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Teaching Vergil to write: Vergil's aesthetics and the influence of Philodemus and Parthenius[*]

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ABSTRACT

The influence of the Greek scholars Philodemus and Parthenius on their contemporary Vergil remains understudied. Close examination of selected passages from the *Aeneid* demonstrates the poet's reception of Philodemus' theory of poetry and of Parthenius' collection of mythological summaries, the *Erotica Pathemata*. Investigating the intertextual connections between Philodemus, Parthenius, and Vergil offers a chance to explore how an Augustan poet made use of the writings of two of his teachers and main influences, and an opportunity to examine the question of late Hellenistic aesthetics through the prism of its earliest reception.

KEYWORDS: Philodemus, Parthenius, Vergil, *Aeneid*, intertextuality

Abbreviations: *AP*: *Anthologia Palatina (Palatine Anthology)*; *HE*: Gow, A. S. F. and D. L. Page 1965: *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams*, 2 vols, Cambridge; *GP*: Gow, A. S. F. and D. L. Page 1968: *The Greek Anthology: The Garland of Philip and Some Contemporary Epigrams*, 2 vols, Cambridge; Sider: Sider, D. 1997: *The Epigrams of Philodemus: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, Oxford; Skutsch: Skutsch, O. 1985: *The Annals of Q. Ennius*, Oxford; *SH*: Lloyd-Jones, H. and P. Parsons 1983: *Supplementum Hellenisticum*, Berlin.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this article, we tackle late Hellenistic aesthetics from the point of view of its earliest reception, that of Roman authors, specifically Vergil. Philodemus and Parthenius form something of a natural pair: both Greek scholars and authors from the east, both eventually resident in Roman Italy by dint of the vicissitudes of first-century BCE Mediterranean history, but most importantly, both authors of works about poetry or for poets and both said to be Vergil's teacher. Philodemus produced theoretical writings on poetry, how it works, and what makes it good, while Parthenius catalogued potential poetic subject material drawn in particular from Hellenistic histories and romantic fiction. Our knowledge of both men is imperfect both with respect to their own writing and as to the extent of their interactions with Vergil, but it is certain that they were connected with him. We can consider the influence of Philodemus' extant views on poetics and of Parthenius' collection of erotic stories. Philodemus offers insights into the poetic amalgam of form and content; Parthenius affords a chance to see what Vergil did with a fairly obscure Alexandrian love story.

In what follows, we shall examine representative passages in Vergil's *Aeneid* from the perspective of a 'Philodemean reader', for whom form and content combine to suggest some additional meaning or emphasis. These selections will be paired with examples of the same kind from Philodemus' epigrams. We shall also consider one instance in which Vergil clearly borrowed from Parthenius, not simply to refer in passing to an obscure myth, but to introduce a deeply resonant set of allusive intertexts that draw together disparate strands of his narrative more cohesively. We argue that Philodemus had appreciable influence on Vergil's technique and choice of effects, and that the Roman poet deployed a tale from Parthenius' book to add resonances to his characters and connect strands of his narrative in unexpected ways.

2.   PHILODEMUS AND VERGIL

Philodemus was born around 110 BCE in Gadara, whose ruins stand now on the border between Israel and Jordan.[1] Both before and after Philodemus' time, Hellenistic Gadara was home to a number of Greek intellectuals, including Meleager the poet and anthologist and Theodorus the rhetorician and teacher of Tiberius. As a young man, Philodemus spent some time in Alexandria, where he was already moving in philosophical circles. Around 85 BCE or shortly thereafter (after the end of Sulla's siege), Philodemus sailed from Alexandria to Athens and began his studies there under Zeno of Sidon, the head of the Epicurean school. Later, he moved to Italy, probably with a stopover in Sicily first. At some point, he came under the patronage of Lucius Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, later the father-in-law of Caesar. Cicero implies that this happened when Piso was both *adulescens* and of senatorial rank, which suggests the year 70 BCE (when Piso was quaestor), or not long thereafter.[2] Piso and Philodemus were, Cicero says, inseparable, and Philodemus moved among the Roman upper classes and was respected in both philosophical and literary circles.[3] His literary reputation proved more durable than his philosophical one: his epigrams were still sufficiently well regarded to be included by Philip in his *Garland* more than two generations after his death, but a citation of his *History of Philosophy* in Diogenes Laërtius is the only mention of his philosophical work after his lifetime. A large number of books predominantly by him were found in the *Villa dei Papiri* (also known as the *Villa dei Pisoni*); these now constitute the Herculaneum papyri. In his *On Signs and Sign-Inferences* III, Philodemus mentions that Mark Antony imported pygmies from Hyria in 40 BCE, when Philodemus was around 70.[4] We do not know how much longer he lived.

Philodemus was also a teacher, and his students were quite famous: he dedicated works on slander (*P. Herc. Paris* 2), envy (*P. Herc.* 1082), and greed (*P. Herc.* 253 and others) to Quintilius the critic, the poets Plotius Tucca and Varius Rufus, and, of course, Vergil.[5] This testifies to long and serious study on the dedicatees' part. On the other side, *Catalepta* 5 and 8 indicate Vergil's interest in Epicureanism (or at least that this interest figured as a strong and early part of Vergil's biographical tradition). It is reasonable to assume that Philodemus also discussed poetry and poetics with these students, given their later careers.[6]

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[1] For a more detailed biography, see Armstrong-McOsker 2020: 1–10 and Fleischer 2023: 26–32, both with further bibliography and argumentation. For an introduction to the Herculaneum papyri, see Longo *et al.* 2020.

[2] Cf. Cicero, *In Pis.* 68 and 70, where Philodemus is not named (though Asconius in his commentary identifies him and calls him *Epicureus illa aetate nobilissimus*), as well as *Prov. Cons.* 14 (where the plural hides at least Philodemus).

[3] Cicero cites Philodemus respectfully at *De Fin.* 2.119 and may have used him as a source in his *De Natura Deorum*; Philodemus dedicates a book of his *On Rhetoric* to C. Vibius Pansa Caetronianus (cos. 43). On the literary side, Horace names him at *Sat.* 1.2.121 (where see Gowers 2012: 114–15), and Cicero compliments his poetry at *In Pis.* 70 (where see Nisbet 1961: 138 and 183–86). Around three dozen of his epigrams survive in the *Greek Anthology* via Philip's anthology. For an overview of his literary impact, see Tait 1941 and Sider 1997 on his epigram 27 Sider, the invitation to Piso (which spawned its own genre).

[4] *De Sign.* 2.15–18.

[5] See Körte 1890; Gigante and Capasso 1989; Gigante 2004.

