

Language politics in the *Aeneid* and Friel's *Translations*

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A recent book, entitled *Virgil and Joyce: Nationalism and Imperialism in the Aeneid and Ulysses*, interprets the two titular authors' works against each other. Joyce's allusions to Virgil are read as contributing layers of meaning to the later text, but they also suggest re-reading the *Aeneid* in the light of *Ulysses*. "Eyes that have read Joyce's novel pick out aspects of the *Aeneid* that may not otherwise stand out".¹ Particular lines, passages and aspects of both texts are charged with new meaning when read against each other, and the allusions also prompt a broader "compare and contrast" dialogue between the two texts that affects the interpretation of the earlier one. The interpretative method is a kind of bidirectional intertextuality. In an analogous spirit, I stage here a conversation between Virgil's *Aeneid* and Brian Friel's 1981 play *Translations*, in which I mainly explore what new interpretations of the *Aeneid* are uncovered by Friel's engagement with Virgil. I focus on this retrospective side of the intertextual relationship for two reasons: first, as a complement to those studies that have already considered Friel's classical allusions, and second, because the comparison helps us to look more closely at language difference in the *Aeneid*, an important and understudied theme which intersects in significant ways with the better-studied topic of Virgilian place-names.

Friel's *Translations* "deals with the ways in which the consciousness of an entire culture is fractured by the transcription of one linguistic landscape (Gaelic and classical) into another (Anglo-Saxon and positivist)".² The play's central reception of Virgil contributes to its fabric, but also helps us to interpret Virgil's poetry itself. Friel had thought carefully about the *Aeneid* while writing *Translations*, in ways that were informed by George Steiner's *After Babel*, a book that argues in Heideggerian terms that all interpretation, all understanding, is a form

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¹ Pogorzelski (2016) 16.

² Kearney (1983) 24.

of translation.³ Accordingly, Friel's play sees the *Aeneid* as part of an exercise in translation *à la* Steiner that works on several levels – personal, cultural, and political – but his vision is inflected with the Irish experience of colonialism and language politics.

Several years before writing *Translations*, Friel penned a self-portrait in which he recalled reading Virgil at school.

“Before I leave my childhood and youth I want to look back briefly at that bizarre process called my education. For about fifteen years I was taught by a succession of men who force-fed me with information, who cajoled me, beat me, threatened me, coaxed me to swallow their puny little pies of knowledge and attitudes.

“And the whole thing, I know now, was an almost complete waste of time. I'm not resentful about this. I don't feel scarred or damaged by it. [...]

“Arma virumque cano
Troiae qui primus ab oris
Italiam fato profugus Lavinaque venit litora [*sic*]
[...]

“And so on, and so on.

“Yes, on second thoughts I am slightly resentful. And the little grudge I bear is directed against those men who taught me the literature of Rome and Greece and England and Ireland as if they were pieces of intricate machinery, created for no reason and designed for no purpose. They were called out of the air, these contrivances, and planked [*sic*] in front of us, and for years we tinkered with them, pulling them apart, putting them together again, translating, scanning, conjugating, never once suspecting that these texts were the testimony of sad, happy, assured, confused people like ourselves. And there we were, so engaged in irregular verbs and peculiar declensions that we never once smelt blood or felt gristle”.⁴

Blood and gristle! As belated compensation for what felt like a sterile education, Friel later found meaningful interlocutors in Virgil and other classics such as Chekhov, Turgenyev, and Ibsen.⁵

³ Steiner (1975); for Steiner's influence on Friel's thinking, see especially Kearney (1983); McGrath (1989); Pilkington (1990).

⁴ Murray (1999a) 39–40 (originally published in 1972).

⁵ Friel translated two plays by Chekhov, *Three Sisters* (1981) and *Uncle Vanya* (1998). He wrote other plays based on works by Chekhov: *The Yalta Game* (2001) is based on ‘The Lady with the Dog’; *Afterplay* (2002) enacts a meeting between Sonya from *Uncle Vanya* and Andrey from *Three Sisters*; and *The Bear* (2002) is based on a short story of the same name. The spirit of Chekhov breathes through others of his plays, especially *Aristocrats* (1982). From Turgenyev he translated *Fathers and Sons* (1987) and *A Month in the Country* (1992); and from Ibsen *Hedda Gabler* (2008).

His revisiting of these texts, where he adapts them to Irish contexts, raise questions about the ownership of the Classics and the possibility of translation itself. His *Living Quarters* (1977), subtitled ‘after *Hippolytus*’, transplants Euripides’ play to rural Donegal. He took on Russian plays partly because he found that most English translations misrepresented the experience of the characters and compounded popular clichés.⁶ In turn, his own Hiberno-English versions drew barbs from the likes of Paul Muldoon, who in *The Prince of the Quotidian* (1994), wrote:

“The last time I saw *Three Sisters*
was in a ‘vershin’ by Monsignor Friel who was,
I recall, at pains to prove that Chekhov was more Irish
than a rush.”⁷

Translations is set in 1833 in a hedge-school⁸ in the fictional village of Ballybeg / Baile Beag (the Irish for “Small Town”), an Irish-speaking community in rural Donegal, on the eve of the potato famine. English soldiers have come to Ballybeg to map the locality, an exercise in colonial cartography which involves translating all place names from Irish into English. Most of the characters are locals: Hugh the hedge-schoolmaster, Manus his son and deputy, and several pupils, Maire, who has ambitions to emigrate to America; Sarah, who has a speech impairment; Jimmy Jack, a bachelor in his sixties who is in love with Pallas Athena; the bumptious Doalty, who resists the English presence; and the irreverent Bridget. Two English soldiers, the efficient and imperious Captain Lancey and the dreamy Lieutenant Yolland, are stationed in Ballybeg while working on the map. Hugh’s other son Owen is a complex character: he lives in Dublin and speaks fluent English, and puts his local knowledge and language skills at the service of the English soldiers (who call him Roland), making himself a quisling in the eyes of his own people.⁹ During the course of the play, Lieutenant Yolland goes missing, and in

⁶ See his note on ‘Translations’ (from Russian) in Murray (1999a) 179–80, and many *obiter dicta* in Delaney (2000). Here are two revealing examples. From an interview with Elgy Gillespie (1981): “Of course [the] Fen [translation] is perfect for England, but if you do use that one you must get your actors to assume English accents because it’s English music. As English as Elgar. The officers say ‘Jolly good, wasn’t it splendid!’” (156). From an interview with Donal O’Donnell (1981): “What has happened up to this is that Irish actors have to assume English accents, so you end up with being an Irishman pretending you’re an Englishman pretending you’re a Russian! In some way the whole thing gets further and further away from us, I think” (150–51).

