

**'AN EXPLORATION OF THE VIRGILIAN STRUCTURE OF THE *AENEID*  
AND ITS RE-USE IN SILVER LATIN, FLAVIAN, & RENAISSANCE EPIC'**

by

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I, Wendy Jane Little, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

## “A Match Made in Heaven?” A Study in Epic Continuity

### Abstract

The focus of this paper is Jupiter’s first prophecy scene from the *Aeneid*. This passage has most often been considered in the light of the political context. Less scholarly interest has been shown in examining this scene from an intertextual point of view, but an analysis of this scene from this perspective can be used as an entry point into the broader problem of structure and closure in post-Virgilian epic.

As many scholars have already acknowledged, an epic’s beginning is inextricably tied up with its ending. Any discussion of Jupiter’s prophecy scene is immediately complicated by the fact that this narratorial device operates in conjunction with the final scene in the epic between the gods which, in turn, brings about the resolution of the epic. The purpose of this study is to address the correlation between these two major scenes. The prophecy scene between Jupiter and Venus in Book 1 correlates with the reconciliation scene in Book 12 between Jupiter and Juno. Not only do these scenes function to provide a point of reference for the reader, but these two scenes, combined with a dual narrative structure (one ‘human/historical’, one ‘divine’), actually form the very structure. The prophecy scene controls the historical storyline for the human players, whilst the reconciliation scene controls the resolution of the epic.

The importance of the reconciliation scene cannot be overestimated because it also reveals Juno’s function within the narrative. When Jupiter and Juno reach an apparent reconciliation, questions linger about the bargain struck. What assurances do we have in Jupiter’s very words? The interpretation of this scene has come under scrutiny. Some scholars believe that the gods

reach a happy reconciliation, whilst others (more correctly) argue that this is not the case. Feeney (1991, pp.148-9), whose views on this particular Virgilian passage warrant special discussion, correctly claims that Jupiter and Juno reach only a partial agreement in the reconciliation scene. As Feeney (1984, p.344) has correctly pointed out, 'the crucial point is the obvious one – that Juno's hatred of Troy is only half her motivation': whilst her mythological grievance (Troy) is resolved, her historical grievance (Carthage) remains unresolved. From a divine perspective, Juno's wrath has been only partly appeased; this therefore suggested that the hostility on the human plane, between Rome and Carthage, still remained potent and unresolved.

### Methodology

Based on Feeney's assumption, corresponding scenes were analysed in in epics subsequent to the *Aeneid*, in order to investigate whether they followed the same structural patterning. The objective of this methodology was to investigate whether Juno's ongoing hostility ensured continuity across the epic tradition. The epics chosen for this study were Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Silius Italicus' *Punica*, Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, Maphaeus Vegius's *Thirteenth Book*, and Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis*.

### Results

In summary, Feeney's analysis held true, not only for the *Aeneid*, but also for the majority of the epics in this study. So, the final question remained, 'Was the relationship between Jupiter and Juno ever a "Match made in Heaven"? Concord between the divine couple occurred only three times. First, in *Metamorphoses* 14 when Ovid concluded the theme of Junonian anger, thus closing down the divine narrative, and Juno was effectively removed from the

equation. Secondly, in Maphaeus Vegius's *Thirteenth Book* in his desire to supply a 'happier' ending to the *Aeneid*. Finally, Sannazaro's ending, which naturally presumed the Coronation of the Virgin, echoed the ending in *Metamorphoses* 14. Therefore, in a seamless continuity, Christian epic came to supplant Classical Epic, and concord between God and Mary in the Heavenly realms, came to supplant concord between Jupiter and Juno in Olympus.

## Impact Statement

Who would have thought that the anger of an artful goddess could create such an impact across the epic tradition? Feeney's seminal work on Virgil's reconciliation scene in the *Aeneid*, combined with the findings of this research, indicate that Juno's anger was a narratological device, devised to create continuity. This research also indicated that epic closure could be categorised into three distinctive groups: those epics that relied upon the anger of Juno, those that didn't, and those that relied upon other means, (such as subsidiary narratives, or ecphrasis), in order to create continuity, or lack of closure. This research also indicated that the majority of epics followed the Virgilian model. Those that didn't were in the minority. The results of these findings could have far reaching consequences for epics which have already been read, those which have suffered from neglect, and those which, as yet, remain unread.

Contemporary research in classical studies focuses on the ancient civilisations of Greece and Rome, both in their own right and within the broader context of the ancient world. The historical impact of these civilizations and their continuing relevance and value in the modern world are also of central interest. Current research in classics is done from many diverse points of view and uses a vast range of texts (and material remains). In addition to scholarship based directly on traditional philological, textual, and historical methodologies, modern research considers the political, social and economic structures, science and technology, religions and philosophies, and creative and performing arts of the ancient world and their legacies. The field of classical studies is, by its very nature, interdisciplinary and was the first disciplinary field in the humanities.

This wide range of materials and approaches allows classical scholars to generate new understandings of even the most familiar of ancient authors, such as Virgil, and his epic successors.

Classical scholarship contributes vitally to our understanding of the modern world in areas such as literature, art, government and law, political and social ideologies, religions and their conflicts, trade and international relations. The impact, and importance, of research remains boundless, limitless, and infinite, and, in the words of F.Scott Fitzgerald:

“You don’t write because you want to say something,  
You write because you have something to say.”

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## INTRODUCTION

The *Aeneid* starts with a prophecy (1:257-96) and ends with a prophecy (8:626-728), and mid-way between these points is yet another prophecy (6:756-886) which serves to emphasise the first. Jupiter's prophecy to Venus (at 1:257-96), however, is the most striking, as it provides the basis for the framework of the poem. This famous passage has most often been considered in the light of its political context. Less scholarly interest has been shown in studying this scene from an intertextual point of view, but an analysis of Jupiter's prophecy scene from this perspective can be used as an entry point into the broader problem of structure, and closure, in post-Virgilian epic.

The ambiguous ending of the *Aeneid* has long been a matter of debate. Before the emergence of the Harvard school it was a generally held opinion that the *Aeneid* achieved a happy ending, but critics, such as Weber (2017, p. 121) have shown how the critical point of view held by the Harvard School led to a different evaluation of the ending of the *Aeneid*.<sup>1</sup> This study will address the possibility that the ending of the *Aeneid* could be better evaluated from a structural perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> Weber (2017, p.121) argues that:

'Fifty years on, it is easy to forget how wrong-headed opinions of Virgil's poetry could be in the 1950's and early 1960's. Ronald Syme's big book (1939), widely read and influential, made of Virgil a cheerleader for Augustus. Writing in 1970, Allen Mandelbaum lamented that some years had to pass before he could break free from the "tenacious resonance" of Mark Van Doren's "tag line," as Mandelbaum called it, that "Homer is a world; Virgil a style" (1981:v). In 1952, concerning the final episode in the *Aeneid*, a colleague of Van Doren's at Columbia could write, "all bitterness and all passion [sic] was now laid at rest, and all could now join hands as comrades and together walk to meet the shining future" (Hadas 1952:159). If such declarations are no longer taken seriously, the Harvard School deserves much of the credit. As Willem de Kooning said of Jackson Pollock, the Harvard School "broke the ice", though Poschl's book, appearing in America in 1962, surely played its part as well.'

Scholars have frequently noted the many correspondences between books 1 and 12.<sup>2</sup>&<sup>3</sup> Mack's seminal study (1978) has already shown the correlation between the Roman prophecies in the *Aeneid*, and O'Hara (1990) has highlighted the discrepancies found in Jupiter's prophecy scene. This paper will address similar issues, except the scenes under scrutiny will be the exchange between Jupiter and Venus at the opening of *Aeneid* 1:223-296 (Jupiter's first prophecy scene), and the exchange between Jupiter and Juno at the close of *Aeneid* 12:791-842 (the reconciliation scene). O'Hara's study (1990) broadly illustrated the discrepancies found in Jupiter's words, but this

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<sup>2</sup> Highet (1972, p. 98), for example, has shown that Jupiter's prophecy is a framing device which provides the epic structure, where the final scene mirrors the first: 'the poem is framed between two forecasts of the future made by God Almighty. At the beginning, in 1:257-296, Jupiter tells Venus that Aeneas will build his city and reign in Italy; that he will be succeeded by Iulus and Iulus by the Alban kings, and then by Romulus the founder of Rome; and that at last Augustus will come, to bring Roman world-dominion and world peace. At the end, in 12:830-840, Jupiter tells Juno that Troy and the Trojans will disappear, absorbed by the Latins: the peoples, mingling, will produce a new race. To Juno he says nothing of its future glories, remarking only that it will have an unequalled sense of duty and will honour Juno above all other nations. For this Juno cares little, but she is satisfied with the annihilation of the hated Trojans. In both these predictions the future is the same. For Juno, filled with destructive rancour, it is seen from the negative side ('*subsident Teucra*'), 12:836). For Venus, inspired by maternal love, it is a promise of generation and regeneration to eternity. She is *Aeneadum genetrix*, and her sons shall never perish from the earth.' (98).

<sup>3</sup> Tarrant (2012, p.3) also shows the interconnection between Jupiter's prophecy scene and Jupiter's resolution scene: 'Correspondences between books 1 and 12 cluster thickly in the final scenes of the latter book. On the large scale, the conversation between Jupiter and Juno in 12:791-842 balances that between Jupiter and Venus in 1:213-96; each scene contains a prediction by Jupiter of the future of Rome. The last first- person authorial statement in 12:500-4 echoes, (and implicitly answers), the first, in 1:8-11. At a more detailed level, the phrase *soluuntur frigore membra*, which describes Aeneas at his first appearance in 1:92 is applied to Turnus in the last moment of life, 12:951. The first and last speeches of the poem both begin with an indignant question introduced by the particle *ne* attached to a personal pronoun (1:37 (Juno) *mene incepto desistere victam...?* 12:947-8 (Aeneas) *tunc hinc spoliis indute meorum/ eripiare mihi?* Finally, an accumulation of closural language toward the end of the book strongly suggests that Virgil saw the end of book 12 as the end of the poem. In short, despite the poem's apparently abrupt conclusion, there can be no doubt that the *Aeneid* ends where and how Virgil meant it to end.'

study narrowly focuses upon one particular discrepancy which comes to light in the reconciliation scene.

In his opening prophecy, Jupiter had promised Venus that 'Spiteful Juno, who now in her fear/ troubles sea and earth and sky, shall change to better counsels/ and with me cherish the Romans, lords of the world/ and the nation of the toga, 1:279-82.' However, in the last divine exchange, we see that this is not the case. Juno remains only partly appeased, and Carthage, 'an ancient city ... which Juno loved beyond all other lands (1:15)', still remains a contentious issue. The main objective of this paper, however, will be to show that no correspondence has a greater impact across the epic tradition than this final correspondence which occurs between Jupiter and Juno.

In this investigation, where a variety of epics were studied (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, Silius Italicus' *Punica*, Maphaeus Vegius' *Thirteenth Book of the Aeneid*, and Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis*, it soon became apparent that this self-same Virgilian 'formula' was being used time and time again. The secret in understanding the endings of epics subsequent to the *Aeneid* rested upon sifting the mythological storyline from the historical storyline. Close attention had to be paid to the first and final speeches, (where the first important speech was generally a prophecy, and the final speech was a reconciliation scene, or a speech which functioned as an episodic parallel to this). Within the subsequent epics, the structural roles of Jupiter, Juno, and Venus remained relatively unchanged, (as did their very natures). All of the subsequent epics, in the broadest sense, appeared to be following the Virgilian structure, in some capacity, in order to formulate their beginnings and their endings. This, therefore, suggested that writing an epic,

and devising a new ending, was merely a matter of getting the formula right. So what was the formula?

During this investigation, certain issues had to be addressed:

- 1) Did the epic in question operate on a dual-dynamic narrative structure? Was the narrative structure the same as the *Aeneid*? (In other words, did they include a prophecy scene which correlated with a reconciliation scene, which, in turn, brought about an ambiguous closure, where one narrative structure achieved closure, but where one narrative remained open?)
- 2) Did they (faithfully) follow the 'Virgilian' structure, or did they deviate from it in any way?
- 3) Was Juno present at the epic ending, and, if so, in what capacity (i.e. was she happy or sad?)
- 4) If Juno was absent from the epic's ending, was there any other means of epic continuation put in place? (In other words, were there any subsidiary prophecy scenes, or passages, or even pictorial devices, which operated to create, or suggest, a future narrative beyond the epic's ending?)

Chapter one begins with the operation of the Virgilian model in order to illustrate the structural connection that exists between the beginning and ending prophecy scenes in the *Aeneid*. These two scenes are interconnected and do not operate in isolation from one another. Furthermore, it will be shown that the prophecy scene between Jupiter and Venus and the resolution scene between Jupiter and Juno are an important device in many epics. Not only do they provide a point of reference for the reader, these two scenes, combined with a dual dynamic narrative structure, one human and one divine, actually form the

very structure. The prophecy scene controls the historical story line for the human players, and the reconciliation scene between Jupiter and Juno controls the resolution of the epic. In the *Aeneid*, the decision reached between Jupiter and Juno in the reconciliation scene is critical in bringing about the ending. The ending the epic actually achieves is dependent on the divine narrative: if the gods disagree the historical (human) narrative is ongoing, but if they, (more unusually), agree, the historical (human) narrative closes. Juno's relentless anger, therefore, is not only the driving force of the plot, but also the means in bringing about the epic's resolution. The first chapter will illustrate how Virgil uses these two scenes in order to create a structure which results in an ambiguous ending.

The second chapter will show how Ovid offers the reader two alternative endings to the *Aeneid* in the *Metamorphoses*: in Book 14, Ovid parodies the Virgilian model, formulating a complete resolution to the *Aeneid*, essentially 'closing down' both the human and divine narrative structures, and in Book 15, Ovid replicates the Virgilian model, and reaches the same result as the ending of the *Aeneid*. In the first example, at *Metamorphoses* 14:581-608, Ovid follows the Virgilian model in order to resolve the Virgilian narrative, with the specific intention of providing full 'closure' to the *Aeneid*. This passage functions as a direct response to Virgil: Ovid answers, continues, and then concludes, Jupiter's first prophecy from the *Aeneid*. In this passage in Book 14, Ovid creates a divine resolution, and, for the very first time, concord is achieved between Jupiter and Juno.

Conversely, in Book 15, Ovid creates an (imminent) mortal resolution, thereby achieving an ending which appears to be immune to continuation both



on a mythological and historical plane. Jupiter is the sole speaker, and Juno is not present to frustrate the human (historical) narrative. No other means of continuation, (such as subsidiary prophecies), have been put in place, so the reader can safely assume that whatever Jupiter says is set in stone. Ovid's consolation speech for the death of Caesar, given to Venus, which functions as an episodic parallel to Virgil's final reconciliation scene, does not appear to look forward to a future beyond Augustus. Jupiter's final speech, therefore, appears to achieve an ending which is both historically and politically closed: 'The Empire without End' has become 'The End of Empire.'

The third chapter will show that Silius Italicus is the most faithful adherent to the Virgilian model: he replicates the Virgilian model in an advanced timescale to the *Aeneid*, takes Juno's anger as a 'given' requirement of the epic genre, and breaks no codes. In the *Punica*, the human narrative is developed in the same way as in the *Aeneid*: via an initial prophecy scene, given by Jupiter to Venus (3:557ff; 3:571ff.), which correlates with, and is resolved by, a final reconciliation scene between Jupiter and Juno (17:341ff.). Like the *Aeneid* (12:793ff.), Silius includes his own version of the Virgilian Jupiter to Juno reconciliation scene (17:341ff.). Like the *Aeneid*, at the close of the epic, Silius Italicus' *Punica* achieves no reconciliation on the mortal plane, (but triumph for Scipio), and only partial reconciliation in the immortal sphere, thus leaving the text historically open to continuation. The triumph of Scipio that comes at the very end of the epic is not the end of the story. The battle of Zama at the ending of the *Punica* constitutes but one stage in the longer history to which the *Aeneid* alludes. This conclusion is left historically open and anticipates the Third Punic War (149), and beyond. The close of this epic also anticipates the

next story as prophesised in Jupiter's speech – the coming of another Scipio<sup>4</sup>, who will also raze Carthage to the ground. This refers to a battle even beyond the 3<sup>rd</sup> Punic War, when in 146 B.C., Carthage will be destroyed by P.Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus.

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<sup>4</sup> This anticipates the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C

The fourth chapter will show how Valerius Flaccus follows the Virgilian model, but complicates it in a variety of ways. This epic is based on a triple dynamic narrative structure. In the *Argonautica*, one line of the human narrative (Jason's narrative) is developed in the same way as in the *Aeneid*: via an initial prophecy scene, given by Jupiter to Venus (3:557ff; 3:571ff.). Book 1 includes a decree given by Jupiter, in which he explains his reasons for the Argonautic voyage, declaring that this is a time for Greek victory, rather than Roman triumph, but that Rome will eventually prosper and rule the world. (*Argonautica* 1:531-560). Medea's narrative is developed differently. The more complex storyline of Medea, which occupies books 5-8 as a further (inset) narrative, is made up of separate episodes, partly reliant on the Virgilian intertext. This ultimately creates two separate (human) narrative structures, (which are simultaneously operative, as well as being mutually dependant), which are governed by a third (the divine narrative).