[6] There is an increasing amount of scholarship into Epicurean ethics in Augustan poetry: *e.g.* Davis 2020 and 2023 and McOsker forthcoming for Horace's *Odes*; Yona 2018 for Horace's *Satires*; Erler 1992, Galinsky 1988 and 1994, Fish 2004, Kronenberg 2005, and Nelis 2015 on Vergil's *Aeneid*. Skinner 2004 is an attempt to bring Philodemean aesthetics to bear on the *Aeneid*, and Obbink 2002 traces an Epicurean echo in the *Aeneid* back to Philodemus' *De Pietate*. Keith 2021 looks at the influence of Philodemus' erotic epigrams on Augustan poets, while Keith 2023 is a survey of Epicureanism in Roman poetry generally. As will become clear, the relationship between Philodemus' poetics and his Roman students' poetry is much murkier. Freer 2023 is an exploration of the Philodemean (*AP* 6.349 = 34 Sider = 19 GP) and Parthenian (fr. 36 Lightfoot) intertexts behind Vergil's *Georgics* 1.436–37.

We can recover the broad outlines of Philodemus' poetics from what remains of his five-book treatise *On Poems* as well as scattered references and parallel arguments in *On Music*, *On Rhetoric*, and *On the Good King According to Homer*, just to name the major sources.[7] One significant difficulty is that the *On Poems* was a polemical work in defence of established Epicurean views (probably those expressed in Metrodorus' *On Poems* and maybe Zeno of Sidon's *On the Utility of Poetry*), not a constructive one. Consequently, Philodemus' doctrine must be ferreted out from his refutations and rare positive statements. What emerges as one of Philodemus' most important views is that form and content, though theoretically separate, are combined in a poem and produce 'additional thoughts' that entertain, move, or enthral (ψυχαγωγέω) the audience.[8] Content is arbitrary (any topic can be chosen for a poem), but poetic form must deviate from prose norms. Both form and content must be good for a poem to be good, and we must assume that this means that the 'additional thoughts' will be effective at producing ψυχαγωγία. What form this took is not clear: in his *On Rhetoric* III, Philodemus says that display oratory has a similar effect. Audience members become absorbed in the formal features of the speech, ignore the content, and imagine that they would be successful orators themselves.[9] We can infer that good poetry has the ability to engross an audience in the world of the poem and in other thoughts provoked by it.

Philodemus' theory, then, seeks to explain what makes poems good. His *On Poems* is not a handbook of verse composition or a style manual, but a heavily theoretical polemic against other theorists. He took himself to be describing facts about the world that poets had discovered independently of Epicurean philosophical tenets. In more detail: as an Epicurean, Philodemus is committed to the *prolēpsis*, 'preconception' or something along those lines. *Prolēpseis* are shared by all people and are one of the criteria of truth: if someone compares some poem to the *prolēpsis* of the good poem and they match, then the poem *is* a good poem. If they do not match, then the poem *is not* good. Difficulties arise because people have beliefs that contradict the *prolēpsis*, but do not recognize this. For instance, people believe that the gods live untroubled lives but are also troubled when humans fail to sacrifice to them: people simply fail to recognize that these beliefs cannot stand together. Philodemus' arguments are aimed at reasserting the *prolēpsis* of 'the good poem' against theories that, as he thinks, misunderstand or distort it. This means that it is impossible to demonstrate Vergil's dependence on Philodemus' teaching definitively: if Vergil wrote poems that Philodemus would have considered good, this could be due to Vergil's natural talent, good taste, and wide reading, which taught him the lessons that Philodemus would have wished to see on display in a poet of quality. But we consider it likely prima facie that Vergil discussed poetry with Philodemus, and that he absorbed the lessons that his interlocutor had to offer. In the first part of this article, we will survey a few techniques—word picture, rhythm, and sound effects, including the use of foreign words, in mostly that order—that both Vergil and Philodemus use and see how similar they are in form and effect. We will suggest what 'additional thoughts' the poets produced and how they produced them. The close correspondence between the techniques and effects of the poets suggest that they were pursing similar poetic projects.

Vergil's description of the beach near Carthage contains a number of subtle effects due to the word pictures in it. The first is a noteworthy verbal picture as the poet visualizes the scene of the Trojan landing in North Africa (*Aen.* 1.159–61):

> est in secessu longo locus: insula portum
> efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto
> frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.[10]

> There is a place in a deep cove: an island provides
> a harbour by the jutting forth of its sides, by which every
> wave from the deep is broken and divides itself into recessed channels.

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[7] 'Poetics' here is used in the vaguely Aristotelian sense of 'account of how poetry works'. See McOsker 2021 for in-depth discussion and McOsker 2020 for a summary.
[8] On the meaning of *psychagogia* in Philodemus, see recently Barnes 2022.
[9] See McOsker 2021: 202–11.
[10] Passages from the *Aeneid* are taken from Conte's Teubner edition, and their translations are ours.

The beach (*locus*) at the end of the long recess (*in secessu longo*) is in fact reached, after its existence is announced with *est*, only after reading several words—the exact words that describe the distance that must be travelled before reading the beach. The fuller description of this bay, as *sinus … reductos*, comes even further on, two lines later. Those two words are themselves broken apart by the verb *scindit*. In addition, 'every wave' (*omnis … unda*) that arrives is 'broken up' by the word *frangitur*, and instead of crashing, the wave just hisses gently on the beach in a phrase markedly loaded with sibilant sounds: *inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos*. A brief description of the harbour is necessary to understand and advance the narrative at a crucial juncture, but Vergil makes it more interesting and vivid with a clever arrangement of the words and sound effects. The words enact the geography, and the letters enact the sounds of the place. Philodemean readers may imagine themselves on the beach.

Philodemus, too, composed a verbal painting with aquatic significance. At the end of an epigram in which he remonstrates with an ex-lover, he contrasts their current situations (ll. 5–8 of 23 Sider = *AP* 5.107 = 5 *GP*):

> ταῦτ' ἐβόων αἰεὶ καὶ προύλεγον, ἀλλ' ἴσα πόντῳ
> 　　Ἰονίῳ μύθων ἔκλυες ἡμετέρων.
> τοιγὰρ νῦν σὺ μὲν ὧδε μέγα κλαίουσα βαΰζεις,
> 　　ἡμεῖς δ' ἐν κόλποις ἥμεθα Ναϊάδος.

