

Vergilius Lyricus:
The Influence of the Greek Lyric and Elegiac Poets on the *Aeneid*
[Virgilio lírico:
La influencia de los poetas líricos y elegíacos griegos en la *Eneida*]

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Abstract: Relatively little work has been done on the influence of the Greek lyric and elegiac poets on Virgil's *Aeneid*. Close consideration of a number of passages from the surviving corpus of archaic and classical Greek lyric and elegiac poetry will demonstrate the pervasive influence of these works on the Augustan epicist.

Resumen: Se ha estudiado relativamente poco la influencia de los poetas líricos y elegíacos griegos en la *Eneida* de Virgilio. El examen detallado de algunos pasajes del *corpus* de poesía lírica y elegíaca griega arcaica y clásica que se conservan demostrará la omnipresente influencia de estas obras en este poeta de época augustea.

Keywords: Lyric, elegiac, iambic, Virgil, *Aeneid*

Palabras clave: Lírica, elegía, yambo, Virgilio, *Eneida*

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Considerable work has been done to illustrate in detail how Virgil made use of the rich store of Greek archaic and Alexandrian epic in the composition of his *Aeneid*. The Virgilian debt to both Homer and Apollonius has been the subject of major monographs and numerous commentary notes and scholarly articles.¹ Likewise, the Virgilian reception

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¹ The respective standard modern studies are Knauer 1964 (for Homer) and Nelis 2001 (for Apollonius Rhodius). Foundational to the study of the Greek influences on Virgil is Orsini 1568. I am grateful for the comments and corrections of the two anonymous referees, which greatly improved this study, and for the assistance of the editor.

of Attic tragedy has been explored more or less extensively.² Hesiod and Pindar have also been examined as important figures in the poet's *Vorleben*.³ In all of these cases, we benefit from relatively extensive bodies of surviving literature with which to grapple, and Virgilian intertexts are readily identifiable. The process of analyzing Virgil's engagement with his predecessors is twofold: first passages that seem to demonstrate intertextual connections are identified, and then critics explore the ramifications and implications of the possible borrowing.

Less attention has been paid (understandably enough) to the influence on Virgil of those Greek poets whose works survive mostly in fragment. There has been some consideration of Virgil's Callimachean intertexts, not least because of the amount of extant material available for study, frustratingly fragmentary or not.⁴ But the vast traditions of Greek lyric and elegiac verse have elicited comparatively little interest as potentially important sources of Virgilian inspiration, a sad, inevitable consequence of the poorly preserved state of the remains of a Sappho or a Theognis.

Our purpose herein will not be to present overarching, grand theses that explore what Virgil may have gleaned from the rich repertoire of lyric and elegiac poetry at his disposal. Too little survives to allow for such lofty enterprises. Rather, we shall endeavor to assemble a collection of passages that may serve to illustrate the inspiration of archaic and classical Greek lyric on the *Aeneid*, citations that either have escaped the notice of commentators, or that seem to deserve greater consideration for the possible implications of the poet's possible if not probable borrowings.⁵ Ideally, what we amass will serve as *prolegomenon* for further investigation of this hitherto largely untapped vein of Virgilian intertexts. The general comments appended to the roster of these passages will offer highly tentative suggestions for future work, in the nature of observations rather than

² See here König 1970 and Panoussi 2009.

³ Cf. Sider 1988 and Fratantuono 2022.

⁴ Note, e.g., O'Hara 2001.

⁵ Among standalone editions of books of Virgil, Stégen 1975 deserves special note for its attentiveness to lyric sources, at least to the extent of acknowledging them, even if without commentary.

definitive conclusions. The connections between Latin elegy and Virgil's epic have attracted recent critical attention; our work seeks to offer a supplement on the Greek side to the noteworthy effort that has been expended in exploring the elegiac veins that run through the *Aeneid*.⁶

Our parameters are straightforward: we shall consider the entire surviving body of Greek lyric and elegiac verse from the archaic and classical periods, excluding Pindar.⁷ Our methodology will be to assemble a number of passages of potential interest, and to append commentary and discussion. For convenience, the arrangement of selections will follow the order of events in Virgil's epic.

1. *Aen.* 1.39-45, *The vengeance of the goddess Pallas on Locrian Ajax*: cf. Alcaeus fr. 298 Campbell/262 Page *SLG* (P. Oxy. 2303 fr. 1(a) [vv. 15-28] + P. Colon. 2021 [vv. 1-49]), and note *Scolia* 884 Page *PMG* (*Carm. Conv.* 1 Page); vid. Orsini 1568, pp. 197-8.

As she sees the Trojans safely make their way from Sicily to Italy, Juno is incensed at how ineffectual her power is. She complains that the goddess Pallas/Minerva was able to exact fiery retribution on the Lesser Ajax in consequence of his assault on Cassandra.⁸ Pallas' vengeance is accorded a vivid vignette. The passage is rendered all the more striking for how early it comes in the epic. The crimes and punishment of Locrian Ajax figured in the "standard repertoire" of events in Fall of Troy narratives, and can be attested in both Homeric and cyclic poetry.⁹ Alcaeus related the story of Ajax's mad violation of the goddess' temple (16-9), his assault on Cassandra (20-4), and Pallas' revenge as he sought to sail home (24 ff.). A paradigmatic story of the fate of the impious, the narrative of Ajax's grim,

⁶ Cf. McCallum 2023.