⁷ Muldoon (1994) 22. “Monsignor Friel”: Friel spent time as a seminarian at Maynooth; “vershin” ~ “version” in countrified Irish pronunciation, alluding also to the character Lieutenant-Colonel Vershinin in *Three Sisters*; “rush” suggests “Russian”, as if Chekhov were more Irish than Russian.

⁸ Hedge-schools were informal schools, which sometimes convened outdoors, that provided education to Catholics. They were illegal, as the penal laws enacted during William III’s reign forbade Catholics to be educated. For a recent re-appraisal of hedge-schools and the teaching of Classics in 18th- and 19th-century Ireland, see O’Higgins (2017).

⁹ For the notion of the translator as a traitor in Greek and Roman sources, see Mairs (2011).

response Captain Lancey threatens a violent reprisal unless he is found (though it is clear that Yolland has been killed). These characters dramatize a range of perspectives on the play's core themes of language and translation, through both individual utterances and interactions. At the public and political end of the spectrum, the play leaves it in no doubt that the translation of place-names for colonial purposes was an act of cultural violence, to which the Irish characters respond with different degrees of resistance, acquiescence, assent, or a mixture of these. Maire, for example, sees English as the passport to success through emigration, but Hugh cautions that even if he manages to teach her English, it may not enable her to "interpret between privacies".¹⁰ At the private end of the spectrum, Yolland shows a conqueror's rueful but fruitless reflection on the injustices of the military operation, and it is notable that the play's emotional climax comes when he and Maire (who speaks only one sentence of English) share a love scene in which they communicate by speaking Irish place names.

It becomes clear very quickly that the Irish characters are to be understood as speaking Irish, even though the script is written in English. Language difference between characters within the fiction of the play is a source of comedy and pathos: it leads to some mutual unintelligibility, as well as feigned misunderstanding, suspicion, alienation, attraction, romanticization, deliberate mistranslation and miscommunication. The theatrical conceit whereby the actors speak English but some characters are to be understood as speaking Irish itself thematizes the relationship between the two languages. (The play also refers occasionally to the impending potato famine, a cataclysm that dealt a blow to the vitality of the Irish language in Ireland, which introduces a sense of foreboding).¹¹ The palimpsestic quality of the play – English laid over Irish – has been interpreted in various ways that largely complement one another, and that are rooted in a broad understanding of Friel's preoccupation with language and communication, and in the politics of language in Irish literature.¹² Some have read it as a harbinger of the eventual eclipsing of Irish by English among the majority of speakers.¹³ Others have seen it as looking forward to the phenomena of Hiberno-English language and literature, where English-language culture is lived, and literature written, on an Irish-language palimpsest. Others still see the language game as a metaphor for colonial hybridity.

¹⁰ Friel (2000) 89–90: "But don't expect too much. I will provide you with the available words and the available grammar. But will that help you to interpret between privacies? I have no idea. But it's all we have. I have no idea at all".

¹¹ See Ó Tuathaigh (2015).

¹² See Kearney (1983); McGrath (1990); Murray (1999b); He (2010); also Pilkington (1990); Peacock (1993). For the play's critical reception see Longley (1985) 28–29 and Pilkington (1990) 283–84.

¹³ Cf. Friel, 'Extracts from a sporadic diary', written during the composition of the play (Murray, 1999a, 75): "I don't want to write a play about Irish peasants being suppressed by English sappers. I don't want to write a threnody on the death of the Irish language. I don't want to write a play about land-surveying. Indeed I don't want to write a play about naming places. And yet portions of all these are relevant. Each is part of the atmosphere in which the real play lurks".

Friel himself insisted that the play was about language and the possibilities of communication, but in a political context. In an interview, at the Dublin premiere of *Translations*, with Mary McAleese, then a journalist and later President of Ireland, Friel put the emphasis on the issue of the English language as spoken in Ireland both as a legacy of the English presence, and as a barrier to communication:

“I suppose the play has to do with two issues that I think have never been properly resolved in this country; one is the English presence, and the other, I think, has to do with another issue that is more concerned with ourselves, which is the problem of expressing ourselves through an acquired language, and [that] in some way is also inhibiting the relationships between this island and England ... You and I could list a whole series of words for example that have totally different connotations for English people than they have for us, words like ‘loyalty’, ‘treason’, ‘patriotism’, ‘republicanism’, ‘homeland’, so that in fact there are words which we think we share, and which we think we can communicate with, which in fact are barriers to communication”.¹⁴

In several interviews around the time of the play’s premiere, Friel remarked that the “sad irony, of course, is that the whole play is written in English. It ought to be written in Irish”,¹⁵ which was indeed the language spoken by Friel’s grandparents, as he recalled in a 1982 interview with Fintan O’Toole:

“I had grandparents who were native Irish speakers and also two of the four grandparents were illiterate. It’s very close, you know, I actually remember two of them. And to be so close to illiteracy and to a different language is a curious experience. And in some way I don’t think we’ve resolved it. We haven’t resolved it on this island for ourselves”.¹⁶

(The Irish-language reception history of *Translations* is an interesting story in its own right).¹⁷ All of these considerations about language in *Translations* are relevant to a reading of the *Aeneid*.

¹⁴ Radio Teilifís Éireann on 7 October 1980; see <https://www.rte.ie/archives/2015/1002/731966-brian-friels-translations/>.

¹⁵ Murray (1999a) 80 (interview with Ciaran Carty, 1980); see also Murray (1999a) 85 (interview with Paddy Agnew, 1980): “Of course, a fundamental irony of this play is that it should have been written in Irish”.

¹⁶ Murray (1999a) 108.

¹⁷ See de Buiteléir (2007). There was a monolingual Irish translation by Breandán Ó Doibhlin (*i.e.* one in which all characters spoke Irish, preserving the linguistic uniformity of Friel’s original), and a bilingual one by Gearóid Ó Cairealláin of Aisling Ghéar theatre company (in which the English characters spoke English and the Irish characters spoke Irish). Though Friel had previously refused permission for bilingual translations, exceptionally, he gave his blessing to Ó Cairealláin, whose work he respected (Brid Ó Gallchoir of Aisling Ghéar, *per litteras*, 1 February 2017). The polyglossia of this translation brought out the violence of the cultural encounter between the English and Irish characters.

