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ARTICLES

Epic Gods, Imperial City

Epic Gods, Imperial City: Religion and Ritual in Latin Epic
from Beginnings to Late Antiquity

Vassiliki Panoussi 3–7

Vergil's Dream of the Afterlife

Jeffrey Brodd 9–30

Acrostic Reflections on Divine Violence in the *Aeneid*

Julia Dyson Hejduk 31–55

Festivals in Statius's *Thebaid*: "Uncelebrating" Vergil

Anke Walter 57–76

Poetry in Motion: Movement, Violence, and Sacred Landscapes
in *Peristephanon* 11 and *Aeneid* 8

Laura Kathleen Roesch 77–100

* * *

Aeneas and the Lost Cause: Harry Stillwell Edwards's

Eneas Africanus as Monument to White Supremacy

Kristopher Fletcher 101–33

Hermann Broch Reads Vergil: Artists, Empires, and Artistic
Truth across Millennia

Stephanie Quinn 135–66

VERGILIAN BIBLIOGRAPHY 2020–2022

Shirley Werner 167–200

REVIEWS

Nicholas Horsfall, *Fifty Years at the Sibyl's Heels: Selected Papers
on Virgil and Rome*

(Lee Fratantuono) 201–5

- Scott McGill, *Virgil: Aeneid. Book XI*
(Fiachra Mac Góráin) 206–9
- Martin Stöckinger, *Vergils Gaben: Materialität, Reziprozität und Poetik in den Eklogen und der Aeneis*
(Petra Schierl) 209–13
- Christiane Reitz and Simone Finkmann, eds., *Structures of Epic Poetry*
(Sergio Casali) 213–21

EPIC GODS, IMPERIAL CITY: RELIGION AND RITUAL IN LATIN EPIC FROM BEGINNINGS TO LATE ANTIQUITY

Vassiliki Panoussi

IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS, VERGILIAN SCHOLARSHIP HAS SEEN AN explosion of interest in intertextuality. This theoretical framework gave rise not only to a new appreciation of the Vergilian *oeuvre* itself but also to a reevaluation of the relationship between Vergil and later authors such as Ovid, Lucan, and the Flavians.¹ A series of theoretical studies (esp. Hinds 1998, but also Pucci 1988 and Edmunds 2000, as well as Hardie 1993) helped reevaluate old discussions regarding *Quellenforschung*, *imitatio*, *emulatio*, and *contaminatio*. This new interpretative lens, by emphasizing that “tradition” is a dynamic, malleable treasure-trove of tropes, motifs, and ideas, demonstrated that ancient authors perceived originality profoundly differently from us and forged a reconsideration of the scope, importance, and value of well-known but imperfectly understood processes of literary creation. One of the most important consequences of this approach is a new appreciation of the concept of “secondariness” as a self-conscious aesthetic trope. Indeed, the resulting reassessment of the concept of canonicity in Latin literature has brought about a true renaissance of Flavian studies (e.g., Augoustakis 2010, 2013, 2014, 2016; Lovatt 2005, 2013; Ganiban 2007; Bernstein 2008, 2013; Stover 2012).

Intertextuality is no longer studied in isolation, simply as literary wordplay, but as a means that enables Vergil and later authors to grapple with history, memory, identity, and nation-building. In the case of the *Aeneid*, recent scholarly trends include examinations of the problem of memory (Seider 2013), the process of colonization and the formation of Italian identity (Fletcher 2014), the relationship between past and future (Rogerson 2017), as well as the construction of Roman nationhood against the backdrop of enemies such as Carthage (Giusti 2018). Intertextuality

1. A good summary of the scholarship that led to the rise of intertextuality as a critical framework is in Skinner 2002.

has thus firmly emerged as an essential component in every question asked of Vergil and his epic successors.

This interest in identity formation and ideology has garnered renewed attention to the role of religion in Vergil's works and the *Aeneid* in particular. Religion constitutes another lens through which we can ask questions about the relationship between human and divine, prophecy and history, gender and sexuality, war and empire. Denis Feeney's 1998 groundbreaking *Literature and Religion at Rome* demonstrated the importance of the cultural processes that are enacted in religious practice and shape religious beliefs, and how their representations play out in Roman texts, especially poetry. Since religious ideas and practices are the product of a host of assumptions, interpretations, and negotiations, they deeply affect the formation of personal, social, and political identity in individuals and in groups. As a result, approaching literary representations of religious acts as a dynamic process can shed light on the workings of a variety of ideologies: religious, personal, social, political, national. In the case of Vergil's *Aeneid*, scholars have increasingly probed the function of the divine (Miller 2009; Hejduk 2020), of ritual practice (Hejduk 2001; Panoussi 2009), and their impact on our understanding of Vergil's relationship with Augustan ideology. As a result, the nexus of intertextuality, identity, religion, and ideology provides a fruitful avenue for exploring Vergil's works and those of his successors.

Vergil and later authors routinely use this nexus of meanings to make their own statements about issues important to their works. In epic poetry, with its close connections to imperial ideology, we see a particular engagement with the violence of the gods, human responsibility, the ravages of civil war, and the role of leadership and empire. The viability of the Roman enterprise is guaranteed by divine sanction; the sacralized landscape serves to celebrate and legitimize imperial rule. And yet this multiplicity of meanings allows room for the expression of anxiety, resistance, and discontent. Religious symbolism can point to the violent and capricious nature of the divine; philosophy can provide a guide to individuals as they face the demands of their specific historical time. Memory can function as both a way to celebrate the past and a warning for the present and future. Latin epic is a prime locus of reflection on the contours of Roman national identity.

Within this intellectual context, the Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Society for Classical Studies invited papers reflecting on Latin epic's representation of ritual practice in the imperial city. The organizers of the panel asked participants to probe "how the genre in its Italian setting offers frameworks for approaching

ritual practice, including prophecy, ruler cult and conceptions of the gods; the relationship between religion and philosophy; insights offered through material culture, including iconography and sanctuaries; the forging of memory and the tools of persuasion; and epic reflections on the establishment and expansion of the sacralized landscape.”

In “Vergil’s Dream of the Afterlife,” Jeffrey Brodd proposes to examine *Aeneid* 6 as a dream, “focusing on observation and free association” in order to appreciate more fully the book’s resistance to definitive analysis or interpretation. Julia Hejduk’s “Acrostic Reflections on Divine Violence in the *Aeneid*” uncovers a series of acrostics linked by the theme of violence. She examines not only Vergil’s text but also Horace’s *Odes* and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* as they connect intertextually with the *Aeneid*, deftly demonstrating another way through which the authors respond to one another’s work. Anke Walter in “Festivals in Statius’s *Thebaid*—‘Uncelebrating’ Vergil” turns her attention to Statius’s engagement with festivals as repositories of time and memory. Walter examines three festivals in Argos, Thebes, and Nemea that occur at pivotal moments in the epic, each promoting a new understanding of time and history, especially as they invite contact with Vergil’s *Aeneid*. She concludes, however, that the poem’s ending, by reversing the very process of commemoration, questions the ideological work of Roman festivals more generally. Taking us to the fourth century CE, Laura Roesch’s “Poetry in Motion: Movement, Violence, and Sacred Landscapes in *Persistephanon* 11 and *Aeneid* 8” argues that Prudentius’s landscapes evoke the epic journey of *Aeneid* 8 in order to invest Rome with a new, “Christianized” identity, grounded on the poetic commemoration of martyrial violence.

All four papers included in this issue focus on the ways in which the authors’ self-conscious engagement with predecessors and contemporaries can help us gain a richer understanding of the religious and ideological work enacted in the *Aeneid*, Statius’s *Thebaid*, and Prudentius’s *Peristephanon* 11. Vergil articulates a vision of the underworld through broad engagement with religious and philosophical beliefs found in a host of predecessors Greek and Roman (Brodd); he also engages in a learned literary wordplay with his contemporaries in order to amplify religious motifs and themes operative in his epic (Hejduk). Moving to the Flavian era, Walter demonstrates how Statius manipulates the Vergilian motif of the foundational festival in order to reframe it as emblematic of the destruction of civil war. Lastly, Roesch, in examining *Peristephanon* 11, argues that Prudentius reworks *Aeneid* 8, specifically the journey to Tiber (what she calls epicizing journey) and the story of Hercules and Cacus in *Aeneid* 8 (martyrial violence). Through allusion to these episodes of

the *Aeneid*, Prudentius instructs his bishop and community on violence, divinity, history, and martyrdom or, as she puts it, encourages “creative conceptualizations of Christianized sacred landscapes of Rome.”

A second common thread among the papers is the violent nature of the divine forces at work in the epics under examination. Brodd probes the qualities of dreams in *Aeneid* 6 and their potential to depict both idealized visions and grim reality itself. Hejduk argues that a series of possible acrostics in the *Aeneid* underscores the violence inflicted by the gods on Aeneas and his men, as well as the violence incurred by the Sibyl as she utters her prophecy. Moreover, these acrostics expose as false the dichotomy between Jupiter as benevolent divinity and Juno as vindictive enemy of Rome. Vergil and Ovid use acrostics to show that gods manipulate human frailty to disastrous effect (e.g., Amata in Vergil, Myrrha in Ovid). Walter demonstrates how Statius manipulates the commemorative power of festivals to underscore the destructive nature of civil war. Prudentius highlights the violence incurred by martyrdom, even as Christianity no longer faces persecution. This violence is nevertheless important in Prudentius’s new articulation of Christian identity.

Self-conscious, ideologically charged readings such as these can shed light on not only the complexity of the texts themselves but also the intellectual and cultural processes that generated them in the first place. Each of the works examined here leans on various traditions, epic, philosophical, or religious, yet lays claim to its own place within that tradition. As such, the intersection of intertextuality and religion showcases the polyphony of propositions emerging from Latin epic from Vergil to Prudentius. Some of these propositions converge with imperial ideology, others diverge from or negotiate it, but all participate in a rich exchange of ideas surrounding the formation of Roman identity.

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VERGIL'S DREAM OF THE AFTERLIFE

Jeffrey Brodd

Abstract: I argue for the efficacy of approaching *Aeneid* 6 as one would approach a dream, an approach that defies insistence on discovering fully coherent solutions to perceived problems. True to the polysemic nature of dreams, Vergil seems to have intended, on numerous fronts, to convey a multiplicity of meanings to multiple types of readers. This is suggested by the sheer variety of sources from which Vergil drew to compose book 6; these sources can be assigned to five categories: Homer's *Odyssey*; various Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic texts; Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*; miscellaneous other possible sources pertaining to conceptions of the fates of souls (e.g., the painting by Polygnotus of the underworld at Delphi, described by Pausanias); and Roman history as Vergil understood it. I proceed to consider the two most daunting interpretational challenges of *Aeneid* 6: the seeming incongruity of mixing Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic ideas with traditional Roman values, and the twin gates of sleep (or dreams) and the exit by Aeneas and the Sibyl through the ivory gate of false dreams. I also explore two possible historically accurate presentations of religious phenomena in *Aeneid* 6, one involving connection to the Eleusinian mysteries, the other involving funeral rituals.



AMONG THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF VERGIL'S ELABORATE ACCOUNT OF Aeneas's journey through the underworld in *Aeneid* 6 that have given rise to divergent interpretations is the concluding motif of the twin gates of sleep (or dreams). Whether or not Vergil intended for his readers to regard Aeneas's *katabasis* as a dreamlike experience, I contend that approaching book 6 as one would approach a dream is the most efficacious means of analyzing Vergil's complex depiction of the afterlife. My main thesis is thus methodological in nature. Rather than proposing yet another attempt at "solving" one or more of its various enigmas, I wish to demonstrate that book 6 is best explored by focusing on observation and free association

rather than by the positing of hypotheses and pursuit of proofs thereof.¹ Evidence in support of my thesis consists as much of various scholarly attempts at solutions as it does of content of the *Aeneid* or the variety of ancient sources from which Vergil drew inspiration. The reader will note that at no point do I succeed in proving any of these attempts incorrect; they are in fact for the most part cogent and erudite—and yet, not a single one seems to have convinced a sizable majority of other scholars. This observation has led to my own hypothesis: Like a dream, the content of book 6 for the most part defies analysis that insists on discovering fully coherent solutions to problems, especially monolithic solutions. Vergil seems not to have insisted on such, and so neither should we.² My intention is that approaching book 6 as one would approach a dream will prove helpful for purposes both of literary analysis and historical study; in the case of the latter, mostly by demonstrating the paucity of dependable evidence that can be derived.

Vergil's depiction of the afterlife incorporates some of the most notable of the *Aeneid*'s many religious elements.³ Abounding in literary

1. Nicholas Horsfall (2013, 615–16) acknowledges in his instructive commentary on book 6 its “dream-like qualities,” but seems to doubt the potential of dreams to present truths: “Dream-like qualities are present in the text, but if what Aen. has experienced, however unremembered, is basically a veridical revelation, then it is best not understood (almost inevitably with impugned veridicity) as a *dream*.” Why should we doubt the potential of dreams to convey the veridical?

2. I do not mean to infer that Vergil composed his poem with the phenomenon of dreaming in mind, nor do I wish to delve deeply into the controversial topic of dream interpretation. I wish instead to draw on what I consider a commonsense perspective on the nature of dreams and a reasonable theory of how we might interpret them, such as espoused recently by Sidarta Ribeiro (2021). Coming to the defense of Freud and the psychoanalytic tradition by drawing on recent findings of his own field of neuroscience, Ribeiro asserts that, while dreams are closely associated with waking life, with regard to memories of events and also to negotiating the future, it “is rare to dream an exact repetition of a waking experience. On the contrary, most dreams are characterized by the intrusion of illogical elements and unforeseen associations” (8). *Aeneid* 6, with its amalgamation of historical realities, real-world aspirations, and mythic or fantastical motifs, seems to me to manifest such combining of the real and the “illogical” and “unforeseen.”

3. Religious elements include: fate and divine intervention (1.22, 254–296); various aspects of Homeric religion (e.g., invocation of the Muses at 1.8; 7.47, 880; 9.77, 774); deities, both the Olympians and their relatives (e.g., Amor) and various non-Olympian Roman deities, e.g., Bellona (7.319; 8.703), Janus (7.180, 610; 8.357; 12.198), and Tiberinus (6.873; 7.30, 797; 8.31; 9.125); religion and war (1.294; 2.151, 162–163; 7.601–602); divination and prophecy (2.40–41, 115, 199–200, 246–247, 470–471); divine counsel and intervention; sacrifice; prayer; encounters with shades

antecedents and elaborate in detail, the *katabasis* is naturally alluring for anyone interested in understanding Roman perspectives on the fate of the dead. Serious challenges, however, frustrate attempts to derive facts regarding actual Roman beliefs and practices, with regard to death and afterlife and to most other of the poem's religious elements. It can even be cogently argued that in some instances Vergil intentionally sets forth misinformation; for example, when describing the sacrifice of a bull to Jupiter (Dyson 2001, 14). It is not surprising that, despite the abundance of religious elements in the *Aeneid*, scholars hesitate to treat much from the poem as historically reliable at face value, as indicated by the reluctance to draw on the *Aeneid* by authors of sourcebooks. Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, for example, in *Religions of Rome: Volume 2: A Sourcebook* (1998, 101–2), include only one episode, citing Vergil's description of the oracle of the god Faunus at Albunea near Lavinium (7.81–101), about which the authors are appropriately cautious: "Although a poetic account, it may be inspired by cults in the region of modern Solfiorata." Valerie M. Warrior (2002, 74), in *Roman Religion: A Sourcebook*, also cites only one episode, on the opening of the temple of Janus 7.607–615. Jo-Ann Shelton (1998, 359–430), in her general sourcebook, *As the Roman Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History*, includes among the seventy-two entries in her chapter "Religion and Philosophy" not a single passage from the *Aeneid*.

Aeneid 6 specifically is beset by two notorious interpretational challenges that draw into question the extent to which Vergil even attempts to represent realities of Roman culture:

1. The seeming incongruity of mixing Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic ideas with traditional Roman values, as is done in Anchises's speech and the *Heldenschau* ("parade of heroes")—the episode most would agree is the climactic point of book 6.
2. The twin gates of sleep and the exit by Aeneas and the Sibyl through the ivory gate of false dreams. This motif raises questions regarding Vergil's sincerity, or at the very least of his sense for his readership's willingness to regard as real the underworld he has described.

Many attempts have been made to resolve these challenges, but it can hardly be said that scholars have reached consensus. Commenting specifically on the second challenge (along with the question as to why Vergil has Aeneas take a golden bough with him on his journey through

of the dead (in addition to those featured in book 6); religion and healing; and forbidden religion.

the underworld), D. A. West (1990, 224) seems to speak for many when he laments: “These are ancient problems and modern scholars are still at a loss.” When considered not first and foremost as a repository of historical facts but rather as a literary work designed to provoke and to raise questions, the *Aeneid* need not, and should not, be expected to set forth only one “true” perspective on any given issue. Vergil seems to have intended, on numerous subjects, to convey a multiplicity of meanings, addressed to multiple types of readers. For example, as convincingly demonstrated by Karl Galinsky (1996, 229–30), Dido is intended as a composite of various literary models, among them Nausicaa, Circe, Calypso, Medea, and Cleopatra. Galinsky contends that Augustan culture writ large is generally characterized by such polysemy.

Dreams are also polysemic. Without attempting here to engage in formal dream analysis, much less to provide a study of ancient means of dream interpretation, it is reasonable to posit that dreams often contain simple imagistic reiteration of mundane facts of the day’s experiences alongside deeply meaningful symbols.⁴ Dreams seem not to unfold based on predetermined objectives or narrative destinations, and they are not dependable depictions of historical fact, but these qualities do not make their content untrue or insignificant. Indeed, dreams can provide important clues that serve to enhance waking life. It is in this light that Vergil’s account of the afterlife can efficaciously be approached as a dream. Letting this dream come to us, observing and freely associating its complex web of motifs without forcing hypotheses regarding Vergil’s intentions, we allow the poem to speak for itself.

VERGIL’S SOURCES

The sheer variety of sources from which Vergil drew to compose book 6 suggests a multiplicity of meanings without implying insistence on conceptual coherence, for Vergil clearly understood that his sources present the views of sometimes quite disparate perspectives. Unlike the various proposed solutions to the enigmas of book 6, claims regarding sources tend not to be strongly contested, although naturally there is room for disagreement regarding details. For convenience, we can posit five categories: Homer’s *Odyssey*; various Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic texts; Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis* at the end of his *Republic*; miscellaneous

4. As Ribeiro (2021, 76) points out, even Freud—for whom the symbolic content of dreams is highly significant—asserted that “dreams contain day residues from the waking hours, which go some way to explaining their content.”

other possible sources, both literary and artistic, pertaining to conceptions of the fates of souls; and Roman history insofar as Vergil understood it, or at least presents it in the poem, most pertinent for the *Heldenschau* near the end of the narrative.

The Homeric sources are from the *Odyssey* books 4, 10, 11, and 19. *Odyssey* 4.561–569 identifies the Elysian Plain (*Ēlysion pedion*) as being the afterlife destiny of Menelaus; this is the first extant literary reference to Elysium, to which Vergil adds a moral component, making Elysium a paradise for deserving souls. According to the *Odyssey*, Menelaus is destined for the Elysian Plain because, as husband of Helen, he is the son-in-law of Zeus—not for any specific moral achievement. The incident in 10.487–540 in which Circe instructs Odysseus on how to find the underworld and to access the dead is echoed in Vergil's accounts of Helenus instructing Aeneas to consult the Sibyl (3.441–462) and of the shade of Anchises instructing Aeneas (5.731–735), and then generally throughout book 6 in the Sibyl's guiding of Aeneas. Many parallels are based on *Odyssey* 11. Elpenor (*Od.* 11.51–80) is a prototype of Palinurus (*Aen.* 6.337–383). Odysseus's consultation with Teiresias (*Od.* 11.90–150) and reunion with his mother (*Od.* 11.152–224) are closely paralleled by Aeneas meeting with Anchises (*Aen.* 6.679–892). Odysseus's encounter with Ajax (*Od.* 11.469–470) is reflected in Aeneas's encounter with Dido (*Aen.* 6. 450–476), who “makes no reply, as the ghost of Ajax in Homer had made none to Odysseus, and turning from Aeneas in hatred goes to join Sychaeus” (Williams 1990, 54), and perhaps also in the horribly mutilated figure of Deiphobus (*Aen.* 6. 494–547; Solmsen 1990, 214 and 220). Homer's description of Tityos and Tantalus being punished in the underworld (*Od.* 11.576–592) and of Minos (*Od.* 11.568–572) served Vergil as sources for descriptions of the same in *Aen.* 6.595–603 and 6.432.⁵ Penelope's discourse in book 19 to the disguised Odysseus on the twin gates of dreams, one of horn and one of ivory (*Od.* 19.562–567), clearly provided Vergil with the model for his own twin gates motif.

5. R. D. Williams (1990, 198) elaborates: “Virgil's Tartarus is firmly based on the literary tradition: the torments of Tityos, Tantalus, and Sisyphus are described in Homer (*Od.* 11.576 ff. [although other scholars, as far back as Wilamowitz, have asserted that this is likely a post-Homeric interpolation]), and Tartarus as the place of punishment for the great sinners is an essential part of the Underworld in Platonic myth (*Phaedo* 113e, *Frogs* 146 ff.). A fine passage in Lucretius (3.978 ff.) gives the Epicurean rationalization of the myths of Tityos, Tantalus, and Sisyphus, and there are frequent references in Horace's *Odes* to these familiar figures of literature and folklore.” Similar complex conglomerates of sources relating to the same motif hold for most all of the examples cited.

If Homer's *Odyssey* can be said to be Vergil's most important source for his narrative framework, the Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic texts can surely be considered the most important sources of philosophical ideas regarding ethical living, judgment, and consequences in the afterlife.⁶ As Jan Bremmer has made clear, there are numerous Orphic references in book 6, including: the ritual cry of the Sibyl ("*procul o, procul este, profane*"; 6.258), which portrays her "as a kind of mystagogue for Aeneas"; the directive in the gold leaves to the soul to "Go to the right" (or similar formulations); and the motif of joyousness, also from the gold leaves, that is prominent in the *Heldenschau*.⁷ Bremmer (2009, 184, 194) also makes clear the importance for book 6 of the lost poem about the *katabasis* of Orpheus.⁸ Pindar's *Olympian Ode 2* and Aristophanes's *Frogs* are also important sources for Vergil. Pindar and Aristophanes designate specific spaces for the blessed souls—those who have become perfectly pure and therefore no longer subject to reincarnation—and for those who undergo punishment (Molyviati-Toptis 1994). Aristophanes's *Frogs* is also important for its narrative framework, featuring the descent of Dionysus to the underworld and the presence of such mythic figures as Charon (*Aen.* 6.298–330 and 6.384–416) and Cerberus (*Aen.* 6.417–425). Bremmer (2009, 202) contends that the *Frogs* 431–433 provided Vergil with the source for

6. I employ "Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic texts" as a convenient label indicating a variegated category characterized by shared eschatological ideas as set forth, e.g., in Plato's "myths" of the afterlife; e.g., judgment of the soul, punishment or rewards in the afterlife, and transmigration of the soul. Plato was clearly influenced in this regard by Pythagorean ideas, which in turn show affinity to the nebulous grouping of ideas generally labeled Orphic. The ensuing discussion provides examples.

7. Jan Bremmer (2009): on the Sibyl's ritual cry, 186; on "Go to the right," 190; on the motif of joyousness, 200. For the translation "Go to the right," and for a thorough study of the gold leaves (also known by similar labels, such as "gold tablets"), see Graf and Johnston 2013, esp. 98–100. They provide a concordance (48–49) of the numbering of the thirty-eight leaves (per their count) in various scholarly works. Deposited in graves in Greek and Italian locales from the fifth century BCE to the second century CE, the leaves reflect interest in the mythic singer Orpheus and the worship of Dionysus.

8. Williams (1990, 192) notes another clear point of connection between Vergil and Homer (and, for that matter, between Williams and Bremmer), albeit not in the *Aeneid* per se. Vergil's fourth *Georgic*, with its account of Orpheus, demonstrates an explicit connection between the poet and this worldview: "Orphic poems describing a descent into the Underworld (a *katabasis*) began to be written, perhaps from the sixth century onwards. The two most famous heroes who performed this exploit were Hercules and Orpheus himself (whose story is told in the second half of the fourth *Georgic*). Orpheus was also connected with the elaborate and exclusive ritual of the Eleusinian mysteries."

the incident of the Sibyl asking Musaeus regarding the whereabouts of Anchises, parallel to Dionysus asking the Eleusinian initiates about Pluto. There is also the likelihood of Orphic influence on Vergil's importation of the Homeric concept in the *Odyssey* 4.561–569 of Elysium. As R. D. Williams (1990, 198) explains, “there is a Homeric prototype for this passage ... but there are Orphic elements too, as is indicated at the beginning by the mention of the Thracian priest (Orpheus, 645) and at the end by the meeting with Musaeus, his disciple; and there are quite marked similarities with Orphic elements in Pindar.”⁹

Empedocles (ca. 493–ca. 433 BCE), a Pythagorean philosopher, possibly influenced Vergil. Despite his early date, Empedocles was influential during Vergil's time period, as attested by Lucretius, who credits Empedocles with having been foremost among philosophers who theorized on the origins of the world from the four elements of fire, earth, air, and water (*DRN* 1.714–716). Empedocles asserted that virtuous persons upon dying were divinized (Molyviati-Toptsis 1994, 40 and n. 19).

Likely the most important sources for Vergil of Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic ideas were the dialogues of Plato himself. Certainly Vergil drew extensively from Plato's “myths” of the afterlife—although Plato in one case does not label his account a myth, having Socrates insist in the *Gorgias* (523a and 527a) that the story he sets forth therein is a true account: *logos*, not *mythos*. The *Gorgias* 523a–527a sets forth the themes of judgment and of distinctive afterlife destinies for the good (the Isles of the Blessed) and evil (Tartarus) and the identity of specific judges—Rhadymanthus and Aeacus along with Minos, who is singled out as having seniority. (These same three, with the addition of Triptolemus, are referenced by Socrates in the *Apology* 41a as being “true judges.”) The *Phaedo* (110b–114c) and the *Phaedrus* (246d–249d) set forth more elaborate and, in some ways, complementary depictions of the afterlife, stipulating reincarnation as the destiny for all but the most evil souls. In *Phaedrus* 249b, in agreement with Pindar's *Olympian Ode* 2, Plato states that the souls of philosophers who have undergone three successive thousand-year rounds and achieved perfect purification are freed from the cycle of rebirths and judgment. The *Phaedo* describes in detail Tartarus and the rivers of the underworld, whereas the *Phaedrus* focuses attention on the heavenly realm. Both dialogues feature the same theme of judgment with consequent rewards or punishments as referenced more briefly in the *Gorgias*. The myth of Er at the end of the *Republic* (614a–621d), which includes many of these same motifs, is especially relevant for Vergil's depiction. Along with

9. Williams (1990) cites Pindar's *Ode* 2.61 ff. and *Fr.* 114, 127.

emphasizing judgment of the dead and rewards or punishments, the myth spells out details regarding the process of reincarnation that are explained by Anchises to Aeneas near the end of book 6. Shared motifs include thousand-year periods between rebirths (*Resp.* 615a; *Aen.* 6.748), the souls drinking from the River of Forgetfulness (located in the “plain of Lethe”; for Vergil Lethe is the name of the river) lest they recall when back on earth their time in the afterlife realms (*Resp.* 621a; *Aen.* 6.749), and, although differing in function and procedure, a review of future lives (*Resp.* 618a–b; *Aen.* 6.756–892).

The Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic sources became even more complex through the centuries in between Plato and Vergil, as Stoic and Epicurean ideas entered into the mix. In the early twentieth century, in a commentary on book 6 that has largely withstood the test of time, Eduard Norden (1916) argued strenuously that Vergil depended for his depiction of the afterlife on a lost work by Stoic philosopher Posidonius (ca. 135–ca. 50 BCE). Whereas some aspects of Norden’s argument have been rejected by most scholars, his identifying of specific similarities between Vergil’s book 6 and Posidonius’s perspective are accepted (Habinek 1989, 246 n. 66).

Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis* (“Dream of Scipio”) deserves its own category as a third major source of Vergil’s ideas regarding the afterlife. D. C. Feeney (1986, 1) emphasizes the significance of the dream for Vergil’s presentation of Anchises’s “eulogistic speech” to Aeneas, noting its combination of elements from the myth of Er and from Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis*, which as the final book of Cicero’s *Republic* naturally parallels to some extent Plato’s myth. Feeney proceeds to elaborate on this mixture of Platonic influence with Cicero’s dream:

Anchises’ description of the cycle of purification and rebirth (724–51) has Platonic matter mixed with Stoic, and owes much in expression to the *Somnium Scipionis*. Especially Platonic is the presentation of corporeal existence as entrapment in a sinful prison. If the speech itself puts us in mind of Plato’s doctrines, the personal setting recalls the situation of the *Somnium Scipionis*, where a son meets a deceased father and is given a discourse on the role of the statesman. (1986, 2)

In the midst of this passage, Feeney (1986, 2 n. 13) provides in a footnote details regarding the intensely Platonic nature, conveyed by Cicero, especially in section 29, of Vergil’s descriptions, most notably in lines 731–734: *clausae ... corpore caeco; corporeae pesles; malorum; and infectum scelus*.

Our fourth category of possible influences, which I label “miscellaneous,” includes the painting by Polygnotus (fl. ca. 475–447 BCE) of

the underworld at Delphi, which is described by Pausanias (book 10, on Phoci and Ozolian Locri; see esp. 10.28.1–10.29.3). Among the painting's subjects is Odysseus's consultation of Teiresias, replete with depiction of the River Acheron, Charon (who is not included in the *Odyssey*), wrongdoers being punished, Tityos, and so forth. Just as Dante was influenced by the painting of Satan in the ceiling of *Il Duomo* in Florence, so too Vergil may have been influenced by Polygnotus's painting or those like it. Other sources on which Vergil might have depended include Hellenistic Jewish texts, as has been pointed out by Bremmer (2009), who especially emphasizes similarities with 1 Enoch.

The fifth and final category, Roman history, is sometimes overlooked in lists of possible influences—but this is an important category for book 6, and indeed for the entire *Aeneid*, which of course presents its own version of Roman history from the vantage point of its legendary setting. It is on Roman history—Vergil's version of it, likely molded to fit his purposes here—that Vergil draws for the many figures featured in the *Heldenschau* and for the description of the heroic founding figures, the line of Teucer (649–651), Ilus, Assarcus, and Dardanus, whom Aeneas spies prior to finding Anchises. We now set our sights on assessing this Vergilian history of the Roman people in light of their juxtaposition with the Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic religious concepts that give form to the *Aeneid*'s perspective on the fate of the soul.

CHALLENGE 1: INCONGRUITY OF ORPHIC-PYTHAGOREAN- PLATONIC IDEAS AND ROMAN VALUES

We return now to consider the first of the two interpretational challenges that would seem to draw into question the extent to which Vergil even attempts to represent realities of Roman culture in *Aeneid* 6. It is one thing to situate Homeric mythic perspective alongside the complex of Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic ideas that seem to have influenced Vergil. There seems to be at least some degree of interjection of Orphic ideas into the *Odyssey*; it is commonly believed, for instance, that Homeric Tartarus is a later addition, an “Orphic interpolation” according to Wilamowitz (Williams 1990, 198). It is quite another thing, however, to align the Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic worldview with Roman values as represented by heroic figures, as Vergil does in Anchises's speech and the *Heldenschau* near the end of *Aeneid* 6.

Even with regard to the component parts of this primary interpretational challenge there are challenges, as scholars assert widely divergent opinions on the specifics of Vergil's version of the Orphic-

Pythagorean-Platonic perspective, most especially regarding the status of the souls in Elysium, which in turn raises questions pertaining to the degree to which this realm is divided into separate regions. Bremmer (2009, 206–7) strongly advocates for a tripartite structure, such that souls are divided among those who are condemned to punishment in Tartarus while undergoing purification, those good souls who enjoy paradise while undergoing this process, and those who have achieved perfection, never again to be reincarnated. These three degrees of achievement correspond to three main regions in the afterlife: Tartarus, the portion of Elysium reserved for the perfected (the Blessed Groves [*sedes beatae*], 637–678), and the portion of Elysium in which dwell Anchises and the souls destined for rebirth as Roman heroes (679–892).

In basic agreement with Bremmer but positing a more complex set of regional divisions is Urania Molyviati-Toptsis (1994, 35), who argues that Vergil presents Elysium, like the other main regions of the underworld, as consisting of subdivisions. The Blessed Groves, “populated by semidivine souls which have escaped the cycle of rebirth,” exist alongside and slightly above the “shining plain” (*nitentes campi* [677]), “containing the souls destined to transmigrate to new bodies,” where Aeneas and the Sibyl find Anchises. This is the home of the valley of the River Lethe (*domi placidae* 705), where these souls drink of the waters of forgetfulness, similar to the situation described by Er in Plato’s myth. She bases her argument primarily on the language used to describe the various main regions (*regna*)—Orcus, Styx, Tartarus—that are said to contain within them different locations. Styx, for example, is divided into locations designated by various terms: *sedes* (431), *loca* (434), *campi* (441), and *arva* (477). Molyviati-Toptsis notes that the Sibyl uses some of this specific language when asking Musaeus about the whereabouts of Anchises: *quae regio Anchisen, quis habet locus?* (670). Her argument, similar in this manner to Bremmer’s, depends in part on the fact that Orphic-Pythagorean texts tend to situate the souls destined for rebirth below those of the “ultimately blest” (Molyviati-Toptsis 1994, 43). She also references 5.734–735, at which Anchises tells Aeneas that he resides among the assemblies of the blest (*concilia piorum*). A difficulty in this explanation lies in Musaeus’s answer to the Sibyl’s question: *nulli certa domus* (673)—which would seem to imply that these souls are *not* confined to one region, and therefore perhaps not souls of a perfected class as opposed to a class of souls destined for rebirth.

Diametrically opposed to the multipart interpretation are the perspectives of (to name just two) Friedrich Solmsen and Williams (1990, 200), who assert that *all* souls in Elysium are destined for rebirth. As Solmsen (1990, 218) explains, “the sojourn in Elysium is not the final

condition of the souls. As becomes clear in the next lines ... for the *pauci* the purification continues in Elysium until their souls have regained their pristine nature and are again identical with the aether spirit, i.e. the (Stoic) *pneuma* which, as we have learned, keeps the world and all its parts in being.” Vergil either willfully did not intend to clarify with regard to this issue, or he simply neglected to do so. Is it efficacious for us to strive to determine what Vergil left indeterminate?

When considering Vergil's underworld in a conceptual manner rather than spatially with corresponding states of the souls, we are on more solid ground. For over a century, scholars have tended to agree on three distinguishable categories: (1) the Homeric or mythological; (2) the moral; and (3) the philosophical. The third category, the philosophical, is primarily Platonic; as Solmsen explains, it is “characterized by its focusing on the soul as the surviving and eternal part of man, by its concomitant insistence on a fundamental difference between the soul and the body, and—in its early phases at least—by its belief in reincarnations.” Solmsen (1990, 211, 217) goes on to argue convincingly, however, that to insist on a strict tripartite structure of these elements is not sound. Rather, the basic three elements are interwoven. The more perplexing interweaving, however, if such is even possible, involves the mix of these Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic ideas with Roman values, as we have pointed out in connection to our first primary challenge.

The moral-philosophical perspective embodied in Plato's accounts of the afterlife would seem to clash with the Roman this-worldly quest for *dignitas* and *gloria*—clearly exemplified by the heroes-to-be displayed before Aeneas. To illustrate the point, we might consider: To what extent is Odysseus's choice of his next lifetime in the myth of Er compatible with Roman values? Odysseus, who by lot chooses last, opts for the life of an ordinary citizen (*Resp.* 620c)—the sort of life conducive to the philosophical quest for purification that Plato prescribes. How many self-respecting Romans, the sort of men Aeneas sees in the *Heldenschau*, would have opted for such a life, devoid of hope for attaining *dignitas*? Feeney (1986, 2) delves revealingly into the nuances involved in the interweaving of the conceptual elements that underlie such a stark choice, addressing specifically the “fundamental paradox of an eschatology which is expressed and presented within a recognised philosophical tradition, but which appears to champion mundane values disparaged by that tradition, turning our eyes insistently towards this corporeal world, away from the concerns of the soul.” Feeney argues that, despite appearances, *Aeneid* 6 is ultimately about *this* world. His meticulous review of the heroes on parade reveals the shortcomings of the traditional values of *dignitas* and *gloria* and pursuits thereof: “Rome

is celebrated by this device, but the reader has been given the perspective of a Platonist, and it is bewildering to be promised an elaborate revelation which ultimately declares that there is in fact nothing more than the mixed uncertainties of actual history” (1986, 16).

Feeney sets forth an elegant solution to a significant aspect of this main interpretational challenge. By attending to the narrative’s effects on the reader, he succeeds in showing the coherence of the intermixing of Plato’s moral philosophy with the decidedly mixed qualities and careers of the heroes on parade: “The personal aims and sufferings of the politicians on view are put into a disconcerting perspective once we have been invited to see them as characters in a Platonic myth” (1986, 16). What, though, are we to make of other components of the Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic framework, notably the concept of transmigration of souls and the need to purify oneself in this life through philosophy? Are we to posit that Vergil sincerely believed in these teachings, and that *Aeneid* 6 is a didactic attempt, like the myth of Er, to encourage his fellow Romans to devote themselves to philosophy? I venture to say it is impossible to answer these questions—which does not at all damage the integrity of Vergil’s poem, so long as we approach it as a dream. Nor does it curtail the benefits of the sound type of dream interpretation achieved through the erudite and cogent analyses of Feeney and others from whom I draw herein.

CHALLENGE 2: THE TWIN GATES OF SLEEP

The concluding lines of book 6 (893–901) tell of Aeneas’s departure from the underworld:

Sunt geminae Somni portae, quarum altera fertur
cornea, qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris,
altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto,
sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia Manes.
his ibi tum natum Anchises unique Sibyllam
prosequitur dictis portaque emittit eburna:
ille viam secat ad navis sociosque revisit;
tum se ad Caietae recto fert litore portum.
ancora de prora iacitur; stant litore puppes.¹⁰

Two gates of Sleep there are, whereof the one, they say, is horn and offers a ready exit to true shades, the other shining with sheen of

10. This final line (901) is equivalent to 3.277, “its original position” per the Loeb translation by H. R. Fairchild, rev. G. P. Goold; Goold (1999, 596).

polished ivory, but delusive dreams issue upward through it from the world below. Thither Anchises, discoursing thus, escorts his son and with him the Sibyl, and sends them forth by the ivory gate: Aeneas speeds his way to the ships and rejoins his comrades; then straight along the shore he sails for Caieta's haven. *The anchor is cast from the prow; the sterns stand ranged on the shore.* (trans. H. R. Fairchild, revised by G. P. Goold; emphasis in original)

This second interpretational challenge, enigmatic as it is significant, has given rise through the years to an immense variety of attempted solutions. How is the reader to interpret this final passage of book 6, and how should this affect the reading of the entire account of the underworld? The most drastic approach, advocated rigorously by Nicholas Horsfall (2013, 608) in his commentary, involves recognizing that the concluding section of book 6 (886–901) is unfinished, and thus suffers from “the hasty and distracted composition of a transition which would one day require proper attention as the fitting closure to a great compositional sequence.” This possibility causes us to acknowledge a potential Pandora's box of interpretational problems; most glaringly, that Vergil might have intended to alter significantly the two gates passage. But as with regard to the general problem of the poem's unfinished state, we need not stop in our tracks over this possibility.

The spectrum of interpretations of this passage ranges roughly from the ancient commentator Servius, who, writing at the end of the fourth century, bluntly asserted that Vergil herewith is dismissing his account as false: *Poetice apertus est sensus: uult enim intelligi falsa esse omnia quae dixit.* On the other end of the spectrum, a number of recent critics seem intent on preserving Vergil's sincerity (perhaps suspiciously intent; does preservation of the poem's integrity sometimes intrude as motive?). One modern scholar who leans somewhat in the direction of Servius is Galinsky who, in *Augustan Culture*, when citing “Vergil's use of the underworld as a splendid example” of the complex attitude toward religion of writers of the period, states: “Few of his educated contemporaries believed in a literal Hades; it was an old wives' tale according to Cicero (*Tusc.* 1.48)—hence Aeneas' exit through the gate of false dreams, which does not affect the updated spiritual message that is conveyed.” (1996, 283). Taking a more strident stance against Servius, Frank Fletcher states in his Oxford commentary of book 6: “No reader of Virgil would willingly accept this interpretation. The poet could not have said, or meant, that nothing that he had said about the life after death and the glories of Roman heroes was true.” Fletcher proceeds to suggest

that Vergil employs his “dream” much in the manner of Plato who, “when he reaches the subject of immortality in his philosophy, has recourse to ‘myths’ and symbolic language” (1941, 102).

Typical of opposing interpretations of many of the *Aeneid*’s incidents, there is much to commend the views of both Galinsky and Fletcher. On Galinsky’s side is the general impression we gain, based on the preponderance of evidence aside from book 6 and Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis*, that the Romans for the most part were less concerned about personal welfare in an afterlife than they were about protecting themselves in this life against the threat of *di Manes* (through the Parentalia, Lemuria, and various other ritualized means). In support of Fletcher’s view, one might well ask what sense it would have made for Vergil to compose this elaborate description of the afterlife only to end up dismissing it all as a falsehood? Most modern commentators tend to take the side of Fletcher.

Other interpretations also, like Fletcher’s, draw on various Platonic ideas. James O’Hara argues that the “dream” functions in the manner of Plato’s “myth”; that is, as a likely account that cannot be proven but ought nonetheless to be recognized as meaningful and taken seriously. Underlying O’Hara’s perspective on the gates motif is his admirably “big picture” appraisal of Vergil’s general tendencies as author:

Enormous critical energy and ingenuity has been expended in attempts to prove that the exit of Aeneas through the gate of false dreams does not carry any suggestion that some of what Aeneas has been told in the underworld might not be true. Such efforts would be warranted only if that suggestion were somehow inconsistent with Vergil’s ideas or with his methods of presenting ideas. Instead, the intimation that Anchises’ prophecy might paint a picture of the future that for rhetorical purposes is more optimistic than truthful, is neither surprising nor problematic: with the Gates of Sleep, Vergil brings Anchises’ prophecy more closely in line with the other overly optimistic prophecies. (1990, 171)

O’Hara (1990, 171) proceeds to point out that Vergil, with the “false dream” motif, is being consistent with Penelope’s point in *Odyssey* 19, for she “has dreamed that her husband will come home and kill the suitors, but she thinks that her dream has come from the gates of ivory—that her hopes are unrealistic, and unattainable.” Having earlier pointed out that Anchises’ prophecy of Aeneas having a long life does not come true, O’Hara (1990, 172) asserts that a “close reading of Vergil’s prophecies shows his painful awareness—which the shrewd Augustus may have shared—that this could

be just an illusion, just a fantasy (like the other more obvious fantasies in Augustan poetry), just a false dream.”

O'Hara thus offers a variant rationale to that of Galinsky for contending that Vergil's dream is truly “false,” while at the same time holding the same general perspective on Vergil with regard to the poet's stance on Augustus and his reign. O'Hara (1990, 164) asserts that “the idea that the future is generally less bright than is predicted in prophecies is quintessentially Vergilian: in this prophecy as in others, Vergil presents both the hope that things will be better under Augustus, and his deep fear and worry that this is an illusion.” This sentiment brings to mind Galinsky's (1996, 152) take on the subtle but disconcerting sculpture of the snake on the *Ara Pacis*: “Amid the leafage, there are reminders that peace and growth are never unthreatened: a snake attacks a bird's nest ... and there are scorpions.”

R. J. Tarrant draws on a variation of this same Platonic theme, arguing that because Aeneas is returning to corporal existence in the material world, he is inevitably relatively “false” in a Platonic sense. Tarrant (1982, 53) notes: “This view of Aeneas' departure might seem to clash with the glorious vision of Roman history which Anchises has revealed to his son, but it is important to recall that Anchises' prophecy does not end with the triumph of Augustus, but with the early death of Marcellus.” Tarrant sets forth his main argument as follows:

Virgil insists on the distinction between *true* shades and *false* visions and in some way associates Aeneas with the latter. By what criterion is Aeneas appropriately classed with the false or unreal? Put thus, the question finds a ready answer: by the criterion expounded in Anchises' own speech on the soul's purification in the afterlife (724–51). That authoritative account, the central revelation of the entire Underworld journey, speaks of the body, in language familiar from Plato, as the soul's prison, the source of these emotions that cloud the soul's vision and infect it with vices and impurities. (1982, 53–54)

Feeney (1986, 15), who agrees with Tarrant's interpretation, summarizes: “Aeneas leaves by the gate of the *falsa insomnia* because he is still alive, still a prisoner of the body and of the illusions of the ‘real’ world which the body is doomed to inhabit.”

Finally, drawing on a different Platonic (and Vergilian) motif, G. P. Goold (1999, 597) asserts that, like the souls drinking from the River Lethe, Aeneas exiting through the gate of false dreams simply functions to prevent Aeneas from remembering what he has witnessed: “By making

Aeneas leave by the gate of delusive dreams Virgil represents his vision of Rome's destiny as a dream which he is not to remember on his return to the real world; the poet will have us know that from the beginning of Book 7 his hero has not been endowed with supernatural knowledge to confront the problems which face him."

This set of proposed solutions to the second challenge—all cogent and at least partially defensible but variegated, in some cases even diametrically opposed—provides evidence in support of my thesis, which is that sound methodology for approaching *Aeneid* 6 warrants avoiding insistence on discovering fully coherent solutions to problems, especially monolithic solutions. Vergil's poem defies such solutions, as I hope to show through the following list of refutations.

Contrary to the ancient assertion by Servius and the modern variation by Galinsky, Vergil must not be writing off his dream as "false" in this direct sense, as this would imply that he also intended Anchises's statement at 5.719–745 (prior to the commencement of the dream) to be false to some extent, but there is no reason to suspect this. Various elements of the underworld narrative also surface at other points in the poem, as, for example, in the description of Dido's death, with Iris releasing her soul from the prison of her flesh (4.695). What are we to include among the book 6 ideas from which Vergil allegedly distances himself, given that similar ideas are set forth elsewhere? There is also the issue of our first interpretational challenge: much of the content of book 6, especially near the conclusion, is the stuff of Roman history and the embodiment of traditional Roman values. Surely Vergil does not intend to distance himself also from that.¹¹

O'Hara's proposed solution, with which Fletcher concurs on the idea of Vergil's dream functioning as a Platonic "myth," is beset with similar issues. By the time of Vergil's death in 19 BCE, most everything that Aeneas witnesses in the *Heldenschau* had already become reality per the historical record. Granted, the jury was still very much out on the extent to which Augustus would succeed in securing the "golden age"; but this is a subjective notion and it is not sound to conclude that Vergil regarded the prospects only as a type of "overtly optimistic" prophecy.

11. Horsfall (2013, 615) offers a similar rebuttal of this proposed solution: "V's educated readers may have wished to take comfort in the employment of the gate of ivory to distance the myths related by V. from their sophisticated outlook ... or as learned doubt expressed towards the account given of the souls of the dead (West, 14), but Caesar, Pompey and Marcellus are no myths and V. offers his readers (interpreted) familiar historical (and legendary) facts."

In defense of O'Hara's proposal, to regard Vergil's dream as akin to one of Plato's myths is not to insist that none of its content could conform to historical realities; rather, that it does not *necessarily* do so. (For this same reason, O'Hara's proposal comes relatively close to my own conception of "dream" as appropriate category.) On O'Hara's perspective on the Homeric antecedent of the two gates motif, there is no good reason to insist that Vergil must have precisely followed Homer's lead. For one thing, whereas Penelope believes her dream arrived through the gate of false dreams, Aeneas *embodies* the dream that now emerges into the this-worldly realm. Penelope asserts that dreams issued forth through the ivory gate are deceptive and propose things that are not fulfilled. But Anchises's words—and Aeneas's experience—are for the most part fulfilled. The Homeric antecedent therefore is not a direct prototype for the motif as applied by Vergil.

Regarding the solution proffered by Tarrant (with which Feeney agrees), it would seem the situation of the Sibyl complicates things somewhat. She has previously journeyed through the underworld and apparently has emerged with clear memory of a true experience, for she is able to describe Tartarus and its inhabitants to Aeneas in detail based on her previous visit there under the guidance of Hecate (6.562–627). Granted, she is now back in the underworld and not in the this-worldly realm; but had Vergil intended for his readers to care about this surely he would have provided some indicator. Granted, too, that the Sibyl is no ordinary mortal as is Aeneas (despite his divine parentage and heroic persona). Indeed, she is somewhat reminiscent of Plato's Diotima, Socrates's sagely teacher whose wisdom he recounts in the *Symposium*. Still, the Sibyl's straightforward description of Tartarus, and Vergil's general portrayal of her as true prophetess, draws into question O'Hara's interpretation of Aeneas, in the words of Horsfall (who cites O'Hara at this point in his commentary; 2013, 615), emerging back to earth as "a bogus spirit who has been exposed to a veridical vision. That ... raises insoluble problems with regard to his qualifications for passing through one gate, or indeed the other one." Significant for Tarrant's (1982, 53) proposal is the incident of Marcellus (the younger) appearing at the conclusion of the *Heldenschau*: "it is important to recall that Anchises' prophecy does not end with the triumph of Augustus, but with the early death of Marcellus." Much has been done in attempt to highlight and explain the significance of this incident, providing many stimulating suggestions. I wonder, though, if this might be a case of forcing too much in order to find—or more precisely, invent—coherence. Could not Vergil simply have wished to include a sort of eulogy in honor of Marcellus (whose death in 23 BCE occurred during

the latter period of composition of the *Aeneid*) and considered this the natural point in the narrative at which to do so?