⁷ The surviving corpus of iambic poetry seemingly offers little of readily apparent interest to Virgil (not surprisingly given the subject matter). The possible influence of Semonides on Virgil is noted below; cf. also Hipponax, fr. 177 West and *Aen.* 4.244 (Mercury's power to consign someone to sleep), fr. 65 West and *Aen.* 5.774-6 (libations thrown into the sea), fr. 172 West and *Aen.* 12.473-80 (swallows as harbingers of misfortune), and also fr. 72 West and 1.469 (Rhesus' white horses).

⁸ On the goddess in Virgil note Spence 1999, Fratantuono 2017, and Delarue 2016.

⁹ Cf. Gantz 1993, p. 651.

gruesome end accords with lyric references to the hazards of travel by sea, and to the use of storm metaphors to describe both personal and political turmoil. Alcaeus' text emphasizes that Ajax had no regard for the goddess, despite the fact that Zeus' daughter was a giver of victory in war (22-4). It is an artfully composed vignette, emphasizing both the impiety and the ingratitude of the warrior.

A surviving drinking song references both Zeus and his daughter Pallas in association with sudden death (on account of their use of lightning bolts against malefactors). While Apollo and Artemis are often noted in connection to the untimely death of the young (via archery), the supreme god and his daughter are less frequently cited for acts of swift retribution.

2. *Aen.* 1.106-12, 166-9, *The peril of the Syrtes, and the shelter of the Nymphs*: cf. Anacreon fr. 403 Page (Gentili 114), and Timotheus fr. 791.88-90, 110-1 Page *PMG* (P. Berol. 9875).

The storm that results in Aeneas' consequential landing in Carthage is a *tour de force* of the epic poet's art, which has been studied extensively for its Homeric (cf. *Odyssey* 5.282-312) and Apollonian (*Argonautica* 4.1225 ff.) intertexts, as well as (*inter al.*) its possible evocation of Pythagorean theories on the disruption of harmony.¹⁰ Anacreon may have used storm imagery to describe the crises endured by one in love.¹¹ In *Aeneid* 1, there is a marked advance from the tempest in the physical world that drives the Trojans to Carthage, to the metaphorical storm of love that engulfs Dido and Aeneas. Part of the argument that the queen uses in defense of Aeneas' extended sojourn in North Africa is the peril of winter navigation and the threat of storms (cf. *Aen.* 4.51-3); the poet artfully blends the effects of tempests both real and poetic. Salvation from meteorological peril is succeeded by entrapment in erotic disaster.

For Virgil's storm sequence, one unappreciated source may be a poet of the so-called New School. Most of what we know of the lyricist Timotheus derives from the Berlin papyrus that preserves significant portions of his nome *The Persians*, with its vivid, graphic account of

¹⁰ So Villalba Saló 2021, pp. 47-8, 54-9.

¹¹ So Bernsdorff 2020, *ad loc.*

shipwreck and drowning. There is direct reference to the perils of shoals or sandbars to navigation (88-90), and, in an especially fragmentary passage (110-1), a reference to a cave of the nymphs that comes as part of the lament uttered by a shipwrecked survivor. Timotheus may have been an inspiration for Virgil's identification of a cave of the nymphs as the site of Aeneas' landing amid the storm (cf. *Aen.* 1.167-9) after having navigated the perils of the Libyan Syrtes (*Aen.* 1.106 ff.). Further, any possible Virgilian allusion to Timotheus might have been occasioned by the fact that the Mysian sailor of the nome invokes the Trojan mountain mother goddess, and bemoans the plight of the Phrygians.¹² In other words, while the song may be of the naval disaster that beset the Persians as they faced the Greeks in a sea battle, there is a shared perspective of Phrygian suffering at sea that links the storm narratives.

With respect to the Virgilian scene, we may note, too, an instance of where our sources illustrate how Virgil followed Homer and not lyric. Angry that Aeolus has stirred up a storm in his marine realm, Neptune angrily calls the winds to account, include the Zephyr (*Aen.* 1.131).¹³ Servius glosses the collocation of Zephyr and Eurus as a summation of all the winds; Servius *auct.* adds the detail that the Zephyr is the wind that should have led the Trojans to Italy (and so it is especially culpable for its role in the Junonian tempest). The Servian comments reflect the stereotypical association of the Zephyr with calmer conditions. Theophrastus notes that in some locales the Zephyr is violent, and in others sweet and gentle;¹⁴ he cites Homer for the former condition, and the lyric poet Philoxenus for the latter.¹⁵ Here there is perhaps an awareness that the climate of Carthage is affected by westerly winds prevailing from southern Gaul. No gentle Zephyr for the Trojans in the waters off North Africa, rather a more dangerous westerly, here stirred up with Eurus to wreak havoc on Aeneas' fleet.

¹² Note here Munn 2006, p. 169.

¹³ On this passage note Kühn 1971, pp. 17-9, and Villalba Saló 2021, p. 49.

¹⁴ *De Ventis* 38.

¹⁵ Cf. *Il.* 23.200, *Od.* 5.295, and Philoxenus fr. 835 Page.