Of all Friel's plays, *Translations* is the richest in explicit references to Greek and Latin texts.¹⁸ The teaching of Greek and Latin in the hedge-school is the main vehicle for classical allusions, as Hugh puns in Latin or quizzes his pupils about the source and meaning of Greek and Latin quotations and etymologies. His first words upon entering the stage introduce us to his conversational tendency: "*Adsum*, Doalty, *adsum*. Perhaps not in *sobrietate perfecta*, but adequately *sobrius* to overhear your quip. Vesperal salutations to you all".¹⁹ The punning etymologies of Hugh's pig-Latin-Irish-English would not work, at least not in their current form, if Hugh's script were truly written in Irish – because the etymologies exist in English but not Irish – and yet he asserts the greater proximity of the classical languages to Irish than to English, as he reports to his pupils of his conversation with Captain Lancey: "I went on to propose that our own culture and the classical tongues made a happier conjugation".²⁰ Hugh persistently quips in classical quotations: "Sophocles from Colonus would agree with Doalty Dan Doalty from Tulach Alainn: 'To know nothing is the sweetest life'".²¹ Beyond these language games which pervade the play, it is clear that Hugh and Jimmy Jack (and to a lesser extent the other Irish characters) find Greek and Roman authors meaningful outside the classroom. Jimmy Jack frequently quotes Homer, in line with his marital designs on Pallas Athena; he knows the first book of Horace's *Satires* off by heart. Hugh brands Captain Lancey's eviction threat an "*Edictum imperatoris*".²² Hugh reminisces to Jimmy Jack about how they set off for the 1798 rebellion with the *Aeneid* in their pockets, but later turned back. Hugh quotes the exilic Ovid in frustration that he has been excluded from teaching in the new national school: *barbarus hic ego sum quia non intellegor ulli*.²³ The final scene ends with Hugh struggling to remember a passage from the beginning of the *Aeneid*.

"*Urbs antiqua fuit* – there was an ancient city which, 'tis said, Juno loved above all the lands. And it was the goddess's aim and cherished hope that here should be the capital of all nations – should the fates perchance allow that. Yet in truth she discovered that a race was springing from Trojan blood to overthrow some day these Tyrian towers – a people *late regem belloque superbum* – kings of broad realms and proud in war who would come forth for Lybia's downfall – such was – such was the course – such was the course ordained – ordained by fate ... What the hell's wrong with me? Sure I know it backways. I'll begin again. *Urbs antiqua fuit* – there was an ancient city which, 'tis said, Juno loved above all the lands.

¹⁸ Friel (2000) 92–94 is an appendix of Greek and Latin used in the text, with translations into English.

¹⁹ Friel (2000) 21.

²⁰ Friel (2000) 23.

²¹ Friel (2000) 22.

²² Friel (2000) 91.

²³ Friel (2000) 87; Ov. *Ti.* 5.10.31; some editors of Ovid read *qui* for *quia*.

Begin to bring down the lights.

“And it was the goddess’s aim and cherished hope that here should be the capital of all nations – should the fates perchance allow that. Yet in truth she discovered that a race was springing from Trojan blood to overthrow some day these Tyrian towers – a people kings of broad realms and proud in war who would come forth for Lybia’s downfall ...

Black”²⁴

A number of scholars have analyzed and interpreted these and other classical references in *Translations*,²⁵ and it will be helpful to review the chief lines of interpretation before turning to the effect of reading Virgil through Friel. Each allusion – and there are dozens – can be interpreted in its own context, and they sometimes respond to the historical background of the play. Thus, when Jimmy and Doalty discuss Virgil’s advice that black, rich soil that is crumbly under the plough is most suitable for growing corn, Jimmy exclaims that they should be growing corn rather than potatoes “in that upper field of yours”,²⁶ a clear foreshadowing of the failure of the potato crop in the following decade, with its cultural and linguistic repercussions. It is clear also from the examples in the previous paragraph that the Irish characters use classical quotations to express their political and cultural situation *vis-à-vis* the English incursion. On one assessment, the classical quotations unify the Irish characters against the adversity of English imperialism, even though the survival of their culture will be through the medium of English.²⁷ As the play’s first reviewers complained,²⁸ it is not realistic that Friel’s English characters do not understand Latin, but the distinction within the play’s fiction sets up a dichotomy between the Gaelic and classical world that is passing and the ascendant world in which English will dominate. Yet, even though it is the Irish characters who visibly marshal classical materials to make sense of their situation, it is the English soldiers who control the classical legacy of empire.²⁹ The closing quotation from the beginning of the *Aeneid* is a good example of this: it suggests an allegorical musing on Hugh’s part in which the English stand for the Romans, and the Carthaginians (whose overthrow is glimpsed in prospect) for the Irish. Most probably, it is the horrible vision of Ireland’s downfall that causes Hugh to falter in recollecting the passage.³⁰

²⁴ Friel (2000) 90–91.

²⁵ See Arkins (1991); Cullingford (1996); DeHoratius (2011); Maley (2011); Hinds (2011) 79–83; Saunders (2012); Passaretti (2014).

²⁶ Friel (2000) 14; *Geo.* 2.203–05.

²⁷ DeHoratius (2001), an attempt at a comprehensive reading of the classical intertextuality in the play.

²⁸ Pilkington (1990) 285–86.

²⁹ Saunders (2012).

³⁰ Arkins (1990) 208; cf. Cullingford (1996) 231, arguing that the English are the descendants of the Trojan-Romans via Brutus.

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Friel's use of the *Aeneid* in *Translations* may serve as a spur to rethink the politics of language in the *Aeneid* itself. In the most general terms, Friel's play reminds us that the *Aeneid* dramatizes a series of cultural translations into Latin, and that translation, whether ancient or modern, is always political.³¹ More specifically, I shall argue that the linguistic uniformity of the *Aeneid* lends itself to political interpretation comparable with what has been proposed for Friel's *Translations*. By "linguistic uniformity" I mean the fact that all characters in the *Aeneid* speak polished Latin, whether they be Trojan, Greek, Tyrian, Latin, or from Italy beyond Latium, even though characters from different lands are distinguished by other features, such as dress or customs.

The difference in orientation of point of view between the two works matters greatly for language politics: the *Aeneid* is an integrationist narrative that foregrounds the perspective of the victors, while giving some voice to the conquered, all in Latin. *Translations* is animated by the point of view of the conquered, even though it enacts a story of cultural violence in the language of the conqueror. To be sure, linguistic uniformity is the norm in classical epic, and on that score, unremarkable. But my argument is that Friel's *Translations* helps us to see that Virgil encourages us to think of the politics of linguistic assimilation, by pointing to language difference at critical moments, even as his poem's characters speak uniformly in the language of Roman conquest.

