

## AENEID I AND IV: THE ARTISTRY OF THE PROLOGUE AND OF THE TRAGEDY

By A. J. DUNSTON

IF one is led on by "Ἄτη to commit the ὕβρις of inventing the title before writing the paper, Νέμεσις will surely follow to punish the presumption. Νέμεσις attends me now, for my title must surely give the impression that I regard *Aeneid* IV as a book that may be taken by itself as a Tragedy and *Aeneid* I as the prologue to that Tragedy, and further that the two books can somehow be separated from the rest of the *Aeneid* and analysed separately.

None of this is, of course, so. It is true that *Aeneid* IV has a seeming unity: it is at first sight a story complete in itself. So is *Aeneid* II, and *Aeneid* VI, and it was doubtless for this reason that Virgil selected these three books when he at last bowed to Augustus' insistence that he recite to him "something from the *Aeneid*".<sup>1</sup> It is true too that from very early times, according to Macrobius,<sup>2</sup> *Aeneid* IV enjoyed a particular popularity, and it was to this book that sculptors, painters, embroiderers, mimic actors and the like turned for inspiration. But it remains essentially part of a whole, and can no more be isolated from that whole than, say, the stories of Pallas, of the sack of Troy, of Camilla, of Turnus, or indeed any other portions of the *Aeneid* which have from time to time been recognized by one scholar or another as essentially tragic.

I referred just now to the seeming unity of *Aeneid* IV. Pease<sup>3</sup> puts it well: "the psychological characterization (of Dido) is so largely concentrated in Book IV, that this may be considered a distinct self-contained unit, like those episodes from Greek epics which dramatists re-worked into independent tragedies". Bearing this in mind, and remembering that the action, the development of the tragedy, is interspersed with passages of an almost "choric" nature, that Aeneas, the hero of the *Aeneid* appears as deuteragonist, as Richard Heinze calls him,<sup>4</sup> to Dido as protagonist and that both so completely dominate the book—remembering this, we find it easy to understand at once why it is that people have come to talk of *Aeneid* IV as a Tragedy. That was perhaps inevitable from the time that Plato began to talk of Homer as the "first of the tragic poets".<sup>5</sup> But *Aeneid* IV is not a Tragedy; it was never intended to be presented on the stage. The *Aeneid* is an epic poem: the fourth book is an integral part of that epic, and cannot be separated from the whole. Any interpretation of *Aeneid* IV, or of *Aeneid* I, or of any other single book or group of books, can

<sup>1</sup> *Vita Donati* 31 cf. Servius *ad Aen.* IV. 323: if, however, there is any truth in the story that the order of the early books was altered, the books read may have been I, IV and VI.

<sup>2</sup> *Sat.* V.17.4-6. Cf. *Ov. Tr.* II.535-6, where however *pars . . . de corpore toto* might more properly be interpreted as "the Dido episode", "the story of Dido".

<sup>3</sup> A. S. Pease, *Aen.* IV. *Intro.* p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> R. Heinze, *Virgils Epische Technik*, p. 119.

<sup>5</sup> *Rep.* X. 607 a.

only be valid in so far as that interpretation is related to the interpretation of the poem as a whole.

Having thus demonstrated that my title is virtually nonsensical, it remains for me to make quite clear exactly what my purpose is. This is, to illustrate, in the course of a partial analysis and discussion of *Aeneid* I, the way in which Aeneas and Dido are introduced to the reader (or listener, as I ought perhaps to say) and how finely their characters are drawn: to illustrate, too, the undertones which are present from the very beginning, and the artistry with which, time and time again, links are forged, later to be joined with others in *Aeneid* IV to form an unbroken chain.<sup>6</sup> All this will, I hope, in its turn, have the effect of indicating a deliberate conditioning which must affect the interpretation of *Aeneid* IV, and show the whole Aeneas-Dido encounter as a major episode in the whole poem.

Brooks Otis<sup>7</sup> well reminds us that Virgil is "pre-eminently an author who can be read at several levels of comprehension". The truth of this statement, which applies especially to the *Aeneid*, becomes evident as early as the seven-line proem. Virgil's poem is to be of the warrior-hero: *arma virumque cano*. The Homeric cast of this beginning is clear: "Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε . . . But from the context, Virgil goes on to make it quite clear that Aeneas is not only to be a warrior-hero who escapes from a conquered city, a returning soldier who has miraculous adventures by land and sea, who is shipwrecked and rescued by a princess, who has contact with the ghosts of the underworld before he reaches his destination. He is also to be a man governed by destiny, from whom are destined to arise the Latin race, the Alban fathers and the walls of lofty Rome. His outstanding characteristic, mentioned right at the outset, is his sense of duty—his *pietas*.<sup>8</sup> Yet he is hounded by one of the deities; not, like Odysseus, by Poseidon who bore a grudge against Trojans in general for the deceit of Laomedon and against Odysseus in particular for the killing of his son Polyphemus, but by the queen of the gods herself, Juno. True, Juno is, in Homeric cast, represented as bearing a grudge which originated with the affront she felt after the judgement of Paris: but that, as Virgil indicates by the degree of prominence he attaches to it, is secondary: more important, she is a goddess who has assumed the patronage of Carthage: her cherished hope is that that city and its people shall be the mistress of the world. The intensity of her interest-patronage is stressed by the threefold anaphora and the doubled verbs:

*hic* illius arma,  
*hic* currus fuit; *hoc* regnum dea gentibus esse,  
si qua fata sinant iam tum tenditque fouetque.

(I. 16-18).

