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Cover photo taken by Taryn Boonpongmanee in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican, Rome, Italy
“The Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple” by Raphael

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

The term “Classics” is primarily used in Western contexts to describe the field that studies Ancient Greek and Roman literature and culture. But in my Latin 699 class this year, I was given the opportunity to explore *any* piece of ancient classical society. After seeing a picture of the Indo-European language tree, I was really interested in the broader view of Classics beyond Latin and Greek. I had taken Sanskrit in the spring of 2022 as an elective generously taught by Dr. Houston, as a result of his interest in the language. While searching through the Indo-European language tree I wanted to look at languages other than Latin and Greek and I found the language of Pali which falls under the Indo-Aryan language family, closely related to Sanskrit.

During the fall of 2022, I decided to center my independent research on Pali, an ancient classical language that is primarily used within Buddhist texts. I learned about the grammar, structure, and vocabulary of Pali, as well as the Buddhist religion and Southeast Asian traditions. As a Thai Buddhist, I grew up in Washington state where the population of Buddhists is extremely low. At the age of 16, because of Dr. Houston’s generosity in supporting an independent Classics course, I had a revival of interest in Buddhism and can now attribute my Classical studies in stereotypically white antiquity to my journey of self-exploration. I’m forever grateful for Latin and Greek, specifically Deerfield, for giving me the chance to explore things outside of my STEM background and allow me to cultivate a love for the humanities and the Classics.

My first official Latin class was in the Deerfield Classics Department. But if I had the opportunity to start Classics before high school, I would have started far earlier. Unfortunately, Richland, Washington did not provide me with the opportunity to study Latin. My vision for starting *Calliope*, as someone who comes from an untraditional Classics background, was to expand the accessibility of Latin and give us the chance as a Deerfield community to celebrate student work in a shrinking field. I hope you enjoy our very first volume of *Calliope*!

Bene vale,
Taryn Boonpongmanee

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Laocoon's Warning

Levi Tipton

The *Aeneid* has been translated for hundreds of years, yet each translation is very unique. As David West describes in “The *Aeneid* and The Translator,” translation is challenging: “The translator takes millions of decisions on points of detail.”¹ While there are some consistent passages, phrases, or words shared among translations, the creative liberties taken by translators create a unique, vivid experience each time. Different translations have stayed close to the text, while others have strayed from the story. Some translators have tried to capture the meter and rhetoric; others have not. Despite their reasoning, these translators have always sought to truly capture the life of the *Aeneid*.

However, not every translation is perfect. As West argues, “The translator of Virgil has often to concede defeat before he starts.”² In an article titled “Translating the ‘Aeneid,’” West dissects different Authors translations of book II, lines 604 to 623. One of the Authors was C.D.Lewis, and he hated his translation:

Look! I shall swipe away the cloud which occludes
And dulls your moral vision, even as you gaze, the dank mist
Befogging you. Fear not to do whatever your mother
Tells you, and willingly be guided by me. Now, look at
That litter of masonry there, huge blocks, stone torn from stone,

¹ West, David, “The ‘Aeneid’ and the Translator.” *Greece & Rome* 37, no. 1 (1990): 52–64, accessed November 13, 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/643242>.

² West, David, “Translating the ‘Aeneid.’” *Translation and Literature*, vol. 1 (1992): 100-103, accessed March 1, 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40339623>.

And the dust-laden smoke billowing up from the debris –
It's Neptunes work: he gores and tosses with his great trident,
The walls, the foundations, until the whole city is disemboweled.
Look over there! At the Scaean gate, panoplied Juno
Heads the shock-troops, and in a vindictive fury calls up
Her allies from the ships.³

West points out the “wild fluctuations in style level.”⁴ I agree. The passage seems to suddenly shift from a sense of sublimity to pathos. Looking at Lewis’s work, the description of a cloud that “dulls your mortal vision” to a “mist befogging you,” and the lines “from not to do” to “whatever your mother tells you,” are all conflicting emotionally. From one happier extreme to an exaggerated tragedy-esquires sadness, Lewis fails to capture the tone of Venus in this passage. Rather, as West argues, Venus is more serious in this passage. She is not some epic savior. Furthermore, I find it odd that the outlandish descriptions of the ruined city, “the whole city is disemboweled,” are not fully present in the Latin text. And while authors are encouraged to take creative liberties, this is an excessive exaggeration. The passage is too emotional. West concludes with the statement: “[this passage] takes the measured strength of Vergil and screws it up a notch here and there to make it more sensational.”⁵ This aligns completely with my thinking. This translation strays too far from Vergil’s original text and intended message.

In this paper, I will be conducting a deep analysis of two major parts of Laocoon’s speech found in Book 2, lines 40 to 56. To do so, I’ll explore the grammar, rhetoric, and voice of the Latin text, compare translations, and show how each of these translations alters the sense of tension and foreboding in Laocoon’s warning.

³ Vergil, *The Aeneid of Vergil*, trans. C. Day Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1952. ⁴ West, “Translating The ‘Aeneid’,” 100.

⁵ West, “Translating The ‘Aeneid’,” 100.

The Spear

Laocoon warns the Trojans about the wooden horse, arguing that it is not a gift of the Greeks. He pleads for the Trojans to listen because he fears that the horse is a trap. Laocoon, upset, hurls a spear into the horse, encouraging others to destroy it. This passage contains complex and ambiguous language (II. 50-54):

Sic fatus validis ingentem viribus hastam
in latus inque feri curvam compagibus alvum
contorsit. stetit illa tremens, uteroque recusso
insonuere cauae gemitumque dedere cavernae.⁶

So saying Laocoon hurled a huge spear by means of strong force
Into the flank and into the joints of the curved belly of the horse.
That (spear) stood trembling, and the womb having been shaken,
resounded and gave a groan of a hollow cave.⁷

This passage is highly descriptive and syntactically rich, yet is also quite grammatically confusing. To start, let us explore the phrase *validus ingentem viribus hastam* (II.50). This line exhibits synchysis. *Ingentem* and *hastam* agree (they are both accusative), but the words are split by *viribus*. *Viribus* also agrees with *Validus* (they are both ablatives), but those two words are split as well. This creates an “ABAB” order. In doing so, I believe that the reader's attention is drawn to this phrase; it's initially confusing. The word order builds tension because it isn't fully understood until the reader reads *hastam*, which intentionally sits at the end of the sentence.

⁶Barbara Weiden Boyd, *Vergil's Aeneid Expanded Collection*, (Mundelein: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2013), 111.

⁷This is my own work.

Vergil forces the reader to consider the true meaning of the words and the relationship between them.

In line 53, *insonuere cavae gemitumque dedere cavernae*, is arguably the most interesting feature of the passage: the use of sound. When someone reads this line outloud, the reader can almost hear the spear vibrating in the belly of the horse. The line not only uses onomatopoeic words, but also is made up entirely of dactyls. The rhythm of the words echo the reverberations of the spear. Additionally, the specific word choice in the line creates tension. *Gemitum*, which can mean roaring or groaning, adds a layer of life to the description of the hollow cavern of the horse's stomach. The word creates an ominous atmosphere, creepily almost giving life to the horse. I think that the description creates tension because it is unsettling; it makes the reader hold his or her breath, waiting to see what happens next.

Let us explore how other translators have tackled this ambiguous, rich passage. By exploring the use of word order, as well as the use of sound, how did these translations capture tension? To start, let us look at Sarah Ruden's translation (II. 50-54):

He hurled a massive spear with all his strength
Into the creature's round and riveted belly.
The shaft was planted, quivering; the deep,
Recoiling womb sent out an echoing groan.⁸

It is evident that Ruden has captured Vergil's dactylic hexameter into iambic pentameter in English. She also has made sure to translate each line of Latin into one line of English. Unlike Vergil in line 50, Ruden does not capture the tension in the word order. However, Ruden is able to create a tension by mimicking the sound of the scene, just as in the Aeneid. Through vivid

⁸ Vergil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Sarah Ruden (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), 33.

descriptions, Ruden is able to capture the unsettling acoustic atmosphere. The additional use of onomatopoeic words, such as “recoiling womb,” give even more life to the scene. Let us look at John Dryden’s translation (II. 50-54):

Thus having said, against the steed he threw
His forceful spear, which, hissing as it flew,
Pierc'd thro' the yielding planks of jointed wood,
And trembling in the hollow belly stood.
The sides, transpierc'd, return a rattling sound,
And groans of Greeks inclos'd come issuing thro' the wound.⁹

Dryden uniquely translates using rhyming couplets. This makes sense because Dryden was obsessed with, and strived to capture, Vergil’s rhythm and meter. As Robert Fitzgerald, a renowned poet, literary critic, and translator, described Dryden, “During 1665 and 1666, when London was being visited first by plague and then by the Great Fire, Dryden worked in Wiltshire on his Dialogue *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* and on a long poem, *Annus Mirabilis*. In the Dialogue he touched on Virgil as the ‘pattern of elaborate writing’ and as Ovid’s superior in restraint.”¹⁰ Despite this constraint, Dryden is able to capture tension through the word order. The first time the word “spear” is mentioned is in the middle of the second line, which is similar to how *hastam* appears at the end of line 50 in Latin. In doing so, Dryden builds tension, just like Vergil, because the line isn't fully understood until the reader has completely read it. However, Dryden does not capture as much tension in the sound. While he used onomatopoeia, like the word “hissing,” his translation did not capture the ominous tone of the Aeneid. For example, Dryden

⁹ Vergil, *The Aeneid*, trans. John Dryden (London: Penguin Classics, 1997), 34. ¹⁰ Fitzgerald, Robert, “Dryden’s ‘Aeneid.’” *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*, vol. 2, no. 3 (1963): pp. 17–31, accessed 1 March 2023, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20162849>.

decided *gemitum* referred to the Greeks, rather than the hollow belly. This distracts from the tension in the Latin text.

Lastly, let us examine Robert Fagles's translation (II. 50-54):

In that spirit, with all his might he hurled
a huge spear straight into the monster's flanks,
the mortised timberwork of its swollen belly.
Quivering, there it stuck, and the stricken womb
came booming back from its depths with echoing groans.¹¹

Fagles creates tension in the word order. The word "spear" is first mentioned in the second line. Similarly to Dryden's translation, Fagles's makes the reader read the entire line before it is understood. Like Ruden's translation, Fagles also creates tension through sound. Fagles used words like "quivering," "booming," as well as the phrase "echoing groans" to mimic the unsettling atmosphere of the Latin text.