Valerius Flaccus follows the Virgilian model by the inclusion of a prophecy scene and an episodic substitute, which stands as a reconciliation scene. The ending to Jason and Medea's narratives meet in the reconciliation scene. Both narrative structures (i.e. Jason's narrative and Medea's narrative) correlate with, and are resolved by, this particular passage. Jupiter's prophecy, (which controls Jason's storyline), and Medea's narrative, are both brought to a close in book 8, when, in the final moments of the epic, in a reworking of the reconciliation scene, the Argonauts engage in conversation, attempting to persuade Jason to leave Medea behind (*Argonautica* 8:385-399).

Unlike Jupiter in the *Aeneid*, Jupiter in the *Argonautica* is a more fallible narrator: what he predicts comes to pass. Unlike Juno in the *Aeneid*, where the goddess opposes the protagonist and his epic mission in the *Aeneid*, in the

*Argonautica*, Juno supports Jason in his quest for the Golden Fleece, but what she chooses to do with Medea is anyone's guess. VF thus 'closes' Jason's narrative but 'leaves open' Medea's narrative, offering the reader many possible endings.

In the *Argonautica*, no compromise is required by Jupiter and Juno in the reconciliation scene, (hence the inclusion of a different sort of reconciliation scene), therefore VF had to find an alternative way of bringing all narratives to a standstill. This is achieved in a conversation between the Argonauts themselves. Hercules becomes part of VF's reworking of the Virgilian model. In the *Aeneid*, Juno's (Homeric) wrath provided the impetus for the supernatural storyline throughout the epic, and her specifically Carthaginian wrath perpetuated further epics beyond the epic's resolution. Valerius Flaccus takes Juno's anger as a 'given' requirement of the epic genre. VF recognised the importance of alluding to the 'model', but also realised that he had the freedom to 'change the code'. VF thus has to break the code and find another sworn enemy of Juno's in order to perpetuate the epic cycle. With great sophistication, VF turned the model on its head – by finding an earlier cause for the Trojan War (which also involved the stealing of a woman) and by a new antagonist, in the shape of Hercules. VF thus changes the model for Juno's anger (now she hates Hercules, rather than Aeneas and the Romans), enabling this epic to continue as far as its literary successor(s) – the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, etc. VF anticipates the initiation of the Trojan War, but, (unlike Homer who relied on the Judgement of Paris, and Virgil who relied on Juno's hatred of the Carthaginians), offers an alternative, and earlier (?), cause for the Trojan War via the myth of Hesione

(2:451ff.), a venture that was aided by our new hero – Hercules!<sup>5</sup> Yet Hercules's role in this epic is two-fold: not only is he Juno's new enemy, but he is used as an agent to measure analeptic and proleptic time, thereby transporting the reader into the next epic. VF, therefore, follows the Virgilian structure: he creates an epic ending, where one narrative is closed (Jason's story), and the other narrative is open (Medea's story). VF not only follows the Homeric/Virgilian theme of disharmony amongst the gods, but pre-empts it. It is not until the Judgement of Paris, that the two spurned goddesses, Hera (Juno) and Athena (Pallas), became the sworn enemies of Aphrodite's (Venus's) beloved Troy. The inclusion of a new protagonist allows for epic continuation: By breaking the code, Juno's (new) unresolved grudge against Hercules, which continues way beyond the epic's ending, therefore suggests that Jupiter and Juno remain in partial disagreement, which thereby indicates that the human/historical narrative can be continued, (and will be continued in the *Iliad*).

The fifth chapter will show how Vegius uses the Virgilian Jupiter's prophecy in order to formulate a different resolution to the *Aeneid*: the human narrative is constructed by using the prophecy scene already imposed by Virgil (*Aeneid* 1:257-296) which corresponds with a reconciliation scene devised by Vegius. Vegius uses Jupiter's prophecy from the *Aeneid* in order to engineer a different ending. Vegius picks up and continues the storyline of the *Aeneid*. Vegius resolves the first three years of Jupiter's prediction, up to the founding of Lavinium. Unlike the *Aeneid*, where the reconciliation scene involves Jupiter

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<sup>5</sup> Hesione was the daughter of Laomedon, king of Troy, and was chained to a rock, in order to be devoured by a sea-monster, that he might thus appease the anger of Apollo and Poseidon. Hercules promised to save her, if Laomedon would give him the horses which he had received from Zeus as a compensation for Ganymedes. Hercules killed the monster, but Laomedon broke his promise. Hercules took Troy, killed Laomedon, and gave Hesione to Telamon, to whom she bore Teucer. Her brother Priam sent Antenor to claim her, and the refusal of the Greeks to give her back was one of the causes of the Trojan War.

and Juno, in this epic the reconciliation scene involves Jupiter and Venus. The final speech between Jupiter and Venus in the *Thirteenth Book* (607-619) is engineered to correspond and resolve the first speech between Jupiter and Venus in the *Aeneid* (1:254). Vegius thus creates a circular narrative so that the ending of the *Thirteenth Book* leads back to the beginning of the *Aeneid*. By reworking Virgil's beginning, Vegius engineers another ending. The final scene between Venus and Jupiter in the *Thirteenth Book* picks up, and resolves (Virgil's) Jupiter's prophecy. In the advanced timescale of the *Thirteenth Book*, three years have since elapsed. Venus refers back to the two promises her father had made earlier in the story (*Aeneid* 1:234ff.). In his prophecy, Jupiter had promised the fulfilment of two issues: first, in order to compensate for the miseries of the Trojan War, the survivors' heirs would enjoy future glory, and second, Aeneas would be granted the gift of apotheosis. Vegius' *Thirteenth Book* picks up continues the earlier dialogue held in the *Aeneid*. Venus thanks Jupiter for the fulfilment of his first promise, but now proceeds to remind him that, with the passing of time, the fulfilment of the second promise is now overdue (595-605). Jupiter then proceeds to grant Venus her request, and the second promise reaches fruition. The issue of her son's apotheosis is finally resolved, and the text reaches a point of sublime closure with Aeneas having been translated to the stars.

Vegius thus provides complete resolution of the supernatural narrative, which results in complete resolution of the human narrative. Closure of the *Aeneid* and closure of the *Thirteenth Book* is therefore not only simultaneous, but also complete. Maphaeus Vegius' *Thirteenth Book* achieves full reconciliation on the mortal plane, and full reconciliation in the immortal sphere. The text is therefore not historically open to continuation, on either a historical

or mythological level. By providing the resolution to Virgil's prophecy, and by continuing the historical storyline to its ultimate conclusion, all the loose ends have been tied off. Vegius thus attempted to have the very last word. At the close of the *Aeneid* (12:791ff.) Juno does not abandon her hostility entirely in her negotiation with Jupiter but, in the reconciliation scene at the close of the *Thirteenth Booke*, Vegius provided the complete resolution to Juno's hostility both within the text itself, and by the explicit use of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as an intertext. Maphaeus Vegius, therefore, not only resolves his own epic, but also the *Aeneid*. Furthermore, like Ovid, he prevents any epic regeneration. To summarise, the conclusion of Vegius's *Thirteenth Booke* thereby illustrates that Feeney's analysis holds true, not just for the *Aeneid*, but in epics subsequent to Virgil's epic, (at least as far as 1428): it takes an 'agreeable' resolution on both the human and divine planes to effect a complete epic 'closure'.

The sixth, and final, chapter will show that Sannazaro's epic is highly unique, in that it follows a hybrid structure that resembles both the Virgilian and Valerian models. Following the Virgilian model, this epic includes a prophecy scene which correlates with a reconciliation scene, resulting in an ending which achieves closure, but remains able to be historically continued). Unlike the Virgilian model, but like the Valerian model, this epic operates on a triple-dynamic narrative structure where the divine narrative simultaneously governs the action on the human plane for two protagonists. Sannazaro uses a prophecy given by God in order to develop the storyline of Mary and Christ and to formulate a human resolution to the *De partu Virginis*. The focus of this epic is the primary narrative of Mary, which occupies book 2 as a further (inset) narrative made up of separate episodes, whilst subsidiary narratives create the future story of Christ, following the Virgin birth. This creates two separate (although mutually dependant) narrative structures, which are governed by a third, in other words, the divine narrative (God).

Sannazaro adheres closely to the structure of the Valerian model in his use of multiple, subsidiary prophecies in order to supply the background for his other major protagonist - Christ. King David's prophecy and Jordan's speech govern the Christian narrative and form an outer frame to the (inner) Marian narrative. Jordan's lengthy speech at the close of Book 3 (3:331-497) mirrors King David's prophecy at the close of Book 1. Whilst David's prophecy provides a progressive view of the private life of Christ, Jordan's prophecy provides a retrospective view of the public life of Jesus.

God's speeches operate as a ring-composition, and his intention, as specified in his first speech, reaches fruition in his closing speech. In the resolution scene, the omission of a Juno figure, (or a replacement recipient), is



once again significant. Following the 'Virgilian' pattern once again, the 'typical' final speech between the divine couple is deliberately omitted and replaced by God's lengthy address to an assembly of silent, (and unresponsive), angels (3:34-88).

Sannazaro's ultimate, and triumphal, ending is an inversion of the Virgilian model. At the close of *De Partu Virginis*, God's prophecy brings about the anticipated ending. The Christian narrative ends with the diffusion of Christian influence as envisaged by God in his prophecy scene. Sannazaro achieves closure to this particular storyline of his epic by the deliberate omission of the major players - Venus and Juno. Unlike the speeches in the *Aeneid*, the speeches are addressed to a silent audience. The deliberate exclusion of Venus from the prophecy scene indicates that the (historical) Christian narrative can neither be questioned, nor altered, whilst the deliberate exclusion of Juno from the resolution scene indicates that God's decision cannot be frustrated. Yet the removal of the divine players results in a different (singular) narrative structure and the removal of the anger which fuelled an(y) epic ending results in an epic 'dynamic' that has now been fractured. Sannazaro's deconstruction of the Virgilian formula thus lays bare the very workings of the structure imposed by that model. Unlike the *Aeneid* which failed to reach closure because of Juno's on-going wrath, and unlike the *Thirteenth Book* which achieved closure because of the appeasement of Juno's anger, a (sacred) silence, (and an epic finality), bring closure to the Marian narrative – Mary's mission has reached fulfilment. Nonetheless, the Virgilian model still prevails – one narrative structure must close, one narrative structure must remain open- the Marian narrative has achieved its predicted closure, but the Christian narrative, on the other hand, remains open to continuity. Rather than

using Juno as a means of epic continuity, Sannazaro achieves this effect by following the (particularly) Valerian device of subsidiary narratives, (provided, in this epic, by King David and the River Jordan).

## CHAPTER 1: VIRGIL'S *AENEID*

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

As many scholars have already acknowledged, an epic's beginning is inextricably tied up with its ending. Any discussion of Jupiter's prophecy scene in the *Aeneid* is immediately complicated by the fact that this narratorial device operates in conjunction with the closing scene. The purpose of this study is to address the correlation between two major scenes in the *Aeneid*: the exchange between Jupiter and Venus at the opening of *Aeneid* 1:223-296 (the Prophecy Scene), and the exchange between Jupiter and Juno at the close of *Aeneid* 12:791-842 (the reconciliation scene), in order to show that, from a structural perspective, these two scenes are the most important scenes in *any* epic. Not only do they provide a point of reference for the reader, these two scenes, combined with a dual narrative structure, one human and one divine, actually form the very structure. The prophecy scene controls the historical story line for the human players, and the reconciliation scene between Jupiter and Juno controls the resolution of the epic. The resolution of the *Aeneid* cannot come by the will of men, but only by the intervention of the divine characters and Jupiter's decision to halt the narrative in the reconciliation scene. The importance of the reconciliation scene cannot be overestimated. The reconciliation scene is critical in providing the missing (structural) link between the opening scene and the resolution of the epic. The ending the epic actually achieves is dependent on the divine narrative: if the gods disagree the historical (human) narrative is ongoing, but if they, (more unusually), agree, the historical (human) narrative closes. Juno's relentless anger is not only the driving force of the plot, but also the means to bring about the epic's resolution. This very factor

suggests that Jupiter and Juno's (apparently) tempestuous relationship is a perfectly balanced structural device in order to produce further continuation to the storyline.

## 1.2 THE PROPHECY SCENE (*AENEID* 1:223-296)

Jupiter's first role in the epic is to 'control' the historical narrative for the human players. Jupiter's speech is instigated by Venus. It is a critical moment. Venus approaches Jupiter to voice her doubts and anxieties concerning her son, Aeneas, and the Trojans. Operating as a consolation to Venus, Jupiter proceeds to reassure his daughter, 'Spare your fears, lady of Cythera; your children's fates abide unmoved / you will see Lavinium's city and its promised walls: and great -/souled Aeneas you will raise on high to the starry heaven. No thought has turned me.' Jupiter then proceeds to lay out his prediction for Aeneas and his world plan for Roman dominion – 'For these I set no bounds in space or time, but have given Empire without end.' Jupiter's prophecy predicts the reversal of the result of the Trojan War through Rome's conquest with Greece, the end of Juno's hostility in the Punic Wars, the resolution of discord, and universal peace under the leadership of Venus' Roman descendants. It should be made clear, however, that the Virgilian Jupiter fails to specify exactly when Juno's hostility is likely to end.

O'Hara (1990) correctly claims that Jupiter misleads about the future which makes it difficult to trust his prophecy, and rightly questions the fallibility of Jupiter's words. His study (1990, pp. 30-31) shows that there are several misleading or untrue features of Jupiter's prophecy in Book 1. O'Hara (1990, p.149), argues that 'the beginning of the *Aeneid* sets up expectations that will not be fulfilled as the poem becomes more complex and ambiguous' Zetzel

(1997, p.197), similarly agrees that the rhetorical purpose of Jupiter's first prophecy scene frequently leads to 'distortion and oversimplification.

### 1.3 THE RECONCILIATION SCENE (*AENEID* 12:791-842)

Jupiter's final role in the epic is to halt the narrative in 'present' time which he achieves by calling an end to his wife's interference in the Trojan mission and the destiny of Aeneas and the Romans. At the ending of the *Aeneid*, in the final scene, when Jupiter addresses Juno, she is passive in a golden cloud, gazing at the fray. Jupiter forbids any further intervention on Juno's part. His reproofs are stern and his prohibitions final. As Johnson (1976: 124) has shown, in the reconciliation scene when Jupiter encounters Juno (at 12:791-2), 'he is not angry; he is perhaps somewhat exasperated, but his voice is the voice of firm reason...no threats, no recriminations; rather a simple, rational statement of the facts: what she has done, and what she may do no more.' Jupiter chastises Juno, and tells her that:

'ventum ad supremum est. terris agitare vel undis  
Troianos potuisti, infandum accendere bellum,  
deformare domum et luctu miscere hymenaeos:  
ulterius temptare veto.

'The end is reached. To chase the Trojans over land or wave, to kindle monstrous war, to mar a happy home and blend bridals with woe, this power you have had; I forbid you to try any further'

## Juno's Reply

When Juno answers, as Johnson (1976, p. 125) has shown, Juno replies with utter composure – yielding instantly to reason and fact. Seider (2013, p.172) shows that ‘Juno leverages her husband’s worry with a brilliant response. She acknowledges that his will is supreme and then, by listing all the anti-Trojan tactics she has refrained from attempting, audaciously implies that she has respected his superiority all along.’ In her final speech of the *Aeneid*, Juno begins by agreeing to the marriage of Aeneas and Lavinia, but then she bargains for the final outcome.<sup>6</sup> Juno demands that the native Latins should not change their ancient name (12:823), ‘nor to become Trojans and be called Teucrians’ (12:824). She insists that they should keep their native language and their attire (12:825). She does, however, agree ‘that there should be a Latium and that Alban kings should reign from generation to generation, and that Rome should absorb Italian blood: *sit Latium, sint Albani per saecula reges, sit Romana potens Itala virtute propago* (Let there be a Latium, let Alban kings live on through the centuries, let the stock of Rome be made mighty by the manly courage of Italy) (This correlates with Jupiter’s prophecy at 1:271). Finally, Juno insists that: *occidit, occideritque sinas cum nomine Troia*. (‘Troy is fallen, and fallen let her be, together with her name.’).

But what were Juno’s motives? As Seider (2013, p.175) has shown,

‘Juno plots an opposing course to Aeneas that will erase any memory of Aeneas and Troy. Juno’s anger is long-lasting and she is willing to let Aeneas win the day so long as he loses the commemoration he has

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<sup>6</sup> Juno’s closing speech is thought to have been formed by an imitation of several passages from Ennius. Buchheit (1963), 146, claims that Juno’s speech must be understood as the combination of two Ennian parts: Jupiter’s prophecy and Juno’s reconciliation during the Second Punic War. One of them is the announcement of the apotheosis, the other, the affair of Juno with Rome.

struggled to attain. ...Juno seeks nothing less than cultural oblivion. The ferocity of this request is on display in the final line of her speech. Her repetition of the verb (“die”) leaves no doubt as to her wishes and the climactic placement of Troy” (“Troia”) affirms what is at the core of her wrath. In spite of Troy’s physical destruction, the Trojans have been keeping the city alive by commemorating it in spirit. This has only exacerbated Juno’s anger, and now she wants to ensure complete annihilation of both the city and its name - ‘Troy is the final word of her speech and the final word she speaks in the *Aeneid*, and it brings the epic back to the memories that motivated her anger in Aeneid 1, and reaffirms that they still motivate it in *Aeneid* 12. ‘

Juno’s final words are also an attempt to beguile Jupiter into believing that her only grudge is her ancient, and specifically Homeric, grievance. Juno’s hatred of Troy is only half her motivation’: whilst her mythological grievance (Troy) is resolved, her historical grievance (Carthage) remains unresolved. Thus ‘the cause of her wrath and her bitter sorrows’, that had not yet faded from her mind at the beginning of the epic (1:25-28)<sup>7</sup> is now, by omission, conveniently disregarded in order to protect her beloved Carthage.<sup>8</sup> Juno’s agrees to the founding of Rome and the subsequent marriage of the ‘Trojan remnant’ to Lavinia, but her fear of the (coming) Roman race looms ahead. For whilst the Greeks had defeated the Trojans, Juno had heard about the power of Rome – ‘that a race was springing from Trojan blood, to overthrow someday the Tyrian towers’, and, deep in her heart, she knows that Carthage is doomed, *sic volvere Parcas* (“so rolled the wheel of fate”, 1:22).