It need hardly be pointed out that Virgil's picture of language is a Latin version of the Homeric convention. In the *Iliad* Greeks and Trojans speak fluent Greek, and the issue of a language barrier between them is simply not raised, despite several references to language difference in the poems, including among the Trojan allies, and the use of the adjective βαρβαρόφωνος of the Carians in the Catalogue of Ships.³² Short of actual language difference, it has been persuasively argued that "in the *Iliad*, Greeks and Trojans talk differently", in that "Achaean are proficient at blame, while Trojans perform praise poetry".³³ Aside from the two epics, in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite (5.111–16), Aphrodite comes to Anchises disguised as a Phrygian, and explains to him that she is familiar with his language as well as with her own, because she had a Trojan nurse as a child. But of course their conversation, like the whole poem, is written in Greek. Ennius adopted the Homeric custom in that his "foreigners" speak Latin,³⁴ and he even reports a response from the Delphic Oracle to Pyrrhus in Latin hexameters, which led Cicero to doubt the veracity of the episode partly on the grounds that Apollo never spoke Latin.³⁵

³¹ See Mairs (2018).

³² Language difference at *Il.* 2.802–06; βαρβαρόφωνων at 2.867; see also 4.433–38; *Od.* 19.172–77. Ross (2005) argues that linguistic disunity among the Trojans' allies implies a kind of pan-Hellenic unity. See Hall (1989) 19–21.

³³ Mackie (1996) 1; 83.

³⁴ *E.g.* Pyrrhus at *Ann.* 183–90 Sk; Hannibal at *Ann.* 234–35 Sk.

³⁵ See Cic. *Div.* 2.56.116 = *Enn. Ann.* 167 Sk.



A more naturalistic convention is used in some non-epic genres. For Aristophanes, dialect and language are markers of geographical and social origin, often with comic effect.³⁶ Plautus seems to have used Punic to characterize Hanno in *Poenulus*.³⁷ Prose historians may discreetly hint at language difference between opponents, such as when Polybius’ and Livy’s Scipio and Hannibal communicate through interpreters before the battle of Zama, increasing the sense of Hannibal’s otherness.³⁸

Despite the many peoples who communicate with each other in the *Aeneid*, Virgil avoids the narrative awkwardness of interpreters.³⁹ And he eschews any hint of macaronic speech presentation (*i.e.* alternating languages), which would have compromised epic decorum. Indeed, macaronic exchanges are the stuff of travesty: burlesque scenes in which the Trojans have to mug up quickly on Latin so that they can talk to Latinus later provided a comic take on the absurdness of Trojans (and everyone else) speaking Latin.⁴⁰ Dante, bolder than Virgil in his use of linguistic conventions, raises eyebrows by having “Virgil” and “Dante” converse in the vernacular. Dante also admits different languages into his *Divine Comedy*, from Provençal to Latin, but only at carefully chosen moments. For instance, in *Inferno* Canto 31, when we meet the diaspora of Babel, Nimrod, who initiated building the tower, speaks a line of gibberish. Virgil rebukes him for his unintelligibility. Isolation is Nimrod’s punishment, but the episode also points to how Latin unifies all of the characters and peoples in Virgil’s own epic.

Although more constrained than Dante by the convention of linguistic uniformity, Virgil chose to advertise language difference on three occasions in the epic. Let us review these.

On the night that Troy is breached, the Trojan Coroebus and his men put on the armour of some Greeks that they have killed, with a view to military advantage. The ruse is initially

³⁶ Colvin (1999); Willi (2003).

³⁷ See the discussion of Giusti (2018) 75–87, esp. 83, with further references.

³⁸ Polybius 15.6.3 and Livy 30.30.1; on Livy’s possible use of Polybius, see Adler (2011) 84. On Roman enemies’ actual speeches not having been in Latin, see Adler (2011) 7. Adler *passim* also considers the historicity of the speeches in historiography, but I am surprised he does not make more of the fact that speeches that were originally not in Latin were reported in Latin in Roman historiography. On ancient testimonies to oral translation see Wiotte-Franz (2001).

³⁹ Ahl (2007) however translates *centum oratores*, in the embassy to Latinus at 7.152, as “a hundred men, gifted in language”, and annotates thus: “the Latin has *oratores* (trained public speakers). Virgil’s world is not, like Homer’s, united under one language”. He substantiates this with the references to language difference which I shall discuss shortly.

⁴⁰ See Paulouskaya (2017) 119–21 for macaronic moments in *Aeneid* travesties in German, Russian and Ukrainian. Aloys Blumauer (18th century Austrian poet) and Ivan Korlyarevsky (18th–19th century Ukrainian poet) have the Trojans learning Latin with contemporary schoolbooks. In Irish poet Donncha Rua McNamara’s 18th-century rewriting of the *Aeneid*, *Eachtra Ghiolla an Amaráin / Adventures of a Luckless Fellow*, Charon speaks only Irish and Latin (see McElduff, 2011, 235). On the mixing of high and low language in Virgil travesties see Hardie (2014) 173–88, esp. 183.

successful, as the disguised Trojans slaughter many Greeks and scatter others, but it backfires when they get pelted by weapons from their own side, and then recognized as impostors by Greeks whom they had previously chased through the city (2.420–23):

*Illi etiam, si quos obscura nocte per umbram
fudimus insidiis totaque agitavimus urbe,
apparent; primi clipeos mentitaque tela
agnoscunt atque ora sono discordia signant.*

(“Even the troops that we once, in disguise, under cover of night-time, Chased through the shadows, dispersed in their panic all over the city, Now reappear. They are first to detect that our shields and our weapons Lie about who we are, and to note that our language is different”).

(trans. Ahl, 2007)

Does *ora sono discordia* suggest a different language or simply a different dialect or pronunciation? Opinions vary.⁴¹ Ahl’s translation preserves the ambiguity. The passage may look back to the Homeric tradition of linguistic variety among the Trojan allies, as Horsfall (2008, *ad loc.*) implies. To me it seems less absurd that the Greeks and Trojans should speak two different languages than that they should speak different versions of the same language (indeed, which language would that be?). Either way, the nod to linguistic difference draws attention to the convention of linguistic uniformity, especially in a passage in which a Trojan is narrating a story in Latin to Tyrian Dido about linguistic difference between Greeks and Trojans.

On the shield of Aeneas Augustus is depicted surveying a parade of the vanquished as part of his triple triumph. The peoples differ as much in dress and armour as they do in language (8.720–23):

*Ipsē sedens niveo candentis limine Phoebi
dona recognoscit populorum aptatque superbis
postibus; incedunt victae longo ordine gentes,
quam variae linguīs, habitu tam vestis et armis.*

⁴¹ Horsfall (2008) *ad loc.* mentions two stories in Livy where language difference betrays a military ruse (10.4.8–10; 23.34.6); cf. also Monda (2011) 200–01; Casali (2017) 236: “Ma anche qui in effetti il riferimento è più a diversità di pronuncia che non a una vera e propria diversità di lingua”. For biblical parallels see the shibboleth episode at Judges 12, and for Galileans being recognizable for their distinctive speech see Matthew 26.73 and Mark 14.70.