When these translations are compared together, it is evident that some translators chose to ignore elements of the Latin text, while others clearly emphasized others. If I had to choose which translation was the best, I'd pick Fagles. This is because he managed to create tension throughout the passage with both word order and sound. While I don't think Ruden's or Dryden's translations are inaccurate, I do think that each translation, having only emphasized one of these elements, doesn't contain as much life as Fagles's.

¹¹ Vergil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Robert Fagles (London: Penguin Classics, 2006), 76.

The Condition

Later, Aeneas reflects on Laocoon's speech. He laments, describing how the people of Troy were stubborn. If the people had followed Laocoon's message, Troy would still be standing (II. 54-56):

et, si fata deum, si mens non laeva fuisset,
impulerat ferro Argolicas foedare latebras,
Troiaque nunc staret, Priamique arx alta maneres.¹²

And, if only it had been fated by the gods, if only [his] mind had not been foolish, He would have impelled the [Trojans] to befoul the Greek's lair with his iron, Then Troy would now stand, and Priam's high fortress would remain.¹³

In this passage, there certainly is difficult syntax. To begin, I'd like to examine the contrary to fact condition that is in line 54. Typically, contrary to fact conditions feature an imperfect subjunctive and a pluperfect subjunctive. However, an indicative verb may be substituted in the apodosis of a contrary to fact condition in order to express that the action was intended, creating a sense of urgency. *Fuisset* is a subjunctive verb. The word *impulerat* is an indicative verb. It should be, to agree with the condition, a subjunctive verb: *impulisset*; yet, since the verb is indicative, the new meaning that arises holds significance. The statement now contains a sense of necessity. I theorize that Vergil intended to do this because he wanted to draw his readers attention to the line. He wanted to show the significance of the condition without the use of other words. Perhaps, Vergil needed to cut words to fit the line into the dactylic hexameter, or he wanted to be concise, or even possibly make the line more poetic. Whatever the reason, this

¹² Boyd, *Vergil's Aeneid Expanded Collection*, 111.

¹³ This is my own work.

subtle detail amplifies the foreboding tone of the condition. This new, heightened meaning builds tension, and gives force to Laocoon's warning.

Additionally, anaphora and asyndeton are present in this condition. The first dependent clause, *si fata deum*, lacks a verb. This is an example of anaphora. Vergil did not want to repeat *fuisset* (had been), so he just omitted the word. Asyndeton is present in the second dependent clause, *si mens non laeva fuisset*. The first dependent clause of the condition starts with *et* (and); therefore, the second dependent clause should likely also start with an *et* given the repetition of *si* (if). Thus, our new translation could be, "and if only... and if only..." or "if...not only had been, but also if...had been." This is a small change. Ultimately, this implied use of *et* connects the two clauses more tightly together. It even, to an extent, has each clause build on the other. I propose Vergil omitted these words to create a sense of foreboding. The ambiguity of the phrase creates mystery. This mystery feeds the forebodingness of Laocoon's warning.

Lastly, there is a very important word used in this passage that creates a unique tension: *laeva*. *Laeva* means "left hand" or "wrong." In this condition, *laeva* is modifying *mens* (mind). This single word opens a world of different translations. As David West notes when dealing with tricky language, "How weird is the translator going to make his English."¹⁴ How is the translator going to interrupt the meaning behind *laeva mens*? At its core, it means "left hand mind." Yet, given that Laocoon is trying to warn the Trojan people, I thought that it may have meant "foolish mind" or "stubborn mind." My translation would evoke a sense of foreboding of Laocoon because describing his mind as essentially "wrong" goes to show his decay of state of mind, the disbelief of the Trojan people, and subsequently his imminent fate. (I acknowledge that *mens* may refer to the collective mind of the people; however, I decided to refer *mens* to Laocoon because I really wanted to give life to the text, bringing that ominous foreboding tone.

¹⁴ West, "The 'Aeneid' and the Translator," 60.

I also think that changing “his foolish mind” to “their foolish mind” does not detract from the meaning of the text. Either the people are explicitly described as stubborn, or the people do not believe the stubborn words of Laocoon).

Now let us transition once again to other translators' work. I will look for three things in each translation: how did the translation capture the contrary to fact condition, how did they approach the phrase *laeva mens*, and what tone is present? We will start with Sarah Ruden's translation (II. 54-56):

Had heaven willed it, had we all been sane,
We would have followed, shattering the Greek lair;
Priam's high citadel would still be standing.¹⁵

Ruden certainly captured the conditional statement. The two uses of “had” clearly demonstrate two conditions. Just like the use of *et* in the Latin text hints at two separate, but still closely linked, conditions. Ruden decided to refer to the collective mind of the Trojan people, rather than Laocoon's mind. She also translated the words *non laeva* (not wrong) as “sane,” which is very similar to my own translation. Additionally, the tone of the passage is very foreboding. The conditional statement is very ominous, and suggests that tragedy has already struck. It reads almost like, “Had we listened.” Ultimately, Ruden did an excellent job of capturing the passage's syntax and tone.

Let us look at John Dryden's translation (II. 54-56):

And, had not Heav'n the fall of Troy design'd,
Or had not men been fated to be blind,
Enough was said and done t'inspire a better mind.
Then had our lances pierc'd the treach'rous wood,

¹⁵ Vergil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Ruden, 33.

And Ilian tow'rs and Priam's empire stood...¹⁶

Dryden went above and beyond in his translation; he decided to add a third line to the conditional statement. This triple couplet uniquely uses “and...or...” Like I discussed above, the missing *et* could imply a connection between the clauses, or a distinction. Dryden decided to supply this *et*, thereby making the clauses seem more separate. The word “or” indicates a difference between the two. Dryden decided to translate *laeva mens* as “blind men,” which, just like my translation, depicts the stubbornness of the Trojan people. Overall, Dryden’s translation achieved a sense of foreboding. It painted a very mysterious scene and used descriptive, gothic language.

Finally, let us indulge in one more translation of this passage from Robert Fagles (II. 54-56):

If Fate and our own wits had not gone against us,
surely Laocoön would have driven us on, now,
to rip the Greek lair open with iron spears
and Troy would still be standing—
proud fortress of Priam, you would tower still!¹⁷

What is starkly different from the other two translations is the simplified conditional statement. While it does capture the general meaning, the clauses lack tension or any sense of foreboding. While the statement was simplified, the phrase *laeva mens* was exaggerated. Roughly, Fagles translated it as “wits had...gone against us.” This is an exaggerated way of saying, “we were unable to think.” I think this translation takes away from the previous foreboding elements of the Latin text. It seems like a more straightforward translation, rather than a more eloquent,

¹⁶ Vergil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Dryden, 34-35.

¹⁷ Vergil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Fagles, 76.

poetic one. Overall, the passage lacks any real tension or sense of foreboding. Rather, it reads like Aeneas is extremely upset. I dislike this interpretation because it seems like Fagles overlay exaggerated the emotions of Aeneas.

I believe that Dryden had the best translation. Dryden captured all the elements I looked for. Specifically, Dryden's approach to the missing *et* captured tension in the text. Ruden is a close second because while the translation had all the elements I explored, Dryden took a step further. In the end, the best translators take creative liberties. I believe Dryden is a perfect example. His rhyming couplets forced him to subtly adjust grammar, through the addition or subtraction of words, ultimately heightening and bringing life to the text.

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The Missing Caryatid

Tessa Bracken

My dear sister
We are reminded of your absence every day
With each glance at the gap in the chiseled stone at our feet
Our thoughts are tainted by the memory of that fateful day two hundred years ago
When the one they call Elgin
Ripped you off your pedestal
Who would've predicted
After all the bullets that ricocheted off our skin
And the bombs that rumbled our temple
That some puny mortal made of mere flesh and bone
Would be the one to force us to part?
I wouldn't call him much of a Lord
But they don't want to listen to a statue

Without your presence
The entablature of the Erechtheion became heavier
And the Acropolis more crumbled
Then the acid rain came and burned our skin
Industrialization stained our *peploi*
And conquest spoiled our sacred soil
We watched from our ancient porch
As our Golden city
Fell to Silver, Bronze, Iron
And I cannot help but think
That the Gods generated the mortal's decline
As retribution for kidnapping
Their holy Caryatid

I wonder now
If you have acquired the tongue of your captors
Have your lips forgotten
The language of your home?
Perhaps you have developed an affinity
For tea and biscuits
Do you even remember
The sweet taste

Of nectar and ambrosia?
They call you “Artifact D”
But do they not realize
A letter means nothing
When it stands alone?

Greek Archer Reconstruction

Sophie Petronzio



Chroma reconstruction, through Ultraviolet (UV) and raking, of a marble archer east of Greece, near the Temple of Aphaia. The piece possibly represents the Trojan prince, Paris, who abducted Helen and is held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, NY as a part of the Chroma: Ancient Sculpture in Color exhibit. The original was done in 480 B.C.

Apicius 10.1: Stuffed Sardines

Preyas Sinha

Original Apicius Recipe:

“Properly, ought to be treated in this manner: the sardine is boned and filled with crushed flea-bane, several grains of pepper, mint, nuts, diluted with honey, tied or sewed, wrapped in parchment and placed in a flat dish above the steam rising from the stove; season with oil, reduced must and origany.”

Apicius also specifies in a footnote that the sardines for this recipe must be freshly caught.

Adapted Recipe:

Ingredients:

¼ lb. fresh sardines

1 tsp. fleabane leaves

1 tsp. pepper

1 tsp. mint

1 tbsp. nuts

1 tbsp. honey

½ tbsp. olive oil

1 tbsp. reduced grape must

Oregano to taste

Procedure:

1. Create a stuffing by mixing together fleabane, pepper, mint, nuts, and honey
2. Debone the sardines and fill them with the stuffing
3. Sew together the sardines to keep the stuffing inside
4. Wrap sardines in parchment
5. Steam for 10 minutes
6. Top with oil, grape must, and oregano

About the Ingredients:

Fleabane is a common urban weed, closely related to daisies, that thrives in abandoned and disturbed areas.¹ Fleabane leaves are smooth and edible, while the stems are hairy and prickly, although still edible. Cooking the stem can reduce or eliminate the hairy texture.²

Grape must is a precursor to wine in the fermentation process. It is grape juice but with the skin, seeds, and stem left in. In order to reduce it, must is simmered until it becomes a syrup, giving it a sweet, molasses-like, taste.³

¹Phillips, Daniel. “Stalking Rome: Weeds in the Eternal City.”