3. *Aen.* 1.198-207, *Aeneas encouraging his men to have endurance in the face of hardship*: cf. Archilochus fr. 13.6-7 West; vid. Orsini 1568, p. 205.

At a desperate moment, the Trojan commander rallies the weary spirits of his men, urging them to remain steadfast and courageous. Archilochus' elegiac poem speaks of the loss of men at sea (3-5), before urging patient tolerance of grief and immense pain.¹⁶ The context fits exactly with that of the shipwrecked Trojans, and is a good example of where the corpus of elegiac verse provides ready inspiration for a scene of exhortation, with alignment of subject matter: at the time of his attempt at consoling his men, the Trojans have every reason to believe that their missing companions were drowned. The sentiments that Aeneas expresses may be commonplace; indeed, the hero's text address has been identified as a reworking of similar remarks of Homer's Odysseus to his men (*Od.* 12.208 ff.).¹⁷ Archilochus offers a further potent parallel.

4. *Aen.* 1.314-24, *The disguised Venus and Thracian Harpalyce*: cf. Ibycus fr. 5 Page (286 PMG).

Venus appears to Aeneas in a costume that is compared to the dress of the Thracian huntress Harpalyce.¹⁸ Thracian Harpalyce is a relatively mysterious and obscure figure (at least given the state of our sources); she has Diana-like associations given her love of hunting, and the costume verges on mockery of the virgin goddess of the chase by Venus. The principal point of Venus' masquerade encounter with her son is to inform him of where he has landed, and to tell him the story of Dido. Ibycus speaks of love as allowing for rest at no season; he compares its action to the Thracian north wind, rushing from the Cyprian goddess.

The Virgilian scene works on several levels simultaneously. Venus' outfit is reminiscent of Diana, and when Dido makes her entrance, she is compared to the divine huntress.¹⁹ Hunting imagery marks the disastrous

¹⁶ See further Swift 2019, *ad loc.*

¹⁷ See here Schlunk 1974, pp. 51 ff.

¹⁸ On Harpalyce see further Arrigoni 1985 and Knox 2014, as well as Knaack 1894 and Brucia 2001.

¹⁹ *Aen.* 1.496-504.

amorous involvement of Aeneas and Dido.²⁰ Aeneas' mother Venus is capricious by nature given her erotic arena of responsibility; her actions with respect to setting the love affair in motion (motivated by fear, like the classic, reflexive response of an anxious lover) wreak havoc on the situation of the Trojans in Carthage. Venus' impish arrival as Thracian Harpalyce proves to be a harbinger of doom; as in Ibycus, so in Virgil, the Cyprian goddess knows no rest, and her action is akin to that of a Thracian wind, again as Aeneas recovers from a real storm, only to walk into a metaphorical one.

5. *Aen.* 1.317, *Harpalyce's Hebrus*: cf. Alcaeus fr. 45 Lobel-Page (P. Oxy. 1233 f. 3.8-15, 9.9, 18 + 2166(b)2).

Harpalyce is said to have been able to outrun even the swift Hebrus.²¹ Alcaeus' poem is an address to the Hebrus, noting that it flows through Thrace as the loveliest of rivers, and that it is visited by many maidens (presumably to bathe), who are enchanted by the marvelous water, which is like unguent. Lyric intertexts here contribute to the eroticism of a scene that has been noted for the "flirtatious" reception of Aeneas and Achates by the goddess of love.²² The Hebrus (modern Maritza) of the lower plains is broad and notably gentle in its flow; in the highlands closer to the Rhodope, outrunning the river is a more impressive feat.²³ The lyric color of the Harpalyce passage accords with its essentially erotic quality; something of the same intertextual effect will be seen in the Camilla narrative, which recalls the reference to Harpalyce. Virgil will have distilled this originally lyric lore through Hellenistic sources, notably Parthenius.²⁴

²⁰ Cf. *Aen.* 4.68-73 and 129 ff.

²¹ For Thrace and its semantic association with "Horse, Wind, and Arrow" note Paschalis 1997, pp. 64-5.

²² Newman and Newman 2005, p. 35.

²³ For this observation I am indebted to Egil Kraggerud, who also reminded me of the relevant, exemplary discussion of Roiron 1908, pp. 125 ff.

²⁴ Cf. *Erotika Pathemata* 13, with Lightfoot 1999, pp. 446 ff.

6. *Aen.* 1.749, *Dido drank deeply of love*: cf. Anacreon fr. 450 Page *PMG* (Gentili 131).

The Carthaginian queen enjoys both her wine and Aeneas' conversation and stories, as she falls more deeply in love with him with every passing moment. Servius identifies the metaphor as coming from Anacreon.²⁵ "Drinking deep" has been taken as an emblem of impending disaster.²⁶ There is likely a pointed allusion to the bibulous behavior of Cleopatra and Antony in Alexandria. As long as Aeneas remains in Carthage, he runs the risk of recalling what for Virgil's contemporaries was the all too vivid memory of Antony's dalliance with Egypt's queen: lyric commonplace merges with historical reality.

