

**Reading Aeneas and Dido:  
Suggestion and Inference in *Aeneid* 1-4**

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## Dedication

To Bryce,  
*omnis curae casusque levamen*

and Rosie,  
*animae dimidium meae*

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## Abbreviations

<i>ad</i>	at (the citation)
AJP	American Journal of Philology
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
BCE	Before Common Era (=BC)
CA	Classical Antiquity
CB	Classical Bulletin
CE	Common Era (=AD)
CHCL	<i>Cambridge History of Classical Literature</i>
CJ	Classical Journal
CP	Classical Philology
CQ	Classical Quarterly
CR	Classical Review
CW	Classical World
ECM	<i>Échos du Monde Classique</i>
FGrH	<i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Berlin 1923—55.
G& R	Greece and Rome
GRBS	Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies
HSCP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
L&S	Lewis and Short Latin Dictionary
OCD	Oxford Classical Dictionary, 3 <sup>rd</sup> ed.
OCT	Oxford Classical Text
OLD	Oxford Latin Dictionary
PVS	Proceedings of the Vergil Society
RE	<i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Alterumswissenschaft</i> . Stuttgart 1893—.
REL	<i>Revue des Études Latines</i>
<i>s.v.</i>	<i>sub voce</i>
TAPA	Transactions of the American Philological Association
TLL	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> . Leipzig 1900—.
YJC	Yale Journal of Classical Studies

## Ancient Works

<i>adv. Indoct.</i>	Lucian's <i>Adversus Indoctum</i>
<i>Aen.</i>	Vergil's <i>Aeneid</i>
<i>Ant. Rom.</i>	Dionysius of Halicarnassus' <i>Antiquitates Romanae</i>
<i>AP</i>	Horace's <i>Ars Poetica</i>
<i>Arg.</i>	Apollonius of Rhodes' <i>Argonautica</i>
<i>BP</i>	Nevius' <i>Bellum Punicum</i>
<i>Dial.</i>	Tacitus' <i>Dialogus de Oratoribus</i>

<i>DM</i>	Anonymous <i>Tractatus De Muliebris</i>
<i>DServius</i>	Servius Danielis
<i>Ep.</i>	Horace's <i>Epistulae</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	Justin's <i>Epitome of Pompeius Trogus</i>
<i>Fab.</i>	Hyginus' <i>Fabulae</i>
<i>G.</i>	Vergil's <i>Georgics</i>
<i>Gramm.</i>	Suetonius' <i>De Grammaticis</i>
<i>Her.</i>	Ovid's <i>Heroides</i>
<i>Il.</i>	Homer's <i>Iliad</i>
<i>Inst.</i>	Quintilian's <i>Institutiones Oratoriae</i>
<i>Met.</i>	Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>
<i>N.A.</i>	Aulus Gellius' <i>Noctes Atticae</i>
<i>Od.</i>	Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
<i>Pun.</i>	Appian's <i>Punica</i>
<i>Sat.</i>	Macrobius' <i>Saturnalia</i>
<i>Serv.</i>	Servius
<i>TCD</i>	Tiberius Claudius Donatus
<i>Trist.</i>	Ovid's <i>Tristia</i>
<i>VSD</i>	<i>Vita Suetonii/Donati</i>

## Introduction:

### An Audience-Oriented Approach

This study takes an audience-oriented approach to the first four books of Vergil's *Aeneid*, attempting to consider interpretive issues in the text in terms of the hermeneutic process of linear reading.<sup>1</sup> My interest is in structures of suggestion and prompts to inference (the way that Vergil “says much in little, and often in silence,” as Dryden put it), and in particular how Vergil's indirect methods of exposition invite readers to construct character motivations that help them both to notice and to fill in “gaps” in the plot. Adapting concepts from Wolfgang Iser's study *The Act of Reading*, I explore the views that the text offers the reader as he or she moves sequentially through it (the “wandering viewpoint”), and how structures of oblique suggestion—particularly intertextual recollections and epic similes, as well as breaks in “good continuation” like surprise and contradiction—invite reader participation in the construction of the narrative. Such structures employ provocative indeterminacies that challenge the reader's synthesis of information into coherent configurations of meaning (“*gestalten*”), and so encourage him or her to establish consistency by supplying further inferences (what Umberto Eco calls taking “inferential walks” and writing “ghost chapters”) based on the “horizon” or background formed by the series of previous views offered by the text.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “audience-oriented” is an umbrella under which a diverse array of theoretical approaches fit. Suleiman (1980: 3-45) identifies and discusses exemplars of six: rhetorical (Booth), semiotic and structuralist (Barthes, Riffaterre, Genette, Fish, Culler, Prince, Todorov); phenomenological (Iser); subjective and psychoanalytic (Holland); sociological and historical (Goldmann, Jauss); and hermeneutic (Derrida and opponents). She observes (p. 7) that “[t]hese approaches are not monolithic (there is more than one kind of rhetorical or hermeneutic criticism), nor do they necessarily exclude each other.” On Iser and reception theory specifically, see Holub 1984.



These concepts, which I will discuss in more detail below, are by no means new, but in applying them, in conjunction with the traditional tools of classical philology, to a much disputed episode in Vergil's *Aeneid*, I hope to shed light on important aspects of character and plot development that must be supplied by reader inference within a linear progression of indirect suggestions. In each chapter of this study I focus on one key gap in the first four books of the poem and then show how a linear, "first" reading of the previous views that make up its horizon allows a meaningful inference to be drawn that closes the gap and advances the plot in ways that have not, to my knowledge, received recognition. This hermeneutic method, with attention to the process of the development of meaning, tries to correct for the effect that purely formalist approaches can have of leading interpreters to "rewrite the history of [their] experience of a text teleologically."<sup>2</sup> I argue that the outcome of the Dido and Aeneas episode, in which Aeneas ultimately displays commitment to his mission and leaves Carthage, has caused a critical tendency to efface, retrospectively, the provisional suggestions in Books 1—4 that he did not originally intend to do so, and so to flatten out the path leading to the story's conclusion.

## **Part One: The Reader**

What audience- (or reader-, or reception-) oriented approaches have in common is an interest in the reader end of the author-text-reader axis. This interest in the reader is the consequence of acceptance of the postulate that "meaning is always realized at the

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<sup>2</sup> Slater 1990: 21.

point of reception,” as Martindale has articulated it.<sup>3</sup> In the plainest speech, readers make meanings—though the degree of freedom they have in doing so is a matter of debate. Acceptance of this notion is now widespread, even among those who would not identify themselves as reader-response (*vel sim.*) critics, and it does not preclude interest in the author’s intended meaning.<sup>4</sup> It simply requires recognition that the author’s intention must be perceived by a reader who identifies it as such. To claim otherwise, as Martindale observes, would be to posit “a ‘metaphysics’ of the text and a meaning immanent within the signs regardless of any readerly activity.”<sup>5</sup> The reader, therefore, is the place to start.

Who or what we mean by “the reader” has been the topic of much interesting discussion, and explaining how I will use the term in this dissertation will involve dipping back into the history of audience-oriented criticism. Before we discuss the concept of “the reader” we need to discuss “the author,” specifically as Wayne Booth first nuanced the concept, since his pioneering distinction between the real author and the implied author is the basis for the analogous distinction between real and hypothetical readers. In response to the then-dominant idea that “true artists” are pure of “cheap” rhetorical intention and “simply express themselves with no thought of affecting a reader,”<sup>6</sup> Booth argued, as the title of his 1961 book, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, announces, that even when fiction avoids the “overt, distinguishable rhetoric” of editorializing

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<sup>3</sup> Martindale 1993: 3. The concept pre-dates Martindale, but his concise articulation of it has become an axiom.

<sup>4</sup> Readers read for authorial intention, and authors (who are themselves, of course, also readers) write knowing this. See below for full discussion.

<sup>5</sup> Martindale 1993: 5.

<sup>6</sup> Booth 1983: xiii. I quote from the second edition; the first edition was published in 1961.

intrusions by the narrator, storytelling necessarily involves selection, even down to the basic choice of what story is going to be told, and every choice that the author makes exposes a communicative purpose that “betrays him to the reader.”<sup>7</sup> The author betrayed by these choices is not identical with the flesh-and-blood individual who wrote the work, though, but rather they suggest an imaginable version of him:<sup>8</sup>

As he writes, he creates not simply an ideal, impersonal ‘man in general’ but an implied version of ‘himself’ that is different from the implied authors we meet in other men’s works.... Whether we call this implied author an ‘official scribe,’ or adopt the term recently revived by Kathleen Tillotson—the author’s ‘second self’—it is clear that the picture the reader gets of this presence is one of the author’s most important effects.

This “implied version of himself” that an author creates as he writes is defined by his core “norms”—the ordering of values suggested by his narrative choices.<sup>9</sup> This “literary, created version of the real man”<sup>10</sup> is, in other words, a personification of the values and interests suggested by the work as a whole: “our sense of the implied author includes...the intuitive apprehension of a completed artistic whole; the chief value to which this implied author is committed, regardless of what party his creator belongs to in real life, is that which is expressed by the total form.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Booth 1983: 20.

<sup>8</sup> Booth 1983: 71. Since the author under discussion will be Vergil, I retain Booth’s masculine pronoun. When referring to the reader, I have tried to distribute the gender of pronouns evenly—though, in fact, male and female readers may be expected to respond to issues in the episode differently. See Desmond 1993 for a discussion of how Ovid in *Heroides* 7 (p. 57) “explores the implications of a gender-based understanding of Vergil’s narrative.”

<sup>9</sup> Booth 1983:70-73.

<sup>10</sup> Booth 1983: 74-5.

<sup>11</sup> Booth 1961: 73-4. Roman poets also stress the distinction between the poet as a real person and the poet as understood from his work, particularly in justifying lascivious poetry (Catullus 16; Ovid *Trist.* 2). Though, in both instances this claim not unproblematic. Selden discusses (1992: 487) how in Catullus’ poem paradoxically “the persona that the text demystifies turns out to be a subject which, in the very process of unmasking, it propounds.” In the case of Ovid, Nugent observes (1990: 253) that “the assertion undermines the claim to credibility that this apologia itself might have,” and the stance of the whole exilic corpus, which purports to reflect his life in exile.

Though expressed heavily in terms of authorial control, Booth's rhetorical orientation, with its focus on communication (*i.e.*, not only the "sending" of information, but also the "receiving" of it), is amenable to the ideas that animate reader-oriented criticism. The reader-oriented critic would certainly grant that the author consciously and unconsciously implies things, but would ask: how do we *know* what the author has implied? Everyone except the author himself must *infer* it. Recognizing that meaning is always realized at the point of reception, we could rename Booth's "implied author" the "inferred author."<sup>12</sup> Particularly given the widely disparate understandings of "Vergil" derived from his works, from peace lover to imperial propagandist, it seems more judicious to say that these versions of him are inferred by the readers who so understand him rather than implied by Vergil. Moreover, Booth himself was not inattentive to the role of the reader and in the chapter he devotes to the topic he observes that there is a readerly analogue to his implied author: "The author creates, in short, an image of himself and another image of his reader; he makes his reader, as he makes his second self, and the most successful reading is one in which the created selves, the author and reader, can find complete agreement."<sup>13</sup> Again, for the same reason discussed above, one could perhaps more rightly call this the "inferred" reader. The important thing for the

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<sup>12</sup> Kearns 1999: 91.

<sup>13</sup> Booth 1983: 138. Booth, quoting Walker Gibson's "Authors, Speakers, Readers, and Mock Readers" (1950) observes (*ibid.*) that "the book we reject as bad is often simply a book in whose 'mock reader we discover a person we refuse to become, a mask we refuse to put on, a role we will not play.' We may exhort ourselves to read tolerantly...and still we will find books that postulate readers we refuse to become, books that depend on 'beliefs' or 'attitudes'...that we cannot adopt even hypothetically as our own." It is interesting to note that Vergil did have contemporary readers who found themselves unwilling to "put on the mask" that the *Aeneid* offers—the *obtrectatores* mentioned in the Suetonian biography (*VSD* 43). Vergil's implied audience, we may safely infer, was supposed to appreciate and enjoy the skillful artistry of his transformations of Homer, but it appears that some real audience members could not accommodate themselves to the reader whose taste for innovation the text assumes.

present is Booth's distinction between real selves and "created selves," which helps us be cognizant as we talk of "the author" of the difference between the historical person Publius Vergilius Maro and "Vergil" as constructed from the values understood in his works; and which helps us remain aware, as we talk of the "reader," of the difference between historical, flesh-and-blood readers of any stripe and the hypothetical reader that appears to be assumed by the poem, whose emotional and intellectual responses it tries to anticipate (a topic to which we shall return).

To what degree the actual reader's inference about implied roles (or any other matter) correctly reflects what the author intended to imply cannot be objectively judged, perhaps even by the author (a moot point for Classicists),<sup>14</sup> but the reader's inability to render final and authoritative judgment on the matter does not mean that it is desirable (or possible) not to involve the author's intention in discussion. It would be difficult, for example, to discuss the effect of a particular literary device, for instance, the angry hissing of an alliterative 's', without implying that the author chose to employ that device because he intended to produce its particular effect. Even at the more controversial level of "meaning," I would not wish to excise this consideration, because in this study my interest is in how readers make sense of texts, and in fact "one of the most persistent ways in which both Roman and modern readers construct the meaning of a poetic text is by attempting to construct from (and for) it an intention-bearing authorial voice."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Intention is not always conscious or transparent to the intender, so even the author himself is not necessarily a reliable judge in every situation. See Heath 2002, especially 60-6.

<sup>15</sup> Hinds (1998: 49), who goes on to observe this is "a construction which they generally hope or believe (in a belief which must always be partly misguided) to be a reconstruction; and the author thus (re)constructed is one who writes toward an implied reader who will attempt such a (re)construction." Cf. Eco 1992: 64: "Since the intention of the text is basically to produce a model reader able to make conjectures about it, the initiative of the model reader consists in figuring out a model author that is not the empirical one and that,

Rather than throwing out the baby with the bath water, one may qualify statements about the reader's perception of the author's intention with the recognition that it is just that—a perception. By so qualifying the “constructive intention”<sup>16</sup>—the inferences drawn by the reader from the text, understood as the product of the author's purposive action<sup>17</sup>—one may perform the logical activity of making reasoned conjectures about purpose and meaning from form and effect, without claiming sure and unmediated knowledge of the author's mind.

This qualification, the acknowledgment of the critic's own subjectivity, covers not only reading to find the author, but also to find the reader. Reconstructing the implied reader of a text involves, as Suleiman puts it, “the circularity of all interpretation. I construct the images of the implied author and implied reader gradually as I read a work, and then use the images I have constructed to validate my reading.”<sup>18</sup> That is, the implied reader that the critic finds always seems to look suspiciously like the critic himself or

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in the end, coincides with the intention of the text.” As Susan Suleiman observes (1980: 11), the intention-based notions of implied author and implied reader are “necessary fictions, guaranteeing the consistency of a specific reading without guaranteeing its validity in any absolute sense.” For a strong statement, on the other hand, of the “epistemological vacuity” of even qualified recourse to authorial intention, see Edmunds (2001: 168 for the quote, and *passim*).

<sup>16</sup> Kearns (1999: 50) adopts George Dillon's term “constructive intention” to indicate the authorial intention as inferred by the reader: “We assume that the text exists for a reason, and we speak as if that intention originated with the actual author, but we also know that we can't be certain about the individual's purpose; in this sense we are ‘constructing’ an intention and attributing it to an individual we ourselves have imagined.”

<sup>17</sup> In his defense of properly conceived intentionalism, Heath (2002: 63-4) observes: “What is in view is the teleological structure of the action—its directedness toward some end or ends—and not some inner event or process separable from the performance of the action. So asking questions about authorial intention does not commit us to enquiring into the author's psyche *rather than* the text. The enquiry is precisely into the text as the product of purposive behavior. The author is an indispensable element of the text conceived in this way, since the text *is* the product of purposive behavior *because* it was produced by an author.”

<sup>18</sup> Suleiman 1980: 11.

herself,<sup>19</sup> and this is to be expected, because there is no interpretively neutral zone outside of oneself from which one can analyze a text. The “empirical reader has to interpret the text in order to arrive at the figure of the reader,” as Edmunds objects in reference to Conte’s hypothetical reader (the “reader-addressee”).<sup>20</sup> This is a valid point. I follow Suleiman’s view that it “does not render the notions of implied author and implied reader superfluous, but it does relativize them....Where specific readings are concerned, one can never escape the dilemmas and paradoxes of interpretation.”<sup>21</sup>

Though there are many terms available to describe the implied reader,<sup>22</sup> Peter Rabinowitz calls the implied reader the “authorial audience” (*i.e.*, the imagined audience for whom the author wrote)<sup>23</sup> and this term is the most congenial to the type of exploration I will be attempting here, because as an adverb (*i.e.*, reading *authorially*) it gives us a term for one of the approaches available to the work’s implied reader. This is valuable for this study because my interest is not in describing the implied reader *per se* as a static, circumscribable thing—defining, *e.g.*, what knowledge of literary conventions the text assumes—but rather in examining reading as a responsive, participatory mental process. Our interest is not, for example, in *whether* the authorial audience is meant to

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<sup>19</sup> As many reader-oriented classicists have observed, *e.g.*, Martindale 1993:15 and Hexter 1992: 343. For discussion of how “[a]ccounts of readers can be redescribed as competing stories about reading,” see Martindale (1993: 16) with further references.

<sup>20</sup> Edmunds (2001:41-2), who goes on: “How does Conte gain access to this figure of the reader? The reader-addressee appears only through the initial response of an empirical reader, Conte himself. The same point has been made about Umberto Eco’s ‘Model Reader.’ This empirical reader has to interpret the text in order to arrive at the figure of the reader. So Conte must first be the reader-interpreter in order to know who the reader-addressee is, and one suspects that the two readers are really the same.”

<sup>21</sup> Suleiman 1980: 11.

<sup>22</sup> For Eco’s “model reader,” see 1992: 64, quoted above; for Conte’s “reader –addressee” see 1994: xix-xx: “The reader-addressee is a form of the text; is the figure of the recipient as anticipated by the text.” Iser’s “implied reader” (1978: 34) “designates a network of response-inviting structures, which impel the reader to grasp the text.” Cf. Fish’s (1980: 49) “informed reader” and Riffaterre’s (1973: 46) rather different, conglomerate “super reader.”

<sup>23</sup> Rabinowitz 1980:241-63;1986: 113-19; 1987 esp. chapter 1.

recognize a given allusion, but rather in *how* particularly the reader must be engaged in the reading moment in order to do so. Authorial reading—reading for authorial intent, with awareness of literary artifice—is one of two modes available to the actual reader. The other is the “immersed” reading of the narratee or narrative audience, which is positioned inside the narrative discourse and is the fictional counterpart of the narrator. As Stephen Wheeler explains in his discussion of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, “the epic narrator does not address himself to the implied audience or the reader but to an audience that believes in the illusion of the performance itself.”<sup>24</sup> When participating in this mode of consciousness the reader experiences the story world as “real,” and is not alert to its artifice and its status as a piece of literary creation.<sup>25</sup> The authorial audience notices technical things like meter and stylistic devices—the allusion to Catullus’ Ariadne in Dido’s *perfide!*, for example—and attributes them to the author, not the speaking character. The narrative audience is not aware of Catullus’ existence—for them, there is no other frame for understanding Dido’s words than the events of the story. In his discussion of Rabinowitz’s and others (especially Phelan’s) use of these terms, Michael Kearns has represented these levels of textual transmission schematically in the chart below.<sup>26</sup>

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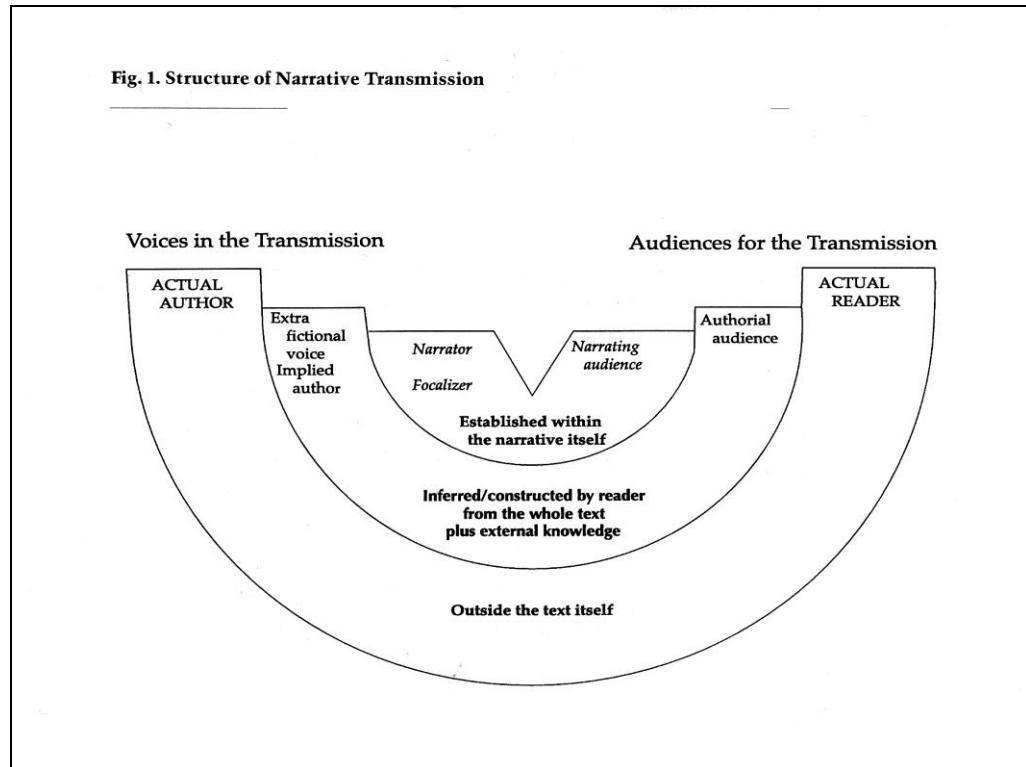
<sup>24</sup> Wheeler 1999: 78.

<sup>25</sup> Kearns (1999: 51) highlights a useful example of the authorial/narrative audience distinction used by James Phelan discussing in Robert Browning’s dramatic monologue “My Last Duchess”: the authorial audience has “a ‘double consciousness’ of the poem’s speaker as both real (mimetic) and created (synthetic), while the [narrative audience] has a single consciousness of the Duke as real.”

<sup>26</sup> Kearns 1999: 51. For discussion of the various forms the Narrative Communication Diagram and their implications, see Shaw 2005.



Fig. 1. Structure of Narrative Transmission



The distinction between these two audience orientations, authorial and narrative, is key to this discussion of modes of reading. The actual reader can shift instantaneously between these two positions, the “immersion” of the narratee and the “detachment” of the authorial audience.<sup>27</sup> Rabinowitz suggests that the reader “must be simultaneously aware of both aspects. A viewer is hardly responding adequately to Hamlet if he leaps on stage to warn the prince that the fencing match is rigged. Neither, however, should he refuse to mourn Ophelia because he knows that she is really backstage studying her lines for *Barefoot in the Park*.”<sup>28</sup> He argues that they are therefore not kept in constant balance, but rather that the passage back and forth between the two is so natural for the practiced

<sup>27</sup> Kearns (1999:51), with further references on the terms in quotation marks. It should be noted that the narratee or narratorial audience is not, as Wheeler (1999: 79) clarifies, “a definite character in the text. Its response is not indicated by the narrator. Rather it is a role that actual and implied audiences are expected to play in the act of receiving the poem.”

<sup>28</sup> Rabinowitz 1980: 243.

consumer of narrative art that we are in no danger of actually reaching the point where we may behave as if a work of fiction were true. We can shift back and forth between these modes instantaneously.<sup>29</sup>

In fact, sometimes when analyzing the *Aeneid* one may sometimes shift too easily between the authorial and narrative levels, blurring the distinction between them. For the sake of a (by no means egregious) example, one may consider Stark's observation regarding Dido's accusation of Aeneas' perfidy: "Clearly the charge of faithlessness, grounded in Aeneas' participation in some kind of relationship with Dido, is Dido's 'trump card,' so she brandishes it as a spurned lover, but also as the representative and founder of the ethnic group so persistently drubbed with that label by the descendants of the very man she accuses."<sup>30</sup> The observation that Dido can accuse Aeneas of the stereotypically Carthaginian blemish of bad faith is certainly relevant at the authorial level—it makes a point to the reader who sees this irony. The way Stark's remark is phrased, however, by focalizing it through Dido ("she brandishes it as"), it sounds as if he were attributing awareness of this irony to the character herself, as if it were part of the stick with which she is hitting him. I doubt that Stark would deliberately, if asked, ascribe this impossible awareness to the character's consciousness, and I have chosen this example simply to show how easy it is to elide the authorial and narrative levels. One frequently finds examples in *Aeneid* scholarship, however, where the difference between character awareness and reader awareness is not observed, to rather more consequential

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<sup>29</sup> In unmarked cases that are not trying to complicate this process, as Kearns (1999: 51) notes.

<sup>30</sup> Stark 1999: 275.

effect.<sup>31</sup> An important component of my analysis of the way the reader produces meaning will be attention to the authorial audience's awareness of the difference between their own "omniscient" view and the tragically circumscribed viewpoints of the characters.

Constructing the authorial audience from the text itself is a somewhat less complicated project when the critic herself shares the cultural milieu of the actual audience who comprise it.<sup>32</sup> Since the actual readers to whom the constructive intention of the *Aeneid* was addressed were, of course, first century BCE Romans, assessing the responses that the text invites from its authorial audience requires attention to an educated Roman's expected literary knowledge and cultural attitudes, which inform his "horizon of expectations," as Jauss called it.<sup>33</sup> This can be constructed both from inside and outside the text. That is, we can see the type of reader assumed by the text itself in, for example, its invitations to specific, nuanced comparisons with Homer's *Odyssey* and Apollonius' *Argonautica*, among other important intertextual models. The text addresses

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<sup>31</sup> This issue comes up particularly in discussions of scenes where Aeneas engages in interpretation of signs whose significance the reader understands better than he does—the ephrasis on the Temple of Juno in Book 1, or the prophecies directing his mission in Books 2 and 3, to give two examples that will figure prominently in my study.

<sup>32</sup> Though, even then, it is not simple. Edmunds (2001: 103-4) observes: "Whether I am reading an ancient text or one written in my lifetime, my world of reference ( $W_0$ ) is not exactly the same as that of every reader contemporary with me. My perspective on  $W_0$  is not the same as someone else's, though if I have the sense to respect my interpretive community, I do not lapse into solipsism.... The  $W_0$  of me and/or my contemporaries will not be the same as that of the contemporary readers of an ancient text... [and further] there is no reason to believe that all ancient contemporary readers had the same  $W_0$ .... The accessibility to me of an ancient  $W_1$  depends neither on the resemblance of my  $W_0$  to the ancient  $W_0$  (there is no convenient "we" that embraces the horizons of the ancient and the modern reader) nor on my reconstruction of the ancient  $W_0$ , which will be partial at best. The accessibility to me of an ancient  $W_1$  depends in the first place on the extremely asymmetrical relation between my  $W_0$  and the ancient  $W_1$ . This asymmetry, not readers' stupidity or lack of historical information, produces the history of reception."

<sup>33</sup> Jauss (1982: 139-85) distinguishes between a first (aesthetic), second (interpretive), and third (historical-reconstructive) reading. I follow Jauss in attributing importance to consideration of the linear experience of a text, but cannot adopt the framework of his analysis, since in the study of classical texts the process of the "third" is inseparable from the "first" and the "second"; we must do historical reconstruction even to recreate a purely perceptual experience of the poem. (This is one of the consistent complaints in reviews of Edmunds' generally very enlightening application of Jauss' scheme to Horace *Odes* 1.9 in his 1992 monograph *From a Sabine Jar*.)

itself to an audience well-versed in Greek literature. We can also establish relevant facts about the actual audience from “outside,” by looking at what kind of reader a Roman education would produce, both in terms of content-knowledge (which would indeed include Greek models) and style of analysis (more on this below). Reconstruction of cultural attitudes both from inside and outside of the text is important, too. For example, negative attitudes toward Carthaginians are played upon in the poem, and we know that such stereotypes were indeed widespread among ancient Romans. The effect to which Vergil uses these stereotypes, however, is debatable—Horsfall suggests that evocations of these biases are used to negatively characterize Dido, while Stark argues that the positive characterization of Dido is used to undercut and comment upon the limits of stereotypes.<sup>34</sup> This disparity points up the fact that although “external” data about a Roman’s education and cultural influences is indispensable to our analysis, it does not by itself solve interpretive questions.

As another example, we may take Ralph Hexter’s learned and insightful, but in certain ways not wholly convincing (to me) article, *Sidonian Dido*, which seeks to “reconstruct the experience of the first reader(s)” by which he means Vergil’s direct historical contemporaries.<sup>35</sup> He defines this reader as a demographically-specifiable Roman reader as opposed to a disembodied “every reader,” and he observes that although it would be nice to be able to describe the difference between “how a reader of senatorial or consular rank experienced the *Aeneid* differently from an *eques* or a simple citizen, for a period so distant there would necessarily be more speculation than convincing

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<sup>34</sup> Horsfall 1990; Stark 1999.

<sup>35</sup> Hexter 1992: 342. Hexter’s interest is not in reading *per se* (as a linear, hermeneutic process) but reading as interpretation. It is, therefore, more closely aligned with a traditional philological approach.

documentation and argument.”<sup>36</sup> As a result, Hexter limits himself to a “simpler attempt” and defines his reader as “a citizen of Rome, thus free, and strictly speaking, a man.”<sup>37</sup> This, however, sets up a false contrast, for we do not have “convincing documentation” for how directly contemporary Roman male citizens in general experienced the *Aeneid* any more than we do for a specific social stratum. It unfortunately has to be an exercise in speculation either way.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, general types cannot predict particular responses to particular passages of literature. This is the crux of my objection to Hexter’s reader.<sup>39</sup> He claims, for example, that “[n]o doubt the Roman patriot’s breast swelled with pride most fully at those passages that describe the ‘future’ glories of Rome,”<sup>40</sup> and goes on to remark that in his opinion it is “likely that these same readers would have smiled at Dido’s angry prophecy [*Aeneid* 4.622-9]. Smiled, because the ‘someone’ she addresses [*exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*], the one who will arise, turned out not to be her avenger. Hannibal, threat though he was, did not defeat Rome.”<sup>41</sup> It is possible, though, to imagine a different response in a reader of the same “demographic.” The patriotic citizen *may* feel bemused satisfaction about how wrong Dido was;<sup>42</sup> but he may, alternatively, shudder to

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<sup>36</sup> Hexter 1992: 343.

<sup>37</sup> Hexter 1992: 333.

<sup>38</sup> If anything, the narrower the demographic factors selected, the more targeted and nuanced our speculations might be. See, for example, Thibodeau 2011, especially chapter 3 for a successful example.

<sup>39</sup> My other objection is that the reading that Hexter goes on to argue, which requires a sensitivity to the feeling of being an outsider, seems to me most likely to occur to a reader who has actually experienced exclusion—a woman, a slave, a foreigner—the exact opposite of his free, citizen, male Roman through whose views he is reconstructing.

<sup>40</sup> Hexter 1992: 344.

<sup>41</sup> Hexter 1992: 344.

<sup>42</sup> Hexter 1992: 344: “The irony depends on [the reader’s] identification of Hannibal with *ultor*: Dido’s prophecy is wrong.” Though it is strictly beside the point here, I would note that Dido does not actually say anything about *defeating* the Romans, but rather dogging their race with war—her prediction is not technically “wrong.”

preview the calling down of the Punic Wars on the Romans, which brought so much devastation and loss of life. As Stark observes, “Hannibal's failure to conquer Rome did not make him or his memory at all pleasant, but rather made him a fearful reminder of how close Rome came to disaster.”<sup>43</sup> Or, if he is reading in a detached, authorial mode, the reader may simply appreciate Vergil’s clever invention of an etiology for Hannibal in Dido’s curse. This is to illustrate that while historical information is indispensable in helping us formulate possible responses of actual readers, it is not prescriptive (as, indeed, Hexter’s qualification of his Roman’s response as “likely” recognizes). When I conjecture in this study about how a Roman reader might respond to something, I mean it in this qualified way.<sup>44</sup> Historical reconstruction helps us read like Romans, but at a certain level our Romans will always read like us.<sup>45</sup>

## Part Two: Reading Contexts

The context in which a text is read affects the method of reading itself (how the reader moves through the text) and the interpretive motivations of the audience, which are in some ways related to their socio-cultural identities. Take, for example, the recitation of poetry as entertainment at elite dinner parties, which is the primary reading context that we will examine. The method of reading that this entails will affect the

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<sup>43</sup> Stark 1999: 267 n. 32.

<sup>44</sup> Feeney 2006: 452: “Classicists, of all people, should have the historical perspective to see that any critical act is provisional: in this way we may resist not only the historicists’ claim to objective recovery of contemporary response, but also the whiggish triumphalism of many of the modern schools.” Kennedy (1993, ch. 1) discusses the double commitment to the acknowledgment of the fact of our situatedness as well as the historicity of our subject of study.

<sup>45</sup> “We approach the reading of texts with the baggage of our values and our experience, with certain categories, assumptions, prejudices and ‘fore-understandings.’ To have such baggage is what it is to be a human being in history; *without it we could not read at all.*” Martindale 1993: 5, with his emphasis.

manner of the audience's perception and comprehension (a recitation does not admit the stopping and reflecting that is possible during private, ocular reading), while the social identity of the group will affect interpretation—how the poem is discussed afterward. This reading context occasions a particular performance of identity<sup>46</sup> through the interpretive aspect of reading (*i.e.*, showing one's education and aesthetic sophistication). I am influenced in this consideration by William Johnson's argument that reading is not simply a private, cognitive activity but "a sociocultural system in which the individual participates."<sup>47</sup> He stresses the performative, social nature of most literary reading in the ancient world,<sup>48</sup> and how this affects the way readers (usually listeners) approach texts. We can, in the case of Vergil, differentiate several contexts for the reading/performance of the poem, including but not necessarily limited to: recitation at private, elite social gatherings, recitation in larger public venues (the audience halls of the *grammatici*, the theater), private reading of the manuscript, and use of the *Aeneid* in school.

The first step on our path through these contemporary reading contexts will be to trace briefly the stages of the publication of a text in first century BCE Rome. Raymond

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<sup>46</sup> In Lucian's *The Ignorant Book Collector*, one of the examples Johnson 2000 uses to illustrate the socio-cultural dimensions of reading in antiquity, the eponymous character is unable to successfully perform the social identity to which he aspires. This *nouveau riche* provincial's use of reading to attempt to present himself as an elite fails because he cannot display the type of education that would confirm his desired social identity ("your haunts in youth were not ours," *Adv. Indoct.* 3).

<sup>47</sup> Johnson 2000: 602.

<sup>48</sup> "The custom of out-loud recitation within a private, elite, social context has roots in the Greek tradition as far back as we can see. In earlier times, private recitation was mostly of melic poetry (as in symposiastic contexts), but the close association of a whole set of habits—recitation, group involvement, artistic or intellectual entertainment, aristocratic socializing, often over dinner—developed into a broad-based and long-lived cultural tradition, and thus influenced generally the ways in which literary texts, including prose texts, were regarded by the ancient reader. At the very heart of the use of literary texts was the association of the activity of reading with the elite community itself, and with the shared 'entertainments' that helped to bind and validate the group." (Johnson 2000: 619).

Starr describes the process of publication as follows (I paraphrase):<sup>49</sup> before publication the author shares drafts with friends for comments; when the author is ready to release it, he sends gift copies to the dedicatee and to his circle of friends; these manuscripts are performed at social gatherings; those who wish their own text obtain a loan for copying, which is in turn performed at their own social gatherings. So the text moves out through circles of friends, with acquisition of the manuscript following behind the experience of the poem's performance.<sup>50</sup>

Vergil's own recitation, then, is the first reading context. Though Vergil's biographical tradition is not, for the most part, to be trusted,<sup>51</sup> we are on firm ground in accepting its attestation of the fact that he recited the poem (even if we are skeptical of the details of the anecdotes), given that we have much supporting evidence for the practice among Augustan era poets.<sup>52</sup> According to the Suetonian biography transmitted by Donatus (*VSD*), in addition to his recital of Books 2, 4, and 6 of the *Aeneid* to Augustus and a retinue that included his sister Octavia, Vergil also performed parts of the poem for larger groups—though the author hastens to add “but not often, and then usually the passages about which he was in doubt, in order to find out the verdict of others' taste.”<sup>53</sup> The qualifications that the *VSD* ascribes to his public readings—not

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<sup>49</sup> Starr 1987. See also Kenney 1982: 15-22.

<sup>50</sup> Starr 1987. Though in passages of Catullus, Horace, Propertius and Ovid we can see private reading as the imagined reception of an emerging form, the *libellus*. Cf. Edmunds 2001: 108-132, Fantham 1996: 64-5.

<sup>51</sup> Horsfall 1995: 1-25.

<sup>52</sup> This practice was brought into currency in Rome by Asinius Pollio in 38 (Sen. *Contr.* 4 pr. 2). Horace comments on the pitfalls of authorial *recitatio*, which has the effect of soliciting insincere flattery (*AP* 408ff.), and elsewhere (*Sat.* 1.4.73) he contrasts himself with the desperate poets trying to get an audience by reciting in the forum. Cf. Hor. *Ep.* 1.19.39, 47, 2.2.97, Plin. *Ep.* 6.17.2. See Kenney 1982: 12 and Starr 1987.

<sup>53</sup> *VSD* 33.



often, and only select bits—seems aimed to deflect the criticisms of *recitatio* as performed by lesser poets, who were mocked by Horace as attention-hungry leeches.<sup>54</sup> It would have been a normal practice for the time for Vergil to have performed parts of the poem not only in private, elite social contexts for his patron and friends, but also for a more general audience, such as the type presupposed by the *VSD*'s anecdote about a heckler's humorous interjection while Vergil was reciting the *Georgics*.<sup>55</sup> Horace attests that *grammatici*—the literary critics of the day—expected poets even of his stature to give recitals in audience halls filled with their pupils,<sup>56</sup> and although Horace may have evaded more popular venues, he at least performed his poetry for more select circles, since as a youth Ovid heard him recite.<sup>57</sup> The immediate success of Vergil's works with *grammatici*, who began incorporating his earlier work into their teaching even during his lifetime,<sup>58</sup> and the *Aeneid* soon after, suggests that he may not have shared Horace's self-purported aversion to involvement with them.

In the context of *recitatio*, whether by the poet himself or by someone else, public or private, we must also keep in mind how aural apprehension will affect the way that a reader processes the narrative. One issue to consider is how the way in which the poem is performed will help the reader pick up nuances, particularly implied or rhetorical points. When one hears a poem recited, it has already received an interpretation in the manner of

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<sup>54</sup> Hor. *AP* 476. Horfall (1995:4 with n. 34) observes that much of the *Vita* is aimed at “defence of the poet against criticism.”

<sup>55</sup> *VSD* 43.

<sup>56</sup> Horace *Epist.* 1.19.40-50.

<sup>57</sup> *Tristia* 4.10.49-50, *et tenuit nostros numerosus Horatius aures*.

<sup>58</sup> Suetonius (*Gramm.* 16 ) reports that Caecilius Epirota, a freedman of Atticus and very good friend of Gallus, was the first to introduce Vergil and other *novi poetae* into the Roman curriculum, in 26 BCE. Cf. Bonner 1977: 32.

the oral reader's expressive choices.<sup>59</sup> Emphasis, timing, tone of voice: these cues are an important part of the rhetoric of the poem, the way it makes unspoken points to the reader. In fact, the poem loses a great deal if the words are not "acted" well,<sup>60</sup> as attested by the remark of the poet Julius Montanus who "used to say that he would steal some phrases from Virgil 'if only he could steal his voice and delivery, too; for the same verses that sounded admirable when he spoke them seemed empty and flat without him.'"<sup>61</sup> It is not only Vergil's reportedly mellifluous voice, but the way his delivery brought out the meaning in the words that made the verses achieve their effect. Ability to bring out the meaning of the words requires a sensitive, well-informed understanding of them. Lucian complains, for example, in his diatribe the *Ignorant Book Collector* that the eponymous character can fluidly articulate the words on the page, but he is unable to bring meaning to them because he does not really understand their content.<sup>62</sup> It need not be seen as a pure fiction, then, that Vergil recited his verses best; he likely would have, because he most intimately understood their subtlest implications. We must keep in mind, when we read silently to ourselves, how much tone, and so, force of suggestion, that we lose by not

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<sup>59</sup> See Gamel 1998 for consideration of this issue in reference to the performance of elegy.

<sup>60</sup> This is not simply a matter of appropriate dramatic flair. The reader must bring out the meaning in the words. This is another of Lucian's charges against the ignorant book collector (2), that he can read aloud fluidly but he does not understand the text and so cannot bring proper meaning to the words. Quintilian (1.8.1-2) also stresses the relationship between understanding the text and reading it aloud properly.

<sup>61</sup> VSD 29.

<sup>62</sup> Lucian (*Adv. Indoct. 2*): su\ de\ a0new|gme/noij me\n toi=j o0fqalmoi=j o9ra|=j ta\ bibli/a, kai\ nh\ Di/a katako/rwj, kai\ a0nagignw/skeij elnia pa/nu e0pitre/xwn, fqa/nontoj tou= o0fqalmou= to\ sto/ma: ou0de/pw de\ tou=to/ moi i9kano/n, h34n mh\ ei0dh|=j th\n a0reth\n kai\ kaki/an e9ka/stou tw~n e0ggegrame/nwn kai\ suni/h|j o43tij me\n o9 nou=j su/mpasin, ti/j de\ h9 ta/cij tw~n o0noma/twn... "To be sure you look at your books with your eyes open, and quite as much as you like, and you read some of them aloud with true fluency, keeping your eyes in advance of your lips; but I do not consider that enough, unless you know the merits and defects of each passage in their contents, unless you understand what every sentence means, how to construe the words..." (Harmon trans.)

having to make choices about how to articulate the words in a way that renders their sense.

After a poem's publication, which in the case of the *Aeneid* occurred posthumously and at the behest of Augustus, the poem would have continued to be recited in both private and public contexts, although in both we may note certain changes that would be occasioned by the ownership of the published manuscript. Unlike the poet's *recitatio* which was used to solicit feedback (or promote adulation) before publication,<sup>63</sup> performance of the published poem by the owner of the manuscript (or rather, by a *lector*, often a slave)<sup>64</sup> at elite social gatherings was often not the cause of the gathering, but only a part of it, namely, the after-dinner entertainment.<sup>65</sup> Part of this entertainment was learned discussion of the text, which itself involves a performance by the listeners—the performance of elite education and taste. We must keep in mind how the “reading culture” in which the performance of the poem occurs is likely to affect what kind of meanings the audience reads for, because they will have expectations about the nature of the discussion that will follow.

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<sup>63</sup> Kenney (1982: 12) underlines the function of the *recitatio* as “a form of advertisement or puffing.”

<sup>64</sup> Starr 1991: 342: “The use of a *lector* was not absolutely required at a dinner party, but the Romans clearly felt that a *lector* marked the events of a certain social class. The speaker in Juvenal's Eleventh Satire defensively draws attention to his lack of a professional *lector* to read the Vergil and Homer at his small and simple dinner party.”

<sup>65</sup> Recitation may not have only occurred at dinner parties, but could also have occasioned its own events: “Cicero's correspondence from the years of Caesar's political supremacy shows that there were many *literati* among the wealthy leisured class who would listen to works of prose or verse at dinner gatherings, and it is only a step to infer that they would be specifically invited to private recitations of history, tragedy, and various poetic forms. The public recitation seems to have become official in the triumviral period, since it is credited to Asinius Pollio, the consul of 40 B.C.” Fantham 1996: 9.

The *grammatici* are, therefore, important to our consideration of the reception contexts of the *Aeneid* not only because they drove the popularity of a work,<sup>66</sup> as noted above, but also because they shaped the way in which poetry was thought and talked about by educated people in general. Hexter observes that the literary critics of the first century BCE inherited the critical tradition of the Hellenistic scholiasts on Homer, a poet “whose inconsistencies and divergences from other mythological traditions were carefully noted, whose every character, in deed and word, was measured against the canon of “the proper” (τοῦ προῦπον) or the likely, and whose (for that time) indecipherable nonce words were the subject of etymology and fantasy.”<sup>67</sup> Hellenistic scholiasts also displayed interest in plot and structure, particularly, for example in “advance notice” (*i.e.*, foreshadowing and anticipation) as a component of the work’s arrangement (οἰκονομία), issues of poetic freedom (*e.g.*, with divine myth and fantastical elements), character, particularly as it is revealed by speeches, rhetorical styles and dramatic effects, and sound.<sup>68</sup> Still, as Kenney observes, the actual interpretation practiced by Roman critics displays “preoccupation with minute, and often absurd, details” and “blindness to what we should account the larger issues of literary criticism.”<sup>69</sup> He points out that there is a great and puzzling discrepancy between “the quality of literary appreciation which, on the evidence of the literature itself, the great

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<sup>66</sup> Horace attributes the lack of popularity of the *Odes* to his unwillingness to court the *grammaticas tribus*, (*Epist.* 1.19.40-1). “Certainly these *grammatici*, like modern critics, could make a man’s reputation.” Fantham 1996: 86.

<sup>67</sup> Hexter 1992: 335. See also Kenney 1982: 27-30.

<sup>68</sup> For these claims see Richardson 2006, in particular p. 182 n. 9 for a catalogue of references to οἰκονομία and anticipation (προσυνιστάναι, προοικονομεῖν, προαναφωνήσις, προλήψις), p. 185 on realism and poetic freedom, p. 187 on character, pp. 192-204 on style, and pp. 204-210 on sound.

<sup>69</sup> Kenney 1982: 29.

writers and in particular the learned poets of Rome expected from their readers, and the almost complete failure of the professional exegetes to respond to these standards.”<sup>70</sup>

We would like to have examples showing exactly how the *Aeneid* was discussed at the private elite dinner parties at the immediate time of its publication, but we must rely on representations from somewhat later authors, ranging from Juvenal and Petronius to Servius and Macrobius. For our purposes, Juvenal and Petronius are primarily useful in attesting to the reading of Vergil at dinner parties as a performance (or, attempted performance) of elite identity,<sup>71</sup> as they do not give us much detail on discussion of interpretive issues, though the points made by the annoyingly well educated woman at Juvenal 6.434-7 are interesting. She “forgives doomed Dido” (*periturae ignoscit Elissae*) and weighs passages of Homer and Vergil against each other (*committit vates et comparat*), and she is animated by antiquarian and lexicographical interests. In the latter interests she appears like the first century CE (and later) commentators evidenced in Gellius, Servius and Macrobius, whose interest is skewed toward technical matters such as textual emendation and word usage.<sup>72</sup> In this educated woman’s defense of Dido, however, her presumed interest in analyzing and adjudicating on matters that stem from ambiguities in plot and character—analyzing the *story* as Vergil tells it—evinces a mode of literary analysis that is not well represented in the (albeit fragmentary) ancient

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<sup>70</sup> Kenney 1982: 29.

<sup>71</sup> Petronius *Sat.* 68. At Trimalchio’s dinner, the slave Massa butchers a recitation of *Aeneid* 5, mixing in verses from Atellan farce. His owner brags that he learned to recite from watching *circulatores*, mountebanks.

<sup>72</sup> Hyginus seems to have been interested primarily in the text, the use of language, and to history and antiquities, as were Cornutus and Aemilius Asper (Nettleship 1881: lx-lxiv). Probus, however, displays an interest in literary analysis, as for example his remarks on Vergil’s description of Dido using Homer’s simile comparing Nausicaa to Artemis (preserved at Gellius 9.9.12). For a thorough survey of the ancient commentators on Vergil, see the introductory chapter devoted to this topic in Conington-Nettleship Vol. 1 (1881: lvii-cix).

commentaries. The exception to the commentary tradition is that of Tiberius Claudius Donatus, who saw the narrower philological interest of his contemporaries as a problem, and sought, by contrast, to bring out the *meaning* of the text, the points implied by its rhetorical structure.<sup>73</sup> He sometimes reaches bizarre conclusions due to his tendency toward literal reading<sup>74</sup> and his assumption that the poem is a straightforward panegyric to Augustus (*genus laudativum*)<sup>75</sup> and must therefore present his forbearer Aeneas in a uniformly impeccable light.<sup>76</sup> Still, the linear, hermeneutical approach of his paraphrase and his attention to how unspoken points are made by the rhetorical relationships between statements in the poem shows an ancient precedent for that aspect of this dissertation's interpretive method.

Tiberius Claudius Donatus presents a more hermeneutically oriented counterweight to the heavily philological interpretive methods evidenced in the commentary traditions represented by Servius and Macrobius. Reading holistically to understand characters' motivations in context, and to interpret the plot in light of them, is, therefore, an attested practice in the reading of the *Aeneid*. This is logical and would hardly need arguing, except that the commentary tradition, which gives us our citable

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<sup>73</sup> TCD 1.1.5-8. He says that commentators are only interested in their own reputations, and he does not seek to replace them, but to supplement them. We can extrapolate, then, that he is taking issue with their narrow philological and antiquarian interests, and their display of learning on particular words and verses at the expense of understanding the rhetorical whole in which they are a part.

<sup>74</sup> So, for example, he takes Dido's curse a sign of her insanity, because a human cannot be born out of another person's bones (TCD 1.410.19-21).

<sup>75</sup> TCD 1.2.7-9. Though Servius did not identify the poem as panegyric in genre, he explained its purpose as "to praise Augustus through his ancestors." The notion of Aeneas as a figure of praise remained central to the subsequent interpretative tradition. For a summary of mediaeval reading practices, which emphasized moral allegory, and early Renaissance reading practices, which saw the poem as a vehicle of epideictic rhetoric centering on Aeneas' laudability, see Kallendorf 1989: 3-15.

<sup>76</sup> So, for example, he argues (TCD 1.388.4-8) that when Mercury finds Aeneas in Carthage, he is not actually building Dido's city, but rather he is sleeping. Starr 1991 offers an overview of TCD's attitude toward Dido as a whole.

evidence for reading practices, is geared by its very format and by the traditional interests of the commentary genre toward one particular type of reading, namely that of philological showmanship on individual words and verses of interest.<sup>77</sup> While we should understand ancient readers who were educated in this tradition to listen to Vergil with such interests in mind, we should also keep in mind that this compartmentalizing approach can have a distorting effect on the understanding of the larger context of the plot, and that some readers, like T. Claudius Donatus, were interested, among other things, in clarifying such issues.

We have discussed reading, specifically recitation, in private and social contexts, but of course in all generations subsequent to the first in which the *Aeneid* was published, all educated readers' first experiences of the poem would have been in school. The publication of the poem allowed the *grammatici*, who had no doubt been eager to have Vergil recite the poem for their audiences while it was still under construction, to use the *Aeneid* as an instructional text. Within Vergil's own lifetime, his earlier work had already begun to be used by *grammatici* in schools, and after its publication following his death in 19 BCE, the *Aeneid* quickly became "the Latin school-text *par excellence*, and remained so through the centuries."<sup>78</sup> This means that for most everyone growing up subsequent to the publication of the *Aeneid*, the first encounter with the poem (particularly the first four books)<sup>79</sup> would be in school,<sup>80</sup> where they, after being given a

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<sup>77</sup> Commentaries were written by *grammatici*, who were of course also interested in instructing their students in correct Latinity. Starr 2007 stresses this aspect of Servius.

<sup>78</sup> Bonner 1977: 213.

<sup>79</sup> Bonner 1977: 214: "The schools undoubtedly did a great deal to ensure the immortality of Virgil's works, and no part of them was more widely known (or, probably, more intensively studied in class) than the early books of the *Aeneid*. Dozens of graffiti from Pompeii and elsewhere record the writers' familiarity with the openings of the first and second books, *Arma virumque cano* and *Conticuere omnes*...and Ovid

general introduction on the poet's life and poem's purpose,<sup>81</sup> would recite it to practice reading, pronunciation, and performance, parse its words to learn grammar, and learn uplifting moral lessons from its sentiments.<sup>82</sup> One can easily imagine how approaching the poem as a monument of culture, as a source of authority, both moral and linguistic, would contribute to the development of an orthodox way of reading the poem, even within the first few generations after its publication.<sup>83</sup>

The immediate canonicity of the *Aeneid* can be understood, then, as determining, or at least contributing to, a certain type of reading that turns a blind eye to potentially pessimistic elements in the poem—particularly any negative reflections on the character of Aeneas—in favor of “lofty sentiments” that will edify the youth who are to be educated by it.<sup>84</sup> Thomas observes:<sup>85</sup>

“Just as Virgil's language, though odd and audacious in its synchronic manifestation, becomes normative in its reception by grammarians, who use it as

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says [*Trist.* 2.533-6] that no part of the whole poem was more widely read than the love-story of Dido and Aeneas.”

<sup>80</sup> Quintilian *Inst.* 1.8.13-14: “In lecturing the teacher of literature must give attention to minor points as well: he will ask his class after analysing a verse to give him the parts of speech and the peculiar features of the feet which it contains....He will point out what words are barbarous, what improperly used, and what are contrary to the laws of language....Their aim will rather be to familiarise the pupil with the artifices of style and to stimulate his memory.”

<sup>81</sup> Bonner (1977: 219) states that “it has been well argued that the kind of scheme which later scholars applied in the introductions to their published commentaries was a traditional one, deriving ultimately from one of the great seats of learning, and long used in classroom teaching. This scheme is seen, for instance, in the prefaces of Donatius and Servius to their commentaries on Virgil, and that of Eustathius on Homer.”

<sup>82</sup> Quintilian *Inst.* 1.8.5: “It is therefore an admirable practice which now prevails, to begin by reading Homer and Vergil, although the intelligence needs to be further developed for the full appreciation of their merits: but there is plenty of time for that since the boy will read them more than once. In the meantime let his mind be lifted by the sublimity of heroic verse, inspired by the greatness of its theme and imbued with the loftiest sentiments.”

<sup>83</sup> See Thomas 2001, discussed below.

<sup>84</sup> There were, Thomas argues (2001:93-121), oppositional, ‘un-Augustan’ voices in the early commentary tradition whose suppression by Servius can be detected. Despite the title of the chapter, “Other voices in Servius: schooldust of the ages,” Thomas does not make as strong a connection as I think he could between the “organization of opinion” on the poem in the early centuries CE and the nature of ancient pedagogy.

<sup>85</sup> Thomas 2001: 93.



their handbook precisely to create and uphold the norm, so his political outlook must be clear and univocal—to praise Augustus through his ancestors.”

It is not only Vergil’s language and politics that have been made normative by their reception—I would add that “odd and audacious” aspects of character and plot, the topic of my study, may have failed to be acknowledged for the same reason. One may imagine that this is due not only to the embalmed optimism of interpretation that the *grammatici* would pass on directly to their students through their own exposition of the text (*ennaratio*) during lessons, but also to the very nature of the activities by which they taught, which entailed de-contextualized use of individual passages for exercises like *ethopoeiae* and declamatory *themata*.<sup>86</sup> By encouraging students to recast characters’ emotions and motivations at a given point in the narrative in ways that suit an assigned rhetorical goal,<sup>87</sup> such exercises could cause students to approach the poem in a way that bulldozes over the extremely context-sensitive implications that each passage has within the subtle, indirect exposition of plot and character.

I have discussed performance of the *Aeneid* in private elite social contexts and in the audience halls and eventually the classrooms of the *grammatici*. There remains another venue to consider, one which brought access to Vergil out beyond the sphere of

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<sup>86</sup> See McGill (2005: xix), who discusses evidence of a range of school exercises reworking passages of Vergil, including Augustine’s *ethopoeia* of Juno’s anger (*Conf.* 1.17) and references to declamation exercises in Servius: “In his note *ad Aen.* 10.18, Servius mentions that Titianus and Calvus devised *themata*, which would appear to mean situations derived from specific passages in Virgil’s poetry, that students might utilize *ad dicendi usum*. In the same entry, Servius mentions *controversiae* written in conjunction with *Aen.* 10.18-95. Later in his commentary, Servius links Virgil further to the schools of rhetoric by calling attention to one *qui Vergilium scripsit declamations (ad Aen.* 10.532).”

<sup>87</sup> On this type of exercise in general, see Kenney (1982: 8), who notes that “the aim of the adepts was not so much to convince as to astonish their auditors. To this end they employed all possible resources: vivid descriptions, striking turns of phrase, paradox, point, sententious epigram, and emotional extravagances of the most extreme kind. Above all they relied on what were technically known as *colores* ‘colours’: the ingenious manipulation, often to the point of standing things on their heads, of words and ideas, with the object of putting a new and unexpected complexion on the data of the case.”

the educated classes: the theater.<sup>88</sup> The *VSD* claims that the *Eclogues* were so successful that they were recited on the stage by singers,<sup>89</sup> and Tacitus shares an anecdote about an occasion upon which the crowd in the theater, upon hearing verses of Vergil recited (presumably the *Eclogues*), rose to honor him, for he happened to be present.<sup>90</sup> The dramatic nature of the *Aeneid* particularly lends it to performance. The *Aeneid* graffiti in Pompeii may attest to “the impact of public performances,” and Horsfall observes that even though many find-spots point to school-centered authorship, “this is not exclusively true (witness Virgil in gladiatorial barracks, ironmonger’s shop, brothel).”<sup>91</sup> The wider popularity of Vergil points to another, less cerebral aspect of the appreciation of Vergil. The appreciation of character and plot, particularly as they combine to create *pathos*, is well attested in ancient literary theory,<sup>92</sup> and is something that would affect both educated and uneducated members of the poem’s audience.

### Part Three: The Act of Reading

I would like to look now at ideas about how a reader moves through a text, and develop some conceptual tools for analyzing “the interaction between the textual signals

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<sup>88</sup> Horace (*Sat.* 1.10) contrasts these audiences, dismissing the aspiration to please the multitude in the theater or to be used in schools, directing his efforts instead toward the appreciation of learned men, such as Plotius and Varius, Maecenas and Virgil, Valgius and Octavius, among others.

<sup>89</sup> *VSD* 26.

<sup>90</sup> Tacitus *Dial.* 13.2 (on Vergil’s fame): *testes Augusti epistulae, testis ipse populus, qui auditis in theatro Virgilii versibus surrexit universus et forte praesentem spectantemque Virgilium veneratus est sic quasi Augustum.*

<sup>91</sup> Horsfall 1995: 251. For a useful look at the relevant graffiti, see Franklin 1997.

<sup>92</sup> Ancient criticism of poetry (e.g., in Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Longinus) is interested largely in poetry’s affective nature. See Farron 1993.

and the reader's acts of comprehension."<sup>93</sup> Fundamental to this interaction is the notion that, as Ingarden formulated it, "[e]very literary work is in principle incomplete and always in need of further supplementation."<sup>94</sup> Or, as Eco puts it, "Texts are lazy machineries that ask someone to do part of their job."<sup>95</sup> There are a number of levels at which the incomplete nature of literary representation can be considered.<sup>96</sup> Ingarden saw the reader's participation as "concretizing" the raw material (the "schematized aspects") of the text, almost as a musician performs a score.<sup>97</sup> Since literary works represent objects that are not real, and therefore not fully determined, there will be "places of indeterminacy" (*Unbestimmtheitsstellen*) where the reader must fill in gaps. Ingarden's mechanistic view of this process, however, leads him to see gap-filling not primarily in terms of constructing meaning, but rather in establishing the level of determinacy we expect of optical perception—supplying, for instance, the color of a character's hair.<sup>98</sup>

Modifying Ingarden's notion of indeterminacy, Iser argues that the image-building entailed in the reading process involves a process of "ideation" that is quite

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<sup>93</sup> Iser 1978: 9. What constitutes such a "signal" and to what degree it can "prestructure" a particular response will be discussed below. Iser's formulations have been criticized for sometimes being overly deterministic.

<sup>94</sup> Ingarden 1973: 251.

<sup>95</sup> Eco 1979: 214.

<sup>96</sup> See Ronen (1994) for analysis of the ontology of fictional worlds as it relates to literary theory. She remarks (p.115, emphasis hers): "Fictional entities are inherently incomplete. Their incompleteness is primarily logical and secondly semantic. Fictional entities are *logically* incomplete because many conceivable statements about a fictional entity are undecidable. A fictional entity is *semantically* incomplete because, being constructed by language, characteristics and relations of the fictional object cannot be specified in every detail. . . . This absence of a complete referent underlying the fictional construct leaves many propositions ascribable to the fictional world indeterminable. In reality, as opposed to fiction, we assume that there are no gaps and that gaps in representation can be filled by reference to a complete, fully detailed and, at least in principle, available object. Incompleteness is thus the formal manifestation of a difference between reality and fiction, between an extraliterary real object and a fictional construct."

<sup>97</sup> Ingarden 1973: 276-87.

<sup>98</sup> For his discussion of "places of indeterminacy" see Ingarden 1973: 246-54. For contrast with Iser's use see Iser 1978: 176.

different from the almost photographic image-making suggested by Ingarden.<sup>99</sup> This ideation occurs in the linear process of reading, as the perspective segments that make up the text (its “schematized views”) are encountered in sequence by the reader’s “wandering viewpoint.”<sup>100</sup> Iser stresses that the reader cannot apprehend the text as a whole, from outside, like an object of art, but rather, reading is an event in time in which the reader is present. As one reads, she moves through the consecutive segments of text, “travel[ing] along *inside*” it.<sup>101</sup> The system of interwoven perspective segments that make up the work and that the reader’s viewpoint must move through in the process of reading can be described in terms of “theme and horizon,” which function like foreground and background. The “theme” is the view or perspective segment that a reader “is involved with at any one particular moment,” and “horizon,” is the background of “the other perspective segments in which [the reader] has previously been situated.”<sup>102</sup> Theme and horizon interact dialectically: “every moment of reading is a dialectic of protension [expectation] and retention [memory], conveying a future horizon yet to be occupied, along with a past (and continually fading) horizon already filled; the wandering viewpoint carves its passage through both at the same time and leaves them to merge together in its wake.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> “The imagistic vision of the imagination is therefore not the impression objects make upon what Hume still called ‘sensation;’ nor is it optical vision, in the true sense of the term; it is, in fact, the attempt to ideate (*vorstellen*) that which one can never see as such.” (Iser 1978: 137) He remarks (*ibid.* n. 6): “I use the word ‘ideate’ as the nearest English equivalent to the German ‘*vorstellen*,’ which means to evoke the presence of something which is not given.”

<sup>100</sup> The chapter “Grasping a Text” (Iser 1978: 107-134) gives the concept full treatment.

<sup>101</sup> Iser 1978: 109.

<sup>102</sup> Iser 1978: 97.

<sup>103</sup> Iser 1978: 112.

According to Iser, the incompleteness of each manifestation of the work during the time-flow of reading (i.e., the inconclusiveness of each view) “necessitates syntheses,”<sup>104</sup> and the reader’s synthesizing activity (the guiding principles of which is “consistency-building”)<sup>105</sup> is the process by which he or she allocates information into center or margin, figure or ground, in order to form coherent *gestalten*, or units of configurative meaning.<sup>106</sup> That is to say, the reader selectively organizes a mass of information into meaningful pictures. The reader’s syntheses often “take place below the threshold of consciousness.”<sup>107</sup> When, however, this unconscious process of “passive synthesis” is complicated and “good continuation” is disrupted, it “mobilize[s] the reader’s imagination in the constitutive activity of supplying missing links.”<sup>108</sup> By impeding textual coherence, these breaks in continuity, which Iser terms “gaps” (*Leerstellen*),<sup>109</sup> “trigger acts of ideation” by prompting the reader to make inferences,

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<sup>104</sup> Iser 1978: 109.

<sup>105</sup> “Consistency-building is the indispensable basis for all acts of comprehension, and this in its turn is dependent upon processes of selection.” Iser 1978: 125.

<sup>106</sup> In summary: “The wandering viewpoint is a means of describing the way in which the reader is present in the text. This presence is at a point where memory and expectation converge, and the resultant dialectic movement brings about a continual modification of memory and an increasing complexity of expectation. These processes depend on the reciprocal spotlighting of the perspectives, which provide interrelated backgrounds for one another. The interaction between these backgrounds provokes the reader into a synthesizing activity....These syntheses, then, are primarily groupings that bring the interrelated perspectives together in an equivalence that has the character of configurative meaning. Here we have one of the basic elements of the reading process: the wandering viewpoint divides the text up into interacting structures, and these give rise to a grouping activity [*gestalt* formation] that is fundamental to the grasping of a text.” (Iser 1978: 118-9)

<sup>107</sup> Iser 1978: 135.

<sup>108</sup> Iser 1978: 185.

<sup>109</sup> Iser summarizes the function of gaps thus (1978: 202): “As a suspension of connectability between perspective segments, it marks the need for an equivalence, thus transforming the segments into reciprocal projections, which, in turn, organize the reader’s wandering viewpoint as a referential field. The tension which occurs within the field between heterogeneous perspective segments is resolved by the theme-and-horizon structure, which makes the viewpoint focus on one segment as the theme, to be grasped from the thematically vacant position now occupied by the reader as his standpoint.” (202)

and so to realize unspoken meaning<sup>110</sup> that is present in the text without being verbally manifested.<sup>111</sup>

One criticism of Iser's scheme is that he does not demonstrate how exactly a text "prestructures" particular responses in the reader.<sup>112</sup> Iser's concept of suggestive gaps between "schematized views" is useful, but the way indeterminacy prompts reader participation can, in fact, be understood to be in constant operation at every level, even down to the lexical, as Eco's semiotic study *The Role of the Reader* demonstrates. As Eco discusses, the reader makes inferences not only when a juxtaposition of viewpoints presents a gap, but as an inherent part of interpreting the propositional content of the signs of the text (making "semantic disclosures"). To actualize the narrative, the reader supplies notions from his "encyclopedia," which derives from both real-life and literary

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<sup>110</sup> I follow Heath (2002) who argues that what constitutes "meaning" depends on what questions we are asking, which depend upon the nature of our interest in the text. "[T]he selection of a criterion of meaning (what will *count* as a meaning within a particular interpretive project), and our selection of descriptive or evaluative statements about a text as interpreted in accordance with that criterion, are both determined by reference to the *significance* they bear in relation to some interest which an interpreter is taking in that text." (Heath 2002: 54) This is not to be confused with Hirsh's (1976) distinction of meaning (the authorial intention) and significance (the meaning deduced by the reader), which Iser seems to modify when he says (1978: 151): "Meaning is the referential totality which is implied by the aspects contained in the text and which must be assembled in the course of reading. Significance is the reader's absorption of the meaning into his own existence."

<sup>111</sup> Iser's theory rests on the distinction between what is "given" in a text and what must be "supplied." Stanley Fish (1989: 77) objects to this distinction on the grounds that different readers will disagree on what is "given," which means that it is *not* given: "for if the "textual signs" do not announce their shape but appear in a variety of shapes according to the differing expectations and assumptions of different readers, and if gaps are not built into the text, but appear (or do not appear) as a consequence of particular interpretive strategies, then there is no distinction between what the text gives and what the reader supplies; he supplies *everything*; the stars in a literary text are not fixed; they are just as variable as the lines that join them."

<sup>112</sup> Iser relies on the premise that there are "givens" in a text, which are like fixed points in a constellation, with reader inference drawing the lines between them. Stanley Fish objects to this distinction on the grounds that different readers will disagree on what is "given," which means that it is *not* given (1989: 77): "for if the "textual signs" do not announce their shape but appear in a variety of shapes according to the differing expectations and assumptions of different readers, and if gaps are not built into the text, but appear (or do not appear) as a consequence of particular interpretive strategies, then there is no distinction between what the text gives and what the reader supplies; he supplies *everything*; the stars in a literary text are not fixed; they are just as variable as the lines that join them."

experience.<sup>113</sup> So, in the example Eco uses from the short story *Un Drame Bien Parisien*, when in the midst of a quarrel the husband advances upon his wife “with his hand raised” the reader supplies the notion “to strike,” “even though the linear text manifestation shows neither the fact nor the intention,” and in a different context a raised hand could mean something entirely different.<sup>114</sup> The reader is able to supply the correct inference by resorting to the real-life (“common”) frame of “violent altercation,” as well as the intertextual frame of “comic quarrel between husband and wife.” (Eco uses the term “intertextual” in a broad sense, as literary *topoi*. See below.)

When a reader fills gaps, the inferences she generates not only produce the discursive structure of the *plot* (the way the story is told, the “micronarrative” level), but also forecast the *fabula* (the story itself, the “macronarrative” course of events). Eco calls these forecasts “inferential walks.” They are anticipations of how the story will play out, based on similar narrative situations. The reader is “encouraged to activate [a] hypothesis by a lot of already recorded narrative situations (intertextual frames). To identify these frames the reader has to ‘walk,’ so to speak, outside the text in order to gather intertextual support (a quest for analogous *topoi*, themes, or motives.”<sup>115</sup> This is a useful concept for understanding the way the *Aeneid* invites reader participation, but it requires alteration of Eco’s loose, general notion of intertextuality as it pertains to the prose narratives he studies, for Vergil’s poetry is a dense intertextual tour de force, unique in literature in

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<sup>113</sup> Eco 1979: 21: “Common frames come to the reader from his storage of encyclopedic knowledge and are mainly rules for practical life (Charniak, 1975). Intertextual frames, on the contrary, are already literary ‘topoi,’ narrative schemes (see Riffaterre, 1973: 1976).”

<sup>114</sup> Eco 1979: 21.

<sup>115</sup> Eco 1979: 32. “Inferential walks are supported by the repertory of similar events recorded by the intertextual encyclopedia.” (*ibid.*, 216)

“the magnitude and quality of its allusiveness.”<sup>116</sup> It is not only common literary *topoi* that form the “intertextual encyclopedia” that facilitates the reader’s grasping of the situations that unfold in the *Aeneid*, but the whole tradition of Greek and Latin literature that forms its models—particularly its epic predecessors (Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Apollonius’ *Argonautica*, and Naevius’ *Bellum Punicum*). Therefore, when I consider the “inferential walks” prompted by the intertextual engagements of the *Aeneid*, I will be using the term in the specialized way that is commonly applied to analysis of Latin literature.<sup>117</sup> I will be particularly interested in the over-arching, two-tiered system of allusion that runs through the Dido and Aeneas episode, by which Aeneas’ arrival in Carthage is likened to Odysseus’ arrival on Circe’s island and Jason’s reception by Hypsipyle.

Moreover, I would like to apply the concept of “inferential walks” not only in reference to the reader’s hypotheses about what *will* happen, but also her hypotheses about what *is* happening, and why, and how to feel about it, for the nature of the immediate situation is often revealed more obliquely than in Eco’s prose narrative models. As Quinn remarks, Vergil’s elliptical technique creates the illusion “of a story with an existence of its own, independent of Virgil’s telling of it,” into which the reader gets only partial views.<sup>118</sup> I am particularly interested in how Vergil’s text relies on the reader’s “inferential walks” to extrapolate his characters’ feelings and beliefs—their

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<sup>116</sup> As Farrell (1991: 8) puts it.

<sup>117</sup> There has been, of course, a great deal of valuable discussion within the field about how to conceive of the way that intertextuality functions in Latin literature. For a survey of scholarship on this topic, see Farrell 1991: 11-25.

<sup>118</sup> Quinn 1963: 202.



“doxastic constructs.”<sup>119</sup> The reader has to infer a great deal about characters’ views and feelings in the *Aeneid*, and intertextual relationships with other texts show, sometimes broadly and sometimes pointedly, how to shade in the suggestive contours of Vergil’s own narrative. The interest in allusion in the present study,<sup>120</sup> then, is particularly in how it helps the linear reader build a picture, fill in gaps in Vergil’s elliptical and often enigmatic presentation of characters’ inner workings and viewpoints.<sup>121</sup> A sustained pattern of indirectly expressed suggestions in the poem offer the reader evocative glimpses of Aeneas’ and Dido’s understandings of their own situations that prompt the reader to take “inferential walks” through the caves of emotion carved out behind his character.<sup>122</sup>

When considering characters’ “doxastic constructs” and how the reader infers them, the concept of a fictional work as a “possible world” is helpful. Ronen observes:<sup>123</sup>

It is assumed in literary studies that most literary works, especially narrative types, construct fictional worlds. Yet, despite the longevity and acceptance of this assumption by literary theory and criticism, the concept of fictionality has almost been entirely neglected until recent years. This neglect is mainly due to a long tradition of massively focusing on the mimetic function of literary worlds: literary criticism has been traditionally preoccupied with the representational and mimetic relations between the worlds of literature and an actual reality, paying no heed to

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<sup>119</sup> Eco (1979: 220) calls the propositional attitudes of the characters within a story “doxastic constructs.” (For example, the belief that the wolf is trustworthy is a doxastic construct of Little Red Riding Hood.)

<sup>120</sup> Allusion in Latin poetry is often discussed in terms of the poet’s assertion of his place in reference to his literary predecessors (see especially Thomas 1986, Hinds 1998)

<sup>121</sup> See my discussion of how, for example, the allusion to *Il.* 21.273-9 in Aeneas’ speech in the storm at sea (1.92-101) indirectly exposes his angry feelings of betrayal by the gods, particularly his mother, while the allusion to *G.* 3.250-1 in the Diana simile (1.498-503) suggests that he experiences an intensely erotic reaction to his first view of the queen. The reader who has inferred the true nature of Aeneas’ hidden emotions from these allusions is then better able to notice the nuance in Aeneas’ response to Dido’s offer of a home in Carthage, and supply a motivation for it.

<sup>122</sup> To mix Eco’s metaphor with that of Virginia Woolf, who writes in her diary (August 30, 1923), “I dig out beautiful caves behind my characters: I think that gives exactly what I want; humanity, humour, depth.” As Quinn (1963: 203) has observed, “Virgil’s narrative itself makes us feel continually that his story neither begins nor ends with what he tells us. We seem all the time to catch hints of things left out.”

<sup>123</sup> Ronen 1994: 18.

the logical and semantic implications of the fact that literary worlds are fictional, imaginative constructions.

Appreciating the imaginary world of poem as one that is constructed rather than represented opens up further avenues for analyzing the meaning-building activity of the reader,<sup>124</sup> and this concept “is indispensable when we wish to speak of inferential walks.”<sup>125</sup> If the *fabula* (story) itself, as Eco suggests, is taken as a possible world encompassing a succession of textual states (the course of events), then what a character believes, wishes, projects, etc., within it constitutes a “possible subworld.”<sup>126</sup> Moreover, the eliciting of the reader’s expectations about future events in the story produces another possible subworld. That is, both characters’ epistemic and doxastic constructs and the reader’s own expectations project possible states onto the actual (fictional) world of the story that may or may not play out in the unfolding of the *fabula*.<sup>127</sup> The plot of the

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<sup>124</sup> Although he does not refer to possible worlds *per se*, Iser likewise stresses (1978: 141) that a literary situation has no corresponding real-world “facts: “we have a sequence of schemata, built up by the repertoire and the strategies, which have the function of stimulating the reader himself into establishing the ‘facts’.” These facts are not “given”—they must be “discovered, or to be more precise, produced” by synthesizing “aspects of a hidden, nonverbalized ‘truth’” in order to “ideate a totality.”

<sup>125</sup> Eco 1979: 217. It also assists in analysis of the issues with the actual world that the fictive world invites the reader to reflect upon. For, as Edmunds states (2001: 107), “a possible world is a counterfactual state of this world, and any poem, as a possible world, will stand in an implicitly or explicitly critical relation to this world.” (On “counterfactuality,” one may contrast Ronen’s observation (1994: 61, 87, 89) of the distinction between possible worlds and fictional worlds.)

<sup>126</sup> Eco 1979: 235. Cf. (*ibid.*, 246): “[The text] is a machine for producing possible worlds (of the *fabula*, of the characters within the *fabula*, and of the readers outside the *fabula*).”

<sup>127</sup> Ronen (1994: 169) summarizes Eco’s view succinctly: “Within narrative semantics Eco 1979 describes plot-structure as a process of activating some semantic possibilities, while narcotizing others. The *fabula* is eventually structured as a process of choosing among alternative courses or possibilities of actualization and the narrative structure is the outcome of this process. The options opened by the text, the fact that the narrative is a structure of diverging alternatives, are reflected in the reader’s active participation which includes inferences, forward anticipations and gap filling.”

Carthage episode turns upon the impossibility of the protagonists' possible subworlds within a *fabula* that the reader already knows will disprove them.<sup>128</sup>

The reader is highly involved in generating the characters' possible subworlds, for the oblique, often intertextual manner in which their inner workings are suggested leaves the likelihood of their actualization entirely dependent upon reader participation. This creates a tug on the reader in two directions, for if she actualizes the narrative in the way that I will advance in this study, she produces a plot that is desperately trying to escape the *fabula*. Even as by inference the reader builds up the possible subworld of what the human characters imagine to be true, she must situate it within the "real" fictional world in which these imaginings are false and will be remorselessly crushed.<sup>129</sup> The reader must inferentially generate the characters' false understandings, but cannot join the characters in believing the expectations she imputes to them, for the truth of the (fictional) situation has been clear to the story's external audience from the start.<sup>130</sup> The ultimate course of *fabula* is never in doubt. Instead, the reader's forecasts must be full of dramatic irony all along, anticipating the inevitable clash. Appreciating the nature of the

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<sup>128</sup> The gods play an important role in the nature of this situation, and should not be unwritten in favor of a naturalistic interpretation. They are part of the possible world that is given as the "actual world" of the story. As Feeney (1991: 172) emphasizes, "[t]he poem is not dealing with given facts which need a poetic colour, it is not located in a reality upon which has been super-imposed a divine gloss for the reader to pare away. In the poem's terms, as Johnson (1976: 146) has clearly demonstrated, Allecto and Juno are characters as much as Aeneas and Turnus."

<sup>129</sup> The contrast between the public greatness and private suffering in the *Aeneid* and the political comment it makes on the cost of empire has been well recognized in scholarship on the poem—it is the fundamental notion behind "pessimistic" criticism. What the concepts described here add to that discussion is a consideration of how the reader's participation is elicited in constructing such issues and relating them to one another.

<sup>130</sup> So, for example, I argue that in Aeneas' first speech (1.94-101), intertextual recollections of Achilles' speech when he thought he was about to drown in the Scamander (*Il.* 21.273-9) suggest that Aeneas feels his impending death has given the lie to the prophecies promising his fate. This inference is foundational in the production of the possible subworld of his perceptual landscape as it is suggested throughout Book 1. Understanding what he thinks at this juncture is key to understanding how he acts later.

possible subworld of the characters' desires and intentions brings drama to unfolding of the *fabula* that will prove their feelings to be irrelevant.<sup>131</sup>

Targeted, systematic tapping of the reader's intertextual encyclopedia is one way that the text of the *Aeneid* structures inferences that actualize indirect suggestions.

Another important structure of suggestion deployed by the poem is the epic simile.<sup>132</sup>

Even in Homer, epic similes have long been recognized as not merely "ornamental" but "dynamic,"<sup>133</sup> and this is even truer in Vergil, where they do not simply illuminate the single feature described but also share multiple (inferable) correspondences with their surrounding context<sup>134</sup> and participate in the "motif structure" of an episode.<sup>135</sup> They can also, as Pöschl recognized, indirectly reflect characters' emotions: "In Homer's similes, the action is suspended while the poet pauses to elaborate a point in the story. In Vergil's similes the inner action continues in the emotions of the persons involved. To a much greater degree than Homer's, Vergil's similes are transparent signs for inner events."<sup>136</sup>

The simile in which Latona rejoices at the beauty of Diana leading her chorus of Nymphs is such an example, for the analogous viewer is Aeneas.<sup>137</sup> The correspondences between simile and context sometimes go beyond what can be deduced from the explicit narrative,

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<sup>131</sup> Aeneas' feelings are conveyed so obliquely that their irrelevance to the grand scheme is almost thematized by their textual invisibility.

<sup>132</sup> On the function and interconnectedness of the similes in the poem, see Hornsby 1970. On the multiple correspondences that similes have to elements in their context, see West 1969. On narrative in the *Georgics* reincorporated into similes in the *Aeneid*, see Briggs 1980.

<sup>133</sup> Hornsby 1970: 6, who observes: "The simile in Homer... functions in a variety of ways, most of which, as we shall see, Vergil too employs. It can relieve the monotony of battle scenes, mark pauses or changes in the action, and end scenes."

<sup>134</sup> See West 1969.

<sup>135</sup> Otis [1964] 1995: 71.

<sup>136</sup> Pöschl [1950] 1962: 65.

<sup>137</sup> This was observed by Pöschl. In Chapter 1, I will take the erotic implications further, through an allusion to the *Georgics* within the simile.

and thereby prompt what Eco would call the writing of “ghost chapters,” the imaginative production background events that explain them.<sup>138</sup>

In addition to intertextual prompting and the suggestive force of epic similes, there is a third way that the text structures inferences about the characters’ thoughts (and the actions motivated by them), and that is through play between the expected and the unexpected. When, for example, Dido offers the Trojans her kingdom, it is unexpected, and this prompts the reader who wishes to understand her motivation to extrapolate an explanation from the “horizon” available in the previous exposition of her character. These sorts of breaks in “good continuation”—incongruous juxtapositions, inconsistencies, surprises, characters’ failure to make the responses dictated by the intersubjective norms of communication—play an important role in cueing a reader in to something that merits the extrapolation of an explanation.

These are the primary indirect means of suggestion that I will use in the exploration of the way the reader is invited to construct the possible subworlds of the characters and use them to supply motivations for otherwise insufficiently explained behavior. The final consideration I would like to discuss is an important one, and it has determined the entire approach and organization of this study. All of the principles laid out above for how readers are enabled to construct configurations of meaning are based on the notion that the reader is moving forward linearly through the text. The implications of each view depend upon the “horizon” or context furnished by all the

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<sup>138</sup> Eco 1979: 214: “Frequently, given a series of causally and linearly connected events *a.....e*, a text tells the reader about the event *a* and, after a while, about the event *e*, taking for granted that the reader has already anticipated the dependent events *b,c,d* (of which *e* is the consequence, according to many intertextual frames).” In Chapter 4, I will argue that simile comparing Aeneas to a *nescius pastor* who has shot a deer (4.68-73), is one such example.

previous views that the reader has built up; none of them (except the first) suggests what I will claim it suggests if considered in isolation or out of sequence.