#### Jupiter’s reply

At the close of this exchange, Jupiter pretends to be satisfied with Juno’s explanations and with her announcement that her plans have changed and

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<sup>7</sup> See Formicola (2005), 48-9, for discussion of Juno’s memory and Juno’s grudges

<sup>8</sup> This claim is further supported by Maurizio Bettini (1997), 31, who notes ‘Jupiter and Juno’s reconciliation leaves it to the Trojans to agree to ‘amnesia’.

agrees to her request: *do quod vis, et me victusque volensque remitto* ('I grant your wish and relent, willingly won over' *Aeneid* 12:833). Jupiter promises Juno three things: the Ausonians will retain their name, the Ausonians will retain their language, and the Ausonians will retain their customs. And, as Seider (2013, p. 177-8) has shown, ultimately, 'Over time, the Trojan culture, having contributed no distinguishing characteristic to the new city, will become lost in the swirl of other traditions.'

Jupiter is pleased because it has been so easy, and smiles at his wife's reply, but as Johnson (1976, p. 126) has pointed out, 'He smiles because, like the Zeus of *Iliad* 15, he has caught his wife in an amusing lie and can therefore toy as he pleases with her partial admission and her ridiculous pretence at submission.':

'es germana Iovis Saturnique altera proles,  
irarum tantos volvis sub pectore fluctus.  
verum age et inceptum frustra summitte furorem.  
do quod vis, et me victusque volensque remitto.  
sermonem Ausonii patrium moresque tenebunt  
utque est nomen erit; commixti corpore tantum  
subsident Teucrici. morem ritusque sacrorum  
adiciam faciamque omnis uno ore Latinos.  
hinc genus Ausonio mixtum quod sanguine surget,  
supra homines, supra ire deos pietate videbis  
nec gens ulla tuos aequale celebrabit honores.'

'You are Jove's true sister, and Saturn's other child, such waves of wrath surge deep within your breast. But come, allay the anger that was stirred in vain. I grant your wish and relent, willingly won over. Ausonia's sons shall keep their fathers' speech and ways, and as it is now, so shall their name be: the Teucricians shall but sink down, merged in the mass. I will give them their sacred laws and rites and make them all Latins of one tongue. From them shall arise a



race, blended with Ausonian blood, which you will see overpass men, overpass gods in loyalty, and no nation will celebrate your worship with equal zeal.'

In his closing line Jupiter reassures Juno that no nation will celebrate her worship with equal zeal, thereby illustrating that he is easily able to read Juno's "inwardly-brooding" mind.<sup>9</sup> Seider (2013, p. 176) has shown,

'Jupiter recognizes the gravity of the punishment Juno desires and the wrath that motivates such a desire. The vehemence of her rage confirms her identity, as well as the continuing connection between her anger and memory...In a strong correlation between Books 12 and 1, Jupiter's acknowledgment of his wife's anger keys into the question asked by the narrator in the proem to the *Aeneid* at 1.11, "Can heavenly spirits cherish resentment so dire?" (*tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*), along with a phrase associated with this question at 1:4, when we are immediately told of the unforgetting anger of savage Juno. (*saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram*). These lines also raise the possibility that Jupiter's metaphorical use of "waves" (*fluctus*) at 12:831 alludes to the actual waves of the sea-storm that Juno caused in *Aeneid* 1.'

This was Juno's first act to disrupt Jupiter's divine providence, which persists until the end of the poem, and beyond. As Johnson (1976, p. 125) has shown, 'she has shown by the constancy and intensity of her anger that she is, like him, a true Olympian...'As Seider (2013, p. 177) has shown, 'For her there is no forgetting or forgiveness and this is just as Jupiter expects. She possesses the sort of personality he admires and rewards'.

### The departure of Juno

Juno, (we are told), is gladdened by this turn of events:

adnuit his Iuno et mentem laetata retorsit  
interea excedit caelo nubemque relinquit

Juno assented to this and joyfully changed her purpose; then she leaves heaven, and quits the cloud. (12:841-2).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> This particular line corresponds with Juno's inner soliloquy at 1:49, when she wonders 'And will any still worship Juno's godhead or humbly lay sacrifice upon her altars?'

Nonetheless, when Jupiter and Juno reach an apparent reconciliation, questions linger about the compact struck. What assurances do we have in Jupiter's very words, or in Juno's very actions? Juno's final acquiescence is never mentioned, neither in book one, nor in book twelve, and her eventual 'change of heart' remains open to interpretation. Some scholars believe that the gods reach a happy reconciliation. Seider (2013, p.171) too, has shown how Alex Hardie (2007, pp.551-92) claims that Juno who initially fosters discord, "will yield ultimately to reconciliation", and that "the concordant aspect of (Juno's) character will ultimately bring concord and peace to Italy". Kühn (1971b, p.164), likewise, claims that Juno gives up her anger: "only now is she to let go this vainly begun "furor", and further claims that, 'Juno nods approvingly at such words and pleases her mind. Then she leaves her cloud and the heavenly vaults: what now comes remains bitter for her to look.' Mack (1978, pp.79-80) also suggests that 'Juno, whose wrath began Aeneas' troubles, leaves the scene reconciled and happy'. Formicola (2005, p.151), likewise, (who makes reference to Giancotti (1983, p.498), similarly supposes that Juno is happy and 'lit by a light of joy'.

Some scholars also (incorrectly) claim that Juno is eventually reconciled to Rome. Johnson (1976, p. 127), for example, has shown that: "The fact that Juno did not, so far as Roman sentiment was concerned, become reconciled to Rome at this time, and possibly never became reconciled to Rome at any time,

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<sup>10</sup> Feeney (1990), 341, claims that Virgil follows the Ennian chronology (as Servius comments on 281) when he locates Juno's change of heart. Servius informs us that at *Aeneid* 1:281ff, *consilia in melius refert* (Juno shall change to better counsels), the reconciliation during the Hannibalic war is part of the Ennian tradition. According to Ennius, 'because in the Second Punic war Juno was placated and began to favour the Romans'. Feeney (1990), 343, also claims that 'at various points in the poem, it is clear that Virgil does adhere to this Ennian tradition', and 'Ennius had Juno fighting for Carthage against Rome and, so it seems, does Virgil'.

is clear from Servius' difficulties in interpreting *mentem retorsit*. Juno is happy, perhaps, but Juno happy is not much less frightening than Juno unhappy. Neither Servius nor Horace is quite at ease, either'.

Other scholars (correctly) argue that no reconciliation takes place between Jupiter and Juno. Feeney (1984) also rightly points out how Juno does not at all submit to Jupiter's will but, instead, leaves heaven, and quits the cloud, (12:841-2), quite satisfied with what she has achieved. As Feeney (1991, pp.148-9) has correctly shown, 'the reconciliation scene resolves the question of Aeneas's settlement in Latium and the final passing away of Troy, but fails to resolve all of Juno's grudges' (Carthage), noting that 'the divine resolution is qualified to the extent that it reflects only so much of the Roman endeavour that has been accomplished so far; it leaves open what historically remains open.' Feeney's argument (1984, p.344), therefore, shows that, although the matter of Juno's Trojan anger has been resolved, Carthage still remains a motivational force, and, as Johnson (1976: 126-7) has rightly argued, 'her acceptance of her husband's will signals a recalibration of her strategy, not an abandonment of her aim'.<sup>11</sup>

#### 1.4 THE ENDING OF THE *AENEID*

The reconciliation scene thus witnesses the departure of Juno, although, as Johnson (1976, p. 126), has rightly pointed out, 'For though Juno now disappears from the poem, the poem began with her and, in effect, it ends with her. The 'real' ending of the *Aeneid*, and the consequence of the reconciliation

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<sup>11</sup> Morton Braund (1997, p.211), (also supportive of Feeney's claim above), argues that, 'Jupiter is the only one powerful enough to bring about the conclusion, which he finally achieves (12:829-40) by compromising his pro-Venus, pro-Trojan position in order to accommodate Juno in a partial reconciliation.'

scene, is not played out until the final divine scene where Juno's action continues to shape its final catastrophe.<sup>12</sup> (Jupiter knows that Juno is responsible for the breaking of the truce (and with it, the possibility of a somewhat rational and essentially nonviolent solution to the dilemma) and for the wounding of Aeneas).<sup>13</sup> Operating as a series of delays to an ending, the human narrative concludes with the death of Turnus. Turnus' first words in Book 12 introduce the theme of a search for an ending: *nulla mora in Turno; nihil est quod dicta retractent ignavi Aeneadae, nec quae pepigere recusent: congregi,* ('No delay lies with Turnus! There is no reason for the coward sons of Aeneas to recall their words or to renounce their pact! I go to meet him' *Aeneid* 12:11-12). The destined final encounter (12: 887-952) is deferred for a further 800 lines, first by a scene in which the parents of Lavinia attempt to dissuade Turnus from his fixed intention, second, by the elaborate account of the *foedus*, designed to expedite the duel but in fact allowing time for Juturna to exploit Italian unease in order to disrupt the truce and provoke a renewal of war, which then rages unchecked for nearly 400 lines. The whole of the last half of the *Aeneid* is a tale of divinely engineered delay to Jupiter's plan that Trojans and Italians should live in peace together. Turnus and Aeneas come together for the single (but not final) combat. Even at this stage, Virgil delays the ending. The spear wound is not fatal. Aeneas and Turnus come face to face for the last time at *Aeneid* 12: 887ff. Utilising the Homeric 'plot', the climax of the *Aeneid* parallels and resembles the ending of the *Iliad* up to the point of the death of Turnus in the final moments of the epic. Then, the Virgilian ending departs from the Homeric paradigm(s) because it displays an absence of any closing ritual.

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<sup>13</sup> See Johnson (1976), 126.

The *Iliad*, on the other hand, ends with the funeral of Hector displaying ritual after death. An elaborate treaty (ritual) is arranged between Aeneas and Latinus to regulate the duel between Aeneas and Turnus (*Aeneid* 12:176-211)<sup>14</sup>. This *foedus* between Aeneas and Latinus becomes broken at *Aeneid* 12:283-301).<sup>15</sup> In the *Aeneid* this ritual thus proves to be a false ending. Virgil follows the Homeric model but changes/ subverts the code. The killing of Turnus inverts the expected sequence of violence followed by ritual: Virgil's ending, unlike the Homeric ending, displays ritual followed by violence.

### 1.5 THE RESOLUTION OF THE *AENEID*

Many of the factors specified by Jupiter's prophecy do not come to fruition. Whilst many of the systems of meaning within the epic culminate in the final book, the concluding section does not make the reader feel that it has resolved satisfactorily by resolving, or 'closing', all the conflicts of the work.<sup>16</sup> As readers, we can only assume that, since by the death of Turnus, the conditions of the treaty, which had been entered on, are now fulfilled and Lavinia will be obtained in marriage by the Trojan prince, Aeneas will unite the Trojans and Latins into one nation, and he will found a city, Lavinium, and he will secure the

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<sup>14</sup> Aeneas's speech about Italy recalls Agamemnon's speech, where he invokes Zeus (*Iliad* 3:276; also *Iliad* 19:258ff.)

<sup>15</sup> This ritual truce in *Aeneid* 12 also echoes the truce before the duel between Paris and Menelaus over Helen in *Iliad* 3. Another counterpart to this treaty is found in the *Odyssey*, where a truce is administered, by a disguised Athena, to Odysseus and the families of suitors in order to prevent further killing.

<sup>16</sup> Mack (1978), 84, rightly shows that:

'It is entirely in keeping with the characters of these last books that the *Aeneid* just stops at Turnus' death – there is no conclusion, no drawing up of loose threads, no look, however brief, at what has been achieved, what is likely to follow. From Jupiter's prophecy in Book 1 we know what is to follow: '*contundet moresque viris et moenia ponet/ tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas*' (For his people he (Aeneas) shall establish laws and city walls till the third summer has seen him reigning in Latium and three winters have passed in camp since the Rutulians were laid low, 264-266).<sup>16</sup>

right of succession to the kingship following the death of Latinus, and thus *accepit sedem in Italia intulitque deos Latio*, as the poet had declared in Book 1:5-6, *genus unde Latinum/ Albanique patres atque altae moenia Romae* (whence came the Latin race, the Lords of Alba, and the lofty walls of Rome, 1:6-7). However, as Mack (1978) has shown, by making the future known *beyond* the incident with which the narrative closes, the text remains ‘open-ended’. The ending the narrative achieves is thus premature. From an historical, and human perspective, this results in a narrative that, whilst achieving ‘closure’, still remains ‘open’ to further continuation. Thus the death of Turnus, and the victory of Aeneas, that comes at the very end of the epic is not the end of the story.<sup>17</sup> The dual ending of the *Aeneid* displays the end of the narrative (the death of Turnus), but also anticipates a further ending- the foundation of Rome and the triumph of Augustus. At the end of the *Aeneid*, the resolution on the human plane successfully resolved the question of Aeneas’ settlement in Latium and the finally passing away of Troy, but the resolution between Jupiter and Juno on the supernatural plane remains only partial. Juno’s ongoing anger remains an unresolved issue.

#### 1.6 NOT THE END, BUT THE BEGINNING...

For Kühn (1971b, p.165) the *Aeneid* begins and ends with the cause of Juno’s wrath and ends with the appeasement of her anger.<sup>18</sup> Formicola (2005,

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<sup>17</sup> See Pollio (2006), 106, who argues that ‘Unlike Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid*’s sudden and powerful ending does not leave us with a clear image of reconciliation, but only with an invitation to speculate as to what happens next – an appropriate sentiment given the shifting social and political climate in the years after Actium’.

<sup>18</sup> Kühn (1971b), 165, (who claims that ‘Juno gives up on her anger – ‘only now is she to let go of this vainly begun furor’) suggests that 12 mirrors 1, when, a second promise, mirroring the first, is made to Juno. In this ‘inner’ promise Jupiter tells Juno she will be honoured above all others. Speaking of the final interaction between Jupiter and Juno in 12, Kühn claims that, ‘this conversation brings the appeasement of Juno and ends the subject of her anger which had first been raised in the *Aeneid*. At the same time, it creates an “inner connection” with the Jupiter-

p.151) who believes that Juno has now reached a state of 'inertia' in the *Aeneid*, claims that *mentem retorsit* 'marks the end of the affair for the integration of the goddess into the pre-ordained/ pre-established 'historical' field. The character has run out of the energy that kept her alive.' More recently, Weber (2017, p. 122-3) has intimated that a transferal of emotion takes place, from Juno to Aeneas, at the ending of the *Aeneid*<sup>19</sup> but, on the contrary, it can be argued that the *Aeneid* begins with, ends with, and continues (beyond the ending) with Juno's anger.

In the proem, Virgil alludes to Hera's implicit anger from the *Iliad*,<sup>1</sup> transforming Juno's anger into an explicit and integral part of the *Aeneid*. Juno's (Homeric) animosity, past and future, is explained at *Aeneid* 1:8-33 where Virgil illustrates Juno's ancient (and specifically Homeric) grievance, 'the cause of her wrath and her bitter sorrows': *necdum etiam causae irarum saevique dolores/ exciderant animo, manet alta mente repostum/ iudicium Paridis spreataeque iniuria formae/ et genus invisum et rapti Ganymedis honores* (that had not yet 'faded from her mind: deep in her heart remain the judgement of Paris and the outrage to her slighted beauty, her hatred of the race and the honours paid to

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Venus-Scene by ending the theme which was so intensely begun: the promise of the greatness of Rome. This argument, however, becomes flawed when an historical, rather than a literary, perspective comes into play. Kühn (1971b), 167, who falls into self-contradiction, admits that 'it is by no means easy to find a happy ending. With all the promises of a great future, the *Aeneid* itself does not reach to this splendour'.

<sup>19</sup> Weber (2017, p.122) has correctly noted, 'It is commonly recognised that the end of the *Aeneid* recalls the beginning thematically, in that the poem begins and ends with vengeful and deadly rage being provoked by the memory of past injury.' From these very factors, Weber deduces that a 'transference of emotion' takes place, from Juno to Aeneas, in the final scene of the *Aeneid*. Weber (2017, p.123) claims that:

'in the final episode, clear recalls of the beginning of the poem transfer to Aeneas Juno's persona as the avatar of deadly anger. Together with a final line that has previously related the killing of an Italian maiden, the intimation that Aeneas' rage has replaced Juno's necessarily leaves the impression that the poet's point of view is at least ambivalent, and quite possibly even pessimistic'

ravished Ganymede', *Aeneid* 1:25-28).<sup>1</sup> In the first instance, Virgil can be seen on capitalising on the Homeric intertext. Echoes of Hera's anger surface beneath the *Iliad*, but in the *Aeneid*, Virgil capitalises on Juno's anger, making explicit what was only implied in Homer (*Iliad* 24:25-30).