<sup>6</sup> The place of Book I in the story of Aeneas and Dido has been well recognized, especially by Heinze, Austin, *Aen.* IV, p. 25 and Pease, *Introd.* p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford, 1963).

<sup>8</sup> See Prescott, *Development of Virgil's Art*, p. 330 for a fine definition of *pietas* in the Roman sense. It "involves not merely piety, but the full performance of one's duties to one's family and fellow men, as well as towards the gods".

To a Roman, the threat that Carthage had once offered to the rise of Rome and the deep fear that Hannibal had engendered would be at once recalled. The words *Karthago, Italiam contra*, with their effective juxtaposition would have reminded a Roman at once of the historical as well as the geographical positions of the two races. Moreover the association of Juno and Carthage was well known: it was Juno who had been evoked from Carthage by Scipio when the city was destroyed:<sup>9</sup> the Roman colony which C. Gracchus endeavoured to establish on the site was called Iunonia,<sup>10</sup> and though this project failed, the city-site of Carthage was later re-settled both by Julius Caesar and by Augustus. Finally, the story of the traditional hatred of Juno for the Romans would have been well known to Romans from Naevius and Ennius. Many, too, would remember this, and her favour towards Carthage, from two well-known Odes of Horace.<sup>11</sup>

On one level, then, Aeneas is a Homeric-type warrior hero hounded by an offended deity: on another he is the man who is destined to make possible the future foundation of Rome and who from the outset of his adventures is persecuted by the deity who is the patron and protectress of the most fearful enemies Rome ever had. So much is made clear right from the beginning of the poem.

The first conflict of the two is the storm provoked by Juno. There is no reason to doubt Macrobius when he says<sup>12</sup> that there was a similar incident in Book I of the *Bellum Punicum* of Naevius, followed by Venus' complaint to Juppiter and his encouraging reply. There is, however, no reason at all for supposing that Juno was connected by Naevius with the raising of the storm: and, whereas Dido *may* have figured in the earlier epic, there is no evidence at all either that she was brought into conflict emotional or otherwise with Aeneas, or that Juno had any part to play in such an episode. In the *Aeneid*, with Juno's contriving to raise the storm, an important link with Book IV is about to be forged. For the Romans, Juno was essentially the goddess with an especial interest in women and women's affairs: as *Pronuba* she attended their weddings, as *Iterduca* she brought brides to their new homes, as *Cinxia* she was the *numen* of the girdle, as *Opigena* she brought them help in child-birth and as *Lucina* brought their offspring to the light of day. In both *Aeneid* I and *Aeneid* IV she abuses this aspect of her powers in her effort to thwart the will of Juppiter. In *Aeneid* I she bribes Aeolus with the promise of a lovely young nymph *conubio iungam stabili propriamque dicabo* (l. 73); in *Aeneid* IV Virgil makes her use these very same words<sup>13</sup> of her plan to effect the union of Dido and Aeneas (l. 126). It is perhaps not surprising to find the line *Aeneid* IV.126 rejected by that inveterate obelizer Hofman Peerkamp: it is strange to find this view accepted by scholars such as Ribbeck, Haupt and Mackail. Not only is it the case that "without it the

<sup>9</sup> For the reputed words of the *euocatio* see Macrob. III.9.10, and Fraenkel, *Horace*, p. 237 & n.

<sup>10</sup> Plut. *C. Gracch.* 11; Solin. 27.11.

<sup>11</sup> Hor. *Od.* I.25 and III.3.

<sup>12</sup> *Sat.* VI.2.31.

<sup>13</sup> The use of the verb *dicō*, *-are* should not be overlooked. Outside these two places, Virgil only uses it at *Aen.* V.90—of temples consecrated. It is a poeticism for the "*uox propria*"—*dedicō*,—*are*.

speech would end on too light a structure, and Juno's part be shorn of its solemnity",<sup>14</sup> but, more important, it forms a clear link with Book I. It is as intentional a repetition as that of the line IV.160 *interea magno misceri murmure caelum*, which describes the storm ultimately responsible for the union of Aeneas and Dido, and is clearly intended to recall *Aeneid* I.124 *interea magno misceri murmure pontum*, which describes the storm ultimately responsible for their meeting in the first place. Both storms can be regarded as symbolical.

When we first meet Odysseus in the *Odyssey*<sup>15</sup> he is in a woebegone state, sitting by the sea shore, groaning and wailing, unwilling lover of the willing nymph Calypso. Urged by Athene, Zeus sends Hermes to bid her send him on his way: setting out on his raft, he is caught in the storm sent by Poseidon and immediately gives voice: "Thrice—yea four times blessed those Greeks who died at Troy."<sup>16</sup> When Virgil makes Aeneas the first time we meet him utter virtually the same words,<sup>17</sup> he portrays him, in spite of his divine protection and his divine mission, as still a man with the weaknesses and emotions of an ordinary human being. The reader is being subtly prepared for the emotional conflict of *Aeneid* IV.

As Juno is brought on the scene as the persecutor of Aeneas and the Trojans, so a divine champion soon appears. At *Aeneid* I.229 ff. Venus appeals to Juppiter. Among her first words she identifies herself as the mother of Aeneas<sup>18</sup> and reminds Juppiter that it has been promised that the Romans<sup>19</sup> will come from this stock. Roman readers would at once think of Venus *Genetrix*, recalling the opening lines of the *de rerum natura* of Lucretius and perhaps remembering the Ennian usage too: they would be aware that her cult was traditional in the family of the Iulii (i.e. of Augustus) as the divine mother of that *gens*. In other words, the struggle of Rome and Carthage is again brought to the minds of Roman readers: it is instructive to see how this is reflected once more in the course of the later interventions of these goddesses in *Aeneid* I and *Aeneid* IV.