Since I am interested in the hermeneutic process by which a reader builds meaning within the process of reading, the analysis that follows will not only be linear, but it will also try, as much as possible, to recreate a “first” reading. By this I do not mean a literal (impossible to recover) first reading, but rather with this designation I try to distinguish between the retrospective stance of an interpreter who has full knowledge of the completed whole and the process of discovery that we can recreate when we read in a linear fashion, subtracting as much as possible the knowledge that can only be derived from subsequent points in the text.<sup>139</sup> It is not the goal of this idealized first reading to recapture a more “pure” experience of the text, but rather it is a hermeneutic tool meant to allow us to get at the act of building meaning as a process that evolves in the experience of reading.

Scholarly interpretations of the *Aeneid*, both ancient and modern, often presuppose knowledge and interests that cannot exist at the time of a first reading—that is, they involve an understanding of the whole that is only available to a second reader.<sup>140</sup> As Edmunds observes, “[f]ormalist, structuralist, and now deconstructive approaches all depend, implicitly or explicitly, on an Archimedean stance of the reader, who somehow knows what he has to know about a poem before he begins to read it and can therefore

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<sup>139</sup> This is not, then, the aesthetic “first reading” and interpretive “second reading” of Jauss’ (1982) schema, although I am influenced by his ideas. For full discussion, see the Introduction.

<sup>140</sup> As discussed above, most educated Roman adults would have already formed ideas in school about what the *Aeneid* was “about,” and discussions of the poem, both in social settings and scholarly writings, therefore consist of what we may call “second readings.”

supposedly read backward as well as forward.”<sup>141</sup> The second reader can, for example, identify the first points in a pattern as precisely that; the first reader cannot. The picture that the first reader thinks will emerge from what appears to be a pattern must be provisional, and it may turn out quite differently. As Michael Riffaterre observes, “the text is the object of a progressive discovery, a dynamic and constantly changing perception.”<sup>142</sup> We run the risk as reflective second readers of retrospectively flattening out the process by which we found the conclusion. This is why consideration of the linear nature of the first reading is so important to the method of my study. The reader’s understanding of the situation between Dido and Aeneas in Book 1 is key to interpreting the outcome in Book 4, and when we look at the episode from a synchronic perspective, we tend to ignore where the plot tried to pull away from the *fabula*, recasting the entire plot in the mold of its conclusion.<sup>143</sup> As Niall Slater explains:<sup>144</sup>

“Most formalist theories assume meaning is an end product, a two-dimensional grid of signification with no depth in time. Normally we do not say a given work begins to mean x but gradually comes to mean y; we collapse the time dimension and say that while a work may seem to mean x (or have an x surface structure), in the end we discover that it “really” means y. There is an aspect of *damnatio memoriae* to all this; for a coherent, atemporal meaning to emerge, our internal Ministry of Truth must expunge any initial lapses of interpretation. We then rewrite the history of our experience of a text teleologically.... A linear approach shows us the series of provisional responses a reader makes as the reading process transpires.”

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<sup>141</sup> Edmunds 2001: 51.

<sup>142</sup> Riffaterre 1973: 250.

<sup>143</sup> So, readers often summarize the Dido and Aeneas episode along these lines: “Aeneas originally intended his sojourn to be temporary; he became waylaid by the love-affair, but then returned to his original intention.” On a first reading that does not presuppose an original intention to resume his mission, the story, I will argue, runs thus: “Aeneas originally intended to abandon his mission; as a result he was able to become entangled in a love-affair, but the direct intervention of the gods caused him to resume his mission unwillingly.”

<sup>144</sup> Slater 1990: 21-2.

Such a teleological rewriting can have a particularly distorting effect on the Dido and Aeneas episode of the *Aeneid*. The outcome, in which Aeneas eventually leaves Dido and resumes his mission to Italy has in many cases caused a critical tendency to efface, retrospectively, provisional indications from the *beginning of Book 1* (as I will try to demonstrate) and up to the intervention of Mercury that he did not originally intend to do so.<sup>145</sup> This has had the effect of flattening out the path leading to the story's conclusion, resulting in the loss of an important dramatic tension that runs through the whole episode, fueled by the ironic distance between (the reader's construction of the possible subworld of) Aeneas' desire to make Carthage his permanent home from the moment of his arrival and the reader's knowledge that this desire is both untenable and dangerous.

## Summary

This study explores the way the reader is invited to construct Aeneas' and Dido's perspectives on each other and on the unexpectedly advantageous situation in which they each find themselves when the hero washes up in Carthage. I hope to show that they both want Aeneas to stay from the very start, and both believe that he can—until Mercury intervenes in Book 4 and indicates otherwise. To argue this, I will first trace the development of each of their perspectives in Book 1: Chapter 1 will be dedicated to suggestions of Aeneas' viewpoint, and Chapter 2 to that of Dido. I will argue that Aeneas

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<sup>145</sup> Gordon Williams, for example, articulates (1983: 43) the common view that “[t]hroughout the first book the poet, and throughout the next two Aeneas himself, portrayed him as a man driven by a compelling inner sense of purpose, of a destiny... One of the most interesting problems for the poet must have been to show how such a man could be overcome by passion to the extent that he was able to ignore that driving force within.” Despite Williams' many invaluable observations on the poem, in this particular case I take a view diametrically opposed to the one quoted.



presents himself as amenable to settlement in Carthage because he in fact is, and that Dido is presented as a shrewd interpreter who understands Aeneas' situation and feelings, and the boon they presents for her and her people. Chapter 3 will be dedicated to the suggestions of theological skepticism conveyed in Aeneas' narration of the fall of Troy and the prophecies directing his mission to Italy, and Chapter 4 will explore how these previous implications resurface in the unfolding of Book 4. Each chapter will be structured around one key gap by which a subtle but important aspect of the plot is indirectly revealed for the reader to actualize by drawing a meaningful inference that closes the gap.

The first chapter is devoted to the presentation of Aeneas' perspective in Book 1. My discussion starts by establishing a gap in the plot relating to Aeneas' motivation, namely his ambiguously positive response Dido's offer of a permanent home in Carthage (1.595-610) and his tacit acquiescence to the implications of her statement that like him she was brought by *fortuna* to settle in Carthage (her implication, I argue, at 1.629). Having identified this gap, I then attempt to establish the horizon available to the reader trying to making sense of it. To do so, I turn back to the beginning of the poem and work forward through each view of Aeneas, arguing against the common opinion that the hero simply appears "despondent" about the difficulty of his mission, and arguing instead that a consistent program of suggestive strategies, both rhetorical and intertextual, encourage reader to infer that Aeneas believes himself to have been betrayed by the gods (including his unreliable mother, Venus) and has lost faith in the very legitimacy of his prophesied fate. When Aeneas sees Carthage, he marvels enviously, and I argue that the simile

comparing Dido's political activity to Diana leading a chorus of nymphs, which is focalized, as Pöschl recognized, through Aeneas, suggests both his erotic excitement, as I argue with reference to the delight that "overcomes" him (*pertemptat*, 1.502), and his unconscious attempt to accommodate his perception of the scene in front of him to the new, erotically-charged optimism that it inspires in him. The gender dynamic of the scene is troublingly inverted, but Aeneas processes the scene in a way that "fixes" it, that de-politicizes and re-feminizes Dido's anomalously masculine role. This horizon of perspectives provides the reader with a way to fill in the gap of Aeneas' ambiguous response to Dido's offer of a permanent home by constructing a plausible motivation from it—namely, that he does not decline Dido's offer, because he would like to accept it.

In Chapter 2 I explore how the reader is invited to construct Dido's own perceptions and motivations in Book 1. I begin by establishing a gap in the plot that relates to Dido's motivation in welcoming the Trojans, namely why it is that when Mercury has simply made the Carthaginians "friendly" toward the Trojans (1.298ff.), Dido takes the extraordinary step of offering them settlement in her kingdom—the kingdom itself, as she initially phrases it (*urbem quam statuo, vestra est*, "the city I am building, it is yours," 1.573). Contrary to the general opinion that Dido is simply an exceptionally generous person, I argue that when we follow references to her in sequence through Book 1, she appears not only intelligent and brave, as critics have observed, but also deceptive and self-interested, an effect that is brought about through sustained intertextual parallels to the Circe episode in *Odyssey*10 and Hypsipyle's deceptive

welcome of Jason in *Argonautica* 1, as well as through allusions in Venus' narration of Dido's personal history to the literary tradition about her pre-dating Vergil's account (evidenced in Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus), in which she is intricately deceptive in escaping her evil brother, as well as in acquiring supporters and furthering the interests of her exiled followers. Having been allusively reminded that Dido has the quick reflexes of a practiced (though, justified) liar, the reader has material with which to fill the gap opened up by Dido's inordinate generosity, which far exceeds the expectation set by Mercury's intervention: namely, that Dido is trying to exploit the convenient coincidence that a band of homeless Trojan warriors showed up on the doorstep of her fledgling state, which happens to be greatly in need of an army.

Chapter 3 examines Aeneas' inset narration of his wandering in Books 2 and 3. Scholars often wonder how Dido could think that Aeneas could and would stay in Carthage, given his narration of the oracles and prophecies directing him to Italy. As Ralph Hexter (1999: 67) articulates the general consensus, "The words of the text notwithstanding, Dido exercises her freedom, a terrible freedom, to make false inferences: that having been dissatisfied to date, Aeneas might stay with her, rather than move on, defying or ignoring oracular and prophetic pronouncements." I suggest that to a first reader, this "false" inference of Dido's appears in fact a logical way to bridge the gap opened up the conclusion of his narration, where, after a bitter exclamation about the uselessness of prophecy to convey what really matters (3.710-14), he ambiguously implies that in Carthage he has reached the end of his wandering (3.714-15). The reader's horizon for interpreting the significance of this remark includes not only the previous

suggestions of Aeneas' disillusionment in Book 1, as discussed in my first chapter, but also his pessimistic narration throughout Books 2 and 3, which is replete with suggestions of Aeneas' frustration with the ambiguities and unreliability of prophecy and the cruelty of the gods. Failing to distinguish between story and discourse, between the events that are recounted and the way that they are recounted, scholars often take the mere fact that Aeneas tells Dido of the prophecies that he has been following as evidence that he expresses to her his continued commitment to his mission. When, however, one takes into account the rhetoric of Aeneas' presentation of these experiences, treating them as they are narrated, holistically, in context, they point to a very different conclusion. The reader may, therefore, bridge the gap opened by the pessimistic conclusion of Aeneas' narration of the prophecies that have thus far failed to bring him to Italy with the inference that he no longer considers them trustworthy, and may attribute the same conclusion to Dido.

In the fourth and final chapter I look at the gap opened up by Dido's claim in her quarrel with Aeneas as he prepares to obey Mercury and resume his mission, that "now" Apollo's prophecies matter (4.376-78) and consider how the implication that he previously suggested otherwise accords with the readings advanced in my previous chapters, as well the horizon developed within Book 4. I argue that the presentation of events in Book 4 (and its coda in Book 6) corroborates my argument that Dido is depicted as having correctly assessed Aeneas' desire, from the very start, to settle permanently in Carthage, and that his desire to do so leads him to subordinate himself to her purposes. This creates an important element of the episode's drama, for he is deeply attached to the very thing that would destroy his heroism (and the future of Rome), and inciting

questions in the reader about when and how he will extricate himself from this sticky situation are an important part of the way the episode builds interest.

Together, I hope my chapters show the dynamic tension that runs through the whole of *Aeneid* 1—4 when we appreciate Aeneas' untenable desire from the very start to make Carthage his home. The understanding of the plot that I advance here makes the vulnerable blindness of the human viewpoint more acutely felt, and brings out the contrast between the perspectives of the human characters and the uncaring gods who have their own, invisible agendas to advance. The raising of this problem—the nature of the gods' interference in human affairs, and their injustice—within the fictional world of the poem encourages critical theological reflection on the actual world of the poet and his readers.

## Chapter One

### *Quae me cumque vocant terrae:* Constructing Aeneas' Perspective in Book 1

In this study, I will argue that Dido correctly understands Aeneas' desire to settle in Carthage from the moment of his arrival. My argument that Dido is, contrary to the general opinion,<sup>146</sup> presented as a shrewd interpreter of Aeneas' feelings about his mission requires first establishing what his feelings are—that is, how the reader him- or herself is invited to construct them. For, as I discussed in the Introduction, Vergil's techniques of exposition are often indirect and require a high degree of reader participation through inference. This is particularly true when it comes to the “possible subworlds” of the characters' wishes, beliefs and intentions. The nature of these subworlds comes to light primarily through the reader's “gap-filling,” as prompted by the text's indirectly suggestive manner of exposition.<sup>147</sup> I will focus in this chapter on the linearly developed series of invitations to the reader in Book 1 to actualize<sup>148</sup> connotations of Aeneas' sense, given the apparent failure of his *fata* as prophesied, that he has been deceived by inscrutable and unreliable gods. I will argue that as a consequence of this inference, the reader is able to understand Aeneas' response to Dido by constructing for his character an understanding of the world in which a permanent

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<sup>146</sup> See Chapter 2 for discussion of prevailing views of Dido's misunderstanding of what Aeneas tells her.

<sup>147</sup> Suggestions are structured by intertextual recollections, epic similes, and various types of breaks in “good continuation.” See the Introduction for full discussion.

<sup>148</sup> “Actualizing” the unexpressed occurs in the process of “concretization,” that is, the process of ideating the words on the page into the series of (often imagistic) meanings that comprise story as it plays out in the reader's mind. See Ingarden 1973: 332-355 and Iser 1978: 170-9. For full discussion, see the Introduction.

settlement in the highly appealing land where he has found himself seems to be a viable option.<sup>149</sup>

Each chapter of this study is built around one key gap at a particularly revealing or consequential moment in the plot,<sup>150</sup> the resolution of which depends upon the way the reader has inferentially constructed the character's possible subworld. I will start each chapter by identifying and discussing the pivotal moment in question (indicated by the chapter's Latin title), and then will return to the beginning of the book and work linearly through the relevant views leading up to it (a process which also engages the reader in actualizing unexpressed suggestions).<sup>151</sup> I hope to show how the reader's resolution of prior ambiguities during the synthesizing process of reading forms a background or "horizon" that enables her to bridge the chapter's key gap in a way that is consequential for her understanding of the plot. In terms of Aeneas' perspective when he arrives in Carthage and the way it affects the actualization of the plot, the "risky moment" in Book 1 is in Aeneas' response to Dido's invitation to settle in Carthage (1.595-610), which I shall argue is ambiguously positive.

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<sup>149</sup> I take the opposite view of that articulated by Gordon Williams when he says (1983: 43): "Throughout the first book the poet, and throughout the next two Aeneas himself, portrayed him as a man driven by a compelling inner sense of purpose, of a destiny... One of the most interesting problems for the poet must have been to show how such a man could be overcome by passion to the extent that he was able to ignore that driving force within."

<sup>150</sup> The "risk-laden moments" that Barthes (1975: 248) terms the "cardinal functions" of the plot. "In order to classify a function as cardinal, all we need to verify is that the action to which it refers opens (or maintains or closes) an alternative directly affecting the continuation of the story, in other words that it either initiates or resolves an uncertainty... What makes them crucial is not their spectacular quality (the importance, the volume, the unusual nature, or the impact of the enunciated action), but rather the risk involved: the cardinal functions are the risk-laden moments of narrative."

<sup>151</sup> The inherently incomplete nature of literary representation means that there are indeterminacies at every level of the reading process, prompting the reader's constant inferential engagement. For discussion, see the Introduction.

At 1.595, Aeneas emerges from the cloud hidden within which he has heard Dido offer either to help the Trojans sail on to Latium or Sicily, or to let them settle in her city (1.569-74), and he proceeds to make a speech expressing his “extravagant” gratitude:<sup>152</sup>

*‘coram, quem quaeritis, adsum  
Troius Aeneas, Libycis ereptus ab undis.  
o sola infandos Troiae miserata labores,  
quae nos, reliquias Danaum, terraeque marisque  
omnibus exhaustos iam casibus, omnium egenos,  
urbe, domo socias, grates persolvere dignas  
non opis est nostrae, Dido, nec quidquid ubique est  
gentis Dardaniae, magnum quae sparsa per orbem.  
di tibi, si qua pios respectant numina, si quid  
usquam iustitiae est et mens sibi conscia recti,  
praemia digna ferant. quae te tam laeta tulerunt  
saecula? qui tanti talem genuere parentes?  
in freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbrae  
lustrabunt convexa, polus dum sidera pascet,  
semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque  
manebunt, quae me cumque vocant terrae.’*

(Aen. 1.595-610)

“Here I am, the one you seek, Trojan Aeneas, saved from the Libyan waves. O you who alone have pitied the crushing labors of Troy, you who join us—the remnants left by the Greeks, broken down now by every misfortune of land and sea and in complete need—to your city, your home; we can never worthily repay you, Dido, nor can whatever is left of the Dardanian race, which is scattered through the great world. May the gods (if there is any divine regard for goodness, if there is any justice anywhere) and your own awareness of acting rightly, bring you worthy rewards. What happy age bore you? What noble parents begot one such as you? As long as rivers flow into the sea, as long as shadows pass over the mountains, as long as the sky gives pasture to the stars, your honor and name and praise will always remain, whatever lands call me.”<sup>153</sup>

Since scholars often treat the speech as rendering thanks for Dido’s kindness as a generic whole, I would like to point out that amidst his effusive expressions of gratitude, Aeneas

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<sup>152</sup> Heinze [1915] 1993: 98.

<sup>153</sup> I use R.A.B. Mynors’ Oxford text. All Latin translations are my own, unless otherwise noted. Greek translations are as indicated.



only thanks Dido for her offer of a home, without any reference to his appreciation of or interest in her offer of assistance in sailing on. Ilioneus had told Dido that the Trojans intended to settle either in Italy, or, if their leader were dead, in the *sedes paratas* of king Acestes in Sicily (1.553-8), and Dido had promised help in doing either (1.569-71) before going on to offer a third option, settlement in her kingdom (1.572-4). Aeneas makes no reference at all to Dido's statement that if they wished to continue their journey, she would help them with *auxilium* and *opes*. Instead, he frames the elaborate and emotional statement that he "cannot adequately thank" Dido (*grates persolvere dignas/ non opis est nostrae*, 1.600-1) solely with reference to the fact that she "joins [the Trojans] to her city and her household" (*quae nos.../urbe, domo socias*, 1.598-600).<sup>154</sup> The "extraordinary warmth"<sup>155</sup> of Aeneas' response to Dido's offer of settlement in Carthage, combined with his failure to express interest in her offer of assistance reaching Italy, produces an ambiguously positive reply and so opens a gap about his intention.

One might argue that, although Aeneas makes no explicit indication that he is unable or unwilling to accept the offer for which he has rendered such abundant thanks, he implies a rejection of it by concluding his speech with the declaration that Dido's fame will endure, "whatever lands call me" (*quae me cumque vocant terrae*, 1.610). Eve Adler articulates the general view that "Aeneas, with great tact, concludes his grateful speech

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<sup>154</sup> On the word *sociare*, a verb which refers to joining by dynastic marriage in all other instances of its use in this poem (4.16, 7.96, 12.27-8, 9.593-4, Monti 1980: 31), see discussion below. I point to other indications that Aeneas perceives and welcomes the potentially erotic implications of Dido's offer.

<sup>155</sup> Heinze ([1915]1993: 234-5), who takes Aeneas' reply to express a more generic gratitude, uses the "extraordinary warmth" of Aeneas' thanks as an example of how Vergil artfully compresses all the emotions motivating a speech into the speech itself, rather than using exposition by the narrator. His point is germane to my argument, although I suggest a different way of understanding the emotions behind it.

by nevertheless declining Dido’s most noble offer of Carthaginian citizenship.”<sup>156</sup> It must be observed, however, the indefinite *quaecumque* (“whatever”) and the generalizing plural *terrae* (“lands”) cast the idea of Aeneas going elsewhere as a hypothetical possibility (there has, as yet, been no mention of a fated homeland), and this produces a very different effect than it would to say something like “although the land of Italy calls me.” The definiteness of such a response would not diminish its “tact,” and it is in fact how Odysseus, *mutatis mutandis*, answers Alcinous’ offer of a home (and royal marriage) in Scheria, or assistance in sailing home:<sup>157</sup>

Zeu= pa/ter, ailq’ o3sa ei|pe teleuth/seien a3panta  
 0Alki/noov! tou= me/n ken e0pi\ ze/dwron alrouran  
 alsbeston kle/ov eilh, e0gw\ de/ ke patri/d’ i9koi/mhn.  
 (Od. 7.331-333)

“Father Zeus, may Alkinoös accomplish everything  
 of which he spoke, and so may he have imperishable glory  
 upon the grain-giving earth; and may I come home to my country.’  
 (Lattimore trans.)

In Aeneas’ speech, Vergil approximates the *me/n*-clause of Odysseus’ prayer (*alsbeston kle/ov eilh*, “may his fame be endless”) with Aeneas’ declaration “your honor and name and praise shall remain forever.” However, Vergil renders the *de/-*clause, in which Odysseus tactfully but explicitly expresses his choice to leave

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<sup>156</sup> Adler 2003: 34. Citing 1.610 as evidence, Horsfall suggests (1995:125) that Aeneas “does not disguise from the queen that he intends to leave Tunisia.” Gibson (1999: 191) reiterates the notion of tact, but is sensitive to the high degree of ambiguity: “He makes no direct reply to Dido’s offer of a place for them in her kingdom. He only describes her offer (1.598-600), and adds a tactfully oblique hint that circumstances will find him moving on from Carthage (1.610 *quae me cumque vocant terrae*). This is neither clear acceptance nor firm rejection of her offer.”

<sup>157</sup> Odysseus also made this clear in his initial speech to Arete, which in terms of structure (though not content) is parallel to Aeneas’ speech to Dido here: *au0ta\r e0moi\ pomph\n o0tru/nete patri/d’ i9ke/sqai qa=sson*, (“But for me, urge that conveyance be given quickly to my country,” *Od.* 7.151; Lattimore trans.).

Scheria (e0gw\ de/ ke patri/d' i9koi/mhn, “may I reach my homeland”), with Aeneas’ equivocating phrase “whatever lands call me.” An even closer parallel is present in Apollonius’ *Argonautica*,<sup>158</sup> when Jason is offered settlement and kingdom by Hypsipyle. Like Odysseus, he, too, tactfully declines in a perfectly explicit way:

9Uyipu/lh, ma/la ken qumhde/oja0ntia/saimen  
 xrhsmosu/nhj, h4n almmi se/qen xate/ousin o0pa/zeij:  
 ei]mi d' u9po/tropoj au]tij a0na\ pto/lin, eujt' a2n  
 e3kasta  
 e0cei/pw kata\ ko/smon. a0naktori/h de\ mele/sqw  
 soi/ g' au0th=| kai\ nh=soj: e0gw/ ge me\n ou0k  
 a0qeri/zwn  
 xa/zomai, a0lla/ me lugroi\ e0pispexousin aleqloi.  
 (Arg. 1.836-41)

“Hypsipyle, we shall most gladly accept the heart-cheering assistance that you offer us who are in need of your help, and I shall return again to the city after I report everything in due order. But let sovereignty and the island remain in your own care; yet for my part, I do not refuse out of disdain, but because grievous trials hasten me on.”

(Race trans.)

Unlike Aeneas, both Odysseus and Jason take care to make it clear upfront that they must journey on and therefore cannot accept the monarch’s generous offer of a permanent home and royal marriage. The reader’s intertextual encyclopedia supplies contrasts that highlights the anomalousness of Aeneas’ failure to do so.

Certainly, there is a suggestion in the phrase *quae me cumque vocant terrae* that Aeneas *could* depart—Dido knows they were on their way to Latium—but it is not at all clear from this phrase that he still intends to go there, and certainly not that he *must*.

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<sup>158</sup> Sustained references to the *Argonautica* create a second-tier program of allusion that runs alongside the “contaminated” Scheria-Aeaea episodes of the *Odyssey*, which is the primary intertextual model for Aeneas’ arrival in Carthage. See Nelis 2001. I will discuss this pattern in more detail in Chapter 2.

When scholars read “whatever lands call me” as polite code for “but I must continue my journey,”<sup>159</sup> they fill the gap opened by the ambiguity of this phrase by retrojecting a later Aeneas (the Aeneas of Book 4, when he claims he must go to Italy) back onto the Aeneas here.<sup>160</sup> At this point in the story, moreover, Dido has not been informed of the divinely mandated nature of the Trojans’ journey to Latium, so it would make little sense for Aeneas to drop a polite hint that he knew she could not pick up. Nor does the linear reader who has been sensitive to the suggestions of Aeneas’ disillusionment have any reason to understand Aeneas’ statement as a suggestion of refusal, as I will argue in the course of this chapter.

Reading forward from the beginning of the episode, rather than back from its conclusion, presents a different and I think more psychologically complex explanation for Aeneas’ ambiguously positive response to Dido’s offer. Having established this as the key gap toward which my analysis will be working, I would now like to turn back to the beginning of the poem to follow the development of the reader’s “horizon,” the series of previous views in front of which this key scene takes place, which I believe presents the consistency-building reader with a motive for Aeneas’ failure to decline Dido’s offer of a

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<sup>159</sup> Adler (2003: 34) goes on to paraphrase: “Aeneas is bound to take the Trojans on to another land. He will carry the praises of Dido’s generosity to the land on account of which he cannot accept that generosity; the reward of human praise that Dido has given to the Trojans in her temple murals (*sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi*, 461) will be reciprocated in the reward, admittedly insufficient, of praise that Aeneas will bring to Dido’s name.” This summary supplies notions that Aeneas pointedly avoids expressing. Like Adler, Henry (1873: 791 *ad loc.*) paraphrases the statement in a way that goes far beyond what Dido could possibly understand his implication to be: “The meaning is: ‘your glory will be permanent, will last as long as the world itself, no matter what may become of me,’ *i.e.* ‘though I cannot accept your noble and generous offer, though I am obliged by the fates to go in search of distant lands, your offer is not the less generous on that account, and your praises will be celebrated forever.’”

<sup>160</sup> This is a good example of how a second reading rewrites the first. Aeneas will ultimately decide to sail on; this does not mean that he intended to do so all along. When we collapse the time dimension and unwrite Aeneas’ intention to give up his mission, we lose the suspense that runs through the first four books.

permanent home in Carthage. I will argue that a series of indeterminacies in Book 1 prompt the reader to actualize the indirectly expressed suggestions that in the “possible subworld” of the shipwrecked Aeneas, that is, in his understanding of the world, he has been misled by the gods about his fate. The reader can use this psychological horizon to shade in the contours of Aeneas motivation in making an ambiguous reply to Dido’s offer of a home in Carthage, instead of type of polite but explicit refusals familiar in his literary predecessors. In fact, the reader needs to be fully alive to the consequentiality of Aeneas’ disillusioned beliefs even to appreciate that his reply to her *is* ambiguous, which is perhaps why this has passed below the radar.

Examination of the “themes”<sup>161</sup> or perspective units in which we see Aeneas in Book 1, which together form the “horizon” or backdrop against which the reader will view the initial interactions between Aeneas and Dido will show that Aeneas appears to be in a crisis of faith in the legitimacy of his *fata* when he washes up in Africa, and finds the flourishing city and its beautiful, sympathetic leader enticing. From this a reader is encouraged to shade in the contours of Aeneas motivation in acquiescing to the implications of Dido’s overtures<sup>162</sup> with the conjecture that the homeless hero who believes he has been rejected by the gods does not wish to close the door too hastily on her appealing offer. This is a consequential, “cardinal” moment in the narrative, for in

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<sup>161</sup> The system of interwoven perspectives that makes up the work and that the reader’s “wandering viewpoint” moves through in the process of reading are described by Iser in terms of “theme and horizon,” which function like foreground and background. The “theme” is the view or perspective segment that a reader “is involved with at any one particular moment,” and “horizon,” is the background of “the other perspective segments in which [the reader] has previously been situated.” Iser 1978: 97.

<sup>162</sup> Borrowing Reed’s phrasing (2007: 95): “For a moment in Book 1 it seems quite possible that the ancestors of the Romans will become Carthaginian instead. The viewpoint of the hopeful and unknowing Aeneas, through which we receive these overtures, ominously does not oppose their implications.” Reed is one of the few critics who recognizes that this is the case already in Book 1.

appearing amenable Dido's offer, Aeneas causes the plot to take the particular course that it does. It is the first step onto the tragic path the plot will take in Book 4. The potential for a plot in which Aeneas might, like Odysseus and particularly Jason, sail off with the good will of his host/lover is closed off in consequence of this action.

The first "theme" of the poem, the view of the proem, is of Aeneas as a man who is simultaneously *pious* and persecuted. How this can be so—how a man *insignem pietate* can be put through so many *labores* (1.10)—is the question the poet asks the Muse, and it is thus set up as the central tension of the poem.<sup>163</sup> It is immediately established that this contradiction is possible because gods are capable of capricious and petty vindictiveness,<sup>164</sup> and even more importantly, they are partisans of different human populations.<sup>165</sup> Humans have enemies among the gods, whether they know it or not. The rewards due to *pietas* cannot, therefore, be guaranteed; hostile divinities may always interfere.<sup>166</sup> If we look at Aeneas' *pietas* in the span of history, which the proem does, we see that it (though not *he*) will eventually be rewarded: the Roman race will be founded

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<sup>163</sup> For one of many articulations of this, cf. R.D. Williams 1967: 29: "The problem is posed by Virgil himself in his invocation—*tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*—and is explored throughout the poem: what is the reason, the justification, for the suffering of individuals?"

<sup>164</sup> The answer to the narrator's rhetorical question, *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* (1.11) will very quickly be shown to be "yes," as Juno ruminates on her rage. This, however, raises the more difficult question of how the gods of the story well relate to the gods of the real world—how do we explain *their* apparent injustice and irrationality?

<sup>165</sup> In addition to her personal grievances, Juno hates the Trojans because the Romans will overthrow her beloved Carthaginians (1.12-23).

<sup>166</sup> I follow Lyne (1987) in understanding the poem's religious picture primarily in terms of the chaotic, anthropomorphic polytheism of Homer (as opposed to an expression of a more unitarian Stoic providence), which, as Lyne stresses (1987: 65), is not an implausible religious view, but "on the contrary it is plausible, though far from comforting. To many people (especially in the ancient world) it may well seem that there are supernatural powers, powers beyond their control, affecting their lives; and it may well seem that there is no rhyme or reason to such powers. For example, storms assail this person and not that; love, madness, plague attack and incapacitate us, indiscriminately, paying no apparent heed to justice or the lack of it. Why?...I think a natural, ready, and economic explanation is to assume that there is a plurality of capricious or partial gods. It is certainly a more ready explanation than to suppose that all such phenomena are caused by one god, and a benevolent one at that."

thanks to his efforts.<sup>167</sup> What is unstated in the proem,<sup>168</sup> but latent in this tension between present pain and distant future rewards, is the question of how a *pius* person experiencing this contradiction feels about his apparent abandonment by the gods to whom he has been obedient.<sup>169</sup> I will argue that Aeneas' own perception that he, although *pius*, he has been betrayed by the inscrutably capricious gods directly and negatively affects his ability to trust that the *fata* prophesied to him are indeed legitimate and trustworthy.

Our first view of the hero in the flesh, as it were, casts a spotlight back on this empty place on the stage of the proem—the feelings of the man of destiny. As Quinn observes, “The opening line of the poem spoke merely of ‘a man’ (*virum*), defined only through his *labores*; the second reference to him was equally underplayed (10: *insignem pietate virum*); now we have the hero at last, named for the first time—and he is almost in tears.”<sup>170</sup> Aeneas enters the reader's view in the midst of a violent storm, and utters a

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<sup>167</sup> Though again, he himself will not reap the blessings he might hope. We know from the start that he will die three years after the action of the poem ends (1.265-6), and that posterity, not Aeneas himself, will reap the reward of his *pietas*.

<sup>168</sup> The proem proper (1.1-33) is relatively neutral, pointing out both the individual suffering and the reward reaped by the community, without editorial comment clarifying how specifically the reader is to feel about the price paid by the character. Horsfall (1995: 101) believes that Vergil's rhetoric is “explicit” and “exceptionally generous” in indicating an optimistic view on this topic, but it must be noted that he elides Jupiter's prophecy with what can be “seen and heard in the prooemium.” Though I do not advance a specifically political reading here (or elsewhere in this study), my reading is “pessimistic” in that I believe, whatever Vergil's feelings about the Augustan principate in particular may have been (and I by no means categorically deny that have been hopeful), the poem as a whole presents a dark view of man's place in an inscrutable universe.

<sup>169</sup> Parry pushed the problem of Aeneas as a person versus Aeneas as an agent of an institution into the spotlight in his famous article on the “two voices” of the *Aeneid*, which he concludes thus (1962: 80): “The *Aeneid* enforces the fine paradox that all the wonders of the most powerful institution the world has ever known are not necessarily of greater importance than the emptiness of human suffering.” Though my own conclusions diverge in some fundamental ways from Parry's, appreciation of Aeneas' suffering as an individual is key to my argument.

<sup>170</sup> Quinn 1968: 102.

speech that I would like to suggest expresses a different attitude than has been generally recognized:

*eripiunt subito nubes caelumque diemque  
Teucrorum ex oculis; ponto nox incubat atra;  
intonuere poli et crebris micat ignibus aether  
praesentemque viris intentant omnia mortem.  
extemplo Aeneae solvuntur frigore membra;  
ingemit et duplicis tendens ad sidera palmas  
taliam voce refert: 'o terque quaterque beati,  
quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub moenibus altis  
contigit oppetere! o Danaum fortissime gentis  
Tydide! mene Iliacis occumbere campis  
non potuisse tuaque animam hanc effundere dextra,  
saevus ubi Aeacidae telo iacet Hector, ubi ingens  
Sarpedon, ubi tot Simois correpta sub undis  
scuta virum galeasque et fortia corpora volvit!  
(Aen. 1.88-101)*

Suddenly the clouds snatch away the light of day from the Trojans' eyes. Black night broods over the water; the heavens thunder, and the air glitters with constant lightning, and everything threatens immediate death to the men. Aeneas' limbs fall slack with a sudden chill; he groans and extending his hands toward the sky says the following: "O three and four times blessed, those whose fate it was to fall before the faces of their fathers under the high walls of Troy! O Tydides, most brave of the Danaan race! Why could I not have died on the fields of Ilium and poured out this life by your right hand, where savage Hector lies struck by the spear of Achilles, where giant Sarpedon, where the Simois churns so many men's shields and helmets and brave bodies, snatched up under its waves?"

Although Aeneas' reaction is often referred to as being very "human," critics often fail to appreciate that it reflects not just human emotion (grief and fear), but also the limited *knowledge* of a human.<sup>171</sup> The difference between what we know and Aeneas' own involved and limited knowledge is carved in deep relief in this first view of him. In

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<sup>171</sup> R.D. Williams observes (1972: 167 *ad* 1.81) that "Virgil wishes to show us at the outset Aeneas' human frailty. Though he has fate to support him, he must himself by his own endeavors achieve his mission (this paradox is absolutely central to the significance of the *Aeneid*), and his strength is hardly sufficient for the difficulty of the task." We, the external audience, know for certain that fate is on the side of his mission, because we know, both from the proem and from the fact of history, how it will turn out. Its "support" is not apparent to him, though. Aeneas' failure of commitment is not an issue of strength but of knowledge.



his wish to have died at Troy he is not simply indulging in histrionic observation; he says this because he believes that he is about to die now, in a much less honorable circumstance. Aeneas himself cannot know, as the audience does, that he will survive. Those who are not alive to the consequences of the fact that Aeneas truly believes that he is about to die (*praesentemque viris intentant omnia mortem*, 1.91), miss as a consequence the point Aeneas is making.

Knowing, as the audience does but the character himself does not, that Aeneas' *fata* are not a lie and that he *will* survive to complete his mission, critics have tended to ignore how the situation must appear to Aeneas himself. As a result, critics miss the mark, in my opinion, when they suggest that Aeneas cries out "with a sense of melancholy and nostalgia,"<sup>172</sup> or that he is "bewildered, frightened of the elements,"<sup>173</sup> due to his "human frailty."<sup>174</sup> The speech does not, on my reading, portray his "crumbling endurance of a responsibility that seems never-ending"<sup>175</sup> (on the contrary, it seems about to end all too soon!), nor do I think that Aeneas is petulant about his difficult *fata* in the face of adversity, as Otis suggests when he writes:<sup>176</sup>

It is not really the physical calamity that oppresses him but his total situation as the *survivor* of Troy. The storm is simply the occasion, the 'trigger', not the primary cause of the feeling. Here we see, in short, the hero in despair, seizing the unfavourable circumstances of the moment to reveal his fundamental nostalgia.

Implicit in these statements is the notion that Aeneas knows, or somehow should know, as we do, that he really will survive the storm, that he is only experiencing a setback. It is

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<sup>172</sup> Mackie 1988:20.

<sup>173</sup> Austin 1971: 55 *ad* 1.96.

<sup>174</sup> R.D. Williams 1972: 167 *ad* 1.81.

<sup>175</sup> Quinn 1968: 102.

<sup>176</sup> Otis 1964: 231-2, who goes on to suggest that it is an impiety of Aeneas here to "distrust that *fatum*, that mission, that he really knows to be divinely guaranteed."

an irritation, to some, that he does not, and his character was, in bygone days, maligned as a result.<sup>177</sup> If, however, the reader takes 1.91 seriously (and there is no reason not to), the reader must infer that from Aeneas' own point of view the certain death which he is facing means that his *fata* were a divine deception, and his *pietas* and *labores* have therefore been in vain. As Wlosock observes:<sup>178</sup>

*Das gegenwärtige Geschehen—denkbar nur als Wirken der Götter—steht jedoch in totaler Widerspruch zu ihren Verheißungen. Angesichts des drohenden Todes ist die Erfüllung des Auftrags in Frage gestellt, die Rettung vor Troja und alle bisher erduldeten Leiden erscheinen sinnlos. Dem Augenschein nach muß sich Aeneas von den Himmlischen, denen er gehorchte und vertraute, verlassen wähnen, preisgegeben, am Ende grausam getäuscht.*

The present events – conceivable only as works of the gods – stand, however, in total contradiction to these promises. In light of threatening death, the completion of the mission is called into question, the rescue at Troy and all of the sufferings endured up until now seem to have been for nothing. At all appearances, Aeneas must (incorrectly) believe himself to be abandoned, forsaken, in the end cruelly disappointed.

Wlosock, however, steps back from the conclusions toward which her observation points, arguing somewhat paradoxically that Aeneas must not be understood to question the will of the gods even as it appears to him that he has been forsaken by them. She does so on the grounds of Aeneas' reference to his mother's assistance when Diomedes had mortally

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<sup>177</sup> Aeneas' perceived failure to be sufficiently heroic in this passage figured into negative assessments of his character among earlier critics. Williams (1967: 30) remarks: "For the Romantics he was profoundly unsatisfying.... Fox found him 'always either insipid or odious.' Elton said that he 'alternately excites our contempt and disgust,' and Landor speaks of the 'verses which drop like icicles from the rigid lips of Aeneas.' This attitude lingered on through the nineteenth century and is enshrined in the introduction to Page's commentary: 'Moreover, Virgil is unhappy in his hero. Compared with Achilles his Aeneas is but the shadow of a man.'" Williams gives as further examples (1967: 31 n.1) such as Conington: "We are wearied, it must be confessed, of being continually reminded of his piety," and Wight Duff: "The *Aeneid* succeeds in spite of its hero," and "Aeneas is too often a puppet."

<sup>178</sup> Wlosock 1967: 19.

wounded him with a giant stone as he defended the body of Pandarus (*Il.* 5.239-354).<sup>179</sup>

This, then, is “an indirect cry to his divine mother” to help him again.<sup>180</sup>

The implication of Aeneas’ reference to his mother’s intervention on that occasion may, on the other hand, be understood to support of my argument that this speech conveys Aeneas’ feeling that he has been betrayed by the gods. I would like to emphasize a feature of Aphrodite’s rescue of Aeneas in *Iliad* 5 that Wlosock passes over, namely that on that occasion her assistance proved to be outrageously unreliable. As Aphrodite carried Aeneas off the battle field, she was struck on the wrist by Diomedes’ spear, whereupon she shrieked and dropped her son, fleeing to Olympus to nurse her own wound. Aeneas’ mother intervened to help him, only to leave him to die (he only survived because Apollo stepped in). His reference to that occasion during the storm at sea does suggest that he has his mother in mind here, but not, I think, in the trusting way that Wlosock suggests. Moreover, the way Aeneas refers to the event makes a rhetorical point. He does not simply wish that he had been killed by Diomedes, as it is often phrased, but he wonders why exactly it is that he could not have been (*o Danaum fortissime gentis/ Tydide! mene Iliacis occumbere campis/ non potuisse tuaque animam hanc effundere dextra*, 1.96-8), which is a subtle but important distinction to recognize. He implies that the divine assistance he has received has an inscrutable purposelessness, since it appears he has been rescued only to be killed later.<sup>181</sup> When Aeneas wonders why

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<sup>179</sup> Wlosock 1967: 19. “*Daß wir sie nicht in die Haltung des Aeneas hineinragen, ist durch die hintergründige Erwähnung des Diomedes verbürgt.*” (“That we do not carry it [doubt in the gods] into the attitude of Aeneas is vouched for by the subtle mention of Diomedes.”)

<sup>180</sup> “*Hinter der Beschwörung des Diomedes verbirgt sich somit auch ein indirekter Aufschrei zur göttlichen Mutter,*” Wlosock 1969: 18 n. 15.

<sup>181</sup> He will go on state this explicitly in reference to the death of Anchises, who, as it turned out, had been “saved to no purpose,” (*tantis nequiquam erepte periculis*, 3.711). See Chapter 3.

he could not have died at the hands of Diomedes, the implied point is, “If my mother was going to abandon me to die, why could it not have been the first time, when I at least would have met a hero’s end in my beloved homeland?”

Aeneas’ own implicit indictment of the gods’ inscrutability and particularly his mother’s unfathomable fickleness is supported by another allusion, one that is enacted at the authorial level (that is, by the poet, not the character). This is the evocation in Aeneas’ speech of Achilles’ prayer to Zeus when he is about to drown in the Scamander (*Il.* 21.273-83).<sup>182</sup> Though the Homeric intertext most discussed in reference to Aeneas’ speech in the storm is that of Odysseus on the raft (*Od.* 5.297-312), I will argue that Achilles’ prayer is more germane to understanding Aeneas’ feelings.<sup>183</sup> I would first like to note the strength of the verbal correspondences between *Aen.* 1.88-101 and *Il.* 21.273-83 in order to emphasize the strength of the resonance, and will then discuss how the parallel leads the reader of the *Aeneid* on an “inferential walk.”

As noted above, though Odysseus’ speech is clearly recalled with the memorable echo of ‘trisma/karej Danaoi\ kai\ tetra/kij’ (“thrice and four times blessed, the Greeks,” 5.306) in Aeneas’ exclamation ‘*o terque quaterque beati*’ (1.94), the attitudes of the two heroes, and the contents of their speeches, differ in important

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<sup>182</sup> Though this parallel has long been recognized, it has not received much substantial analysis. Mackie (1988:19) and Highet (1972: 191) both make a passing mention of it, as does Heinze ([1915] 1993: 329). Wlosok (1967: 19-20) notes Achilles’ prayer as a model, but sees it primarily in terms of contrast, arguing that because Aeneas does not explicitly rebuke the gods as Achilles does, he is not to be understood as feeling the same indignation at his betrayal.

<sup>183</sup> The two allusions work together, as well, to present Aeneas “programmatically as the new Odysseus and new Achilles through the artistic device of combining multiple heroes, which was long seen as a mere bumbling mixing of sources,” as Wlosok (1969: 15). (“*Es sie gleich hier vermerkt, daß Vergil durch diesen Kunstgriff, die Zusammenarbeit mehrerer Vorbilder, in der man lange nur stümperhafte Quellenkontamination gesehen hat, nichts Geringeres bezweckt, als seinen Helden auf einen Schlag programmatisch als neuen Odysseus und neuen Achill einzuführen...*”)

ways. Ancient critics, recognizing the Odyssean model as the only one operative in Aeneas' speech, found fault with Vergil's "translation" of *Od.* 5.298, on the grounds that *duplices tendens ad sidera palmas talia voce refert* (1.93-4) is a weak (*molle*) rendering of the more heroic *pro\j o4n megalh/tora qumo/n*, "to his great spirited heart," remarking also that it makes no sense for him to raise his hands to heaven as this is not a prayer.<sup>184</sup> These objections should not be brushed away too easily as being the result of the "captious naïveté" of early critics,<sup>185</sup> despite other problems with their assumptions about the way Vergil uses Homer. Aeneas' attitude here *is* very different from that of Odysseus on the raft.

The complaints of the ancient critics—the gap that the *Odyssey* intertext opened up in their view—can be answered, however, if we look to Achilles' prayer to Zeus as a model. The description of Aeneas groaning and lifting his hands to the sky (*ingemuit et tendens duplcis ad sidera palmas*, 1.93) that ancient commentators found so unheroic directly replicates the description of Achilles, who "groaned and looked up toward the broad sky" (*w1|mwcen i0dw\_n ei0j ou0rano\n eu0ru/n*, 21.273) before uttering his prayer. After calling upon Zeus, Achilles says:

‘al1loj d’ ou1 ti/j moi to/son ailtioj Ou0raniw&nwn,  
 a0lla\ fi/lh mh/thr, h3 me yeu/dessin elqelgen,  
 h3 m’ elfato Trw&wn u9po\ tei/xei+ qwrhkta/wn  
 laiyhroi=j o0le/ssqai 0Apo/llwnoj bele/essin.  
 w3j m’ olfel’ 3Ektwr ktei=nai, o3j e0nqa/de g’ eltraf’  
 alristoj.

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<sup>184</sup> D.Servius *ad* 1.92: "reprehenditur ... Vergilius quod improprie hos versus Homeri transtulerit [*Od.* 5.297-8]... 'duplices tendens ad sidera palmas talia voce refert' molle, cum illud magis altum et heroicae personae *pro\j o4n megalh/tora qumo/n*. Praeterea quis interdiu manus ad sidera tollit, aut quis ad caelum manum tendens non aliud precatur potius, quam dicit 'o terque quaterque beati'?"

<sup>185</sup> As Austin does (1971: 55 *ad* 1.92) in defending Aeneas from the "bad press-notices" resulting from his insufficiently heroic attitude.

tw~ k' a0gaqo\j me\n elpefn', a0gaqo\n de/ ken  
 e0cena/rice,  
 nu~n de/ me leugale/w| qana/tw| ei3marto a(lw~nai  
 e0rxqe/nt' e0n mega/lw| potamw|~, w(j pai=da suforbo/n,  
 o3n r9a/ t' elnauloj a0poe/rsh| xeimw~ni perw~nta.'  
 (Il. 21.275-9)

“I blame my mother more than any deity,  
 She who cozened me with lies,  
 Who declared that I would meet my death  
 Under the armored walls of Troy, shot by Apollo.  
 If only Hector had killed me, who was the best on their  
 side, at any rate; one good man killed by another.  
 As it is, I am doomed to a wretched death,  
 Caught in this river, like a swineherd boy  
 Swept away while crossing a winter torrent.”

(Lombardo trans., adapted)

We may note the abundance of echoes both of phrasing and of sentiment in Aeneas' speech. Like Achilles (Trw&wn u9po\ tei/xei+ qwrhkta/wn, “under the armored walls of Troy”) and, incidentally, unlike Odysseus,<sup>186</sup> Aeneas wishes he had died “under the high walls of Troy” (*Troiae sub moenibus altis*, 1.95), and Aeneas wishes he had been killed by Diomedes, because he was the “best” (*fortissimus*) of the Greeks, just as Achilles wishes he had been killed by Hector, because he was the best (a1ristoj) of the Trojans.<sup>187</sup> The phraseology of Aeneas' reference to “men's shields and helmets and brave bodies” washed away by the Simois (*ubi tot Simois correpta sub undis/ scuta virum galeasque et fortia corpora volvit!* 1.100-1) is frequently identified as being modeled upon *Iliad* 12.22-3, where the weapons and bodies by the banks of the Simois are washed away when Apollo and Neptune decide, years after the war, to destroy

<sup>186</sup> Odysseus wishes he had died “in broad Troy” (Troih| e0n eu0rei/h|, *Od.* 5.307).

<sup>187</sup> Odysseus, on the other hand, does not wish to have been killed by any particular warrior, but rather in the great fight for Achilles' arms (*Od.* 5.308-10).

the Greek wall.<sup>188</sup> However, as Henry points out, long dead bodies “in the dust” of the riverbank is very far from the image in Vergil, and moreover, the calm and distant context of *Il.* 12.22-3 would render this a “frigid quotation” in Aeneas’ mouth.<sup>189</sup> Pöschl seems to hit the mark when he points to *Il.* 21.301-2 as the “inspiration” for the image<sup>190</sup>—verses which, in fact, occur immediately after the speech of Achilles which I have just been discussing as a model for that of Aeneas during the storm: “many fine weapons of vigorous men killed in battle were floating, and their bodies” (*polla\ de/teu/xea kala\ dai+ktame/nwn ai0zhw~n/ plw~n kai\ ne/kuej, Il.* 21.301-2). The verbal resonances in this example are much stronger; note how *polla\* is rendered by *tot*, *ai0zhw~n* is reflected in *fortia*, and *ne/kuej* is directly translated as *corpora*.

The intertextual relationship between Aeneas’ speech during the storm and Achilles’ prayer in *Iliad* 21 can help us bridge the gap opened by the differences between Aeneas’ and Odysseus’ speeches and better understand Aeneas’ sentiment. Odysseus’ complaint was primarily that in drowning he would be robbed of *kleos*.<sup>191</sup> If we only analyze Aeneas’ speech in these terms, we miss something important. Achilles prays to

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<sup>188</sup> *kai\ Simoiij, o3qi polla\ boa/rgia kai\ trufa/leiai ka/ppeson e0n koni/hisi kai\ h9miqe/wn ge/noj a0ndrw~n.* “And Simois, where many bull-hide shields and helmets fell in the dust, and the race of half-divine men.” Heyne *ad loc.* writes, “Contendit cum Homero, *Il.*, 12.22sq.” Conington (1883-98: 42 *ad loc.*) recognizes the lack of correspondence when he notes, “Imitated from Hom. *Il.* 12.22, who, however, speaks of the spoils and bodies of those who fell on the banks of Simois.” R.D. Williams 1971: 169 *ad* 1.100-1 simply states, “Cf. Hom. *Il.* 12.22f.”

<sup>189</sup> Henry 1873-92: 334-8 *ad* 1.104-5.

<sup>190</sup> Pöschl (1962: 36) observes that the “sorrowfully pathetic image which climaxes and ends his speech” is “inspired by Homer (*Iliad* 21.301),” but offers no further discussion of the intertext or its significance, focusing rather on Odysseus’ speech as the model for that of Aeneas.

<sup>191</sup> Pöschl (1962: 35) points out that “Odysseus grieves because he must forego glory and burial honors; he does not mention love. Aeneas’ wish to have died *ante ora patrum* expresses not only longing for glory but also for love and warmth of home.” I agree, though as my argument shows, I see not only love of Troy, but betrayal and anger at the gods who appear to have brought him to this point.

Zeus in bitter indignation, because if he drowns, as it appears will soon happen, then he was misled by his mother's "lying" prophecy of his fate (h3 me yeu/dessin elqelgen, "she who cozened me with lies"). The immanence of his death appears as proof to him that the understanding that he was explicitly given of his fate must have been a deception. He has been laboring and suffering all this time under a delusion. It is not difficult to see the parallels in Aeneas' situation. He too has been laboring under the promise of a fate that, in view of his seemingly certain death at sea now appears a lie. Aeneas can be understood, then, to question the legitimacy of his prophesied fate and the reliability of the gods who have supposedly been protecting it, and the supposition is all the more powerful because the poet has shown it rather than stated it, letting the reader himself draw a meaningful deduction.

Though Wlosock recognizes the importance of Achilles' speech in understanding that of Aeneas, she suggests that the absence of explicit indictment of the gods in Aeneas' speech indicates that his attitude is to be seen in contrast to that of Achilles.<sup>192</sup> He remains, on her reading, nobly obedient despite his undeserved suffering—the very quality that defines Vergil's new hero, as Perret argued (*héros par la seule adhésion de son vouloir à l'ordre des dieux*).<sup>193</sup> As I stated above, there is a tendency in such readings

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<sup>192</sup> Wlosock 1967: 19: "auch Achill erfährt einen Widerspruch zwischen Schicksalsverheissung und scheinbarer Wirklichkeit. Aber wie anders verhält er sich dabei!" ("Achilles also experiences a contradiction between the promise of fate and apparent reality. But how differently he acts in doing so!")

<sup>193</sup> Perret (1952: 138) located Aeneas' new type of heroism precisely in his continuing commitment to the gods despite "discouragement": "Or Énée est un héros puisqu'il ne renonce jamais, mais il est souvent lassé, découragé, héros par la seule adhésion de son vouloir à l'ordre des dieux, mais pour le reste encore faible comme nous." ("In fact, Aeneas is a hero because he never gives up, but he is often tired and discouraged, a hero through the mere commitment of his will to the order of the gods, but for the rest still weak like us.") Cf. Pease (1935: 43): "Aeneas is regularly the agent of destiny, too patiently submissive, at times, as to give his character a markedly passive quality, which has perhaps estranged more readers than any positive sin of commission. Yet this is completely in keeping with his fundamental philosophy." In a



to soften the appearance of certain death into “suffering” or “disappointment.” We must, however, appreciate that in Aeneas’ mind at this point during the storm, there is no question about whether or not the mission will be completed—it absolutely will not. If it does not come to completion, and he dies instead, then it was not fated after all, and if that is the case then he has been deceived. The fact that he expresses this obliquely does not mean that he does not express it.<sup>194</sup> The critic is in a comfortable position to judge the certainty of Aeneas’ *fata*; the character himself is not. If one resists the urge to force externally-derived knowledge of the future upon Aeneas’ consciousness, and instead acknowledges the difference between them, an inference can be constructed—namely, that Aeneas is not in a position to know objectively the legitimacy of, and therefore to trust, his prophesied *fata*. On my reading, this doubt will form the bedrock of the reader’s construction of the character’s “possible subworld,” the way the he believes the actual (fictional) world to operate. As more views contribute to it as Book 1 unfolds, the initial suggestion is, I believe, confirmed.

Once one appreciates that the appearance of divine betrayal motivates Aeneas’ speech, the raising of his arms as if in prayer makes more sense. Aeneas’ sentiments are directed at the gods, who are responsible for his deception. It is not made explicit, though, which god(s) he has in mind, though as I noted above, a primary target appears to

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similar vein Arnold (1911: 13) explains: “To understand Aeneas we must first picture a man whose whole soul is filled by a reverent regard for destiny and submission to Jove, who represents destiny on its personal side. He can therefore never play the part of the hero in revolt...he can love or weep, but the sovereignty of his mind is never upset.”

<sup>194</sup> See Heinze [1915] 1993: 329, who notes: “Thus, in the place of the partly descriptive and deliberative words of Odysseus at the outbreak of the storm at sea, [Vergil] puts the much shorter, emotionally heightened speech of Aeneas, an ejaculatory prayer rather than a monologue...”

be Venus.<sup>195</sup> Here, the difference between Aeneas' and Achilles' statements is notable. Achilles addresses his prayer to Zeus, whose assistance he requests (and receives). Aeneas assumes the posture of supplication, and yet, unlike Achilles, he makes an implicit rebuke without asking for assistance. So while on the one hand, the intertext with Achilles' prayer at *Il.* 21.273-83 helps us recognize that Aeneas feels frustrated resentment toward the gods for what he understands as deception and betrayal, it also opens a gap, namely, why he does not call on Jupiter, as Achilles calls on Zeus.

At the authorial level, the reason may be that if he were to call on Jupiter, then Jupiter would need to help him. An important aspect of the divine mechanics of the poem, the dispensation under which its world operates, is that Jupiter is concerned with yet does not closely manage human or divine affairs—if he did, the chaos of the poem could not happen. Though he acts as the mouthpiece of fate, he never directly intervenes to help Aeneas, and rarely even indirectly helps him. While in the *Iliad*, Zeus sends Poseidon (and Athena) to help Achilles, in the *Aeneid* Neptune helps Aeneas' of his own

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<sup>195</sup> The reader who draws these inferences will find support for them in Aeneas' subsequent encounter with Venus in the forest, and in his narration of his journey in Books 2 and 3. In Book 2 we will see Aeneas explicitly articulate his frustration with his mother's inscrutable, seemingly pointless help. In his narration of the fall of Troy, Aeneas tells of his mother's appearance to him, and her promise to guide him home through burning Troy (*nusquam abero et tutum patrio te limine sistam*, I will never be absent, and I will place you safely on your doorstep, 2.620). Aeneas confirms that true to her word, she did help him, saying, "with a god leading me between the fire and the enemies I hasten: the weapons make way and the flames recede," *ducente deo flammam inter et hostis/ expeditur: dant tela locum flammaeque recedunt* (2.632-3).<sup>195</sup> Her assistance leaves him frustrated, though, when Anchises' refusal to leave makes it appear that she has saved him in vain. Aeneas exclaims:

*hoc erat, alma parens, quod me per tela, per ignis  
eripis, ut mediis hostem in penetralibus utque  
Ascanium patremque meum iuxtaque Creusam  
alterum in alterius mactatos sanguine cernam?* (2.664-7)

Was it for this, "caring" mother, that you saved me, through weapons, through fire, so that I might see the enemy in the middle of my house, and Ascanius and my father and Creusa all slaughtered in each other's blood?

Aeneas' frustration here with his divine mother's inscrutable and seemingly pointless, or at least unreliable, assistance is of a piece with the accusatory attitude toward her that I argue can be detected in his first speech during the storm at sea.

accord, and not out of care for the hero but because his jurisdiction has been violated by Juno and Aeolus (1.132-41). It is important, I think, that one feels it should be Jupiter who restores cosmic order; his absence here is palpable.<sup>196</sup> At the actorial level, the character level, we can see in Aeneas' lament to the gods, rather than an actual request of assistance, how far Aeneas is from expecting anything from them.

Contrary to Aeneas' own expectation, he survives the storm; but he watches some of his friends die pitiful deaths, others disappear. He and his men wash up on the shore of Libya not only in a crisis of circumstance, stranded in an unknown land, but also a crisis of faith.<sup>197</sup> Awareness of this will make the depth of his attraction to Carthage and Dido easier to appreciate. As Mackie observes, "Vergil wishes us to understand that Aeneas' state of mind makes the prospect of respite at Carthage all the more enticing. Thus, even in the first scene in which Aeneas appears, Vergil has one eye on the Dido episode."<sup>198</sup> I agree entirely with the suggestion that from the very beginning the text begins establishing the psychological groundwork for Aeneas' character that the reader needs to apprehend in order to appreciate his motivations when he meets Dido in the climax toward which Book 1 is building.

Mackie's choice of the term "respite" in Carthage (rather than "settlement") seems, however, to expose an attempt to ignore something improper about Aeneas' intention, which at the same time his word "enticing" recognizes. There would be nothing

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<sup>196</sup> One may compare Jupiter's notable absence from the proem of the *Georgics*; cf. Nappa (2005: 28), who argues that it brings emphasis to Jupiter's later appearance in the *aition* for the present human condition. For a thorough analysis of Jupiter as a character in the *Aeneid*, see Hejduk (2009), who shows how far Vergil's Jupiter is from the moral and just *pater omnipotens* that readers wish to see.

<sup>197</sup> On "faith," see just below.

<sup>198</sup> Mackie 1988: 20.

“wrong” with Aeneas wishing to make a temporary stop in order to regroup; if “respite” is all he will want in Carthage, there is no need for a long exposition of his despondent “state of mind.” Like many scholars, Mackie recognizes Aeneas’ disillusionment, yet appears to resist what it appears to mean for Aeneas’ much celebrated commitment to the Trojan *fata*, and so a little later in his argument he is forced to conclude that “Aeneas’ despondency arises from his *pietas*: so strong is his commitment for the Trojans to follow the fated way that obstacles are intolerable.”<sup>199</sup> We frequently find descriptions of Aeneas as being simultaneously in total “despair” and yet resolute in his commitment, which can sometimes verge on self-contradiction. In his analysis of Aeneas’ first speech, for example, Pöschl, tells us that it “must not be seen as expressing...faltering faith in God,” even though behind it lies “doubt and even despair.”<sup>200</sup>

On the contrary, I am inclined to infer, *pace* Pöschl, that “faltering faith in God” is actually exactly what we are to see in Aeneas at this juncture.<sup>201</sup> Pöschl’s statement may be seen to betray why some scholars seem disinclined to countenance the idea that Aeneas would give up on his divinely mandated mission. Even thoroughly secular studies have inherited a way of thinking about faith and obedience to God in Judeo-Christian terms.<sup>202</sup> Camps, for example, puts explicitly the kind of relationship that scholars

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<sup>199</sup> Mackie 1988:24.

<sup>200</sup> Pöschl 1962: 58-9. Quinn (1968: 103) seems sensitive to the implications of the word, and therefore carefully pulls up short of it, calls Aeneas “near despair.”

<sup>201</sup> Pöschl is without a doubt one of Vergil’s finest critics, to whom this and all modern studies of the *Aeneid* are much indebted. Therefore, though I disagree with his optimistic interpretation of the poem’s religious outlook, it is with hesitation that I would detract from his foundational and illuminating study.

<sup>202</sup> Wlosock (1967:23-4) observes that concern for Aeneas’ “unbelief or weakness of faith” (*Unglauben oder Glaubensschwäche*) is anachronistically Christian: “*Das sind vom Christentum geprägte Kategorien.*” She emphasizes, in contrast, that “[d]er Kern römischer *pietas erga deos* is *Gehorsam, ist sorgfältige Einhaltung der Forderungen und Weisungen der Götter.*” (The heart of Roman *pietas erga deos* is obedience, careful adherence to the commands and instructions of the gods.) Wlosock’s point that it is

sometimes unconsciously assume when they discuss Aeneas' divinely mandated mission when he writes: "Like Abraham Aeneas receives a command from heaven; is told to leave his own homeland for a destination still unrevealed; has the promise of a great future for his posterity; has the hope of 'an abiding city'."<sup>203</sup> Despite the fact that Rome is indeed Jupiter's chosen city, Aeneas does not have any kind of personal "covenant" with him. Jupiter has never appeared in any form to Aeneas, told him anything directly, made him any promises.

Everything Aeneas has learned of his fate has come through ghosts, visions, dreams, oracles, and prophecies—which often turn out to be ambiguous, partial, or sometimes outright wrong.<sup>204</sup> The reader never, by contrast, hears Jupiter tell Aeneas anything so direct as, "Get thee out from thy country...unto a land that I will show thee." (Gen. 12:1) God's direct, unmediated communication with Abraham makes infinitely simpler both obedience and the faith upon which it operates (and even then, it is presented as difficult). Not only does Aeneas always have to wonder if he even correctly understands what his divine commands are, but the Greek and Roman gods change their minds and their allegiances, and they do deceive humans.<sup>205</sup> Aeneas has been thoroughly *pious*, and yet he has been batted around in circles,<sup>206</sup> and now it looks like he and his crew

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action, not intention, that matters in Roman religion is well taken, but as I discuss here, in Aeneas' case the "commands and instructions" are not clear enough for "careful adherence." In other words, one must believe that one has a reliable grasp of the gods will in order to choose to act in accordance with it.

<sup>203</sup> Camps 1969: 22. Cf. Haecker (1934: 73): "Did not Abraham also have to leave the homeland of his heart, and, for the sake of the faith and in obedience to an inscrutable will, a *fatum*, take upon himself the sorrow and bitter smart of memory, which for star-bound man is the meaning of a change of homeland. So it was with Aeneas."

<sup>204</sup> The way Aeneas presents these events in his narration is the topic of Chapter Three.

<sup>205</sup> Even Venus accusingly asks if Jupiter has changed his mind, since that is certainly how things appear (1.237).

<sup>206</sup> A point that he himself will make to the disguised Venus (*sum pius Aeneas*, 1.378-85); see below.

may not even survive in this deserted land. Aeneas' crisis of faith is not to be understood as a moral or spiritual flaw, like the breaking of a covenant, but rather as a practical recognition of the possibility that the gods have changed their minds and turned on him, that his goal may be just a phantom. We know for certain that it is real; he himself does not.

If Aeneas has doubt about the Trojans' promised *fata*, how much more so must the men who rely on him. It is clear that Aeneas recognizes this fact—that his men's spirits depend on his own—when he feigns hope (*spem vultu simulat*) to deliver the following speech:

*dictis maerentia pectora mulcet:  
'O socii (neque enim ignari sumus ante malorum),  
o passi graviores, dabit deus his quoque finem.  
vos et Scyllaeam rabiem penitusque sonantis  
accestis scopulos, vos et Cyclopa saxa  
expertis: revocate animos maestumque timorem  
mittite; forsitan et haec olim meminisse iubabit.  
per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum  
tendimus in Latium, sedes ubi fata quietas  
ostendunt; illic fas regna resurgere Troiae.  
durate, et vosmet rebus servate secundis.'*  
*Talia voce refert curisque ingentibus aeger  
spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem.*  
(Aen. 1.197-209)

With these words he soothes their grieving hearts: "O comrades (for we are not inexperienced in suffering), o you who have suffered worse things, god will give an end to these ones, too. You have approached rabid Scylla and her deep sounding cliffs, you have endured the rocks of the Cyclops; call back your courage and cast aside your sad fears; perhaps these things too will one day be a pleasure to remember. Though various misfortunes, through so many close adventures we are making our way toward Latium, where our fates indicate a quiet settlement; there it will be permitted for the kingdom of Troy to arise again. Be strong, and save yourselves for more favorable circumstances." He says these things aloud, and though he is sick with overwhelming anxiety he feigns hope in his expression. He presses his grief deep down in his heart.

They Odyssean intertext of Aeneas' first speech had situated him in a position functionally parallel to Odysseus in *Odyssey* 5, about to wash up on the shore of the land where he would narrate his earlier adventures. When Aeneas found land, however, the intertextual setting switched to Circe's island of Aea, which was recalled in the harbor ecphrasis.<sup>207</sup> Now his speech to his men reinforces this connection, for it recalls Odysseus' speech at *Od.*10.189-93,<sup>208</sup> where he addresses his men before the reconnaissance mission into the unknown wilds of Circe's island.

‘Keklute/ meu mu/qwn, kaka/ per pa/sxontej e9tai~roi:  
 w} fi/loi, ou0 ga\r ildmen o3phi zo/foj ou0d’ o3phi  
 h0w/j,  
 ou0d’ o3ph| h0e/luoj faesi/mbrotoj eij’s’ u9po\ gai=an  
 ou0d’ o3ph| a0nnei=tai: a0lla\ frazw/meqa qa~sson  
 eil tij elt’ e0stai mh=tij: e0gw\ d’ ou0k oilomai  
 eijnai.’

(*Od.*10.189-93)

“Hear my words, my companions, in spite of your hearts’ sufferings.  
 Dear friends, for we do not know where the darkness is nor the sunrise,  
 nor where the Sun who shines upon people rises, nor where he sets,  
 then let us hasten our minds and think, whether there is  
 any course left open to us. But I think there is none.”  
 (Lattimore trans.)

Aeneas' speech begins:

*O socii (neque enim ignari sumus ante malorum),  
 o passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem.*

O friends (for, we are not inexperienced in hardship), o you who have suffered more grievous ills, a god will give an end to these ones, too.

Aeneas' distribution of vocatives, one in each line (*O socii* and *o passi*) reproduces that of Odysseus (e9tai~roi and w} fi/loi), and his use of the participial *passi*

<sup>207</sup> See Chapter 2 for full discussion of the harbor ecphrasis and its thematic significance.

<sup>208</sup> It “contaminates” this with references to his speech before Scylla and Charybdis (*Od.* 12.208-12).

*graviora* corresponds to Odysseus' *kaka/ per pa/sxontej* ("though suffering evils"). Aeneas is considerably more encouraging in his addition of *neque enim ignari sumus ante malorum* (from *ou0 ga/r pw/ ti kakw~n a0dah/mone/j ei0men*, *Od.* 12.208, discussed below). This comes out particularly in Odysseus' subsequent statements: three lines of pessimistic reflection on how utterly lost they are, followed by two lines in which he asks whether there is any strategy available to them, and promptly shares that he himself doubts it (*e0gw\ d' ou0k oilomai ei]nai*, "But I think there is none"). This statement met with disapproval from the scholiasts (whom Vergil may well have read),<sup>209</sup> according to whom Aristarchus himself complains that Odysseus should "utter [these words] to himself privately."<sup>210</sup> This is precisely what Vergil has Aeneas do—internal recital of his anxieties is suggested by *curisque ingentibus aeger* (1.208). Odysseus' thoroughly pessimistic assessment of his men's situation is replaced in Aeneas' speech with one line, the assurance *dabit deus his quoque finem*.<sup>211</sup> We can see back through this allusion, though, to a suggestion of Aeneas' judiciously concealed inner assessment of his hopeful claims that a god will provide: *e0gw\ d' ou0k oilomai*.<sup>212</sup> The poignancy of the ironic distance between

<sup>209</sup> Schlunk 1974: 53, who follows Pöschl's optimistic analysis of this speech.

<sup>210</sup> Schlunk 1974: 53. *tou=to ei]nai dia\ me/sou fhsi\n 0Ari/starxoj w9j a1n a0palgh/santoj tou~ 0Odusse/wj i0di/ai a0napefwnh~sqai [HQ].*

<sup>211</sup> Who is the *deus* that Aeneas considers his "patron"? Though I think Aeneas may be referring to Venus (see below), this ambiguity raises questions about the absence of Jupiter's intervention, as did Neptune's resolution of the storm. In the interview between Venus and Jupiter situated immediately after Aeneas' speech, Venus, enraged, throws Aeneas' words (*dabit deus his quoque finem*) at Jupiter as an accusation: *quem das finem, rex magne, laborum?* (1.241). We know that Aeneas' true feeling is precisely the opposite of what he says (his hope is feigned, *spem vultu simulat*, 1.209), and Venus articulates the implication of that: a feeling of betrayal (*prodimur*, 1.252). Jupiter's speech assures Venus that the Trojan *fata* will come to pass, but he turns a deaf ear to her accusation that *he* should be doing something.

<sup>212</sup> Note that the very first time Aeneas actually feels any hope is when he lays eyes on the temple at Carthage: *hic primum Aeneas sperare salutem/ ausus et adflictis melius confidere rebus* (1.451-2)



Aeneas' expression of faith in this speech and the suggestive negation of it encourages the reader to infer Aeneas' true feelings, particularly in light of his theologically pessimistic speech during the storm.

The next four lines of Aeneas' speech draw on a different speech of Odysseus:

*vos et Scyllaeam rabiem penitusque sonantis  
accestis scopulos, vos et Cyclopia saxa  
experti: revocate animos maestumque timorem  
mittite; fors an et haec olim meminisse iubabit.*  
(*Aen.* 1.200-4)

You have approached rabid Scylla and her deep sounding cliffs, you have endured the rocks of the Cyclops; call back your courage and cast aside your sad fears; perhaps these things too will one day be a pleasure to remember.

ou0 me\n dh\ tode mei~zon elpi kako\n h2 o3te Ku/klwy  
eillei e0ni\ sph=i+ glafurw~| kraterh=fi bi/hfin:  
a0lla\ kai\ elnqen e0mh~| a0reth~| boulh~| te no/w| te  
e0kfu/gomen, kai/ pou tw~nde mnh/sesqai o0i5w.  
nu~n d' algeq', w9j a2n e0gw\_ eilpw, peiqw&meqa  
pa/ntej.  
(*Od.* 12.209-14)

“This is no greater evil now than it was when the Cyclops had us cooped in his hollow cave by force and violence, but even there, by my courage and counsel and my intelligence, we escaped anyway. I think that all this will be remembered some day too. Then do as I say, let us all be won over.”  
(Lattimore trans.)

There is, as Austin observes, “a notable difference in tone. Odysseus is unsure of his men, sure of himself, reminding them of his own courage and skill in bringing them out of cruel dangers [a0lla\ kai\ elnqen e0mh~| a0reth~| boulh~| te no/w| te e0kfugomen]. Aeneas trusts his men, and gives them credit for steadfastness [vos accestis, esperti vos], deliberately concealing his own nagging fears.”

<sup>213</sup> He perceives and responds to the emotional state of his companions much better than Odysseus does (whose speech on Aeaëa causes an emotional breakdown in his men) and much more aptly encourages them with sympathy and praise. Moreover, unlike Odysseus' rather less reassuring "if only somehow Zeus may grant that we get away from this danger and escape," Aeneas' assures his men that "god will grant an end to these labors, too," and despite his own disbelief, concludes his speech with a message of hope for a secure future home (*sedes ubi fata quietas/ ostendunt; illic fas regna resurgere Troiae./ durate, et vosmet rebus servate secundis, Aen. 1.204-7*). As Macrobius observes, with these words Aeneas "added a more powerful kind of consolation [than Ulysses at 12.208-12] since he caused his men to think not only of their past escapes but also of their future happiness, in promising that after their present toils they would enjoy not just a peaceful place to settle but even a kingdom."<sup>214</sup> Let me take this opportunity to note how this speech allows us to see that Aeneas, who is sometimes accused of being imperceptive, both emotionally and intellectually, is in fact quite sensitive (something we will want to keep in mind as we analyze the way he picks up on suggestions in Dido's speeches later in Book 1, and replies subtly in kind).

In addition to allusive suggestions within his speech of Aeneas' true feelings of hopelessness, the narrator remarks explicitly that his hope is feigned (1.208-9). Despite this, the speech is often summarized as suggesting confidence—the exact opposite of what the lines themselves say. Pöschl, for example, translates *spem vultu simulat* "and his

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<sup>213</sup> Austin 1971: 81 *ad* 1.198ff.

<sup>214</sup> Macrobius V.11.8 (Kaster trans.): *Sed et hoc quod vester adiecit solacii fortioris est. suos enim non tantum exemplo evadendi, sed et spe future felicitates animavit, per hos labores non solum sedes quietas se et regna promittens.*

face looked confident and cheerful,” and sees the speech as an expression of hope for “Troy and its renascent empire to come,” concluding that “Vergil’s Aeneas is a great soul, pressing toward a magnificent goal.”<sup>215</sup> Otis, who entirely ignores the lines in which Vergil tells us that the speech does not reflect Aeneas’ true feelings, sees it as a “return” to *pietas*, after the apostasy of his “nostalgia” during the storm: “Now he accepts and insists upon his mission and fate; now he greets danger as a challenge, rather than a cause of despair.”<sup>216</sup> Segal sees in Aeneas’ words of comfort an articulation of the authorial voice.<sup>217</sup> In response to such suggestions I would simply emphasize the narrator’s own clarification, which is that Aeneas is *pretending* to feel these things for the sake of his men. As Anderson observes, “his hopefulness is assumed, and his talk of destiny is hollow.”<sup>218</sup> Aeneas’ inability to believe in the veracity of his supposed fate—which the reader knows is, in fact, true—points up the fact that as a human participant he is unable to assume the secure, retrospective authorial point of view.

Unlike Odysseus, who sends his men off to reconnoiter on Circe’s island,<sup>219</sup> Aeneas, who has been turning around “many thoughts,”<sup>220</sup> decides to go himself to

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<sup>215</sup> Pöschl 1962: 41-2. Mackie (1988:23-4) also elides “despair” into “despondency” to keep Aeneas commitment intact. Wlosock (1967) maintains Aeneas commitment in spite of sensitive attention to indications otherwise.

<sup>216</sup> Otis 1964: 232.

<sup>217</sup> Segal’s differentiation (1981: 68 and *passim*) between the “authorial” and “participatory” voices in the poem is a basic narratological distinction that is key to my whole study; I disagree, however, with Segal’s view that Aeneas (p. 69) “occupies a unique position in that he partakes of both voices,” speaking authorially whenever he reflects on his role as an agent of destiny. I agree with Segal, however, that the reader (p. 77) “fluctuates between distance and participation.” See discussion of authorial vs. immersed reading in the Introduction.

<sup>218</sup> Anderson 1930: 4.

<sup>219</sup> For a full discussion of the important and sustained involvement with *Odyssey* 10, see Chapter Two.

<sup>220</sup> *At pius Aeneas per noctem plurima volvens* (1.305). The unspecified nature of the substantive *plurima* encourages reader to step into his head, imagine what kinds of things must be running through it. In the intertextual context, the epithet *pius* may have point. Unlike Odysseus, he goes out to reconnoiter himself, not wishing to risk his men’s lives.

explore and discover whether the land has human inhabitants (1.305-9). He and Achates come across Venus disguised as a Carthaginian huntress, and though he does not realize it is his mother, he is certain that he is speaking to a goddess.<sup>221</sup> In response to his question about where they are, Venus tells Aeneas Dido's personal history. I will discuss the impression this makes on the reader in the next chapter. Here my interest is in the impression it makes on Aeneas. We are never given his reaction, but the audience will be able to see in it numerous points where Dido's experience is parallel to Aeneas' own, with the result that she appears almost as his *alter ego*,<sup>222</sup> and the reader may surmise that Aeneas sees this, too. The loss of spouse and city, directives from ghosts, accidental leadership and long wandering, and the founding of a new city: Aeneas has much to identify with in Dido's life.<sup>223</sup> The exception, of course, is the founding of the new city, which Aeneas has yet to achieve. As a result, Dido must appear to Aeneas not only sympathetic, having endured similar suffering, but also enviable, having achieved the ultimate goal, which for Aeneas is nowhere in sight.

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<sup>221</sup> See discussion of Nausicaa intertext below.

<sup>222</sup> Otis (1964: 236) observes this, but he focuses on how this story prepares the *reader* for the love between Aeneas and Dido (and, through irony unavailable to the characters, foreshadows their tragedy). Likewise, Heinze (1993:97) notes how "the narrative is ingeniously contrived so that it not only informs *us* but also wins *our* sympathies." (emphasis mine) It is not only *our* sympathies, though, but also those of the story's listener, Aeneas, that are moved by this speech. I would like to stress the fact that, as Otis observes ([1964] 1995: 237), Venus' story "determines the point of view he is to take toward the new city and toward Dido herself."

<sup>223</sup> Horsfall (1990: 134-5) wonders whether "their fortune [has] been really and essentially *similis*." Granting the litany of similarities in their experiences, he counters that "[t]here is a tremendous emphasis on the role of *money* in Dido's story." I agree completely that "the story told by the disguised Venus can hardly be intended to evoke unqualified sympathy," and I take the idea much further in the next chapter, where I argue that Venus alludes to less savory aspects of the Dido legend, particularly her adeptness at deception. However, allusion operates at the authorial level, and it is therefore the reader's, not Aeneas' sympathy, that is complicated by this. To Aeneas, as we see in his appraisal of the city, the contrast between his poverty and Dido's wealth makes her, I think, all the more alluring.

Aeneas is not given a chance to respond to the picture of Dido presented by Venus, because she concludes her tale by asking him who he is. He responds with the famous speech (1.378-85) whose first three words, *sum pius Aeneas*, earned him the contempt of a bygone generation of critics who deduced his tone and meaning in complete isolation from their context.<sup>224</sup> As Williams observes, “in calling himself *pius* Aeneas implies, ‘and this is what I get for it?’” which we can see clearly when we consider the verses that follow it, in which Aeneas “lists the reasons why he might expect fate to deal less unkindly with him, and launches into bitter complaints about what has happened to him and his people.”<sup>225</sup> I think Anderson brings out the sense of this passage aptly when he paraphrases it thus: “I am, forsooth, the Aeneas who is famed as *pius*, the man who rescued the Penates from the foe and carried them away with me; I am descended from the sovereign god Jupiter; a goddess, my mother, pointed out the way to me, and I faithfully followed the oracular behests that the gods sent me. And what is the result?—here I am with only seven ships surviving, a needy stranger wandering over Libyan wastes!”<sup>226</sup>

It must be stressed that Aeneas really believes that he is speaking with a divinity, unlike Odysseus in his flattery of Nausicaa, a scene with which this passage intertextually engages. This affects the point that we ascribe to his rhetoric:<sup>227</sup> the injustice of his labors in light of his *pietas* reflects badly on the gods, something he hopes this divinity will

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<sup>224</sup> See note above, in discussion of Aeneas’ first speech.

<sup>225</sup> Williams 1972: 189 *ad* 1.378.

<sup>226</sup> Anderson 1930: 4. Wlosock (1967: 79) maintains that Aeneas remains confident in his mission, even if he laments his suffering: “*Aeneas begehrt auch hier nicht auf. Mit Selbstverständlichkeit halt er ja an dem gebotenen Ziel fest.*”

<sup>227</sup> Anderson 1930: 4 observes, in reference to Aeneas’ comment *si vestras forte per auris/ Troiae nomen iit* (if by chance the name of Troy has reached your ears) that the word *vestras* “may well mean ‘of you gods and goddesses,’ in which case there is a world of bitter irony in [the statement].”

recognize and wish to remedy. We are not told explicitly that Aeneas believes that he is speaking to a goddess, and when he begins by addressing her *o quam te memorem, virgo?*, the reader is invited to consider the passage in light of Odysseus' flattering question whether Nausicaa is a goddess or a mortal.

Gounou=mai/ se, alnassa: qeo/j nu/ tij h] broto/j  
 e0ssi;  
 ei0 me/n tij qeo/j e0ssi, toi\ ou0rano\n eu0ru\n  
 elxousin,  
 0Arte/midi/ se e0gw/ ge, Dio\j kou/rh| mega/loio,  
 ei]do/j te me/geqo/j te fuh/n t' algxista e0i5skw;  
 ei0 de/ ti/j e0ssi brotw~n...  
 (Od. 6.149-53)

“I am at your knees, O queen. But are you mortal or goddess?  
 If indeed you are one of the gods who hold wide heaven,  
 then I must find in you the nearest likeness to Artemis  
 the daughter of great Zeus, for beauty, figure, and stature.  
 But if you are one among these mortals who live in this country...”  
 (Lattimore trans.)