²Alderson, LeAura Alderson. “Daisy Fleabane Wildflower Is an Edible & Beneficial Plant to Know.”

³James Grout, *Wine and Rome*

Fishing in Rome:

Ancient Rome received much of its fish from Gaul, modern-day France, as according to Pliny, they had the most developed fishing industry at the time. However, this doesn't mean the Romans didn't fish, recreationally or for food. Pliny has poems dedicated to recreational fishing; Augustus and Nero spent their leisure time fishing. The Romans and Greeks employed similar methods of fishing: they used longlines, bottom lines, nets, traps, harpoons, and foils. Excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum show tinned iron and bronze fishing hooks. Pliny credits the process of tinning hooks for fishing to the Gauls. Caesar tells us the Ligurians of northwestern Italy fished along the coast as well as inland on the streams, rivers, and lakes of the region, leading them to have an unmatched diversity of fish.⁴

In the classical world, fish such as sprats, sardines (like in this recipe), and anchovies were considered low-quality and for people of modest means. However, fresh fish, as designated in this recipe, was reserved for the high class. Fresh fish gave social value to those who consumed it or served it at parties. Fresh, small fish, such as sardines, were often served as appetizers, meaning this recipe would be served as such as well.

Not every fresh fish was the same though. Some fresh fish, most likely like sardines, were of lower social value and more affordable for the general public. Generally, the larger the fish was, the more valuable it was. On Marcus Aurelius's imperial estate, sardines were eaten by laborers, based on Aurelius's correspondence with Fronto.

Diocletian's price edict of 301 AD gives us some insight into the different kinds of fish at the markets and their price. One pound of sardines cost 16 *denarii*, as did "second quality marine fish," although listed separately. Two dozen eggs as well as one pound of "marine fish from rocky bottoms" are both listed at 24 *denarii*.

We can conclude based on the above information that this meal would likely be eaten by those in the lower classes and the general population. However, many poorer Romans did not have kitchens in their apartments and thus ate out consistently at food stalls and bars. This meal requires access to a kitchen, so this meal might have been served in taverns — bars with the lower class as main customers.⁵

In order to preserve fish, such as for trade, they were salted. Preserved, salted fish was much cheaper at just 6 *denarii* per pound. Salted fish was a staple food amongst all classes, from laborer to emperor, based on evidence from Roman Egypt. Another staple of Roman cuisine was *garum* or fish sauce, which acted as a seasoning to bring the flavors out of a dish and was made by fermenting fish.

Due to the prevalence of salted fish, Rome had a vast fishery infrastructure. Along the coasts of the Black and Mediterranean Seas, there are many fish salting workshops, ranging in size. At the ancient Roman ports of Portus and Ostia, situated at the mouth of the Tiber River, where there were large build-ups of salt, there exists evidence of fish-salting activity.

⁴"Fishing in Ancient Rome."

⁵Hartnett, Jeremy. "Bars (Taberna, Popina, Caupona, Thermopolium)."

Fishermen in ancient Rome were generally considered low class, but still developed business models profitable enough to get by. There isn't definitive evidence of whether the role of fishermen extended to salting and selling as well; however, some evidence points to large-scale fishing operations creating partnerships with fish salters and fishmongers, those who sold fresh fish in markets. This system was a profitable business model for all involved, given the popularity of fish in Rome.⁶

Steaming:

The process of steaming has not changed much over the last 2500 years. Romans used cooking pots, called *caccabi*, filled them with water, and placed them over a fire, like a tripod. Then, they placed a rack above the pot and let the steam cook the parchment-wrapped food above.⁷ Today, technology, such as steamers, exists to make the process much easier and more convenient.

⁶ Almost this entire section about fishing comes from the following source: Marzano, Annalisa. "Fish and Fishing in the Roman World - Journal of Maritime Archaeology."

⁷ Roman Cooking Utensils in the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology

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Translating Vergil's *Aeneid*

Henry Zhang

Why bother learning classical languages?

Why even read the *Aeneid* in Latin?

One common response stresses how English translations, no matter how excellent, are unable to fully express all the nuances of the author's native tongue. Vergil's *Aeneid*, which has been translated for over a thousand years, demonstrates this perfectly.

Over the next seven pages, I'll examine the different aspects of Vergil's language, ranging from semantics to meter, to prove that the beauty of the *Aeneid* lies well above its underlying story.

In the preface to his translation, John Dryden, the great seventeenth-century translator of Vergil, specifically points out the difficulty of translating *pietas* from Latin. He asserts that "the word in Latin is more full than it can possibly be expressed in any Modern Language."¹

Serving as the leitmotif and prominent characteristic of *pius* Aeneas, Dryden defines *pietas* as "the Whole Duty of Man towards the Gods; towards his Country, and towards his relations."² Its

¹ Garrison, James D. *Pietas from Vergil to Dryden*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992.

² Garrison *Pietas from Vergil to Dryden*

English derivatives “piety” and “pious” are rarely sufficient for translation because they often fail to convey this broader sense of duty.

In the following passage from Book I of the *Aeneid*, Vergil uses *pius* as an epithet for Aeneas:

Praecipuae pius Aeneas nunc acris Oronti,
Nunc Amyci casum gemit et crudelia secum
Fata Lyci fortemque Gyan fortemque Cloanthum.³

First *pius* Aeneas especially laments the fall of spirited Orontes,
now Amycus, and (he laments) the cruel fate of Lycus
and brave Gyan and brave Cloanthus with himself.

Weeping over his fallen comrades, Aeneas is described as being *pius*. “Pious” is inappropriate as a translation in this case, for it implies one’s devotion to god (or a leader), and not a leader’s or god’s devotion towards his subjects. Likewise, the word “loyal” refers to one’s devotion to his superior. “Dedicated” is a much better alternative, but it still fails to “convey as strong a sense of duty and obligation as *pius*.”⁴

Translators, such as Ruden, Dryden, and Lewis, first must compress Vergil’s dactylic hexameter in order to fit his lines into a more suitable meter for English. However, Classical Latin meter was based on the lengths of the syllables, not on the stresses, as in English. This challenge is further compounded by the fact that Latin is a highly inflected language, and much denser than English. In the preface to Sarah Ruden’s translation of the *Aeneid*, Susanna Braund writes: “The

³ Vergil and Barbara Weiden Boyd. *Vergil's Aeneid: Expanded Collection: Book 1 and Selections from Books 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12*. Mundelein, Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc., 2013, I.220-222

⁴ Woodell, Keith Alexander. “UNTRANSLATABLE WORDS IN CLASSICAL LATIN: THE PROBLEM WITH PIUS.” Thesis, UNM Digital Repository, 2012.

endings of verbs indicate who is performing the action of the verb: ‘we’ or ‘you’ or ‘I’ or ‘they.’ English cannot dispense with such pronouns.”⁵ Latin also omits the articles “a” and “the”, whereas English nouns usually require at least one article. This brevity results in the loss of the detail and ornamentation that had cemented the *Aeneid* as one of the greatest epics of classical antiquity.

Another difficulty is with the sheer number and “violence” of the enjambments in the *Aeneid*.⁶ Vergil’s enjambments are rather significant, and often form part of his narrative. Combined with elisions and meter, they are what create Vergil’s music.

The above are evidenced by the following passage from Book I of the *Aeneid*:

Franguntur remi, tum prora avertit et undis
dat latus, insequitur cumulo praeruptus aquae mons.
Hi summo in fluctu pendent; his unda dehiscens
terram inter fluctus aperit, fruit aestus harenis.⁷

The oars broke, the prow swerved and set the ship
Against a looming precipice of water.
Crews dangled on the crest or glimpsed the seabed
Between the waves. Sand poured through seething water.⁸

⁵ Vergil, Susanna Braund, and Emma Hilliard. *The Aeneid*. Translated by Sarah Ruden. New Haven, NH: Yale University Press, 2021.

⁶ Vergil. *The Aeneid*. Translated by Sarah Ruden. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008.

⁷ Virgil and Boyd, *Virgil's Aeneid*, I.104-107

⁸ Vergil, Braund, and Hillard, *The Aeneid*, I.104-107.

To convey the sailors' unease, Vergil employs five spondees in addition to the elision between *summo* and *in*, leaving the tension unresolved before it crashes to an end with the fifth foot dactyl. Similarly, the enjambment in *dehiscens / terram* also serves to add to this feeling of suspense. While Ruden does make an attempt to imitate Vergil's music, her iambs and trochees simply fail to capture the almost operatic drama of his spondees and elisions.

Choosing the "correct" vocabulary and syntax can also prove to be a major issue for a translator of the *Aeneid*. While Milton employed a Latinate and Vergilian form of English for his epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Ruden mostly uses Anglo-Saxon words for her translation. For example, Ruden uses "huge" rather than "immense" and "hard" instead of "difficult." This preference, as Braund puts it, "often brings the advantage of a monosyllable over a polysyllabic word and helps [Ruden] achieve the desired brevity."⁹ Likewise with syntax, the translator has to choose between a Miltonic word order (that closely resembles Vergil) and a more natural word order for English.

Just by taking a look at the first few lines of the *Aeneid*, one can easily discern the differences in the translations of Ruden, Lewis, and Jackson Knight.

Arms and a man I sing, the first from Troy,
A fated exile to Lavinian shores
In Italy. On land and sea divine force
Shook him, through ruthless Juno's brooding rage.¹⁰

Compare this to Lewis' translation of the same lines:

⁹ Vergil, Braund, and Hillard, *The Aeneid*,

¹⁰ Vergil, Braund, and Hillard, *The Aeneid*,

I tell about war and the hero who first from Troy's frontier,
Displaced by destiny, came to the Lavinian shores,
To Italy—a man much travailed on sea and land
By the powers above, because of the brooding anger of Juno.¹¹

Now compare that to Knight's rendition:

This is a tale of arms and of a man. Fated to be an exile, he was the first to sail from the land of Troy and reach Italy, at its Lavinian shore. He met many tribulations on his way both by land and on the ocean; high Heaven willed it, for Juno was ruthless and could not forget her anger.¹²

Lewis, unlike Ruden, entirely disregards Vergil's original word order, instead choosing to end with the object. Furthermore, his translation doesn't conform to any specific meter; the first line is fifteen syllables, the second and third lines thirteen syllables, and the fourth line seventeen syllables. Ruden's, on the other hand, fits almost perfectly into iambic pentameter, closely imitates the Latin word order, and accomplishes her "desired brevity."¹³ Knight's rendition of the same passage is vastly different from the other two in that it is in prose form. While prose theoretically offers greater accuracy because it isn't subject to the same constraints as poetry, it often fails to convey the fact that the *Aeneid* is ultimately a poem. Students, as Braund puts it, "are apt to identify a prose translation of the *Aeneid* as a novel and to misunderstand it profoundly by bringing to bear inappropriate expectations of character, plot, form."¹⁴

¹¹ Vergil, and Cecil Day-Lewis. *The Aeneid of Virgil*. Doubleday Anchor Books, 1952.