As this chapter has shown, in the last exchange between the gods, in the reconciliation scene, it can be deduced that Juno's anger has not at all subsided,<sup>20</sup> and more importantly, at the actual close of the *Aeneid*, it can be deduced that her anger still remains in full-force. Tarrant (2012, p.5), who also holds this point of view, claims that 'even as he (Jupiter) effects this reconciliation, he remarks on Juno's propensity to anger as a defining characteristic. The implication is that Juno's anger has been allayed, not permanently stilled'. Furthermore, as Seider (2013, p.175, Note 50) has rightly shown, 'Even if Juno somehow fosters concord in Italy (which, according to the *Aeneid's* depiction of the goddess is questionable) her request that the Trojans be forgotten and Jupiter's subsequent reaction to it, show that her rage has not at all subsided'. This suggests that Juno's wrath merely serves to impede Jupiter's decision. This factor has already been noted by Fowler (1997, p.260) 'Whenever Jupiter tries to bring things to an end, his wife frustrates him and creates *mora*, 'delay': whenever Juno and her allies introduce delay, in the end the story moves on.' Juno's role, therefore, is to propel the narrative in future time, as far as the next epic. In an earlier study, Fowler (1993, p.292) rightly argued that,

'Juno is forever starting things up again when they are about to come to a premature end, forever opening gates and wounds that should be closed. She is also mad in her attempted proliferation of narratives -

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<sup>20</sup> See Tarrant (2012), 5, and Seider (2013), 175, who also support this claim.



setting up counter-fates to what we all know is the only possible story - the master narrative that literally is in the mind of God.'<sup>21</sup>

Juno's function in the *Aeneid* is simply summarised by Morton Braund (1997, p. 211):

'She is the Carthaginian goddess Tanit, championing her city against the rival Romans, as portrayed by Ennius in his epic *Annales*. She is the Greek Hera of the Homeric poems, who hates the Trojans. She is the allegorical representation of aer, the lower air, the realm of storms. And her association with beginnings (as opposed to endings) links her with anarchy and lack of closure'

Furthermore, from a specifically structural perspective, Juno's (Homeric) wrath provides the impetus for the divine narrative throughout the plot, but her (Carthaginian) wrath perpetuates the epic cycle beyond the resolution of the *Aeneid*. At the close of Virgil's epic, we may ask, like the narrator himself: *tantaene animis caelistibus irae?* ('Can heavenly spirits cherish resentment so dire?' *Aeneid* 1:11). However, as Feeney's analysis has proved, without Juno's motivation, and relentless anger, the epic genre would, quite simply, just grind to a halt.

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<sup>21</sup> See also Hershkowitz (1998b), 106, who states: 'In contrast to Juno, the goddess of openings, Jupiter is the god of closure in the *Aeneid*. While Juno is constantly engaged in getting things started, Jupiter continually attempts to end things before they ever begin.'

## CHAPTER 2: OVID'S METAMORPHOSES

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Ovid offers the reader two alternative endings to the *Aeneid* – one ending (Book 14) resolves the *Aeneid*, whilst the other ending (Book 15) reaches (a political) stasis. The prophecy scene in the *Metamorphoses* appears in different guises, in both implicit and explicit contexts.<sup>22</sup> Ovid's first (explicit) use of the Virgilian prophecy scene as an intertext occurs in *Metamorphoses* Book 14 (581-608). In this particular scene, Ovid gives an example of pastiche, referred to by Genette (1982, p.85) as “an imitation in playful mode which primary function is pure entertainment”. In Book 14, Ovid parodies the Virgilian model, formulating a complete resolution to the *Aeneid*, essentially ‘closing down’ both the human and divine narrative structures. Ovid's second (explicit) use of the Virgilian prophecy scene as an intertext occurs in *Metamorphoses* Book 15 (816-831).<sup>23</sup> In Book 15, Ovid's Jupiter is the sole speaker and an absence of Juno suggests no future narrative. These episodes will be discussed in turn.

### 2.2 THE APOTHEOSIS OF AENEAS

Ovid's first (explicit) use of the Virgilian prophecy scene as an intertext occurs in *Metamorphoses* Book 14:581-608:

iamque deos omnes ipsamque Aeneia virtus  
lunonem veteres finire coegerat iras,

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<sup>22</sup> Ovid's first (implicit) use of the prophecy scene occurs in *Metamorphoses* Book 1(163- 252), whilst Ovid's second (implicit) use of the prophecy scene occurs in *Metamorphoses* Book 9 (243-58).

<sup>23</sup> An implicit use of the prophecy scene occurs in (1:163-252) and (9:243-58) (To be included at a later date)

cum, bene fundatis opibus crescentis Iuli,  
tempestivus erat caelo Cythereus heros.

Now had Aeneas's courageous soul moved all the gods and even Juno to lay aside their ancient anger, and, since the fortunes of the budding Iulus were well-established, the heroic son of Cytherea was ripe for heaven.

Although a specific response to Virgil's prophecy scene in *Aeneid* 1, this scene opens with an allusion to the final dialogue between Jupiter and Juno at *Aeneid* 12:794-5, where Jupiter tells Juno about the anticipated apotheosis of Aeneas: "*indigetem Aenean scis ipsa et scire fateris/ deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli*" (You yourself know, and admit that you know, that Aeneas, as Hero of the land, is claimed by heaven, and that the Fates exalt him to the stars).

The apotheosis of Aeneas is also anticipated at *Aeneid* 1:259-60. In the *Aeneid*, Venus is distraught when she approaches Jupiter: (Venus, saddened, and her bright eyes brimming with tears 1:228). Venus petitions Jupiter reminding him of his earlier promise – that Rome would be her compensation for the fall of Troy. In the *Iliad*, Hera was willing to trade the destruction of her favourite cities for that of Troy. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil extended the Homeric storyline: Jupiter will extract due payment of the promise that Hera gave in the *Iliad* and ensure that her request becomes fulfilled: the Romans will subdue her favoured cities (Argos, Sparta, and Mycenae) as they conquer Greece. Venus, on the other hand, bewails the destruction of Troy but wants the founding of Rome). Jupiter smiles at his daughter and kisses her and tells her, "*parce metu, Cytherea; manent immota tuorum fata tibi/ cernes urbem et promissa Lavini moenia/ sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli magnanimum Aenean/ neque me sententia vertit*" (Spare your fears, Lady of Cythera, your children's fates abide

unmoved. You will see Lavinium's city and its promised walls and great-souled Aeneas you will raise on high to the starry heavens. No thought has turned me) (*Aeneid* 1:257-60). \_ when Jupiter tells Venus that she will eventually translate her son to the skies: "*sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli magnanimum Aenean*" (and great-souled Aeneas you will raise on high to the starry heavens). Jupiter then proceeds to describe the remaining events in Aeneas's life on earth: "*bellum ingens geret Italia populosque feroces contundet moresque viris et moenia ponet/ tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas/ ternaque transierint Rutulis hiberna subactis*" 1:263-266, ((he) shall wage a great war in Italy, shall crush proud nations, and for his people shall set up laws and city walls till the third summer has seen him reigning in Latium and three winters have passed in camp since the Rutulians were laid low). Later in the same passage he tells her, "*quin aspera Iuno/ quae mare nunc terrasque metu caelumque fatigat/ consilia in melius referet/ mecumque fovebit Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam*" (Spiteful Juno, who now in her fear troubles sea and earth and sky, shall change to better counsels and with me cherish the Romans, lords of the world and the nation of the toga 1:279-282). At the close of the *Aeneid*, both of these issues remained unresolved. Ovid proceeds to resolve both the issue of the apotheosis of Aeneas and Juno's anger.

In the *Metamorphoses*, Venus approaches Jupiter with affection, "throwing her arms around her father's neck" and is treated in kind by Jupiter, Hardie (2015) 596 note 765-7. Following the Virgilian Venus, Ovid's Venus, whose sole concern with one aspect of the Virgilian prophecy to be fulfilled, asks Jupiter to grant her son Aeneas some divinity (apotheosis) on the grounds that he is Jupiter's grandson and of their lineage. Ovid's Venus evokes the

pathos of Virgilian Venus's oblique request in *Aeneid* 10: 46-9 that at least Ascanius-Iulus be spared:

si nulla est regio Teucris quam det tua coniunx dura,  
per eversae, genitor, fumantia Troiae  
excidia obtestor: liceat dimittere ab armis  
incolumem Ascanium, liceat superesse nepotem.  
Aeneas sane ignotis iactetur in undis  
et, quacumque viam dederit fortuna, sequatur  
hunc tegere et dirae valeam subducere pugnae.

If there is no country for your relentless consort to bestow upon the Teucrians, by the smoking ruins of desolate Troy I beseech you, Father, let me dismiss Ascanius unscathed from arms – let my grandson still live! Aeneas, for that matter, indeed, may well be tossed on unknown waters, and follow wherever fortune points out a path, let me avail to shield this child and withdraw him from the dreadful fray.

Ovid plays on the ease with which Venus can have her request, and informs the reader: tum pater “estis” ait “caelesti munere digni/ quaeque petis pro quoque petis: cape, nata, quod/ optas!” (Then father Jove declared: “You are both worthy of this heavenly boon, both thou who prayest and he for whom thou prayest. Have then, my daughter, what thou dost desire”).<sup>24</sup> As Fantham (2004, p.100) has correctly shown, ‘as with Jupiter’s “request” for Hercules, so now the gods give approval (592) and even Juno is reconciled.’ Ovid’s Jupiter

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<sup>24</sup> Translation by Frank Justus Miller (1916), p. 343.

fulfils Virgilian Venus's earlier request at the behest of all the god, "*adsensere dei, nec coniunx regia vultus inmotos tenuit placatoque adnuit ore*" (The gods all gave consent; nor did the queen-consort keep an unyielding face, but peacefully consented, *Metamorphoses* 14:592-3). Jupiter then bids Venus to translate Aeneas to the stars. The process of the apotheosis is beautifully summarised by Fantham (2004, p.100):

'Jupiter now confirms that her request is granted, and Venus flies in her dove-drawn chariot to the River Numicius, where she orders the river to cleanse Aeneas of all his mortal elements and carry him down to the sea. As with Hercules, his best part survives. His mother anoints him with ambrosia and makes him a god, hailed as "Indiges" by the people of Quirinus and assigned his own temples and altars.'

The final words in this Ovidian scene, "*indigitem*", link *Metamorphoses* 14:608 and resolve *Aeneid* 12:794-795: "*indigetem Aenean scis ipsa et scire fateris/ deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli*" (You yourself know, and admit that you know, that Aeneas, as Hero of the land, is claimed by heaven, and that the Fates exalt him to the stars).

The implacability of Juno is also dealt with when Ovid provides a resolution to Juno's anger once and for all, and, by doing so, this poet not only undermines the entire purpose of the *Aeneid*, an epic dependent on the wrath of the gods, but also prevents the means of epic regeneration. In this particular Ovidian passage, the gods find complete agreement.<sup>25</sup> However, just as in the *Aeneid*, there are arguments to suggest that this reconciliation is as incomplete in the *Metamorphoses* as it is Virgil's epic. Sara Myers' (1990, p155) excellent

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<sup>25</sup> Also compare (*Metamorphoses* 9:243-58), where this earlier episode showed that the animosity between Jupiter and Juno remained unresolved

commentary on *Metamorphoses* 14:581-608 discusses this reconciliation in greater depth:

‘In Virgil, Juno’s abandonment of her anger against Aeneas and the Trojans (*Aeneid* 1.4) is predicted by Jupiter at *Aeneid* 1:279-82 (*quin aspera Juno...mecumque fovebit/Romanos*), but falls outside the poem’s events. Juno’s reconciliation with Jupiter at *Aeneid* 12:806-42, after Jupiter’s second mention of Aeneas’ future apotheosis (793-6), has been seen as limited or qualified, considering her future role in the Punic Wars. Ennius placed her renunciation of hostility to Rome during the second Punic War (*Ann.*8.xv-xvi Sk. (= Serv. on. *Aen.*1:281). The goddess’ acceptance of Aeneas’ deification in Ovid may share a common Ennian model with Horace’s association of Juno’s conciliation with the death and deification of Romulus at *C.*3.3.30-6 *protinus et gravis/ iras et invisam nepotem...Marti redonabo...adscribi quietis/ ordinibus patiar deorum* (see *Enn. Ann.*53-5 Sk., Feeney 1984: 185-91, Nisbet and Rudd 2004:36). The Ennian *concilium deorum* is alluded to by Mars at 808-15 (see 805-17n.,812n.) and is relevant to the council before Hercules’ deification at 9.242-61. In Ovid’s poem, only one hundred lines later (778ff.), Juno is again Rome’s enemy; see Tissol 2002:329-30.’

Feeney (1991), 127, Note 145, has also shown that, later in the text, Juno is still operating against the Romans despite her supposed ‘reconciliation’.

<sup>1</sup> Feeney, remarks, ‘Note the way in which Ovid’s Juno turns up as antagonist of the Romans, helping the Sabines, even after her acquiescence in the apotheosis of Aeneas’. (*Met.*14:592-3, *Met.*14:781-2) (cf. *Fasti* 1:265-6).

## 2.3 THE APOTHEOSIS OF JULIUS CAESAR (15:803-42)

Ovid's second explicit use of the Virgilian prophecy scene as an inter-text occurs in *Metamorphoses* Book 15. The scene between Venus and Jupiter at *Metamorphoses* 15:803-42 is a reworking of the interview between Venus and Jupiter in *Aeneid* 1:223-296 and represents Ovid's version of the reconciliation, a rewriting/replacement of the final reconciliation scene between Jupiter and Juno in the *Aeneid* (12:793ff.). Ovid signals a departure from what Virgil does by displaying a significant absence of Juno from both his beginning (the prophecy) and from his finale (the reconciliation scene). The reconciliation scene at the end of the *Metamorphoses* (15:807-39) is a dialogue between Jupiter and Venus, but in two parts: Venus to Jupiter from 15:765-778, then an insert at 15:779-806, followed by Jupiter's reply to Venus at 15:807-842.

### Venus to Jupiter 15:765-778

Gladhill (2012) has shown that there is an increased use of prophetics at the end of the *Metamorphoses* where Ovid merges the prophetic programme of *Metamorphoses* with that of the *Aeneid*. Ovid draws a contrast between Julius Caesar in the *Metamorphoses* and the opening scene of the *Aeneid* in which Venus supplicates Jupiter on behalf of Aeneas. In the *Aeneid* Jupiter calms her fears by revealing the *fata* of Rome from the deification of Aeneas to the deification of Julius Caesar. In the *Metamorphoses*, on the other hand, at the moment of Caesar's assassination, Venus anxiously prays to the other gods, and not Jupiter alone, on behalf of Caesar (15:765-778):

“adspice,” dicebat, “quanta mihi mole parentur  
insidiae, quantaque caput cum fraude petatur,



quod de Dardanio solum mihi restat lulo.  
solane semper ero iustis exercita curis,  
quam modo Tydidæ Calydonia vulneret hasta,  
nunc male defensæ confundant moenia Troiæ,  
quæ videam natum longis erroribus actum  
iactarique freto sedesque intrare silentum  
bellaque cum Turno gerere, aut, si vera fatemur,  
cum Iunone magis? quid nunc antiqua recordor  
damna mei generis? timor hic meminisse priorum  
non sinit; en acui sceleratos cernitis enses.  
quos prohibete, precor, facinusque repellite neve  
caede sacerdotis flammæ exstinguite Vestæ!”