But for the moment, let us consider the reply of Juppiter. In the first four lines (257-60) he assures Venus that nothing has changed and that in the end *sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli | magnanimum Aenean*. The use of this latter epithet is rather puzzling. I cannot agree with those who argue, e.g. as Conway does, that a "notion of generosity combined with courage is always implied in the Latin word". And Servius *auctus*<sup>21</sup> is perhaps wide of the mark in his comment "*bene hoc addidit, quasi*

<sup>14</sup> Austin, *Aen.* IV.126.

<sup>15</sup> *Od.* V.82 ff.

<sup>16</sup> *Od.* V.306.

<sup>17</sup> The masterly addition of the words *ante ora patrum* should be noticed: cf. the savage words of Turnus, as he sets out to kill Pallas—*cuperem ipse parens spectator adesset.* *Aen.* X.443.

<sup>18</sup> I.231 *quid meus Aeneas*.

<sup>19</sup> The effective use of the noun *Romanos* picks up the mention of Rome (l. 7) and the *gens Romana* (33).

<sup>20</sup> Enn. *Ann.* fr. 52 (Vahlen) 49 (Warmington).

<sup>21</sup> *ad Aen.* I.261.

*dicat, quem tu miserum dicis, nos magnanimum, summum*". The adjective is in Homeric style, and is a conventional epic epithet, used by Virgil some dozen times in the *Aeneid*, not only of Aeneas<sup>22</sup> and Juppiter<sup>23</sup> (ironically) but of Aeneas' enemies Mezentius<sup>24</sup> and Volcens.<sup>25</sup> Here it has no special significance, and the truth is probably that it may have been taken over from Ennius<sup>26</sup> or Naevius.<sup>27</sup> Be this as it may, there is probably little further Ennian or Naevian influence in the speech of Juppiter, least of all in the passage where Juppiter defines the power that shall be Rome's—*his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono | imperium sine fine dedi* (279), and Virgil defines his conception of Rome not only as a conquering nation but as a civilizing influence in the world—*Romanos rerum dominos gentemque togatam* (282), and after reflecting the efforts of Roman genealogists to connect the Iulii of Rome with Ilus of Troy<sup>28</sup> ends with a clear reference to Augustus<sup>29</sup> and the closing of the Gates of War.

The concluding lines well illustrate Virgil's artistry :

claudentur Belli portae ; Furor impius intus  
saeua sedens super arma et centum uinctus aënis  
post tergum nodis fremet horridus ore cruento.

Servius *ad loc.* has two explanations to offer. The first is that *furor impius* refers to the Civil Wars. The second *sicut quidam tradunt* is that Virgil is referring to a picture which those entering the *forum Augusti* could see on the left—a picture of War, and Furor sitting on a heap of weapons, with her arms tied behind her back. Pliny (*N.H.* XXXV, 93 ff.) confirms this : it was a picture by Apelles. It depicted War with his hands tied behind his back, and it had been placed in the *forum Augusti* by Augustus himself. We can, I think, be reasonably sure that Virgil had this picture in mind, and that those who heard his words would have thought of it at once too : it is a subtle compliment to Augustus, rounding off the references to him in the preceding lines. But there is also another explanation which may be offered, not as an alternative, but as a complement. In the proem of Book I the wrath of Juno symbolizes the setback and suffering which is to affect in various ways most of the characters of the *Aeneid*. At the end of the proem, Virgil poses the question " Why was a man, outstanding for his sense of duty, driven to undergo such suffering ? Does such great resentment exist in the minds of the dwellers in heaven ? " *tantaene animis caelestibus irae ? Ira* and *furor* are keywords in the *Aeneid*. *Furor* is to be a motif of *Aeneid* IV, for it is when she is *furens*, when she has let *furor* control her actions, that Dido is no longer a regal figure, a queen, but just a woman dominated

<sup>22</sup> *Aen.* V.17, 407 ; IX.204.

<sup>23</sup> XII.144, 878.

<sup>24</sup> X.774.

<sup>25</sup> X.563.

<sup>26</sup> Though the attribution to Ennius of frag. 65-66 Vahlen (63-64 Warmington) is not certain. See further Norden on *Aen.* VI.307 and to his examples of the use of the epithet add Catullus LXIV.85 (of Minos).

<sup>27</sup> See n. 12.

<sup>28</sup> The name has no authority other than this passage.

<sup>29</sup> *pace Servii*, ll. 289-90 clearly indicate that Augustus, not Julius, Caesar is meant.

by a self-centred passion. Again, it is *furor* which is responsible for the *uiolentia Turni*—Turnus, who in the opening of Book XII is compared with a wounded Punic lion who snaps off the huntsman's spear in his side and rages with bloodstained mouth *fremit ore cruento*. It is no coincidence that Virgil echoes in Book XII the phrase from Book I. Virgil uses the speech of Juppiter to introduce a number of motifs: above all he uses it to stress again the difference between his poem and the Homeric ones, and to look forward to, and make understandable, the suffering that is to be the dominating feature of later books, especially of Books IV and XII.