Odysseus states that *if* Nausicaa is a goddess (*ei0 me/n tij qeo/j e0ssi*), then she is most similar to Artemis in appearance. He then turns to the other possibility, which, given its placement second, suggests it is what he actually believes, that she is a mortal. Aeneas, on the other hand, starts with the possibility that she is a mortal (*virgo*), then immediately rejects it:

*nulla tuarum audita mihi neque visa sororum,  
 o quam te memorem, virgo? namque haud tibi vultus  
 mortalis, nec vox hominem sonat; o, dea certe  
 (an Phoebi soror? an Nympharum sanguinis una?)  
 sis felix nostrumque leves, quaecumque, laborem.*  
 (Aen. 1.326-330)

I have neither seen nor heard any of your sisters, o maiden—or what should I call you? For your face is not mortal, nor does your voice sound human. O, goddess, most certainly (the sister of Phoebus? Or one of the race of Nymphs?), may you be gracious and, whoever you are, lighten our burden.

He does not qualify her divine attributes within a conditional clause, as Odysseus does (ei0 me/n tij qeo/j e0ssi), but states them as evidence (*namque*) for his conclusion that she is a goddess. Moreover, unlike Odysseus' use of three synonyms for beauty (ei]do/j te me/geqo/j te fuh/n t'), Aeneas does not exactly call this maiden "beautiful," but rather describes as having a face that does not look mortal (though this suggests divine beauty), and, in what is surely not a piece of stock flattery, a voice that does not sound human. He concludes that she certainly is a goddess (*o, dea certe*). Moreover, if the reader retained any doubt that unlike Odysseus he actually believes the maiden is a goddess, he proceeds to pray to her (*sis felix nostrumque leves, quaecumque, laborem*).<sup>228</sup>

Keeping in mind that he is well aware that he is addressing a goddess, Aeneas declaration of himself as *pius* is not a boast but, as noted above, an accusation against the gods, which he hopes will make this goddess feel compelled to treat him more kindly than her fellow gods have. There is a double irony here. The first is that Aeneas is complaining about being deceived by divinities as he is being deceived by a divinity. The second in a way reverses the first: the goddess that he is trying to convince that the gods have treated him unjustly in view of his *pietas* is the same goddess who just argued this very same point to Jove (*hic pietatis honos?* 1.253), and is in the process of trying to

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<sup>228</sup> Syed (2005: 58) observes that particularly given the great degree of detail devoted to Venus' disguise (1.314-20), the reader is here shown "how good a reader of images Aeneas really is." I am not entirely certain that the detailed description of Venus' disguise proves that it was a good disguise that would require particularly sharp powers of discernment to see through. We can at least give Aeneas credit, though, for not naively buying her explanation ("We Tyrian maidens all dress like this," 1.336-7) unlike his father in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*. The take-away from Aeneas' awareness that he is speaking to a goddess may be that he *expects* divinities to lie.

remedy the situation. He is trying to make her feel compelled to be the only god to honor his *pietas* and help him; he does not know that she in fact already is.

When Aeneas realizes that this is his mother, he exclaims *quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis/ ludis imaginibus?* (1.408-9) This statement presents several serious gaps to the reader, and is one of the many passages that, as Quinn puts it, creates the illusion “of a story with an existence of its own, independent of Virgil’s telling of it,” into which the reader gets only partial views.<sup>229</sup> One question is to whom Aeneas compares Venus when he claims that she is “also” cruel (*crudelis tu quoque*). Servius suggests Juno and the other gods hostile to Troy, and D.Servius adds that Aeneas indicated their hostility in Book 2.<sup>230</sup> This is a plausible enough way to fill in this gap, but the linear reader may hear another, more immediate resonance. Someone else has just been described as *crudelis* for deceiving a family member: Pygmalion. The word *crudelis* was the key note of Venus’ speech, in which she described how Sychaeus was slaughtered on cruel altars (*crudelis aras*, 1.355) by the cruel tyrant Pygmalion (*odium crudele tyranni*, 1.361). This gives point to Aeneas’ emphatic placement of *natum* at the beginning of the sentence. Pygmalion’s barbarous act was particularly “cruel” because he did not care about his own sister’s feelings (*securus amorum germanae*) and he strung her along “for a long time” with false hope (*factumque diu celavit et aegram/ multa malus simulans vana spe lusit amantem*, 1.350-2). Echoing *crudelis* and *lusit*, Aeneas throws Venus’ opprobrium for Pygmalion back at her: “*You* are just as cruel to *me!*” By likening her to Pygmalion, he implies that Venus has been stringing him along with lies,

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<sup>229</sup> Quinn 1963: 202.

<sup>230</sup> Servius *ad* 1.407: “YOU ALSO: that is, Juno and the other gods, who are hostile to the Trojans, *whom he also indicates in the second book, when he says ‘the great powers of the gods hostile to Troy.’*”



toying with his hopes, and the comparison suggests a sense not only of frustration, but anger and disgust. This is consistent with his attitude toward her that I have argued we catch a glimpse of in his first speech during the storm, and that is so important in understanding Aeneas' motivations as the story unfolds.

Aeneas feels stinging bitterness toward his mother, but it is not clear, though, precisely what role she has been playing, or what role Aeneas thinks she has been playing, or ought to have been playing, in his journey. With *totiens*, "so many times," Aeneas clearly has specific events in mind, but what they might be is not made explicit. Austin remarks that, "We do not know the allusion to *totiens*; it is something left to our imagination, like the visions of Anchises, nowhere else mentioned, that troubled Aeneas' dreams and warned him against staying with Dido."<sup>231</sup> Heinze argues that when Vergil was writing this passage in Book 1 he must have intended to have Venus appear in Book 3 like Athena in the *Odyssey*: "After the definitive reshaping of Book 3, Aeneas' complaint would have admittedly seemed meaningless to the reader, and we must assume that Virgil would have excised it once he realized that it was now irrelevant."<sup>232</sup> For a first reader at this juncture, though, what the poet does or does not reveal about Venus' role in Book 3 is irrelevant to the passage at hand. If we look to the immediate context of Aeneas' claim, we do find material that at least gives a suggestive hint, if not a definitive answer, about how make sense of this statement. It does not answer the question of Venus' actual role in Aeneas' mission, but it does suggest what *he* thinks it has been. In his speech to the huntress, he summarized his situation like this:

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<sup>231</sup> Austin 1971: 144 *ad* 1.408

<sup>232</sup> Heinze [1915] 1993: 77. There are reasons, however, to believe that Book 3 was composed before Book 1; see Sparrow 1931.

*bis denis Phrygium conscendi navibus aequor,  
matre dea monstrante viam data fata secutus;  
vix septem convulsae undis Euroque supersunt.  
ipse ignotus, egens, Libyae deserta peragro,  
Europa atque Asia pulsus...*

(*Aen.* 1.381-5)

With twenty ships I embarked on the Phrygian sea, and with my mother, a goddess, showing the way I followed the fates given to me; scarcely seven remain, wracked by the waves and the East wind. I myself, unknown, helpless, wander the deserted places of Libya, ejected from Europe and Asia...

Note the emphatic placement of *bis denis*, and the accusatory contrast of *vix septem*.

Aeneas has lost more than half his ships and he is now wandering helplessly through deserted lands *ignotus, egens* (1.381-5). All this occurred with his divine mother showing the way (*matre dea monstrante viam*). Williams observes “perhaps a touch of rebuke”<sup>233</sup> in *matre dea*; I think in fact Aeneas is being quite pointed. Confirmation that Aeneas is blaming his mother for his current circumstances is shown when she immediately becomes very annoyed (*nec plura querentem passa Venus* 1.385-6) and brusquely cuts him off mid-verse saying, “Whoever you are, I hardly think you are hated by the gods, considering that you still live and breathe,” (*Quisquis es, haud, credo, invisus caelestibus auras/ vitalis carpis*, 1.386-7). One may well wonder why Venus would become annoyed when Aeneas’ complaint about his circumstances is, in her view valid, since we have just heard her make the exact same complaint to Jove (1.229-53). The answer that presents itself is that she does not like what he implies about *her* failure in all of this. Recall that in the speech of Achilles alluded to in Aeneas’ first speech (discussed above), Achilles says that of the gods, the one he blames is his mother, because she misled him with prophecies

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<sup>233</sup> Williams 1972: 190 *ad* 1.382.

that must have been “lies.”<sup>234</sup> Recall also how that intertext opened up a gap about which god or gods Aeneas held responsible for his deception, since unlike Achilles, he did not say. Recall also the mysterious god in his speech to his men (*dabit deus his quoque finem*, 1.199),<sup>235</sup> whom he claims, without really believing it, will continue to help them. In the *sum pius Aeneas* speech, Aeneas’ implied accusation of his mother for failing him allows us to fill in these gaps: he holds *his mother* responsible for guiding their journey, and therefore for the *casus* he has endured and his apparent deception regarding *his fata*. And if he has lost faith in his own mother’s help, how much less must he trust in the providence of other gods.

After this bitter confrontation with his mother, and the suggestion of betrayal that it carries, we see Aeneas in his most desperate as he first lays eyes on Carthage. This is one of the only times that we see Aeneas happy in the *Aeneid*. Looking down at the city from the top of a hill, he positively marvels:

*miratur molem Aeneas, magalia quondam,  
miratur portas strepitumque et strata viarum.*  
(*Aen.* 1.421-2)

Aeneas marvels at its massive structures—once huts!—,  
he marvels at the gates and the hubbub and the paved streets.

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<sup>234</sup> allloj d’ oul ti/j moi to/son ailtioj Ou0raniw/nwn, a0lla\ fi/lh mh/thr, h3 me yeu/dessin elqelgen (*Il.* 22.275-6).

<sup>235</sup> Compare, too how in this speech Aeneas encourages his men to hold out for a more “favorable situation” in Latium (*durate et vosmet rebus servate secundis*, 1.207), which sounds a bit like the “better fortune” hoped for by Teucer in *Odes* 1.7. Teucer, who has been rejected by his father, specifically hopes that his fortune will be “better than his parent” (*quo nos cumque feret melior fortuna parente*, 1.7.25). If the Horace passage is earlier, Vergil may be picking up this theme of parental resentment (*mutatis mutandis*) from it; if Horace is later, he may be making more explicit what is present but unstated in Vergil.

The anaphora of *miratur* at the start of each line not only emphasizes the word, but replicates Aeneas' experience of marveling again and again as he looks from one thing to the next. The piling up of objects in his view has the same effect, which is enhanced by the excitement of the polysyndeton. We first see a wide view of the huge city (*molem*) from a distance, then zoom in, looking from the gates to the streets, and the hustle and bustle thereon. The collocation as phrased is somewhat random, with 'hubbub' thrown in the middle. It seems that these verses, which are clearly focalized through Aeneas—that is, it is his gaze we follow—, are in virtual *oratio recta*. It is as if he is thinking to himself, "What gates! And the hustle and bustle! And the paved streets!" Likewise *magalia quondam* is not (or not only) an insertion by the narrator: the Carthaginian word choice reflects the narrator's erudition, but the sentiment and its exclamatory marvel ("once huts!") belongs to Aeneas. He has attempted to found two cities already, and when he looks on this great city, still under construction, his natural reaction is to compare it to its very beginnings.

Next we see (still focalized through Aeneas) the Carthaginians hard at work. The fruits of their industriousness are plain to see.<sup>236</sup> Unlike his own ill-fated settlements, the Carthaginians' labors seem blessed with success. Aeneas is jealous. With a highly emotional exclamatory *o!*, he expresses his envy: '*o fortunati, quorum iam moenia surgunt!*' (1.437). The keyword here is *iam*. The Carthaginian's walls are *already* well under way; Aeneas own walls could be months, years, even decades away, for all he knows.<sup>237</sup> The rising walls of Carthage are not, *pace* Clay, "the symbol of his own

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<sup>236</sup> On the simile comparing the Carthaginians to bees, see the next chapter.

<sup>237</sup> Ovid's Dido brings out this point:

aspirations for a new Troy founded in the West.”<sup>238</sup> On the contrary, Aeneas’ “aspirations” are not his own, as he himself will later say (*Italiam non sponte sequor* 4.361), and the emotion that he feels here is not motivation but its opposite. For seven years Aeneas has been sacrificing present things for a murky, intangible future, and he is now convinced that the gods have proven themselves unfaithful. We saw in his speech at sea that he felt betrayed about his supposed *fata*; we saw in his speech to his men that he had no hope of survival in a deserted land; we saw in his speech to the huntress how bitter his current situation made him feel about his self-sacrificing commitment to *pietas*. It has been suggested repeatedly that Aeneas has taken a cynical view of the promise of his own future walls. Looking at Carthage makes Aeneas’ frustrated desire for such a home *now* particularly acute, and the focalization of these appealing views of Carthage through Aeneas aligns the reader with his point of view, helping the reader appreciate the tug Aeneas feels. As Rand observes, “A very natural temptation it is for Aeneas, coming at the moment of extreme despair and after so many attempts to raise the walls of a new Troy. Might not the rising Carthage fulfill at once the oracle and his dream?”<sup>239</sup>

Finally, we can see from his interpretation of the temple artwork that he thinks he is in a good place, a place that will treat his people well:

*sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi,*

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*utque latet vitatque tuas abstrusa carinas  
vix tibi continget terra petita seni. (Her. 7.147-8)*

And, as it is unknown and, being concealed, denies your ships, you may barely reach the land you seek in your old age.

<sup>238</sup> Clay 1988:196. Otis (1995:238) recognizes Aeneas’ “consciousness of the distance between his own present plight and his far-away goal. Dido has done what he is as yet far from doing.” Despite Otis’ recognition of Aeneas’ “bitterness” (p. 237) at this point, he immediately elides it into “nostalgia,” preserving Aeneas’ commitment to his goal: “His initial nostalgia is enhanced by this glimpse of the long hard way he has to go.”

<sup>239</sup> Rand 1908: 26.

*sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.  
solve metus; feret haec aliquam tibi fama salute.*

(*Aen.* 1.461-3)

Here, too, honor has its rewards, there are tears for things and the transience of life touches the mind. Let go of your fear; this fame will bring you some safety.

This is, of course, the *locus classicus* for character misinterpretation within the text,<sup>240</sup> but for the present argument the idea that Aeneas is wrong is not directly relevant (though it will figure prominently in our discussion of Dido's character in Chapter Two). What matters is that this is the first point in Book 1 in which Aeneas feels *hope*: "here, for the first time, Aeneas dared to hope for safety and to trust better in his afflicted circumstances," *hic primum Aeneas sperare salutem/ ausus et adflictis melius confidere rebus* (1.451-2). To state the obvious, that means that he was *without hope* before this point. I belabor this point because my argument has been that in our first three views of Aeneas (in the storm sea, addressing his shipwrecked men, and complaining to the divine "huntress"), the text suggested that he was not simply "nostalgic," or "depressed," as some scholars would have it, but that he had in fact lost hope in the providence of his mission—not that he was in danger of giving up on it, but that he *had* given up on it. When Aeneas does start to feel hope, it is not for his mission, but simply for survival (*salutem*). He does not say to Achates, "Perhaps we are destined to make it to Italy, after all," but rather, "Perhaps we will live."

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<sup>240</sup> As in the case of Venus' narration of Dido's story and the simile comparing the Carthaginians to bees, Aeneas' impression is much more favorable than that of the reader, who in all these situations can see something sinister that he cannot. These passages are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

Aeneas' favorable view of Carthage has been growing, and the "crescendo" of Book 1 reaches its climax in his encounter with its stunning leader.<sup>241</sup> As Aeneas is gazing at the temple frieze, Dido enters, and, like Nausicaa in the *Odyssey* (6.102-8), is compared to Diana:

*Haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda videntur,  
dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno,  
regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,  
incessit magna iuvenum stipante caterva.  
qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi  
exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae  
hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades; illa pharetram  
fert umero gradiensque deas supereminet omnis  
(Latoniae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus):  
talis erat Dido...*

(*Aen.* 1.494-503)

While Dardanian Aeneas was viewing these marvelous images, while he stands agape and pores over them, captivated in an unbroken gaze, the queen strides toward the temple, Dido, a woman most beautiful, with a band of young men crowding around her. Just as on the banks of the Eurotas or along the peaks of Cynthus Diana directs her dancers, with a thousand Oread nymphs in bands all around her following her; she carries a quiver on her shoulder and she walks tall, higher than all the other goddesses (joy overpowers the silent heart of Latona): so was Dido...

The contextual incongruity of this allusion bothered ancient commentators. Gellius records (*N.A.* 9.9.12) that Probus, according to his pupils, "used to say how Vergil had nowhere been more infelicitous than when he transferred the charming verses written about Nausicaa by Homer...Vergil's treatment simply was not fitting because the simile, conceived from Diana's sporting and hunting, could not be applied to Dido as she proceeded in pomp and festive attire through the middle of the city." The correspondence

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<sup>241</sup> Otis [1964] 1995: 235, "The rest of Book 1 (after 305) is, as we have already partially seen, arranged in a kind of crescendo that starts from Aeneas meeting with Venus and reaches its climax in the encounter with Dido. There are here three ironically ambiguous episodes: 1) The meeting with Venus (305-417), 2) Aeneas in the City (418-93), 3) The encounter with Dido (494-722)." See also Klingner 1967: 397 ff.

of elements in the simile to its narrative context has been thoroughly demonstrated by Pöschl, who answers the complaints of ancient critics by convincingly showing that “there is more of a correspondence than has been acknowledged between the lively movement of the Diana simile and that of the queen’s entrance,”<sup>242</sup> and West identifies a number of “irrational correspondences” that make this simile more appropriate than ancient commentators thought.<sup>243</sup>

Pöschl also recognizes the importance of the ways Vergil has altered the presentation: “In Homer, Odysseus is still far away and the beautiful spectacle is seen by none but the poet and reader. Aeneas, on the other hand, awaits and sees the queen.”<sup>244</sup> To put this in narratological terms, we may observe how there is no clear break in focalizer here, no distinctive transition back to the “objective” focalization of the narrator. We were perusing the temple through Aeneas’ eyes, and he is still the one gazing (*obutuque haeret defixus in uno*, 1.495) when *forma pulcherrima Dido* walks in (1.496). As the viewer of the scene, the adjective *pulcherrima* reflects his focalization, the impression Dido makes on him. Let me note that elsewhere in Book 1, the narrator uses adjectives that highlight Dido’s ignorance and impending misfortune,<sup>245</sup> or describes her with the geographical epithet *Sidonia*.<sup>246</sup> It is only when she first steps into Aeneas’ view that she is described as “beautiful.” How the sight of this beautiful woman and her activities (to be discussed presently) make him *feel* is suggested within the simile. As Pöschl observes, “the real crux of the Diana simile rests in the joy that fills Latona’s

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<sup>242</sup> Pöschl 1964: 63.

<sup>243</sup> West 1969: 43-4.

<sup>244</sup> Pöschl 1964: 65.

<sup>245</sup> *fati nescia* 1.299; *inscia* 1.717; *infelix* 1.749.

<sup>246</sup> 1.446; 1.613.



silent heart, which explains why Vergil, in contrast to Homer, has put it at the end. The hidden emotion of the still unseen spectator is thus revealed.”<sup>247</sup> That is, in this joy we are seeing “the germ of love” sprout in Aeneas’ heart as he watches her.<sup>248</sup>

Pöschl’s insight that this simile reflects Aeneas’ impression is convincing, and important to my interest in structures of suggestion that indirectly reveal characters’ inner worlds. I would like to add two points, the first about what the simile suggests about Aeneas’ visceral, emotional reaction to the sight of Dido (the excitement of sexual passion), and the second about his psychological reaction (the way he perceives Dido’s role). In the simile, the verb used to describe how joy acts upon Leto’s heart as she watches her beautiful daughter presents a gap, for it is odd: *pertemptant*, it “overcomes” her heart. This idea of overpowering implies reluctance in her heart that Probus found puzzling: “[Vergil] himself, however, wishing to imitate this [ge/ghqe de/ te fre/na Lhtw/, “Leto rejoiced in her heart,” Od. 6.106], made her joy slow and superficial and hesitating and as if floating on the surface of her heart. For he [Probus] said that he did not know what else ‘*pertemptant*’ could mean.”<sup>249</sup> While successfully answering Probus’ other criticisms of Vergil’s use of this simile, Pöschl breezes past what is in fact a genuine problem in *pertemptant*. It is odd that in Vergil’s simile Leto’s heart should be hesitant, somehow resisting her own reaction to her daughter’s beauty. Its

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<sup>247</sup> Pöschl 1962: 67.

<sup>248</sup> Pöschl (1964: 65): “The germ of love in his heart sprouts from this first deeply stirring impression.” West (1969: 44), on the other hand, considers the joy that tempts Leto’s heart to be an “irrational correspondence” with Dido’s own happiness (*se laeta ferebat*, 1.503), but I do not find that suggestion compelling.

<sup>249</sup> Aulus Gellius (*N.A.* 9.12.15): *atque illud impense Probum esse demiratum in Vergilio dicebant, quod Homerica quidem Leto gaudium gaudeat genuinum et intimum atque in ipso penetrati cordis et animae vigen, siquidem non aliud est: ge/ghqe de/ te fre/na Lhtw/. ipse autem imitari hoc volens gaudia fecerit pigra et levia et cunctantia et quasi in summo pectore supernantia; nescire enim sese, quid significaret aliud “pertemptant.”*

incongruence within the simile draws attention to the “silent viewer” outside of the simile to whom Leto corresponds: Aeneas. In *his* heart, *pertemptant* makes perfect sense. He has been mired in despair and resistant to optimism, but since catching view of Carthage his attitude has been brightening, and now he gives way.

We may understand, then, the resistance of *pertemptat* in reference to Leto’s analogue, Aeneas, whose pessimism is overcome by joy as he views Dido’s beauty. There is an important difference between Leto and Aeneas, however. Leto’s joy can be understood to come from her pride as the mother of such a beautiful individual. The joy that a woman’s beauty brings a male viewer, on the other hand, arises from desire. Vergil in fact uses the same word, *pertempto*, in the *Georgics* to describe the way that sexual passion overcomes a horse that has caught a whiff of a mare: *nonne vides ut tota tremor pertemptet equorum/ corpora, si tantum notas odor attulit auras?* (“You see, do you not, how a tremor seizes stallions’ whole bodies if only the scent has carried on the familiar breeze,” *G.* 3.250-1).<sup>250</sup> This overpowering effect of sexual desire, he noted earlier in this passage, is the same for animals and humans: *amor omnibus idem* (*G.* 3.244). As Nappa remarks in his discussion of love and madness in *Georgics* 3, “Vergil’s *amor* is a force that goes well beyond either love or lust; it is a driving passion that pushes its victim toward that which the victim desires.”<sup>251</sup> The suggestion that Aeneas feels the irresistible passion of *amor* as he beholds Dido is an inference that the horizon I have been tracing helps to structure. Moreover, the reader who has filled the gaps in this way will then be more likely to notice further suggestions of Aeneas’ erotic attraction to Dido in Book 1.

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<sup>250</sup> Strengthening the intertextual connection, this line directly follows the warning that it is not safe to wander in the wilds of Libya during mating season (*heu, male tum Libyae solis erratur in agris*, *G.* 3.249).

<sup>251</sup> Nappa 2005: 137.

This is important to observe, since it is the groundwork laid for the inferences that must be drawn about his motivations in Book 4.

I have argued, then, that one should not try to ignore the awkwardness of the verb *pertemptat* in reference to Leto's heart, but rather appreciate that this incongruence draws attention to the "silent viewer" outside of the simile to whom she corresponds, Aeneas, and the effect that viewing Dido has on him. While Pöschl has already observed that Vergil's similes represent inner events,<sup>252</sup> I have argued that the word *pertemptat* suggests a reaction that is not as benign as the sprouting of the "germ of love," but rather a visceral erotic reaction (with vaguely dangerous connotations). Aeneas has been utterly pessimistic up to this point, not just about the authenticity of his prophesied fate to settle in Italy, but about whether or not the shipwrecked men will even live. A new twinge of hope for survival began to tempt Aeneas for the first time as he beheld Dido's city and temple. When the struggle in his heart between his persistent expectation of death and the new hope for survival that he barely even "dares" to allow himself<sup>253</sup> is won, as we see happen indirectly in this simile, the scale is tipped to optimism by the power of sexual desire.

The second point that I would like to add to Pöschl's observation that this simile reflects Aeneas' inner world is that it enables us to see not only how he feels, but what (and how) he thinks. As in the case of his impressions of Dido's personal history (1.340-68),<sup>254</sup> his view of Carthage evoking a beehive (1.430-6), and the temple murals (1.467-

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<sup>252</sup> Pöschl 1964: 65.

<sup>253</sup> *hic primum Aeneas sperare salutem/ ausus* (1.451-2).

<sup>254</sup> As I noted in discussion of this passage, this impression must be conjectured based upon the intent betrayed by Venus' rhetoric.

78), the impression made on Aeneas here by Dido's activity as a ruler is thoroughly positive, while the reader is presented with a view that exposes a different, less flattering angle.<sup>255</sup> In the simile that reflects Aeneas' inner workings, one can see a psychological event take place, in which Aeneas suppresses the transgressive aspect of Dido's exercise of power over men. As a reflection of his impression,<sup>256</sup> the simile exposes his reshaping of the scene in front of him to accommodate his positive, desirous view of Carthage and Dido. For, the gender dynamics of the scene are troublingly (by ancient standards) inverted, with a woman exercising authority over her men. Aeneas, however, processes the scene in a way that "fixes" this, de-politicizing and re-feminizing Dido's masculine role.

The reader's alertness to the dangerous gender transgression that he is about to witness had been heightened by the bridge to Dido's entrance, the image on the temple of Penthesilea, the *bellatrix* who dares to usurp a masculine role (*bellatrix, audetque viris concurrere virgo*, 1.493).<sup>257</sup> Tatum remarks that "[a]s he turns from Dido's mural with its depiction of Penthesilea, the Amazon who dared to vie with men, he sees a comparable figure before him: like Penthesilea, Dido is a woman successfully engaged in a world of men, dispensing laws and justice."<sup>258</sup> Dido enters totally surrounded by armed men (*iuvenum stipante caterva*, 1.497; *saepta armis*, 1.506), an image that resonates at the

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<sup>255</sup> I have only treated the positive impression these scenes make on Aeneas in this chapter, as I am reserving consideration of the dubious suggestions available to the reader for my discussion of Dido in Chapter 2.

<sup>256</sup> I take the simile as symbolically representing, though not literally transcribing, his thoughts.

<sup>257</sup> Pignon 1991: 45-53 and Segal 1990: 3-4. Krevans (2002-3: 176) notes that linking Dido to Penthesilea strengthens her connection to Hypsipyle, who has many Amazon characteristics (*Arg.* 1.627-30). I argue in Chapter 2 that evocations of Hypsipyle in Dido are important to the reader's sense that her generous welcome has an ulterior motive.

<sup>258</sup> Tatum 1984: 437.

authorial level with Penthesilea on the battlefield, *mediisque in milibus* (1.491). Dido's power over adult males strikes Aeneas, however, as innocuous, like a virgin goddess in the woods with her nymphs. Her political supereminence over these men, literalized in her high throne (*solioque alte subnixta resedit*, 1.506), becomes, in Aeneas' mind, Diana's superiority in height to her female followers (*deas supereminet omnis*, 1.501). Like Penthesilea who "dares to contend with men," Dido gives laws not just to her "people" generically but specifically "to men" (*iura dabat legesque viris*, 1.507).<sup>259</sup> This and the vigorous pressure she exerts upon them (*instans opera*, 1.504) are softened, in Aeneas' mind, into a more appropriately feminine image, that of a goddess training her dancing nymphs (*qualis...exercet Diana choros*, 1.498-9).

Dido has, then, been introduced to the reader as potentially comparable to Penthesilea, but her disturbing masculine behavior is reshaped in the imagination of Aeneas, who has been "overcome" by her beauty, into a more gender-appropriate analogue, a female leading other females in a non-political context. This may be what Aeneas wants to see, but the image of Dido as this particular goddess raises as many problems for the reader as it solves for Aeneas. Dido does not actually meld easily into Diana: she is urban, political, and, most importantly, unlike the virgin huntress she is not *thalami expertem*. Comparing her to Diana heightens the reader's awareness of the difference between them—at least externally.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Tiberius Claudius Donatus remarks that she must be a good leader indeed for men to obey her. The fact that Dido is a woman comes up continually in his assessment.

<sup>260</sup> Nappa (2007: 313) argues an inner alignment between Dido and Diana, using this simile and other associations of Dido with nymphs, hunting, and Diana, particularly Dido's own wish that she could have lived *more ferae* (4.551), a loose calque or "interpretive translation," as Nappa argues (*ibid.*: 307 n. 31), of Homer's description of Artemis' nymphs as *agrono/moi* (*Od.* 6.105-6).

Dido may remind Aeneas of what Diana would look like as she leads her chorus, but the simile will remind the reader of another simile, Homer's description of Nausicaa playing in the woods (*Od* 6.101-9).<sup>261</sup> Probus' complained that Artemis' joyful hunt was not suitable for comparison with Dido's stately (and as he imagines, somber) entrance, and in one respect Pöschl has successfully countered this claim, showing how much lively movement Vergil's scene also contains.<sup>262</sup> But Probus may have a point, though the result is not as infelicitous as he may think. Even refitted with the proper modifications,<sup>263</sup> the simile is incongruous. Vergil's reworking of it may appropriately reflect Dido's location and lively movement, but it still recalls a very famous simile that describes a girl who is very, very different from Dido, despite a number of superficial similarities.<sup>264</sup> They are, of course, both beautiful, young, unmarried, royal women in the land where the hero has been shipwrecked. And yet, the nature of their unmarried status is also what makes them so different: Nausicaa is an innocent virgin, who lives under the authority of her father, the king. Dido is well acquainted with sex (not to mention lies, inter-familial murder, daring theft and dangerous political enmities), and moreover she is under no one's authority. She *is* the king, as it were. The reader already knows all this about Dido, and when the text conjures up a comparison to Nausicaa, it brings Dido's

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<sup>261</sup> This is mediated by Apollonius' use of the same simile to describe Medea (3.876-85), see Otis [1964] 1995: 73-6 and Nelis 2001:82-6. It therefore participates in the two-tiered intertextual pattern of Book 1, which systematically alludes both to a "contamination" of *Odyssey* 5-10 and of Jason's arrivals at Lemnos and Colchis in the *Argonautica*. On this, see Chapter 2.

<sup>262</sup> Pöschl 1964: 62-3.

<sup>263</sup> Pöschl (1964:64) notes that Vergil makes Diana lead her companions (*exercet...choros*) and replaces Artemis' sport with Diana's ritualistic performance, which Vergil makes take place at her shrines in Sparta and Delos (*in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cunthi*) rather than the hunting grounds of Taygetos and Erymathos.

<sup>264</sup> Hexter (1992: 337) finds the parallel between Nausicaa and Dido "too far" of a stretch, but as Galinsky (1996: 230) stresses, "the reader is invited to reflect on both the similarities and dissimilarities," and "the poet is asking the reader to determine the exact extent of such resonances."

worldly experience and anomalous, gender-transgressing political power into high definition.<sup>265</sup> To sum up my point, Aeneas' desire to see Dido in a more appropriately feminine role, recasting her as Diana leading nymphs, may strike a discordant note in the mind of the reader who can see how very different, at least externally, Dido and Diana are, and the reminiscence at the authorial level of the Homeric model of Nausicaa for Aeneas' impression highlights how off-base it is. This is, then, yet another in a series of instances in which the "possible subworld" that Aeneas projects upon the actual world is shown is shown to misalign.

Concealed in the cloud, Aeneas watches as Ilioneus presents the Trojan situation to Dido (without mentioning their *fata*), and Dido responds by offering them assistance in reaching Italy, or, should they so choose, Sicily, and then offers another option, settlement in Carthage. In the next chapter we will discuss these speeches in detail. At the present I would like to stay focused on Aeneas and the exposition of his feelings and motivations. Just after Dido finishes speaking, he appears seemingly out of thin air, and identifies himself as the very Trojan Aeneas whom Dido had just wished were present as she concluded her speech.<sup>266</sup> He goes on to make the speech that forms the gap with which I began this chapter (1.595-610), in which he lavishly thanks Dido for her offer of settlement in Carthage, without declining it. The reader's inference about why has been structured in the way I have argued. Having worked linearly through the exposition of

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<sup>265</sup> Nappa 2007: 312: "When Aeneas meets Dido, on the other hand [as opposed to Odysseus meeting Nausicaa], he is meeting with the political authority of Carthage, *regina* and *dux*. The *Odyssey's* careful preservation of societal norms collapses in Dido's Carthage."

<sup>266</sup> *'atque utinam rex ipse Noto compulsus eodem/ adforet Aeneas! equidem per litora certos/ dimittam et Libyae lustrare extrema iubebo,/ si quibus eiectus silvis aut urbibus errat.'* "But if only your king himself, Aeneas, were present, driven her by that same south wind! I certainly will send out trustworthy men along the coast and will order them to comb the farthest reaches of Libya, in case he has been cast ashore and wanders in some woods or town." (1.575-8)

Aeneas' viewpoint up to this juncture, I hope to have shown how strong Aeneas' attraction to Carthage and Dido already is, and how this both makes the reader more alert to his ambiguous reply and gives the reader ideas about why.

The narrator offers no explanatory or editorial comment on Aeneas' speech, which means the reader must also fill in this gap (Aeneas' actual intentions), in addition to the gap of Dido's perception of Aeneas' intentions (which I will treat in the next chapter). Given the development of Aeneas' bitter, skeptical attitude toward his supposed mission that we have discussed so far, the reader can infer why it is that he does not use it to excuse himself from the queen's offer, as Odysseus and Jason did in similar circumstances. Moreover, we shall see that inferences about Aeneas' erotic attraction to Dido will be borne out in the remainder of Book 1. Before leaving Aeneas' speech of thanks to Dido, I would like to note the erotic resonances that this speech contains.

Aeneas concludes his speech thus:

*quae te tam laeta tulerunt  
saecula? qui tanti talem genuere parentes?  
in freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbrae  
lustrabunt convexa, polus dum sidera pascet,  
semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque  
manebunt, quae me cumque vocant terrae.'*  
(Aen. 1.605-10)

“What happy age bore you? What noble parents begot one such as you? As long as rivers flow into the sea, as long as shadows pass over the mountains, as long as the sky gives pasture to the stars, your honor and name and praise will always remain, whatever lands call me.”

Aeneas' exclamation *quae te tam laeta tulerunt/ saecula qui tanti talem genuere parentes?* (1.605-6), echoes Odysseus' accolades of Nausicaa: *trisma/karej me\ n*



soi/ ge path\ r kai\ po/tnia mh/thr, trisma/karej de\  
kasi/gnhtoi (“three times blessed are your father and the lady your mother, and  
three times blessed your brothers too,” *Od.* 6.154-5). This allusion has been well noted,  
but its significance has received less attention. One may recall that Nausicaa was  
conjured in Aeneas’ first view of Dido, in the Diana-simile. That simile, as I argued  
above, reflects Aeneas’ erotic attraction to Dido, and suggests his re-imagining of Dido’s  
political, masculine role in a more appropriately feminine scenario. At the same time, its  
intertextual echo of the Artemis-simile in *Odyssey* 6 put Nausicaa on the reader’s  
interpretational map for Dido (primarily, I argued, for contrastive effect). Now, with  
Aeneas’ remark about Dido’s parents, we are encouraged to see him flattering Dido as  
Odysseus flattered Nausicaa. Odysseus capped this statement about Nausicaa’s blessed  
parents with the observation that most blessed of all is the man who will marry her:

kei=noj d’ au] pe/ri kh~ri maka/rtatoj elcaxon allwn,  
o3j ke/ s’ e0e/donoisi bri/saj oi]ko/nd’ a0ga/ghtai.  
(*Od.* 6.158-9)

“but blessed at the heart, even beyond these others, is that one who, after loading  
you down with gifts, leads you as his bride home.”  
(Lattimore trans.)

Where Odysseus compliments Nausicaa as a most desirable wife, Aeneas caps speech  
with an “unmistakably” erotic trope,<sup>267</sup> declaring (1.607-10): “As long as rivers flow into  
the sea, as long as shadows pass over the mountains, as long as the sky gives pasture to  
the stars, your honor and name and praise will always remain.”<sup>268</sup> Odysseus’ appeal to  
Nausicaa’s conjugal aspirations is not a random attempt at flattery, but one clearly

<sup>267</sup> Ross 2007: 33.

<sup>268</sup> For parallels see K.F. Smith on Tibullus 1.4.65-6, Shackleton Bailey on Prop 1.15.29, Nisbet-Hubbard on Horace C. 1.2.9, 1.29.10, 1.33.7.

calculated to strike a chord with a noble girl just coming upon marriageable age, for whom this can be deduced as a likely interest. Though the reader may well be aware of the other traditions of Dido's story, in which she has no interest in remarrying,<sup>269</sup> for the character Aeneas it may not be absurd to imagine that his romantic interests will meet with reciprocation. She is a female of child-bearing age,<sup>270</sup> and, as Aeneas knows from Venus' speech, she is capable of intense love but does not have a husband. Moreover, as Adler argues, when Dido concludes her offer of citizenship to Ilioneus and the other Trojans by wishing that Aeneas were also present, she "delicately suggests the unspoken thought that, just as the Trojan people may be united with the Carthaginian people, so the Trojan king may be united with the Carthaginian queen; if the two peoples are to be one, surely they will be ruled by King Aeneas and Queen Dido."<sup>271</sup> Political alliances both in the real Roman world and within the poem (i.e., Lavinia) are sealed with marriages, and needless to say, it would be inconceivable for two unmarried monarchs to plan to permanently cohabit as friends. We cannot imagine Aeneas to be unaware of what such a

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<sup>269</sup> This tradition will be discussed at length in Chapter 2.

<sup>270</sup> Dido is frequently imagined by scholars as a mature, even middle-aged lady based, it would seem, simply on the fact that she is a widow. The text suggests that she is still quite young, though. She was given as a virgin, and so we are to imagine, a young teen, to Sychaeus (1.345). Venus does not say how long they were married before he was killed, but her story moves quickly from the marriage to the murder, which makes the events feel close. The reader concerned with such details may deduce that Sychaeus was killed relatively soon after marrying Dido, given that the marriage had not yet produced children. (And, even if they were married, say, ten years, Dido would still be in her early twenties.) Moreover, she has not been in Carthage long. E.L. Harrison suggests (1984: 101) that "the important concept of the longstanding faithfulness of Dido toward her dead husband could only have benefited from the representation of Carthage as an already established city; as it is, the notion of its *novitas* tends to conflict with this." As Harrison himself observes, though, there does not seem to be evidence in the text for what is in fact the very common but nonetheless unfounded assumption that Dido has been a widow for a long time (i.e., the "longstanding" faithfulness he ascribes to her). Given that women were often widowed young in the ancient world, the ancient reader might well have imagined a beautiful widow (particularly a childless one) to be young as automatically as modern readers imagine a widow old.

<sup>271</sup> Adler 2003:33. As Monti (1981:35) observes: "The emotional aspect of the Dido-Aeneas relationship does not obliterate its initial political character, but rather is an intensification and extension of it."

union of peoples would mean for the relationship between their respective monarchs, and he may be understood to hint his favorable attitude with the erotic overtones of his speech.

Dido certainly interprets his speech (which is, incidentally, the last we hear him speak in Book 1) optimistically. I will discuss her response in detail in the next chapter. Here I would like to note one thing, namely that she implies that he has responded affirmatively to her offer of a home in Carthage when she suggests to them that they have finally come home:

*me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores  
iactatam hac demum voluit consistere terra;  
non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco.*  
(*Aen.* 1.628-630)

Fortune wanted *me* to settle in this land too, after I had been cast about through many similar labors; being no stranger to trouble, I am learning to know how to help the unfortunate.

Dido suggests that in *this* land and no other (*hac demum*)<sup>272</sup> the Trojans have finally found the place they were meant to settle, just as she did (*me quoque*).<sup>273</sup> She has offered them a permanent home, and Aeneas has not rejected her offer. She then takes it a step further, speaking to them almost as if they had accepted. She has no reason at this point

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<sup>272</sup> On *demum*, Austin observes (1971: 193 *ad loc.*), “with *hac*, ‘in this land, and just this one’, chosen as it were from all others” citing for comparison Cic. *ad Att.* 8.8.1.

<sup>273</sup> James O’Hara has observed (in conversation, in reference to my presentation *Dido as a Correct Interpreter?* at the 2011 APA) that *quoque* could be modifying *per multos similis...labores/iactatam*. Grammatically this possible, and taking the sentence in isolation, it would make equal sense. It would, however, totally disjoint the sentence (main clause: [*fortuna*] *hac demum voluit [me] consistere terra*) from the preceding sentence, rather than function as a logical connective, as it does when taken to modify *me*. That is, the second sentence explains the previous sentence in which she exhorted the Trojans, whom she has invited to share her city, to enter her house (*tectis...succedite nostris*). With *quoque* modifying *me*, the two sentences read: I welcome you into my home, [for] I was *also* meant to settle in *this* land [as you are].” If we take *quoque* in the subordinate clause, we have no logical reason for Dido to follow her exhortation to the Trojans to enter her house by saying [*fortuna*] *hac demum voluit [me] consistere terra*: I welcome you, [and, on an unrelated note] I was meant to settle in *this* land.

not to be optimistic that they will, for Aeneas is showing no sign of resistance to the suggestion, and in fact seems warm to it. With no contradiction from Aeneas, they enter the palace to feast.

We are given one more suggestive hint of Aeneas' already strong erotic feelings in the banquet scene that follows. During the feast, Cupid, disguised as Ascanius, arrives at the behest of Venus and arouses the admiration of the Carthaginians, and especially their queen, with both his personal beauty and the luxury of the gifts (1.709-14).<sup>274</sup>

Ascanius makes for the queen, after first clinging to Aeneas with his infectious limbs:

*ille ubi complexu Aeneae colloque pependit  
et magnum falsi implevit genitoris amorem,  
reginam petit.*

(*Aen.* 1.715-7)

After he draped himself in Aeneas embrace, hanging from his neck, and filled up the great love of his false father, he made for the queen.

The phrase *magnum falsi implevit genitoris amorem* ("he filled up his false father's great love") contains a knot of ambiguities. One question is who are to be understood as the subject and object in *genitoris amorem* ("love of the father"). Though Servius took this as an objective genitive referring to the false Ascanius' simulation of love for Aeneas, this (*imitari*) is not what *implevit* means.<sup>275</sup> Henry argues that it only makes sense as "the affection of the father for the son," and notes that the false Ascanius treats Aeneas and Dido in a parallel way, soliciting their embraces to incite love.<sup>276</sup> Though Henry takes this to be fatherly affection in Aeneas' case, the fact that he uses the same technique to

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<sup>274</sup> This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>275</sup> Servius *ad* 1.716: ET MAGNUM arduum; difficile est enim imitari verum filii adfectum. ("GREAT: meaning laborious; for it is difficult to imitate the true affection of a son.")

<sup>276</sup> Henry 1873-92: 834 *ad* 1.719-23.

induce an erotic response in Dido suggests that the *amor* with which he fills Aeneas is of the same sort of feeling that which makes Dido forget her husband. Moreover, the two leaders are in a parallel place, emotionally. Both have already been shown, indirectly, to be strongly attracted to one another. In the present chapter, we saw that Aeneas felt erotic attraction in his immediate reaction to the sight of Dido in the temple (*pertemptant gaudia pectus*, 1.502) as suggested by the intertextual evocation of the overpowering *amor* that drives animals to mate (*tremor pertemptet...corpora*, *G.* 3.250-1). As I will discuss in my exploration of the development of Dido's perspective in Chapter 2, she is shown in to feel romantic attraction to Aeneas in her first view of him (*obstipuit*, 1.613), as suggested by the evocation of Nausicaa's immediate emotional reaction to the sight of the beautified Odysseus (*q̄hei~to de\ kou/rh*, 6.237). That is, they have both already begun to feel the nagging tug of *amor*, and if Cupid's embrace amplifies this in Dido, it only follows that it amplifies it in Aeneas, too.<sup>277</sup>

To sum up, when Aeneas does not decline Dido's offer of citizenship, and neglects to mention his *fata* or correct her impression, there is a reason. I hope to have shown that this may be because he has lost hope in his mission and faith in its divine guarantor(s), particularly his mother, and at the same time is marvelously impressed by Carthage, and overcome with passion for its alluring leader. Aeneas tries not to sound too committed to his mission—both when he introduces himself to Dido, and, later as he concludes the tale of his wanderings (to be discussed in Chapter 3)—because his

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<sup>277</sup> The next time that we see Aeneas and Dido interact, it is on the fateful day of the hunt. The development of Aeneas' feelings of love here is important for filling in gaps in his motivations in Book 4.

commitment has totally disintegrated just he comes upon what looks like an irresistibly appealing alternative.

## **Chapter Two**

### ***Vultum demissa:* Constructing Dido's Perspective in Book 1**

In the last chapter I discussed how Aeneas presents himself to Dido, and why. In this chapter I will discuss how Dido interprets Aeneas' words and the nature of the Trojan situation, which I will argue she sees opportunistically and reacts to with cunning. Chapter 1 was structured around a key gap—why Aeneas responds in an ambiguously positive way to Dido's offer of permanent home in Carthage—and showed how the reader's construction of Aeneas' "possible subworld" enables her to infer motivations that are not stated explicitly. So in this chapter I would like to start by pointing to a gap, namely, why Dido takes the extraordinary step of offering the Trojans settlement in her

kingdom—the kingdom itself, as she initially phrases it (*urbem quam statuo, vestra est*, 1.573). The gap opened up by Dido’s excessive generosity, especially when it has been hinted that her initial disposition toward the Trojans was hostile, prompts the reader to speculate a motive that will close the gap and establish consistency, while furthering the development of the plot. I will argue that set against the backdrop of Dido’s indirect characterization in the scenes leading up to her interview with the Trojans, the pragmatic and duplicitous Carthaginian queen appears to be trying to exploit the fact that a band of homeless Trojan warriors showed up on the doorstep of her fledgling state, which happens to be greatly in need of an army.

Scholarly discussions of Dido’s characterization often begin relatively far into it. The reader’s introduction to Dido does not coincide with the alluring series of impressions experienced by Aeneas in Venus’ recital of Dido’s personal history (1.338-68), nor Aeneas’ first dazzling view her as she strides, *forma pulcherrima*, into the Temple of Juno and dispenses justice and duties to her citizens with aplomb (1.494-508)—though scholars very frequently refer to this happy scene as our first and foundational view of her.<sup>278</sup> If the reader’s view coincided entirely with that of Aeneas, I think he would certainly conclude, as Williams does, that “[i]n these opening scenes Virgil has portrayed a woman whom there is every reason to admire. The first of her qualities revealed to us has her energy and courage—*dux femina facti*. Secondly her

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<sup>278</sup> Pöschl (1962: 61) begins his treatment of Dido in the Temple: “The dark drama of Dido begins with a happy scene.” After mentioning Venus’ story as our preview of Dido, Camps (1969: 31) goes on: “When she appears it is in the role of queen, active, admired, beautiful and attended with all the honours of her royal condition. She receives the Trojans with generous sympathy.” Monti (1981: 9-29) argues that she appears a paragon of *humanitas*. Ross (2007: 33): “We see Dido for the first time just as Aeneas does, as she and her entourage enter the temple of Juno...”

beauty is like that of a goddess. Thirdly she is a capable and beloved ruler, whose people happily accept her leadership. Fourth she is warm hearted and helpful to those in distress.<sup>279</sup> This series of uniquely favorable representations does shape *Aeneas*' view of Dido (and I pushed the implications of that in Chapter 1), but the *reader's* view is not coextensive with that of Aeneas. The reader already been shown her first direct view of Dido in a scene with much more sinister implications—Mercury's softening of the Phoenicians' *ferocia corda*. This scene, though brief, is absolutely essential to the plot and characterization that follows, and yet has received surprisingly little analysis. Moreover, even before the reader's introduction to Dido in the Mercury scene, the Carthaginian people and even the as-yet unnamed queen herself have been characterized through a program of allusive foreshadowing. I would like to begin by discussing this allusive program and follow its development in relation to Dido up to, and then beyond, the gap around which I would like to construct this chapter, namely, the disparity between the presentation of her attitude toward the Trojans before their arrival and her own presentation of her feelings and intentions in her speeches to the Trojans themselves.

As I discussed in the Introduction and the previous chapter, allusion is a device that can be used to nudge the reader onto "inferential walks" along paths that can both open up gaps and indirectly provide help in closing them. It encourages reading between the lines by creating parallels whose relationship must be extrapolated, and shows, sometimes broadly and sometimes pointedly,<sup>280</sup> how to shade in the contours of Vergil's

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<sup>279</sup> R.D. Williams 1987: 107.

<sup>280</sup> Broadly, intertexts can imbue a scene with the emotional color necessary for sensing a character's tone or disposition, while they can also suggest specific "facts" about the story world that must be supplied by the reader's inference (what Eco calls "ghost chapters").



own narrative. One function of allusion in the poem, as I have been arguing, is to help the reader fill in gaps in the elliptical and often enigmatic presentation of characters' inner workings and viewpoints.<sup>281</sup> Particularly important for our understanding of the Dido and Aeneas episode is a program of "double allusion"<sup>282</sup> that runs through *Aeneid* 1 and 4 linking Dido's reception of Aeneas to Circe's reception of Odysseus in *Odyssey* 10 (and, secondarily, Alcinous' in *Odyssey* 6—7) and Hypsipyle's reception of Jason in *Argonautica* 1 (and, secondarily, Aeetes' in *Argonautica* 3). Nelis' extensive study has shown that a "pattern of two-tier allusion linking Vergil, Apollonius and Homer is fundamental to the understanding of the *Aeneid* as a whole,"<sup>283</sup> and is particularly crucial to the Carthage episode.<sup>284</sup>

When we look at Books 1—4 from above, so to speak, the Homeric model that may seem the most dominant is Odysseus' sojourn in Scheria, and in terms of narrative structure this is an apt parallel: both Scheria and Carthage are places where the hero arrives after being shipwrecked in a storm, and after reaching a city under the divine protection of a concealing cloud, he is hospitably received, and at a banquet proceeds to

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<sup>281</sup> See my discussion of how, for example, the allusion to *Il.* 21.273-9 in Aeneas' speech in the storm at sea (1.92-101) indirectly exposes his angry feelings of betrayal by the gods, particularly his mother, while the allusion to *G.* 3.250-1 in the Diana simile (1.498-503) suggests that he experiences an intensely erotic reaction to his first view of the queen. The reader who has inferred the true nature of Aeneas' hidden emotions from these allusions is then better able to notice the nuance in Aeneas' response to Dido's offer of a home in Carthage, and supply a motivation for it.

<sup>282</sup> On the notion of double allusion, see in particular Cairns 1979, McKeown 1987 *ad* 1.37-45, Thomas 1986. These studies focus largely on the self-conscious poetics of double allusion, while my interest here is in how it creates a more varied and complex plot.

<sup>283</sup> Nelis 2001: 5.

<sup>284</sup> Since the reader's awareness of models is important to the argument that follows, it is worth noting that both of the dominant poetic models discussed in this chapter had also been translated into Latin. By Vergil's time, the *Odusia* of Livius Andronicus was a school text (Horace, *Ep.* 2.1.69ff, see also Conte 1994: 40 and Bonner 1977: 213) and the *Argonautica* of Apollonius was translated by Varro of Atax in 45 B.C.E. (see Odgers 195: 145).

tell of his previous wanderings in a multi-book inset narration.<sup>285</sup> But the linear reader, who only sees Book 1 as Book 1 unfolds, Scheria is only one of several Homeric models that presents itself, and running alongside it is Odysseus' landing at Aeaea and reception by Circe.<sup>286</sup> As Knauer observes, "in *Aeneid* 1 Vergil has contaminated two large portions of the *Odyssey* without changing the sequence of their single parts."<sup>287</sup> Moreover, braided together with these two strands from the *Odyssey* is another large-scale allusive pattern by which the reader is reminded continually of Apollonius' reworking of these very scenes in his representation of Jason's reception both on Lemnos and in the palace of Aeetes in the *Argonautica*. While these are among a plethora of other intertextual parallels available to help shape the reader's expectations and response during the development of the plot,<sup>288</sup> what I will argue in this chapter is that recollections Circe's reception of Odysseus and Hypsipyle's reception of Jason (which itself recalls Circe's reception)<sup>289</sup> are activated at key moments both to build up questions

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<sup>285</sup> This is the dominant model in Nelis' schema (2001: 70).

<sup>286</sup> Scholars have tended to ignore the presence of *Odyssey* 10 in *Aeneid* 1 due to the structural parallels between *Aeneid* 1 and *Odyssey* 5. "The correspondence was so obvious that it deterred readers from seeing Virgil contaminated *Odyssey* 5 and 10 in *Aeneid* 1." (Knauer 1990: 396)

<sup>287</sup> Knauer [1964b] 1990: 399.

<sup>288</sup> My interest is primarily in allusions that supply explanatory context to oblique developments in the plot, with an interest less in questions of what deeper message the poet is conveying at the symbolic level and more in how allusions—particularly sustained patterns of them—give the reader footholds in the plot. Cf. the fair, in my view, observation of West (2000: 234): "Much recent work on intertextuality, genre, symbolism, and imagery in Virgil depends on observing resemblances. Many of the practitioners... are imposing for the accuracy of their observations and the justice of their conclusions, but a doubt remains. Is this the way to read poetry? And is this the way it was heard when read in Virgil's time? Not all resemblances and repetitions are load-bearing." The systems of allusion that I am interested in here show themselves to be "load-bearing" by the way they relate meaningfully to one another and significantly alter the way the plot can be read.

<sup>289</sup> "Dido has been shown to be modeled on both Alcinoos and Circe during the reception scene. These two Homeric characters had, however, already been blended by Apollonius in the creation of Hypsipyle." Nelis 2001: 117.

and premonitions about what will happen (creating suspense through foreshadowing),<sup>290</sup> and to help the reader deduce the intentions behind Aeneas and Dido's unexplained actions and reactions (that is, to use his or her "intertextual encyclopedia" to write the "ghost chapters" necessitated by gaps).<sup>291</sup>

Moreover, this epic-allusive program is not the only means used to shape reader responses in anticipation of Dido's first appearance. The poet also activates historical stereotypes of Carthaginian cruelty, and in Venus' speech makes pointed reference to the way she is purposefully whitewashing less savory aspects of Dido's "true," unabridged life story as it was known in the pre-Vergilian tradition evidenced by Timaeus and Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus. These less appealing aspects of her character—specifically, her duplicity and acquisitiveness—are also pointed to indirectly by the scenes chosen for representation on the temple she has built for Juno. The development of these indirect suggestion about her character, as well as the flashes of Circe and Hypsipyle that flare up in the course of her speeches to the Trojans, help the reader fill in the gaps left by the text's oblique exposition of her motivations when she offers the Trojans her city and proceeds to give a suspicious explanation of her longstanding admiration of their people. We will first look at the Carthage theme in the proem (briefly, because it has already received plenty of scholarly analysis), and we will then turn to how the text builds the expectation that Aeneas may be about to meet woman as dangerous and potentially transformative as Circe, and who is as quick thinking and duplicitous as

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<sup>290</sup> See Barthes' (1970: 17 and *passim*) "hermeneutic code," the structuring principle of creating suspense through unanswered questions.

<sup>291</sup> See my introductory chapter, which draws on the arguments of Eco 1979 (for the terms used here, see especially p. 214). I use the term "intertextual encyclopedia" in a more narrowly literary sense than Eco.

the Dido of legend—a figure who would probably act just as pragmatically as Hypsipyle does in the *Argonautica* if an army showed up upon the doorstep of her precarious state. This chapter will show what a very different, and much more sinister, picture we get of Dido when, instead of beginning our analysis of her with the golden moment when she strides into the temple of Juno, we approximate the reader’s linear experience of the development of Dido’s character, working through the text sequentially and observing all the hints of danger and duplicity that structure a more guarded, skeptical response to that impressive scene in the temple, and those that follow it.

Before the character of Dido is introduced, ideas about the Carthaginians, which will, therefore, necessarily relate to her characterization, have already been offered by the text. For Dido is, before everything else, a Carthaginian, and the reader’s “Carthage Horizon” opens up in the proem. As Horsfall observes: “Unmistakably, in the prooemium, we are confronted with the Punic wars: Romans *bello superbi* face Carthage *studiis asperrima belli*; a Roman empire *late regem* confronts Juno’s ambitions for Carthage, *regnum... gentibus esse*.”<sup>292</sup> What is activated is not just the general “old hatreds” of the Punic wars, but specific ideas about what type of people the Carthaginians are, inherently.<sup>293</sup> The Carthaginians were stereotyped in contemporary poetry and

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<sup>292</sup> Horsfall 1990: 130.

<sup>293</sup> I cannot agree entirely with Horsfall’s argument, which presents a compilation of the negative, stereotypically Carthaginian qualities that Dido displays without discussion of their interplay with the features that make her appealing and sympathetic, or how the reader’s feelings may shift back and forth as the narrative progresses. However, since sympathy for Dido has tended to downplay the countervailing force of her suspicious, dangerous Carthaginian nature, his article provides an important counter perspective. I will bring up many of the same passages that Horsfall identifies as casting a negative light on Dido, and give them fuller discussion, particularly with reference to how they engage the reader’s imagination as she attempts to build consistency.

historiography as cruel, deceptive, arrogant, and wealthy,<sup>294</sup> and two of these characteristics are stressed in the proem—their wealth (*dives opum*) and superlative hostility (*studiisque asperrima belli*).<sup>295</sup> In the poem, Carthaginian wealth and Carthaginian ferocity, we shall see, actually relate to each other paradoxically: we have many suggestions in the build-up to our meeting Dido (and after) that she and her people are both eminently civilized on the outside but deeply savage at heart. This “savagery,” I will show, is hinted at throughout the build up to our meeting with Dido (and after) through a strategy of verbal and imagistic association of the Carthaginians with animals. If in the text the Carthaginians are men with the hearts of animals, as we shall show they are, their queen is strongly associated with a mythological figure whose animals were actually men: Circe. This is to say that the two themes I will be talking about here, the historical theme of Carthaginian savagery and the mythical theme of Dido as a Circe figure, sync up neatly with each other. The relevance of the sustained recollections of Circe in Dido has not received as much focused analysis as one might expect despite Knauer’s assertion that, “Dido ist in Aeneis 1 die Kirke des *k*.”<sup>296</sup> She is, in fact, the perfect mythological model for the queen of a people who are, despite outward

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<sup>294</sup> On the stereotypical characteristics of the Carthaginians (primarily falling into two categories—cruelty and greed) as evidenced in Horace, Livy, and Cicero, see Horsfall 1990: 127-8 and Stark 1999, with copious references.

<sup>295</sup> Stark (1999: 271 n. 40), arguing that the Carthaginians are not negatively characterized in the poem, notes that Vergil uses “a similar phrase regarding the future Roman race at 1.21, *populum...bello superbum*.” That statement, however, reflects Juno’s focalization, not an unambiguous statement by the narrator. More important, though, is the fact that statements that cast a shadow on Roman values do not inversely undo negative characterizations of the Carthaginians.

<sup>296</sup> Discussions of the broader significance of the whole of Book 1’s sustained intertext with *Odyssey* 10 are surprisingly sparse. On Circe as a model for Dido’s reception of Aeneas, see Knauer’s short but important discussion (1964: 177-80).

appearances, really animals, and her desire to keep Aeneas is in effect a desire to turn him into one of her own.<sup>297</sup>

Moving forward from the proem, our next hints about the nature of the Carthaginians are developed through intertextual suggestions about the nature of the place where the Trojans have landed. We may first note that the reader is immediately made aware that Libya is, indeed, their location:

*Defessi Aeneadae quae proxima litora cursu  
contendunt petere, et Libyae vertuntur ad oras.*  
(*Aen.* 1.157-8)

The followers of Aeneas, exhausted, strain together to reach the nearest shore, and turn toward the coast of Libya.

At the name of Libya, the relief that the reader may have felt on behalf of the Aeneadae when Neptune calmed the storm will likely revert to anxiety—an anxiety that is made all the more acute by the dramatic irony of the fact that the characters do not know, as the reader does, of the human dangers that Libya poses. Aeneas' men do not need any special knowledge to perceive that the land itself is dangerous—unknown, deserted lands are inherently so.<sup>298</sup> The danger that they perceive would naturally be that posed by the wildness of nature. The reader, however, knows that they ought to be just as afraid of the people of Libya. And the reader familiar with Naevius must already suspect that Trojans will meet these people—specifically, the people of the capital city, Carthage. For the

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<sup>297</sup> For an analysis of Circe as a model for Dido and her metaphorical attempt to transform Aeneas, see Tsakirópoulou-Summers' 2006.

<sup>298</sup> And the land of Libya was proverbially so. In the *Georgics*, Libya is consistently characterized as a vast, deserted land (1.241, as the southern counterpart of the Caucasus; 2.105-6, with uncountable grains of sand; 3.339-45, shepherds walk a month without encountering civilization) The well-versed reader may recall *Georgics* 3.242-9 in particular, where Libya is populated by lions, bears, boars, and tigers—a place one does not wish to roam, particularly when these animals are in season and at their most ferocious (*heu male tum Libyae solis erratur in agris*).

storm at sea that the Trojans just suffered was highly reminiscent of the storm in the first book of Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* ("This whole passage was taken from Naevius," says Macrobius).<sup>299</sup> The reader may therefore suspect that, as is likely to have been the case in the *BP*, Aeneas and his men will end up in the city of Carthage, and perhaps even meet Dido.<sup>300</sup> It seems most unlikely, given the topic of his poem, that Naevius' portrait of the Carthaginians was as a good and decent people. Though this hardly proves that he depicted Dido as despicable, one dimensional villains,<sup>301</sup> it is none the less likely that there were negative elements in his characterization of them. Between the ferocious nature of the Carthaginians featured in the *Aeneid's* proem, and the allusion in the storm at sea to Naevius' most probably anti-Carthaginian poem, the reader is most likely to anticipate danger already at *Libyae vertuntur ad oras*.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Macrobius 6.2.31: *In principio Aeneidos tempestas describitur, et Venus apud Iovem quaeritur de periculis filii, et Iuppiter eam de futurorum prosperitate solatur. Hic locus totus sumptus a Naevio est ex primo libro belli Punicum. Illic enim aequae Venus Troianis tempestate laborantibus cum Iove queritur, et secuntur verba Iovis filiam consolantis spe futurorum.* "In the first book of the *Aeneid* a storm is described, and Venus complains to Jove about the dangers faced by her son, and Jupiter consoles her regarding the prosperity of their future descendents. This whole piece is taken from Naevius, from the first book of the *Bellum Punicum*. For there equally Venus complains to Jove while the Trojans are struggling in the storm, and there follows the words of Jove consoling his daughter with future hope."

<sup>300</sup> We do not have fragments specifying where the storm in the *BP* landed Aeneas. Carthage, however, is a reasonable conjecture, particularly considering that the whole sequence in book 1—the storm, Venus and Jupiter's exchange, and Aeneas' speech to his men—seems to echo the sequence in the *BP*. D. Servius indicates that Aeneas' speech to his men uses elements from the *BP* (ad 1.198, "*totus hic locus de Naevio Belli Punicum libro translatus est*"—n.b., of course, how loosely Servius uses "translate"). Moreover, the fact that Dido is mentioned (Servius ad 4.9 says, "*cuius filiae fuerint Anna et Dido, Naevius dicit.*") suggests a location in Carthage.

<sup>301</sup> Pace Horsfall 1990: 143: "[S]ince Naevius wrote the *BP* as an old man during the closing years of the second Punic war, about the first Punic war, in which he had himself served, a favourable or sympathetic portrait of the foundress of Carthage will have been unthinkable. What then was she? Evil, treacherous, insidious, a magician, having the worst qualities of Circe and Calypso, who had recently been presented to Roman readers in Livius Andronicus' *Odissia*? That is not unlikely..."

<sup>302</sup> On the likely negative characterization of Dido and the Carthaginians in the *BP* and the possibility of its influence on Vergil's Dido, see Horsfall 1990.

The alarm triggered by the fact that the Trojans have washed up in Libya will be amplified by the sinister ecphrasis of the Libyan harbor which immediately follows:

*est in secessu longo locus: insula portum  
efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto  
frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.  
hinc atque hinc vastae rupes geminique minantur  
in caelum scopuli, quorum sub vertice late  
aequora tuta silent; tum silvis scaena coruscis  
desuper, horrentiaque atrum nemus imminet umbra.  
intus quae dulces vivoque sedilia saxo  
Nympharum domus. hic fessas non vincula naves  
ulla tenent, unco non alligat anchora morsu.*

(*Aen.* 1.159-69)

There is a place in a deep inlet: an island makes it a harbor with the barrier of its arms, on which every wave from the sea is broken and splits itself, rolling back into the inlet. On both sides giant rocks and twin peaks tower threateningly, under whose peaks the expanse of protected sea is silent; and down from above, menacingly, hangs the backdrop of the trees' quivering leaves and the black wood bristling with shadows.

G. Williams observes that the ecphrasis of this harbor recalls the harbor of the Cyclops (*Od.* 9.136ff.), as well as that of the Laestrogians (*Od.* 10.87-94) and Odysseus landing on Ithaca (*Od.* 13.96-104),<sup>303</sup> and following this Clay suggests that “[e]ither Carthage is a kind of homecoming and safe harbor for Aeneas in his wanderings, or it is a place of still greater dangers.”<sup>304</sup> While I agree with Clay that the ambiguous allusive possibilities of the ecphrasis put the reader in “suspense,” I think the anticipation is not whether the place is safe or dangerous, but rather which type of danger it poses; for coming “home” to Carthage is a danger, too. While the possibility of a Cyclopedian or Laestrogian welcome certainly stirs up fear, the recollection of the harbor in Ithaca (which is by far the

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<sup>303</sup> G. Williams 1968: 637-40. On the similarity to the Argonauts sailing into Phasis, see Nelis 2001: 71.

<sup>304</sup> Clay 1988: 197-8.



strongest parallel)<sup>305</sup> is not as innocuous as Clay suggests. The picture of Aeneas' arrival in Carthage as a "homecoming" should feel all wrong to the Roman reader. Add to this the foreboding description of the harbor's giant twin peaks that "threaten" (*minantur*) the sky, the eerie silence of the water (*aequora tuta silent*) and the darkness of the "black forest looming with bristling shadows" (*horrentiaque atrum nemus imminent umbra*). This allusively suggested homecoming has all the creepy distortion of a fun-house mirror or an inverted Bizarro World, and the enigma it presents is the keystone in the episode's "hermeneutic code,"<sup>306</sup> building interest and suspense by raising questions and anticipations of what lies ahead.

The idea of Aeneas' arrival in Carthage as a potentially twisted homecoming is central, I believe, to the tension of Book 1. Carthage is set up from the very start, with this sinister ephrasis, as an alternative home for the Trojans. It is not, however, an equally good home; it is a place where the heroes' true, Roman destiny would be lost, where their identity would be subsumed. It is a trap. The difference between the reader's awareness of this and the characters' lack of awareness creates tension and suspense, which is to say, emotional involvement. I would like to stress the contrast between Aeneas' perception of this alluring, welcoming, alternative home (argued at length in the

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<sup>305</sup> This is the immediate parallel adduced by Macrobius: '*videte, inquit, portum ad civitatem Didonis ex Ithaca migrantem.*' (5.3.18). All natural harbors share certain topographical traits, but Dido's harbor shares two other specific, distinctive features with that of Ithaca: a cave of the Nymphs, and a description of how it is so calm that a ship needs no mooring. As a result, I think it is likely that this parallel is the one that would stand out most to a reader. G. Williams observes (1968: 640) that another feature that the harbor in Libya and in Ithaca have in common is that their description belongs to the narrator, while those of the Cyclopes and Laestrogians belong to Odysseus. "The description then becomes a direct communication from the poet to the audience in a more intimate way than that which characterizes normal third-person narrative, for the poet's description conveys to the audience facts that stand outside the narrative and need not be known to the characters in it." That is to say, the ephrasis of the Libyan harbor has the same narrative function as that of the harbor of Ithaca; the poet is using it to communicate with the audience through images that go beyond what is necessary for the simple facts of the plot.

<sup>306</sup> Barthes 1970: *passim*. See discussion above, and in the Introduction.

previous chapter) and the reader's awareness that this counterfeit "home" is a dangerous place, as I shall continue to argue in this chapter. In fact, everything that looks appealing to the hero looks suspicious to the reader, who can see more than he can.<sup>307</sup> This is a potent way to instill the anxiety of suspense in an audience, suggesting that things are not as they appear to the hero. After the ecphrasis of the harbor, which presented Libya as a sinister alternative home for the Trojans, the text develops a sustained parallel to *Odyssey* 10, in which Odysseus lands on Circe's island. It is easy to see the significance of this intertextual relationship for the issue just raised: Circe appears friendly, but she is actually hostile. What appears to be *hospitium* is actually a trap. What appear to be tame animals are really tortured men. The allusions to Odysseus' adventure in Aeaea that run from the time that Aeneas lands in Libya right through his banquet with Dido may suggest to the reader that he faces a danger that is somehow parallel: a friendly, civilized appearance may mask an animalistic inner nature.

The Circe episode of *Odyssey* 10 is woven through the entire fabric of *Aeneid* 1, and as we move through Vergil's text we will see traces of it every step of the way. The shipwrecked Trojans reach land totally exhausted (*defessi*, 1.157, *fessi rerum* 1.178), and grieving their companions (*maerentia pectora* 1.197), like Odysseus' men who spend two days on the shore of Aeaea in exhaustion and grief (οἰμῶν καμὰ τῶν τε καὶ ἀλλήλων ἐλδόντες, *Od.* 10.143). Like Odysseus, who then climbs a rocky point to look for signs of humans (10.146-7), Aeneas *scopulum... conscendit*

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<sup>307</sup> We can see this dynamic in modern fantasy literature in which a hero, worn out by the real world, is lured into false world that seems like a better alternative, but is in fact a trap. It is precisely the attractiveness of the counterfeit world that incites dread in the reader; if the hero were in a clearly dangerous place, he would be on guard. The fact that he believes he is safe, that he *likes* the place, is what makes the reader fear for him.

(1.180) to look for his lost companions. Both Odysseus and Aeneas then spot deer, which they hunt and bring back to their men to eat (*Od.* 10.156-71; *Aen.* 1.184-94), following which each hero gives a speech to hearten his men (*Od.* 10.174-7 and again the next morning, 189-97; *Aen.* 1.198-207).<sup>308</sup> Like Odysseus and his companions (*Od.* 10.183-4), Aeneas and his men then tend to their hunger, feasting on meat and wine (*Aen.* 1.213-4). The next day Odysseus and his men have no choice but to explore the island, seeking help from whatever inhabitants they may find—and as the reader knows, they find a very welcoming, very dangerous host.

This structural parallel gives the reader reason to suspect at this point that Aeneas may find a similarly dangerous woman ruling this land. Before he awakes and sets out to explore, though, the scene cuts to Olympus, where Venus chastises Jupiter for appearing to have changed his mind (*quae te, genitor, sentential vertit?* 1.237), and Jupiter reassures her of the Roman destiny. He then sends Mercury to soften the “ferocious” hearts of the Carthaginians.

*Haec ait et Maia genitum demittit ab alto,  
 ut terrae utque novae pateant Karthaginis arces  
 hospitio Teucris, ne fati nescia Dido  
 finibus arceret.*  
 . . .  
*et iam iussa facit, ponuntque ferocia Poeni  
 corda volente deo; in primis regina quietum  
 accipit in Teucros animum mentemque benignam.*  
 (*Aen.* 1.297-304)

He [Jupiter] said these things and sent down the son of Maia from on high, in order that land and the new citadel of Carthage might be open in hospitality to the Teucrians, lest Dido, ignorant of fate, fend them off from her borders...and now Mercury carries out his orders, and the Phoenecians put aside their fierce hearts

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<sup>308</sup> On the significance of the intertextual interaction between these speeches for our understanding of Aeneas' mindset, see the previous chapter.

by the will of the god; the queen, especially, receives a calm spirit and gentle attitude toward the Teucrians.

This—not the winning scene in the temple of Juno—is the reader’s first direct view of Dido. Like the Cyclopes and Laestrogonians recalled in the ecphrasis of her harbor, she does not observe the obligations of *hospitium*, a behavior that must be practiced by any people who can be called civilized. The Carthaginians’ refusal to let the battered Trojan ships land is scandalously barbaric, as Ilioneus later protests when he is brought before the queen (1.539-40). Despite the explanation that Dido will give Ilioneus, the Carthaginians’ unwillingness to extend *hospitium* to travelers is here described as being due to their savage inner nature, their *ferocia corda*. With this word, *ferox* and its root meaning “beast” (*fer*), Vergil suggests that the Carthaginians are at heart not simply “barbaric” but specifically animalistic. Though James Henry would like to soften the drastic nature this implication, arguing that “*ferox* is less our ‘ferocious’ than our ‘fierce, high-spirited, haughty, over-confident, presuming,’”<sup>309</sup> his only example of such a mitigated usage of the word in the *Aeneid* is, in fact, as applied to an animal: *stat sonipes, ac fraena ferox spumantia mandit* (4.135). The phrase *ferocia corda* and its linking of the Carthaginians with animals is the first in a pattern of such associations that will emerge in the poem.<sup>310</sup>

The Mercury scene is of a piece with the elements that are already on the reader’s Carthage Horizon. The reader was already reminded in the proem that the Carthaginians are *studiis asperrima belli*, and this is now elaborated upon: their extreme bellicosity is

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<sup>309</sup> Henry 1873-92: 587 *ad* 1.301-8.

<sup>310</sup> See discussion below of *hominesne feraene*, 1.308, and head of savage horse that emblemizes them, as well as Dido’s later wish to have lived *more ferae* (for a more nuanced discussion of the phrase and context see Nappa 2007), and Jupiter’s reference to *fera Karthago* (10.12).

due to their *ferocia corda*. Dido herself has a *ferox cor*. It is she especially (*in primis*) whose attitude toward the Trojans is transformed. It is represented in no uncertain terms that her kindly attitude toward the Trojans (*in Teucros animum mentemque benignam*) is artificial, and it is our first hint that she may have previously been hostile not only toward foreigners in general, but toward the Trojans specifically. We may note, too, the evocation here of Zeus' mollification, via Hermes, of the cruel, angry Aeetes described in the *Argonautica*.<sup>311</sup> Aeetes says that:

ou0de\ ga\r Ai0oli/dhn Fri/con ma/la per xate/onta  
de/xqai e0ni\ mega/roisin e0fe/stion, o2j peri\  
pa/ntwn  
cei/nwn melixi/h| te qeoudei/h| t' e0ke/kasto,  
ei0 mh/ oi9 Zeu\j au0to\j a0p' ou0ranou= alggelon h[ken  
9Ermei/an, w3j ken proskhde/oj a0ntia/seien.  
(Arg. 3.584-8)

For he said that he would not have received the Aeolid Phrixus as a guest in his palace in spite of his great need—he who surpassed all strangers in gentleness and fear of the gods—had not Zeus himself sent his messenger Hermes to him from heaven, so that he [Phrixus] might find an affectionate host. (Race trans.)  
As Moorton observes, “this parallel warns us to keep in mind the fact that Dido, like Aeetes, is an intense and potentially turbulent personality, as events will show.”<sup>312</sup>

Scholars tend to assess Dido's characterization without reference to the Mercury scene, or pass lightly over its significance.<sup>313</sup> The inclination to ignore Mercury's intervention may be due to the awkward fact that it represents a literal, unnaturalistic

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<sup>311</sup> See Moorton 1989: 49, who enumerates the syntactic and verbal parallels in detail.

<sup>312</sup> Moorton 1989: 53. He point out that Dido's furious reaction to Aeneas' abandonment parallels the vindictive fury of Aeetes in *Argonautica* 4, and observes (*ibid.*) that “Vergil crafts a meaningful symmetry between Aeetes and Dido at both the beginning and the end of her encounter with Aeneas in order to deepen our sense of the formidable nature and unfortunate destiny of his poignant hero.”

<sup>313</sup> “Optimistic” critics who are unsympathetic to Dido are more inclined to remark upon the scene. For example, Horsfall (1990: 132) observes that “*ferocia* would be their natural reaction to the Trojans, and *benignitas* is what Mercury's presence secures.... We should remember that only Mercury's intervention prevented the premature outbreak of the first Punic war.” His conclusion, however, that Dido is simply a villain would seem to many, including myself, to ignore a great deal.

divine intervention, unlike elsewhere in the *Aeneid*, where the “divine machinery” can often be interpreted as functioning in a more nuanced way as a psychological allegory.<sup>314</sup> As Feeney observes, many readers are inclined to “rewrite Virgil’s epic narrative into a novelistic piece of naturalism,” but there are points where the text defies this.<sup>315</sup> As I discussed in the Introduction, a reader who plasters over the awkward fit when there is a conflict between the operations of the mythic “possible world” of the poem and the “world of reference” (i.e., the reader’s “real world”) loses something important; for meaning is generated when the reader analyzes what kind of comment the poet could be making about the nature of the actual world when he “blows up” questionable elements of it in his counterfactual version.<sup>316</sup> We are encouraged by the blowing up of Mercury’s unnaturalistic intervention to consider not whether Dido really is really affected by a supernatural power in this scene—for she definitely is—but rather what it means for a world to operate in such a way.<sup>317</sup> Moreover, inattention to this scene may also be due to the fact that it reflects negatively on an important aspect of Dido’s “true nature,” making the scene feel less consequential to critics who are highly sympathetic to Dido (as I am as

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<sup>314</sup> Cf. Quinn 1968: 316-20 (“Parallel divine and psychological motivation”); Williams 1983: 20-45 (“a trope for human motivation”); Lyne 1987: 66-71 (“Working with”). These discussions do not include the Mercury scene in Book 1.

<sup>315</sup> Feeney 1998: 105 and *passim*. He argues in reference to Mercury’s actions in Book 4, that attempts to interpret Mercury’s actions naturalistically, to “write him out of the text,” are not well advised, for doing so ignores a question that is contested even within the poem and is an important locus of meaning.

<sup>316</sup> Elements of the world of reference can be “blown up” in the constructed world at relevant moments, others are “narcotized.” See Eco 1979: 23. I am adopting the term in an expanded sense. Naturally, genre is an issue in Vergil’s choices as well, but reference to Homer cannot not explain away Vergil’s representation of the gods, since he adapted models and crossed generic boundaries freely.

<sup>317</sup> The question of whether the real world could possibly function like the story world, specifically in reference to the nature of the gods’ feelings and behavior, is asked explicitly in the proem: *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*(1.11)

well—ultimately).<sup>318</sup> Austin is representative in his view that “in this book [1] she is fine and noble, with no weakness or fault, and Virgil draws all our sympathies to her,”<sup>319</sup> and that “[b]efore the intervention of Venus she is all goodness.”<sup>320</sup> I would rather like to stress that the Mercury episode offers a key piece in the development of an intertextually suggested picture, in which it is hinted that Dido is as fierce as Aeetes and as dangerous Circe, and that her warm welcome of the hero should be viewed with apprehension and skepticism.

This first presentation of Dido is situated in front of a coherent backdrop of suggestions that parallel the Trojans with Odysseus’ men on Aeaia (see above), which puts Dido, when her identity is revealed in this passage, in a position analogous to Circe. The reader who is aware of this (which is likely to a majority, given the lack of literary erudition needed to identify the obvious parallels with one of the most famous Homeric episodes) will use memory of the Circe episode in the *Odyssey* to construct expectations about Dido. The text cannot formulate precisely what these expectations will be—this is the “province of the reader himself.”<sup>321</sup> Though the text cannot force a reader to connect two points, it can offer two points that suggest a connection. Odysseus became Circe’s consort and took up residence with her. That is, we already have a hint of an affair

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<sup>318</sup> Readings of the poem as a critique of Augustanism and the price of empire rely heavily on the fact that we feel sympathy for the victims of the Roman destiny—and I agree with this. Our sympathy with Dido, however, does not on my reading, result from a sense of her original moral goodness, but rather from the pathos her fall from greatness after the fashion of an Aristotelian tragic hero. On the latter notion, see Moles 1984 (though I take a different view of the nature of her *hamartia*).

<sup>319</sup> Austin 1971: xvii.

<sup>320</sup> Austin 1971: xviii

<sup>321</sup> “[T]he text itself does not formulate expectations or their modifications; nor does it specify how the connectability of memories is to be implemented. this is the province of the reader himself, and so here we have a first insight into how the synthesizing [sic] activity of the reader enables the text to be translated and transferred into his own mind.” Iser 1978: 111-12.

between Aeneas and Dido, even before they meet. The reader who draws this connection may be thrilled (or horrified, depending on how seriously she takes poetry) by the scandal of such a possibility. It must seem almost unthinkable, given that one of the defining features of Dido's character in existing myth was that she preferred to die rather than remarry,<sup>322</sup> that in Vergil's poem she might turn out to be a sinister, luxurious seductress like Circe.<sup>323</sup> It creates all sorts of curiosity about how the plot will unfold,<sup>324</sup> and casts her anticipated friendly welcome in a sinister light.

After this first view of Dido and the Carthaginians in the Mercury scene, the narrative returns to Aeneas, who sets out the next morning to see "who inhabits the land (for it appears uncultivated), whether men or beasts" (*qui teneant (nam inculta videt), hominesne feraene*, 1.308). The Carthaginians were just indirectly likened, less than ten verses prior, to beasts (*ferocia corda*, 1.302-3). Aeneas' straightforward, literal question takes on a thematic, metaphorical significance for the reader. The Carthaginians are, for all appearances, men, but we know that they have the hearts of beasts. Given the parallel to *Odyssey* 10 that structures this whole episode, the phrase *hominesne feraene* offers the possibility that they are both; the exterior can mask the true inner nature. Circe's beasts were men in disguise; the Carthaginians are, metaphorically, the reverse. Aeneas'

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<sup>322</sup> Lord 1969 offers a long and thorough treatment. The Dido of legend was also known for her cunning, and this, I think, is the lynch pin that keeps her characterization in the *Aeneid* linked to tradition about her. See further discussion in the treatment of Venus' speech, below.