“Behold what a crushing weight of plots is prepared against me, and with what snares that life is sought which alone remains to me from Dardanian lulus. Shall I alone for ever be harassed by well-founded cares, since now the Calydonian spear of Diomedæ wounds me and now the failing walls of ill-defended Troy overwhelm me, since I see my son driven by long wanderings, tossed on the sea, entering the abodes of the silent shades and waging war with Turnus, or if we speak plain truth, with Juno rather? But why do I recall the ancient sufferings of my race? This present fear of mine does not permit me to remember former woes. Look! You see that impious daggers are being sharpened up. Ward them off, I pray, prevent this crime and let not Vesta’s fires be extinguished by her high-priest’s blood”

In Book 14, Ovid’s Venus, in her rhetorical ploy, hoped that Aeneas would get some kind of divinity, however small. This passage evokes Virgilian Venus’s oblique request that at least Ascanius/Iulius be spared (*Aeneid* 10:46-7). Hardie (2015, p. 595 note 760-842) locates a secondary, and ‘alternative’, model for the complaint of Venus to Jupiter at *Aeneid* 10:16-62. In this Ovidian scene, Venus’s speech functions as a direct response to Virgil’s ‘alternative’ model of the prophecy scene). Ovid’s utilisation of this alternative model changes the register and provides a new epic code. Throughout the *Aeneid*,

Virgil capitalises on Juno's historical grievance from the *Iliad* (24:25-30), (as illustrated in the introduction), but, in this particular episode, it is Venus's historical grievance from the *Iliad* that takes precedence (5:318-354). Venus's memory of the past transports the reader to the *Iliad*, when she recalls an ancient wound inflicted by Diomedes. In the *Aeneid*, Venus's wounds are anticipated, but not yet realised: 'Aeneas, unknowing is far away. Will you never suffer the siege to be raised? Once more a foe, a second army, threatens the walls of infant Troy; and once more against the Trojans there arises from Aetolian Arpi, a son of Tydeus. Truly, I think, my wounds are yet to come, and I, your offspring, delay a mortal spear'. By the time we reach the *Metamorphoses*, however, Venus's ancient grudge has become present and 'current time': 'now the Calydonian spear of Diomedes wounds me 15:769), ('now' also used x3 in this passage). This indicates that Ovid is referring specifically to 44B.C, the year of Julius Caesar's assassination. Ovid has used the Homeric and Virgilian text as a temporal leap in the narrative in order to reach his own times (*mea tempora*).<sup>26</sup>

Now, in Book 15, Ovid's Venus displays a hysterical concern for Julius Caesar, and hysterical insistence on Dardanian Julius as the only survivor of the family descended from Iulus: "Behold what a crushing weight of plots is prepared against me, and with what snares that life is sought which alone remains to me from Dardanian Iulus' (15:769). Rather than offering aid they send prodigies to Rome. Ovid then directs his readers to another Virgilian episode, the *signa* scene of *Georgics* 1:461-514, which describes the response of the natural world to Julius Caesar's assassination. The *Metamorphoses*

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<sup>26</sup> Hardie shows how Virgil applied this technique in the Shield of Aeneas in *Aeneid* 8.

includes an insertion at 15:779-806. In direct opposition to the Virgilian model, where Venus was 'freed from anxiety' (*tu...secura*, *Aeneid* 1:289-90), Ovid's Venus is now described as the anxious goddess, who cried these complaints throughout the sky, but all in vain (15:779-80). Hardie (2015) claims that most of the sources in prose focus on omens *before* the death of Caesar, but Ovid closely follows the Virgilian model with his list of portents of civil war, *following* the assassination.<sup>27</sup> For example, Ovid picks up the *Georgics* (1:463-468):

solem quis dicere falsum  
audeat? ille etiam extincto miseratus Caesare Romam,  
cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine textit  
impiaque aeternam timuerunt saecula noctem

'Who dare say the sun is false? He and no other warns us when dark uprisings threaten, when treachery and hidden wars are gathering strength. He and no other was moved to pity Rome on the day that Caesar died, when he veiled his radiant face in gloom and darkness, and a godless age faced everlasting night'.

In the *Metamorphoses* (15:783-90):

arma ferunt inter nigras crepitantia nubes  
terribilesque tubas auditaque cornua caelo  
praemonuisse nefas; solis quoque tristis imago  
lurida sollicitis praebebat lumina terris;  
saepe faces visae mediis ardere sub astris,  
saepe inter nimbos guttae cecidere cruentae;  
caerulus et vultum ferrugine Lucifer atra  
sparsus erat, sparsi lunares sanguine currus;

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<sup>27</sup> Hardie (2015), 599, suggests that, with this restructuring of history, Ovid is able to diminish the importance of the civil war (and also the role of Augustus as saviour). The apotheosis of Caesar ends the luctus (782) as the arrival of Aesculapius had concluded the luctus of the plague. Taken together, the omens are anticipations of sad events and expressions of sorrow of the gods, for example, the sun in mourning for the death of Caesar.

They say that the clashing of arms amid the dark storm-clouds and fear-inspiring trumpets and horns heard in the sky forewarned men of the crime; also the darkened face of the sun shone with lurid light upon the troubled lands. Often firebrands were seen to flash amidst the stars; often drops of blood fell down from the clouds; the morning-star was of dusky hue and his face was blotched with dark red spots and Luna's chariot was stained with blood.

In the *Georgics* (1:469-471):

tempore quamquam illo tellus quoque et aequora ponti,  
obscenaeque canes importunaeque volucres  
signa dabant

Yet in this hour Earth also and the plains of Ocean, ill-boding dogs and birds that spell mischief, sent signs which heralded disaster.

Whilst in the *Metamorphoses* (15:791):

tristia mille locis Stygius dedit omina bubo

In a thousand places the Stygian owl gave forth his mournful warnings.

In the *Georgics* (1:476-480):

vox quoque per lucos vulgo exaudita silentis  
ingens, et simulacra modis pallentia miris  
visa sub obscurum noctis, pecudesque locutae,  
infandum! sistunt amnes terraeque dehiscunt  
et maestum inlacrimat templis ebur aeraque sudant.

A voice boomed through the silent groves for all to hear, a deafening voice, and phantoms of unearthly pallor were seen in the falling darkness. Horror beyond words, beasts uttered human speech; rivers stood still, the earth gaped open. In the temples ivory images wept for grief, and beads of sweat covered bronze statues

Whilst in the *Metamorphoses* (15:792):

mille locis lacrimavit ebur, cantusque feruntur  
auditi sanctis et verba minantia lucis.

in a thousand places ivory statues dripped tears, and in the sacred groves wailing notes and threatening words were heard.

Jupiter then enters the narrative revealing that Caesar's assassination is necessary for his consequent apotheosis, Augustus' pacification of the Roman world and future deification. Ovid's deification of Caesar comes in two parts. The first section focuses on Caesar's metamorphosis into a *novum sidus*, and the second part magnifies Jupiter's reassurance to Venus. Ovid's first representation of Caesar's apotheosis reads as follows:

Caesar in urbe sua deus est. quem Marte togaque

praecipium non bella magis finita triumphis

resque domi gestae properataque gloria rerum

in sidus vertere novum stellamque comantem...(15:746-9)

Venus is then made to witness Caesar's assassination. In the next section, Jupiter's speech reveals the *fata Caesaris*. The most striking facet of the *fata* is not the historical chain of events linked to Caesar's assassination, but the *fata* themselves, who has access to them, where they are located, and what they are made of.

#### 2.4 THE RECONCILIATION SCENE (15:816-831) (JUPITER'S REPLY TO VENUS (15:807-842)

At 15:807-15, Jupiter begins by asking Venus: "Dost thou, by thy sole power, my daughter, think to move the changeless fates? Jupiter's words to Venus also echo the words of Zeus to Athene in the *Odyssey* (1: 78-79), when

Zeus tells her that Poseidon, 'all alone and against the will of the other immortal gods united (he) can accomplish nothing'. In his reply to Venus, Ovid's Jupiter does not console his daughter, as he had done in the *Aeneid*. Jupiter's speech begins with an admonition to Venus in her attempt to subvert fate, as Hera was warned by Zeus in *Iliad* 16:441-2 on the fate of Sarpedon's death. (This episode is imitated in *Aeneid* 10:464-73 where Jupiter warns Hercules that Pallas cannot escape his fate of death). This speech develops into a consolation speech based on the certainty of fate modelled on Jupiter's speech at *Aeneid* 1:257-96 (*manent immota tuorum*, 'your children's fates abide unmoved', 257-8), in a scene that, in turn, Venus had taken over from Naevius.

Talibus hanc genitor: 'sola insuperabile fatum,  
nata, movere paras? inter licet ipsa sororum  
tectata trium; cernes illic molimine vasto  
ex aere neque et solido rerum tabularia ferro,  
quae neque concussum caeli neque fulminis iram  
nec metuunt ullas tuta atque aeterna ruinas.  
invenies illic incisa adamante perenni  
.fata tui generis; legi ipse animoque notavi  
et referam, ne sis etiam num ignara futuri.

Ovid's Jupiter speaks to Venus from 'memory'. He 'remembers' having read (*legi ipse animoque notavi*, 15:814) about the fortunes of Venus's family, which are inscribed on eternal adamant and stored in the house of the Fates:

cernes illic molimine vasto  
ex aere et solido rerum tabularia ferro,  
quae neque concursus caeli neque fulminis iram  
nec metuunt ullas tuta atque aeterna ruinas;  
invenies illic incisa adamante perenni  
fata tui generis: legi ipse animoque notavi  
et referam, ne sis etiamnum ignara futuri.

Thou shalt there behold the records of all that happens on tablets of brass and solid iron, a massive structure, tablets which fear neither warfare in the heavens, nor the lightning's fearful power, nor any destructive shocks which may befall, being eternal and secure. There thou shalt find engraved on everlasting adamant thy descendant's fates. I have myself read these and marked them well in mind; and these will I relate, that thou mayst be no longer ignorant of that which is to come.

Jupiter tells her that Julius Caesar has met his death (15:816):

hic sua conplevit, pro quo, Cytherea, laboras,  
tempora, perfectis, quos terrae debuit, annis.  
ut deus accedat caelo templisque colatur,  
tu facies natusque suus, qui nominis heres  
inpositum feret unus onus caesique parentis  
nos in bella suos fortissimus ultor habebit.

This son of thine, goddess of Cythera, for whom thou grievest, has fulfilled his allotted time, and his years are finished which he owed to earth. That as a god he may enter heaven and have his place in temples on the earth, thou shalt accomplish, thou and his son. He as successor to the name shall bear alone the burden placed on him, and, as the most valiant avenger of his father's murder, he shall have us as ally for his wars.

Jupiter then reiterates to Venus the events preceding the establishment of the Roman Empire:

Under his command the conquered walls of leaguered Mutina shall sue for peace; Pharsalia shall feel his power; Emathian Philippi shall reek again with blood; and he of the great name shall be overcome on Sicilian waters. A Roman general's Egyptian mistress, who did not well to rely upon the union, shall fall before him, and in vain shall she have threatened that our Capitol shall bow to her Canopus. But why should I recall barbaric lands to you and nations lying on either ocean-shore? Nay, whatsoever habitable land the earth contains shall be his, and the sea shall come beneath his sway!

Hardie (2015, p. 606) has shown how lines 822-839 trace the career of Octavian/Augustus: 822-8 = victories in the civil war; 829-31= universal achievements; 832-7 = civil and succession in government, (where 832 specifically refers to the core ideology of the *pax Augusta*, that results in the end of the civil wars); 838-9 = death and apotheosis. Instead of the anticipated Golden Age of the *Aeneid*, Ovid's Jupiter predicts a very different future for Augustus and his descendants. Ovid relates the bloody conquests: the battle of Pharsalia in 48BC; the defeat of the Republicans at the Battle of Philippi by Augustus and Antony in 42BC; and the Battle of Actium in 31BC, culminating in the establishment of the Roman Empire under Augustus in 27BC. Jupiter's speech serves to illustrate the wars between 44B.C. (present time in this scene) – 29B.C. (the *Pax Augusta*). The timescale of this passage must therefore refer to the Post-Caesarian civil war (44-43 B.C.), (the Liberator's civil war which was started by the Second Triumvirate to avenge Julius Caesar's murder. The war was fought by the forces of Mark Antony and Octavian against the forces of Caesar's assassins, Marcus Junius Brutus and Gaius Cassius Longinus in (42 B.C.), the Sicilian revolt (44-36 BC), the Perusine War (41-40) and the Final



War of the Roman Republic (32-30 BC). Yet Caesar's (recent) apotheosis had inaugurated a savage resurgence of civil war.

### The Apotheosis of Augustus

Just as in *Aeneid* 1 where Jupiter passes over the death of Julius Caesar, Ovid's Jupiter moves directly from Augustus' long life to his apotheosis, omitting that pivotal moment between the two events. Just as in the *Aeneid*, the apotheosis of Augustus is anticipated, but not until the closing lines of the *Metamorphoses*, and when it is mentioned, it is by an external narrator. This issue, however, is not mentioned at all to Venus. At the close of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid specifically refers to Augustus (15: 868-870, 'far distant be that day and later than our own time when Augustus, abandoning the world he rules, shall mount to heaven and there, removed from our presence, listen to our prayers').

Meanwhile, at the close of the narrative, Jupiter bids Venus, to translate Julius Caesar's soul to the stars. (Ovid picks up Virgil's notoriously problematic line (1:286), and here Ovid includes what Virgil omits). Gladhill (2012, p. 10) shows that:

'while Ovid follows Augustus' fated apotheosis with the actual deification of Julius Caesar, the transition from Augustus' future deification to Caesar's actual apotheosis is inherently problematic. The problem is two-fold: the mode of deification established between the *Caesares* hinges on the name (*heres nominis*), and furthermore this new Caesar must bear the *onus* of being a *progenies*... An unsuccessful successor will bring the Iron Age world of Roman Civil War. Another *Iterum...Philippi* is not precluded if Augustus' example is not followed.'

## 2.5 THE RESOLUTION OF THE *METAMORPHOSES*

As Wheeler (1999, p.193) has correctly argued, 'Ovid ends the narrative of the *Metamorphoses* with the very speaker with which he began. Whose authority could be greater than Jupiter's? One disbelieves at one's own risk'. Following the structure of the Virgilian prophecy scene, in this epic, (in the event of Juno's absence), Jupiter will have the sole decision at the epic's ending, which implies that the historical/human narrative will remain static. The personified frenzy of civil war that was promised to have been kept in perpetual confinement in the *Aeneid* remains at large, and civic discord still remains potent and unresolved.

### THE REAL ENDING OF THE *METAMORPHOSES*<sup>28</sup>

Gladhill's study (2012, p.10) shows that Ovid channels divine prophecy and fate back to the prophetic voice of the Virgilian vates, but this is inheritantly problematic. He tells us that:

'Myths and narratives of succession should not end epics, but her at the end of the *Metamorphoses* Ovid emphatically sets the transition from Julius to Augustus within the myth of succession: *sic magnus cedit titulis Agamemnonis Atreus, Aegea sic Theseus, sic Pelea vicit Achilles...sic et Saturnus minor est Jove* (*Metamorphoses* 15:855-58). Is Augustus like the heroes or Jupiter? The difference matters. Agamemnon, Theseus and Achilles invoke the Orestes, Hippolyti, and Neoptolemi, the tragic successors of their tragic fathers. Jupiter is unique that he ends

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<sup>28</sup> (Ovid's Ending = Ovid's 'Heart of Darkness'= Virgil's *Georgics* 1:498-514)

succession myths completely on the divine level. It is precisely this reason why Ovid refers to *Georgics* 1:497 (*di patrii Indigetes et Romule Vestaque mater*) in which Virgil prays that the gods allow the *iuvenis* to succor his inverted age on the premise that the perjury of Laomedon has been repaid with Roman blood. Ovid's prayer both includes the *Georgics* as a subtext, but it focuses on Augustus at the threshold of divinity. Ovid calls upon the gods to delay Augustus' death and that, when it does arrive, he might favour those who are praying. (*tarda sit illa dies et nostro serior aevo,/ qua caput Augustum, quem temperat, orbe relicto/ accedat caelo faveatque precantibus absens*, 15:867-70). The final clause, *faveatque precantibus absens*, recalls *Metamorphoses* 15:758-9, which connect the favour of the gods to the presence of a *praeses rerum* (*quo praeside rerum/ humano generi, superi, favistis abunde*). Just as Caesar's *res* hinged upon his successor, so too do Augustus', but the poem and the *fata* leave the *nomen* of the *heres nominis* absent. Instead, the divine Augustus still inhabits the space of the *praeses rerum*, although his deification will leave an absence (*absens*) in Rome, which will necessitate a new *praeses rerum*. Ovid has filled this uncertainty with the hard reality that even when an emperor is *iustissimus* the Iron Age is lurking beneath his *leges* and *iura civilia*. The superlative does not lend an optimistic reading to the success of a successor that he become even more just than the prior *auctor*. Succession is suppressed, but its tensions and fears are fully tangible. Ovid's gesture to the *Georgics* emphasizes all the more just how precariously the matter hangs as the *iuvenis* in the *Georgics* is now *segnior* in the *Metamorphoses*.

Ovid's ending thus exposes, and makes explicit, the heart of darkness at the heart of the *Aeneid*, and this is achieved by Ovid's prayer which leads us back to *Georgics* 1:512ff., where, if you listen very carefully, you can still hear the sound of civic unrest: *ut cum carceribus sese effudere quadrigae/ addunt in spatia, et frustra retinacula tendens/fertur equis auriga neque audit currus habenas* (even as when the chariots stream forth and gather speed lap by lap, while the driver, tugging vainly at the reins, is carried along by his steeds, and the car heeds not the curb).

## CHAPTER 3: VALERIUS FLACCUS' ARGONAUTICA

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the reception of Virgil in an epic, the *Argonautica*, written by Valerius Flaccus. As Barnes (1995, p.273) has shown, 'Valerius response to Virgil must be described from his poem itself alone; there are no stories to determine expectations. His subject is defined correctly enough as Greek myth rather than Roman history; but if his primary source is Apollonius his primary model is Virgil, and he adumbrates a history that is not Apollonius but Virgil's, at least in one or two of its most important ideas.'<sup>29</sup> As Zissos (2008, pp.34-5) has shown, 'it is widely recognised that VF's principal artistic debts are to AR and Virgil, and that he grafts onto the narrative body of the former the poetic language and thematic concerns of the latter. Liberman (1997, p.11) likewise, maintains that it would be quite wrong to believe that the plan followed by Valerius is derived from the *Aeneid*. The organisation of the poem actually obeys the need to follow the historic plan provided by the Greek model, with the added desire to make variations.'<sup>30</sup> Zissos (2008, pp.34-5) maintains that, 'If AR is the primary model on the level of plot, Virgil supplies the principal inspiration on the level of language, structure, and thematic treatment'.

### 3.2 THE RESOLUTION OF VALERIUS FLACCUS' ARGONAUTICA

As Adamietz has correctly pointed out, the insight into the overall structure is made difficult by the absence of the conclusion (1976, p.107). The crucial issue at the end of the poem, with the cessation of the text at 8:467,

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<sup>29</sup> See further: Barnes (1981), 36-370.