> These words I would shout and give warning, but you heeded them the way you would the Ionian Sea. This is why *you* are howling so loudly, while *I* rest in the bosom of Naias.[11]

Philodemus rests (ἥμεθα) in the bosom of Naias (ἐν κόλποις … Ναϊάδος), in which κόλπος can mean 'bay' and Naias could, of course, simply be a naiad. The watery joke is set up by the way that Philodemus' unnamed ex-lover listens to him like the Ionian Sea.[12] The verb βαΰζω was originally 'bark' ('bau bau!') but came to mean something like 'howl'. Here, Philodemus puts it in onomatopoetic contrast with his own βοάω, which has the same general idea of yelling, but is articulate. Previously he was agitated and articulate, though his ex-lover was calm but did take him seriously. Now she is agitated and inarticulate, and he is calm, like the waters of a harbour. The sound of βαΰζω helps drive the point, and the final word picture subtly and quietly expresses his own pleasurable state of relaxation. Both poets have characters come to rest in harbours, for Philodemus, the narrator; for Vergil, Aeneas and his men. In both, the word order enacts the coming-to/being-at-rest, though in different ways, and both poets include auditory punning, as it were, on the sounds of water. Separation of syntactically joined words increases tension, so as the last word slots into place in the reader's understanding of the passage, the reader experiences a parallel kind of coming-to-rest as the people in the poems. The sonic effects help set the scene: in Vergil, the soothing hiss of water on sand; in Philodemus, the bau-ing and loud crying increase the tension that is relaxed in the bay/arms of the naiad/courtesan.

Vergil and Philodemus also engaged in rhythmic effects. A passage in the *Aeneid* of particular interest in this light is 1.187–88, as Aeneas prepares to engage in his first act on African soil, the celebrated hunt in which he will slay seven stags for his seven ships:

> constitit (sc. Aeneas) hic arcumque manu celerisque sagittas
> corripuit fidus quae tela gerebat Achates

> Aeneas stood here and with his hand snatched the bow and swift shafts,
> the arms that faithful Achates bore.

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[11] The text and translation of Philodemus' epigrams are drawn from Sider 1997.

[12] An imitator of Philodemus or Meleager used the same word picture in l. 8 of 36 Sider = *AP* 5 = Meleager 69 *HE*, σὺ δ' ἐν κόλπαις αὐτὸν ὁρᾷς ἑτέρων, a woman addressing the lamp of her ex-lover); for stylistic criticism, see Sider 1997: 195–98.

Austin observed here that the second line has a rare rhythm: there are word breaks after both fourth- and fifth-foot trochees, *i.e.* —◡ | ◡—◡ | ◡—x.[13] Because of the way that Latin word accent interacts with the hexameter line, this pattern forces word accent to coincide with the metrical *longum* in the fourth foot. (Vergil makes word accent and *longum* coincide in the fifth and sixth foot as a rule, but disfavours it in the fourth foot.[14]) Here, because of the unusual rhythm in the fourth foot and the caesura after the trochee of the fifth foot, readers feel a false ending to the line a foot early: the coincidence of word accent and *longum* in the fourth foot, where it is unusual, and then the fifth foot, where it is usual, produces the metrical and accentual pattern of the fifth and sixth feet, where coincidence of *longum* and accented syllable is almost required. That is, a hexameter line *could* end with *têla gerêbat* and be perfectly regular, but this one goes on for another three syllables, which feels jerky and throws the reader somewhat. This jerkiness matches and metrically enacts Aeneas' action in grabbing the weapons out of Achates' hands. The rhythm of the line does not exactly enact the action that the line describes, but matches it in a different medium. The reader is thrown off by a jerky unexpected motion, just as we imagine that Achates was. A Philodemean reader can find art in an otherwise somewhat pro-saic line because the form and content work together to draw the reader into the text.[15]

The same rhythm is found in the last line of *Aeneid* Book 5 (5.871–72):

> o nimium caelo et pelago confise sereno,
> nudus in ignota, Palinure, iacebis harena.

> O you who trusted too much in the sky and the serene sea,
> naked, Palinurus, will you lie on an unknown shore.

It is only during Aeneas' *katabasis* in Book 6 that we learn of Palinurus' fate (6.347–71): his body was cut up with swords (*ferro*, 6.361) and cast into the sea by the people who found him.[16] Yet this fate is metrically enacted by the fourth-and fifth-foot *caesurae* (N.B. from *caedo*, 'I cut') of 5.872 which cut up the line, just as Palinurus was cut up. This line's metrical irregularity may also call attention to the ironic juxtaposition of *ignota Palinure*—the place where Palinurus washed ashore was, after all, named after him. Of course, Aeneas cannot know this fact in Book 5, but the alert reader will smile with recognition. This is one of two verses with this rhythm for which Norden in his note on 6.140 sees 'painterly intent'; the other is 2.465: *ea lapsa repente ruinam*.[17] This last verse forms a small family with 2.380 (*trepidusque repente refugit*) and 7.27 (*omnisque repente resedit*). All these are influenced by Ennius *Ann.* 46 (fr. **xxix) Skutsch: *haec effatus pater, germana, repente recessit*, where the effect is to emphasize Aeneas' ghost's sudden departure. Likewise, in Vergil's cases, the staccato rhythm empha-sizes sudden movement (or its cessation).[18]

We have dwelt on rhythm because Philodemus himself used intentionally 'bad' rhythm to make a point in one of his epigrams (22 Sider = 25 *GP* = *AP* 5.126):

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[13]   In his note on 4.58, he counts about 100 instances in Vergil, but the majority involve -*que* and -*ve*, which Norden (on 6.140 and 789 and in app. vii) is probably right to exclude because, in Greek, various monosyllables prevent violations of Hermann's Bridge, and in the end, he admits only twenty-one instances in the *Aeneid*; cf. Norden 1927: 175–76. See also Dainotti 2015: 199 with n. 610.

[14]   Cf. Knight 1939. Desire for word accent to fall on the *longa* of the fifth and sixth feet is why Vergil and other poets tend to avoid line-final monosyllables.

[15]   *gero* meaning '(literally) carry' rather than '(figuratively) bear' is mostly poetic, but the word itself is found in prose authors of all periods; all the other words occur in prose (save Achates) and the grammar is normal (prose regularly fronts a word that belongs to the sense of a relative clause before the relative pronoun, but the choice of the adjective rather than the name may be unusual).

[16]   That the bandits dumped his body into the sea is only implicit in the text; see Norden 1927: 234.

[17]   Norden 1927: 175–76: 'malerische Absicht'. For 2.465, see especially Austin 1964: 184.