It is significant that it is immediately following this speech of Juppiter that Virgil introduces Dido. He does so in terms full of foreboding . . . *fati nescia Dido*. No woman, no person could stand in the way of a man with such a mission as Aeneas'. Dido is introduced as a queen (l. 303)—the word is used of her some twenty times in Books I and IV. A Roman would not fail to think at once of another queen who had caused Rome no little trouble—Cleopatra, of whom Dio (51.4) was later to say: "By love she gained the title of Queen of the Egyptians, and when she hoped by the same means to win that of Queen of the Romans too, she failed, and lost the other as well." Some might remember hearing of yet another Oriental, Teuta of Illyria, who had precipitated a war by murdering a Roman envoy. The impact of the word must not be overlooked, especially in an age in which, unlike in the Roman, the conception of queen is common in both recent and past history. Even more significantly, in l. 302 Virgil uses the noun *Poeni*<sup>30</sup> to describe her people. Virgil is sparing in his use of this word: more common is *Tyrius*, *Tyrii*, an adjective somewhat freer from the connotation "Carthaginian" and the memories of the Punic Wars.

We may now turn to the second intervention of Venus, who appears in disguise to Aeneas to tell him where he is, and to give him, and the reader (or audience), the early history of Dido. This confrontation, if the word may nowadays be used thus, has a similarity with that of Odysseus and Nausicaa.<sup>31</sup> Φαίηκες μὲν τήνδε πόλιν καὶ γαῖαν ἔχουσιν says Nausicaa:<sup>32</sup> *Punica regna uidet* (l. 338) says Venus. The influence is unmistakable, but the words of Venus have a deeper meaning. The adjective *Punicus*, with its strong reminder of the Punic Wars, is used by Virgil only here and in *Aeneid* IV.49 where Anna tempts Dido with the thought of what a union of Trojan and Carthaginian might achieve.

Venus' story of Dido is soon told: she has been widowed in tragic circumstances, but is still a woman of spirit and enterprise. She it was who organized the removal of her husband's treasure, organized an escape-party, and had the ingenuity to acquire land, albeit by dubious real-estate methods, in Africa. *dux femina facti* (l. 364): this aspect of Dido is to be kept constantly before the readers' eyes.

<sup>30</sup> It is used in XII.4 of an African lion, in the simile mentioned above concerning another enemy of Aeneas, Turnus. Cf. however *Ecl.* V.27. In VI.858 it is used of the Carthaginians defeated by Marcellus. Otherwise it is found only at *Aen.* I.302, 442 and 567, and, perhaps significantly, at *Aen.* IV.134 of the Carthaginians who accompany Dido on the ill-fated hunt.

<sup>31</sup> *Od.* VI.127 ff. Cf. R. D. Williams, *Phoenix* (1963), p. 271.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* 195.

The next intervention of Venus is when (ll. 664 ff.) she persuades her other son Cupid to come to the aid of his half-brother Aeneas. Once again, Virgil has in mind an episode from another and earlier epic, for in Apollonius Rhodius, Bk. III, Hera, Athena and Aphrodite combine to help Jason and Medea—and Aphrodite persuades Eros, no, *bribes* him, for the Eros of Apollonius is a *very* spoiled brat—to pierce Medea with his arrows. Once again too, the similarity is one of framework only. Virgil adds an editorial comment before Venus acts: *quippe domum timet ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis* (l. 661). Here clearly, unequivocally, Virgil means to put into the minds of his readers the idea of *Punica fides*, almost proverbial to Romans and epitomized in Livy's *perfidia plus quam Punica*:<sup>33</sup> the keynote of Venus' speech is ll. 671-2 *ueror quo se Iunonia uertant | hospitia*. The adjective *Iunonia* is used by Virgil only here: in the rest of Latin literature it is not by any means common. The associations that it was intended to refer to cannot be doubted. Again, the fear which beset those to whom the future of the Trojans and of Rome was dear is echoed again in *Aeneid* VI.694 where almost the first words that the shade of Anchises addresses to his son are *quam metui ne quid Libyae tibi regna nocerent!* Cupid goes on his way, and the next time that Virgil describes Dido it is as *infelix, pesti deuota futurae*.

Virgil now prepares to forge yet another link between *Aeneid* I and *Aeneid* IV. For at *Aeneid* IV.90 when Dido is already inflamed with love for Aeneas—Virgil picks up the phrase *pesti deuota futurae* with *tali persensit peste teneri* (IV.90)—he makes Juno intervene for the last time.<sup>34</sup> She proposes to Venus that the two be united on a more formal basis. Her speech is not only artistically set in Book IV between two deeply emotional passages, Dido's struggle with her conscience, and the consummation of the union: her words clearly recall the speech of Venus at *Aeneid* I.664 ff. and Cartault<sup>35</sup> remarks that it is almost as if she had a stenographic record of what was said then. For in l. 96 her description of Venus as afraid (*ueritam*) recalls the *ueror* of I.671: her reference to the *suspectas . . . domos Karthaginis altae* (l. 97) recalls Virgil's comment on Venus' fear for *domum ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis* (I.661) and her words to Venus *habes tota quod mente petisti* (l. 100) reflect Venus' *nostram nunc accipe mentem* (I.676).

The *motif* Rome-Carthage is very apparent in the actions and the speeches of Venus and Juno. I have already shown how in this last intervention of Juno the storm which accompanies—or indeed makes possible—the ill-fated union is paralleled by the storm provoked by Juno in Book I, and pointed to the effective repetition of the line *conubio iungam stabili propriamque dicabo* (*Aeneid* I.73; IV.124). Let us now return to the point where we left Aeneas in Book I when I jumped ahead to illustrate the interventions of Venus and Juno.

Venus had told Aeneas of Dido and of her history, and Aeneas had introduced himself: *sum pius Aeneas* (l. 378). Charles James Fox's criticism, and Henry's tremendous, if oratorical, defence of these lines have each received a disproportionate amount

<sup>33</sup> XXI.4.9.