¹² Vergil, and Jackson Knight. *The Aeneid*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1956.

¹³ Vergil, Braund, and Hillard, *The Aeneid*,

¹⁴ Vergil, Braund, and Hillard, *The Aeneid*,

And as with other noted poems, the beauty of Vergil lies in his picturesque writing and brilliant use of rhetorical figures. This short passage from Book II demonstrates his ingenuity:

Et iam

Bis medium amplexi, bis collo squamea circum

terga dati superant capite et cervicibus altis.¹⁵

And now,

Having encircled his middle twice, having placed their scaly backs

Twice around his neck, they tower above him with their head and tall necks.

Vergil's use of a tmesis (combined with a hyperbaton), where *circum* and *dati* surround *terga* just as the snakes wrap around the neck, accomplishes a vivid visual representation of the scene described. But due to the fixed word order of English, "word pictures" like this one are near impossible to emulate.

In the preface to his famed translation, Dryden notes, "But slaves we are, and labor on another's man plantation; we dress the vineyard, but the wine is the owner's [...]. He who invents is master of his thoughts and words; he can turn and vary them as he pleases, till he renders them harmonious. But the wretched translator has no such privilege; for, being tied to the thoughts, he must make what music he can in the expression, and for this reason it cannot always be so sweet as that of the original."¹⁶ Even Ruden, who "aims to reflect the elegant fluidity of [Vergil's] Latin" through her brevity, cannot match nor preserve the beauty of Vergil's glorious epic.¹⁷

¹⁵ Virgil and Boyd, *Vergil's Aeneid*, II.217-219.

¹⁶ Virgil. *The Aeneid (Dryden trans.)*. New York: P. F. Collier, 1697.

¹⁷ Vergil, Braund, and Hillard, *The Aeneid*,

What's lost is precisely the treasure we wish to uncover when we study the *Aeneid*, or any other literary masterpiece, in its original language.

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Original Greek Bronze Boxer

Adaugo Nwaokoro



This bronze statue of a boxer is a part of a duo known as the “Hellenistic ruler” and the “victorious boxer.” It was found in 1885 during an excavation and shows a boxer after a match, wounds still bleeding. It was displayed in the Metropolitan Museum’s Chroma: Ancient Sculpture in Color exhibit as a reconstruction.

Independent Uses of the Subjunctive: Grammatical

Approaches to Equanimity

Elle Stearns

1 Introduction

In Latin, most verbs have three moods: the indicative, used for statements of fact or questions; the imperative, used for direct commands; and the subjunctive, used to express idea, intent, uncertainty, potentiality, desire, or anticipation. I've spent most of my life preferring the indicative. Whether it's the words and origin of the Lord's Prayer, the tiling on the sanctuary floor, mathematical theorems, or poetic devices, I savor structure, I savor clarity. I too often bow my head, focusing on individual tiles on the floor or single trees, and I forget to look up every once in a while and cherish the forest of subjunctives that surround me.

2 The Hortatory Subjunctive is used in the present tense to express an exhortation or a command. The negative is nē.¹ Example: Let us pray.

... Reverend Lindvall said on Easter Sunday. While I tilt my head towards the floor, the rows of wooden pews creak in solidarity. I clasp my sweaty hands together and close my eyes just long enough to forestall any concerned stares or invitations to the youth prayer circle during the post-service 'coffee hour'. In this darkness, before the praying actually starts, I briefly consider the composition of the anticipated "Lord's Prayer." I suppose that it was first written in biblical Greek, and I consider the merits of reading the 'original' text, perhaps as some haughty display of intelligence for my parents or youth group leader. The prayer is focused on "thy kingdom" and "heaven," whatever those two things are supposed to be, so I posit that it comes from the Gospel of Matthew.

¹ "Independent Uses of the Subjunctive Mood," Latin Library,

<https://www.thelatinlibrary.com/101/Subjunctive1.pdf>.

In the safety of everyone else's prayer, I open my eyes and unclasp my hands, not as an act of defiance, but maybe of confusion. Head still tilted, I examine the tiles under the pew in front of me: salmon-colored diamonds woven together with a thin stream of gray grout. I consider the process of tiling the floor. The craftsman, on his knees, would bow down, as I do now, and place each tile one after the other. He smooths gloppy grout into the cracks, leveling the floor into a uniform surface. He repeats the process with different colored diamonds, forming a gradient. I wonder whether he designed such a pattern or if this was prescribed to him. *'Our Father who art in heaven...'*

I string together the words of the Lord's Prayer, one sentence after the other. I follow the group's cadence, noticing the intonation of my father beside me. I observe the untaught way he holds his hands and how he says his words in one, smooth stream. I try to mimic it. My hands feel sweaty, though, and the English feels foreign.

I remember the first time I said the whole prayer from memory. I felt more sure of myself at nine, with my poofy green dress and pink plastic ballet flats. During church, I would cross my ankles and rest the bulletin on my lap, so that when I bowed my head I would be able to read the prayer if I forgot it. An exercise in memorization, I closed my eyes hoping that I wouldn't need to check the words. After the echoes of "amens" and the subsequent creaking of the pews, I looked up and realized that I had made it through the whole prayer. Gleaming with pride, I looked to my father and whispered, "I got it without looking at the words!" He smiled and then I smiled, an exchange which in my optimistic, nine-year-old eyes granted me entry into some higher level of piety.

As I pray, I try to channel nine-year-old Elle. Though I have probably spoken the Lord's Prayer by heart hundreds of times since my poofy dress days, I feel as though whatever

faith I had once achieved through memorization has fizzled away. And yet, I still have my father beside me and the cadence of the congregation to follow.

3 The Deliberative Subjunctive is used in questions implying (1) doubt, indignation, or (2) an impossibility of the things being done. The negative is nōn.

Example: *Can I even solve this math problem?*²

Praying isn't something I do much of anymore, mostly by virtue of moving away from home and not making a habit of it, and I spent my junior fall Sundays on homework instead. Where I once bowed my head in prayer, I craned my neck to focus more closely on my Calculus homework. I thought this substitution might provide an escape from the somewhat unsettling uncertainty of religion, replacing it with a discipline where nothing is guessed, and everything feels clear. Ignorantly, I hoped that the rules of math could protect me from my struggles with subjectivity.

This was true for the earlier levels of math. I found success with the "plug and chug" math worksheets and the simple methods by which I could reach an answer. I savored Geometry proofs and Algebra tests where I could always answer in neat lines of equations or postulates, one after the other. But when I reached Calculus, to my dismay, my struggles with prayer returned. The problems were no longer just equations to simplify or postulates to cite. I started having to visualize the problems instead of simply reading them. After an especially poor test score, I asked my teacher for some help and her advice was, "you need to stop focusing on the individual trees, and start looking at the larger forest," which I've since understood to mean that I needed to stop focusing on individual rules and start thinking about how they fit together in an abstract sense. To me, this statement felt like a betrayal of everything I expected math to be. Math used to be an escape from the unstructured, abstract nature of my English and History

²"Independent Uses," Latin Library.

classes and when she gave me the forest metaphor, I realized that I could no longer escape my struggles with the humanities.

4 The Potential Subjunctive is used to suggest an action as possible or conceivable. The negative is nōn. ³

Example: *You might believe these things.*

After Calculus betrayed me, I sought refuge in my study of the Roman poet Catullus. Catullus' poetry embodies "ars est celare artem," or in English "true art is to conceal art." Though Catullus wants the reader to think his poems are simple, they are actually full of intricate poetic constructions, allusions, and elegant vocabulary and more often than not end up containing a deeper message than one initially believes. I spent the fall term of senior year studying his words, venturing through his forest of intricate word pictures, meters, and sounds.

One of my favorite examples of Catullus' sneaky genius is his 45th poem, a dialogue of passion between the two lovers, Acme and Septimius. Not only is this poem unique in its subject matter, considering that when poems are about love for Catullus, their subject is most often his lover, Lesbia, but this poem is also carefully constructed. Even in the first line, Catullus boasts his poetic prowess.

"Acmen Septimius suos amores
tenens in gremio "mea," inquit, "Acme,"⁴

Admiring this line for its English translation would be to betray "ars est celare artem". Catullus might want you to believe that he is simply setting the scene, but he is doing much more than that. Acme is Septimius' "suos amores" and by interlocking a description of Acme between

³ "Independent Uses," Latin Library.

⁴ Gaius Valerius Catullus, "Carmina 45,"
<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0003%3Apoem%3D45>.

two descriptions of Septimius, Catullus intertwines the two individuals in a love-trance. And though Septimius is holding Acme, Acme's name begins and ends the first two lines, syntactically holding Septimius. As if I were a kid carefully following a Lego set's directions, I eagerly build an understanding of the poem by means of its syntactic pieces. I overlook Catullus' feelings, motivations, and desires, refusing to entertain the potential for a different meaning. Too narrowly focused on the anatomy of the poem itself, I failed to understand the poem for its role in Catullus' poetic forest, as his plea for a more solid relationship with Lesbia.

The idyllic love of Acme and Septimius seems to stand in isolation from the rest of his love poems, but actually plays a crucial role in understanding Catullus' love for Lesbia, which he talks about in the rest of his collection. In this same way, my many independent instances of confusion, frustration, and failure –my hortatory, deliberative, and potential subjunctives– might seem like they exist in isolation from one another, but actually all shape the way that I view the world and the communities that I find myself in.

Additionally, in the same way that Acme and Septimius are interlocked in both syntax and love, my indicatives and subjunctives are also deeply intertwined in my lived experiences. I'll be the first to say that there is a lot of beauty in life's indicatives, and an appreciation of life without them would be incomplete, but an appreciation of life without its subjunctives is altogether insufficient. In many ways, from church, to Calculus, to Catullus, I have attempted to escape what I cannot understand, and I have tried to convert my independent subjunctives to indicatives in order to make myself more comfortable.