On the subject of amorous Dido, we may append here an observation that does not seem to have attracted notice. The Carthaginians are explicitly associated with bees (cf. *Aen.* 1.418-40), and Dido's name Elissa has been connected with the Greek μέλισσα.²⁷ In these apian allusions, Virgil may have had in mind the iambic/elegiac poet Semonides and his satirical, iambic work on the nature of women, where the ideal wife is compared to a bee.²⁸ This poem has been the subject of significant attention for what light it may shed on cultural attitudes toward women in archaic Greece; less interest has been paid to its possible literary inheritance, despite the fact that it is one of our most extended surviving pieces of early Greek verse.

When Aeneas first encounters the widowed Elissa, he meets a woman who has secured impressive accomplishments for her Carthaginian immigrants: their nascent city is like a busy hive, and soon enough the queen is raising the possibility that Aeneas and his Trojans might join her people in a shared polity. Apian imagery featured in Augustan propaganda, beyond any literary or philosophical implications of the poet's introduction of bee

²⁵ Cf. here Vallat and Béjouis-Vallat 2023, and Baudou and Clément-Tarantino 2015.

²⁶ So Anagnostou-Laoutides 2023, p. 112.

²⁷ See further Grant 1969. On Dido's associations with Cleopatra note Astorino 2020.

²⁸ Fr. 7.83-93 West, on which the commentary of Lloyd-Jones 1975 remains invaluable. For good appraisal of the literary and historical issues note also Osborne 2001).

similes.²⁹ But no nuptial union with Dido is possible in view of the destiny of the Trojans. To the extent that the association of the Carthaginians with bees makes one think of the idealized wife in Semonides, the impending tragedy is all the more acute: the bee-woman Elissa is not, in fact, fated to be the spouse of Aeneas.

7. *Aen.* 2.713-6, 741-4, 788-9, *The loss of Creüsa heralded by the temple of the deserted Ceres*: cf. Melanippides, fr. 764 Page *PMG* (note also Telestes, fr. 809 Page *PMG*, anon. fr. 935 (Frr. Adesp. 17 Page) *PMG*).

Aeneas loses his wife under mysterious circumstances during the escape from the doomed city of Troy.³⁰ A temple of Ceres is the designated rendezvous for the fleeing Trojans (2.713-4 *est urbe egressis tumulus templumque vetustum / desertae Cereris ...*); by the time the group of survivors arrives there, it is clear that Creüsa is missing (2.741-3 *nec prius amissam respexi animumque reflexi, / quam tumulum antiquae Cereris sedemque sacratam / venimus ...*). Her shade appears to Aeneas, noting that she has been detained by the great mother of the gods, i.e. the goddess Cybele (2.788 *sed me magna deum genetrix his detinet oris*).³¹ One point of connection between temple and disappearance is readily apparent: there is a clear enough allusion to Ceres' loss of her daughter; in the label *desertae Cereris* (cf. 2.713-4) the transferred epithet works on two levels, referring both to the fact that the temple is deserted, and to the fact that the goddess was abandoned by virtue of Proserpina's abduction.³² We do not hear of Ceres after the references to her temple; when Aeneas sees the spectral image of his lost wife, she speaks, it would seem, of the Trojan mother goddess. Here Virgil may borrow from lyric citations that conflate Ceres and the

²⁹ See here Boas 1938, pp. 141-2.

³⁰ Casali 2017, *ad loc.* offers good annotation here.

³¹ Given the Trojan context, the mother goddess is likelier to be Cybele than Rhea/Ops. Passages from the *Aeneid* are quoted from Conte 2019.

³² There is also a reminder of the tradition of how the immortals abandon ruined cities, their temples rendered desolate; cf. the sentiments of Poseidon at Euripides, *Troades* 26-7.

mother of the gods; *genetrix* points to Cybele, but it also recalls Ceres, whose ancient, deserted temple was the fateful locus for assembly.

Cybele was also said to be associated with Aphrodite, or even Artemis;³³ this complex syncretism is likelier to have been borrowed from lyric than from epic. Cybele retains Creüsa; Aeneas' lost spouse becomes a veritable symbol of the old Troy that is being abandoned, with Lavinia and Latium looming in the future (notwithstanding a detour with Carthaginian Dido). The evocation of lyric conflation of the goddesses allows for rich rumination on the nature of Troy's end, and the possibility of rebirth and resurrection in a new home.

8. Associations of Aeneas and Bacchus: cf. Praxilla fr. 752 Page *PMG*.

Bacchus is one of the more complex of the deities in the Virgilian pantheon.³⁴ While the poet never makes explicit any connection between Aeneas and Bacchus in the manner he uses for comparing his hero to Apollo (cf. *Aen.* 4.141-50), some scholars have made the reasonable observation that there are deliberate correspondences between Aeneas and the wine god.³⁵ It may be worth noting that in Praxilla, Dionysus is the son of Aphrodite, not of Semele. This is the same sort of conflation and debate as to genealogy that we find with Cybele and Ceres; here it may be purposeful insofar as Virgil wants to develop any Bacchic associations for Venus' son, especially in light of any reminiscence of Antony and Cleopatra in the progress of the Dido affair. In any case, the fact that Dionysus was Aphrodite's son in Praxilla makes any connection of Aeneas to Bacchus easier for the poet to craft.

9. *Aen.* 4.450-1 (cf. 4.474-5), Dido prays for death as a release from love: cf. Anacreon fr. 411 Page (Gentili 29 + 32).

Appeals are made in vain to Aeneas; Anna conveys the misery and grief of her lovesick sister, but divine powers see to it that the Trojan's ears

³³ Cf. Hipponax, fr. 127 West.