<sup>30</sup> Liberman (1997), 11: comments: 'Il serait cependant tout à fait faux de croire que le plan suivi par Valerius est décalqué de celui de l'*Énéide*; en réalité l'organisation du poème obéit à la nécessité de suivre le plan de l'histoire fourni par le modèle grec, au désir d'y apporter variantes et variations'

leads firstly to the question of the (apparent) incompleteness of the poem, as well as the number of books intended by the poet. Scholarly opinion remains divided on the composition of VF's *Argonautica*: some scholars argue in favour of a composition of twelve books, whilst others, such as Schetter (1959, pp.297-308) favour an eight-book poem. Adamietz (1976, p.108) claims that widespread opinion suggests that VF intended to have twelve books, where the most important argument in its favour was the reference to the model of the *Aeneid* itself, whose books had served as a model for the *Argonautica*, as well as the *Thebaid* of Statius. But even Silius Italicus, in spite of his veneration for Vergil, did not adhere to the *Aeneid* in book number. Moreover, no reason for the theory of the 12 books had been obtained from the *Argonautica* itself. Finally, as Adamietz (1976, p.108) correctly pointed out, 'one must also ask what (else) Valerius would require (in order) to fill the remaining four and a half books.' The resolution of this epic thus remains a contentious issue. According to Zissos (2008, p.26):

'The most widely accepted explanation for the poem's incompleteness is that the poet died before finishing it. The rival theory, first proposed by Heinsius, that the poem was completed, but subsequently lost its ending when the manuscript of the archetype was damaged in transmission, has never enjoyed widespread support. Both Quintilian's obituary notice and the pattern of Statius' 'response' to *Arg.* seem to indicate an unfinished work. Internal evidence also suggests an unfinished work: the narrative is at times lacunose, inconsistent or disconnected in ways that do not seem to derive from the poet's elliptical or discontinuous style. Moreover, Thilo and many thereafter have pointed out that the incomplete eighth book is easily the least polished of the epic, suggesting that it was never finished or subjected to even cursory revision. Metrical and codicological evidence for incompleteness has also been adduced.'

Pellucci (2012, p.403) maintains that scholars seem to agree on the incompleteness of the poem, more likely due to the death of the poet, rather than on a loss of part of the poem, due to an accident in textual transmission.

Jachmann's theory maintains that the poem would end with the Argonaut's return to Pagasae,<sup>31</sup> yet, in the hypothesis formulated by Hershkowitz and Nesselrath, the poem would end with the killing of Absyrtus on the island of Peuce.<sup>32</sup> Earlier, Adamietz (1976, p.113) argued that, in comparison to the Greek model, there is nothing in Valerius to suggest that the lost text (or no longer extant text of the work) concentrated on the confrontation at the island of Peuce, and then the return was relatively rapid. Adamietz (1976, pp.107-113) maintains that, even when read against the Apollonian model, the Valerian text could not be improved by a further addition. Pellucci's hypothesis, (which reaches a state of impasse), leads to the conclusion of the last ten lines of the poem. Pellucci (2012, pp.402-3) claims that these final lines remain unsolvable, as they are in contradiction to with what comes before, and she questions whether this is due either to an ancient interpolation, or a double recension. It can be argued, however, that the final lines make perfect sense when considered in the light of the Virgilian model. This chapter attempts to show that this epic has reached its intended resolution, when read against the Virgilian intertext.

### 3.3 STRUCTURE IN VALERIUS FLACCUS' *ARGONAUTICA*

Valerius Flaccus follows the Virgilian model and therefore includes a prophecy given by Jupiter, but includes a substitute to a reconciliation scene, in the form of a discussion by the Argonauts. Jupiter's prophecy is clearly indebted to its celebrated Virgilian predecessor, and similarly reveals a providentially

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<sup>31</sup> See review by Castelletti (2013)

<sup>32</sup> Castelletti (2013) suggests that this reading would be supported by the Virgilian model (Aeneas' and Turnus' final duel) and several correspondences, (suggesting a ring-composition) between Valerius Book 1 and Book 8.

guaranteed historical plan that offers one possible framework for the ‘meaning’ of the poem.<sup>33</sup> Adopting a more fluid approach, VF differs from the Virgilian model in his utilisation of the divine narrative: Jupiter’s prophecy simultaneously governs the action on the human plane for two protagonists, Jason and Medea. Far more simplistic than the *Aeneid*: both Jason and Medea’s narratives are not only ordained, but already decided in this prophecy scene, indicating that a further ‘divine’ reconciliation will be unnecessary. Unlike the Virgilian model, this epic operates on a triple-dynamic narrative structure where the divine narrative simultaneously governs the action on the human plane for two protagonists. VF uses the Virgilian model of Jupiter’s prophecy in *Aeneid* 1 order to develop the storyline of Jason and to formulate a human resolution to the *Argonautica*. The storyline of Medea occupies books 5-8 as a further (inset) narrative, partly reliant on the Virgilian intertext, made up of separate episodes. This creates two separate, although mutually dependant, narrative structures, which are governed by a third (in other words – the divine narrative). Following the Virgilian model, this epic is similarly designed to reach an ending where one narrative structure reaches closure, whilst the other narrative structure remains open.

Valerius Flaccus’s epic is best defined in terms of a ‘primary’ and ‘subsidiary’ narrative structure. (By ‘primary’ narrative I mean the top levels of the story’s narrating as opposed to ‘subsidiary’ narratives that are reported within it). The ‘subsidiary’ narrative is no less important than the ‘primary’ narrative, and it remains connected to the ‘primary’ narrative, but performs a different function. In this epic, Jason’s storyline performs as the ‘primary’

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<sup>33</sup> See Zissos (2008), 34-35, Adamietz (1976), 22-3, and Spaltenstein’s commentary on 1:498-52.



narrative, whilst the storyline of Medea storyline is the 'subsidiary' narrative, (made up of further smaller prophecies), whose function is not only to show Medea's role within this epic, but also to anticipate events outside the poem's narrative limits.

### 3.4 THE PROPHECY SCENE (*ARGONAUTICA* 1:531-60)

Following the Virgilian model, Jupiter's prophecy is initiated by Sol, who exhibits the same concerns for his own people as Venus had shown in the *Aeneid*. Responding to Sol's complaints, Jupiter affirms the due unfolding of fate, and elaborates on his long-term agenda for the human race. Jupiter's prophecy sets out the scene: the quest, the veiled reference to Medea, and the foreshadowing of the Trojan War. Three important, interrelated themes are addressed by Jupiter: successful completion of the Argonauts' mission, establishment of a new competitive world order, and the winning of immortality through extraordinary accomplishment. The Argo's maiden voyage will initiate intercourse and rivalry between nations, an ongoing 'Darwinian' contest (558-60) resulting in the emergence of new world powers. In due course global supremacy will pass from Asia to Europe, a shift brought about through the Trojan War.<sup>34 35</sup>

Thus, in a speech that corresponds to the same god's disposition at *Aeneid* 1:257-96, Jupiter foretells a succession of world empires that the reader

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<sup>34</sup> Adamietz (1976), 23; and Zissos (2008), 314

<sup>35</sup> The idea of a succession of world empires was well known to ancient historiography, probably coming to the Greeks from Asiatic sources. Greek and Roman supremacy were added in due course. Jupiter amalgamates the initial Asiatic series of monarchies here;<sup>35</sup> Alfonsi (1970) suggests that in overlaying the Hesiodic schema of declining metallic ages (498-502) with the historiographical concept of a succession of empires, some aspects of the Golden Age are attributed to the initial period of Asian global dominance – e.g. it appears to be relatively free of warfare (539-41), though this results from military ascendancy rather than peaceful inclination as such.

presumes will culminate in Rome (1:542-60).<sup>36</sup> For Liberman (1997, p.10) ‘the linking by Valerius of the fate of Rome and the opening of the seas by the Argo ship must also be taken as part of the *Argonautica*’s relationship with the work of Virgil.’<sup>37</sup> Liberman (1997, p.11) claims that the *Aeneid* is a monument to the glory of Augustus and the Empire. The *Argonautica*, similarly, in tribute to the *Aeneid*, will also function as a monument to the glory of the Empire, thus it was Valerius’ desire to include his work in the tradition of the *Aeneid* and make reference to it.<sup>38</sup> For Liberman (1997, p.9), ‘the presence of the theme of the duration of Empire is not without signification: In book 1, Jupiter sets out, in the form of a prophecy *ante eventum*, his doctrine for the succession of empires: the third and final empire will be universal and know the longest duration.’<sup>39</sup> As the advent of universal empire is the culmination of history, especially, in this epic, of the history of the Argonauts, thanks to navigation and the opening of the seas, the meeting into a whole of separate parts of the inhabited world, the advent of this world has a common and universal history:<sup>40</sup> *ipse suo voluit commercia mundo/Jupiter* (1:246-7), (Jupiter himself has willed the fellowship of men throughout this world, and their union in such mighty tasks); *una omnes gaudent superi venturaque mundo/ tempora quaeque vias cernunt sibi crescere Parcae* (1:501-502), (With him all the gods rejoice, and the Fates mark how the

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<sup>36</sup> See Zissos (2008), 314.

<sup>37</sup> Liberman (1997), 10, comments: ‘Le lien établi par Valerius entre le destin de Rome et l’ouverture des mers par le navire Argo doit se comprendre aussi dans le cadre de son rapport avec l’oeuvre de Virgile.’

<sup>38</sup> Liberman (1997), 10, comments: ‘L’*Énéide* est un monument à la gloire conjointe d’Auguste et de l’Empire; de même les *Argonautiques*, en hommage à l’*Énéide*, seront à la gloire de l’Empire.’

<sup>39</sup> Liberman (1997), 9, comments: ‘La présence du thème de la durée de l’Empire n’est pas sans signification; au chant I Jupiter expose, sous la forme d’une prophétie *ante eventum*, sa doctrine de la succession des empires: le troisième et dernier empire sera universel et connaîtra la durée la plus longue.’

<sup>40</sup> Liberman (1997), 9, comments, ‘Or, autant l’avènement de l’empire universel est l’aboutissement de l’histoire, autant l’histoire des Argonautes marque, grâce à la navigation et à l’ouverture des mers, la réunion en un tout des parties séparées du monde habité, l’avènement de ce monde à une histoire commune et universelle’

coming age and the paths over the waters increase for their own gain).’, Liberman (1997, p.9). In other words, without the passage of the Argo, the universalism of the Roman Empire would not have been possible. Yet, (more circumspect in her approach than Liberman), Hershkowitz has rightly claimed that, ‘the foundation of the Roman empire, or even the establishment of Greek dominance, may not rest on Jason’s shoulders, but his ship and its successful voyage are unambiguously presented as an important and necessary link in a wider chain of events.’ Hershkowitz (1998a, p.240) has also pointed out that ‘although Jupiter’s words seem to point to Roman superiority, unlike his Virgilian counterpart, he neither specifies the Romans as the ultimate human rulers of the world nor guarantees that power will remain forever in their hands’. Barnes (1981, pp.360-370) suggests that ‘Jupiter says he will favour other nations after the Greeks, and uses a vague plural (555.f); the notion of Greek supremacy after Troy is obscure from any point of view, but that might be an allusion to the Carthaginians.’<sup>41</sup> Much debated, also, is whether this pronouncement implies transience or permanence for Roman dominion. At the very least, though, it must be granted that Valerius Flaccus’s Jupiter makes no explicit assertion of the eternity of Roman rule: *longissima...regna* (cf.2:245-6) constitutes something of an equivocation when set against *Aeneid* 1:279 *imperium sine fine dedi*, and makes available an alternative, Zissos (2008, p.321).<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> See Buchheit (1963a), 54ff.

<sup>42</sup> Zissos (2008), 36, makes reference to Barich (1982), 135-6, who observes, ‘Jupiter’s serene perspective and his insistence of the fixity of fate are both palpably ‘Virgilian’, and his allusion to eventual Roman supremacy (555-6) also recalls the model. Yet Lines 555-6 are problematic: Barich (1982) detects a reminiscence of Jupiter’s declaration at *Aeneid* 1:281-2. Zissos maintains, ‘As explicitly in the model at *Aeneid* 1:275-96, so obliquely here Jupiter touches on the rise of Rome to world dominion; Valerius Flaccus signals Roman geopolitical emergence more overtly at 2:572-3.

### 3.5 MEDEA 'S NARRATIVE

With respect to overall structure, it is generally agreed that the *Argonautica* is bipartite, with the two halves governed by different compositional principles. Schetter (1959, pp.297-308) maintains that VF organised his poem into halves along Virgilian lines, with a medial proem marking the second half early in book 5 (217-221), corresponding to *Aeneid* 7:37-40. More recently, Zissos (2008, p.30) similarly indicates that the bipartite structure follows the example of Apollonius Rhodius, who used the formal device of 'a proem in the middle' for demarcation (3:1-4), combining it with a book division and the closural motif of the completion of a journey. Like his Hellenistic predecessor, VF provides a medial proem immediately following the Argonauts arrival in Colchis and uses it to signal a thematic redirection via the 'introduction' of Medea, the crucial character in the second half of both epics. In this epic, the invocation to the Muse (5:217ff.) signals a marked division in the text, when martial epic becomes discarded in favour of themes that are both romantic and magical. Allusion to the *Aeneid* is sparse during the first half of the epic, but after the invocation to the Muse, the latter half of the *Argonautica* exhibits dense Virgilian resonances which continue right up to its closing lines. Zissos (2008, p.36) has correctly shown, 'in Valerius Flaccus' final books, the union of Jason and Medea will be narrated through dense allusion to Virgilian models of sexual and marital negativity, Aeneas and Dido in particular. On the intertextual level, Jason thus follows a trajectory that replays the tragedy of Dido not as an isolated misstep in an otherwise exemplary heroic career, but rather as a somewhat more comprehensive paradigm that adumbrates an irrevocably grim destiny.'

The following section will show how this is achieved. Valerius develops a mythological narrative (the storyline of Medea) by explicitly following the trajectory of the Virgilian intertext. In his development of Medea's storyline Valerius freely alludes to Virgilian reminiscences taken from different parts of the *Aeneid*. Combinatorial allusion throughout each episode tends to complicate matters. For the purpose of this enquiry, and due to the restrictions of time and space, it is necessary to disregard Homer and Apollonius and to concentrate on the Virgilian intertext alone. In many of the following episodes Valerius adopts, but then inverts, the ideas found in the *Aeneid*. In order to illustrate the Virgilian resonances in Valerius, it will be necessary to quote at length.

#### 1) AEETE'S DREAM

Virgil's story of Dido begins in the opening book of the *Aeneid*, yet the build-up of expectation for her appearance has been developed long before she enters the narrative (in Jupiter's instructions to Mercury; when Venus tells Aeneas of Dido's story; in the pictures painted on Juno's temple). When she finally makes an appearance, she is 'Diana-like' in her beauty, she is intent on the welfare of her people, she is kind and generous to Ilioneus, and she is filled with admiration for Aeneas). Her speech to Aeneas (at *Aeneid* 1:628) indicates the bond of sympathy which is likely to exist between herself and Aeneas. This is the happy start to a tragic tale. It is not until the close of book 1 that the first undertones of disaster begin to emerge when Venus and Cupid scheme to entrap her. Like Virgil, Valerius builds up an expectation for the appearance of Medea. In Valerius, the first mention of Medea occurs when the ghost of Phrixus appears to a (sleeping) Aeetes with a warning (5:231-240):

quondam etiam tacitae visus per tempora noctis  
effigie vasta, socerumque exterruit ingens

prodita vox: "o qui patria tellure fugatum  
quaerentemque domos his me considerare passus  
sedibus, oblata generum mox prole petisti,  
tunc tibi regnorum labes luctusque supersunt,  
rapta soporato fuerint cum vellera luco.  
praeterea infernae quae nunc sacrata Dianae  
fert castos Medea choros, quaecumque procorum  
pacta petat, maneat regnis ne virgo paternis."

Once too did he appear, a vast phantom, in the silent hours of the night,  
and a great voice spoke forth and struck terror into the father of his bride:  
"thou who didst suffer me, a fugitive from my native land in search of a  
home, to settle in these abodes, and soon offering thy daughter invited  
me to be thy son-in-law, dolour and ruin of thy realm shall abound for  
thee what time the fleece is stolen from the sleep-drugged grove.  
Moreover, Medea, who is now consecrated to Diana of the underworld  
and leads her holy dance – let her look for betrothal to any suitor, suffer  
her not to abide in her father's kingdom."

This passage implies a comparison between the heroine herself and  
Virgil's Lavinia. In the *Aeneid*, Faunus tells Latinus to allow his daughter to  
marry a stranger 'whose blood shall exalt our names to the stars':

"ne pete conubiis natam cociare Latinis,  
o mea progenies, thalamis neu crede paratis;  
externi venient generi, qui sanguine nostrum  
nomen sub pedibus, qua sol utrumque recurrens  
aspicit Oceanum, vertique regique videbunt."

"Seek not, my son, to ally your daughter in Latin wedlock, and put no  
faith in the bridal chamber that is ready at hand. Strangers shall come, to  
be your sons, whose blood shall exalt our name to the stars, and the  
children of whose race shall behold, where the circling sun looks on each  
ocean, the whole world roll obedient beneath their feet."

