine remains partial and compromised; for instance, he does not comprehend the scenes from Roman history that Vulcan has fashioned on his shield: *rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet* (8.730). But it is still far superior to that of other characters.

Take Anna, for example. Her speech of advice to Dido at 4.31–53 evinces a shocking ignorance of the divine realities that apply in Virgil's epic. Thus, in line 34, she dismisses the notion of a conscious afterlife in proto-Epicurean fashion, in an attempt to convince Dido to stop caring about her deceased husband Sychaeus and embrace life and love with Aeneas. And she follows this gaffe by proposing that Aeneas arrived in Africa *dis auspibus et Iunone secunda* (45: 'with the gods' favour and Juno's aid'). The phrases drip with unintended irony. Anna clearly hasn't a clue what she is talking about. Juno had no intention whatsoever to blast Aeneas to Africa. She set out to sink his fleet. Aeneas' arrival at Carthage is thus not at all the result of purposeful divine planning—unless we image that the fates had a hand in this. But Juno, at any rate, is here the exact opposite of *auspex* or *secunda*, and the tempest that brought Aeneas Dido's way was not a favourable (in Latin: *secundus*, implied by Juno's attribute) breeze, but a destructive storm—an ill wind that blew nobody any good.

Another example of a character with precious little insights into the workings of the divine is Iarbas. In his prayer to Jupiter at 4.206–28, he intends to bully his divine father into taking action. He posits that *either* Jupiter sees what is going on with Dido and Aeneas—*or* there is no point in worshipping him. But if Jupiter is aware of what is going on, so the implication, his inaction is disgracefully negligent given the dutiful veneration he receives from his son. Jupiter is thus placed in an impossible position: the way Iarbas frames his argument, the supreme divinity cannot plead ignorance and hence is undoubtedly guilty of negligence. That

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316. See Essay 1: Content and Form.

Jupiter has so far tolerated the love affair at Carthage without any sign of disapproval or intervention means for Iarbas that the economy of religious communication, which requires some divine support in return for dutiful human worship, has broken down. He suggests to Jupiter that it is in the god's own interest to restore it. Jupiter's reaction to Iarbas' prayer is instructive. While his son's pleading has alerted the god to the situation at Carthage, he pays no attention whatsoever to the complainant and his concerns. True, Iarbas gets what he prays for—a break up of the union between Dido and Aeneas—but perhaps also more than he bargained for, insofar as Dido proceeds to commit suicide. And Jupiter interferes not out of any consideration for his son and his hundred altars, but because he is committed to the fated plot. Put differently, Iarbas may well think that his prayer has been efficacious. But the reader realizes that the perceived efficaciousness of the religious speech-act is accidental. Iarbas gets his way not because Jupiter felt the urge to answer his prayer, but because he fortuitously happened to wish for something to which Jupiter was anyway already committed.

Then there is Dido. She is by far the most interesting and complex religious agent in *Aeneid* 4, in part since her religious outlook undergoes a development over the course of the book. This development involves three basic stages, which correspond roughly to the three sections of *Aeneid* 4 that Virgil marks with the opening phrase *at regina* (1–295, 296–503, 504–705).

As we already had occasion to note, at the beginning Dido, fuelled by misguided hope, pursues lines of communication with the gods reminiscent of Rome's civic religion. Lines 54–64 show her visiting altars to beseech the gods, investing in repeated (and expensive) sacrifice to render them benevolent, and vetting the entrails of her victims for signs of divine approval. This approval appears not to be forthcoming; but that also means that the gods in charge of the signs prove reliable and honest partners in communication. What Dido asks for is in violation of fate, and she fatefully disregards the lack of divine sanction in how she proceeds. By calling Anna and Dido ignorant of the seers (65: *heu, uatum ignarar mentes!*), Virgil situates the religious endeavours of the two sisters within a universe, in which the efficaciousness of traditional religion (as practiced in Rome's civic sphere during republican times) is sharply curtailed, owing to the fact that history is by and large predestined—and foretold as such by prophet-figures (*uates*). If the two sisters had had knowledge of what the *uates* were saying, they would have realized that all their efforts to solicit



divine support for their plan would be to no avail. But they don't—and pay the price: their hope is foolish, their actions are doomed to failure, and their lack of insight results in tragedy. The practices and institutions of civic religion (captured by the terms *uota* and *delubra*) have a strictly limited remit in Virgil's literary universe.

The second stage kicks in after Dido finds out that Aeneas plans to leave her. It is marked by denial, confusion, and bouts of angst that gradually develop into genuine insight. Dido oscillates between a quasi-Epicurean attitude towards supernatural interferences in human affairs (i.e. dismissing them as figments of the imagination or outright lies) and terror at divine signs of her impending doom. Thus at *Aeneid* 4.376–80, she doubts the veracity of Aeneas' claim that he was visited by Mercury in a theophany:

(heu furiis incensa feror!): nunc augur Apollo,  
nunc Lyciae sortes, nunc et Ioue missus ab ipso  
interpres diuum fert horrida iussa per auras.  
scilicet is superis labor est, ea cura quietos  
sollicitat!

[Alas! I am whirled on the fires of frenzy. Now prophetic Apollo, now the Lycian oracles, now the messenger of the gods sent from Jove himself, brings through the air this dread command. For sure, this is work for gods, this is care to vex their peace!]

Dido here adopts a proto-Epicurean position, mocking the notion that gods would get involved in human affairs—as opposed to enjoying an existence free of all worries (as they do in Epicurean philosophy). The implication is that Aeneas is a liar when he ascribes his desire to depart to the need to follow a divine command. Conversely, slightly later on Dido sees and hears portents of her looming death that are of supernatural (or infernal) provenance after Aeneas has refused to slacken his resolve (*Aeneid* 4.450–55):

Tum uero infelix fatis exterrita Dido  
mortem orat; taedet caeli conuexa tueri.  
quo magis inceptum peragat lucemque relinquat,  
uidit, turicremis cum dona imponeret aris,  
(horrendum dictu) latices nigrescere sacros  
fusaque in obscenum se uertere uina cruorem.