(“Great Caesar sits sublime upon his throne,
 Before Apollo’s porch of Parian stone;
 Accepts the presents vow’d for victory,
 And hangs the monumental crowns on high.
 Vast crowds of vanquish’d nations march along,
 Various in arms, in habit, and in tongue”).

(trans. Dryden)

Leaving aside the question of how language difference could (not) have been represented on the shield, this passage is the one that most evokes, in linguistic terms, the distinction between Greeks / Romans and barbarians. Indeed, the *gentes* enumerated in the following lines would have spoken a variety of languages before and after being conquered by Rome. But in fact, as Katharine Toll points out, Augustus had not conquered all of the peoples listed in ll. 724–28, and their foreignness is exaggerated.⁴² Virgil has visibly widened the gap between conventional epic usage and the polyglossia of the empire.

Finally, towards the end of the poem, Juno strikes a deal with Jupiter: she will give up her opposition to the Trojans if Jupiter grants that the Latins not have to change their name, language or dress (12.821–28, 834–37):

[Juno]

*‘Cum iam conubiis pacem felicibus (esto)
 component, cum iam leges et foedera iungent,
 ne vetus indigenas nomen mutare Latinos
 neu Troas fieri iubeas Teucrosque vocari
 aut vocem mutare viros aut vertere vestem.
 Sit Latium, sint Albani per saecula reges,
 sit Romana potens Itala virtute propago:
 occidit, occideritque sinas cum nomine Troia.’*

...

[Jupiter]

*‘Sermonem Ausonii patrium moresque tenebunt,
 utque est nomen erit; commixti corpore tantum
 subsident Teucri. Morem ritusque sacrorum
 adiciam faciamque omnis uno ore Latinos.’*

⁴² Toll (1997) 45–47.

("[Juno:]

'When, and so be it, they settle their peace in fulfilment of marriage,
When they shape treaties and laws in their confederation together,
Don't require those who were born here, the Latins, to alter their ancient
Name, become 'Trojans', be known as 'The Teucrians', or alter their language.
Don't make them change their traditional dress. Let Latium continue,
Let there be Alban kings who will span all the centuries. And let
Roman stock get its strength from Italian concepts of courage.
Troy is destroyed. Now permit Troy's name to share her destruction'

[Jupiter:]

'Italy's people will keep both native language and culture.
Further, their name will remain as it is. Inter-marriage will thin out
What's left of Teucrians: namely, their blood. I'll add rituals and customs,
And I'll ensure that they'll all be collectively known as "The Latins"').

(trans. Ahl, 2007)

("The Ausonians will keep their speech and customs
And name unchanged. The Trojans will fade out
As they breed in. I'll introduce their rites,
But make one Latin people, with one language").

(trans. Ruden, 2008)

I give several translations of the last sentence (834–37) to record interpretative divergence over *faciamque uno ore Latinos* – one ethnonym or one language?⁴³ Whichever it is (and I favour “one language”), the scene retroactively implies that the Trojans and the Latins have been speaking different languages, even though we have read or heard them and their allies speaking Latin *to each other*.⁴⁴ What we have here is similar to the linguistic palimpsest in Friel's *Translations*, with the significant difference that it is the language of the conquered and not the conquerors that wins out in Italy, and in which the dialogue is written. The Julians of Virgil's day emphasize their Trojan ancestry, even though Juno has ensured that the Trojans do not pass on their language, dress or customs to their descendants.⁴⁵ *Uno ore* and

⁴³ Tarrant (2012) 304: “uno ore: ‘speaking one language’, but perhaps evoking the more common sense of the phrase, ‘with one voice / unanimously’”. Fletcher (2014, 251) translates: “And I will make them all Latins with one face”.

⁴⁴ Tarrant (2012, 304) puts the lines in the context of contemporary interest in language as a marker of identity, citing Dench (2005) 298–361. See also Zetzel (2018) 31–77.

⁴⁵ See Bettini (2005) and (2006) on this contradiction.

epic linguistic uniformity imply the ascendance of Latin after the settlement between Jupiter and Juno, and in historical time, the dominance of Latin on Italian soil to the exclusion of other languages. W. R. Johnson recognizes the paradox; as he puts it, “the Trojans will start speaking Latin, which will manifest their complete unity with the natives. One in body, language, customs, soul”.⁴⁶ Juno’s bargaining also ensures that it is the non-barbaric language that becomes established.

What can we conclude from these three scenes? One way of resolving the contradiction between Latin uniformity and references to language difference is to imagine that all or at least some of the languages in play, at any rate Latin⁴⁷ and Trojan (as seemingly in Homer), may be versions of Greek. Sure enough, Virgil’s Latin engages closely with Greek on many levels, and it is possible to infer correlations between linguistic, intertextual and cultural translations from Greek to Latin in the *Aeneid*, mirrored also by the presence of the Greek diaspora in the poem, itself a sign of the cultural hybridity between Greek and Italian elements in Virgil’s culture. After all, Latin literature was born in translation, as Denis Feeney has recently reminded us.⁴⁸ Beyond this metaphorical level, though, it does not seem satisfying to think of Latin and other languages in the *Aeneid* as versions of Greek.

More generally, the passages suggest that Virgil is more interested in language, language difference, and imperial sociolinguistics than has sometimes been realized. In each of the three scenes, two or more language communities come face to face through conflict, and the language difference marks their relative otherness. But the passages occupy differing positions on a spectrum from enmity to assimilation. The Greeks and Trojans of book 2 are mortal enemies, even though Aeneas’ Trojans will eventually unite with the Greek diaspora on Italian soil, under Latin auspices. The foreign peoples on the shield in book 8 have been conquered by Rome, and while they are being paraded as enemies, the triumphal procession signals subjugation and incorporation into the Roman empire. Their languages mark them out as different, and one wonders how much the drift of the poem implies that all conquered peoples should assimilate to Latin, even though Greek and other languages remained dominant in the East. This procession is, of course, part of the shield that Aeneas carries into battle, and into the single combat that will seal the bargain of Jupiter and Juno. Finally, in that bargain, the Latins and the Trojans are about to be reconciled and twinned in the polity that will lead to the foundation of Rome. The Trojans will contribute their blood only, but will assimilate to Latin language and culture, and the Latin name. Read together, the three passages suggest that language difference

⁴⁶ Johnson (2001) 13.

⁴⁷ See Stevens (2006–07) on ‘Aeolism’, the theory that Latin is a dialect of Greek; *contra* Gitner (2015).

⁴⁸ Feeney (2016).

marks conflict and enmity, and that linguistic assimilation is concomitant with political assimilation.