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil draws a comparison between Helen and Lavinia.  
The war in Italy was a repetition of the Trojan War and Virgil suggests, at  
*Aeneid* 6:93-4), that Lavinia will be a second Helen – (causa mali tanti coniunx  
iterum hospita teucris externique iterum thalami). In the *Aeneid*, Lavinia is  
portrayed as a figure who 'would herself be glorious in fame and fortune, yet to  
her people she boded a mighty war (*Aeneid* 7:79-80). In Phrixus' address to

Aeetes it is suggested that Medea, (like Virgil's Lavinia) should be allowed to accept a foreign suitor and to become an 'alien bride', or else she would ultimately become the cause of future Colchian woe. This episode thus carries the implication that the heroines, in their respective epics, boded ill-luck for their nations: (Helen for Troy), Lavinia for Latium, and Medea for Colchis. Valerius goes one step further than Virgil in his suggestion that Medea, as an 'alien bride' must also alienate herself and leave her father's kingdom of Colchis. This episode ultimately suggests that Medea, 'who is now a devotee of Diana', but is soon likened to something 'like a scene from a pageant of Proserpine' (at *Argonautica* 5:372), rather than exalting her nation's fame to the stars was, in fact, likely to have the adverse effect.

## 2) MEDEA'S DREAM

Having introduced Medea as a figure of ill-omen, Valerius continues with the same theme. A second dream episode is incorporated in which Medea, awakening from a nightmare, has been foretold her own ghastly future (5:329-340):

Forte deum variis per noctem territa monstribus  
senserat ut pulsas tandem Medea tenebras,  
rapta toris primi iubar ad placabile Phoebi  
ibat et horrendas lustrantia flumina noctes.  
namque soporatos tacitis in sedibus artus  
dum premit alta quies nullaeque in virgine curae,  
visa pavens castis Hecates excedere lucis;  
dumque pii petit ora patris, stetit arduus inter  
pontus et ingenti circum stupefacta profundo,  
fratre tamen conante sequi: mox stare paventes  
viderat intenta pueros nece seque trementum  
spargere caede manus et lumina rumpere fletu

It chanced that Medea, alarmed in the night by heavenly portents, had sprung from her couch so soon as she saw the shadows fled, and was going towards the sun's first heartening gleam and the river streams that purge night's horrors. For while in her silent bower deep quiet held her

slumbering limbs and no trouble was in her maiden heart, she seemed to her terror to be stepping forth from Hecate's holy grove, and when she sought her loving father's presence, the tall sea stood between them and she was aghast at the vast deep all around, yet her brother assayed to follow; then she had seen children stand terror-stricken at the threat of sudden death, and herself as they trembled stain her hands with their murder, while tears burst from her eyes.

Here, Valerius draws upon the Virgilian model where, in the opening lines of book 4 (6-11), Dido also awakens from a dream and addresses Anna (4:6-11):

Postera Phoebæa lustrabat lampade terras  
umentemque Aurora polo dimoverat umbram  
cum sic unanimam adloquitur male sana sororem:  
"Anna soror, quæ me suspensam insomnia terrent!  
quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes,  
quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!"

The morrow's dawn was lighting the earth with the lamp of Phoebus, and had scattered from the sky the dewy shades, when, much distraught, she thus speaks to her sister, sharer of her heart: "Anna, my sister, what dreams thrill me with fears? Who is this stranger guest who has entered our home? How noble his mien! How brave in heart and feats of arms"

In the *Aeneid*, this dream is used as a narratorial device which looks backwards in time to Dido's late husband Sychæus, who operates as a ghostly warning of her future. In the *Argonautica*, the dream is used as a narratorial device which prophesies Medea's future. This episode neglects to mention the marriage between Jason and Medea but, instead, anticipates events in Medea's far distant future (beyond the epic's ending), and after Jason's departure.

### 3) THE MEETING

Valerius alludes to the temple scene from *Aeneid* 1:453ff. in order to describe the lover's meeting. In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas awaits the arrival of Dido and, whilst doing so, admires the artefacts and works of art in Juno's temple,



viewing scenes depicting *past* events of the Trojan War. In the *Argonautica*, Jason and the Argonauts similarly await the arrival of Medea. Medea's story is related in a lengthy ecphrasis, occupying fifty seven lines, which depicts *future* events: the arrival of Jason and his comrades at Colchis, the absconding Medea and her grieving parents, and the marriage between Jason and Medea.

#### 4) THE TEMPLE SCENE

At Aeete's shrine, Jason bursts out of a cloud into the midst of a crowd

(5:465-6):

admonet hic socios nebulamque erumpit Iason  
siderea ora ferens; nova lux offusa Cytaeis.

Hereupon Jason gives the sign to his comrades, and bursts forth in starry presence from the cloud: the new light dazzles the Cytaeans.

Jason resembles Aeneas, on his entrance to the temple at Carthage

(1:586-593):

vix ea fatus erat, cum circumfusa repente  
scindit se nubes et in aethera purgat apertum  
restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit  
os umerosque deo similis; namque ipsa decoram  
caesariem nato genetrix lumenque iuventae  
purpureum et laetos oculis adflaret honores;  
quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo  
argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro.

Scarce had he said this, when the encircling cloud suddenly parts and clears into open heaven. Aeneas stood forth, gleaming in the clear light, godlike in face and shoulders; for his mother herself had shed upon her son the beauty of flowing locks, with youth's ruddy bloom, and on his eyes a joyous lustre; even as the beauty which the hand gives to ivory, or when silver or Parian marble is set in yellow gold.

#### 5) JASON = AENEAS = APOLLO, MEDEA = DIDO, BUT DOES NOT = DIANA.

Valerius describes the moments before the first meeting between Medea and Jason. He describes Medea's appearance, and her dismayed reaction at the arrival of the Minyae (5:343-355):

florea per verni qualis iuga duxit Hymetti  
aut Sicula sub rupe choros hinc gressibus haerens  
Pallados hinc carae Proserpina iuncta Dianae,  
altior ac nulla comitum certante, prius quam  
palluit et viso pulsus decor omnis Averno:  
talis et in vittis geminae cum lumine taedae  
Colchis erat, nondum miseros exosa parentes.  
ut procul extremi gelidis a fluminis undis  
prima viros tacito vidit procedere passu,  
substitit ac maesto nutricem adfata timore est:  
“quae manus haec, certo ceu me petat agmine mater,  
advenit haud armis, haud umquam cognita cultu?  
quaere fugam, precor, et tutos circumspice saltus.”

As Proserpine in Springtime led the dance over Hymettus' flowery ridges or beneath the cliffs of Sicily, on this side stepping close by Pallas, on that side hand in hand with her beloved Diana, taller than they and surpassing all her fellows, 'ere she grew pale at the sight of Avernus and all her beauty fled: so fair also was the Colchian in her sacred fillets by the twin torches' light, yet while yet she hated not her hapless parents. When first she saw, at a distance from the cool waters of the riverside, men proceeding with silent pace, she stopped, and called to her nurse in dismay and fear: "Mother, what band is this approaching, as though it made toward me with sure advance? Neither by armour nor by dress do I know them. Seek flight, I pray thee, look about for some glen to hide us "

This episode is clearly an inversion of the following passage from the *Aeneid* (1:494-504):

Haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda videntur,  
dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno,  
regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,  
incessit, magna iuvenum stipante caterva.  
qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi  
exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae  
hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades; illa pharetram  
fert umero gradiensque deas supereminet omnis;  
Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus:  
talis erat Dido, talem se laeta ferebat  
per medios, instans operi regnisque futuris.

While these wondrous sights are seen by Dardan Aeneas, while in amazement he hangs rapt in one fixed gaze, the queen, Dido, moved towards the temple, of surpassing beauty, with a vast company of youths thronging round her. Even as on Eurota's banks or along the heights of Cynthus, Diana guides her dancing bands, in whose train Oreads trip to right and left; she bears a quiver on her shoulder, and as she treads overtops all the goddesses; joys thrill Latona's silent breast – such was

Dido, so moved she joyously through their midst, pressing on the work of her rising kingdom.

## 6) THE HANDSOME HERO

Valerius then describes Jason and Medea's first reaction to one another

(5:363-375):

at Juno, pulchrum longissima quando  
robur cura ducis magnique edere labores,  
mole nova et roseae perfudit luce iuventae.  
iam Talaum iamque Ampyciden astroque comantes  
Tyndaridas ipse egregio supereminet ore;  
non secus, autumnno quam cum magis asperat ignes  
Sirius et saevo cum nox accenditur auro  
luciferas crinita faces, hebet Arcas et ingens  
Iuppiter; ast illum tantum non gliscere caelo  
vellet ager, vellent calidis iam roribus amnes.  
regina, attonito quamquam pavor ore silentem  
exanimet, mirata tamen paulumque reductis  
passibus in solo stupuit duce.

But Juno, since long anxiety and heavy toil had taken from the leader the beauty of his strength, shed over him new might and the sheen of roseate youth. And now in peerless aspect doth he out vie Talaus and Ampycides and the sons of Tyndareus with star-illuminated hair; just as when Sirius in Autumn sharpens yet more his fires, and his angry gold gleams in the shining tresses of the night, the Arcadian and great Jupiter grow dim; fain are the fields that he would not blaze so fiercely in heaven, fain too the already heated waters of the streams. The princess, though amaze holds her in speechless stupor, yet drawing back a space marvelling at the chief, and at him alone.

## 7) THE LOVER'S FIRST ADDRESS.

Jason's first speech to Medea recalls the first (of three) direct addresses

spoken by Aeneas to Dido (1:594-610):

tum sic reginam adloquitur cunctisque repente  
improvisus ait "coram, quem quaeritis, adsum,  
Troius Aeneas, Libycis ereptus ab undis.  
o sola infandos Troiae miserata labores,  
quae nos, reliquias Danaum, terraeque marisque  
omnibus exhaustos iam casibus, omnium egenos,  
urbe, domo socias, grates persolvere dignas  
non opis est nostrae, Dido, nec quidquid ubique est  
gentis Dardaniae, magnum quae sparsa per orbem.  
di tibi, si qua pios respectant numina, si quid

usquam iustitiae est, et mens sibi conscia recti  
praemia digna ferant. quae te tam laeta tulerunt  
saecula? qui tanti talem genuere parentes?  
in feta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbrae  
lustrabant convexa, polus dum sidera pascet,  
semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt,  
quae me cumque vocant terrae.”

Thus he addresses the queen, and, unforeseen by all, suddenly speaks:  
“I, whom you seek, am here before you, Aeneas of Troy, snatched from  
the Libyan waves. O you who alone have pitied Troy’s unutterable woes,  
you who grant us –the remnant left by the Greeks, now outworn by every  
mischance of land and sea, and destitute of all, a share in your city and  
home, to pay you fitting thanks, Dido, is not in our power, nor in theirs  
who anywhere survive of Trojan race, scattered over the wide world. May  
the gods, if any divine powers have regard for the good, if there is justice  
anywhere – may the gods and the consciousness of right bring you  
worthy rewards! What happy ages bore you? What glorious parents gave  
birth to so noble a child? While rivers run to ocean, while on the  
mountains shadows move over slopes, while heaven feeds the stars,  
ever shall your honour, your name, and your praises abide, whatever be  
the lands that summon me!”

Jason’s opening words to Medea surely parody its Virgilian counterpart

(5:375-390):

nec minus inter  
ille tot ignoti socias gregis haeret in una  
defixus sentitque ducem dominamque catervae.  
“si dea, si magni decus huc ades”, inquit, “Olympi  
has ego credo faces, haec virginis ora Dianae,  
teque renodatam pharetris ac pace fruentem  
ad sua Caucaseae producunt flumina Nymphae.  
sin domus in terris atque hinc tibi gentis origo,  
felix prole parens, olimque beatior ille,  
qui tulerit longis et te sibi iunxerit annis.  
sed fer opem, regina, viris. Nos hospita pubes  
advehimur, Graium proceres tua tecta petentes.

duc, precor, ad vestri quicumque est ora tyranni,  
ac tu prima doce fandi tempusque modumque.  
nam mihi sollicito deus ignaroque locorum  
te dedit; in te animos atque omnia nostra repono.”

He likewise is entranced by her alone of all the unknown company of  
maidens, conscious of her as queen and mistress of the band. “If thou art  
a goddess,” he says, “a glory of great Olympus come to earth, these are  
the torches, I ween, and this is the face of virgin Diana, and thy nymphs  
escort thee, at peace, and thy quiver string unloosed, to their Caucasian

streams. But if thy home is on earth and thy race hath here its origin, happy thy parents in their offspring, and happier one day he who will bear thee away and join thee to himself in long enduring union. But, O queen, give succour to heroes. Strangers are we, who have sailed hither, Grecian princes in search of thy house. Lead us, I pray, to the presence of your lord, who,er he be, and do thou first instruct us in the time and manner of address. For heaven hath sent thee to me, bewildered as I am and ignorant of this region: to thee I entrust our purpose and our all.”

## 8) ENTRANCE INTO THE CITY

Juno sends mist in order to conceal Jason on his entrance into the city

(5:399-401):

ille autem inceptum famula duce protinus urget  
aere saeptus iter, patitur nec regia cerni  
luno virum, prior Aeetae ne nuntius adsit

But he forthwith sets out in haste upon his road, with the handmaid as his guide, encompassed by a mist, for royal Juno suffers not the hero to be seen, lest before him a message should reach Aeetes.

This episode recalls the *Aeneid*, when Venus enshrouds Aeneas and the Trojans in mist on their entrance into Carthage (1:411-414):

at Venus obscuro gradientis aere saepsit  
et multo nebulae circum dea fudit amictu  
cernere ne quis eos neu quis contingere posset  
molirive moram aut veniendi poscere causas.

But Venus shrouded them as they went, with dusky air, and enveloped them, goddess as she was, in a thick mantle of cloud, that none might see or touch them, none delay or seek the cause of their coming.

## 9) DIVINE INTERVENTION

In the *Argonautica*, it takes the machinations of divine intervention (in the form of Juno, who conceived a further refinement to the plan she had in mind), in order to make Medea fall in love. Juno approaches Venus and asks for her help (6:460-476):

“in manibus spes nostra tuis omnisque potestas  
nunc” ait, “hoc en iam magis adnue vera fatenti.

durus ut Argolicis Tirynthius exulat oris,  
mens mihi non eadem Iovis atque adversa voluntas,  
nullus honor thalamis flammæve in nocte priores.  
da, precor, artificis blanda adspiramina formæ  
ornatusque tuos terra caeloque potentes.”  
sensit diva dolos iam pridem sponte requirens  
Colchida et invisum genus omne excindere Phœbi.  
tum vero optatis potitur; nec passa precari  
ulterius dedit acre decus fecundaque monstris  
cingula, non pietas quibus aut custodia famæ,  
non pudor, at contra levis et festina Cupido  
adfatusque mali dulcisque labantibus error  
et metus et demens alieni cura periculi.  
“omne” ait “imperium natorumque arma meorum  
cuncta dedi; quascumque libet nunc concute mentes.”

“In thy hands all my hope now lies,” she says, “and all my power; all the more than grant this boon, for it is truth I tell thee. Ever since the stern Tirynthian hath been an exile from Argolic shores, Jove hath not the same mind toward me, his will is contrary; no regard hath he for my chamber, no nightly passion as of yore. Grant me, I pray, the winning allurements of a cunningly wrought beauty, grant me thy own adornments that have power both on earth and in heaven.” The goddess perceived her craft, for long had she sought herself to destroy the Colchian land and all the hated race of Phœbus. Now at last she has what she desires: suffering no further prayer she gives her the dangerous ornament, the girdle fruitful in dire issues, that knows no piety nor care of good repute nor honour, but rather fickleness and hot desire, and inducement to ill and sin that allures the wavering, and fear, and the distracting terror of another’s peril. “All my power and all the armoury of my sons have I given thee,” she says, “now make havoc of what hearts thou wilt.”

This episode resembles the *Aeneid*, where it took the machinations of divine intervention for Dido to fall in love with Aeneas, this time in the form of Ascanius, sent by Venus (1:657-660):

At Cytherea novas artes, nova pectore versat  
consilia, ut faciem mutatus et ora Cupido  
pro dulci Ascanio veniat, donisque furentem  
incendat reginam atque ossibus implicet ignem

But the Cytherean resolves in her breast new wiles, new schemes: how Cupid, changed in face and form, may come in the stead of sweet Ascanius, and by his gifts kindle the queen to madness and send the flame into her very marrow.

Venus issues Cupid with the following command (1:683-688):

“tu faciem illius noctem non amplius unam  
falle dolo, et notos pueri puer indue vultus,  
ut, cum te gremio accipiet laetissima Dido  
regalis inter mensas laticemque Lyaeum  
cum dabit amplexus atque oscula dulcia figet  
occultum inspires ignem fallasque veneno.”

“For but a single night, feign by craft his form and, boy that you are, don the boy’s familiar face, so that when, in the fullness of her joy, amid the royal feast and the flowing wine, Dido takes you to her bosom, embraces you and imprints sweet kisses, you may breathe into her a hidden fire and beguile her with your poison.”

## 10) THE MAGICAL EFFECTS OF LOVE

Before long the magic has the desired effect, and Medea finally falls in love (7:1-14):

Te quoque Thessalico iam serus ab hospite vesper  
dividit et iam te tua gaudia, virgo, relinquunt,  
noxque ruit soli veniens non mitis amanti.  
ergo ubi cunctatis extremo in limine plantis  
contigit aegra toros et mens incensa tenebris,  
vertere tunc varios per longa insomnia questus  
nec pereat quo scire malo; tandemque fateri  
aus sibi causam medio sic fata dolore est:  
“nunc ego quo casu vel quo sic pervigil usque  
ipsa volens errore trahor? non haec mihi certe  
nox erat ante tuos, iuvenis fortissime, vultus.  
quos ego cur iterum demens iterumque recordor  
tam magno discreta mari? quid in hospite solo  
mens mihi?”