³⁴ Useful here is Mac Góráin 2013, pp. 124-45.

³⁵ So Weber 2002, pp. 322-43.

are deaf to any entreaty. Anacreon deserves to be highlighted for the seemingly commonplace sentiment of speaking of death as the only freedom for the elegiac lover; Dido's suicide (with its elaborate, ritualistic preparation) is a grandiose version of the almost casually expressed (however heartfelt) emotions of the lyric lover. The lover in poetic tradition speaks of death and suicide with relative ease; in the tragedy of *Aeneid* 4, Aeneas' abandonment of Dido sets into motion the queen's inexorable march toward self-destruction. The matter was one easily parodied, and a subject familiar to biographical traditions (cf. Sappho's alleged suicide for love).³⁶ In Augustan Rome, the suicides of Antony and Cleopatra followed on their defeats at Actium and Alexandria; there was war as well as a love affair. In Virgil, the threat of war comes as a result of a dalliance gone awry in the matter of the queen's curse on the future Romans (cf. *Aen.* 4.621 ff.); Dido's suicide comes not amid military reversal, but as the highly consequential fulfillment of a lyric prayer for peace in death.

10. *Aen.* 4.510-1, Hecate as attendant of Aphrodite: cf. Lobel-Page incert. fr. 23.

The goddess Hecate is mentioned only occasionally in the *Aeneid*, but the references to her come at heightened moments of emotion and drama.³⁷ She figures both in the response of Dido to her disastrous affair with Aeneas (cf. *Aen.* 4.509-11, 609-10), and in the hero's venturing to the underworld, where he will encounter her shade (cf. 6.117-8, 247, 562-5). Hecate has well-known connections to Artemis/Diana, with whom she was often conflated. But she was also linked to Aphrodite, an association that may be of particular relevance for the Dido/Aeneas story. Associations with Artemis follow on the aforementioned comparison of Dido to Diana, and the Diana-like Harpalyce costume donned by Venus to tell Dido's story. Hecate's infernal realm introduces a dark twist on the evocation of both Diana and Venus; the love affair that was instigated in no small way

³⁶ See further here Hutchinson 2008, p. 171.

³⁷ See further Colombo 1985 and Hejduk 2014; cf. also Bailey 1935, pp. 160-162, Duclos 1969) and Fratantuono 2020.

by Aeneas' mother and her machinations with Cupid has reached a dire stage by the time Dido is invoking Hecate as part of her black magic rituals.

11. *Aen.* 4.522-8, *All of nature was at rest*: cf. Alcman fr. 89 Page *PMG*.

After Dido's recourse to the black arts, she alone is unable to sleep: the natural world is at rest, and indeed Aeneas is able to enjoy his slumber, despite the peril he faces if he remains in Carthage. Amid the unfolding tragedy, and in a striking instance of employing a moment of lyric loveliness before a dramatic, even violent scene, Virgil recalls a passage of Alcman. As often, we do not know the context of the lyric excerpt; it has been noted that in the complete poem there could have been a contrast, as in Virgil (i.e., nature is asleep, but someone is awake), or the text may precede the epiphany of a deity.³⁸ In the case of Aeneas, his slumbering is soon interrupted by a dream apparition of Mercury that urges him to take his leave of the queen immediately. The point of the description is to juxtapose the loveliness of the world of nature at repose with the disquiet and anxious turmoil of the one who cannot rest, in the case of Dido the frenzied, distraught lover on the verge of suicide.

12. *Aen.* 4.693-5, *Juno's taking pity on Dido at her suicide*: cf. Bacchylides, fr. 20D Snell (P. Oxy. 2362 fr. 1 col. ii + 1361 fr. 36 (vv. 10-12) + 2081 (e) fr. 2).

Dido's suicide is botched; having stabbed herself, the queen suffers an agonizingly slow end. The Carthaginian patroness Juno is merciful, sending the rainbow goddess Iris to hasten her death. At the close of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, Artemis does not consider it appropriate to linger at the gory scene of her votary's violent demise; she does not hasten and end to his suffering. But in Bacchylides, Zeus shows mercy to the nymph Oenone at her suicide. Any intentional allusion to the lyric passage may be relevant in view of the derogatory image of Aeneas as another Paris;³⁹ in any case, references to divine pity for mortal suicide are rare, and so any

³⁸ Cf. Campbell 1988.

³⁹ Cf. *Aen.* 7.321 and 363-4.

intentional parallelism between Zeus/Oenone and Juno/Dido may serve to draw out the implications of Trojan perfidy. A remembrance of Bacchylides' passage would add another layer to the richly polyvalent account of Dido's death that closes *Aeneid* 4.

13. *Aen.* 5.295, *Euryalus' exceptional appearance*: cf. Ibycus, fr. 288 Page *PMG*.

At the foot race during the memorial games for Anchises, Euryalus is one of the most noteworthy and distinguished of contestants, given his extraordinarily handsome appearance. Ibycus is cited by Athenaeus (13.564f) for what are said to be famous lines about the loveliness of one Euryalus, whose identity remains a mystery.⁴⁰ Euryalus' status as Nisus' *eromenos* is implicitly underscored by the lyric allusion. The lyric emphasis on the youth's looks is prelude to the more striking intertext described below that is introduced for his death scene.