Most remarkable of all is the gap that Virgil opens up between the epic convention of linguistic uniformity and the many languages of the poem's fictional reality; this gap points to the dominance of Latin in the world outside the text. As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill has put it:

“Establishing one language as dominant is key to hegemonic practice ... It is precisely the fact that using one language is ‘normal’ or ‘unmarked’ that establishes the rules of the game, the underlying power relationship. By using the dominant language, you buy into the rules of the game. But the fact it is unmarked means you take the dominance for granted.”⁴⁹

Of course, Wallace-Hadrill is talking about Roman history rather than epic convention, but the aetiological character of the *Aeneid*, whereby Virgil uses myth to explain what came later, suggests that the insight may also be relevant to the language politics of the poem.

Virgil's use of myth reflects on Roman history and contemporary realities. It is worthwhile probing what the external correlative of the poem's language politics might be. There seem to be several intertwined strands: Rome's conquest and later unification of Italy; Rome's assimilation of peoples beyond Italy; and the spread of Latin that was consequent on the expansion of the Roman empire, at least in the West.⁵⁰ The question is made more complex and interesting by the fact that Virgilian aetiology has a central linguistic element, which often involves a discourse of naming. My argument, inspired by Friel's *Translations*, is that the *Aeneid* encodes memories of Latin eclipsing other languages, that linguistic assimilation to Latin which was part of the work of empire, and that Virgil's poetry suggests that there is more than one way of looking at the process.

Scholars continue to investigate ways in which the *Aeneid* contributes to ideas of Roman identity by commemorating history.⁵¹ Place-names in the *Aeneid* have a very special significance in this regard,⁵² and it is on this theme that the *Aeneid* and Friel's *Translations* converge most closely. Names preserve local history, and evoke foundation, refoundation, colonization. They stake claims of ownership, and sometimes prior ownership.⁵³ One need only think of

⁴⁹ Wallace-Hadrill (2008) 64.

⁵⁰ On the dominance of Greek in the East and even in parts of Italy, see e.g. Wallace-Hadrill (2008) 57–63, who points out that command of Latin was not necessary to be a Roman, which was a juridical category.

⁵¹ See Toll (1997); Ando (2002); suggestive comments throughout Dench (2005); Reed (2007); Reed (2010); Fletcher (2014); Zetzl (2019).

⁵² On names and naming in the *Aeneid* see Jenkyns (1998); Fletcher (2014). Sullivan (2014) (with further references) is an excellent overview.

⁵³ See e.g. Goldschmidt (2013, 116–19) on Acestes and Segesta in Sicily, and the Trojans' (and therefore Romans') pre-Carthaginian claim on the island.

the etymologies in Evander’s tour of Rome,⁵⁴ or his story of how names changed⁵⁵ in Latium depending on who was in power (8.328–32):

*Tum manus Ausonia et gentes venere Sicanae,
saepius et nomen posuit Saturnia tellus;
tum reges asperque immmani corpore Thybris,
a quo post Itali fluvium cognomine Thybrim
diximus; amisit verum vetus Albula nomen.*

(“Then came Ausonians, and Sicanian tribes –
The land of Saturn often changed its name –
Then there were kings, and giant, cruel King Thybris,
After whom we Italians called this river;
The Albula has lost its ancient name”).

(trans. Ruden, 2008)

Ruden translates Virgil’s *verum ... nomen* as “ancient name”, collapsing any distinction between “etymological name” and “true name”, with a passing nod at the root (> “true name”) of the word “etymology” itself. Evander, an Arcadian, has translated himself into an Italian (*Itali ... diximus*), and has internalized Latin as well as Greek etymologies. On this passage Richard Jenkyns has commented:

“Virgil expresses a sense of the power of names: there is such a thing as a ‘true’ name. This combines with a sense of the aboriginal: the true name is the old, the primal name, undiscovered by later incomers. ‘Amisit’ evokes a nostalgia, a vague sense of loss, and a sense of the hidden, as though the name could not be found, buried as it is in the darkness or dimness of the past.”⁵⁶

But Evander’s history reminds us that name-changes are often violent affairs, as in Friel’s *Translations*. Juno’s words on the death of Troy are apposite: *occidit, occideritque sinas cum nomine Troia* (12.828).

Names can also tell of history in the future tense. Anchises lists for Aeneas the names of the Alban colonies (6.773–76):

⁵⁴ 8.321–58; Ahl (2007) aims to capture as much as possible of the etymologies in his translation. For the etymologies see O’Hara (2017).

⁵⁵ On name-changes in the *Aeneid* see Fletcher (2014) 19; 72.

⁵⁶ Jenkyns (1998) 553.

*Hi tibi Nomentum et Gabios urbemque Fidenam,
 hi Collatinas imponent montibus arces,
 Pometios Castrumque Inui Bolamque Coramque;
 haec tum nomina erunt, nunc sunt sine nomine terrae.*

(“These, when you are gone,
 Will build Nomentum and Gabii and the city of Fidena,
 Fortify hill towns, wall the citadels
 Of Collatia, found Pometii, Bola and Cora
 And Camp Inuus: unheard-of today, unsigned,
 Their name and fame will come”).

(trans. Heaney, 2016)

They will be names then; now they are lands without names: one thinks of Owen’s quip in *Translations*, “We name a thing and – bang – it leaps into existence”.⁵⁷ Poignantly, though, by Virgil’s time, these colonies had themselves been abandoned.⁵⁸

Heroes’ names point to their Roman descendants, as well as to Italian geography and historical events.⁵⁹ Aeneas’ love and affection for Italy grow as the poem proceeds,⁶⁰ and yet Virgil shows us a disunited and even riven land. Elena Giusti writes of “the presentation of the wars in Latium as not only a proto-Civil and proto-Social, but also proto-Hannibalic War”.⁶¹ But we could go further back and discern in Virgil’s Latian wars, and in the wars which precede the “long peace” (7.46) of Latinus, dim reflections of Rome’s conquest of Italy, a process narrated in the first decade of Livy’s history.⁶² Indeed, the Italian books of the *Aeneid* provide a blueprint for integration with Rome, even though it is the victorious Trojans that assimilate into the host culture of Latin, which will itself in due course eclipse other Italic languages. But there is resistance along the way: Katharine Toll has traced a pattern of gradual amalgamation of peoples throughout the *Aeneid*. Enemies are prospective allies; “Italy’s *externi* were to be *externi* only transitorily”.⁶³ This entails that all wars with one’s neighbours may be refigured as civil wars from the perspective of later unification. The poet

⁵⁷ Friel (2000) 45.

⁵⁸ Barchiesi (1988) 297–98.

⁵⁹ See Adams Holland (1935); Reed (2007), esp. 1–7.

⁶⁰ Fletcher (2014).

⁶¹ Giusti (2018) 229.