<sup>323</sup> Horsfall (1990: 143) thinks that while a "full scale romantic entanglement, portrayed with rich Hellenistic sensibility" could not have occurred in Naevius, it is possible that his Dido appeared as a seductress. There is, however, simply no evidence for this. If there had been any erotic motivation in Naevius' Dido, it would be hard to understand why Vergil alone was criticized in later tradition, from Hellenistic epigram (A.P. 151) to Church fathers (Tertullian, *De Monogamia* 17; Jerome *Ad. Iovinianum* 1.45), for besmirching her chaste character. See Lord (1969) for the Christian authors' use of the pre-Vergilian Dido as a moral exemplum of permanent, chaste widowhood.

<sup>324</sup> Not only does the intertext suggest impending danger for Aeneas, but also ultimate failure for Dido. "In a way, Hermes opens up Circe's defenses and prepares her to be vanquished by the hero, just as he (*qua* Mercury) does with Dido and Carthage." (Tsakirpoulou-Summers 2006: 246)



question of whether the land belongs to men or beasts brings together for the reader the historical theme of Carthaginian viciousness and the mythological theme of Circe and her beasts, suggesting that the Carthaginians are, on the inside, animalistic.

As Aeneas sets off to explore, the reader alive to the structural parallels with *Odyssey* 10 may expect that on his way he will run into a deity who will explain to him the identity of the *deinē* woman who awaits him in the middle of the forest, just as Hermes appeared to Odysseus *en route* to Circe's palace. With Mercury having already performed Hermes' protective action, the expository portion of Hermes' role is assumed by Venus,<sup>325</sup> who appears to Aeneas in the woods disguised as a Carthaginian huntress (1.338-68), the next scene to which I would like to turn. This provides our second indirect view of Dido, which is Aeneas' first. We should, therefore, be careful about assessing the impression the story makes on "us," since the impression of Aeneas, who has no other information, will be different from that of the reader, who has an interesting background with which she is pointedly encouraged to fill in its gaps.

That background is the well known legend<sup>326</sup> of Dido's character pre-dating the *Aeneid*.<sup>327</sup> The earliest version of Dido's story comes from the 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BCE Greek historian

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<sup>325</sup> In this capacity she is also reminiscent of Athena in *Odyssey* 7, who appears in the form of a girl to Odysseus as he makes his way to the Phaeacian city and tells him in particular of the queen Arete. Knauer (1963:160) observes the functional parallel between these two speeches, which allow the hero to learn what sort of place he is in, and of the queen from whom he will seek protection ("Die Funktion beider Reden ist genau die gleiche: die Fremden sollen orientiert sein über die Verhältnisse, in denen sie sich binnen kurzem zurecht zu finden haben werden, beide erfahren den Namen der Königinnen, denen sie sich schutzflehend nahen sollen.") I would like to note how Arete's role as queen is relevant to Dido's characterization. Both texts stress how anomalously these women exert authority over men, cf. *Od.* 7. 69-77; compare particularly the later description of Dido giving laws to men (*iura dabat legesque viris*, 1.507) and Arete's adjudication of men's disputes (*ἀνδρά/σι νεί/κεα λυ/εί*, *Od.* 7.74).

<sup>326</sup> It can be assumed to be well known since it lived on after Vergil's account, and Macrobius says "everybody" (*universitas*) knows it was the true version (5.17.5).

Timaeus,<sup>328</sup> in a fragment preserved in the anonymous *Tractatus De Muliebris Claris in Bello (DM)*, a catalogue of 14 very short biographies of women who performed outstanding deeds.<sup>329</sup> Its summary of Timaeus is as follows:

Qeiossw/. tau/thn fhsi\ Ti/maioj kata\ me\n th\n  
 Foini/kwn glw~ssan 0Eli/ssan kalei=sqai, a0delfh\n de\  
 ei]nai Pugmali/wnoj tou= Turi/wn basile/wj, u9f' h[j  
 fhsi th\n Karxhdo/na th\n e0n Libu/h| ktisqh=nai. tou=  
 ga\r a0ndro\j au0th=j u9po\ tou= Pugmali/wnoj  
 a0naireqe/ntoj e0nqeme/nh ta\ xrh/mata ei0j ska/faj  
 meta/ tinwn politw~n elfeuge kai\ polla\ kakopaqh/sasa  
 th|= Libu/h| proshne/xqh, kai\ u9po\ tw~n Libu/wn dia\  
 th\n pollh\n au0th=j pla/nhn Deidw\ proshgoreu/qh  
 e0pixwri/wj. kti/sasa de\ th\n proeirhme/nhn po/lin,  
 tou= tw~n Libu/wn basile/wj qe/lontoj au0th\n gh=mai,  
 au0th\ me\n a0nte/legen, u9po\ de\ tw~n politw~n  
 sunanagkazome/nh, skhyame/nh teleth/n tina pro\j  
 a0na/lusin o3rkwn e0pitele/sein, pura\n megisthn  
 e0gguj tou= oilkou kataskeua/sasa kai\ a2yasa, a0po\  
 tou= du/matoj au9th\n ei0j th\n pura\n elrriyen.

(FGrH 556 F 82)

Theiosso. She, says Timaeus, was called Elissa in the Phoenician tongue and was the sister of Pygmalion, the king of the Tyrians. He says that Carthage in Libya was founded by her. For after her husband was killed by Pygmalion, she placed her money in boats and fled with some fellow citizens. After suffering much, she reached Libya and was called Dido by the Libyans in the local tongue, because of her many wanderings. After she founded the above city, the king of the Libyans wanted to marry her. She refused, but was compelled by her compatriots to

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<sup>327</sup> For a summary of evidence for the “historical” Dido, see Odgers 1925. For discussion of the Dido of tradition in relation to Vergil’s heroine, see: Horsfall 1990, Hexter 1992, Desmond 1993: 24-33, Stark 1999.

<sup>328</sup> Timaeus FGrH 556 F 82. On the anonymous *De Muliebris*, see Gera 1997.

<sup>329</sup> See Gera (1997:3): “*DM* is an anonymous work and there is no indication of the author’s date, background, or intentions in assembling the collection... We cannot even be certain that the title given the work in the mss., *Women Intelligent and Courageous in Warfare* (gunai=kej e0n polemikoi=j sunetai\ kai\ a0ndrei=ai) is that assigned by the original author.” She notes (1997: 4) that the ancient notion that there is something freakish and contrary to nature in publicly active women—that they are “strange and paradoxical” creatures—is underlined by the transmission of the *De Muliebris* with a collection of *Paradoxographoi*. (Gera 1997: 126 n.4 notes that commentators “sometimes speak of a note on the margins—or at the end—of Book 8 of a ms. of Polyaeus’ *Strategemata* [which is on women who used trickery to defend their countries], as if it were an additional, independent source for Timaeus account. But this note is... virtually identical with the *DM* notice and since the whole of *DM* is found almost immediately after the text of Polyaeus in several mss., this must simply refer to the text of *DM*.”

comply. Pretending that she had to perform a certain rite to annul her vows, she prepared and lit a great pyre near her palace. She then threw herself from the house into the fire.

(Gera trans.)

As Jakoby points out in his commentary on this fragment, it must be only a scant outline of the full account in Timaeus. An extensive version the same story is preserved in Justin's 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century CE epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Philippic History* (18.4-6), a work composed contemporaneously with the *Aeneid*.<sup>330</sup> Justin's summary of Pompeius Trogus' much fuller account is identical in outline to Timaeus' skeletal narrative and must be based directly or indirectly on it.<sup>331</sup> Though it cannot, of course, be assumed to be an exact reproduction of Timaeus, Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus allows us to "supplement the condensed account given by *DM* and sketch a fuller picture of the pre-Virgilian Dido."<sup>332</sup> The traditional Dido evidenced in these sources<sup>333</sup> is a morally ambiguous character, who is both intelligent and brave as well as acquisitive and extremely duplicitous—the latter two characteristics figuring prominently into hostile ancient representations of Carthaginians and Phoenecians.<sup>334</sup> It is therefore a mistake, I

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<sup>330</sup> On the difficulty of dating Trogus, see Wigodsky 1972: 30. Odgers (1924: 146) puts him just before Vergil. The last event in the epitome of the *Philippic History* was the recovery of the Roman standards from the Parthians in 20 BCE, which is recounted in the 42<sup>nd</sup> of the work's 44 books. This would likely put the composition of Book 18, in which Dido's story is recounted, some years prior, meaning that it may have been available to Vergil while he was composing the *Aeneid* (29-19 BCE)—certain precise verbal parallels make this an interesting possibility. Most likely, however, Vergil and Trogus were both drawing on the same tradition, evidenced also, in condensed form, in the fragment of Timaeus.

<sup>331</sup> Gera 1997: 126-7. Davidson (1998: 67) believes that the similarities suggest a common source. Boccaccio treats the version of "Justin and the ancient historians" (*Justinus et historiographi veteres*) as one (see Kallendorf 1989: 59, with further discussion of Boccaccio's use of the alternative Dido tradition).

<sup>332</sup> Gera 1997: 127.

<sup>333</sup> There are also scattered fragmentary references to her in Ennius, Naevius and Varro as well, but are too scant to provide information that can be put to reliable use. The latter two are the most potentially relevant in that they link (or may link) Aeneas with Carthage before Vergil. For a summary see Odgers 1925.

<sup>334</sup> As Davidson (1998: 69) notes, "Timaeus was attempting to elevate the struggle against Carthage in Sicily into an epic clash of opposed cultures.... Certainly, cruelty and savagery seem to have featured very largely in Timaeus' account of Carthaginian actions."

think, to consider the uncompromised chastity of the pre-Vergilian Dido as an indicator of her “innocence” of character.<sup>335</sup> She certainly shows “fortitude, leadership, vision, and craft”<sup>336</sup> in the earlier tradition, but it should be noted that the last—her craft—dominated the plot of her story at every turn.

It has been argued that “a comparison of Virgil's narrative with the relevant chapter of Justin's epitome of Trogus (18.4) shows that the poet's alterations serve to increase Aeneas' (as well, of course, as the reader's) sympathy with Dido and her sufferings.”<sup>337</sup> I submit that it can be shown, however, that Venus' narration of Dido's personal history points the *reader's* eyes toward this traditional version as the true, “unabridged” version of her life story, even as she conceals it from Aeneas. For the goddess is not a disinterested storyteller, but has a rhetorical agenda.<sup>338</sup> Venus is urging Aeneas toward Dido (her *hospitium* is his only hope of survival), not warning him away. She wants her son to proceed to the now mollified Carthage for help, and in order to attract him to it, she plays up its queen's similarity to Aeneas, presenting her as a relatable *alter ego*,<sup>339</sup> while omitting the less savory aspects of Dido's endeavors. I would

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<sup>335</sup> Hexter (1992: 339) believes that Vergil's account is a “radical revision of Dido's traditionally exemplary character.” He argues that Vergil makes a “ghost” of the original, “innocent” Dido, inverting the way that the post-Homeric tradition created an innocent *eidōlon* for the guilty Homeric Helen (p. 342): “In creating a double to the hitherto traditional Dido and thus a double Dido, Vergil is replicating a Helen who, in the fullness of the Greek tradition, is likewise double, guiltless and guilty.”

<sup>336</sup> Hexter 1992: 340.

<sup>337</sup> Dyck 1983:239, summarizing the argument of Heinze [1915] 1993: 97 n. 7.

<sup>338</sup> Otis observes ([1964]1995: 237) that Venus' story “determines the point of view he is to take toward the new city and toward Dido herself.”

<sup>339</sup> Otis ([1964] 1995: 236) makes this observation, but he focuses on how this story prepares the *reader* for the love between Aeneas and Dido (and, through irony unavailable to the characters, foreshadows their tragedy). Likewise, Heinze ([1915] 1993:97) notes how “the narrative is ingeniously contrived so that it not only informs us but also wins our sympathies,” and remarks (*ibid.* n.7) how we can see, in contrast to the version in Justin's epitome, how “Vergil strives here to produce an emotional effect, to arouse pity for Dido and indignation against Pygmalion.” I would only amend “us” to “Aeneas” and “Vergil” to “Venus,” for as

like to go through Venus' narrative and demonstrate how she does this, and how Vergil shows that she is doing this, so that the reader herself draws a different conclusion than the character Aeneas.

The goddess begins her story thus:

*imperium Dido Tyria regit urbe profecta,  
germanum fugiens. longa est iniuria, longae  
ambages; sed summa sequar fastigia rerum.*  
(*Aen.* 1.340-2)

Dido commands the power of the state, having departed the city of Tyre, fleeing her brother. Long is the history of injury, many are the twists and turns; but I will touch upon the main points.

“Many wrongs were done,” says Venus, *longa est iniuria*. With the deliberately oblique phrasing, Vergil has Venus hint that she could tell of much more—there were other “injuries” done, there were “twists” in the plot that she will not tell of. What were these other injuries, who perpetrated them? This presents a gap that Aeneas, with his limited horizon of information, will fill in one way, and the reader, who already knows the traditional story about Dido, in another. To Aeneas, the only context of this enigmatic statement is the information from the immediately preceding statement that Dido had to flee her brother (*germanum fugiens*). This would naturally lead him to deduce that the other *iniuriae* suggested here are further acts perpetrated by her hostile brother against her, and that Venus' (or, the “huntress'”) reason for abridging them (*sed summa sequar fastigia rerum*) is that it would take too much time (*longa, longae*). (He notes this consideration before summarizing his own story, 1.372-4). To the reader familiar with the version of Dido's story pre-dating Vergil's, though, Venus' statement that she will stick

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I am arguing here, what Vergil says to the reader in the speech is quite different from what Venus says to Aeneas.

to the “main points” (*fastigia rerum*) and not go into the whole sordid history of wrongs reads as a notice from the poet that the abridged account Venus chooses to give Aeneas, which gives a very favorable impression, is to be read against the “full” version of the story, in which Dido herself was a perpetrator, not just a victim, of *iniuriae*.

In both accounts, Dido’s brother Pygmalion kills her husband Sychaeus (in Trogus, Acerbas)<sup>340</sup> for his wealth,<sup>341</sup> but it is only in Venus’ story that Dido is a victim of his deception.

*huic coniunx Sychaeus erat, ditissimus auri  
Phoenicum, et magno miserae dilectus amore,  
cui pater intactam dederat primisque iugarat  
ominibus. sed regna Tyri germanus habebat  
Pygmalion, scelere ante alios immanior omnis.  
quos inter medius venit furor. ille Sychaeum  
impius ante aras atque auri caecus amore  
clam ferro incautum superat, securus amorum  
germanae; factumque diu celavit et aegram  
multa malus simulans vana spe lusit amantem.*

(*Aen.* 1.343-52)

She had a husband, Sychaeus, richest in gold of all the Phoenicians, and loved with great passion by his poor wife; her father had given her to him as a virgin and joined them in her first wedding rites. But her brother Pygmalion, monstrous in wickedness before all others, was ruling the kingdom of Tyre. A madness came between them. Pygmalion caught Sychaeus unaware and stealthily killed him with a sword impiously before an altar, blind with love of gold and without a care for

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<sup>340</sup> Venus does not include the (possibly unseemly) information that he is her uncle (*avunculo suo*, 18.4.5), but unlike aspects of Dido’s “true” story that Venus directly hints at, there is nothing here indicating that reader is specifically meant to understand this as a fact deliberately concealed by Venus. It is perhaps worth noting, though, that Dido later refers to her *penates* spattered with “fraternal” blood (*sparsos fraterna caede penatis*, 4.21). D.Servius takes this to mean blood spilled by her brother (*quam frater admiserit*), but it may alternatively or simultaneously suggest a cognate familial relationship between Pygmalion and Sychaeus. The word *frater* is often used of cousins (L&S s.v. *frater* IIC1), and we may perhaps attribute an even looser sense to it here. (As “brotherly blood” makes the desired point more eloquently than the technically accurate “avuncular blood.”) Note also that in Venus’ account, Dido is given to her husband by her father; in Trogus her father is already dead, and she marries Acherbas when the people give the throne to her brother.

<sup>341</sup> Venus repeats the tradition’s emphasis on the wealth of Sychaeus (*ditissimus auri/ Phoenicum*, 1.343-5)—throwing out for the reader, with the emphatic enjambment of *Phoenicum*, a reminder of the proverbial Punic wealth that has pejorative implications Aeneas himself cannot grasp.

the love of his sister. He concealed the deed for a long time, and the wicked man deluded his sister, sick with love, with many fabrications.

Venus' story emphasizes two elements that are not present in the earlier tradition, to which we will turn in a moment, namely her intense love of her husband (*magno miserae dilectus amore*, 1.344; *securus amorum/ germanae* 1.349-50; *aegram/ vana spe lusit amantem*, 1.351-2)<sup>342</sup> and the lying of Pygmalion (*diu celavit*, 1.351; *multa simulans, lusit* 1.352), who keeps Dido in the dark for a long time, stringing her along with fictitious stories.<sup>343</sup> I so doing, Venus presents a side of Dido that Aeneas will find particularly relatable, for he too lost a beloved spouse and feels that he has been strung along and deceived by cruel forces.<sup>344</sup> In Pompeius Trogus, the dynamic is quite different:

*Cum interim rex Tyro decedit filio Pygmalione et Elissa filia, insignis formae uirgine, heredibus institutis. Sed populus Pygmalioni, admodum puero, regnum tradidit. Elissa quoque Acherbae auunculo suo, sacerdoti Herculis, qui honos secundus a rege erat, nubit. Huic magna, sed dissimulatae opes erant, aurumque metu regis non tectis, sed terrae crediderat; quam rem etsi homines ignorabant, fama tamen loquebatur. Qua incensus Pygmalion oblitus iuris humani auunculum suum eundemque generum sine respectu pietatis occidit. Elissa diu fratrem propter scelus auersata ad postremum dissimulato odio mitigatoque interim uultu fugam tacita molitur...*  
(*Ep.* 18.4.3-9)

Meanwhile King Mutto died in Tyre, appointing as his heirs his son, Pygmalion, and his daughter, Elissa, a girl of exceptional beauty. The people consigned the throne to Pygmalion, though he was still a boy, while Elissa married her uncle

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<sup>342</sup> This element is never stated explicitly in Pompeius Trogus or Timaeus, though the reader may perhaps infer it from her choice of suicide rather than remarriage in both accounts (depth of romantic love is certainly not the only motivation suggested by these accounts, however—see below). The only reference to the strength of Dido's love for her husband post-dates Vergil. In one of Tertullian's many brief references to Dido as a pagan exemplar of chastity, he refers to her husband as "deeply loved" (*Dido, ne post virum dilectissimum nubere cogeretur, Ad Martyras* 4.5), a detail that of course may well have been taken from Vergil himself. On early Church Fathers' use of Dido as an *exemplum virtutis*, see Lord 1969.

<sup>343</sup> On these sympathy-building alterations, see Heinze [1915] 1993: 97 n. 7 (who attributes them to the poet, not the narrating character).

<sup>344</sup> On Aeneas' negative view of the gods and their treatment of him, see my argument in Chapter 1.

Acherbas, the priest of Hercules, a position ranking next to that of king. Acherbas had great wealth but he kept it concealed; and out of fear of the king he had entrusted his gold not to his house but to the earth. Although people were not aware of this, rumor of it still got out. This excited Pygmalion who, in total disregard of human rights, put to death the man who as both his uncle and brother in law, with no thought for family obligations. The crime turned Elissa against her brother for a long time. Finally, concealing her hatred and assuming a conciliatory demeanour, she secretly prepared her escape...

(Yardley trans.)

We may see parallels in that the Pygmalion of Trogus is enflamed by the wealth of Acherbas (*qua incensus*), just as in Venus' account he is blinded by his own greed (*auri caecus amore*), and just as in Trogus he is "forgetful of human laws" (*oblitus iuris humani*) and "without respect for family relations" (*sine respectu pietatis*) so according to Venus he is "careless of the love of his sister" (*securus amorum germanae*).<sup>345</sup> The motivation of Trogus' Dido, however, is not presented as being the result of her love of her husband, which is nowhere mentioned, but rather her hatred of her brother. Venus' account seems to directly reverse the "long time" that Dido kept her hatred a secret, deluding him, (*diu fratrem propter scelus auersata*) with the "long time" that Pygmalion kept his crime a secret, deluding her (*factumque diu celavit*, 1.351). In Trogus' account, it is Dido who holds the cards.

Acherbas' buried treasure is important to both stories, but while it is stated at the beginning of the story as told by Trogus (*huic magnae, sed dissimulatae opes erant, aurumque metu regis non tectis, sed terrae erediderat*), Vergil/Venus relocates the disclosure of it to a dream in which Dido's husband appears to her, reveals Pygmalion's crime, tells her of the gold, and enjoins her to flee:

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<sup>345</sup> These and other even more distinct verbal similarities lead me to believe there is a direct relationship between Pompeius Trogus and Vergil; if Vergil did not have Trogus' account available, there must have been a common source in Latin with substantially similar wording.



*ipsa sed in somnis inhumati venit imago  
coniugis ora modis attolens pallida miris;  
crudelis aras traiectaque pectora ferro  
nudavit, caecumque domus scelus omne retextit.  
tum celerare fugam patriaque excedere suadet  
auxiliumque viae veteres tellure recludit  
thesauros, ignotum argenti pondus et auri.*

(*Aen.* 1.353-9)

But an apparition of her unburied husband came to her in a dream, lifting up his uncannily pale face. He exposed the cruel altar and his breast pierced by the sword, and uncovered the whole dark crime of the house. Then he exhorted her to hasten her flight and depart from her homeland, and he revealed an ancient treasure in the ground as a help for her travels, a secret mass of silver and gold.

The effect of this dream, which seems to be an invention of the *Aeneid*,<sup>346</sup> is to give Dido's subsequent actions an official blessing, so to speak; she takes action in obedience to direct commands from her husband. Her decision to flee is imposed upon her externally, rather than contrived by the woman herself as part of a revenge plot, as it is in Trogus' version. In telling what happens next, Venus appears to deliberately skip over a number of the *iniuriae* and *ambages* which she had referenced in prefacing her tale. For in telling of how Dido acquired followers and ships, Venus evokes, without describing them, the elaborate ruses by means of which she did so:

*his commota fugam Dido sociosque parabat.  
conveniunt quibus aut odium crudele tyranni  
aut metus acer erat; navis, quae forte paratae,  
corripiunt onerantque auro. portantur avari  
Pygmalionis opes pelage; dux femina facti.*

(*Aen.* 1.360-4)

Disturbed by these things, Dido prepared flight and allies. Those who had either hatred of the cruel tyrant or intense fear of him, come together. They snatch ships which by chance had been prepared and load them with gold, the wealth of greedy Pygmalion was carried over the sea. A woman was the author of this deed.

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<sup>346</sup> Appian (*Pun.* 8.1) refers to it, but have borrowed this element from Vergil.

In Venus' account, the exact nature of her acquisition of followers is obscured by the vague *conveniunt* ("they come together"), and the ships they steal have conveniently been "prepared by chance" (*forte paratae*). These two events are an important part of her legend, and the reader may then be well aware when Venus vaguely waves her hand at how they were achieved that they were actually accomplished by carefully calculated (and morally ambiguous) trickery, which entailed two separate and elaborate ruses:

*Elissa diu fratrem propter scelus auersata ad postremum dissimulato odio mitigatoque interim uultu fugam tacita molitur adsumptis quibusdam principibus in societatem, quibus par odium in regem esse eandemque fugiendi cupiditatem arbitrabatur. Tunc fratrem dolo adgreditur, fingit se ad eum migrare uelle, ne amplius ei mariti domus cupidae obliuionis grauem luctus imaginem renouet neue ultra amara admonitio oculis eius occurrat. Non inuitus Pygmalion uerba sororis audiuit, existimans cum ea et aurum Acherbae ad se uenturum. Sed Elissa ministros migrationis a rege missos nauibus cum omnibus opibus suis prima uespera inponit prouectaque in altum compellit eos onera harenae pro pecunia inuolucris inuoluta in mare deicere. Tunc deflens ipsa lugubrique uoce Acherbam ciet ; orat ut libens opes suas recipiat, quas reliquerit, habeatque inferias, quas habuerat causam mortis. Tunc ipsos ministros adgreditur ; sibi quidem ait optatam olim mortem, sed illis acerbos cruciatus et dira supplicia imminere, qui Acherbae opes, quarum spe parricidium rex fecerit, auaritiae tyranni subtraxerint. Hoc metu omnibus iniecto comites fugae accepit.*

(Ep. 18.4.9-15)

Elissa long entertained a hatred to her brother for his crime, but at last, dissembling her detestation, and assuming mild looks for the time, she secretly contrived a mode of flight, admitting into her confidence some of the leading men of the city, in whom she saw that there was a similar hatred of the king, and an equal desire to escape. She then addressed her brother in such a way as to deceive him; pretending that "she had a desire to remove to his house, in order that the home of her husband might no longer revive in her, when she was desirous to forget him, the oppressive recollection of her sorrows, and that the sad remembrances of him might no more present themselves to her eyes." To these words of his sister, Pygmalion was no unwilling listener, thinking that with her the gold of Acerbas would come to him. But Elissa put the attendants, who were sent by the king to assist in her removal, on board some vessels in the early part of the evening, and sailing out into the deep made them throw some loads of sand, put up in sacks, as if it was money, into the sea. Then, with tears and mournful ejaculations, she invoked Acerbas, entreating that "he would favourably receive

his wealth which he had left behind him, and accept that as an offering to his shade, which he had found to be the cause of his death.” Next she addressed the attendants, and said that “death had long been desired by her, but as for them, cruel torments and a direful end awaited them, for having disappointed the tyrant’s avarice of those treasures, in the hopes of obtaining which he had committed fratricide.” Having thus struck terror into them all, she took them with her as companions of her flight.

(Yardley trans.)

Unlike in Venus’ white-washed story, her flight is the product of her premeditated, independent design (*fugam tacita molitur*, 18.4.9) not a sudden response to the urging of the ghost of Sychaeus (*tum celerare fugam...suadet*, 1.357). Her calculation, skill in dissimulation, and elaborate planning are at the very center of the story. She makes herself appear to feel one way, while concealing her true thoughts (*dissimulato odio mitigatoque interim uultu*)—this, I will argue below, is key to understanding Vergil’s Dido, too. She is able to anticipate other characters’ feelings astutely, and therefore manipulate them successfully. She suspects Pygmalion will welcome her suggestion of her moving into his house, because he will believe that she will be bringing Acherbas’ gold; playing on this expectation, she is able to craft a means both to acquire ships and to load them up with her possessions without arousing his suspicion—in fact, she tricks him into actively assisting with his own defrauding!<sup>347</sup> She can correctly judge which citizens are likeminded (*quibus par odium in regem esse...arbitratur*), and takes them into her confidence, while she uses lies and fear to manipulate subordinates into joining her (*metu omnibus iniecto*). This second element of her trick also involves skillful manipulation

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<sup>347</sup> In *portantur avari/Pygmalionis opes pelago* (1.363-4), Venus again creates a gap that Aeneas, with his limited horizon, will fill one way, and the reader another. Dyck (1983: 241) notes that these words “suggest that Dido’s vengeance consists in the removal of royal treasure; the reader, though not expressly told, is left to assume that this is identical with the *ignotum argenti pondus et auri* disclosed by Sychaeus’ ghost.” As Austin (1971: 133 *ad* 1.363) puts it, “a neat sarcasm; the *opes* are those that Pygmalion had thought he got.” In fact, it is only Aeneas who is left to assume that. The reader familiar with the traditional account knows that she in fact stole her brother’s ships and slaves.

based on her ability to anticipate others' thoughts and reactions, for she makes them believe they have done something that they in fact have not (thrown the gold of Acherbas into the sea) so that they will then believe that Pygmalion will kill them if they return to him. Note that Venus echoes both *odium* and *metus* in her description of how Dido acquired followers, but she distances Dido herself from them. In Venus' account, Dido's fellow citizens feel *odium*, not *par odium*—that is, any reference to Dido's own hatred is erased. And it is they, the citizens, who fear of Pygmalion (*tyranni...acer metus*) in Venus' account, not servants whom Dido has amorally tricked. We can see, then, that Venus' account recalls for the reader the more suspect elements of Dido's character that she is concealing from Aeneas. This prepares the reader to see dissimulation in Dido's response to the Trojans, and to perceive that Aeneas is unaware of it.

Adding to these indirect means by which the reader is encouraged to construct a multi-dimensional and morally ambiguous Dido behind Venus' narration is a subtly unsavory emphasis in the tale on money (*thesauros, onerantque auro, avari, opes*),<sup>348</sup> and her stereotypically Punic acquisitiveness will be relevant to the reader's characterization of her on my reading. This can be seen in the conclusion of Venus' story as well, in which she explains how Dido obtained land for Carthage with the trick of the the ox-hide. This reminds the reader of another deception contrived by Dido, though it cannot mean anything to Aeneas:

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<sup>348</sup> The act of theft carries some connotation of greed, as does the emphasis on money overall in the story, which may taint her with a certain degree of guilt by association. It is noteworthy, too, that in Pompeius Trogus, the only gold Dido takes is her own (Sycaeus' treasure)—her theft of the *opes Pygmalionis* appears to be Vergil's invention (compare Camilla's "typically female" attraction to gold--this may be part of the emphasis of *dux femina facti*). Horsfall (1990: 135) argues that "Dido's story suits the origins of a great merchant people, with an unpleasant reputation for sharp dealing which goes back to the kidnapping of Eumaeus and the kidnapping of Io in Herodotus 1.1." Cf. also Hexter 1992: 345-6 and 356.

*devenere locos ubi nunc ingentia cernes  
moenia surgentemque novae Karthaginis arcem,  
mercatis solum, facti de nomine Byrsam,  
taurino quantum possent circumdare tergo.*  
(*Aen.* 1.367-8)

They came to the place where you now see the giant walls and rising citadel of new Carthage. They bought land, called Byrsa from the name of the deed: it was as much land as they could encircle with a bull's hide.

This refers to a well known tradition about the founding of Carthage:<sup>349</sup>

*dein empto loco, qui corio bouis tegi posset, in quo fessos longa nauigatione  
socios, quoad proficisceretur, reficere posset, corium in tenuissimas partes secari  
iubet atque ita maius loci spatium quam petierat, occupat, unde postea ei loco  
Byrsae nomen fuit.*  
(*Ep.* 18.5.9)

Then she bought some land, just as much as could be covered by a cow's hide, where she could give some recreation to her men, weary from the long sea-journey, until the time of her departure. She next gave orders for the hide to be cut into very fine strips, and in this way she took possession of a greater area than she had apparently bargained for. From this the place was afterwards called the Byrsa. (Yardley trans.)

There is no motivation at the actorial level for the detail about the name Byrsa to be included in Venus' account at all, except that at the authorial level it clues the reader in to the contrast between the way Venus is telling the story and the somewhat seamier tradition about her deceptiveness and acquisitiveness that we see in the earlier tradition represented by Pompeius Trogus. Just as Venus recalls the "unabridged" version with her suspiciously vague descriptions of unsavory activities using words that recollect the "true" version of events (like *odium* and *metus*), so here the name Byrsa signals that Venus' summary is not intended to replace the traditional account for the reader, but to be seen as a selective whitewashing of it for Aeneas. She omits direct mention of the

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<sup>349</sup> It is also attested by Servius *ad loc.* and Livy 34.62.11.

scheming, dissimulating, and outright coercion that we see in the epitome of Pompeius Trogus,<sup>350</sup> but she evokes it. Heinze remarks that Vergil “has deliberately omitted the sly deception and we can see why: it would be a jarring note in his description of the heroic wife.”<sup>351</sup> We must, however, amend this observation by noting that it is not Vergil but the narrator Venus who judiciously omits this “jarring note,” and that Vergil in fact reminds the reader, in the ways described above, of the real story that she is bowdlerizing.

I hope to have shown that critics who suggest that this speech makes an unambiguously good impression are correct—it makes such an impression *on Aeneas*. At the same time, the reader’s own impression is mixed, for Venus’ statement that she will be abridging the story of the “many wrongs” that were done reminded the reader that in the full version of the story Dido is not only admirably energetic, intelligent, and brave, but also has a busy mind, an acquisitive spirit, and is a skillful dissimulator. In conjunction with the reader’s most recent view of her artificial transformation from *ferocitas* to *benignitas*, this scene contributes to a sense of suspicion in the reader as Aeneas moves closer to Carthage.

When Venus concludes Dido’s story she asks Aeneas about his own. He relates his experiences in a way that emphasizes the faithlessness of the gods and hints at blame of his mother, to which Venus takes offense. As I argued in the previous chapter, this interaction highlights the troubled psychological state of Aeneas when he arrives in Carthage, and in his view of the Carthaginian city (*o fortunati!*) we see the appeal that such a settlement already presents to him, even before it has been offered. I would like to

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<sup>350</sup> We may note another *iniuria* from Trogus’ account, her ordering the abduction of 80 girls from the shore of Cyprus to be wives for her men (*Ep.* 18.5.4-5).

<sup>351</sup> Heinze [1915] 1993: 108.

note here that in the epic simile describing Aeneas' view of Carthage, its citizens hard at work in their various tasks are described as busy bees:

*qualis apes aestate nova perflorea rura  
exercet sub sole labor, cum gentis adultos  
educunt fetus, aut cum liquentia mella  
stipant et dulci distendunt nectare cellas,  
aut onera accipiunt venientum, aut agmine facto  
ignavum fucos pecus a praesepibus arcent;  
fervet opus redolentque thymo fraglantia mella.*  
(Aen.1.430-436)

Just as busy work under the sun seizes the bees in early summer in the flowery fields, when they lead out the matured youth of the tribe, or when they press liquid honey and swell their cells with sweet nectar or receive the burdens of those returning, or with a battle line drawn up ward off the drones, a lazy tribe, from their hives; the work buzzes and the fragrant honey smells of thyme.

As a product of Aeneas' focalization, and so a metaphorical representation of the impression made on him, we can see that to him Carthage is image happy industriousness and strong community. It also "evokes an atmosphere of fragrance and light," which points to the positive emotional impact that the scene has on Aeneas,<sup>352</sup> and as Briggs remarks, the civic harmony of the scene "attracts him to stay in Carthage."<sup>353</sup> At the authorial level, however, there is another sense. Bees are highly acquisitive, possessive, and potentially hostile creatures, and the simile draws the reader's attention to this aspect of the Carthaginian nature, too.<sup>354</sup> In the description of the Carthaginians at work to which the simile corresponds, there is no element that corresponds to the verses *agmine facto/ ignavum fucos pecus a praesepibus arcent* ("With a battle line having been formed,

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<sup>352</sup> Grant 1969: 382. See my previous chapter for discussion of the development of Aeneas' perspective.

<sup>353</sup> Briggs 1980: 73: "The simile shows Aeneas now aware of the harmony possible in a divinely sanctioned political state and this attracts him to stay in Carthage." (Though I disagree with the notion that the "divinely sanctioned" nature of the state is present or relevant here.)

<sup>354</sup> Moreover, as Briggs notes (1980: 73), "the lesson of the *Georgics*, that the accomplishment of this harmony precludes the indulgence in amor, is omitted."

they drive the drones, an idle tribe, from their hive.”) This does correspond, though, to the inclination of the Carthaginians to “drive away” outsiders, as we saw when Jupiter sent Mercury to mollify the Carthaginians “lest Dido drive the Trojans from her land” (*ne fati nescia Dido finibus arceret*, 1.299-300). There is in this simile a subtle reminder of Carthaginian hostility, then, as well as their thirst for wealth. For this simile closely recalls Vergil’s description of the bees at *Georgics* 4.156-69,<sup>355</sup> following which the bees are compared in an epic simile to Cyclopes working at the forge; both are driven by their “innate love of acquisition” (*innatus amor habendi*):

*non aliter, si parva licet componere magnis,  
Cecropias innatus apes amor urget habendi  
munere quamque suo.*

(G. 176-8)

In just this way, if small things may be compared to great ones, does the innate love of acquisition drive the Athenian bees each at its own task.

This spirit of acquisition, it should be remembered, was a key element in Dido’s traditional story and even showed through in Venus’ cleaned-up version. Again, then we have a split view, with Aeneas’ wholly favorable impression undercut for the reader by suggestions at the authorial level that there are untrustworthy, potentially even dangerous aspects of the Carthaginian queen’s nature.

This note is sounded again as Aeneas reaches the temple of Juno. Despite being in the middle of the city, Dido’s giant temple is situated in a clearing at the center of a dense grove of trees (*lucus...laetissimus umbrae*, 1.441), a pleasant sight to Aeneas, perhaps, but an image which for the reader again recalls Circe, whose great stone house was situated in the center of a thickly wooded glen (ἐὐν βήσσησι, *Od.* 10.210). The

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<sup>355</sup> The parallel is widely recognized. For comparison of language, see Grant 1969 and Briggs 1980: 71-8.



reader is reminded of the theme of the animalistic inner nature of the Carthaginians when we learn that the temple was built on the site where they dug up the head of a “fierce horse” (*caput acris equi*), which portended that they would be “a people great in war and enjoying easy wealth” (*sic nam fore bello/ egregiam et facile victu per saecula gentem*, 1.444-5).<sup>356</sup> That is, just before we meet them, we see them emblemized by their animalistic ferocity and enjoyment of prosperity—the two descriptors of the Carthaginians in the proem (*dives opum studiisque asperrima belli*, 1.14), which were both subtly reiterated in the simile of the bees.

The difference between Aeneas’ perception of civilized safety and the suggestions of lurking danger the poet has offered the reader is heightened when Aeneas interprets the depiction of the Trojan War on the temple of Juno as a sign of sympathy, while the reader’s potential response to the “gap” of the artwork’s meaning has been structured rather differently.<sup>357</sup> When Aeneas sees the temple he dares to hope for safety for the first time (*hic primum Aeneas sperare salute/ ausus*, 1.450-1), for events from the Trojan war are depicted in the temple artwork:

*constitit, et lacrimans, ‘quis iam locus’ inquit ‘Achate,  
quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?  
en Priamus! Sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi;  
sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.  
solve metus; feret haec aliquam tibi fama salutem.’*

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<sup>356</sup> This portent was not the invention of Vergil (cf. Pompeius Trogus 18.5.16), but he a) considered it thematically relevant such that he chose to include it, and b) added the adjective *acris*, underlining that the link between the Carthaginians and animals is in their fierceness.

<sup>357</sup> “Many scholars argue that Aeneas misreads the frieze, for its location in a temple dedicated to Juno must in all probability suggest that it celebrates the triumph of Juno’s favored Greeks rather than lamenting the fate of her despised Trojans or, more universally, expressing sorrow for mortal suffering.” Perkell 1999: 46. This famous passage has generated a large bibliography, which is far from exhausted by the following list: R.D. Williams 1960 [1990 reprint], Stanley 1965, Johnson 1976: 99-114, Segal 1981, Lyne 1987: 209-10, Clay 1988, Thomas 1983, Leach 1988: 311-23, O’Hara 1990: 35-9, Horsfall 1990, Fowler 1991, Hexter 1992: 354-7, Putnam 1998, Bartsch 1998: 336-9, S.C. Smith 1999:232-42.

(*Aen.* 1.459-63)

He stopped and, weeping, exclaimed, “What place now, Achates, what corner of the world is not full of our tribulations? Look, Priam! Here too glory has its rewards; there are tears for things and mortal suffering [“mortal things”] touches the heart. Let go of your fear. This fame, I tell you, will bring some safety.”

Although it is not perfectly clear what Aeneas is saying, his sense that these depictions convey sympathy is, in any event, wrong.<sup>358</sup> Whatever Aeneas means by *lacrimae rerum* (“tears for things”),<sup>359</sup> the reader has seen that the Carthaginians hearts are *ferocia*, not, as Aeneas imagines, “touched by mortal suffering.” Aeneas’ incorrect deduction is to be expected, though. Critics have occasionally been harsh about his perceptive abilities,<sup>360</sup> but we must keep in mind that the horizon available to the character for filling in the gap presented by the temple art work is much narrower than that of the authorial audience.<sup>361</sup> Aeneas does not know, for example, that Juno is his sworn enemy,<sup>362</sup> and he has been intentionally misled by Venus into believing Dido is just the kind of tender-hearted person would pity great suffering. Through omissions and vague obfuscations in her story, Venus intentionally established a false horizon of expectation that would

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<sup>358</sup> On Aeneas as a subjective viewer of the ecphrasis, see especially Clay 1988: 202, Leach 1988: 318, Segal 1981, and Bartsch 1998: 336-8, and S.C. Smith 1999: 232-42.

<sup>359</sup> See Stanley (1965) for discussion of the possibilities.

<sup>360</sup> Hexter (1992: 355) calls Aeneas’ inference “monumentally stupid.”

<sup>361</sup> As S.C. Smith (1999: 235) observes, “He seems to see only the ‘evidence’ and not its context.” I concur, but would like to stress that the “context” necessary for correct interpretation of the evidence is unavailable to him.

<sup>362</sup> It is not clear at the actorial level that Juno is intractably set against the Trojans. Aeneas saw all the gods destroying Troy, not just Juno—she appears as much an enemy as Jupiter, whom we expect him to trust. Aeneas has performed the sacrifices to Juno that Helenus advised, and he does not know that this storm is her doing (i.e., that his sacrifices did not—could not—work). Human characters do not know which gods are for or against them at any given time, a fact to which Vergil explicitly points on this very frieze, which depicts the women of Troy beseeching Athena, who, little do they know, is an adamant enemy of their city. The Homeric scene (*Il.* 6.297 ff.) is made tragic by this dramatic irony—the women call Athena as *rhusiptoli* (“defender of the city” *Il.* 6.305), not knowing that she is in fact their destroyer. Just as the women in the Vergilian ecphrasis approach the temple of “not unpartisan Pallas” (*non aequae Palladis*, 1.479), ignorant of her bias, so Aeneas approaches the temple of *non aequae Iunonis*, as we might put it. We pity the Trojan women’s helpless ignorance of their divine enemy, and I think Aeneas’ ignorance can be seen to warrant the same reaction.

subsequently cause him to fill in gaps incorrectly, because if he read the temple correctly, he would flee. Her plan for his survival depends on his misreading. This “misreading,” then, is not to be confused with “reading poorly.” He simply does not have (and has been actively prevented from having) the information necessary to interpret the intention of this art work correctly. There are larger statements to be drawn about art and interpretation from this,<sup>363</sup> but it is also simply important to the development of the “hermeneutic code” of Book 1 as I have been arguing it: the poet builds interest and suspense by letting the reader perceive dangers that Aeneas himself does not.

It has been well established that Aeneas misinterprets here, but less attention has been paid to what Dido’s triumphant depiction of the suffering of the Trojans says about her character, and how we should interpret her subsequent friendliness. The fact that Aeneas is wrong is more easily accepted by critics than its logical corollary, which is often ignored: namely, that if Aeneas is obtuse in thinking that Dido’s art work shows sympathy for the Trojans, then the truth is that Dido is not sympathetic to the Trojans, but in fact glories in their destruction. And if Dido has an antipathy toward the Trojans, then her later claim to have long admired them should be viewed with skepticism, as should the warm generosity of her welcome, which she attributes to this admiration. I will return to this point momentarily. Before leaving the temple, I would like to stress that in Dido’s particular choice of scenes (lest we forget, she has commissioned this, *hic templum*

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<sup>363</sup> It has been aptly described, from various angles, as comment on art’s inability to enforce its own authoritative interpretation. This can be taken as a political statement (*e.g.*, Bartsch 1998: 339, on Vergil “invoking the impossibility of dictating artistic interpretation even as Augustus begins his turn to an ideological artistic program at Rome.”), a poetic statement warning the reader about his or her own interpretive blind spots (*e.g.*, Hexter 1990: 122 on places in Vergil where “the text is a mirror, a blank, a screen onto which its readers project their desires”) or a more cosmic statement about “the essential fraudulence of art and of the realities that art mirrors,” as Johnson (1976: 105) concludes.

*Iunoni ingens Sidonia Dido/ condebat*, 1.445-6),<sup>364</sup> the Greeks display the same particular personal characteristics that she herself exhibited in her flight from Tyre. As I argued in my discussion of Venus' abridgment of her history, her acquisitiveness and skill in trickery were her cardinal characteristics. That those constitute virtues in her view may be seen in her choice of scenes celebrating a sneaky and rapacious brand of heroism—the cunning catching of an adversary off-guard in the nighttime raid of Rhesus' camp and the ambush of Troilus, and the triumph of acquiring an enemy's wealth, in the selling of Hector's body for gold.<sup>365</sup>

Dido's appearance in the temple like Diana surrounded by nymphs suggests something deeply appealing to Aeneas, and something suspicious to the reader, as I argued in the previous chapter. I would like to argue here that her words do the same. As she sits upon her throne dispensing commands to the men who obey her, the band of shipwrecked Trojans led by Ilioneus enters. Ilioneus, the elder of the group, begins his speech with a calm heart (*maximus Ilioneus placido sic pectore coepit*, 1.521), an allusion to Argus' reply to Aeetes (meilixi/wj prose/eipen, e0pei\ progene/steroj h]en, "he answered him gently, ahead of his brothers, for he was the eldest," *Arg.* 3.319). As Nelis observes, this allusion "automatically places Dido in the role of Aeetes," and he goes on to note that "Ilioneus' words continue to recall the

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<sup>364</sup> Hexter (1992: 356) observes that "[t]he major point of the line... is to focus attention on Dido's active role in the building of the temple." I see too much conflation of the narrative and authorial level, however, in his conclusion that Dido's building of a temple to Juno, not the Carthaginian goddess Tanit, "emblemizes Dido the outsider who wants entrée into Roman history and culture, even before the arrival of Aeneas."

<sup>365</sup> Horsfall (1990: 138) makes a more general (and in my opinion insufficiently nuanced) point in the same vein, "They illustrate just those qualities which Carthaginians might admire in the victorious Greeks—greed and brutality, for which they themselves had such a fine reputation."

Apollonian model.”<sup>366</sup> Just as Argus tells Aeetes that the Argonauts have traveled much but have no hostile intent (Arg. 3.348-51), Ilioneus explains to Dido that they have been cast all about the sea (*ventis maria omnia vecti*, 1.524), and stresses that they pose no danger (*victis, miseri*, without *vis* and *superbia*):

*‘non nos aut ferro Libycos populare penates  
venimus, aut raptas ad litora vertere praedas;  
non ea vis animo nec tanta superbia victis.’*  
(Aen. 1.527-9)

“We have come neither to destroy the Libyan land with the sword, nor to make for the shore with stolen booty; the conquered do not have such violence or arrogance in their hearts.”

He goes on to explain that they were on their way to Italy when blown off course by a storm:

*‘est locus, Hesperiam Grai cognomine dicunt,  
terra antiqua, potens armis atque ubere glabrae;  
Oenotri coluere viri; nunc fama minores  
Italiam dixisse ducis de nomine gentem.  
hic cursus fuit,  
cum subito adsurgens fluctu nimbosus Orion  
in vada caeca tulit penitusque procacibus Austris  
perque undas superante salo perque invia saxa  
dispulit; huc pauci vestris adnavimus oris’.*  
(Aen. 1.530-538)

“There is a place, the Greeks call it Hesperia, an ancient land, powerful in arms and with richness of earth; Oenotrian men inhabited it; now it is reported that their descendents have named the nation Italy after the name of their leader. We were going there, when suddenly, rising up from the waves, stormy Orion bore us into the dark shoals and widely whipping South winds drove us through the waves and the pathless rocks as the waves overcame us. From here we few sailed to your shores.”

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<sup>366</sup> Nelis 2001: 87, who compares the contents of Ilioneus’ speech to its Homeric and Apollonian models and concludes that “[t]he content of Ilioneus’ speech...owes more to Argus before Aeetes than to Odysseus before Alcinous and Arete.” On Dido as an Aeetes figure, see also Moorton 1989.

Nelis observes that “Ilioneus states the goal of his journey, Italy” just as “Argus describes the Golden Fleece as the goal of the Argonauts’ voyage (*Arg.* 3.336-9).”<sup>367</sup> There is an important difference, though. Ilioneus does not actually explain the Trojans’ goal. He says nothing about *fata, auguriis divum, sedes*, anything conveying the notion that that they are following divine directives to found a new homeland in a specified place. He simply states *hic cursus fuit* (“this is where we were going”). On the reader’s horizon there is information available to fill this gap easily—they are going to Italy to found a new homeland, and this mission is very important because from it a great nation will be born. To the reader, “We were going to Italy,” means “We are on an important mission to a predestined location.” This authorial level information is not present on Dido’s horizon, and based on the immediate information available to her, that they are refugees from a destroyed city who have not had success in founding a new home (*ventis maria omnia vecti*, 1.524) her bridging of the gap posed by this vague statement is structured differently. “We were going to Italy,” means “We are looking for a new place to settle.” The reader who recognizes that she sees the situation in this way can then see why she reacts the way she does, seizing upon what appears to be an opportunity to keep them.

It will be noted that 1.534 is a hemistich, one of three unfinished lines in the book, and the likelihood that Vergil would have edited this line<sup>368</sup> should make us hesitant to let too much of our argument depend upon it. One could suppose that Vergil intended to add

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<sup>367</sup> Nelis 2001: 87.

<sup>368</sup> Though we should not assume that Vergil would have completed all the half-lines in the poem, some of which are rhetorically effective (Sparrow 1931: 1-19), the fact that 1.534 occurs in a context that shows a lack of revision suggests that it not an intentional half-line (Sparrow 1931: 30). Lack of revision is evidenced in the two hemistiches within the same passage (1.560 also) and the verbatim repetition of 3.160-3, which was composed first (see next note, and Sparrow 1931: 93-4 for full argumentation.).

something about *fata* in the remainder of this half-line. In fact, however, it is most likely that he would have replaced the whole of 1.530-4, which repeats verbatim part of another passage which was clearly composed first (3.163-6, part of the prophecy of the Penates).<sup>369</sup> That is, this section of Ilioneus' speech appears to be one of the *tibicenes*, or provisional insertions, with which Vergil's biographers say he temporarily "propped up" the work in the course of composition to prevent his flow of inspiration from being hindered.<sup>370</sup> Precisely how Vergil would have reworked or replaced the whole of 1.530-4 is unknowable, but it seems unlikely that Ilioneus would have elaborated on the history of prophecies directing their mission, since this information is not salient to his rhetorical goal here, which is to impress upon Dido that the Trojans did not come to her land as invaders, and should therefore be treated with *hospitium* not hostility.<sup>371</sup> If Ilioneus' description of Italy is, as it appears to be, a *tibicen*, then they are simply a stand in for a better expression of the notion that they express, which is simply "We were going to the land of Italy."

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<sup>369</sup>“These lines and the descriptive detail fit better the address of the Penates to Aeneas,” and “in book 3 the lines are an inextricable portion of the passage where they occur,” which continues: *hae nobis propriae sedes, hinc Dardanus ortus/ Iasiusque pater, genus a quo principe nostrum/...Corythum terrasque requirat/ Ausonias; Dictaea negat tibi Iuppiter arva.* “This is our true home, it is from here that Dardanus and father Iasius sprung, from whom our people originated/...Jupiter demands Corythum and the Ausonian lands; he denies you the fields of Dicte.” 3.167-71)

<sup>370</sup> Donatus' biography (supposed to be based upon Suetonius' *De Poetis*), our sole authority for Vergil's method of composition, tells us that Vergil wrote a prose first-draft in 12 books, then composed the poem piece by piece, as the mood struck him; to enable his inspiration to flow unhindered during the course of composition he left some lines without endings, and others he "propped up" with "inconsequential" verses, which he jokingly called "*tibicines*": *Aeneida prosa prius oration formatam digestamque in xii libros particulatim componere instituit prout liberet quidque, et nihil in ordinem arripiens. ac ne quid impetum moraretur, quaedam imperfect transmisit, alia levissima verbis [or versibus, Donatus Auctus] veluti fulsit, quae [quos, Don. Auct.] per iocum pro tibicinibus interponi aiebat ad sustinendum opus, donec solidae columnae advenirent.* (VSD 23) On the Vita Suetonii/Donati (VSD) in general see Horsfall 1995: 1-25; on Vergil's method of composition, see Sparrow 1931.

<sup>371</sup> This is precisely what 1.528-38 formulate as a single, complete sentence if we subtract the lines that have been borrowed from 3.163-6 and wedged in between 1.530 and 1.535 (assuming *cum* at 1.535 was in the original, pre-*tibicen* sentence a conjunction like *sed*.)

Adding to the lack suggestion in Ilioneus' speech that the Trojans are on a divinely appointed mission is the fact that at the end he states that the Trojans would ideally continue on their way to Italy, but if it turned out that their leader had perished, they would instead settle in Sicily, in the *sedes paratas* of king Acestes.

*'quassatam ventis liceat subducere classem  
et silvis aptare trabes et stringere remos,  
si datur Italiam sociis et rege recepto  
tendere, ut Italiam laeti Latiumque petamus;  
sin absumpta salus, et te, pater optime Teucrum,  
pontus habet Libyae nec spes iam restat Iuli,  
at freta Sicaniae saltem sedesque paratas,  
unde huc advecti, regemque petamus Acesten.'*  
(*Aen.* 1.551-558)

“Permit us to draw up our wind-battered fleet, and to prepare beams in the woods and strip the trees for oars, so that, if we are able to regain our friends and our king and make for Italy, we may happily seek Italy and Latium; if our salvation is lost, and the Libyan sea holds you, great father of the Teucrians, and our hope in Iulus is gone, then let us seek at least the shoals of Sicily and the prepared home from whence we came here, and the king Acestes.”

This all sounds as if the Trojan exiles just wanted *a* place to settle. We can see that this is what Dido has deduced, for in her reply we can see her attempt to take advantage of the opportunity that their search for a home, as she sees it, presents.

As noted above, up to this point the Trojans' reception has been set up as parallel to the Argonauts' reception by Aeetes. The intertextual cycle shifts gears, though, for Dido cannot respond as Aeetes does in an explosion of rage (*Arg.* 3.367-8). This has been specifically prevented by Mercury's mollification of her, just as Hermes mollified Aeetes toward Phrixus (see above). Instead, the intertextual backdrop opens up, suggesting a different monarch's reception of the Argonauts—the warm but deceptive welcome of



Hypsipyle,<sup>372</sup> which we will discuss more momentarily. Having learned that these men are Trojans, Dido thinks for a moment (*breviter*) with her face down (*vultum demissa*), then explains that her people's hostile attitude toward strangers is not because they are a *barbara patria* but because the dangerous circumstances surrounding their fledgling, threatened state compels vigilance:

*Tum breviter Dido vultum demissa profatur:  
'solvite corde metum, Teucrici, secludite curas.  
res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt  
moliri et late finis custode tueri.'*

(*Aen.*1.561-4)

Then, with her face cast down for a moment, she speaks: "Put fear out of your hearts, Trojans, shut out your worries. A harsh situation and the newness of my kingdom force me to devise such actions,<sup>373</sup> and to protect my borders with a wide guard."

In their overwhelmingly positive response to this "simple and kind"<sup>374</sup> speech, some scholars have, I venture to speculate, been as easily manipulated as Aeneas himself. A great many seem to automatically take Dido at her word, but the horizons in front of which this scene comes into focus make simple acceptance of Dido's explanation of her people's hostility and her warm welcome of her guests suspicious. What Dido says about the precarious position of her state is certainly true—but is it the *whole* truth? The reader knows from Venus' tale—and even more so from the fuller tradition to which Venus alludes (see discussion above)—that Dido is duplicitous. This excuse for her people's behavior, the masking of their *ferocia corda* with a plausible (because it is partly true)

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<sup>372</sup> On the broader relevance of Hypsipyle as a model for Dido, see Krevans' summary (2002-3: 175-6) of their similarities. Nelis suggests (2001: 181) that the similarities of Dido and Hypsipyle are "so striking as to suggest that the whole idea for Aeneas' temporary stay in Carthage and love affair with the female ruler of the place originated with a reading of the first book of the *Argonautica*."

<sup>373</sup> The word *moliri* can have the implication of plotting or contriving, cf. *G.* 1.271, *insidias avibus moliri*. Pompeius Trogus uses the word for the way Dido devised her flight (*fugam tacita molitur*, *Ep.* 18.4.9).

<sup>374</sup> To use the phrasing of Austin 1971: 180 *ad* 1.561-78.

explanation comes from the mouth, it should be remembered, of a quick-thinking, dissimulating character whose true nature is in danger of being caught out.<sup>375</sup> Moreover, the disingenuousness of the whole speech is signaled by the recollection of Hypsipyle's welcome of Jason, which is described explicitly by the narrator as deceptive.

Dido's lowering of her face (*vultum demissa*, 1.561) is a demure, feminine gesture,<sup>376</sup> and it recalls Hypsipyle's slanted glance down before addressing Jason (ἐὐγκλίδο\ν οἰσσε βαλου=σα, *Arg.* 1.790).<sup>377</sup> Hypsipyle, however, uses this performance of femininity, with its submissive, non-threatening implications, to put her male interlocutor at ease so that she may the more easily manipulate him with her subsequent lies.<sup>378</sup> Apollonius states as much explicitly when he explains, "yet for all her modesty, her speech was calculated to deceive" (ἐλμπα δε\ το/ν γε / αἰὸ dome/nh mu/qoisi prose/nnepen αἰ9muli/oisin, *Arg.* 1.791-2).<sup>379</sup> She knows that the situation on Lemnos must look suspicious, and she offers an explanation (1.793-833) which is based on the truth, that the Lemnian men had become enamored with their captive women and had rejected their wives, but fabricates a different, but plausible, conclusion that the women had simply locked their husbands out

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<sup>375</sup> Note how differently the injunction "Do not be afraid" (*solvite corde metum*, 1.561) sounds when Dido is read as a dangerous character. There are a number of such sinister ironies in her speech, such as her statement that she is *non ignara mali*, "not unacquainted with wickedness," (1.630).

<sup>376</sup> Cf. Andromache at 3.320. Pöschl ([1950] 1962: 170) argues that Dido's humanity "finds expression in the *vultum demissa* gesture which delicately shows her embarrassment at the harsh treatment afforded the shipwrecked Trojans."

<sup>377</sup> This parallel was observed by Heinze [1915] 1993: 117 n. 44 and is also noted by Highet 1972: 219 and Nelis 2001: 114. These scholars do not, however, consider the implications of Hypsipyle's deceptive use of the gesture in Vergil's application of it to Dido.

<sup>378</sup> Compare also Juno's insincere use of this gesture when she capitulates to Jupiter (*summisso...vultu*, 12.807) in a speech that, as Johnson (1976: 126-7) observes, "centers on a lie hidden in a half-truth."

<sup>379</sup> I have used Rieu's translation here, which brings out the sense of mu/qoisi ai9muli/oisin better than Race's "cajoling words."

of the city as a result. Likewise, Dido explains evidence of her people's hostility with a story that includes true elements. Her assumption of a deferential feminine demeanor with *vultum demissa* should, however, have the opposite of its intended actorial-level effect on the reader, who is reminded that Hypsipyle manipulatively used such a modest gesture to win trust in her "wily words," and who has seen a well developed series of suggestions up to this point that Dido is adept at masking her true thoughts (and who knows that there are truths about Carthaginian hostility that need to be masked here). Hypsipyle not only wants to mask her people's aggressiveness, but also entice the hero to settle. Dido's gesture will make the reader alert to her own parallel desires in the magnanimous speech that follows.

This is an emblematic moment in the reader's construction of her character's true perspective, as I have tried to highlight by making *vultum demissa* the title of this chapter. Looking down can also suggest that a character's mind is silently working—Hera and Athena, to give an example, "fixed their eyes on the ground in front of their feet, separately brooding within themselves," as they tried to come up with a stratagem or plan to help Jason.<sup>380</sup> Looking down suggests an invisible, internal monologue as the wheels turn within a character's mind. With *vultum demissa*, the reader can see simultaneously her contrived performance of harmless femininity, and beneath it the silent, busy working of her mind.

After apologizing for the harsh treatment the Trojans received, she asserts her knowledge of their fame with almost embarrassing flattery:

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<sup>380</sup> Race trans. (ε0p' ouldeoj ai3 ge podw~n pa/roj olmmat' elphcan,/alndixa porfu/rousai e0ni\ sfi/sin, *Arg.* 3.22). I am not suggesting an intertextual evocation of this particular verse, just illustrating the use of downcast eyes to suggest silent machinations.

*quis genus Aeneadum, quis Troiae nesciat urbem,  
virtutesque virosque aut tanti incendia belli?*  
(*Aen.* 1.565-6)

Who does not know the race of Aeneas, who does not know the city of Troy, the courage and the heroes, or the destruction of that terrible war?

If the reader has it in mind that her words are, like Hypsipyle's, "wily," the breathless wonder of her adulation of the Trojan *virtutesque virosque* sounds affected. Moreover, she proceeds to subtly shift the issue away from something quite damning and true (not abiding by civilized mores, *quaeve hunc tam barbara morem/ permittit patria?*) to something less serious and not true by responding as if Ilioneus had accused her people rustic ignorance rather than barbaric aggressiveness to foreigners:

*non obtunsa adeo gestamus pectora Poeni,  
nec tam aversus equos Tyria Sol iungit ab urbe.*  
(*Aen.* 1.567-8)

We Phoenicians do not have such dull minds, nor does the sun yoke his horses so from the Tyrian city.

Asserting that the Carthaginians know who the Trojans are make it seem as if that were the issue—that they were aggressive because they did not recognize them. This is at one level actually true, but only because of Mercury's intervention. The reader knows that the Carthaginians were in fact naturally hostile to the Trojans (Dido's reference to the *pectora Poeni* evokes Mercury's intervention),<sup>381</sup> which was emphasized in the art work on Dido's walls. Her sudden admiration must be set against this.

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<sup>381</sup> Their barbaric aggressiveness remains intact, for Mercury did not make the hearts of the Carthaginians universally friendly, but friendly specifically toward the Trojans: *in Teucros animum mentemque benignam* (1.304). It is not the case, then, that his spell is somehow slow to work (*pace* Austin 1971: 115 *ad loc.*, "the Carthaginians did not 'put off their rough spirit' all at once, as is clear from 539ff.>").

Dido goes on to offer Ilioneus assistance in reaching either of the two possible destinations he had named, Italy or Sicily, and she then offers a third option, settlement in Carthage, which she seems confident they will accept.<sup>382</sup>

*seu vos Hesperiam magnam Saturniaque arva,  
sive Erycis finis regemque optatis Acesten,  
auxilio tutos dimittam opibusque iuvabo.  
vultis et his mecum pariter considerare regnis?  
urbem quam statuo, vestra est; subducite navis;  
Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur.*  
(*Aen.* 1.569-74)

“Whether you desire great Hesperia and the Saturnian fields, or the territory of Eryx and king Acestes, I will send you safeguarded with help and I will assist you with materials. Would you like to settle even in this kingdom, on equal terms with me? The city I am building—it is yours. Draw up your ships. Trojan and Tyrian will not be ruled differently by me.”

Her generosity is extreme,<sup>383</sup> going far beyond what the situation calls for. She not only offers the Trojans *hospitium*—the goal of Mercury’s spell—but her city itself: *urbem*

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<sup>382</sup> The fact that she goes on to address them with an imperative (*subducite*), ordering them to draw up their ships, and then states that she *will* treat them as equal citizens (future indicative *agetur*) suggests an easy certainty on her part that the destitute Trojans exiles will find the third offer, settlement in Carthage, most appealing.

<sup>383</sup> This has not seemed to trouble scholars. Austin’s comment (1971: 182) on line 1.572, “Dido’s warm magnanimity finds clear expression here,” is a typical response to what is, in fact, a shocking offer. Horsfall (1990: 132) suggests that there is something off here, and notes that “Dido’s offer has political advantages for her in terms of protection against Tyre and the Nomades (4.320f, 535f.), and is normally described as kind and generous. But I wonder whether that would have been quite a Roman’s reaction: it is, after all, in direct conflict with what has already been said in the poem of relations between Carthage and Rome and with the Roman historical experience.” Gibson (1999: 190-1) recognizes the shocking nature of her offer, and offers an interesting suggestion: “Certainly an offer of incorporation, made on a first encounter with a deeply offended foreign people, can hardly be accounted for by simple altruism. . . . An offer of an equal place in her kingdom is. . . not only an expression of non-hostility and recognition of status. It is also so overly-generous in proportion to the situation that it may be thought to compensate the Trojans for their ill-treatment. And, in advance of any services received, it puts the Trojans firmly in her debt for making such a generous offer. It appears that they can now redeem themselves only by a display of submission. Dido thus skilfully recovers her position. She is transformed from barbarian (1.539f.) to commanding host.” Though I disagree with his assertion that that this is a hollow gesture used to save face, I concur that her offer is calculated to get the Trojans into her power.

*quam statuo, vestra est.* At least, this is how she initially phrases it.<sup>384</sup> This surprising offer opens up the gap with which I began this chapter: why does Dido offer the Trojans her city, and what is her impression of their current situation, such that she thinks they would accept? Scholars often suggest that Dido welcomes the Trojans because that is the kind of warm, generous person she is—this characterization of her is central to many, many readings of the episode. The text as I have been analyzing it, however, has structured a suspicious response to her sudden “warmth.” The question of Dido’s motivation in offering the Trojans settlement has received little attention that I am aware of—it is often taken for granted that she is just extremely generous.<sup>385</sup> I will argue that the reader’s “Dido Horizon” as constructed in this chapter points to a different answer: she has a pragmatic ulterior motive.

The second question is important because it is often assumed that the speeches of Ilioneus and Aeneas convey the notion that they have a mission in Italy to which they are committed. Dido’s scheme to keep them would make no sense if that were so. As Servius muses<sup>386</sup> in reference to Ilioneus’ statement that the Trojans did not come to devastate Libya, *ergo hoc agitur, ut discat Dido eos ad Italiam tendere. quomodo ergo se iungit Aeneae? sed furoris illud est, non consilii.* (This is done so that Dido may learn that they are heading to Italy. How then does she join herself to Aeneas? But that is the result of madness, not deliberation.) Servius’ comment illustrates the reading process that has

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<sup>384</sup> With *agetur* (which is not ‘*habebitur*’ but ‘*regetur*’; see Michaelis 1890: 29), she implies that they would be her subjects.

<sup>385</sup> Gibson (1999) is the exception.

<sup>386</sup> Servius *ad* 1.299, apropos of a reference in the discussion of Dido’s being ‘*nescia fati*’ to Ilioneus’ statement *non nos aut ferro Libycos populare penates venimus*. Note also how Servius links the question of Dido’s knowledge of the Trojan *fata* to her understanding of her marriage to Aeneas. More discussion on how these issues need to be separated before they can be intelligibly combined.

resulted in the general consensus that Dido somehow, inexplicably misunderstands what the Trojans tell her explicitly. Knowing that the Trojans must and will sail on, Servius reads this implication back into their statements. Dido has no reason—nor even the ability—to do so. The fact that the Trojans are fated to settle in another land is never stated explicitly by Ilioneus, nor later by Aeneas when he emerges from the cloud and introduces himself to Dido—in contrast to his intertextual models, for Odysseus tells Alcinous and Jason tells Hypsipyle in polite but unmistakable terms that they cannot accept the offer of settlement. This is important to keep in mind when considering whether the keenly astute Dido somehow misread clear information.<sup>387</sup>

As noted above, many scholars take Dido's extraordinary offer of Carthaginian citizenship as the result of her natural generosity, but given our discussion of her ambiguously hostile natural inclinations, the reader has reason to look elsewhere on her "Dido horizon" for information that might help to fill this blank. The reader knows from Venus' speech to Aeneas that Dido's state is in a precarious position, situated between hostile kingdoms and under potential threat from her murderous brother. They need arms and allies, a fact that the astute<sup>388</sup> Ilioneus seems to perceive, as tries to persuade her to friendship by presenting Aeneas as having both a sense of dutiful reciprocity (*iustior, pietate, officio* 1.544-5), and something with which to repay her—their own military prowess and wealthy, armed friends (*nec bello maior et armis, 544-5; sunt et Siculis*

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<sup>387</sup> Heinze [1915] 1995: 96. "Hypsipyle never counted on holding her beloved guest captive forever; it does not occur to her to chide him for leaving her." This is because unlike Aeneas, Jason told her explicitly that he would be leaving.

<sup>388</sup> Compare the way he presents the Trojans to Latinus, which appears carefully modulated to address Latinus' likely concerns. He also seems to have calculated his reproach of her people's barbarity in light of the sophisticated aspirations that her building projects reveal. Naturally, he does not know of Carthage's precarious foreign relations, but he can certainly see that the city is new, has no proper army, and is hyper-defensive.

*regionibus urbes/ armaque Troianoque a sanguine clarus Acestes, 549-550).*<sup>389</sup>

Mercury's magic may solve the puzzle of Dido's pro-Trojan reversal, but her extraordinary offer of citizenship goes far beyond the offer of *hospitium* that her "*in Teucros...benignam animam*" was designed to prompt. We have a gap between Mercury's inducement to "friendliness" and Dido's inordinate generosity, and the math is not difficult to calculate: Dido is bold and decisive when opportunity presents itself, as we saw both in Venus' story, and the more extensive story lurking behind it.<sup>390</sup> Now she needs arms and allies for Carthage, and suddenly an army in need of a home appears on her doorstep. Though it is not explicitly expressed, the reader is invited to surmise that Dido picked up Ilioneus' suggestion that Trojan arms could be of use to her, and, quickly concluded that it would be advantageous to acquire them.<sup>391</sup> This is to say, her offer of a permanent home in Carthage is not an expression of pure altruistic generosity, an offer in whose acceptance or rejection she has no personal interest or stake, but the expression of different personal characteristic that the reader has already seen in Dido, her opportunism. If the reader fills the gap presented by Dido's unexpected and inordinately generous offer by making this connection, it will color the motivation that the reader ascribes to her subsequent words and actions.

Strengthening this suggestion, it must be noted that Hypsipyle's reason for lying to Jason is not simply to avoid attack by the Argonauts, but to induce them to settle there

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<sup>389</sup> The suggestion that this is a veiled threat, as some suggest (*e.g.*, Gibson 1999: 188), seems illogical—how, if they were dead, would they notify Acestes of Dido's treachery?

<sup>390</sup> See discussion above.

<sup>391</sup> A reader who attributes this motivation to Dido will find support when Anna successfully uses this same prospect to encourage Dido's expressed interest in marriage with Aeneas: *nec venit in mentem quorum consederis arvis? Hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello,/ et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrits;/...Teucrum comitantibus armis/ Punica se quantis attollet gloria rebus!* (4.39-49)



so that the Lemnian's may enjoy military protection, repopulation, and future prosperity, as was spelled out in the speech of Polyxo in the council of Lemnian women prior to Jason's interview (Arg. 1.675-96). With this self-serving end in view, Hypsipyle concludes her speech by offering Jason and the Argonauts her city:

tw~ u9mei=j strwfa=sq' e0pidh/mioi: ei0 de/ ken au]qi  
 naieta/ein e0qe/loij kai/ toi a3doi, h] t' a2n elpeita  
 patro\j e0mei=o Qo/antoj elxoi] ge/raj.  
 (Arg. 1.827-9)

Therefore, all of you stay and reside with us; and if you yourself should wish to live here and would find it agreeable, then truly you would have my father Thoas' position. (Race trans.)

Note how Dido's offer replicates Hypsipyle's following the offering settlement with an emphatic statement of her guests' total possession of it. (Dido, true to her nature, proceeds to qualify this very subtly by indirectly stating her own ultimate supremacy, "Trojan and Tyrian will not be treated differently *by me*," *Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*, 1.574).<sup>392</sup> At this stage in the *Aeneid*, Dido's pragmatic motivations in welcoming the Trojans have not yet been directly exposed, but they can be extrapolated both from the context of her precarious situation and the intertext with *Argonautica* 1, where the true, self-serving motivation for the warm welcome is spelled out perfectly clearly.<sup>393</sup> The parallels between the concerns of the Lemnians and those of the Carthaginians are easy to see: both fear military reprisal from a party that they wronged, and for long-term prosperity they require additional manpower—for the Carthaginians,

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<sup>392</sup> Unlike Hypsipyle, who is speaking to Jason himself, Dido is speaking to Ilioneus, hence she does not offer him kingship personally.

<sup>393</sup> See the speech of Hypsipyle's nurse Polyxo (Arg. 1.675-96). The *Aeneid's* linear reader will encounter a similarly explicit enumeration later, in the speech of Anna at 4.31-53.

this means an army for political dominance, and for the Lemnians it means the production of children to replace an aging population. When in Dido's statement "The city I am building is yours," the reader hears Hypsipyle's "You shall have my father's royal position," the true motivation of Dido's warm generosity should appear as a possibility.

Aeneas proceeds to emerge from the cloud in which he has been cloaked, and makes a speech of thanks which I argued in the previous chapter is ambiguously affirmative in its response both to Dido's explicit offer of a home in Carthage and the implicit erotic suggestion that it could entail for him. Just as Aeneas' lavish thanks recalled Odysseus' flattery of Nausicaa and appeal to her conjugal aspirations, so Dido's response replicates Nausicaa's response to the beautified Odysseus. After Odysseus' initial address to Nausicaa, Athena had beautified him as he bathed, and when he emerges Nausicaa is struck by his beauty (*qhei~to de\ kou/rh*, 6.237) and remarks to her friends:

Klu~te/ meu, a0mfi/poloi leukw/lenoi, olfra ti eilpw.  
ou0 pa/ntwn a0e/khti qew~n, oi3 l0lumpon elxousi,  
Faih/kess' o3d' a0nh\r e0pimi/sgetai a0ntiqe/oisi:  
pro/sqen me\n ga\r dh/ moi a0eike/lioj de/at' eilnai,  
nu~n de\ qeoi~sin eloike, toi\ ou0rano\n eu0ru\n  
elxousin.  
ai2 ga\r e0moi\ toio/sde po/sij keklhme/noj eilh  
e0nqa/de naieta/wn, kai/ oi9 a3doi au0to/qi mi/mnein!  
(*Od.* 6.239-45)

"Hear me, my white-armed serving women; let me say something.  
It is not against the will of all the gods on Olympos  
that this man is here to be made known to the godlike Phaiakians.  
A while ago he seemed an unpromising man to me. Now  
he even resembles one of the gods, who hold high heaven.  
If only the man to be called my husband could be like this one,

a man living here, if only this one were pleased to stay here.”  
(Lattimore trans.)

One may recall that before Aeneas emerged from the cloud and addressed Dido, he had just received a similar divine beautification (1.589-93), helping ensure that Dido would have a similar response. Just as Nausicaa observes of Odysseus (q̄eoi~si eloike, 6.243), he looks like a god (*os umeroque deo similis*, 1.589), and like Nausicaa (q̄hei~to de\ kou/rh, 6.237) Dido is struck by the physical beauty of the hero: *obstupuit primo aspectu Sidonia Dido* (1.613). She has been watching him as he gives the speech which my previous chapter attempted to demonstrate strongly suggests his favorable response to Dido’s offer of a home in Carthage, and his amenable attitude toward the unexpressed erotic possibility that would go along with it. We may imagine, particularly due to the parallel with Nausicaa’s reaction, that Dido now, having seen Aeneas in the flesh, does indeed hope that such a man would be “pleased to stay forever.”<sup>394</sup> That is, an erotic element is added to her political plan when she sees Aeneas himself.

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<sup>394</sup> Cairns observes (1989: 131) that this line (e0nqa/de naieta/wn, kai/ oi9 a3doi au0to/qi mi/mnein, 245), “with its emphasis on her husband staying in Phaeacia, is a clear warning...that Nausicaa is potentially a second Calypso, wishing to do what Calypso did,” and stresses (133) how “in *Odyssey* 6 and 7 Nausicaa was a real source of jeopardy to Odysseus’ return.” I agree, but would add that in this regard she poses the same threat not only as Calypso but also Circe. On the threat posed by Calypso, Cairns quotes the poem’s proem (to\n d’ oi}on, no/stou kexrhme/non h0de/ gunaiko/j, nu/mfh po/tni’ elkrue Kaluyw/, di=a qea/wn, e0n spe/ssi glafuroi=si, lilaiome/nh po/sin ei}nai, 1.13-15), but we may note that Circe is described as posing the very same threat: Odysseus repeats the same phrase twice (lilaiome/nh po/sin ei}nai) to describe the intentions of both Calypso and Circe at 9.29-32. As I have been arguing, the intertextual interplay in this episode is primarily between Nausicaa and Circe, and it is one of contrast: recollection of the naïve virgin Nausicaa points up how shrewd and experienced Dido is, which works in concert with the strategy of painting her as a Circe-figure.

Though Dido's emotional reaction (*obstipuit*) is like that of Nausicaa, the speech that she proceeds to make is modeled upon that of Circe (*Od.* 10.325-35).<sup>395</sup> Knauer sets the two passages side by side,<sup>396</sup> showing how like Circe Dido asks two incredulous questions, then identifies the hero by name, explaining how she had already learned of him, and concludes by inviting him into her home (in Circe's case, her bed):

*'quis te nate dea, per tanta pericula casus  
insequitur? quae vis immanibus applicat oris?  
tunc ille Aeneas, quem Dardanio Anchisae  
alma Venus Phrygii genuit Simoentis ad undam?  
...  
tempore iam ex illo (i.e. Teucer's visit) casus mihi cognitus urbis  
Troiane nomenque tuum regesque Pelasgi.  
...  
quare agite, o, tectis, iuvenes, succedite nostris.'*  
(*Aen.* 1.615-627)

What misfortune drives you, son of a goddess, through such great danger? What power pushed you to these great shores? Are you that Aeneas, whom nourishing Venus bore to Dardanian Anchises on the shore of the Phrygian Simois? . . . The misfortune of the Trojan city and your name and the Pelasgian kings have been known to me ever since that time [when Teucer told her]....Come then, men, and go up into my home.

*'ti/j po/qen ei0j a0ndrw~n; po/qi toi po/lij h0de\  
tokh=ej;  
qau=ma m' elxei w9j oul ti piw\n ta/de fa/rmak'  
e0qe/lxqhj.  
. . .  
h} su/ g' 00dusseu/j e0ssi polu/tropoj, o3n te/ moi  
ai0ei  
fa/sken e0leu/sesqai xruso/rrapij a0rgeifo/nthj,  
e0k Troi/hj a0nio/ta qoh=| su\n nhi\ melai/nh|.  
a0ll' alge dh\ kolew|~ me\n alor qe/o, nw~i d' elpeita  
eu0nh=j h9mete/rhj e0pibh/omen olfra mige/nte  
eu0nh|= kai\ filo/thti pepoi/qomen a0llh/loisin.'*  
(*Od.* 10.325-35)

<sup>395</sup> The "contamination" of Odysseus in Scheria and Odysseus on Aeaea is fundamental to the structure of *Aeneid* 1, as discussed above.

<sup>396</sup> Knauer 1963: 178-9.

“What men are you and whence? Where are your city and parents?  
 The wonder is on me that you drank my drugs and have not been  
 enchanted...  
 You are then resourceful Odysseus. Argeïophontes  
 of the golden staff was forever telling me you would come  
 to me, on your way back from Troy with your fast black ship.  
 Come then, put away your sword in its sheath, and let us  
 two go up into my bed so that, lying together  
 in the bed of love, we may then have faith and trust in each other.”  
 (Lattimore trans.)

Knauer’s point here is primarily to demonstrate that the *Odyssey* passage was the model for the *Aeneid* passage. What I would like to add to this is a consideration of what the recollection of Circe brings to our picture of Dido at this point. I have been arguing that our first charming view of Dido and her generosity is staged in front of a shadowy backdrop of suggestions that Dido is dangerous, and her friendliness is artificial and, therefore, precarious. This note is sounded again in this speech in several ways.

Circe explains to Odysseus how she knows his name, and Dido does the same. Dido’s source will only increase the feelings of distrust that the Circe parallel is likely to stir up in readers who appreciate its implications. Standing in a temple adorned with pictures that the reader knows celebrate the deaths of the Trojans, she explains that the source of her knowledge of them comes from the Greek warrior Teucer, their enemy. She assures them that he had nothing but good things to say about them, though!

*‘atque equidem Teucrum memini Sidona venire  
 finibus expulsum patriis, nova regna petentem  
 auxilio Beli; genitor tum Belus opimam  
 vastabat Cyprum et victor ditione tenebat.  
 tempore iam ex illo casus mihi cognitus urbis  
 Troianae nomenque tuum regesque Pelasgi.  
 ipse hostis Teucros insigni laude ferebat*

*seque ortum antiqua Teucrorum a stripe volebat.*  
(*Aen.* 1.619-26)

“Indeed, I remember that Teucer came to Sidon, having been expelled from his father’s land, seeking a new kingdom with the help of Belos. At that time my father Belus was laying waste to rich Cyprus and as a victor held it under his command. Ever since that time I have known about the downfall of the Trojan city and your name and the Pelasgian kings. He himself was an enemy, of course, but he used to discuss the Trojans with marked praise, and he maintained that he himself was born from the ancient race of Trojans.”

Though critics in general do not seem to register a problem with this claim,<sup>397</sup> it strains credulity, both logically and in terms of her temple’s hostile depictions which are presumably based on his narration. This is a good example of a place where a gap encourages the consistency-seeking reader to construct an explanation which has been prestructured by information leading up to it: when Dido says that Teucer admired the Trojans, she is lying. Horsfall is the only critic I have encountered who suggests that things do not add up here, that the hostile attitude toward the Trojans depicted on the walls of the temple in which they are standing gives the lie to Dido’s claim that they are based on the account of a Trojan admirer.<sup>398</sup> Fowler, who takes (justifiable, in my view) objection to Horsfall’s broader view, counters that “[s]he associates herself with the tragic interpretation of Trojan history, and to view her as lying in so doing would be an

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<sup>397</sup> As with Dido’s excuse for her people’s aggressiveness, commentators and critics often simply repeat Dido’s own explanation; *e.g.*, Austin 1971: 192 *ad loc.*: “Enemy though he was... this Greek Teucer could not but praise the Trojans to Belus, a fact which must have deeply impressed Dido.”