<sup>34</sup> That is, as far as Aeneas and Dido are concerned.

<sup>35</sup> *L'Art de Virgile dans l'Eneide I* (1926), pp. 344-5.

of attention. The pattern is that of Odysseus' self-introduction to Alcinous,<sup>36</sup> but Virgil has as usual effected a complete transformation. Not only is *pietas* the essential element in the character of Aeneas, but there is another reason for the use of the adjective that would have been at once understood by a Roman. Aeneas is reasonably sure that he is addressing a goddess from whom further help may be forthcoming. When a Roman thus addressed a deity he made sure to mention his *pietas*, his fulfilment of his obligations to the gods, to justify his request and make clear that he has deserved its granting. "*O di reddite mi hoc pro pietate mea*" cries Catullus.<sup>37</sup>

Venus' reply is to assure Aeneas that he will find his lost comrades again. These words she confirms with an omen. Once again Virgil has Homer in mind here, for in *Il.* XV.690 Hector's attack is compared with that of an eagle upon geese, cranes and swans. Once again, too, the omen and its augural interpretation is made to strike a completely Roman note.

As Venus disappears, Virgil makes Aeneas lament as did Odysseus in *Od.* XI.210. His words *crudelis tu quoque*<sup>38</sup> reveal him again as a man of human emotions giving voice to his frustration. Shrouded like a Homeric hero favoured of the Gods<sup>39</sup>—though the mist here is symbolical<sup>40</sup>—he looks down on the Tyrians building their city. This scene and those that follow are vividly drawn; we are to be reminded of them again in a number of ways in *Aeneid* IV, each time with increasing significance.

The Tyrians are eagerly at work (*l.* 423) building walls, harbours, the citadel, places of entertainment, all in fact that one would expect to find in a civilized city of the ancient world. To describe their activity, Virgil uses a simile: "Exactly the same is the toil which in early summer keeps the bees busy, when they lead forth the grown-up offspring of their race or pack the fluid honey, making the cells swell and be sweet. Others take over the loads of returning workers, or swarm and drive away the drones, that lazy flock, from, as it were, the fold. The whole work is aglow and the fragrant honey is sweet with thyme."

Now whenever a simile is found, there are some people whose first reaction is to seek out its literary history. So, indeed, Macrobius<sup>41</sup> quotes this simile and follows it at once with a quotation of *Il.* II.87-90, where Homer describes the Achaeans hastening to an assembly: "Even as when the tribes of thronging bees issue from some hollow rock, ever in fresh procession, and fly clustering on to the flowers of spring, and some on this hand and some on that fly thick." Macrobius cites these two similes as an instance of where Virgil has in *transferendo densius excoluisse*: "has perfected what he took over more exactly, more precisely": he goes on to note that in Homer the bees are described as merely "fitting to and fro", whereas

<sup>36</sup> *Od.* IX.19.

<sup>37</sup> Cat. LXXVI.26. Cf. Hor. *Od.* II.24.11 *tu frustra pius heu non ita creditu poscis Quintilium deos*, and Cicero, *de officiis* II.3.11 *deos placatos pietas efficiet et sanctitas*. Cf. G. Appel, *De Romanorum precationibus* (Giessen, 1909), pp. 151 ff.

<sup>38</sup> A curious echo of *Ecl.* VIII.50.

<sup>39</sup> e.g. *Il.* III.381.

<sup>40</sup> Otis, p. 65.

<sup>41</sup> *Sat.* V.II.I.

Virgil portrays them as "working, performing the function they were born to perform". All this is nonsense: if one wants to see the influence of this particular Homeric simile, one would do far better to look at Apollonius Rhodius *Arg.*, I.879-82 where the Lemnian women are described as thronging round the Argonauts like bees which issue from a hive in a rock, and hum around the fair flowers in the rejoicing, dewy meadow. Or at *Aeneid* VI.707 ff. where the ghosts of the dead flit around the River Lethe like bees around the many-hued flowers and white lilies of a summer meadow. That is a short, simple simile, and, unlike the one with which we are dealing, of little literary significance. In the simile in Book I, Virgil had *neither* Homer *nor* Apollonius Rhodius in mind: he adapts to an illustrative simile a passage which he had written as a literal description in the fourth book of the *Georgics*—and no one has ever suggested Homeric or Apollonian influence *there*, as far as I know!

The proper question to ask is not "whence?" but "why?" Virgil wishes to illustrate vividly the scene of happy employment, and uses very closely, and with only minor alterations, a passage from his own *Georgics*. In part, perhaps, the wholesale repetition may be a kind of "signature", just as the closing lines of Book IV of the *Georgics* deliberately recall his authorship of the *Eclogues*.<sup>42</sup> More important, the simile is exactly what is needed to "suggest all the sweetness of security and happy employment" with which "Aeneas can but contrast his own very different plight"<sup>43</sup> again revealing his inner emotions—*o fortunati, quorum iam moenia surgunt* (l. 437): he knows that his turn will come, but he can't help envying those who are already enjoying a turn of their fortunes for the better. But even this explanation is not complete and overlooks the prime literary importance of the simile: it is deliberately put there to be recalled, very dramatically and effectively, by another simile in Book IV. I will return to this later.