Finally, there is Goold's proposal that exit through the ivory gate functions, like drinking from the River Lethe, to cause Aeneas to forget his experience. Here, the situation of the Sibyl is more seriously problematic: Unless she exited from her previous descent by some other means (which is not suggested), why should she be able to remember that experience? A more straightforward challenge to Goold's suggestion is that the ivory gate is said to be the exit way of false dreams; it is not said to erase memory.

A SEARCH FOR RELIGIOUS REALITIES IN *AENEID* 6

As the previous section has shown, potential solutions to the two main interpretive challenges—the problem of reconciling Orphic-Pythagorean-Platonic philosophical perspectives with Roman values and the problem of the twin gates motif—can be cogent and seem convincing. Inevitably, however, any single solution fails to be met with unanimous acceptance among scholars. In light especially of the second challenge, how are we to regard *Aeneid* 6 as a potential source for historical facts relevant to Roman perspectives—or even Vergil's own perspective—on the afterlife? Referring again to the dream interpretation metaphor, I propose that, for one thing, we need not, and ought not, assume that only one solution to either interpretive challenge is *the* correct solution. In fact, various of the aforementioned solutions could be “correct,” if indeed Vergil intended to convey a multiplicity of meanings, and to multiple readers at that. In doing so, he would have been true to the common polysemic tendency of Augustan culture. More to the point of my thesis, if we approach book 6 appropriately, as we would regard a dream, we need not—and should not—assume or guess about Vergil having intended anything that is not obvious to the reader. The mistake of imagining hidden intentions or hidden coherency leads to its twin mistake of opining (imagination's Platonic partner in crime; *Resp.* 511d–e) about solutions to problems that do not exist.

I briefly explore here two possible historically accurate presentations of religious phenomena in *Aeneid* 6. The more intriguing one, if much less probable, involves connection to the Eleusinian mysteries. In his 1973 article “Virgil and the Mystery Religions,” Georg Luck examines an astonishing hypothesis set forth in the first half of the eighteenth century by Bishop Warburton, whose two-volume work *Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated on the Principles of a Religious Deist*, hardly ever noted by

modern scholars (Luck calls it a curious case of *damnatio memoriae*), argues that Vergil's depiction of Aeneas's *katabasis* is based thoroughly on the Eleusinian mysteries. Luck reminds his reader that Augustus was an initiate, and so too was Cicero, who praises the mysteries in *De legibus* (2.14.36). Luck cites Warburton's thesis (from vol. 1:251 of the 1st ed.):

The descent of Virgil's hero into the infernal regions, I presume, was no other than a figurative description of an initiation, and particularly a very exact picture of the spectacle of the Eleusinian mysteries, where everything was done in show and machinery, and where a representation of the history of Ceres afforded opportunity to bring in the scenes of heaven, hell, purgatory and whatever related to the future state of men and heroes. (Luck 1973, 150)

In amidst Luck's many uses of "might" and "could," he presents a variety of arguments, including: Romans (like Augustus) were familiar with the mysteries; two other mythic heroes who made the descent to the underworld, Heracles and Dionysus, are said in a "little-known tradition, preserved in the ps.-Platonic *Axiochus* (371e1)" (Luck 1973, 152) to have been initiates; the sanctuary of the Sibyl resembles the sanctuary at Eleusis with its Ploutonion; Vergil presents the Sibyl as not only a prophetess, but a mystagogue (Luck 1973, 154); (as we have noted, Bremmer also asserts that the Sibyl is portrayed as a mystagogue, but of Orphic mysteries). Luck (1973, 166) concludes with regard to the various arguments and their net effect: "All of this, of course, remains hypothetical, but the picture that has emerged seems plausible enough." Had Vergil indeed intended for readers to perceive such connections, it is likely he would have intended that only *some* of his readers would comprehend them. Vergil would thus have maintained the same sort of secrecy that characterizes the mysteries of Eleusis, and the mystery religions in general. We can thus classify this sort of presentation of religious realities as *esoteric*, a category that also is useful to apply to the content of some dreams. While I think it is highly improbable that Bishop Warburton was correct about this, approaching *Aeneid* 6 as if approaching a dream implies that we ought to be open to such a possibility. Like all sound attempts at dream interpretation, Luck's analysis—and Warburton's before him—sets forth inviting touchstones for seeking meaning from the poem.

A second possible representation in *Aeneid* 6 of religious realities involves funeral rituals. This possibility is of the *exoteric*, rather than *esoteric*, and is far more probable, per compelling arguments that Vergil, with the *Heldenschau* and the lament for Marcellus, based his depiction on

actual Roman funerary rites. Paul Burke, drawing on the earlier work of Eiliv Skard,¹² endeavors

to show that by creating a scene reminiscent of the traditional *pompa funebris* Virgil has, in a startlingly original way, inverted many of the features of the Roman funeral and thus produced not a description of an actual event but a literary sequence with far greater symbolic power than a mere chronicle of Marcellus' funeral could ever have had.... Virgil has produced a funeral with national and not merely familial significance. (1979, 222)

Burke (1979, 223) identifies four correspondences between Vergil's *Heldenschau* and Roman funerals: the *pompa* of notable Romans (who are studiously described in Feeney's article, as noted above); the "strikingly recognizable appearance" of these men from across generations; the praise of the heroes' deeds and the glory they have secured for the family; and "the closely related notion of genealogy, of the family linked in an unbroken line." Importantly, Vergil does not confine the set of heroes to members of the *gens Iulia*, thus treating them "as members of one immense, extremely ancient family" (1979, 223).

Kirk Freudenburg, in "Seeing Marcellus in *Aeneid* 6," draws upon and augments Burke's study. In the course of providing an engaging analysis of Anchises's *excudent alii* ("others will hammer out"; 6.847–853) priamel, Freudenburg (2017, 117) focuses on one of the Roman heroes, Marcus Claudius Marcellus; not Marcellus the Younger, but rather, the Marcellus whose exploits in the late third century, including being awarded the *spolia opima* for killing the Celtic ruler Viridomarus in the Battle of Clastidium in 222 BCE, gained him much notoriety, both negative and positive, from a variety of authors down through Vergil's time. Referencing incidents that he has described in some detail, Freudenburg (2017, 130) admirably channels the questions Vergil clearly intends for his readers to ponder: "As we look to Marcellus—not the icon, but the embattled and much talked about public figure—for the specific lesson that Anchises wants to teach with him, what do we actually see? The man who thoughtlessly war-mongered his way through Syracuse...? Or do we see the man who took special pains to save Archimedes, but failed to do so, then wept when reminded of his demise and personally saw to his burial?"

12. Eiliv Skard, "Die Heldenschau in Vergils *Aeneis*," *SO* 40 (1965): 53–65

CONCLUSION

Freudenburg's acknowledging of Vergil's polysemic presentation avoids infringing upon the dreamlike nature of *Aeneid* 6. Most all of the studies consulted for this article note in one way or another the seemingly impenetrable nature of Vergil's portrayal of the afterlife. Considered spatially, "the underworld of Book 6 resists being mappable" (Myers 2019, 2); considered conceptually (or even visually), "it is still not easy to see light in the darkness of Virgil's underworld" (Bremmer 2009, 208). My hunch is that none of these esteemed scholars would deny that *Aeneid* 6 is dreamlike, and perhaps they would not object to the efficacy of approaching the narrative as one would approach a dream. Every serious interpreter of the *Aeneid* recognizes that, along with the various unfinished lines, there are inconsistencies; Silvius, for example, is said by Anchises at the outset of the *Heldenschau* to be progenitor of the Roman people (6.760–766), but Vergil had already assigned that role to Ascanius (1.268–277).

Dreams sometimes seem to contain unequivocal inconsistencies in this manner, perhaps induced by random firing of synapses in the brain.¹³ Dreams often include content that likely stems from tangible, real-life experiences of the day. But dreams also often seem to include symbolically charged content that strikes the dreamer as meaningful and worthy of analysis, even if the true meaning is somehow hidden away. I would guess we all for the most part approach *Aeneid* 6 as if approaching a dream—as well we should—so long as we do not fool ourselves into assuming that there must be something coherent hidden away, or that the dreamer's mind must harbor clear intentions for producing this or that motif, or that beneath the apparently nonlogical surface there must lie logic. We owe it to Vergil not thereby to disturb his dream.

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13. An extreme version of such an explanation was put forth by the English biologist Francis Crick, who argued that dreams are *only* the result of such neural activity and are devoid of meaningful relevance. But as Ribeiro (2021, 27) points out, Crick's anti-Freudian model does not leave room for the empirical fact of recurring dreams, which must be caused by something other than purely random firing of synapses.

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ACROSTIC REFLECTIONS ON DIVINE VIOLENCE IN THE *AENEID*

Julia Dyson Hejduk

Abstract: From killings at an altar to episodes where one is given for many, the *Aeneid* is replete with sacrificial deaths. This article focuses on the interpretive rewards of discerning a series of acrostics linked by the theme of divine violence. Its itinerary includes multiple authors and some surprising stops: it begins by connecting Horace's reflections on wine with sacrifice in the *Aeneid*, passes through erotic violence done to Vergil's Sibyl figures, turns to Ovid's association of his Myrrha with Vergil's Amata, and ends with Vergil's sacrifice of Turnus. It shows that far from being mere jeux d'esprit irrelevant to the poets' larger aims, acrostics were a form of serious play that could be a significant source of meaning. Becoming aware of the vertical "conversations" within and between poems brings the excitement of discovery to texts that have been pored over for thousands of years, and with it an even deeper appreciation of the ancient poets' complex reflections on such universal topics as art and wine, sex and sacrifice.



VERGIL'S GODS TAKE PLEASURE IN VIOLENCE. FROM KILLINGS AT AN ALTAR TO episodes where one is given for many, the *Aeneid* is replete with sacrificial deaths; Juno's opening speech laments the potential loss of *honor* upon her altars, and Jupiter's prophecy of her future *honores*—his final word in the poem—finds ominous fulfillment in the poem's closing vignette, the sacrifice of Turnus. Apollo's attempted rape of Cassandra, which lies in the background of her ignored prophecy of Troy's destruction, is recalled by his symbolic rape of the Sibyl as she delivers her prophecy of *horrida bella* in Italy. The Dira sent by Jupiter, who may be none other than the infernal demon Allecto sent by Juno, encapsulates the nightmarish intensity of the gods' thirst for revenge.

A growing body of substantial articles, many of them published in the past few years, has been building a persuasive case that ancient authors read and composed vertically as well as horizontally.¹ I have expounded elsewhere on “Why a belief in acrostics is not actually insane,” due to the nature of ancient texts and reading practices, the expressive possibilities of vertical composition, and the ancient testimonia discussing acrostics in prophetic texts and others (Hejduk 2018, 72–76). In the present article, I shall focus on the interpretive rewards of discerning a series of acrostics linked by the theme of divine violence. The itinerary will include multiple authors and some surprising stops: It begins by connecting Horace’s reflections on wine with sacrifice in the *Aeneid*, passes through erotic violence done to Vergil’s Sibyl figures, turns to Ovid’s association of his Myrrha with Vergil’s Amata, and ends with Vergil’s sacrifice of Turnus. My hope is that this startling acrostic conversation will lead to a deeper understanding of the authors’ meaning and of the ingenious ways they responded to the writings of their comrades and predecessors.

HORATIAN WINE AND VERGILIAN VIS

Wine is a multivalent symbol in Horace’s *Odes*, touching on the interrelated themes of philosophy, poetry, politics, and love (see Davis 2007; Commager 2009; Mette 2009). As a definitional component of a symposium, it represents friendship, pleasure, and all those enjoyable activities over which the shadow of death falls: in the *carpe diem* ode, for instance, the exhortation to Leuconoe to “be wise, strain the wine” (*sapias, vina liques*, *Carm.* 1.11.6) implies that purifying one’s wine is essential to wisdom—and to having good taste, another meaning of *sapias*. Wine represents poetry, especially the particular blend of Latin words in a Greek lyric form revolutionized by the *Odes*, as symbolized by the pure wine in a Sabine *diota* in the Soracte Ode (1.9.7–8) or the Sabine wine in Greek *cantharae* in the invitation to Maecenas (1.20.1–2). Wine is an essential component of the politics of clemency and forgetfulness connected to Augustus’s healing after civil war, as in the “oblivion-inducing Massic” that Horace recommends in his *rhipsasopia* poem (2.7.21; see Smith 2015, 270–73). The Cleopatra Ode contrasts the celebratory imbibing of the Roman *sodales* (1.37.1–4) with the crazed inebriation of the Egyptian

1. Most recently, see Hejduk 2018 and 2020a; Kronenberg 2018a, 2018b, and 2019; Robinson 2019a, 2019b, and forthcoming; Mitchell 2020a and 2020b; Hanses 2020; Wheeler 2021. By “acrostic,” I here mean words formed by the first letters of successive lines of poetry.

queen, drunk on Fortune and Mareotic wine (11–14), until she sobers up and drinks in (*combiberet*, 28) the poison that turns her into a Stoic hero. The final, Callimachean vignette of *Odes* 1 is the poet rejecting oriental extravagance and “drinking under a narrow vine” (*sub arta / vite bibentem*, 1.38.7–8). It is no coincidence that “drinking” is literally the book’s last word.

Recognizing that learning to drink appropriately is a metaphor for human and poetic flourishing helps to explain a mysterious feature of *Carm.* 1.18, whose topic is the ambiguous quality of wine as a purveyor of both happiness and danger. To illustrate his warning about “overleaping the boundaries of moderate Liber,” Horace alludes to mythological episodes involving the lethal consequences of excessive drinking:

Nullam, Vare, sacra vite prius severis arborem
 circa mite solum Tiburis et moenia Catili.
 siccis omnia nam dura deus proposuit neque
 mordaces aliter diffugiunt sollicitudines.
 quis post vina gravem militiam aut pauperiem crepat?
 quis non te potius, Bacche pater, teque, decens Venus?
 ac ne quis modici transiliat munera Liberi,
 Centaurea monet cum Lapithis rixa super mero
 debellata, monet Sithoniis non levis Euhius,
cum fas atque nefas exiguo fine libidinum
DISCERNunt auidi. non ego te, candide Bassareu,
 Invitum quatiā nec variis obsita frondibus
 Sub divum rapiam. saeva tene cum Berecynthio
 Cornu tympana, quae subsequitur caecus amor sui
 Et tollens vacuum plus nimio gloria verticem
 arcanique fides prodiga, perlucidior vitro.
 (C. 1.18)

You should plant no tree, Varus, before the sacred vine, around the gentle soil of Tibur and the walls of Catilus. For the god has made everything hard for teetotalers, nor do gnawing anxieties flee away by other means. Who, after wine, jabbers about grueling military service or poverty? Who doesn’t rather (jabber) about you, father Bacchus, and you, lovely Venus? And that no one should overleap the gifts of *moderate* Liber, the brawl between centaurs and Lapiths, fought over pure wine, offers a warning; Euhius not gentle to the Thracians offers a warning, **when they discern right and wrong by a slender boundary, greedy for their lusts (or: discern right and wrong by the narrow**

boundary of their lusts, greedy). Radiant Bassareus, I would not shake you against your will, nor bring into the open (“snatch out under the god”) things hidden by variegated leaves. Hold back your savage tambourines with Berecynthian horn, which blind love of oneself follows, and (vain)glory, raising its empty head to great excess, and faith, prodigal of secrets, more transparent than glass.

The brawl between Lapiths and centaurs has obvious resonance with the violence of martial epic; this correspondence is amplified to a ludicrous degree by Ovid’s depiction in the *Metamorphoses* of the disastrous nuptial feast of Pirithous and Hippodameia, where centaurs attempt to abduct the bride, as a grotesque parody of epic battle (*Met.* 12.210–535).² Similarly, “Euhius not gentle to the Sithonians” probably refers to divine punishment for incest, that most tragic of themes: “Horace seems to be alluding both to Sithon who loved his own daughter and was killed by Dionysus (Nonnus, 48.93) and to Lycurgus who alleged the god of wine was no god, drank wine, and then ravished his own mother (Hyginus, 132.1)” (West 1995, 88). Given Horace’s connection of temperance in food and alcohol with Callimachean poetics, the association of intemperate drinking with the intemperate genres of epic and tragedy suggests that the aesthetic and moral realms are intertwined.

This philosophical and metapoetic background helps to confirm the intentionality and explain the meaning of the poem’s five-letter “gamma acrostic” DISCE, “Learn!”³ The acrostic appears right after a line about failing to recognize the “slender boundary” (*exiguo fine*) between good and evil, causing abstractions that are normally good, “love” and “glory” and “faith,” to become their evil twins under the influence of the potentially beneficent yet dangerous god. Moreover, DISCE is the first in a series of acrostics in the *Odes* related to the themes of wine and wisdom. Appearing one line from the bottom of the penultimate poem of the first half of *Odes*

2. Mader (2013, 113) aptly characterizes Ovid’s centauromachy as “high epic replaying itself as black comedy.”

3. The term “gamma acrostic” refers to a sequence that springs both horizontally and vertically from the same letter, thus forming a corner shape like a capital Greek gamma (Γ). The most infamous of these is ΛΕΙΤΗ in Aratus *Phaen.* 783–787, on which see Kronenberg 2018a, 2018b, and 2019. After probabilistic analysis of Horace’s DISCE, Morgan (1993, 145) concludes, “I am forced to assume that any gamma-acrostic of five or more letters is deliberate. I am not certain that this tells me much about the present poem, which is still mysterious and inaccessible.” Mitchell (2020a, 171) merely observes that *Carm.* 1.18 “has the gamma-acrostic DISCE, which is (like the poem) difficult to interpret but may have hidden depths.”

1, it is mirrored in **POTA** one line from the top of the penultimate poem of the book's second half (the Cleopatra Ode), an ambiguous form that "can simultaneously be an imperative, 'drink!,' and a participle, 'drunk woman,' thus encapsulating the poem's contrast of celebratory Roman imbibing with the deadly inebriation of Cleopatra" (Hejduk 2018, 74). The acrostic **SAPIS** ("You are wise"), "which begins at the middle line (12/24) of the middle poem (10/20) of the collection's middle book (2/3) in an Ode about middleness (*mediocritas*), reinforces the idea that balance is essential to wisdom" (Hejduk 2020b, 139–40).⁴ But other than *Carm.* 1.18's warning against drunken behavior associated with epic and tragic *furor*, why is this argument appearing in an article about divine violence in the *Aeneid*?

The most compelling reason for associating Horace's **DISCE** with Vergil's epic is that the *Aeneid*'s first five-letter acrostic, **AVIDI**, a vertical string appearing nowhere else in Latin epic, is the word following Horace's *DISCERNunt*. In her opening speech, Juno complains that she, Jupiter's wife and sister, should have the same privilege of punishing humans that his daughter does:

Vix e conspectu Siculae telluris in altum
vela dabant laeti et spumas salis aere ruebant,
cum Iuno aeternum servans sub pectore vulnus
haec secum: 'mene incepto desistere victam
nec posse Italia Teucrorum avertere regem!
quippe vetor fatis. Pallasne exurere classem
Argivum atque ipsos potuit summergere ponto
Vnus ob noxam et furias Aiakis Oilei;
Ipsa Iovis rapidum iaculata e nubibus ignem
Disiecitque rates evertitque aequora ventis,
Illum expirantem transfixo pectore flammas
turbine corripuit scopuloque infixit acuto;
ast ego, quae divum incedo regina Iovisque
et soror et coniunx, una cum gente tot annos
bella gero. et quisquam numen Iunonis adorat
praeterea aut supplex aris imponet honorem?'
(*Aen.* 1.34–49)

Scarcely out of sight of the Sicilian land, they were setting sail for the deep, happily, and plowing with bronze the foam of the salt sea, when

4. Hosle (2020, 1146 n. 8) points out Hejduk's unawareness that Adkin 2014, 47 n. 11 mentions this **SAPIS** acrostic as well. I apologize for the oversight and am grateful for the correction.

Juno, nursing an eternal wound beneath her heart, said this to herself: “I’m to desist, conquered, from my undertaking, and not be able to turn away the king of the Teucrians from Italy?! Of course, I’m forbidden by Fate! Pallas was able to burn the Argive fleet and submerge the men themselves in the sea, because of the guilt and madness of **one man**, Oilean Ajax; she herself, hurling the rushing fire of Jupiter from the clouds, scattered the ships and overturned the sea with winds, snatched up the man breathing flames from his pierced chest and impaled him on a sharp cliff; but I, who stride as queen of the gods and both sister and wife of Jupiter, am waging war with one people for so many years! And does anyone adore the divinity of Juno anymore, or will they, suppliant, place a sacrifice on her altars?”

Vertical **AVIDI** appears as Juno introduces the theme of the many dying for the guilt of the one, an inversion of the ubiquitous sacrificial theme that “one head will be given for many” (*unum pro multis dabitur caput*, 5.815), as Neptune memorably says of Palinurus (see Hardie 1993, 19–56). Like Horace’s **POTA** only more so, **AVIDI** can convey several meanings simultaneously. It could be a single word, “greedy”—like Juno and the other gods, greedy for the (human?) sacrifices she mentions at the end of her speech. Since the interjection *A* (“Ah!”) can mean just about anything,⁵ the acrostic could also be broken down as **A VI DI**: “alas, the gods by violence”—also an apt description of the unfortunate Ajax impaled on a cliff by a thunderbolt. The string could even be read as **AVI DI**, meaning either “ancestral gods” (**AVI** genitive singular or nominative plural of *avus*) or, more likely, “the gods by an (avian) omen” (**AVI** the ablative of *avis*), as in Horace’s *mala ducis avi domum*, “You’re bringing [Helen] home with evil omen,” in the Iliadic prophecy of Nereus (*Carm.* 1.15.15); Juno’s vignette of a lethal storm supernaturally fueled is indeed ominous for the events about to unfold. Finally, breaking the words as **A VIDI**, “aha, I saw it!”, alludes to the uncompromisingly visual nature of the acrostic itself and the pleasure of discovering one.

Another clue that Horace with his **DISCE** acrostic may be engaging in a learned game involving an in-joke with Vergil lies in the name of *Carm.* 1.18’s addressee, “Varus.”⁶ Though my argument does not depend

5. *OLD* s.v. *ā, āh*: “An interjection expr. any of various feelings, e.g., a (distress, regret, pity). b (appeal, entreaty). c (surprise, joy). d (objection). e (contempt).”

6. The chief contenders in modern scholarship are P. Alfenus Varus of Cremona, consul suffect in 39 BCE, and Quintilius (Varus?), whom Horace depicts as an exasperated editor in *Ars P.* 438–444 and whose death he laments in *Carm.* 1.24.

upon identifying Horace's Varus with the "Varus" Vergil addresses in the *Eclogues*, there are three suggestive connections. First, in *Eclogue* 6, which Wendell Clausen (1994, 176) calls "a neoteric *ars poetica*," Vergil's famous *recusatio* addresses "Varus" in the vocative (as Horace does, 1.18.1) and associates him with the epic genre opposed to his own pastoral project:

cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthus aurem
vellit et admonuit: 'pastorem, Tityre, pinguis
pascere oportet ovis, deductum dicere carmen.'
nunc ego (namque super tibi erunt qui dicere laudes,
Vare, tuas cupiant et tristia condere bella)
agrestem tenui meditabor harundine Musam:
non iniussa cano. si quis tamen haec quoque, si quis
captus amore leget, te nostrae, Vare, myricae,
te nemus omne canet; nec Phoebus gratior ulla est
quam sibi quae **Vari praescripsit pagina nomen.**
(*Ecl.* 6.3–12)

When I was singing of kings and battles, Apollo plucked my ear and admonished me: "A shepherd, Tityrus, should feed his sheep up fat, but sing a fine-spun song." Now I (for there will be plenty of people left for you who want to declare your praises and establish grim wars) shall meditate upon the rural Muse with a slender reed: I sing things that have been ordered. Nevertheless, if someone, someone captured by love, will read even this, our tamarisks will sing of you, Varus, the whole grove will sing of you; nor is any page more pleasing to Phoebus than the one that **has placed the name of Varus on its margin.**

Second, Vergil calls attention to Varus's *name written on the margin of his page*. As John Schafer (2017, 140–46) argues, this reference to writing

Though a scholiast (pseudo-Acro, probably third century CE) refers to Horace's Quintilius as "Varus, poet from Cremona, a friend of Vergil," this may derive from confusion with the P. Quintilius Varus who lost three Roman legions in Germany in 9 CE. See Ferriss-Hill 2019, 167 n. 48 for bibliography. After discussing the controversial identification, she concludes that "regardless of the historical personage of Quintilius Varus, I see little reason to doubt that as a named person he is consistent across the Horatian corpus" (2019, 167). Nevertheless, as Nisbet and Hubbard (1970, 228) point out, Catullus 30, addressed to "Alfenus," shares the "rare and difficult meter" of *Carm.* 1.18 (Greater Asclepiad), which might suggest that Vergil's "Varus" and Horace's are both P. Alfenus Varus, distinct from Horace's Quintilius. On the confusion among the two (or more) Vari (and Alfeni), see Armstrong 2014a and 2014b.

may be a playfully erudite allusion to the authorial pagination of Vergil's manuscript, where breaking the *Eclogues* into columns of thirty-six lines each would indeed put "Varus" at the top of a page. Finally, in *Eclogue* 9, the *name* of Varus, again in the vocative, appears right before an acrostic, **UNDIS** (Grishin 2008). Varus is thus associated with the epic genre, with the visibility of a word on a page, and with an acrostic involving a body of water. While any one of these connections with Horace's **DISCE** and Vergil's **AVIDI** could be coincidental, cumulatively, they offer the tantalizing possibility that "Varus" was an element in a literary game among the learned friends involving names, acrostics, and literary genres. As I have argued elsewhere, such generic play has political and philosophical significance for Horace, since "the transformation of a Triumviral poet into an Augustan one is reflected in the defeat of epic and iambic, the genres of war, by lyric, the genre of peace" (Hejduk 2020b, 111).

Whether or not "Varus" is a piece of the same puzzle, the kind of sophisticated allusion I am suggesting in Horace's *DISCERNUNT AVIDI* assumes—or perhaps proves?—that Horace had access to a written text of part of the *Aeneid* before it was published. Schafer (2016), examining close verbal parallels in the horizontal text between *Carm.* 1.7 and *Aeneid* 1, persuasively argues that Horace did indeed have such access.⁷ And if Horace and Vergil were as close as Horace claims they were, and as prone to in-jokes as they seem to have been, it is plausible that Horace would have alluded to Vergil's first acrostic with an uberacrostic of his own. Such an allusion would also give additional point to Horace's assertion within the **DISCE** lines that he will not "snatch out [hidden things] under the god" (*sub divum rapiam*), where *divum*, metonymically "the open sky," refers literally to the sky god, Jupiter. The figurative image conveyed by *sub divum rapiam* finds literal fulfillment in Oilean Ajax swept up in a whirlwind and impaled by the thunderbolt hurled by Jupiter's daughter.

Finally, in addition to Horace's allusion, an acrostic sentence in a scene fulfilling Juno's desire for revenge on the Trojans reinforces the intentionality of Vergil's **AVIDI**. The acrostic sequence **VI**, of course, is extremely common, appearing over fifty times in the *Aeneid*, and is unlikely to have any significance on its own. But when combined with other words, as in **A VI DI**, the chances of intentionality increase substantially. Such is the case for another **VI** acrostic in the context of

7. While it is also theoretically possible that Vergil's acrostic postdates Horace's, for Juno's wrathful tirade in the "heavier" genre of epic to be responding to a sympotic poem would appear to be pointless.

gods offering human sacrifices to themselves at sea.⁸ After Juno's prelude describing the death of Oilean Ajax, the first such sacrificial killing that the reader experiences in real time is the shipwreck of Orontes:

tris Notus abreptas in saxa latentia torquet
 (saxa vocant Itali mediis quae in fluctibus **Aras**,
Dorsum immane mari summo), tris Euris ab alto
 In brevia et Syrtis urget, miserabile visu,
 Inluditque vadis atque aggere cingit harenae.
Vnam, quae Lycios fidumque uehebat Oronten,
 Ipsius ante oculos ingens a vertice pontus
 In puppim ferit: excutitur pronusque magister
 Uoluitur in caput, ast illam ter fluctus ibidem
 Torquet agens circum et rapidus vorat aequore vertex.
 Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto,
arma virum tabulaeque et Troia gaza per undas.
 (*Aen.* 1.108–119)

Three ships, snatched away, the south wind hurls on hidden rocks (the Italians call the rocks in the middle of the flood **Altars**, a **huge spine on the surface of the sea**), three the east wind from on high drives into the shoals and Syrtes, wretched to see, and smashes on the shallows and surrounds with a heap of sand. **One**, which was carrying the Lycians and trusty Orontes, before the eyes of (Aeneas) himself the huge ocean strikes from a whirlpool onto the stern: the captain is shaken out and rolled face down onto his head, but the flood hurls the ship three times in the same place, driving it around, and a rushing whirlpool devours it in the sea. Occasional swimmers appear in the vast flood, **arms of men** and **planks** and **Trojan treasure through the waves**.

To reinforce the sacrificial nature of this death of the “one”—emphatic line-initial *unam*, like the *unius* of Ajax (1.41)—Vergil places the incident near some rocks called the Altars.

The scene is also remarkable for its archly metapoetic coloring. As Ellen Oliensis observes of the last line quoted above, “The disarticulation and reincorporation of Virgil’s opening line is both elaborate and precise” (2004, 31). The phrase *arma virum* cannot but recall the *Aeneid* itself, often referred to as the *arma virumque*; since the sea is one of the primary metaphors for an epic poem, the *arms and a man* and *tabulae*—

8. On sacrificial death by water in the *Aeneid*, see Dyson 2001, 50–94.

“planks” but also “writing tablets”—floating through the waves make this shipwreck doubly metapoetic. If the epic poem is a sea,⁹ the “huge spine on the surface of the sea,” *dorsum immane mari summo*, could be a gesture toward the acrostic along its edge. As in **AVIDI**, the word springing horizontally from the **V** here is the form of *unus* (*unius*, 1.41; *unam*, 1.113). Moreover, if **DII VI**, “the gods by violence,” is already appropriate to the context, the addition of another word to produce **DII VI IUTA**, “the gods by violence [that is] *helped along/strengthened*” (*OLD* s.v. *iūuō* 2, 4), increases the acrostic’s length and appropriateness and thus its chances of intentionality. These violent storm winds are no mere natural forces, but are supernaturally manipulated, “helped along” or “strengthened,” by Juno, Aeolus, and the wind gods.

Like the “huge ridge on the surface of the sea,” the acrostic spanning Orontes’s sacrificial death is but the tip of the iceberg. In the following sections, I explore further acrostics that appear in the context of divine violence. While the intentionality of any one of these does not depend on the others (and the acrostic catcher always runs the risk of reeling in one too many), the fact that they form a thematically connected pattern increases the likelihood of their hermeneutic significance.

SIBYLLINE SENTENCES

When ancient writers talk about the Sibylline oracles, they frequently mention as one of their distinguishing characteristics the massive gamma acrostics with which the prophecies begin, presenting the entire first hexameter vertically (Buitenwerf 2003, 108). Readers would thus be primed to look for acrostics in Sibylline contexts, and Vergil does not disappoint. Joshua Katz (2013) and Neil Adkin (2015) have discussed the acrostic that occurs when we first meet the Sibyl in person in book 6 (77–85).¹⁰ But there are at least three additional acrostics appearing in passages

9. Mac Góráin 2018, 435: “*Tabulae*, which can also mean writing tablets, supports the metapoetic allusion. In the picture too is Horace *Odes* 1.3, which implicitly compares Virgil’s composition of the *Aeneid* to a perilous sea voyage. *Rari nantes* introduces to the scene a sense of Lucretian material dissolution. The *Aeneid* bobs adrift, with *arma virum* acting as a synecdochic tag, floating like *tabulae* between material and literary signification.”

10. Katz argues for **ABEO OS OS**, “I go away—a mouth, a mouth!”, playing on the passage’s references to mouths and openings, while Adkin prefers to see **OSOS**, an archaic form of *osus*, “hating,” alluding to 3.452, *abeunt sedemque odere Sibyllae* (“they go away and hate the abode of the Sibyl”). As usual with acrostics, the reader need not choose.

depicting violence and Apollonian prophetesses in the *Aeneid*, forming a consistent pattern in which each reinforces the others.

The first involves Cassandra, who, like the Sibyl of Cumae, was desired by Apollo and given the gift of prophecy. In Cassandra's case, however, her rebuff of her divine lover's advances turned that gift into a curse, since the god also ensured that her prophecies would not be believed. Aeneas describes Cassandra giving one last, unheeded warning as the Trojans bring the horse into the city:

o patria, o divum domus Ilium et incluta bello
moenia Dardanidum! quater ipso in limine portae
Substitit atque utero sonitum quater arma dedere;
Instamus tamen immemores caecique furore
Et monstrum infelix sacrata sistimus arce.
Tunc etiam fatis aperit Cassandra futuris
Ora dei iussu non umquam credita Teucris.
Nos delubra deum miseri, quibus ultimus esset
Ille dies, festa velamus fronde per urbem.
Vertitur interea caelum et ruit Oceano nox
Involvens umbra magna terramque polumque
Myrmidonumque dolos; fusi per moenia Teucris
conticuere; sopor fessos complectitur artus.
(*Aen.* 2.241–253)

O fatherland, o Ilium, home of the gods, and walls of the Trojans, famous in war! Four times **on the gate's very threshold** it fell back, and four times the arms gave a sound from its womb; nevertheless, we press on, mindless and blinded by madness, and place the unhappy portent in our sacred citadel. Then, too, does Cassandra open to the coming Fate the mouth by the god's command never believed by the Trojans. We wretched ones, for whom that day was to be the last, with festive foliage veil the gods' temples throughout the city. Meanwhile, the heavens revolve, the night rushes up from Ocean enfolded in a great shadow the land and the sky and the tricks of the Myrmidons; the Trojans, scattered throughout the walls, have fallen silent; sleep embraces exhausted limbs.

The acrostic **SIET O NIVI**, "O let it not be by violence!", with *siet* an archaic form of the subjunctive *sit* used in emphatic and legal contexts, captures the essence of Cassandra's helpless protest. When she opens her mouth to Fate, we can well imagine that her mantic cry prophesies the imminent

rape of her city (a topos originating in the *Iliad*), as she once must have cried out against Apollo's rape of herself. During the fall of Troy, she herself will be the object of even more *vis*, rape by Oilean Ajax—a crime for which Pallas punishes him, as Juno's opening speech reminds us in the lines spanned by **AVIDI**. Like the "huge ridge on the surface of the sea," the cue phrase "on the gate's very threshold" (*ipso in limine portae*) may be a nod to the acrostic immediately following.

The next significant **VI** acrostic, though smaller, appears in a doubly prophetic context, as the prophet Helenus describes the operating procedure of the prophetess Aeneas will encounter at Cumae. Helenus warns that she must not be allowed to play her usual trick:

"quaecumque in foliis **descripsit carmina** virgo
 Digerit **in numerum** atque antro seclusa relinquit:
 Illa manent immota locis neque **ab ordine** cedunt.
 Verum eadem, verso **tenuis** cum cardine ventus
 Impulit et teneras turbavit ianua frondes,
 numquam deinde cavo volitantia prendere saxo
 nec revocare situs aut **iungere carmina** curat:
 inconsulti abeunt sedemque odere Sibyllae."
 (*Aen.* 3.445–452)

"Whatever **poems** the maiden has **written down** on the leaves she distributes **in order** and leaves enclosed in the cave: they stay unmoved in their places and don't depart **from their order**. However, these same ones, when **slender** wind has turned the hinge and struck them, and the door has disturbed the tender leaves—as they flit about in the hollow rock, she never takes care to grab them, or recall their places, or **join the poems**: people depart unenlightened and hate the home of the Sibyl."

DIVI ("the gods") or **DI VI** ("the gods by violence"), signaled primarily by its Sibylline context, helps to solve some of the *Aeneid's* minor hermeneutic puzzles. Why put such emphasis on the *written* nature of the Sibyl's prophecies, since the action takes place in an allegedly preliterate heroic world? And if the Sibyl entrusts not merely a word but a *carmen*—that is, a poem or a poetic verse—to each leaf, why would it matter so much to "join the poems together" (*iungere carmina*)? Perhaps it matters because meaning arises not just from each individual line, *but from the order* [ab ordine] *in which they appear*: that is, from their acrostic, one of whose purposes in the actual Sibylline oracles was to ensure that no lines

had been omitted or misplaced. This little *jeu d'esprit* is indeed *tenuis*, the buzzword for Callimachean elegance and wit.

A third acrostic sentence after the Sibyl has delivered her prophecy concludes the series. Apollo's violently erotic possession of his priestess before her prophetic utterance, signaled especially by the loaded phrase *fingitque premendo* ("he molds her by pressing," 6.80), is recapitulated at its end:¹¹

Talibus ex adyto dictis Cumaea Sibylla
 Horrendas canit ambages antroque remugit,
 Obscuris vera inuoluens: ea frena furenti
 Concutit et stimulos sub pectore vertit Apollo.
Vt primum cessit furor et rabida ora quierunt,
Incipit Aeneas heros ...
 (*Aen.* 6.98–103)

With such words the Cumaean Sibyl, from her shrine, sings terrifying ambiguities, and bellows from the cave, wrappings truths in obscurities: such reins does Apollo shake on her in her madness, and twists the goads under her breast. When **first** the madness has ceased and her rabid mouth grown quiet, Aeneas, the hero, **begins** ...

HOC VI, "This [is] by violence," with the cue words *primum* and *incipit* pointing to the "first" letters at the "beginning" of the lines, reinforces the acrostic message from the scenes with Cassandra (SIET O NI VI) and Helenus (DIVI): the god of prophecy is not a gentle lover. John Miller notes that "as a response to [Aeneas's] petitions, the Sibyl's utterance is not only disappointing but downright perverse" (2009, 144), predicting only further suffering and bloodshed in Italy. The erotic violence in Apollo's possession of his priestess may apply to the content of her prophecy as well as to the state of her body and soul as she delivers it.

JUNONIAN ACROSTICS I: ALLECTO, AMATA, AND OVID'S MYRRHA

Fate in the *Aeneid* is generally associated with the proclamations of Jupiter, who declares authoritatively to Venus in his iconic prophecy that "the fate of your people remains unmoved for you" (*manent immota tuorum / fata tibi*, 1.257–258). Juno, conversely, is often characterized as

11. On the association of phrases in the form *-itque -ndo* with both lust and disease, see Dyson 1996, 209–10.

“the greatest opponent of Fate” (Zanker 2019, 157). Yet Vergil’s vertical voice problematizes this simple dichotomy. When Juno first gives Allecto her instructions for stirring up war in Italy, the poet calls attention to the Junonian aspect of Fate with an acrostic (unique in Latin epic):

quam Iuno his acuit verbis ac talia **fatur**:
 “hunc mihi da proprium, virgo sata Nocte, laborem,
 hanc operam, ne noster honos infractae cedat
Fama loco, neu conubiis ambire Latinum
 Aeneadae possint Italosue **obsidere finis**.
 Tu potes unanimos armare in proelia fratres
 Atque odiis versare domos, tu verbera tectis
 funereasque inferre faces, tibi nomina mille,
 mille nocendi artes. fecundum concute pectus.”
 (*Aen.* 7.330–338)

Juno sharpens her up with these words and **speaks** thus: “Give me this labor as my own, maiden born of Night, this work, lest my honor and **reputation** depart from this place, shattered, or Aeneas’s race be able to canvass Latinus for marriage or **occupy** the Italian **border**. You have power to arm same-minded brothers for battle and to overturn households with hatred, you have the power to bring whips and deadly torches under a roof; you have a thousand names, a thousand arts of harming. Shake out your fertile breast.”

Jupiter prophesied the war in Italy (1.263), then said he had forbidden it (10.8). He also, at the end of the poem, sends a Dira, similar to or even identical with Juno’s hellish emissary (12.853–854).¹² This acrostic further demonstrates that the dichotomy between Jupiter and Juno is false: even if, as Servius asserts, “The voice of Jupiter is Fate” (*vox enim Iovis fatum est, ad* 10.628), both of the divine siblings are agents of the fated, fatal war in Italy. Cue words *fatur* and *fama* point to the cognate **FATA**, which “occupies the border” of the page. As David Konstan (1986, 25) observes, “Juno too is fate”: the entire action of the poem shows the goddess’s wrath and warmongering driving the destiny of Aeneas and his descendants.

Allecto’s first victim, Amata, is already primed to respond to the Fury’s fatally malevolent manipulation. The clause “feminine cares and wrath were seething her, burning” (*femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque coquebant, 7.345*) employs the language and imagery of sexual passion.

12. On the distress readers have experienced at Jupiter’s sending of the Dira, see Hejduk 2020b, 99–101.

Vergil hints that Amata has an incestuous crush on Turnus, who, as Servius tells us, is her nephew (*ad* 7.366 *quid consanguineus*). When the Fury slides a snake into Amata's bosom, the imagery is even more explicitly sexual:¹³

Ille inter vestis et levia pectora lapsus
Uolvitur attactu nullo, fallitque furentem
Vipeream inspirans animam; fit tortile collo
Aurum ingens coluber, fit longae taenia vittae
innectitque comas et membris lubricus errat.
(*Aen.* 7.349–353)

Sliding between her clothes and smooth breast, the snake rolls in without a touch and deceives the maddened woman, breathing in his viperous breath; the enormous serpent becomes a twisted gold necklace, becomes a strip of long fillet and entwines her hair and wanders, slippery, through her limbs.

The acrostic **IUVA**, playing on the double meaning of *iuvare* as “to help” and “to please”—including through sexual pleasure (cf. Ovid, *Am.* 1.10.31)—is doubly appropriate. Even as Amata gives a silent cry for “Help!”, she also, in the paradox that underlies all erotic poetry, desires her plague to remain and calls for the snake to “Give pleasure!”

Two Ovidian acrostics suggest that one of Vergil's best ancient readers saw this double meaning and responded with acrostics of his own. The first is in the prelude to the second Song of Orpheus in the *Metamorphoses*, where the singer announces that his topics will be Jupiter, boys beloved by gods, and girls who deserved punishment for their illicit lust:

“ab Iove, Musa parens, (cedunt Iovis omnia regno)
carmina nostra move! Iovis est mihi saepe potestas
dicta prius: cecini plectro graviore Gigantas
sparsaque Phlegraeis victricia **fulmina** campis.
nunc opus est levioe lyra, puerosque canamus
Dilectos superis **inconcensisque puellas**
Ignibus attonitas meruisse libidine poenam.
Rex superum Phrygii quondam Ganymedis amore
Arsit, et inventum est aliquid, quod Iuppiter esse,
quam quod erat, mallet. nulla tamen alite verti
dignatur, nisi quae posset sua **fulmina** ferre.

13. On the erotic character of Allecto's serpentine infestation, as well as associations with the Thracian and Phrygian god Sabazius, see Lowe 2012.

nec mora, percusso mendacibus aere pennis
 abripit Iliaden; qui nunc quoque pocula miscet
 invitaque Iovi nectar Iunone ministrat.”

(*Met.* 10.148–161)

“From Jupiter, mother Muse (all things yield to Jupiter’s kingship), start my song! Often before have I spoken of the power of Jupiter: with heavier plectrum, I sang the Giants and victorious **thunderbolts** scattered on the Phlegraean fields. Now there’s need for a lighter lyre: let us sing of boys beloved by the gods and of **girls who, thunderstruck by fiery passions not permitted, have deserved punishment because of their lust**. The king of the gods above once **burned** with love for Phrygian Ganymede, and something was found that Jupiter himself would rather be than what he was. Yet he deigns to turn into not just any bird, only the one that could bear his **thunderbolts**. No delay—beating the air with mendacious wings he snatches up the Trojan, who even now mixes cups and serves nectar to Jupiter, against Juno’s will.”

The centerpiece of the song Orpheus goes on to sing is the incestuous love of Myrrha for her father (300–502), and the association of the acrostic **DIRA** (unique in Latin epic) with Myrrha is overdetermined. The **D** line (153) introduces “girls who, thunderstruck by fiery passions not permitted, have deserved punishment because of their lust,” which clearly refers to Myrrha, the only such girl in the subsequent narrative. When Orpheus does tell her story, its first word is none other than *Dira*: *Dira canam* (300) primarily means “I shall sing dire things,” but with a secondary nuance of “I shall sing as a *Dira*.” Orpheus suggests that “one of the three sisters”—that is, the *Dirae*—caused Myrrha’s terrible lust by infecting her with a Stygian branch *or snakes* (313–314), and Myrrha herself expresses fear of the goddesses of vengeance who attack with torches *and snakes* (349–351). Not only is Amata the most famous literary character to be infected by a *Dira*’s snake, but she is also, like Myrrha, the victim of an incestuous obsession. Ovid, ever one to amplify Vergil’s hints, puts the incest aspect front and center in his own *Dira*-infected heroine.

Before discussing why I believe Ovid was alluding to Vergil’s **IUVA**, I shall hazard one other hypothesis about a hermeneutic reward to be gained from **DIRA**. The proem of Orpheus’s song highlights the double double standard, both male/female and mortal/immortal: sexual behavior that destroys a woman has no consequences for a man (cf. Cinyras’s cheerful willingness to sleep with a girl his daughter’s age while his wife is away, 441), still less for a god. Orpheus (or Ovid) archly juxtaposes

Jupiter the Thunderer, “burning” for Ganymede, with girls punished for being “thunderstruck [*attonitas*] by fiery passions not permitted,” thus bringing the unfairness of it all into strong relief. **DIRA** helps to relate this dynamic to the *Aeneid* (a martial epic such as Orpheus claims to have sung already, 148–151), in which Jupiter makes his debut as the rapist of Ganymede (*Aen.* 1.28) and his exit as the sender of the hellish Dira (12.853–854). The Ovidian acrostic suggests that Ovid was alert to the ironic similarity of Jupiter’s two avian emissaries at the bookends of the *Aeneid*, the abducting eagle and the Dira-bird. Modern debate still rages over whether Vergil’s Juno-sent Allecto and his Jupiter-sent Dira are one and the same; Ovid’s coy reference to the goddess of vengeance as “one of the three sisters” (*de tribus una soror*, 314), without specifying which one, may even point to an ancient controversy over this very issue (cf. *Aen.* 12.845–848).

But back to Myrrha. Having recognized the evil of her desire for her father, she attempts to hang herself (381)—yet another parallel with Amata. When her nurse rescues her and demands to know the reason, Myrrha remains stubbornly silent (at first). The corresponding acrostic includes, with enhancement, **IUVA**, which marked the demonic erotic possession of Vergil’s wretched queen:

“Muta silet virgo terramque inmota tuetur
 Et deprensa dolet tardae conamina mortis.
 Instat anus canosque suos et inania nudans
 Ubra per cunas alimenta**que prima precatur**,
 Vt sibi committat, quicquid dolet. illa rogantem
 Aversata gemit; certa est exquirere nutrix
 nec solam spondere fidem.”
 (*Met.* 10.389–395)

“The maiden is silent and mute and looks motionless at the ground and grieves that her attempt at death, too slow, was caught. The old woman presses her, and baring her gray hair and empty breasts, **prays** through the cradle and **first** nourishment that she entrust to her whatever hurts. As she asks, Myrrha turns away from her and groans; the nurse is determined to find out and promise more than just her confidence.”

The cue phrase *prima precatur*, “she prays the first ones,” forms an apt sentence.¹⁴ As a silent call for help, **ME IUVA**, “Help me!”, confirms the

14. As Feeney and Nelis (2005) argue, in Vergil’s famous MARS acrostic (*Aen.* 7.601–604, brought into the limelight by Fowler 1983), the words *prima movent in*

narrator's (Orpheus's? Ovid's?) sympathy for his tragic heroine.¹⁵ At the same time, like every lovesick tragic heroine whose passion is discovered by a nurse figure, Myrrha craves the sexual pleasure that will ultimately destroy her: the second meaning of *iuuare* allows her vertical utterance to mean "Give me pleasure!" Myrrha is crying for help both to escape from her dire passion and to fulfill it.

Reading Ovid's **DIRA** and **IUVA ME** as a response to Vergil's **IUVA** can enhance our understanding of Vergil, Ovid, and Ovid-reading-Vergil. Vergil depicts the Dira's possession of Amata explicitly, with the overtones of eroticism and incest implicit; Ovid does the opposite, making the eroticism and incest his focus, while the Dira is alluded to (horizontally and vertically) but not depicted as an agent. Though I had never thought of Amata and Myrrha as a pair, the acrostics provided the clue to a connection that is demonstrably present even without them. Both are regal women; both are attacked by a snake-wielding Dira before doing anything wrong; both suffer from incestuous passions; and both hang themselves, though Myrrha's suicide attempt is intercepted and Amata's is not (*Met.* 10.381, *Aen.* 12.603). Ovid and Vergil both show empathy for the sufferings of these women, helpless before the supernatural forces that manipulate their emotions with disastrous effect.

JUNONIAN ACROSTICS II: THE SACRIFICE OF TURNUS

Allecto's fiery infection of Turnus, like her serpentine infection of Amata, marks Junonian violence with an acrostic. Impersonating Juno's priestess, the Fury invokes her mistress's authority to get Turnus to enter the war:

fit Calybe **Iunonis** anus templique sacerdos,
 Et iuveni ante oculos his se cum vocibus offert:
 "Turne, tot incassum fusos patiere labores,
 Et tua Dardaniis transcribi sceptrum colonis?
 Rex tibi coniugium et quaesitas sanguine dotes
 Abnegat, externusque in regnum quaeritur heres.
 I nunc, ingratis offer te, inrise, periclis;

proelia Martem (603) hint that "the first (ones) move a MARS." In Ovid's *prima precatur*, though *prima* is transformed from nominative singular to accusative plural (as Vergil's *prima* is transformed from accusative plural to nominative plural), there is no need to remove intervening words (as one must do with Vergil's *in proelia*) to produce the cue sentence.