[18]   There are other such cases, *e.g. Aen.* 4.335: *nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae* (see Austin 1955: 107: 'Yet throughout these opening lines, Aeneas seems to be slowly and carefully picking his words, trying not to say what he might wish unsaid, and this impression is helped by the unusual rhythm of *meminisse pigebit Elissae*, by which the line itself has a certain reluctance as the words fall slowly into position to bring it to its close'), and *G.* 3.519: *opere in medio defixa reliquit aratra*. Vergil does not limit his rhyth-mic play to lines with word-breaks after the fourth- and fifth-foot trochees: in 4.132 (*Massylique ruunt equites et odora canum vis*), Austin notes the bustling and chaotic feel, appropriate to the release of hunting dogs, that the unusual line end provides (1955: 61–62). But we do not want to belabour the point. See additionally Sandbach 1933 who focused on Verg. *E.* 7 but has interesting observations on a number of lines in Vergil.

πέντε δίδωσιν ἑνὸς τῇ δείνᾳ ὁ δεῖνα τάλαντα
    καὶ βινεῖ φρίσσων καί, μὰ τόν, οὐδὲ καλήν·
πέντε δ' ἐγὼ δραχμὰς τῶν δώδεκα Λυσιανάσσῃ
    καὶ βινῶ πρὸς τῷ κρείσσονα καὶ φανερῶς.
Πάντως ἤτοι ἐγὼ φρένας οὐκ ἔχω ἤ τό γε λοιπὸν
    τοὺς κείνου πελέκει δεῖ διδύμους ἀφελεῖν.

Mr. X gives Mrs. Y talents for one favor and he screws, shivering with fear,
one who is, what's more, God knows, no beauty.
I give five—drachmas—to Lysianassa for the twelve favors,
and what's more I screw a finer woman, and openly.
Assuredly, either I'm crazy or, after all this,
he should have his balls cut off with a knife.

The first line of this poem contains violations of Hermann's Bridge (δείνᾳ | ὁ), Meyer's First Law (against ending a word that began in the first foot after the first short syllable in the second foot, δίδωσιν), and employs a syllable that is long by position before the third-foot caesura, irregularly for Philodemus. (The fifth line has an unusual correpted long syllable in the fourth foot (οὐκ ἔχω ἤ), as if to remind us of the metrical problems of the first line.) Sider suspected 'that the metrical irregularities of this poem are intended to mirror the crudeness of the person and situation described'.[19] The metrical jerkiness enacts the motions of the man who shivers with fear (φρίσσων) as he engages in sexual intercourse. Admittedly, this kind of rhythmic enactment has a long history, from Homer's rolling stone (*Od.* 11.568) to Hesiod's 'worst hexameter' (*Th.* 319) through Ennius down to Catullus,[20] but poets nonetheless had to decide between using this technique or maintaining a high standard of metre. Callimachus, for instance, would not violate Hermann's Bridge for effect. Vergil preferred to produce more suggestive poetry in which form and content cooperate rather than perfectly smooth metre. Philodemus would have approved.

Iarbas' prayer to Jupiter in which he complains about the Trojans also has some rhythmic and sonic effects (4.215–16):

et nunc ille Paris cum semiviro comitatu,
Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem

And now that Paris with his half-man retinue,
his jaw with a Maenonian bonnet, and drenched hair

In the first verse, Austin notes that the 'Greek' line-ending (*i.e.* one in which, *contra* good Latin practice, the last word is not two or three syllables) 'suits the "foreign" picture, upsetting the normal pattern'.[21] The disrupted rhythm enacts the failed masculinity (as Iarbas sees it) of the strange, 'Eastern' Trojans, and in combination with *semivirus* might also suggest that they are, or are no better than, the alien and alienating eunuch priests of Cybele. At 216, there is a striking series of seven sounds in assonance. Gilbert Highet suggested that this repeated *m* was a subtle allegation of effeminacy, appropriate to Iarbas' verbal attack on the Trojans.[22] The language slinks and minces. All this was effective enough that Vergil partially reuses it in the mouth of Turnus at 12.98–99, where Aeneas is again denounced for his Phrygian heritage. The 'additional thought' here is to activate the worst possible associations that the Trojans, *qua* 'easterners', could have for a Roman audience, which is surely what Iarbas intended.

[19] Sider 1997: 139; see also McOsker 2021: 180–81.
[20] Cf. Poliakoff 1985; Solomon 1985; Dettmer 1993.
[21] Austin 1955: 78–79.
[22] Highet 1972: 118. Cf. *Aen.* 4.435–6: *extremam hanc oro ueniam (miserere sororis), / quam mihi cum dederit, cumulatam morte remittam.* The lines are extremely difficult (see the long note of Fratantuono and Smith 2022 *ad loc.*, and cf. Kraggerud 2022), but Highet 1972: 137 understands the dozen *m* sounds as an enactment of Dido's sobbing.

In this connection, we note that Philodemus wrote a mock epitaph for a eunuch priest which itself emphasizes foreign and effeminate elements (33 Sider = 26 *GP* = *AP* 7.222):[23]

> ἐνθάδε τῆς τρυφερῆς μαλακὸν ῥέθος, ἐνθάδε κεῖται
>   Τρυγόνιον, σαβακῶν ἄνθεμα σαλμακίδων,
> ἢ καλύβῃ καὶ δοῦμος ἐνέπρεπεν, ἢ φιλοπαίγμων
>   στωμυλίῃ, μήτηρ ἣν ἐφίλησε θεῶν,
> ἡ μούνη στέρξασα τὰ Κύπριδος ἀμφιγυναίκων
>   ὄργια καὶ φίλτρων Λαΐδος ἁψαμένη.
> φῦε κατὰ στήλης, ἱερὴ κόνι, τῇ φιλοβάκχῳ
>   μὴ βάτον ἀλλ᾽ ἁπαλὰς λευκοῖων κάλυκας.

Here lies the tender body of the delicate girl, here lies Trygonion, devotee of feeble effeminates, (she) through whom chapel and duma gained glory, to whom there was playful chatter, whom the Mother of the Gods loved, she who in a class by herself cherished the Cyprian rites of those all-around women, and helped with Lais' love philtres. O sacred dust, nourish around this philobacchic's stele not prickly shrubbery but tender buds of white violets.

W. R. Paton argued that this is better understood as a mock lament for a eunuch priest than for a biological woman.[24] But beyond the surface meaning of the poem, words that suggest 'eastern' strangeness are legion: the rare and sibilant σαβακῶν [...] σαλμακίδων (v. 2) do not sound Greek (initial σ- regularly turned into the aspirate, and most Greek words that begin with σ followed by a vowel are loans); their alliteration calls attention to them. The noun καλύβη (v. 3) in anything resembling this sense (apparently 'tabernacle') is rare, and δοῦμος (also v. 3), a borrowing from Phrygian, is found otherwise only in inscriptions from Asia Minor (it means something like 'sacred assembly' or 'town'). Beyond the obviously erotic material, στωμυλίη is to be understood as 'erotic chatter, dirty talk', and by calling the Galloi ἀμφιγύναικες, Philodemus seems to impute an unusual sexuality to them. Even Trygonion's name is a neuter diminutive (appropriate to a 'neutered' person who is 'tender' and 'delicate'), often used for names of courtesans. Everything conspires to alienate, giving the impression of deviancy, and to locate the poem 'elsewhere', in Phrygia.