For the moment, however, let us complete the picture in Book I: Aeneas sees that the temple (*Juno's* temple, lest we forget the patron deity of this city) decorations, perhaps the metopes, portray the war at Troy, and yet again we learn his emotional reaction *sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt* (l. 462): the comparatively long description of the scenes portrayed is not only a form of digression developed from Homer and particularly favoured by the Hellenistic poets:<sup>44</sup> it serves to remind the reader of the experiences that Aeneas has undergone. Nor are suggestions of Augustus absent, especially in the concluding scenes.<sup>45</sup> The picture of Carthaginian activity is completed by the appearance of Dido: she is a queen, with a queen's retinue (l. 497) and she is also a beautiful woman—*forma pulcherrima* (l. 496). She moves through her people gaily, proudly (*laeta* 503): like them she is eagerly wrapped up in the project *instans operi regnisque futuris*. She is compared with Diana.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. n. 38. Cf. also, e.g. *Ecl.* I.73 and IX.50, *Aen.* I.58 as adapted from *Ecl.* IV.51 and *Geo.* IV.222. And see Sparrow, *Half-lines and Repetitions in Virgil* (1931), esp. pp. 90, III.

<sup>43</sup> Otis, p. 67.

<sup>44</sup> See Fordyce, *Catullus* (1961), p. 273.

<sup>45</sup> See Conway, *Aen.* I. p. 89: "the figure of Aeneas himself, victorious, and followed by allies of Troy drawn from afar, 488 and 493, inevitably suggesting Augustus in the East, as in VI.94."

Brooks Otis has on pp. 72 ff. a fine discussion of the Aeneas-Dido similes. He rightly concludes: "Virgil in short has taken Apollonian, Homeric, and even tragic materials to form the structure of a very complex and very un-Apollonian and un-Homeric epic."<sup>46</sup> With this we can agree: but he seems to me to have been a little side-tracked along the way to this conclusion. For instance, examining the similes "which involve a direct comparison with Jason-Medea or Aeneas-Dido" (I am not sure exactly what he means here), he cites this simile of Dido—Diana, and those at IV.69 (Dido—a wounded doe), 143 ff. (Aeneas—Apollo), and 441-9 (Aeneas—wind-battered oak), and notes parallel similes in Apollonius and Homer,<sup>47</sup> setting them down in tabular form. This is meant to show us at a glance exactly what has happened: "Virgil is primarily indebted to Apollonius: all his direct similes for Dido and Aeneas correspond in some degree to the Apollonian similes for Medea and Jason. But he has added many Homeric touches to Apollonius."

This statement contains two fallacies. First, not all the similes applied to Dido and Aeneas come from Apollonius: Otis does not mention *Aeneid* I.592 (the beauty that Aeneas' mother has bestowed on her son is compared to a craftsman's inlay or other decorative work): this comes from Homer, *Od.* VI.229 (repeated XXIII.156), and is not found in Apollonius. Further, neither of the two powerful similes at *Aeneid* IV.301 ff. (Dido—maenad) or 469 ff. (Dido—tragic figures of the stage) owe any debt to Apollonius, to Homer, or to anyone else that we know of. Yet all of these similes deal with Aeneas or Dido in their relations with each other.

Secondly, Virgil is not primarily indebted to Apollonius. Let us look briefly at the alleged sources of the Dido-Diana simile.

In *Aeneid* I, Virgil compares Dido moving, with an escort of warriors, among the Tyrians as they build the city: "just as on the banks of Eurotas, or over the heights of Mt. Cynthus Diana leads her dancing bands—a thousand mountain-nymphs follow her, thronging around on this side and on that: she herself carries her quiver on her shoulder, and as she steps along overtops all the goddess-nymphs, and joy fills the quiet breast of Latona—even so was Dido, even so did she bear herself proudly . . ." (I.498 ff.). In the sixth book of the *Odyssey*, Homer describes Nausicaa, as she plays with her maidens, just before encountering Odysseus: "And even as Artemis, the archer, moveth down the mountain, either along the ridges of lofty Taygetus or Erymanthus, taking her pastime in the chase of boars and swift deer, and with her the wild wood-nymphs disport themselves, the daughters of Zeus,<sup>48</sup> lord of the aegis, and Leto is glad at heart, while high over all she rears her head and brows, and easily may she be known—but all are fair: even so the girl unwed outshone her maiden company."<sup>49</sup> Now, it is possible to argue that Virgil is clearly indebted to Homer:

<sup>46</sup> Otis, p. 76.

<sup>47</sup> p.73 for Pirithous read Polypoites, s. of Pirithoos: to the list of Apollonian similes *not* used in *Aen.* IV. by Virgil add Ap. Rhod. III.291, III.1019 and above all III.756 (imitated at *Aen.* VIII.22 ff.).

<sup>48</sup> This phrase adds support to the emendation *deas* of Pomponius Laetus (=M<sup>7</sup> in Sabbadini's *apparatus*) for the *dea* of MPR.

<sup>49</sup> Trans. Butcher & Lang.

in both similes Diana/Artemis moves on foot, the scene in the Homer simile is in Sparta or Arcadia, in the Virgilian in Sparta or Delos. In both, wood-nymphs attend Diana/Artemis, in both she makes her mother's heart rejoice and in both she overtops her companions. We may go on to add that in both the simile is made to refer to a young woman about to encounter a man, and argue that it was natural for Virgil to think of Homer, seeing that the broad outlines of the Nausicaa/Odysseus story are used for the Dido/Aeneas episode.