15. The girl possessed by an unholy force, her inner self silently spelling out "help me" the only way it can, has an eerie analogue in *The Exorcist* (1978).

Tyrrhenas, i, sterne acies, tege pace Latinos.
haec adeo tibi me, placida cum nocte iaceres,
ipsa palam fari omnipotens **Saturnia** iussit.”
(*Aen.* 7.419–428)

She becomes Calybe, **Juno**’s old woman and priestess of her temple, and presents herself before the youth’s eyes with this speech: “Turnus, will you let so many labors be poured out in vain, and your scepter be transferred to Trojan colonists? The king refuses marriage to you and the dowry sought through blood, and a foreign heir is being sought for his kingdom. **Go** now, scorned one, offer yourself to thankless dangers; **go**, lay low the Etruscan lines, clothe the Latins in peace! So much to you, while you were resting in the calm night, has all-powerful **Saturnia** herself ordered me to say.”

Era is the mot juste for Juno, both because it is “applied as a term of respect to goddesses” (*OLD* s.v. *era* 2a) and because it is sometimes spelled *hera* (Juno’s Greek name). Sent by Juno, disguised as her priestess, and declaring that she acts under her orders, Allecto can truly tell Turnus, “My mistress/Juno goes too!” As Allecto repeats the imperative *i nunc*,... *i*, “Go now,... go!”, the vertical voice suggests that Turnus will “go” accompanied by and doing the bidding of Juno’s rage.

At the end of the poem, a final acrostic shows what happens to the hero for fulfilling the goddess’s desire. When Turnus begs for either his life or decent burial, Aeneas hesitates ... but then, maddened by the sight of Pallas’s stolen baldric, sacrifices his enemy:

consurgunt gemitu Rutuli totusque remugit
Mons circum et vocem late nemora alta remittunt.
Ille humilis supplex oculos dextramque precantem
Protendens ‘equidem merui nec deprecor’ inquit;
“Utere sorte tua. miseri te si qua parentis
Tangere cura potest, oro (fuit et tibi talis
Anchises genitor) Dauni miserere senectae
Et me, seu corpus spoliatum lumine mavis,
Redde meis. vicisti et victum tendere palmas
Ausonii videre; tua est Lavinia coniunx,
Vlterius ne tende odiis.” stetit acer in armis
Aeneas volvens oculos dextramque repressit;
Et iam iamque magis cunctantem flectere sermo
cooperat, infelix umero cum apparuit alto
balteus et notis fulserunt cingula bullis

Pallantis pueri, victum quem vulnere Turnus
 Straverat atque umeris inimicum insigne gerebat.
 Ille, oculis postquam saevi monimenta doloris
 Exuviasque hausit, furiis accensus et ira
 Terribilis: “tunc hinc spoliis indute meorum
 Eripiare mihi? Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas
 Immolat et poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.”
 (*Aen.* 12.928–949)

The Rutulians rise up with a groan and the whole mountain around bellows back and the deep woods send back their voice far and wide. He, suppliant, stretching forth humble eyes and praying right hand, says, “I know, I’ve deserved it, nor do I pray it away; enjoy your fortune. If any care for a wretched father is able to touch you, I pray (to you, too, was Anchises a father like that), have pity on the old age of Daunus, and return me—or, if you prefer, my body deprived of light—to my people. You’ve won, and the Ausonians have seen me, conquered, give you my hands; Lavinia is yours as wife; stretch no further in your hatred.”

Fierce in arms stood Aeneas, rolling his eyes, and held back his right hand; and as he hesitated, ever more, the speech had begun—was just about—to turn him, when high on the shoulder appeared the unhappy baldric, and the sword-belt gleamed with the well-known studs of the boy Pallas, whom, conquered by a wound, Turnus had laid low, and who was wearing on his shoulder the enemy’s emblem. He, after with his eyes he drank in the memorial of savage pain and the spoils, enflamed with furies and terrible in his wrath: “Are you, clothed in the spoils of my own, to be snatched away from me here? Pallas with this wound, Pallas sacrifices you and exacts the penalty from your cursed blood.”

As in *ET ERA IT*, Juno, who has been attempting to help Turnus throughout the war, is the most obvious referent of *ERA* in *MI PUTA ERA VAE*. The vertical voice articulates Turnus’s silent prayer, “Lady/Juno, think ‘woe’ for me!”, “have pity on me!” But Juno, or Aeneas assimilated to Juno, refuses Turnus’s plea.¹⁶ *SIET EI*, “Let it be [so] for him!”—the *Aeneid*’s only appearance of *SIET* other than the one spanning Cassandra’s unheeded

16. In the chilling final words of Putnam’s (1965, 201) seminal study, “it is [Juno], not Aeneas, nor the grandeur for which Augustus seems to stand, who wins the greatest victory as the soul of Turnus passes with a resentful moan to the shades below.”

warning—uttered by the recipient of Turnus’s prayer, tells us that the fallen hero will, indeed, encounter “woe,” though not in the way he had hoped. Like the hesitation of the fateful horse on the threshold of Troy, the hesitation of Aeneas in dispatching his foe is ultimately overcome by *furor* (see Hejduk 2013). If Turnus was asking for pity, he receives instead a sarcastic taunt in the grand tradition of word-twisting parting shots from enemies: “He’ll get his ‘woe’ all right!” The poem’s closing sacrifice, fueled by *furiae* and *dolor*, fulfills the promise of its first major acrostic, **AVIDI**, as god and mortal unite in this final act of violence and Juno receives her *honores* at last.

CONCLUSION

When Don Fowler published his one-paragraph article on Vergil’s **MARS** acrostic (1983), with its unforgettable conclusion “I await the men in white coats,” he could hardly have foreseen that in less than two generations acrostics would be the topic of multiple full-length articles in major journals and even of entire monographs. Nevertheless, most readers today, if they think about acrostics at all, still conceive of them as a slightly embarrassing, momentary whimsy of the (too-)learned poet. In the present article and elsewhere, I have attempted to expand our imagination of what acrostics can do, showing that vertical conversations within and between poems were a form of serious play that could be a significant source of meaning.

What, then, are some of the interpretive payoffs for reading vertically?

I have argued that Horace’s acrostic response to Vergil, in addition to confirming that he read parts of the *Aeneid* before it was published, is integral to his metapoetic meditation on wine and wisdom, in which violent greed is associated with epic and tragic *furor*. The vertical injunction to the reader—“learn!”—reinforces the poet’s protreptic. As he encourages us to recognize the danger in overstepping boundaries, the care with which he adorns the boundary of his wine poem points us toward the moral, aesthetic, and political connotations of drinking throughout his poetic corpus. Horace’s acrostic allusion to “greedy” Juno’s wrathful opening tirade, which sets the tone and direction for Vergil’s martial epic, also underscores his own poetic project of conquering the genres of war, epic and iambic, with lyric, the genre of peace. He invites the reader to “learn” along with him the irenic moderation more appropriate to the Pax Augusta.

Ovid, on the other hand, displays the disastrous effects of *furor* in the realm of sexuality. The tragic “fate” set in motion by Juno’s demonic

minion destroys queen Amata through incestuous desire, and Ovid implies that the same Dira plays a similar role in princess Myrrha's downfall. The inherent flexibility of the vertical medium, in which words are liberated from the constraints of meter, syntax, persona, and decorum, allows the authors to exploit the ambiguity of *iuva* as "help!" and "give pleasure!"; the double meaning highlights the ambivalence of erotic passion's victims, who simultaneously seek to escape and to indulge their disease. The acrostics show the authors' sensitivity to female suffering, as well as the cruel contrast with Jupiter's lust, which has devastating consequences for mortals but none for himself. The juxtaposition of Jupiter's eagle with the Dira in Ovid's story underscores this contrast, and it may even suggest that he perceived the chilling parallel between Jupiter's avian emissaries at the beginning and the end of the *Aeneid*.

The Vergilian intratextual acrostic conversations I have discussed, centering on Apollo and Juno, emphasize the willingness of those gods to sacrifice mortals to their own lusts. The horizontal text creates a horrifically erotic picture of Apollo's violence as he instills madness into his helpless prophetesses, collapsing the anachronistic modern dichotomy between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Cassandra's posttraumatic vertical plea for her city to be spared, "let it not be by violence!," is as feckless as her prophecies. Turnus's similar appeal to the pity of Aeneas-become-Juno is equally ineffectual, even as Allecto's vertical prophecy that "Juno, too, is going" with Turnus to war comes true. Juno's hunger for human sacrifice, introduced both horizontally and vertically in her opening speech, culminates in her acquiescence—"Let it be so for him!"—to Turnus's final "woe."

Unlike horizontal reminiscences, which may have some interpretive value even if they do not rise to the level of deliberate allusions, acrostics are a high-stakes, all-or-nothing hermeneutic gamble.¹⁷ What makes the case for a given acrostic's intentionality compelling is that it enhances themes already present in the text; the associations I have discussed are all worth reflecting upon even without the vertical signals that strengthen them. As I hope I have shown, becoming aware of the conversation along their margins brings the excitement of discovery to texts that have been pored over for thousands of years, and with it an even deeper appreciation of the ancient poets' complex reflections on such universal topics as art and wine, sex and sacrifice. I invite you to share that excitement and appreciation as part of the strange adventure that is reading, in which we

17. On the difficulty and inevitable subjectivity of determining which verbal and thematic similarities constitute "allusions," see Hinds 1998, 17–51 (and *passim*).

are all called to discern the slender boundary between significance and insanity.

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FESTIVALS IN STATIUS'S *THEBAID*: “UNCELEBRATING” VERGIL

Anke Walter

Abstract: In his *Thebaid*, Statius includes a couple of festivals that structure the narrative and mark the key stages in the run-up to the full outbreak of the war against Thebes in the second half of the epic. Among other intertexts, he closely engages with Vergil's *Aeneid* and the very prominent role that the festival of Hercules Invictus in book 8 plays for the poetic and political program of the epic. In the topsy-turvy world of Thebes, however, the festivals make it very clear that epic order and memory are turned on their head: The festive commemoration of key moments of the epic plot is notably premature, leading to a climactic battle that, according to Statius, should be forgotten by future generations (*Theb.* 11.574–579). This raises further questions on the relevance of the *Thebaid* for Domitianic Rome, asking the epic's audience to ponder to what extent their own festivals are wholly positive celebrations of foundational events and values, or whether they might actually be implicated in (self-)destructive tendencies.



STATIUS'S *THEBAID* IS A UNIQUE EPIC IN MANY RESPECTS. ONE FEATURE of the poem, which has so far received hardly any attention, is the central role of festive days in structuring the work. As so often, Statius is in close dialogue with Vergil's *Aeneid*, in particular with the festival of Hercules Invictus at the center of the epic, while he creates something very new: an epic poem, in which the central stages in the development of the war are commemorated by festivals—markedly prematurely, since, as the poet declares in book 11, the terrible fraternal war between Argos and Thebes should not be remembered beyond the day on which it happened. The Vergilian paradigm of a foundational festival that connects Rome's early past with the Augustan present is turned on its head in a poem in which three festivals ultimately mark the crisis of epic commemoration—and the sinister implications that even contemporary Roman festivals might have.

Scholars working on the *Thebaid* have stressed the way epic conventions are profoundly questioned in this work. In particular, the repetitive nature of Theban history (esp. Heinrich 1999), the pervasive Theban *furor* (Henderson 1991; Hershkowitz 1994, 1995, 1998), and the epic's "poetics of *nefas*" ("the unspeakable") question, in fact undermine epic storytelling itself (e.g., Ganiban 2007; McNelis 2007; Walter 2014). What has gone unnoticed, however, is that time and memory are interwoven in the *Thebaid* in a rather complex way.¹ In the first part of my paper, I will examine the three annual celebrations depicted in the *Thebaid*. They are connected with each of the three sites of the epic, Argos, Thebes, and Nemea, and each of them is part of a different understanding of time. The first anniversary, celebrated in Argos, strongly plays with expectations of time known from the *Aeneid*—yet soon to be disappointed in the world of the *Thebaid*. The second festival, celebrated in Thebes, is anchored in the repetitive and ever-regressive history of that city. It is the time-frame characteristic of civil war. Finally, the games founded in Nemea represent an explicitly Greek way of time reckoning in terms of one of the Panhellenic Games. All of these festivals occur at focal points of the epic action, as crucial narrative threads are being intertwined. Since the festivals are all recurring on a regular basis—every year or every two years—the initial stages of the *Thebaid*'s action too are associated with and integrated into that firm commemorative framework.

However, the final outcome of the epic action is so atrocious that the usual mechanisms of commemorating epic deeds are reversed. The narrator, after the culminating fraternal duel in book 11, states that, of all lands and all ages, "only one day" should know this crime, that is, the awful deed should have been kept away from any form of regular commemoration and anniversaries in the first place. In the end, the epic action is both distanced from and incorporated into Statius's contemporary Rome. In contrast to Argos, Thebes, and Nemea, Rome does not have the story of the Theban fratricide in its calendar. But the more general question is one that the Roman readers of the *Thebaid* have to ponder, as they observe their own anniversaries: To what extent can the celebration of one's origins ever be an innocent act? Is a danger similar to the one acted out in Thebes lurking in the memory of Rome's foundations?

1. Cf. however, on ritual in Flavian epic more generally, the contributions in Augoustakis 2013.

1. ANNIVERSARIES

1.1. *The Argive Festival of Apollo*

Inquiring into anniversaries in the *Thebaid* is a somewhat paradoxical undertaking. The epic action, after all, is based on a broken notion of the year. The *Thebaid* begins when, after Oedipus has blinded himself, his sons, the twins Eteocles and Polynices, have to share the power among themselves. They decide to take turns as king of Thebes on an annual basis. The lot decides that Eteocles is to be the first to rule. Polynices spends the year in Argos, at the court of king Adrastus, where he marries the king's daughter. After the year has run out, Eteocles is unwilling to step down from the throne of Thebes, forcing Polynices, with the support of the entire Argive army, to go to war against his own brother.

The tragic knot of these events is forged precisely in the context of two anniversaries. The first one is prominently placed at the end of the first book. Polynices, after he has left Thebes, happens to arrive in Argos, at the palace of king Adrastus, at the same time as Tydeus, who is fleeing from his hometown of Calydon. Adrastus recognizes in Polynices, who is covered by the skin of a lion, and Tydeus, who wears a boarskin, the sons-in-law whom an oracle from Apollo had prophesied to him, speaking of "wild beasts" who would marry his daughters. Moved by the omen, he leads the two young men into his palace and gives the order to renew the feast they had been holding before, in honor of Apollo, whose festival was celebrated on that day. The king sets out to tell a long aetiological story (1.557–668) about "which rites these are, and for what reason we are primarily honoring Phoebus" (*quae sint ea sacra quibusque / praecipuum causis Phoebi obtestemur honorem*, 1.557–558).²

This story anchors the epic action in a very large framework of time. It starts with a divine deed that marks the beginning of an ordered relationship between men and gods, "introduc[ing] men to their place within the divine scheme": the killing of the Python and the foundation of the Delphic oracle by Apollo (1.562–9).³ The *Thebaid* is given an almost cosmic background, although it will eventually profoundly question that very same divine order of the world. Beginning with Delphi, the story told by Adrastus revolves around a plague sent to Argos by an angered

2. Translations of the *Thebaid* are taken from Shackleton Bailey 2003; the text from Hill 1983.

3. Clay 1989, 91, see also 44, 75, 94. On Apollo's attempt to expiate his guilt, which only leads to more guilt and pollution and "set[s] an early precedent for viewing the Olympian gods as unreliable and capricious," see Dee 2013, 191–92.

god Apollo, until the young Argive Coroebus finally manages to appease the god, whom Adrastus later evokes as “our parents’ savior” (1.694) in a prayer that concludes the book (1.696–720).⁴ The aetiological story, however, actually fails to convey the optimistic message that Adrastus evidently thinks it has. Its supposedly happy ending cannot match up with the bleak reality that will haunt the *Thebaid* in the eleven books to follow (Ganiban 2007, 9–23; McNelis 2007, 40–44; Bernstein 2008, 76–77; Walter 2010).

What I want to focus on here is the role played by the anniversary announced by Adrastus. The annual recurrence of the festival is underscored when the Argive king concludes his tale by stating that “from that time [*inde*] the solemn feast every year renews these rites [*haec sacra*] and renewed worship appeases Phoebus’s shrine” (1.666–668). As the Roman reader of the *Thebaid* will easily recognize, this festival carries unmistakable overtones of the festival in honor of Hercules declared by Evander in book 8 of the *Aeneid*, when Aeneas first visits the future site of Rome—a central scene of arrival, banquet, and storytelling, which later authors keep invoking when the context allows. Like Polynices and Tydeus in the *Thebaid*, Aeneas is invited by his host to take part in the renewed festive banquet. In both cases, a lengthy aetiological story is told, with clear parallels existing between two. The festive day too is referred to in both texts in similar terms. Just like Adrastus’s guests, Aeneas too is asked to join in “these sacred rites,” *sacra haec* (*Aen.* 8.172), and this too is a feast that is held annually and that must not be deferred: *sacra annua, quae differre nefas* (*Aen.* 8.173).⁵

As Denis Feeney has shown in *Caesar’s Calendar*, this Hercules festival is of central importance for the *Aeneid* and its outlook on time. Vergil’s readers would have known that the day in question is what we would call the twelfth of August. This day was said to have united three crucial events from three distant epochs of Roman history: the arrival of Hercules

4. On the story, see Aricò 1972; Vessey 1973, 101–7; Ahl 1986, 2850–58; Kytzler 1986; Hill 1990, 113–15; Dominik 1994b, 63–70; Taisne 1994, 245; Ripoll 1998, 303–4; Franchet d’Espèrey 1999, 376–82; Delarue 2000, 121–23; 2006; Ganiban 2007, 9–23; McNelis 2007, 25–49; Bernstein 2008, 76–77; Newlands 2009; Walter 2010; see Keith 2013, on Ovidian influence on the female monsters depicted in this story and on the “crisis of contagion” that, in the context of Adrastus’s aetiological story, “spills into the embedding narrative and pollutes his household” (316). On the prayer, see Dominik 1994a, 91–98; Taisne 1994, 259–63; Gibson 2013, 139–40; Hubert 2013, 114–18; for prayers in the *Thebaid* in general, see Dominik 1994a, 88–119.

5. For the Vergilian parallels, see Venini 1961, 386; Vessey 1973, 94–95; Hill 1990, 107–8; Brown 1994, 166–68.

at the later site of Rome and his victory over Cacus, Aeneas's arrival at the same spot, and, finally, the arrival of Octavian, on the twelfth of August 29 BCE, after his victory over Antony and Cleopatra. Octavian put up his camp just outside the city before entering Rome in the triple triumph the next day. The twelfth of August functions, in Feeney's words, as a "wormhole of time." The identity of the day allows one to directly travel from one event to the next, and to experience the typological parallels between the three foundational heroes Hercules, Aeneas, and Augustus. The identity of the place, the Ara Maxima, underscores the identity of time, that is, of the day (Feeney 2007, 161–63).

Taking our cue from Feeney's observation, we can see how the description of this festival is of crucial importance for the way the *Aeneid* situates itself in its Roman context. Anyone who has read Vergil and is taking part in the ceremonies of twelfth August at the Ara Maxima—*haec ara*, as Evander says (*Aen.* 8.271–272)—might have Vergil's words in mind and see the "wormhole of time" open up before their eyes. The *Aeneid*, by conjuring up one of the central earlier instances of this day, ensures for itself a place at this festival, through the hearts and minds of its readers. Conversely, while recalling the *Aeneid* enhances the experience of the festival, the festival itself serves the memory of the *Aeneid*. Whenever the very day described in the text is renewed in actual life, it triggers another act of recollection of the text in the bystanders at the Ara Maxima. The text and the city, as well as the text and the festival, are firmly tied to each other. The epic claims to have a voice during one of the events of the Roman festive calendar, just as this festive calendar is inscribed in the epic.

We do not know how exactly this festival might have looked in Statius's time, but we do know that the cult at the Ara Maxima remained alive through much of the imperial period.⁶ At any rate, Statius engages very closely with the almost iconic Vergilian description of this important day.⁷ For the world of the *Thebaid*, the festival of Apollo marks a crucial

6. The Ara Maxima burnt down in 64 CE, during the great fire under Nero, and must have been rebuilt. The fate of the Hercules festival is unclear (see Coarelli 1996, 16), but we do have strong evidence of its continuation, as it is still mentioned by Servius ad loc. and Macrobian *Sat.* 3.6.9–17. For the imperial reception of the cult, see McDonough 2004; Torelli 2006.

7. The parallel with the *Aeneid* also becomes clear from the way Statius diverges from Callimachus's *Aetia*, his source for the story of Coroebus, which Adrastus tells. Even verbal parallels between the two accounts can be detected (see Aricò 1972; Delarue 2000, 121–23; Brown 1994, 174–75; McNelis 2007, 35; Walter 2010, 73–75). Yet in marked contrast with Callimachus, Adrastus's tale is not the action

day. Not only does it preserve and reestablish an old Argive custom, but it is also interwoven with the meaningful events under way in Argos. Subsequent years might remember the day for both the deeds of Coroebus and Apollo, as well as for the fact that on this day Adrastus had first welcomed his future sons-in-law. In fact, to celebrate the full revelation of the oracle's meaning, Adrastus marks the day by instituting another cult and another anniversary. Having first seen Polynices and Tydeus, and having understood the oracle, Adrastus then prays to Night, since it was she who had “unveiled the rudiments of ancient destiny” (*veterisque exordia fati / detegis*, 1.503–504). Adrastus declares, “ever shall this house do you honor and worship as the years measure out their circles *semper honoratam dimensis orbibus anni / te domus ista colet*. Black herds with chosen neck shall be your sacrifice, goddess, and Vulcan's flame, drenched with fresh milk, shall consume the lustral entrails” (1.505–509). The phrase *dimensis orbibus anni* (1.505) suggests that this cult too will be celebrated on an annual basis, forever preserving the memory of that one fateful night—the night that marks the beginning of a disastrous chain of events. The cult here inaugurated functions as a monument to Adrastus's tragic blindness: both the Argives and the Thebans will soon enough be engulfed by the night of horrible warfare and the powers of the underworld, rather than by a night of clarity and recognition. At the same time, Statius sets the tone for a fateful reversal of time and memory, as commemoration comes at the beginning, rather than the end of the epic action.

Adrastus concludes his prayer to Night by invoking the “ancient truth of tripods, dark recesses” (*salve prisca fides tripodum obscurique recessus*, 1.509), believing that he has “caught the gods” (*deprendi, Fortuna, deos*, 1.510). The reference to the tripods is important in the context of an Apollo festival. The coincidence of Adrastus's comprehending the enigmatic oracle on the day when the god of oracles is celebrated must confirm Adrastus's belief that the god has his guiding hand in the unfolding of events. There is of course a tragic irony in that Adrastus hails the unveiling of “ancient *fatum*,” believing in benevolent divine guidance, and at the same time unwittingly paving the way for the doom—*fatum*—of both Argos and Thebes. Apollo's festival, which marks and seemingly confirms Adrastus's realization seems not entirely innocent in this development.

The horror of the *Thebaid* will eventually lead to the point where the religious interaction between men and gods is profoundly questioned.

of the Argive festival ἄρνῆς, when dogs would be killed, nor of the Argive month Ἀρνείος (cf. fr. 26.1–2 Pf.). Instead, the emphasis on Apollo and the festival in the god's honor establishes a close connection with the *Aeneid*.

After the death of the Argive seer Amphiaraus, Apollo himself declares that he is no longer worthy to be worshiped, since he had been unable to save his prophet: *saevus ego immeritusque coli*, he says (9.657), and then retreats from the rest of the epic.⁸ In fact, as we can now see, the god's role in the *Thebaid* has been somewhat uneasy from the start, since his oracle and his festive day first opened up the tragic chain of events. The festival celebrated in Argos, then, turns out to be deeply implicated, in fact, instrumental, in the awful events of the *Thebaid*.

1.2. *The Bacchus Festival in Thebes*

While Adrastus and the Argives are still celebrating the god Apollo, their framework of time is already entwined with the fateful time frame of Thebes. While the first book ends with Adrastus's hymn of Apollo, the second begins with a word that is characteristic enough of epic narrative, but particularly meaningful in the present context: *interea*, "meanwhile." *Interea* can refer to a rather vague simultaneity, to any point in time within a certain time span, or it can mean "now, moreover," signaling the passing on to a new subject or topic (cf. *OLD* s.v. *interea*; Hardie 1994, ad *Aen.* 9.159). In this case, however, there is at least the possibility that the Theban festival in honor of Bacchus is celebrated in the same night as the Argive festival of Apollo. In any case, the structural parallels between them connect the two festivals, as well as the fact that they are juxtaposed at the end of the first and beginning of the second book of the *Thebaid*.

What is happening "meanwhile" is that Mercury, following Jupiter's command, raises the ghost of Laius from the underworld and leads him to Thebes, where he is to inspire Eteocles to live up to the curse lying over the family, and to pursue his twin brother in eternal hatred.⁹ The fateful day when Laius sets in motion this train of events is again an anniversary. The Theban festival is described as follows (2.71–90):

et tunc forte dies noto signata Tonantis
fulmine, praerepti cum te, tener Euhie, partus
transmisere patri. Tyriis ea causa colonis
insomnem ludo certatim educere noctem
suaserat; effusi passim per tecta, per agros, 75
serta inter uacuosque mero crateras anhelum
proflabant sub luce deum; tunc plurima buxus

8. On Apollo in the *Thebaid*, see Feeney 1991, 357–58; 371–74.

9. On the ancestral stigma that keeps haunting Thebes, see Bernstein 2008, 66–69.

aeraque taurinos sonitu uincentia pulsus;
 ipse etiam gaudens nemorosa per auia sanas
 impulerat matres Baccho meliore Cithaeron: 80
 qualia per Rhodopen rabido conuiuia coetu
 Bistones aut mediae ponunt conuallibus Ossae;
 illis semianimum pecus excussaeque leonum
 ore dapes et lacte nouo domuisse cruorem
 luxus; at Ogygii si quando adflauit Iacchi 85
 saeuus odor, tunc saxa manu, tunc pocula pulchrum
 spargere et inmerito sociorum sanguine fuso
 instaurare diem festasque reponere mensas.
 nox ea cum tacita uolucer Cyllenius aura
 regis Echionii stratis adlapsus ... 90

It chanced to be the day marked by the Thunderer's famed bolt when your forestalled delivery, tender Euhius, handed you over to your father. That gave the Tyrian settlers their reason to draw out a sleepless night in sportive rivalry. Stretched everywhere, indoors or in the fields, amid garlands and empty wine bowls they were exhaling the panting god as day approached. Then sounded many a boxwood pipe and cymbals louder than the beating of bullhide. Cithaeron himself had merrily driven sane mothers through the wooded wilds under a kinder Bacchus. Such feasts do Bistonians in wild assembly lay out on Rhodope or amid Ossa's vales; for them a sheep half living, food shaken from lions' jaws, and blood diluted with new milk is luxury; but if ever the fierce odour of Ogygian Iacchus breathes upon them, then they love to scatter stones and winecups, and after spilling guiltless blood of comrades to begin the day afresh and reset the festal boards. Such the night when from the silent air the swift Cyllenian glided to the Echionian monarch's bed.

What at first sight looks like an ordinary anniversary, or more precisely a triennial event, is in fact more complex.¹⁰ First of all, the birthday in question is not a standard one. To be precise, it is only the first birthday of Bacchus, who will later be born again from the thigh of his father Jupiter—Dionysus, the “twice born,” according to a famous folk etymology.¹¹ From

10. Cf. 2.661–663, Tydeus's taunt to the fifty Thebans: “*non haec trieterica vobis / nox patrio de more venit; non orgia Cadmi / cernitis aut avidas Bacchum scelerare parentes*” (“This night is not your triennial returning by ancestral custom; you look not at Cadmus' orgies or mothers greedy to stain Bacchus with crime.”).

11. Cf., e.g., the allusion to this etymology in Eur. *Bacch.* 519–529.

the start, time looks somewhat dysfunctional even in the case of the patron deity of Thebes: Bacchus's birth is *praereptus*, line 72, "snatched away before its time." "That day" marked by this birth, then, is implicated in a troubled framework of time.

Let us now examine more closely the simile comparing the Thebans to Thracians. The simile is introduced as a typological parallel: *qualia*, line 81. However, the last line—the Thracians "beginning the day afresh and resetting the festal boards"¹²—takes us back to the festival in Thebes (cf. the following "such the night"), which had first led to the simile being introduced. This line also suggests that, beyond the typological parallel, the Theban and the Thracian festivals could be synchronic, that is, that they take place on the same day sacred to Bacchus. The festival celebrated in both places, then, opens up a wide horizontal axis of space. It unites two tribes who live apart geographically, but who still, as suggested by the simile, honor the same god in a very similar way. The comparison with the proverbially wild and uncivilized Thracians underlines the fierce character potentially inherent in the Theban festival even in the particular instance singled out by Statius, which looks relatively moderate, compared to its Thracian counterpart.

That said, the anniversary, by its very nature, also works along a vertical axis of time, that is, the history of Thebes. What is striking here is the reference to "sane mothers," *sanae matres* (2.79–80). There were times in Theban history when the Theban mothers were decidedly not sane, most notably, when Agaue and her female companions tore apart Agaue's son Pentheus. The reference to mount Cithaeron, where this happened, underscores this allusion. It is suggested that this event too might have happened on that same day, the birthday of Bacchus: we do not know for sure, but it is at least conceivable. The way the Thebans themselves celebrate this day seems fairly tame: a sleepless night spent "in sportive rivalry," with processions of "sane mothers." The wild and cruel character of the Thracian festival, coupled with the memory of Pentheus, acts as both a flashback on past Theban atrocities, and a flashforward on the horrors of the war to come: "the guiltless blood of comrades" (2.87), even of a mother's own son was spilt in the past, and it will be in the future, in the bloody war around the walls of Thebes.¹³ The vertical axis of time opened up here makes manifest this characteristically Theban dimension

12. This is a common expression for renewed celebrations on festive days; cf., e.g., *Aen.* 4.63; 8.175–176; *Theb.* 7.94, with Gervais 2013, ad loc.

13. For further references to the future contained in this simile, see Gervais 2013, ad loc.

of time. There is a strong sense that, although time does keep going on, little progress is being made. Laius quite literally appears as a ghost from the past that keeps haunting Thebes, once more setting in motion the same story pattern of madness and hatred within one's own family.

This festival, which parallels the one celebrated in Thebes, also becomes the site of a fateful interweaving of narrative threads. In “that night,” *noxe* (2.89), the ghost of Laius calls Eteocles to action, instigating another replay of the regressive Theban story-pattern, which shines through even in the moment in which Thebes is compared to Thracia far away. This mirrors the night in which the Argives celebrate Apollo, and in which Adrastus founds a cult in honor of that night. Even while the order of time and of the festive calendars observed in the different cities is still upheld, then, in reality Argive, Theban, and even Thracian time are connected. By this uncanny parallel, they are already implicated in the repetitive urge of Theban history, which will bring doom over Argos as well. The structure of time in the *Thebaid* is far apart from the foundational “wormholes of time” opened up in Vergil's *Aeneid* (Feeney 2007, 161–63).

1.3. *The Funerary Games in Honor of Opheltes*

In the middle of the *Thebaid*, an anniversary is again interwoven with an important beginning in the narrative. When the Argives finally march towards Thebes, their progress is halted in Nemea. The god Bacchus causes a drought, and while the Argives stumble through the woods looking for water, they meet Hypsipyle from the island of Lemnos, who leads them to a spring. She tells the Argives at great length how she saved her father from the massacre committed by the Lemnian women and how she came to Nemea. While she is speaking, the infant child entrusted to her care, Opheltes, son of the Nemean king, is killed by a snake. It turns out that an oracle from Apollo had predicted that Opheltes would be the first casualty of the war. In his honor, the Argives celebrate the first Nemean Games, which will be established as a recurrent triennial event.¹⁴

As Joanne Brown and Charles McNelis have demonstrated, Statius is at his most Callimachean in the Nemean narrative. Echoes of Callimachus's *Aetia*, the central Hellenistic text for stories of origin, can be detected

14. From the start, the episode carries strong aetiological undertones; cf. its introduction in 4.649–651: *quis iras / flexerit, unde morae, medius quis euntibus error, / Phoebe, doce: nos rara manent exordia famae* (“Tell, Phoebus, who turned their wrath aside, whence came delay, what wandering stayed their march. We have only scattered beginnings of the story”). On the death and funeral of Opheltes, see Vessey 1973, 187–95; Augoustakis 2010, 54–61; Ganiban 2013.

throughout the episode (Brown 1994, esp. 30–56; McNelis 2007, 76–96; cf. also Delarue 2000, 123–40). Most importantly, the action of the Nemean Games is told in book 3 of the *Aetia* as well. The main hero of the Callimachean narrative, as far as we can tell from the fragments, was Hercules, whose victory over the Nemean lion marked the beginning of these games. However, Opheltes too seems to have figured in Callimachus's account, since the games were later “renewed” for his soul.¹⁵ Statius keeps alluding to Hercules in the Nemea episode, showing that he is very well aware of the Callimachean action (cf. esp. Brown 1994, 30–40). Ultimately, however, in declaring the death of Opheltes not a secondary, but the only action for the games, he notably corrects the Callimachean version. As we shall see, this has important consequences for the way the war against Thebes is commemorated.

The foundation of the Nemean Games is referred to several times in the text. First, soon after the death of the child, the Argive prophet Amphiaraus tells his countrymen that “he must be accorded lasting honors” (*mansuris donandus honoribus infans*, 5.744), and he consoles Opheltes's parents by prophesying them eternal fame in 5.746–751, speaking of the rite (*sacrum*) in honor of their child, who is already a god (*nam deus iste, deus*, 5.751). His ashes, appropriately, come to rest in a *templum* (6.238–248). After his death, *Fama*, “Rumor,” spreads the news that the Argives “are founding rites for a new tomb and games to boot ... a festival according to Greek custom” (*Graium ex more decus*). The first games thus established, the poet goes on to say, were the Olympian Games, followed by the Pythian Games in Delphi, as well as the Isthmian Games (6.5–14). Note that the reference to the Pythian Games and to Apollo's victory over the Python (*proxima vipereo celebratur libera nexu / Phocis, Apollineae bellum puerile pharetrae*, 6.8–9) harks back to Adrastus's tale in book 1, which began with this same Apolline deed. The two temporal frameworks of Argos and Nemea, then, are closely connected with each other.¹⁶

15. From the scholia on Vergil, we learn that, according to Callimachus, the Nemean Games, having first been established by Hercules, “were later renewed for the soul of Archemorus—another name for Opheltes—by the Seven, who were on their way to Thebes”: Ps.-Probus ad Verg. *Georg.* 3.19–20, on which cf. Harder 2012, ad fr. 60c.9. Cf. however Brown 1994, 47–50, who suggests that possibly “the comic tale of Herakles, Molorchus and the mice is framed by the altogether gloomier story of Archemorus, and Herakles is re-founder rather than first founder” (50).

16. This is underscored by the fact that the bier of the dead infant Opheltes is decorated with an image of Linus (6.62–66), which harks back to Adrastus's narrative of Coroebus in book 1 (where the dead child remains nameless though); see Aricò 1972, 77–78; Vessey 1973, 104–5; Brown 1994, 182–86; McNelis 2007, 37–40; Ganiban

Later, after the first Nemean Games have been celebrated, Adrastus, while making a libation, invokes Opheltus as though he were already a god: “Grant, little one, that we may renew your day at many a triennial” (*da, parve, tuum trieteride multa / instaurare diem*, 7.93–94). Adrastus too then places this action in the context of the other three Panhellenic Games (7.93–97). The Nemean Games are thus twice made part of an explicitly Greek way of time reckoning (*Graium ex more decus*) and of an entire system of measuring and naming the years according to the Panhellenic Games. The recurrent memory afforded by the intermittent time-frame of the games of course interacts with other forms of commemoration, such as the permanent tomb relief, made of stone (cf. *saxea moles*, 5.242), which likewise preserves the memory of the child and his nurse Hypsipyle (6.238–248). The two forms together guarantee the commemoration of these events: the monument through its lasting, constant presence, and the games through the intermittent, yet vivid renewal of the memory of the past.

This type of memory is again closely connected with the Argives’ expedition against Thebes. When Amphiaraus first announces the games, as quoted above, he prays to Apollo for ever more delays, *morae*, on their way to war, and that “deadly Thebes may ever further recede” (5.743–5).¹⁷ Only a few lines later, Amphiaraus also states that Opheltus, who is now known by the name of Archemorus, is “marked, alas, by our destiny’s name”: *et puer, heu nostri signatus nomine fati, / Archemorus* (7.738–739).¹⁸ The name Archemorus has two meanings. As Feeney notes in *The Gods in Epic*, it can be interpreted, in Latin, as “beginning—ἀρχή—of *mora*,” that is, delay, or, in Greek, “beginning of μῦθος,” that is, doom.¹⁹ The memory preserved by Archemorus’s name, as our present focus allows us to realize, works in a twofold way with regard to time. The Argives’ *mora* in the woods of Nemea, spent for the most part by celebrating the games, has already happened, while μῦθος, the Argives’ doom, still lies in the future.

2013, 254–59 for the parallels. Although different commemorative media (an oral narrative and a woven garment, about to be burned together with the funeral pyre) play a role here, the references to the story of Linus still underline the connection between the different commemorative days.

17. For the theme of *mora* in the *Thebaid*, see Vessey 1973, 165–67; Feeney 1991, 339–40; Ganiban 2007, 99; 101–2, 156–70; McNelis 2007, 86–91.

18. Just like the day celebrated earlier in Thebes was marked, *signata*, by the first birth of Bacchus (2.71–72: *et tunc forte dies noto signata Tonantis / fulmine*).

19. Feeney 1991, 339; Ganiban 2013, 253, who adds that Hypsipyle is the first to call the dead boy by that name, implying a connection with the death she predicts for herself.

The child bears the name of the Argives' fate (*nostrī signatus nomine fati*) just before that *fatum* becomes reality. The split memory inherent in the name of the child, underlined by the split between the two languages—Greek μόρος and Latin *mora*—also testifies to the tension inherent in the myth of the Seven against Thebes: in the name of Archemorus, the wish to avoid the awful events to come, or to delay them infinitely, coexists with the inevitability of doom. This tension, which marks the crucial narrative moment when the Argives are delayed one last time before eventually entering into the war, is forever commemorated in the Nemean Games and inscribed into the Greek system of time reckoning by way of the Panhellenic Games.

2. COMMEMORATION AFTER THE DUEL

By this point of the epic, at least the appearance of an order of time is still upheld by the celebration of regular festivals, although these are already intertwined with the cursed time frame of Thebes and the doom to come. In fact, the three festivals themselves help create this order, by acting as central structural elements of the narrative, marking the crucial steps toward war on the Argive and Theban side, as well as the involvement of Nemea, and punctuating the epic narrative at structurally important points: at the end of the first and the beginning of the second book, as well as marking the middle of the epic, encompassing the events in Nemea between the end of book 4 and the beginning of book 7. Yet, as we shall see, by marking the decisive steps toward the war, the festivals will eventually become instrumental in the breakdown of all order and the usual mechanisms of commemoration.

After the *Thebaid*, in book 11, has reached its gruesome high point with the mutual killing of the twin brothers Eteocles and Polynices, it becomes clear that this deed, which encapsulates the horror of the epic as a whole, does not fit into any regular commemorative framework. Immediately after describing the duel, the narrator exclaims that both brothers should go to Tartarus, “and exhaust all the pains of Erebus. And you, Stygian goddesses, spare now the ills of mankind. In all lands and every age let one day only see such a crime [*omnibus in terris scelus hoc omnique sub aevo / viderit una dies*]. Let the monstrous infamy be forgotten by future generations and only kings remember this duel (11.575–579).”²⁰ “One

20. An interesting parallel, with *una dies* in the same metrical *sedes*, is Luc. *Bellum Civile* 10.532–533: *potuit discrimine summo / Caesaris una dies in famam et saecula mitti* (“Because of Caesar’s utmost danger, a single day might have become

day only,” *una dies*: given that the motif of the anniversary had been brought up at crucial points of the epic, these words can be read as an emphatic renouncement of such a pattern for the culminating event of the *Thebaid*. Only one day should see that fraternal death, that is, there should expressly be no commemoration beyond the day on which this terrible crime happened, and certainly no regular reenactment of this memory in a festive context.

This is certainly one of the more Lucanian moments in Statius’s narrative. Lucan’s epic on the civil war between Caesar and Pompey, the *Bellum Civile*, is the central text for matters of internecine strife in all Flavian epics. Like Statius, Lucan, at the height of horror, the battle of Pharsalus, cries out against it: “Let my mind turn away from this part of the war and leave it in darkness, and no age shall learn from me as *vates* of such horrors, what license is granted to civil wars” (*nullaque tantorum discat me vate malorum, / quam multum bellis liceat civilibus aetas*; Luc. *Bellum Civile* 7.552–554).²¹ *Nulla ... aetas* is placed in a bold hyperbaton spanning the two lines. This expresses *in nuce* the conflict faced by the poet, between speech and silence: the speech which fills these two lines, and the silence commanded by the framing *nulla ... aetas*. Despite his claims to be silent, Lucan immediately goes on to describe in detail Caesar’s “crimes” which he had just renounced—one of the epic’s many instances of dilemma, which Joseph Reed (2011, 24) fittingly calls “Lucan’s master trope.”²²

The poet of the *Thebaid* inherits and cultivates the “split” voice with which Lucan is speaking (cf. esp. Henderson 1987; Masters 1992). Statius too makes known what should not go beyond that “one day.” But this conflict concerns not only the poet. The epic action is not only commemorated by his words, but it is also inscribed in the framework of three different festivals in Argos, Thebes, and Nemea. Not only is the epic voice at war with itself, but the temporal orders of the ground on which the epic action is played out are dragged into the conflict as well. Ultimately, then, the destruction of convention and of order enacted in

for ever famous”), when Caesar was nearly killed in the fighting at Alexandria. Is Caesar one of the *reges*, then, who should have taken into account the “day” that Statius is talking about, and that he disregarded to become the infamous tyrant that he was, according to Lucan?

21. Trans. Duff 2006. On Lucan and the *Thebaid* see most recently Roche 2015.

22. The claim to be silent is reiterated in the two following lines (*Bellum Civile* 7.555–556): *a potius pereant lacrimae pereantque querelae: / quidquid in hac acie gessisti, Roma, tacebo* (“rather let our tears be shed in vain, and our complaints be uttered in vain: of the part that Rome played in this battle I shall say nothing”).

the epic is all-encompassing, involving both the temporal order of the narrative and the voice of the epic poet, with the breakdown of order in both spheres confirming and reinforcing each other. In fact, the fateful interweaving of Argive and Theban anniversaries suggests that they have been doomed from the start, with no chance to escape. In the *Thebaid*, then, celebrating one's origins and looking back on the beginning is not an innocent act. Instead, it might already be the beginning and premature memorialization of what should better be limited to one day only.

The festive days of the *Thebaid* take place far away from Rome, in the mythic past of Argos, Nemea, and Thebes. Unlike the festival of Hercules Invictus in the *Aeneid*, they do not have a place in the Roman calendar, they are not synchronous with Roman life. Unlike the battle of Pharsalus, the day of the fatal fraternal duel does not have a date fixed in the Roman calendar. And yet, both the marked presence of the festival of Hercules Invictus from *Aeneid* 8 in the Argive festival of book 1 and the strong Lucanian undertones in Statius's depiction of the Theban civil war invite his readers to ponder the relationship of the *Thebaid* and its festive days with the festive life of Rome itself.²³

It is worth keeping in mind that the Flavian dynasty at its beginning had carved out its own myth of origin, for the new dynasty after the Julio-Claudians—a narrative promising a return to Augustan values, but also emphasizing, for instance, the virtue of a simple Sabine origin, and the *pietas* between the father and his biological, not adopted, sons. The new dynasty also left its mark on Roman time, for instance, with the reestablishment, in 86 CE, of the Capitoline Games by Domitian, to be held every four years (cf. Suet. *Dom.* 4.4). These games originally commemorated Rome's landmark victory over the Gauls in 387 BCE, but in their new form they also resembled the Neronia which had been discontinued at Nero's death (Jones 1992, 103; Hardie 2003; Newlands 2014, 322). Statius himself became part of this recurrent festival: in the *Silvae*, he laments that he was not victorious in the poetic agon of these games, possibly with parts of the *Thebaid* (*Silv.* 3.5.31–33; 5.3.215–233; cf. van Dam 1984, 14 n. 16). As a poet, he cannot escape the new time frame of Rome.

23. In general on the question of how the *Thebaid* relates to Flavian Rome, see Ahl 1986; Hill 1990; Dominik 1994b, esp. 130–80; Henderson 1998; Braund 2006; McNelis 2007, 2–5; Rosati 2008. Bernstein (2013, 248) concludes his examination of ritual murder in the *Thebaid* by stating that “the *Thebaid* implies that much ritual work must be done in order to restore a proper relationship with the gods after the violence of the civil war.”

At the same time, the audience of the *Thebaid* learns to be cautious about the seemingly optimistic celebration of origins both old and new. The festivals of the *Thebaid* certainly encourage the audience to think critically about their own origins and their celebration: even while Rome is celebrating, say, the festival of Hercules Invictus or the Capitoline Games, is something similar to the fate of Thebes under way in Rome as well? Is the city, given its own innate propensity for internecine strife whose consequences are so memorably expressed in Lucan's epic, also heading towards another disaster, even while the citizens are still enjoying the festive splendor of Rome's meaningful days, both old and new?²⁴ Festivity, just like epic poetry itself, emerges as inherently double-edged: both a powerful way of commemorating the past and reaffirming Roman identity and the values of the present and of equally powerfully undercutting any sense of stability and the assurance that a long, proud history can provide. What Statius accomplishes could be considered something quintessentially Flavian, or at any rate highly appropriate for that age: although the epic itself takes place in a safe distance from Rome and Roman time, the order of time in Argos, Thebes, and Nemea, their interweaving, and the disorder into which they are thrown, will remind the readers and perhaps Statius's own audience at the Capitoline Games that time and history can take—and have taken, and perhaps are again taking—very disturbing ways indeed.

3. CONCLUSION

I have suggested that anniversaries play an important role at crucial points of the epic: the narrative threads of Argos and Thebes are first interwoven during the festival of Apollo in Adrastus's palace. "Meanwhile," Eteocles is inspired with ancestral hatred by Laius in the night of the Bacchus festival at Thebes, and the memory of Archemorus, the first victim of the war, is honored by the foundation of the Nemean Games. The beginning of the war, then, is closely associated with the distinctive temporal structures of the three sites of the *Thebaid*—notably before, rather than at the end of the action. In a blatant reversal of the usual functioning of epic κλέος, the poet at the culmination of his work declares that its memory should be confined to one day only, instead of being remembered at regular intervals. The festivals themselves, we finally realize, are instrumental in

24. For a comparable conclusion on the *Thebaid's* relevance for contemporary Rome, based on Statius's use of Ovid's Perseus narrative in the *Metamorphoses* as a vehicle for questioning Vergil's foundational myths, see Spinelli 2019.

this process. Like the epic voice itself, they too become the sites on which the epic's crisis of memory is acted out. Rather than guaranteeing the positive continuity of memory, they ultimately stand exposed as empty monuments to madness, violence, and self-destruction, but also to the blindness of those who commemorate, and whose festivities lead to the premature commemoration of what will need to be forgotten.

In the process, Statius also throws new light on the festival of Hercules Invictus, which forms the intertext of the Argive festival in book 1, with which the chain of festivities in the epic begins. Whereas the festival in *Aeneid* 8 encapsulates the profound connection that Vergil establishes between the past and the Augustan present, commemorating the various foundations and refoundations of Rome, Statius turns the topos of the epic festival into something much more sinister. Adrastus embodies an all too blind belief in the power of origin myths and celebration, thus opening the door to the madness that will unfold throughout the *Thebaid*, and ultimately to the breakdown of the usual categories of epic narrative and commemoration, but also of the human relationship with the gods. The festival of *Aeneid* 8, the emblem of an unbroken chain of commemorating foundational deeds, is reframed as the beginning of destruction, in an epic in which the epic voice, but also epic structure and epic commemoration, are at war with themselves.

Adrastus's blindness could be connected with this belief in a well-known epic topos, which does guarantee commemoration of foundational events in the *Aeneid*, but which Adrastus himself will help turn on its head in the first book of the *Thebaid*. Although the *Thebaid* takes place far away from Flavian Rome, the Vergilian—and Lucanian—intertext might lead Statius's fellow Romans to ponder the role of their own memorable days and stories of origin, as they are celebrated throughout the Roman year. For Statius's contemporary audience, who might have happened to hear the poet perform parts of his epic in the context of a festival, the Capitoline Games, this connection becomes even more acute. Festive commemoration, whether in Argos, Thebes, Nemea or Rome, it is suggested, need not be an altogether positive phenomenon. Instead, the joyous commemoration of the past in a happy moment of the present could already be the beginning of doom, destructing the foundational events of the past and any prospect for the future. In retrospect, Statius makes the festival of Hercules Invictus appear in a rather dark light, as he reframes it as a template not of the eternal commemoration of Rome's glorious foundation and founding-fathers, but as the beginning of the end of epic commemoration in its usual form. The festive commemoration of foundations, the *Thebaid* teaches us, is

no guarantee of a happy future, but needs to be treated with caution. What looks like a joyous occasion might already be doomed.