Other 'additional thoughts' can be produced by sound, which plays a role in the Vergilian description of the suicide of Dido and Iris' snipping of her lock at 4.659–64 and 704–05:

> dixit (sc. Dido), et os impressa toro 'moriemur inultae,
> sed moriamur' ait. 'sic, sic iuvat ire sub umbras.
> Hauriat hunc oculis ignem crudelis ab alto
> Dardanus et nostrae secum ferat omina mortis'.
> Dixerat, atque illam media inter talia ferro
> conlapsam aspiciunt comites [...]
> sic ait et dextra crinem secat. Omnis et una
> dilapsus calor atque in ventos vita recessit.

Thus she spoke, and pressing her face on the couch she said, 'We shall die unavenged, but let us die. Thus, thus is it pleasing to go down to the shades. May the cruel Dardadian drink down the fire with his eyes from the deep, and carry with him omen of our death.' She had spoken, and amid her words her companions beheld her, fallen by the sword [...] Thus she spoke, and she cut the lock with her right hand. At once the warmth gave way, and her life departed into the winds.

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23 See in general Sider 1997: 178–87; McOsker 2021: 181–83.
24 Paton 1916: 48.

Repeated *sic* and the other sibilants suggest the metallic hiss of the sword being drawn from its sheath—it would not ring metallically in flesh, but we understand from the sound effect that someone is being stabbed at that moment—the words *sic sic* are the sound effect that accompany the violence. It is also possible that the anaphora of the adverb simply enacts the violent thrust of the blade, like some discordant musical note.[25] There is no verb to describe the stabbing itself, and Servius on 4.660 notes: 'et hoc eam se loco intelligimus percussisse; unde alii dicunt verba esse ferientis' ('and in this passage, we understand that she struck herself; for which reason others say that these are the words of the striker').[26] Both Servius' view and that of the 'alii' are correct: by the phrase *sic sic* we understand that she has stabbed herself *and* they are the very words that she spoke. The latter is their primary function ('thus, thus it is pleasing …'), but their sound produces the additional (and crucial) sense that she has endeavoured to kill herself. Lines 663–64 contain a word picture: *illam comlapsam* surround not just the sword that she has fallen upon, but also the words that are coming out of her. Incidentally, *conlapsam*, 'having (already) collapsed', is an indication that *sic sic* is the exact moment that Dido stabs herself. The book closes with Juno's minion Iris cutting a lock of Dido's hair as a dedication to Dis. At this point *sic* is repeated, now in conjunction with sec*at*, on the one hand a normal verb of cutting, but which in context and verbal echo cannot help but recall and reinforce *sic*. This effect is an improvement on Philodemus' use of βαΰζω for inarticulate wailing: Philodemus used a verb that sounds inarticulate to mean inarticulate sounds; Vergil used suitable words in context to suggest sounds that would mean something to his audience. At the very least, the *sic* […] *secat* of Iris recalls the *sic sic* of Dido, where we did not need a verb to tell us of the queen's bloody act.

Finally, in some places, Vergil uses words borrowed from other languages. Besides proper names, one striking case is *magaria* at 1.421 and 4.259 (as Fratantuono and Smith now prefer over *magalia*).[27] *Magaria* ought to be a borrowing of the (so far unattested) Phoenician word *MGR*, which should mean 'dwelling places', as Servius ad loc. was aware: '"magalia" vero antistoechon est: nam debuit "magaria" dicere, quia "magar", non "magal" Poenorum lingua villam significat' ('"magalia" is a transliteration. But one ought to read "magaria" because "magar", not "magal", means "villa" in the language of the Phoenicians').[28] Whichever word is read (or even if different ones are read in different places), the use of Punic (or plausible enough pseudo-Punic) gives an exotic flavour to the text to describe the foreign land. Philodemus' borrowings of the Phrygian δοῦμος and (probably) σαβακῶν … σαλμακίδων are comparable to Vergil's use of *magaria*. Both characterize and exoticize, potentially subtracting slightly from intelligibility (what Roman in Italy would know what a δοῦμος is? Or a *magar*?) to add to a flavour of the exotic. If the reader did not fully understand what was meant, so much the better: travellers in foreign lands often do not understand things perfectly, and Philodemus' and Vergil's use of foreign words helps produce the feeling of being in a foreign land or situation.

So far, we have surveyed a number of ways that Philodemus and Vergil manipulate form in service to content. In every case, the particular combination of *this* form with *this* content produces some additional effect, usually engaging the reader in the world of the poem and causing incrementally deeper immersion in it. These effects range from the feeling of relief and calm that comes after a dangerous sea voyage (or a fight with your girlfriend), which is produced by word pictures and sound effects, to irregular rhythms that parallel the jerky movements of grabbing a sword or of sexual intercourse, to the feelings of foreignness and unfamiliarity that come from foreign sounding or actually foreign words used in description of foreign places and practices. These are, admittedly, small-scale effects that work over the course of a few lines or a short episode, but we hope to have shown how certain bits of Vergil's *Aeneid* function in accord with Philodemean poetics.

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[25] The composer Bernard Herrmann achieved the same effect in the infamous shower stabbing scene in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*.

[26] Guillaumin 2019: 247; our translation.

[27] Fratantuono and Smith 2022: 438 and Fratantuono and Roumpou forthcoming.

[28] But see Mari 2016: 125. The formation is the *m-* prefix for a noun of place + the root *g-r* meaning 'dwell, inhabit' = 'dwelling place'; see Gaggiotti 1990: 774.

3. PARTHENIUS AND VERGIL

Around the same time that Philodemus was commencing his association with Piso, another Greek scholar from the east was beginning his own sojourn in Rome: Parthenius of Nicaea. Hardly anything is known about Parthenius' life, but we do know that, after being taken prisoner during the Third Mithridatic War, he became a teacher of Helvius Cinna, Vergil, and Cornelius Gallus.[29] Parthenius is most famous today as the author of the *Erotica Pathemata*, the only completely extant work from his prolific output in both prose and poetry. The volume consists of three dozen epitomes of amatory stories, which, as Parthenius explains in his prefatory cover letter to Gallus, are expressly intended for poets to draw on for subjects and allusive references. He further specifies that the material in his mnemonic collection (he expressly notes that he is aiming not at literary polish, but at providing an *aide-mémoire*) is meant for both composers of elegies and of epics.