I'm not sure that I'll ever reach the level of piety nine-year-old Elle felt looking at her father that one fateful Sunday, but I will still try to pray. And I'm not sure that I'll ever feel as secure in Calculus as I once felt in Algebra II, but I will still enroll in math classes each new year. I'm unsettled by potentially never understanding my world's subjunctives correctly or

by the fact that there may not be a correct way to understand them at all, but, at the very least, I can love them for their existence. For if the pews never creaked, if math was never abstract, or if Catullus never loved, the indicatives intertwined with those moments would fizzle away too.

Dido the Hero

Taryn Boonpongmanee

In the *Aeneid*, Dido's death scene mirrors Ajax's heroic death and Vergil creates the explanation of Dido's death by drawing many parallels between the events leading up to the characters' deaths. Vergil uses the heroic code and morality of Ajax to compare Dido's death motivations to one of a hero.

When we meet Dido and Ajax, they are at peak positions of power and widely respected by their people. Dido is described as "the legendary queen of Carthage."¹ Dido holds a position of great power as the Queen and founder. When Aeneas arrives, Carthage is booming with the "construction of a tremendous city... complete with temples and art-galleries,"² and he is stunned by the grandness of it all. Ajax is a great Greek warrior, second to Achilles in regards to courage and character. After Ajax's suicide, Teucer, his half-brother says:

"This man of perfect excellence—

No nobler one has ever been than he:

I speak of Ajax, while he lived."³

He speaks of Ajax's great character and the "general nobility of Ajax'[s] character and the numerous benefits which he had provided for the Greeks."⁴

¹ Janice M. Benario, "DIDO AND CLEOPATRA," *Vergilius (1959-)*, no. 16 (1970): 2, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41591641>.

² Adam Parry, "The Two Voices of Virgil's 'Aeneid,'" *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 2, no. 4 (1963): 74, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20162871>.

³ Parry, "The Two Voices," 62.

⁴ Vincent J. Rosivach, "Sophocles' Ajax," *The Classical Journal* 72, no. 1 (1976): 47, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3296881>.

As Dido and Ajax lose their power, they similarly descend into madness. Their mental states become distracted and uncontrollable. Aeneas serves as a distraction and prevents Dido from looking after her kingdom. Dido loses grip of her successful kingdom and the once potentially great city goes unfinished:

Non coeptae adsurgunt turre, non arma iuventus

Exercet portusve aut propugnacula bello

Tula parant: pendent opera interrupta minaeque

Murorum ingentes aequataque machina caelo⁵

The towers she began don't rise. The young men

No longer drill or build defending ramparts

Or ports. The work stalls, halfway done—the menace

Of high walls and the cranes as high as heaven⁶

When Aeneas decides to leave Dido, Dido recognizes how far her kingdom has fallen and how much she has lost. In addition to her kingdom, she has also lost respect from her people and now faces the danger of outsiders questioning her, including Iarbas. She goes from an admirable, clever Queen to a lover's fool. Dido flies into a mad frenzy, heartbroken over Aeneas' decision to leave. Likewise, after Ajax competes against Odysseus for Achilles' armor and loses, he goes into a crazy hysteria. He refuses to believe the "honest judgment of his fellow Greeks that he is not as great as he thinks he is"⁷ and seeks "scapegoats in [O]dysseus and the Atreidae."⁸

⁵ Vergil and Barbara Weiden Boyd, *Vergil's Aeneid: Expanded Collection : Book 1 and Selections from Books 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12* (Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2013), IV.86-89.

⁶ Vergil et al., *The Aeneid*, revised and expanded edition. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), IV.86-89.

⁷ Rosivach, "Sophocles' Ajax," 48.

⁸ Rosivach, "Sophocles' Ajax," 48.

Vergil also mimics Sophocles in the discovery of these two characters' deaths. Tecmessa, Ajax's wife, and Anna, Dido's sister, are both used as pawns in the deaths. The two people who are closest to the main characters are the ones being forced to discover their bodies. For Ajax, the readers depend completely on Tecmessa to narrate the scene where she discovers Ajax's body: "Tecmessa describes the death in two stark lines (906-07). Finally, when the chorus ask[s] where the body lies (912-14), at the point when a body would normally be revealed—it is at precisely this point that the corpse of Ajax is instead covered up."⁹ While we hear Ajax's final speech and see the stage directions, the rest of the specifics of Ajax's death scene are not seen by the audience. Tecmessa is the link from inside the story to the outside.

We see Dido's treachery and death from Anna's point of view when Anna is left in the dark while Dido has her sister unknowingly plan Dido's death. The wife and sister are left in a state of helplessness as they discover the bodies only after the deaths and find themselves unable to prevent the actual suicide. Dido tricks Anna and Anna only recognizes her mistake as Dido is already dying: "The imperfect tense, 'all along you were deceiving me.'"¹⁰ Vergil makes the decision to give Anna the importance of building up their sisterly relationship, then setting Dido's death through Anna's thoughts. He chooses a character with an intimate tie to experience the situation while "he could have left the dying queen in association with a really minor character, with a woman of those mean qualities which modern scholarship, with amazing perversity, assigns to her."¹¹

Even after their respective deaths, similarities can still be seen in *the Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*. We learn the true nature and intention behind Dido's death in Aeneas' journey to the

⁹ S. P. Mills, "The Death of Ajax," *The Classical Journal* 76, no. 2 (1980): 132-33, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3297376>.

¹⁰ Ellenor Swallow, "Anna Soror," *The Classical Weekly* 44, no. 10 (1951): 150, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4342919>.

¹¹ Swallow, "Anna Soror," 150.

Underworld: “Aeneas’ final and painful parting with Dido occurs not, as we would expect, among the suicides, but in a place called the grieving fields.”¹² Instead of her death being just under the category of suicide, we understand that her “presence [in the grieving fields] indicates that she too died for love, for love of Aeneas.”¹³ Aeneas recognizes this and hence an air of awkwardness arises as they meet. Dido refuses to talk to him and leaves to join her husband and former lover, Sychaeus. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus travels to the Underworld and begs Ajax to listen to him: “Odysseus meets the shade of Ajax in the [U]nderworld and immediately attempts to make peace, going so far as saying he wishes he never won the [armor].”¹⁴ Ajax refuses to listen to Odysseus’ pleas and ignores him, leaving Odysseus with his guilt unresolved.

Vergil deliberately evokes the image of Ajax in parallel to Dido, suggesting that Dido’s death is a part of the hero’s life because she is reenacting an aspect of the heroic code. As Ajax falls into his mad spiral, his character completely changes and he goes from a virtuous character to breaking the heroic code. Heroic morality centers itself “on the virtuous disposition, and courage, in particular, the principal touchstone of the aristocratic warrior’s character.”¹⁵ The first aspect of the “ethical code required Greek warriors to care for their friends in life and death. It fostered a kind of gentleness of spirit in even the fiercest Greek warrior.”¹⁶ To be a Greek Hero, it was critical that they maintain the balance between strength and ethics. Honoring heroic warriors depends on the trust of their character but the risk is that the warrior will “turn against his own community if he considers himself wrongfully dishonored,”¹⁷ as Ajax does. For a heroic warrior

¹² Grace Starry West, "Caeneus and Dido," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* (1974-) 110 (1980): 315, <https://doi.org/10.2307/284225>.

¹³ West, "Caeneus and Dido," 316.

¹⁴ Eric Bronson, "The Myth of Resilience," *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 52, no. 4 (2019): 116, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26909728>.

¹⁵ Stuart Lawrence, "Ancient Ethics, the Heroic Code, and the Morality of Sophocles' Ajax," *Greece and Rome* 52, no. 1 (2005): 18, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3567855>.

¹⁶ Bronson, "The Myth," 111.

¹⁷ Lawrence, "Ancient Ethics," 19.

that fully embodies the moral grounds “[i]t is inconceivable that the virtuous person as delineated by Plato, Aristotle or the Stoics would turn against the community.”¹⁸

Ajax disobeys his previously virtuous nature by slaughtering the cattle captured by the Trojans and the herdsman.¹⁹ Once he calms down and comes back to his senses, he sees what he has done and cannot find a way to get out of this predicament:

I am hated by the gods, that’s plain; the Greek camp hates me:

Troy and the ground I stand upon detest me...

What countenance can I show my father Telamon?

How will he ever stand the sight of me

If I come before him naked, armed with no glory”²⁰

He has no place to sail away to and no one to turn to because he does not want to spread dishonor to his heroic father, Telamon. He believes that he has no place to go except the Underworld. Ajax commits suicide by falling on a sword that “[w]as Hector’s gift”²¹ to keep his hero status and bring an end to the “shame and dishonor [he feels] at the loss.”²²

Correspondingly, when Aeneas leaves, Dido sees no other option except for suicide. In her state of madness, Aeneas’ speech does not help “console the outraged, humiliated, and heart-broken Dido, who realizes now that she has made a fool of herself for love.”²³ Without Aeneas’

distractions, she sees “that she has utterly neglected her responsibilities as queen, that she has

¹⁸ Lawrence, "Ancient Ethics," 19.

¹⁹ Sophocles, *Sophocles - II The Complete Greek Tragedies*, ed. David Greene and Richmond Lattimore, trans. John Moore (n.p.: University of Chicago, 1957), 60-65.

²⁰ Sophocles, *Sophocles - II The Complete*, 458-465.

²¹ Sophocles, *Sophocles - II The Complete*, 817.

²² Lee Fratantuono, "'RECENS a VULNERE': DIDO, AJAX, AND THE HIERARCHY of HEROINES," *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica* 106, no. 1 (2014): 196, accessed March 4, 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24645214>.

²³ Janet Schmalfeldt, "In Search of Dido," *The Journal of Musicology* 18, no. 4 (2001): 609, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jm.2001.18.4.586>.

utterly neglected her responsibilities as queen, that she has utterly neglected her responsibilities as queen, that she has broken her vow to never remarry and ever to remain chaste, that she has been profoundly betrayed.”²⁴ Everything that she has worked for, including Carthage, and her reputation is now tarnished and heading for destruction. She worries that either Iarbas or her brother Pygmalion will take advantage of her current state of weakness and capture her. To prevent anything worse from happening, she tricks Anna into building a funeral fire, and to end Book 4 of the Aeneid, she falls onto Aeneas’ sword.