<sup>398</sup> Horsfall (1990: 137) is one of the few to register discord here, when he observes that “Troy can have had few bitterer enemies, if we recall just who this Teucer was,” namely the son of Telamon, who had “a rich family experience of Trojan misconduct.” His father Telamon had helped Heracles sack Troy after Laomedon cheated Heracles of his prize for killing the sea monster menacing the city, which had been sent by Neptune because Laomedon had cheated the god of his reward for helping build Troy. Horsfall connects Teucer’s likely hostile account with the hostile scenes on the Temple, but he does not explicitly draw the lines between the dots he has plotted (or, recognized that Vergil has plotted).

extreme subversion to which the text gives no encouragement.”<sup>399</sup> I hope that the arguments made in this chapter demonstrate otherwise. There is ample encouragement both to understand Dido’s people as originally hostile to the Trojans (necessitating Mercury’s intervention), and to understand her as dissimulating this in her explanation to Aeneas, an inference encouraged in the reader not only by the contradiction at hand, but also by a consistent allusive program that has painted her as a skillful liar.

Dido’s statement itself even sounds contrived. It is only after she has explained the source of her information that she seems to catch herself and forestalls the logical deduction prompted by what she has said by adding an explanation of how Teucer was not really, as one would expect, hostile to Troy. It strikes a false note when she claims he tried to “maintain” (*volebat*) that he was of Trojan blood—his mother was Hesione, Priam’s sister. By presenting this true information as tendentious, she encouraged her listener to think, “No, no, he really was Trojan in origin!” and so buy into the whole of what she is saying. The most believable lies are those that are not pure fantasy, but rather are based on something that can be recognized as true, thereby lending credibility to the rest of the fabrication. Dido uses the known fact of Teucer’s Trojan lineage as the basis for the fabrication that he took pride in Troy, in order to make the idea that he would praise the Trojans more plausible. We see in this speech the shrewd, calculating Dido of legend. Moreover, we have been reminded that Dido is in a position analogous to Hypsipyle, who needed to fabricate an excuse for the absence of men on her island, lest

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<sup>399</sup> Fowler 1991: 32, who notes as part of his objection that Horsfall “is intent on showing that Aeneas did the right thing in leaving Dido.” I disagree with Horsfall’s larger claims inasmuch as they do not take into account the way sympathy is developed for Dido in Book 4, and how that is important to the effect of the episode as a whole.

her people's aggressive actions be surmised. Likewise, Dido knows that there is suspicious evidence available to her guests (the artwork on her temple) that could betray her previous hostility to the Trojans, and she calculates a story that is plausible because it is based on a true foundation. Both queens have pragmatic reasons for hoping that their guests will accept their invitation to stay, but must explain away troubling aspects of their own aggressive past so that there may be no obstacle to the hero's trust.

Having established, I hope, the likelihood that the reader gets to watch a character famous for her lies think on her feet and come up with a fabrication mid-speech, the entirety of which is calculated toward pragmatic ends, let us return to the model of Circe to consider the effect of Dido's invitation of the Trojans into her house. As noted above, Circe concludes by exhorting Odysseus "let us two go up into my bed so that mingling in bed and in love we may trust each other," (nw~i d' elpeita / eu0nh=j h9mete/rhj e0pibh/omen olfra mige/nte /eu0nh|= kai\ filo/thti pepoi/qomen a0llh/loisin, *Od.* 10.334-5)." This is an exceedingly warm offer of "hospitality," so to speak, but one which masks the intention—as Hermes has already warned Odysseus—to unman him when his guard is down. She sounds kindly, but her intention is otherwise. When Dido, having lied to the Trojans about her long admiration for their people, exhorts them to come into her house (*quare agite o tectis, iuvenes, succedite nostris*, 1.627), it strikes a note of foreboding. The reader's fear, I think, is not only that she could potentially be provoked to another change of heart and do them some harm—the artificiality of her *benignitas* does put this possibility on the radar—but that she will somehow "enchant" them so that she may keep



them forever. Dido's warmth and kindness are, I have argued, calculated to precisely this end. Viewed in this light, we can see the rhetorical purpose behind her identification with the Trojans and their struggles. She even suggests to them that they have, finally, come home:

*quare agite o tectis, iuvenes, succedite nostris.  
me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores  
iactatam hac demum voluit consistere terra;  
non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco.*

(*Aen.* 1.627-630)

Come then, men, enter into our house. Fortune wanted *me* to settle in this land too, after I had been cast about through many similar labors; being no stranger to trouble, I am learning to know how to help the unfortunate.

Dido suggests that in *this* land and no other (*hac demum*)<sup>400</sup> the Trojans have finally found the place they were meant to settle, just as she did (*me quoque*).<sup>401</sup> She has offered him a permanent home, and unlike Odysseus and Jason in parallel episodes, Aeneas has not rejected her offer.<sup>402</sup> She then takes it a step further, talking to them almost as if they had accepted. She has no reason at this point not to be optimistic that they will, for

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<sup>400</sup> On *demum*, Austin observes (1971: 193 *ad loc.*), "with *hac*, 'in this land, and just this one', chosen as it were from all others" citing for comparison Cic. *ad Att.* 8.8.1.

<sup>401</sup> One may object that *quoque* could be modifying *per multos similis...labores/iactatam*. Grammatically this possible, and taking the sentence in isolation, it would make equal sense. It would, however, totally disjoint the sentence (main clause: [*fortuna*] *hac demum voluit [me] consistere terra*) from the preceding sentence, rather than function as a logical connective, as it does when taken to modify *me*. That is, the second sentence explains the previous sentence in which she exhorted the Trojans, whom she has invited to share her city, to enter her house (*tectis...succedite nostris*). With *quoque* modifying *me*, the two sentences read: I welcome you into my home, [for] I was *also* meant to settle in *this* land [as you are]." If we take *quoque* in the subordinate clause, we have no logical reason for Dido to follow her exhortation to the Trojans to enter her house by saying [*fortuna*] *hac demum voluit [me] consistere terra*: I welcome you, [and, on an unrelated note] I was meant to settle in *this* land.

<sup>402</sup> Both Circe and Hypsipyle are recalled in her exhortation at 1.627 (*quare agite o tectis, iuvenes, succedite nostris*), cf. *Arg.* 1.832 (a011' alge nu=n e0pi\ nh=a, etc.) and *Od.* 10.402 (e1rxeo nu=n e0pi\ nh=a, etc.)

Aeneas is showing no sign of resistance to the suggestion.<sup>403</sup> The twisted homecoming foreshadowed in the harbor ecphrasis is in danger of becoming reality.

I have been arguing that Dido speaks to the Trojans in a calculated way.<sup>404</sup> She appears similar not only to the Dido of legend, who is cunning and deceptive in the service of a justified cause, but also, perhaps, to the Dido of Naevius. Given the extremely fragmentary state of the *BP*, we can only speculate about how Dido was characterized in it, or even whether she played a role in it. She is, at the very least, named.<sup>405</sup> And the fact that in the first book of the *BP* Aeneas is shipwrecked somewhere after a storm and then in the second book asked to tell of the fall of Troy, a sequence which Vergil copies,<sup>406</sup> suggests that in the *BP* Aeneas may have also found himself in Dido's Carthage. Of interest here is the fragment in which someone asks him to tell of his wanderings:

*blande et docte percontat Aenea quo pacto Troiam urbem liquisset.* (fr. 23)

In an ingratiating and well informed manner, s/he asks Aeneas how he left the city of Troy.<sup>407</sup>

Scholars are divided on who the subject of *percontat* is, but a majority favors Dido over a *hospes Italicus*, whether Latinus or Evander.<sup>408</sup> Among several reasons, one is that *blande* and *docte* both are reflected in Dido's manner of speaking to the Trojans in

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<sup>403</sup> Unlike Jason, who explains to Hypsipyle that he is on a mission and will have to sail on. See discussion in Chapter 1.

<sup>404</sup> Note, too, how her statement that she is *non ignara mali* ("not unacquainted with badness," 1.630) has a sinister secondary meaning to the reader who is alive to the *longae ambages* of her traditional story.

<sup>405</sup> D.Servius *ad* 4.9: *cuius filiae fuerint Dido et Anna, Naevius dicit.*

<sup>406</sup> On the storm at sea, D.Servius *ad* 1.198 remarks, "This whole passage is taken over from the *Bellum Punicum* of Naevius," (*totus hic locus de Naevio Belli Punici libro translatus est*). Of Venus' interview with Jupiter, Macrobius 5.2.4

<sup>407</sup> I use Paratore's translation (1970: 236) of the phrase.

<sup>408</sup> For a quick summary of the issue and further bibliography, see Horsfall 1990: 140-1.

*Aeneid* 1. She demonstrates a great deal of knowledge about Troy (in the Temple art, in her response to Ilioneus,<sup>409</sup> and in her response to Aeneas), and her words are described by Venus as *blandis* (*blandisque moratur vocibus*, 1.670), to which I will turn momentarily. Without hanging too much on such fragmentary evidence, let me conclude simply by reiterating the obvious fact that if the Dido of the *BP* was as “ingratiating” as she was “intelligent,” the reader of Vergil’s *Aeneid* would be even more sensitive to the machinations that I have been arguing animate Dido’s generosity.

To sum up my argument so far, I have argued that prior to Mercury’s magic Dido was hostile to Troy, as evidenced generally in her *ferox cor*, and specifically in the Temple depictions and the hostile (truly, I argue) source of her information about Troy, Teucer. Her change of heart does not sufficiently account for her extraordinary offer of her city itself to the Trojans. The tradition that Dido was clever and opportunistic (though for justified reasons) helps the reader bridge the gap of why she makes such an offer: because she could use an army. Her speeches, both to Ilioneus and to Aeneas, are rhetorically constructed with a goal of enticing the Trojans into settling in Carthage. Nothing has been said by either of them of their fate in Italy, and therefore Dido’s apparent optimism about their acceptance of her offer appears justified. Reminiscences of Circe and Hypsipyle have been shot through the entire build-up to Aeneas meeting Dido, which, in addition to the “historical” tradition about Dido’s deceptiveness, help the reader to understand that Dido’s hospitality is aimed at turning the Trojans into Carthaginians (who have been represented, thematically, as animals) and keeping them forever.

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<sup>409</sup> Dido demonstrates her erudition by applying learned epithets to the lands mentioned by Ilioneus, calling Hesperia the *Saturnia arva* and Sicily the *Erycis finis*, 1.569-70.

I have been arguing, then, that Dido's generous welcome has an ulterior motive, and that there is something precarious about her *in Teucros benignam animiam* due to its artificial imposition upon her. Supporting the idea that there is something disingenuous about Dido's welcome is confirmed by Venus, to whom narrator ascribes fear of Dido:

*quippe domum timet ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis  
urit atrox Iuno et sub noctem cura recursat.*

(*Aen.* 1.661-2)

For she fears the ambiguous house and the double-tongued Tyrians. She is distressed by Juno's hostility and her anxiety rushes back as night falls.

The words *ambiguam* and *bilinguis* are focalized through Venus (she is the subject of *timet*), but we do not have strong grounds for ascribing them to her *alone*.<sup>410</sup> There does not seem to be any irony here to distance the narrator from the judgment of these adjectives, which appear all the more objectively true given that we have just seen Dido subtly and skillfully lie about Teucer's feelings toward the Trojans. And these adjectives accord with the fears the reader has been allowed to develop as well. As Venus entreats Cupid she explains:

*nunc Phoenissa tenet Dido blandisque moratur  
vocibus, et vereror quo se Iunonia vertant  
hospitia: haud tanto cessabit cardine rerum.*

(*Aen.* 1.670-2)

Now Phoenician Dido has him and is keeping him with enticing words, and I fear the direction Junonian *hospitium* may turn: she will not yield at such a critical juncture.

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<sup>410</sup> The double-tongued nature of the Carthaginians was, of course, proverbial, cf. Livy 21.4.9, describing Hannibal's *perfidia plus quam Punica*. Stark rightly points out (1999: 272) that Venus and Cupid themselves are presented as crafty, but I cannot agree that this obviates Dido's own duplicity ("Vergil...removes suspicions of Dido as a naturally crafty Carthaginian by labeling Venus and Cupid, not Dido, as the real tricksters (1.673, 682).") There can be more than one crafty character. In fact, an important part of the traditional Dido legend is the irony that eventually the trickster is herself tricked.

Venus throws “*Phoenissa*” out first as if it tells Cupid everything he needs to know about Dido’s character, and it accords with the narrator’s initial description of the *ferocia corda* of the *Poeni*. Her picture of Dido trying to hold Aeneas in Carthage with *blandis vocibus* (recall Hypsipyle’s “wheedling words,” *mu/qoisi ai9muli/oisin*)<sup>411</sup> accords with the reader’s own construction as outlined above. Venus seems to fear both aspects of Dido’s Circe-potential: she is trying to ensnare him permanently (*tenet, moratur*), but she also could potentially be provoked to another change of heart and do them some harm, due to the precarious artificiality of her *benignitas*. Venus is afraid for Aeneas as a guest, as night falls, and there is a sinister suggestion here that Dido could do something monstrous<sup>412</sup> if by some intervention of Juno she ceased to feel *benignitas* toward him. Only the thin shield of Mercury’s intervention seems to be protecting Aeneas from his hosts. Venus re-does Mercury’s work to greater effect, escalating *benignitas* into *amor*, to ensure that it sticks.

After Cupid’s interference, of course, Dido’s romantic interests take over. Despite what I have been arguing about Dido’s desire to keep Aeneas in Carthage permanently preceding Cupid’s intervention, I follow the conventional view that her uncontrollable feelings for Aeneas follow it. Cupid adds is sincere, deep sentiment—the passion of

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<sup>411</sup> On *blandis* Austin (1971: 204) remarks “malicious; Dido has said nothing that could fairly be called ‘wheedling.’”

<sup>412</sup> As I discuss in my final chapter, in Book 4, Dido fantasizes about killing and dismembering her guests, but then tells herself the time to do that was when they first arrived, “Unhappy Dido, *now* you think of impious deeds? *Back then* was the time to do it, when you were giving them your kingdom... Couldn’t I have ripped his body into pieces and thrown them in the water? Couldn’t I have put his friends to the sword, or Ascanius himself and served him as a meal to his father? ” (*infelix Dido, nunc te facta impia tangunt?/ tum decuit, cum sceptrā dabas.... non potui abreptum diuellere corpus et undis/ spargere? non socios, non ipsum absumere ferroAscanium patriisque epulandum ponere mensis?* 4.596-502). Dido’s potential to do serious harm to the Trojans is on the horizon, then, is activated at both the beginning and the end of her story.

love—to what was previously only political-*cum*-erotic calculation. (Note, though, how he entices her, fueling her Phoenecian lust for acquisition in order to prime her other desires: *expleri mentem nequit ardescitque tuendo/ Phoenissa, et pariter puero donisque movetur*, 1.713-4).<sup>413</sup> As long as Dido was not personally, emotionally invested in her ideas about a potential union of the peoples, Aeneas remained in danger. Cupid is sent to seal the deal.

As he arrives, disguised as the false Ascanius, our recollection of the Circe-potential of Dido’s character is reignited by the description of Dido’s banquet,<sup>414</sup> which is based not, I think, on *Od.* 1.136f. “with considerable elaboration,”<sup>415</sup> as some commentators have it, except inasmuch as all banquet scenes use the same basic stock. More specifically, it recalls Circe’s banquet at *Od.* 10.348-74 in the ornate luxury of the scene,<sup>416</sup> with its purple rugs on the couches (*stratoque super discumbitur ostro*, 1.700 = e0balle qro/noij elni r9h/gea kala\ porfu/rea kaqu/perq’, 10.352-3) and particularly the ecphrasis of the busy servants, with the listing of their numbers and their tasks (1.703-6).<sup>417</sup> Unlike Odysseus, who relaxes at this banquet having secured an oath from Circe guaranteeing his safety, Aeneas enters the banquet in which Junonian *hospitium* still poses a danger. The false Ascanius, however, quickly sets

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<sup>413</sup> Pavlock is, therefore, only partially right, in my view, that (1990: 76): “On the psychological level, Dido’s vulnerability to Cupid masquerading as the hero’s son suggests that her love for Aeneas is initially bound up with her maternal instincts.”

<sup>414</sup> There is a structural parallel between the dispatching of the hero (or here, Achates) to his ships to bring his companions to the banquet in the related passages of the *Odyssey*, *Argonautica* and *Aeneid*. Cf. Nelis 2001:115-7.

<sup>415</sup> So Austin (1971: 201 *ad loc.*), likewise Williams (1972: 211 *ad loc.*)

<sup>416</sup> Again, in the extravagance of Dido’s court her acquisitiveness is highlighted. Pavlock (1990: 76) observes the disapproval implied by the emphasis on the opulence of her banquet, including Dido’s jeweled cup, which she notes is used as a symbol of decadence in the *Georgics*.

<sup>417</sup> Since Dido is feeding an army (literally), Circe’s four servants are multiplied to 200.

to work, with success. Now, the tables have been turned and, like the Dido of Pompeius Trogus,<sup>418</sup> the deceptive Carthaginian queen herself has become the victim of a deception. Dido has been subdued. The circumstances that incited the reader's wariness about Dido have been eradicated, and the stage is now set for sympathy.<sup>419</sup> By falling in love, the hard, calculating (and so, self-protecting) layer of Dido's personality that was so feared by Venus has been stripped away, and what remains is the pitiable vulnerability a person who is not in full possession of herself.

It is recognized that in Dido's prayer at the banquet we can see her hopes for a permanent union,<sup>420</sup> and I hope to have shown that this mindset has not sprung up instantly due to Cupid's work, but rather that Dido has been actively desiring and rhetorically working toward keeping the Trojans since the moment she encountered them. Dido acknowledges that the Trojans are, at the moment, the Tyrians' *hospites*, but her brief remarks can also be read as exposing her (conscious) vision of a permanent bond:

*Juppiter, hospitibus nam te dare iura loquuntur,  
hunc laetum Tyriisque diem Troiaque profectis  
esse velis, nostrosque huius meminisse minores.  
adsit laetitiae Bacchus dator et bona Iuno;  
et vos o coetum, Tyrii, celebrate faventes.'*

(*Aen.* 1.731-5)

“Jupiter, for they say that you give laws to hosts and guests, may it be your will that this day be happy to the Tyrians and to those who set out from Troy, and that our descendents remember it. Let Bacchus the giver of happiness be present, and good Juno; and you, O Tyrians, favor and praise the union.”

<sup>418</sup> They use the same *Punico...ingenio* to trick Dido that she herself had previously used (18.6.2).

<sup>419</sup> Dido is now *infelix, pesti devote future* 1.712, and her lack of awareness makes her pitiable (*interdum germio fovet inscia Dido/ insidat quantus miserae deus*, 1.718-9)

<sup>420</sup> This speech—i.e., after Cupid's intervention—seems to be the first point at which critics generally note that Dido *desires* a union with the Trojans (her overture to Ilioneus is generally treated as neutral, disinterested altruism, and her repetition of it to Aeneas is generally not recognized as such). The exception is Reed 2007, who recognizes Dido's sustained hope of unification from the first interview, though he attributes it to sympathetic generosity.

At one level, this is a prayer for the friendship of the nations (full of dramatic irony, of course).<sup>421</sup> But it is also possible to see another meaning which is not only psychologically revealing, but perhaps even intentionally suggestive (i.e., rhetorically purposeful) hints in the words Dido chooses. She refers to the Trojans not as *Troiani* but as “those who have set out from Troy,” a description which makes their Trojan national identity a thing of the past. When she wishes that “our” (*nostros*) descendents remember this day, the ambiguity allows a range of interpretations, from the most overtly political (your Trojan descendents and my Tyrian descendents, in guest-friendship), to a more subtle political aspiration (our joint Tyrian-Trojan descendents, a unified as single people) to a private aspiration (the offspring of you, Aeneas, and me, Dido).<sup>422</sup> In reference to the last implication, we may note that *coetum* is certainly a revealing word choice.<sup>423</sup> Invoking Bacchus and Juno, rather than the more customary pair of Bacchus and Ceres, hints at the same matrimonial orientation that her other word choices expose.<sup>424</sup>

In summary, Dido has been calculating, from the moment she meets the Trojans and spots the opportunity for martial power that they represent, to keep them in Carthage,

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<sup>421</sup> DeWitt 1907: 287: “The whole banquet scene seems to be a mocking premonition of the future.”

<sup>422</sup> Reed observes (2007: 92) that Dido “blurs the possessive pronouns in her prayer to Jupiter,” remarking on *nostrosque huius meminisse minores* that “[t]he last clause suggests the real prayer (even before her visit from Cupid), that her *minores* be the same as Aeneas’, remembering and celebrating the day that made the two nations one.”

<sup>423</sup> As Reed (2007:92) also notes: “*Coetus* has a number of implications: the present gathering to which all have been invited (the same word is used at Catullus 64.33 of the gathering to celebrate the marriage of Peleus and Thetis), the coming-together of the two peoples for which she entertains such high ambitions, and the more personal coming-together of herself and Aeneas that is soon to dominate her life.”

<sup>424</sup> Austin *ad* 1.734 suggests that “Dido is unconsciously calling on the goddess of marriage,” to which Adler (2003:39) responds: “...has she not been somehow quite conscious of her wish to marry Aeneas ever since, immediately after offering equal citizenship to the Trojans at large, she expressed the wish that their king too would be included (55-576)?”



and her speeches to both Ilioneus and Aeneas are animated by this rhetorical purpose. She has every reason to believe that this is possible, because neither Ilioneus nor Aeneas has yet described Latium to Dido as the Trojans' fated homeland, nor does Aeneas make any indication that he unwilling or unable to settle in Carthage, an option she has both explicitly offered (1.572-4) and implicitly assumed his acceptance of when she parallels the way that *fortuna* has brought both peoples to "this land" (1.627-30). Venus confirms the suspicion that Dido has an agenda (and that her Punic deceptiveness makes her friendship unreliable), but neutralizes the threat that Dido's machinations pose by emotionally embroiling her in what was previously pragmatic calculation.

In the next section we will discuss ambiguities and gaps in Aeneas' narration, and how a reader with Dido's mindset might process them. The reader's impression of Dido's horizon of expectation, the information and preconceptions with which she will order her understanding of the events in his story,<sup>425</sup> has been set. Dido's already fully-formed confidence that Aeneas can and, with any luck, will settle in Carthage will guide the ways she interprets his attitude toward the riddling prophecies that expose the Trojans' long unfulfilled *fata*.<sup>426</sup> Her understanding of his present feelings and intentions, as I will presently argue, condition the way she processes the mass of "data" that comprises Aeneas' tale. When Dido does eventually hear, in the course of Books 2 and 3, about the divine mandate behind the Trojan's destination, she actually *can* withhold import from this with the thought, that "having been dissatisfied to date, Aeneas might stay with her,

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<sup>425</sup> Expectations govern what the perceiver allocates to "figure" and what to "ground;" this is not a distorted process unique to Dido, but a psychological fact of the process of perception.

<sup>426</sup> Seven years of wandering has left an impression on her; she prefaces her request for his story by mentioning it (1.755-6).

rather than move on, defying or ignoring oracular and prophetic pronouncements.”<sup>427</sup>

This is not in defiance of “the words of the text” as Hexter puts it, but a justified interpretation of them in light both of the expectations set by Aeneas in the scenes I discussed in the previous chapter, and also due to the fact that Aeneas’ divination-filled tale hardly suggests confidence in divination, a topic to which we will now turn.

### **Chapter Three**

#### **“Saved to No Purpose”: The Pessimistic Perspective of Aeneas as Narrator of Books 2—3**

In Chapter 1, I argued that Aeneas’ response to Dido’s offer of home in Carthage is ambiguously positive, and that the reader who has gone on the “inferential walks” prompted by the poet’s indirect suggestions of Aeneas’ doubt in the continued legitimacy

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<sup>427</sup> Hexter 1999: 67.

of his prophesied *fata* is likely to understand the disillusioned hero as in fact being amenable to Dido's invitation. In Chapter 2, I made the case that Dido perceives the positive implications of Aeneas' ambiguous response, and that allusions to Circe, Hypsipyle, and the Dido of legend help the reader to appreciate that her character has a quick and subtle mind, and is well equipped to gauge the nuances of Aeneas' rhetoric. In this chapter, I will argue that Aeneas' tale of the oracles and prophecies directing him to Italy conveys a pessimistic, skeptical attitude toward them. This should come as no surprise to the reader who has been alive to indications of his disillusionment through the course of Book 1. On such a reading, it would appear that Dido interprets the implications of Aeneas' tale correctly. Appreciating this helps the subsequent behavior of each character make clearer sense.

The common assumption that Aeneas never intended to settle permanently in Carthage, and that Dido should have understood that, is primarily based on the fact that in Books 2 and 3 Aeneas recounts the oracles directing him to Italy, something that is often taken by critics as a statement by him of his intention to continue this mission. If we tick off the list the supernatural messages that Aeneas receives, and allow our memory to reduce their contents into a straightforward message, then we end up with the conclusion of many of the text's interpreters who, since Late Antiquity, have done just this: Dido, somehow, fails to understand what Aeneas explicitly tells her.<sup>428</sup> The fact that this is not a compelling answer is evidenced by the exasperated bafflement that such scholars express when they make this observation. Aeneas himself *tells* her! How could she not

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<sup>428</sup> "After the banquet Dido asks Aeneas to tell the story of the fall of Troy and his subsequent wanderings, and during his long account it must be very evident to her that because of his quest to found a new settlement in Italy he is not free to stay with her. Nevertheless..." (R. D. Williams 1987: 109)

understand what he plainly says? As a result, Dido is generally considered a faulty interpreter, or as Ralph Hexter puts it, an “interested misreader,”<sup>429</sup> who distorts what Aeneas tells her into what she wants to believe. After all, this reasoning goes, she hears Aeneas’ tale of the fall of Troy and his subsequent wanderings, in which he mentions multiple divine signs directing him to found a new homeland in Italy, and yet, as Hexter puts it, “The words of the text notwithstanding, Dido exercises her freedom, a terrible freedom, to make false inferences: that having been dissatisfied to date, Aeneas might stay with her, rather than move on, defying or ignoring oracular and prophetic pronouncements.”<sup>430</sup> Even Richard Monti, who seriously questions whether we can fairly say that Dido has deceived herself given the husbandly behavior Aeneas proceeds to exhibit while living in Carthage, takes for granted that we must weigh his deeds against the “numerous oracles” Dido has heard “from Aeneas’ own mouth.”<sup>431</sup> Dido’s apparently perverse disregard for Aeneas’ own words troubled commentators as far back as the 5<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>429</sup>Hexter 1999: 67, who follows Konstan 1991 in taking Dido a reader excessively absorbed in his narrative, which Konstan sees (24) as resulting in a “loss of distance [that] is destructive to the purposive action of constructing a city.”

<sup>430</sup> Hexter 1999: 67. Similarly, Camps (1969: 32): “She knows of course that Aeneas believes himself called to Italy, but she has no cause herself to think the call compelling.” Likewise, Horsfall (1995: 126) refers to Aeneas’ narration as “evidence” that he will depart: “Dido’s sense that Aeneas might, despite the evidence to the contrary in bks. 2—3, be free to remain in Carthage...” Segal (1981: 80): “In her fatal immersion in the narrative, knowledge and ignorance become strangely mingled and confused. The willingness to suspend or block out the known under the influence of Venus’ magic subtly intimates the self-blinding that love creates.” Desmond 1993: 58-9: “Vergil’s narrative dramatizes Dido’s limits as a reader: her responses to the narrative of *Aeneid* 2 (the Fall of Troy) and *Aeneid* 3 (the Wanderings of the Trojans until they reach Carthage)—the stories to which she listens with such rapt attention—are neither penetrating nor astute...[Books 2 and 3] represent Aeneas’ ever-growing awareness that he must seek a kingdom in Italy on the shores of Hesperia...[But this] is lost on Dido.”

<sup>431</sup> Monti 1981: 47.

century, when Tiberius Claudius Donatus wondered what hope of marriage Dido could entertain, having listened to the prophecies that “Aeneas himself” recounted.<sup>432</sup>

In such remarks, it is taken for granted that “the words of the text” that come from “Aeneas’ own mouth” are *statements* about his mission that convey commitment to it.<sup>433</sup> In this chapter, I will argue that they are not and do not. If we do not reduce the mixed array of divine signs to a straightforward message, and we do not subtract them from their context but rather consider them as they are presented in narration by Aeneas, they do not project such an unequivocal picture. In this chapter I will argue that far from presenting himself as “a man driven by a compelling inner sense of purpose,”<sup>434</sup> Aeneas presents himself as perpetually uncertain and reluctant—an “inner sense of purpose” is precisely what he lacks.<sup>435</sup> In his story, the “omens, oracles of the gods, messages from the dead” do not “constantly reinforce” his sense of mission<sup>436</sup> but rather present a series of generally unhelpful and ambiguous directives that are, none the less, the only thing he has to go on. He is externally, not internally motivated, and he presents his hopes in these

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<sup>432</sup> TCD 1.376.4-12: *qua autem spe ducebatur Dido matrimonii quod eo genere contraxerat, quae ipsam Aenean in convivio referentem audisset responso Creusae vaticinantis accepto et regnum Italiae iam sibi paratum esse et coniugem regiam, Apollonis quoque et deorum pentaium Heleni etiam unum idemque extitisse praedictum, quo non tantum Aeneae verum etiam liberis et posteris eius per uxoris Italicae consortium Italiae atque orbis totius deberi memoratum est regnum?* Donatus was, of course, troubled by many things that need not trouble us, since his adherence to the notion that the *Aeneid* belonged to the *gens laudativum*, and that therefore admitted only praise of Aeneas, forced him to bizarre interpretive gyrations (as, for example, his explanation that when Mercury encountered Aeneas he was not building Carthage, but sleeping). On this see Starr 1991.

<sup>433</sup> So for example even Block (1981: 216), who is rare her appreciation of the significance of the fact that “[a]t no point in Book 1 was it made clear to Dido that the Trojans were fated to settle in Italy,” still takes for granted that Aeneas’ recounting of divine signs is tantamount to a statement of commitment to them, going on to state that “the dream of Hector makes clear to Dido for the first time that Aeneas is going to leave her.”

<sup>434</sup> G. Williams 1983:43.

<sup>435</sup> I believe he lacks a sense of purpose in terms of his mission, which he does not understand, but consider him intelligent and capable in other respects. In this I differ from Chew who likewise believes (2002: 620) that “ignorance is a defining trait of Aeneas,” but considers this a personal failing on his part due to his unreflective nature.

<sup>436</sup> G. Williams (1983:43), from the same quote.

external directives as perpetually disappointed. In his narration, in fact, we see the backstory that explains the grave doubt in providence that I argued is very evident throughout Book 1. In short, Aeneas' tale is far from a statement of faith in the reliability of the gods and their signs, and therefore even less so a statement of commitment to the mission that rests on their inscrutable and apparently inconstant will.

In fact, his tale is not a "statement" at all. Before discussing what exactly Aeneas says and how he says it, I would like to stress the significance of a narratological consideration, namely that what Aeneas tells Dido about the divine signs directing his mission does not form a statement, but a *story*. Until Aeneas' exchange with Dido at 4.340-61, the words Aeneas says about his mission all occur exclusively within in the inset narration of Books 2—3. Therefore, we need to look not only at how the Aeneas of the narration (the "narrated I") views the events he experiences (which is sometimes optimistic), but also how Aeneas the storyteller (the "narrating I") frames them.<sup>437</sup> The audience understands the provisional nature of the "narrated I"'s understanding, and therefore subordinates that past, incomplete perspective to that of the present, "narrating I" who knows the pessimistic conclusion to his own tale—not Italy, but a shipwreck. There is often dramatic irony in the gap between them.<sup>438</sup> So, for example, when Aeneas

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<sup>437</sup> On Spitzer's *erzählendes Ich* and *erzähltes Ich* see Genette 1980: 252-4. For an instance of their application to analysis of Aeneas' narration, see Johnson 1999.

<sup>438</sup> The nature of the irony depends on what we take the mental state of the "narrating I" to be. According to Genette (1980: 252), his example text, Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*, "approaches certain forms of religious literature, like Saint Augustine's *Confessions*: the narrator does not simply know more, empirically than the hero; he *knows* in the absolute sense, he understands the Truth." Traditional criticism of the *Aeneid* has tended to view Aeneas' "narrating I" in a similar way, as possessing true knowledge of his mission and its validity, but as I argue in this chapter, the way the text both sets up and relates Aeneas' tale does not support such an understanding of his consciousness. As a result, it is not the pessimistic elements of Aeneas' tale that appear naïve in the retrospective view of the "narrating I," but rather the instances of ignorant optimism. Cf. G. Williams 1983: 247-50.

rejoices at finally receiving a clear and encouraging message from the Penates in a dream (3.173-91), it misses the mark to take this as a positive development in absolute terms in Aeneas' understanding (and so, it is assumed, trust) of his fate,<sup>439</sup> for we must consider the fact that at the time Aeneas recounts that event he feels, as I have argued in Chapter 1, that in the end he has been deceived about his fate. To the "narrating I," who knows of the subsequent disappointments that supposedly explicit divine messages will bring him, the joy that the "narrated I" feels would seem naïve. I will return to this point throughout the argument.

I would also like note the difference between what the external audience knows before Aeneas' begins his tale, and what Dido knows. The external audience knows that one way or another, Aeneas will continue on his mission; Dido, however, has not read the poem. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, before Aeneas' narration Dido has received no indication of there being a divine mandate directing Aeneas' journey, and after her interview with Aeneas she seems optimistic about his accepting her offer of a home in Carthage. When Aeneas chooses not to share upfront the critical information that he is following *oracular commands* to Italy, letting this emerge indirectly later via subnarrative, he leaves it to Dido to infer how he currently feels about the events he has described. Dido only hears of these prophecies after she had already formed the impression that he was favorable toward settlement in Carthage—an expectation that will guide the way she links elements of his story into a meaningful picture. Context matters

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<sup>439</sup>For example, Saunders (1925: 85): "The goal is revealed to them only gradually, in a series of prophecies, whose steady, progressive unfolding gives unity and dramatic climax to the book." Likewise, Putnam (1980: 14): "Virgil...documents the change from ignorance to knowledge, from insecurity to authoritative posture that occurs gradually during the intervening time [between Delos and a recollection of it in the name of Ortygia at 3.694] and distinguishes the first half of the book from the second."

not only to the external audience, but to the internal audience, too. Dido will shape her understanding of Aeneas' story using the "knowledge" and expectations she has developed during her discourse with him prior to the banquet during which he tells his tale.<sup>440</sup> This is a legitimate interpretive process—in fact, *not* to use the context of Aeneas' present outlook (as she understands it) to interpret the tale he offers to explain it would be a perverse method of reading.

Note, of course, that "what Dido thinks" as she listens to Aeneas' tale it is simply shorthand for "what the reader imagines that the character thinks." To reprise a point from the Introduction, Vergil's characters are fully psychologically developed individuals within the world of the poem, and the reader is presented with suggestions of their "doxastic constructs"<sup>441</sup> (their beliefs about what is true) and encouraged to consider how characters understand each other's perspectives. Inferring these is a major part of how the reader actualizes the text in the process of reading. Even though Vergil's Dido is a fictional character, we can talk about how she would hear elements of Aeneas' narration because the reader, who knows that she is the tale's internal audience, will hear it through

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<sup>440</sup> Second-degree narration of this sort has an explanatory relationship to the outside story: "these narratives answer, explicitly or not, a question of the type 'What events have led to the present situation?'" (Genette 1980: 232). That is, the "present situation" is the matter of primary interest to the fictive listeners, who are to be understood as attempting to *relate* the events in the story to the "present situation," with the result that their understanding of the "present situation" is the standard by which they assign significance to material in the internal narration. Quinn appreciates this basic concept when he says (1968: 113-14) that "[t]he structural effectiveness of introducing the story of Aeneas' *labores* at this point is obvious. We come to them with our interest in the personality of Aeneas aroused by Book 1." Our interest, I think, is not only in his "personality" in general, but in the shockingly hopeless attitude toward his fated mission and the enthrallment with Carthage that he displays in Book 1. The external reader comes to the story of his *labores* wondering how he became so desperate, that he would consider settlement in Carthage; the internal reader, Dido, comes with the same question, though from a different angle.

<sup>441</sup> Eco (1979: 220) calls the propositional attitudes of the characters within a story "doxastic constructs." (For example, the belief that the wolf is trustworthy is a doxastic construct of Little Red Riding Hood.)



her ears,<sup>442</sup> so to speak, trying to imagine what she would think. Tiberius Claudius

Donatus, for example, does precisely this when he asks:

*quemadmodum auditum putamus Aenean referentem discrimina sua, cum amissam coniugem insanis laboribus perquisitam diceret, quemadmodum arbitramur iudicio eius acceptum quae intentionem tenuerat ut eius matrimonio iungeretur?*

(TCD 1.354.17-21, *ad Aen.* 4.3-5)

“How ought we to think that Aeneas was heard [sc. by Dido] as he told of his adventures, when he said that his lost wife was sought with ‘insane’ efforts, how ought we judge that it was received in the judgment of she who held the intention that she be joined in marriage to him?”

Donatus imagines Dido being alert as a listener to material relevant to her own prospective relationship with Aeneas, and imagines how it would sound to her, how her outlook would affect the way that she would fill in “gaps” in Aeneas’ story.<sup>443</sup> When we talk about Dido “filling in gaps,” we are really talking about the reader trying to fill in gaps from her perspective, imagining what she would extrapolate.<sup>444</sup> That is, the reader has a double vision: his own construction of meaning in Aeneas’ story, and his construction of Dido’s construction of meaning in Aeneas’ story. Given the difference between what Dido believes (*i.e.*, that Aeneas wishes to stay) and what the reader knows (*i.e.*, that regardless of Aeneas’ desire to stay, he will eventually depart), his construction

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<sup>442</sup> Though, as Bal observes (1997:53), “[w]hen the embedded text presents a complete story with an elaborate fabula, we gradually forget the fabula of the primary narrative,” the reader can be induced periodically to remember that Aeneas is telling this story to Dido, and to bring that context to bear on the interpretation of what he says.

<sup>443</sup> Modern readers do this, too. At 3.493 (*vivite felices*), Horsfall (2006: 353) observes: “We might wish to consider how Dido will react to Aen.’s evident commitment to a higher and more lasting goal.” I read the tone in Aeneas’ farewell to Buthrotum in the diametrically opposite way (see discussion below); my point here is simply that both modern and ancient readers can be seen attempting to read from Dido’s perspective. Gransden’s discussion (1985) of the fall of Troy is continually alert to Dido’s presence as a listener. See also Desmond 1993.

<sup>444</sup> Ovid’s *Heroides* 7, the epistle from Dido to Aeneas is an exercise in this. In it we not only see Ovid’s Dido interpret the motivations and actions of Vergil’s Dido, but we also see her critically assess, with the benefits of retrospect, the way Vergil’s Dido reads Aeneas’ inset narration. Cf. Desmond 1993 and my discussion below.

of her psychology involves a dramatic irony that builds both anticipation for how the ensuing debacle will unfold,<sup>445</sup> and sympathy for a tragic character in whose mind he travels (a qualified, complicated sympathy, of course, like all those in the *Aeneid*).

Having made these preliminary observations, I would like to begin my exploration of Aeneas' attitude in Books 2—3 from the reader's (and Dido's) perspective with a crucial gap in the conclusion of Aeneas' tale, and I will then show how the horizon established by a linear reading up to that point presents material that allows the consistency-building reader to bridge the gap. Aeneas concludes his two-book narration with a grief stricken apostrophe to his beloved father, lamenting the inscrutability of the will of the gods and the failure of prophecy to illuminate it in a meaningful way:

*'hic me, pater optime, fessum  
deseris, heu, tantis nequiquam erepte periclis!  
nec vates Helenus, cum multa horrenda moneret,  
hos mihi praedixit luctus, non dira Celaeno.  
hic labor extremus, longarum haec meta viarum,  
hinc me digressum vestris deus appulit oris.'  
Sic pater Aeneas intentis omnibus unus  
fata renarrabat divum cursusque docebat.  
conticuit tandem factoque hic fine quievit.*  
(*Aen.* 3.710-718)

“Here, best of fathers, in my weariness you desert me—oh, alas!—after you had been saved to no avail from so many dangers. Neither did the prophet Helenus, when he warned me of many horrors, foretell this grief to me, nor did dreadful Celaeno. This was my final hardship, this was the turning post in the course of my long travels, after leaving from here a god pushed me to your shores.” So father Aeneas, with everyone intent on him alone, recounted the *fata* of the gods and explained his journey. Finally, he fell silent and, having ended his story here, he became still.

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<sup>445</sup> Quinn (1968: 113) likens this to the suspense in Greek tragedy: “it is not *what* is going to happen that arouses the suspense, as in a modern adventure story, but *how* what we sense must happen does happen.”

The words *labor extremus* (“final hardship”) and *longarum meta viarum* (“the turning post in the course of my long travels”) present a gap: just what kind of end is Aeneas suggesting he reached? Horsfall suggests that when Aeneas refers to Drepanum as the *meta* of his journey, we must understand a “shift in narrative outlook here, since Aeneas as narrator now speaks from the viewpoint of the hero who has just arrived at Drepanum from Troy and Buthrotum, has at last reached western waters, and is no longer engaged on a creeping *periplus*, but faces Cumae/the Tiber mouth across the Tyrrhenian.”<sup>446</sup> One may object, though, that there is no clear reason that we “must” understand this rather strained reading. It requires us, without demonstrated justification, to understand *viarum* very narrowly, as only the “creeping *periplus*” part of his route, in contrast to the straight shot he was apparently expecting between Drepanum and the Tiber; the *OLD*, however, records no examples of *via* meaning a specifically roundabout or shore-hugging route.<sup>447</sup> Moreover, such a reading of the phrase could only make sense if the clause *longarum haec meta viarum* existed in isolation, whereas it is, in fact, part of a tricolon (*hic..haec..hic*) in which it makes little sense to understand the perspective as having shifted back to that of the “narrated I” in the first two cola, when the final colon most definitely represents the present perspective of the “narrating I,” referring as it does to Aeneas’ current location in Carthage (*hinc me digressum vestris deus appulit oris*). To accept Horsfall’s reading of *longarum haec meta viarum* as reflecting the hopeful perspective of Aeneas at Drepanum, we must understand an

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<sup>446</sup> Horsfall 2006: 473 *ad* 3.714.

<sup>447</sup> *OLD s.v. via*. Of the ten definitions listed, the first six relate to literal pathways and by extension the notion of travel, and none suggests a roundabout course. The closest definition is VI: “The line of travel leading to a particular destination, the way, course,” for which *Aen.* 3.202, *scire vias maris* is cited.

ellipsed disjunction (“but”) between that phrase and the one that follows it, in which he explains that he was blown to Carthage. That is, if, as Horsfall suggests, we shift back to Aeneas’ perspective when he was at Drepanum and take *longarum haec meta viarum* to mean “this was [going to be] the turn [toward Italy] in my long [and heretofore shore-hugging] travels,” then we can only take the next clause, *hinc me digressum vestris deus appulit oris*, to be expressing a contrast, “[But instead, f]rom here I sailed and the god brought me to your shore.”<sup>448</sup> This would negate the purpose of using a tricolon, the rhetorical effect of which is meant to be a building crescendo, not a deflated contrast.

Horsfall’s reading appears to be an attempt to avoid understanding a positive statement by Aeneas about his arrival in Carthage. After all, unless we accept the unsigned shift in perspective that Horsfall posits, the idea upon which Aeneas is expanding in the tricolon would be that Drepanum marked the final point in his suffering (*labores*) and wandering (*viae*), which would, as Williams suggest, imply an amenable view of his arrival in Carthage: “Aeneas pays [Dido] the compliment of implying that now they have reached Carthage their trials are over.”<sup>449</sup> Horsfall takes Williams to be suggesting that the phrase *longarum haec meta viarum* refers to Carthage, and counters that *haec* could only refer to Drepanum, as the *hic* before it (714) and the *hinc* after it (715) do.<sup>450</sup> This must be the case; Drepanum is surely the *meta viarum*. Even so, and however we translate *meta*, the positive implication about Carthage is the same. Aeneas

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<sup>448</sup> Here I use Horsfall’s own translation (2006: 37), supplying in brackets the notions that his notes suggest. Confirming my sense that his reading requires us to take the third element of the tricolon disjunctively, he renders it as a new sentence in his translation. (“This was my last toil, this the turn in my long travels. From here I sailed and the god brought me to your shores.”)

<sup>449</sup> R.D. Williams 1962: 212 *ad* 3.714.

<sup>450</sup> Horsfall 2006 *ad* 1.714: “Williams (both edd.) seems to take *haec*, in isolation, of Carthage, which will not do at all.”

is either calling Drepanum the “end” of his long travels (ellipsing the storm and shipwreck, which Ilioneus had already explained),<sup>451</sup> or (as I prefer) calling it the “turning-post” that marked his entry into the final stretch of his travels;<sup>452</sup> the implication about his current location, Carthage, is the same. It stands across the finish line, on the other side of which were the tribulations of his wandering. Those who assert that Aeneas is not implying something complimentary about Carthage can only do so by breaking up the tricolon and treating its elements in isolation, thereby severing the logical relationship between Aeneas’ assertion of the end of his trials (*hic labor extremus, longarum haec meta viarum*) and his arrival in Carthage (*hinc me digressum vestris deus appulit oris*).<sup>453</sup> Taking the tricolon as the single rhetorical unit that it is, the only question is whether he means simply that in Carthage his trials *thus far* are over, or whether he is implying that his *labores* and *viae* have reached a more lasting conclusion. This is our gap.

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<sup>451</sup> Williams (1972 ad 3.714) translates *meta* as “the end,” noting that “Aeneas omits mention of the storm which drove him to Carthage after leaving Sicily because it has already been described to Dido (*Aen.* 1.535f).”

<sup>452</sup> In my opinion, the fact that Aeneas need not describe the storm at sea, which would be repetitious for the authorial audience and unnecessary for the internal audience, since it had already been referred to (1.535) by Ilioneus (as DServius ad 3.174 notes) does not mean that it would make sense for him to speak as if it had not happened, to call Drepanum the “end” of his wandering even as he is sitting in Carthage. I therefore prefer to understand *meta* as turning-post, bringing out the metaphor in my translation by rendering *meta viarum* “the final turning post in the course of my long travels.”

<sup>453</sup> Henry, who argues (1873-92: 534 ad 3.715-8) that *hinc me digressum vestris deus appulit oris* is “not to be understood as complimentary to Dido, or as Aeneas’s praise of and thanksgiving to the good providence which had brought him to a place where he was so well treated, but as the expression of the ordinary religious sentiment that whatever happens to us, whether good or ill...happens to us by the will and agency of God,” treats the verse as if it were an independent sentence and does not include the previous verse (3.714) in the same lemma, or anywhere at all, in fact. Aeneas’ statement in 3.714 that his labors are now over tells against reading 3.715 with Henry as implying that Aeneas expects he may suffer evil at Carthage, which Henry notes that Odysseus does, *mutatis mutandis*, at *Od.* 6.172-3 (nu~n d’ e0nqa/de ka/bbale dai/mwn/olfra ti/ pou kai\ th~|de pa/qw kako/n, “Now a god has cast me up here, so that, I suspect, here too I may suffer some evil,” my trans.) Moreover, it must be noted that Odysseus is trying to persuade Nausicaa to treat him kindly, and so his statement that he may suffer evil in her land is a proreptic rhetorical appeal. Dido, on the other hand, has already welcomed Aeneas kindly.

Though I am not certain precisely what suggestions of permanence Williams is attributing to Aeneas' statement that his trials are now over, the text has already established that, at a minimum, Aeneas thinks this is true for the immediate present (*hic primum Aeneas sperare salutem/ ausus*, 1.451-2). I would like to argue, however, that Aeneas is suggesting not simply that he has reached an end to his troubles up to this point, and that his journey will now continue smoothly with Dido's assistance, but rather that he has found a potential settlement which would render his *labores* and *viae* complete in a permanent sense. Given that he did not articulate any acceptance of Dido's offer (1.569-71) of assistance sailing on, while at the same time he lavishly thanked her (1.595-610) for her offer of a permanent home in Carthage (see Chapter 1), it would not be implausible for Aeneas' audience (both external and internal) to understand the endpoint represented by Carthage to be permanent. The objection to this is, of course, that Aeneas' statements at the end of Book 3 are preceded by a tale of oracles and prophecies directing him to Italy, and that, therefore, he could not be understood to imply an intent to put down stakes in Carthage. This is, of course, the usual reason given for the statement that Dido is a poor interpreter: Aeneas could not possibly be implying that he would stay, because that would mean ignoring the commands of the gods, which he would not do. I would like to argue here that the way Aeneas tells his tale implies that this is something that he *would* do; the disappointments, miscommunications, and perceived betrayals by the gods that he recounts help the reader see why. Tracing the development of events and attitudes in Aeneas' narration of Books 2—3 will show this.

The first theme of Aeneas' narration is the continuing, unabated nature of his grief about the destruction of his city, which feels as real to him sitting in Carthage seven years later as it did when it happened. Aeneas' tale begins thus:

*infandum, regina, iubes renovare dolorem,  
Troianas ut opes et lamentabile regnum  
eruerint Danaï, quaeque ipse miserrima vidi  
et quorum pars magna fui. quis talia fando  
Myrmidonum Dolopumve aut duri miles Ulixi  
temperet a lacrimis? et iam nox umida caelo  
praecipitat suadentque cadentia sidera somnos.  
sed si tantus amor casus cognoscere nostros  
et breviter Troiae supremum audire laborem,  
quamquam animus meminisse horret luctuque refugit,  
incipiam.*

(Aen. 2.3-13)

You command me, o Queen, to renew an unspeakable grief, the tale of how the Danaans overturned the wealth of Troy and its sorrowful kingdom, most wretched things which I myself saw and in which I played a large part. In telling these things, what Myrmidon or Dolopian, or what soldier of harsh Ulysses could refrain from tears? And already the damp night hastens from the sky and the falling stars urge sleep. But if you have such a great desire to learn of our misfortunes and to hear briefly the final tribulation of Troy, although my heart shudders to recall it and recoils from the grief, I will begin.

I would like to emphasize how Vergil does *not* have Aeneas frame his tale: teleologically.

We might expect him to do so, if he had learned the lessons in the events of Books 2—3 that are often imputed to him (and that he is supposedly trying to convey to Dido).

Aeneas' lengthy expression of the immense pain that the fall of Troy caused and continues to cause him (*infandum dolorem, lamentabile, miserrima, lacrimis, casus, supremum laborem, horret, luctu*) is, however, unmitigated by any trusting or hopeful

remark situating this misfortune within the destiny promised to him.<sup>454</sup> If he were to begin by contextualizing, however briefly, the ensuing tale of woe within a belief of a better future guaranteed by providence, the reader would be prepared to meet the almost uniformly pessimistic feelings of the “narrated I” as a temporary, prior attitude; the reader would naturally expect that the more optimistic current attitude of the “narrating I” would, at some point in the story, be shown to supersede it. Aeneas does not set up this expectation, however. He does not give Dido (and the external reader) a teleological interpretational framework that would encourage her to privilege an understood current faith over the lack of faith that Aeneas will describe himself as having experienced during the fall of Troy and his wanderings. Critics, nevertheless, often suggest that Dido ought to read Aeneas’ tale teleologically and optimistically, and her evident failure to do so results in the consistent labeling of her as a “misreader” or bad interpreter; but, the narrator Aeneas offers her no such frame for interpretation.

If continuing grief is the first point on the horizon of Aeneas’ narration as a whole, the first theme of the narrated past itself—the first “schematized view” or perspective unit encountered through the reader’s “wandering viewpoint”—is the construction of the Trojan horse, and with it the notion of the gods’ invisible partisan malevolence:

*fracti bello fatisque repulsi  
ductores Danaum tot iam labentibus annis  
instar montis equum divina Palladis arte*

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<sup>454</sup> Block (1981: 262): “While he is personally reluctant to recall the horrible events, he also does not yet understand why they occurred, why the gods acted as they did; the events of Troy’s last hours seem to him to violate the laws of man and gods, and he views them with horror still, not with the knowledge, available to the reader, of Jupiter’s magnificent prophecy, but with the helpless fury he reveals in his reaction to Venus in Book 1.”



*aedificant, sectaque intexunt abiete costas;  
votum pro reditu stimulant; ea fama vagatur.*  
(*Aen.* 2.13-17)

Broken by war and beaten back by fate, the leaders of the Danaans, with so many years now slipping by, build a horse the size of a mountain by the divine art of Pallas, and they weave the ribs with planks of fir. They pretend it is an offering for their return. This rumor spreads.

The horse is constructed *divina Palladis arte* (2.15), which, as Horsfall notes, could suggest “the divinely-favoured art of carpentry, or the cunning of the goddess herself.”<sup>455</sup> Though this phrase might, in another context, pass for a stock description of craftsmanship in terms of its patron deity, it is known to the reader familiar with Greek literary accounts<sup>456</sup> that Minerva herself *did* help the Greeks fashion the horse, and, as we shall see throughout his story, the “narrating I” has clearly deduced this as well. Servius notes that *arte* could mean “either ‘cleverly’ or ‘deceptively’, as if he were saying, ‘by the plan of the angry goddess, who was hostile to the Trojans,’”<sup>457</sup> and as Elizabeth Block observes:<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>455</sup> Horsfall 2008: 59 *ad* 2.215.

<sup>456</sup> In the *Odyssey*, the horse is referred to as being made by Epeios “with the help of Athena” (τοῦν Ὀεπειοῦ ἐποιοῦσεν σὺν Ὀαῦχῳ/νη, *Od.* 8.493 |). In Proclus’ summary of the *Ilias Parva*, Epeios fashioned it κατ’ Ὀαῦχναῖον προαί/ρεσιν (OCT *Homeri Opera* 5.107.2-3). In the opening speech of Euripides’ *Trojan Women*, Poseidon says that all this happened because Epeios built the wooden horse “through the devices of Athena” (μηχαναῖσι Πάλλα=δοῖ, 10). His speech blames the gods alone, specifically Athena and to a lesser degree, Hera (24-5), for the destruction of Troy, and concludes the prologue by stating that the city “would still be standing tall, had not Pallas Athena, the child of Zeus, destroyed you all,” (εἰλ σε μὴ διω/λεσεν Πάλλαῖον Διοῦ παῖον, ἡσὴ ἀνέον βα/ροῖον ἐλτι, 46-7). *Pace* Horsfall (2008: 60 *ad* 2.15) who feels that “[c]onsideration of older views of Athene’s role solves nothing,” this tradition presents material from the “intertextual encyclopedia” that the reader can be expected to draw on for inference. The reader has also been reminded of Minerva’s hostility toward the Trojans in the panel on the Carthaginian temple to Juno (*Aen.* 1.479-82), which depicted the staunch partisanship of *non aequae Palladis* as she refused the offering of the desperate Trojan women, and allusion to *Il.* 6.297.

<sup>457</sup> Servius *ad* 2.15: PALLADIS ARTE: aut ingeniose, aut dolose, ac si diceret, consilio iratae deae, quae fuit inimica Troianis.

<sup>458</sup> Block 1981: 264.

This interpretation not only extends the meaning of *arte*, but also shifts the point of view from that of Aeneas before the fall to Aeneas in Carthage, who knows the results of the acceptance of the Horse, and that Minerva's involvement was not, as Sinon depicted it, friendly to the Trojans. This single line provides for the reader, in miniature, the double vision that will persist, and grow increasingly central, as the book progresses; the reader is led to experience the feelings of a Trojan at the same time that he is reminded of the results of taking this view.

A short while later, Aeneas again alludes to his suspicion of Minerva's active involvement in the deception by calling it a lethal gift to—or *of*—the maiden Minerva (*innuptae donum exitiale Minervae*, 2.31). Although the form of *Minervae* should probably be understood on any reading as genitive not dative, the ambiguity is the same, since the genitive can be construed subjectively or objectively, with the latter amounting to a dative.<sup>459</sup> DServius points out that *donum Minervae* is ambiguous (*a0mfiboli/a*), and clarifies *non quod ipsa dedit, sed quod ei oblatum est* (“not [a gift] which she herself gave, but which was offered to her”).<sup>460</sup> Naturally, this is the pretense of the Greeks themselves, and in explaining that the ambiguity of *Minervae* is to be solved in this way, DServius probably has in mind the inscription on the horse in the *Deiphobus* of Accius: *Minervae donum armipotentes Danai abeuntes dicant* (“The warlike Greeks, departing, dedicate this gift to Minerva”).<sup>461</sup> Certainly, there is no question that the horse was

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<sup>459</sup> Henry (1873-92: 44 *ad* 2.30-4) takes it objectively, citing *donum Triviae*, “a gift to Trivia” (*Aen.*11.566) and Ovid's *Penelopae munus* (*Met.* 13.510) to mean a present for Penelope. Likewise, Conington *ad loc.* cites Cic. *Verr.* 2. 3. 80, *civium Romanorum dona*, “presents made to Roman citizens.” Against these, however, I would place *Aen.* 2.269, where Aeneas says that sleep, as a most welcome gift of [i.e., from] the gods (*dono divum*), creeps (*serpit*) over the Trojans. This instance is clearly a subjective genitive, and, moreover, is a particularly relevant parallel since it fits into the same web of metaphors that figure the horse as a serpent. As Knox observes (1950: 388): “This rest is indeed a gift from the gods; it is part of the divine plan for Troy's overthrow.”

<sup>460</sup> DServius *ad* 2.31. Commentators often cite this as clear proof of the objective genitive, without considering the fact that DServius' attempt to solve the ambiguity is *ipso facto* evidence that it exists.

<sup>461</sup> DServius cited this verse just prior, at 2.17 on *votum*. Hyginus (*Fab.* 108) follows this tradition, reporting that the inscription on the horse was *Danaei Minervae dono dant*.

meant to *appear* as an offering to Minerva; that is not what I wish to dispute. I am instead suggesting that the ambiguity recognized by DServius should be allowed to stand, rather than be “solved” in favor the meaning that replicates the syntax of a fragment of Accius.<sup>462</sup> The phrase holds two opposed meanings simultaneously: the false one believed by the “narrated I” (the horse is a religious gift to Minerva) and the terrible truth now clear to the “narrating I” (it was in fact a deadly “gift” from her). Appreciating this enriches the passage by enabling us to see a poignant juxtaposition of Aeneas’ “then” and “now” viewpoints, and the origins of his troubled faith in the gods.

The dramatic irony created by the difference between these perspectives has a powerful and tragic effect. In fact, there are heavy intertextual resonances between this passage and the second choral ode in Euripides’ *Trojan Women*,<sup>463</sup> which can be seen to use overlaid perspectives in the same way to conjure tragic emotion.<sup>464</sup> The chorus laments the joy with which the Trojans rushed to the gates “to give this destruction of the Dardanians to the goddess, a thank offering to the unmarried goddess who rides immortal horses” (Dardani/aj altan qe/a| dw&sw n,/xa/rin alzugoj

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<sup>462</sup> Henry 1873-92 *ad* 2.30-4 and Conington 1883-98 *ad* 2.31 both argue that DServius takes *donum Minervae* at 2.31 “rightly,” and cite the parallel phrase at 2.189, *si vestra manus violasset dona Minervae* (“if your hand violated the gift to Minerva”). This begs the question, though, since this evidence is subject to the same question. 2.189 is also arguably full of ironic ambiguity. Sinon does tell the Trojans it is a gift to Minerva, but he is lying; in fact he makes claims that the narrating I now knows to be the exact opposite of the truth: Sinon here says that the horse will bring destruction (*exitium*) if it is *not* brought into the city.

<sup>463</sup> As Henry (1873-92: 43-4 *ad* 2.30-4) observes, in xa/rin alzugoj a0mbrotopw&lou we have *innuptae donum Minervae*; in Dardani/aj altan, *exitiale*; in qe/a| dw&sw n, *duci intra muros et arce locari*; in ceston loxon Argeiwn, *Danaum insidias*; in peuka en oureia, *abiete*; in proj pulas wrmaq, *panduntur portae, iuvat ire*; and in pasa genna Frugwn, *omnis Teucra*.

<sup>464</sup> The intertextual relationship between this passage and Euripides’ *Troades*, far from solving the ambiguity in favor of a gift to unweid Minerva, as Henry suggests on the grounds of xa/rin alzugoj a0mbrotopw=lou, 535, supports my argument that the phrase can also reflect the retrospective understanding that it was a gift from her. This choral ode is full of the same type of bitterness that Aeneas feels in reflecting upon the irony of the Trojans’ deception by the goddess. Like Aeneas, the Trojan women ruminate on the difference between how the horse appeared (a gift to Athena, 535 cited above), and the reality

ἀμβροτόπωλον, 535-6). As Henry points out, the chorus here calls the horse a gift to Athena in a phrase that mirrors that of Aeneas in syntax and vocabulary (ἄρῃ ἀμβροτόπωλον = *innuptae donum Minervae*), but there are several factors that should prevent us from concluding, as Henry does, this is therefore, the (only) way to read Aeneas' phrase.<sup>465</sup> First we must note that, just as in Aeneas' case, the chorus' statement that the horse was a gift to Athena is focalized through the Trojan's "then" perspective.<sup>466</sup> In both passages this perspective is made ironic by the retrospective context, in which it is obvious how wrong that original perception was, and in both cases the intrusion of a word focalized through the "now" perspective of the speaker (*exitiale*, Δαρδανία ἄλταν) reminds the reader of this. The narrated Aeneas and the Trojans thought this was a gift to Minerva that represented their victory, but Aeneas the narrator knows it was a trap laid by her to ensure their destruction. The responsibility of the goddess for their deception and destruction is only hinted at in Aeneas' phrasing by the alternate meaning that lurks in *donum Minervae*, but it is explicitly spelled out by the chorus of the *Trojan Women*, who go on to call this ambush the "work of the maiden goddess" (κόρη ἐργὰ Πάλλης, 560). I would also add that *innuptae donum Minervae* replicates *this* phrase even more closely than it does ἄρῃ ἀμβροτόπωλον. The word order is identical, with the epithet "maiden" and the name of the goddess flanking the noun, and the word *donum* ("thing given") is parallel to ἐργὰ ("things wrought") as a substantive derived from a verb. An

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<sup>465</sup> As Henry does (1873-92: 43-4 ad 2.30-4).

<sup>466</sup> The statement is part of a participial purpose clause (ἠέροντες...δωσαν, "they rushed...to give") indicating the Trojans intentions (and so, their perspective) at the time that they found the horse.

important part of the tragic point of view of the narrating Aeneas is that the gods can and do manipulate the limited knowledge of humans to destructive ends. This suggestion, which is only here hinted in passing, will be brought home with full force in the Laocoon episode that follows.

I would like to start by reviewing the treatment of Laocoon's role in the story of the Trojan Horse in the literary tradition, in order to be better able to identify and discuss an innovation in Vergil's account that is significant to the argument I am making here, namely that Minerva appears to have intentionally tricked the Trojans into accepting the horse through the omen of Laocoon's death.<sup>467</sup> In our earliest treatment of the Trojan horse, the song of Demodocus (*Od.* 8.500-20), Laocoon is not mentioned. The Trojans are simply represented as considering three courses of action, having already dragged the horse into the city: hack it open, throw it over a cliff, or leave it as a gift to the gods (γεω~ν γελκθ/ριον, *Od.* 8.509). They decide upon the latter, because this was their fate (αι}σα γαρ η}ν α0πολε/σραι, *Od.* 8.511). Laocoon makes his first appearance in the literary tradition in the Epic Cycle, in the *Iliou Persis* of Arctinus. Here is Proclus' epitome:

w9j ta\ peri\ to\n i3ppon oi9 Trw~ej u9po/ptwj  
 elxontej perista/ntej bouleu/ontai, o3,ti xrh\  
 poiei=n: kai\ toi=j me\n dokei= katakrhmni/sai  
 au0to/n, toi=j de\ katafle/gein, oi9 de\ i9ero\n  
 au0to\n elfasan dei=n th|~ 0Aqhna|~ a0nateqh=nai:  
 kai\ te/loj nika|~ h9 tou/twn gnw/mh. trape/ntej de\  
 ei0j eu0frosu/nhn eu0wxou~ntai w9j a0phllagme/noi tou=

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<sup>467</sup> Sources for the story are: Arctinus (OCT *Homeri Opera* 5.107.23), Apollodorus *Ep.* 5.18; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 1.48.2; Servius on *Aen.* 2.201 (Euphorion); Hyginus, *Fab.* 135; Petronius 89; Quintus Smyrnaeus 12.353-499; Tzetzes, *Scholia on Lycophron* 344 and 347. There are also the fragmentary lines, possibly by Nicander on the sons of Laocoon and the serpents (Supplementum Hellenisticum no. 562). In addition to a *Laocoon*, Sophocles wrote a *Sinon* that also does not survive.

pole/mou. e0n au0tw|~ de\ tou/tw| du/o dra/kontej  
e0pifane/ntej to/n te Laoko/wnta kai\ to\n e3teron  
tw~n pai/dwn diafgei/rousin:e0pi\ de\ tw|~ te/rati  
dusforh/santej oi9 peri\ to\n Ai0nei/an u9pech~lqon  
ei0j th\n lIdhn.

(OCT *Homeri Opera* 5.107.17-26)

The Trojans, being suspicious of the wooden horse, debate as they stand around it what they ought to do. It seems best to some to throw it down, and to others to burn it up, while others said they ought to dedicate it to Athena. And in the end this third opinion won out. Then they turned to merriment and feasting, believing the war was over. But at this very time two serpents appear and destroy Laocoon and one of his two sons. Alarmed at this portent, the followers of Aeneas withdrew to Mt. Ida.

As in Homer’s version, the Trojans again appear to have already brought the horse into the city before debating what to do with it, and the motif of three potential courses of action is repeated, though we may note that their “suspicion” (u9po/ptwj) is specifically mentioned here. We are not told what allays this suspicion, but unlike in later versions, it is *not* the death of Laocoon and his son, which in this account occurs after the Trojans have already admitted the horse and begun to celebrate. (Note, too, that the horse is now to be dedicated to a specific deity, Athena.) The link between the omen of Laocoon’s death and Aeneas’ departure prior to the sack of the city was also apparently represented in Sophocles’ tragedy *Laocoon*. Dionysius of Halicarnassus says:

Sofoklh=j m\en o9 tragw|dopoio\j e0n Laoko/wnti  
dra/mati mellou/shj a9li/skesqai th=j po/lewj  
pepoi/hke to\n Ai0nei/an a0naskeuazo/menon ei0j th\n  
lIdhn, keleusqe/nta u9po\ tou= patro\j A0gxi/sou kata\  
th\n mnh/mhn w{n 0Afrodi/th e0pe/skhye kai\ a0po\  
tw=n newsti\ genome/nwn peri\ tou\jLaokownti/daj  
shmei/wn to\n me/llonta olleqron th=j po/lewj  
suntekmhrame/nou.

(*Ant. Rom.* 1.48.2)

Sophocles, the tragic poet, in his play *Laocoon* depicted Aeneas, just before the taking of the city, as removing his household to Mt. Ida, having been ordered by

his father Anchises, who, from his recollection of the commands of Aphrodite and from the omens that had recently happened to the sons of Laocoon, conjectured the coming destruction of the city.

The mythographers Apollodorus and Hyginus, whose compilations themselves postdate Vergil but draw on earlier, particularly Hellenistic, material,<sup>468</sup> also record the death of Laocoon and his sons. Apollodorus appears to follow the tradition represented in the Epic Cycle and Sophocles, in which the omen of Laocoon's death comes after the Trojans have begun feasting, and is a true sign portending the destruction of the city.<sup>469</sup> Here is Apollodorus' version:

Kasa/ndraj de\ legou/shj elnoplou e0n au0tw|~ du/namin  
ei|nai, kai\ prose/ti Laoko/wntoj tou= ma/ntewj, toi=j  
me\n e0do/kei katakai/ein, toi=j de kata\  
bara/qrwn a0fie/nai: do/can de\ toi=j polloi=j i3na  
au0to\n e0a/swsi qei=on a0na/qhma, trape/ntej e0pi\  
qusi/an eu0wxou=nto. 0Apo/llwn de\ au0toi=j shmei=on  
e0pipe/mpei: du/o ga\r dra/kontej dianhca/menoi dia\  
th\j qala/sshj e0k tw~n plhsi/on nh/swn tou\  
Laoko/wntoj ui9ou\j katesqi/ousin.  
(*Ep.* 5.17-18)

Since Cassandra said that there was an armed force in it, as did Laocoon, the seer, it seemed best to some to burn it, and to others to throw it down a precipice; but as most wanted to leave it as an offering to the gods, they turned to sacrifice and feasting. However, Apollo sent them a sign; for two serpents swam through the sea from the nearby islands and devoured the sons of Laocoon.

In the *Ilious Persis*, Sophocles, and Apollodorus, then, the death of Laocoon and/or his sons is an admonitory omen about the impending fall of Troy. In Hyginus we see evidenced a different tradition, in which the death of Laocoon is not actually a portent,

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<sup>468</sup> Both works are spuriously attached to famous figures: the *Bibliotheca* of pseudo-Apollodorus, attributed to the Hellenistic scholar, probably dates to the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE. (*OCD* s.v. Apollodorus (6) of Athens), while the *Fabulae* of Hyginus, written in Latin but compiled from Greek sources, probably dates to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE, and is not, therefore, the product of the literary critic and freedman of Augustus named Hyginus (*OCD* s.v. Hyginus (3)).

<sup>469</sup> Kleinknecht (1944: 79-80) shows how Vergil's account is consistent with Roman historical descriptions of disaster portents.

but rather a punishment of Laocoon for religious impropriety, which appears to the Trojans, by sheer coincidence, as a portent. According to Hyginus:

*Laocoon Capys filius Anchisae frater Apollinis sacerdos contra voluntatem Apollinis cum uxorem duxisset atque liberos procreasset, sorte ductus, ut sacrum faceret Neptuno ad litus. Apollo occasione data a Tenedo per fluctus maris dracones misit duos qui filios eius Antiphantem et Thymbraeum necarent, quibus Laocoon cum auxilium ferre vellet, ipsum quoque nexum necaverunt. Quod Phryges idcirco factum putarunt, quod Laocoon hastam in equum Troianum miserit.*

(*Fab.* 135)

Laocoon, son of Capys, brother of Anchises, and priest of Apollo, against the will of Apollo had married and had children. By lot he was appointed to sacrifice to Neptune on the shore. With an opportunity having presented itself, Apollo sent two snakes from Tenedos over the waves of the sea to kill his sons Antiphantes and Thymbraeus. When Laocoon tried to bring aid to them, the snakes killed him in their coils, too. The Phrygians thought this happened because Laocoon had thrown his spear against the Trojan Horse.

In making Laocoon a priest guilty of a religious infraction, Hyginus appears to be following the tradition, though not the exact version, of the Hellenistic poet Euphorion, preserved by Servius:

*LAOCOON: ut Euphorion dicit, post adventum Graecorum sacerdos Neptuni lapidibus occisus est, quia non sacrificiis eorum vetavit adventum. postea abscedentibus Graecis cum vellent sacrificare Neptuno, Laocoon Thymbraei Apollonis sacerdos sorte ductus est, ut solet fieri cum deest sacerdos certus. hic piaculum commiserat ante simulacrum numinis cum *Antiopa sua* uxore coeundo, et ob hoc inmissis draconibus cum suis filiis interemptus est. historia quidem hoc habet: sed poeta interpretatur ad Troianorum excusationem, *qui hoc ignorantes decepti sunt.**

(*Servius ad 2.201*)

Laocoon: As Euphorion says, after the arrival of the Greeks the priest of Neptune was killed by stoning, because he had not prevented their arrival by his sacrifices. Afterward, with the Greeks departing, when they wished to sacrifice to Neptune, Laocoon, the priest of Apollo Thymbraeus was chosen by lot, as is accustomed to happen when there is no assigned priest. This man had committed a religious crime by having sex with his wife Antiopa before the statue of the god, and on account of this he was killed together with his sons by sea-serpents that had been



sent against him. This is the real story:<sup>470</sup> but the poet understands it to excuse the Trojans, who, unaware of this [Laocoon's true crime], were deceived.

Prior to Vergil, then, we have two versions of the Laocoon story, one in which his death is a genuine portent of the city's destruction (Arctinus, Sophocles, Apollodorus) and one in which it is a punishment for sexual impropriety which is erroneously interpreted, due to coincidental timing, as a response to his hostility to the horse (Euphorion *via* Servius, and Hyginus). Vergil clearly follows the Euphorion-Hyginus tradition<sup>471</sup> in making the Trojans understand the death of Laocoon as being the result of divine anger at his opposition to the horse,<sup>472</sup> but is Vergil's reader also supposed to assume, therefore, that the real reason for his death is an unrelated sexual-religious impropriety? Tracy argues yes,<sup>473</sup> and suggests that "[i]f this is so, Troy's fall, that most important of events, becomes on the level of human action the accidental by-product of this rather sordid act. What we have in the Laocoon episode is, I think, a characteristically Vergilian comment on human events. So often, he seems to suggest,

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<sup>470</sup> I translate *historia* as 'real story' to bring out the connotation of truth; the word is used by Servius in contradistinction to *fabula* to suggest a tale that, whether fictional or not, is rational and plausible (*secundum naturam*, see his definition *ad* 1.235). For a thorough study of Servius' use of the term *historia*, which implies that an account is worthy of belief, see Dietz 1995.

<sup>471</sup> Laocoon's opposition to the horse is implied in the Euphorion version alluded to by Servius *ad* 2.201 (*sed poeta interpretatur ad Troianorum excusationem, qui hoc ignorantes decepti sunt*) and made explicit in Hyginus (*Quod Phryges idcirco factum putarunt, quod Laocoon hastam in equum Troianum miserit. Fab.* 135). Of course, Hyginus may well be using Vergil as one of his sources, but he certainly retains elements that are present in Euphorion and not in Vergil (or the other sources we have discussed), making Laocoon a priest of Apollo who had committed a sexual impropriety.

<sup>472</sup> Note that Vergil also agrees with the Euphorion-Hyginus tradition in having the serpents kill both sons and Laocoon himself. Additionally, as Tracy (1987: 452) points out, Vergil alludes to this tradition by calling Laocoon *ductus Neptuno sorte sacerdos* (201). Cf. Hyginus 135: *sorte ductus, ut sacrum faceret Neptuno* and Servius reporting Euphorion *ad* 2.201: *cum vellent sacrificare Neptuno, Laocoon Thymbraei Apollonis sacerdos sorte ductus est.*

<sup>473</sup> Likewise, Klingner 1967: 412. Kleinknecht 1944: 79-80 argues no. Harrison (1990: 53) does not take into account Euphorion's version, but considers Vergil's Laocoon to have merited divine punishment by violating "an object whose construction was under the sponsorship of Minerva."

men suffer and die for the meanest, most petty of reasons.”<sup>474</sup> This may be so, though even within this formulation, the role of the gods in creating this “accident” should not be overlooked. I would like to consider, though, how the event looks to the embedded tale’s internal narrator and internal audience, who, of course, must be understood to have no knowledge of the true nature of Laocoon’s (unrelated) crime, even if an external reader familiar with Euphorion does presume it to be retained.

I would like to suggest that to the narrator Aeneas, it appears in retrospect that Minerva did indeed send the serpents to kill Laocoon for his assault on the horse, though not for the reason that the Trojans’ assumed at the time. That is, he was not “punished” because he had violated an offering sacred to her, but rather “murdered” to secure the success of her stratagem.<sup>475</sup> Though Aeneas does not articulate this explicitly (the limits of human knowledge prevent him from objectively narrating the activities and motivations of the gods),<sup>476</sup> he shows by the way he tells the story that this is in fact what he thinks. As I discussed above, Aeneas has already framed the story of the horse by twice pointing toward Minerva’s suspected authorship of the stratagem (*divina Palladis*

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<sup>474</sup> Tracy 1987: 453-4.

<sup>475</sup> “Murder” is not a term usually applied to gods’ killings of humans, but I employ the word here in order to distinguish it from the vengeance of an offended god, and highlight that in retrospect this must look to Aeneas like the calculated killing of an innocent man. See more below.

<sup>476</sup> Lynch (1980: 177) states that Aeneas takes an “anthropocentric” view: “In reporting the event within this framework, Aeneas is focusing on the secular and human side of the reasons for Troy’s fall. There is very little recourse in his account to religious explanation beyond a wistful statement which evenhandedly distributes responsibility to the *fata divum* and mental error: ‘if the fates of the gods, if our minds had not been unfavourably disposed (*laeva*)’, Aeneas laments, Laocoon would have prevailed and Troy would still be standing (2. 54-6). Only later in the story is divine agency stressed, and that is done by Venus, who has to illustrate graphically for Aeneas the *divum inclementia, divum, ...* (2. 602 ff.)” I think, rather, that this anthropocentrism is the fact of Aeneas’ non-omniscience, not some feature of his disposition, that forces him to narrate human events; and yet, because Venus has revealed the *inclementia divum* to the narrated-I, we can assume that it is informing the general outlook of the narrating-I. That is, though he cannot give a play-by-play of what the gods did throughout the fall of Troy, but he knows that all along they were behind the scenes. His attitude toward their responsibility is extremely important.

*arte*, 2.15 and *innuptae donum Minervae*, 2.31). After recounting Laocoon's warnings (2.40-56), Aeneas tells his Carthaginian audience that if the Trojans had listened to Laocoon, Troy would still be standing; but they did not, because the gods wanted the city to fall:

*et, si fata deum, si mens non laeva fuisset,  
impulerat ferro Argolicas foedare latebras,  
Troiaque nunc staret Priamique arx alta maneres.*  
(*Aen.* 2.54-6)

And, if the *fata* of the gods, if their will<sup>477</sup> had not been unfavorable, he would have compelled them to befoul the Greek hiding place with the sword, and Troy would now be standing and you, high citadel of Priam, would still remain.

By framing the arrival of Sinon and the death of Laocoon as manifestations of the will of the gods that Troy fall, Aeneas shows that he sees these event in terms of the destructive, deceptive intention of the gods.<sup>478</sup> As Block observes, “the death of Laocoon undermines Aeneas’, and the reader’s, faith in the ability of men to comprehend the purposes of the gods. At the same time that the death demonstrates for the reader that Troy is destined to fall, it also implies that man not only cannot change fate, but, more important for the meaning of the *Aeneid*, he cannot expect to understand it; the future is clear only when it has become past.”<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>477</sup> Williams (1971: 220 *ad* 2.54): “For *mens deum* cf. 170, *Geo.* 4.220, *Ov. Met.* 15.137; some take the phrase to refer to the Trojans’ minds (cf. *Ecl.* 1.16), but this gives an unbalanced sentence.”

<sup>478</sup> Heinze, who does not register the troubling theological implications of this, states ([1915] 1993: 11): “For in the whole of the *Aeneid*, no great event ever occurs without Virgil reminding us that it is the will and work of the gods....is [the destruction of Troy] to be the sole exception?...The great men of this world are merely their tools. But the gods are also responsible for disaster...it is they, not the Greek forces, who destroy Troy; therefore they too must have been responsible for allowing the fatal horse to enter the city. That is taken for granted by Virgil and by anyone who is in sympathy with his thought.”

<sup>479</sup> Block 1981: 268.

First the Trojans are deceived by Sinon,<sup>480</sup> who convinces them that the horse is an offering to Minerva to atone for the desecration of the Palladium (2.183-94). This speech of Sinon and its pivotal role in the plot may be a Vergilian development. Sinon is mentioned in one earlier extant account, the *Iliou Persis*, but there he simply signals the Greeks with fire after the horse has been accepted, “having previously got into the city by pretence.”<sup>481</sup> Vergil could have let Sinon alone convince the Trojans, who are thoroughly snowed by him;<sup>482</sup> but instead the poet shows the gods confirming Sinon’s lie through Laocoon’s death. Immediately following Sinon’s story, twin serpents emerge from the water and kill the priest as he is sacrificing a bull to Neptune on the shore. Aeneas pitifully describes how the serpents first crush the *parva corpora* of his two sons and feed upon the innocent boys’ *miseros...artus* (2.213-15). The pathos their father’s frenzied attempt to rescue them, and the horror of the image of him trying in vain to claw away the snakes knotted around his own neck, invokes an emotional reaction from the reader, as does the following simile that likens him to a stunned sacrificial animal.<sup>483</sup> Though

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<sup>480</sup> His tale is a long lie *about* omens. These omens are doubly fictitious in that *within* his story they are used to manipulate and deceive the Greeks, and because this fiction itself is used to manipulate and deceive the Trojans. On the way that this episode holds up an “interpretive mirror” to the reader, whose own “gap-filling” is anticipated and manipulated by the poet just as that of the Trojans is by Sinon, see Hexter 1990.

<sup>481</sup> OCT *Homeri Opera* 5.107.23. In the version of Hyginus (*Fab.* 108), he likewise plays a side-role: “the Achaeans came out of the horse which had been opened by Sinon, killed the guards at the gates, and at a given signal admitted their friends.” In Apollodorus (*Ep.* 5.19.2-3), Sinon is mentioning as kindling the beacon to signal them. The 3<sup>rd</sup> century *Posthomerica* of Quintus Smyrnaeus (12.353-499), however, features Sinon prominently in a similar role, convincing the Trojans of the horse’s authenticity as a *sacrum*. In Quintus, however, Sinon does so by enduring extensive torture by the Trojans as they interrogate him.

<sup>482</sup> They are all won over by his speech: *Talibus insidiis periurique arte Sinonis/ credita res, captique dolis lacrimisque coactis*, “Through such snares and the lying art of Sinon the matter was believed, and we were captured by his tricks and his forced tears,” (*Aen.* 2.195-8). For discussion of his rhetoric in stylistic terms, see Lynch 1980, who demonstrates that Laocoon’s rhetorical style evokes (p. 177) “a pristine form of Romanness,” and Sinon’s “a decadent form of Greekness.”