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POETRY IN MOTION: MOVEMENT, VIOLENCE, AND SACRED LANDSCAPES IN *PERISTEPHANON* 11 AND *AENEID* 8

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Abstract: This paper examines poetic processes of Christianization of landscapes in and around Rome, viewed through the lenses of Prudentius's *Peristephanon* 11 and Vergil's *Aeneid* 8. Placing these works in conversation, this essay explores resonances in the two poets' imaginative usages of movement as a method to guide their audiences' understandings and experiences of Rome's landscapes. Further texture is added through attention to how movement creatively intersects with different forms and expressions of violence and of the divine in both poems. From the (literally) tortured travels of the early Christian martyr Hippolytus to Aeneas's journeys across time and place in a mytho-historic Italy, both Prudentius and Vergil weave together movement, violence, and the sacred into instructive tapestries for their respective audiences. Rather than simply rehashing Vergilian themes with a Christian veneer, however, Prudentius places himself in creative dialogue with his poetic predecessor to offer his audience a distinctly Christianizing vision of Rome's history and landscapes. Writing in a period marked by the possibilities and pitfalls of a Roman world in flux, Prudentius anchors his audience in the venerable past of Roman epic while striding forward into the brave new world of a Christian Roman Empire.



MOVEMENT—OF VARIOUS PACES AND DIRECTIONS, THROUGH DIFFERENT landscapes both concrete and envisioned (historical and mythic), performed by multiple agents in embodied and/or vicarious forms, evoked

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through text and image, even across time itself—functions as a critical tool with which to think through landscapes. Put slightly differently, landscapes are far from inert backdrops, but are constantly (re)imagined and (re)defined in direct relation to the imaginative, agentive experiences they shape (see Frankfurter 2018; Jenkyns 2013; O’Sullivan 2011, esp. ch. 6). Dynamic mobility operates as a critical piece of processes of conceptualizing landscapes as culturally meaningful. In what follows, I will explore how movement creates meaning in the late-fourth/early-fifth-century poetics of the Spanish Christian lay author Prudentius, with close attention to reminiscences with one of his prominent classical models, Vergil.¹ I suggest that Prudentius employs epic journeying motifs as part of the Christianizing of the landscapes of the city of Rome and its surrounds, specifically through his poetic commemoration of the torture and execution of the third-century martyr Hippolytus in *Peristephanon* 11 and its echoes with *Aeneid* 8. In short, I argue that Prudentius weaves together layers of epicized movement, martyrial violence, and evocative Vergilian resonances in order to encourage imaginative understandings and experiences of *Christianitas* embedded in the sacred landscapes of Rome.

Before turning to the poems themselves, some brief comments on Prudentius’s Christianizing, epicizing tendencies as well as on the broader late antique “culture of movement” will be helpful.² Prudentius’s rich poetics offer us a launchpad for parsing the sheer imaginative potential of late ancient processes of Christianization. As a scholarly concept, “Christianization” involves a dizzying array of possible definitions and manifestations. Widely variable and often contested, identifying something as “Christian” was open to a host of interpretations and implementations. In David Frankfurter’s (2018, xiv) helpful formulation, Christianization refers generally to how *Christianitas* was “made recognizable, sensible, indigenous, and authoritative.” Here, we shall see how Prudentius drew on the cultural authorities of Vergilian poetics and early Christian martyrdom to guide his audience’s understanding and experience of Rome’s landscapes as indelibly Christian.

Mediterranean Religions. I would like to thank the organizers, my fellow panelists, and the audience for their incisive questions and comments. I am also indebted to the reviewers for their feedback, suggestions, and insights, as well as to the enormously helpful editors at *Vergilius*. The *Aeneid* text used is Mynors 1969; the *Peristephanon* text is Cunningham 1966; unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

1. See Witke 2004, 128–40; Roberts 1993; Palmer 1989; O’Hogan 2016.

2. For this phrasing, see Dietz 2005, ch. 1.

Further, recent scholarship has stressed a more nuanced approach to notions of an inherently agonistic relationship between Christianity and paganism in the fourth and fifth centuries, couched in a teleological terminology of Christian triumphalism versus pagan survivals and refracted through cultural output like literature.³ This is not to suggest that there was no animosity between Roman Christians and Roman pagans. Indeed, Prudentius's own writings belie this time and again, from the sensationalistic two-book takedown of pagan practices in the *Contra orationem Symmachi* to the graphically violent death of the personification of *Veterum cultura deorum* at the hands of *Fides* in the *Psychomachia* (see *Psych.* 21–39; see also Hardie 2017). However, as Marc Mastrangelo has argued, Prudentius's antagonism toward paganism by no means entailed a concomitant rejection of *Romanitas*; rather, his poetics evince his deep commitment to a programmatic unification of Roman history and Christian salvation history. Prudentius was profoundly invested in a Christian Roman Empire and marshaled his literary talents in the creation of an “epic master narrative” that shaped “historical memory and collective ideology” in part through intertextual allegory and typology (Mastrangelo 2008, 4). In so doing, Prudentius engaged with epic's emphasis on “totality and completion” while also embracing its potential for “repetition and reworking” (Hardie 1993, 1).

This sense of simultaneous closure and openness, found particularly in Vergil and in the political context of the early Augustan period (see Hardie 1993 and Rimell 2015), finds parallels in the late-fourth/early-fifth-century empire, especially under Emperor Theodosius I and his successors. Both periods saw dramatic cultural, social, and political change that allowed for and even necessitated imaginative reevaluation and experimentation concerning questions of identity, of history, of present and future—questions that literature positioned itself to help answer. One of the most pressing issues facing late ancient Roman Christians stemmed from their gradual accession to positions of power in the empire, for in so doing martyrdom, one of the hallmarks of early Christian identity and ideology, had the potential to become a fossilized relic of a distant past. In other words, the opportunity to willingly face physical persecution at the hands of imperial authority, which had become engrained in the discursive texture of *Christianitas* over the past two and a half centuries, was no longer available for most Christians. In this context Prudentius deployed his rhetorical arsenal to reinforce and reinscribe martyrdom in the fabric

3. See esp. Al. Cameron 2011; Watts 2015; Pelttari 2014; Jones 2014; Hardie 2019; 2014, ch. 6; Av. Cameron 1991.

of a changing Roman world, embedding violent narratives into the very landscapes of the empire.

Further, epic tension between completion and repetition finds particular resonance in late antique martyr narratives, which were marked by a sense of recurrence while also operating within and indeed helping to create a totalizing view of Christian salvation history. As the *Aeneid* “constantly works against its own closure” (Hardie 1993, 2), so too do martyr narratives. That is, while such narratives functioned as local “primordial” histories and “foundational dramas,” they also “resonated with the metanarrative of Christian history” (Sizgorich 2009, 57). Each individual martyr narrative offered a bloody microcosm of Christian truth, able to be repeated and re-presented *ad infinitum* as part of an overarching “grand narrative of Roman Christianity” (Sizgorich 2009, 57). As essential pieces of broader Christian history, these seemingly self-contained narratives consistently belied such containment. As we shall see, this sense of forestalled closure and imaginative re-presentation suffuses the accumulative and overlapping journeys winding across time and landscapes throughout *Peristephanon* 11. Moreover, as with martyr narratives more broadly, this impression remains even as such layers of movement ultimately coalesce in the service of totalizing, epicizing processes of Christianization.

Parallels between epic and martyr literature have hardly gone unnoticed; as Elizabeth Castelli (1996, 174) has shown, Prudentius married inherited literary traditions of epic with martyr narratives in his *Peristephanon* as a means to retell “the story of Christian origins as a story of Christian empire” (see also Lavarenne 1963, 12; and Gorab Leme 2017, 374). Taking advantage of epic’s focus on foundations, he infused Roman Christian history with all the sweeping gravitas of epics like the *Aeneid* and positioned martyrs as new epic heroes. We can investigate one critical piece of this fusion of epic and martyrology through Prudentius’s usage of multilayered, intertextual journeying to (re)create meaning and understanding of sacred landscapes, a theme explored in part by Cillian O’Hogan’s (2016) recent work. Prudentius intertwined epic journey motifs with aspects of a broader late antique culture of movement, in particular vicarious or “armchair” pilgrimage, through which audiences could gain intimate, envisioned experience with landscapes to which they had never physically traveled thanks to evocative textual descriptions.⁴ Accounts of journeys not only transmitted vivid details about given locales but

4. See Frank 2000, 4–5; and O’Hogan 2016, 19–20, 30–34. See also Bitton-Ashkelony 2005; Elsner and Rutherford 2005; Dietz 2005.

functioned as a method to shape how audiences could—and should—approach and understand the world around them. Instructive journeying was a critical lens to think through and participate in processes of imaginatively Christianizing landscapes, processes that also drew on epic models of informative and transformative journeying (see Fletcher 2014 and Van Nortwick 1992).

In the example of *Peristephanon* 11 and its resonances with *Aeneid* 8 that follows, we will also see how violence plays a significant role in creating and enhancing the vicarious experience and understanding of landscapes in and around Rome. Throughout his account of Hippolytus of Rome's martyrdom and subsequent veneration, Prudentius interweaves movement and visceral violence to shape both the martyr's own achievement of sanctity as well as his later memorialization. Though book 8 is often read as a respite from the violence that suffuses so much of the *Aeneid* (see, e.g., Jenkyns 1998; Fratantuono 2007), violence also helps frame Aeneas's (and the audience's) mobile exploration and informs his understanding of Rome's landscapes and gods. Fundamentally, Prudentius's evocations of *Aeneid* 8 underscore instructive confluences of violence, movement, and sacred landscapes in both texts. My aim in what follows is to tease out these intersections to explore how Prudentius used Vergilian epicized journeying as a means to shape imaginative understandings and experiences of a violent *Christianitas* grounded in Rome's landscapes.

Peristephanon 11 was born from movement. Like Vergil the "veteran traveler" (Fletcher 2014, 13), so too did Prudentius's firsthand knowledge of travel in the Roman world come into play in his poetry, particularly in the "triad of *itinerarium* or pilgrimage poems" formed by *Peristephanon* 9, 11, and 12 (Roberts 1993, 132; see also Palmer 1989, 29). These three poems took as fodder the poet's own journey to Italy, the main impetus for which was likely secular rather than religious in nature (O'Hogan 2016, 51–52; see further Lana 1962, 24–32; Coşkun 2008, 307–10, 312–14). Nevertheless, Prudentius took the opportunity to participate in some spiritual tourism while abroad, exploring sacred geographies, martyr cults, and/or commemorative practices previously unfamiliar to him and, ostensibly, to his audience back home in Spain. Simultaneously poetic guide and curious traveler, he underscores both the didacticism of much of his work and his own active participation in processes of creative Christianization of the landscapes of the empire.⁵

5. On his didacticism, see Fruchtman 2014 and Dykes 2011.

The centerpiece of this itinerant triad finds Prudentius scouring the suburban band of cemeteries in “Romulus’s city” (11.1: *Romula in urbe*), on the hunt for names of holy martyrs to report back to his addressee, Valerian, bishop of Prudentius’s likely hometown of Calagurris.⁶ His task is a tricky one, as the cemeteries brim with numerous, often anonymous, sepulchers of martyrs whom “impious fury devoured, / when Trojan Rome worshiped its paternal gods” (11.5–6; *furor inpius hausit, / cum coleret patrios Troia Roma deos*). This evocative phrase immediately situates his ensuing narrative “within the literary tradition” in order to “make sense of travel and the discovery of new places” (O’Hogan 2016, 40), though in a way that is hardly neutral. Rather, by placing the violent devouring of Christians within a *Troia Roma* beholden to its ancestral gods, Prudentius imbricates Rome’s epic antiquity in a narrative of violent Christianization.

This connection to Rome’s Trojan past as well as *Peristephanon* 11’s broader aura of instructive movement evokes Aeneas’s leisurely tour of Arcadian Rome and its environs by Evander in *Aeneid* 8. Though the scale of this travel may not appear so grand in terms of sheer geographical expanse, the transformative meaning it impresses upon Aeneas imbues it with epic flavor. It forms another leg of Aeneas’s multiple journeys that direct him to the shedding of Trojan identity and the concomitant construction of the Trojans as Romans (see broadly Fletcher 2014; see also Quint 1993, ch. 2). Further, the unhurried pace at which Aeneas and Evander walk through the landscapes in and around Rome, dictated by the king’s old age (8.307; *obsitus aevo*), allows for Vergil to convey both his hero and his audience across “the ground that will one day become Rome”; rather than simply “be told about it,” the poetic construction of the landscape’s meaning has a distinctively embodied, experiential quality (Jenkyns 2013, 149).

Evander’s ambulatory show-and-tell involves many sacred sites permeated with an “ominous sanctity” (8.349–350; *religio dira*) as locales inhabited by gods both named and unknown. One of the known divine denizens provides a subtle yet telling link to Prudentius’s poetic vision of *Troia Roma*. Toward the close of their journey Evander directs Aeneas’s gaze across time and place to “relics and monuments of men of old” (8.356; *reliquias veterumque ... monumenta virorum*) sandwiched within the “ruined walls” of “two towns” (8.355; *duo ... disiectis oppida muris*), one citadel (8.357; *arcem*) of which was built by Janus and thus received the name “Janiculum” (8.358; *Ianiculum huic ... nomen*). In Prudentius’s version

6. On these identifications, see Lana 1962, 3–10; Castillo Maldonado 1999, 88–89; Hershkovitz 2017, 12–13; and Coşkun 2008, 314–16.

of Rome, too, the Janiculum remains a prominent landmark defining the cityscape; however, it is no longer marked by divine power but by intense violence. Having alighted on the discernable name “Hippolytus” in the cemetery, the poet plunges his Calagurran bishop and audience back in time into the martyr’s narrative and into the landscape of *Troia Roma*.⁷ The martyr is brought before his soon-to-be persecutor, initiating the first journey of his narrative; perhaps curiously, however, the main traveler is not the martyr but his adversary. “Not content to bathe the ground inside lofty Rome’s walls / with constant slaughter of the just” (11.43–44; *non contentus humum celsae intra moenia Romae / tinguere iustorum caedibus assiduis*), the “raving leader” (11.39; *insano rectori*) decides to depart the city and turn his wrath against suburban Christians instead. The particular state of the cityscape helps to spur the persecutor’s travel, for it is “when he saw that the Janiculum now drenched, the fora, the rostra, / the Subura overflowed with a flood of blood” (11.45–46; *Ianiculum cum iam madidum, fora, rostra, Suburum / cerneret eluvia sanguinis affluere*) that he sets forth from Rome. Rather than identified according to its divine builder, in Prudentius’s Christianizing poetics the Janiculum is marked by its utter drenching (11.45; *madidum*) with floods of Christian bloodshed (11.46; *eluvie sanguinis*). Recognizable landmarks are here redefined in relation to martyrial torture and execution. As such, the poet intertwines the very landscape of Rome into the fabric of Christian history through a visceral vision of the city’s violent martyrial past.

Such an oversaturation of Rome’s landscape with bloodshed sets in motion further layers of movement that shape Hippolytus’s martyr narrative. In the hunt for more landscapes to “bathe ... with constant slaughter” (11.44; *tinguere ... caedibus assiduis*), the persecutor “carried his raging to the edge of the Tyrrhenian shore” (11.47; *protulerat rabiem Tyrreni ad litoris oram*) and the seaport located there. This setting was likely more than rhetorical flourish on the part of the author. On a more literary level, this seaside location strengthens the martyr’s resemblance to his mythical namesake, particularly the version in Seneca’s *Phaedra*, and offers an intertextual allusion for members of his audience familiar with the text and/or myth to appreciate (see Palmer 1989, 189–91; Malamud 1989, 83–84; Cobb 2017, 149–51). On a more topographical level, this move outside the city may demonstrate Prudentius’s knowledge of the late-fourth-century basilica dedicated to Hippolytus at Portus, as well as his desire not to have it overshadowed by the shrine to the martyr on

7. On Hippolytus, see Trout 2015, 145–46; Malamud 1989, ch. 4; Roberts 1993, 148–67; Fielding 2014; Gorab Leme 2017; Miller 2009, 69–73.

the Via Tiburtina (see Malamud 1989, 82; Trout 2015, 146, 191–92). If this is the case, this nod to distinct, extant sacred sites linked to Hippolytus shows how one martyr’s memorialization could encompass multiple complementary locations, linked together through movement within the narrative world of the poem as well as in later commemoration performed by Christian venerators, a feature to which we will return shortly. On a related note, the persecutor’s own journey also functions to create ties between the intramural urban landscape and its surroundings, ties that are expressly created through shared experiences of violence. That is, the impetus for the persecutor’s journey beyond the walls, the literal inundation of Rome with Christian blood, parallels his intended actions in the nearby coastal landscape to which he travels. As such, the relationship between intramural city and extramural suburbs is less that of “clear tension” (O’Hogan 2016, 48) and more of interrelation forged in a crucible of torture and death.

This particular landscape into which the persecutor traveled to continue his program of violence further resonates with *Aeneid* 8, though here movement occurs in the exact opposite direction. Turning back to the beginning of book 8 before Aeneas has met his Arcadian host, the hero’s journey to Rome, inflected with sanctity and violence, begins on the Tiber’s banks (8.28; *in ripa*). As the book opens, we alight upon Aeneas on the riverbank, “troubled in his heart by harsh war” (8.29; *tristi turbatus pectora bello*); as such, the violence that is to come in the remainder of the epic reaches tendrils into the hero’s early incursions into the landscape of his fated journey. Indeed, as the “very god of the place” (8.31; *deus ipse loci*), the River Tiberinus himself, informs Aeneas in a dream, the landscape’s history has been marred by perpetual war between the Arcadians and Latins (8.55; *hi bellum absidue ducunt cum gente Latina*). Though violent warfare thus surrounds the beginnings of Aeneas’s voyage into Italy, the god takes care to set the hero’s mind at ease. “Do not be frightened by threats of war,” Tiberinus instructs, as “all the swelling of divine wrath / has ebbed away” (8.40–41; *neu belli terrere minis; tumor omnis et irae / concessere deum*).⁸ Undergirding these mollifying words is the river-god’s assurance that Aeneas has been long “awaited by the soil of Laurentum and the fields of Latium” (8.38; *expectate solo Laurentu arvisque Latinis*), for only in the numinous landscapes of Italy are his “sure home” and “sure gods” (8.39; *heu tibi certa domus, certi ... penates*). Not only do “the soil, the fields ... the earth, the very dirt of Italy” welcome its long-awaited and long-absent son (Jenkyns 1998, 530), but they do so in direct relation

8. On this half-line, see also Fratantuono 2007, 235.

to promises of eventual, divinely inspired peace. And yet, the “sunny and relaxed” respite Vergil provides from violent warfare in Tiberinus’s embrace is decidedly tenuous, as the violence that has driven Aeneas’s journey and into which he continues to march inexorably remains hovering around the edges of the reprieve of book 8 (Jenkyns 1998, 518–19; see also Quint 2018).

Tension between peace and violence finds deeper resonance still when, upon daybreak, Aeneas and his men begin their journey proper up the “river most beloved by heaven” (8.64; *caelo gratissimus amnis*). Earlier in the epic Vergil had subtly indicated the natural violence of the Tiber, marked by the “fierce eddies” (7.31; *verticibus rapidis*) with which it “rushed forth into the sea” (7.32; *in mare prorumpit*). This characterization makes the river god’s literal reversal of course that much more striking in his divine aid of Aeneas’s journey to Evander’s Rome:

Thybris ea fluvium, quam longa est, nocte tumentem
 Leniit, et tacita refluens ita substitit unda,
 Mitis ut in morem stagni placidaeque paludis
 Sterneret aequor aquis, remo ut luctamen abesset.
 Ergo iter inceptum celebrant rumore secundo:
 Labitur uncta vadis abies; mirantur et undae,
 Miratur nemus insuetum fulgentia longe
 scuta virum fluvio pictasque innare carinas.
 olli remigio noctemque diemque fatigant
 et longos superant flexus, variisque teguntur
 arboribus, viridisque secant placido aequore silvas. (8.86–96)

Through the length of the night Tiber calmed his swelling stream,
 And flowing back with silent wave he thus stood still,
 So that as a mild pool or in the manner of a quiet pond
 He spread his waters into a smooth surface and there was no toil for
 the oars.

And so as the voyage began they sped along with approving
 murmurs:

The oiled fir-wood glides through the waters; the waves marvel,
 The unaccustomed woods marvel at the men’s shields glittering
 And the painted ships floating on the water.
 The men with their rowing lay siege to both night and day
 And conquer the long curves and are covered by varied trees,
 They cut through the green woods on the calm surface.

The ferocity of the river's eddies has miraculously transformed into its opposite as the river becomes defined instead by mild and smooth stillness, ideal for the Trojans' easy passage upstream. Nevertheless, though divine nature acts to abet their voyage, the journey is not without hints of violence. The Trojans' glittering shields (8.92–93; *fulgentia scuta*) and vivid warships (8.93; *pictas carinas*) evoke the militaristic purpose of their travels from Troy and into Italy, as does the subtle martial language (8.94; *fatigant*; 8.95; *superant*) of their passage across the "calm surface" (8.96; *placido aequore*; see also 8.537–540). This being said, the landscape's own marveling at the implements of war racing through it (8.91–92; *mirantur et undae*, / *miratur nemus insuetum*) casts these evocations of violent warfare not in an agonistic but in a cooperative, even intimate light, at least for the time being (see also Quint 2018, 126–27). The "special epiphany of the divine" creates an affective bond between this landscape, the Trojans traveling through it, and the audience, as in "mutual amazement" these multiple vantage points coalesce to create a "landscape with a 'meaning'" (Jenkyns 1998, 540). That this meaning is channeled through transformative journeying, tinged with echoes of warfare, heightens the epic tone of the Italian landscape and presages the continued unfolding of movement and violence across it. Aeneas and his men's journey up the Tiber envelops them in the mantle of divine nature as the landscape itself miraculously facilitates their travel. Though this journey is largely pacific, the shadows of war swathe the scene and portend the violence to come in the remainder of the epic.

Whereas numinous nature works to facilitate the Trojans' journey, Hippolytus's interaction with nature takes a rather different form. When we left him, the expectant martyr had been brought to the persecutor's new hunting ground at the "Tiber's mouth" (11.40; *ostia per Tiberina*) with blood-soaked Rome left behind. Hippolytus quickly becomes the prime target for the persecutor's wrath, whom he condemns to be torn apart by wild horses in a display of smug ingenuity upon learning his name.⁹ As Hippolytus's punishment finally commences, the tenor of mobility in the poem changes. Whereas before movement was directed from bloodied Rome to an extramural landscape of continued torture, here it becomes torture itself. Incited by the persecutor's cadre of assistants, the pair of unbroken horses to whose yoke Hippolytus had been fastened "rush forth ... driven by blind wandering" (11.111; *prorumpunt ... caecoque errore feruntur*). Such frenetic energy suffuses the horses' journey, as "madness," "wildness," "fury," and "din" impel them onward (11.112–113;

9. See also *Aen.* 7.765–757; Ovid, *Met.* 15.479–546; Auson., *Epigr.* 41.

furor, feritas, impetus, fragor). In contrast to the purposeful journey of the persecutor beyond Rome's walls, here movement is decidedly chaotic. The horses' frantic itinerancy and the persecutor's methodical travel seem on the surface to have destinations that differ in kind; for the latter, the goal is a particular site, whereas for the former it is a particular effect. Put slightly differently, rather than a specific geographic terminus, the horses' journey is aimed instead toward a specific outcome: the piecemeal dismemberment of their martyrial "burden" (11.114; *onus*). Despite this distinction, however, the ultimate purpose for both journeys is centered on the torture and execution of recalcitrant Christians. As such, they mimic one another, not in exact imitation but in evocative representation. In including such subtle modulations of movement, Prudentius encourages his audience to envision sacred landscapes defined not as discrete sites, but through the activities that unfold across and intertwine them.

Such a blend of landscape and experience guides this scene, while echoing the intimate interaction with divinely inspired nature that informed the Trojans' journey up the Tiber. Here, however, this resonance takes on a decidedly different tone. As Hippolytus is dragged through his torture, the agent of his demise shifts from wild animals to the landscape itself:

Per silvas per saxa ruunt, non ripa retardet
 Fluminis aut torrens oppositus cohibet,
 Prosternunt saepes et cuncta obstacula rumpunt,
 Prona fragosa petunt, ardua transiliunt.
 Scissa minutatim labefacto corpore frusta
 Carpit spinigeris stirpibus hirtus ager. (11.115–120)

Through woods, through rocks [the horses] rush, no riverbank
 impedes them
 Nor does an opposing torrent contain them,
 They throw fences to the ground and burst all obstacles,
 Headlong they seek rough places, they jump over steep heights.
 Little by little with thorny roots the rough fields pluck pieces
 Torn off from the dragged body.

Though it is the horses' rapid, haphazard movement that initiates Hippolytus's dismemberment, ultimately the beasts become elided with the natural elements of the ambiguous landscape of "uncultivated nature" through which they rush (Roberts 1993, 154). At first no barrier can contain the sheer force of their progress as they "burst" (11.117; *rumpunt*) any obstacle in their winding path, whether environmental (rocks, trees,

and rivers) or manmade (fences).¹⁰ In the midst of the journey, however, this seemingly adversarial relationship between mobility and landscape becomes instead one of cooperation in order to complete the ravaging of Hippolytus's flesh. "Little by little" (11.119; *minutatim*) harsh natural features "pluck" (11.120; *carpit*) off bits and pieces, so much so that parts of his body adorn the landscape in all directions:

Pars summis pendet scopulis, pars sentibus haeret,
Parte rubent frondes, parte madescit humus. (11.121–122)

A piece hangs from the highest crags, a piece clings to the thorns,
By a piece leafy branches grow red, by a piece the ground is soaked.

The saturation of the ground in this landscape mirrors the ground of Rome earlier in the poem, whose drenching (11.45; *madidum*) with Christian blood prompted the persecutor's movement in the first place. On its surface, then, the narrative journey has seemingly come full circle, beginning and ending in martyrial bloodshed facilitated by multifaceted movement across multiple landscapes.

Appearances, however, can be deceiving. The imitative bloodshed bookending the meat of Hippolytus's narrative gives a purposefully false sense of closure. As Prudentius continues his Christianizing poeticization of the landscapes of Hippolytus's torture and execution, he weaves together further layers of instructive, epicized journeying that span supposed chronological and spatial boundaries. First, we will turn to an exploration of the immediate aftermath of his martyrial voyage with resonances to Evander's story of Cacus and Hercules. This will then bleed into the landscapes of celebratory movement in Christian veneration and in Augustus's triple triumph as depicted on the shield of Aeneas.

In the wake of Hippolytus's itinerant torture and execution, Prudentius employs an elaborate ekphrasis in order to further instruct his bishop and community back home as to the transformative potential of both violence and movement in imagining martyrial geographies.¹¹ The poet's usage of this particular literary technique here complements the vicariousness inherent to textual journeys, as ekphraseis involve visual immediacy, imaginative encounters, and audience participation. In *Peristephanon* 11, ekphraseis and armchair journeys encourage intimate contact between poet, audience, and sacred landscapes of martyrial violence past and

10. Cf. *Aen.* 8.62–65, with interpretation in Jenkyns 1998, 530–31.

11. On ekphraseis and viewing, see esp. Gorab Leme 2017; Kaesser 2008; Elsner 1995, 2007; Fruchtmann 2014; Nasrallah 2010; Miller 2009, 9–11, 67–73.

present. Following the martyr's decoration of the landscape of his torture with his flesh and blood, Prudentius shifts focus to explain the immediate aftermath to Valerian. Through a sumptuous image the poet positions himself self-consciously as a mediator of knowledge (see Roberts 1993, 151–54), melding text, image, and movement to encourage his audience's vicarious experience of *Christianitas* in landscapes of violence. The poet describes a painting of the martyr's torture on the wall above his tomb (11.125; *super tumulum*) "depicting the bloody limbs of the dragged man" (11.126; *effigians tracti membra cruenta viri*):

Rorantes saxorum apices vidi, optime papa,
 Purpureasque notas vepribus inpositas.
 Docta manus virides imitando effingere dumos
 Luserat et minio russeolam saniem.
 Cernere erat ruptis conpagibus ordine nullo
 Membra per incertos sparsa iacere situs. (11.127–132)

I saw tops of rocks spattered, best father,
 And dark red marks fashioned on briers.
 A hand skilled in imitation had mimicked green
 Brambles and reddish gore with vermilion.
 One could see that limbs with joints burst asunder
 Lay scattered in no order across uncertain sites.

Befitting an ekphrastic mode, the poet includes pointed reminders of the fundamentally approximate nature of the artwork upon which he gazed. It is a "likeness" (11.125; *species*), created by a "hand skilled in imitation" (11.129; *docta manus imitando*) that vividly "mimicked" (11.130; *luserat*) elements of the scene of dismemberment Prudentius just (re)created (see further Grig 2004, 115–17). This attention to artificiality does not negate the affective impact of the martyr's torture, nor that of the scenes that follow. Akin to Vergil's usage of ekphraseis in the *Aeneid*, the scene disrupts and destabilizes but, in so doing, "forces itself on the reader as a generative moment" (Putnam 1998, 3). Such cues function to pull back slightly from total immersion in the narrative, to remind the audience—called on directly, in the case of Valerian—of their separation both chronologically and spatially from the moment and place of Hippolytus's martyrdom. This division need not be permanent, however; by drawing attention to it, Prudentius further accentuates the importance of imaginative envisioning to overcome such temporal and geographic boundaries. In so doing, the poet re-presents the martyrial past in the landscapes and communities of the post-Constantinian present.

Prudentius adds yet another layer of instructive movement through his continued description of the tomb painting. Rather than consign the martyr's dismembered corpse to the landscape of his demise, the artist had included Hippolytus's devotees "following in step" (11.133; *gressu ... sequentes*) along the "wandering path" (11.134; *devia semita*) of his "fractured journey" (11.134; *fractum iter*) in order to hunt down and collect every bit of the martyr they could find, from his "mangled viscera" (11.136; *visceribus laceris*) and "snowy head" (11.137; *caput niveum*) down to his shoulders, hands, arms, elbows, knees, and legs (11.139–140) and even the sprays of blood that had fallen on bristles and "thirsty sands" (11.141; *bibulae harenae*). Reduced to a series of bodily objects, Hippolytus is stripped of agency as the focus shifts to the actions of his followers gathering these scattered remnants of dismemberment. Though the focus is on the immediate aftermath of torture, the peripatetic violence that destroyed Hippolytus's body remains firmly at the center of the scene, evoked within the painting ekphrasis through his followers' retracing of his route. Through their meticulous movement, the path of Hippolytus's torture becomes less chaotic and more coherent, allowing poet and audience alike to imaginatively follow along the map of mutilation created.

And yet, this equivalence between martyrial and commemorative movement does not continue in an unbroken feedback loop, continuously replaying itself in strict imitation. Instead, Prudentius layers complementary journeys onto one another while also extending the followers' movement beyond that which inspired it. Upon completion of their devotional task, the martyr's followers finally deviate from their leader's path, striking out with martyrial flesh and blood in hand to find a suitable location for his burial. The landscape of the river mouth that so actively participated in Hippolytus's dismemberment is expressly *not* an acceptable spot for his reassembled corpse to remain, and instead the Christians must move into a different landscape more befitting memorialization. In a partial retracing of the persecutor's journey, the devotees seek Rome as a site "suitable to hold fast the holy ashes" (11.152; *Roma placet sanctos quae teneat cineres*). In another frustration of exact mimesis, however, they stop just outside the "outermost wall near the cultivated pomeria" (11.153; *haud procul extremo culta ad pomeria vallo*), favoring a suburban locale "on the boundary between city and countryside" for Hippolytus's entombment (Roberts 1993, 161; see also Trout 2015, xxi). At this location a "cavern yawns, immersed in dark pits" (11.155; *mersa latebrosis crypta patet foueis*) into which Hippolytus's followers, as well as Prudentius and his audience, descend.

A brief glimpse into this burial site opens an intertextual avenue back into the *Aeneid*. The “cavern” (11.155; *crypta*) into which the martyr’s dismembered corpse is deposited slopes via a “downward path” (11.155; *via prona*) into a cave (11.160; *specus*) distinguished by its interplay between light and dark.¹² Though a claustrophobic darkness shrouds its “narrow halls under shadowy porticoes” (11.164; *arta sub umbrosis atria porticibus*), shafts in the crypt’s ceiling allow for the “glitter of the absent sun” (11.167–168; *absentis solis fulgorem*) to “penetrate the mountain’s hollowed innards” (11.165–166; *excisi cava viscera montis / crebra penetrat*). What exactly this illumination alights upon we shall return to below; for now, our attention can turn to resonances with the *Aeneid*. Scholars have read the descent into Hippolytus’s subterranean tomb as reminiscent of book 6 (see, e.g., O’Hogan 2016, 48–51; Witke 2004, 135–36; Malamud 1989, 104–10); while this is convincing, I suggest that Prudentius also draws on the epyllion of Hercules and Cacus in book 8 as a method of strengthening connections between violence, divinity, history, and landscapes.

Following Aeneas’s journey up the Tiber, his understanding of the landscapes of Italy is deepened through the story of Cacus and Hercules. Evander recounts the narrative while celebrating “sacred rites” (8.185; *sollemnia*) in the god’s sacred grove outside Rome, under the shadow of the remnants of Cacus’s cave and on ground once “warmed by fresh slaughter” (8.195–196; *recenti / caede tepebat humus*). It is fitting that a god distinguished by his wanderings provides another point of reference on Aeneas’s growing map of Italian sacred geography and, in conversation with Prudentius, that the particular version of Hercules Aeneas receives is incredibly violent.¹³ I will not go through the entirety of the epyllion here, but some highlights will prove instructive as to how Vergil, like Prudentius, deployed intersections of violence and movement to shape conceptualizations of sacred landscapes in his epic.

In Evander’s narrative, Hercules’s arrival in Italy set in motion the showdown between the god and Cacus, the “literal bad guy” (Quint 2018, 134) and monstrous son of Vulcan. What I want to narrow in on here is Hercules’s victory over his foe, imbued as it is with movement and graphic violence. Hercules’s initial attack is rebuffed by Cacus’s manipulation of the landscape; in response:

12. See also Malamud 1989, 104–5; Roberts 1993, 158–62; Miller 2009, 72–73; O’Hogan 2016, 49–51.

13. See Fratanuono 2007, 237; Feeney 1991, 158–62; Hardie 1986, 110–18. See also Hardie 2017; and Quint 2018, 130–39.

ter totum fervidus ira
 lustrat Aventini montem, ter saxea temptat
 limina nequiquam, ter fessus valle resedit. (8.230–232)

three times, burning with rage,
 he traversed the great mount of the Aventine, three times he assailed
 the rocky threshold in vain, three times he sank down in the valley,
 exhausted.

Hercules's multiple journeys across the Aventine give texture to the landscape while enhancing the anticipatory, affective drama of the scene. Rather than accept defeat, after his third attempt he ceases his fruitless movement and uses the landscape itself against Cacus, hurling a "towering flint-stone" (8.233–234; *silex insurgens*) into the barred cavemouth. In response, the river below recoils in terror (8.240; *refluitque exterritus amnis*), echoing Tiberinus's reversal of his current (8.87; *refluens*) to aid the Trojans earlier in the poem. Though the tenor has shifted decisively, the river's movement amplifies the aura of violence surrounding interactions between gods, men, and nature within book 8.

At once Cacus's lair cracks open, revealing the horrifying depths within and their "half-beast" (8.267; *semiferi*) denizen perched at the center. Billowing plumes of fire and black smoke do not avail the ill-fated Cacus, as Hercules "hurled himself through the fire / with a headlong leap" (8.256–257; *seque ipse per ignem / praecipiti iecit saltu*) to fulfill his violent intent. With vivid, macabre intimacy Hercules overpowers his foe:

hic Cacum in tenebris incendia vana vomentem
 corripit in nodum complexus, et angit inhaerens
 elisos oculos et siccum sanguine guttur.
 (8.259–261; cf. Prud., *Psych.* 28–35)

Here in the shadows he seized Cacus, spewing fires in vain,
 Grasping him as in a knot, and, clinging to him, throttled him,
 Eyes squeezed out and throat dried of blood.

The prior movement into the cave's interior by both Cacus and Hercules is effectively and violently reversed as Hercules then drags the corpse out by its feet (see also Hardie 1986, 115). To this brutal scene Vergil adds an almost voyeuristic enjoyment, as Hercules places the corpse on display in the landscape:

nequeunt expleri corda tuendo
 terribilis oculos, vultum villosaque saetis
 pectora semiferi atque extinctos faucibus ignis. (8.265–267)

People could not be satiated in gazing upon
 The dreadful eyes, the face, the hairy, brutish chest
 Of the half-beast, his fiery jaws extinguished.

The insatiability of the onlookers' gaze mirrors Cacus's own voracious appetite for human flesh, now neutered and (literally) transported into an object of prurient delight for the once-terrorized locals.

Aided by kaleidoscopic movement to, across, into, and out of the landscape, Hercules's epic journey accomplishes his violent goals while reverberating into the "present-day" of Evander's kingdom. For, as the king finishes his tale, he informs his guest that "from then on rejoicing generations observe a celebrated rite on this day" (8.268–269; *ex illo celebratus honos laetique minores / servavere diem*) in which he invites the assembled "young men" (8.273; *iuvenes*) to participate "in tribute of such great renown" (8.273; *tantarum in munere laudum*). The ceremonial recounting of Hercules's deeds, including his grisly victory over Cacus, becomes embedded in the performed, ritual landscape (see also Fratantuono 2007, 239). As such, the graphically violent, mobile epyllion of Hercules and Cacus helps inform the religious meaning of the site for Aeneas, while rippling across time via Vergil's poetics to help shape the audience's understanding and experience of Rome's outskirts.

This mytho-historic establishment of Hercules's altar (8.271; *aram*) in a landscape of extreme violence just beyond Rome plunges us back into Prudentius's description of his firsthand experience in the "hidden places" to which "Hippolytus's body was entrusted" (11.169; *talibus Hippolyti corpus mandatur opertis*). Within this crypt lies not a fire-breathing monster but an "altar dedicated to God" (11.170; *ara dicata deo*) which acts as both the "giver of sacraments" (11.171; *sacramenti donatrix*) and as the "faithful guardian of its martyr" (11.172; *custos fida sui martyris*) as it "protects the bones in the tomb" (11.173; *servat ossa sepulcro*). Together the altar and tomb demarcate the place as holy, facilitating as they do the practice of Christian ritual and providing coveted contact with the martyr's corporeal remains and the intercessory healing they could offer.¹⁴

Movement and violence continue to reverberate for venerators near and far in this sacred tomb, thanks to the curious materiality of both landscape

14. See *Perist.* 11.175–182; see also Brown 2015, chs. 5 and 6; Van Dam 1993; Moss 2010, chs. 3 and 4.

and object. The martyr's dismembered body rests in a shrine that "glitters with solid silver" (11.184; *argento fulgurat ex solido*) and is decorated with "glistening panels on its smooth surface, just as a concave mirror shines" (11.185–186; *tabulas aequore levi candentes, recavum quale nitet speculum*). That Hippolytus's shrine is covered in reflective material is a telling detail. As the metallic shrine literally "reflects its surroundings" upside down as through a concave mirror, it amplifies a sense of "endless circularity and ... distorted repetition" in Prudentius's text (Malamud 1989, 112; see also Elsner 2007, 22–26). We should pause to take stock, then, of what exactly was in these refracted surroundings, what images would have penetrated the visitor's eye when gazing upon the splendor of the disco-ball-like shrine, illuminated as it was by the "glitter of the absent sun" (11.167–168; *absentis solis fulgorem*) in the heart of the underground crypt. Crucially, as Prudentius informed his audience earlier, the painted image of Hippolytus's dismemberment and subsequent assembly of his sundry body parts by his followers was found here, gracing the "wall ... above the tomb" (11.123, 125; *paries ... super tumulum*). This visual, visceral reminder of the martyr's violent torture and the collective journey of his fellow Christians thus echoes around the tomb, refusing to be relegated to the distant past. Painting and shrine together continuously reinscribe and represent not only Hippolytus's itinerant torture within the location of the crypt, but also the memorializing movement undertaken by his followers. As such, in descending into the tomb travelers like Prudentius (alongside armchair travelers like his Spanish audience) had reflected around them visual reminders of the martyr's graphic death, his devotees' ensuing journey, and the landscapes across which they had unfolded in the third century. Moreover, as Martha Malamud (1989, 111) argues, the depiction of the shrine functions as another ekphrasis, nestled within the larger and seemingly endless painting ekphrasis; indeed, she comments that "reader and poet never emerge from it, and the rest of the poem is contained within the frame." Boundedness and expansiveness here echo the epic tension between repetition and totality, closure and openness. Text, object, history, and landscape all collapse into one another in a Christianizing loop of envisioning and experiencing the violent, accumulative layers of Hippolytus's martyrdom.

The instructive glitter of Hippolytus's shrine and the multitudes it contains provides our final resonance with the *Aeneid*, where another flashing object suffused with dynamism and violence helps shape sacred landscapes across time and place: the shield of Aeneas. Like all those in and around Rome he has experienced throughout book 8, the landscapes framing the epic hero's reception of his divinely wrought arms and shield

are infused with numinous energy. Having sacrificed to Hercules at the altar established in the shadow of Cacus's ruined cave, Aeneas travels into a sacred grove "consecrated with deep ancestral sanctity" (8.598; *religione patrum late sacer*) to receive his mother's prophetic gifts in preparation for impending warfare, the dazzle of which floods the recipient's gaze. This brilliance is intimately connected to martial violence through the nature of the implements themselves—the terrifying crested helmet "vomiting flames" (8.620; *terribilem cristis galeam flammisque vomentem*; see also Quint 2018, 133–34), the "death-dealing sword" (8.621; *fatiferumque ensem*), the "blood-red" corselet (8.621–622; *loricam sanguineam*). This aura of violence is enhanced through allusions to earlier episodes in the book; like the eager spectators who could not get their fill of Cacus's gruesome corpse (8.265; *nequent expleri*), so too is Aeneas unable to be satiated (8.618; *expleri nequit*) in scrutinizing his armor (see Putnam 1998, 162). Likewise, in a nod to a more subtle atmosphere of violence, Aeneas's marveling (8.619; *miratur*) echoes the landscape's response to the Trojans' warships traveling up Tiberinus's miraculously reversed currents (8.91–92; *mirantur et undae, / miratur nemus*). Aeneas's reception of his armor in a numinous Italian grove is thus interwoven with multifaceted violence, mytho-history, and divinity, as well as evoking the dynamism of his instructive journeys across the landscapes of Italy throughout book 8.

Like the prismatic nature of Hippolytus's tomb and painting, the shield is infused with a dynamism in generative tension with its sense of containment as both (imagined) physical object and marked ekphrasis (see Putnam 1998, 154–58). This effect is heightened by the shield's traversal of far-flung landscapes and centuries of Roman mytho-history; we will have to content ourselves here, however, with a brief look at the final scene depicting Augustus's triple triumph in Rome celebrating his victory at Actium. It is fundamentally a "picture of movement" (Jenkyns 2013, 152), marked by streets that pulse and resound with exultant festivities and applause (8.717; *laetitia ludisque viae plausuque fremebant*) in response to Augustus's entrance through the city's walls. Embedded in this vibrancy is an attention to the sacred, as Augustus's procession involves sacrifice at "three hundred great shrines throughout the entire city" (8.716; *maxima ter centum totam delubra per urbem*), sacrifice so great that "slaughtered bulls blanketed the ground before the altars" (8.719; *ante aras terram caesi stravere iuveni*). Intersecting with celebratory religious performance in the urban landscape, then, is an aura of death; as Michael Putnam comments, Vergil's repetition of *caedes* and its derivations in the ekphrasis "allows Octavian's share in the human carnage associated with Actium to remain in our thoughts" (1998, 150, with *Aen.* 8.695, 709). As such, the

festive movement across the cityscape is inextricably linked to violence both sacred and profane, refracted through the shield's evocative glitter that so engrosses the epic hero.

Such exultation linked to violence and motion within and across the landscape of Rome brings us back for the last time to the *Peristephanon* and to Prudentius's final layer of journeying. To further impress upon his Spanish audience the scale of Hippolytus's cult as well as encourage an expansion of both their envisioned sacred geographies and their martyrial calendar, Prudentius describes at length the "dense crowd" (11.212; *densa cohors*) of exuberant venerators flooding the road to the martyr's tomb to celebrate his "birthday" (11.196; *natalemque diem*), or the day of his execution and achievement of martyrdom (see 11.195–212).¹⁵ In a passage redolent with martial language (11.201; *phalanx, umbonibus*; 11.203; *acies*), the present-day venerators evoke an atmosphere of military action that complements not only Augustus's triumph but the broader violent implications of Aeneas's shield and the role it will play in the ensuing books of the *Aeneid*. In a reversal of direction from the shield as well as a "trajectory inverse" (Witke 2004, 137) to that of Aeneas more broadly, however, here the "venerable city vomits and pours forth its Romans" (11.199; *urbs augusta susos vomit effunditque Quirites*). In so doing, the venerators' journeying shifts focus to the "suburban periphery" as the "spiritual heart of the urban center" of a Christian Rome (Dey 2011, 240). Further, by moving *from* the city *into* the suburban surrounds, these later worshipers also evoke the journey of Hippolytus's persecutor. Critically, though, their movement is now undertaken in celebration rather than perpetration of violence. As such, the poet uses layered journeys within the poem to (re)define landscapes and violence alike for his audience. That is, as the periphery becomes marked by commemorative rather than persecutorial movement, so does the tenor and performance of violence shift from infliction to festive memorialization. This transformative shift does not happen suddenly, however; as we have seen, it unfolds through accumulative, interlaced layers of epicized journeying that wind across time and space throughout the poem. Prudentius thus fosters intimate links between the epic, martyrial past and the memorializing,

15. Note that the dates of Hippolytus's festival (August 13th), Augustus's triple triumph of 29 BCE (August 13th), and the annual sacrifice to Hercules at the Ara Maxima (August 12th) all fall within the span of a few days. On the date of the former, see *Perist.* 11.231–232: *si bene commemorini, colit hunc pulcherrima Roma / idibus Augusti mensis* and the *Depositio martyrum: idus Aug. Ypoliti in Tiburtina et Pontiani in Calisti, Monumenta Germaniae Historicae-Auctores Antiquissimi* 9.1; on the dates of the latter two, see Quint 2018, 132.

Christianizing present, forged through the multilayered, intertextual journeys of Hippolytus's narrative and grounded in intersecting landscapes of violence.

CONCLUSION

Epicized journeying, overt and/or implicit violence, and landscapes marked by divine presence and memorialization in book 8 of the *Aeneid* evocatively resonate within, and indeed are amplified by, Prudentius's *Peristephanon* 11. In close conversation with his poetic predecessor Vergil, then, Prudentius capitalizes on the instructive, transformative powers of movement and violence to help (re)define and (re)conceptualize landscapes in and around Rome as infused with the sacred. Writing specifically to instruct his bishop and community back home in Calagurris, Prudentius marries such classical allusions with the experiential vicariousness essential to a late antique culture of movement to guide his audience to creatively expand their envisioned sacred geographies. Reminiscences to Vergil also help underscore the poet's infusion of epic into post-Constantinian commemoration of the age of the martyrs, casting them as epic heroes whose dynamic narratives gave imaginative texture to processes of Christianizing the Roman world. Though Hippolytus and his later veneration are diametrically opposed to the worship of the gods of *Troia Roma*, Prudentius's text does not negate nor erase the cultural traditions from which he evocatively draws. Rather, the poet subtly weaves Vergilian echoes, epicizing movement, and martyrial violence into his vision of a Christian Roman Empire.

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AENEAS AND THE LOST CAUSE: HARRY STILLWELL EDWARDS'S *ENEAS* *AFRICANUS* AS MONUMENT TO WHITE SUPREMACY

K. F. B. Fletcher

Abstract: Scholars have generally downplayed the connection between the *Aeneid* and *Eneas Africanus* (1919), Harry Stillwell Edwards's famous novella about the slave Eneas's journey back to his plantation. But Aeneas's *pietas*, role as leader and founder, and position on the losing side of a war are essential to Edwards's purpose: supporting the Lost Cause. This idea asserts that the Civil War was about states' rights rather than slavery and that slaves were well-treated, happy, and loyal. By embracing and propagating this fiction, *Eneas Africanus* is as much a monument to white supremacy as the Confederate statues erected at the same time.

**Warning: this article discusses racism and racial slurs.*



ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS AND INFLUENTIAL PIECES OF VERGILIAN reception in America is now surprisingly unknown and has largely been neglected by scholars.¹ Originally published in the Georgia newspaper, *Macon News*, on Sunday, March 19, 1919, Harry Stillwell Edwards's *Eneas Africanus* has reportedly sold over three million copies and remained popular for decades in both the South and North.² This epistolary novella

1. Most of the attention has come from outside of Classics, including Garrett 1957; Lowe 2003, 10–17; 2005, 226–32; and Ferguson 2019, 68–69. Ronnick (2010, 378–79) is a notable exception, and she situates the book within her discussion of “Vergil in the Black American Experience.” For more on Vergil in America see Wiltshire 1979; Reinhold 1986; Shields 2001; and the section on “The American *Aeneid*” in Farrell and Putnam 2010.

2. It was published in Macon, GA as a book by the J. W. Burke Company in 1920, from which edition I cite throughout. Drew (2015, 161) also notes that it was

tells the story of the devoted slave Eneas's eight-year journey around the South at the end of the Civil War as he tries to get from his master's stock farm to plantation, which he reaches long after he has been freed.