Dido’s cycle of her loss of status, mad state, and death closely resemble Ajax’s death scenes. and deliberately arouses images of the Greek hero's life. How Vergil writes Dido suggests that as a foreign, Carthaginian queen, she also breaks the heroic code and therefore is just left with the choice to die an honorable death through suicide by sword.

²⁴ Schmalfeldt, "In Search," 586.

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Roman Marble Torso

Sophie Petronzio



Marble torso of a youth during the Hadrianic or Antonine period, Rome (118-161 A.D.) located in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, NY in the Chroma: Ancient Sculpture in Color exhibit. During the first century B.C., statues were made to incorporate aspects of Greek sculpture from the fifth century B.C. The “relative stiffness and lack of organic clarity,” – Met Museum, indicates that it’s an original sculpture in this style of incorporating Greek aspects, rather than simply a copy of a Greek sculpture, which is much more common.

The Bad Mother

Josephine Cramer

How can the goddess of love herself, Venus, be a bad mother? Over the course of the *Aeneid*, written by Virgil, the relationship between the goddess Venus (or Aphrodite in her Greek nomenclature) and her mortal son Aeneas is explored as he travels through a widely famous epic journey. Following the disaster of the Trojan War, Aeneas, a Trojan warrior, roams the Mediterranean searching for a new land for his people. He is destined by the Fates to found a new civilization in the land of Italy, where his people will become the ancestors of the eternally powerful leaders of the Roman Empire. Venus supports her son throughout the epic, by giving him important information about his whereabouts when landing on the beaches in an unknown land and creating a safe guarantee for survival for him in Carthage by forming a relationship between Dido and himself. However, as stated by Eleanor Winsor Leach about Venus, “Historically this judgment arises from the critical observation that the goddess falls short in her provision of maternal comfort.”¹ Venus’ decisions within these specific moments as well as her navigation of her relationship with Anchises, Aeneas’ father, and Aeneas in his early childhood expose that she lacks the important quality of love for her son. This statement, alongside Venus’ characterization in Roman Mythology and conversations she has with Jupiter in Book 1, show that her reasoning for helping Aeneas is corrupted by negative desires for popularity. Although it can be argued that Venus saved Aeneas and gave him crucial information several times throughout his journey because of her maternal love for him, it is more clearly true that Venus’

¹ Eleanor Winsor Leach, "Venus, Thetis and the Social Construction of Maternal Behavior," *The Classical Journal* 92, no. 4 (1997): 351, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3298407>.

intentions in helping her son in Virgil's *Aeneid* were not rooted in a devotion to him, but rather a desire for attention and fame. This is evident through her neglect of Aeneas during his childhood and continued inability to support him lovingly throughout his journey to Italy.

Venus and Anchises' unique relationship that lead to Aeneas' childhood neglect prove that Venus lacked a traditional motherly care for Aeneas through his adult life. After Venus boastfully bragged that she was stronger than Zeus himself, he organized a plan to gain revenge on her, which entailed forcing her to fall in love with a mortal man.² The man that Zeus chose was Anchises, and because Venus promises to keep and protect the child she bears from their single night together,³ she is subject to heavy ridicule and shame from the gods.⁴ As said by Edward Gutting, "The crowning piece of humiliation and displeasure Aphrodite takes in her forced association with the mortal world is her conception of a mortal son."⁵ A tinge of regret from this humiliation is present in Aeneas' childhood as a nymph was the one to actually raise him until the age of five, as "Aphrodite kept moving from bed to bed and hardly slept with anyone twice."⁶ Venus also had other relationships with Hephaestus and Ares,⁷ further proving that her relationship with Anchises was not special or worthy of her attention. The lack of love Venus had for Anchises then transferred over to her lack of dedication to being Aeneas' mother figure. She was not present in his early life, "...but one imagines he was often glum, often alone, a puzzling woodland boy lost in the urbane palaces of Troy, with, you might say, hardly a family life..."⁸ Usually, the early life of a child is the most special time for a mother, because their

² Stephen Fry, *Troy* (London: Penguin Books, 2021), 109.

³ Fry, *Troy*, 112.

⁴ Edward Gutting, "Venus' Maternity and Divinity in the *Aeneid*," *Materiali E Discussioni per L'analisi Dei Testi*

⁵ *Classici*, no. 61 (2009): 49, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40236460>.

Gutting, "Venus' Maternity," 49.

⁶ Alistair Elliot, "Aeneas," *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 20, no. 3 (2013): 1, <https://doi.org/10.2307/arion.20.3.0001>.

⁷ Fry, *Troy*, 110.

⁸ Alistair Elliot, "Aeneas," 1.

connection is strongest and most formative. Therefore, if Venus didn't care enough to spend time with Aeneas when it really counted, then it is doubtful that her relationship with him as an adult was strongly rooted in love.

During her interaction with Aeneas in the forest outside Carthage, Venus' choice of trickery exposes her lack of care for his well being, consequently proving that her motivations for helping were not purely based on love. When Aeneas and his fleet arrive on the beach in Carthage after a horrible storm, they are lost and disheveled. The fleet believes their friends are dead and they have no idea where they landed, so Aeneas and Achates are sent into the forest to try and find help. Venus appears shortly after to Aeneas, according to Ruden's translation, as "A girl in face and clothes, armed as in Sparta," concealing the fact that she was really his mother.⁸ After giving him advice and information about Dido and her city, she quickly reveals herself as his mother to him before disappearing rapidly. Aeneas is outraged by this action saying:

Quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis
ludis imaginibus? Cur dextrae iungere dextram
non datur ac veras audire et reddere voces?⁹

Why do you, cruel as anybody, taunt me,
Your child, with tricks and phantoms? Take my hand!
Let there be words between us as we are!¹⁰

Clearly Aeneas is hurt by this action, as he feels disconnected from his mother through her refusal to talk to him in person. As mentioned by Kenneth Reckford in his analysis of Venus and

⁸ Virgil, et al., *The Aeneid*, revised and expanded edition. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), 15.

⁹ Virgil, and Barbara Weiden Boyd, *Virgil's Aeneid: Expanded Collection : Book 1 and Selections from Books 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12* (Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2013), 54-55.

¹⁰ Virgil, et al., *The Aeneid*, 19.

Aeneas' interaction, "...although Venus comforts and encourages Aeneas, their encounter only adds, in the end, to his cumulative loneliness, frustration, and emotional vulnerability..."¹¹ While Venus is supposedly helping Aeneas by giving him crucial information, her need to disguise herself and make it into a trick shows her lack of true care for her motherly relationship with Aeneas. According to Gutting, "Such as a disguise, and the subsequent recognition, is typical when a goddess deals with a favored mortal, but not with a son."¹² This also shows that Venus' choice of hiding herself was not regular for any relationship between goddess and son, so it cannot be excused by customs. Venus holds an inability to connect with Aeneas on a genuine emotional level,¹³ a frequent occurrence in their long lasting relationship.¹⁴ Concludingly, due to her navigation with her conversation with Aeneas in the forest, Venus makes it abundantly clear that she does not care about having genuine interactions with Aeneas, or supporting him in a motherly way.

The specific nature of Venus' plan involving Dido and Cupid in Carthage reveals her lack of care for Aeneas' conscience and repercussions he endures for his actions. Even after Aeneas has been safely accepted into Carthage, Venus is concerned about the possibility of something going wrong:

Quippe domum timet ambiguum Tyriosque bilingues;

Urit atrox Iuno et sub noctem cura recursat.

Ergo his aligerum dictis adfatur Amorem.¹⁵

¹¹Kenneth Reckford, "Recognizing Venus (I): Aeneas Meets His Mother," *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*, 3rd ser., 3, no. 2/3 (Fall/Winter 1995-1996): 23, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20163572>.

¹²Gutting, "Venus' Maternity," 48.

¹³Reckford, "Recognizing Venus," 2.

¹⁴Reckford, "Recognizing Venus," 8.

¹⁵Virgil, and Boyd, *Virgil's Aeneid*, 88-89.

She feared this lying race, this doubtful refuge.

At evening too, came thoughts of ruthless Juno

To trouble her, so she approached winged Love.¹⁶

She devises a plan and, using Cupid's help, forces Dido and Aeneas to fall in love. However, this plan is devised solely out of momentary anxiety and not truly for her love for Aeneas.¹⁷ If Venus had cared about Aeneas' well being she would have recognized the hurt he will have to endure when the relationship is forced to end, but instead she goes ahead knowing its doomed future.¹⁸ As stated in *Greek Gods, Human Lives*, "Venus is not concerned about the effect this passion will have on Dido. She is only interested in seeing that her son reaches Italy."¹⁹ Additionally, the situation of their relationship will later cause Dido to kill herself and Aeneas will be painted as an intolerable betrayer, tarnishing his reputation.²⁰ Had Venus truly thought about the impact of her decisions instead of jumping to the first possible option, she could have come up with a better solution to ensure Aeneas' safety without causing him extreme guilt from being tied to Dido's suicide and turn an entire nation of people against him.

The fact that Venus' intentions involving her relationship with Aeneas were not overtly based on motherly love, coupled with her language regarding Aeneas' fate express her inner motivations for fame. If Venus' motivations were not love, then there must be another factor driving her effort placed into constantly saving Aeneas. Gutting explains how, "At the same time, her concern extends beyond Aeneas' simple well being to a high stakes political game."²¹ When Venus is talking to Jupiter about her anger concerning the delay of Aeneas' journey and his

¹⁶Virgil, et al., *The Aeneid*, 27.

¹⁷ Leach, "Venus, Thetis," 366.

¹⁸Reckford, "Recognizing Venus," 10.

¹⁹Mary R. Lefkowitz, *Greek Gods, Human Lives: What We Can Learn from Myths* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 192.

²⁰Reckford, "Recognizing Venus," 10.

²¹Gutting, "Venus' Maternity," 1.

predicted fate the entire conversation “concerns property and a promised inheritance.”²² That same conversation also confirms that the powerful goddess is abundantly aware of the fate of Aeneas’ descendants as Jupiter tells her:

His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono:
Imperium sine fine dedi. Quin aspera Iuno,
quae mare nunc terrasque metu calumque fatigat
Consilia in melius referet, mecumque fovebit
Romanos, rerum dominos genteque togatam.

For them I will not limit time or space.
Their rule will have no end. Even grim Juno,
Who now exhausts sea, land, and sky with terror,
Will change her mind and join me as I foster
The Romans in their togas, the world’s masters.