⁶² The book of Alessandro Barchiesi’s Sather lectures, *The War for Italia: Conflict and Collective Memory in Vergil’s Aeneid*, is eagerly awaited; see already Barchiesi (2008). On strife in mythical Italy see Moorten (1989) and Thomas (2004–05).

⁶³ Toll (1997) 48. On the “unity” of Italy in the *Aeneid* and the ways in which the poem remembers the Social War, see also Johnson (2001); Ando (2002); Marincola (2010); Fletcher (2014).

addresses this paradox in his question to Jupiter as the fighting is renewed in the final book of the epic (12.503–04):

*Tanton placuit concurrere motu,
Iuppiter, aeterna gentis in pace futuras?*

(“Was it your will, O Jupiter, that peoples who were to live at peace for all time should clash so violently in war?”)

(trans. West, 1990)

The passages on language difference, especially those from books 8 and 12, imply a Latin linguistic nationalism that is a correlative to the linguistic and cultural unification of Italy, and beyond this to the spread of Latin as the empire expanded: as enemies become allies, the warring peoples are united under the banner of Latin. But what are the dynamics of volition in this process? If the conquered peoples on the shield are speaking their own languages, what pressure is applied to make them speak Latin? It bears repeating that Juno's intervention to ensure the survival of Latin is critical – the historical norm is that the conquered people take on the language of the conqueror – and of a piece with her violent opposition to the Trojans throughout the epic. But how does the spread of Latin in the *Aeneid* relate to the situation in Italian history? And is there any evidence of historical resistance to Latin?

Ancient historians who have discussed the unification of Italy do indeed point out that one outcome of the process was the emerging dominance of Latin throughout the peninsula. Henrik Mouritsen summarizes the historiographic understanding as follows:

“In the late republic, Italy was transformed politically as well as culturally. By the late 3rd century BC Italy still presented a picture of diversity rather than uniformity. The peninsula was split into a large number of states – in alliance with Rome but maintaining full internal sovereignty. The political complexity was matched by an equally strong **cultural plurality in languages and customs**. Two hundred years later this situation had changed completely. Gone was the political diversity: the peninsula now constituted a single political entity with a common citizenship. Also the ‘ethnic’ plurality was difficult to trace; it had largely been replaced by a **uniform Roman culture**.”⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Mouritsen (1998) 2 (bold emphases added), who analyzes the ancient and modern historiography on the unification of Italy.

Though a detailed study of the relations between Rome and Italy is beyond my scope here, I wish to emphasize several points. One is that Roman Italian identities could be complex: on the one hand, an Italian like Cicero could talk about having two *patriae*, one by nature and the other by citizenship.⁶⁵ Secondly, a dominant feature of the narrative of Rome's conquest and unification of Italy is resistance to Roman rule, and power struggles with Rome over autonomy and / or enfranchisement, culminating in the Social War.⁶⁶ A third point is that we have no real evidence for a concerted policy of Romanization, least of all for insistence on the use of Latin. But this does not mean that Roman imperialism did not have a linguistic dimension, either within or beyond the Italian conquest.⁶⁷ As part of this matrix, scholars have identified a sociolinguistics of provincial Italian resistance to the dominance of Latin. The epigraphic record shows the use of Oscan or Paelignian, which some scholars have argued is in explicit defiance of Latin during the period of the Social War, though there may be alternative explanations for the language choice.⁶⁸ Should we, then, be looking for vestiges of Italian resistance to Latin in the *Aeneid*?

It is well to remember that Virgil was born in Cisalpine Gaul less than twenty years after the Social War, just after Italic languages fade in the epigraphic record. It would be easy to imagine him telling an interviewer about the local languages other than Latin that he heard spoken, whether Italic languages, Celtic in northern Italy or Greek in the south. Thus, whether or not Virgil was born a Roman citizen,⁶⁹ he experienced directly the interface of Latin with Greek, and very likely with Celtic and Italic languages.⁷⁰ There are Italic glosses and traces of the Italic languages in the *Aeneid*.⁷¹ These often occur in place-names and etymologies, which (as Jim O'Hara has done most to show) are the linguistic face of aetiology.⁷² Italic languages "[figure] in scholarship mostly with regard to individual lexical items."⁷³ But how should their

⁶⁵ See *Leg.* 2.5 with Jenkyns (1998) 92–99; Ando (2002) 133–34; Fletcher (2014) 4–7. On this feature of municipalization, see Bispham (2007) 440–42.

⁶⁶ See Bispham (2007) 559: *index rerum*, *s.v.* 'Italy, resentment of Roman hegemony in'.

⁶⁷ On imperialism and the spread of Latin, see Farrell (2001), who begins with Juno's bargain.

⁶⁸ For a circumspect overview, see Clackson (2015) 73–78, but also his interlocutors. On regional Italic identities as distinct from Roman ones, with emphasis on language and literary representation, see Dench (2005), esp. 329–44. On "regionalism" in the Latin poets see also Adams Holland (1979). On language contact between Latin and Etruscan see van Heems (2012). Recently on "Romanization", with some treatment of language politics, see Aberson *et al.* (2016), and Aberson *et al.* (2020).

⁶⁹ See Toll (1997) 36.

⁷⁰ See Adams (2003) 111–84 on contact between Latin and Italic languages.

⁷¹ Bartelink (1965) 85–91; Horsfall (2000) *index s.v.* 'glosses, non-Greek, alleged or likely'; Adams (2008) 182, 435; Ferriss-Hill (2011); O'Hara (2017) 91–92. Adams (2008, 182) cautions: "Dialect words cited from the Republic often raise a problem of interpretation, which has come up in relation to Sabine. If a word is described by a source as in use among an Italian people, was it current in their Latin or had it merely once been current in the Italic of their area?" My argument here depends on residual currency or readers' or listeners' memories.

⁷² See O'Hara (2017) and also Paschalis (1997).

⁷³ Rau (2014) 680.

presence be interpreted beyond lexical analysis? Ennius is reputed to have said that he had three hearts because he had a deep understanding of three languages: Greek, Oscan and Latin.⁷⁴ Did these three hearts always beat in harmony, or always with equal fervour? Did Ennius ever feel divided in loyalty to his patron Fulvius or to his Greek or Italic kinsmen? Would Virgil or his readers have felt “traces of ... conflictedness”⁷⁵ about Roman versus Italian identity? What did Virgil feel about the linguistic interface between Latin and its Italic predecessors? Did the “two voices of Virgil’s *Aeneid*”⁷⁶ ever speak in different tongues?