14. *Aen.* 6.290-4, *Aeneas' would-be attack against underworld phantoms*: cf. Bacchylides, c. 5.68-84 Snell.

On the threshold of entering the realm of Dis, Aeneas encounters monstrous specters; he draws his weapon to commence battle.⁴¹ The Sibyl Deiphobe is compelled to restrain his fighting instinct, reminding him that it is pointless to attack insubstantial, harmless phantoms with a sword. In Bacchylides, Heracles has the same reflexive reaction to the sight of the shade of Meleager. Typologically, Aeneas and Heracles have significant affinities.⁴² The storied hero visited the underworld to retrieve Cerberus to fulfill one of his labors; the tradition developed that he tried to fight against ghosts and seemingly portentous creatures.⁴³

⁴⁰ For the name, see Wilkinson 2012, p. 246; cf. Fantuzzi 2012, p. 253.

⁴¹ On the preliminaries for Aeneas' descent to the underworld and his entrance to the infernal regions, see especially Horsfall, 2013, *ad loc.*

⁴² On the god in the epic note Gilmartin 1968 and Zarker 1972).

⁴³ Cf. Ps.-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 2.5.12. On the subject note Robertson 1980.

15. *Aen.* 7.803-17, *Camilla's myrtle and Minervan associations*: cf. *Scolia* 893 and 895 (*Carm. Conviv.* 10 and 12 Page) *PMG*.

The domestic arts of Minerva's loom were not of interest or concern to the Volscian battle maiden Camilla.⁴⁴ Her spear was a shepherd's myrtle. The *myrtus* with which the catalogue of Italian heroes and the book closes is of noteworthy significance.⁴⁵ Its associations with the goddess Venus and erotic as well as nuptial contexts follow on the detail about how Camilla was an object of wonder both to the youth and the crowd of mothers that beheld her (7.812-4), as the poet introduces his heroine with elegiac, wistful imagery. But there may also be a hint here of the traditional association of myrtle, weapons, and the Athenian so-called tyrant slayers Harmodius and Aristogeiton, who slew Hippias' brother Hipparchus at a festival of the goddess Athena. In the case of Camilla, the mention of Minerva and then myrtle for a warrior's weapon as the Volscian ally is described entering the scene for battle may recall the famous deed carried out by the Athenian opponents of the Peisistratids. Any such allusion would accord with the image of Camilla and other native Italians as defending Latium and central Italy from the perceived tyranny of Trojan invaders.

16. *Aen.* 7.806-7, *A wind-swift maiden*: cf. fr. 958 Page fr. adesp. 40 Page *PMG*.

Camilla is certainly said to have been able to outrun the winds, but the lyric fragment we have highlighted may be of more extended interest. The identity of the speedy girl in the lyric citation is unknown; Iris and Atalanta are possible candidates.⁴⁶ If Virgil's Camilla were modeled in part on the archaic Atalanta familiar from, notably, Hesiod's *Catalogue*,⁴⁷ then

⁴⁴ On the close of the catalogue of heroes see Horsfall 2000, *ad loc.*

⁴⁵ For the myrtle in Virgil see Mantero 1987, also Abbe 1965, pp. 145-6, Maggiuli 1995, pp. 366 ff., and Armstrong 2019, pp. 152-5.

⁴⁶ Note here Campbell 1993, p. 377, and Brussich 1976, pp. 139 ff. Jan Rutgers' conjecture of *Eurum* at 1.317 (suggested to Bentley) may have been inspired in part by the topos, even beyond the alleged weight of 8.223, of Cacus' flight that is faster than Eurus.

⁴⁷ Cf. fr. 72-6 Merkelbach-West.

it is possible that lyric/elegiac antecedents were at the poet's disposal.⁴⁸ Further, one cannot exclude a reference to one of the Harpies.⁴⁹

18. *Aen.* 8.51-4, *Evander's Pallanteum*: cf. Stesichorus fr. 21 Davies-Finglass; vid. Orsini 1568, p. 388.

The god Tiberinus provides Aeneas with oracular information about securing allies for the prosecution of the Latin war. In particular, he alerts Aeneas to the settlement of the Arcadian Evander at Pallanteum.⁵⁰ Stesichorus mentioned Pallanteum in his *Geryoneis*; Davies and Finglass *ad loc.* explore possible contexts for where this Italian detail could have figured in the work. It is reasonably clear that Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* provided a model for certain aspects of the story of Hercules and Cacus that Evander tells Aeneas (cf. *Aen.* 8.124 ff.); any lyric influence on the depiction of Aeneas in the underworld and the revelation of Cacus lore to him further cements the hero's association with Heracles.⁵¹ But the poet is no mere typological cataloguer, resorting to easy correspondences, as the next passage for consideration reveals.

17. *Aen.* 9.433-7, *Euryalus' head drooping like a poppy*: cf. Stesichorus fr. 19 Davies-Finglass; vid. Orsini 1568, p. 442.