Eneas Africanus has likely received little scholarly attention in part because its sentiments are now so patently despicable. But another reason for the lack of scholarship on Edwards's most famous work is, ironically, its earlier reception; in light of its success, there was an attempt in the 1930s to turn the story into a musical. For a variety of reasons, the title was changed to *Ulysses Africanus*, and the assumption seems to have been that the story of a man's journey back home had a more obvious connection with Odysseus than Aeneas.³ This change may also reflect the general preference for Greek literature over Roman literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with Ulysses perhaps seeming more marketable. But it is hard not to link the ease with which people dropped the connection with Aeneas to the general lack of scholarship on this story; for instance, in an article on the musical Robert. J. Rabel refers dismissively to the source material's "certain trivial associations with Vergil's *Aeneid*."⁴

But the choice of Aeneas is key to understanding Edwards's work and its context and makes it necessary for Vergilians to confront it. Edwards wrote *Eneas Africanus* in the middle of what James Loewen in his influential discussion of American monuments refers to as "the Nadir of race relations in America" (1890–1940), the same period to which many Confederate monuments date.⁵ Like those monuments, especially the ones that specifically "honor" loyal slaves, *Eneas Africanus* is "intended

syndicated in other papers in 1921. It was not published in the North until 1940, by Grosset and Dunlap (Lowe 2005, 228). The sales figures come from Smith (1969, 19) but are almost certainly exaggerated; they also likely reflect Edwards's habit of giving away copies, which Smith mentions numerous times.

3. For more information about the musical see Zychowicz 1994; Rabel 2007; and Graber 2016, who says that the name was changed because of copyright issues, but offers no evidence (325).

4. Rabel 2007, 553. This statement epitomizes his general dismissal—and concomitant lack of understanding—of the novella. Cf. Lowe (2005, 229), who suggests that Edwards did not pay too much attention to the connection between Eneas and Aeneas.

5. Loewen 2019, 6 and *passim*. I cite throughout this revised edition of his book, which was well ahead of its time when it first came out in 1999. As his new edition makes clear, however, we have made far too little progress in the intervening twenty years. The idea of trying to identify the "nadir of race relations" comes originally from Logan (1954), who chose the years 1877–1901. *Eneas* was published before the events of the "Red Summer" of 1919, but is very much a product of the same context.

to teach the ‘new Negro’ born since slavery how to behave,” and enlists Vergil in support of white supremacy (Foster 1987, 194; quoted in Loewen 2019, 235).⁶

Edwards himself was clear about his purpose. In her biography of Edwards, his granddaughter quotes a letter that he “wrote to an admirer in 1937”:

I feel that in Eneas we have at last an easy answer to that bloody libel on the South *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*; that in time, the verdict of both North and South will be that truth, as to the relations between master and slave, is reflected in such stories as *Eneas Africanus*, and not in the imaginings of ignorant people, however good their intentions.⁷

Like these Confederate monuments, the *Eneas Africanus* is a part of what historians refer to as “the myth of the Lost Cause,” the collective memory and sense of identity constructed by white southerners around the turn of the century.⁸ It sprang up as a result not only of the Civil War but also the radical success of Reconstruction (1865–1877) in its aftermath, and provided the basis for Jim Crow.⁹ Although there are numerous aspects

6. Loewen (2019, 233–40, 287–93) discusses monuments to “faithful slaves.” Cf. McElya (2007, 116–206), who focuses on faithful female slaves and explores the complicated social, political, gender, and racial forces at work in trying to get one such monument erected in Washington, DC.

7. Smith (1969, 19). An even more (in)famous response to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is the Reconstruction trilogy written by Thomas Dixon Jr., the second book of which was the basis for the 1915 film, *The Birth of a Nation*, which Foner (2005, xxii) calls “the most influential portrayal of Reconstruction.” For proslavery responses to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in fiction see Ferguson 2019. Domby (2020, 37) shows that banning *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was part of the censorship enacted to advance the Lost Cause, and Marshall (2011) uses the 1906 Kentucky “Uncle Tom’s Cabin Law,” designed to prevent the performance of plays deemed to excite racial prejudice, as a way to look at how a border state navigated its Lost-Cause identity.

8. As Blight (2001) shows, however, the core ideas of the Lost Cause began to take shape even before the war ended.

9. Foner (2005, 199) identifies the Reconstruction of 1865–1877 “as a distinct era of national history, when Republicans controlled much or all of the South, blacks exercised significant political power, and the federal government accepted the responsibility for protecting the fundamental rights of all American citizens.” As he also observes, there were sixteen Black members of Congress during Reconstruction, most elected during the 1870s (168); after Reconstruction ended, it took until 1969 for there to be another sixteen more elected. For an overview of the increasing role Black people played in politics during Reconstruction, see Foner 2005, 128–49. For a brief overview of the success of Black schooling and politics during Reconstruction

to this revisionary history and nostalgia for a lost utopia that has been so successful that it still persists to a depressing degree today, there are two core ideas, and they and their subsidiary concepts are fundamental to the *Eneas Africanus* and its reading of the *Aeneid*.

Both of these mutually reinforcing core pillars revolve around how white southerners sought to portray the relationship between themselves and Black slaves. The fundamental tenet of the Lost Cause fantasy is that the Civil War was not about slavery but rather states' rights, which allowed white southerners to present themselves as defenders of a Constitution that was under attack by the tyrannical industrial North. This idea is inseparable from the other core idea, that the failed Reconstruction was the reason for racial strife between white and Black people, which could only be fixed by the institution of Jim Crow laws.¹⁰ According to this revisionist history, masters considered their slaves part of the family and treated them well before the war.¹¹

Underpinning both of these tenets is the idea that slaves were content with their position in the antebellum South and did not want to be free (e.g., Anderson 2017, 30–31). Because most white southerners considered Black people mentally inferior to whites, they thought that giving them the ability to vote with the fifteenth Amendment (1870) was a key reason for the problems of Reconstruction.¹² At the same time, the supposed intellectual shortcomings of the slaves meant that they needed to be cared for and protected by their masters, who considered them part of their families. When white southerners presented themselves as fighting for their families, therefore, to some extent this also included their slaves. Although the Lost Cause focuses on the bravery of the Confederate soldiers, an increasingly important part of it is the tenet that Black men,

see Graff 2016, 249. For an excellent recent introduction to the Lost Cause (with a focus on North Carolina) see Domby 2020, with brief definitions of key terms and ideas at 4 and 7. Loewen (2019) discusses numerous monuments from this period. See Foner 2005 for an accessible overview of the end of the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Lost Cause, and the origins of Jim Crow.

10. Domby (2020, 19) discusses the ways in which the “Jim-Crow era Confederate monuments” were victory monuments celebrating the defeat of Reconstruction. See Marshall (2011, 370 n. 4) for recent bibliography on the memory of the Civil War.

11. Cf. Domby (2020, 108, with ample bibliography in n. 15): “In the early twentieth century, tales of loyal slaves aided white southerners in defending segregation and inequality by blaming racial strife on northern interference.”

12. As Fredrickson (1971, 71–96) shows, this belief in the inferiority of Black people was so pervasive that it even influenced the science of the time, which was then used in turn to support the belief. For more on the pseudoscience of the time supporting racism, see below.

too, fought for the Confederacy, which shows that they were more than content with their lot. Statues of “loyal slaves” were therefore erected to “prove” that the Civil War could not have been about slavery: “If African Americans served willingly in the Confederate cause, neo-Confederate thinking goes, then white Southerners could hardly have established the Confederacy to preserve and enlarge slavery” (Loewen 2019, 289). The inherent paradox of the Lost Cause, then, is that white southerners simultaneously claimed that they were not fighting for slavery and that there was nothing wrong with their form of slavery.

All of these aspects of the Lost Cause are, in a word, wrong. But they are essential to *Eneas Africanus*, which Edwards wrote while this narrative was coalescing and which in turn played a part in reinforcing them.¹³ As David Anderson (2017, 25) has argued, the Lost Cause is a “compensatory mythological narrative,” designed to shape white southern identity and to assert control over history and collective memory.¹⁴ This creation of a shared mythological past has obvious similarities with the *Aeneid*, which seeks to rewrite the defeat in the Trojan War into a victory while also (at least ostensibly) creating a legendary underpinning and justification for the reign of Augustus. Both pieces are a form of postwar propaganda, and spin things from their sides. The *Aeneid*’s status as the political, propagandistic epic par excellence is central to its appeal for Edwards.¹⁵

The *Aeneid* can therefore speak to a believer of the Lost Cause in a way that the *Odyssey* cannot, and Edwards’s choice of Aeneas is inseparable from his goal of promoting the white-supremacist myth of the Lost Cause. The Lost Cause depends on the idea of the loyal slave, and because Aeneas is the ancient paragon of loyalty and duty he provides the model for the epitome of Black loyalty in the South. Furthermore, because the Lost Cause fantasy is a response to defeat in a war, Aeneas’s position on the losing side of the Trojan War also makes it easier to read him as southern than Odysseus.¹⁶

A brief survey of Edwards’s life shows that his choice of Aeneas as model was successful and—even more importantly—makes clear that he was in no sense an outlier in terms of his deplorable sentiments; not only

13. Domby (2020) systematically dismantles the myth of the Lost Cause.

14. He also argues that this “regional autobiography” had coalesced by the 1880s and played a key role in shaping white southern identity.

15. The political reading and use of the *Aeneid* have been central to much of the work done on the poem’s reception, see, e.g., the excellent Thomas 2001.

16. Because we have records of slaves named both Ulysses and (A)Eneas in the American South, there is no need to suspect some kind of argument from “realism.” On the use of names from classical antiquity for slaves, see Inscocoe 1983, esp. 541–43.

was he not punished for them, he was rewarded with a rich and varied career. Born in Macon, Georgia on April 23, 1855, Edwards lived through the Civil War and came to adulthood during Reconstruction.¹⁷ After a brief stint in Washington, DC serving as a clerk for the Treasury Department, during which he educated himself by reading the Classics in the Library of Congress in translation (he seems never to have learned much, if any, Latin or Greek), he returned to Macon, where he obtained a Bachelor of Law degree from Mercer University in 1876 and married Mary Roxie Lane, daughter of Confederate colonel Andrew J. Lane. After working as a lawyer and then in the newspaper business, he began writing full-time, and many of his stories were published in prestigious venues such as the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. Even before *Eneas Africanus*, which is now considered his most influential work, he was well enough regarded to be the first southerner elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1912.

Edwards was something of a minor celebrity and knew many influential people. While working for the *Macon News* he met and befriended Jefferson Davis, former president of the Confederate States of America, and his wife, who upon Davis's passing asked Edwards to write an epitaph for the monument dedicated to him in Richmond. In 1900 he was named postmaster in Macon by President McKinley, a position which Theodore Roosevelt renewed upon taking office. He also gave at least one speech seconding Roosevelt's nomination for president at a national convention.¹⁸ In his later years, he became friends with Henry Ford, who would visit him at the cabin to which he had retired. Edwards was even well-connected enough that he was able to help convince Congress to mint the Stone Mountain Memorial half-dollar in 1925. The proceeds from this coin, with Confederate generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson on the obverse, were used to support the creation of a Confederate monument near Atlanta set in motion by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. This colossal relief was so important to the second and third

17. The main source for Edwards's life is the encomiastic Smith 1969, written by Edwards's granddaughter Nelle Edwards Smith, and published by Eneas Africanus Press. Additional details are provided by Bradshaw 1909; and Drew 2015, 159–63.

18. Bradshaw (1909, 1498) says that at Roosevelt's request Edwards seconded Roosevelt's nomination at the 1904 Republican convention in Chicago. Smith (1969, 9), however, says that Edwards gave the seconding speech for Roosevelt for the Progressive (or "Bull Moose") Party in Chicago 1912. Drew (2015, 161) suggests that Edwards was at both conventions.

iterations of the Ku Klux Klan that Martin Luther King Jr. mentions it in his famous “I Have a Dream” speech.¹⁹

I include these details to show that Edwards was neither some outcast nor someone lauded only in the South. In fact, he could even be considered progressive to some extent: as editor of the *Telegraph* he was vocal in his support for the foundation of the Georgia School of Technology (now Georgia Tech), in which he hoped that both men and women would be taught the liberal arts free of charge.²⁰ He also ran a failed campaign for Senate as a Bull Moose progressive in 1920. In short, the *Eneas Africanus* was only the most famous part of an illustrious career.

Edwards died in October 1938, but the influence of *Eneas Africanus* continued well after Edwards’s death, and has a direct bearing on America’s persistent and systemic racism. In 2016, in part as a response to the debate raging around the Confederate monuments erected around the same time as *Eneas Africanus* was written, Charles B. Dew, a professor of history at Williams College, wrote *The Making of a Racist: A Southerner Reflects on Family, History, and the Slave Trade*. Born in 1937 in Florida, Dew examines the ways in which he was indoctrinated into racism. One of the many factors he cites is the books he was surrounded by, including *Eneas Africanus*, which he received as a gift from his aunt in 1951. He sees *Eneas* as following in the same vein as Elvira Garner’s 1937 children’s book *Ezekiel*, which he admits to loving as a child:

I think the main thing that needs to be said is that my education into the ways of the white South continued as I grew older. What was presented to me as a child in the *Ezekiel* tales was presented to me again as a teenage boy in *Eneas Africanus*. It was a process of repetition and reinforcement, not in any necessarily didactic sense, but just something that occurred in the normal course of my growing up on the white side of the color line in the Jim Crow South.²¹

19. For this memorial, its significance to the KKK, and King’s reference to it, see Loewen 2019, 275–80. Loewen does not mention Edwards, possibly because, as Freeman (1997, 80–81) shows, multiple people took credit for the half-dollar. Cf. Smith 1969, 10–11.

20. Ronnick (2010, 379) says that in 1906 Edwards went “on a search for a lost servant named Lummie Long,” but cites no source, and the detail does not appear in Smith 1969, where its inclusion would seem likely. This adventure no doubt was a part of the inspiration for *Eneas Africanus*.

21. Dew 2016, 51–52. He discusses *Ezekiel* at 33–36. As Bond (1977) shows, *Eneas Africanus* also influenced authors such as William Faulkner.

Dew later stresses that he—and those around him—never thought there was anything wrong with such stories. But they play a key role in depicting and modeling Black behavior as seen from a white perspective, and their success in trying to maintain racial hierarchy through derogatory humor explains its enduring popularity. Dew’s admission makes clear that *Eneas Africanus* was not some momentary aberration, irrelevant after being published in 1920. In fact, its publication in the North in 1940 testifies to its continued popularity and provides a salient reminder that the rest of the country has been complicit in accepting the myth of the Lost Cause.²²

As it has throughout America’s history, the ancient world played a role in this new movement, with authors such as Edwards co-opting ancient literature to further this white southern propaganda.²³ Once we situate the *Eneas Africanus* within the Lost Cause we see how it epitomizes the entire movement. The novella relates how, as General Sherman’s forces drew near Major George E. Tommey’s Georgia stock farm in 1864, Tommey entrusted a slave named Eneas with some Confederate money and a horse-drawn wagon with a trunk containing the family’s silver. Eneas was to take these items from the stock farm to Tommey’s plantation—but Eneas never arrived. In 1872, as his daughter is about to get married, Tommey posts an advertisement in newspapers to look for his now-former slave because among the items entrusted to Eneas was a cup used in family weddings. The story takes the form of letters written to Tommey detailing Eneas’s travels throughout the South and ends with a newspaper article about the wedding, at which Eneas arrives just in time with the cup.

Edwards idealizes the plantation and the way of life it represents by making it Eneas’s destination, and Eneas’s quest to return to Tommey “proves” that slaves were just as devoted to the South as the white planters were, as well as the core fiction that slaves loved their masters, who

22. Lowe (2005, 229): “When *Eneas* was finally published in the North in 1940, it accented, in a small but nevertheless important way, the triumphant culmination of the plantation tradition as *America’s* favorite mythology” (emphasis original).

23. For recent discussion of the ways in which both proslavery people and abolitionists drew on the classical world see Malamud 2016, 105–46. Curtis (1997) explores the role Classics played in formulations of southern identity before, during, and immediately after the Civil War. See also Miles (1971), who shows that southerners were convinced that they knew Classics better and cared more about it than northerners. Perhaps most fascinating—and problematic—for classicists are the ways that Basil Gildersleeve (1915), who fought for the Confederacy, applies ancient parallels in defending the South and its racist customs; cf. Lupher and Vandiver 2011.

were gentle and loving.²⁴ In what follows, I will examine the similarities between Eneas and Aeneas in terms of their *pietas*, their roles as leaders, and the nature of their journeys to show how Edwards uses these defining elements of the *Aeneid* to create what aims to be a foundational text for the Lost Cause and a monument to white supremacy.

EDWARDS'S PREFACE

Before taking a more thematic approach I begin by quoting the “Author’s Preface” in its entirety because it sets the tone for the entire novella (5):

Dear to the hearts of the Southerners, young and old, is the vanishing type, conspicuous in Eneas of this record; and as in a sidelight herein are seen the Southerners themselves, kind of heart, tolerant and appreciative of the humor and pathos of the Negro’s life. Eneas would have been arrested in any country other than the South. In the South he could have traveled his life out as the guest of his “white folks.” Is the story true? Everybody says it is.

This patronizing and paternalistic preface introduces Eneas as a “type,” which we quickly learn is the “Uncle” type, the loyal elderly slave, the most famous of which is Uncle Tom, from Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852).²⁵ In propagating this type, *Eneas Africanus* participates in the white codification and policing of Black behavior that still resonates today.

This preface likewise establishes that the novel is not just about Eneas; it is a portrait of the southerners, who—by being contrasted with Black people—are defined as white. Accordingly, all but one of the letters are written by white people, thereby displaying a kind of regional, white unity, as they all help Tommey track down his former slave.²⁶ The preface

24. As noted by Lowe (2005, 230). Cf. Ferguson (2019, 69), who rightly says that Eneas’s quest to get back to the plantation is “a slap in the face” to freed people.

25. On this type see Ferguson (2019, 64), who notes that, “Joel Chandler Harris’ Uncle Remus is the most famous example of an emancipated elder character with no desire to leave the plantation where he was a slave.” Spingarn (2018, esp. 129–58) explains how the original figure of Uncle Tom went from being heroic and a symbol for abolitionists to being a derogatory term used of Black men who were seen as standing in the way of political progress. This shift, which she traces to the Black political rhetoric of the 1910s, continues to exert influence today.

26. On the creation of “a myth of a solid white South” see Domby (2020, 28–29). Cf. Loewen (2019, 299) on “the myth of whites united behind the Confederacy.”

presents an image of the South as its own racially harmonious country, with the implication that it has, in some sense, succeeded in separating itself from the North.²⁷ There is no direct attack on the North in *Eneas Africanus*, but this presentation of the South as distinct and unique is the language of the Lost Cause, and continues to underlie the specious argument that flying the Confederate flag is a patriotic celebration of heritage.

But the reference to “the humor and pathos of the Negro’s life” presents Eneas and other Black people as a group apart, to be watched by white people as objects for their amusement. This reference is likewise part of a general strategy for minimizing the realities of slavery, evident also in Tommey’s initial letter to the paper to advertise for his cup (and Eneas). This letter elides the issue of slavery by saying that Tommey is looking for “an old family Negro of mine” (7) and that “Eneas was a faithful Negro, born and raised in the Tommey family” (10). Edwards never uses the word “slave” in the story, and this omission—coupled with the idea that slaves were part of the family—is meant to suggest a loving, paternalistic relationship. There is no hint whatsoever that Tommey ever mistreated Eneas, and there are no threats of punishment for Eneas’s disappearance with the family silver. But the advertisement deconstructs itself by referring to both “an old family Negro” as well as “the family silver,” and the lie is given to this relationship by the constant references in letters to “your Negro” (21), “your old Nigger” (16), “your man, Eneas” (17), and especially Eneas’s reference to himself as “Yo’ ole nigger” (29), all of which use the language of ownership. The novel’s repeated use of the latter term—especially on Eneas’s part—propagates and even authorizes that word; part of the portrayal of this ideal type is that his embrace of the term is an acknowledgment of his place and role.

The most significant word in this preface, however, is “vanishing,” because it strikes the tone of lament for a simpler, better way of life that has disappeared characteristic of this kind of “plantation fiction,” which often presents the Civil War as an irreparable rupture between two ways of life (Anderson 2017, 25–26). The epistolary format of the novella likewise adds to the sense of a way of life seen at a distance; showing Eneas only through letters and newspaper dispatches makes him a quasi-

27. Domby (2020, 37–38) discusses Mildred Lewis Rutherford, who was commissioned by the United Daughters of the Confederacy to write a pamphlet providing curricular guidelines for southern schools. The 1920 version of this pamphlet declared, “All that the South asks is to be let alone in her management of the negro, so that the friendly relations may occur.”

mythical figure (Garrett 1957, 220). And we could even go a step further to note that the format means all of the characters are seen at a further remove; the whole thing in turn takes on an almost dreamlike quality, with Eneas's exploits and loyalty never to be fully believed, but yet to be desired by white southerners.

PIETAS

The fundamental link between Aeneas and Eneas is their *pietas*, that Roman dutifulness toward gods, family, and country that defines Vergil's titular hero. Because this devotion on Aeneas's part has often given rise to the charge of passivity, Aeneas's defining characteristic may even have suggested his recasting as a literal slave.²⁸ The entire plot depends on Eneas's loyalty to Major Tommey, which drives him to persevere over an eight-year journey to return—despite his freedom—to the plantation where he was a slave, and so to some extent Tommey stands in not just for the gods, but also for the family and even country.²⁹ Eneas perceives his duty as being to Tommey, and he has no larger sense of country than the plantation from which he comes and which he knows only as Tommeysville. The identification of the plantation with Tommey presents him as an oikist, or founder figure, and all of its inhabitants as in some sense his children.

Aeneas's *pietas* manifests also through his transportation of the Trojan penates, key domestic and civic gods. Edwards adapts this aspect of Aeneas's *pietas* to make the plot of *Eneas Africanus* revolve around the cup that Major Tommey's family has been using in weddings for generations, and it was for this cup, rather than Eneas per se, that Tommey wrote to the paper. Many of the letter-writers mention seeing no trunk, let alone cup or other silver when they encountered Eneas and his horse-drawn wagon, but Eneas dutifully presents it to Tommey's daughter on her wedding day, just in time to use it (46). A statement in one of the letters that Eneas "gathered up his household goods" puns on the phrase "household gods" and draws attention to the parallel between cup and penates (23), with family heirloom taking the place of city and family gods.

28. The title may also allude to Aeneas's behavior while in Africa, where he is so devoted to his wife (?) Dido that Mercury rebukes him as *uxorius* (4.266).

29. As Ferguson (2019, 69) observes, Edwards's "definition of Eneas's 'heroism' is strictly limited to the old man's faithfulness." Cf. Garrett (1957, 220), who notes the importance of the cup and that the connection between Aeneas and Eneas is loyalty, which he defines in the latter's case as "Loyalty in the widest sense of the word is his virtue, not the loyalty of slave to master, but the loyalty of man to man."

Edwards's choice of a silver cup in particular as a replacement for the penates is part of his advancement of the Lost Cause narrative, which involves rewriting the past; during the war "white women took to burying their silver and other valuables secretly, at night, lest slaves betray the treasure to the Union."³⁰ In addition to an inscription (see below), the cup also bears the motto *semper fidelis* ("always faithful").³¹ As will become clear in my discussion, there is nothing subtle about Edwards and his message, and this reference to loyalty identifies Eneas's primary characteristic.

Like Aeneas, Eneas is also pious in the more limited English sense of the term. The central letter from the attorney James Taley introduces this other aspect of Eneas's *pietas* (22–23):

He began preaching here among the Negroes and proved to be a most eloquent spiritual advocate. He claimed to be the pastor of a big congregation at home. I heard him on one occasion when he baptized forty converts and was thrilled by his imagery and power.

Although it is perhaps odd that there are no previous references to Eneas preaching (in his initial advertisement, Tommey does not mention the Bible as one of the things that Eneas could talk about at length), its appearance in the same letter that first tells us about Eneas's new family (see below) adds to the picture of *pietas* and makes the parallel with Aeneas even stronger.³² Once Eneas creates his own family, his mission takes on a new, sacral character, recalling the connection between Aeneas's mission and his son, Ascanius (e.g., in Mercury's words at *Aen.* 4.272–276).

A later letter develops the theme of Eneas as preacher and adds a key detail: "When Eneas was not plowing or racing, his favorite occupation was preaching, his subject usually being the wandering of the Hebrews in the desert" (35). The choice of the story of the Jews' delivery from Egypt

30. Loewen (2019, 289), citing Barney (1975, 139), who notes that "Southern whites were shocked to discover that the average domestic slave would be far more likely to lead Union soldiers to the family silver rather than to hide and guard it."

31. Although this phrase is now associated with the US Marine Corps, it did not become its motto until 1883. The phrase was used in numerous contexts for centuries before that.

32. In his initial advertisement, Tommey identifies horses and Tommeysville as the subjects that Eneas would be most likely to speak about at great length, simultaneously highlighting his unrestrained chattiness and general ignorance (10). The lack of a reference to religion here may imply that Eneas "finds religion" on his journey.

in Exodus is significant for multiple reasons. The first is that it tropes Tommeyville as the promised land, thereby adding to the elevation of the master and his plantation that is central to the book and to the Lost Cause more broadly. The Exodus story also shares many similarities with that of the *Aeneid*, as both Moses and Aeneas are leaders of their people to a promised land, with the result that its use here adds a religious dimension to Eneas's journey and adds to the portrayal of him as a leader—another key factor that differentiates Aeneas from Odysseus (see below). Aeneas, Moses, and Eneas all go on god-ordained missions and bring their people safely to their destination.³³

The choice of this story is also significant for a more insidious reason. Albert Raboteau offers a fascinating examination of the contrasting ways that slaves and slaveowners read Exodus, with European whites viewing the New World as delivery, and Black people wanting to be delivered from it.³⁴ By taking what was in many ways the central biblical text for slaves hoping for a better life and reframing it as a return to the plantation even after Emancipation, Edwards wrests this narrative from slave control and (re)aligns it with white supremacy. As was common in the antebellum South, Edwards uses both classical literature and the Bible to justify and normalize slavery.³⁵

When Eneas first appears at the plantation alone right as Tommey's daughter is getting married, he proves his *pietas* by returning himself and bringing the horse and cup with him. But the scene also includes his religious piety, and makes explicit what was only implied previously about his use of Exodus: upon his return, the first thing we are told is, "Then he stood up and began to shout about Moses being led out of Egypt into the promised land" (42). After Tommey addresses him, Eneas cries, "Oh, Lord! Marse George! Glory be ter God! Out o' de wilderness! De projekin son

33. Lowe (2005, 228–29) identifies the story of Joseph and the silver cup in Gen 44 as another key intertext and emphasizes the biblical elements of *Eneas Africanus* as part of its mythical nature.

34. Raboteau (1994, 9–15), who also notes that Exodus is the best symbol of the distinctiveness of African-American Christianity (9) and that Black preachers interpreted the Bible to fit the experience of the enslaved (6). As Trafton (2004) shows, this contestation over Exodus reflects the larger contestation over the doubled nature of Egypt in nineteenth century America as a land of historical pride for African Americans and simultaneously a land of religious shame. Selby (2008, 2) shows that the story of Exodus was a key part of Martin Luther King Jr.'s rhetoric during the Civil Rights Movement and calls it "the most salient story in the African American cultural tradition."

35. For a useful overview of how white supremacist thought was enshrined in and reinforced by biblical readings at the time, see Cannon 2004.

am back ergin!’” (43). The reference to the “wilderness” makes explicit the identification of the plantation with the promised land, and the allusion to the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32) puts Tommey in the position of forgiving father in accordance with the paternalistic view of slavery so central to the Lost Cause.

When Tommey asks Eneas about the trunk, Eneas reveals that he has kept it hidden.³⁶ As a final proof of his loyalty, we see that the trunk is still locked, and Tommey has to break it open with an axe (45–46). After the bride and groom drink from the cup, the novel ends with Eneas producing a pocketbook full of money (47):

“Marse George,” he began, “de bag o’ yaller war money what dey gimme warn’t no good over yonner whar I been. Countin’ de c’llections I tuck up in de church an’ what I winned on de track wid Chainlightnin’ an’ ain’t spent—”

“Keep it,” said the Major, almost exploding with laughter, and patting the old man on the shoulder, “that bunch of Burningham Yallerhama Niggers more than squares us.”

Eneas’s willingness to give Tommey the money from the collection plate passed while preaching shows that Eneas’s true duty and devotion is to Tommey alone, and he fulfills it by returning not only himself and the cup, but also by bringing new people along with him. Aeneas’s devotion to the gods and to Rome becomes Eneas’s devotion to the plantation, that symbol of the antebellum South.

LEADERSHIP

I mentioned that Eneas’s self-identification with Moses presents him, like Aeneas, as a leader of his people, and this role is another reason why Aeneas is a better model for Edwards’s purpose than Odysseus. As the respective proems of the *Odyssey* and *Aeneid* make clear, while Odysseus will not manage to save any of his comrades and will return home alone (*Od.* 1.6–9), Aeneas brings people and household gods with him (*Aen.* 1.5–6, 29–32). Although Eneas seems to have set out alone on his horse-drawn cart, when he returns to Tommey’s plantation he has with him a new wife and at least four children.

Eneas’s loyalty to Tommey is inseparable from his role as a leader of the family he forms on his journey, and this aspect of loyalty is bound up

36. The first letter suggested this as a possibility (13).

with the depiction of Eneas and his family as less human than the white southerners, which Edwards establishes through a constant linking of Eneas, his family, and horses. In his initial description of Eneas, Tommey says that, “If given a chance to talk he would probably confine himself to ‘Lady Chain,’ the mare he was driving [and] ‘Lightning,’ the noted four-mile stallion in my possession” (10). Almost every answering letter refers to Lady Chain, since she draws his cart, and as time goes by horses become an increasingly important part of the story.

The story of Lady Chain enters its next phase in the letter from the attorney James Talley mentioned above as the first to say anything about Eneas’s preaching. The book presents miniature portraits of predominantly white southerners from all walks of life, and Talley, a land-owning attorney in Barton, Washington County, Alabama is in some sense at the pinnacle. Accordingly, his letter comes in the center of the book and, in addition to the beginning and ending of the work, most clearly advances the story and best exhibits its Lost-Cause sentiments (21–23).

This letter develops the theme of horses and introduces yet another plot point that makes Eneas even more like his namesake (22):

He married a young mulatto woman on my place that year, and when he left here about Christmas, 1866, carried with him a young baby besides the old mare and her colt. The colt, by the way, was a beauty.³⁷

This is the first reference to the colt that appears throughout the rest of the novel as a champion racing horse and the source of many winnings for Eneas. A previous letter-writer had mentioned that Lady Chain was in foal to the famous horse Lightning (18), but it is no coincidence that the first reference to the colt comes in the same sentence as the first reference to Eneas’s own child. As I have said, Edwards is not a subtle writer, and this is likely part of his appeal. The parallel between Eneas’s children and the foal, and Eneas (and his wife) and the mare, runs throughout the whole

37. It is unclear to what extent—if any—the detail about Eneas’s wife being a “mulatto” is relevant. It may recall Aeneas’s prophesied creation of a mixed race of Italians and Trojans, but more likely simply recalls the status of mixed race individuals at Edwards’s time. Many southerners viewed “mulattoes” as a potential threat to society because of the ability of some of them to pass as white; in this regard, by marrying a woman of mixed race, Eneas reduces the chance that she—or her children—can try to pass. But people of mixed race were often prized, so Eneas’s marriage to one may be another reflection of his quality. At the same time, this detail may serve as a contrast with the purity of Tommey’s daughter’s marriage (see below). See Reuter 1918 for a contemporary discussion of “mulattoes.”

novel, and culminates in its final scene. The emphasis is on continuity and (quality) breeding, while also suggesting the care that Tommey had expended on both animals and slaves, and their financial value to their owner in turn.

Another passage in Talley's letter suggests the way in which the colt will be central to the depiction of Eneas for the rest of the book (22):

Eneas was a puzzle to me, though I have lived among Negroes all my life. His stories of you and your place were marvels. But for the fact that he held the mare and colt in your name, refusing dozens of offers for the latter when in dire need, I should have put him down as a reckless romancer.

The value of the colt, and Eneas's refusal to sell it, is further proof of his loyalty to Tommey.³⁸ And it is only Eneas's connection with Tommey that proves his authenticity; Eneas has no identity of his own separate from Tommey and his plantation.

The idea that slaves are dependent on their masters is based on an inherent paradox, that Black people are innocent and childlike but simultaneously cunning and deceitful. This tension is evident throughout the novel, as when one letter-writer says of Eneas, that (17):

if you don't find the Nigger, you've lost the champion liar of Georgia. I hope you get him back, but it's hardly possible a man talking like he did could last seven years on the public road.

In plantation fiction, "Uncle" characters such as Eneas tend to tell fabulous stories and humorously inflate their own self-importance (hence the description of him as a "reckless romancer"; Ferguson 2019, 62). And yet another letter-writer says of him that (34):

Eneas is a queer character—wisdom of the serpent and simplicity of a child. His story, probably growing with age, like the stories of some of our veterans, has beguiled many a lonely hour for me.

This paradoxical view is central to justifications of slavery, since it presents slaveowners as benevolent overseers of people that cannot take care of themselves, while also arguing for their dominance because of

38. Lowe (2005, 227) argues that the story of the colt Chainlightning suggests the parable of the servant who invests his master's wealth wisely (Matt 25:14–30).

the inherent untrustworthiness of the slaves. The Lost Cause put Black people in a double bind, with multiple justifications given for why they needed to be under the oversight of white people. And Edwards effects this dehumanization in part through the running link between Eneas's family and a family of horses.³⁹

Despite Talley's view of Eneas, in some sense Eneas's stay with him in 1865 and 1866 is the part of the novella most like Aeneas's stop in Carthage. The lawyer says, "He was very poor and his pathetic story appealed to my sympathies. I let him have some rations and a piece of land and he planted a cotton crop" (21–22). Talley's treatment of Eneas both proves the claim of the preface about the beneficent nature of southerners while also recalling Dido's reception of Aeneas, especially her view of how she welcomed him (*Aen.* 4.373–376). It seemingly offers him everything he could conceivably want: a wife, children, land, and a new calling. Eneas's decision to leave this perfect situation accordingly shows how devoted he is to Tommey and his plantation, just as Aeneas's willingness to leave Carthage testifies to his devotion to his Roman mission.

A later response to Tommey includes a letter dictated by Eneas in 1870, which also makes the connection between colt and child (28–29):

Marse George, Lady Chain's colt come, back in the secon' Jefferson, an' he sholy is old Lightnin's colt; long-legged, big-footed an' iron grey. I been tryin' him out hyar an' thar an' thar ain't nothin' kin tech him.

Marse George, I got ernuther wife down in de third Washington an' am bringin' her erlong. She weighs one hundred and sixty, an' picks fo' hundred pounds er cotton er day. She b'longs ter you, same as me an' Lady Chain an' de colt.

Eneas's need to dictate this letter demonstrates both his ignorance and the fact that he has not availed himself of the chances for education after the war. And there is no reason for this writer to have written out Eneas's letter in dialect other than to give Edwards a chance to ventriloquize and

39. As mentioned above, Edwards's views reflect the pseudoscience of the time; see Rusert (2017, 4 n. 8) for a detailed bibliography on the origins and rise of scientific racism in the United States. Edwards also reflects the related and nascent sociological views of the time; as Cannon (2004, 416) notes, "The popularity of 'heathen conversion' was disclosed in the public reception of George Fitzhugh's [popular book] *Cannibals All! or, Slaves without Masters* [1857], who asserted Africans, like wild horses, had to be 'caught, tamed and civilized.'"

ridicule Black people, a skill for which he was praised.⁴⁰ One of the key techniques of Lost Cause fiction is to put the sentiments of this white supremacist fantasy into the mouths of Black people (Anderson 2017, 31). The connection between Eneas, his family, and the horses carries more weight when Eneas himself makes it.

The juxtaposed descriptions of the colt and Eneas's wife make it clear that they are both commodities, to be valued according to their money-making potential, and Eneas makes the point explicit by asserting that Tommey's claim to both animals and humans is beyond question—even in 1869, well after the slaves were free. Eneas's repetition of the name "Marse George" (dialect for "Master George") reveals him to be an Uncle Tom who knows his place, and this passage suggests that even at this point we are meant to conceive of Eneas as happy to be a slave, not knowing or not believing or maybe not even caring that he is actually a free man.

The parallel between Eneas's family and the horses culminates at book's end. Amidst the joyous reunion at the plantation, Eneas suddenly grows serious and asks where "Nancy" is (44). The name has not appeared previously in the story, but it seems likely that we should understand her to have been his wife, which may emphasize that this (new) wife is one of his choosing.⁴¹ Upon hearing that Nancy is dead, Eneas calls out and the other wagon appears, bearing his wife and at least four children. When they appear, Edwards twice refers to the group of children as a "colony" (44, 45), presenting Eneas as an oikist figure, reestablishing the Major's

40. In his discussion of Edwards's earlier work, Bradshaw (1909, 1498–99) praises Edwards specifically for his use of dialect: "It is close imitation of negro thought and mental habit that makes negro dialect sound natural. The negro's mind at work suggests the rabbit, and the rabbit is the negro's hero in nature. A personage in a story must of course speak in character, but there is a limit beyond which it is dangerous for an author to venture. Mr. Edwards, it seems to us, has measured this limit with a fine degree of precision."

41. If Eneas's reference to getting "ernuther wife" at 29 suggests that he was already married, then his taking of another wife could be read as him marrying a woman of his own choosing or present him as a philanderer for whom such ties are not meaningful, which would better fit the patronizing view of Eneas and Black people in general in the novella. But, as Foner (2005, 83–84) observes, after Emancipation there was an enormous number of marriages as freedmen and -women sought to make their family bonds legal and independent of their masters, as well as reuniting families separated by slavery. Sanjaya Thakur *per litteras* made the excellent suggestion that Nancy is akin to Aeneas's first wife, Creusa, whom he loses during the sack of Troy.

plantation—slavery and all. Edwards again uses Eneas’s voice to make his point crystal clear (44–45):⁴²

“I done brought you a whole bunch o’ new Yallerhama, Burningham Niggers, Marse George! Some folks tell me dey is free, but I know dey b’long ter Marse George Tommey, des like Lady Chain and her colt! Marse George, you oughter see that horse—”

Eneas’s reassertion of Tommey’s claim to him and his family by likening them to the horses culminates the theme of identification of slaves as animals.

I quoted above the very end of the novel, with Eneas presenting Tommey with the money he gained on his trip. It is worth repeating Tommey’s response: “‘Keep it,’ said the Major, almost exploding with laughter, and patting the old man on the shoulder, ‘that bunch of Burningham Yallerhama Niggers more than squares us’” (47). This is the very last line of the novel, with Tommey laughing and accepting Eneas’s wife and children as slaves for his plantation. Moreover, the account of the wedding is a dispatch from a correspondent from the local paper, meaning that neither the writer nor the wedding guests bother to confirm to Eneas that he and his family are, in fact, free. Their ignorance provides entertainment not only for Tommey and his guests, but also the readership of the newspaper. As throughout, Edwards presents Black people as a separate group, and one to be laughed at and taken advantage of; the silence of the audience perpetuates white supremacy.

This ending and the theme of linking horses and slaves as owned property even after Emancipation is shocking even by the standards of such plantation fiction. As Ferguson (2019, 69) says:

Here, Eneas goes much further than the common, derogatory “Uncle Tom” stereotype, perfecting the role of the ingratiated slave by announcing to a party full of white people that he views his own children as Tommey’s livestock. This is a calculated way to conclude the text, as Edwards knows it is exactly what southern whites wanted of blacks: for them to publicly announce that slaveholders had been right to hold them in bondage, that they were happy and had wished to remain on the plantation, that African Americans were not fit to

42. The man who was away when Eneas left tells us that Eneas arrived with three children and left with a fourth (32).

manage for themselves, and that they did not care for their children as whites did theirs.

Eneas's refusal to believe that he is free is meant by Edwards to be proof of how happy he was with Tommey. And, from Tommey's perspective, Eneas is the perfect slave; he could be no more loyal. The greater influence of the *Aeneid* than of the *Odyssey* is patent: Aeneas is defined as having a higher purpose, while in many ways, Odysseus merely serves himself. Odysseus is coming to reclaim his throne, but Aeneas is really only the leader for the journey; his role is to pave the way for his ancestors and to found a new race—just as Eneas has done at the end of *Eneas Africanus*. His new wife and children reestablish life at Tommeysville and erase the defeat of the Civil War.

JOURNEY THROUGH A POSTWAR LANDSCAPE

There is another, even more fundamental reason why Edwards chose Aeneas: Aeneas was on the losing side in a great war.⁴³ Both the *Aeneid* and *Eneas Africanus* tell the story of men set adrift by a calamitous, epochal defeat in war and in some sense attempting to reverse this loss through an act of foundation.⁴⁴ Both Aeneas and Eneas make their way through worlds dominated by nostalgia, but where Vergil's Aeneas tries and fails to refound Troy, Eneas essentially succeeds in refounding the antebellum South by returning as a slave to a plantation untouched by the war.

As is generally the case, it is the first half of the *Aeneid* that has exerted the most influence on this instance of reception. Like Aeneas in the first half of Vergil's poem, Eneas is lost with no real knowledge of how to get to his destination, and reliant upon the kindness of strangers to sustain him. His constant willingness to leave these helpful strangers recalls especially Aeneas's departure from Carthage, and testifies to his devotion to his mission and people. The journeys are similar in scope, and conceptualize space as unified.⁴⁵ While Aeneas's journey through Greece and Carthage foreshadow Roman domination of the Mediterranean (Fletcher 2014, 150),

43. Cf. Garrett (1957, 220), who briefly mentions defeat as a parallel.

44. Cf. the useful remarks of Lowe (2003, 6), who argues that the literature of Reconstruction (in which he includes *Eneas Africanus*) can be read through the frame of exile, loss, displacement, and disruption.

45. Eneas is separated in 1864 and returns in 1872, but one letter from 1872 refers to "seven years" (17), which may be a mistake on Edwards's part based on the seven years of Aeneas's journey. But see Dyson (1996) on the length of Aeneas's journey and the possible contradiction between *Aen.* 1.755–756 and 5.626.

Eneas's journey through seven of the eleven Confederate states helps unite them as southern, and his ability to travel unmolested through them "proves" the claim of the author's preface that "Eneas would have been arrested in any country other than the South" (5).

Likewise, although Tommey's initial letter states that, "our belief is he was murdered by army stragglers and robbed of the trunk" (10)—which testifies both to Eneas's loyalty (i.e., only death would have stopped him from fulfilling his duty) and may cast aspersions on northerners (which is likely the army that Edwards suggests)—the only threat of violence comes from another freedman, whose letter provides Edwards another opportunity to write in (inconsistently rendered) dialect (21):

He was lokun for a tomsville an I tried to show him the way back to tomsville, in Georgia, but he got mad and wanted to fight me, and if he hadn't been er ole man I would have busted him open. Mr. tommy, you wont never see yo nigger no more less he mends his ways of acktin when you are tryin to help him.

This is the only time we hear of Eneas being threatened with violence, and because it comes from another freedman, the implication is that Black people need white people to keep their baser natures in check—a fundamental prop of the Lost Cause narrative. This minimization of violence effaces the very real threat to Black travelers posed by the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction, and may hint that Eneas acted differently toward this person than the white people he encountered.⁴⁶ As outlandish as the mostly white letter-writers present Eneas's behavior to be, no one save this writer threatens him with harm. By playing "the Uncle Tom," Eneas is able to travel unmolested.⁴⁷

The only other reference to a possible hindrance of Eneas's freedom of movement similarly reveals the white-supremacist foundation of the Lost Cause (24):

46. For a brief overview of the role of the Klan during Reconstruction see Foner 2005, 170–77.

47. As the journal's anonymous reader rightly notes, this threat of violence in turn creates Uncle Toms. And Edwards's implication that a Black man should play Uncle Tom undermines attempts at equality; as Spingarn (2018, 151–52) observes, "the notion that one could 'play' Uncle Tom was fundamental to the figure's transformation into a traitor to the race."

An almost worn out pass from his mistress, Mrs. Tommey, though it bore no date or address, saved the old man from arrest. His story, that he was lost and on his way home, though remarkable, was possible, and he was not molested.

Earlier, this letter says that this happened “in 1868 or 1869” (24), which means that Eneas was already a free citizen by this point. And here we get a glimpse behind the veil, for this shows the way in which—even after the war—Black behavior was policed by white authority. There is no suggestion of what Eneas would have been arrested for, other than being a Black man driving through the country.

Although Edwards minimizes the dangers to Eneas, the world Eneas moves through recalls that of the *Aeneid*’s first half by being filled with confusing names and by being marked by a recent war. Eneas does not know where he is going and therefore must rely on other people’s directions. But names seemingly shift as he travels, and he goes somewhere only to find out that it was not his actual destination (e.g., 19–20). In this way, his journey recalls especially book 3 of the *Aeneid*, in which the Trojans stop and start their journey numerous times, constantly finding that they are in the wrong place (that book, of course, ends on Sicily, a place the Trojans will visit twice in the poem). As Aeneas views every place he journeys through an eastern, Trojan filter, so Eneas views everything in relation to the plantation, with the implication being that he led a sheltered life there.⁴⁸

In fact, Eneas’s ignorance of geography is the driving force of the plot and a primary source of humor; it is established at the very beginning of the book (10), repeated throughout (e.g., 23), and so thorough that he even has no idea what the Gulf of Mexico is when he encounters it (19). One of the people who responds to Tommey includes a letter dictated by Eneas that highlights this kind of humor (27–28):

Marse George, I been ter firs one an’ den ernuther Thomasville, year in an’ year out, tell thar ain’t no sense in hit. An’ I ain’t hit de right one yit. Ev’y yuther place is name Thomasville er Macon er Washington er Jefferson. Everybody knows whar I wanten go but me, an’ shows me de road; but all I kin do is ter keep movin. De firs Thomasville I got to I got back to fo’ times. Hit was harder ter loose it than hit was ter find it!

48. For the nature of directions in the *Aeneid* and how they are a key part of Aeneas’s journey see Fletcher (2014).

This is a comic reading of Aeneas's ignorance in the *Aeneid* and shows that Edwards also saw the potential for humor in the repetition of these names throughout the states. This profusion of confusing names also adds to the folktale quality of the story, as Eneas's journey:

takes place in a fictionalized landscape that merges Edwards' own world, that of Macon and of the southerners displaced by the Civil War, with the postbellum world of the Trojan prince Aeneas who was both a hero and a war refugee carrying his people's gods out of the ruins of Troy.

As Michele Valerie Ronnick (2010, 379) also points out, the geography of Georgia may have suggested this connection to Edwards, since Macon had a section named Troy, and there is a city named Rome about 150 miles northwest of Macon.⁴⁹ Similarly, Eneas preaches at a city called Mt. Zion (30), a clear nod to Jerusalem and an element of the biblical undercurrent of Eneas's journey. These names are a good example of the way reception perpetuates itself; chosen in most cases because of their classical associations, they can in turn evoke new ones.

As the world of the *Aeneid* constantly recalls the Trojan War, the world of *Eneas Africanus* bears the scars of the recent Civil War. And as Vergil presents Aeneas's journey to found the Roman race as recompense for the loss in the Trojan War, so Edwards presents Eneas's return to "Tommeysville" as a reversal of defeat and restoration of order. The most obvious sign of the recent war is the presence of Confederate officers, and the emphasis on Confederate valor complements the presentation of Black people as less than fully human. Tommey's initial letter to the newspaper establishes his character but also sets the tone of minimizing the war and defeat throughout the book. The emphasis on heroism suggests that the war was ultimately a success, as the Major's life appears largely unchanged.

Even before he identifies himself, Tommey talks about how the war put his family in danger: "The unexpected movement of our army after the battle of Resaca, placed my stock farm in line of the Federal advance and exposed my family to capture" (8). "Unexpected movement" is a euphemism for the defeat and subsequent retreat of the Army of Tennessee (led by General Johnston) by General Sherman in the Battle of Resaca, a part of the Atlanta campaign. By choosing a battle so close to home for

49. Other Georgia cities with potentially evocative names (regardless of why the name was actually chosen) include: Athens, Camilla, Homer, and Smyrna.

his character, Edwards emphasizes the idea that Tommey was fighting to protect his family, not to defend the institution of slavery. As Adam Domby has shown, the idea that southerners had to defend their families from northern invasion is a central prop of Confederate valor, used to explain away high rates of desertion and justify the South's surprisingly quick loss (Domby 2020, 60–66, 79).

Tommey refers later in the letter to information he received “from a wounded member of my command” (9), further elevating his position. Finally, he signs the letter “Late Major, Tommey’s Legion, C. S. A.” (12). “C. S. A.” stands for Confederate States Army, and almost all of the letters address him by what was, technically, a meaningless title after the war.⁵⁰ Strictly in terms of the narrative, there is no reason for Tommey to have been a Major in the Confederate army. But this decision makes him as much of a type as Eneas: after the war, a claim to have served the Confederate army brought people prestige, and people “used their Civil War service as evidence of their bona fides on the issue of white supremacy.”⁵¹ Having Tommey be a veteran of the Confederacy puts him on the “right side” of all things southern. Although Eneas is modeled on Aeneas and is the titular character, in many ways the Major is the true hero of the story; he is the object of Aenean loyalty and, like Aeneas, has suffered a defeat through no fault of his own. But he does not have the “unheroic” qualities of servility and passivity often attributed to Aeneas.

The first letter in response to Tommey’s advertisement immediately develops these themes. A Martha Horton writes that, “one of my boys was serving in your command” (12) and then adds in a postscript her son’s claim “that next to General Joseph Johnston, you were the bravest man in the Georgia armies” (14).⁵² The reference to bravery is a dead giveaway of Lost-Cause propaganda, which painted the Confederates as valiant soldiers in contrast to their actually high numbers of desertion.⁵³

50. One of the other letter writers identifies himself as “(Late) Major 13th N.C. Volunteers, C.S.A.” (36).

51. Domby 2020, 25; cf. 18. As he shows throughout, many people exaggerated or even lied about their service in order to benefit from it materially and/or socially.