Now let us look at Medea in Apollonius III.876 ff. She is setting out to meet Jason: she mounts a chariot, takes the reins and as she drives along two handmaidens run along on either side: "And even as by the mild waters of Parthenius, or after bathing in the river Amnisus, Leto's daughter stands on her golden chariot, and courses over the hills with her swift-footed roes, to greet from afar some richly streaming hecatomb: and with her come the nymphs in attendance, gathering, some at the spring of Amnisus itself, others by the glens and many-fountained peaks, and round her whine and fawn the beasts cowering as she moves along: *thus* they sped through the city, and on both sides the people gave way, shunning the eyes of the royal maiden."<sup>50</sup> Medea is going off to meet Jason: Virgil knew the simile, but when he compared Dido with Diana, he thought first and foremost of Homer. Apollonius inspired only the mention of a river bank, and the idea of nymphs on either side (*hinc atque hinc*. l. 500): these are the only two points of similarity: otherwise the whole settings in Virgil and Apollonius are completely different.

As with the simile of the bees, the real literary importance of the Dido-Diana simile lies *not* in the source of its inspiration, but in its use. For it is set in *Aeneid* I later to be recalled by, and contrasted with, another simile in *Aeneid* IV—thus forming another of the links which are the prime subject of my paper. In Book I the simile describes Dido as she is about to come into contact with Aeneas for the first time, just before the first ill-fated step in the tragedy that is to be taken. In Book IV Aeneas, as he sets out on what will result in the fatal consummation of the love that he and Dido have, is compared with Apollo, Diana's brother: "as when Apollo leaves Lycia, his winter home, or the stream of Xanthus and visits his birth-place Delos. He starts the dance anew, and round the altars, mingling with each other, Cretans, Dryopes and tattooed Agathyrsi make a din. The god himself strides over the ranges of Mt. Cynthus, and with clinging leafage shapes and holds in his flowing hair, entwining it with gold: his weapons clang on his shoulders: no less vigorous was the bearing of Aeneas as he set out, just as much grace shone forth from his noble countenance." (ll. 143 ff.) In the Dido-Diana simile the atmosphere was one of calm, happy and proud achievement: here, as Otis notes, there are ominous overtones—the word *fremunt* has a nuance of almost Bacchic frenzy, reinforced by the picture of the Cretans, connected with the Corybantes, the birth-legends of Zeus and wild rites, and the outlandish Dryopes and Agathyrsi. What has all this to do with the quiet beauty of the simile in Apollonius ll. 307 ff. where Jason moves through

<sup>50</sup> Trans. R. C. Seaton.

the people on his way to join his ship "like Apollo, leaving some fragrant shrine to visit divine Delos or Claros, in Lycia by the stream of Xanthus"? Nothing at all!—there may have been a faint recollection in Virgil's mind, no more. What Virgil is doing is to make a skilful recollection of the passage in *Aeneid* I, and a contrast which becomes the more effective and ominous when we remember the settings of the two similes.

There are other aspects of the scene in Book I that are taken up and developed in Book IV. The first of these occurs at ll. 73 ff. Dido is now in the grip of passion, and Virgil has just made a comparison of her with a wounded doe. Once again, I feel that Otis has here somewhat overstressed the Apollonian element in this simile. Particularly effective is the use of the adjective *nescius*: not only is Aeneas ignorant of the effect that he has on Dido, but Dido is ignorant of the forces at work: the adjective almost reminds the reader of Virgil's description of Dido, and his "editorial comment", as she fondles what she thinks is Ascanius, but what is really Cupid: *gremio fouet inscia Dido / insidat quantus miserae deus* (I.718-9). Dido shows Aeneas the city: but the queen who was once so proud and happy in the building of the city (*laeta . . . instans operi* (I.503-4)) is now a woman hopelessly wrapped up in love, no longer mistress of herself—*incipit effari mediaque in uoce resistit* (l. 76): she moons around Aeneas, and, if he is not there, his child. This scene closes with a description of the result of all this—when their leader loses interest, so do the men: in deliberate contrast to the scene of activity in Book I, Virgil pictures the cessation of the work (ll. 86 ff.):

non coeptae adsurgunt turres, non arma iuuentus  
exercet portusue aut propugnacula bello  
tuta parant: pendent opera interrupta minaeque  
murorum ingentes aequataque machina caelo.

Two ancient commentators realized Virgil's intention. Servius in his note recalls from Bk. I lines 423 *pars ducere muros* and 427 *hic portus alii effodiunt*. Tib. Donatus comments *eius negligentia omni modo frigere uniuersa quae ante feruebant*. His use of this verb shows that he clearly saw the parallel with the *feruet opus* of I.436. Once again, a passage in Book IV is clearly linked with Book I.

I have already discussed the subsequent intervention of Juno, and the attendant nuance of the menace of Carthage. We are, I think, meant to assume that after the consummation of her love, Dido settles down: we presume Aeneas does too, though Virgil cleverly tells us very little about him and his reactions at this stage. *artis poeticae est non omnia dicere*: yet the situation that he paints is perfectly clear. When Virgil describes the rumours that start to circulate, he specifically says that *Fama* is *tam ficti prauisque tenax quam nuntia ueri* (l. 188) and *pariter facta atque infecta canebat* (l. 190). What did *Fama* have to say? That Trojan Aeneas had come to Carthage—correct. That Dido had given herself to him—correct. That

nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa, fouere  
regnorum immemores turpique cupidine captos

(I93-4)

—therein lay the twist of truth. Virgil means us to understand that *Fama* maliciously accentuated Aeneas' foreign descent, and the manner in which he was spending the winter. For Roman readers there is too a subtle innuendo, a reminder of what another Oriental queen had done to two Romans, and tried to do to a third. Cleopatra, too, had been a threat to Rome. Juppiter's reaction confirms this: Aeneas' true destiny is