This is perhaps the most celebrated of Virgil's lyric debts, a companion to the aforementioned description of the lovely appearance of the ill-fated youth.⁵² Here the lyric evocation in the narrative of his premature death serves as more than a grim parallel to that comparatively lighthearted scene. Euryalus is allusively associated with Heracles' foe, the monstrous Geryon. The commentators have noted the borrowing from Homer, *Il.* 8.306-8, where Teucer takes aim at Hector, only to strike his brother Gorgythion in the chest. In Homer, the point is straightforward, focusing on what may be called the ghoulish aestheticism of the death of the

⁴⁸ Cf. Ps.-Theognis, frr. 1287-94 West.

⁴⁹ We may compare Harpalyce.

⁵⁰ Cf. Eden 1975, *ad loc.*

⁵¹ See further here Lowe 2015, pp. 220-6.

⁵² On this passage see both Hardie 1994, and Dingel 1997, *ad loc.*

handsome and lovely. In Stesichorus, we have what Davies and Finglass rightly note is a certain “incongruity”: Geryon, after all, is no attractive young warrior, but a hideous beast.⁵³ Oddly, death seems to afford the monster an element of flower-like loveliness; in death, the vanquished monster is no threat, and it is a beautiful sight to see the threatening, hulking creature laid low. In the case of Euryalus, the memory of the monster in Stesichorus underscores the grisly horror of the scene: in death, Euryalus may be handsome (like Homer’s Gorgythion), but the destruction of one so handsome is especially horrific. Euryalus was betrayed by the glint of telltale moonlight on his helmet; in Stesichorus, Heracles knocks off one of Geryon’s helmets (cf. 19.13-7). There may be a pathetic point to the intertext: the Latins have a relatively easy job catching the two night raiders; this is nothing like the heroic struggle of Heracles against Geryon’s three bodies.

Especially after the emphasis on equating Aeneas and Heracles, the association of his handsome young comrade Euryalus with Geryon is jarring. In the end, any lyric allusion may serve to highlight certain uncomfortable realities of the scene: Nisus and Euryalus were excessive in their nocturnal slaughter; they aspired to lofty heroic heights, but they failed miserably. In terms of the ultimate disposition of affairs in central Italy that Jupiter and Juno agree to in their climactic colloquy (cf. *Aen.* 12.830 ff.), the Trojan element in the future shared polity in Latium will sink down relative to the Ausonian; Nisus and Euryalus are, in a sense, on the losing side in the war. The foot race in Sicily was marred by bad sportsmanship in the manner of Nisus’ intervention to help his *eromenos* (cf. *Aen.* 5.334-6); Euryalus was able to use the sympathy engendered by his tears and handsome appearance to secure his prize (5.343-4). Darker associations intrude in the events of the night raid; the *eromenos* is slain, and the loyal *erastes* with him. In the heat of the moment, the lovely Euryalus became monstrous as he slaughtered his slumbering enemies; in the description of his own death his attractive appearance is recalled by the floral simile, even as we also remember Stesichorus’ monster. We may

⁵³ On this see further Curtis 2011, p. 147.

wonder what prompted the lyric poet's juxtaposition of flower and monster; it is easier to explain why Virgil borrowed the comparison.

18. *Aen.* 11.492-7, *Turnus as he meets Camilla and her retinue is like a stallion amid the mares*; cf. Anacreon, fr. 417 Page *PMG* (Gentili 78).

Nicholas Horsfall memorably noted that this simile deserved book-length treatment.⁵⁴ The image is borrowed from two Homeric passages, one applied to Paris (*Il.* 6.506-16) and one to Hector (*Il.* 15.263-70); both Apollonius (*Arg.* 3.1259-62) and Ennius (*Annales* fr. 535-9 Skutsch) also lurk, not to mention Virgil's description of a stallion at *Georgics* 3.193-5. To this venerable roster of antecedents, we should perhaps add Anacreon.⁵⁵ Anacreon's metaphor has been noted for its elegant and ironic character;⁵⁶ the imagery accords with the topos of playful behavior sometimes associated with girls in archaic lyric.⁵⁷ While the identity of the "Thracian filly" in Anacreon's lyric is unknown, it may well be a virgin, as opposed to a *hetaira*.⁵⁸ The Virgilian simile offers a richly connotative, poetic illustration of the scene; there will be no union between the stallion and the mares, but the implications of the description heighten the eroticism of the meeting, following on the poet's association of mares and great passion: *scilicet ante omnis furor est insignis equarum*.⁵⁹

19. *Aen.* 11.549-50, *Metabus fearing for the infant Camilla*: cf. Anacreon, fr. 460 Page.

This is another rare instance where Servius notes a lyric borrowing. The scene is the swollen river Amasenus; the exiled tyrant Metabus is trying

⁵⁴ Cf. Horsfall 2003, *ad loc.* Brief but good analysis may be found at Williams 1968, pp. 695-6, 732-3; cf. Johnston 2006 and Fratantuono 2024.

⁵⁵ On the "sustained erotic allegorising" that made Anacreon a classic in the Hellenistic and later ages, see Budelmann 2018, p. 5. On the significance of horses in contexts of liminal eroticism, see Levaniouk 2008, p. 208.

⁵⁶ Cf. Vox 1990, pp. 67-8.

⁵⁷ See here Rosenmeyer 2004.

⁵⁸ So Hullinger 2016; cf. Geißler 2011. More generally on horse imagery see Griffith 2006).