<sup>483</sup> Putnam (1965: 24) calls Laocoon the first symbolic sacrifice in the destruction of the city. See also Harrison 1990: 54. R.M. Smith explores how it relates to the theme of deception, arguing (1999: 503) that the Sinon-Laocoon episode forms “a story of the systematic perversion of religious sacrifice—a perversion, furthermore, that turns at every stage on the perversion of human knowledge.” For a broader look at human

Mackail may have overstated the irrelevance of the Laocoon story to the narrative, he is at one level right that “either or both [parts of his story] could be omitted without leaving any gap, and in fact with some added continuity.”<sup>484</sup> It is true that plot would still make adequate sense without it, and we therefore must consider why Vergil included it. As Heinze observes, “Laocoon’s death would only be superfluous to the narrative if it were a second motivation that came from the same sphere as the first. But beside mortal deception, and at a higher level, comes the sign from the gods.”<sup>485</sup> Though the death of Laocoon is superfluous in terms of plot development, it is, of course, thematically important, and it shows something very dark about the nature of the gods that is crucial to our understanding of how they work in the poem, and how Aeneas understands them to work.

This omen of the gods, the first of Aeneas’ tale, causes death and destruction for the humans who act in accordance with it, not because they have misinterpreted it within its context, but because it was designed to deceive. In versions of the story of Laocoon that link his death with his opposition to the horse (the Euphorion-Hyginus tradition), the priest is not actually being punished for opposing the horse<sup>486</sup> when the serpents kill him—the coincidental timing simply makes it look that way. The reader familiar with Vergil’s sources may initially expect that it will be revealed, as in Euphorion, that some

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death as sacrifice in the *Aeneid*, see Bandera 1981 and the chapter “Substitution and Sacrifice” in Hardie 1993.

<sup>484</sup> Mackail 1930: 47.

<sup>485</sup> Heinze [1915] 1993: 11.

<sup>486</sup> The spear throw itself appears in Hyginus, as well as Tzetzes, *Schol. ad Lycophron* 344 (du/o dra/konej...to\n pai/da tou= Laoko/ontoj a0nei=lon me/son panto\j tou= laou=, o3ti tw|~ do/rati balei=n to\n dou/reion i3ppon e0to/lmhse, “two snakes seized the son of Laocoon in the midst of all the people, because he dared to strike the wooden horse with his spear.”)

legitimately offended god is behind the killing of Laocoon. If Vergil had followed his sources in presenting this omen as having been misinterpreted as a result of the limited nature of human knowledge, this would still reflect a pessimistic attitude toward the imperfect science of divination. However, Vergil diverges from his sources, and the result is even more pessimistic. Aeneas, being a character narrator not an omniscient narrator, cannot authoritatively state the true origin of the omen, but he presents a view of the evidence that can only be adequately understood with this conclusion. For Aeneas discloses a piece of information that is not found in Vergil's sources,<sup>487</sup> and that suggests that the Trojans are correct, that the omen of the serpents *does* come from Minerva, and that she was therefore complicit in the manipulative use of their religious scruples. For Aeneas tells Dido that after killing Laocoon, the snakes retreated to the protection of the temple of "savage" Minerva:

*at gemini lapsu delubra ad summa dracones  
effugiunt saevaeque petunt Tritonidis arcem,  
sub pedibusque deae clipeique sub orbe teguntur.*  
(*Aen.* 2.225-7)

But the twin serpents flee, gliding to the high shrine and seek the citadel of savage Minerva, and they are protected under the feet of the goddess and curve of her shield.

This is a new element that must be accounted for. Neither Servius' citation of Euphorion nor Hyginus (*i.e.*, the tradition in which Laocoon is punished for an unrelated offense)

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<sup>487</sup> Unless Quintus Smyrnaeus is drawing on a pre-Vergilian account when he shows Athena actively persecuting Laocoon for opposing her stratagem. If that is the case, Vergil may be drawing on that same tradition; if not, Quintus may be bringing out explicitly what I argue Vergil (Aeneas) strongly suggests.

say where the snakes went after killing him.<sup>488</sup> It is Vergil's innovation that they seek protection in the temple of Minerva, and with it he suggests,<sup>489</sup> quite unexpectedly, that *she*—not Apollo—really is the author of this omen.<sup>490</sup>

If one takes Laocoon to have actually been “punished” by Minerva, one must assume that he has committed a punishable offense. In Aeneas' account the Trojans, as in the Euphorion-Hyginus tradition, assume it was his opposition to the horse:

*scelus expendisse merentem*  
*Laocoonta ferunt sacrum qui cuspide robur*  
*laeserit et tergo sceleratam intorserit hastam.*  
(*Aen.* 2.229-31)

They say that Laocoon justly paid for his crime, because he had harmed the sacred wood with his spear-point and had thrown his wicked javelin into its back.

But as the reader knows, and as the narrator Aeneas now knows, the horse was not a real *sacrum*, which makes it difficult to conclude with some scholars that Laocoon was “punished...for desecrating the Horse with whose creation she was closely associated,”<sup>491</sup> which makes it sound (with “punished” and “desecrate”) as if Minerva were actually angry about a violated *sacrum*. Minerva's treatment of Laocoon, however, has nothing to

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<sup>488</sup> Quintus Smyrnaeus (12.480-1) has them go into the temple of Apollo, though Athena is explicitly the author of their activities. In the Scholia on Lycophron 347, Tzetzis says it was the temple of Apollo Thymbraeus. These later texts may reflect pre-Vergilian traditions.

<sup>489</sup> Harrison (1990: 48) notes how activities around gods' shrines and temples can “convey, in different ways, the notion of a god's activity,” and cites this example, as well as the disaster at Minerva's temple just when the Trojans seem to have turned the tide (2.396-437), and the final view of *Troia ruens* with the Greek commanders guarding their plunder in the temple of Juno (2.761-7).

<sup>490</sup> In Apollodorus and Hyginus it is Apollo who sends the snakes. In Euphorion (Servius) it is Neptune. The fact that in Vergil's version Laocoon is sacrificing to Neptune and the snakes come from the sea, his realm, may imply that he is acting together with Minerva, as Quinn (1969: 117) believes. Aeneas, however, gives no indication that he believes this to be the case, in contrast to his suggestive references to Minerva.

<sup>491</sup> Harrison 1990: 52. I consider the word “desecrate” misleading, though—it blends the Greeks' lying explanation into the true one. The horse was never really a sacred object, and Minerva's killing of Laocoon was hardly due to her attachment to the structure itself, but rather its instrumentality in the strategy for Troy's destruction. See next note.

do with the horse as a violated religious object, because it is only a simulation of one.<sup>492</sup>

Therefore, what happens to Laocoon is not rightly called a “punishment.” Minerva has not really been offended by the treatment of the horse, but is trying to make it look that way so that the fake *sacrum* appears real. As in Quintus Smyrnaeus’ version, so in Vergil’s account the murderous serpents are simply a “doggish” trick by a hostile, partisan goddess.<sup>493</sup> This is made explicit in great detail in Quintus, who may well have been amplifying an idea that he found in Vergil.<sup>494</sup> If we speak about Laocoon being “punished,” we assume the naïve viewpoint of the Trojans at the time of their deception.<sup>495</sup> The “narrating I,” however, knows better. It will look to the reader who tries to synthesize the facts of Aeneas’ narration that the gods deceive, and that omens can be

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<sup>492</sup> Kleinknecht (1944: 80) observes that “Laokoon ist schuldlos, und das *sacrum* robur ein *monstrum infelix*,” and as Smith puts it (1999: 517), “even if Laocoon was killed for opposing the wooden horse, it is because the *numen* protecting the horse is inimical to the city.” Büchner (1958: 1349-50) likewise recognizes his innocence and stresses the significance of the event as a prodigy. Klingner (1967: 143) points to its role as such in the earlier tradition. Otis (1964: 248 n.2) concedes that “[d]oubtless Kleinknecht is right,” but the issue is “not a very important one: whatever the snakes may be (portent or punishment or both), they indicate the hostility of the gods and serve the purpose of Troy’s destruction.” The questionable justice of divine hostility, though, is the central question of the poem! (*tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* 1.11)

<sup>493</sup> After painfully blinding Laocoon for his speech against the horse, she devised a “more doggish trick” (*ku/nteron allo*) and sent the serpents to kill Laocoon’s sons, leaving him alive to grieve them. Quintus states explicitly that her motivation was that she “hated him, the Trojans, and their city.” That is, her act is motivated strictly by partisan rancor, not a religious offense.

<sup>494</sup> The abundance of similarities between the *Posthomeric* and the *Aeneid* suggest that either Quintus was directly dependent on Vergil (as James 2007 persuasively argues), or that Vergil and Quintus shared an earlier source (as Heinze ([1915] 1990: 38-47) believed). Arguing the latter view, Bassett claims (1925: 247) that since “in general, the Greeks show no evidence of familiarity with the writings of the Romans,” and since Quintus and Apollodorus agree on certain points—against Vergil—it “is altogether probable that Quintus found the version which he followed in the mythological handbooks which were written in Greek before the time of Vergil.” James argues that such views depend on a prejudiced view of Quintus as being incapable of creative redeployment of material from his sources (2007: 147): “the possibility that Quintus chose not to include many prominent features of Virgil’s narrative, if known to him, is rejected as being inconsistent with an author who otherwise simply compiled what was available to him.”

<sup>495</sup> The notion that human catastrophes and suffering are punishments meted out by wronged gods has already been held up for scrutiny in the proem, where the narrator’s rhetorical question about the justice of the gods’ anger (*quo numine laeso?* 1.8), implies a negative answer. Here, the Trojans naively articulate the erroneous premise that a person killed by the gods must have injured them (*sacrum...laeserit*), but we know that in this case it is not true. The reader may ask herself, as the poet did in the proem, *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* (1.11)



a weapon in their arsenal.<sup>496</sup> The first omen witnessed by Aeneas involves a divinity killing an innocent man as part of an intentionally deceptive omen. If this is how the gods operate, it is little wonder that Aeneas lacks faith in the reliability of the divine signs directing his mission.

In the Trojan horse-Laocoon episode, we can see the beginning of the development of a theme that runs through Aeneas' entire tale (and indeed, the entire poem), which is the inability of mortal minds to ascertain the will of the gods correctly through signs until after the fact. Not only are mortal minds limited and prone to folly, but events and the gods themselves can be deceptive.<sup>497</sup> As Elizabeth Block observes in her highly insightful study of divine manifestation in the *Aeneid*, "men, so far from being able to know the future, cannot even expect to deal with its threats rationally, because their judgment may at any point be led astray by the gods or by themselves."<sup>498</sup> This pessimistic version of human knowledge in relationship to the activities of the gods is

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<sup>496</sup> Camps (1969: 46) elaborates with further examples: "[I]n pursuit of their purposes the gods do not hesitate to exploit the reverence of men for them as a means of deceiving men to their own harm. When Laocoon warns the Trojans not to trust the offering of the Wooden Horse the gods, who are planning the destruction of Troy, discredit his warning by sending a fearful visitation against himself. When Iris incites the Trojan women to set fire to the ships she is recognized as a goddess and as such obeyed. When she incites Turnus to attack the Trojan camp she is recognized and obeyed in the same way. An elaborately contrived omen deceives the Latins into believing that the general will of heaven is with them when they break the truce which their king has just solemnly concluded. Thus in its total effect the divine power in its dealings with men appears as irresponsible and heartless."

Contrast Quinn (1969: 118), who argues that Book 2 "teems with philosophical questions which it is not the business of the poem to raise, much less answer," with Johnson's claim (1999: 61) that "few narrators—not even Milton, perhaps not even Dostoyevsky, perhaps not even the writers of the Old Testament—have undertaken a heavier, more cumbersome project of theodicy."

<sup>497</sup> Block 1981: 190-1: "It is impossible to know what the future holds not only because men may misjudge events, but also because events themselves are deceptive; the future is revealed only when it has become the past, not by signs from heaven."

<sup>498</sup> Block 1981: 293.

essentially that of extant Greek tragedy.<sup>499</sup> As a result, it is only in *retrospect* that the true meaning of divine signs becomes clear, and “only when it has become the past does man’s relation to his future make sense or matter.”<sup>500</sup>

This observation is of absolutely critical importance for appreciating the way that the teleological orientation of the *Aeneid* operates. Failing to distinguish between the reader’s retrospective knowledge of the certainty of Roman destiny and the immersed, unfolding view of characters, scholars have often suggested that Aeneas knows, or should know, that his prophesied destiny is secure. He is supposed to trust in destiny; but the point of Vergil’s presentation, I think, is that no human can actually do this, because true destiny can only be accurately identified as such retrospectively. For this reason I cannot agree with Chew’s claim that Aeneas’ failure to understand the will of the gods is a “personal,” not a “cosmic,” problem: “For Aeneas is given certain privileges by the gods which could open up to him new vistas of knowledge and power, but he cannot transcend his human limitations and apply this information on a cosmic scale.”<sup>501</sup> But, the inability of humans to transcend human limitations *is* a cosmic problem. Many critics of the *Aeneid* have felt that Aeneas should not doubt that the prophecies of a homeland in Hesperia given to him will come to pass, as we know they eventually will, and that his

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<sup>499</sup> As Christopher Nappa has drawn to my attention, in Euripides’ *Ion* Apollo knowingly lies, while in Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, Agamemnon is given a command that is specifically designed to make him *deserve* being punished.

<sup>500</sup> Block 1981: 132 and *passim*.

<sup>501</sup> Chew 2002: 626. I would add that even if Aeneas could transcend human comprehension and really appreciate the cosmic scheme and his role in it, this would not open up new vistas of power for him—he is fated to die three years after arriving in Italy, whether he understands his role in the grand scheme or not. Moreover, I am sympathetic to arguments that the grand scheme itself appears sinister. Cf. the seminal work of Johnson 1976, and more recently Hedjuk 2009.

doing so is a personal weakness that he must learn to surmount.<sup>502</sup> In fact, as Block persuasively argues, the impossibility for humans of knowing what is fated until after it has come to pass is one of the central themes of the work.<sup>503</sup> Divine signs do not present useful guide posts, because they cannot be correctly understood except in retrospect, when it is too late, as the Laocoon tragedy illustrates. “The effects of the Laocoon passage reverberate through the poem; the passage is recalled both verbally and emotionally as the story unfolds, constantly reminding the reader of the problems revealed through this recreation of Troy’s fated fall.”<sup>504</sup> It is not only the external reader, but Dido, too, who is encouraged by Aeneas’ presentation of this event infer that he is deeply hesitant to trust divine signs. This is important to keep in mind as we look at his ensuing story of oracles and consider how pessimistic the “narrating I” may sound to the reader and especially to Dido.

Let us turn, then, to “the words of the text” in which Aeneas recounts the “numerous oracles” directing him to Italy, and consider whether his telling makes it “very evident” (as scholars often assume they do) that he understands himself to be following a “compelling” call to Italy, and therefore presents himself as “not [being] free to remain in Carthage.”<sup>505</sup> I would like to suggest, on the contrary, that Aeneas the disappointed, shipwrecked narrator takes a guarded view of the divine signs that have repeatedly raised his hopes only to dash them. There is a twofold dramatic tension created by the narrative

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<sup>502</sup> Otis, to give one influential example, articulates this assumption explicitly when he says ([1964] 1995: 231-2) that Aeneas’ doubt in the storm scene in Book 1 represents an impious “distrust of that *fatum*, that mission, that he really knows to be divinely guaranteed.”

<sup>503</sup> See also Mack 1987.

<sup>504</sup> Block 1981: 287.

<sup>505</sup> Excerpted quotes and ideas amalgamated from Hexter 1999: 67, Monti 1981: 47, R. D. Williams 1987: 109, Camps 1969: 32, Horsfall 1995: 126. For the full quotes, see the beginning of this chapter

structure: the difference between the ignorance of the “narrated I” and the more experienced, disappointed “narrating I”; and the difference between the skepticism and frustration of the “narrating I” and the sure, retrospective knowledge of the reader.<sup>506</sup>

After telling of Laocoon’s fate and the entry of the horse into the city, Aeneas proceeds to relate the fall of Troy, during which he has several supernatural experiences: his dream of Hector, the interview with Venus and the apocalypse of the gods, the portent of the flames around Ascanius’ head, and his vision of Creusa. I would like to look at these events, followed by the omens, dreams, and prophecies that Aeneas recounts in Book 3, in terms of the central question of this chapter, namely Aeneas’ attitude toward the reliability of the gods’ revelations and his understanding of his mission. Along the way we will look at the editorial comments that the “narrating I” makes that reveal his understanding of the way the gods operate. I would like to stress the difference between the perspective of the characters in the story and that of the reader, who, in addition to his or her knowledge of history and legend, has also heard the long, detailed, triumphant disclosure of Roman destiny straight from the mouth of Jupiter in Book 1.<sup>507</sup> There is a

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<sup>506</sup> Mack (1987: 55-84) discusses the two basic standpoints from which to view the action in the poem (p. 55): “ordinarily the reader is engaged in Aeneas’ present, occasionally he is asked to observe that present in terms of *its* own distant future, *his* own present and past.” At the same time, she observes, within Aeneas’ own viewpoint there is also a discrepancy between his evolving present and the prophetic predictions preceding it, which appear to him to be misleading when they do not come to pass as expected (p. 56)—“partly because they do not reveal all...but largely because they give no indication of the relative weight of individual events, so that the same occurrence may have one appearance when predicted and another when seen in the present.”

<sup>507</sup> Though the triumphal picture of Italy may leave the reader, despite the patriotic thrill, with a grim sense of Rome’s destiny. As Hedjuk (2009: 283-292) has very convincingly shown, the supposed optimism of Jupiter’s prophecy of Rome’s future Golden Age is a mirage construed by modern scholarship; “Jupiter’s vision of the Roman future is grim,” (283) particularly in its depiction of peace, which is lacking any reference whatsoever to the agricultural fertility, beauty, and pleasure that are the staples of our other representations of Peace in Homer, Hesiod, tragedy, Lucretius, Vergil’s own 4<sup>th</sup> Eclogue, and on the Ara Pacis. Peace, in Jupiter’s prophecy, will amount to the suppression of roaring, bloody-mouthed *furor*, whose horrific image dominates in lieu of the tableaux of bounty and happiness that customarily represent

tendency among scholarly readers, being retrospectively oriented and bolstered by Jupiter's prophecy, to understand the signs that Aeneas receives to be much more authoritative, objective messages than the character himself possibly could have at the time.

The first prophecy that Aeneas receives comes in the form of a dream of Hector, who tells Aeneas that the city is already lost, and exhorts him to flee and to build a new home for the Trojan Penates in a land that he will find after wandering for a long time at sea (2.289-95). This dream is recognizable as meaningful in retrospect, but one ought not to expect the narrated Aeneas to actually perceive it at the time as an authoritative revelation of his true (as yet vague) destiny and so reject his natural and heroic instinct to fight for his city.<sup>508</sup>

It is also worth considering how the dream must sound to Dido, and whether Aeneas the narrator can be understood to parallel their experiences intentionally. He has recently heard of Dido's dream of Sychaeus, and describes his dream of Hector with similar words. The ghost of Sychaeus, like the ghost of Hector, appears in the form of his mangled corpse. The image of Sychaeus appeared in the form of his unburied corpse,

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peace elsewhere in ancient literature. Moreover, though such a prophecy might make Aeneas more *certain* in his mission, he would hardly be *heartened* even if he had heard it: his destiny is to fight a "giant war" against "ferocious people," then die three years later (1.263-6). He will, of course, be made divine, but the remainder of his earthly life looks bleak.

<sup>508</sup> "Only to the reader does the macabre shade of Hector portend Roman glory, for only the reader has heard Jupiter's prophecy." (Block 1981: 214-5). This distinction between what Aeneas understands and what the reader understands is often conflated in discussion of this and other prophetic passages. For example, Alden Smith states (1995: 61) that Aeneas' eyewitness account is "laced with visions pertaining to his calling or Rome's future destiny. Accordingly, while the visions that Aeneas presents form a part of his own city's past, the details of Trojan history anticipate and expound a future vision of Rome." This is true, provided we are careful to observe that this future vision of Rome that lurks in the events Aeneas narrates operates exclusively at the level of the poet and external reader, unbeknownst to the character. Losing sight of this fact causes the erroneous, I believe, understanding of Aeneas' mindset against which I am arguing in this study.

with a white face (*ora...pallida*, 1.354) and pierced breast (*traiectaque pectora ferro*, 1.355). So Hector appears as he did at the time of his death, black with gore (*aterque cruento/pulvere* 2.272-3), and with pierced feet (*per pedes traiectus lora tumentis*, 2.273). Just as the ghost of Hector exposes the Greek treachery to Aeneas and exhorts him to flee his homeland (*heu fuge nate dea...hostis habet muros*, 2.289-90) so the ghost of Sychaeus exposes Pygmalion's treachery and warns Dido to flee (*celerare fugam patriaue excedere suadet*, 1.337). Aeneas' recognition of the correspondence between their experiences seems to be underlined, perhaps for Dido's benefit, in the way he describes Hector's ghost.<sup>509</sup>

One can see, then, further grounds for Aeneas and Dido's appreciation of one another, their awareness that they are kindred spirits who have experienced similar traumatic events, in Aeneas' narration of his dream of Hector's ghost. Block argues, however, that "at the same time, the very vision which in Book 2 establishes a further reason for Aeneas' attraction to Dido also makes clear the extent of Aeneas' awareness of his fate, and the impossibility of staying in Carthage."<sup>510</sup> Block, who recognizes that Aeneas says nothing to Dido of Italy or fate in Book 1, claims that "the dream of Hector makes clear to Dido for the first time that Aeneas is going to leave her."<sup>511</sup> On the contrary, at this point the words of Hector could easily be synthesized into Dido's picture

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<sup>509</sup> "Aeneas is recalling the dream after seven years of wandering, so that he may be remembering only select details, and he is probably emphasizing certain aspects of the story of Dido's benefit, particularly after hearing of her dream from Venus and after seeing her city." (Block 1981:212-3) Note that elements parallel to the dream of Sychaeus are distributed between two encounters reported by Aeneas, one being the dream of Hector, the other being the vision of Creusa.

<sup>510</sup> Block 1981: 216.

<sup>511</sup> Block 1981: 216.

of Aeneas' interest in Carthage as a home. For Hector does not name a specific place, to the exclusion of all others, as the future home of the exiled Trojans:

*sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia penates;  
hos cape fatorum comites, his moenia quaerere  
magna pererrato statuas quae denique ponto.*  
(*Aen.* 2.293-5)

Troy entrusts her holy things and her Penates to you; take these as the companions of your fortunes, seek for them great walls, which you will at long last establish after having wandered all over the sea.

Dido may well imagine that the great walls of his future city will prove to be hers (as in fact, for a while, they do). At this juncture, Hector's prophecy may in fact simply seem to confirm the assumption upon which she has been operating since meeting the Trojans, namely that in Carthage they have found a suitable ending to their long wandering. As she stated, with no correction from Aeneas, before entering the palace to feast: "Fortune wanted *me* to settle in this land, too, after I had been cast about through many similar labors," *me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores/ iactatam hac demum voluit consistere terra* (1.629).<sup>512</sup> Far from puncturing a hole in this impression, Hector's prophecy may well seem to her to confirm it. The time in Aeneas' tale will come when it becomes apparent that Aeneas is commanded to settle in Italy and only Italy, but that is as yet far off.

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<sup>512</sup> See Chapter 1 for full discussion.

Although Anchises' house (in which Aeneas appears to live) is set back and screened by trees (*secreta parentis/ Anchisae domus arboribusque obtecta recessit*, 2.299-300), the growing din of battle wakens Aeneas and he climbs to the roof.<sup>513</sup>

*excitior somno et summi fastigia tecti  
ascensu supero atque arrectis auribus asto:  
in segetem veluti cum flamma furentibus Austris  
incidit, aut rapidus montano flumine torrens  
sternit agros, sternit sata laeta boumque labores  
praecipitisque trahit silvas; stupet inscius alto  
accipiens sonitum saxi de vertice pastor.  
tum vero manifesta fides, Danaumque patescunt  
insidiae. iam Deiphobi dedit ampla ruinam,  
volcano superante domus, iam proximus ardet  
Ucalegon; Sigea igni freta lata relucent.  
exoritur clamorque virum clangorque tubarum.*  
(*Aen.* 2.302-13)

I start from sleep and I climb onto the peak of my high roof and I stand there listening carefully: just as when a fire fanned by the raging South wind has fallen on a wheat field, or a swift torrent from a mountain river rushes over the plains, rushes over the flourishing crops and the labors of the oxen, and drags the forest trees headlong; a shepherd listens to the sound from a mountain peak, helplessly dumbfounded. But then the truth becomes clear, and the treachery of the Greeks lies open. Now the large house of Deiphobus has met its ruin with fire rising up over it, now the house of Ucalegon next door burns; the wide Sigean harbor glows with reflections of fire. The clamor of men and the clanging of horns rises up.

Aeneas stares out at the city, confused by the distant roar; “but then the truth becomes clear” (*tum vero manifesta fides*, 2.309) when he catches sight of flames and he realizes that the Greeks are in the city. It takes a moment. To feel the impact of this, it is important to appreciate that he does not, as many critics picture it, wake up believing his dream that the city is under attack, and then climb to the roof and immediately see this

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<sup>513</sup> On the numerous Homeric models for this simile, see Knauer 1964: 380. Macrobius records disapproval of Vergil's combination of fire and torrent (5.13.12-13, *duas parabolae temeravit ut unam faceret*). On the similes comparing Aeneas to a *pastor*, see Anderson 1968 and Chew 2002.



knowledge confirmed.<sup>514</sup> Through the screen of trees, the glow of fires has not yet become visible on horizon of the city, and there is a slow initial moment<sup>515</sup> of confusion in which Aeneas gapes into the darkness. The image is one of blindness, of mentally groping in the dark. He stands there, craning to hear (*arrectis auris asto*, 2.303) in an image of frozen alertness that poignantly evokes the intent posture of a dog. In the simile that follows, he is likened to a bewildered shepherd listening (*accipiens sonitum*)<sup>516</sup> as fire or flood wreaks destruction in the distance below (*stupet inscius alto/ accipiens sonitum saxi de vertice pastor*). Within the simile, there is no reason why the *pastor* should not be able to see what is going on below,<sup>517</sup> and this may be why Aeneas is often taken by critics to be staring in “amazement at Troy’s destruction.”<sup>518</sup> But although the burning of the city is evoked for the reader, it has not yet reached the narrated-Aeneas’ eyes. *Inscius* draws attention to itself by not fitting the shepherd well. I would suggest that Aeneas, the retrospective narrator, has let an adjective “cross the fence”<sup>519</sup> into the

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<sup>514</sup> Pace Henry 1873-92: 160 *ad* 2.302-12: “*Tum vero* marks as usual the acme, the extreme degree. He had first heard the noise, increasing continually in nearness and clearness (*et magis atque magis...clarescunt sonitus, armorumque ingruit horror*), but now from the top of the house (*tum vero*) all is plain.” Likewise West 1969: 40. Note, though, that this noise does not consciously register with the character, who is still asleep—its increasing nearness is used to explain what wakes him. See below.

<sup>515</sup> Note how the epic simile slows the reader down by making the story-time (the time the narrator spends describing the moment) exceed the fabula-time (the length of the moment itself, as Aeneas looks out at the city). Bal (1980: 106-8) calls this tempo “slow-down,” and discusses the “magnifying-glass” effect that it has.

<sup>516</sup> Against his contemporary critics’ focus on the simile’s representation of the destruction caused by battle, Forbiger (*ad loc.*) asserted the simile’s focus on the parallel between the listening Aeneas and the listening pastor.

<sup>517</sup> The adjective *inscius* does not fit the shepherd well, as we can see in Servius’ attempt to explain it *ad* 2.307: *INSCIOUS non ignarus; nam videt: sed qui not valde sit causarum peritus, id est simplex, alpeiroj*, “*Inscius*: not ‘unknowing,’ for he sees; but the sort of man who is not very knowledgeable about causes, that is, simple, inexperienced.”

<sup>518</sup> As Chew (2002: 620), to pick an example, puts it.

<sup>519</sup> West (1969: 48) observes (though not in relation to this simile) that “[s]ometimes the term which crosses the fence... is a detail which would fit the narrative but occurs instead in the simile which it does not fit, or conversely a detail which would be appropriate in the simile but which occurs instead in the narrative.”

simile that only properly fits the person being described by it—himself. It highlights the difference between what he now knows and has just told us—that the city was being ravaged—and the “narrated I”’s ignorance of the source of this sound. Aeneas himself as narrator creates dramatic irony, and allows his listener a sympathetic glimpse into his mental process as he, standing there *in scius*, suddenly reaches the terrible realization of a truth already known to the listener.

These moments in which he is shown blindly straining to determine what he is hearing are followed *tum vero*, which I believe should be understood as adversative (“but then”) rather than confirmatory (“then indeed”).<sup>520</sup> For this brings out the contrast with *in scius*; at first he was in the dark, *but then* he realized the truth. This allows us to see Aeneas struggle for a moment to put everything together, as he realizes that the dream was not just a dream, the Greeks *are* in the city, and the horse was a trap.<sup>521</sup> As Aeneas realizes what is going on, a vista opens up in which we see flames now becoming visible (*iam...iam*) across the city, first as they surmount (*superante*) the high house of Deiphobus, then that of Ucalegon, while a multitude of fires across town that are not themselves visible from Aeneas’ vantage point are reflected in the waters of the harbor.<sup>522</sup> Now, closing out the scene, Aeneas can clearly identify the previously mysterious *sonitum* as the sounds of battle (*clamorque virum clangorque tubarum*).

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<sup>520</sup>Though the examples of *tum vero* Austin cites (1964: 140 ad 2.307, citing 2.105, 228, 624) all mean “then indeed,” (he does not translate or discuss the phrase), he well notes: “the words follow on *arrectis auribus asto* (303): Aeneas now realizes the stark truth.” It is true (see citation of Henry 1873-92: 160 ad 2.302-12 above) that *tum vero* is frequently used by Vergil to mark an acme, but disjunctive examples can be found, too: e.g., 12.776, where Aeneas is trying to pull his spear out of the tree of Faunus, “but then” Turnus prays and this prevents it.

<sup>521</sup> This contrast is lost if we take Aeneas simply to be in *disbelief* up to this point, *pace* Horsfall 2008: 263 ad 2.309, who approvingly repeats La Cerda’s citation of Livy 5.42.3, in which the Romans were unable to accept that the sack they were seeing with their own eyes was really happening.

<sup>522</sup> This is how I take *relucent*, ‘to give back a glow.’

From the lapidary statement *tum vero manifesta fides*, the reader must infer the mental steps Aeneas takes as he stares out into the darkness, *accipiens sonitum*: “What is that ominous sound? Can it be....? Good god, it is. Battle! The dream was true! But how did they...? The horse!”<sup>523</sup> This is a good example of what Iser means when he says that the literary work is incomplete until the reader actualizes it in the process of reading, fleshing it out by filling in gaps and emotionally registering the implications of what is suggested without being explicitly described. It is just such lapidary and ambiguous statements that involve the reader in producing the meaning of the text: “He is drawn into the events and made to supply what is meant from what is not said....[I]t is the implication and not the statements that give shape and weight to the meaning...[T]he unsaid comes to life in the reader’s imagination.”<sup>524</sup> By recognizing that Aeneas, like the shepherd, is confused at first but suddenly realizes the truth, the reader (re)creates the moment in which the veil is lifted from his eyes. This involves the reader in creating the character’s mental landscape and fleshing out his feelings.

Aeneas leaves his house, enraged and burning to die in arms (*arma amens capio*, 2.314). This is not because he has already “forgotten his duty,”<sup>525</sup> but because he does

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<sup>523</sup> Servius *ad* 2.307: MANIFESTA FIDES: non somnii, ut quidam volunt, sed fraudis Graecorum: nam et hoc sequitur ‘Danaumque patescunt insidiae.’ *quamvis alii hoc ad Laocoontis interitum, alii ad responsa Cassandrae applicant*, “‘The truth becomes clear’: not [the truth] of the dream, as some believe, but of the Greek’s deception: for also this follows ‘and the treachery of the Greeks lies open.’ [DS:Although some apply this to the destruction of Laocoon, some to the words of Cassandra].” These are not mutually exclusive—Aeneas realizes several related truths at the same time. The impact of the statement, its cascade effect, is increased by the fact that it encompasses all of these: the true nature of the horse, of Sinon’s “honesty,” of Laocoon’s misunderstood death, of Cassandra’s unheeded warnings, of Hector’s pronouncement that the city is lost. In a single terrible moment of realization, these all come crashing down upon Aeneas together. For discussion of the common expression *manifesta fides*, see Horsfall 2008: 263 *ad* 2.309.

<sup>524</sup> Iser 1978: 168.

<sup>525</sup> For one of many who suggest this, see E. Henry 1989: 46. Horsfall 2008: 249 *ad* 2.289-95 also attributes Aeneas’ rushing into battle to forgetfulness of his dream (“woken violently, he naturally does not recall he

not yet recognize it as such. What Aeneas experienced was merely a dream—or so it would appear at the time.<sup>526</sup> On his way he encounters Panthus, the priest of Apollo, who is transporting the Penates and dragging along his tiny grandson, “a pathetic prolepsis, as it were, of Iulus.”<sup>527</sup> Panthus explains to Aeneas that the city is lost: “savage Jupiter has handed over everything to the Greeks,” *ferus omnia Iuppiter Argos/ transtulit* (2.326-7). We must keep in mind that this is the god that Aeneas must trust. We, the readers who have read Jupiter’s prophecy in Book 1, understand that Troy must fall so that Rome may rise, and that Aeneas’ destiny will truly come to pass. Aeneas himself, however, can only see the savagery of gods whose intentions are inscrutable. The untrustworthiness of the gods and the inscrutability of their cruelty is a theme to which Aeneas returns again and again in his narration.

The reader has already heard Aeneas ascribe the Trojans’ deception to the unfavorable intention of the gods (*si fata deum, si mens non laeva fuisset*, 2.54), which he pointed to again when he referred to Sinon as protected by the ill-disposed fates of the gods (*fatisque deum defensus iniquis*, 2.257). Now, as he describes the fighting in the city, he points to the inscrutability of divine malevolence at every turn. The “narrating I” does not have to do this; he could, if he felt that his subsequent experiences learning of the Trojan destiny explained and vindicated his prior suffering, include editorial comments to that effect instead. But he does not. As Johnson argues:<sup>528</sup>

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is now charged with a sacred mission”), but I follow his view that “[t]he widespread vituperation of Aeneas for his furious return to battle seems to reflect a reluctance to study Vergil’s complex plotting and motivation with sufficient care.” (See his note for a full bibliography of relevant discussions.)

<sup>526</sup> Moreover, as a speaker Hector has neither divine nor paternal authority, as Kühn (1971: 42) points out.

<sup>527</sup> Austin 1964: 145 *ad* 2.320.

<sup>528</sup> Johnson 1999: 57.

...the 'narrating I' knows a bit more about the will of Jupiter, about how the designs of providence are achieved than does the 'narrated I' of Book 2...and he could be using that increase in knowledge to soften his presentation of his earlier self's anxiety and doubt. He fails to soften it, however, ...because, different though he is from the man he was before, he resembles him still in his mistrust of men and gods, because the divinities that claim to be friendly to him are seldom disposed to show that friendliness with great clarity, because even here, in Dido's court, safe for now from the perils of the angry sea (where so many of his companions have just perished), the memory of old disasters, intensified by new ones, takes hold of his imagination and causes him to identify with the older self, his hero, who is more ignorant than he, the teller of the tale, is of newer griefs that await him.

Aeneas prefaces his speech to the young warriors who assemble around him by explaining their rejection by the gods: "All the gods upon whom this nation depended have departed and abandoned our shrines and altars," *excessere omnes adytis arisque relictis/ di quibus imperium hoc steterat* (2.351-2). The band, who at first expected only death (2.354), begin to be buoyed by hope after an initial bit of good luck due to mistaken identity, which Coroebus takes as a sign: "'O friends,' he says, 'where Fortune first shows the way to salvation, where she first shows herself to be auspicious, there let us follow,'" *o socii, qua prima, inquit, Fortuna salutis/ monstrat iter, quaeque ostendit se dextra, sequamur* (2.387-8). This is, in fact, sound logic: the favor of the gods can be ascribed to success. His resulting trick of putting on Greek arms initially yields success, but the "narrating I" knows how fickle the appearance of divine favor can be. In an emotional editorial interjection that reminds us of the sadder but wiser perspective of the "narrating I," he exclaims: "Alas! Let no one trust in unwilling gods!" (*Heu nihil invitis fas quemquam fidere divis!* 2.402) This is the conundrum posed by the different temporal perspectives of the poem. One cannot trust the gods unless he knows whether they are favorably disposed; but he cannot know if they are favorably disposed until the matter in

question has already been concluded. The conclusion to Coroebus' story shows that the gods' dispositions were not as he understood them. The armor-switching trick fails when Coroebus attempts to save Cassandra as she is dragged from Minerva's temple. As Coroebus attempts to prevent this pitiful sacrilege, he is killed beside the goddess' altar (*divae armipotenti ad aram*, 2.425).

The enduring pessimistic attitude of the "narrating I" toward the justice of the gods is made explicit in his retrospective editorial comments on the indifference of the gods to the slaughter of righteous men. After Coroebus is killed:

*cadit et Ripheus, iustissimus unus  
qui fuit in Teucris et servantissimus aequi  
(dis aliter visum); pereunt Hypanisque Dymasque  
confixi a sociis; nec te tua plurima, Panthu,  
labentem pietas nec Apollonis infula texit.*  
(*Aen.* 2.426-30)

Ripheus falls, too, the most righteous of the Trojans, and the most committed to justice (the gods thought otherwise); Hypanis and Dymas perish, struck by allies; nor did your great *pietas* protect you as you fell, Panthus, nor the priestly fillet of Apollo.

The reader has already seen Aeneas' disillusionment in the gods' disregard of *pietas* implied in his speech to the disguised Venus in Book 1.<sup>529</sup> Here it is spelled out clearly. Panthus was a man of *plurima pietas* and a priest of Apollo, but that god did not save him. When Aeneas states unequivocally that Ripheus was *iustissimus* and *servantissimus aequi*, then adds ironically that apparently the gods did not think so (*dis aliter visum*), the rhetorical suggestion of this iconic phrase—which could almost be Aeneas' motto—is not, of course, that the gods actually thought Ripheus was an unjust man, but that they treated him like one. Again, a lapidary statement forces the reader to assume Aeneas'

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<sup>529</sup> For full discussion, see Chapter 1.

point of view, to step into his mind, in order to flesh out the implications of what he says.<sup>530</sup>

The battle section concludes with the pitiful slaughter at Priam's palace, including the gruesome killing of the old king himself. Aeneas concludes the heart-wrenching scene with an editorial comment on the unpredictability of fate's reversals:<sup>531</sup>

*haec finis Priami fatorum, hic exitus illum  
sorte tulit Troiam incensam et prolapsa videntem  
Pergama, tot quondam populis terrisque superbum  
regnatorem Asiae. iacet ingens litore truncus  
avulsumque umeris caput et sine nomine corpus.*  
(*Aen.* 2.554-8)

This was the end of Priam's destiny, this conclusion brought to him by the lot of fate, to see Troy burning and Pergama toppled, once the proud ruler of Asia, with so many peoples and lands.<sup>532</sup> A giant trunk, he lies on the shore, head torn from his shoulders, a corpse without a name.

Priam's death marks the culmination in a series of deaths that Aeneas presents as being the reversal of what one would expect in a just and ordered universe. As Conte observes, "His great suffering also implicitly poses the question that springs from all deep grief: 'Who is to blame?'"<sup>533</sup> This question is anticipated and answered in the Helen scene.<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>530</sup> In so doing, a reader may import a philosophy not present in the text, as, for example, Yeames' (1913: 196) gloss of *dis aliter visum* as, "Thy will be done!"

<sup>531</sup> On this passage, particularly the allusion to Pompey identified by Servius (*ad* 2.557), see Bowie 1990.

<sup>532</sup> Fowler suggests (2000: 53) that like 2.504 (*barbarico...ope*), *superbum* here may represent a shift in focalization, "a sarcastic assumption of the Greek point of view... 'what some may see as' *superbum*." I agree in principle, but would rather link this to another use of *superbum* discussed by Fowler, namely Aeneas' statement that the gods saw fit to destroy a race that had not merited it along with *superbum Ilium* (*gentem/ immeritam visum superis, ceciditque superbum/ Ilium*, 3.1-3). Fowler observes (200: 50) that we can take this "as representing the focalization of the gods, and thus bitterly ironic in Aeneas' mouth. Troy seemed so *superbus* to them that they destroyed it." I think the same is true of Aeneas' description of Priam as *superbum*—or so he apparently seemed to the gods who destroyed him.

<sup>533</sup> Conte 1986: 200.

<sup>534</sup> I follow Conte in taking the Helen Episode to be authentic, on the grounds (1986: 207) that "the structure that underlies the Helen episode and the parts directly connected with it has indivisible continuity." For an opposing view (and thorough exposition of how DServius was compiled) see Goold 1990.

At just this moment, after the climactic horror of Priam’s death, Aeneas catches sight Helen lurking in the shadows of Vesta’s shrine, and feels “great indignation, great anger, and an uncontrollable impulse to avenge a wrong.”<sup>535</sup> And yet, as Venus informs him, appearing in plain sight in all her glory (*confessa deam*, 2.591) and restraining his hand (*dextraque prehensum*, 2.592), it is not Helen, but the gods who are ultimately responsible:

*non tibi Tyndaridis facies invisā Lacaenae  
culpatursve Paris, divum inclementia, divum  
has evertit opes sternitque a culmine Troiam.*  
(*Aen.* 2.601-3)

I tell you, it is not the hated face of the Laconian woman, the daughter of Tyndareus, or wicked Paris, it is the hostility of the gods—the gods!—that has overturned this wealth and knocked Troy down from its height.

She pulls back the darkness that clouds mortal eyes to reveal Neptune wrenching Troy from its foundations, Juno leading the charge through the Scaean Gates, Pallas in her aegis (*Gorgone saeva* (2.617), glaring down from the citadel,<sup>536</sup> and Jupiter himself acting as ringleader:<sup>537</sup>

*ipse pater Danais animos virisque secundas  
sufficit, ipse deos in Dardana suscitāt arma.*  
(*Aen.* 2.617-8)

My father *himself* bolsters the Danaans’ courage and favors their strength, he himself rouses the gods against Dardan arms!

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<sup>535</sup> Conte1986: 201.

<sup>536</sup> On *Gorgone saeva* (2.617), E. Henry (1989: 98) observes that “[t]he parallel implied between the Gorgon-head and the snakes who destroy Laocoon, and then glide rapidly away behind Minerva’s shield (2.203-27), is clear.”

<sup>537</sup> Contrast this with the Homeric model, the Battle of the Gods in *Iliad* 20, where Jupiter simply thunders overhead (*Il.* 20.56), and gods fighting on the side of the Trojans are matched with the attacking gods; moreover, in that scene the city is not sacked. Like Vergil, Tryphiodorus (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> c. CE) includes a similar scene in the sack of the city (559ff.)



This helps the reader situate the attitude toward the gods that she has detected in Aeneas' bitterly ironic comments: the "narrating I" knows that the gods did not simply stand by as Troy was destroyed, but that they themselves—including the king of the gods—were invisibly, fiendishly involved in everything. Austin questions the authenticity of this passage, arguing that Aeneas' subsequent "obedient faith in divine guidance, blandly manifested after that apocalypse of devils [the gods destroying Troy] is more than incongruous: it is irrational."<sup>538</sup> I think Austin is absolutely right, these two aspects of the story do not sit well together. My skepticism, however, is directed at the apocalypse passage, whose textual authenticity is secure,<sup>539</sup> but rather at the notion that Aeneas' subsequent obedience to Jupiter's oblique directives is as trusting and emotionally committed as some picture it to be. E.L. Harrison misses the mark, in my opinion, when he says that this is simply a matter "for Virgil's readers, no less than for Aeneas...of striking a balance: the fall of Troy, and all the misery that brings, must be weighed against the emergence from its ashes of a new and greater Troy."<sup>540</sup> The omniscient reader, certainly, can perceive this. Aeneas is another story. Harrison seems to acknowledge this when he explains that "Aeneas will gradually come to know it,"<sup>541</sup> but this side-steps the entire problem pointed to by Austin, which is specifically how Aeneas feels during the process of coming to know it, before he actually does.

In fact, Aeneas has so little sense of any reliable order or purpose that even after Venus promises to bring him home safely, and then does so, he immediately concludes

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<sup>538</sup> Austin 1964: xxi.

<sup>539</sup> Austin (1964: xxi) suggests that the Venus scene was an afterthought, added during a bout of religious pessimism at the end of the poet's life.

<sup>540</sup> E.L. Harrison 1990: 50.

<sup>541</sup> E.L. Harrison 1990: 50.

that her benevolent intervention was utterly pointless after Anchises refuses to leave. Venus makes good on her promise to guide him home through burning Troy (*nusquam abero et tutum patrio te limine sistam*, I will never be absent, and I will place you safely on your doorstep, 2.620), and Aeneas confirms that true to her word, she did help him, saying, “with a god leading me between the fire and the enemies I hasten: the weapons make way and the flames recede,” *ducente deo flammam inter et hostis/ expeditor: dant tela locum flammaeque recedunt* (2.632-3).<sup>542</sup> And yet, when Anchises’ refusal to leave makes it appear that her prior assistance was pointless, Aeneas exclaims:

*hoc erat, alma parens, quod me per tela, per ignis  
eripis, ut mediis hostem in penetralibus utque  
Ascanium patremque meum iuxtaque Creusam  
alterum in alterius mactatos sanguine cernam?*  
(*Aen.* 2.664-7)

Was it for this, *caring* mother, that you saved me, through weapons, through fire, so that I might see the enemy in the middle of my house, and Ascanius and my father and Creusa all slaughtered in each other’s blood?

Aeneas recognizes that Venus saved him, but newer developments, namely Anchises’ intransigence, make it appear that she did so to no purpose.<sup>543</sup> This incomprehensibility and unreliability in matters of life and death frustrates him immeasurably, as we can see in his emphatic (following a diaresis) reference to her as *alma* (“caring”), which in the context of his rebuke sounds sarcastic. This scenario plays out repeatedly during Aeneas’ wandering. Quite understandably, he is reluctant to trust in an obscure divine purpose

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<sup>542</sup> R.D. Williams (1972: 257 ad loc.) notes: “Some MSS read *dea*, but Servius and Macrobius support *deo*; the concept of divinity may be masculine even when applied to a goddess, as with the Greek *θεο/ῆ*.”

<sup>543</sup> This, I will argue, is the same rhetorical suggestion that Aeneas makes at the end of Book 3, when he laments that his father Anchises was “saved from so many dangers to no avail” (*tantis nequiquam erepte periculis*, 3.711). This shows that the “narrating I” shares the same pessimistic view as the “narrated I” that we see in this passage.

when it—or what little of it has been exposed to him—appears contradicted by the events in front of him. He cannot trust the voice behind the curtain over his own eyes. Aeneas would not be a relatable, comprehensible character (unlike some, I believe he is one) if he disregarded all logic, and was willfully, perversely blind to the contradictions of events that he himself was experiencing. Aeneas uses his experience of reality to understand divine purpose, and not *vice versa*. When events betray his expectations, he feels that the divine assistance he received was just another piece of divine inscrutability that served no ultimate purpose. I would like to draw attention to this here, where he says it explicitly, since he will imply it again in the conclusion to his tale, in the immediate context of the gap toward which this chapter’s argument is leading.

As Aeneas arms to return battle and Creusa beseeches him to stay, a sudden *monstrum* occurs in the form of a flame that flickers about Ascanius’ head (2.679-84). Aeneas and Creusa panic and try to extinguish the flame (*nos pavidī trepidare*, 2.685), but Anchises interprets it as good omen (*laetus*, 2.687), and prays to Jupiter for confirmation, which he receives from an immediate crash of thunder on the left and a shooting star falling to Mt. Ida (6.685-98). The characters’ reactions to the flame are mixed;<sup>544</sup> it is only Anchises who sees it as a good sign,<sup>545</sup> and Aeneas makes no comment even after thunder appears to confirm Anchises’ interpretation. Aeneas, of

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<sup>544</sup> Rowell (1957: 14) points out that although Anchises takes the sign as positive, “there is no indication that he understood its import fully and clearly,” and he notes the contrast between Anchises’ hesitation here with the “forthright” interpretations of the soothsayers who interpret the flames upon Lavinia at 7.79-80. It might also be noted how different Anchises’ interpretation of the flames’ significance is from the way that soothsayers interpret Lavinia’s similar omen, with the implication that perhaps he, too, ought to have interpreted the flame as a sign of both fame and war. I agree, though Knox argues (1957: 398 n. 42) that there are no verbal parallels in the descriptions of the two omens, and that the relationship is, therefore, one of contrast.

<sup>545</sup> On the tradition of Anchises’ prophetic powers, see discussion below.

course, has just seen Jupiter personally directing the trauma inflicted upon the city, and has remarked on how the justice of men made no difference to the gods (*dis aliter visum*). So it must be with bitter ears that Aeneas hears Anchises pray to Jupiter, “if you can be swayed by any prayers...if we deserve it because of our goodness,” (*precibus si flecteris ullis/...si pietate meremur*, 2.689-90).

On the characters’ mixed reactions to the flame, Block observes that “the sign, for the reader as well as for Aeneas, is not a clear indication of divine favor. It may act as a guidepost for Anchises, but the reader’s response is not as simple as his...Vergil makes the reader question the clarity of divine signs at the same time that he shows, through the same sign, that the gods are watching over Troy’s fate. While he suggests hope, then, Vergil suggests despair, by joining through a single sign the confused reactions of its viewers.”<sup>546</sup> Adding to the ambiguity of this scene is the fact that this omen recalls the “omen” of Laocoon’s death. “Here we have two omens (snakes, flame), both involving children (the sons of Laocoon, Ascanius), both exciting the aid of terrified parents (Laocoon; *nos* = Aeneas, Creusa), both followed by a confirmatory sign (the destruction of Laocoon himself, the comet or *augurium maximum*), both affecting the principal agent of resistance (Laocoon, Anchises), and both interpreted and enacted.”<sup>547</sup> This parallel renders the omen dubious.<sup>548</sup> As Block observes, “even as Aeneas leaves Troy with the

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<sup>546</sup> Block 1981: 196-7. She goes on: “Even more subtly the reader, because of his privileged view of the gods’ actions, can see the opposite side of each reaction: thus when Aeneas despairs, the reader can see a more optimistic view because he has heard Jupiter’s words in Book 1, but when Anchises expresses hope, the reader can also recall Juno’s implacable wrath and her opposition to the fate that Jupiter prophesied.”

<sup>547</sup> Otis [1964] 1995: 247. On the pattern of snake and flame imagery in *Aeneid* 2, see Knox 1950, who notes this parallel (pp. 397-8)

<sup>548</sup> I would like to note two additional points. First, the shooting star is also described in snake-like language (*lapsa*, 2.693, *labentem*, 2.695) and it glides ‘above the rooftops’ of the Trojans (*super culmina..tecti*, 2.695), an image that recalls Laocoon warning about the horse (*desuper urbi*, 2.47).

sanction of the gods, the reader is reminded of the episode which opened Book 2, in which the gods sanctioned Sinon's deception in order to fulfill fate's decree."<sup>549</sup> Moreover, though it may be true for a retrospective reader that in this final iteration the snake/flame metaphor an optimistic corner is turned, "the serpent has cast its old skin... here all is light, and abundance of it, *fundere lumen*,"<sup>550</sup> that authorial level of narrative is not available to the character Aeneas.<sup>551</sup> Moreover, his troubles in Book 2 have not yet reached their nadir. The disappearance of his beloved wife, which he will describe as the cruelest thing that happened that night (*quid crudelius?* 2.746), still awaits him.

As Aeneas sneaks through the city with Anchises on his back carrying the Penates, and young Ascanius in tow, he loses his beloved—but strangely, not carefully

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Moreover, in the shooting star there is an intertextual parallel that to my knowledge has not been discussed, namely *Il.* 4.75-7, where Jupiter sends Athena down to break the truce between the Trojans and the Greeks. What these mortals then think is an omen is actually a god who has come to cause them to do themselves harm. Moreover, the conversation of the gods preceding the dispatch of Athena makes explicit the self-centered, partisan hostility of the gods and their total disregard for justice and human life. Zeus exhorts the gods to consensus, so that "the city of lord Priam may still be inhabitable, and Menelaus could take Argive Helen home (*Il.* 4. 18-19)," but Hera defends her right to persecute those she wishes on the grounds of her status, just as she does in her first speech in the *Aeneid* ("I am honored both by birth and on account of being your wife," *a0mfo/teron geneh|= te kai\ ou3neka sh\ para/koitij ke/klhmai*, *Il.* 4.60-1, Compare: *ego quae divum incedo regina Iovisque/ et soror et coniunx*, "I who walk as queen of the gods, both wife and sister of Jove," 1.46-7). So, although the shooting star in the *Aeneid* is a positive omen, it recalls a Homeric scene in which the injustice of the gods and the acquiescence of Zeus to Hera's malevolence is showcased. On the relation to the *sidus Iulium*, see Grassmann-Fischer 1966: 24-8.

<sup>549</sup> Block 1981: 194, who goes on (p. 195) to note that as a result of the parallel, "at this critical juncture the reader remembers the sign which suggested that the guidance of the gods is not always clear to mortal minds. Further, the reader's positive response to the flames as a sign depends on his knowledge of Jupiter's prophecy in Book I, which was not heard by the characters."

<sup>550</sup> Knox 1950: 397-8.

<sup>551</sup> Articulating the reader's point of view, Quinn (1969: 120): "The function of this Episode is to suggest that the destruction of Troy by the gods was not a purposeless act of malevolence, but the working –out of a divine plan which is constructive as well as destructive: Troy falls, Rome Rises." But, for Aeneas, for whom the constructive aspect of all this is still invisible, the future of Rome—not yet even named—cannot mitigate the devastation.

protected— wife Creusa.<sup>552</sup> For he thinks he hears the pounding of feet, and Anchises suddenly starts shouting to flee (*'nate...fuge, nate! propinquant!'* “Flee, son, flee! They are getting closer!” 2.733). Aeneas panics and loses his head, which he attributes, quite naturally, given his recent experiences, to divine malevolence (*hic mihi nescio quod trepido male numen amicum/ confusam eripuit mentem*, “Then some unfriendly divinity snatched my confused wits away from me in my fear,” 2.735-6).<sup>553</sup> Given Aeneas’ attitude toward the inscrutable interests and interventions of the gods, the phrase may imply not only “hostile” but also possibly “friendly to me to no avail” or even “friendly to me to my detriment.” Since, as Johnson argues, it is likely that the divinity Aeneas is referring to is Venus,<sup>554</sup> the notion that her “friendliness” does him no good, that it only bolsters him up to let him come crashing down later, seems germane.

Recalling his discovery that he had lost Creusa, the “narrating I” relives his grief, exclaiming:

*quem non incusavi amens hominumque deorumque ,  
aut quid in eversa vidi crudelius urbe?  
(Aen. 2.745-6)*

What man, what god did I not blame, crazed with grief, or what crueler thing did I see in the sack of the city?

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<sup>552</sup> Vergil follows the tradition that Cybele and Aphrodite “rescued her from slavery among the Greeks, as she was, of course, the wife of Aeneas” (Paus. 10.26.1), rather than the tradition represented Naevius (see Servius *ad* 3.10), where Creusa accompanies Aeneas into exile. Aeneas’ injunction that Creusa follow “far behind” (*longe*), thereby enabling her disappearance to escape his notice, is strange. Heinze ([1915] 1993: 35): “We ask ourselves why the poet has motivated her disappearance in such a circumstantial way, when Magna Mater could have simply taken Creusa to herself.” Perkell (1981: 359-62) argues that this represents a less admirable aspect of Aeneas’ *pietas*, which values only males. Grillo (2010) argues that comparison of Aeneas to Hector in *Iliad* 6 and Orpheus in *Georgics* 4 reflect poorly on his concern for his wife. Note also Ovid’s Dido’s correction, in hindsight, of Vergil’s Dido’s reading of this event, when she claims that she should have deduced from his narration of this event that despite his supposed *pietas*, he was the sort of man to abandon a wife (*Her.* 7.79-85). See Desmond 1993: 63.

<sup>553</sup> On the likelihood that he is referring to Venus, see Johnson 1999: 56-7.

<sup>554</sup> Johnson 1999: 57. He remarks, “And if he cannot trust her, whom can he trust?”

The sputtering effect of the hypermetric elision reproduces the onslaught of feeling as Aeneas relives this moment, and the rhetorical questions invite the reader to step back into the moment with him, imagining the enraged shouts that he now, with his sanity regained, can scarcely believe he uttered. The suggestion of *quem non* is that he blamed multiple people, that he named them one after another. We already know from the Venus scene that his first impulse was to blame Helen and Paris, and we might add Ulysses, too. There is another individual who played a role, a direct one, in the loss of Creusa, whom Aeneas would certainly now shudder to recall having accused: Anchises. It was Anchises' sudden cries of "flee!" that made Aeneas panic, and Anchises had already tried Aeneas' patience to the breaking point when he refused to leave the house. Aeneas was almost forced, in his *pietas* toward his father, to see his son and wife slaughtered in their own home (2.667-70). The hint that Aeneas may have cursed his father (in his mind, or perhaps even aloud—it is not clear whether or not these accusations were vocalized) shows how truly driven to insane despair he was.<sup>555</sup>

As for *quem deorum*,<sup>556</sup> it is not difficult to imagine, after our discussion above of Aeneas' awareness of Minerva's role, that she is a likely target. Aeneas saw Juno, Neptune, and Jupiter himself destroying the city; and he has already rebuked his mother for her inconstancy. All these are names we might imagine Aeneas furiously, impiously cursing in his anguished insanity. Moreover, as Johnson observes:<sup>557</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> On his failure to blame himself, see Perkell 1981: 207, Johnson 1999: 56, Grillo 2010: 53.

<sup>556</sup> DServius (*ad* 2.745) explains the rhetoric of *quem non* as equivalent to *etiam*, a statement meant to demonstrate how insane Aeneas was, because he accused *even* the gods (*dat sibi amentiam, quia in furore incusavit deos etiam, quod numquam; cum enim dixit 'quem non', intellegimus etiam deos.*) This explanation falls apart, though, when we remember that the same rhetorical structure is being applied to *hominum* as well; it would make no sense, of course, to say that he rebuked "even men."

<sup>557</sup> Johnson 1999: 56.

Aeneas as abject narrator may chastise Aeneas as abject hero, but for all the miles and years that separate them, despite the fact that this Aeneas knows so much more about self and world than that Aeneas knew back then and there, the teller to Dido of his own tale cannot erase from his/their story of salvation and renewal the broken faith in men and the gods that tinges it with a special shade of religious dubiety.

Aeneas returns to the city to search for Creusa, and encounters her *imago*, which tries to comfort and reassure him, and prophesies to him his future home. She begins by telling him that this is all the gods' doing:

*quid tantum insano iuvat indulgere dolori,  
o dulcis coniunx? non haec sine numine divum  
eveniunt; nec te comitem hinc portare Creusam  
fas, aut ille sinit superi regnator Olympi.*

(*Aen.* 2.775-9)

What use is it to so give way to your raging grief, o sweet husband? These things are not happening without the power of the gods; nor is it permitted for you to bring Creusa from here as a companion; the ruler of high Olympus does not allow it.

In stressing that all this is the gods' doing (*non sine numine divum*), Creusa may be trying to reassure Aeneas that the fall of Troy is for the best—that is an implication critics often draw from this statement. Her more direct point in these verses, however, is simply that Aeneas' frantic struggle to find her is utterly useless (*quid iuvat?*), because the gods, and specifically Jupiter, will not allow it. Invoking the gods' involvement may not be meant to justify the situation to him as much as to make it clear that resistance is utterly futile. Moreover, one must consider how this sounds to Aeneas. Williams remarks on *non haec sine numine divum/ eveniunt* that “this is the lesson of the book which Aeneas has been (understandably) slow to learn.”<sup>558</sup> Quite the contrary, he has been painfully aware of the gods' involvement all along. He already knows perfectly well that all this is happening by the agency of the gods, including Jupiter himself, for he saw this with his own eyes when

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<sup>558</sup> Williams 1971: 264 *ad* 2.777-8.



Venus revealed the gods destroying the city: *apparent dirae facies inimicaque Troiae/ numina magna deum* (“dreadful faces appear, and the great powers of the gods hostile to Troy,” 2.622-3). In fact, he has been remarking all throughout his narration on the fact that these terrible things are happening *numine deum*. This fact is not, in and of itself, reassuring. If anything, stressing that it is Jupiter who will not allow Creusa to go with Aeneas must make him all the more embittered toward the father of the gods and his inscrutably cruel designs.

Having said that, Creusa does try to encourage Aeneas by pointing to an eventual happy outcome:<sup>559</sup>

*longa tibi exsilia et vastum maris aequor arandum,  
et terram Hesperiam venies, ubi Lydius arva  
inter opima virum leni fluit agmine Thybris.  
illic res laetae regnumque et regia coniunx  
parta tibi; lacrimas dilectae pelle Creusae.*

(*Aen.* 2.780-4)

Long will be your exile, and the vast expanse of the sea will have to be sailed, and you will come to the land of the west, where Lydian Thybris flows, sweeping smoothly through men’s fertile fields. There a happy situation and a kingdom and a royal wife have been prepared for you. Beat back your tears for beloved Creusa.

Here the site of the future settlement prophesied by the ghost of Hector is revealed—sort of. Creusa does not explain how to seek out Hesperia,<sup>560</sup> but says simply that eventually he “will come” to it. At this point *hesperiam* may sound to Aeneas like an adjective modifying *terram* (“the western land”) rather than a proper noun (“the land of

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<sup>559</sup> Note, though, her recognition that this “happiness” is not what Aeneas himself would choose. We see this acknowledged in her “delicate opposition of *dilectae Creusae* [not merely *loved*, but *loved by choice* or *preference*] to *regia coniunx*” (Henry 1873-92: 347 *ad* 2.781-4, who considers this a consolation to herself), and in *pelle lacrimas*, which implies violently fighting off his feelings.

<sup>560</sup> On her oracular language and its role in colonization narratives, see Horsfall 1989: 11.

Hesperia”).<sup>561</sup> Although the river Tiber is also mentioned, this only adds confusion, for Creusa calls it Lydian (*Lydius*), which must perplex Aeneas, who does not know that it is called so because it runs through the land of a people who originated in Lydia.<sup>562</sup> If this is the case,<sup>563</sup> we can see why at the beginning of Book 3 the Trojans were still “unsure where fate may bring us, where settlement will be granted,” (*incerti quo fata ferant, ubi sister detur*, 3.7). All this is to say that what the retrospective reader sees as clear revelations do not appear so to the narrated Aeneas. Moreover, the “narrating I,” who now understands the prophecy of Creusa’s ghost in light of subsequent information confirming and elaborating upon her promises, also understands that happy prophecies are usually deceptively elliptical.<sup>564</sup> Mack observes here, “Creusa...lingers on the aspects of Italy that make it ideal for founding a city. The land is rich (good for farming), it is already inhabited (facilitating settlement), and there a river flows gently (easy water supply and transport). They are ready and waiting for Aeneas—*parta tibi*. The *Aeneid* would be a very different poem if the actual situation closely resembled the predicted situation.”<sup>565</sup> Moreover, as Block points out, the narrating Aeneas would already be

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<sup>561</sup> Saunders (1925: 85). An explanation of the name will not come until the dream of the Penates (3.163-8). It is only after this that Aeneas understands the word and stops trying to found settlements. The beginning of the Penates’ explanation (*est locus Hesperiam Grai cognomine dicunt*) is modeled on Ennius (*est locus Hesperiam quam mortales perhibebant*, *Macr. Sat.* 6.1).

<sup>562</sup> He will learn this from Evander at 8.479-80. Saunders notes (1925: 85-6) that “Hesperia was only a ‘western land’ to him and, in such a connexion, *Lydius Thybris* must have greatly perplexed him. At the time of the Trojan War the phrase is an anachronism, and it could hardly have meant anything but ‘Trojan Tiber’ to Aeneas. The description of such a river as ‘flowing through the fields of a western land’ did not at all enlighten the distracted husband.” As an aside, one may note that although the Roman reader may have believed that the Etruscans were of Lydian origin, modern scholars do not think so.

<sup>563</sup> Arguing against this is Anchises’ statement at 3.185-6 that Cassandra often prophesied about Hesperia and Italy. This may, therefore, simply be an inconsistency that Vergil would have fixed, or that may serve another purpose.

<sup>564</sup> O’Hara (1990), who discusses the prophecy of Helenus. On the prophecy of Creusa, see Block (1981), whose study lays important groundwork for O’Hara’s arguments, as does Mack (1978).

<sup>565</sup> Mack 1978: 57.

aware of the disparity between Creusa's prophecy and the reality he has experienced:

“Creusa's reassuring appearance is in a sense deceptive, for the scope of what she leaves out of her prophecy is staggering. The comfort she gives Aeneas is wifely, but in retrospect useless, and Aeneas is telling his story with an awareness of what was left out of Creusa's message.”<sup>566</sup>

As Aeneas leaves the city the morning star, Lucifer, can be seen rising above the peaks of Mt. Ida (*iamque iugis summae surgebat Lucifer Idae*, 6.801). This is the planet Venus, and DServius remarks:

*hoc est autem quod ei Venus promisit [2.620] numquam abero. Varo enim ait hanc stellam Luciferi, quae Veneris dicitur, ab Aenea, donec ad Laurentem agrum veniret, semper visam, et postquam pervenit, videri desiisse: unde et pervenisse agnovit.*

(DServius *ad* 2.801)

Moreover, this is what Venus promised him: “I will never be absent.” (2.620) Indeed, Varo says that this star Lucifer, which is said to be Venus, was always seen by Aeneas until he came to Laurentum, and after he arrived, it ceased to be seen. This is how he recognized that he had arrived.

With this allusion, Vergil's reader may expect something similar. As DServius notes, Venus has already promised to be with him. Moreover, in both Ennius and Naevius, Venus gives Anchises prophetic powers. Ennius refers to “learned Anchises, whom Venus, the beautiful one of the goddesses, gave the power to prophesy, to have a prophetic heart,” (*doctusque Anchisesque Venus quem pulchra dearum/ fari donavit, divinum pectus habere*, *Ann.* 15), while Naevius, according to a scholion preserved outside of the Servian corpus, says that Venus gave Anchises books containing the future

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<sup>566</sup> Block 1981: 228.

(*Nevius enim dicit Venerem libros futura continentes Anchisae dedisse*).<sup>567</sup> The reader of the *Aeneid*, then, may expect not only that Aeneas will have trustworthy help from his mother Venus, but may suspect that Anchises will be shown to have been furnished by her with some manner of privileged view into the future. Any such expectation will be quickly disappointed.<sup>568</sup> Vergil's Anchises does not have a *divinum pectus*, the true ability to see the future, but rather a humbler version of it, the soothsayer's ability to interpret through signs. The Aeneas of the *Aeneid* is, therefore, in a much more difficult position than his literary predecessors. Anchises does not know the future, and Venus will not guide him with her star. Neither his mother nor his father will give him the direct and reliable guidance that the Aeneas of the earlier literary tradition enjoyed.<sup>569</sup> Certainly,

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<sup>567</sup> Scholion to *Aen.* 7.123, Codex Parisinus Latinus 7930. In full it reads: *Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit: hoc autem non praedixit Anchises, sed Celeno: unde vel catatosiopomenon intellegendum est vel divinitatem Anchise assignat, qui ubique divinus dicitur. Nevius enim dicit Venerem libros futura continentes Anchise dedisse: unde reliquit aut magdavit (sic) significat aut libros reliquit qui haec responsa continebant.* This belongs to the same tradition as the D scholia, see Rowell 1957. Note also that D Servius alludes to the tradition of Anchises' prophetic powers at 3.103: *ubique enim sciens futurorum inducitur*, 2.687: *et hic et alibi Anchisen divinandi peritum inducit*, and 5.47, *multa enim antiqua lectio Anchisen futurorum scientem concelebrat.*

<sup>568</sup> Before his death, Anchises lacks special prophetic powers; but Vergil does incorporate this tradition elsewhere by making Anchises Aeneas' guide in the Underworld in Book 6.

<sup>569</sup> As Rowell (1957: 16) rightly points out, such sure knowledge would "spoil the tone and purpose of Book 3," for there would be no process of discovery: "The fact is, of course, that before his death, Anchises could not have been made a true seer by Vergil without breaking one of the principal threads that run through the first books of the *Aeneid*. . . [Book 3] is concerned with the gradual revelation to Aeneas of his ultimate goal. Had Anchises possessed a divine knowledge of the future, through inspiration, sacred books, or any other means, the tale would have had to be told in a radically different manner from the departure from Troy on. We cannot well imagine a father who would not have told his dutiful son all that he knew about the future from the beginning; and had he known it and revealed it, the result would have been a course set straight for Italy. Aeneas, of course, might still have been buffeted about by wind and wave from shore to shore. But the very importance of Book 3 is that Vergil has given us not a story of pure adventure, but an account of a lofty mission determined by providence and gradually un-veiled to its agent Aeneas through the inspired utterance of others." See, though, my discussion below about the assumption that by the end of Book 3 Aeneas has come to understand and appreciate his lofty mission.

this creates a more vivid drama<sup>570</sup>—but that is no comfort to the character himself, of course.

As Book 3 opens, we see Aeneas on his own, lacking direction, and the “narrating I” frames the ensuing events with cynical comments on the will of the gods:

*Postquam res Asiae Priamique evertere gentem  
immeritam visum superis, ceciditque superbum  
Ilium et omnis humo fumat Neptunia Troia,  
diversa exsilia et desertas quaerere terras  
auguriis agimur divum, classemque sub ipsa  
Antandro et Phrygiae molimur montibus Idae,  
incerti quo fata ferant, ubi sister detur,  
contrahimusque viros. vix prima inceperat aestas  
et pater Anchises dare fatis vela iubebat,  
litora cum patriae lacrimans portusque relinquo  
et campos ubi Troia fuit. feror exsul in altum  
cum sociis natoque penetibus et magnis dis.*

(Aen. 3.1-12)

After it pleased the gods to destroy the kingdom of Asia and the innocent people of Priam, and “haughty” Ilium fell and all of Neptune’s Troy is a smoking rubble, we are driven by divine signs to seek far-off places of exile and empty lands, and we build a fleet beneath Antandros itself and the foothills of Phrygian Ida, unsure where fate may bring us, where settlement will be granted, and we gather together men. Scarcely had summer begun and father Anchises was ordering us to set sail trusting fate when I, weeping, leave behind my home shores and harbor, and the fields where Troy was. An exile, I am carried out to sea with my friends and son and ancestral gods—and the great gods.

The tone of these opening lines conveys the same enduring bitterness that we saw in Book 2. The comment implied by Aeneas’ statement in Book 2 that Ripheus was the most just of the Trojans, though the gods apparently did not agree (*dis aliter visum*), namely, that the gods do not have any regard for justice, is echoed and made perfectly explicit here with the powerful collocation of *immeritam visum superis*. It “seemed best”

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<sup>570</sup> Horsfall observes (1989: 12) that these older versions “disclose devastatingly undramatic possibilities.”

to the gods to destroy a people who did not deserve this (*immeritam*). Aeneas cannot understand why. In his mind even at the time of his storytelling, it is not for the sake of Rome (which he cannot yet grasp), but because they resented the city's greatness. We can see in his description of Troy as *superbum*, which, as Fowler observes, represents "the focalization of the gods, and thus bitterly ironic in Aeneas' mouth. Troy seemed so *superbus* that they destroyed it. This makes sense of the link between *superis* and *superbum*, accentuated in the *humo fumat* of the following line: the gods thought Troy was getting uppity, and put it in its place."<sup>571</sup> As I noted above when discussing the beginning of Book 2, Aeneas does not retrospectively frame his narration to suggest a current understanding of the gods and his destiny in a way that contrasts his earlier pessimism. There is no suggestion in the way that he sets up or tells his story that now he knows better, that he now appreciates that this was all for a greater goal. Rather, as a storyteller Aeneas seems still to identify with the frustrations of his narrated self. This makes it difficult to accept the very common assumption that in the process of the gradual unveiling of his destiny in Book 3, Aeneas moves from uncertainty to certainty. I hope to show that even at the end of Book 3, Aeneas remains uncertain, as his final remarks will expose. The development of Aeneas' appreciation of the imperative of his mission extends far beyond Book 3, and does not culminate until he actually reaches Italy.<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>571</sup> Fowler 2000: 50.

<sup>572</sup> It is hard to pinpoint a moment when Aeneas begins to truly believe that his prophesied fate must and will come to pass, but it does not seem to be the case until after Book 6. Even in Book 5, he still considers giving up his mission after the burning of the ships. After Aeneas arrives in Italy and lays claim to a piece of land, he begins to speak of it as his fated home. As Block points out (1981, *passim*), this is an aspect of prophecy that the poem highlights continually: promises about the future only have meaning after they have already become the past.

As noted above, the Trojans set out “unsure where fate may bring us, where settlement will be granted,” (*incerti quo fata ferant, ubi sister detur*, 3.7). In *desertas quaerere terras/ auguriis agimur divum*, 3.4-5), we can see the message that Aeneas has taken away from the dream of Hector and the vision of Creusa. His expectation of *diversa exsilia* (3.4), originates in Hector’s statement that he will found a city finally (*denique*) after having wandered all over the sea, *pererrato... ponto* (2.295,) which is repeated by Creusa: *longa tibi exsilia et vastum maris aequor arandum* (2.780). He interprets Creusa’s *terram Hesperiam* (2.781) as *desertas terras*, reflecting his very vague, perhaps non-existent knowledge of what that name designated.<sup>573</sup>

The notion that divine signs are hardly a reliable or practical guide is driven home in Book 3, and as the prophecies become more explicit, they also become more problematic. Far from “constantly” reinforcing Aeneas’ sense of purpose and desire to found a settlement in Italy,<sup>574</sup> they keep him second-guessing everything he thinks he has just learned. Creusa’s *imago* told him to go west, but his first attempted settlement in Thrace proves that it was not the west she was talking about. If Aeneas thought the guidance of his mother had brought him there—he is sacrificing to her when he encounters the corpse of Polydorus<sup>575</sup>—he was wrong.

On Delos, Aeneas receives an oracle directly from Apollo,<sup>576</sup> exhorting them:

*Dardanidae duri, quae vos a stripe parentum  
prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere laeto*

<sup>573</sup> Servius (*ad* 3.4) tries to explain this as deserted by Dardanus (*a Dardano*), and DServius adds that some understand it proleptically as “deserted by us,” (*quas et tenuimus et deseruimus, ut Cretam et Thraciam*).

<sup>574</sup> G. Williams 1983: 43.

<sup>575</sup> *sacra Dionaeae matri divisque ferebam*, 3.19. Note also that he refers to himself as being brought here (*feror huc*, 3.16).

<sup>576</sup> Suerbaum (1984: 280-4) suggests that a similar oracle may have directed Aeneas to Samothrace in the *Annales* of Cassius Hemina (as reported by Servius *ad* 7.207).

*accipiet reduces. antiquam exquirite matrem.  
hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris  
et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis.*

(*Aen.* 3.94-8)

O strong Dardanians, the same land which first bore you from your parents' lineage will receive you in her fruitful bosom when you return. Seek your ancient mother. Here the house of Aeneas will dominate all shores, and the sons of your sons and those who will be born from them.

If any word from the gods should be trustworthy, this is it, for it is unmediated by any agent. This oracle, however, leads the Trojans astray.<sup>577</sup> Of course, at the authorial level, there is ample motivation for this: the riddling oracle is a classic trope,<sup>578</sup> and the misinterpretation and discovery of the truth creates drama. This does not obviate the disheartening and frustrating effect of the god's misleading words for the characters within the narrative level. The Trojans received the oracle with immense joy (*ingens...laetitia*, 3.99).<sup>579</sup> They shout encouragement to one another as they sail (*nauticus exoritur avrio certamine clamor:/ hortantur socii Cretam proavosque petamus*, 3.128-9), and when they arrive Aeneas throws himself into the building of the city with eager delight:

*ergo avidus muros optatae molior urbis*

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<sup>577</sup> In an otherwise compelling article on Book 3 as a dramatization of the Trojans' need to reject versions of their past, Quint (1982: 31) calls the word *Dardanidae* (94) a "dead give-away" that only a "willful Trojan interpreter" would not understand to be pointing them toward the homeland of Dardanus: "Anchises' application of the oracle to Crete [based on the association of Trojan Mt. Ida with Cretan Mt. Ida] suggests a desire for what is familiar and recognizable from the Trojan past rather than a willingness to confront a new and unknown future." The problem, though, is not Anchises' unwillingness to let go of the past, as if he were consciously choosing the frame of reference that occurs to him, but that "dead give-aways" only stand out as such once the truth is understood.

<sup>578</sup> For a list of examples in foundation myths (most notably Herodotus 4.157), see Horsfall 1989: 12 n. 25.

<sup>579</sup> In recounting the subsequent sacrifices that the Trojans made, the "narrating I" apostrophizes Apollo, calling him *pulcher* (*taurum tibi, pulcher Apollo*, 3.119). Given that the "narrating I" knows that this sacrifice was in vain and the oracle was misleading, one could perhaps imagine that the now disaffected Aeneas is deliberately using an epithet that Apollo was said not to like. For DService remarks: *pulchros enim a veteribus exoletos dictos. nam et apud Lucilium Apollo pulcher dici non vult*, and Horsfall (2006: 122 ad 3.119) observes that the epithet is, indeed, uncommon.



*Pergameamque voco, et laetam cognomine gentem  
hortor amare focos arcemque attollere tectis.*

(*Aen.* 3.131-3)

So I eagerly build the walls of our hoped for city, and I call it Pergama, and I encourage the people, happy in the name, to love their hearths and to build up the citadel with buildings.

We can see the sincere enthusiasm of these new arrivals (*avidus, molior, optatae, laetam, hortor amare*); Horsfall observes “the meticulous unfolding of the Trojans’ false landfall,” in which “detail is accumulated in the interests of tragic irony or paradox.”<sup>580</sup> We watch the Trojans hopes be raised in excruciating detail as they become comfortable, building homes and getting married; it is only after they have become secure that Apollo signals that they are in the wrong place by destroying their work, their livestock, and their own bodies, with plague and famine (3.135-42).<sup>581</sup>

Anchises urges Aeneas to return to Delos, to request Apollo’s goodwill,<sup>582</sup> and seek guidance (*veniamque precari/ quam fessis finem rebus ferat, unde laborum/ temptare auxilium iubeat, quo vertere cursus*, 3.144-6). Before he can do so,<sup>583</sup> a dream of the Penates corrects the misunderstanding and makes clear that Hesperia is Italy, and it is the only place that they are to settle:<sup>584</sup>

*‘nos te Dardania incena tuaque arma secuti,*

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<sup>580</sup> Horsfall 2006: 132 *ad* 3.132.

<sup>581</sup> Moreover, as Mack (1978: 58) observes, even when they do reach Italy, they will not achieve dominion in the easy, automatic way suggested by the prophecy: “when the true mother welcomes her children home, [it is] with war, a war that is essentially a civil war, a war that never actually ends within the poem’s narrative present.”

<sup>582</sup> Against Servius’ interpretation (“*veniam erroris Anchisae qui oraculum male interpretatus est*”), Henry (1973-94: 393 *ad* 3.144-52) asserts that “the ‘*venia*’ sought is not forgiveness for having mistaken the oracle, or any other forgiveness, but the favour of being told by Apollo *quam fessis finem rebus ferat, [etc.]*,” he goes on to demonstrate that *veniam* is used repeatedly throughout the *Aeneid* to mean favor.

<sup>583</sup> But too late, of course, to save his men from the plague, as Block (1981: 118) notes.

<sup>584</sup> 3.163-6 is identical to 1.530-3. It is clear that the Penates’ words in Book 3 were written first, and that an excerpt from them is used as a *tibicen* in Ilioneus’ speech in Book 1. See Sparrow (1931) and my discussion in Chapter 1.

*nos tumidum sub te permensi classibus aequor,  
idem venturos tollemus in astra nepotes  
imperiumque urbi dabimus. tu moenia magnis  
magna para longumque fugae ne linque laborem.  
mutandae sedes. non haec tibi litora suasit  
Delius aut Cretae iussit considerare Apollo.  
est locus, Hesperiam Grai cognomine dicunt,  
terra antiqua, potens armis atque ubere glaebae;  
Oenotri coluere viri; nunc fama minores  
Italiam dixisse ducis de nomine gentem.  
hae nobis propriae sedes, hinc Dardanus ortus  
Iasiusque pater, genus a quo principe nostrum.  
surge age et haec laetus longaevo dicta parenti  
haud dubitanda refer: Corythum terrasque requirat  
Ausonias; Dictaea negat tibi Iuppiter arva.'*

(Aen. 3. 156-71)

We followed you and your arms after Troy was burned, we transverse the swell of the sea in ships under your command, and we, the same ones, will lift up your future descendents to the stars and will give power to your city. You prepare great walls for great people and do not abandon the long labor of your flight. Your settlement must be changed. It was not this shore that Delius Apollo urged upon you, nor did he order you to settle in Crete. There is a place that the Greeks call Hesperia, an ancient land, strong in arms and the richness of the soil. Oenotrian men inhabited it; now there is a story that the newer generation has called their race Italian, after the name of their leader. This is our true home, from here Dardanus arose and father Iasius, from whom our race descended. Get up now and happily bring to your aged father these words, which are scarcely to be doubted: he requires Corythus and the Ausonian lands; Jupiter denies the fields of Dicte to you.

Here, for the first time, Aeneas narrates information about his mission that we would

expect to impinge upon Dido's picture of Aeneas' intentions as described in Chapter 2.