[Then, indeed, awed by her doom, luckless Dido prays for death; she is weary of gazing on the arch of heaven. And to make her more surely fulfil her purpose and leave the light, she saw, as she laid her gifts on the

altars ablaze with incense—fearful to tell—the holy water darken and the outpoured wine change into loathsome gore.]

In addition to these ghastly prodigies and unsolicited omens of doom that adumbrate a dire future, Dido now also recalls the many sayings of seers of old (*multa...uatum praedicta priorum*) which terrify her with fearful foreboding (4.464–65). This stretch of religious terror results in the decision to commit suicide, which sets up the final stage in her development.

From the outset, stage 3 is marked by insightful determination (*Aeneid* 4.504–10):

At regina, pyra penetrali in sede sub auras  
 erecta ingenti taedis atque ilice secta, 505  
 intenditque locum sertis et fronde coronat  
 funerea; super exuuias ensemque relictum  
 effigiemque toro locat, haud ignara futuri.  
 stant arae circum et crinis effusa sacerdos  
 ter centum tonat ore deos... 510

[But the queen, when in the heart of her home the pyre rose heavenward, piled high with pine logs and hewn ilex, hangs the place with garlands and crowns it with funeral boughs. On top, upon the couch, she lays the dress he wore, the sword he left, and an image of him, knowing what was to come. Round about stand altars, and with streaming hair the priestess calls in thunder tones on thrice a hundred gods...]

Now Dido has sorted through her religious confusion. Now she is back in charge. Now she knows what the future holds. Now Virgil calls her priestess. Now she has gained insight into the constraints that the existence of historical destiny imposes upon conventional religious efforts. This insight empowers. In stage 2, she wished Aeneas to die in a shipwreck—a futile desire since it is contrary to fate.<sup>317</sup> Now she utters a curse that operates within the parameters set by historical necessity (*Aeneid* 4.612–18):

‘...si tangere portus  
 infandum caput ac terris adnare necesse est,  
 et sic fata Iouis poscunt, hic terminus haeret,

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317. See 4.381–84: *i, sequere Italiam uentis, pete regna per undas./ spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt,/ supplicia hausurum scopulis et nomine Didol/ saepe uocaturum* (‘Go, make for Italy with the winds; seek your kingdom over the waves. Yet I trust, if the righteous gods have any power, that on the rocks midway you will drain the cup of vengeance and often call on Dido’s name’).

at bello audacis populi uexatus et armis,  
 finibus extorris, complexu auulsus Iuli  
 auxilium imploret uideatque indigna suorum  
 funera...'

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[... If that accursed wretch must needs reach harbour and come to shore, if Jupiter's ordinances so demand and this is the outcome fixed: yet even so, harassed in war by the arms of a fearless nation, expelled from his territory and torn from Iulus embrace, let him plead for aid and see his friends cruelly slaughtered! ...]

Dido has now even cottoned on to the fact that her earlier hope of Aeneas' dying in a shipwreck was misplaced. She has acquired a good sense of what the *fata* entail. She realizes that she cannot prevent Aeneas from reaching Italy and fulfilling his destiny. But outside these basic plot patterns she can contribute her share towards making his life and the lives of some of his descendants truly wretched. Her curse comes true.

The acuity of Dido's theological reflection remains remarkably high right up to her suicide. At *Aeneid* 4.651–53, in an address to the clothing Aeneas left behind, she even recognizes herself as a figure of *fortuna* and Aeneas as a figure of fate:<sup>318</sup>

dulces exuuiae, dum fata deusque sinebat,  
 accipite hanc animam meque his exsoluite curis.  
 uixi et quem dederat cursum Fortuna peregi,  
 et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.

['O relics once dear, while God and Fate allowed, take my spirit, and release me from my woes! My life is done and I have finished the course that Fortune gave; and now in majesty my shade shall pass beneath the earth.']

In the context of her curse, which includes an invocation of the Underworld divinities, her suicide doubles as a literal self-sacrifice along the lines of the Roman *deuotio*, one of the most striking religious rituals of the Roman republic.<sup>319</sup> The scene harks back to Virgil's comments on Dido's efforts to receive divine approval for a union with Aeneas in line 65–67. There the poet noted that, rather than seeking succour in conventional religious institutions and practices (*delubra, uota*) or tearing open the breasts of

318. Cf. already 1.628–29, with its striking reminiscences of the proem: *me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores/ iactatam hac demum uoluit consistere terra* ('Me, too, has a like fortune driven through many toils, and wanted that in this land I should at last find rest').

319. For a brief discussion see Gildenhard (2007), pp. 82–84. My argument is based on Flaig (1991).

victims and inspecting animal entrails in order to figure out the future, Dido ought to consider what is eating away under her own breast, in her own innards. She herself, so Virgil intimates, is a sacrificial victim of sorts that contains within divine signs of events to come. In a perverse re-enactment of an animal sacrifice for the purpose of divination that also resembles the Roman *deuotio*-ritual, Dido finally opens *herself* up. Her suicide, which is preceded by a powerful invocation of the gods (not least those of the Underworld), countersigns her curse, and in and through her death she writes herself into the destiny of Aeneas and of Rome. Dido in and through her suicidal wrath thereby manages to shape the future in more powerful ways than she was ever able to accomplish with conventional prayers or sacrifices. In the end, then, she has come to understand, and accepts, the religious realities of Virgil's brave new world *as they are* and becomes a frightfully efficacious agent within them.



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