⁵⁹ *Georgics* 3.266.

to cross over with his infant daughter. Servius quotes Anacreon for a reference to the “burden of Eros,” a conventional enough phrase, we might think, for the complaint of a mournful lover. If we can trust Servius’ judgment that Virgil had Anacreon in mind here, we may consider the possible implications of the intertext. At minimum, the reminiscence of Anacreon provides another intertext for a character description that has a markedly lyric color.

20. *Aen.* 11.721-4, *Hawk/falcon and Trojan doom*: cf. Stesichorus fr. 103.45-8 Davies-Finglass.

The simile that compares Camilla’s attack on the Ligurian Aunides to the evisceration of a dove by a hawk or falcon is one of the more memorable in the battle scenes of the Iliadic *Aeneid*. The image of the predatory bird is borrowed from *Iliad* 22.136-44, where Achilles is the accipiter and Hector is the dove as he is chased before the walls of Troy. There is also a reminiscence of the comparison of Artemis to a dove as she seeks to escape the wrath of Hera (*Il.* 21.489-96); Virgil’s depiction of Diana’s mortal avatar Camilla invites comparison to the Homeric Achilles and Artemis comparisons.⁶⁰ In Stesichorus, hawk imagery is employed in association with the peril posed by the Wooden Horse. Loss of text does not permit definitive sense here; are we dealing with a simile (as in Homer and Virgil), or a portent? What is clear is that as the Trojans debate what to do with the fatal horse, hawk imagery is employed by the lyric poet to illustrate the immediate peril. A similarly ominous avian image recurs during the equestrian battle, in which the Trojans suffer serious enough reversals at the hands of the hawk-like Camilla that Jupiter is compelled to intervene to save them from a complete rout; in both cases, equine peril is accompanied by the poetic raptor.

21. *Aen.* 11.532-3, *Diana’s nymph Opis*: cf. Timotheus fr. 778 Page *PMG*; vid. Orsini 1568, p. 442.

⁶⁰ For the perennial opposition between accipiters and doves see De Jong 2012, p. 95.

Opis plays a brief but memorable role in the drama of *Aeneid* 11, securing vengeance for Camilla's death by killing the Etruscan Arruns. The question of the association of Opis with Artemis/Diana was already raised in Macrobius.⁶¹ In addition, we have evidence that the poet Timotheus composed an *Artemis*, and that in songs he performed at the goddess' cult center at Ephesus, Artemis was referred to as Opis.⁶² In Callimachus' Artemis hymn, "Oupis" is cited as a cult of the goddess;⁶³ the Hellenistic poet also applies the name to a Hyperborean girl who was said to have helped at the birth the divine twins.⁶⁴ The name is shadowy and obscure; we are not certain of its exact origins.⁶⁵ Virgil's introduction of Opis in the Diana-Camilla narrative offers another good example of where the poet employs lyric lore that has been distilled through Alexandrian intertexts.

The passages assembled above represent a reasonably comprehensive list of possible if not probable Virgilian debts to surviving Greek lyric and elegiac poetry and *testimonia*. Other critics might select additional texts; conversely, one might question whether in every instance above we ought to see the influence of these Greek poets on Virgil. Some general comments may be appended to this list. Not surprisingly, many of the proposed Virgilian borrowings from lyric and elegy are connected with the untimely loss of the young (Dido, Euryalus, Camilla).⁶⁶ Arguably the most lyrical and elegiac sections of the epic are Books 1 and 4 (Dido) and 11 (Camilla). Besides the topos of premature death, lyric is employed in descriptions of the world of nature, in contexts both serene and stormy. Rivers are particularly noteworthy here.⁶⁷ The loveliness of the natural world offers a poignant contrast to the untimely deaths either in battle or as a consequence of tragic, disastrous loves, deaths that sometimes mar a

⁶¹ *Saturnalia* 5.22.4-5.

⁶² On this piece note Leven 2014, pp. 19-20.

⁶³ *H.* 3.204, 240, on which see Adorjáni 2021, *ad loc.*

⁶⁴ *H.* 4.292; cf. Mineur 1984, *ad loc.*

⁶⁵ See here Rutherford 2020, p. 196.

⁶⁶ For a start to the study of this vast subject see Sisul 2018.

⁶⁷ On the pervasive importance of this element of the natural world in Latin poetry note Jones 2005.

handsome appearance, even as the slain are also rendered forever young. While Virgil's exploration of these topoi owes much to his epic antecedents, lyric provides ample material for what ultimately is a poetic response to the swiftness of the grave and the quest for immortality, even in one's transient amatory preoccupations.

Due to the accidents of time and preservation, our knowledge of archaic and classical Greek lyric and elegiac poetry allows for only markedly imperfect, fragmentary glimpses of a vast treasure of influential song and verse. The highly incomplete state of the material offers haunting hints of a world dominated by ephemeral, erotic passions; the fleeting nature of those obsessions is incarnated in the conjecture-ridden pages of our texts, where every page bears witness to the ravages of the clock. And yet enough endures of the ethereal, not entirely lost corpus of lyric to allow us to appreciate Virgil's debts to its sentiments of the odd juxtaposition of death and loveliness. Not surprisingly, we see evidence of the poet's intertextual *homage* to lyric and elegy most clearly in those moments when he captures, like a snapshot, an image of seductive grace or attractive charm, of beauty all too often doomed to a premature end.

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