Vergil's use of Parthenius is of a different sort from the principles he absorbed from Philodemus; here content is the salient issue, not form per se, or the marriage of form and content. And yet what we discover by investigating Vergil's method here is that surprises abound, displays of creative and intelligent appropriation go far beyond the mere peppering of exotic mythological names.

Vergil makes interesting use of one of the stories in Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata* in what may seem at first glance to be a brief, inconsequential allusion to an obscure Hellenistic myth, of no particular purpose other than to add colour and ornamental learning to a passage. Once again, the scene is the hunting episode in North Africa, in the wake of the Trojan landing, and the first substantial meal on Carthaginian soil. Aeneas and Achates are exploring the environs, and they encounter the disguised Venus. Aeneas' divine mother has chosen to adopt the costume of a local huntress; in a passing comment, Vergil notes that Venus was like 'Thracian Harpalyce' (1.316–17):

> […] uel qualis equos Threissa fatigat
> Harpalyce uolucremque fuga praeuertitur Hebrum.[30]

> […] or like Thracian Harpalyce tires
> the horses, and in her flight outruns the Hebrus.

The reference is brisk; but—as we shall see—the connections and implications for the development of the epic's plot are considerable, far surpassing the brief investment in a learnt citation.[31] 'Harpalyce' appears rarely in extant Greek and Latin literature. Other than Parthenius' account of her story (*Erotica Pathemata* 13),[32] she occurs in Hyginus' *Fabulae*, in the Servian commentary tradition on Vergil, and, curiously, among the lemmata of the *Expositio Notarum*.[33]

Parthenius' story is about Harpalyce daughter of Clymenus; he cites the Hellenistic poet Euphorion (author of a mythological epic on Thrace) as a source (cf. *SH* 413.12–22). The tale is disturbing: the beautiful Harpalyce is the object of the incestuous lust of her father, who seeks to interfere with her marriage and to live with her as a spouse. The daughter responds by killing her younger brother/ son, serving him to their father as a cannibalistic feast, and begging the immortals that she might be removed from human sight. Avian metamorphosis (into the chalcis) is the answer to her entreaty, and Clymenus commits suicide.

Hyginus also refers to this dark account.[34] But the late mythographer also tells of another Harpalyce, an example of those who were especially devoted to duty and piety.[35] King Harpalycus reared his

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[29] Clausen 1982; Lightfoot 1999: 9–16.

[30] We favour the consistently attested *Hebrum*, as opposed to Rutgers' *Eurum* (as reported by Bentley) that is favoured *inter al.* by such editors as Heyne, Weidner, Ribbeck, Dolç, and Goold. In support of reading *Hebrum*, see Wakefield 1796 *ad loc. Eurum* has been defended on the grounds of 8.223 (of Cacus): *fugit ilicet ocior Euro*, but cf. Roiron 1908: 125–26 and Stégen 1975: 143.

[31] It is not surprising that an appreciable bibliography has developed around the figure; cf. Knaack 1894; Arrigoni 1985; Brucia 2001; Knox 2014; Fratantuono 2023 (with fuller exposition of ideas outlined here).

[32] See Lightfoot 1999: 446–51 for her general introduction to this story.

[33] R. 19, where see Dionisotti 2022 *ad loc.*

[34] See Hyginus, *Fab.* 255, where Harpalyce *filia Clymeni* is cited as an example of impiety for slaying her son/brother.

[35] *Fab.* 252; the story is told at length at *Fab.* 193.

homonymous daughter Harpalyce on animal milk after the death of her mother. The girl was trained in arms and became a fierce warrior. Harpalycus subsequently was slain in an uprising by his citizens; his daughter fled into the forest. Ultimately she was slain by herdsmen on account of her cattle-rustling.

The Servian commentary tradition *ad Aen*. 1.317 tells much the same story, though with different details. Harpalycus was captured by the Getae; Harpalyce is compared to a rushing river, whose course she outruns by virtue of how speedily she saves him. Like Vergil's Camilla, the infant Harpalyce was reared on the milk of wild beasts. Harpalycus was eventually slain by his own subjects; Harpalyce withdrew into the forest and lived as a huntress and thief. She was pursued and killed after making a raid on local livestock. There was a fatal argument as to the provenance of one of the stolen animals, which gave rise to the tradition of athletic competitions at her grave, bouts aimed at propitiating her shade.

There are thus two Harpalycae: 1) Parthenius' daughter of Clymenus, and 2) Hyginus' daughter of Harpalycus. The first is associated with incest and cannibalism, the second with wild animals and cattle raids. The first is transformed into a bird; the second receives posthumous graveside honours. It is notable that the first Harpalyce is Thracian, but the second is not, at least in our extant texts before Vergil.

What is Venus doing? What is the import of her huntress masquerade? To explore these questions is to unravel a good example of the densely allusive, intertextual reception in which Vergil revels. Vergil's Harpalyce can outrun both horses and the Hebrus. The poet refers to the river in his last *Eclogue*, and in the Orpheus and Eurydice epyllion in his last *Georgic*. Cupid will not relent from his assaults on Gallus, even if he drinks from the chill Hebrus (*E*. 10.65). In pathetic fallacy, the Hebrus itself makes a lament for the dead Eurydice (*G*. 4.463), and it is the grisly conduit for the final *conclamatio* uttered by the decapitated singer (*G*. 4.523–7).

Harpalyce's name—'Snatcher She-Wolf'—evokes rapacity and violence. Working strictly from Vergil's description, we have a picture of predatory and successful hunting, of lupine acuity and astonishing swiftness. The huntress' speed is connected to a river that evokes dismal amatory outcomes in recollection of the ends of both of Vergil's earlier poems. This sounds like the daughter of Harpalycus, described in Hyginus and Servius. But the epithet *Threissa* seems to invoke the 'other' Harpalyce, daughter of Clymenus (the Greek adjective, instead of Latin *Thrac(i)a* could refer to a specifically Greek source, *i.e.* Euphorion's poem), who is explicitly placed in Thrace, unlike the Hyginian–Servian one (though lack of evidence prevents certainty). The name 'Harpalyce' alone is enough to make a reader think about the story of Clymenus' incest, at least briefly, but if the adjective were specifically associated with Parthenius' Harpalyce, it would certainly help.