52. Johnston took command of the Army of Tennessee in December 1863, and fought against Sherman in the Atlanta campaign in 1864 with which Tommey begins his account.

53. Domby (2020, 72–75 *et passim*) explores the ways in which even historians often perpetuate the myth that Confederate soldiers were especially valorous despite all of the evidence to the contrary. This reality also creeps into the hagiographic account of Smith (1969, 4), who obscures the details of whatever happened with Edwards’s brother, who was fighting in Virginia in 1865: “he turned back when the

The beginning of the book thus makes it clear that the story is just as much about Major Tommey as it is Eneas, and the two complement each other to emblemize the Lost Cause: Eneas is the loyal Black slave, so devoted to his master that he endures years of wandering—and gives up his freedom—to come home; Tommey, in contrast, is the very picture of Confederate valor, who fought to protect his state and his family—the two things that Confederates later claimed they were fighting for, rather than slavery.

We catch other glimpses of the war's effects throughout the novella, but it is in the culminating dispatch from the *Macon Telegraph and Messenger* that Edwards couples the presentation of the war and Confederate bravery with Eneas's return and submission to present the perfect picture of the Lost Cause. This description of the plantation is also the culmination of Eneas's journey, and in some sense serves as a kind of punchline. Throughout the letters, writers talk about Eneas's description of Tommeysville, including details such as its twelve fountains (33–34). The tone makes it clear that we should read this as Eneas exaggerating, but we do not know for sure until the correspondent refers to “a tiny fountain with a spray” (39). This detail concludes the running gag of the fountains and is further “proof” of an idea expressed throughout the work, most clearly by the man who describes Eneas as “a harmless old fellow, though a picturesque liar, as are many old Negroes when they talk of their white folks” (20).

But the depiction of the plantation also helps downplay the realities of the war, presenting an escapist fantasy. Contrary to what one of the letter-writers morosely supposes, Tommeysville has not “suffered from the ravages of the war” (30); rather, as the correspondent says, “Sherman's army missed the charming spot and the only sign of the ‘late unpleasantness’ is the Major's sword crossed with the colors of the Legion over the broad fireplace at the end of the hall” (39).⁵⁴ This lone reference to Sherman is also a part of the Lost Cause narrative, which blamed Sherman for burning and looting that was often actually done by Confederates themselves (Loewen 2019, 294–302).

Federal forces were about to overrun their position at Petersburg and fired a gun that had been left loaded and might have been turned on his comrades. He received a mortal wound and was taken prisoner to a hospital.” Smith is not the most eloquent writer in the best of circumstances, but this seems like deliberate obfuscation.

54. See Foster (2018, 425) on the various names given to the Civil War during and after it. He suggests that the “‘Late Unpleasantness’ evoked either southern quaintness or an unwillingness to face the reality of defeat” and was rarely used as a name for the war.

The story ends with the wedding we never get in the *Aeneid*, and Confederate bravery appears even here, as the correspondent tells us that Tommey's daughter had her name changed to Beauregard Forrest: "by the act of the Georgia Legislature this was changed in honor of the two heroes of the Confederacy, dear to the heart of her illustrious father" (40). These "heroes" are General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard and Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest. While Beauregard was most revered as the commander who ordered the first shots fired in the Civil War at Fort Sumter, Forrest is still one of the most honored men in the South, and is often held up as proof of Confederate valor and military genius. But he was also a war criminal, having overseen the terrible 1864 massacre at Fort Pillow in Tennessee and, from 1867 to 1869, he was also the first Grand Wizard, or head, of the original Ku Klux Klan, which had been founded two years prior by Confederate officers.⁵⁵ The Major's heroization of these two figures mirrors the widespread reverence for them during the Lost Cause, and further monumentalizes them.⁵⁶ Once again, Edwards's "monument" works hand-in-hand with the physical monuments erected after Reconstruction.

The wedding feast adds to the presentation of Tommey's plantation as an unchanged idyll: "Such a display of delicacies and substantials has not been seen in this section since the good old days before the war" (40–1).⁵⁷ The dinner provides the proper amount of wine, too, "the famous scuppernog of the Major's own vintage" (41), further adding to the sense of the plantation as the ideal of self-sufficiency.⁵⁸ Although through the correspondent's eyes we get a look at an antebellum paradise, preserved in amber, he also sounds a negative note (41):

55. For the misguided heroization of Forrest see Loewen (2019, 261–75), who notes that Forrest gets more markers in Tennessee than any other person in any other state (270) and puts these markers at number ten on his list of "Twenty Candidates for 'Toppling'": "whites of good will need to take the initiative to retire every statue of Nathan Bedford Forrest" (472). Cf. Domby (2020, 42–45) for the ways in which the proponents of the Lost Cause have tried to downplay or explain away the massacre at Fort Pillow.

56. Former U.S. Attorney General and Senator from Alabama Jefferson Beauregard Sessions III provides a recent example of this kind of naming practice, as he—after his father and grandfather—was named for Beauregard and Jefferson Davis.

57. Loewen (2019, 300) discusses the ways in which many southerners wrongly blamed the North for economic hardships.

58. For self-sufficiency as a plantation ideal see Grootkerk (1994, 33), whose discussion of plantation portrait paintings provides useful context for reading this scene.

Toast after toast was given and sentiment and the poets were interspersed with songs from the family Negroes assembled in the backyard by a gigantic bonfire. Some of the songs were of exquisite harmony and pathos. Freedom, so far, had brought but little of brightness into the lives of these humble people.

Edwards's sloppiness is evident here, since he awkwardly tries to join a picture of antebellum racial harmony with a dig at the failures of Reconstruction.⁵⁹ But the overwhelming point is that "the family Negroes"—another one of those slippery phrases meant to minimize the harsh reality—are still a happy part of the plantation. The use of "pathos," recalling its use in the preface, disingenuously suggests that Edwards and his target audience only wish the best for Black people.

Eneas's reappearance with the cup completes the wedding, the ceremony that symbolizes the preservation of social order. Edwards once more recites the inscription on the cup to emphasize the point (46; cf. 9):

*Ye bryde whose lippes kisse myne
And taste ye water and no wyne
Shall happy live an hersel see
A happy grandchile on each knee.*

The (incorrect) archaizing supports the idea that the cup has been in Tommey's family "for some six or eight generations" (8), and its successful passage through the generations and its connection with grandchildren mirrors the parallel story of the horses and its focus on lineage. The marriage takes place at a plantation that is largely unchanged and a kind of fantasy realm where the antebellum South persists. All of this minimizes the South's defeat in the Civil War and downplays the war and Reconstruction, suggesting that they caused no rupture with the idyllic antebellum past.

The Lost Cause is all about turning a military defeat into a moral triumph.⁶⁰ And the wedding at the end of *Eneas Africanus* does just this. In this sense, the novella goes beyond the *Aeneid*. Both works begin with losers of a recent war who come out on top at the end, but Edwards gives us the wedding that Vergil denies us. We are presented with a picture of a beautiful scene, described in rapturous tones by the newspaper

59. Cf. Domby (2020, 114): "Stories of loyal slaves were designed to make clear that African Americans were not suited to democracy and were happiest when disenfranchised and untroubled by such concerns."

60. For this succinct formulation see Cobb 2005, 62 (quoted in Domby 2020, 32.)

correspondent, depicting all of the things the Confederates claimed they were fighting for. In this corner of the world, it is as if the war never happened.

This restoration of Eneas, cup, and horse is a response to a dominant feeling in postbellum literature; as David Blight (2001, 39) says, “White Southern memory of the war was forever animated by this profound sense of loss in 1865.” This same sense of loss dominates the first half of the *Aeneid*, especially *Aeneid* 3, in which Aeneas and other Trojans constantly name places after Trojan people and places, thereby attempting to recover some small bit of a glorious past, and in which the miniature Troy of Buthrotum is a bittersweet reminder of what happened during the Trojan War. But unlike Vergil, Edwards gives us a neat and tidy “happily ever after” ending. Life in “Tommeysville” will continue undisturbed, a perfect white utopia; the hierarchy of races has been maintained, and its continuity ensured.⁶¹

CONCLUSION: THE INSIDIOUS APPEAL OF *ENEAS AFRICANUS*

Some of the success of Edwards’s novel, especially in the North, may be due to the absence of any attack on the North or any direct commentary on the supposed “horrors” of Reconstruction. There is a possible allusion to carpetbaggers in one of Tommey’s men marrying “a Connecticut girl” (14) and only a couple passing mentions that may be construed as referring to sharecropping, the system of lending land to freedmen and -women so hated by the southern planter class (24–5, 33, 34–5).⁶² The closest thing to a direct indictment of Reconstruction is the joke that, after a successful horse race, Eneas became “quite a hero among members of his race” so there “is said to be a movement to elect him to State Senate” (38). This statement comes in the final entry before the concluding newspaper article, and is clearly a joke at Eneas’s expense.⁶³

61. Lowe (2003, 25) rightly notes that a work such as the *Eneas Africanus* reminds us that the patterns of exile that we generally regard as positive, even heroic, can be used for widely different purposes.

62. According to Zychowicz (1994 80), in the proposed musical version, Ulysses would return to the plantation just in time to save it from carpetbaggers. On sharecropping see the classic study by Royce (1993), who shows that it was a compromise with which neither freedmen and -women nor the planter class were happy.

63. This detail may be even more pointed if we consider it in light of the assertion by Foner (2005, 137) that, “Whatever their individual histories, most former slaves who rose to prominence during Reconstruction had already established themselves

Whether through sharecropping or not, however, Eneas's use and even possession of land multiple times in the novel means that he has succeeded in the terms that most freedmen wanted after the war. Not only, then, was he free and clear of his master, but he had obtained access to land and was making a living. His explicit rejection of that life in favor of returning to the plantation—like his running from being elected to State Senate—condemns that system and fits with the overall project of showing that the old ways were better. Like Aeneas, he leaves places that seemingly have everything he wants out of devotion to his higher mission.

The lack of any direct attack on the North made the work acceptable to the North and helps explain its nationwide success. The work seems impossibly southern now, but George Garrett (1957, 222) sums up his analysis of it in *The Georgia Review* by saying:

Edwards' underlying strength is in a presented moral vision, the shrewd, unswerving ethic of a naïve character, the paradox we Americans have always enjoyed of the wise, innocent, the pilgrim who, with no more than native wit, stumbles and pratfalls his way into Jerusalem.

The suggestion that all Americans would respond to this novel the same way may appear astonishing to some, but such praise of Edwards's "moral vision" in an eminent literary journey almost one hundred years after the Civil War shows how deeply entrenched and systemic this white supremacy was—and continues to be. This sentiment shows the power of the Lost Cause, and its acceptance in the North explains a great deal of American attitudes toward race still today.

As Confederate monuments are a continuation of the Civil War, renegotiating its meaning and continuing its fight, so too is the *Eneas Africanus*. And this context and purpose explains Edwards's choice of model; the *Aeneid* transmutes the infamous loss at Troy into a victory and monumentalizes the recent victory at Actium. It is wonderfully ironic, then, that the very things that made the book so successful as to prompt its adaptation as a play led to that project not coming to fruition. The role of Eneas was meant for the famous actor, singer, and activist Paul Robeson, but he rejected it. His wife and agent, Eslanda Robeson, offered her reasons for turning down the project in a 1939 letter:

as community leaders—as ministers, teachers, skilled workers, Civil War soldiers, or simply men known to possess courage and good judgments."

If he plays a drunk, the Negros are drunkards; if [he] plays Ol' Uncle Tom, then all Negros are "handkerchief-heads" and don't want to be free.... The general public's idea of a Negro is an Uncle Tom, an Aunt Jemima, Ol' Mammy, and [the boxer] Jack Johnson. These types have been sold to the public deliberately. Well, now that they don't exist anymore except in the sentimental minds of credulous people, we certainly must not do anything in any way, to prolong their non-existent lives!!!⁶⁴

Robeson saw with clear eyes the nature of this story and the harm it did to society by perpetuating the myth of the Lost Cause that was so fundamental to Jim Crow.

And this call to arms must resonate with us. We students and teachers of the ancient world must remind ourselves that Edwards's *Eneas Africanus* is the most famous instance of the American reception of the most commonly taught Latin text in America today. This novel is as much a monument to white supremacy as any statue of a Confederate general, and its popularity through most of the twentieth century bears witness to the enduring and often problematic power of the legacy of not just Vergil, but of ancient Rome itself. We should therefore read and teach works such as *Eneas Africanus* alongside the *Aeneid* to provide our students with an insight into their own culture, as well as that of Rome's. At the same time, we have a moral obligation to push back against texts such as *Eneas Africanus* by using reception studies to position them within both their contemporary context as well as the larger history of readings of classical texts, lest our silence be taken as endorsement that they represent reality rather than a white-supremacist fantasy.

The true benefit of reception studies to our field is that it broadens our perspective of what we teach; it reminds us that texts and their meaning do not exist in hermetically sealed historical moments. At its best, it allows us to learn more about both the texts we study and the world in which we currently live, and is therefore vital to society. True change cannot happen without an understanding and frank acknowledgment of our past and how we got to where we are. Academics are often told to stay inside their lanes, and to only focus on their areas of expertise. But racism is systemic precisely because it touches and infects everything—including

64. Quoted in Graber (2016, 334). Robeson also turned down an offer from MGM in 1944 to play Uncle Tom—though he did perform in a play based more closely on Stowe's novel. See Spingarn 2018, 193 and 212 n. 19 for details.

texts from two-thousand years earlier. To ignore racism's influence on how the texts we study have been read is to be complicit in that racism.⁶⁵

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HERMANN BROCH READS VERGIL: ARTISTS, EMPIRES, AND ARTISTIC TRUTH ACROSS MILLENNIA

Stephanie Quinn

Abstract: Major portions and characteristics of Hermann Broch's *The Death of Virgil* illuminate and reenforce aspects of Vergil's *Aeneid*. The two works arose in similar historical contexts, which contemporaries in both eras interpreted similarly as catastrophic moments on the edge of enormous change, confusion, and risk. Both historical eras reflected a dual consciousness about historical truth, which in turn is taken up in both works as an artistic problem—the role of the artist in history. The problem is an ethical one. Both works employ a perspective on their problem similar to the idea of *chōra* in Plato's *Timaeus*, as a place from which artists are able both to create and to analyze their creations simultaneously. Much about the modern novel was already present in the ancient poem. Reading *The Death of Virgil* strengthened my regard for the *Aeneid* as a work beyond its time.



LARGE PARTS OF HERMANN BROCH'S GREAT TWENTIETH-CENTURY NOVEL *The Death of Virgil* produce an extended, intense aesthetic experience akin to that at the *Aeneid*'s last few lines.¹ There, the pious hero Aeneas

The story of this article is long and hence so is the list of people who have helped it on its way. A group of friends, organized by Dr. Sally Kitt Chappell, read both *The Death of Virgil* and the *Aeneid*. I gratefully and fondly dedicate this article to my late and dear friend Sally. A presentation at the Chicago Classical Club in February 2016 on the core of the current piece led to collaboration with colleagues Dr. John Burns, Dr. Matthew Caleb Flamm, and Dr. William Gahan including a panel at the Rocky Mountain MLA meeting in October 2017 and then our book, *The Quarrel Between Poetry and Philosophy: Perspectives Across the Humanities* (Burns et al. 2021), which contains my chapters on Vergil and Broch. This collaboration is a high point of my career. Dr. Julia Dyson Hejduk encouraged my submission of a paper for the SCS January 2020

decides to kill his suppliant enemy Turnus, as Aeneas displays his impulses for both compassion and rage, virtually simultaneously. The epic and the novel display juxtaposed contradictions that are suspended in conflict. The literary tropes in the works reflect the fraught, agonizing historical times in which their makers lived. In their respective eras, perceived as upside down, when time itself was confounding, both Vergil and Broch aligned political history and literary style.² In both works, style itself is used to express the complexity of oppositions in art and history.³ Reading the novel helped me explore that crucial issue in the poem, and to practice in Broch's novel the type of perception Vergil affords us at the *Aeneid*'s very end:

and between such a stream and counterstream [*und zwischen solchem Strom und Gegenstrom*], between night and counternight [*zwischen Nacht und Gegennacht*], red-gleaming below, clear-flickering above, in this doubled nocturnality he swayed on his litter. (*The Death of Virgil* 31, hereafter *DoV*; *Der Tod des Vergil* 30, hereafter *TdV*)⁴

Ideas here in the novel are countered and doubled—red versus clear, below versus above, gleaming versus flickering; they coexist in a betweenness, complexly modifying a simple action—he swayed on his litter. This compact

Vergilian Society panel on “Imperial Virgil”: “Hermann Broch Reads Vergil”—thank you. Dr. Hunter Gardner suggested a submission to *Vergilius*. I am grateful to Dr. Gardner and the *Vergilius* outside reader for their standards and collegueship, as well as references, in improving this paper. Finally, editorial suggestions from Dr. Jennifer Rea and Dr. Sharon Meilahn Bartlett strengthened the introduction. I am fortunate in the life of the mind and heart that I share with friends and colleagues. All of them are present in the current article; none is responsible for any remaining flaws.

1. For comments on Broch's place in twentieth-century European literature see Arendt 1949, 476 and 481; Steiner 1972, 149; Lützel 2003b, 1–2. See Cox (1997, 334–35) on Broch's work and Vergilian scholarship in the 1960s and 1970s: “To say that *The Death of Virgil* is the twentieth century's most important response to Virgil seems no exaggeration. It is an astonishing piece of literature,... that anticipates the main trends of subsequent Vergilian criticism.”

2. Mack (1978, 1) finds that Vergil's “preoccupation with time is new in Roman literature.” Regarding historical time, see Crawford's chapter “The World Turned Upside Down” (1993, 138–53) and Alston 2015, 8: “After 43 B.C. ... Roman society was turned upside down.”

3. Ziolkowski (1964, 33) described the novel's “barrage of contrasts.” Quint (2018, ix) finds duality in the very structure of the *Aeneid* in its uses of chiasmus.

4. The original German and English versions were published in 1945 (Ziolkowski 1964, 31). Broch (1965, 495) expressed gratitude for his translator's work. See Ziolkowski (1980, 16), Steiner (1975, 319–20), and Hargraves (2003) on the collaboration. In the interest of space, most of the German of the quotations from *TdV* is omitted.

technique pervades most of *The Death of Virgil*, as in the *Aeneid* a similar technique builds to a final explosion of meaning.

The aesthetic of both works is ethical; it answers to both artists' doubts about expressing truth through art at all, while truth itself was a combatant in world-shaping conflicts. In answer to the doubts, the end of the epic and parts of the novel inhabit a strange space or gap, a hole in place, time, or mind. Ancient and modern philosophers' uses of the concept of such a space or gap as a "third kind of reality" reflect for me the aesthetic and ethical perception in the epic and the novel. An idea like this is named *chōra* in Plato's *Timaeus*.⁵ The novel illuminates at length this betweenness, as does the epic's highly compressed ending. In this way, both works express how art can speak truth even among the world's evils: the "unrecognized evil" that was "beyond ... reach ... except, it may be, [by] that small voice of the soul, called song" (*DoV*, 23). Song itself can answer the call, although not without deep discomfort. Despite their obvious and important differences, Broch's novel captures something essential about Vergil's poem, as both works create and occupy the artistic space between opposites.⁶

In about five hundred pages of mostly ultramodern, stream of consciousness prose, the novel tracks Vergil's one last day of life, his final meeting with Augustus, and his mystical dying. The novel begins as Vergil arrives with Augustus at Brindisi from Greece, the gravely ill poet being carried on an elegant litter. In fevered hallucinations over several hundred pages, Broch's Vergil agonizes over his life's work—"and he had not noticed that he had lavished his whole life on it, wasted his life" (*DoV*, 91)—perhaps planning to destroy the *Aeneid*, as tradition tells us Vergil indeed contemplated doing.⁷ My focus in this article is on these first approximately three hundred intense pages of the novel, where the novel evokes and immerses the reader at length in an aesthetic and ethic like that of the epic's abrupt and long-fraught ending.⁸

5. See below on this idea from Plato's *Timaeus*, at 49–52 and esp. 52a–b.

6. The novel's fourth part, "IV Air—The Homecoming," describes Vergil's dying as a mystical reverse ontology, ending in spirit alone. The language is transcendent in a "proto-Christian" sense of love (see Lowrie 2004, 217, 219; Arendt 1995, 150), which comprises a resolution of the novel's suspensions. It is in its resolution that the novel most differs from the epic.

7. See Laird 2017, on the Vergilian biographical tradition and the instruction in Vergil's will to destroy the *Aeneid*, which Augustus prevented.

8. Ziolkowski (1964, 32) describes major sections of *The Death of Virgil* as "totally lyrical, unrelieved by any narrative, with disembodied imagery that remains frustratingly intangible," which "few readers, if any, are capable of reading" (33). He then apologizes for this style: "Despite this central criticism the book is one of the

Many scholars and critics have situated my reading of Vergil and Broch. What is missing is how to explain the apparently anomalous but yet powerful resonance between *The Aeneid* and *The Death of Virgil* that I have experienced. Apparently so disparate in style, how could the modern work elucidate the ancient? Both works embed history. Both entangle history and style. Both disentangle ethical choices. And both reveal a place for art to speak truth.

TWO HISTORIES

Broch (1886–1951 CE) began *The Death of Virgil* in 1937 and worked on it while he was imprisoned for five months by the Nazis during the 1938 *Anschluss* into Vienna (Ziolkowski 1964, 30–31), as he realistically expected to be killed.⁹ Broch wrote during and after imperial upheavals and stresses on time-honored values, through the fall of the Hapsburg Empire and two world wars, as did Vergil during the Roman Republic's prolonged and bloody collapse in the first century BCE. In confusing and dangerous contexts, Broch's Vergil questions the value of his life's work, as did the ancient poet. The novel's perpetual suspensions and contradictions relate to poetry itself:

poetry [*Dichtung*] ... was lingering on the threshold [*ist Warten an der Schwelle*], was at once participation and loneliness [*ist Gemeinschaft und Einsamkeit zugleich*], was intermingling and the fear of intermingling [*ist Vermischung und / Angst vor der Vermischung*] ... anticipation but not quite departure, yet it was an enduring farewell. (*DoV*, 65; *TdV*, 63–64)

Or this on the litter in which the invalid Vergil was being carried in Brindisi:

and in the flawlessly wrought and carved litter-seat,... spangled with stars of goldleaf, rested a flaw-infected invalid in whom decay was already lurking. This all made for extreme incongruity. (*DoV*, 29)

As in the *Aeneid*, *The Death of Virgil's* sustained representation of incongruity and the accruing instances of contradictions in language and

major literary works of the century" (33). Where Ziolkowski is his least sympathetic to *The Death of Virgil* is where I find the novel most attuned to Vergil's epic.

9. Through the efforts of James Joyce and others, Broch was released and fled to London, from there to the USA. He is buried near New Haven, CT (Ziolkowski 1964, 31, 38–39).

images correspond to the histories that the two authors experienced and to the interactions of history and art.

Reading *The Death of Virgil* activates the histories during which Vergil and Broch lived and worked, highlighting the similarities between the ancient and the modern, and the uses of the one by the other. Recent literary theorists are comfortable in aligning history and aesthetic. Tim Whitmarsh (2006, 104) challenges the “widespread, but misguided, assumption that reception theory is fundamentally anti-historicist.” Vergil responded to his literary inheritance and crafted his own work, in part at least, through the lens of contemporary Roman events, just as Broch in his context responded to Vergil.

Early twentieth-century Germany experienced many difficulties: the loss of World War I, perceived as traumatic and humiliating; the treaty, called in Germany, “the dictate of Versailles”; a ruinous inflation; the weaknesses of the Weimar system; the radicalization of the extreme parties on the left and right.¹⁰ Elsewhere in Europe at the time, Italy was an uncomfortable nation, newly established in 1871; massive tensions between the north and south were not resolved; deep poverty existed in some parts, still a peasantry; whereas an Italian artistic movement, the Futurists, lauded the totalizing power of the machine and of war (see Bull 2016, 9–27). Across Europe, the unsettled period between the two world wars, as Nazi and fascist totalitarianisms were developing, was often interpreted in virtually commonplace references to the ancient Roman and Greek worlds, their leaders, and their artists.¹¹

Connections between the modern era and ancient Rome are not hard to discern, and visionaries of empire throughout Europe found them. In “1930 Europe celebrated the bimillennium of Virgil’s birth” (Cox 1997, 327). For example, in 1938, Mussolini celebrated the anniversary of Augustus’s birth with a grand exhibition of Augustan Romanness, *La Mostra Augustea della Romanità*. Among its one million visitors was Adolf Hitler, who apparently was inspired by the exhibition to rebuild Berlin as “a city even more ‘breathhtaking’ than Rome, ‘our only rival in the world’” (Kelly 2006, 126). In Germany, Augustus and the Führer were linked (Schmidt 2008, 140); there was apparently a “German fascination with Vergil” (Schmidt 2001, 150).¹²

10. Paraphrased from Schmidt 2001, 152. Similarly Browning 2017; also Bergen 2016 for a good general history of the Holocaust.

11. “Ever since Spengler’s [*The Decline of the West, 1918–1922*], analogies between the cultural and social crisis of the early twentieth century and the Roman Empire have been popular”; Heizmann 2003, 188. See Eiden 2006, 442, 443.

12. See also Hardie 2014, 143 on the *Fourth Eclogue*, the Golden Age, and its “perverted expression in the Nazi ideology of the Third Reich”; also Eiden 2006, 447,

Richard Thomas's *Virgil and the Augustan Reception* relates Vergil's work to the long-standing European use of Vergil as apologist for power and empire: "the dominant European reception of Virgil is always inextricably involved with the reception of Augustus" (2001, 223). Broch's Augustus articulates this "Augustan" reading, which he thinks Vergil's *Aeneid* facilitated: "indeed, your poem is the very spirit of Rome, and it is magnificent" (*DoV*, 314), says Augustus to Vergil. Broch's Vergil then expresses what would become the darker interpretation of *The Aeneid*: "The imperfections, Augustus, go deeper than anyone suspects!" (*DoV*, 315). Fiona Cox explores how Broch's novel "probes and anticipates many of the anxieties attached to twentieth-century responses to Virgil" (327).¹³

Both eras were seen in their times as millennial moments marking the turning of a new age. Joseph Farrell and Damien Nelis (2013, 4–5) find among the poets of the first century BCE a sense of being "in a truly liminal" position. That liminality reflected the history: "When Octavian ordered the Temple of Janus Quirinus in Rome closed in 29 BC, to mark the return of peace to the entire Roman state, he intended it to symbolize the start of a new era" (Eck 2003, 40). Although the Secular Games were celebrated two years after Vergil's death, planning for the *Ludi Saeculares* had begun during his lifetime, to celebrate the long cycle of time from 146 BCE, at the end of the Third Punic War, that by 17 BCE marked the beginning of a new era, a *saeculum* (Gurval 1998, 279; Alston 2015, 291–94). In *The Death of Virgil*, a frequent, famous, and variable phrase is "no longer and not yet." Broch himself saw "history as a dialectic process of two-thousand year cycles" (Ziolkowski 1964, 6). The ancient and modern periods experienced intense and prolonged crises, and both eras interpreted their crises as world-historical, the modern age using the ancient as a model for this too.

The two eras were similar in their confusions. The experience at the end of the first century BCE has been described as paradoxical.¹⁴ Both sides in the Roman civil war claimed to do the same things—restore the republic, defend liberty (Crawford 1993, 146; Hardie 1993, 5; also Quint 1993, 11). Gruen (1990, 395) tells us that "the difference between rhetoric and reality is a central feature of the Augustan years, and of Augustan imperial policy."¹⁵ Romans of the era lived simultaneously in conflicting realities—those of the

451.

13. In general, on classical studies, fascism, and Nazism, see Roche and Demetriadou 2018.

14. Alston (2015, 2) says of the assassins of Julius Caesar, "They stabbed a senior magistrate in order to preserve the rights and privileges of Roman magistrates." Also Eck 2003, 62 and Meier 1990, 69–70.

15. See also O'Neill 2020, 218–20 on Augustus's role as a "savior-founder" (220).

hugely successful, now debilitated Roman Republic versus the emerging—What? W. R. Johnson (1981, 55) relates the years after the 30s BCE to their effect in the *Aeneid*: “we are no longer sure what battles have been lost or what battles have been won.” For the early twentieth century, the subjects of the Hapsburg Empire “lived simultaneously in different social universes and different historical epochs” (Perloff 2016, 6, on Hobsbawm). Carl Schorske (1981, 116) quotes a novelist, Robert Musil, a contemporary of Broch, as follows: “time was moving faster than a cavalry camel.... Nor ... could anyone quite distinguish between what was ... moving forward and what backward.” Resonances with Broch’s period are notable, even uncanny. In this context, some people in the early twentieth century tried to cast ancient Roman history and Vergil’s ancient text into one message of settled, imperial universality for the modern era.¹⁶

People in both eras lost confidence in what had seemed fixed truths—for Rome, republican values and practices, in what Johnson (1976, 154) calls the “disintegration of justice and truth.” For Europe, again in uncanny resonance, Enlightenment liberalism was at stake in what Schorske (1981, 4) names a “disintegrating society.” Glenn Most (2001a, 189) sees this phenomenon in Vergil:

Vergil is also the European poet in whom, for the first time, we discover a new and epoch-making sense of historical time. Vergil is fascinated by people who feel lost in history, who are being propelled by forces they cannot understand toward a future from which they cannot escape.

Broch’s Vergil describes a similar feeling: “the inescapable, inexplicable unrest, this alarming sense of being lost with no way out, this sharply felt foreboding of an ever-threatening, ever-present engulfing calamity” (*DoV*, 87). In his first appearance in Vergil’s epic, Aeneas laments that he had not died with his homeland: “O three times and four times blessed [*O terque quaterque beati*] are those who died at Troy” (*Aen.* 1.94–96). Broch’s Vergil also laments being still alive: “yet, tired of the fever as from the coughing, tired of the journey, tired of the future” (*DoV*, 24).¹⁷ The dislocations these speakers experienced were more than personal; they were world-historical.¹⁸

16. See Thomas (2001, 222–59) on, among others, Goebbels and his scholarship; some of Mussolini’s writings; comments by Wilamowitz and other contemporary German scholars; and the work of Theodor Haecker on Vergil and Christianity.

17. “*müde des Fiebers wie des Hustens, müde der Reise, müde des Kommenden*” (*TdV*, 24).

18. Dodds (1959, 247) claims that in this period “the tide of rationalism ... begins to retreat.” Johnson (1976, 136) finds that in the *Aeneid* Vergil “ponders the tragic

They were also dangerous. Broch's Vergil says he discerns something new to him, "namely the awareness of the people's profound capacity for evil" (DoV, 23).¹⁹ In such worlds politicians and artists made history and art, taking many paths, some benign and some not.²⁰ Vergil and Broch were left to make meaning through art, and a potential for hope however remote, when meaningful life itself seemed to be undone.²¹

HISTORY REFLECTED IN STYLE

Reading Broch's novel helped me apply the historical discontinuities of Vergil's age to his poetry. Contrary, paradoxical views of reality and truth mark both eras and both works. Both artists used time as an instrument of meaning. For both Broch and Vergil, history is reflected in style.

Language itself for Broch and others is implicated in the historical confusions present within Vergil's first-century BCE and the early twentieth-century CE, when, Broch's Vergil says, "this was like a language that is no longer a bridge between people" (DoV, 115).²² *The Death of Virgil* searches to express "that which was not to be comprehended by thinking" (DoV, 90), just as circumstances in Europe of the 1930s and 1940s seemed beyond human comprehension: "oh, the goal of poetry, oh, these moments in which speech sublimated itself beyond all description and all communication" (DoV, 84); "a language ... beyond all earthly linguistics" (DoV, 91); "a language beyond language" (DoV, 174). *The Death of Virgil* is shorn of millennia-old structures of language and thought, and with them, assurance that the world's empires reflect a rationally structured universe.

The last words of Broch's novel are: "it was the word beyond speech" (*das Wort ... jenseits der Sprache*) (DoV, 482; TdV, 454). Of Vergil, the poet

failure of classical humanism to confront its own weaknesses." Schorske (1981, 22) for Broch's era cites "the dissolution of the classical liberal view" of humankind.

19. "nämlich des Volkes Unheilsabgründigkeit" (TdV, 23).

20. See Thomas 2001, 235: "The extremes of German Romanticism and its formation and distortion of 'Hellenism' and ancient heroism carry a great burden. The line from Winckelmann to Nietzsche and George, thence to Gundolf and Goebbels, would only need the ingredients of Hitler and certain political and economic conditions to reach their full potential." On the entwining of epic and the political in the *Aeneid* see Quint 1993, 13.

21. See Agazzi 2016, 7 on the position of *The Death of Virgil* as a product of an end of time (*Endzeit*) within which there is a glimmer of hope (*Hoffnungsschimmer*) for art.

22. See Agazzi 2016, 13 on Broch's desire that his work would address the crisis of art and the inadequacy of literary works against political change in the first half of the twentieth century. The poet Paul Celan is said to have "invented a new form of German, reconceiving the language for the world after Auschwitz" (Franklin 2020, 72).

Rosanna Warren says that “Vergil’s art ... in its most stringent form consists of *not* saying; an art of the unspoken, perhaps of the unspeakable (*infandum*)” (2001, 114, emphasis original). The *Aeneid*’s last two lines contain no final spoken words but rather a groan of dying breath (*cum gemitu*, 12.952);²³ the resonance regarding the two works is striking. Broch and Vergil took their art forms to their limits and beyond, as historical limits exploded around them.²⁴ The method of compressed and opposed suspensions is rehearsed in the novel throughout hundreds of pages; it culminates in the epic in a wisp of comprehension at the very end.

The epic and the novel enable and oblige their audiences to experience historical eras simultaneously, in “layered reading”:²⁵ for the Romans, the ancient traditions of Roman myth and history along with the contemporary breakdown of the Roman Republic; for Europeans, ancient Roman Republic and Empire along with the contemporary weakening of European fundamentals. In both works, time itself is confounding, and its layering is an artistic point of entry into representing historical confusions. For the *Aeneid*’s first audience, the epic offers their present as the past recapitulated and their past as the future.²⁶ In the novel, we find phrases such as “past and future cross each other” (*DoV*, 32); “the future might become the past” (*DoV*, 45). Here is Broch’s description of time for the dying poet:

that every station on the path might encompass in itself the entire future and the entire past, arrested in the song of the unique present, bearing the moment of complete freedom, the moment of god-becoming, this time-free moment from which, nevertheless, the whole world would be embraced as a single, timeless memory. (*DoV*, 45)

This description in the novel could describe as well the function of time in the epic, especially its ending.

The mapping of history onto style penetrates deeply into the two works. The Holocaust historian Saul Friedländer described how he thought history writing should recount the experience of the Shoah: “The commentary

23. *ast illi solvuntur frigore membra / vitaeque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbra*, 12.951–952. Latin quotations of Vergil’s works are from the Fairclough (1994, 1996 [Loeb]) edition; translations are my own.

24. Lützeler (2003b, 9) claims that even Joyce’s *Ulysses* could not serve Broch in his “attempt to surpass the borders of the modern novel”; see similarly Johnson (1981, 53) on Vergil: Vergil’s epic “shatters this genre [epic] and transforms it.”

25. I owe this apt phrase to *Vergilius*’s anonymous reader of this article.

26. See O’Neill 2020, 223: “Livy and Vergil admit the possibility of both linear development through augmentation and recurrent re-foundation.” See Mack 1978, 1, 4.

should disrupt the facile linear progression of the narration, introduce alternative interpretations, question the partial conclusion, withstand the need for closure” (Goldberg 2009, 228). Friedländer seems to be saying that only history writing that bridges the divide between scientific historiography and the subjective reality of lived experience can adequately express reality when reality’s horror exceeds the grasp of human understanding. The kind of reality Friedländer studies defies straightforward linear narrative in favor of a story that remains open to multiple, incompatible but simultaneously true stories.²⁷ Vergil and Broch already knew that. Vergil lived through a history apt for the kind of prose writing Friedländer invokes. Broch lived in the very period Friedländer was researching. The result is that what Friedländer envisions for the writing of history, Vergil and Broch achieved in poetry and fiction respectively. Their fictional artistry was telling a true history of their times.

For Broch, time is a theoretical construct, a concept that bridges abstract thought and literary style, in which, says Broch’s Vergil, life, death, and poetry join in “all simultaneousness”; “in a single moment of existence”; “memory had become the well of simultaneousness” (*DoV*, 82). According to Hannah Arendt (1995, 132–39), in his later work, Broch theorized about time in a way she believes was “entirely original”; “time assumes the function that is ordinarily ascribed to space,” thus bridging entities that logic separates. Broch is seeking an “abrogation of time”:

which he calls the “architecturization of the passage of time,” ... [that] transforms all sequence into coexistence and in which the temporally structured course of the world ... is presented as it would be seen by the eye of a god, who would take it all in simultaneously. (Arendt 1995, 133)

This language, describing the novel, could describe as well the structure of time that Vergil designed in the *Aeneid*. Broch’s later theorizing articulates the narrative method of his novel. The theorizing may have been original to Broch.²⁸ Vergil had already practiced the method.

Vergil and Broch responded similarly to an implicit question, contemporary for both of them: How to represent artistically a world

27. Friedländer (2007, xv) expands Holocaust research from mainly German policies and actions to include as well the perspectives of the victims. I am grateful to Professor Edward Mathieu of Rockford University for this and other valuable references.

28. See Lützel 2003a, xiii, on Broch as a “first-rate theoretician.”

terribly confusing, even upside down? Each answered by upending his art. The *Aeneid* builds methodically and at length, and then undoes the edifice in the few closing lines. The final experience has built for almost ten thousand lines in ever accumulating tension of overlapping and, to use Broch's phrase, "infinite crossings" of references and counterreferences, through the echoing, crossing, entangled memories and experiences of many fathers and sons, wives and loves lost;²⁹ of wars, treaties, of oaths made and broken; in Troy past, Italy present, and Rome future; of traditions of heroism and practice of leadership.³⁰ In *The Death of Virgil* the opposing voices separate in the conversation between Vergil and Augustus. Across hundreds of pages before that scene, however, the opposing voices of the epic are internalized and manifested, in Broch's Vergil's fevered, hallucinatory, self-contradicting and self-aware stream of consciousness, as he lies on the precipice of death.

The *Aeneid*'s stories and characters resonate internally in their multiplicities and oppositions, and Vergil's intermingling structures and connections make for brilliant and fascinating literature. In those resonances, as Broch's Vergil says, "truth and falsehood, calling and not calling, nearness and farness flowed into each other, they merged together" (*DoV*, 180). Looked at this way, the meaning of Vergil's structures is not only complex but unstable.

At the time of Vergil's death in 19 BCE, Octavian's 31 BCE victory over Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium was only twelve years in the past; the title "Augustus" was conferred on Octavian in 27 BCE, only eight years before Vergil died. During those years, there had been possible assassination attempts, and Augustus's health had been fragile (see Eck 2003, 55–56). In 19 BCE bloody civil conflict was still painfully recent and still realistically potential. In one of the epic's most important similes at *Aen.* 12.715–724, the two enemies Aeneas and Turnus are likened equally to two bulls, merging in one image, as they "exchange wounds between themselves with great force,"³¹ in their equalized mortal battle. The outcome here is uncertain.

The literary suspense of the two-bulls simile is safely removed in the long-distant past, while simultaneously it evokes the unsettling contemporary Roman world. At the end of the first century BCE, few people might have

29. Aeneas lost his wife Creusa and lover Dido, and see also Putnam 2011, 110–14 on the eroticism of Pallas.

30. As Most (2001b, 155) said, "It is not too much to claim that this final episode of the *Aeneid* condenses all the aspects of memory and forgetting that fascinated Virgil throughout his poetic career." See Putnam 2001, 87 on book 12 as highly "multivalent" and, e.g., Quint 2018, 16 on Aeneas and Turnus.

31. *illi inter sese multa vi volnera miscent* (*Aen.* 12.720).

foreseen the continuation of Augustus's reign for another thirty-three years after Vergil's death, until Augustus died in 14 CE. For its early audience, the *Aeneid* could have evoked in part that lingering uncertainty, denying the "linear progression" of history and the sense of "closure" that two thousand years hence may seem falsely inevitable, in favor of "alternative interpretations" (to use Friedländer's phrases), that may have remained plausible. Vergil's Jupiter conveys that moment of suspense; at the end of the bulls simile, he holds the two heroes' fates and by implication Rome's in equal balance, *aequato examine* (12.725), forestalling closure, at least for a while. Broch's admittedly strange, unsettled, unsettling novel strengthened my reading of an unsettled, unsettling strangeness in the *Aeneid*.³²

Broch's antilinear language creates an effect like Vergil's highly wrought, complex form in the *Aeneid*'s accumulation of internal resonances. Here Broch both describes the program of his novel and illustrates it within the text, as his Vergil reports on his own reading of his *Aeneid*:

[it] consisted no longer of lines, but of an endless immense space stretching out on all sides to infinity, a space in which the sentences did not follow one another in / order [*die Sätze nicht aufeinander folgten*], but covered each other in infinite crossings [*sondern in unendlicher Verkreuzung einander überdeckten*] and were no longer sentences [*und nicht mehr Sätze*], they were rather a dome of the inexpressible [*sondern Dome der Unaus- / drückbarkeit waren*],... yet whenever this had become manifest, unfolding to expression, at every spot where the sentence-waves and sentence-cycles crossed one another, there war, treachery and bloody sacrifice showed up also, there warfare, lifeless and callous, conducted by beings essentially dead, came to view, there the feud of the gods could be seen in its godlessness, there too was revealed the nameless murder in a nameless sphere, executed by phantoms that were merely names, executed at the behest of fate, holding the gods in bondage, executed by language [*vollzogen in der Sprache*], through language [*durch die Sprache*], for the sake of illimitable speech [*im Auftrag der unendlichsten Sprache*], in the god-governed inexpressibility of which fate has its cause and completion [*in deren götterbeherrschender Unausdrückbarkeit ewiglich das Schicksal anhebt und sich beschliesst*]. It made him shudder [*Ihn schauderte*]. (DoV, 189–90; TdV, 181–82)

32. Thomas (2001, 15) finds that "from many perspectives [Vergil] is stranger and less classical even in the *Aeneid* than he came to be."

The whole of the poem is grasped by Broch's Vergil in a single perception, all the forces of gods and mortals summarized in one vision simultaneously both confounding and pellucid. The artist creates an artist reflecting on his art, as Broch reproduces the shuddering effect of Vergil's *Aeneid*'s final lines.

The Death of Virgil expresses the explosion of history through form, its isolated building blocks spread out like high art debris. The novel abjures familiar edifice and instead reveals the building materials in its disruptive sentences, as Broch's Vergil reads his poem.³³

The memorable content of the poem was disappearing [*das inhaltlich Erinnerungsfähige verging*];... fell quite away, all of it stripped off, the poem had discarded it [*es fiel ab, es ward abgestreift, das Gedicht hatte es abgeworfen*] like a useless garment and was returning back into the unveiled nakedness of its hidden being, into the vibrating invisible from which poetry stems, subsumed again by the pure form, finding itself there like its own echo, like the soul housed in its crystal shell, singing of itself. (*DoV*, 197; *TdV*, 188)

Broch's Vergil reads his own words and form beyond words and form. *The Death of Virgil* is the *Aeneid* inside out.³⁴

From one perspective, of course, the *Aeneid* is the opposite of strange. Vergil's epic stands as the literary icon of his own time and of the subsequent two millennia of European literature. T. S. Eliot (1957, 73) famously declared the *Aeneid* "the classic of all Europe," because it permeates and defines so much of the European literary tradition. The *Aeneid* may have performed another function, though, as Broch's Vergil performs it in the novel. Broch's novel is a meditation on death, "the death of a culture; the death of the artist; the death of art" (Lipking 1981, 131). Broch's essay from which the novel arose is titled "*Die Kunst am Ende einer Kultur*," "Art at the End of a Culture" (Heizmann 2003, 188). Broch has his Vergil foresee the end of the culture he himself founded; Broch "put his recanting of Western civilization into Virgil's own mouth" (Lipking 1981, 136 and xi). In so doing Broch helps us read the *Aeneid* as the harbinger of its own explosion. Our Vergil seems to have known he was doing something similar.³⁵ Along with Aeneas's concluding anger and the audience's responses to it, the *Aeneid*'s

33. See Untermeyer 1965, 486 on the novel's structure; and Arendt 1995, 133 on the connection between Broch's theories and the structure of his sentences.

34. Quint (2018, 22) finds that Vergil turned aspects of the epic tradition "inside out."

35. See Johnson 1976, 91. See also Quint 2018, 25 on Aeneas's final act as writing Athena's "allegorical rationality" of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* "out of the *Aeneid*."

encyclopedic reprisal of Roman history and culture also explodes in the hero's final sword stroke.

The layering and intermingling of eras within each text open space for both texts to speak to each other across time.³⁶ Such is Lorna Hardwick's and Christopher Stray's claim regarding reception versus tradition as an interpretive lens: the "interface" between the ancient and modern texts and contexts is "dialogic." They note that "reception becomes decisive when traditions intersect or are in conflict" (2008, 5). Such exactly is the conflicted intersection in early twentieth-century Europe between ancient Roman history and interpretations of Vergil's texts. An example of this intersection is explored by Randall Pogorzelski in relation to the work of Broch's contemporary James Joyce.³⁷ Pogorzelski (2016, 3) analyzes a "bi-directional process" between Vergil and Joyce:

the allusive incorporation of the *Aeneid* into *Ulysses* implies not only that aspects of the classical epic remain within the modernist novel, but also that *aspects of the modernist novel were already present* in the classical epic. (17, emphasis added)

Cox also uses this approach in reading Broch's work, which, she finds, in "liberating us from the chronological constraints of influence, enables us to see not only how Virgil enhances Broch, but also how Broch modifies our readings of Virgil" (1997, 329; see Vinken 2006, 417). The reciprocal and bidirectional relationship between texts in reverse chronological reading expresses my reading of Broch with Vergil. As Thomas observed, so much did Broch convey Vergil's voice that "Broch effectively becomes Virgil, in a moment of literary brilliance that has the effect of *eliding the millennia* between the two writers" (2001, 262, emphasis added). As in *Ulysses*, aspects of Broch's modern novel were also present in Vergil's old epic. The confusions of time within each work effect a bridge between them.

CLARITY IN CONFUSION—THREE PERSPECTIVES ON ETHICS

In times of crisis great leaders envision a constructive path beyond the upside-downness of their present. After the terror of the proscriptions under the triumvirate of Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus following Julius

36. On artists' use, or reception, of other artists' work see Spence (2001, xx): "we must try to see the poem from a distance while we acknowledge the fact that there is no distance at all."

37. See Ziolkowski 1964, 20 on Broch and Joyce.

Caesar's assassination, Octavian as Rome's newly named Augustus spent his forty-year reign creating the new order that Rome had fought against for one hundred years but needed were it to survive, for better or worse. Broch's Augustus names this work: "institutions which are obsolete turn reality into a farce of reality, freedom to a farce of freedom, and provide the best soil for all kinds of criminality; that's the sort of thing I had to clear away" (DoV, 364). Great artists similarly build new edifices with techniques that embrace reality's confusions through new forms of artistic control.

Our own last one-hundred-plus years of confounding, explosive history and art have yielded theoretical means for naming and analyzing these literary problems and responses. Works like the *Aeneid* and *The Death of Virgil* have a hero and author, of course, whose perspectives are much studied. They also have audiences, the receivers of a work, who have a role in understanding a text's life and meaning over time. By foregrounding and isolating readers' reactions to a text as not only analyzable but also appropriate for, deserving of, even necessary for analysis, reader response theory affords insights that have helped us separate and disentangle sight lines on a story.³⁸ Analyzing separately the perspectives of three participants in *The Aeneid* and *The Death of Vergil*—hero, audience, and author—clarifies actions and ethics operating within the works and judgments applied to them.

An effect of their historical contexts on these two literary works is a focus on evaluating action in time. Regarding the *Aeneid*, readers make judgments about Aeneas and his final act, about Vergil and his role in Augustan Rome, and more recently about the judges, the readers themselves, across the centuries of Vergilian interpretation. The weight and burden of ethical action for the three entities—hero, audience, author—differ significantly.

Aeneas the actor of the epic lives in narrative time; he must act within his story and in so doing, inevitably and necessarily, he chooses a path, favoring one set of impulses, values, and experiences over others. For a mortal actor, such as Aeneas, a moment of crisis can precipitate commitment to a course of action. On the other hand, such a moment can cause a breakdown, paralysis, such as King Latinus experiences at the start of the Italian war: "having spoken nothing more, he enclosed himself within his walls and let go the reins of state."³⁹ Inaction is not neutral; inaction is a choice.

38. E.g., see Martindale and Thomas 2006, 3: "The new model [of literary reception] would acknowledge the historicity of texts, but also allow for the aesthetic response of readers in the present." See also Hardwick and Stray (2008, 5) about a "reciprocal relationship" between tradition and reception.

39. *nec plura locutus / saepsit se tectis rerumque reliquit habenas* (Aen. 7.599–600). Or a leader can second-guess himself as Latinus does, *multaque se incusat* (Aen.