Venus personally has a lot to gain from Aeneas’ fulfillment of his fate. Her biggest enemy, Juno, is projected to join her son and support his ancestors because of how powerful they will become. As the mother of the Roman people, she will be given special honors and higher respect from the Gods above.²³ The prospect of this was most appealing to Venus because as stated in Stephen Fry’s *Troy*, “Aphrodite’s weakness...was vanity. She could never receive enough praise, worship or sacrifice.”²⁴ She was tempted by the praise of being related to Aeneas, father of the Romans, and therefore rooted her motivations for saving him in that desire for worship.

²²Leach, "Venus, Thetis," 356.

²³Anthony S. Mercatante, "The Facts on File Encyclopedia of World Mythology and Folklore" (New York, N.Y.: Facts on File, 1988), 652.

²⁴Mercatante, "The Facts on File Encyclopedia of World Mythology and Folklore," 652.

As Aeneas and Venus' relationship is examined through the events of the Aeneid, it is clear that Venus holds malformed motivations that push her to help Aeneas in the forest and with his safety in Carthage. Beginning with the regret she holds from her fling with Anchises, that leads her childhood neglect of Aeneas in his formative years, all the way to her ignorance of his feelings as a grown adult in need of support, Venus makes it abundantly clear that she does not hold the traditional motherly love for her son. She is instead driven by a desire to be associated with the race that will rule for eternity, deriving from her greed for worship and fame. In the complex world of Greek mythology, the gods and goddesses hold such elaborate personalities that can often turn out to be opposite of what was first thought. While Venus was one example of a goddess whose true intentions were hidden within the words of Virgil, how many more characters of mythology are not who we think? How can the truth of Venus connect to our own lives and force us to question what we really know about the intentions of those in our own lives today?

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The Power of Ancient Propaganda

Adam Lipman

Throughout his writing "De Bello Gallico," Julius Caesar is steadfast in his belief that the Druids of Gaul are inferior to Rome and that they are the enemy. The language chosen to depict the social and religious culture of the Druids is designed to subtly manipulate the reader, the Roman people, into a feeling of superiority and then a call to action against the Druids. Caesar presented his argument as if he were an objective Roman commentator. Caesar's words were wartime propaganda that boosted his image and justified the war. Through his words on the topic, Julius Caesar proved his lack of objectivity and displayed his opinionated view of Gaul.

Caesar views the social hierarchy maintained by the Druids as an abusive system that enslaves the average person for religious reasons. He describes it as "In omni Gallia eorum hominum, qui aliquo sunt numero atque honore, genera sunt duo. Nam plebes paene servorum habetur loco, quae nihil audet per se, nullo adhibetur consilio. Plerique, cum aut aere alieno aut magnitudine tributorum aut iniuria potentiorum premuntur, sese in servitutem dicant nobilibus: in hos eadem omnia sunt iura, quae dominis in servos." (6.13 1-7). Caesar presents the Romans as saviors to the abused people under the law of the Druids. He sparks sympathy through his description of slavery. Caesar's usage of the idea of slavery is a conscious choice with the goal of getting the average Roman on his side. Those who were enslaved via indentured servitude or apprenticeship would connect with Caesar's depiction of the unfortunate Gauls who were crushed by the boot of the Druids. Caesar used Roman issues such as debt to connect the people of Rome to the people of Gaul and build support for the idea that the Romans saved the innocent slaves from the cruel Druids. Caesar's depiction of the class system among the Druids is heavily

biased to serve his narrative. Freedom-Kai Phillips, a professor at Eastern Michigan University, states the relevance of the different governments and Caesar's political ambitions "Caesar at no time let his final goal fall out of sight. Even with his appointment to Gaul, he stayed politically astute and well informed about affairs in Rome. His survival was dependant on his ability to mold the political scene of Rome, keep his name at the forefront, and limit the power of his opponents...enabling him not only to inform the roman public of his accomplishments, but also to stay informed of Rome's political landscape." (A General's Self-Depiction: The Political Strategies of Gaius Julius Caesar as Seen in the *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*). Caesar knew what he needed to say in order to maximize his experiences in Gaul. By studying the Druid government he knew what would be the furthest from roman normalcy and how to present himself as a hero. His boost in social standing would make it easier to climb the political ladder. Through his saddening description of life as a citizen of Gaul, Caesar connects with roman citizens who see him as someone who understands what their lives are like. His bias unveils his sole purpose of boosting his public perception and utilizing it to further his political career. Through his language, Caesar guides the Roman populace through the social structure of Gaul and leads them to his conclusion that Rome saved the people of Gaul and for this reason, the war was justified.

Although he is precise in his criticism of the Druid class system, Caesar is vicious in his description of the governmental power the Druids wield over their people. In his quest for Rome to conform to his view of Gaul, Caesar sparked an ideological debate over government. He exploited Roman pride towards their systems of government, such as the Senate, to create a larger divide between the cultures of Rome and Gaul. While the Romans see themselves as more advanced than the rest of the world, Caesar portrays the Druids as ruthless animals. Courtenay

Edward Stevens, a British historian at Oxford, detailed how the Druids became savages in the minds of Romans “The news of the pacification of Gaul, which reached Rome in the autumn of 57 b.c...The news of pacification would lead politicians, especially hostile politicians, to think of provincialisation...he could show that an invasion of Britain was necessary to secure peace in his pacified Gaul” (the *Bellum Gallicum* as a Work of Propaganda). The usage of the word pacification does not come from Stevens but from Caesar’s writings. By building on his previous claims about Gaul, Caesar subconsciously convinces the reader that he is a savior and is saving Rome from the wickedness of the Druids. Instead of characterizing the two sides as civilized equals fighting a war, the Druids become the animal that Caesar has volunteered to put down. In such a situation, the reader would admire Caesar for his bravery and victory. There is no debate between siding with Rome or siding with a violent and rabid animal that wishes to destroy all of the Roman empire. He guarantees the point is made and the opinion is spread by discussing the details of the Druid governmental systems in Gaul. He describes Druid rule “Nam fere de omnibus controversiis publicis privatisque constituunt, et, si quod est admissum facinus, si caedes facta, si de hereditate, de finibus controversia est, idem decernunt, praemia poenasque constituunt; si qui aut privatus aut populus eorum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicunt.” (6.13-17). Caesar’s subjective language pays off when the earlier description of the Gauls’ servitude is applied to the mundane task of a leader resolving disputes. The reader cannot view the Druids objectively because Caesar’s writing forces an immediate negative reaction. Caesar withholds information that could become a detriment to the narrative he weaves. When he describes the reach of Druid trials, the reader is led to believe that the Druids give the Gauls no freedom and overstep in the lives of ordinary citizens. Caesar could be excluding what determines whether the Druids get involved in private disputes or he could be lying. Since Caesar controls the facts,

whatever he says is what the reader perceives as the truth. The distinct differences between the Roman culture and Caesar's interpretation of Gaul culture are only highlighting Caesar's negatives towards the Gauls. He depicts the Druids as merciless and cruel people who punish the tiniest of dissent with a punishment regarded by Romans as the most extreme outcome. The reader cannot disagree with Caesar and has to agree with what they have available. There is no counterargument or authority to note Caesar's biases. Caesar traps the reader in an impossible situation that ends with the reader agreeing with everything he says. However, Caesar doubled down on his chilling narrative by describing how the Druids execute the punishments upon the Gauls and how they force the people to take part. He writes "Haec poena apud eos est gravissima. Quibus ita est interdictum, hi numero impiorum ac sceleratorum habentur, his omnes decedunt, aditum sermonemque defugiunt, ne quid ex contagione incommodi accipiant, neque his petentibus ius redditur neque honos ullus communicatur." (6.13 17-22). Caesar's description of punishment under the Druids makes them appear to be tyrannical oppressors. The victimization of the Gauls is at its strongest when Caesar talks about this punishment system. The fear of being picked off by a secretive religious group would terrify anyone reading it to the point where it would be impossible to not sympathize with the victims. The contrast between the Romans and the Gauls is stark when Caesar makes it seem like the Druids beat their people into submission and break their spirits.

While Caesar is merciless with his descriptions of the Druid government and class system, he saves his most biased claims for the religious customs the Druids perform. By depicting these beliefs in an inferior light, Caesar diminishes the entire culture of the Druids. He is exact in identifying customs for his audience that, when presented without context, appear to be savage rituals. He disparages them "Natio est omnis Gallorum admodum dedita religionibus,

atque ob eam causam, qui sunt adfecti gravioribus morbis quique in proeliis periculisque versantur, aut pro victimis homines immolant aut se immolatuos vovent administrisque ad ea sacrificia druidibus utuntur, quod, pro vita hominis nisi hominis vita reddatur, non posse deorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur, publiceque eiusdem generis habent instituta sacrificia” (6.16 1-7). The barbaric nature of human sacrifice was not as common in the Roman empire but Caesar uses this to his advantage as a means of disgusting the reader and creating shock towards all Gauls. By introducing a controversial concept like human sacrifice, Caesar sets up his later descriptions to appear even scarier than what was previously thought possible. He discusses what is the worst of the worst to him “Alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent, quorum contexta viminibus membra vivis hominibus complent; quibus succensis circumventi flamma exanimantur homines. Supplicia eorum qui in furto aut in latrocinio aut aliqua noxia sint comprehensi gratiora dis immortalibus esse arbitrantur; sed, cum eius generis copia defecit, etiam ad innocentium supplicia descendunt.” (6.16 8-13). The vivid description of men burning alive for entertainment and a twisted way of appeasing the gods accomplishes everything Caesar wanted to accomplish in his writings. The reader would be petrified at the thought of what a lack of Rome can do to people and cultures. The justification for the war is that Rome needs to save these people from themselves. In this case, Caesar literally wants to save these people from burning each other to death and assimilate them into the Roman umbrella. Through the fear of the unknown, Julius Caesar is able to mold the religion of the Gauls and fear of the Druids into an impactful call to action for the entirety of the Roman Empire. Through the sheer strength of his words, Caesar created the narrative that would shape the worldview of the Gauls and the Druids for the rest of history.