Unlike the messages of ghosts of Hector and Creusa and the riddling Delian oracle that

Aeneas has described thus far, the Penates here make the Trojan mission to Italy clear in

no uncertain terms: *suasit, iussit, propriae sedes, haud dubitanda, requirat, negat*

*Iuppiter*. Unlike the previous, murkier prophecies which might easily be relegated to the

margins of the *gestalt* that Dido has been forming as she listens to Aeneas' narration, this

prophecy presents information that impinges upon that picture. Some, therefore, take this prophecy as proof that Dido should understand Aeneas' intention to sail on. A. Smith, for example, states that, "Aeneas' exposition to the queen and her court of his vision of the Penates in Crete should have clarified, for them and for himself, his own destiny and obligation to his future land."<sup>585</sup> The prophecy of the Penates is not the conclusion of Aeneas' story, but one of the many twists and turns within it. Though many assume that by telling of the gods' messages Aeneas is automatically implying a statement of his belief in and commitment to their injunctions, the *frame* of his narration does not actually encourage the reader to do so. As I argued in Chapters 1 and 2, before Aeneas began his narration, he gave the impression that he was interested in settling in Carthage—this is the current state which the reader expects his narration to explain. The reader need not completely revise her understanding of the "now" toward which Aeneas' story is ultimately leading when she is told of events directing him otherwise. She may well suspend judgment on their ultimate import until the story is complete. And indeed, as I argue in this chapter, Aeneas' concluding pessimistic statements about prophecy will encourage her to take his final assessment as a statement of disillusionment and doubt in the gods' intentions that would affirm her initial impression of his attitude toward settlement in Carthage.

When Aeneas explains the dream of the Penates to his father, Anchises remarks that he actually had the information necessary to interpret the oracle correctly the first

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<sup>585</sup> A. Smith 1995: 65.

time, but that he simply did not have the frame of reference necessary to apply it.

Specifically, he says that Cassandra had prophesied this to him:

*tum memorat: 'nate, Iliacis exercite fatis,  
sola mihi talis casus Cassandra canebat.  
nunc repeto haec generi portendere debita nostro  
et saepe Hesperiam, saepe Itala regna vocare.  
sed quis ad Hesperiae venturos litora Teucros  
crederet? aut quem tum vates Cassandra moveret?*  
(Aen. 3.182-7)

Then he relates, “My son, driven hard by the Trojan fate, Cassandra alone prophesied such things to me. Now I recall that she foretold these things owed to our people and often named Hesperia and the Italian kingdom. But who would believe that the Trojans would come to the shore of Hesperia? Or who at that time found the prophet Cassandra compelling?”

Here we see, in a nutshell, the problem with the applicability of prophecy to the interpretation of life events: one needs the proper contextual frame to make its specifics meaningful, but that frame is furnished by the outcome itself, and so is of limited assistance at the time that a decision must be made. There is nothing blameworthy about Anchises’ failure to appreciate the importance of Cassandra’s words, for she sounded like a mad woman.<sup>586</sup> On the other hand, in the very next episode Aeneas receives an extremely dire prophecy from Caeleno, but his serious concern will prove to be to be entirely unwarranted. One cannot tell, except retrospectively, what kind of reaction a prophecy merits. There is, therefore, nothing sure or stable vouchsafed by a prophecy until its completion has proven its true meaning. Scholars sometimes speak of the

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<sup>586</sup> Aeneas also refers to Cassandra at 2.246-7 (*tunc etiam fatis aperit Cassandra futuris/ ora dei iussu non umquam credita Teucris*). In this we see another instance of the cruelty of a god and the misleading nature of their communications, although I am not certain how far we can press the fact of Aeneas as narrator here. It is not clear how he would know that it was Apollo who made the Trojans not heed Cassandra, and *dei iussu* may simply be a small intrusion by the external narrator of the poem.

prophecies of the Trojan future as straightforward promises, guarantees, something Aeneas can take to the bank, so to speak. When we appreciate that that is not how Aeneas experiences it or presents it, it becomes easier to see how his tale of prophecies directing him to Italy is not tantamount to a statement of his belief in the directives he has been given.

As Mack observes, the Trojans “set off joyfully; within five lines of their departure they are overwhelmed by a storm.”<sup>587</sup> When they arrive on the island of the Harpies, Celaeno’s prophecy (3.247-57) foretells war (obliquely)<sup>588</sup> and a famine so terrible (*dira fames*) that the Trojans will eat their tables. At the time of Aeneas’ narration, moreover, he does not yet know that Celaeno’s prophecy will be irrelevant,<sup>589</sup> and so even as he tells his story he anticipates suffering and death in his people’s future.<sup>590</sup> That is, the one clear and encouraging prophecy that Aeneas receives has a shadow cast over it almost immediately. As Allen observes, “[t]he goal seems to be more clearly described when the midnight vision of the Penates speaks of Hesperia and Italy, but again becomes obscure when the grim prophecy of the Harpy casts doubt upon the desirability even of success itself.”<sup>591</sup> Moreover, as Block observes, this event again emphasizes the “incomprehensibility of a divine order which can obscure disaster in

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<sup>587</sup> Mack 1978: 58.

<sup>588</sup> Celaeno calls the Trojans’ attack on the Harpies war (*bellum...bellum*, 3.247-9) and implies that in Italy they will reap what they sow. Though she only specifies famine as their punishment, Aeneas seems to pick up the hint that there will be violence, too, when he tells Helenus (3.365-7) that she predicted grave wrath (*tristis iras*) as well as evil famine (*obsenam famem*).

<sup>589</sup> Helenus will assure him not to worry about Celaeno’s prophecy (*fata viam invenient aderitque vocatus Apollo*, 3.395), but by the time his narration ends he has learned the magnitude of the gaps in Helenus’ encouraging revelation.

<sup>590</sup> On the “double deception of Celaeno’s prophecy, which makes the Trojans worry needlessly before arriving in Italy, and then, having arrived there, rejoice when they are in fact “on the brink of great trials and suffering,” see O’Hara 1990: 25 and Mack 1978: 60.

<sup>591</sup> Allen 1951: 122.

intimations of glory, and clothe in horrific terms the ritual meal which marks the long-awaited arrival in Latium.<sup>592</sup> We might add that just as there is no straight, objective reading of a text that is disembodied from the preconceptions of the reader, so there is no possibility of understanding a prophecy without using one's understanding of context to prioritize or color information. Technically, the Trojans could have interpreted Celaeno's prophecy as harmless even before its fulfillment,<sup>593</sup> just as Anchises could have understood Apollo's prophecy correctly from the word *Dardanidae*.<sup>594</sup> But human actors do not have objective, disinterested, omniscient views of their own situations.

The final prophecy that Aeneas receives in Book 3 is that of Helenus at Buthrotum. Aeneas now knows that his goal is Italy, and yet, for the reasons just stated above, he has doubts about whether or not he will really get there, and what dire events will occur if and when he does. He prefaces his question about the horrors in store for him by alluding to the fact that he has received both encouraging and discouraging messages in the name of Apollo and Jupiter, in the prophecies of the Penates and Celaeno respectively:<sup>595</sup>

*'fare age (namque omnis cursum mihi prospera dixit  
religio et cuncti suaserunt numine divi  
Italiam petere et terras temptare repostas;  
sola novum dictuque nefas Harpyia Celaeno  
prodigium canit et tristis denuntiat iras  
obscenamque famem), quae prima pericula vito?  
quidve sequens tantos possim superare labores?'*

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<sup>592</sup> Block 1981: 232.

<sup>593</sup> Block (1981: 233-4) points out that Aeneas himself used the word *mensas* at 3.231 for the whole idea of a feast, and described their food as *semesam* (3.244).

<sup>594</sup> Block 1981: 233-4: "But just as preconceptions interfered with a correct understanding of Apollo's prophecy, so the growing feeling that the journey is fraught with trouble interferes with a clear interpretation of the Harpy's prophecy."

<sup>595</sup> Recall the Penates' assurance that their words come directly from Apollo (3.154) and convey the will of Jupiter (3.171), and Celaeno's claim that she tells what Phoebus told her and Jupiter told Phoebus (3.251).

(Aen. 3.362-8)

“Come, tell me (for all omens favorably tell my course and all the gods have urged me to seek Italy and the distant lands; only the Harpy Celaeno sings a new and unspeakably evil portent and warns of grievous wrath and evil famine): what dangers shall I avoid first? Or following what would I be able to overcome such trials?”

His exhortation for information (*fare age*) is explained (*namque*) in reference to the contrast between the favorable (*prospera*) orientation of all previous divine signs (*omnis religio et cuncti divi*) and the new and awful promises (*novum dictuque nefas*) of Celaeno. His question arises from the awareness, brought home to him by the pall cast over his newly buoyed hopes by the Harpy’s prophecy, that the favorability of *religio* and the urging of the gods does not in and of itself guarantee their unbending support. As a result, the failure of his mission, even when it apparently has divine sanction, seems a real possibility to Aeneas.

Helenus furnishes Aeneas with a wealth of practical details: the omen of the sow, the need to avoid Magna Graecia, the route around Scylla and Charybdis, and the insane prophet (*insanam vatem* 3.443) at Cumae who will disclose additional information to him about the wars and hardships to come.<sup>596</sup> At the point where he would mention the storm of Juno that brings Aeneas to Carthage, he only emphasizes that her wrath must be placated, and misleadingly states that this can, in fact, be done:

*praeterea, si qua est Heleno prudentia vati,  
si qua fides, animum si veris implet Apollo,  
unum illud tibi, nate dea, proque omnibus unum  
praedicam et repetens iterumque iterumque monebo,  
Iunonis magnae primum prece numen adora,*

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<sup>596</sup> It will in fact be Anchises who explains these things to Aeneas in the Underworld. “Vergil calls attention to the omission of Anchises death from Helenus’ prophecy,” (O’Hara 1990: 28), though of course that would only be evident to a second reader.

*Iunoni cane vota libens dominamque potentem  
supplicibus supera donis: sic denique victor  
Trinacria finis Italos mittere relictas.*

(*Aen.* 3.433-40)

Moreover, if Helenus has any foresight as a prophet, or any trustworthiness, if Apollo fills his heart with truths, I predict this one thing to you, son of a goddess, this one thing worth all the rest, and repeating it again and again I will warn you: revere first of all the power of great Juno with prayers, readily chant vows to Juno and overcome the powerful mistress with supplication and gifts: in this way, finally, after leaving behind Sicily, you will be sent as a victor to the territory of Italy.

This prediction that, having properly appeased Juno, the Trojans would sail successfully from Sicily to Italy must appear an egregious omission to Aeneas and his audience sitting, as they are, in Carthage.<sup>597</sup> They did duly sacrifice to Juno (3.545-7), but what happened next was the exact reverse of what they were told would happen. Instead of being sent as a victor to Italy, he suffered a terrible shipwreck and washed up quite unexpectedly in Africa. The fact that Anchises has also died unexpectedly is an even more serious blow, a point that Aeneas will make explicitly as he concludes his tale.

Before turning to that passage, the tone of Aeneas' response to Helenus merits note. Aeneas hardly feels confident in the future Helenus promises, lamenting, despite Helenus' reassurances, that his people are subject to an unstable, shifting calling:<sup>598</sup>

*vivite felices, quibus est fortuna peracta  
iam sua: nos alia ex aliis in fata vocamur.  
vobis parta quies: nullum maris aequor arandum,*

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<sup>597</sup> Helenus prefaced his prophecy with the conditional statement *si qua est Heleno prudentia vati, / si qua fides, animum si veris implet Apollo* (3.433-4). On this motif, see O'Hara (1990), who remarks (*ibid.*: 29 n. 39) in reference to this passage "In saying *si qua*..., Helenus may not intend to express doubt (Page [1909 *ad* 4.433]), but we must note Vergil's habit of using this motif with prophecies he depicts as flawed or useless."

<sup>598</sup> Horsfall (2006: 354 *ad* 3.493) thinks "[w]e might wish to consider how Dido will react to Aeneas' evident commitment to a higher and more lasting goal." It will be clear, I hope, that I do not think this is the message of his speech.



*arva neque Ausonia semper cedentia retro  
quaerenda.*

*si quando Thybrim vicinaque Thybridis arva  
intraro gentique meae data moenia cernam,  
cognatas urbes olim populosque propinquos,  
Epiro Hesperiam (quibus idem Dardanus auctor  
atque idem casus), unam faciemus utramque  
Troiam animis: maneat nostros ea cura nepotes.'*  
(*Aen.* 3.493-505)

Live happily, you whose own destiny has already been fulfilled: we are called from one fate to another. Your rest has been secured: you do not have to plow the expanse of the sea, nor seek the always retreating fields of Ausonia. . . . If I ever enter the Tiber and the fields around the Tiber and see walls given to my people, one day we will make our related cities and the neighboring people, Hesperia and Epirus (who have the same Dardanus as founder, and the same fortune), both into one Troy in spirit: let this concern await our descendents.

Aeneas contrasts the *felicitas* of the Trojans settled at Buthrotum with the instability of his own people, who are called not simply to a distant land, but “from one fate to another” (*nos alia ex aliis in fata vocamur*). With bitterness he describes the promised fields of Ausonia as *semper cedentia retro*, always slipping out of reach, and he remains unsure that he will ever reach them (*si quando Thybrim intraro*). As Parry observed in his seminal essay, “[w]hat this and other like passages impress upon us is something at variance with the stated theme of the poem. Instead of an arduous but certain journey to a fixed and glorious goal, there arises, and gathers strength, a suggestion that the true end of the Trojan and Roman labors will never arrive.”<sup>599</sup> Aeneas is exhausted by the constant need to clarify and reevaluate the partial information given by prophecies—and he already knows, as Helenus himself emphasized, that he has not told him everything he

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<sup>599</sup> Parry 1962: 75. One must note, moreover, that Dido is not aware of the “stated theme of the poem,” with the result that she has even less cause to see Aeneas as pressing on to a glorious goal.

needs to know, that this is not the end of his goal's shifting visibility.<sup>600</sup> As Horsfall himself observes, "over and over again the gods must be consulted for further clarification of the obscure and ambiguous information they have given, and the Trojans' depression is intensified by this ever-present uncertainty."<sup>601</sup> It does not take a perverse distortion of Aeneas' despondent words for Dido to extrapolate that Aeneas feels misgivings about the certainty of the course that fate has supposedly prepared for him. If Aeneas' tale ended on a high note (particularly if he had framed the beginning with some sense of current hope or higher calling) this would not be the case at all. The fact that Aeneas is despondent at many (in fact, almost all) points within his story does not demand a pessimistic interpretation of the whole, just as the moment of optimism in Aeneas' story after the dream of the Penates does not make the story one of increasing faith.<sup>602</sup> What matters is the way he frames his "now" perspective on these experiences at the beginning and end of his narration. And that is most certainly pessimistic.

This returns us to the gap around toward which this chapter has built, Aeneas' indirect suggestion in the conclusion of his tale that he has found the end of his wanderings in Carthage. His final remarks are prefaced by his remarks on the final event

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<sup>600</sup> Helenus warned Aeneas that he could not tell him everything: "for the Parcae prevent Helenus from knowing the rest, and Saturnian Juno forbids him to speak it," (*prohibent nam cetera Parcae/ scire Helenum farique vetat Saturnia Iuno* (3.380). The meaning of this verse is problematic, since Helenus need not be forbidden from saying what he has been prevented from knowing. O'Hara's note (1990: 26 n. 35) provides a useful bibliography.

<sup>601</sup> Horsfall 1989: 11. Chew is very wide of the mark, in my view, when she argues (2002: 626) that "no matter how many times he hears it, he never comprehends the cosmic game plan. The gods do their best to make up for his deficits with constant guidance."

<sup>602</sup> Moreover, even before reaching the conclusion of Aeneas' tale, the optimism inspired by these encouraging prophecies is continually undercut, as I have discussed above. As Block (1981: 158) observes, "[t]hese prophecies may be partially helpful, but both Aeneas and the reader soon see that they were incomplete." Cf. O'Hara (1990: 121): "Aeneas is told at almost every step that peace and rest from labor lie just ahead, when in fact every possibility for happiness for him in this world is sacrificed for the benefit of future generations....Aeneas' cooperation with divine will is secured by trickery and false promises."

in his long *labores* before the shipwreck, the death of his father Anchises. In the climax of his tale, he asserts his current grief, the pointlessness of the gods' interventions have in retrospect, and the inability of prophecy to foretell the most important information:

*hinc Drepani me portus et inlaetabilis ora  
accipit. hic pelagi tot tempestatibus actus  
heu, genitorem, omnis curae casusque leuamen,  
amitto Anchisen. hic me, pater optime, fessum  
deseris, heu, tantis nequiquam erepte periclis!  
nec uates Helenus, cum multa horrenda moneret,  
hos mihi praedixit luctus, non dira Celaeno.*

(*Aen.* 3. 707-13)

From here the port of Drepanum and its joyless shore receive me. Here, driven by so many storms across the sea—alas!—I lose my father, Anchises, who had been the solace of my every worry and tribulation. Here, best of fathers, you desert me in my exhaustion—oh! you who were saved to no purpose from so many dangers! Neither did the prophet Helenus, when he warned me of many horrors, predict this sorrow to me, nor ill-boding Celaeno.

It has been argued that in the course of Book 3 we see Aeneas turn from “hopeless exile” to man with a mission,<sup>603</sup> and scholars often speak of Aeneas having “a greater awareness of purpose”<sup>604</sup> at the end of Book 3. There is no evidence for this. When Aeneas concludes his tale, he is as weary (*fessum*, 3.710) as he was when he arrived at Delos (*fessos*, 3.78). This characteristic designation of the Trojans' emotional state is used

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<sup>603</sup> Howe 1930: 186: “Something of the haphazard nature of the hopeless exile falls away from him, and something of the man of purpose begins to dominate and guide his plans and actions.” It is telling that this paper only cites the actual Latin once (p. 190). This notion of Aeneas' development is a projection onto the text of what is *supposed* to happen (a hero's uncertainty must develop into confidence) rather than a reflection of what Vergil's verses actually depict.

<sup>604</sup> Lloyd 1957b: 146: “Although much of the desperate weariness of the Aeneadae has given way to a greater awareness of purpose (gained by the end of III) the mood of essential weariness which was the keynote of successive arrivals and departures in III... is here sustained. Note the tenor of the passage describing the landing in North Africa (I, 157 ff.): *defessi Aeneadae quae proxima litora cursu contendunt petere, et Libyae vertuntur ad oras, etc.*” Lloyd fully recognizes that Aeneas' mood is just the same at the end of Book 3 as it was at the beginning; this throw-away remark about Aeneas' greater sense of purpose, which is contradicted by the rest of his assessment, shows how reflexive the assumption is that the hero's commitment to his mission must grow throughout Book 3.

throughout Book 3,<sup>605</sup> which “is essentially the book of disappointment and failure: it begins with sorrow at the departure from Troy and ends with grief at the death of Anchises. The death of Anchises is a last symbol of the tragic necessity of breaking away from the past: and in the personal grief felt by Aeneas the impression of weariness reaches its climax. This is marked by a final occurrence of *fessus* in Aeneas' cry to his father: *Hic me, pater optime, fessum deseris* (3.710-11).”<sup>606</sup> The effect of the death of Anchises on Aeneas' emotional<sup>607</sup> and mental state cannot be overstated, and it sets the tone of the conclusion of Aeneas' tale. Anchises “dominates much of the action in Book 3...The importance of this character is sustained to the very end of the book when his death at Drepanum brings Aeneas' narrative to Dido to a quiet close.”<sup>608</sup> A quiet, anguished close, that is. Anchises has been the single most important person to Aeneas, and they have shared leadership jointly throughout. Aeneas explicitly wonders why Anchises was saved at all, if it was only to die before reaching his goal: *heu, tantis nequiquam erepte periclis!* (3.711). The direct interventions of the gods have proven, in Anchises' case, utterly pointless (*nequiquam*). The death of Anchises has undermined what strained faith he already had in the divine mandate of his mission. As a result, as Sanderlin observes, when Anchises dies at Drepanum, he leaves “an Aeneas who at last

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<sup>605</sup> 3.78, 85, 145, 276, 568, and 710 (in addition to examples where it simply means physical weariness).

<sup>606</sup> Allen 1951: 123. He goes on to observe (*ibid.*): “This would be unbearable as the end of the whole poem. But Anchises is to return when he presents the vision of Rome's distant future, and so “image forth” the value which some day will rise from the weariness of the present.” This is true, but an unavailable consolation to Aeneas (or the first reader) at the conclusion of Book 3.

<sup>607</sup> Warde Fowler ([1917] 1983: 4-5) suggests that Aeneas' loneliness “after the death of his father, explains, by contrast, Aeneas' passionate love for Dido.” I would certainly consider this a contributing factor, together with the disappointments and frustrations discussed in this chapter.

<sup>608</sup> Lloyd 1957b: 144. Lloyd considers the Trojans' despair to be (p. 145) “balanced by an eagerness on the part of Aeneas and his followers to ascertain and fulfill their destiny, the more so as they gradually become aware of it as the will of a higher authority.” This claim, however, is not borne out by the text.

understands what his destination is, Italy, but who has no strong emotional commitment to getting there.”<sup>609</sup>

The reader alive to this suggestion, and the others that have been built up over the course of Aeneas’ narration, has a basis with which to make inferences about what Aeneas means when he says:

*hic labor extremus, longarum haec meta uiarum,  
hinc me digressum uestris deus appulit oris.*  
(*Aen.* 3.14-5)

This was my final tribulation, this the turn into the final stretch of my long wandering, when I set out from here a god pushed me to your shores.

This final comment reveals his own sense that perhaps the ever inscrutable divine plan has changed, a hint that Dido would certainly read in accordance with her own interpretation of the situation as argued in Chapter 2.<sup>610</sup> Like his failure to decline her invitation to settle in Carthage in Book 1, this juncture has a “cardinal function” in the plot. It keeps her initial impression intact, and thereby allows the tragedy of Book 4 to proceed as it does.

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<sup>609</sup> Sanderlin 1975: 56, who goes on to make the sensitive observation that: “In spite of the *pietas* exemplified by his religious activities in Book 3, Aeneas is at this point scarcely prepared for the challenge Dido will soon offer to his mission.”

<sup>610</sup> Simultaneously, at the authorial level it closes out his internal narration by resituating him within the intertextual framework established by Book 1, in which Dido’s court presented a structural Scheria (and a thematic Aeaea). For his statement recollects the conclusion of Odysseus’ tale:

1Enqen d’ e0nnh=mar fero/mhn, deka/th| de/ me nukti\  
nh=son e0j 00gugi/hn pe/lasan qeoi/, e1nqa Kaluyw\_  
nai/ei e0u+plo/kamoj, deinh\ qeo\j au0dh/essa,  
h3 m’ e0fi/lei t’ e0ko/mei te. (*Od.* 12. 447-50)

From there I was carried along nine days, and on the tenth night the gods brought me to the island of Ogygia, home of Kalypso with the lovely hair, a dreaded goddess who talks with mortals. She befriended me and took care of me. (Lattimore trans.)

At the same time that this reminds the reader that Aeneas has been in a position structurally parallel to that of Odysseus as he tells his tale in the court of Alcinous, it aligns Carthage, the place that the hero describes the gods taking him at the end of his tale, with Ogygia, paving the way for a new structural parallel in Book 4, foreshadowing Dido’s love and care for Aeneas, as well as Mercury’s intervention to remove him.

The persistent urge of critics to read Book 3 as the culmination of the divine revelations experienced by Aeneas has resulted in the tendency to project onto him at its conclusion a commitment that the text strongly suggests he does not feel. In fact, as Lloyd has pointed out, the trajectory of revelation is not complete when Aeneas arrives in Carthage.<sup>611</sup> His experience in Carthage is not an aberration from his sense of purpose, but a step (and by no means the ultimate one) in the formation of it. He has already learned where he must go (from Creusa, Apollo at Delos, and the Penates), and then what kind of dangers he will encounter in the process (from Celaeno and Helenus). He has yet to appreciate *why* he really must do this, which will come through the divine manifestations he experiences in Books 4—6: Mercury’s appearance in Book 4, the dream of Anchises in Book 5, and most powerfully the shade of Anchises in the Underworld in Book 6.<sup>612</sup> Even in Book 8, Aeneas cannot appreciate the significance of the events depicted on the shield Venus gives him—it is still too distant and abstract. We must resist the urge to see the end of Book 3 as a culmination, and instead keep in mind that at this vulnerable point he is only mid-way through the revelations that will occur between Troy and Latium.

As Kirkegaard observed, “Life can only be understood backwards; but it has to be lived forwards.” This is Aeneas’ dilemma. Allen perceived early on what Block would later develop more fully, sensitively observing:<sup>613</sup>

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<sup>611</sup> “An examination of the episodes outside III will show that this pattern of successive revelation begins actually before the departure from Troy and has not run its course until the end of VI.” Lloyd 1957b: 147.

<sup>612</sup> Boyle (1986: 135) argues of Anchises’ exhortations to Aeneas in the Underworld (6.487-53): “This series of forceful moral imperatives, which brings to a climax the vision of Rome’s future majesty and greatness...constitutes both the first and the only fully overt declaration to Aeneas of the *raison d’être* of his mission, the ideology of the imperial process.”

<sup>613</sup> Allen 1951: 123.

The intention which guides life can only be fully understood when it has been fulfilled: until then it is only a prophecy half-understood. There must always be a contrast between the certitude and finality which one hopes the future will achieve, and the treacherous flux of the present moment. The strain and tension which result from the sense of this contrast between recognition of present failure and hope for future accomplishment is the real subject of the third book of the *Aeneid*.

At the close of Book 3, as Aeneas sits in Carthage, he is firmly in the grip of “the treacherous flux of the present moment.” As Dido listens to this tale in which, as O’Hara puts it, “events repeatedly betray Aeneas’ expectations, because of what he has been told by gods and prophets,”<sup>614</sup> we must expect that she fully appreciates his exhausted and frustrated ambivalence toward his ever unfolding mission. As a result, Dido does not appear to have somehow misread Aeneas’ tale despite having learned of his divine mandate from his own mouth, as scholars often remark with incredulity. Quite the opposite, the misreading is ours if we allow a preconception conditioned by our teleological mode of reading to convince us, despite much evidence to the contrary, that Aeneas’ tale conveys conviction about his mission. Dido’s “misreading” of him is, in fact, justified by his presentation of his own feelings in Books 2 and 3. Vergil’s representation in Book 4 of both the affair and its demise will confirm this, as we will discuss in the next chapter.

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<sup>614</sup> O’Hara 1990: 25.

## **Chapter Four**

### ***Nunc, Nunc:* Revealing Implications in Books 4 and 6**

In the first chapter of this study, I traced the steps by which the reader is invited to construct Aeneas' understanding of his situation when he arrives in Carthage in Book 1. Arguing against the common opinion that the hero appears merely "despondent" about the difficulty of his mission, I attempted to demonstrate that through a consistent program of suggestive strategies, the linear reader is encouraged to infer that when Aeneas arrives



in Carthage, he strongly suspects that the Trojan mission has been abandoned by the gods. I argued that appreciating this helps the reader fill in the gap opened by the ambiguously positive way he responds to Dido's overtures.

In Chapter 2 I turned back to the beginning of Book 1 and followed the linear reader's wandering viewpoint again, this time tracing the ways that the reader is invited to construct Dido's own perceptions and motivations. Contrary to the opinion of many scholars that prior to the intervention of Venus Dido is "all goodness,"<sup>615</sup> I argued that when we follow references to her in sequence through Book 1, she appears not only intelligent, brave, and admirably enterprising, but also highly duplicitous, acquisitive, and self-interested, an effect that is brought about through sustained intertextual parallels to Homer's Circe, Apollonius' Hypsipyle, and the dubiously cunning Dido of the literary tradition pre-dating Vergil that we see in Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus. Being the decisive person that she is, she sees an opportunity and acts fast, concealing her previous hostility toward the Trojans and offering them a rhetorically manipulative invitation to settle in Carthage. Dido's generosity, therefore, appears calculated to exploit the convenient coincidence that a band of homeless Trojan warriors showed up on the doorstep of her fledgling state, which would benefit greatly by acquiring an army.

Having established the nature of Aeneas and Dido's beliefs and expectations (the "possible subworlds" that they project onto the actual (fictional) world in which they live), I turned in Chapter 3 to Aeneas' narration, arguing that it supports and explains the picture of Aeneas the exhausted, disillusioned skeptic evoked in Book 1. Therefore, I suggested, Dido should not be understood to have "misread," willfully or accidentally,

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<sup>615</sup> Austin 1971: xviii.

Aeneas' tale when she fails after hearing it to revise her initial expectation that Aeneas may choose to settle in Carthage, for his tale does not, in fact, demand to be understood otherwise. In this final chapter, I will trace the development in Book 4 of this same issue, examining Dido and Aeneas' perceptions of each other's feelings and understanding of the world in which they live<sup>616</sup> as the reader is invited to construct, revise, and supplement them while she moves through the text in a linear fashion.

In the three previous chapters, I began with a key gap in the text, then showed how in a linear reading the "horizon" created by the accumulation of preceding, relevant views enabled the reader, upon reaching the gap in question, to supply a meaningful inference. In this chapter, I would like to explore how the entire horizon of Books 1—3 provides the reader with material from which she is encouraged to draw explanatory inferences that flesh out the obliquely reported events of Book 4. Doing so—reading Book 4 as the culmination of a long, subtly developed, linear progression of ideas—presents a considerably different picture, I believe, than when one reads Book 4 as a decontextualized, more or less stand-alone unit.<sup>617</sup> At the same time, I will show that the presentation of events in Book 4 (and its coda in Book 6) corroborates my argument that Dido is depicted as having correctly assessed Aeneas' desire, from the very start, to settle permanently in Carthage, and that his desire to do so leads him to align himself with her purposes. The danger posed by his desire, which causes him to subordinate himself to a

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<sup>616</sup> Eco (1979: 220) calls the propositional attitudes of the characters within a story "doxastic constructs." (For example, the belief that the wolf is trustworthy is a doxastic construct of the character Little Red Riding Hood.) The doxastic constructs of Aeneas and Dido inform the "possible subworlds" that they construct.

<sup>617</sup> Pease articulates a common view when he states (1935: 5) that "[Dido's] psychological characterization is so largely concentrated in Book 4 that this may be considered a distinct, self-contained unit," noting (*ibid.* n. 13) the relevance of Book 1 as its "prologue."

woman, is an important part of the drama of the episode, for by it Aeneas is temporarily transformed, like one of Circe's beasts, into something less than a man, a creature to be kept. He is deeply attracted to the very thing that would destroy him (and the future of Rome), and questions about when and how he will extricate himself from this dangerous, enticing situation are an important part of the way the episode builds interest, what Barthes would call its hermeneutic code.<sup>618</sup>

As Book 3 comes to a close and Aeneas, having completed his long story, falls silent, the reader is reminded that this has all been an inset narration, and that the queen and her courtiers have been listening all the while with rapt attention (3.716-7).<sup>619</sup> The impact of Aeneas' final, emotional outburst on the death of his deeply revered and beloved father Anchises and his closing comment on the crushing inscrutability of the gods and their prophecies (3.710-13) has been felt not only by the external reader, but also by Dido. In fact, my contention that Aeneas presents the gods as unreliable guides in his narration, and that this is something that should be understood as perceptible to the internal audience (*i.e.*, Dido), is corroborated by Ovid's placing this very claim in the mouth of his Dido in *Heroides* 7. There, in response to Aeneas' assertion that a god commands him to depart (*'Sed iubet ire deus,* '141), Dido sarcastically asks whether this is the same god under whose trustworthy "guidance" he has seen nothing but failure during his long wandering (*hoc duce nempe deo ventis agitaris iniquis/ et teris in rapido tempora longa freto?* "Isn't it with this god as a guide that you are harassed by unfavorable winds and are wearing away ages on the swift sea?" 143-4). In presenting

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<sup>618</sup> Barthes 1970: 17 and *passim*.

<sup>619</sup> As Putnam (1980: 16) observes, "the first and fourth books of the epic are...part of a grander cycle of which Aeneas' account of his past is only the elaborate core."

this as a way that Dido could read Aeneas' tale, Ovid shows the plausibility of attributing to Dido such a skeptical deduction about the role of the gods in Aeneas' own telling of his experiences.<sup>620</sup>

Moreover, the implication in his closing remarks that he views his arrival in Carthage favorably is no doubt welcome to her, not only because she has had it in mind to keep the Trojans in Carthage from the moment she saw them, but also because she has, after Cupid's intervention, fallen madly in love with the man himself. The outer calm of the silent banquet hall with which Book 3 closed (*conticuit, quievit*, 3.718) provides a stark contrast for Dido's inner turbulence as Book 4 opens:<sup>621</sup>

*At regina gravi iamdudum saucia cura  
vulnus alit venis et caeco carpitur igni.  
multa viri virtus animo multusque recursat  
gentis honos; haerent infixi pectore vultus  
verbaque nec placidam membris dat cura quietem.*  
(*Aen.* 4.1-5)

But the queen, injured for a long time now with the pain of love, feeds the wound with the pulsing of her veins and is gripped by a blind fire. Often the great courage of the man races back through her mind, and often the honor of his lineage; his face sticks, fixed in her heart and his words, too, nor does her love give gentle rest to her limbs.

With the image of fire running through Dido's veins, we are reminded that before Aeneas' tale, Cupid was sent by Venus in order to "set the queen ablaze with love and weave fire into her bones" (*incendat reginam atque ossibus implicet ignem*, 1.660). In analyses of Venus' intervention, its purpose tends to receive less attention than its tragic result, but it is worth remembering, as I argued in Chapter 2, that Venus' plot is not an act

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<sup>620</sup> On Ovid's Dido as a reader of Vergil's Dido, see Desmond 1993.

<sup>621</sup> A point observed by Servius (*ad* 4.1). Cf. Cartault 1926: 301. Mackail (1930: 129) notes that *at regina* here and at 4.296 and 4.504 introduce the three main sections of Book 4.

of gratuitous cruelty; the beautiful, clever queen is presented as a duplicitous and potentially very dangerous person. She was by nature hostile to the Trojans, and converted artificially (and so, perhaps, tenuously) to friendliness. As Aeneas entered her palace to feast he evoked Odysseus entering the house of Circe. The undercurrents of danger continuously signaled by the whole intertextual program of Book 1 were corroborated by the narrator's statement that Venus doubted Dido's trustworthiness: *quippe domum timet ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis* ("For indeed, she fears the ambiguous house and the double-tongued Tyrians," 1.661). I argued that by making Dido fall in love with Aeneas, Venus transformed the motivation of the queen's friendliness from a mutable, political calculation, vulnerable to interference by Juno, into a secure, inescapable, emotional commitment, thereby preventing any about-face that could endanger him and the Trojans. That is, Dido does not get the idea to make the Trojans her people and Aeneas her consort *after* she has fallen in love with him, but rather, by being made to fall in love with him she is prevented from reneging on her own designs (at the instigation, Venus seems to speculate, of some potential *agent provocateur* of Juno).<sup>622</sup> One might say that Mercury's intervention was designed to get the Trojans into Carthage safely, while Venus' was designed to enable them to get back out.

Once Dido is no longer in possession of herself, the over-arching intertextual program suggesting her motivations and inner workings changes. The prevailing Homeric

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<sup>622</sup> See Chapter 2. The narrator says: "For indeed, she fears the ambiguous house and the double-tongued Tyrians; baleful Juno burns with rage, and worry rushes back [to Venus] as night falls," (*quippe domum timet ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis;/ urit atrox Iuno et sub noctem cura recursat*, 1.660-1). Venus herself rearticulates this to Cupid: "Now Phoenecian Dido holds him and keeps him with coaxing words, and I fear where the hospitality of Juno may turn: she will not yield at such a key moment," (*nunc Phoenissa tenet Dido blandisque moratur/ vocibus, et vereor quo se Iunonia vertant/ hospitia: haud tanto cessabit cardine rerum*, 1.670-2).

model of Books 1—3 was a “contamination” of *Odyssey* 5—10 which repeatedly evoked Circe in reference to Dido.<sup>623</sup> At the beginning of Book 4, as Knauer observes, this pattern breaks off over night, as it were, and a new sequence dominated by Hellenistic models is initiated with the new morning.<sup>624</sup> Dido has spent the night in fitful sleep, troubled by dreams, and makes an anguished speech revealing her feelings to her sister the next morning:

*postera Phoebæa lustrabat lampade terras  
umentemque Aurora polo dimouerat umbram,  
cum sic unaniam adloquitur male sana sororem:  
'Anna soror, quæ 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 fati! quæ bella exhausta canebat!'*  
(*Aen.* 4.6-14)

The next day's Dawn was beginning to move over the earth with the lamp of Phoebus and had dispelled the damp shade from the sky, when Dido, not at all well, addresses her like-hearted sister thus: “Anna, my sister, what dreams terrify me, tormented as I am! What new guest has come here into our house, how he carries his countenance, what strong chest and arms he has! I do believe, actually—and it is not silly credulousness—that he is of the race of the gods. Fear exposes inferior hearts. Oh, by what fortunes he has been cast about! What wars, drained to the last drop, he recounted!”

The situation, it has been well noted, recalls Apollonius' representation of Medea in *Argonautica* 3, who has been made by Aphrodite to fall in love with Jason. After awaking from a dream in which Jason had come not for the fleece but to take her as his wife (*Arg.* 3.616-32), she agonizes over her conflicted feelings in a speech (*Arg.* 3.636-55) whose first line, *Deilh\ e0gw/n, oi[o/n me barei=j e0fo/bhsan o1neiroi*, is evoked in Dido's exclamation *Anna soror, quæ me suspensam insomnia*

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<sup>623</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>624</sup> Knauer 1964: 154.

*terrent!*<sup>625</sup> Monti observes that this passage “seems to be, more than a simple imitation of Apollonius, an allusion to the whole tradition of love narrative,” for Apollonius’ treatment itself initiated a pattern repeated in Moschus and Ovid, as well.<sup>626</sup> This shift from epic to Hellenistic poetry for the dominant intertextual models for Dido’s thoughts and behaviors signals a shift in the ensuing narrative pattern, as well as in Dido’s own psychology: Venus’ intervention has transformed her from the powerful, ambiguously dangerous female of epic embodied by Circe to the tortured heroine of Hellenistic love poetry. Medea is, of course, dangerous, too, but in a different way—it is the potential for anger and revenge, not deception and entrapment, that she presents. (Aeneas’ entrapment has already been effectively achieved, as I argued in Chapter 1.)

This is perhaps a juncture at which to reprise an important aspect of this study’s methodology in making intertextually based inferences about characters’ inner thoughts and feelings. Though in Book 4 Medea is frequently recollected in Dido (a point well recognized since Servius), we must be careful not to suggest that Dido “is” a Medea, or any of her other models. As Hexter warns, “Vergil’s Dido is no simple young thing, no Ariadne, not even the Medea of Apollonius’ *Argonautica*. She is a fully grown woman, a widow, [leader, city founder, etc.].”<sup>627</sup> Likewise, Monti, notes that “[u]nlike the protagonists of the Greek tradition, Dido is a political woman, and any consideration of her emotional attachment to Aeneas has to be made with that aspect of her character in

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<sup>625</sup> On the gap presented by Dido’s dream, which could be of Aeneas or Sychaeus, Krevans (1993: 270) observes that “[i]f we view Dido’s dreams, at least in part, as indices of her progressive deterioration, it seems clear that the ambiguity here is deliberate. The dream may be of Sychaeus, as that first, programmatic dream was [1.353-9]. Or it may be of Aeneas, as Medea’s was of Jason, as Ilia’s was of Mars. As Dido hovers halfway between city-founder and victim of love, her dream hovers also.”

<sup>626</sup> Monti 1981: 53, with further references.

<sup>627</sup> Hexter 1992: 350.

mind.”<sup>628</sup> This is an important point, and it certainly misses the mark to say too casually, “Dido is a Medea” or “Dido is an Ariadne,” to equate her with one of her models in a totalizing sense; but consideration of Ariadne, for example, as a model for Dido’s psychology at the *particular points* where she is evoked—namely during Dido’s speeches when she has realized Aeneas is leaving—allows the reader to appreciate that when she utters the accusation *perfide!*, she is possessed with the same feeling of shock at her betrayal, paralyzing helplessness, and furious moral outrage that Catullus’ Ariadne felt. Of course, Dido is not objectively in Ariadne’s helpless position—a young girl lured away from her home and then abandoned on a deserted island—and that is all the more reason that it needs to be shown to the reader through allusion to this model that she *feels* like she is, for Aeneas’ departure will leave her just as ruined.

Naturally, Dido cannot be equated as a whole character with any single literary predecessor (otherwise, given her multiplicity of models, she would be a completely incoherent character),<sup>629</sup> but rather the recollection of a particular model’s particular feelings at a particular moment in the allusive model invests Dido’s own thoughts at an analogous moment with the psychological color of the recollected character, allowing the reader by their suggestions to fill in gaps and supply motivations where they are not expressed. Whatever characters give us hints of her mental and emotional workings at particular moments, Dido is always her own, independent character. She is colored, rather

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<sup>628</sup> Monti 1981: 59.

<sup>629</sup> Hexter (1992: 336) considers the invocation of different models at different points to be a strategy intended to prevent the reader from seeing her as “univocal and coherent.” This only makes sense, however, if one is trying to interpret her through a totalizing, synchronic equivalence, to place her outside of the text and sum her up as a whole. In my linear approach, however, a multiplicity of models does not confound interpretation but works with it in the real time of reading. Models operate diachronically, specific to the moment within the progression of the linear reading, and expire quickly wherever they are not refreshed.



than defined, by her literary models. As Hexter and Monti are right to stress, she is a mature, powerful, and deeply politically invested woman, and it is from that well that the other aspects of her personality and her feelings spring up.

Let us return, then to Dido at the outset of Book 4, the Dido who, like Apollonius' Medea, has been made to fall in love, and consider the way her perception of her situation is revealed. The narrator tells us that Dido is attracted to Aeneas' courage (*virī virtus*) and his lineage (*gentis honos*), as well as his beauty (*vultus*).<sup>630</sup> The character herself, after exclaiming that she has had terrifying dreams, states this in the reverse order, admiring first his beauty (*quem sese ore ferens*), then his courage (*quam forti pectore et armis*), and finally his lineage (*credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum*).<sup>631</sup> This is a revealing comment that has received relatively little attention. Aeneas has said explicitly in the course of his narration that the goddess Venus is his mother (a story with which Dido was already familiar, 1.615-18). Here Dido says that she “really believes” it (*credo equidem*), suggesting that under other circumstances (if his courage did not prove it, 4.13) she would consider such a claim fictitious. Her statement implies that she is a critical listener who does not automatically believe everything Aeneas tells her, and that she takes a distanced view toward the divine. Note that the furthest she can go is to concede that he is “of divine lineage,” rather than calling him the “son of a goddess” (as she did, diplomatically—perhaps even sycophantically—to his face: *nate dea*, 1.615).

Dido goes on to encapsulate Aeneas' narration thus:

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<sup>630</sup> Contrasting Dido with Apollonius' Medea, Monti observes (1981: 34) that “the reasons for Dido's attraction to Aeneas, the consideration of his *virtus* and *gentis honos*, are like those of a Roman aristocrat, not of a sentimental Greek heroine.”

<sup>631</sup> On Dido's religious attitudes, see below.

*'heu, quibus ille  
iactatus fatis! quae bella exhausta canebat!'*  
(*Aen.* 4.13-4)

“Oh, by what fortunes he has been cast about! What a draining of war’s cup he recounted!”

This is her “take away” from Books 3 and 2 respectively: the vicissitudes of his wanderings (*iactatus fatis*) and the toils of war (*bella exhausta*). It is worth considering what she does *not* say, “What revelations of the gods! What a glorious destiny!”

Although this is the message that some critics ascribe to Aeneas’ narration, as I argued in Chapter 3 there is nothing suggesting that this reflects the character’s own view or intended message. Enduring faith in the will of the gods does not shine through at the end of Aeneas’ tale, and when Dido imagines an obstacle to the idea of them marrying, it is not his commitments, but hers. Dido assumes that Aeneas could and would marry her, if she wished. It is telling that she never entertains the idea for even a moment that Aeneas feels compelled by divine forces to travel on. If she were wrong, one might expect some nod from the narrator toward this discrepancy, some indication that Dido’s assumption that he can stay, if he so chooses, is at variance with what he himself has stated. The narrator intervenes quite a bit in Book 4, and dramatically points out when Dido is deluded.<sup>632</sup> Her understanding at this point of Aeneas’ own amenability to the possibility of settling permanently in Carthage is not one of them.

Dido goes on to explain that she would pursue marriage with Aeneas if it were not for one obstacle, namely that she had resolved never to marry again after losing her beloved husband Sychaeus:

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<sup>632</sup> Cf. 4.65-6, *heu, vatum ignarae mentes. etc.* and 4.169-72, *ille dies primus leti, etc.*

*‘si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet  
 ne cui me vinclo vellem sociare iugali,  
 postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit;  
 si non pertaesum thalami taedaeque fuisset,  
 huic uni fosan potui succumbere culpae.  
 Anna, fatebor enim, miseri post fata Sychaei  
 coniugis et sparsos fraterna caede penatis  
 solus hic inflexit sensus animumque labantem  
 impulit. agnosco veteris vestigia flammae.’*  
 (Aen. 4.15-23)

“If it were not firmly fixed in my heart that I did not wish to join myself to anyone in the bond of marriage after my first love disappointed and deceived me with death, if I were not thoroughly sick of the bridal chamber and marriage torches, I would perhaps be able to give in to this one lapse. For I confess, Anna, that after the death of my poor husband Sychaeus and the spattering of my household gods with a brother’s blood, only this one man has swayed my inclination and made my intention falter. I recognize the traces of the old flame.”

Though Dido’s decision to remain eternally a widow is a key aspect of Vergil’s version of her story, and so is a familiar aspect of her characterization to the second reader, the first reader learns of it—or at least, Vergil’s unique version of it—for the first time here. Vergil’s account looms so large in the literary tradition<sup>633</sup> that it is easy to forget that before him there is no clear evidence that Dido’s choice to remain a widow was due to her sworn fidelity to the ashes of her deceased husband. As I discussed in Chapter 2, our sources representing the pre-Vergilian tradition of Dido’s story consist of a short fragment of Timaeus (3<sup>rd</sup> c. BCE) and Justin’s epitome of the substantially similar but much more detailed account of Vergil’s contemporary Pompeius Trogus, which is based either on Timaeus or on the same source.<sup>634</sup> In both accounts, Dido was a widow and her

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<sup>633</sup> As Macrobius’ speaker notes (5.17.5-6), the popularity of Vergil’s account completely outstripped that of its less compelling predecessors, which were, however, still well known.

<sup>634</sup> Kowalski 1929; Gera 1997: 126-7; Davidson 1998: 67.

suicide was occasioned by the prospect of forced marriage to a local Libyan king,<sup>635</sup> but in neither account does this appear necessarily to be as a result of an oath to her deceased husband. In both surviving sources, the notion of this oath emerges only within the context of the ruse by which she seeks to avoid the proposed marriage to the local king. Timaeus tells us she built a pyre “pretending that she was performing certain rites to obtain release from vows,” (skhyame/nh teleth/n tina pro\j a0na/lusin o3rkwn e0pitele/sein) and Pompeius Trogus likewise presents the idea that she is under some sort of obligation to her dead husband only within her own pretext for building the pyre, “as if she were going to placate the *manes* of her husband and give him offerings before her wedding,” (*velut placatura viri manes inferiasque ante nuptias*, *Ep.* 18.6.6). Neither narrator specifies the nature of the oath or ever mentions it before this point in the narrative, even though Pompeius Trogus’ account describes her reaction to her husband’s death in some detail. An oath of eternal fidelity may perhaps, therefore, be understood in these stories as part of her elaborate fabrication for why she needs to build the pyre.<sup>636</sup> It is worth noting that this would not be the first time Dido had made use of her dead husband to trick people—making fake offerings to his shade was part of her elaborate scheme to deceive Pygmalion’s servants into becoming her followers.<sup>637</sup> Moreover, in Pompeius Trogus’ version it is explained that the local king’s advances will be found odious by her because no one would want to live “in the manner of a beast”

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<sup>635</sup> In Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 82) he is an unnamed “king of the Libyans,” while Pompeius Trogus (Justin, *Ep.* 18.6.1) identifies him as “Hiarbas, king of the Maxitani.”

<sup>636</sup> The Church fathers who discuss the Dido of legend take the oath to be genuine, but these authors post date Vergil, with the result that his version may affect the way they fill gaps in the historical version, and they are isolating a single part of a larger story to teach Christian conjugal morality. Their appropriation and use of the historical Dido is not, therefore, a reliable indicator of how the traditional story would appear to Vergil’s contemporaries. On their use of the traditional Dido as an exemplum of chastity, see Lord 1969.

<sup>637</sup> A point likewise observed by Gera (1997: 135).

(*ferarum more*, *Ep.* 18.6.3) with barbarians.<sup>638</sup> Whether or not her oath was fabricated, she also simply looked down upon her suitor, and felt that marriage to him would degrade both her and her people. It is clear, then, that “she did not wish to wed again, but loyalty to her dead husband need not be her sole (or even chief) reason for refusing to remarry.”<sup>639</sup>

It may come as a surprise, then, to Vergil’s contemporary reader that Dido’s commitment to the memory of Sychaeus is unambiguously real in the *Aeneid*. What was perhaps only part of an elaborate ruse in the traditional account has become a key aspect of Dido’s character in the *Aeneid*, where it provides “the basis for the construction of a moral conflict in the style of the Hellenistic poets.”<sup>640</sup> This “vow” (Vergil never actually refers to it as such, either) is not, however, as straightforward as it is sometimes taken to be.<sup>641</sup> Dido is frequently compared to a Roman *univira*,<sup>642</sup> a woman who chose to remain faithful to a single husband throughout her life. Though her sentiments evoke ideals of

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<sup>638</sup> The phrase, of course, bears a striking resemblance to Dido’s enigmatic wish to have lived untouched by marriage “in the manner of a beast,” *more ferae* (4.551). For discussion, see below.

<sup>639</sup> Gera (1997: 135), whose work I found after having already formulated a similar argument.

<sup>640</sup> Monti 1981: 52.

<sup>641</sup> Pace Horsfall (1990: 134): “Her vows to remain *univira*, loyal to Sychaeus’ memory, were unambiguous (1.720, 4.15ff.) and her breach of them is shocking to herself and to a Roman, more familiar than us with the moral and religious status of the *univira*.” In fact, 1.720—Cupid’s erosion of Sychaeus’ memory—makes no reference, direct or indirect, to her having made a promise of fidelity to him, but only suggests that his memory has been lodged in her heart. At 4.15ff. she suggests—but only indirectly—that her unwillingness to remarry involves a promise to Sychaeus, and it is by no means an “unambiguous” evocation of the *univiratus* as a Roman social institution. In fact, the only passage where Dido states directly that she had made a pledge to Sychaeus is 4.552, *non servata fides promissa Sychaeo*.

<sup>642</sup> On the concept of the *univira* as it changed over time, see Lightman and Zeisel 1977. They note (p. 27) that “when the Christians added their ideal of continent widowhood to the pagan epithet *univira*, they altered the usage of *univira* in a fundamental manner. Pagans viewed widowhood as an unfortunate accident of life; but Christians saw in it the positive good of sexual continence, and some Christians, for example Jerome, even extolled continent widowhood as a state of purity second only to lifelong virginity.” Hexter (1992: 378 n. 104) notes that many scholars have too strongly tried to read the Christian importance and misunderstanding of *univiratus* back onto Vergil’s Dido and Augustan Rome.

loyalty associated with the *univira*,<sup>643</sup> Dido is not presented as being one in any technical sense. She here presents her decision as arising not from adherence to the social and religious norm of the *univira* familiar to the Romans, but from her angry emotional reaction to Sychaeus' death. As Pavlock observes, the language she uses "to convey her attitude ... seems excessive. She views Sychaeus' unexpected death as a kind of personal deception (*primus amor deceptam morte fefellit*),"<sup>644</sup> and this sense of betrayal has resulted in her aversion to marriage, which she expresses with injured contempt (*pertaesum*, "thoroughly sick of"). As Nappa observes, "[s]he says not that she is still grieving for her former husband Sychaeus nor that she feels bound by her oath never to remarry, but rather that she finds the whole idea of marriage hard to tolerate. Her phrases for marriage (*vinclum iugale*), for the way Sychaeus' death affected her (*deceptam morte fefellit*), and for her view of weddings (*pertaesum thalami taedaeque fuisset*) pave the way not for a confession of new love, but for the hardly romantic description of falling in love with Aeneas: *succumbere culpa*."<sup>645</sup> The nature of Dido's *culpa* has garnered a great deal of attention.<sup>646</sup> What I would like to stress at this point is that in this speech Dido describes her commitment not to remarry as a matter of personal choice, something

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<sup>643</sup> On Roman ideals of marriage, see G. Williams (1958), especially pp. 23-5 on Dido as a *univira*; for a list of ancient references see Pease 1935: *ad* 4.29. I agree with Monti (1981: 54-5) who argues that Dido has not breached a social norm in remarrying: "Dido's dilemma is a self-made conflict." Likewise, Stark (1999: 277): "Ultimately Dido's vow and her conception of the vow are entirely personal; she charges herself, tries herself and punishes herself. Rudd (1990: 156-9) argues that in our literary sources *univiratus* was contrasted with divorce, not a widow's remarriage, and points out that remarriage in general was not viewed with reservations, noting that the Lex Iulia of 18 BCE actually punished failure to remarry. For opinions that Dido's remarriage (irrespective of the question of its own legitimacy) would be seen as a censurable social failure, see Otis ([1964] 1995: 84) on "the criminal folly of her deed," Phinney 1964-65: 357 ("One must not underestimate the intensity of Dido's guilt by sentimentalizing away her ruin as only the will of fate.") and Horsfall 1990: 134.

<sup>644</sup> Pavlock 1990: 78-9.

<sup>645</sup> Nappa 2007: 310.

<sup>646</sup> See Rudd 1990, with further references, and the discussion below.

entirely self-imposed. She “decided” (*mihi...animo fixum immotumque sederet*) that she did not “want” (*ne vellem*) to join herself in marriage again after a painful first experience. In remarrying, she would be renegeing on her own commitment and this is personal failing that she clearly struggles with, but she gives no indication that within the story world remarriage of a widow in and of itself would be viewed by other characters as a socially censurable choice.

Public judgment does matter to Dido, though—immensely, in fact. The way that she wants others to see her, however, is not simply as chaste *per se*—a reflection of properly circumscribed womanhood—but what one might call heroically chaste, a sort of super-human inversion of womanhood. Her ability, due both to her personal disinclination and her unique social position, to reject the “chains” of marriage, to use her choice of phrase (*vinclum iugale*), appears to constitute a point of pride.<sup>647</sup> She can hold herself to a different standard than most women, whom necessity forces to remarry. She is above remarriage, and this is another part of why she considers the otherwise appealing idea of marrying Aeneas a “lapse” or “failure.” This comes out more fully as her speech continues:

*‘sed mihi uel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat  
vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,  
pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque profundam,  
ante, pudor, quam te violo aut tua iura resolvo.  
ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores  
abstulit; ille habeat secum servetque sepulcro.’  
sic effata sinum lacrimis impleuit abortis.*  
(*Aen.* 4.20-30)

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<sup>647</sup> Dyck 1983: 242: “Like Antigone, Dido sets for herself a higher standard of morality than the ordinary person is prepared to accept.”

“But I would wish that the deep earth first swallow me up, or that the omnipotent father of the gods drive me down to the shades with his thunderbolt, the pale shades of the underworld and the depth of night, before I violate you, Honor, and annul your laws. That man who first joined me to himself stole away my love; let him have it and keep it with himself in the grave.” Having spoken thus, she filled her bosom with an outburst of tears.

We can see that while it is true that she loved Sychaeus, this is not the only reason she has decided not to remarry. The reader can also infer from this speech that her decision is also the result of her proud self-view. As Pöschl puts it:<sup>648</sup>

Her tremendous self-respect is her decisive trait. It is the core of her existence. Love of self in the high Aristotelian sense is perhaps the ultimate value in Roman and ancient ethics. And “glory” connoting so much splendor to the ancients, is most intimately connected with it. “Glory” is the visible brilliance of the inner fire of “self-love.” Because Dido is so full of self-respect, she is convinced that she owes her dead husband eternal faithfulness and curses herself should she ever be unfaithful.

Dido appears governed by her own code, or rather, her personalized, female adaptation of the male heroic code which ranks social judgment, *fama*, as the highest value. As Pavlock observes, Dido’s “sense of glory is different from the general *eukleia*, or good reputation, that Nausikaa, for instance, values in the Phaeacian episode. It is more like the *kleos*, or glory, for which epic heroes in Homer strive.”<sup>649</sup> By her refusal to remarry, her self-sufficiency despite her gender, Dido has a quality that sets her apart from the common woman, and so lends legitimacy to her public role as city founder and ruler.<sup>650</sup> Like male heroes, she deeply values and cultivates her *fama*, and her *pudor* is what regulates her

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<sup>648</sup> Pöschl 1962: 82.

<sup>649</sup> Pavlock 1990: 78.

<sup>650</sup> G. West suggests (1980: 319) that Dido’s choice never to remarry suggests “an image of a woman forced to deny her womanliness, of a woman transformed by the political station she has assumed.” Given the suggestions in Book 1 of Dido’s bold and self-oriented disposition, one might simply amend this to say “allowed” rather than “forced.”



behavior in such a way as to preserve it.<sup>651</sup> *Pudor* is “shame,” but this word is loaded with implications in English that can make it a misleading. Her *pudor* is not her sense of moral guilt, but the sense of dignity associated with self-control. It entails concern for social judgment based on a broader notion of honor than mere *pudicitia* (chastity), for which, in Dido’s case, it is often confused.<sup>652</sup> Dido’s *pudor* is her concern for publicly demonstrating her adherence to the *iura* (laws) of right conduct, among which the broader social value of good faith (*fides*) figures much more prominently than simple sexual abstinence.<sup>653</sup> Self-control is a distinctly masculine trait in Roman thinking,<sup>654</sup> and Dido’s lofty sense of *pudor*, of self-mastery, shows her masculine orientation. Her sense of honor was built around her commitment never to remarry, not only for Sychaeus but also for her view of herself as an extraordinary person. It is at the center of her identity and reputation as an individual who controls rather than is controlled, who is talked about with admiration for exceeding normal human (in her case, female human) constraints.<sup>655</sup>

From this angle, her motivation as a “*univira*” bears no resemblance to that of the Roman

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<sup>651</sup> Phinney (1965: 358) observes that Medea’s *ai0dw/j* in *Argonautica* 3 at the thought of betraying her father provides a model for Dido’s *pudor*, but the contrast is important, too, for Medea’s filial obligations are not unique, self-imposed standards. As R.M. Henry (1930: 101) observed, “There is no question of the relative duty which Medea owes to her parents and her lover. She thinks of her father’s anger and of leaving her old home more as obstacles to be overcome than as part of the problem which she has to solve for herself. The hesitations which beset her are not ethical. They are the trembling uncertainty of a maiden confronted for the first time with the waves of passion which threaten to bear her away. Her question is rather ‘Shall I?’ than ‘Ought I?’”

<sup>652</sup> On the highly polysemous term *pudor*, see Thomas 2005. West (1980: 317 n. 17) notes the importance of not confusing it with *pudicitia* (chastity).

<sup>653</sup> It is an irony of Dido’s character in the *Aeneid* that *fides* is her most deeply esteemed social value, being that she is a Carthaginian and personally famous for trickery.

<sup>654</sup> See Edwards (1993: 78), who notes Cicero’s definition of self-control (*continentia*) as avoiding behavior which is unmanly—*parum virile* (*De Fin.* 2.47).

<sup>655</sup> Pavlock 1990: 79: “Dido’s motivation for her vow of fidelity to Sychaeus...seems a complex mixture of an unselfish devotion, a troubled repression of her sexuality, and a keen interest in her own glory.” (I am less certain of the second item.) On suggestions of her inherent nature being ill-suited to marriage, see Nappa 2007.

*univira*, an ideal closely linked with the notion of proper wifely obedience and submission.<sup>656</sup>

While it is clear that Dido has made a commitment after the death of Sychaeus never to remarry, the nature of this “vow” is quite shadowy. That is, it presents a gap that elicits further inferences on the part of the reader. Dido has stated explicitly that after her beloved Sychaeus’ death she made a firm decision not to remarry, that she would consider it a *culpa* to do so, and that her *pudor* prevents it. A decision, however, is not a “vow,”<sup>657</sup> and at this juncture in the text, the notion that she made some sort of formal oath or a promise can only be extrapolated from her statement *ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores/ abstulit; ille habeat secum servetque sepulcro* (“That man who first joined me to himself stole away my love; let him have it and keep it with himself in the grave,” 4.28-9), which sounds like a reiteration of it. Since some critics rest the notion that Dido deserves to die on the fact that she breaks this “oath,” it is worth belaboring the point that Vergil, while stressing the emotional conflict it creates in Dido, says nothing objectively about it in the narrator text, nor do any characters besides Dido herself make reference to it.

To recap, then, Dido’s decision never to remarry is unlike that of the Roman *univira* in that it arises out of anger at the loss of her husband, and it both nourishes and is nourished by her self-regard in the ancient heroic sense. We can also see both in Dido’s speech and in Anna’s response that Dido simply has not been attracted to any of her

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<sup>656</sup> See G. Williams 1958: 23-5 on the association of the ideal of faithfulness to one man with the wife who is obedient (*obsequens, unanima, morigera*).

<sup>657</sup> Later she will say that she did not keep the faith promised to Sychaeus (*non servata fides cineri promissa Sychaeo*, 4.552). These are our only two indications of the nature of her commitment, and to me they do not suggest that she has breached solemn vows and violated a sacred institution.

suitors. Dido stated that Aeneas is the only man she has met who has affected her feelings (*solus hic inflexit sensus*, 4.21), and Anna will elaborate on the excluded “others” implied by *solus*. After rhetorically asking Dido whether she really thinks the ashes of the dead care about “it,” she reveals that Dido had suitors both in Tyre and in Africa, whom she rejected not on the grounds of a promise to Sychaeus but because they were not “pleasing”:

*Anna refert: ‘o luce magis dilecta sorori,  
solane perpetua maerens carpere iuventa  
nec dulcis natos Veneris nec praemia noris?  
id cinerem aut manis credis curare sepultos?  
esto: aegram nulli quondam flexere mariti,  
non Libyae, non ante Tyro; despectus Iarbas  
ductoresque alii, quos Africa terra triumphis  
dives alit: placitone etiam pugnabis amori?’*  
(Aen. 4.31-8)

Anna answers: “O my sister, more beloved than light, will you waste away your whole youth alone, grieving, and know neither sweet children nor the rewards of Love? Do you believe that ashes or buried spirits care about it? Granted, no husbands swayed you back when you were sick with bereavement, not in Libya, not previously in Tyre, and you scorned Iarbas and the other commanders whom the rich African land nourishes with triumphs. But will you fight against even a pleasing love?”

This idea, that Dido rejected her local suitors because she scorned them as barbarians, is the same as the reason given in the traditional account evidenced by Trogus. Given that Vergil’s Dido is, at heart, that same legendary Dido (see Chapter 2), this question of Anna’s (*placitone etiam pugnabis amori?* 4.38) can be read at a metaliterary level as well. That is to say, Anna seems to ask (at the authorial level, unbeknownst to the character herself) whether the traditional “chaste” Dido would still have rejected

remarriage, if a pleasing man like Aeneas had been her suitor.<sup>658</sup> At this level, Vergil can be seen to remark upon how his ostensibly radical transformation of the “chaste” Dido’s legend is not actually such a departure—he has simply put her in a different circumstance.

The Dido of tradition would certainly have seen the advantage presented by the arrival of Aeneas and the Trojans, and I argued in Chapter 2 that Vergil’s Dido can be seen to be attempting to take advantage of this opportunity as well. After learning of her love here, “like-minded” Anna uses Dido’s already keen political desire for Aeneas to persuade her to give in to her emotional desire for him:

*‘nec venit in mentem quorum consederis arvis?  
hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello,  
et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis;  
hinc deserta siti regio lateque furentes  
Barcae. quid bella Tyro surgentia dicam  
germanique minas?  
dis equidem auspibus reor et Iunone secunda  
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!’*

(Aen. 4.39-49)

“And does it not occur to you in whose land you have settled? On one side, the Gaetolian cities, a race unconquerable in war, and the wild Numidians and the hostile Syrtis surround us. On the other side, a dry desert and the broadly raging Barcae. What do I need to say about the wars arising in Tyre and the threats of our brother? In fact, I think that it was with the blessing of the gods and the favor of Juno that the Trojans ships were brought here by the wind. What a city, my sister, what a kingdom will you see arise with such a husband! To what great heights will Punic glory rise with the arms of the Trojans accompanying us!”

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<sup>658</sup> Hexter (1992: 341-3) stresses the difference between Vergil’s “guilty” Dido and the “chaste” Dido of tradition, whose very existence makes Vergil’s Dido a “double Dido,” mirroring the guilty Iliadic Helen and her *eidōlon*. On my reading, Vergil’s Dido and the Dido of tradition differ in circumstance, not morality.

As Monti observes, “The emotional aspect of the Dido-Aeneas relationship does not obliterate its initial political character, but rather is an intensification and extension of it.”<sup>659</sup> Moreover, as a reader of Aeneas’ tale, Anna exposes an inference about how the Trojans ended up in Carthage that his narration itself allows: “In fact, I think that it was with the blessing of the gods and the favor of Juno that the Trojans ships were brought here by the wind,” (*dis equidem auspibus reor et Iunone secunda/ hunc cursum Iliacas uento tenuisse carinas*, 4.45-6). Aeneas had concluded his narration by stating that an unspecified god brought them to Carthage (*hinc me digressum vestris deus appulit oris*, 3.715),<sup>660</sup> and Anna thinks that she knows which god would do this, and why. Juno is their patron and a goddess of marriage, and since a marriage with Aeneas would be advantageous to their city, Juno must have brought him to them for that purpose.<sup>661</sup> This is not correct, but based on the information available to the characters, it is not an absurd deduction.

Moreover, the only means the human characters have to verify such deductions is divination, and this is the course of action that Anna urges (*tu modo posce deos veniam, sacrisque litatis/ indulge hospitio*, 4.50-1).<sup>662</sup> As we shall see in a moment, divination will give ambiguous results, as it usually does. Dido is totally won over by Anna’s arguments:

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<sup>659</sup> Monti 1981: 35.

<sup>660</sup> On the pessimistic implications in his tale about the prophecies directing them to Italy, see Chapter 3.

<sup>661</sup> One may note also, as Austin does (1955: 38 *ad* 4.48) that Anna is suggesting lawful marriage, and that “there is no hint here that Anna thought Dido not free to marry again.”

<sup>662</sup> Agrell (2002: 96) notes that Anna’s suggestion that Dido “weave reasons for staying,” (*causasque innecte morandi*, 4.51-3) could, if we put weight on it, suggest “that Aeneas is still intent on the *fatalia arva* of Italy.” The suggestions made by Aeneas (and at the authorial level, by the narrator) in Books 1—3 do not, on my reading, encourage that inference, and by the same token one could note that all Anna thinks it would take to obtain marriage with Aeneas would be to give him an immediate excuse to stay. This suggests that he does not, to her, seem strongly intent on Italy.

*his dictis impenso animum flammavit amore  
spemque dedit dubiae menti solvitque pudorem.*  
(*Aen.* 4.54-5)

With these words Anna set her heart on fire with eager love and gave hope to her hesitating mind and broke down her self-restraint.

If we needed to be reminded that her *pudor* is not synonymous with her *pudicitia*, this statement should suffice, for she loses her *pudor* before she loses her “virtue.” Dido’s abandonment of her *pudor* is not the concomitant of her erotic liaison with Aeneas but rather the prerequisite to it. She does not simply abandon her “modesty,” as Henry argues in a note that focuses strictly on the dissolution of her sexual morality, but rather, she releases her grip on her (masculine) ideals of public image and power. After she abandons her *pudor*, she begins running around acting desperate. She has lost her dignity and self-control, and in an unflattering image, she obsesses over constant sacrifices that she personally performs, eagerly gaping with an open mouth (*inhians*, 4.64) over the quivering entrails. Still, these sacrifices are not, as O’Hara persuasively argues, to be viewed as expiatory, as if Dido were trying to “cover her fault.”<sup>663</sup> It is not clear what she deduces from this divination about the gods’ attitude toward a marriage between her and Aeneas—if their answer is negative, it is not sufficiently clear; if it is positive, the gods must be deceiving her. Both are possible, and either way would be in keeping with the presentation of divination in Aeneas’ tale, in which divine signs were easy to misinterpret (the oracle on Delos, for example) as well as intentionally deceptive (the snakes’ killing

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<sup>663</sup> O’Hara (1993: 107), who argues against Austin 1955: 41 *ad* 4.56. O’Hara argues (*ibid.*) convincingly for *lito* as “offer acceptably” (so *L&S*) rather than “offer by way of propitiation or atonement” (*OLD*, which uses this passage as evidence). Dido at this point has nothing to expiate. On my translation of the clause temporally: as Pease states (1935: 128 *ad* 4.50), “the ablative absolute [*sacris litatis*] here expresses a condition; if the sacrifices have turned out favorably Dido may assume that the gods favor her course of action.” However, Anna’s certainty that the condition will be favorably resolved makes “with your sacrifices accepted” sound confidently temporal.

of Laocoön). The narrator's exclamation *heu, vatū ignarāe mentes!* ("Alas, the ignorant minds of prophets!" or "Alas, minds ignorant of prophecy!") supports either reading.<sup>664</sup>

I would like to take this occasion to digress briefly on Dido's attitude toward the gods, which is presented in a way that requires the reader who wishes to establish consistency to draw larger inferences. Though we know that Juno favors the Carthaginians, that they have built a temple to her, and that they observe standard religious procedures,<sup>665</sup> the Olympians as traditionally conceived do not figure prominently in the Carthaginian outlook, which shows an Epicurean flavor.<sup>666</sup> They are notably absent, for example, in Dido's initial speeches to both Ilioneus and Aeneas.<sup>667</sup> As Adler observes, "[s]itting in the temple of the Carthaginian patron goddess Juno, Dido speaks of herself alone as the settler of her own kingdom (*mecum*, 572), the independent establisher of her own city (*statuo*, 573), and the self-sufficient disposer of its citizenship (*mihi*, 574). Dido conceives common citizenship as depending not on the sharing of gods but on the ignoring of gods. . . . She neither asks after the Trojans' gods nor mentions her own."<sup>668</sup> Note too that after Aeneas' introduces himself to Dido, she exclaims, "What misfortune, son of a goddess, pursues you through so many dangers? What force brings you to our great shores?" (*quis te, nate dea, per tanta pericula casus/ insequitur? quae*

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<sup>664</sup> On the ambiguity of this phrase, see O'Hara (1993), with summary of prior discussions. Agrell (2002: 96) observes: "Virgil does not tell us what the outcome of repeated sacrifices was, or indeed, what she had in mind; instead, by ominous, if opaque, comments on the inefficacy of divination, he sheds a sinister light on the proceedings."

<sup>665</sup> Dido orders sacrifices upon the Trojans' arrival, pours a libation and prays to Jupiter, Bacchus, and Juno at the banquet, and consults the *exta* of sacrificial animals.

<sup>666</sup> See especially Dyson 1996.

<sup>667</sup> Adler 2003: 35: "As in the first conversation between Ilioneus and Dido, so in the first between Aeneas and Dido: he appeals to the gods and she is silent about them."

<sup>668</sup> Adler 2003: 32.

*vis immanibus applicat oris?* 1.615-6).<sup>669</sup> She automatically understands impersonal forces at work—*casus, vis*—where we might expect a person with a divinely-oriented view of causality to ask not *quis casus* but *quis deus*.<sup>670</sup> When she offers a prayer and libation to Jupiter at the banquet, she distances herself from her statements (*Iuppiter, hospitibus nam te dare iura loquuntur*, “Jupiter, for they say that you give the laws of hospitality,” 1.731).<sup>671</sup> This attitude seems to permeate the whole of Carthaginian culture. During the banquet her bard Iopas sings a cosmogony that offers a naturalistic, godless exposition of the world. It is highly pleasing to the Tyrians, who enthusiastically applaud at its conclusion—in contrast, perhaps, to the Trojans (“The Tyrians redouble their applause, and the Trojans follow,” *ingeminant plausu Tyrii, Troesque sequuntur*, 1.747).<sup>672</sup>

Dido’s religious attitude seems to be one of standard *pro forma* practice combined with beliefs that are quite detached and conveniently flexible. We might call her theological outlook utilitarian. Though she seems generally not to care a great deal about the gods, and when it is convenient articulates the Epicurean view they do not care a great deal about humans,<sup>673</sup> she is scrupulous in verifying their *pax* and *venia* when it is in doubt, as evidenced in her obsessive attempts to gain a favorable response about

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<sup>669</sup> Her address of Aeneas as *nate dea*, and subsequent reference to his lineage from Venus seems a matter of respectful recognition of his *fama* rather than theological faith, especially when considered in light of her later remark that, given his excellent attributes, maybe he really *is* a descendent of “the gods” (*credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum./ degeneres animos timor arguit*. 4.12-3)

<sup>670</sup> Feeney 1998:117. Andromache, for example, asks what chance or god brought them to Buthrotum: *sed tibi qui cursum venti, quae fata dedere?/ aut quisnam ignarum nostris deus appulit oris?* (3.337-8)

<sup>671</sup> Since she is in fact a breaker of these laws, such that Mercury’s intervention was required, at the authorial level her skepticism toward Jupiter’s actual concern for *hospitium* seems pointed.

<sup>672</sup> For a summary of interpretations of the song of Iopas, with bibliography, see Perrell 1999: 47-9.

<sup>673</sup> As we shall see later in her sarcastic response to Aeneas’ claim that the gods are making him leave: *scilicet is superis labor est, ea cura quietos sollicitat*, “Sure, as if the gods toil at that, as if that concern bothers their serenity!” (4.379-80)



marriage with Aeneas in the passage currently under discussion. This itself, though, exposes what a flexible view of the gods' will Dido takes. Revision is always an option, provided one seek *pacem ad aras* (4.56).<sup>674</sup> We may recall that at the spot where she founded Carthage, Dido had dug up the head of a fierce horse, a sign that her people would be “great in war and easy in prosperity throughout the ages,” (*bello egregiam et facile victu per saecula gentem*, 1.445). In the historical account, which the reader has been encouraged to use to supplement any apparent ellipses in the presentation of Dido,<sup>675</sup> she first found the head of an ox, but did not like the subservience it portended, and so moved to a new spot.<sup>676</sup> We can see in this a flexible attitude toward divine signs—the will of the gods is not written in stone, and if one does not like a sign she may simply ask again until she gets the outcome she wants.

Dido's likeminded (*unanima*) sister Anna reminds her that the ashes of a dead man do not care (4.34), and as for the gods, they seem to have brought him here (1.45-6). Therefore, she advises, “just ask the gods' leave, and when your sacrifices have been accepted” (*tu modo posce deos veniam, sacrisque litatis*, 4.50) proceed to pursue Aeneas.

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<sup>674</sup> Though this may appear problematic within the Judeo-Christian traditions of later Europe, this is not necessarily so within Roman religion.

<sup>675</sup> I argued that this is the case specifically in terms of Venus' narration of Dido's personal history, which has a rhetorical agenda. The omen of the horse head, on the other hand, is reported by the primary narrator, and so does not demand that the reader fill in the true backstory in the same way. Still, it does present a gap in comparison to the legendary version which the reader has been encouraged to see as the full story.

<sup>676</sup> *In primis fundamentis caput bubulum inuentum est, quod auspiciū fructuosae quidem, sed laboriosae perpetuoque seruae urbis fuit; propter quod in alium locum urbs translata, ibi quoque equi caput repertum, bellicosum potentemque populum futurum significans, urbi auspicatam sedem dedit.* “When the foundations were first being laid, an ox's head was found, an omen that, while the city would be prosperous, it would face hardships and always be enslaved. The city was therefore moved to another location. There, too, a head was found, that of a horse, indicating that the people would be warlike and might, and so it provided for the city an auspicious site.” (Justin, *Ep.* 18.5.15-6, Yardley trans.).

There is an easy brushing of the hands in *sacrisque litatis*,<sup>677</sup> an assumption that the gods do not really care about anything, provided they are given proper appeasement. It has been remarked that Dido espouses an Epicurean outlook on the gods, though she does not adhere to Epicurean philosophy in all points (being, for example, a highly politically involved person), and concluded that through her Vergil critiques Epicureanism (supposedly his own abandoned philosophy). Feeney, for example, remarks that “the urge to read an Epicurean *Aeneid* founders with Dido, who is herself a character with an Epicurean reading of the poem’s action—a reading which is proved comprehensively wrong.”<sup>678</sup> I am in complete agreement with Feeney that the gods are to be understood as real characters within the poem, and it is certainly true, therefore, that the story world does not operate on Epicurean principles (we do not need the Dido episode to show us that). This does not mean that the reader is necessarily meant to reject an Epicurean outlook on the “actual world.”

In this sense, by presenting a theology within the possible world that is subject to serious criticism, Vergil may be seen to have written a poem whose takeaway, after analysis, supports an Epicurean rejection of such anthropomorphic deities, with their selfish anger and disregard for human life. Dido’s Epicureanism is disproved *within* the possible world of the poem by the actions of the Olympian characters, some of which cannot be naturalistically explained away, but the Olympians as they are presented can

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<sup>677</sup> O’Hara 1993: 107 argues convincingly for *lito* as “offer acceptably” (so *L&S*) rather than “offer by way of propitiation or atonement” (*OLD*, which uses this passage as evidence). Dido at this point has nothing to expiate. On my translation of the clause temporally: as Pease states (1935 on 4.50), “the ablative absolute [*sacris litatis*] here expresses a condition; if the sacrifices have turned out favorably Dido may assume that the gods favor her course of action.” However, Anna’s certainty that the condition will be favorably resolved makes “with your sacrifices accepted” sound confidently temporal.

<sup>678</sup> Feeney 1991: 172-3.

have no place in the actual world.<sup>679</sup> The poet encourages a skeptical comparison of the mythic theology of the possible world of the poem with the reader's "actual world" theology when he asks in the proem, *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* (1.11) Dido's detached attitude can be seen as validated in the actual world even as it is defeated in the fictional world.

We may note, finally, that Dido's theological outlook pertains to her supposed "misreading" of Aeneas' tale, as well. Aeneas sounded a detached note in his doubtful reference to the probability of the gods' rewarding justice in his introductory speech to Dido (1.603-5), and that he was pessimistic in his presentation in Books 2—3 of the divine signs predicting his future. The reader may, therefore, imagine that Dido thinks Aeneas shares her own flexible, distanced view of the gods' involvement in mortal life. For the reader who may wonder if Dido could really think there would be no consequences if Aeneas were to give up his mission, the beginning of Book 4 will confirm that yes, indeed, she could think just that (and he seems to think that, too).<sup>680</sup>

Returning to the passage at hand, then, we may note that in contrast to our first view of Dido's proud bearing and political energy in Book 1 when she strode into the

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<sup>679</sup> I agree with G. Williams' pessimistic view of the gods in the poem (1983: 213), but I think the theological skepticism of the poem cannot be applied to the story world at the narrative level (the gods' actions cannot all be naturalistically understood), but rather raises analogous pessimistic theological questions about the "real world."

<sup>680</sup> Feeney (1998: 117) remarks: "This [Epicurean] attitude to divinity is also, partly, a metaphor for [Dido's] general tendency to emphasize the individual and the personal at the expense of the supra-personal historic elements represented by the divine plot." She is not directly privy to the divine plot, though. This is precisely the issue that Vergil keeps bringing up—that humans cannot have the "right" attitude toward the divine plan until it has been achieved, and only retrospect enables it to be identified definitively as such. In short, of course she picks the personal over the historical, because that is the only level she, or anyone, can reliably see.

temple (*incessit*, 1.497) like a goddess (*qualis...Diana*, 1.498-504),<sup>681</sup> she now moves through the city without purpose (*vagatur*, 4.68),<sup>682</sup> like a wounded animal (*qualis...cerva*, 4.70-3). In her active, public, masculine role she had appeared almost superhuman, while after abandoning her commitment to public honor she appears to have descended in her passivity not simply to the level of an ordinary woman, but in her lack of self-determination she is metaphorically sub-human, a crazed, injured deer:

*uritur infelix Dido totaque vagatur  
urbe furens, qualis coniecta cerva sagitta,  
quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit  
pastor agens telis liquitque volatile ferrum  
nescius; illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat  
Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo.*

(*Aen.* 4. 68-73)

Ill-starred Dido burns, and she wanders through the whole city frenzied, like a deer struck by an arrow, an unwary deer which a shepherd struck from a distance amid the Cretan groves, pursuing her with his darts; and he left a flying shaft of iron in her, unknowingly. In her flight she wanders the woods and groves of Dicte; the deadly shaft hangs from her flank.

This evocative simile generates interesting suggestions about both Aeneas and Dido.<sup>683</sup>

For Dido, it points to a complete role reversal, from the commanding huntress Diana in the simile of Book 1 to “one of her vulnerable creatures.”<sup>684</sup>

<sup>681</sup> For full discussion of this passage within the context of Book 1, see Chapter 1 of this study.

<sup>682</sup> Pease 1935: 146 *ad* 4.68: “The verb *vagor* is in contrast with the dignified or formal *incessus*, admired by the Romans, which should characterize a person of consequence, like a queen.”

<sup>683</sup> Pöschl (1962: 81) summarizes the function of the comparison thus: “(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 movement.” For discussion of the simile see particularly Anderson 1968: 8-10, Hornsby 1970: 91-2, Johnson 1976: 79-81, Lyne 1987: 194-8 and Chew 2002, as well as Duclos 1971 and O’Hara 1993b.

<sup>684</sup> Pavlock 1990: 74. Nelis (2001: 132) notes that the allusion here to *Arg.* 4.12-13, in which Medea is likened to a deer terrified by the barking of dogs, reverses the earlier simile in which she was likened to Artemis, a parallel that Vergil’s similes replicates. Hornsby (1970: 92) remarks that the simile “emphasizes that Dido’s passion reduces her behavior to something like that of an animal,” yet arouses pity with the image of a wounded creature.