In fact, for Jane Lightfoot, the two Harpalyces are 'in some respects […] mirror-images of each other'; she proceeds to note 'one could argue that the Thracian warrior-maiden was invented by Virgil and that the whole of Servius' note is no more than elaboration on Virgil's Camilla'.[36] Indeed, the emphasis on Harpalyce's speed at 1.316–17 is directly recalled when Camilla is introduced at 7.806b–7 (*sed proelia virgo / dura pati cursuque pedum praevertere ventos*): her swiftness surpasses the winds, not specifically horses and a river. But in Book 11, she will fight masterfully in a cavalry battle (thus evoking the equestrian Harpalyce), and in her infancy her salvation comes when she is successfully cast on a spear across a swollen river (cf. 11.547–48 and 561–63); this detail about her ability to traverse water is signposted at 7.810–11 in Vergil's note that she could skim over water without wetting her feet, and it recalls Harpalyce's ability to outrun the Hebrus.

The connections between Harpalyce and Camilla are problematic in part because unlike the Thracian girl, the Volscian is cited nowhere in surviving literature outside Vergil (which has led to the question of authorial invention).[37] We may note, too, that the Servian commentary *ad* 11.785 offers information that recalls the story of Harpalyce the cattle raider. There, one may read of how Vergil's depiction of Camilla's killer Arruns is rooted in the arcane lore about how to ward off lupine marauders from one's flocks.

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[36] Lightfoot 1999: 447–48.
[37] Horsfall 1988 argues for Vergilian innovation. See, too, Fratantuono 2022 for the question of the possible presence of Camilla in Callimachus' *Aetia*.

Matters become more interesting when we note a subtle but potent detail in the poet's description of Camilla's battle exploits, namely a list of her casualties: *Tereaque Harpalycumque et Demophoönta Chromimque*, 11.675. The first two names directly recall Parthenius' incest story: Tereus evokes the tale of the notorious Thracian king who was fed the flesh of his son Itys after raping his sister-in-law, while Harpalycus reminds the reader of Harpalyce (even though Harpalycus is the father of the 'other' Harpalyce). Juxtaposed as they are, the names of Camilla's victims make clear a connection between the Volscian warrior and the mysterious Thracian huntress.[38]

Context matters: Venus disguises herself as Harpalyce to tell her son the story of Dido, the queen of the realm to which he has been driven by Juno's storm. When Venus play-acts the Diana-like huntress Harpalyce as she tells the story of Dido to Aeneas, she anticipates how Vergil will explicitly compare the queen herself to Diana in the celebrated simile of 1.498–504. When Dido and Aeneas meet for the fateful hunt in Carthage that will witness the consummation and commencement of their erotic union, another simile will compare Aeneas to Apollo (4.143–50). By that point in the unfolding of the tragic story, Dido has been associated not only with Diana, but with a wounded deer shot by an unknowing shepherd (4.68–73), in a classic instance of the huntress becoming the hunted. The doomed union of Dido and Aeneas is cast in implicitly incestuous terms, with the Diana–Apollo comparisons evoking the image of sibling union, a fact that some scholars have rightly seen as evocative of the world of Ptolemaic royalty.[39] The evocation is especially potent given the tremendous significance of the divine twins to the religious programme of Augustan Rome; the forbidden coupling of Dido and Aeneas is marked on several levels as deeply problematic and destined for disaster.

Aeneas first hears of his future tragic love from a disguised love goddess whom the poet compares, albeit perhaps indirectly, to a victim of incest who slew her brother/son. If scholars are right in arguing that the costumed Venus goes so far as to flirt with Aeneas, then the incest story from Parthenius is recalled on yet another level.[40]

Parthenius' Harpalyce killed her child. In Vergil, once the Dido–Aeneas relationship sours, the queen displays increasingly disturbed and unhinged behaviour. She goes so far as to fantasize about serving Aeneas' son to his father for dinner: *Ascanium patriisque epulandum ponere mensis* (4.602), a cannibalistic image that directly evokes the story of Clymenus' daughter Harpalyce, at least for those familiar with the story, as well as that of Thyestes. Dido dreams of the death of son and father alike (605–06). She utters imprecations against Aeneas, wishing for his own death by drowning, torn from the embrace of his son (616); all of this is crowned by her prayer for constant war between the future Romans and her Carthaginians. The curse of conflict will come to pass in the Punic Wars, but the hope for the slaying of the son and the grisly offering of his flesh to his father will not. But the dramatic, Medea-like echoes of the queen's sadistic fantasies tie back directly to the highly allusive, suggestive, and ominous costume that Venus donned to introduce Dido's story to her shipwrecked son.

Vergil's borrowing of 'Harpalyce' from Parthenius' catalogue of amatory stories constitutes a brilliantly economical adoption from the Hellenistic storeroom: a brief description of the name of a girl and a river evokes a wealth of allusions that both look back, to the gloomy associations of the Hebrus as prominently featured in *E*. 10 and *G*. 4, and forward, to the outcome of the Dido–Aeneas relationship. The incestuous details in Parthenius' story are not explicitly mentioned in Vergil's citation of Harpalyce, but the knowledgeable reader recalls the disturbing details and remembers them as certain aspects of Aeneas and Dido's affair are presented.

What, then, may we conclude? Thanks to the preservation of the *Erotica Pathemata* (a work explicitly written for poets by one of Vergil's teachers), we know that Vergil borrowed 'Harpalyce' from Parthenius. We may trace what he did with the story he found there. The informed reader of *Aeneid* 1 might be amused at Venus dressing as a veritable anti-Venus; the Hebrus would recall troubles in love.

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[38] Certainly the 'double' Harpalyce may connect to the uneasy coexistence of the world of hunting and the milieu of warfare in the life of the doomed Camilla. In the absence of further evidence, it is impossible to trace the origin of Harpalyce *Harpalyci*: while the daughter of Clymenus has good attestation thanks to Parthenius, the homonymous huntress is more obscure. It is worth noting that Harpalycus' Harpalyce is more true to her name; her story is virtually a commentary on her wolfish etymology.

[39] Cf. Hardie 2006; Fratantuono and Smith 2022: 297–98.

[40] Newman and Newman 2005: 197 offer a perceptive reading of the behaviour of the 'fetching' goddess.

Once Aeneas' affair with Dido commences, the incestuous implications of the Diana–Apollo compar-isons would make one remember the incest story in Parthenius. Once Dido starts threatening to cook Aeneas' son for supper, there would be no doubt as to the implications of the poet's mention of how Venus looked like Thracian Harpalyce.

All of this might seem to come to an end with the suicide of Dido. Enter Camilla, briefly by way of introduction in Book 7, and then on centre stage in Book 11. If there were another Harpalyce in the pre-existing tradition—the lupine raider of flocks—then Vergil employed the same method as with Parthenius' Harpalyce, though here the borrowing was less a case of allusive signposting, and more an instance of essentially retelling the story. The lupine girl is slain while making a de facto raid on hap-less flocks (*i.e.* her decidedly inferior Trojan and Etruscan adversaries); her assassin must be stealthy to defeat her, imitating a wolf to slay a wolf.[41] Camilla is killed in part because she fatally conflates the world of war and the world of the hunt; the behaviour proper to the one realm is hazardous in the other.