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The Futility of Free Will vs Fate in the *Aeneid*

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Predeterminism, as defined by *Oxford Languages*, is “the belief that all events, including human actions, are established or decided in advance” (*Oxford Languages*).¹ Often associated with a theistic belief system, the power and influence of predeterminism is evident in Vergil’s *Aeneid*. In the polytheistic religion that the characters of the *Aeneid* subscribe to, the power of predeterminism is synonymous to “Fate.” Whether one likens Fate to be an abstract notion, or holds the theistic interpretation that “Fate” is a title for one of the three goddesses that dictate the destinies of the characters in the epic poem, the power of Fate ultimately bounds the characters and events in the *Aeneid* to a certain destiny. The mention of Fate calls into question the extent to which “free will,” the ability to make uninfluenced, personal decisions, matters in the epic. The characters in the *Aeneid*, regardless of their status as deities, demigods, or humans, have their destinies ultimately determined by Fate. They may exercise their free will to varying degrees in order to attempt to nullify their Fate, but these attempts will be in vain, as no matter what their personal feelings are pertaining to their destinies, the most they can do is delay Fate’s inevitability.

Virgil’s first three lines of the *Aeneid* display, early in the poem, the overarching theme and importance of Fate. Virgil writes, “*Arma virumque canō, Trōiae quī prīmus ab ōrīs/Ītaliā, fātō profugus, Lāvīniaque vēnit/ lītora.*”² Written by Virgil in a first-person perspective, these

¹“Predeterminism,” *Oxford Languages*, accessed November 19, 2022, <https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/>.

²Virgil and Barbara Weiden Boyd, *Vergil's Aeneid: Expanded Collection : Book 1 and Selections from Books 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12* (Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2013), 3.

lines, as translated by Sarah Ruden, mean, “Arms and a man I sing, the first from Troy/A fated exile to Lavinian shores/in Italy.”³ From the first lines of the poem, we learn that our protagonist is destined to arrive upon the shores of Lavinia, an Italian town. It is not a regular voyage, but a “fated exile.”⁴ Virgil knows the plot of the story as he is the author, and he narrates to the reader that our protagonist, who is revealed to be Aeneas, will arrive in Italy. However, Aeneas and his fellow journeymen encounter numerous obstacles that inhibit an easy voyage. It seems that Fate did not outline, or dictate, the conditions of their journey, but they did ensure that whatever occurred, that Aeneas, “the first from Troy”⁵ would live to establish the first Trojan settlement in Italy.⁶ As foreordained by Fate, Aeneas achieves this task and the legendary Trojan becomes the ancestor of the Roman people. The reader learns early in the epic that no matter how unlikely the odds seem, or whatever challenges the protagonist will face, Fate will mandate that Aeneas fulfills this prophecy. Virgil seems to spoil the story by revealing that Aeneas will complete his journey; there is longer an air of mystery for the reader as they read the epic—they know that the hero will achieve his goal. However, the power of Fate is merely a theme that underlines the plot. The various characters, emotions, poetic language, beautiful imagery, and twists and turns are all techniques that enhance the plot and make the *Aeneid* the legendary tale it is.

The power of Fate supersedes even those of venerable figures such as deities. This sentiment is exemplified by Juno’s inability to alter Aeneas’s destiny of reaching Italy. In a 1907 article titled, “Fate and Free Will in the Aeneid: In Two Parts—Part II,” R.B. Steele cites Juno as “one of the most interesting divinities portrayed by Vergil, for she, better than any one of [the

³Virgil, et al., *The Aeneid*, revised and expanded edition. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), 3

⁴Virgil, et al., *The Aeneid*, 3.

⁵Virgil, et al., *The Aeneid*, 3.

⁶Virgil and Boyd, *Vergil's Aeneid*, 3.

other divinities], illustrates the workings of free will in opposition to fate.”⁷ Among the litany of deities involved and mentioned in the *Aeneid*, such as Venus, Jupiter, and Minerva, it is evident that Juno is the deity most opposed to Aeneas and the completion of his journey. Juno exercises her free will to disrupt Aeneas’s journey, such as by deciding to plead with Aeolus to send disruptive winds so that Aeneas’s fleet will perish.⁸ Juno despises the Trojan people for primarily two reasons. The people of Carthage, also known as Tyre, are Juno’s chosen people. She planned “that Carthage would rule the world – if only fate allowed!”⁹ However, Juno is aware that Fate has destined Troy’s descendants to destroy the Carthaginian people. Troy’s descendants are fated to come from Aeneas and his comrades and become the Romans, the group of people who will destroy Carthage.¹⁰ Secondly, during the Judgement of Paris, the Trojan prince, Paris, chose Venus as the most beautiful goddess above Minerva and Juno; his decision was likely fueled by Venus’s promise to give him Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, to be his wife.¹¹ Juno hates the Trojans for these two reasons and wishes to see them fail. However, Juno knows she cannot prevent Aeneas from reaching Italy as she states, “Fate blocks me.”¹² Juno holds severe spite for the Trojan people, and she has taken actions to inhibit the success of Aeneas’s journey, but she knows that these efforts will ultimately be in vain. Despite Aeolus’s wind storm sinking some of Aeneas’s fleet and separating him from some of his comrades, amongst other challenges, Aeneas still completes his journey to Italy. As put by the author of the 1964 journal article “*Fata Deum* and the Action of the *Aeneid*,” H.L. Tracy, “Juno knows that she cannot keep Aeneas from Italy. Yet she can obstruct his progress.”¹³ However obstructive her actions are, they only delay

⁷R.B. Steele, "Fate and Free Will in the Aeneid: In Two Parts—Part II," *The New York Latin Leaflet* 7, no. 164 (January 28, 1907): 1, accessed November 19, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40405496?seq=2#metadata_info_tab_contents.

⁸Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 6.

⁹Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 4.

¹⁰Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 4.

¹¹Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 4.

¹²Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 5.

¹³H.L. Tracy, "Fata Deum and the Action of the Aeneid," *Greece and Rome* 11, no. 2 (October 1964): 192, accessed November 19, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/642245?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

the inevitability of Aeneas completing his journey. Juno uses her free will extensively to disrupt the Trojans' voyage, but Fate prevents these attempts from being fruitful.

Aeneas uses the guarantee of the Trojan destiny to motivate his comrades after calamity. After the windstorm, courtesy of Juno and Aelous, Aeneas and his remaining companions end up on the shores of Libya, disgruntled and dismayed. Here, Aeneas gives the colloquially named "Beach Speech," where he encourages his men to retain hope and reminds them of the challenges they have overcome prior. During the speech, Aeneas states, "We fight through perils and catastrophes/To Latium, where divine fate promises/A peaceful homeland, a new Trojan kingdom."¹⁴ Aeneas encourages his allies to think of their destiny in Italy, where they will reign prosperously in a new kingdom. Aeneas is confident that his statements will come to fruition because "divine fate" promises so.¹⁵ Their destiny is to found this new kingdom, and they will do so, no matter what. Aeneas's words motivate his men, and they proceed to pick up their morale and find food and drink.¹⁶ In this moment, Aeneas uses his free will to supplement his fate, encouraging his men to take actions that will hasten the fulfillment of their glorious destiny. Soon after, Venus expresses lament pertaining to the hardships that her son is going through. Her father, Jupiter, consoles her by saying, "Take heart: no one will touch the destiny/Of your people. You will see Lavinium/In its promised walls, and raise your brave Aeneas/To the stars."¹⁷ The most powerful deity, the king of the gods, Jupiter, acknowledges how powerful Fate is. Even he is unable to alter its inevitability, and he reminds his daughter that no matter what hardships

¹⁴Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 11.

¹⁵Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 11.

¹⁶Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 11.

¹⁷Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 13.

arise, Aeneas will eventually find peace and fulfillment when he achieves his destiny. Similarly to Aeneas during the “Beach Speech,” Jupiter uses his free will to provide comfort to his loved ones, reminding them that Fate will make all things work out in the end.

Fate begot the inevitable downfall of Troy. The homeland of Aeneas, Troy, was raided and destroyed by the Greeks due to the grand deception of the Trojan Horse. In Book II, while Aeneas is recounting the tales of his travels to Queen Dido and her fellow Carthaginians, he arrives at the moment in which the Trojans first saw the Trojan Horse. He recalls that the Trojan Thymoetes was the first to suggest that the Trojans accept the gift. Aeneas states that it was either due to “[Thymoetes’s] own guile or the fate of Troy inspired him.”¹⁸ Thymoetes may have been prompted to use guile to bring on the downfall of Troy due to a vendetta he had against his own fellow Trojans. Thymoetes’s son was killed in order “to avert a prophecy linking his birth to the downfall of the city.”¹⁹ The Trojans decided to kill Thymoetes’s son in order to defy a prophecy, a prediction of Fate. Thymoetes may still harbor adverse feelings because of this, and suspects that the gift is a trap. He would want to accept the gift in order to make Troy suffer, similar to how he did when his son was killed. The other motivation for Thymoetes’s suggestions may lie in Fate’s influence. Aeneas believes that a possibility for Thymoetes’s suggestion may be due to external factors, such as Fate. Troy was destined to fall, and this is a fact that Aeneas is aware of. In order to hasten the onset of Troy’s destiny, the deities of Fate may have prompted Thymoetes to voice this suggestion. In a moment of irony, Thymoetes’s son was killed in order to escape the damning fate of Troy, but it was to no avail. Now, his father suggests that the Trojans accept the gift that will lead to their downfall. Whatever Thymoetes’s motivations were, Troy was destined to fall, and it indeed fell. Despite the Trojans attempting to

¹⁸Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 32.

¹⁹Virgil et al., *The Aeneid*, 32.

avert Fate by killing Thymoetes's son, Fate still prevailed. Thymoetes's role in the story is interesting, however. If he indeed decided to accept the gift of the Trojan Horse out of guile and a desire for revenge, then he would have been exercising his free will, voluntarily and intentionally hastening the unfortunate Fate of Troy. On the other hand, if it was Fate that prompted him to make the suggestion, then it would have been Fate prompting him directly to act as an agent of Fate, involuntarily hastening Troy's downfall. Virgil embeds this detail into the *Aeneid* to display the nuances between fate and free will. Sometimes it is unclear to the character which one is fueling their actions, but as we have gleaned from prior examples, the power of Fate dictates and supersedes all events in this epic work.

The power of Fate in the *Aeneid* is an overarching, superseding force that dictates the end-all of all happenings in the story. While characters can use their free will in attempts to alter their fate, or use their free will to supplement and hasten the onset of their fate, the final result will be the same. Fate's inevitability in the epic is paramount, and it is the driving force of the entire plot. Fate fuels the legendary tale that is the *Aeneid*.

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