. . . fore qui grauidam imperiis belloque frementem  
 Italiam regeret, genus alto a sanguine Teucrici  
 proderet, ac totum sub leges mitteret orbem.<sup>51</sup>

(229-31)

The allusion to his words to Venus in Book I is unmistakable and intentional on Virgil's part. *Fama* spreads a half-truth: Dido is not *regni immemor*: Aeneas is—forgetful of the destiny that he half-understands.<sup>52</sup> Subtly, in his description of Aeneas, as found by Mercury when he delivers Juppiter's message, Virgil lets us know what has happened. He has become wrapped up in Dido's plans: now it is Aeneas who superintends the building of Carthage: even the clothes that he wears are Tyrian, Oriental:

Aenean fundantem arces ac tecta nouantem  
 conspicit. atque illi stellatus iaspide fulua  
 ensis erat Tyrioque ardebat murice laena  
 demissa ex umeris, diues quae munera Dido  
 fecerat . . .

(260-4)

The scene depicted in *Aeneid* I is again recalled: the very language *fundantem* . . . *arces* recalls the earlier passage. How much more effective is *Aeneid* IV when we read it in the light of *Aeneid* I!

The final link with *Aeneid* I comes some time later. Aeneas, moved by Mercury's warning, acts immediately. It is outside the scope of my present inquiry to comment on the artistry with which his emotional conflict is described by Virgil: how *ardet abire* (l. 281) so clearly indicates his feelings of guilty compulsion<sup>53</sup> and one adjective *dulcis*, immediately following—"the land he'd come to love"—, suffices to present his dilemma: the intimate appeal of the adjective *optima* (l. 291):<sup>54</sup> how, finally, the single adjective *imperio laeti parent* not only recalls the joy and pride of Dido and the Carthaginians in the building of *their* city, but reveals what Aeneas' men thought of the situation. But, to return: Aeneas is unmoved by Dido's pleas and orders his men to prepare to sail.

At line 400, Virgil uses a simile to describe their activity. "Just as when ants, mindful of the winter, plunder a huge pile of corn, storing it in their homes: the

<sup>51</sup> See p. 27. Virgil's conception of the twofold mission of Rome finds its ultimate expression in the words of Anchises in Book VI.851 *regere imperio populos* and 852 *pacisque imponere morem*.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *Aen.* I.380 *Italiam quaero patriam*.

<sup>53</sup> Otis, p. 266.

<sup>54</sup> The adjective seems almost to have the force of "dearest". Cf. the sepulchral inscription (C.I.L. VI.11602) *Amymone Marci optima et pulcherrima* and Lucret. III.894-5 *uxor optima*.

black column moves over the plain: they drag their booty over the grass along a narrow track. Some strain with their shoulders and push along the huge ears of corn: others close up the ranks, urge on the dalliers: the whole narrow way is alive with the task."

Heyne and Conington saw a hint of the simile in Ap. Rhod. IV.1452-6, where the Minyae gather round a spring of water "as when earth-burrowing ants gather in swarms round a cleft, or when flies lighting upon a tiny drop of sweet honey cluster round with insatiate eagerness". May I again express the opinion that Virgil never even thought of this simile in Apollonius?

No one seems to have pointed out in a few words how perfect an example this simile is of Virgil's creative art, though Henry had seen how it creates the idea of distance. Seen from some high window of the Palace, the figures of the men would have looked like ants. He points acutely to Virgil's subsequent apostrophe

quis tibi tum, Dido, cernenti talia sensus  
quosue dabas gemitus cum litora feruere late  
spiceres arce ex summa?

(408-10)

But that is far from all. First to be noted is Virgil's sympathetic use of language. To whom else is the pile of corn *huge*, the ears of corn *huge* save to the ants? Furthermore, the application of technical military terms—*agmen*, *praedam*, *agmina cogere* reflects the same sympathetic attitude as Virgil had previously shown in *Georgics* IV.153 ff., where he talked of bees having *natos*, *penatis*, of existing like humans *sub legibus*, of having, like humans, *consortia urbis tecta*. In *Georgics* IV? And also in *Aeneid* I—and herein lies the full force of this simile. The joy, the bustle, the ordered employment of the Trojans in their desire to get away from Carthage, is exactly that of the Carthaginians in Book I in the building of their city. To seal this pathetic contrast, Virgil uses the same verb: *feruet opus redolentique thymo fragrantia mella* (I.436): *opere omnis semita feruet* (IV.407).

We start Book IV of the *Aeneid* with the two main characters clearly depicted. Aeneas is a man with a mission, whose progress is governed by fate, watched over by *Venus Genetrix*, destined to be ultimately responsible for the coming into being of Rome and its subsequent rise to unprecedented power. He is still a man, uncertain at times, with the weaknesses of man. Dido is a woman with a history of past unhappiness, energetic, ingenious but still a beautiful woman. She too is founding a city, whose protectress is Roman-hating Juno, a city destined to provide a major threat to the rise of Rome. This nuance of the menace of Carthage present from the very beginning of the *Aeneid* is to be brought out into the open with the clear reference to Hannibal in Dido's curse (IV.625). The tragedy that is to come has its essence in the human elements of Dido and Aeneas; the conflict of human desires will be played out before the backdrop of the major issue—the conflict of Rome and Carthage. All this is foreshadowed in Book I of the *Aeneid*: time and time again points made, ideas put forward in Book I are taken up and developed in Book IV. And therein lies much of the artistry of Book I, and of the *Aeneid* as a whole.