Criticism on the epic often and reasonably focuses on Aeneas's final action, which comprises a choice between options. No choice Aeneas makes can by definition be total or complete, can encompass all the choices open to him. At his fleeting but intense moment of hesitation, "and yet, as he hesitated, yet more, the speech [of his enemy Turnus] began to deflect him,"⁴⁰ Aeneas receives reminders of virtually all his experiences in and after the fall of Troy. In that crowded instant he is poised between two immediate options, to spare or kill, *parcere* or *debellare* (*Aen.* 6. 853), choices that we know are contained within Anchises's advice to his son Aeneas in the underworld. In life those injunctions are likely to be incompatible. In the instant, Turnus is simultaneously both a proud opponent and humbled hero, but Aeneas can either spare or destroy, not both. Amid Aeneas's powerful memories and contradictory associations, in a flash of decision, he chooses to kill his opponent. Broch affirms Vergil's portrayal of Aeneas's final action:

beauty, and before all the beauty born of art, failed quickly of its effect if in disregard of the reciprocal balance of its two components [mildness and cruelty] it approached man with but one of them.... had the virtuous Aeneas remained as / soft-hearted as might once have been expected of him, had he, either in the upsurge of his compassion or for the sake of the poem's beautiful tension, been reluctant to kill his mortal enemy, had he not, with better judgment, decided in that moment to do the terrible deed, he would by no means have become the example of gentleness which had to be emulated [*er wäre keineswegs zu Beispiel nachstrebenswerter Milde*], but instead he would have become a tedious and unheroic figure unworthy of portrayal by any poem [*den darzustellen kein Gedicht hätte wagen dürfen*]. (*DoV*, 135–36; *TdV*, 129)⁴¹

The ethics of historical actors, in fiction and fact, knowing the risks of action, is to accept the risks and consequences onto themselves, as Aeneas did in deciding. The gaining of this dire knowledge was a reason fate, and Vergil, forced Aeneas to experience the poem's trials, so that he could enact the vision of imperial glory with heightened insight, at risk of possible, even likely failure.

11.469–471); or succumb to grief and despair as Latinus does at his wife's death: *it scissa veste Latinus / coniugis attonitus fatis urbisque ruina*, "with torn clothes, Latinus goes thunderstruck at the fate of his wife and the fall of his city" (*Aen.* 12.609–610).

40. *et iam iamque magis cunctantem flectere sermo / coeperat* (*Aen.* 12.940–941).

41. See Putnam (2001, 90) on Aeneas's perhaps "greatest single display of self-assertion in the poem."

Aeneas must choose; he must either kill Turnus or let him live.⁴² The audience, within the action of the poem, is not so obliged. Although interpretation is a form of agency, a poem's audience as audience makes neither law nor war. The audience instead accesses this poem's harsh reality and new hopes all at the same time but without a history-making duty. Audiences bring their own contexts and values to their interpretations, and as such lay claim to ethical positions in their times and institutions. But within the action of a text itself, they have no role or responsibility. The heroes of our two works, Vergil's Aeneas and Broch's Vergil, operate within the frames of the works and must make fateful choices—to kill the fallen enemy; to let the *Aeneid* live. The audiences respond from outside, but within the action of the story, they do not have to choose.

The creators of the poem and the novel, however, Vergil and Broch, partake of both the hero's and the audience's roles; they inhabit simultaneously worlds inside and outside the frame of the works, as artists and actors both. The two artists signal that they know this. In the *Aeneid* Vergil gives himself voice about his job in several apostrophes, notably of course in lines that introduce the two halves of the epic: "is there such wrath in heavenly spirits?" (*Aen.* 1.11); "a greater order of the world is born for me, I engage in a greater project" (*Aen.* 7.44–45).⁴³ Broch's Vergil speaks of a kind of madness: "but the poet is the very man who possesses the gift of taming his own madness and guiding it" (*DoV*, 259), perhaps as Vergil had to tame his artistic Juno in order to use it/her in creating the *Aeneid*. Broch's comment recalls one attributed to Vergil in the ancient biographical tradition, that he had undertaken such a work, the *Aeneid*, through "almost a defect of the mind."⁴⁴ Within the novel, through his Vergil, Broch discusses poetry and art explicitly, for just a few examples: "art existed ... only insofar ... as it renewed itself by fresh and hitherto unaccomplished tasks" (*DoV*, 139); "genuine art bursts through boundaries, bursts through and treads new and hitherto unknown realms of the soul" (*DoV*, 255). As creators, Vergil and Broch make themselves also participants within their creations, alongside their protagonists.

By the act of creating in time and place, the two artists were also inescapably historical actors as well as artists, whose deeds of words had consequences, which they both knew. Vergil's work as a whole played its

42. See Putnam 2001, 97 on Aeneas's choices.

43. *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* (*Aen.* 1.11);... *maior rerum mihi nascitur ordo, / maius opus moveo* (*Aen.* 7.44–45).

44. "*ut paene vitio mentis tantum opus ingressus mihi vedear*" Otis (1964, 1) citing Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.24.11.

part in the Augustan regime, perhaps even as contributor to its ideology, for which he has been analyzed, praised, and blamed.⁴⁵ Vergil's role in this history was not abstract. From his first *Eclogue*, we have a story of land loss and restoration presumably for Vergil himself and by Octavian: "Oh Meliboeus, a god brought about this quietude for me."⁴⁶ After the assassination of Octavian's adoptive father Julius Caesar, Octavian was among those responsible for proscriptions of his supposed enemies, later battling fellow Romans in civil conflict. Among all the victims and combatants could have been people that Vergil had heard of or seen or met or knew. Vergil's literary patron was Maecenas, a man at one remove from Octavian, later Augustus, who, even as an ally, was apparently demanding, formidable, dangerous (Powell 2017, 195).

Broch, originally Jewish and early converted to Catholicism (Ziolkowski 1964, 5–6), participated in the successful Austrian Jewish bourgeoisie and then became a victim of Nazi anti-Semitism. We know that Broch struggled about how to lead his life. He spent several years as an industrialist heading the family's firm (Ziolkowski 1964, 5), which he shocked his family by selling in 1928 to return to university studies toward a doctorate in philosophy and mathematics (8). He was novelist often despite himself (9); a refugee himself, he was devoted to helping refugees from Europe (38); and he had prestigious American grants to study the theory of mass psychology (25). Whatever Broch and Vergil may or may not share across two millennia, they unite in experiencing the intersection of political actions and consequences with the ethical problems of making art in their times. Among the other participants related to works of art, the hero and audience, only our artists have this dual perspective and function, as a voice inside a work and as an actor in the world.

These artists do two things simultaneously, obliterating, as Arendt (1995, 137) puts it, the "enslavement to sequence." By writing, our artists act in time, as do heroes in epic and leaders in history. The two artists also create works that live beyond the authors' moments, outside time. With this dual perspective, inside and out, the artists can act and evaluate action simultaneously and reciprocally; creating and critiquing become a joint

45. See Gurval 1998 on the *Aeneid's* role in creating the vision of a new Augustan era including through the shield episode in book 8. Vergil's and the *Aeneid's* role in history and politics is studied by, among others, Zanker (1990), Galinsky (1996), Nappa (2005), and Powell (2008). "Vergil is a political poet, whether we like it or not" (Nappa 2005, 231). The nature of his role is of course much disputed.

46. *O Meliboe, deus nobis haec otia fecit* (*Ecl.* 1.6). See Garrison 2017 on this part of the biographical tradition.

enterprise. A result is that the most ethical actor in both the *Aeneid* and *The Death of Virgil* is neither the hero nor the hearer but the artist.

In their political climates of confusion and danger, our Vergil and Broch's Vergil questioned the ethics of their work. In the *Aeneid*, after Aeneas is severely angered, an enemy warrior's spear having dislodged the tip of his helmet and especially because of the broken Italian-Trojan treaty (*Aen.* 12.491–499), the poet-narrator asks: "What god might now unfold for me so many calamities, such ... slaughters in song."⁴⁷ This slender, tender, yet fierce phrase, *carmine caedes*, expresses a conflict between the craft of poetry and what poetry is called on to create, in effect asking if poetry can meet the challenge, or should.⁴⁸ The narrator in book 12 asks Jupiter if it was his intention that peoples, the Latins and the Trojans, who were meant to live in future peace, should first fight so intensely.⁴⁹ Broch's Vergil extends our Vergil's question. Even if poetry can effectively sing of slaughter, with what result? Will the harsh message, even if offered, be heard?

Nothing availed the poet [*nichts vermag der Dichter*], he could right no wrongs; he is heeded only if he extols the world, never if he portrays it as it is. Only falsehood wins renown, not understanding! And could one assume that the *Aeneid* [*sic*] would be vouchsafed another or better influence? Oh yes, people would praise it because ... only the agreeable things would be abstracted from it, and because there was neither danger nor hope that the exhortations would be heeded. (*DoV*, 15; *TdV*, 15)

In Broch's terms, Vergil's audience is poised to ask if it will hear only the beauty of the song or also the horror of the slaughter. The voice of doubt that Vergil permits himself on occasion in the *Aeneid*, Broch makes the subject of his novel, turning the epic inside out (see also Arendt 1995, 112).

The possibility of being misunderstood is all the more dire because these two artists knew their words wielded great power and that with such power came great risks, especially in mortally precarious times. In the *Aeneid* at the end of the Sinon episode in book 2, Vergil tells us that the Trojans were deceived and defeated not by some great warrior, not by a ten-year war, not

47. *Aen.* 12.500, *Quis mihi nunc tot acerba deus, quis carmine caedes?*

48. Quint (2018, xviii–xix) discusses Vergil's "contrary moods about his writing of the *Aeneid*."

49. *tanton placuit concurrere motu, / Iuppiter, aeterna gentis in pace futuras?* (*Aen.* 12.502–503).

by a thousand ships, but by treachery in words themselves.⁵⁰ Vergil signals his artistic doubts notably through the story of Daedalus that introduces book 6. Having made wings of wax to fly through the sky, Daedalus warns his son Icarus not to fly too close to the sun; the boy disobeys, falls to the ground, and dies. Daedalus's sculpture of this story ends without his completing the images of his son's death. The artist cannot complete the work of art; art cannot portray the depth of feeling, and also the harm done, the unintended cruelty of the artist's craft (see Putnam 1987). Vergil's dutiful hero Aeneas descends to depravity after Pallas's death in book 10 of the *Aeneid*.⁵¹ At one point, amid almost one hundred lines of killing (*Aen.* 10.510–604), Aeneas turns upon one warrior's four-horse chariot. When the horses perceive Aeneas savagely approaching, with this hero growling terribly like an animal (*dira frementem*, *Aen.* 10.572), even the animals are frightened by him and rush away, spilling out their master.⁵² Aeneas's unrelenting slaughter depicts the potential for cruelty even in a man known for piety.⁵³

Broch's Vergil also knew his power and the risks of that power:

as an unearthly sham-infinity,
and hence a game
the game of earthly men amidst their earthliness, playing at eternity
(*DoV*, 122)
and hence pitiless,
pitiless toward human sorrow which meant no more to art
than passing existence, no more than a word, a stone, a sound, or a
color ...
and thus beauty revealed itself to man as cruelty. (*DoV*, 122–23)

For Broch, the artist was “thoughtlessly able to inflict sorrow and death” (*DoV*, 123) through the cruel game of beauty.⁵⁴ Broch regularly turned

50. *Aen.* 2.195–98, *Talibus insidiis periurique arte Sinonis / credita res, captique dolis lacrimisque coactis / quos neque Tydides nec Larisaeus Achilles, / non anni domuere decem, non mille carinae.*

51. See Putnam's (2011, 18–48) extended analysis of this book.

52. *Aen.* 10.569: *sic tot Aeneas desaevit in aequore victor*; 10.573 *metu versi retroque ruentes.*

53. See Alston's (2015, 135–43) chapter “Death in Rome” on the triumvirate's proscription, including the decree itself. Aeneas's killing spree did not lack recent historical precedent.

54. Quint (2018, xvi) says the “*Aeneid*'s veiled criticisms of what it more openly praises have the quality of a trick”—a trick upon his audience and even upon the *princeps*.

to both theoretical research and political action, considering his novel writing a diversion from the responsibilities of his time.⁵⁵ In the novel, in an extended passage with virtually no sentence breaks over eight pages (*DoV*, 137–44), which starts with a sybil, a descent to Hades, and a golden branch, all reminiscent of *Aeneid* 6, Broch's Vergil ruminates on the duty of poetry and the danger of beauty:

whenever beauty existed for its own sake, there art is attacked at its very roots (*DoV*, 140) ... his poetry could no longer be called art (*DoV*, 141) ... it had been a mere indulgence of beauty ... beauty in the place of truth (*DoV*, 142) ... locked in the prison of art, this was the poet ... condemned to fail from the start. (*DoV*, 143)

One critic of Broch's work (Paik 2003, 201) described Broch's dilemma this way: "Measured against the reality of suffering, art is both inadequate and incapable of giving voice to horror and agony, or it is complicit in it." As Theodor Adorno (1981, 34) wrote, "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric." For Vergil, how does a poet make song out of slaughter—*carmine caedes*? When others' words are weapons with existential consequences, an artist's choices about what to say or whether even to speak are viscerally pertinent.

The three roles of hero, audience, and author of course always exist; theories and analysis of the audience distinctly are relatively recent. The extreme demands of Vergil's and Broch's lived experiences have heightened and intensified the roles of all three participants in their works of art, and especially for the artists. Their dual self-awareness as artists and actors seems keener—more stringent, more urgent, more painful, and more consequential—than those of some other artists in some other times. These artists' treatment of their roles in the *Aeneid* and the *Death of Virgil* answer to the ethical demands both posited. In their suffering, Vergil and Broch needed and devised a means, a place to practice and acknowledge their self-awareness, to confront but not be paralyzed by their artistic pains and doubts, a place neither wholly in nor out, simultaneously both in and out, to exercise artistic control and hence also to judge their works, their worlds, and themselves, often severely. Whatever technique Vergil and Broch used to navigate their artistic issues had to be able to engage the ethical ones.

55. See Arendt 1995 on Broch's philosophical work. On the novel as a diversion, see Ziolkowski 1964, 29–30, 38. Lipking (1981, 135) quotes Broch: "in this time of horrors I could not dare to put still more years into a work [*DoV*] that, with each additional page, would have become increasingly esoteric."

A PLACE FOR ART

Engaging text intimately with history, as Vergil and Broch did, activates the ethical issues operating in the works' historical contexts.⁵⁶ The *Aeneid's* readers conjure opposing interpretations of Vergil's position on empire, rightly, since the poem offers strong opposing voices. But what of truth? All is a blur? Anything goes? No. The truth Vergil creates for us is the duality itself; as David Quint (2018, ix) says, "Virgil deliberately designed the *Aeneid* in order to produce the double effect that divides critics; it is not an either/or but a both/and." That posture is not one of weak irresolution; rather it is an achievement of powerful art. Broch created a similar, simultaneously opposed, mutually exclusive duality, and in this too he was in astute discourse with Vergil's epic.

Cox relates twentieth-century theoretical studies to Broch's reading of Vergil's works and to Vergil's works themselves in a protracted cycle of reception and response. Regarding Roland Barthes's 1968 *The Death of the Author*, Cox (1997, 329) connects the discussion of an author's control of a text to ideas of intertextuality. Charles Martindale links the emergence of reception theory to such thinkers as Jauss, Schiller, Gadamer, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Baudelaire and others (Martindale and Thomas 2006, 1–13, esp. 3–4). Broch himself, as a student of philosophy, was immersed in the thinking of his time.⁵⁷ The artist Broch was practicing a sophisticated reception of the artist Vergil's works not only before Vergilian scholars did but even as theories of literary reception were nascent.

A result of reading Broch and Vergil closely together has been to perceive the *Aeneid* anew as a work of ancient genius but in terms it has taken us two thousand years to recognize and name theoretically. In reciprocal correspondence, Broch's novel vitalizes the ancient epic's deep, uncanny, impossible modernity.⁵⁸ Thinking about Vergil and Broch together has helped me substantiate perceptions of Vergil's modernity, as qualities that are manifest in the novel and are discerned as modern—such as the simultaneous interplay of opposites, suspension of resolution, an open

56. Fleming (2006, 137) addresses the ethical issue regarding early twentieth-century use of Greek and Roman literature and history.

57. Ziolkowski 1964, 4. See Lützeler 2003a, xii on Broch as a member of the avant-garde and (xiii) a "forerunner" of "new pertinent humanities discourses of later decades."

58. Quint (2018, xii and xvi) uses this term, "uncanny," about poetic effects in the *Aeneid*.

system of meaning, explicit artistic self-awareness—were present in the *Aeneid*.⁵⁹

Both artists used a literary technique that abuts a philosophical construct. Johnson (1976, 20) discussed not just the presence of opposites within the *Aeneid* but found that “both its positive and its negative forms may be present at the same time,” which he calls an “impartial interplay of opposites.” Johnson (21) links this literary technique to a philosophical idea, and he cites Plato (*Phaedo* 59A) on a single “society” where “discordant elements ... cling together,” a society that Johnson describes as “unnamable and invisible and unknowable.”⁶⁰ It is with Plato and a version of his “society” that this article ends. I believe that Vergil and Broch operate within such a society.

For Broch, language with excessive focus on beauty does not serve truth, for it “cancelled the great hope that the pledge of knowledge would not be in vain, not merely because truth was futile but rather because it was superfluous” (*DoV*, 131). Later in the novel, Augustus claims that at their moment in Rome a “oneness of spirit” (*DoV*, 344) exists in the state and in art; he says, “You [Vergil] deliberately overlook the fact that every era that is fruitful for the state is also fruitful for perception” and that he, Augustus, will “rely on philosophy to find the new perception.” Vergil disagrees: “Philosophy is no longer capable of finding it” (*DoV*, 344), and “time is unrelenting, Augustus, thinking has reached its limits” (*DoV*, 345); “philosophy has come to have no base for its perception” (*DoV*, 346). If a historical “oneness” (of classical humanism and the circumstances of the Roman Republic, or later of Christianity and the Enlightenment) is no longer adequate, has exploded, what is there for art to express but the lack of oneness, the explosion itself? Regarding Vergil, Warren’s (1995–1996, 174) wonderful poem on Turnus tells us that the *Aeneid*’s ending lines “tear a hole in the poem, / a hole in the mind.” In Broch’s novel, my experience is that we live for many pages inside that hole, that artistic space where thought exceeds language.⁶¹

The novelist and English literature scholar Margaret Anne Doody (2001, 192) expresses the upside-downness of the end of the Roman Republic as

59. Otis (1964, 3) addresses Vergil’s modernity, as does Lowrie 2004. Vergil’s epic calls “attention to its own artifice,” which is “surprisingly modern” (Demanski 2021, 30, citing Bartsch-Zimmer).

60. Quint (2018) names chiasmus as the “master trope” of the *Aeneid* (xiv) which Vergil turns into “a figure of thought” (1). The “society” that Johnson picks up from Plato is a similar entity.

61. See Untermeyer (1965, 485): the novel’s “fullness of expression lies not alone in the words themselves but quite as much in the spaces between.”

it relates to the experience of reading the epic, “Aeneas and his companions are living in the crack, on the cusp between times and worlds.” Of *The Death of Virgil*, one German literature scholar says that Broch’s “Virgil declares this location between two shores of time to be the genuine site of the poet” (Heizmann 2003, 194). The two works seem to share that hole in the mind, a cusp, a hole in time. In the novel Augustus says to Vergil, “You sound as though we were standing at the end of something”; Vergil replies that “Perhaps it would be better to say not yet!” (*DoV*, 335). Broch’s Augustus conveys a sense of major but unknown transition: “Caesar, much dismayed, was weighing these words—and between them yawns an empty space” (*DoV*, 335).⁶² Here occur several statements of the famous line from the novel, “no longer and not yet” [*nicht mehr und noch nicht*, *TdV*, 315], which Augustus expands: “the empty spaces between epochs ... the nothingness for which everything comes too late and too early ... which time tries to bridge over cautiously and on a hairline” (*DoV*, 336). Elsewhere in the novel time is described as “balanced on a knife’s edge” (*DoV*, 51).

These readers across disciplines and Broch himself articulate virtually identical aesthetic experiences and expressions in these two works that cross millennia—hole, crack, cusp, hairline, knife-edge. The nature of this “empty space between” has both ancient and modern theorists. What Broch describes as “the language of the void, to bridge which nothing has ever existed, nameless the space in which it functioned” (*DoV*, 130) is the type of space or time in which or from which both Vergil and Broch can operate simultaneously inside and outside their works. It is for this reason, among others, that some readers characterize Vergil’s works as modern, indeed as postmodern.⁶³

Broch’s phrases above would not be out of place regarding Plato’s concept of *chōra*. The following statements display an undeniably postmodern tone; they do not refer to the *Aeneid* or *The Death of Virgil*. The first statement is about a concept or place where “the voices remain multiple, at best echoing one another, generating a play of echoes through which the dialogue ... makes something manifest, yet without producing simple univocity. In their multiplicity the voices are interactive, peculiarly performative” (Sallis 1999, 1). Another author describes a concept that “provokes and resists any binary ... determination”; about which the author asks, “didn’t it name a gaping

62. On the *Aeneid* and Vergil as situated “between two worlds,” see, e.g., Hardie 2014, 145.

63. Kirchwey, cited in Miller’s (2010b, 100) review of Farrell and Putnam; also Lützeler 2003b, 6–7. Farrell (2019, 217) urges a rethinking of the ancient and modern dichotomy.

opening, an abyss or a chasm?... The cleavage between the sensible and the intelligible” (Derrida and Eisenman 1997, 20). Here is another example, about a concept that “effectuates discontinuities by temporarily articulating them and then starting over, again and again” (Kristeva 1984, 26). John Sallis, Jacques Derrida, and Julia Kristeva are referring, not to modern or postmodern literature or philosophy, but to Plato’s dialogue *Timaeus*.⁶⁴ There Plato modifies the world he himself had posited of absolute and unmixable opposites, ideal and real, and creates a “third kind” in addition to the previous two:

and a third Kind is ever-existing Place ... itself being apprehensible by a kind of bastard reasoning by the aid of non-sensation, barely an object of belief; for ... all that exists should exist *in* some spot and occupying some *place*. (*Tim.* 52a–b, emphasis original; Bury 1989, 122–23)

It turns out that Plato himself sounds postmodern. Plato’s word for place here is *chōra*.

The *Timaeus* is a notoriously difficult text, and its relatively brief discussion of *chōra* is especially knotty. Both the dialogue and the concept have also been cited as being at the core of Western philosophy and modern thinking (Miller 2010a, 321). My response to Broch’s response to Vergil finds expression in this strange and rich concept of *chōra*. In Broch’s description, Aeneas’s final action partakes of a *chōra*-like brief, simultaneous operation of opposite qualities:

gentleness and cruelty [were] comprehended in the equilibrium of beauty’s language [*Milde und Grausamkeit vereinigt im Gleichgewicht der Schönheitssprache*], comprehended in the symbol of the balance which they maintained between the ego and the universe, in the intoxicating magic of a unity which endured with the song, but no longer [*die so lange währt wie der Gesang, doch nicht länger*]. (*DoV*, 136; *TdV*, 130)

These philosophers, both Plato and the moderns, grappling in various ways with the concept of *chōra*,⁶⁵ do so in terms that sometimes are virtually

64. Kristeva (1984, 25) uses Plato’s term from the *Timaeus*. Two classicists, Antony Augoustakis (2010) and Hunter H. Gardner (2013), explore the operation of the feminine in certain Latin texts through the lens of Kristeva’s *chōra*.

65. These are complex issues. Plato’s metaphors for *chōra* include feminine creativity (nurse, 49a; or mother, 51a) and neutral images such as the odorless

identical to those used by readers of Vergil's texts and by Broch within his text.

Miriam Leonard's (2010) edited volume *Derrida and Antiquity* places Derrida's work in the context of his use of ancient thought, particularly that of Plato: "Derrida's confrontation with the Greeks explodes the traditions of both antiquity and modernity" (2010, 4). The metaphor of explosion conjures that effect noted here in the *Aeneid's* ending and much of *The Death of Virgil*. In his essay "We Other Greeks," translated in that volume, Derrida (2010, 34) describes his work on *chōra*: "what I attempt to show in 'Khōra' is a structure utterly resistant to historical narrative, not eternal or ahistorical like an intelligible idea, but radically foreign to all oppositions and to all dialectics that make history or narrative possible." Written before Derrida's project, the epic's conclusion and the novel's extended style disqualify and disable attempts at narrative fixity.

For both Derrida and Kristeva, considerations in literature and philosophy coalesce on the matter of ethics. History, literary theory, and philosophy converge and connect Vergil's and Broch's literary techniques with their ethical concerns about art and truth: "Here we arrive at the heart of the question concerning the *ethical function* of the text, or the ethical function of art in general" (Kristeva 1984, 232, emphasis original); "one cannot ask that 'art'—the text—emit a message which would be considered 'positive': the univocal enunciation of such a message would itself represent a suppression of the ethical function as we understand it" (233). Paul Allen Miller (2010, 331) says about Derrida's thought, "Thus the possibility of meaning, action, decision, and history depends on that which eludes all possible totalization, i.e. the other in its radical difference from the same. This is the fundamental ethical commitment of Derridean philosophy," a "moment of openness to the absolute other" (332). This openness, which corresponds with Friedländer's prescription for writing about the Holocaust, is where, in *chōra*-like moments, the two artists locate their truth.

Vergil's and Broch's works embody their contradictory efforts in the dilemma of telling the truth in the world in time. Broch sought the "ethical support that the world today needs," an aesthetic "under the primacy of ethics" (Eiden 2006, 447; Heizmann 2003, 197). Vergil's denial of totalization in the *Aeneid*, and Broch's denial of totalization until the final mystical process of death, are these artists' utmost ethical achievement through their

foundation of perfumes (50e) or moldable material such as gold (50b) or what it is not (51a). Derrida's *chōra* seems to rely more on the neutrality of *chōra* and Kristeva's on the generativity. See Derrida 1995, 113 on *chōra* as "alogical and achronic." See Lützeler 2003, 9 on Broch and Derrida.

skill at nonsaying.⁶⁶ Broch's Augustus warns his Vergil about the gap, the abyss: "oh, the abyss of unformed time must not become visible, must not be allowed to gape open" (*DoV*, 336). Neither Vergil nor Broch obeys this Augustus. Broch's novel keeps the gap open for hundreds of pages, closing it only in death. Aeneas's final sword thrust at the same stroke slams shut the epic's story but keeps the abyss, the gap perennially open. Reading Broch as his Vergil grapples with Broch's ethical problems and standards convinces me that neither his nor our Vergil has failed his own ethical standard.

* * * * *

The *Aeneid's* audiences linger across millennia in the gap that Vergil created so very briefly. In Broch's novel, the gap expands, inside out, through several hundred pages, having in effect hit a long pause on the epic's last lines thus allowing us to replay their effect over and over, to practice the strange discipline of perception within that kind of cusp, knife-edge, as Vergil and Broch themselves have done. Broch describes this instant:

only the truly comprehended, even though it be only for a moment in the ocean of millenniums, only the firmly retained becomes timeless, becomes permanent, becomes a guiding song, becomes guidance. (*DoV*, 20; *TdV*, 20)

Broch's novel gives us hundreds of pages of time within which we might acclimate to this ineffable, *chōra*-like essence of the *Aeneid's* last lines.⁶⁷ This is what I learned to experience in Vergil's poem from Broch's novel.

The Death of Virgil is a challenge. Classicists may miss the *Aeneid's* massive but decipherable and thus reassuring sentences and structures. *The Death of Vergil* on the other hand leaves us to find meaning, in history and art, without them. The structures themselves can be, have been used, in partial readings, to enshrine empires and their totalizing effect. Reading the very modern novel helps capture the immediacy, urgency, and radicalism of the very old poem: "the urgency of the now can best be addressed by the

66. I find that both artists are successful, but their successes differ. Broch explicitly seeks some hopeful vision of totalization, in the novel and in later theory. Vergil may have sought to create a total poem, and the *Aeneid* has notes of hopefulness, but its closing refuses totality. Vergil's search itself may be what later ages perceived as Vergil's intuition of a new world view.

67. See Quint 2018, xiii: "The conflicting senses" ask "the reader to *think twice*" (emphasis original). Putnam (2001, 87) says that Vergil intended us "to ponder" the *Aeneid's* ending. Of *chōra*, Derrida (1995, 96) says it "puts in question" a series of "presuppositions."

painstaking analysis of the past ... grounded in a radical rereading of the foundational texts" (Leonard 2010, 2, on Derrida), as Vergil's poem does those of its forebears and Broch's text does of Vergil's. My researches here have aimed to understand how Broch's *The Death of Virgil* could strengthen for this reader the power of Vergil's *Aeneid*. This article carries my gratitude to Hermann Broch for the journey.

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Shirley Werner

Because last year's *Vergilius* 67 (2021) was conceived as a thematic issue, an annual bibliography was not included; therefore, this year's bibliography includes publications that have appeared since the publication of *Vergilius* 66 (2020). This 2020–2022 compilation is indebted to the resources of the William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, and to those of *l'Année philologique*.

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Bottone discusses the implications of *mors immatura* in the *Aeneid*. Cairo’s book contains three main sections: on *fatum* in the *Aeneid*; on prophecies in relation to the narrator; and on prophecies in relation to Aeneas. The three volumes of Cussen’s work include (1) *El milenio según Virgilio : ensayo*, (2) *La Eneida* [Latin ed.], and (3), *Notas para la reconstrucción de la “Eneida”*. Farrell argues that the *Aeneid* aims to provoke uncertainty about what kind of story the poem is telling and what kind of hero Aeneas will

be (Odysseus, the homecoming hero; or the intransigent Achilles). This conflict reflects in different ways on the ethical legitimacy of Augustus as emperor. Paschalis argues that in the *Aeneid*, the most persuasive speeches fail to change opinions or affect outcomes. Suerbaum's study is a revised edition of his 1999 publication with a new bibliography.

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Byrne disputes the widespread assumption that Horace and Vergil were friends, arguing that the idea of their friendship originates in the frequent pairing of Horace and Vergil together as recipients of Maecenas's patronage in the works of later poets. According to Cairns, the Vergilius of Horace, *Odes* 4.12 is not the poet Vergil but a young relative of Vergil whose political career Horace wished to promote. Myers (111) "explores how Vergil's representation of the afterlives of lovers in the *lugentes campi* of *Aeneid* 6 engages with depictions of the underworld in contemporary Latin love elegy, while also affecting subsequent elegiac treatments of the afterlife." Rossiter focuses especially on the Polydorus episodes in Vergil (*Aen.* 3.14–68) and Ovid (*Met.* 8.739–765). Strauss Clay finds that Horace's use of intertextuality in *Odes* 2.6 lays particular emphasis on his relationship with Vergil.

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Bernstein finds a dedicatory acronym to Maecenas, in reverse, at *Ecl.* 6.69 (*calamos, en accipe, Musae*). Conte 2018 shows that, unlike Lucretius, who builds syntactic structures through subordinate clauses, Vergil imitates Homer in his tendency towards parataxis with the use of *et*, *-que*, and *sed*. Dexter and Chaudhuri note that in the phrase *Dardanio Anchisae* at *Aen.* 1.617 and 9.647 the co-occurrence of hiatus and fifth-foot spondee has literary significance extending beyond the hyper-Homericism of the imitation. Gagliardi 2016 discusses the stylistic feature known as parenthetical apposition, a technique first observable in Vergil’s *Eclogues*

and perhaps originating with Gallus. Meulder explores the double significance of the name Laocoon: first, “one who preserves the people (in arms)” (from λαός and κόων “one who warns, protects, preserves with religious prescience”); second, “one who warns the people (in arms)” against “the cavity that houses the armed Greek men” (the latter meaning based on -κόων, related to Greek κόος (“cavity”) and Latin *cauus* (“hollow”). Trevizam analyzes passages throughout Vergil’s works in which a mixture of genres is apparent. Villalba Saló analyzes *caeruleus* and related words in Latin poetry of the first century BC, with particular attention to the *Aeneid*. Zientek demonstrates, through a case study of passages containing the verb *mugire* in *Aen.* 2, 3, and 6, the way Vergil uses sound words to augment depictions of aesthetically sublime objects or events; the single instance of this practice in Lucan 5.82–87 conveys the same idea.

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Audano notes that Suetonius, *Tit.* 5.3 alludes to Aeneas’s encounter with Anchises at *Aen.* 6.687–689. Cardigni writes on Fulgentius’s interpretation of the *Aeneid* as an allegorical journey through the stages of human life. Florio examines some of the more extreme revisions and reuses of Vergil’s works in later ages, including the works of Petronius, Ausonius, Proba, and Prudentius. Gilski discusses Mariology in the Homeric and Vergilian *centones*, including the *Cento Probae*. Hosle argues that Ambrose’s allusion at *Epist.* 73.18 to *Georg.* 1.149 shows his awareness of the double significance of Vergil’s *Dodona* both as a metonymy for Jupiter and for its pseudoetymological association with the verb δίδοναι. Nazzaro observes that, unlike other Christian authors, who invoke Vergil in terms that are either laudatory or polemical, Ambrose of Milan (c. 339–c. 397) shows a balanced attitude toward the *Georgics*. Perilli notes that Petronius 68.1–2 evokes *Aen.* 7.117–129. Salanitro analyzes a fifth-century Vergilian *cento* which seems to be an ekphrasis of a wall painting. Schirner discusses the Vergilian allusions at Valerius Flaccus 2.77–432. Sisul 2021b focuses on *De verbi incarnatione*.

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Diggle observes that *Aen.* 2.311–312 *iam proximus ardet | Vcalegon* alludes to Callimachus, *Hymn* 4.180 γείτονος αἰθομένοιο, which itself alludes to Homer, *Il.* 21.253 ἄστεος αἰθομένοιο. Labate discusses the myths pertaining to Hercules and Theseus in Ovid and Vergil, which are both presented in the form of lists of their exploits; these are inspired by formal structures found in aretological hymn and tragedy. Perotti compares some passages in the *Aeneid* with the corresponding Homeric passages. Privitera examines the intertextual relationship between *Aen.* 3.330–332, *Aen.* 4.471–473, and Cicero, *Rosc.* 66–67 (or rather his source, likely Pacuvius). Richer’s study of Theocritus 4.1–14, on the absence of song, is equally relevant to a reinterpretation of Vergil’s *Eclogues*. Sillett argues that Vergil’s description of the orator Drances in *Aen.* 6 points to Cicero and to a tradition of anti-Ciceronian invective even though Cicero is not named.

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Arena rejects the prevailing view that numerous statues of Marsyas with a raised arm found in Rome and the provinces function as a symbol of cities' freedom: this view is based on Servius's misunderstanding of the role of the god Liber in the *Aeneid*. Bovet notes that, according to Servius, *Aen.* 1.289, the verbs *honorare* and *onerare* were frequently confused; inscriptions confirm this confusion. Bureau observes that, in his commentary on Terence, the originality of Donatus's approach to Vergil lies in his attention to the power of Vergil's dramatic discourse and in Vergil's creation of dramatic situations. Esposito analyzes some shared motifs in the biographical traditions of Vergil, Ovid, and Lucan. Estienne compares two different editions of Servius, *Aen.* 7.188, to establish his list of the *pignora imperii Romani*. Gioseffi observes that the *argumenta* to Vergil's work preserved by Servius and Donatus are not real summaries but attempts to address specific rhetorical or textual objectives. Longobardi observes that knowledge of Theocritus's work among late Latin writers is principally due to Servius's commentaries. O'Sullivan 2019 examines the scholia in the ninth-century MS Montpellier H 253 that do not derive from Servius's commentary: these closely resemble scholia in *Servius auctus*, the Scholia Bernensia (Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 167 and 172, and scholia found in Berlin, SB, MS lat. 2o 421; other scholia can be compared to the commentary on Statius's *Thebaid* attributed to Lactantius Placidus and to the Vatican Mythographers. O'Sullivan 2020 demonstrates ways in which the scholia to Vergil reflect Carolingian imperial ideology, classicism, and historiographical culture. Pirovano 2022 discusses the rhetorical interpretations of *Aen.* 8.9–17 and 11.225–295 by Sulpicius Victor, Servius, Servius Auctus, and Emporius. Roesch remarks that at *Aen.* 9.4 Servius connects the substantive *consilium* to the verb *sedere*. Setaioli's analysis of Servius's only reference to Plotinus demonstrates that the *daimon* Servius describes more closely resembles ideas prevalent in popular superstition than it does Plotinus's original thought. Stok 2019 observes that the eighth-century Spangenberg fragment (Marburg, MS Hessische Staatsarchiv, fr. 319, Pfarrarchiv Spangenberg [Depositum], Hr Nr. 1), usually considered the oldest manuscript of Servius Danielis, contains notes not present in the Servius Danielis. It is possible that the source of the fragment was the lost Vergilian commentary of Aelius Donatus. Stok 2021 analyzes Ovid's treatment of the story of Achaemenides (*Met.* 14.167–222), which rectifies particulars of the Homeric elements of

the Polyphemus episode in Homer that were modified by Vergil at *Aen.* 3.568–691. It seems probable that Ovid knew the works of the *obtrectatores*, in which Vergil was criticized.

MANUSCRIPTS; TEXTUAL TRADITION

- Bureau, Bruno. 2019. “Les enjeux nouveaux qu’ouvrent les Humanités numériques en lien avec les pratiques éditoriales traditionnelles et leur questionnement.” *BAGB* 1: 132–49.
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- Gervais, Kyle. 2019–20. “Positioning ‘Aeneas’: A Proposed Emendation to *Aeneid* 7.5.” *CJ* 115: 146–73.
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Bureau discusses the use of the Text Encoding Initiative, self-described as “an SGML application designed for the markup of classical literature,” in the University of Pennsylvania’s Vergil Project. Conte finds that the arguments in favor of the variants *dederis* and *dederit* at *Aen.* 4.436 have roughly equal weight. Crotto proposes the emendation *in Arimis* at *Aen.* 9.716 instead of the controversial toponym *Inarime*.

THE MIDDLE AGES

- Beringer, Alison L. 2021. “A Fate Worse than Death? Virgil’s “*steinîn wîp*” in Jans der Enikel’s *Weltchronik*.” In *Gender Bonds, Gender Binds: Women, Men, and Family in Middle High German Literature*, edited by Sara S. Poor, Alison L. Beringer, and Olga V. Trokhimenko, 177–97. Sense, Matter, and Medium 3. Berlin.
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- Montroso, Alan. 2020. “‘Skin Black and Wrinkled’: The Toxic Ecology of the Sibyl’s Cave.” *Postmedieval* 11: 91–101.

Beringer focuses on a fantastic story by the Austrian chronicler Jans Enikel (c. 1230–1302) in which Vergil, rejected in love by a woman,

transforms her into a living statue. Feddern demonstrates that the observations made by Petrarch (1304–1374) and Boccaccio (1313–1375) concerning Vergil’s invention of the encounter between Aeneas and Dido display their humanistic philological erudition and are linked to their desire to defend poetry against its adversaries. Montroso argues that the Sibyl’s entanglement with her toxic environment demonstrates feminine resistance to masculine attempts at dominance over nature; the *Roman d’Énéas* is also discussed in this context.

RENAISSANCE AND TUDOR WRITERS

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- Bogumił, Izabela. 2015. “*Aeneis* Jana Lucienbergiusa: Wizja typograficzna i teatralna.” *Symbolae Philologorum Posnaniensium Graecae et Latinae* 25: 91–107.
- Casanova-Robin, Hélène. 2021. “La poésie de la nature, de Virgile à Giovanni Pontano: L’exemple des pronostics solaires.” In Oberhelman, Abbamonte, and Baker, 59–78.
- Curbelo Tavío, María Elena, and María Dolores García de Paso Carrasco. 2020. “Extractos atribuidos a Virgilio y el canto XIII de *La Eneida* en los florilegios latinos del siglo XVI.” *GLB* 25: 47–60.
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- Fumagalli, Edoardo. 2021. “Virgilio castigato: Stazio, Dante e le correzioni all’*Eneide*.” In Oberhelman, Abbamonte, and Baker, 79–96.
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- Jiménez del Castillo, Juan Carlos. 2020. “Virgilio, Camões, Corte-Real y Acosta: Una escena de hospedaje naval y relato interno en los *Cantos de la batalla ausonia* de Pedro de Acosta Perestrello.” *Críticón* 138: 35–56.
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- Reid, Lindsay Ann. 2020. "What's in a Blush? Constellating *Aeneid* 12.64–9 and *Amores* 2.5.33–40 in Spenser's *Legend of Chastity*." In Burrow, Harrison, et al., 287–301.
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- Wulfram, Hartmut. 2020. "The Aesthetics of the False: Paradoxical Encomium and Virgilian Allegoresis in Poggio Bracciolini's *De avaritia*." In *Serio ludere: Sagesse et dérision à l'âge de l'Humanisme*, edited by Hélène Casanova-Robin, Francesco Furlan, and Hartmut Wulfram, 67–90. Rencontres 481. Paris.

Bogumił discusses Johannes Lucienberger's dramatization of the *Aeneid* in Frankfurt am Main in 1576 (in Polish, with English summary). Casanova-Robin writes about the solar imagery, influenced by Vergil, in the hexameter poem *Urania* by Giovanni Pontano (1429–1503). Curbelo Tavío and García de Paso Carrasco discuss the popularity of spurious works attributed to Vergil, including items collected in the *Carmina XII sapientum*, in sixteenth-century florilegia. Doyle demonstrates that the

Eclogues by Alexander Barclay (1475–1552) are influenced by early modern interpretations of the meaning of food in Vergil. Fuente Marina discusses the Spanish translation and adaptation of the *Eclogues* by Juan del Encina (1468–1530). Gaisser discusses Vergilian resonances in the work of Giovanni Pontano (1426–1503). Jiménez del Castillo considers the influence of Vergil on a naval scene in an epic poem (1571) written in Castilian by the Portuguese poet Pedro de Acosta Perestrello. Luke discusses the editorial change of “bushing” to “blushing” made by eighteenth-century critics in John Milton’s (1608–1674) *Paradise Lost* in order to evoke Lavinia’s blush in Vergil. Magnien writes about the Vergilian scholarship of Julius Caesar Scaliger (Giulio Cesare della Scala, 1484–1558). Owens discusses the nature of ambiguity in Renaissance supplements to the *Aeneid*, including those by Pietro Candido Decembrio (1399–1477), Maffeo Vegio (1407–1458), and Jan van Foreest (1586–1651). Pantani traces Vergilian influences on the poetry of Giuso de’ Conti (c. 1390–1449) and Basinio da Parma (Basinio Basini, 1425–1457) in their representation of love, particularly in lovers’ use of magic and the persistence of love after death. Reid discusses Vergilian and Ovidian resonances in the *Legend of Chastity* by Edmund Spenser (1552–1599). Silva studies Vergilian influences in the medical writings of Rodrigo de Castro (c. 1550–1627). Škraban considers the pastoral poetry of Giovanni Pontano (1426–1503) (in Slovenian, with English summary). Usher considers Homeric and Vergilian influences on the poet Pierre de Ronsard (1524–1585).

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Serroy, Jean. 2021. *Paul Scarron, Le Virgile travesti*. Classiques Jaunes 580. Paris.

Serroy offers an edition of the burlesque *Virgile travesti* by Paul Scarron (1610–1660).

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Pellicer, Juan Christian. 2019. “Georgics as Genre: The Scholarly Reception of Vergil in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain.” In Bär and Hauser, 79–93.

NINETEENTH CENTURY

Kilgour, Maggie. 2020. “In the Sibyl’s Cave: Vergilian Prophecy and Mary Shelley’s *Last Man*.” In Gladhill and Myers, 62–76.

Masselli, Grazia Maria. 2018. “Leopardi vs Virgilio: Il ‘caso’ Enea.” *InvLuc* 40: 83–97.

Kilgour contextualizes Mary Shelley’s novel *The Last Man* (1826), written four years after the drowning of her husband Percy Bysshe Shelley off the coast of Italy. Masselli writes about the interpretation by Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837) of the cave in which Aeneas and Dido have their intimate encounter as a symbolic space of the unspoken.

TWENTIETH CENTURY

Ball, Robert J. 2020. “The Correspondence of Glibert Highet and Georg Luck about Highet’s Book *The Speeches in Vergil’s Aeneid*.” *Vergilius* 66: 135–62.

Mecella, Laura. 2021. “Piero Treves lettore di Virgilio e Orazio: Riflessioni intorno ai bimillenari del 1930 e del 1935.” *Hormos* 13: 139–72.

Spataro, Roberto. 2018. *L’Egloga IV di Virgilio e l’interpretazione di Salvatore De Lorenzo: Tra veterum sapientia e instituta Christiana*. Flumina ex Fontibus 17. Roma.

Mecella examines the early writings of the Italian historian and journalist Piero Treves (1911–1992) on the poetry of Vergil and Horace, most of which appeared as reviews of publications that appeared in the bimillenary years 1930 and 1935. Spataro writes about the thought of Salvatore De Lorenzo (1874–1921).

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Epicoco, Luigi Maria. 2022. *La scelta di Enea: Per una fenomenologia del presente*. Milano.

Pache, Corinne Ondine. 2021. “Translating Friendship: *My Brilliant Friend* and the *Aeneid*.” In Marshall, 285–95.

Rea, Jennifer A. 2019. “The Golden Age and Imperial Dominance in the *Aeneid* and *Serenity* (2005).” In *Screening the Golden Ages of the Classical Tradition*, edited by Meredith E. Safran, 175–90. Edinburgh.

Epicoco believes that the *Aeneid* may be used as a lens through which to reflect on a present that “lacks hope and needs to believe in a spring waiting under the snow of the winter we are experiencing.” Pache discusses the role played by the story of Dido in the friendship between the protagonists in the novel *My Brilliant Friend* (*L’amica geniale*, 2011; English translation, 2012) by the pseudonymous author Elena Ferrante

(1943–). Rea discusses the 2005 science-fiction space-western film *Serenity* written and directed by Joss Whedon and its relationship to the *Aeneid*.

VERGIL AND THE ARTS

Gamberale, Leopoldo. 2013. “L’Italia di Enea fra passato e futuro.” *Rationes Rerum* 2: 9–67.

Humfrey, Peter. 2020. “More on Dosso’s *Aeneas* Frieze.” *Artibus et Historiae* 81: 137–56.

Kaloudis, Naomi. 2019. “Before Queen: Vergil and the Musical Tradition of Sampling Popular Song.” *CJ* 114: 488–506.

Quaranta, Paolo. 2018. “Pompei, casa di Sirico: Proposte di lettura degli affreschi mitologici del triclinio 8 e dell’ ambiente 34; Due episodi dell’*Eneide* come espressione di evasione e amore.” *Cadmo* 27: 133–69.

Rotiroti, Francesco. 2020. “Enea, Turno e il fascismo: Riflessioni in margine al gruppo scultoreo di Giuseppe Menozzi.” In *Narrazioni del diritto, musica ed arti tra modernità e postmodernità: A partire dall’VIII Convegno Nazionale della Italian Society for Law and Literature (ISLL); Catanzaro, 28 e 29 giugno 2018*, edited by Paola Chiarella, 443–54. Collana del Dipartimento di Giurisprudenza, Economia e Sociologia 59. Napoli.

Smiles, Sam. 2018. “Ruins and Reputations: The Tomb of the Poet in Visual Art.” In Goldschmidt and Graziosi, 299–316.

Gamberale notes that Vergil’s representation of Italy’s future dominion under the descendants of Aeneas stems from an innovative reading of *Il.* 20.302–308, an aspect that is captured in the poetry of Giorgio Caproni (1896–1981) and the sculpture of Francesco Baratta (d. c. 1730), Ugo Attardi (1923–2006), and Sandro Chia (1946–). Humfrey writes on the “Aeneas” frieze painted by Dosso Dossi (Giovanni di Nicolò Luteri, 1489–1542). Quaranta interprets the mythological frescoes in Triclinium 8 and Room 34 of the House of Sirico in Pompeii, which illustrate at least two episodes from the *Aeneid*: the wounded Aeneas’s rescue by Venus and his wedding with Dido. Rotiroti reflects on the monument honoring Vergil that was dedicated in Mantua in 1927. The sculptures by Giuseppe Menozzi (1895–1966) embody a fascist interpretation of Vergil’s work. Smiles’s focus is on the painting “Virgil’s Tomb by Moonlight, with Silius Italicus Declaiming” (1779) by Joseph Wright (1734–97) and on the sketches made near Vergil’s tomb by J(oseph) M(allord) W(illiam) Turner (1775–1851).

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REVIEWS

Nicholas Horsfall. *Fifty Years at the Sibyl's Heels: Selected Papers on Virgil and Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN 9780198863861. Pp. 544. \$120.

This is a collection of papers spanning half a century of work, a fitting crown to a life spent in the service of explicating and celebrating the rich tapestry of Virgil's poetic corpus. For the splendor of its content and the monumental character of its author's achievement, this is among the key Vergilian titles of 2020.

Horsfall died on New Year's Day, 2019. The present volume was not a planned work of the author, but rather a project designed by way of memorial and reminiscence. Ailsa Croft's preface describes something of the process of selecting the pieces from the Horsfall bibliography that were included, a process facilitated by the solicitation by Tony Woodman of advice from scholars and friends on what to include.

Nicholas Horsfall stands forth as the lion of Vergilian studies at the close of the twentieth and the dawn of the twenty-first centuries. His commentaries on books 2, 3, 6, 7, and 11 of the *Aeneid* are monuments to his learning, method, and work ethic. Book 1 was in progress at the time of his passing. He was not sympathetic to the scholarship on book 8, and he once indicated to me that book 5 would require him to learn everything there was to know about pugilistics. Still, had the Fates allowed it, there is little doubt that within another decade or so there might well have been something approaching a complete Horsfallian *Aeneid*, a work of erudition and vast scope with an idiosyncratic flair reminiscent of James Henry, save only that Horsfall would likely not have reduced the scale of his work as he neared the goal. He could deservedly be called the dean of a true *belle époque* for Vergiliana, an age over which he presided as judge, jury, and occasional executioner.

To acquire this new Oxford book is to receive a scholarly treasure to be cherished with every consultation. The book offers a more than generous sampling of the many scholarly articles produced by Horsfall, from his academic debut in a Vergilian commentary world dominated by Austin and Williams, to his death in a realm that he had helped to redefine and

reimagine. Most of the papers are devoted to Vergil studies. A few were originally authored in Italian and appear here for the first time in English translation (a fact that Horsfall might well have found to be corroborating evidence of his oft-expressed assertions about the deplorable state of anglophone knowledge of continental languages). None of his oftentimes notorious (and sometimes anagrammatically signed) reviews are reprinted; these diminished in number, Horsfall once wrote, as the need for procuring northern Scottish firewood became more pressing.