In a carefully documented study of the Sabine glosses in the *Aeneid*, Jennifer Ferriss-Hill has detected a “program of Sabellic etymologizing” and has argued that the glosses impart a native Italian flavour to the epic’s second half, some of these glosses occurring in the catalogue of Italian warriors in book 7.⁷⁷ Along similar lines, William Warde Fowler wrote of the catalogue:

“Here the most obvious motive in the poet’s craft is the wish to move the feeling of his Italian reader as he sees the stately procession of Italian warriors passing before him, or perchance to fill his mind with pride and pleasure at finding among them the ancient representative of his own city or district.”⁷⁸

These are compelling arguments, but they seem to me to be predicated on a unitarian view of Italy. Instead, I wonder whether a speaker of Sabellic – a sympathizer of the Italian Allies, say – would be equally if not more likely to lament the extinguishing of their language by Latin than to celebrate its cameo appearance in the new national epic. To take one example (7.516–17):

*audiit et Triviae longe lacus, audiit amnis
sulpurea Nar albus aqua fontesque Velini ...*

(“The white sulphur-laden streams of the river Nar heard it and its springs in lake Velinus ...”)

(trans. West, 1990)

⁷⁴ Aul. Gel. 17.17.2: *Quintumque Ennium tria corda habere sese dixisse, quod tris linguas percullisset, Graecam, Oscam, Latinam.*

⁷⁵ Johnson (2001) 7. See Jenkyns (1998, 73–127) for the interplay of love of one’s locality and love of country: “A Transpadene was well placed to apprehend a sense of national unity-in-diversity” (108).

⁷⁶ Parry (1963).

⁷⁷ See Ferriss-Hill (2011) and the sources which she cites. Adams (2008, 435–37) also notes that Virgil uses “regional” language on several occasions in the *Georgics*, perhaps to add local colour to his descriptions: *trabea* (1.166); *bufo* (1.184); *rustum* (2.413).

⁷⁸ Fowler (1918) 27.

Virgil glosses *Nar* with *sulpurea*, by describing the water with a translation of the Sabine word; Servius *ad loc.* tells us that the Sabines call sulphur *nar* in their language.⁷⁹ Friel's *Translations* celebrates the Gaelic origins of Irish place-names and produces emotive effects from their very sound. Virgil acknowledges the Italic roots of toponyms, but this may have elicited (and been designed to elicit) a mixed response from those whose ears remembered the local language or dialect: pride, but also a twinge of nostalgia at the passing of the local language, perhaps even resentment at the ineluctable might of Rome.

I have focussed so far on Italy, but the passage on conquered peoples' foreign tongues suggests that the argument may apply elsewhere, especially in the western empire where Latin most spread. Let us consider the glosses on Punic, Dido's language.⁸⁰ Virgil puns several times on the Punic root of Karthago, which means "new city".⁸¹ Of course, the name means nothing in Latin, and so we are in similar territory to the phonetic Anglicizations of Gaelic place-names in Friel's *Translations*.⁸² In an epic that looks to the foundation of Rome, the wordplay on "new city" is pointed: Carthage is the first city that we see rising in the *Aeneid* – *o fortunati quorum iam moenia surgunt* (1.437) – but it will be destroyed by Rome, as we glimpse in prospect at the reaction to Dido's suicide after Aeneas abandons her for Italy (4.670).

Aeneas marvels at this new city rising (1.421):

Miratur molem Aeneas, magalia quondam

("Aeneas marvels at the size [of the city], once huts").

Servian notes tell us that *magalia* is Punic, quoting Cato the Elder and Sallust.⁸³ But why *quondam*, since Aeneas had no prior acquaintance with whatever buildings predated the monumental city? Perhaps we should read *quondam* as a metalinguistic tag that puts *magalia* in virtual quotation marks: *back then* they called them *magalia*, but that was before the spread of Latin in North Africa.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Ferriss-Hill (2011) 267, who also points out that Virgil seems to have used as his model Ennius, *Annales* 222 Sk, *sulpureas posuit spiramina Naris ad undas*.

⁸⁰ These are listed at O'Hara (2017) 91.

⁸¹ E.g. 1.12 *Urbs antiqua fuit*; 1.298 *novae ... Karthaginis*; 1.366 *moenia surgentemque novae Karthaginis urbem*; 1.522 *o regina, novam cui condere Iuppiter urbem ...*

⁸² The process of Anglicization is enacted at length in the first scene of Act 2. From the stage directions (Friel, 2000, 38): "Yolland's official task, which Owen is now doing, is to take each of the Gaelic names – every hill, stream, rock, even every patch of ground which possessed its own distinctive Irish name – and Anglicise it, either by changing it into its approximate English sound or by translating it into English words. For example, a Gaelic name like Cnoc Ban could become Knockban or – directly translated – Fair Hill".

⁸³ Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.421–22; 4.259; *Geo.* 3.340.

⁸⁴ On the survival of Punic see Adams (2003) 200–45 and Clackson (2015), esp. ch. 6. On the linguistic ecology of ancient Lybia, which involved Berber / Lybiac as well as Punic and Latin, see Selden (2014) 209–17.

Why did Dido speak Latin, along with everyone else in the *Aeneid*? Beyond narrative convention, characters' Latinity looks forward to the spread of Latin in the Roman empire, leading to the development of hybrid cultures.⁸⁵ By puncturing the poem's linguistic uniformity with occasional references to language difference, Virgil makes a remarkable proleptic statement of imperial whitewash and supremacy. If Dido and the others were ever to speak in their own voices, which surely the passages on language difference suggest that they once did, they are unable to do so now. Julius Caesar reported that the Gauls worshipped Mercurius above all gods (*deum maxime Mercurium colunt*, *BG* 6.17), but what account would the Gauls themselves have given? Or how would Dido have described her sacrifices to Ceres, Lyaeus, and Juno? The *Aeneid* is a linguistic palimpsest that subtly advertises how it silences the non-Latin voices subsumed by Rome, creating a hybrid culture in which Latin dominates. The story of Rome's conquest of Italy can only be told in Latin, since the rival sources barely survive. Latin and Romano-centric sources likewise dominate the story of Rome's conquest of the empire. But with its references to language difference, the *Aeneid* hints that even Rome's mythical prehistory could have been told in other ways by other people, and that it would have been a different story if told in other languages, whether Italic or from beyond Italy: with different symbols and systems of signification, different key terms and ways of thinking, which now we can only guess at. Virgil's aetiological epic thus provides the basis for later historians who ventriloquize foreign leaders criticizing Rome in Latin: Hannibal, Boudicca, Calgacus, Caractacus. Their speaking Latin indicates the dominance of Rome, and prompts reflections on what story they would have told if they had been speaking in their own language. As Augustine wept for Dido, we may weep for these enemies of Rome, but most of all because they cannot, never could, speak in their own voice.

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⁸⁵ For the case of Gaul, see Woolf (1998).

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