But Vergil offers his reader the significant intertextual treat that we have noted: Camilla kills both 'Tereus', and 'Harpalycus'. The first name makes one think of incestuous fathers, and the second sug-gests the ill-fated daughter in Parthenius' story. What is the point in recalling so directly the obscure lore referenced fleetingly in Book 1? Why recall the story of incest and child murder, when what was relevant in the context of the Dido–Aeneas affair seems less germane for the *Camilliad*? (There is no hint that her father Metabus is incestuous, and indeed her virginity is emphasized throughout her epi-sode). If the story of Harpalyce *filia Harpalyci* existed before Vergil, then the poet alludes to it deftly, with the added mention of 'Tereus' recalling the 'other' Harpalyce, *filia Clymeni*. If there were not orig-inally two Harpalyces, then Vergil has crafted an elaborate story rooted principally in the etymology of Harpalyce's name, and possibly in information such as that related by Servius *auctus* regarding Arruns and the wolf-priests of Soracte and their strange rites.

In either case, an implicit contrast is developed between Camilla and Dido, both of whom partake of Parthenian Harpalyce lore. The former is associated closely with Diana, as a virgin huntress before her reckless entry into war. The latter is compared to Diana, and problematically so: for her, the hunt is the environment in which she will commence a sexual relationship with Aeneas–Apollo. Parthenius' incestuous Harpalyce story is alluded to as something of an ominous harbinger of the Carthaginian catastrophe to come. To the extent that Camilla truly evokes the 'other' Harpalyce (as opposed to merely playing a role, like Aeneas' capricious mother), she meets a similar end to her Alexandrian antecedent, struck down in the midst of her predatory, wolfish raid.

Parthenius offered his collection to Gallus as a convenience, a place where one could find the Hellenistic love stories told simply and in an unaffected, unembellished manner, a quarry for elegy and epic alike. One could, for example, compose an epyllion or an elegy on any of the thirty-six tales in the series. Vergil was more creative in his adaptations of Parthenius' portraits. In the richly evoca-tive tradition of profoundly intertextual engagement with his predecessors, Vergil employed authorial comment—*qualis equos Threissa fatigat, etc.*—to unfold a complicated yet coherent commentary on the events of his epic. The Harpalyce story is programmatic for the first third of the epic and its focus on Dido and Aeneas, so it merits its prominent place in Vergil's Venus–Aeneas scene in Book 1; yet it also resonates later in the Camilla narrative, which occupies a prominent place by virtue of its own introduction as the climax to the Italian catalogue at the end of the first book of the poet's *Iliad*, and in the fateful cavalry battle in the epic's penultimate book.

To close, however, an additional thought from our 'Philodemean reader' from earlier: Vergil creates this web of associations, which operate primarily on the level of content, via the choice of one name and a few words of description, *i.e.* via formal features. But he did not have to name or describe anyone in particular, because in terms of material necessary for the plot, any Carthaginian peasant would have done. But he chose to use Venus disguised as Harpalyce because of the associations that the name—and its combination with its bearer—would bring. (If he deliberately conflates versions by describing Harpalycus' daughter with the epithet of Clymenus' daughter, so much the clearer.) The

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[41] Cf. Servius *auctus ad* 11.385.

name itself activates associations that flavour the episode and the whole epic's development. These are unnecessary for understanding the plot of the epic, but add to an alert reader's depth of understanding and their appreciation of Vergil's art (not to mention causing foreboding for the future development of the plot). A reader who paused after Venus and Aeneas' conversation to consider the implications of the comparison could murkily foresee—that is, have Philodemus' 'additional thoughts' about—the failed love affair, a failed family, and assorted impious crimes. Camilla's introduction, as it reminds a reader of the Dido scene, raises similar expectations, but they are subverted. This is much more, and much better poetry, than a recitation of the bare data—those that Aeneas needs to learn for plot purposes—would have been. Our Philodemean reader who watches Vergil develop and play on these possibilities in the Dido episode and again with Camilla would find them to be a source of *psychagogia*. That is, Vergil's choice of form and content causes these further reflections to come to the mind of his reader—this is the 'additional thought'. The *psychagogia* that the Philodemean reader feels is caused, in this case, by a more intellectual engagement than in those canvassed earlier, but the feeling of engagement or immersion would be the same, and the effect of foreboding would be similar in kind. In the case of Harpalyce, it relies on knowledge of an obscure myth and its ramifications when used as an intertext, but, we suggest, at the root, psychological effects are more or less of the same kind. If Vergil composed so that his borrowing from Parthenius served Philodemean poetics, namely the principle that good poetry is found when form and content produce additional thoughts, then we have another piece of evidence that he learnt his poetics from Philodemus.

4. CONCLUSIONS

We have catalogued several instances where Vergil's technique in the *Aeneid* shows a point of contact with Philodemus' in his epigrams and discussed the sole instance where Vergil uses a story that Parthenius included in his compendium. Both Philodemus and Parthenius are interesting in their own rights as late Hellenistic literati, and their influence on Vergil deserves investigation. This article has been fairly suggestive rather than probative, but this is unavoidable: we cannot eavesdrop on Philodemus' and Parthenius' classrooms.

Yet Vergil must have learnt something from someone, and we consider it worthwhile to press the evidence to show what that might have been. Philodemus' teaching about form, content, and 'additional thoughts' provides a sort of aesthetic blueprint for writing poetry: technically accomplished form with interesting, entertaining content, yes, but also the language should be pushed to serve the interests of audience *psychagogia*. More important than metrical perfection, for example, is the need for the metre to cooperate with and reinforce the content. Metrical writing is not just a vehicle for ideas nor just a defining feature of poetry that is devoid of further significance; it is an integral part of a poem that participates in meaning-making.

Parthenius' handbook of topics and plots may seem at first glance rather sterile, and a poetaster would have failed to exploit the possibilities that Vergil saw. In this case, he recognized the potential in the obscure myth of Harpalyce, daughter of Clymenus, and combined it with another myth about a homonymous young woman to create a web of associations that suggest violence, incest, and role-breaking women. These associations were available to the well read, whose enjoyment and appreciation of the epic was increased by watching how Vergil could deploy, develop, and subvert them. Vergil's engagement with these two important late Hellenistic literati helps reveal an aesthetic continuity that stretches from Alexandria and Athens to Rome and Naples, and sheds some light on the transmission of Hellenistic thought and practice to Latin authors.

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