What I would like to stress here are the implications of the simile's equation of Aeneas with a hunting shepherd. In the simile, the deer is struck not by a sport hunter but by a *pastor*, who, it can be inferred, has spotted game while tending his flocks. He is, it has been well recognized, quite like Aeneas when he washes up on shore in Carthage. While looking out for lost ships, he spots deer which he then pursues, "driving them with arrows" (*agens telis*, 1.191), to feed his men. By evoking that scene with the shepherd-deer simile here, it is not only confirmed that Aeneas has had his sights on Dido, but also part of the reason why. As I have been arguing in this study, Aeneas has been shown to be dangerously enamored with Carthage and deeply erotically attracted to its queen from his first view;<sup>685</sup> this simile highlights the pastoral dimension of his motivation, the relief that Carthage represents for his beleaguered followers. Though he is *nescius* of his success, this does not make his pursuit unintentional.<sup>686</sup> As Chew observes: "The circumstances in the simile... seem to undercut the moral acquittal which *nescius* imparts to Aeneas—the *pastor* is out hunting, *agens telis*, after all.... In fact, if we examine the above deer hunting simile in the context of Aeneas' prior hunting expedition in Book 1, similarities suggest that Aeneas is hardly negligent in Book 4 but rather opportunistic.... In both passages, Aeneas acts in the best interests of his 'flock' when he hunts down deer to serve the flock's needs."<sup>687</sup>

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<sup>685</sup> For full argumentation, see Chapter 1 and the summary below.

<sup>686</sup> Lyne 1987: 196: "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*. What he is ignorant of is that one of his shafts has struck.... [D]iscreetly but definitely we are told something about the hero's role at Carthage. He has courted the queen, made up to the queen, 'hunted' her in the hunt of love."

<sup>687</sup> Chew 2002: 623. This is important, for it is among the many indirect suggestions of Aeneas' motivations that keep us from surmising, *pace* Hornsby (1970: 92), that he is merely "acceding to his desire for dalliance" in his affair with Dido.

It is often remarked that we are never told of Aeneas' feelings about Dido prior to the affair. In fact, though, we are given several indirect suggestions of his attraction and the reader is not, therefore, in the dark about his interest until after it has been exposed by his consent in the cave. As I argued in Chapter 1, an intense pang of sexual desire was suggested in the description of Aeneas' first view of Dido in the epic simile likening her to Diana (1.498-502), in which the poet intertextually likened the joy that "overcomes" (*pertemptant*) Aeneas' heart to the tremor that overcomes a stallion's body when it has caught the scent of a mare.<sup>688</sup> His attraction was also reflected by the erotic trope used in his speech of thanks (1.607-10), and was shown to be fueled by Cupid's *amor*-instilling embrace, which the god applied to Aeneas as well as Dido (1.715-6). It has been consistently indirectly suggested that Aeneas feels passion for Dido. Here, in the shepherd-deer simile, it is suggested that he has recognized that a relationship with her presents a benefit for his people that he would like to take advantage of, and has been pursuing her purposefully at a distance. What it means for him to send darts in her direction is left to the reader to imagine—his subtle use of amatory language to praise her generosity at 1.607-10 provides, I would venture, a starting point.

When Juno sees that concern for her *fama* is not keeping Dido's love in check (*nec famam obstare furori*, 4.91), she realizes that Dido has been completely conquered by Venus,<sup>689</sup> whom she confronts with the proposition that they settle their feud by marrying Aeneas and Dido: *quin potius pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos/*

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<sup>688</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>689</sup> It is Dido's masculine-heroic, as I have argued, concern for *fama* that would, under other circumstances, have prevented her from serving a husband, which is what Juno now suggests is possible (*liceat Phrygio seruire marito*, 4.103).

*exercemus?* (“Why do we not rather work out an eternal peace and an agreed upon marriage?” 4.99-100) In doing so, as Agrell notes, Juno “takes Aeneas’ heart for granted,”<sup>690</sup> which, as I have been arguing, she is well justified in doing. Juno treats the marriage that the goddesses will perform as official: *coniugio iungam stabili propriamque dicabo./ hic hymenaeus erit* (“I will join them in stable marriage and declare her his wife. This will be the wedding.” 4.126-7). Juno’s plan, to which Venus assents (delighting at its sure failure, 4.128), comes to pass the next day when Dido and Aeneas seek the same cave during the storm. As Williams observes, “[s]everal elements of a formal Roman wedding are here—except that they are translated into supernatural terms. How is this to be understood?”<sup>691</sup> It is clear neither what the characters themselves make of them,<sup>692</sup> nor what the reader is supposed to think.<sup>693</sup> As Johnson observes, this impressionistic, blurry presentation of events, which “refuses to explain precisely what is happening and precisely how and why it is happening” is one of Vergil’s characteristic modes.<sup>694</sup> “All we know is that a real wedding is pictured; that the bride and groom cannot see what we can see; and finally, that the image of the wedding which we have just witnessed is obliterated.”<sup>695</sup>

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<sup>690</sup> Agrell 2002: 97.

<sup>691</sup> G. Williams 1968: 378.

<sup>692</sup> Ovid fills this gap by having Dido in *Heroides* 7: 93-6 suggest that she perceived the supernatural forces at work and interpreted it as a wedding.

<sup>693</sup> Bibliography on the cave scene and the question of what constitutes legitimate marriage in the Roman mind is large. Agrell 2002 gives a summary with further references. The intertextual model is the emergency wedding of Jason and Medea in a cave (*Arg.* 4.1128-69). For comparison and contrast see Nelis (2001: 148-52), who notes that although that wedding is straightforwardly legitimate, “Apollonius has consistently shadowed this story with reference to the *Medea* of Euripides and the tragic outcome of the relationship whose origin he is narrating.”

<sup>694</sup> Johnson 1976: 45.

<sup>695</sup> Johnson 1976: 45 n. 42.

As Agrell notes, the verses that follow the union in the cave have been taken as “Vergil’s definitive statement” that Dido and Aeneas were not really married and she knew it.<sup>696</sup>

*ille dies primus leti primusque malorum  
causa fuit; neque enim specie famave movetur  
nec iam furtivum Dido meditatur amorem:  
coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam.*  
(*Aen.* 4.169-72)

That day was the first cause of death and the first cause of evils; for neither is Dido moved by appearance or reputation, nor at this point does she contemplate secret love: she talks of “marriage” and with this word she decorates her failure. (On my translation, see below.)

These are in fact strange verses that, far from clarifying the situation, make it even murkier. The narrator begins with an odd statement that the day in the cave was the first day of death and evil: *ille dies primus leti primusque malorum/ causa fuit* (4.169-70).<sup>697</sup> It was, however, Venus making Dido fall in love that was the original *causa malorum*, and there have been others steps along the way (Anna wins her over; divination convinces her it is permissible). Although the day in the cave marks the beginning of a new stage in the course of the plot, it is strange to hear it pronounced the first (emphatically repeated, *primus...primusque*)<sup>698</sup> cause of the tragedy that is already well underway. The verses that follow explain this statement (*enim*), but the explanation is very vague, obliquely

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<sup>696</sup> Agrell 2002: 100. In fact, 4.172 is often imprecisely cited as evidence that Dido is universally wrong about everything, as for example Pease (1935: 54): “With her entire thought upon love she wrongly supposes Aeneas to be equally in love with her (4.172, *coniugium vocat*).”

<sup>697</sup> As Moles (1984: 51) observes, this sounds very similar “to the ἀρχὴ κακῶν (‘beginning of evils’) motif so basic to the thought and narrative patterning of Homeric epic and Greek tragedy.”

<sup>698</sup> Austin (1955: 69 *ad* 4.169) argues that *primus* is adverbial, which eliminates the problem of its agreement with *dies* rather than *causa*, but it does little to improve the sense (“That day in the beginning was the cause of death, that day in the beginning was the cause of sorrow.”)



reveals new and enigmatic information,<sup>699</sup> and includes seemingly self-contradictory elements. For we learn that she both does not care how things appear to others (*neque enim specie famave movetur*) and that she feels the need to cover up the truth (*coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam*). Only one of those statements can be true. If she wishes to cover something up, it would suggest that she *does* care what people think.

Much hinges on the meaning of *culpa*. We have two choices, one being to understand it in a way that makes sense within the sentence, and the other being to understand it in a way that makes sense with the rest of the narrative. Within the logic of the isolated sentence *coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam*, the contrast with *coniugium* suggests that *culpa* means illicit sex and the illegitimate union it inaugurates. As Moles claims, “[t]he obvious meaning of Virgil’s words 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*.”<sup>700</sup> The problem with this idea is that the narrator has just prefaced this statement by directly stating that she does not care about her reputation, or how things look (*neque enim specie famave movetur*). Pease voices the view that it means “unfaithfulness to the memory of Sychaeus,”<sup>701</sup> and this would accord with Dido’s own suggestion that remarriage would be a *culpa* (4.19) because she has pledged her love to the deceased Sychaeus. If this is the case, though, how does her calling the union a “marriage” mask a *culpa*? As Monti points out, it would be illogical

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<sup>699</sup> The suggestion that she has been contemplating *furtivum amorem* (4.171) is new and unsupported elsewhere in the text. G. Williams (1968: 379) suggests that this simply means “she has been feeling love for him and not talking about it.”

<sup>700</sup> Moles 1984: 51-2.

<sup>701</sup> Pease 1935: 211 *ad* 4.172.

for her to try to cover up the *culpa* of remarriage with the name of marriage.<sup>702</sup> There is simply no way to make the sentence make internal sense and still accord with what we have been told in its immediate and earlier context. It may present an uncloseable gap that confounds attempts to establish consistency. The purpose may be that in trying to determine what Dido's *culpa* is, the reader is given the opportunity to recreate her feelings, to color in the outlines of the text in the shades of his or her choosing.

My own sense is that that while Dido does not care what anyone else thinks of the union (*neque enim specie famave movetur*), she feels that it is a personal *culpa*, for the reasons she outlined to Anna at the beginning of the book—she is proud of her ability to maintain a faithfulness that exceeds norms of the common person, and the *fama* she has garnered by her heroic *pudor* is the cornerstone of her public identity. She sees, however, a bright side to this failure to maintain a very public commitment, which the benefits of marriage to a great man present, and she chooses to focus on that. Being united in personal and public purpose with someone who will raise her city to great heights makes her own failure of honor in her word look more attractive to her—it was for a higher cause. The relationship with Aeneas represents a personal failure of hers (or so she thinks, being unaware of the machinations of the character Venus), but by focusing with the word “marriage” on the permanent and public character of her new partnership, she “weaves decoration around or in front of” her failure of resolve—not so much “concealing” it, perhaps, as adorning it, putting attractive colors around it, highlighting the gain.

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<sup>702</sup> Monti 1981: 55.

Agrell notes that neither *vocat* nor *nomine* inherently suggest misrepresentation—one can “call” something by its true name, too, and I follow his translation of the words *coniugium vocat* as “she talks of ‘marriage.’”<sup>703</sup> It is the proximity to the dishonest action perceived in the phrase *praetexit culpam* that suggests misrepresentation to most readers, but “concealment” is a secondary meaning of this verb, and the first example that *L&S* give for this definition is this very passage.<sup>704</sup> The basic meaning of *praetexo* is “to weave before or in front,” “to fringe, edge, border.”<sup>705</sup> We may extrapolate a different metaphor here from this literal root, whereby Dido seizes on the attractive aspect of her decision to favorably color around its less attractive component. (Whether or not she is wrong about the truth of that attractive aspect is another question, whose possible answers will emerge as Book 4 progresses.)

We are given nothing of Aeneas’ viewpoint, except what his concord with Dido’s words and actions implies—which is significant. “This highly elusive handling of the male role is quite in keeping with that sense of epic decorum which balks at presenting the hero as a lover. In both Apollonius and Vergil it is the woman’s feelings which are made explicit while those of the man must be pieced together from hints and allusions scattered throughout the text.”<sup>706</sup> Aeneas would surely come off badly as an epic hero if the words of Fama (“now they enjoy all the long winter together in luxury, unmindful of their kingdoms and captives of base lust,” *nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa, fovere/ regnorum immemores turpique cupidine captos*, 4.193-4) were articulated by the

<sup>703</sup> Agrell 2001: 101, with further references. For similar uses in the *Aeneid* see 7.264 and 11.105.

<sup>704</sup> *L&S* s.v. *praetexo* IIB: To “cover,” “cloak,” “conceal,” “disguise with anything”: *hoc praetexit nomine culpam*, A. 4.172: *funera sacris*, id. ib. 4.500: *fraudem blando risu*, Claud. Ruf. 1.99.

<sup>705</sup> *L&S* s.v. *praetexo*.

<sup>706</sup> Nelis 2001: 132. See also Monti 1981: 76.

narrator, or exposed in direct action or dialogue. Monti observes: “Although Vergil is reticent about Aeneas’ behavior, the information which he supplies about the progress of the relationship between Dido and Aeneas has the effect of compromising the accuracy of Aeneas’ static view of it and of his responsibilities of Dido....All that we hear of Aeneas’ conduct is condensed into the rapidly moving narrative which follows the incident in the cave and ends with the scene of confrontation (4.17-295).”<sup>707</sup>

When Mercury arrives—at the behest of Jupiter, who has been advised by Iarbas that Dido has made Aeneas the master of her kingdom (*dominum Aenean in regna recepit*, 4.214)—he finds Aeneas building Dido’s city, dressed in ornate Tyrian garb (4.260-4). He calls Aeneas “uxorious” and upbraids him for joining in purpose with Dido, and acting like her husband by treating her city as his own:

*‘tu nunc Karthaginiis altae  
fundamenta locas pulchramque uxorius urbem  
extruis? heu, regni rerumque oblite tuarum!*  
...  
*quid struis? aut qua spe Libycis teris otia terris?’*  
(*Aen.* 4.265-71)

“Are you now laying down the foundations of high Carthage and, in obedience to your wife, building her beautiful city? Oh, so forgetful of your kingdom and your own affairs! What are you building? Or with what hope do you waste time in leisure in the land of Libya?”

This passage requires the reader to write what Eco calls a “ghost chapter,” to make assumptions about what must have happened for the story to have progressed to the point it has.<sup>708</sup> Many readers, including myself, can only make sense of the relationship

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<sup>707</sup> Monti 1981: 45.

<sup>708</sup> Eco 1979: 214: “Frequently, given a series of causally and linearly connected events *a*.....*e*, a text tells the reader about the event *a* and, after a while, about the event *e*, taking for granted that the reader has

between point *a*, the union in the cave, and point *e*, Aeneas behaving as her consort, by writing a ghost chapter (that is, supplying the intervening events *b*, *c*, *d*) in the way Monti describes: “Aeneas’ actions give the observer no choice but to assume that he has taken Dido as his wife, that he has undertaken the administration of Carthage and consequently foresworn the political mission to Italy.”<sup>709</sup> Aeneas’ perception of the union as being more than a personal arrangement, despite the illegitimacy of the wedding ceremony, is signaled by his taking on the public duties of the king. Aeneas’ behavior accords with Dido’s hopes, as I picture them, when she focuses on the gain afforded by “marriage” (*coniugium vocat*) in order to make herself feel better about having compromised her prior principles (*praetexit culpam*). We may note also that although Aeneas has now taken over Dido’s masculine role, he appears effeminized in doing so. This effect is in part achieved through his Eastern dress itself, which is luxurious, but also through the cultural assimilation and abandonment of his own identity that it connotes.<sup>710</sup> In Book 1 it was intertextually hinted by parallels with Circe that Dido wanted to turn the hero into one of her creatures, and here we see that she has.

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already anticipated the dependent events *b,c,d* (of which *e* is the consequence, according to many intertextual frames).”

<sup>709</sup> Monti 1981: 47. He goes on to note: “It is the common opinion that Dido’s story is a tragedy of self-deception, but it is worthwhile to ask to what extent she has deceived herself.”

<sup>710</sup> As the consort of a female Eastern monarch, Aeneas evokes Marc Antony. Parry (1963: 73) claims: “But Aeneas is not just Augustus. There is also the possibility of his being Augustus’ bitter enemy, Marc Antony. Such is the identification we are led to make when, in the fourth book, he has become the consort of Dido, queen of Carthage.” This parallel is strengthened, as Weber (2002: 338) argues, by the resemblance of Aeneas in Carthage (particularly here, in his scarlet cloak spangled with gold) to Dionysus, “whose mortal counterpart Antony claimed to be.”

Mercury's intervention has sometimes been taken as a symbolic representation of a change of heart in Aeneas,<sup>711</sup> but we have no hints leading up to this scene that Aeneas was already beginning to make Mercury's accusations against himself. Feeney argues that "[i]t is important to remind ourselves that Virgil could easily have anticipated our modern scruples and written the scene in entirely naturalistic terms. After all, when Odysseus has been dallying too long with Circe, his men remind him that it is time to think of home, and they persuade him to leave (*Od.* 10.469-75). When Apollonius imitates this Odyssean scene in the *Argonautica*, as the Argonauts are dallying with the women of Lemnos, he likewise has one of the ship's company, Heracles, shame the heroes into resuming their voyage (*Arg.* 1.861-78)."<sup>712</sup> Feeney observes the importance of literally understood divine intervention here, which gives the reader "a sense of disjunction" between Jupiter's cosmic plan and Aeneas' focus on the here and now.<sup>713</sup> I agree with his assertion that "[i]t matters terribly for Aeneas' tragedy that an external constraint makes him leave."<sup>714</sup>

Mercury's intervention at Jupiter's behest clearly evokes Hermes' extrication of Odysseus from the island of Ogygia at the bidding of Zeus. Vergil, however, reverses the recipient of the address, making Mercury appear to Aeneas rather than Dido, which as Knauer notes, has tragic consequences.<sup>715</sup> If Dido could believe in Mercury's intervention, she would not feel so utterly deceived and rejected by Aeneas. "For her part,

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<sup>711</sup> For example, Quinn (1968: 317-18) on "Aeneas' sudden realization (as we should put it) that he must leave Carthage before it is too late."

<sup>712</sup> Feeney 1998: 114.

<sup>713</sup> Feeney 1998: 115. Cf. Otis [1964] 1995: 82-3 and 92-3.

<sup>714</sup> Feeney 1991: 174.

<sup>715</sup> Knauer 1964: 214.

Dido will not believe in the reality of Mercury and of the apparatus for which he is a mouthpiece, and readers who follow her lead—a majority?—will not want to believe in that reality either. They will be as repelled as she was by the apparent frigidity and inconsequentiality of speaking of Mercury in this way.”<sup>716</sup> What is important for the interests of this study is to recognize that unsettling aspects of the fictional world of the story invite critical reflection on the reader’s world of reference, the actual world. We should not try to unwrite unconvincing or unappealing aspects of the possible world in order to make it feel more natural or more just, but rather consider whether at such junctures the poet is inviting us to ask analogous questions about the workings and nature of the gods in the real world. (*Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*)

“Now we come back to Aeneas,” as Otis observes. “*Now for the first time in the book*, our full attention shifts to him, now also for the first time in the book we grasp, empathetically, his point of view and read his mind”.<sup>717</sup>

*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?*

(*Aen.* 4.281-4)

He burns to flee and leave behind the lands he found sweet, thunderstruck by such an amazing warning and the command of the gods. Alas, what should he do? With what overtures might he dare to get around the enraged queen? How should he preface it?

His choice, as Perkell notes, is instantaneous (perhaps, as she argues, unflatteringly so),<sup>718</sup> but the focalization of *dulcis* through him exposes his genuine love of the land he is leaving, and the ease of his acquiescence may be justified by the fact that he is

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<sup>716</sup> Feeney 1998: 123.

<sup>717</sup> Otis [1964] 1995: 83, with his emphasis.

<sup>718</sup> Perkell 1981: 362. A different stripe of critic considers his lack of deliberation a mark to his credit.

thunderstruck (*attonitus*) by the experience of being stingingly attacked (*invadit*, 4.265) by a god who suddenly appeared out of thin air. His first thought is how to present the news to Dido in a way that avoids her rage. As Page notes,<sup>719</sup> on the one hand, *amibre* and *exordia* convey an unpleasant “sense of falsehood,” but one may also note that there is nothing particularly morally suspect about wishing to present bad news in a way that will minimize the recipient’s rage, and Aeneas is right to suppose (with the proleptic *furentem*) that Dido will be enraged. It reflects on Dido’s character as well as his own that Aeneas is plainly terrified to tell her. His shame at that fact can be seen in the way he conceals it from his captains when he tells them to hide their preparations (*taciti, dissimulent*, 4.289-91) while he waits for the right time to break it to her gently (*mollissima fandi/ tempora*, 4.293-4), because this unexpected news (*non speret*) will hurt *optima* Dido (4.291). To them, he suggests that he is trying to avoid breaking her heart,<sup>720</sup> while the reader knows he is trying to escape her fury.<sup>721</sup>

Though Aeneas appears to the reader to be trying to sneak preparations while working up his courage to have what he knows will be an ugly confrontation, he appears to Dido simply to be trying to sneak away without her knowledge. She responds with the outraged surprise of Catullus’ Ariadne, and enraged rhetoric of Euripides’ and Apollonius’ Medea:<sup>722</sup>

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<sup>719</sup> Page 1951: 366 *ad* 4.283.

<sup>720</sup> We may note also that what she has been calling “marriage” (*coniugium*), apparently openly and therefore with his knowledge, he now, to his men, at least, calls “great love” (*tantos amores*). His face-saving rhetoric with his men forecasts the tack he will take with Dido herself.

<sup>721</sup> Note that he also orders the preparation of arms (*arma parent*, 4.290), consciously or subconsciously anticipating the possibility that Dido might actually attack them (as she almost does—see discussion of 4.593-4).

<sup>722</sup> Catullus 64.132-5, Euripides *Med.* 465-519, Apollonius *Arg.* 4.335-90. For comparison of specific echoes, see Heinze [1915] 1993: 103 n. 36 and Hight 1972: 220.



*'dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide, tantum* 305  
*posse nefas tacitusque mea decedere terra?*  
*nec te noster amor nec te data dextera quondam*  
*nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido?*  
*quin etiam hiberno moliri sidere classem*  
*et mediis properas Aquilonibus ire per altum,* 310  
*crudelis? quid, si non arua aliena domosque*  
*ignotas peteres, et Troia antiqua maneret,*  
*Troia per undosum peteretur classibus aequor?*  
*mene fugis? per ego has lacrimas dextramque tuam te*  
*(quando aliud mihi iam miserae nihil ipsa reliqui),* 315  
*per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos,*  
*si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quicquam*  
*dulce meum, miserere domus labentis et istam,*  
*oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.*  
*te propter Libycae gentes Nomadumque tyranni* 320  
*odere, infensi Tyrii; te propter eundem*  
*extinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam,*  
*fama prior. cui me moribundam deseris hospes*  
*(hoc solum nomen quoniam de coniuge restat)?*  
*quid moror? an mea Pygmalion dum moenia frater* 325  
*destruat aut captam ducat Gaetulus Iarbas?*  
*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.'* 330  
 (Aen. 4.305-30)

“Did you even *hope*, you traitor, you could hide such an unspeakable crime and depart silently from my land? Does neither our love, nor your prior pledge, nor the fact that your Dido is about to die a cruel death hold you? No, rather, even though it is winter you are hastening to prepare your fleet and to go across the sea when the North winds are at their worst—you heartless bastard! Come on, even if you were not seeking foreign fields and unknown homes, and ancient Troy were still standing, would you seek *Troy* through the stormy sea? Is it *me* you flee? Through these tears, through the pledge of your right hand (since (315) I have left my wretched self nothing else), through our marriage and the undertaking of our wedded union, if I well deserved anything from you, if anything of mine was sweet to you, pity this falling house, I beseech you, and if there is any room left for prayers, change that decision of yours. On account of you the Libyan people and the kings of the Nomads hate me, and the Tyrians are hostile; on account of you again my honor has been extinguished and my previous heroic reputation, by which alone I was ascending to the stars. To whom do you desert me, my guest (since only this name now remains from he who was once husband)? Why do I

delay? Until my brother Pygmalion destroys my walls or Gaetolian Iarbas leads me away as a captive? At least if I had begotten a child before your flight, if some little Aeneas were playing in my hall, who would still recollect you with his face, I think I would not feel so totally trapped and deserted.”

Dido had heard from Fama that Aeneas was preparing his fleet (4.298-9), and we can see that she rightly assumes that he is resuming the mission (*arva aliena domosque/ ignotas*, 4.311-12) that she was almost—but not quite—certain he had definitively abandoned. Her nervousness despite the apparent security of the relationship (*omnia tuta timens*, “fearing everything, even though it was safe,” 4.298) is suggestive. For she seems to recognize, as *inceptos hymenaeos* may imply, that there is something incomplete about their *conubia*.<sup>723</sup> If she thought the notion that they were married were in any fundamental sense contestable, it seems unlikely that she would bring it up here as she does. She must, one may imagine, be perfectly aware that they were not joined by a regular wedding ceremony, but perhaps does not expect that Aeneas would contest their personal promises and the realities of their married life on technical grounds.

We may note what must appear his desperation to escape her, for to others (who have not seen Mercury) his motivation clearly cannot be his scarcely compelling (*aliena, ignotas*) mission that is really driving him, for he would not sail even for his beloved

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<sup>723</sup> Against the suggestion of Conington (“The *conubia*, as Wagner remarks, was the furtive union; the *hymenaei* the formal rite to which she flattered herself it was a prelude—whence *incepti*.”) Henry (1873-92: 696 *ad* 4.314-9) observes, “Dido adjures Aeneas by her marriage with him (*per conubia nostra*), and then recollecting that he might demur to that expression, modifies it by the addition of the word *inceptos*; *hymenaeos* being used for *conubia* according to our author’s usual manner, and merely for the sake of variety and richness, and the sense being exactly the same as if the words had been “*per conubia nostra, per incepta conubia nostra*,” or “*per hymenaeos nostros, per inceptos hymenaeos nostros*.” That is, this is theme and variation.

Troy in such a dangerous season. The reason must be her (*mene fugis?*).<sup>724</sup> That this humiliating deduction would be readily apparent to anyone is ruinous to her as a public figure. She asks him to pity her falling house (*miserere domus labentis*), and indicates that in the course of their relationship latent hostilities both domestically and with foreign neighbors have turned to outright hatreds (*te propter Libycae gentes Nomadumque tyranni/ odere, infensi Tyrii*) and that her entire identity has been destroyed (*te propter eundem/ extinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam,/ fama prior.*) This *fama*, as discussed above, is not simply her reputation as a chaste woman, but the powerful persona she had built around her remarkable personal morality, which reinforced her legitimacy as a monarch. That can never be gotten back. Her only hope to retain power might have been to have had a son, to have produced an heir whose regent she would be. Her moving wish to have a *parvulus Aeneas* to totter around her halls is genuinely moving, but also fits with the acute awareness of her devastating political loss that undergirds the speech.<sup>725</sup>

Aeneas responds to her claims on his love and gratitude in what a great many critics consider a most unsatisfactory manner:

*Dixerat. ille Iouis monitis immota tenebat  
lumina et obnixus curam sub corde premebat.  
tandem pauca refert: 'ego te, quae plurima fando  
enumerare uales, numquam, regina, negabo  
promeritam, nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae                     335  
dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.  
pro re pauca loquar. neque ego hanc abscondere furto*

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<sup>724</sup> Ovid's Dido elaborates on this suggestion (*Her. 7: 47-8*): *exerceo pretiosa odia et constantia magno,/ si, dum me careas, est tibi vile mori.* "You exercise a costly hatred and dearly bought constancy, if you consider it a small price to die in getting rid of me."

<sup>725</sup> On Dido's emphasis throughout the speech on the political consequences of the loss of her *fama*, see Monti 1981: 40-1.

*speravi (ne finge) fugam, nec coniugis umquam  
 praetendi taedas aut haec in foedera ueni.*  
*me si fata meis paterentur ducere uitam* 340  
*auspiciis et sponte mea componere curas,  
 urbem Troianam primum dulcisque meorum  
 reliquias colerem, Priami tecta alta manerent,  
 et recidiua manu posuissem Pergama uictis.*  
*sed nunc Italiam magnam Gryneus Apollo,* 345  
*Italiam Lyciae iussere capessere sortes;  
 hic amor, haec patria est. si te Karthaginis arces  
 Phoenissam Libycaeque aspectus detinet urbis,  
 quae tandem Ausonia Teucros considerare terra  
 inuidia est? et nos fas extera quaerere regna.* 350  
*me patris Anchisae, quotiens umentibus umbris  
 nox operit terras, quotiens astra ignea surgunt,  
 admonet in somnis et turbida terret imago;  
 me puer Ascanius capitisque iniuria cari,  
 quem regno Hesperiae fraudo et fatalibus aruis.* 355  
*nunc etiam interpret diuum Ioue missus ab ipso  
 (testor utrumque caput) celeris mandata per auras  
 detulit: ipse deum manifesto in lumine uidi  
 intransentem muros uocemque his auribus hausit.*  
*desine meque tuis incendere teque querelis;* 360  
*Italiam non sponte sequor.'*

(Aen. 4. 331-61)

She had spoken. He, by the commands of Jupiter, kept his eyes fixed and, struggling, suppressed the love in his heart. Finally he answers briefly: "I, my queen, will never deny your worthiness of the many things you are able to enumerate, nor will I regret to recall Elissa for as long as I am mindful of myself, as long as life rules these limbs. I will state my case briefly. Neither did I hope (do not imagine it) to conceal this flight with stealth, nor did I ever hold forth the wedding torches of a husband, or enter into this agreement. If fate permitted me to lead my life by my own auspices and to settle my cares according to my own will, I would be cultivating the city of Troy first and the sweet remnants of my people, the high house of Priam would remain, and I would myself have put down a reborn Pergamum for the conquered. But now (345) Grynean Apollo, now the Lycian oracle have ordered me to lay hold of great Italy. This is my love, this is my homeland. If the citadel of Carthage and the vision of a Lybian city can hold you, a Phoenecian, how, I ask, can you begrudge the Teucrians settlement in the land of Ausonia. We too are permitted to seek foreign kingdoms. Whenever night covers the land with damp shadows, whenever fiery stars rise, an anxious image of my father Anchises warns me in my dreams and terrifies me; the boy Ascanius, the injury to one so dear, whom I am defrauding of the kingdom of Hesperia and

his fated fields [moves] me. Now even the messenger of the gods, sent by Jupiter himself (I swear on both our heads) has brought down commands through the swift air: I myself saw him in broad daylight entering the walls and I heard his voice with these ears. Cease setting me and yourself on fire with your complaints; I am not seeking Italy of my own will.”

Perkell observes, “while Aeneas does recognize the necessity of being gentle and consoling, the words which he actually utters to Dido are not consoling but inflammatory. In his speech Aeneas acknowledges no fault of his own; he expresses no love for Dido, no sympathy for her pain, no regret at leaving her. Instead he attempts to exonerate himself with the superficially correct but substantively false legalism that he never actually married her.”<sup>726</sup> By stating that he did not *technically* marry Dido, however, he inadvertently admits that in some other sense, he did. We can see, then, a certain point of agreement between them that they were in meaningful, if formally illegitimate way, married. He goes on to state, after an elaborate protasis (*me si fata...4.340*), that if he had his own way...he would rebuild Troy. “Both Dido and the reader surely expect that Aeneas will conclude (to paraphrase) ‘...I would certainly remain with you.’ This is the moment to affirm love and care,”<sup>727</sup> but he does not. The claim that Italy, not Dido, is his love (*hic amor, haec patria est, 4.347*) is a slap in the face, and it strikes a note of discord both with his prior presentation of his mission to Italy, which, even on a traditional reading, is far from meriting the word ‘*amor*,’ but also fits poorly with his repeated statement within this very speech that he is being forced to go there against his own will (*me si fata meis paterentur ducere uitam/ auspiciis, etc. 4.340-1; Italiam non sponte*

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<sup>726</sup> Perkell 1981: 365.

<sup>727</sup> Perkell 1981: 368.

*sequor*, 4.361). He also “implicitly discredits her feelings for him by suggesting that it is malice or envy which motivates her to detain him (4.347-50).”

Though some argue that Aeneas’ reticence speaks well of him here,<sup>728</sup> I think Perkell is right that it is counterproductive: “Aeneas’ lack of sympathy is what most keenly wounds (4.368-70). Dido’s grief is based on her lost love and the loss of her kingdom, but her rage is based on his lack of acknowledgment of his role in this.”<sup>729</sup> However, her argument that these passages “make the reader question Aeneas’ moral and emotional courage and honesty”<sup>730</sup> must be balanced with the fact that Jupiter has supernaturally blocked Aeneas’ ability to connect with Dido (*ille Iovis monitis immota tenebat/ lumina et obnixus curam sub corde premebat*, 4.331-2).<sup>731</sup> If we take the intervention of the gods to be represented as real within the story world, then, even where it consists of an augmentation of a potential already present in the character’s nature, it still deflects from characters the full force of the blame that their actions could otherwise elicit. I take Venus’ intervention as rendering Dido’s *culpa* of falling in love with Aeneas pitiable, and I likewise take the restraints that Jupiter puts on Aeneas (4.331, 396, 440) to explain his tone-deaf, uncaring response—despite his genuine care (4.332, 4.393-6, 4.448-9)—to Dido’s valid and devastating concerns. On my reading, it is the gods of the

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<sup>728</sup> Feeney 1990 argues this on rhetorical grounds, Braund 1998 on the grounds of ancient theory of personality, according to which garrulity was a mark of lower class.

<sup>729</sup> Perkell 1981: 366. Feeney 1990:190 believes “there is nothing in the poem to give us reason to believe that any other words would have been more effective.” We can see, though, that Dido’s anger escalates when Aeneas fails to show that he feels her pain (*num fletu ingemuit nostro?*, etc. 4.370). This suggests that a caring response would have had a different effect.

<sup>730</sup> Perkell 1981: 237, cf. Otis [1966] 1995: 268-9.

<sup>731</sup> Jupiter’s admonishments did not include anything to the effect that he must show no emotion in speaking to Dido, and therefore the ambiguity of the phrase that he does so “by the command of Jove” suggests that Jupiter has instilled this inclination in him, just as by Jupiter’s will Dido was made to feel kindly toward the Trojans (*deo volente*, 1.301-4).

story world, not the human characters—their victims—who come off looking bad in this episode. The fact that Aeneas is doing what is right by the gods does not make his actions look just, but rather it makes their actions and the values according to which the gods govern the world look unjust. This is what the *pietas* demanded by Jove looks like.<sup>732</sup> As Hedjuk has recently argued in a thorough and persuasive article, “Virgil’s Jupiter is in fact concerned solely with power (*imperium*) and adulation (*fama*), despite persistent attempts by readers and characters in the poem to see him as benign.”<sup>733</sup> Jupiter made Dido expose herself to vulnerability, and then made Aeneas wound her; and he did so because he could not advance his chosen people to the glory and power that he desired for them without awkwardly stepping around the parries of Juno, the formidable female with whom he himself, though omnipotent, did not wish to cross swords.

The expectation voiced in Dido’s subsequent response (4.371-2) that Juno and Jupiter will not approve of the wrong done to her would, therefore, be laughable if it were not so sad.<sup>734</sup> The injustice of the gods of the story world again raises theological questions that can be applied to the actual world. Provoked from her alternating grief and anger to a state of blind rage by Aeneas’ condescending argument and unfeeling refusal to acknowledge or mourn the fact that she will be ruined by his departure (*num fletu*

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<sup>732</sup> “If Aeneas epitomizes *pietas*, as his repeated epithet would indicate, then perhaps Virgil is suggesting that *pietas* so conceived is a flawed ideal since it seems not to require humane virtues or any personal loyalty or affection which does not ultimately subserve what we might term political or military goals.” Perrell 1981: 370-1.

<sup>733</sup> Hedjuk 2009: 279.

<sup>734</sup> “Finally, Dido comes to accept that the immutable *fata Iouis* (4.614) are the source of all her troubles, and she bitterly names them before she pronounces her curse on Aeneas (615-29) and prepares the sacrifice of her own body to “Stygian Jupiter” (638). Much of the pathos of the Dido episode, I suggest, comes from the way her confident prayers to the god of justice and hospitality disintegrate into sarcasm and despair. For as the reader knows, far from responding to Dido’s pleas, Jupiter’s role is to ensure that Aeneas will fail to respond to them as well (4.331, 356, 396, 440).” (Hedjuk 2009: 316).

*ingemuit nostro? num lumina flexit*, 4.369), she unleashes her anger, and sums up her complaint in a way particularly pertinent to the themes of this study. For she goes on to point out that when she was offering Aeneas a home in her kingdom, he did not appear to feel compelled by the oracles that he now cites:

*'nusquam tuta fides. eiectum litore, egentem  
excepi et regni demens in parte locaui.  
amissam classem, socios a morte reduxi  
(heu furiis incensa feror!): nunc augur Apollo,  
nunc Lyciae sortes, nunc et Ioue missus ab ipso  
interpres diuum fert horrida iussa per auras.'*  
(*Aen.* 4. 373-8)

“Good faith is safe nowhere. When you were cast up on my shore, in total need, I took you in, and (I must have been out of my mind) gave you a place in my kingdom. I brought back your lost fleet and saved your companions from death (alas, I am on fire with rage!). *Now* the Augur Apollo, *now* the Lycian oracle, *now* even the messenger of the gods sent by Jupiter himself brings terrible orders through the air!”

Dido is not simply enumerating Aeneas’ debts—a point he already conceded in anticipation (*quae plurima fando/ enumerare vales*, 4.333-4)—but pointing out that previously Aeneas did not act as if he felt compelled by the divine mandates he is now citing. When she sarcastically exclaims that “*now* Grynean Apollo, *now* the Lycian oracle, *now* even the messenger of Jove” command him to seek Italy, she implies a contrast with the attitude toward his mission that he previously displayed back at the time when she received him in Carthage.<sup>735</sup> I have chosen to highlight this moment, the anaphora of *nunc*, in the title of this chapter, because Dido’s implication here accords

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<sup>735</sup> In his narration of his wanderings in Books 2—3, Aeneas mentioned neither Apollo’s temple at Gryneum (in Asia minor) nor his oracle at Lycia. Aeneas did receive an oracle from Apollo on Delos, and Williams suggests (1971: 363 *ad* 4.345) that “it is probable therefore that Aeneas refers to this oracle, giving Apollo two of his familiar epithets without meaning that the oracle was given in these places.” I do not find this entirely satisfactory (he does not merely call Apollo Lycian, but refers to *Lyciae sortes*).



with the reading of Aeneas' attitude advanced in my previous chapters, as well the horizon developed in Book 4. She is not just mocking his divine excuses, but pointing out that they do not hold water within his own self-presentation, that there is a contrast between his attitude toward divine messages *then*, and his attitude toward them *now*. It is not simply that she does not think the gods care to come down (though it is clearly that, too, 4.379-80), but she rhetorically asks why, if Aeneas is so concerned with his mission and the gods are so concerned with his mission, this only coming up *now*. It is a legitimate question. In constructing the possible subworld which Aeneas has been projecting onto his actual world, this is easy to answer—he doubted the gods and thought he could avoid their supposed plans for him. In terms of the workings of the actual (fictional) world, it is also easy, but theologically unsatisfactory—omnipotent Jupiter simply did not notice.

Dido curses Aeneas (4.382-7), then collapses, and *pius* Aeneas returns to his ships,<sup>736</sup> constraining his desire to show Dido the care that would soothe her, in accordance with the *iussa divum* (4.396). Since Aeneas has no choice but to go (or blatantly refuse a direct command issued personally by a god), the question of culpability tends to focus on the legitimacy of the marriage. To many critics, the justice of Aeneas and Dido's behavior is correlated directly to this: if they were not technically married, then Aeneas has done nothing wrong and Dido's ruin is her own fault; and if they were in some legitimate, if not technical, sense married, then he is a lying scoundrel.<sup>737</sup> In

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<sup>736</sup> The epithet here has been taken both as a commendation of Aeneas' behavior (Page 1955: 122 *ad* 4.393: "it means that he has been true to himself and done his duty at a dreadful cost") and a condemnation of *pietas* so conceived (most forcefully, Perkell 1981).

<sup>737</sup> Perkell 1981: 364-8.

assessing whether the characters are acting in morally culpable ways, the real issue, in my view, is not whether the relationship counts as a “marriage,” but the question at its root, namely whether they were honest with one another about their intentions.<sup>738</sup> To ascertain this, the reader must fill in some very large gaps, but has a great deal of suggestive material with which to do so. In working through the first four books of the poem in linear fashion with the issue of character intentions and self-presentation in mind, this study has attempted to establish the horizon available to the reader attempting to establish consistency at this juncture. On the evidence as discussed here, both the argument that Dido has “deluded” herself about the nature of the relationship, or has a “limited grasp of the complexity of the situation”<sup>739</sup> and the argument that Aeneas knowingly misled her miss the mark.<sup>740</sup> Both views assume that Aeneas always intended to resume his mission at some point, and so Dido’s belief that Aeneas planned to stay permanently must be either the result of her confusion or his misrepresentation. As I have argued, Dido is presented as a shrewd interpreter, and from the start she understands Aeneas almost better than he understands himself. Aeneas appears not only to Dido, but also to the external reader, from the very beginning of the poem, as skeptical of the gods’ reliability and disillusioned with his mission. What specifically Dido and Aeneas might have said to one another about the relationship while passing the winter as a couple is open to the reader’s

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<sup>738</sup> One problem with focusing on the legitimacy of the wedding is that while a ritually correct, legitimate wedding ceremony (which we do not have) would indeed prove that Aeneas had promised to stay, the fact of an irregular union does not prove the reverse.

<sup>739</sup> Pavlock 1990: 81.

<sup>740</sup> Monti 1981: 76. “His wrong consists in having involved himself in a relationship to which it would be impossible to remain faithful.”

imagination,<sup>741</sup> but the fact that she publicly calls it a marriage implies his acceptance of this term, if not his own use of it. What Dido does not “grasp”—the legitimacy and immutability of Aeneas’ prophesied destiny—is the same thing that Aeneas himself does not grasp until Mercury intervenes. In short, neither of them was wrong about the other, but both of them were wrong about the gods.

As Dido descends into madness, the darker side of her character fully emerges, a potential that was hinted at in Book 1. As she resolves to die, the reader is reminded that she is still the deceptive Dido of legend. When Dido considers her unacceptable, humiliating options—begging marriage with a local king, or flight with the arrogant Trojans (4.534-46)—we are reminded of the tricks that Venus glossed over in her white-washed version of Dido’s story. For Dido says that would not now be able to compel her people into exile again, “whom I scarcely pried out of the city of Sidon,” (*quos Sidonia vix urbe revelli*, 4.545). According to Venus, they came willingly, out of hatred and fear of Pygmalion (1.361-2), but as I argued in Chapter 2, the reader was encouraged to understand that Venus was hiding unsavory aspects of Dido’s story from Aeneas, one of which was her deceptive coercion of followers. The reader who has taken Dido’s legend to supply the “uncensored” background will find that deduction confirmed here. She *did* have to coerce followers.

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<sup>741</sup> Quinn (1963: 39), for example, writes the ghost chapter thus: “[Dido] regards herself, not as embarking on a liaison to be kept secret (*nec.furtivum...meditatur amorem*), but an effective marriage to be openly acknowledged. For the moment, though, we can imagine she is as anxious as he to avoid explicit discussion of intentions. She must wait till she feels Aeneas willing to sacrifice for her his mission to Italy. But ‘she calls it marriage’ (*coniugium vocat*). The word slips out, perhaps, in his presence; if it does, he lets it pass. Virgil leaves it all as vague as he wants us to imagine they did.”

It is, then, with her back against the wall politically that she exclaims to herself, “No, rather, die as you deserve,” (*quin morere ut merita es*, 4.546). As Monti observes, “Only after she has convinced herself that she has no place to turn, do her thoughts bring her to Sychaeus and suicide.”<sup>742</sup> Political entrapment is combined with her love for Sychaeus in prompting her suicide, just as was the case for the Dido of legend. The suicide she used to prevent a remarriage that would result in her kingdom being politically dominated becomes, in Vergil’s account, a suicide to escape the political domination that will be a consequence of her failed remarriage. The same elements have been effectively reconfigured to operate in comparable ways within a new plot. Even Dido’s refusal in the historical tradition to live “in the manner of beasts,” (*ferarum more*, *Ep.* 18.6.3) married to a barbarian, is converted into lament that she could not live “in the manner of a beast,” (*more ferae*, 4.551) married to no one.<sup>743</sup>

Meanwhile, Mercury visits Aeneas again and admonishes him to flee immediately. Aeneas obeys, praying, “Whoever you are, we again obey your command, rejoicing,” (*quisquis es, imperioque iterum paremus ovantes*, 4.577). Feeney remarks that this echoes Mercury’s obedience to Jupiter at 4.238-9 and Aeneas’ men’s happy obedience at 4.294-5: “These marked verbal overlaps reveal that Aeneas, as a commander

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<sup>742</sup> Monti 1980: 56. He notes (p. 58): “Her sentimental attachment to Aeneas implies a political commitment, but not a criminal act. The element of moral conflict is introduced for different reasons from those which generate its appearance in Euripides, Apollonius and Catullus.” As Panoussi (2002: 109) notes, Dido is comparable to Ajax who, “in his self-questioning also weighs possible options, which he similarly dismisses: to return home dishonored (460–65) or to attack the Trojans and die in battle (466–70). In both cases the characters’ attempts to formulate the alternatives to heroic suicide convince them of their impossibility.”

<sup>743</sup> On this echo, Jackson Knight (1944: 97) observes that Vergil seems to have carried over a phrase that belonged to her original story—it makes perfect sense in the context of Trogus’ story—and “mysteriously reversed” its meaning. On the broader significance of the phrase in Vergil’s account, which suggests an ill fit between her inner nature and her external role, see Nappa 2007.

and a servant, is in alignment with what the epic and imperial plot demand of him—he is now ‘quoting’ the narrator. . . . Aeneas is now internalizing constraints that had formerly been represented as external.”<sup>744</sup> It may well appear this way, but one may note that Aeneas’ obedience is fleeting. He may seem at this moment to have “internalized” the demands of his mission, but the reader will soon see him uncertain of his fate and debating aborting his mission again following the burning of the ships in Book 5. Aeneas understands that he must obey the god; he still does not fully appreciate why.

The justification for Mercury’s prediction that Dido poses a danger will soon be shown, for as Dido watches the Trojan ships sailing away as dawn breaks, the dangerous Dido, whose instincts had to be suppressed by divine intervention, reemerges:

<i>‘pro Iuppiter! ibit</i>	590
<i>‘hic,’ ait ‘et nostris inluserit advena regnis?</i>	
<i>non arma expedient totaque ex urbe sequentur,</i>	
<i>diripientque rates alii navalibus? ite,</i>	
<i>ferte citi flammās, date tela, impellite remos!</i>	
<i>quid loquor? aut ubi sum? quae mentem insania mutat?</i>	595
<i>infelix Dido, nunc te facta impia tangunt?</i>	
<i>tum decuit, cum sceptrā dabas. en dextra fidesque,</i>	
<i>quem secum patrios aiunt portare penatis,</i>	
<i>quem subiisse umeris confectum aetate parentem!</i>	
<i>non potui abreptum divellere corpus et undis</i>	600
<i>spargere? non socios, non ipsum absumere ferro</i>	
<i>Ascanium patriisque epulandum ponere mensis?</i>	
<i>verum anceps pugnae fuerat fortuna. fuisset:</i>	
<i>quem metui moritura? faces in castra tulissem</i>	
<i>implessemque foros flammis natumque patremque</i>	601
<i>cum genere extinxem, memet super ipsa dedissem.’</i>	
<i>(Aen. 4.590-606)</i>	

“By Jupiter! Will this man go?” she says, “Will some interloper have made a mockery of my kingdom? Will they not grab arms and stream out of the city in pursuit, and others tear their ships from the sheds? Go, bring flames, quickly! Hand out weapons, press the oars! What am I saying? Where am I? What

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<sup>744</sup> Feeney 1998: 122-3.

madness changes my purpose? Oh, unlucky Dido, *now* impious deeds touch you? The fitting time for that was when you were giving him your scepter. For, look at *his* right hand and faithfulness—a man whom they say carries his ancestral gods with him, whom they say carried his aged father on his shoulders! Could I not (600) have snatched his body, ripped it apart, and thrown it in the water? Could I not have killed his companions with the sword, or Ascanius himself, and put him to be eaten on his father’s table? But the fortune of the battle would have been doubtful. Grant that it had been: whom did I, about to die, fear? I should have brought torches into their camp and filled their gangways with flames and killed the son and the father together with their race, and added my very self in addition.”

Dido’s exclamation, “Unhappy Dido, *now* impious deeds touch you? They ought to have [touched you] back when you were giving him your scepter,” (*infelix Dido, nunc te facta impia tangunt?/ tum decuit, cum sceptras dabas*) has generated debate between scholars as to whether Dido refers here to her own *impia facta* or those of Aeneas.<sup>745</sup> As Page, arguing that they are her own *impia facta* puts it, “Some explain *facta impia* of the evil deeds of Aeneas. But, until he deceived her, how could his evil deeds touch her?”<sup>746</sup> Pavlock adds that “she is obsessively concerned with her own impiety in breaking her promise to Sychaeus.”<sup>747</sup> While taking the *impia facta* as those of Aeneas does not yield good sense, for just the reason Page cited, taking them to mean the betrayal her oath to Sychaeus is problematic, too. For with the emphatic *nunc*, Dido suggests that the *impia facta* in question did not occur to her previously, whereas the moral failure entailed in breaking her oath to the ashes of Sychaeus certainly did—she agonized over her attraction to Aeneas and swore an elaborate oath not to break her promise (4.24-9). Monti takes the *impia facta* in reference to Aeneas, and tries to fix the illogic that entails by suggesting a shift in meaning from the first *impia facta* (“is it only now that Aeneas’

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<sup>745</sup> Monti 1981: 63-8 reviews the arguments in detail. See also Gruen 1980 and Casali 1999.

<sup>746</sup> Page 1951: 388 *ad* 4.497.

<sup>747</sup> Pavlock 1990: 83.

impious deeds touch you?") to the second ("The possibility of him committing impious deeds ought to have touched you at the time when you were handing over the scepter.") Even if one accepts this shift, the same problem remains as if we take the *impia facta* in reference to Dido—namely, that it is not "only now," as she watches Aeneas' ships sail off, that Aeneas' impiety has occurred to her—she already thoroughly impugned his *pietas* in their scathing exchange of speeches (4.305-330 and 4.365-87).

The *impia facta* can be better explained, I submit, by looking both to what comes before and after this verse. Dido has just given orders for the ships of the man who is still her *hospes* to be attacked (4.593-4). She stops herself, realizing that such orders to attack her own guest, however ill he treated her, are *insania* (4.595). With crazed irony, she wonders why only now, when it is too late, such *impia facta* occur to her; if she was going to kill a guest, she ought to have done it back when he first arrived, instead of handing over her kingdom to him. This makes the best sense, I think, of *tum decuit cum sceptrā dabas*. It also fits with what follows, for she seems to justify the notion of killing a guest with the explanation that he himself did not adhere to civilized social norms either (*en dextra fidesque*, "because, look at his right hand and faithfulness!"),<sup>748</sup> and proceeds to remark that she could have ripped him limb from limb (4.600-1), as Medea killed her own brother, or fed Ascanius to his father in a Thyestian feast (4.601-2)—references to classic mythological *impia*. Moreover, these ravings remind us why, in part, she did not do these things—because Mercury came down in advance of the Trojans and softened her

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<sup>748</sup> On the "inferential" particle *en*, meaning "because, look!" or "for, look!" see Monti 1981: 67.

heart toward the Trojans, ensuring their safe reception (*hospitio*, 1.298-9), and Venus made Dido fall in love with Aeneas, ensuring their safe departure.<sup>749</sup>

Vergil retains and repurposes the traditional Dido's trick of the funeral pyre, which she pretended was for religious rites before marriage but was in fact for her suicide. Instead of tricking her hated local suitor, Vergil's Dido uses it to fool her beloved sister. Her false demeanor (*consilium vultu tegit*, 4.477) and her elaborate fabrication of the story that she will use the pyre for magical rites recalls the historical Dido's dissimulation of her true feelings and detailed, elaborate, directly reported lies.<sup>750</sup> It is quite important, then, that we not believe, as critics sometimes do, that Dido has really resorted to magical rites to win Aeneas back or cure herself of love (*mihi reddat eum vel eo me solvat amantem*, 4.479).<sup>751</sup> Her problem at this point is no longer simply her rejected love, but the fact that she is politically trapped and can neither flee nor, with her *fama* fatally undermined by the humiliation of her public abandonment, can she reassume her power and return to her prior life. Her reputation, and the public authority she built upon it, is irreparably damaged. It completely misunderstands her character and situation

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<sup>749</sup> As Moorton notes, Dido's thirst for vengeance recalls that of Aeetes (*Arg.* 4.230-5). When we recall that Mercury's softening of her heart in Book 1 evoked Hermes' softening of Aeetes' heart, we see, as Moorton observes (1989: 53), that "Vergil crafts a meaningful symmetry between Aeetes and Dido at both the beginning and the end of her encounter with Aeneas in order to deepen our sense of the formidable nature and unfortunate destiny of his poignant heroine."

<sup>750</sup> One may recall her feigned appearance of friendliness toward her hated brother in Pompeius Trogus' account (*Elissa diu fratrem propter scelus auersata ad postremum dissimulato odio mitigatoque interim uultu fugam tacita molitur*, "Finally, concealing her hatred and assuming a conciliatory demeanour, she secretly prepared her escape," Justin Ep. 18.3.9, trans Yardley.) See Chapter 2 for discussion of the relation of this to Vergil's account.

<sup>751</sup> E.g., R.M. Henry (1930: 104): "I am inclined to think that Virgil intends us to assume that Dido in her conscious mind meant them to be a trick to deceive her sister while her hopes still played with the possibility that they might succeed in winning, if not her lover, at least oblivion." Likewise, Quinn (1963: 54): "On the more rational level, the magic is all supposed to be an elaborate subterfuge: she wants to commit suicide dramatically, but keep her plan concealed. At the same time it is clear that Dido half believes irrationally in the power of the hocus-pocus, somehow, to stave off the inevitable and keep Aeneas."



to think that her feelings of love are actually a problem that she is trying to fix at this point.<sup>752</sup> The personal code of honor by which she publicly and personally defined herself has been destroyed, and there is no solution to that.

Dido is in this respect analogous to Sophocles' Ajax.<sup>753</sup> As Jackson Knight observed: "Dido, like Ajax who killed the sheep of the Greeks in a mad mistake for the Greek leaders, is furious with herself, and hopeless, and resolves to die. In the end, as Ajax falls on the sword of Hector his foe, so Dido falls on the sword of Aeneas, once her dearest, crying to the sun that sees all; they both pray for vengeance, Ajax to the Erinyes, the Furies, and Dido to 'Angels of Dido at her death'; and Dido's long curse is, like the curse of Ajax, half a prophecy."<sup>754</sup> Moreover, as Panoussi argues, "Ajax commits suicide after violating the value he championed when alive, that of *aidos*; Dido takes her life after having violated a value very similar to Ajax' *aidos*, i.e., *pudor*. Both fall prey to madness, and both experience isolation from their communities. The extremism accompanying the final stages of their lives and the kinship between their personal systems of values are painstakingly portrayed in the Vergilian narrative. Most important, both find themselves unable to negotiate an alternative heroic identity when faced with the demands of a new socio-political reality."<sup>755</sup>

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<sup>752</sup> As Pöschl observes (1962: 86) on the related topic of her motivation for suicide: "The queen's pride, her self-respect, her sense of dignity, and her thirst for revenge, all demand her death. . . . The very character of Dido demands that she not seek death because of lost love, but because of the consciousness of her deep fall. That Queen Dido should commit suicide because of frustrated passion would seem far from great to Vergil. Such a motivation might be sentimental and touching, but Vergil's aim here was to inspire."

<sup>753</sup> On recollections of Ajax in Dido, see Hight 1972: 230-1, Lefèvre 1978, Tatum 1984, and Panoussi 2002.

<sup>754</sup> Jackson Knight 1944: 100.

<sup>755</sup> Panoussi 2002: 104.

We see in Dido's death the impossibility of her living with her *fama* demolished, but we also catch hints of what, in a different world, might have been. As Krevans shows, Dido's final address (4.651-62) to the *dulces exuviae* of Aeneas as she sits upon a couch covered with *Iliacas vestes* (both of which she demonstrates are bed-coverings that symbolize the marriage), recalls Hypsipyle's gifts to Jason of textiles which in their histories and depictions "are in turn associated with love-making and betrayal."<sup>756</sup> Krevans argues that "[t]here is a certain irony in evoking Hypsipyle at the moment Dido prepares to stab herself. Of all the women associated with the intertextual textile chain, Hypsipyle is the one who negotiates the hazards of abandonment best."<sup>757</sup> This final allusion to Hypsipyle balances the important allusion to her in Dido's reception of Aeneas in Book 1, where she offered him her kingdom, and so the allusion here creates a ring. Comparing the two heroines, the reader may wonder why Dido could not in the end be like Hypsipyle, letting Aeneas go with the grace and goodwill. In comparing and contrasting the two stories, it is noteworthy that Jason politely but explicitly declined Hypsipyle's offer, in contrast to Aeneas, as I argued in Chapter 1. Hypsipyle has known all along that Jason would leave—he never let her believe otherwise. This goes a long way toward explaining the difference between the two queens' reactions to their lovers' departures. We are reminded in this final evocation of Hypsipyle that if Aeneas had not imagined he could settle in Carthage, Dido would not have imagined it, either. They both pay a terrible price for his daring to think he could live his life according to his own will—though she, of course, much more so.

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<sup>756</sup> Krevans 2002-3: 181.

<sup>757</sup> Krevans 2002-3: 182.

The death of Dido in Book 4 is not, of course, the last the reader, or Aeneas, sees of her. Aeneas meets Dido again in the Underworld (6.450-76), and as Tatum observes, “[b]rief though it is, this famous encounter is also of great importance for our interpretation of Dido's character in Books 1 and 4.”<sup>758</sup> It forms an important coda that confirms some of the arguments that I have made about character and gender in the Dido and Aeneas episode. Scholars have noted the masculinity of Dido’s role as a city-founder and ruler, and I have stressed that this in and of itself effeminizes Aeneas when he becomes her consort and proxy. Just as Vergil hinted thorough out Book 1 that Dido was a Circe-like figure who wanted to turn the Trojans into Carthaginian “animals,” and to unman Aeneas himself, so in Book 4, when Mercury arrives to scold Aeneas for his “uxorious” behavior, we see that she has, metaphorically, done this. In their encounter in the Underworld in Book 6, this same dynamic of inverted power/gender roles is reprised through a dense nexus of allusions which liken her to male heroes and Aeneas to a loyal female slave.<sup>759</sup>

Aeneas first catches sight of Dido in the *Lugentes Campi*, the Fields of Mourning. She is introduced at the end of a catalogue of mythological women whom *durus amor* destroyed (6.442).

*His Phaedram Procrimque locis maestamque Eriphylen  
 crudelis nati monstrantem vulnera cernit,  
 Evadnenque et Pasiphaen; his Laodamia  
 it comes et iuvenis quondam, nunc femina, Caeneus  
 rursus et in veterem fato revoluta figuram.  
 inter quas Phoenissa recens a vulnere Dido*

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<sup>758</sup> Tatum 1984: 434.

<sup>759</sup> The suggestion of the internal animalistic nature of the Carthaginians and Dido is also renewed in this episode, where, as Pavlock (1990: 84) observes, “Dido’s appearance suggests an injured beast, nursing her wound in the forest.”

*errabat silva in magna.*

(*Aen.* 6.445-51)

In this place he sees Phaedra and Procris and sad Eriphyle, pointing to the wounds inflicted by her cruel son, and Evadne and Pasiphae; with these women Laodamia goes as a companion, and Caeneus, once a young man, now a woman, turned back again by fate into her old physical form. Among these women Phoenician Dido, her wound still fresh, wanders in the great forest.

Perret argued that the seven mythical heroines named in lines 6.445-48 represent a significant alteration to the catalogue of women in the passage upon which this is modeled, *Od.* 11.225-332. Although they were all victims of passion in some way, these heroines' varied stories—which involve both innocent misfortune (Procris) and loyalty (Evadne, Laodamia) as well as treachery (Eriphyle) and perversion (Phaedra, Pasiphae)—form an “*étrange amalgame*,”<sup>760</sup> which Perret showed to reflect aspects of Dido's own tragedy.<sup>761</sup> The relevance of the transgendered hero Caeneus, the final character mentioned and the closest in proximity to Dido, is the most perplexing. According to the tradition represented by Ovid (*Met.* 12.189-209 and 459-535), Caeneus was born a female named Caenis, who was raped as a young maiden by Poseidon. In recompense, the god granted her wish to become male so that she might never suffer such an assault again. As a male, Caeneus was a valiant and impenetrable warrior who later died fighting the Centaurs. At first glance Caeneus seems an incongruous addition to this group of

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<sup>760</sup> Perret 1964: 249.

<sup>761</sup> Perret (1964: 251) argues that the unity of the passage resides precisely in the confusing interlacing of vice and virtue (“*résident précisément dans ces déroutants entrelacs du vice et de la vertu*”) which creates a “diffraction” of the complex elements of Dido's own multiplicity (“*comme par un effet de diffraction, la multiplicité d'une âme complexe, la diversité d'un destin contrarié.*”) Cf. Johnston 1987: 651. West (1980) builds on this idea, arguing that Caeneus' presence points up the “tragic and eternal disharmony” of masculine and feminine in Dido's character. In a very valuable article Tatum (1984) then ties this observation into to the nexus of allusions that structures this encounter, which liken Dido to the male heroes Heracles (4.453-4) and Ajax (4.469-76). He includes a convincing discussion of the relevance of the allusion to Catullus 66 at 4.456, to which my present discussion will add additional observations.

women destroyed by love. However, as Perret observes, in Caenis/Caeneus' physical transformation from female to male, we can see a parallel for the vicissitudes of Dido's life, which led her from the early domesticity of marriage to a "*destin héroïque, masculin.*"<sup>762</sup>

Vergil's version appears unique in returning Caeneus to female form in the Underworld.<sup>763</sup> Perret sees this paralleled in Dido's return in death to the husband of her youth, and so to her original, feminine identity. As West points out, however, Vergil does not allow this transition to be as unproblematic as Perret presents it. Vergil keeps her name in the masculine form, Caeneus, creating an "inharmonious juxtaposition" that "calls into question the smooth transition from man back to woman,"<sup>764</sup> and suggests a residual, permanent disparity between her *figura* and her true identity. West observes that such a tension exists in Dido, too: "Caeneus' ambiguous gender in death—though female in shape, 'she' has a masculine name—corresponds to a tragic conflict in Dido's soul."<sup>765</sup> The anomalousness of Dido's gender was underlined throughout Books 1 and 4: though a woman, she devised and led a risky escape from Tyre (*dux femina facti*, 1.364), then founded a city and ruled over men (*iura dabat legesque viris*, 1.507). Like a Homeric hero, she assigned paramount value to her reputation (*fama*), and her sense of honor, personal dignity, and masculine self-control (*pudor*). In her maddened musings following

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<sup>762</sup> In Caenis/Caeneus we see "the projection or representation on the physical plane of what was on the moral plain the destiny of Dido." ("*la projection ou représentation au plan physique de ce que fut au plan moral la destinée de Didon.*") Perret 1964: 252.

<sup>763</sup> Perret 1964: 248.

<sup>764</sup> West 1980: 318. "If we view Dido's story under the aspect of her changing sexual roles, we discover that the ambiguity of Caeneus' gender points to an ambiguity in Dido's soul, an ambivalence dramatized in her life and commemorated now in the underworld."

<sup>765</sup> West 1980: 315. Pease (1935: 33) asserts that she is "thoroughly feminine," but in support he cites the observation that Dido's wish that she had conceived a child by Aeneas reveals a "deep insight into a woman's most sacred and natural desire for motherhood."

the dissolution of the affair, we see the devastation that loss of face wreaks on her.<sup>766</sup>

Dido has the mentality, the heart, of a hero in the body of a woman.<sup>767</sup> The (perhaps too easy, for Dido) suppression of womanly aspirations for the love of a husband and children was a part of her heroic identity, an identity irreparably damaged by her love-sickened lapse back into those conventional feminine ideals. As R.M. Henry well puts it:<sup>768</sup>

The lost reputation she laments is not that of having in the common phrase “lost her honour”: it is the reputation of being a queen whose heart was set not on the things of a woman, but on glory and renown, in the pride of which she had repulsed all suitors, which being now lost she must seek, as other women would have done earlier, an alliance with some of the princes of the neighbouring tribes. All this in Virgil's own way is made abundantly clear. Her *culpa* is the liability to passion, licit or illicit makes no matter: and her fate is not the punishment of her fault, but the inscrutable destiny that wrecks all mortal hopes and plans.

In the Underworld, Dido's allusively emphasized (as further discussion will show) heroic orientation sits uneasily beside her renewed dependence upon the husband of her youth.

Aeneas catches sight of Dido's shadowy form, which the poet likens to a man catching sight of the moon through clouds:

*quam Troius heros  
ut primum iuxta stetit agnovitque per umbras  
obscuram, qualem primo qui surgere mense  
aut videt aut vidisse putat per nubila lunam,*

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<sup>766</sup> Dido attributes the loss of image (*fama*), which was based scrupulous concern for public appearance (*pudor*), to her love for Aeneas (*te propter eundem/ extinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam,/ fama prior*. 4.321-3). The reader can see what this loss of face means to her especially the soliloquy at 4.534ff., where she loathes the thought of crawling back (*inrisa, supplex*) to the local kings she scorned (*sim totiens...dedignata*) or obeying the orders (*iussa*) of the Trojans, who would treat her haughtily (*superbis*). She feels that her kingdom has been mocked (*inluserit*, 4.591) by Aeneas' use of her. She reaffirms her heroic values and identity in her final speech on her deathbed, enumerating her accomplishments (4.651-62).

<sup>767</sup> Dido is here allusively compared both to Ajax and to Heracles, but it is worth considering her general similarity to another hero, Achilles, who like Dido is in a certain sense an tragically incongruous hybrid by nature. He has the ambitions of a god in the body of a man, just as Dido has the ambitions of a man in the body of a woman.

<sup>768</sup> Henry 1930: 105-6.

*demisit lacrimas dulcique adfatus amore est.*  
(*Aen.* 6.451-5)

The Trojan hero, when he first stood next to her and recognized her dim form through the shadows—[dim] like the moon at the beginning of the month [that] one sees or thinks he has seen rising through the clouds—wept and spoke with tender love.

Here Dido's identity is again linked with a heroic male figure, for this simile echoes

Apollonius' description of Heracles fading from Lynceus' sight in the *Argonautica*:

a0ta\r to/te g' 9Hraklh+=a  
mou~non a0peiresi/hj thlou~ xqono\j eilsato Lugkeu/j  
tw\j i0de/ein, w3j ti/j te ne/w| e0ni\ h3mati mh/nhn  
h3 ilden, h3 e0do/khsen e0paxlu/ousan i0de/sqai.  
(*Arg.* 4.1477-80)

But on that day, at least, Lynceus thought he had seen Heracles all alone, far away in that endless land, as a man on the first day of the month sees (or thinks he sees) the moon through the clouds.

(Race trans.)

As Tatum observes, “in each instance [those viewed] are major characters who are fading from the poem, never to appear again...the transformation of Apollonius' simile would in this way add a more pointed comment to Dido's association with the male-female Caeneus: first linked to the male through her changes in gender role, she is now linked to a hero who in his poem becomes a remote, nostalgic figure.”<sup>769</sup> Tatum takes this as a comment on the incompatibility of Dido's “tragic heroism” with Aeneas' Roman future,<sup>770</sup> which is a fine point, but I would like to add that her heroism was incompatible even with her own world, and the preceding reference to Caeneus and his/her

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<sup>769</sup> Tatum 1984: 438-9.

<sup>770</sup> Tatum (1984: 439): “Like Heracles, she may be said to represent a code of heroic behavior no longer tenable; for in the evolving moral world of the poem, Dido stands for a tragic kind of heroism that will have no place in the nation Aeneas will found.” Cf. Pavlock (1990: 85): “While Dido's coldness stems from Aeneas' abandonment of her, she is likewise subtly connected to an unacceptable heroic stance that overvalues reputation....Dido is frozen in time, much like the Marpessian rock to which she is last of all compared (6.471).”

irreconcilable gender polarity points to why.<sup>771</sup> Like Heracles, her heroism cannot fit within the poem, because like Caeneus, she, by her double nature, does not fit within the gendered boundaries of the “natural” world. Ultimately, there is no place for a woman like Dido; her story could not have ended except in tragedy.

After recognizing Dido, Aeneas makes an impassioned, apologetic speech to which she, like Ajax, angrily refuses to respond.<sup>772</sup> In a moment I will discuss the connection with Ajax in reference to the allusive program of masculine gendering discussed above, but first I would like to discuss the contents of Aeneas’ speech, which intertextually situates him in a feminine position—a position that, as I have been arguing, his relationship with a powerful woman has put him into and which has characterized him throughout the episode. The words of his speech are poignant and revealing:

*infelix Dido, verus mihi nuntius ergo  
venerat extinctam ferroque extrema secutam?  
funeris heu tibi causa fui? per sidera iuro,  
per superos et si qua fides tellure sub ima est,  
invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi.  
sed me iussa deum, quae nunc has ire per umbras,  
per loca senta situ cogunt noctemque profundam,  
imperiiis egere suis; nec credere quivi  
hunc tantum tibi me discessu ferre dolorem.  
siste gradum teque aspectu ne subtrahe nostro.  
quem fugis? extremum fato quod te adloquor hoc est.*  
(Aen. 6.456-66)

Unfortunate Dido, so the news I heard was true, that you had perished and had pursued death by the sword? Alas, was I the cause of your death? By the stars I swear, by the gods and whatever faith there is in the depths of the earth, unwillingly, my queen, did I depart from your shore. But the orders of the gods,

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<sup>771</sup> Note too that Heracles is searching for his lost *eromenos*; in likening Dido to him, one may detect a nod toward her role as the dominant partner in the relationship. Aeneas’ subordinate role is emphasized in his subsequent speech, where he is intertextually likened to a female figure.

<sup>772</sup> As Cartault observes (1926: 457), this reverses the roles in the speeches of Book 4, for now Aeneas exhibits “*la tendresse*,” and Dido “*l’insensibilité inflexible*.”



which now compel me to go through these shadows, through places rough with neglect and the deep of night, drove me by their commands. Nor could I believe that my departure would bring this sorrow to you. Stop! Do not deprive me of seeing you! Whom are you fleeing? This is the last thing that fate allows me to say to you.

As Tatum observes, “One would need a heart of flint (or possibly Marpessian marble) not to believe in the sincerity of his words here. But his apology is inadequate for Dido, and it poses a genuine puzzle for the reader.”<sup>773</sup> This is because at 6.460, Aeneas’ exclamation *invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi* is an almost verbatim replica of Catullus 66.39, where Berenice’s severed lock of hair passionately protests to her mistress that she was separated from her unwillingly:

*invita, o regina, tuo de vertice cessi,  
invita: adiuro teque tuumque caput,  
digna ferat quod si quis inaniter adiuravit:  
sed qui se ferro postulet esse parem?*  
(Cat. 66.39-42)

Unwillingly, o queen, I departed from your crown, unwillingly. I swear by you and your head; may anyone who swears falsely bear worthy punishments. But who would claim to be equal to a sword?

The apparent ill-fit between the frivolousness of the Catullan model with the gravity of the context in the *Aeneid* has made the purpose of the intertext difficult to pinpoint.<sup>774</sup> As Cartault observed, it brings the reader dangerously close to laughter at what is supposed to be a point of intense tragedy.<sup>775</sup> Some scholars have argued that the allusion is an

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<sup>773</sup> Tatum 1984: 440.

<sup>774</sup> Skulsky (1985: 447 n. 2) and Griffith (1995: 47-50) provide bibliography and summarize older and more recent arguments. Particularly important contributions include Clausen 1970 and Tatum 1984, as well as Wills 1998, a very interesting, if unconvincingly tenuous, argument that Aeneas’ oath to Dido in the Underworld is part of a “divided allusion,” whose missing pieces are Dido’s oath of unwillingness to perform magic rites (4.491-2) and Juno’s oath to Jupiter that she acquiesces unwillingly (12.807-18).

<sup>775</sup> Cartault 1926: 510 n. 6: “*le rapprochement est de nature à faire sourire...mais Virgile est sérieux.*”

entirely unconscious reminiscence,<sup>776</sup> while others have argued that Vergil is elevating the frivolous to the sublime.<sup>777</sup> Clausen recognized the relevance of the Catullan themes of love, separation, and death within the Vergilian context, and Tatum has persuasively argued that we must look not only at the line itself, but the entire context of Catullus 66, as well as poem 65 which serves as its preface. Poem 65 is a “letter” to the orator and poet Q. Hortensius Hortalus explaining that Catullus could not write him an original poem due to his grief over the recent loss of his brother, offering a translation of Callimachus instead.<sup>778</sup> Catullus’ translation, “while remaining largely faithful to the words of [Callimachus’] text, acquires in its new context an altered spirit.”<sup>779</sup> Tatum argues that “[t]he ensemble of Catullus 65 and 66 enforces a complicated point of view on Catullus’ reader and...on Vergil’s reader in turn.”<sup>780</sup> The fictional separation and grief of the lock and Berenice, and the lock’s subsequent catasterism, are cast, he argues, against a real grief and permanent loss, unredeemed by myths of immortality. Tatum suggests that Vergil’s “allusion to Catullus 66 then becomes more comprehensible, because after sufficient reflection on that poem and on poem 65, his reader will realize that poem is no cause for laughter. Neither are the words of Aeneas which are based on it.”<sup>781</sup>

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<sup>776</sup> See *e.g.*, R.D. Williams 1972 *ad* 6.460: “It is astonishing that Virgil has transferred a line from a mock-heroic, indeed comic, context to this passage of intense emotional pathos.... I prefer to regard the line as a wholly unconscious reminiscence.”

<sup>777</sup> So Austin 1977 *ad loc.*

<sup>778</sup> On the sincerity and significance of this intricate, thoroughly artful confession of a psychological inability to write poetry, see Selden 1992: 471-4.

<sup>779</sup> Griffith 1995: 49.

<sup>780</sup> Tatum 1984: 443.

<sup>781</sup> Tatum 1984: 443.

The highlighting of Dido's masculinity through her association here with Caeneus and Heracles casts an interesting light on the passivity that Aeneas demonstrated throughout the Carthage episode. Tatum observes that in this encounter with Dido, "[t]o the extent that he can be associated with any other character in myth or poetry, it would be only with the persona that speaks in Catullus 66," but Tatum focuses only on how "that association is as much a comment on the life and death of Dido as on the conduct of Aeneas."<sup>782</sup> It is worth considering, though, how it does comment on the behavior of Aeneas.<sup>783</sup> Part of what makes the allusion to Catullus 66 so "embarrassing" is not only the "mock epic" tone of the model, but specifically that the allusion puts Aeneas in the position of a diminutive, female persona who lives to serve her master. We ought not to ignore the significance of this, for it accords with hints about his effeminization we saw elsewhere. Throughout Books 1 and 4 Aeneas appeared to be following Dido's lead, and Mercury explicitly upbraided Aeneas for his obedience to his wife (*uxorius*). Even as (or if) the reader's heart is moved by the sincerity of Aeneas' plea, she is reminded of why his love for Dido was so dangerous. Dido turned him into an effeminized surrogate, an appendage like the loyal lock of the powerful (and dangerous) queen Berenice.<sup>784</sup> Dido

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<sup>782</sup> Tatum (1984: 452), with preceding discussion of the relevance of Catullus 66 to the death scene in *Aen.* 4 (pp. 443-4.)

<sup>783</sup> Another important consideration (though less relevant for my present argument) is how the lock is a figure for Aeneas in that Venus will carry him to the stars, too, as Jupiter prophesied (*sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli magnanimum Aenean*, 1.259-60). Skulsky (1985: 449) observes this and contrasts it with Dido's fate: "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." See also Wills 1998: 288-9.

<sup>784</sup> I would also like to stress the association of Dido with Berenice. Skulsky (1985: 452) points to the allegorical equation of Dido with Cleopatra via the latter's ancestress, Berenice, but it is worth noting Dido's similarities to Berenice herself. The lock asserts, "I knew you had the spirit of a hero, even when you were a young girl," (*at [te] ego certe/ cognoram a parva virgine magnanimam*, 66.25) an allusion to

succeeded in transforming Aeneas where Circe failed with Odysseus, for she unmanned him, transforming him into an object in her keeping. When Aeneas articulates the memorable protestation of a loyal and subservient female who is a literal object, we are reminded of that.

Aeneas' speech does nothing to assuage the anger of Dido:

*talibus Aeneas ardentem et torva tuentem  
lenibat dictis animum lacrimasque ciebat.  
illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat  
nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur  
quam si dura silex aut stet Marpesia cautes.*

(*Aen.* 6.467-71)

With such words Aeneas was trying to soothe her burning, fierce-eyed spirit, and he was near tears. She, having turned away, kept her eyes fixed on the ground, nor was her expression moved by his speech any more that if she stood as a hard flint or Marpesian rock.

It has been well noted that Dido's silence evokes Ajax's response to the overtures of Odysseus at *Od.* 11.541-67.<sup>785</sup> Critics have generally viewed the parallel as a formal one (Odysseus and Aeneas both encounter in the Underworld an individual they have wronged), but West argues that the comparison of Dido to Ajax continues the association with male heroes like Caeneus and Heracles: "Dido is set in an ungainly parallel with the Homeric hero *par excellence*: her conduct is not patterned on the heroines of the Odyssean underworld nor any other female literary prototype. Even in death, then, Dido's male heroic 'image' receives emphasis: though destroyed by *durus amor* (6.442), she is

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Berenice's role in the murder of her husband Demetrius. There is a resemblance to Dido, who also at a young age rose to power following the murder of her husband (though she herself was innocent of it). The contradiction of femininity and masculinity in the collocation *virgine magnanimam* is present in Dido too, in fundamental way.

<sup>785</sup> Servius *ad loc.*: "tractum autem est hoc de Homero, qui inducit Aiakis umbram conloquia fugientem, quod ei fuerat causa mortis." For a thorough analysis of the parallels between Vergil's Dido and Sophocles' Ajax, see Lefèvre 1978, with further consideration in Panoussi 2002.

nonetheless like *dura silex* in her scorn (470).”<sup>786</sup> As I discussed earlier, Dido thoroughly embraces the honor-based values of a Homeric hero, and “*fama* is as central to Dido's view of her role in the world as *timh*/ is to the mind of Ajax.... Her connection with Ajax is thus profound and extends far beyond the implicit parallel suggested by her behavior in Book 6. Both Ajax and Dido are destroyed by an obsession with the very quality that makes them the great heroes they are.”<sup>787</sup>

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<sup>786</sup> West 1980: 323.

<sup>787</sup> Tatum 1984: 448 and 451.

## Conclusion

Dido is one of the most compelling characters in literary history, and this is not because her story is wrought with the pathos of a good-hearted woman misled by a scoundrel—there are plenty of those—but rather, because she is a clever, brave, heroic villain who has been humbled and ruined. It is sad to see her brought down, because she has so much fighting spirit. She has verve and self-respect that makes her impossible not to admire, even though she is savage in her volatility, duplicitous when necessary, highly acquisitive, somewhat irreligious, and a woman who usurps the prerogatives of men. Like an Aristotelian hero, she is not so good that her destruction is simply grotesque, nor so bad that it seems just or satisfying.

In seeking her *hamartia*, most identify a mistaken understanding of her relationship with Aeneas, based on her inability to comprehend that that Italy was his intention all along. “Dido's *hamartia* is an intellectual error of a type common in Greek drama: she thinks she is married (*Aen.* 4.172) when her marriage is at best problematic...and at worst, as from Aeneas' point of view (4.338-9), non-existent.”<sup>788</sup> Or, “The Aristotelian-minded can regard this, if they wish, as Dido's tragic mistake: she failed to ensure her view of their relationship would be shared by Aeneas, hoping (until the quarrel scene) he shared it already....The plot in a word turns upon a misunderstanding.”<sup>789</sup> I hope to have shown in this study that Dido's “tragic mistake” is to live in a world where gods quarrel with one another and psychologically toy with their

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<sup>788</sup> Drew 1995: 50, who goes on: “As Creon confuses the prerogatives of the living with those of the dead (*Soph. Ant.* 773-80, 1068-71, 1192-1205), Deianira mistakes a poison for a philtre (*Soph. Trach.* 578) and Ajax mistakes a sheep for Agamemnon (*Soph. Aj.* 51-70), so Dido has mistaken *amicitia* for *coniugium*.”

<sup>789</sup> Quinn 1963: 39.

rivals' human pawns. This is Aeneas' tragic flaw, too, not "his deviation, even for a moment, from the task imposed upon him by fate."<sup>790</sup>

I have argued that Aeneas is shown to feel just the way Dido seems to surmise—ready to give up his mission and settle in Carthage—, both in the exposition of his psychology to the reader in Book 1 (as I argued in Chapter 1) and in his narration to Dido in Books 2—3 (as I argued in Chapter 3). Likewise, I have tried to demonstrate (Chapter 2) that Dido understands Aeneas' suggestions very well, for she is presented as extremely shrewd, with a keen eye to her people's advantage. Her interpretation of Aeneas' tale and her relationship with him does not involve a miscalculation of Aeneas himself, on my reading, but rather of the interests and intentions of the gods. I hope in this final chapter to have tied together aspects of both of their characters that come out in the course of this indirectly exposed development of plot.

Through a linear reading of the first four books of the *Aeneid* with attention to these and related issues, I have tried to re-imagine the unfolding of the plot in a way that is less fettered by the *damnatio memoriae* of a second reading. It has been my contention that the outcome of the Dido and Aeneas episode, in which Aeneas eventually departs to continue his mission, has affected the way we look back at the story, and allows us to efface, retrospectively, the provisional pictures suggesting that he did not always intend to do so, and to flatten out the path leading to the story's conclusion. I hope that the possibilities I have entertained in this study contribute to the broadening of our appreciation of the subtle ways that Vergil structures the evocative scenes that pass by the reader's "wandering viewpoint" in a way that encourages imaginative deductions that fill

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<sup>790</sup> Pease 1935: 44.

out the characters, enhance the drama and suspense of the plot, and elicit critical questions about the relations of troubling aspects of the story world with the reader's own.



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