In all there are forty-two papers here. Horsfall was particularly expert in the problems posed by the Aeneas legend and the lore surrounding the Trojan voyage to Hesperia. All of the key works in this area are present, alongside several papers on the Vergilian underworld. The essay on “The Geography of the *Georgics*” is a gem of analysis of a challenging topic that has not received as much scholarly attention as it deserves since Petrus van Wees’s 1970 Utrecht thesis *Poetische geografie in Vergilius’ Aeneis*. The paper “*Non viribus aequis*: Some Problems in Vergil’s Battle-Scenes” provides a valuable treatment inter alia of those rare occasions when Vergil seems to “slip” in his treatment of minor characters. Especially near the end of his career, Horsfall researched the influence of Jewish thought on *Aeneid* 6 in particular; that work appears here as well.

Anyone who has even a passing acquaintance with his work knows that Horsfall could be critical in his judgments on scholars both past and present. While never employing quite the unforgettably creative barbs of Housman in wounding and sometimes slaying allegedly lesser lights in the Vergilian firmament, Horsfall was notorious for his blunt assessments of what he considered to be roadblocks on the path to a better understanding of his beloved poet. This very bluntness meant that words of compliment from Horsfall meant something: a brief positive verdict from Horsfall was laden with significance. The present reviewer was warned once that it would really be best to submit a draft of an article on Laurentum to Horsfall first, lest a “bulldozer” later be driven through the work. Obedience to Horsfall on that occasion resulted in nothing but learning, enjoyment, and the renewed impetus always to try to improve and to hone one’s work.

One of the most important papers in the present collection is Horsfall’s seminal 1988 *Athenaeum* article on Camilla (on “the limits of invention”), one of the originally Italian works now rendered into English (by Croft, the de facto editor of the collection). Indeed “the limits of invention” might well be a subtitle for most of Horsfall’s work on Vergil. More than anything, Horsfall taught us how to appreciate Vergilian sources (especially the neglected military prose that was so influential on the poet’s battle narratives), and how to draw reasonable conclusions from the poet’s appropriations as to intent

and purpose. Horsfall had no tolerance for flights of interpretive fancy, but he was no mere cataloguer of parallels. You might finish a Horsfall paper or commentary segment and wonder what, after all, the poet's point was ... but Horsfall had provided you with sufficient evidence to draw reasonable enough conclusions, at least until someone discovered even more relevant parallels with which to fashion a creditable analysis of Vergil's method and goal.

Second in order after this devotion to literary sources, Horsfall's work reminds us of the constant need to be aware of the pervasive Vergilian concern with geography, landscape, topography, and engagement with nature. Here Horsfall's impressive mastery of the Italian scholarly tradition in particular was invaluable to him, as was his personal familiarity with the Italian locales enshrined in Vergilian hexameter. Third, Horsfall compels his readers to be immersed in consideration of just how innovative (not to say radical) Vergil could be in the use of noun cases. To be immersed in Horsfall is to receive an education in the ablative and especially the genitive. Would-be translators of Vergil could learn much from Horsfall's education on how Vergil translated Greek into verse that is never pedestrian and usually inspired.

Sources, place and space, nuances of language, these are the main concerns of Horsfall, though by no means the only. He was less concerned with reception, and yet that proves to be a strength: for all their length, his commentaries are economical, sometimes maddeningly so for anyone who has tried to decipher a cryptic abbreviation. His papers are no less sparing in their use of words and references. Horsfall's mastery of bibliography was legendary, but his citations are never merely listed to prove that he was aware of some paper or obscure book. He was scrupulous in thanking in his acknowledgments the many of us who would happily send him a paper or book. This fact alone renders this Oxford collection a poignant tribute: Horsfall would appreciate the convenience (especially for scholars without easy access to university libraries and online databases) afforded by this book. Let it never be forgotten that much of Horsfall's most intensive work was done in conditions that would make most classicists despair of being able to produce anything much of note.

Horsfall had exemplary manners, and his work on the *Aeneid* reflects his profound sense of when this or that character was depicted as reflecting variously Homeric, Hellenistic, Augustan, and myriad other codes of poetic honor. Horsfall knew intimately well how Vergil's figures were supposed to act on the various stages of his epic, and in consequence his papers are able to provide compelling, authoritative consideration of when Vergil's Aeneas, Turnus, Dido, or Camilla seems to diverge from Homeric, cyclic, and other

epic and tragic antecedents and parallels. Such parallels are especially evident not only in the aforementioned “Camilla” paper, but also in “Dido in the Light of History” and “*Turnus ad portas*.” This Oxford anthology of Horsfall is more than a mere catalogue of a life’s work, even outstanding and groundbreaking work. It is a primer in intertextuality, *Quellenforschung*, and above all how to express one’s affection for a master poet via sensitive, close readings of his work.

This is a large volume, containing the bulk of the author’s major articles. The papers in this collection oftentimes provide valuable context for the author’s commentaries. This is especially true for a fuller appreciation of Horsfall’s work on books 7 (2000) and 3 (2006), which may well represent the finest examples of an extraordinary, praiseworthy corpus of work (the Horsfall book 3 is an especially impressive achievement given the serious difficulties of that underappreciated, difficult book, and the articles in this volume on the Aeneas legend are foundational to the commentary).

Horsfall expected users of his publications not to be shy about laboring in the bibliographical vineyards, and that labor included being aware that oftentimes Horsfall had already produced copious work on a seemingly intractable problem. Coupled with his last published monograph—*The Epic Distilled*—the present collection constitutes a priceless de facto appendix to the five commentaries. Convenience alone dictates the worth of this volume. Along the way of working through the papers chronologically, one obtains an appreciation for how Horsfall’s thought developed over the decades, both in response to his own constant engagement with Vergil’s sources, and not least in reaction to the (to use his own words) “new tricks” of scholarly methodology that the “old dog” was, after all, more than willing to try to learn. Horsfall was ahead of the curve in Vergilian studies in the early years of his career, and by the closing years of his work he was not so much ahead of the curve as he was one of the last survivors of an age where one was expected, after all, to have read everything, or at least to know what one could safely avoid reading without detriment to one’s work. To read Horsfall’s papers in light of more recent trends in the field of classics that would seem to deemphasize the paramount place of language study and philological rigor is to be witness to something of the fading of a different world, one in which a scholar was expected to know the history of a problem with thorough rigor and unapologetic expectations of precision.

Those responsible for the editorial work on this collection are to be commended for producing a beautiful book that is as much remembrance as requiem. The proofreading and copyediting are exemplary; the inclusion of the Horsfall bibliography invaluable (it was a mark of his humility that the bibliography document on his Durham honorary faculty appointment

page was entitled “BORING!” in emphatic maiuscule). It might be boring merely to catalogue his œuvre, but there is nothing remotely boring about this collection. Horsfall could make Italy’s Dercennus a fascinating figure.

One can trace the progress of a remarkable fifty years in this volume, a period that is all the more extraordinary when one considers how Horsfall succeeded in redefining the state of Vergilian studies on topics as major as the development of the cultural unity of Roman Italy and as minor as the pants of Chloereus. All scholars have blind spots. Paradoxically Horsfall knew where his were, and he admitted it without hesitation: genuine self-deprecation marks every page of his papers, alongside his notorious impatience for those who would not do the work required on so sophisticated and allusive a poet as Vergil. Said work is reflected not only in expert engagement with Homeric, Apollonian, Ennian, Lucretian, and other Vergilian *Vorleben*, but also with such vast subjects as Roman religion.

I close on a personal note. Now and again through the years Horsfall and I would correspond on Vergilian problems, not least our aforementioned Laurentum exchanges. Those electronic communications are for me treasures of incisive criticism that are unfailingly deserving of serious reflection. I miss Professor Horsfall, because for me at least he was a scholar whose words of rebuke—and they could be trenchant indeed—were always occasions to return to the sources, always invitations to read more closely, always challenges to work out solutions for the numerous problems in Vergilian studies, oftentimes *crucis* that we did not know existed until Horsfall pointed them out. *Fifty Years at the Sibyl’s Heels* is a tribute to his legacy, and it deserves a place on every Vergilian’s shelves alongside his commentaries. He will be missed by those who were privileged to know him, and I am confident that a century hence, his achievements in Vergilian studies will remain as justly celebrated as they are today.

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Scott McGill. *Virgil: Aeneid. Book XI*. Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781107071339 (hardcover); 9781107416789 (softcover). Pp. viii + 307. \$99.99 / \$26.99.

For its many marvels, *Aeneid* 11 deserves more exposure than it gets. Camilla has rightly garnered attention for her moving backstory, vivid *aristeia*, and dramatic death sequence, all with their gendered dynamics. The other parts of the book are less glamorous but by no means less intense. Opening scenes of funeral and lamentation, with occasional triumphal notes, do the work of grief for the mass carnage of Virgil's civil war. Diomedes's refusal to join the Latin military alliance pivots around a post-Homeric ideal of peaceful coexistence. The war council is highly varied in its speakers and their rhetoric: Latinus's ineffectual diplomacy, Drances's goading, Turnus's explosive but misplaced heroism. And let us not forget the epic's only cavalry engagement, that almost certainly looks to Rome's historical takeover of Italy.

McGill's edition is an excellent introduction to *Aeneid* 11. In terms of scope, it "tread[s] a middle path" between Gransden's 1991 edition of *Aeneid* 11, "a thin volume of sparse, uneven notes" (vii), and the overwhelming detail of Horsfall (2003). Close in spirit to the "green and yellows" of Hardie on *Aeneid* IX (1994) and Tarrant on *Aeneid* XII (2012), it achieves that tricky balance of being accessible to the relative newcomer to Virgil while still offering much of interest to seasoned scholars. I have set it several times for a graduate seminar, and we could not have wished for a more stimulating companion or informative basis for research-based coursework.

The introduction is sober and thoughtful, giving the editor's own views on the book's major themes and players, while distilling earlier scholarship and pointing to more detailed treatments in the commentary. A summary of the book is followed by a synopsis of its place in the epic. Discussion of Aeneas is divided across two sections, "Aeneas," and "Aeneas, Pallas, and Evander." McGill is alert to the interplay of backgrounds and constraints that shape Aeneas's character: the human-sacrificing Homeric Achilles and reportedly human-sacrificing Octavian of the Perusine Altars, Aeneas's status as a vector of proto-Roman values, his guilt over his failure to protect Pallas, his duty to Evander to avenge Pallas's killing, his need to galvanize and unite his troops, and his desire to achieve a peaceful settlement. McGill notes "Aeneas' pious handling of Mezentius' spoils," while still endorsing the evidence that Aeneas "refused Mezentius' suppliant appeal and allowed the Etruscans to abuse the corpse." And moreover: "an intertextual clue points to the same conclusion. Virgil models Aeneas' subsequent speech

(11.14–28) on *Il.* 22.378–394. Just before that passage in Homer (22.371), it is said of the Greeks, ‘No one drew near to him [Hector] without dealing him a wound’” (6–7). It is difficult to say anything new about Aeneas, but the discreet combination here of erudition and inference is characteristic of the value that McGill adds to his inherited materials.

A meticulous section on the Latin council assesses the rhetorical stakes for each speaker, noting Homeric (or cyclic epic) and historical parallels. “It is tempting to think that the fractious meeting reflects Virgil’s dark view of political debate in Rome, especially at the end of the Republic” (20).

The introduction is at its most original with a section on Camilla, examining her literary and mythical backgrounds (Amazons like Penthesilea and Harpalyce, perhaps Atalanta, perhaps Cloelia), her gender-bending, her dual status as huntress and warrior, her death, and (thinking beyond *Aen.* 11) her intratextual relations with other casualties in the epic: Dido, Euryalus, Pallas, and Turnus. Arguably Camilla has to die because she is a Volscian (the Volscians were among Rome’s bitterest enemies), and her heroism cannot be accommodated by the poem’s ethical calculus. A summative judgment on Camilla does seem to resonate with the politics of 2020: “she is driven above all to excel and earn glory in the thrill of the fight; she is a volatile, charismatic warrior and commander, eager to win and to be seen winning, rather than an Aenean *dux*, defined and weighted by public duty, and fighting from a sense of that duty and for peace” (30). Not the least innovative strand in the introduction is McGill’s interest in parenthood: Evander plays the role of mother as well as father in his lament of Pallas, and Camilla’s father “Metabus, a fierce male warrior, crosses gender boundaries and turns partly female, compensating for the absence of Camilla’s mother by taking on maternal roles” (22).

A brief section on meter and another on the text conclude the introduction. McGill’s text is based on Conte’s (2011), and he follows Tarrant in keeping the apparatus brief.

The commentary comprises insightful section introductions and more-or-less line-by-line notes that never fail to be pertinent. These can include linguistic help, stylistic observations, rhetorical figures, interpretation, intertextual models, literary motifs, ritual and historical parallels, later poetic imitations, textual variants, and of course references to secondary literature. McGill has a fine sense of where more layered attention is needed, and accordingly, the more challenging or interesting a passage is, the more he tends to say about it, including in relation to textual variants. His defence of *suffosso* over *suffusso* at 671 expertly combines linguistic and situational understanding, and will draw in readers not used to thinking about textual criticism.

McGill's interpretative judgments are carefully weighed, and he is balanced in citing scholarly views representing a range of positions. A case in point is his disagreement (on ll. 29–41) with the opinion of Michael Putnam (1995, 37–38) and others “that several details in the description of the beautiful Pallas imply A's sexual attraction to Pallas; cf. Powell 2008: 154–62, with Reed 2007: 35–6” (74). The note continues:

This would correspond to the homoeroticism of Achilles and Patroclus, which was recognized from at least the fifth century BCE (Powell 2008: 155–6). But A's homosexual feelings are very difficult to accept given his role as surrogate father to Pallas (see 42–58n.) and given Roman cultural norms regarding homosexuality for those in high military positions: “The ideal (at higher levels of command), which one can hardly imagine V's *Aeneas imperator* not following, was one of prim disapprobation (and exemplary punishment of the older man)” (Horsfall on 36). V. describes Pallas as an ephebic youth, an Antilochus to the Nestor-like Evander (see 139–81n., Quint 2018: 182–3), to vary conventional associations between beauty (especially youthful beauty) and heroism (cf. 6.861, 7.649–50, 9.178–80, and 10.435) and to exploit the pathetic connection between youth, heroism, beauty, and death. His A. keenly feels the pathos of the latter connection (see 39n.); but it is a bridge too far to posit his sexual attraction to Pallas. (The possible feelings of Pallas towards Aeneas are a separate matter; see Quint 2018: 183–4).

The editor makes his own view clear, is detailed and even-handed in setting out the terms of the debate, and leaves space for disagreement or a third way that integrates his view and those that he parries.

Two full indexes to introduction and commentary—subjects (including Latin words of thematic interest) and Latin words—round out the volume. I noticed very few typos, and none that affected the sense. In sum, this is a welcome and enriching addition to the scholarship on *Aeneid* XI and will be widely consulted by readers at all levels.

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Martin Stöckinger. *Vergils Gaben: Materialität, Reziprozität und Poetik in den Eklogen und der Aeneis*. Universitätsverlag Winter: Heidelberg 2016. ISBN 9783825364625. Pp. viii + 281. €45.00.

Based on a 2014 doctoral dissertation at the university of Heidelberg, this stimulating book examines the representation of gifts in the *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid* in an attempt to reveal their potential relation to “Vergil’s immanent poetics” (p. 7). I will first provide a survey of the book chapter by chapter and then evaluate its contribution to scholarship on this basis.¹

In the introduction (ch. 1) Martin Stöckinger points to Phebe Bowditch (2001) and Neil Coffee (2009) as previous studies examining gifts in Vergil (among others) and having recourse to methods from a variety of disciplines such as anthropology and sociology.² While sharing this commitment to methodological pluralism, Stöckinger decidedly focuses on the texts of Vergil rather than the historical discourses of which they form part, for example, the discourse of benefaction. Privileging literary approaches hitherto neglected in this context, he sets out to examine questions relating to intra- and intertextuality, narratology, comparative mythology, as well as subjectivity theory, sign theory, and *memoria* theory. To Marcel Mauss’s influential *Essai sur le don* (1925) and subsequent

1. I was asked to write this review for *Vergilius* in 2020 and have read most of the seven reviews of the book listed to date in *L’Année philologique*. [Editor’s note: I received the book when I took over as *Vergilius* editor in 2019; while I recognize the tardiness of the review, I feel that our readers will benefit from its coverage in this journal, however late it may be. I am exceptionally grateful to Dr. Schierl for her assessment of Stöckinger’s arguments.]

2. Bowditch 2001, 122–42 on *Eclogues* 1 and 4; Coffee 2009, 39–114 on the *Aeneid*.

contributions to gift exchange theory he accords above all heuristic value and the status of “dialogue partners” (p. 15) for his readings of Vergil.

The main body of the book divides into three parts of two chapters each. The first part (chs. 2–3) is devoted to the *Eclogues*. *Eclogues* 2 and 3 are discussed as specimens of the even-numbered/monologic and odd-numbered/dialogic *Eclogues* respectively. Stöckinger analyzes Corydon’s song with the imagined gifts for his beloved Alexis by resorting to the paradigm of “excess and restraint” (Gibson 2007). Through the catalogue of gifts representing his own existence Corydon manages to open up an outside perspective on himself and gains temporary insight in his own insufficiency. In *Eclogue* 3 a bickering exchange between the rivaling herdsmen Damoetas and Menalcas gives way to a singing match channeling their antagonism according to principles of reciprocity that are likened by Stöckinger to the Kula ring with its emphasis on reciprocation rather than the lavish and ostentatious giving of the potlatch that had been mentioned by Bowditch (2001, 133) with regard to *Eclogue* 3.³

The second part turns to the *Aeneid* and examines narratives as gifts and man-made objects as points of departure for narratives. Against the foil of Steve Reece’s (1993) interpretation of metadiegetic narratives in the *Odyssey* as reciprocating material hospitality by increasing symbolic capital, chapter 4 discusses Aeneas’s narration at the court of Dido and Evander’s account of Hercules and Cacus. Stöckinger observes the iterability of such narratives as a feature peculiar to the *Aeneid* and stresses as their specific functions on the one hand the establishment of *concordia* between Dido and Aeneas and on the other the social recognition awaiting Aeneas for fighting against Turnus and Mezentius. In chapter 5 Stöckinger deals with the tropaion of Aeneas, the weapons of Mezentius, and the gifts of Andromache as objects serving a commemorative function. Taking his cue from the concept of “the biography of things” (p. 133) as formulated by Igor Kopytoff (1986), he then turns to objects as Mnesteus’s breastplate or the shield of Nisus. The “biographies” of these objects introduce additional semantic levels into the narrative of which the characters themselves are not necessarily aware. Finally, he points to the nexus of gift and deceit, signaled by the play with *donum* and *dolus*, and discusses both Venus’s instrumentalization of Aeneas’s gifts for Dido and the Trojan horse as a gift fabricated for deception. In an excursus

3. Kula ring and potlatch are forms of gift exchange practiced on islands in the western Pacific and in North America respectively that were described by Mauss, among others.

Stöckinger argues that Pandora's story in Hesiod provides a mythical pattern for the Trojan horse as a poisoned gift.

The relations of gifts to the narrative dynamics and to the plot structure of the *Aeneid* stand at the center of the third part of the book. In chapter 6, readings of the Trojan embassy to Latinus, who holds out the prospect of a marriage between Aeneas and Lavinia, as well as the beginning and the ending of the Dido episode, demonstrate how gifts and scenes of exchange mark narrative units while setting new episodes in motion. Chapter 7 focuses on the Penates as material goods of a special kind. Taking recourse to a concept of Annette Weiner (1992), Stöckinger describes the Penates as "inalienable possessions" (p. 206) symbolizing Trojan identity and endowing with authority those who are associated with them. The transfer of the Penates to Latium, understood as the central mission of Aeneas, is on the basis of the oath in book 12 interpreted as part of an exchange process in which Lavinia constitutes so to speak the return gift.

Chapter 8 is devoted to the shield of Aeneas, but serves at the same time to conclude the book. Its subchapters take up the results of chapters 2–7 and view the shield in their light: from Venus as the giver Stöckinger turns to her relationship to the receiver Aeneas, analyzes the shield as symbolic capital (in the sense of Bourdieu), and discusses its "biography" as well as the closural function it may be taken to fulfil, insofar as the gifts figuring in Octavian's triumph on the shield mark the most recent event mentioned in the *Aeneid* and bring to an end what was set in motion by the treacherous gift of the Trojan horse. Finally, Stöckinger observes parallels between the shield and the Penates as inalienable gifts. The conclusion of both the chapter and the book as a whole emphasizes that there is no single poetic function of gifts in Vergil. Despite the interrelatedness of materiality, reciprocity, and poetics he has demonstrated with regard to gifts, Stöckinger concludes that there is neither a discernable Vergilian "poetics of materiality and reciprocity" nor a "poetics of the gift" (p. 243) and explains in this way why he renounced a tighter coupling of the key terms in the book's subtitle.

As the above summary has shown, Stöckinger deals not merely with material objects that are spoken about, given, or obtained in different ways, but with everything that forms part of a social exchange, above all verbal utterances such as songs and narratives. It is therefore a sometimes unexpected selection of passages from Vergil that is brought together by Stöckinger under the heading of "Vergil's gifts" but one that addresses core concerns of the *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid*. Sounding out various aspects of social reciprocity, Stöckinger offers nuanced and subtle readings of the passages in question and convincingly argues that gifts can fulfill a

structural function in the *Aeneid*. It is a particular strength of the book that passages from Vergil are contextualized in different ways: Stöckinger not only engages competently with familiar primary intertexts, but he also sheds light on intratextual relations established by material objects and discusses mythical parallels (e.g., when he associates the Trojan horse with the Pandora myth or considers the transfer of the Penates in the light of the myth of the golden fleece). Another strong point of the book is its engagement with cultural and literary theory—especially but not only with gift exchange theory. Alongside the theoreticians already mentioned above (Mauss, Bourdieu, Kopytoff, Weiner) Stöckinger also takes recourse to Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Hayden White, René Girard, and the German philosopher Andreas Hetzel amongst others. He succinctly introduces the respective key concepts and uses them both productively and unobtrusively in his discussions of Vergil. In addition, he often takes his cue from recent scholarship on other Latin poets (e.g., Roy Gibson, Melanie Möller) and on Homer (e.g., Jonas Grethlein, Steve Reece) that sometimes mediates his own engagement with theory. Drawing on a wide range of approaches and building at the same time on scholarship on Vergil (if selectively and with some noteworthy omissions pointed out in other reviews), Stöckinger succeeds in opening up new perspectives on questions relating to material objects and social reciprocity in Vergil. His reflections on the aims of his book as well as the various methods he deploys show an acute awareness of theoretical frameworks and methods at disposal for literary analysis. They implicitly raise the questions: To what ends and in what ways should Vergil's texts be studied in the light of the material turn and related paradigm shifts in the humanities? A final word remains to be said about the book's conclusion. In recapitulating the results of each chapter by applying them to a discussion of Aeneas's shield, Stöckinger successfully avoids the danger of mere repetition. While the layout of the chapter has its advantages, it inevitably downplays generic differences between the *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid*. It would, however, be profitable to consider the results of the chapters as regards materiality, reciprocity, and poetics in the light of the respective genres.⁴ Given the prominence of exchanges of songs and goods in pastoral poetry (from Theocritus's *Idyll* 1 onward), the centrality of the notion of reciprocity to this genre merits further discussion. This quibble apart, the book is

4. Stöckinger explains in the introduction that he focuses on the *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid* because both deal with the exchange of gifts among equals while hierarchical exchange situations prevail in the *Georgics*; for a discussion of the latter see now his 2019 article.

to be highly commended for drawing attention to the interrelation of materiality as well as reciprocity and the texture of the *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid*.

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Christiane Reitz and Simone Finkmann (eds.), *Structures of Epic Poetry*. 4 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019. Pp. xxix + 2727. ISBN 9783110492002. \$290.00.

Structures of Epic Poetry, edited by Christiane Reitz and Simone Finkmann, is a massive collection of essays by many authors, which in the most concise way possible, and in the words of the editors themselves, can be defined as "a four-volume compendium on the structural elements and narrative patterns of the literary tradition from Homer to Neo-Latin epic" (p. v). The expression "structural element" translates the German word *Bauform* (also rendered as "building block").

Volume I, "Foundations," is divided into three parts. Part I, "Theories of Epic," opens with Philip Hardie's "Ancient and Modern Theories of Epic," which analyzes what can be reconstructed of the ancient theories on the

nature and objectives of the epic, not only by critics such as Plato, Aristotle, and Horace, or as it can be obtained from the scholiasts, but also in the formulations within the epic texts themselves, and therefore in figures of singers like Demodocus, in their internal audiences, in the *ekphraseis*, and in the representations of fame. Joseph Farrell's chapter, "The Narrative Forms and Mythological Materials of Classical Epic," studies the Greek and Roman epic as structured around the two fundamental themes of war (the *Iliad*) and travel (the *Odyssey*). Next, Egbert Bakker offers a survey of oral-formulaic theory, with particular attention to the use of formulaic language outside the historical context with which it is commonly associated. Bakker's observations about Quintus Smyrnaeus's imitation of Homeric formulaicity are suggestive in the view of Virgilian practice, but only Greek epic is considered here. Robert Kirstein, Andreas Abele, and Hans-Peter Nill briefly discuss narratology in Classics. Epic speeches, and the interaction between theory and rhetorical practice, are the subject of Reitze's chapter on "Epic and Rhetoric." In Gregor Bitto's chapter, "Alexandrian Book Division and Its Reception in Greek and Roman Epic," there are sound observations on the *Aeneid*, with an accurate bibliography; however, apropos the link between *Aen.* 6 and 7, this reviewer notes the absence of Harrison's, "The Structure of the *Aeneid*: Observations on the Links between the Books," *ANRW* 2.31.1 (1980) 359–93.

Part II of volume I ("Classification and Genre") comprises seven chapters. Annemarie Ambühl, in "Intergeneric Influences and Interactions," first offers a good survey of the interrelations between epic and other genres as reflected in ancient literary criticism (171–75) and then skillfully compares ancient approaches to this topic with modern ones, focusing on the issue of "tragic" epic, which she analyzes through exemplary case studies involving similes (especially *Aen.* 4.469–473 and its reception in later epic), messenger scenes, and teichoscopies. Jason Nethercut, in "History and Myth in Graeco-Roman Epic," after having usefully surveyed the evidence for historical epic from Homer to Silius (also schematized in two tables at 207–8), emphasizes the similarities and overlaps between mythological and historical epic.

Didactic poetry is the subject of the chapter by Abigail Buglass, Giulia Fanti, and Manuel Galzerano, "Didactic and Epic: Origins, Continuity, and Interactions." Ample space is given here to the relationship between Lucretius and the *Aeneid*. From this engaging chapter, I single out as especially interesting from a Virgilian point of view the section on didactic-epic formulas and type scenes (247–64, by Buglass). Next, Alison Sharrock's chapter is dedicated to "Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: The Naughty Boy of the Graeco-Roman Epic Tradition." Sharrock brilliantly frames

Ovid's poem in the history of the classical epic, showing how it uses many of the traditional elements of a conventional epic poem, but in an innovative way. Her analysis focuses on the epic propriety/impropriety of three typically epic structural elements: battles, journeys, and hospitality. Silvio Bär and Elisabeth Schedel's chapter focuses on the narratological and methodological challenges of studying structural elements and narrative patterns in "Epic Fragments" from Greek and Latin traditions. Concerning the Roman epics, the authors offer close readings of Livius Andronicus's invocation to the Muse, Naevius's *ekphrasis* of the Giants, and Ennius's battle scene at *Ann. fr.* 15.391–398 Skutsch.

Two chapters devoted to *epyllia* close the section: Finkmann discusses "Narrative patterns and structural elements in Greek *epyllia*," and Nicola Hömke "Epic Structures in Classical and Post-Classical Roman *epyllia*," with particular reference to Catullus's *Carmen* 64, the *Ciris*, *Culex*, and the *Moretum* from the *Appendix Vergiliana*.

Part III of volume I ("Core Structures") also consists of seven chapters. Claudia Schindler studies "The Invocation of the Muses and the Plea for Inspiration" from Homer to Claudian and the Christian epicists; the invocations of the Muses in the *Aeneid* are given proper consideration (500–503, 509–10, 515–17), though a few more bibliographical references might have been helpful. Andrew Zissos's chapter on "Closure and Segmentation: Endings, Medial Proems, Book Divisions" examines the conclusion of the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, Apollonius's *Argonautica*, Vergil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Statius's *Thebaid*, and Silius's *Punica*; much briefer is the space given to the internal effects of closure created by medial proems and book divisions.

Heinz-Günther Nesselrath, in his chapter "'Almost-Episodes' in Greek and Roman Epic," studies those passages in which the epic poet says (or, more broadly, implies) that something could have happened, if something else hadn't happened to prevent it. Anke Walter focuses on "Aetiology and Genealogy in the Ancient Epic" from Homer to Silius, laudably aiming for a comprehensive catalog of all the occurrences of both elements (appendices included, along with exhaustive bibliography). Christiane Reitz, Cédric Scheidegger Lämmle, and Katharina Wesselmann deal with "Epic Catalogues," including in their analysis not only the large troop catalogues which from the *Iliad* on constitute a fixed element of epic poetry, but also any list. It may be noted that, after the publication of the reviewed work, Scheidegger Lämmle and Wesselmann (with Rebecca Lämmle) have also edited *Lists and Catalogues in Ancient Literature and Beyond: Towards a Poetics of Enumeration* (Berlin and Boston 2021).

Ursula Gärtner and Karen Blaschka devote their chapter to “Similes and Comparisons in the Epic Tradition.” Concerning the *Aeneid*, their analysis focuses on the poem’s first simile (1.148–156), the oak simile in book 4, and the horse simile at 11.486–497; more bibliographical references would have been welcomed, especially in the case of the first two instances, which have received such intense critical attention. In the final chapter of this section, Stephen Harrison masterfully looks at “Artefact *ekphrasis* and Narrative in Epic Poetry from Homer to Silius,” focusing on the proleptic role of *ekphraseis* and the issue of their narrative focalisation.

Volume II, “Configuration,” is distributed in two books and five parts, the first of which, “Battle Scenes,” occupies the entire volume II.1. After a short introduction by the editors, Reitz briefly surveys “Arming Scenes, War Preparation, and Spoils in the Ancient Epic.” Claire Stocks’s “Simply the Best? Epic *aristeiai*” highlights the spectacular dimension of *aristeiai*. Joy Littlewood’s chapter on “Single Combat in Ancient Epic” is organized not only in a chronological sequence, but also thematically, with sub-chapters dedicated to topics like “predestined single combats,” “unequal single combats,” etc. Jan Telg genannt Kortmann is remarkably accurate in his chapter on “Mass Combat in Ancient Epic,” which concludes with an appendix listing the most relevant mass combat scenes in classical epic. Equally accurate and valuable is Hans-Peter Nill’s “Chain-Combats in Ancient Epic.” In one of the best contributions to this compendium, Marco Fucecchi offers an outstanding chapter on “Teichoscopies in Classical and Late Antique Epic.”

Martin Dinter, Simone Finkmann, and Astrid Khoo deal with “Nykto-machies in Graeco-Roman Epic.” T. J. Bolt (“Theomachy in Greek and Roman Epic”) well remarks that the only proper theomachy in the *Aeneid*, the fight between the Roman and Egyptian gods depicted on the shield of Aeneas, “is notably displaced to the future, a removal that makes the historical ‘future’ more ‘epic’ than the mytho-historical past” (291).

The following chapters are both by Thomas Biggs and are devoted, respectively, to “Naval” and “River Battles in Greek and Roman Epic.” The first of these chapters, having observed the absence (in Homer and Apollonius, for example), or rather loss (as in the case of Naevius and, most probably, Ennius), of naval battles in epic before the battle of Actium depicted on Virgil’s shield of Aeneas, focuses on the battles of Massilia in Lucan 3.298–762 and Syracuse in Silius 14.353–585. The *Bauform* of the combat between a hero and a river (or a river god) has its archetype in *Iliad* 21. Still, after that it doesn’t resurface again in its complete form until Silius (*Pun.* 4) and Statius (*Theb.* 9). Next, Paul Roche focuses on “Flight, Pursuit, Breach of Contract, and Ceasefire in Classical Epic.” From

the *Aeneid*, he considers the flight and pursuit sequence at 12.733–790 and that of the breach of truce at 12.216–281. An expert on the topic such as Helen Lovatt offers an excellent study of “Epic Games: Structure and Competition” from Homer to Silius Italicus. Martin Dinter, dealing with “Death, Wounds, and Violence in Ancient Epic,” gives a compelling survey of topics, despite the challenge of treating them adequately in a single chapter. The same can be said of the chapter by Antony Augoustakis, Stephen Froedge, Adam Kozak, and Clayton Schroer, who tackle the complex theme of “Death, Ritual, and Burial from Homer to the Flavians.”

Part II of volume II is devoted to “Journeys and Related Scenes.” After the editors’ customary introduction, François Ripoll deals with “Arrival and Reception Scenes in the Epic Tradition from Homer to Silius.” The scenes in question are defined as “narrative sequences in which a traveler (human or divine) arrives at a place with which he is unfamiliar and where he is greeted by a local”: so, as to the *Aeneid*, we find briefly treated Dido’s reception of Aeneas in Book 1, Evander’s reception of Aeneas in Book 8, Latinus’s reception of the Trojan embassy in Book 7, and Andromache’s reception of Aeneas in Book 3 (at p. 30 instead of “The third typical scene” read “The fourth ...”). Anja Bettenworth, the author of *Gastmahlszenen in der antiken Epik von Homer bis Claudian* (Göttingen 2004), gives an unsurprisingly accurate reading of “Banquet Scenes in Ancient Epic.” Next, again Ripoll reviews “Scenes of Departure by Sea in the Epic Tradition from Homer to Silius.”

Part III of Volume II is dedicated to “Time.” The two editors give a short introduction to the topic; then we have a chapter by Otta Wenskus, “Time in Greek Epic” (on astronomical expressions of time in the Greek epic), and one by Anja Wolkenhauer, “‘Time as Such’: Chronotopes and Periphrases of Time in Latin Epic.” This section is very selective, and the introduction of the editors is really too short to give a good idea of the complexity of the many issues related to the narrative management of time; for example, Zielinski’s seminal article on the treatment of simultaneous events in Homer (1899–1901) is cited in their bibliography, but, on Zielinski’s law, or “continuity of time principle,” they merely refer to two far from lucid pages of de Jong’s *Narratological Commentary on the Odyssey*, without providing a definition of it. But the reason for this is certainly that it is difficult to define concepts like this in terms of “structural elements.”

Part IV of Volume II.2, “Space,” is ampler. Robert Kirstein, provides “An Introduction to the Concept of Space in Ancient Epic.” Torben Behm, the author of a Rostock dissertation on the city as a literary landscape in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, now published as *Städte in Ovids Metamorphosen* (Göttingen 2022), appropriately offers a chapter on “Cities in Ancient

Epic,” with sections on Thebes, Troy, Carthage, and Rome, and subsections on “minor” cities like Buthrotum, Pallanteum, and Saguntum. Behm also deals with “Landscapes in Latin Epic,” in a chapter focused on selected landscapes, such as those of Arcadia and Sicily, from Virgil to Claudian. His chapter is preceded by Andreas Fuchs’s on “Landscapes in Greek Epic” (treating Homer and Apollonius). There follow three chapters dedicated to more fantastical landscapes: two chapters by Markus Kersten analyze, respectively, “Mythical Places” and “Abodes of the Gods,” and one by Reitz, “Abodes of the Dead in Ancient Epic.”

The fifth and final part of volume II.2 (“Communication”) is dedicated to the scenes centered on the various types and occasions for communication between epic characters. After the editors’ introduction, we find eight chapters. Martin Dinter and Astrid Khoo deal with “Messenger Scenes in Greek Epic,” with analyses of select passages from Homer, Apollonius, Quintus Smyrnaeus, and Nonnus. The Roman side, from Vergil to Silius, is treated by Finkmann in a separate chapter. Khoo, surveying “Dream Scenes in Ancient Epic,” deals with select passages from Homer to Quintus Smyrnaeus; however, on the Roman side, one misses a treatment of such an essential dream as that of Ilia in Ennius. “Prophecies” are treated by Deborah Beck (in Greek epic: Homer and Apollonius), and by Finkmann, Reitz, and Anke Walter (in Roman epic: Vergil, Lucan, and the Flavian epicists). Reitz also contributes the two following chapters on “Apparition Scenes” and “Divine Council Scenes in Ancient Epic,” offering a series of exemplary readings from Homer to Flavian epic. The volume is closed by Finkmann on “Necromancies in Ancient Epic,” appropriately focusing on the communication between the living and the dead, and covering the period from Homer to the Flavians.

Volume III (“Continuity”) is dedicated—to quote the title of the editors’ introduction—to “the origin, tradition, and reinvention of epic structures.” The editors declare that this final volume addresses two questions: “Are the structural elements scrutinized in volumes I and II characteristic of classical epic specifically? Or are they consistently used throughout the entire tradition of Graeco-Roman epic from early Greek to Neo-Latin epic?” Since it may be presumed that the typical reader of *Vergilius* is less familiar with the texts discussed in this last volume, and for this exact reason perhaps even more interested, I’ll be slightly more effuse in describing the contents of these chapters.

The origin of epic structures is the subject of Johannes Haubold’s chapter, “Poetic Form and Narrative Theme in Early Greek and Akkadian Epic.” As the title suggests, Haubold expands the analysis to ancient Mesopotamia to include a comparison of early Greek and Akkadian

epic narrative techniques. In his view, the art of the Greek bard can be meaningfully compared to that of the Akkadian scribe, although there are significant differences. Comparing the *Iliad* and the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, we find that the two traditions have in common many *Bauformen*, such as ring composition, catalogues, traditional themes, type-scenes, and formulaic language. Still, they generally share “an overall understanding of divine and human history, which acquired narrative form in large-scale mythological poems” (12).

The rest of the volume comprises nine chapters devoted to the reception and transformation of classical epic in later literary traditions. Simon Zuenelli studies “The Transformation of the Epic Genre in Late Antiquity,” focusing on the reception and rhetorisation of two structural elements typical of classical epic, speeches and similes, in the epic production between the second and the seventh centuries CE. Also considered is the preface, seen as a new rhetorical epic structure. The Greek authors here considered are divided into two groups: on the one hand, there is Nonnus, with the three poets often referred to as the “School of Nonnus,” that is, Triphiodorus, Colluthus, and Musaeus, who may be seen as both following and innovating the tradition of late Hellenistic epic; on the other hand, there are Quintus Smyrnaeus and the Orphic *Argonautica*, both characterized by an archaizing style. Latin epic’s prominent representatives are Claudian, Dracontius, and Corippus.

Next, Berenice Verhelst deals with “Greek Biblical Epic: Nonnus’s *Paraphrase* and Eudocia’s *Homerocentones*.” The first part of the chapter focuses on epic structures in Nonnus’s *Paraphrase*, analyzing epithets, speech formulas, conventional time indications, and *ekphraseis*, especially that of the lamps carried by the soldiers who come to arrest Jesus. The second part of the chapter studies the *Homerocentones*, in which lines from Homer are used to narrate the story of the Old Testament and (especially) of the Gospels. The analysis focuses on their overall structure (in the so-called first redaction), their proem, and their adaptation of Homeric type-scenes (such as hospitality and banquet) to render similar scenes in the Gospels. Christoph Schulbert, in “Between Imitation and Transformation: The (Un)conventional Use of Epic Structures in the Latin Biblical Poetry of Late Antiquity,” uses the sea-storm of *Aen.* 1 as a case study to analyze how classical epic materials are transformed, and merged with biblical models, by poets such as Juvenius, Sedulius, Arator, the Heptateuch poet, Marius Victorius, Dracontius, and Avitus. Martin Bažil, in “Epic Forms and Structures in Late Antique Vergilian Centos,” considers the epic features of the *Cento Probae* (especially in the proem and in the scene on the sea), and of the cento *epyllia* from the *Anthologia Latina* (especially the

mythological *Hippodamia*, and the nonmythological <*De Opera Pistoria*>). The chapter closes with an analysis of epic structures and echoes in nonepic centos, such as Hosidius Geta's *Medea* and Ausonius's *Cento Nuptialis*.

Kristoffel Demoen and again Verhelst give a selective survey of "The Tradition of Epic Poetry in Byzantine Literature," and more specifically in the didactic, encomiastic, and ekphrastic poetry from this period (that is, from the inauguration of Constantinople as the capital until its fall, i.e. from 330 to 1453). The opening discussion of the importance of Homeric scholarship and imitation in Byzantium focuses on the figure of John Tzetzes. The following sections deal with Gregory of Nazianzus "the Theologian" (fourth century CE), one of the earliest representatives of didactic poetry; with George Pisides (seventh century), author of encomiastic, historical court poetry; and with the anonymous *Digenis Akritis* (twelfth century), sometimes called "Byzantium's only epic." The final section deals with two ekphrastic poems, Christodorus of Coptos's *Description of the Statues of Zeuxippus* and John of Gaza's *Description of the Cosmic Tableau* (probably early to mid-sixth century). Wim Verbaal's long and complex chapter, "Medieval Epicity and the Deconstruction of Classical Epic," opens by questioning medieval Latin epic's position in modern scholarship. Properly Latin "epic" poems seem to be rare or even absent, in front of a flourishing production of vernacular epics. Verbaal proposes to reconsider the very criteria through which the "epicity" of a work can be defined, and so to present "medieval Latin epicity as a particular and conscious way of dealing with the classical models, more based upon deconstruction and recreation than on the imitation of normative model" (211). The first work to which, according to Verbaal, the status of medieval Latin epic can be attributed is Aldhelm of Malmesbury's *De uirginitate*, composed before 690. Aldhelm influenced two other poems that are only rarely considered proper medieval Latin epics, Bede's *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* and Alcuin's *Versus de patribus regibus et sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae*. Verbaal also proposes to extend the period of production of the medieval Latin epic beyond the traditional limit of around 1180: in his view, medieval Latin epic ended when, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the prosaic rewriting became the most common narrative form, both in Neo-Latin and in the vernaculars, while epic as poetry continued in the vernaculars. The rest of the chapter analyzes the dynamics through which medieval Latin epics deconstruct classical epicity (there are subsections on storms, catalogues, dreams, etc. in a variety of texts), and construct a new epicity, characterized by the obsession with the concepts of truth and veracity, and by humoristic elements.

Christian Peters's fascinating chapter is devoted to "Narrative Structures in Neo-Latin Epic from 1440 to 1500." Although Petrarch's unfinished *Africa* (1374) is commonly considered the first Neo-Latin epic, Neo-Latin epic production began to flourish in Italy in the 1440s. Peters, however, pinpoints the actual starting point of the Neo-Latin epic in Maffeo Vegio's publication of his *Aeneid* XIII (1428). Other, primarily encomiastic, works of the second half of the Quattrocento whose structural elements are analyzed in this chapter include Basinio da Parma's *Hesperis* (1455), Matteo Zuppario's *Alphonseis* (1455), Francesco Filelfo's unfinished *Sphortias* (1481), Tito Strozzi's *Borsias* (also unfinished), Gian Mario Filelfo's *Amyris* (strangely written for the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II, conqueror of Constantinople), and Ugolino Verino's *Carlias* (1480). In Florian Schaffentrath's chapter, "Narrative Structures in Neo-Latin Epic: 16th–19th Century," a survey of the structural elements of Neo-Latin epic follows their uninterrupted production from the sixteenth century up through early twentieth-century examples.

The last chapter, "Experiments in Digital Publishing: Creating a Digital Compendium" by the Digital Humanities specialist Matteo Romanello, "introduces the readers and users to the goals of the digitally provided index of the compendium *Structures of Epic Poetry* and the methods used for it" (331), for, in addition to the three indices provided in the four volumes of the print publication, there is a digital compendium (EpiBau) which should facilitate the search for individual authors, works, characters, epic structures, keywords, and cited loci: <http://epibau.ub.uni-rostock.de/app/> and <http://epibau.ub.uni-rostock.de/api>.

The book closes with a list of the Graeco-Roman *epyllia* and epics from Homer to Late Antiquity, a "core bibliography" author by author (in alphabetical order), and the indices (*locorum* and *rerum*), which, as mentioned above, also close the previous two volumes.

This is a monumental enterprise, carried through with unique industry and judgment. Experienced Vergilians will understand how useful this can be to the student and the novice when they consider the chapters of the third volume, which deal with topics less familiar to them. But that does not mean that even scholars and commentators of classical epics will not be able to benefit enormously from the previous volumes of this comprehensive and highly accurate work.

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SYMPOSIUM CUMANUM 2022

DIDO UNBOUND: THE QUEEN OF CARTHAGE
BEFORE, IN, AND AFTER VERGIL

Cuma, Italy, June 21–25

June 22

Panel 1: Opening the Conference Themes

Chair: Giampiero Scafoglio

1. Richard Thomas (Harvard University), “Dido in the 21st Century Translation”
2. Sergio Casali (University of Rome “Tor Vergata”), “Virgil’s Dido and the Preceding Tradition”

Panel 2: Vergil’s Dido

Chair: Zara Torlone

3. Suzanne Adema (Leiden University), “Bound by Mercurius: Mercurius as Manipulator, Interpreter and Narrator of Dido’s Inner Life”
4. Carey Seal (University of California, Davis), “Dido’s Curiosity”
5. Campbell Celia (Emory University), “Spoiled Dido”
6. Mario Lentano (University of Siena), “*Periturae ignoscit Elissae*. Tracce di lettura al femminile della Didone virgiliana”

Panel 3: Dido in Latin Literature of Augustan and Imperial Age

Chair: Richard Thomas

7. Li Sunju (Jungam Academy for Greco-Roman Studies), “Dido, *oratrix sagax*: An interpretation of the *Heroides*”
8. Anne Sinha (Sorbonne Paris Nord University), “*Anna soror* : le rôle d’Anna dans la construction du personnage de Didon dans la poésie latine”
9. Debra Freas (Wellesley College), “East in Ephesus: Dido and Petronius”

June 23

PANEL 1: Dido in Late Antiquity

Chair: Jim O'Hara

10. Graziana Brescia (University of Bari), “*La scientia futurorum nei novissima verba* di Didone (Serv. *ad Aen.* IV, 613)”
11. Giancarlo Abbamonte (University of Naples “Federico II”) and F. Stok (University of Rome “Tor Vergata”), “Dido in the Late Ancient Commentaries”
12. Étienne Wolff (University of Paris Nanterre), “Didon dans quelques recueils poétiques latins tardifs (*Épigrammes d'Ausone, Epigrammata Bobiensia, Anthologie latine*)”
13. Sophia Papaioannou (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens), “Editing the Dying Dido for a Christian *lector doctus* (Tertullian and Prudentius on Dido's suicide)”

PANEL 2: Receptions of Dido: Europe

Chair: Barbara Weiden Boyd

14. Cristalle Watson (University of British Columbia), “Cutting and Pasting Dido: The Vergilian Centos of Geta and Proba”
15. Giandomiano Bovi (University of Parma), “Luca Pulci's *Pistole*, addressed to Lorenzo di Medici. Rewriting Dido”
16. Patrick Lake (The Hill School), “Shakespeare's Dido in the *Tempest*”
17. Scott Newstock (Rhodes College), “Come, Welcome, Overcome: Marlowe Invites Ganymede to the Dido Story”

June 24

PANEL 1: Receptions of Dido: Beyond Europe

Chair: Sergio Casali

18. Zara Torlone (Miami University, Ohio), “Two Didos in Russian Poetry: Anna Akhmatova and Joseph Brodsky”
19. Jermaine Bryant (Princeton University), “*Our Carthage*: Senghor's Dido and Pan-African Politics”
20. Carlos Mariscal de Gante (National Autonomous University of Mexico), “Dido, a Feminist Symbol for 20th Century Mexican Society: Rosario Castellano's *Lamentación de Dido*”
21. Erika Valdivieso (Yale University), “Searching for Dido in Colonial Latin America”

PANEL 2: Dido Today

Chair: Sophia Papaioannou

22. Alicia Matz (Boston University), "*Ipsa sua Dido concidit usa manu*: Vergil, Ovid, and Dido's Agency in Three Modern Retellings"
23. Francesca Tataranni (Northwestern University), "Waking up over the *Aeneid* in 1985: Dido and a fresco fracas during the Reagan presidency"
24. Barbara Weiden Boyd (Bowdoin College), "Dido in the Desert: Stella Duffy Reads Virgil with Ovid"
25. Muriel Lafond (University of Nice-Côte d'Azur), "What Ever Happened to Queen Dido (on screen)?"

PANEL 3: The "Alternative" Didos

Chair: Alessandro Barchiesi

26. Ekblom Moa (University of Gothenburg), "*Urbem praeclaram statui*: Perceiving Dido the Builder in Antiquity"
27. Alessandro Barchiesi (New York University), "Dido, Venus and Cyprus"
28. Giampiero Scafoglio (University of Nice-Côte d'Azur), "Dido in Dante, Petrarca and Boccaccio"

VERGILIUS

Dear Vergilian Society Member:

We are sending you the new issue of *Vergilius* on the assumption that, even if you have not yet renewed your membership, you intend to do so for the fiscal year 2021–2022 (the 2020–2021 membership expired Sept. 30, 2021). The mailing label of this volume indicates the year through which your dues are paid. Dues for the present or past year should be sent to me or paid via PayPal (see www.vergiliansociety.org). If you have any questions about your membership, please contact me at the address below (which is also listed in the current issue of *Vergilius*).

Sincerely,
John Beeby, Secretary
Vergilian Society
PO Box 3594
Chapel Hill, NC 27515
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December 2022