Now doth the late evening sunder thee, maiden, from the Thessalian stranger, and now do thy joys leave thee, while night comes on apace with balm for all save for the lover alone. So when, heart-sick, with feet that hesitated on the threshold’s verge, she gained her chamber and in the darkness her imaginings took fire, long time she lay unsleeping, brooding on various complaints and ignorant of what plague was vexing her; at last at the height of her distress she dares avow the cause, and thus speaks: “What mishap, what wileful deluding error holds me that so I lie ever sleepless? Not such for sure were my nights ere I had seen thy countenance, gallant youth. What madness makes me recall it again and yet again, though oceans lie between us? Why are my thoughts upon the stranger only?”

Valerius clearly resorts to the opening lines of *Aeneid* 4 for this episode (4:1-5):

At regina gravi iamdudum saucia cura  
vulnus alit venis et caeco carpitur igni.  
multa viri virtus animo multusque recursat  
gentis honos; haerent infixi pectore vultus  
verbaque, nec placidum membris dat cura quietem.

But the queen, long since smitten with a grievous love-pang, feeds the wound with her lifeblood, and is wasted with fire unseen. Oft to her mind rushes back the hero's valour, oft his glorious stock; his looks and words cling fast to her bosom, and longing withholds calm rest from her limbs.

## 11) WOMEN IN LOVE

In her lover's absence, Medea, in her frenzy, behaves like a distempered dog (7:121-126):

tum comitum visu fruitur miseranda suarum  
implerique nequit; subitoque parentibus haeret  
blandior et patriae circumfert oscula dextrae.  
sic adsueta toris et mensae dulcis erili,  
aegra nova iam peste canis rabieque futura,  
ante fugam totos lustrat queribunda penates.

Then doth she gaze, wretched girl, upon her handmaidens, nor can be sated with looking; and suddenly she clings to her parents in coaxing mood, and covers her father's hand with kisses. So doth a favourite lapdog that is wont to share its mistress' table and cushions, when already sick with a new plague and approaching madness, roam whimpering, ere it flee, over all the house.

Whilst unhappy Dido is inflamed, as she yearns for Aeneas (4:68-73):

uriter infelix Dido totaque vagatur  
urbe furens, qualis coniecta cerva sagitta  
quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit  
pastor agens telis liquitque volatile ferrum  
nescius; illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat  
Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo.

Unhappy Dido burns, and through the city wanders in frenzy – even as a hind, smitten by an arrow, which, all unwary, amid the Cretan woods, a shepherd hunting with darts has pierced from afar, leaving in her the



winged steel, unknowing: she in flight ranges the Dictaeon woods and glades, but fast to her side clings the deadly shaft.

## 12) THE CONTEMPLATION OF SUICIDE

In each epic, both heroines contemplate their own suicide. Medea's account follows (7:301-315):

saevus Echionia ceu Penthea Bacchus in aula  
deserit infectis per roscida cornua vittis,  
cum tenet ille deum, pudibundaque tegmina matris  
tympanaque et mollem subito miser accipit hastam:  
haud aliter deserta pavet perque omnia circum  
fert oculos tectisque negat procedere virgo.  
contra saevus amor, contra periturus Iason  
urget et auditae crescunt in pectore voces.  
heu quid agat? videt externo se prodere patrem  
dura viro, famam scelerum iamque ipsa suorum  
prospicit, et questu superos questuque fatigat  
Tartara; pulsat humum manibusque immurmurat uncis  
noctis eram Ditemque ciens, succurrere tandem  
morte velint ipsumque simul demittere leto,  
quem propter furit...

Even as angry Bacchus leaves Pentheus in Echion's hall, his fillets stained with moisture from his horns, while he, full of the god, suddenly seizes, poor fool, his mother's shameful raiment and timbrels and womanly spear: not otherwise fears the girl when she is left alone and casts her gaze around and is fain not to leave the palace. Yet, on the other hand, cruel passion and Jason's danger urge her on, and the words she has heard gain force within her breast. Alas, what is she to do? She knows full well she is heartlessly betraying her father to a stranger, and now she foresees the fame of her own crimes, and wearies heaven above and Tartarus beneath with her complaints; she beats upon the ground and murmuring into her clutching hands calls on the Queen of Night and Dis to bring her aid by granting death, and to send him, who is the cause of all her madness, down with her to destruction...

This can be compared with the following account by Dido (4:466-473):

in somnis ferus Aeneas, semperque relinqui  
sola sibi, semper longam incommitata videtur  
ire viam et Tyrios deserta quaerere terra,  
Euiadum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus  
et solem geminum et duplices se ostendere Thebas,  
aut Agamemnonius Poenis agitatus Orestes,  
armatum facibus matrem et serpentibus atris

cum fugit ultricesque sedent in limine Dirae.

In her sleep fierce Aeneas himself drives her in her frenzy; and ever she seems to be left lonely, ever wending, companionless, an endless way, and seeking her Tyrians in a land forlorn – even as raving Pentheus sees the Bacchants' bands, and a double- sun and two-fold Thebes rise to view; or as when Agmemnon's son, Orestes, hounded by the Furies, flees from his mother, who is armed with brands and black serpents, while at the threshold crouch avenging fiends.

### 13) THE MARRIAGE SCENE

In due course, Jason and Medea marry (8:232-251):

adfuit unanimis Venus, hortatorque Cupido  
zuscitat adfixam maestis Aeetida curis;  
ipsa suas illi croceo subtegmine vestes  
induit, ipsa suam duplicem Cytherea coronam  
donat et arsuras alia cum virgine gemmas.  
tum novus implevit vultus honor, ac sua flavis  
reddita cura comis, graditurque oblita malorum.  
sic ubi Mygdonios planctus sacer abluit Almo,  
laetaque iam Cybele festaeque per oppida taedae,  
quis modo tam saevos adytis fluxisse cruores  
cogitet? aut ipsi qui iam meminere ministri?  
inde, ubi sacrificas cum coniuge venit ad aras  
Aesonides, unaque adeunt pariterque precari  
incipiunt, ignem Pollux undamque iugalem  
praetulit, et dextrum pariter vertuntur in orbem.  
sed neque se pingues tum candida flamma per auras  
explicuit, nec tura videt concordia Mopsus,  
promissam nec stare fidem, breve tempus amorum.  
odit utrumque simul, simul et miseratur utrumque,  
et tibi iam nullos optavit, barbara, natos.

Venus smiled upon the lovers, and Cupid with his pleadings roused Aeete's daughter from the gloomy thoughts that vexed her; Cytherea clothes the girl with her own robe of saffron texture, and gives her own two-fold coronal and the jewels destined to burn upon another bride. Then did a new beauty inform her features, her yellow tresses received the tiring that was due to them, and she moved without a thought of ill. So when the holy Almo washes away Mydonian sorrows, and Cybele now is glad and festal torches gleam in the city streets, who would think that cruel wounds have lately gushed in the temples? Or who of the votaries themselves remember them? Then, when Jason came to the altar of sacrifice with his bride, and together they drew nigh and began to pray, Pollux offered fire and nuptial water, and both together turn rightward in a circle. But no bright flame then won its way upwards through the odorous air, nor does Mopsus see concord in the frankincense or lasting troth, but a brief term of love. Both of them doth

he hate, and both at the same time pity, nor any more desires he children for thee, barbarian maiden.

This episode recalls the consummation scene (a marriage that was not a marriage) between Aeneas and Dido, which occurred in the cave, after a dramatic storm sent by Juno (at *Aeneid* 4:460ff.). Yet another relationship that only had a brief term of love.

#### 14) THE DEPARTURE OF THE HERO AND THE ABANDONED HEROINE.

In the *Argonautica*, Medea faces an imminent abandonment and appeals to Jason. Her speech recalls the following speech made by Dido to Aeneas, who similarly faces abandonment at the close of *Aeneid* 4 (4:305-319):

“Dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide, tantum  
posse nefas tacitusque mea decedere terra?  
nec te noster amor nec te data dextera quondam  
nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido?  
quin etiam hiberno moliri sidere classem  
et mediis properas Aquilonibus ire per altum,  
crudelis? quid? si non arva aliena domosque  
ignotas peteres, et Troia antiqua maneret,  
Troia per undosum peteretur classibus aequor?  
mene fugis? Per ego has lacrimas dextramque tuam te  
(quando aliud mihi iam miserae nihil ipsa reliqui),  
per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos,  
si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quicquam  
dulce meum, miserere domus labentis et istam,  
oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.”

“False one! Did you really hope to cloak so foul a crime, and steal from my land in silence? Does neither our love restrain you, nor the pledge once given, nor the doom of a cruel death for Dido? Even in the winter season do you actually hasten to labour at your fleet, and to journey over the seas in the midst of gales, heartless one? What! If you were not in quest of alien lands and homes unknown, were ancient Troy still standing, would Troy be sought by your ships over stormy seas? Is it from me you are fleeing? By these tears and your right hand, I pray you, - since nothing else, alas, have I left myself – by the marriage that is ours, by the nuptial rights begun, if ever I deserved well of you, or if anything of mine has been sweet in your sight, pity a falling house, and yet if there be any room for prayers, put away, I pray, this purpose...”

Unlike Dido, Medea realises Jason must leave without her (8:419-424):

“vereor, fidissime coniunx,  
nil equidem; miserere tamen promissaque serva  
usque ad Thessalicos saltem conubia portus,  
inque tua me sperne domo. scis te mihi certe  
non socios iurasse tuos. hi reddere forsan  
fas habeant, tibi non eadem permissa potestas.”

“No fears have I, my faithful spouse, yet pity me, and let our plighted marriage endure at least to the harbours of Thessaly, and spurn me only in thine own house. Thou knowest at any rate that thou hast sworn to me, and not thy comrades. They perchance might justly give me up, but thou hast no such power.”

#### 15) THE FRENZIED, ABANDONED WOMAN.

When Jason appears about to depart from Colchis, Medea resembles Dido in her frenzied reaction to Aeneas' departure from Carthage. In both epics, the women suffer similar reactions, raving like Bacchantes, fleeing from the city to the mountains: in the *Argonautica*, this scene occurs after Medea has accosted Jason, but in the *Aeneid* this episode occurs before Dido's proclamation to Aeneas. This is Dido's reaction (4:300-304):

saevit inops animi totamque incensa per urbem  
Bacchatur, qualis commotis excita sacris  
Thyias, ubi audito stimulant trieterica Baccho  
orgia nocturnusque vocat clamore Cithaeron.

Helpless in mind she rages, and all aflame raves through the city, like some Thyiad startled by the shaken emblems, when she has heard the Bacchic cry: the biennial revels fire her and at night Cithaeron summons her with its din.

This is Medea's reaction (8:446-450):

qualem Ogygias cum tollit in arces  
Bacchus et Aoniis inlidit Thyada truncis,  
talis erat talemque iugis se virgo ferebat  
cuncta pavens; fugit infestos vibrantibus hastis

terrigenas, fugit ardentis exterrita tauros ...

Like a Thyiad when Bacchic frenzy drives her to the Ogygian hills and dashes her against Aonian trees, so was she then, so madly raged the maiden upon the thwarts, in fear of all that might befall: she flees the brandished spears of threatening giants, in terror she flees from fiery bulls

### 3.6 THE RECONCILIATION SCENE: *ARGONAUTICA* 8:385-399

Jupiter's prophecy scene operates as a ring-composition where *Argonautica* 1:546-554 corresponds with, and becomes resolved by, *Argonautica* 8:385-399. The reconciliation scene in this epic differs from the norm in the fact that it is not a discussion between the gods, but is, instead, a discussion between Jason's comrades. In this passage they muse not only upon the fate of Jason and Medea, but also their own personal future. But surely this passage is touched with a hint of irony? The Minyae upbraid Jason for his interest in his foreign woman, ('Or have they come that one only may indulge the joys of wedlock and stolen nuptials?'), completely forgetting their dalliances with the Lemnian women earlier in the epic, where it was Hercules who reminded them of their mission to secure the Golden Fleece:

At Minyae tanti reputantes ultima belli  
urgent et precibus cuncti fremituque fatigant  
Aesoniden. Quid se externa pro virgine clausos  
obiciat, quidve illa pati discrimina cogat?  
respiceret pluresque animas maioraque fata  
tot comitum, qui non furiis nec amore nefando  
per freta, sed sola sese virtute sequantur.  
an vero, ut thalamis raptisque indulgeat unus  
coniugis? id tempus enim! sat vellera Grais,  
et posse oblata componere virgine bellum.  
quemque suas sinat ire domos, nec Marta cruento  
Europam atque Asiam prima haec committat Erinys.  
namque datum hoc fati, trpidus supplexque canebat  
Mopsus, ut in seros irent magis ista nepotes,  
atque alius lueret tam dira incendia raptor.

But the Minyae, as they ponder the issue of so bitter a fight, all assail and weary the son of Aeson with protests and entreaties. Why does he expose them, entrapped thus, for a foreign woman's sake? Why compel them to court such perils? Let him regard the more numerous lives, the nobler destinies of so many comrades who are following him over the sea, not through promptings of frenzy or unhallowed desire, but through gallantry alone. Or have they come that one only may indulge the joys of wedlock and stolen nuptials? A fitting time, indeed! For the Greeks the fleece were enough, and to be able to end the war by giving up the maiden. Let him suffer each to seek his home, nor let this Fury first pit Europe against Asia in bloody war. For this is what the Fates decreed, as Mopsus sang in supplication and fear, that the quarrel should rather pass to their latest offspring and another ravisher expiate so dire a conflagration.

This passage picks up the veiled reference to Medea made by Jupiter in the prophecy scene. This clever allusion is both analeptic and proleptic in function – taking the reader back to *Aeneid* 2:573,<sup>43</sup> where Helen is portrayed as the personification of the force leading to destruction both for Greece and Troy (“*Troiae et patriae communis Erinys*”)<sup>44</sup>, but also forward to the future texts of the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*. By this Virgilian allusion, the Argonauts thereby infer that Medea anticipates Helen when they beg Jason not to allow ‘this Fury (Medea) to first pit Europe against Asia in bloody war’, they believe that ‘the quarrel should rather pass to their latest offspring and another ravisher (Paris) expiate so dire a conflagration’<sup>45</sup> Jupiter’s prophecy, however, had ordained that

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<sup>43</sup> These verses from the *Aeneid*, (2:567-588), are now pronounced spurious by the most recent critics. See further Goold (1970). These verses, not given in any ancient Ms or quoted by any ancient commentator, rest solely on the authority of Servius, who says that they were removed by Virgil’s editors. Lucan, in the *Bellum Civile*, also imitates this phrase at 10:59ff, with reference to Cleopatra- ‘*Latii feralis Erinys*’.

<sup>44</sup> This passage, however, as I have noted above (19), is considered spurious. Later, at *Aeneid* 2: 601ff, Venus unclogs Aeneas’ mortal vision to reveal the gods at their terrible work. She assures Aeneas that the Trojan War is not the result of mortal behaviour, but of the Gods.

<sup>45</sup> The above argument is supported by Davis (2014), 198, who expounds this further, giving a Homeric example of Medea’s connection with Helen, ‘But most telling of all is Medea’s prefiguring/re-enactment of Helen’s role in *Iliad* 3 when she views foreign troops from the city’s wall. While Helen is deceived by Iris, Hera’s agent, disguised as her sister-in-law Laodice, Medea is misled by Juno herself masquerading as her actual sister Chalciopie. In both cases the goddess’s goal is erotic, for Iris casts upon Helen ‘sweet desire’ for her former husband (3.139-

this role awaits Helen, not Medea. Jason thus *agrees to the decision of his comrades*, deciding to take the Golden Fleece, return to his homeland, and leave her behind (8:400-404):

Ille trahens gemitum tantis ac vocibus impar,  
quamquam iura deum et sacri sibi conscia pacti  
religio dulcisque movent primordia taedae,  
cunctatur Martemque cupit sociamque pericli  
cogitat . . .  
haud ultra sociis obsistere pergit.

He, groaning deeply and overborne by cries so importunate, though law divine and the binding sanctity of the holy vow and the first sweet beginnings of wedlock urge him on, yet tarries and would fain fight, and bethinks him of her who shares his peril...*no further does he resist his companions...*

### 3.7 THE FINAL SCENE: THE FAREWELL

In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas fails to comfort Dido and silently departs (4:393-396):

At pius Aeneas, quamquam lenire dolentem  
solando cupit et dictis avertere curas,  
multa gemens magnoque animum labefactus amore,  
iussa tamen divum exsequitur classemque revisit.

But loyal Aeneas, though longing to soothe and assuage her grief and by his words turn aside her sorrow, with many a sigh, his soul shaken by his mighty love, yet fulfils heaven's bidding and returns to the fleet.

Conversely, in the *Argonautica*, Jason *comforts* Medea, but then the text breaks off abruptly at 8:467, as Jason begins to answer Medea's reproaches.<sup>46</sup>

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40), while Juno aims to make Medea fall in love with Jason. And the sequel to each teichoscopy is similar, for *Iliad* 3 closes with Aphrodite persuading Helen to make love to Paris, while the next book of the *Argonautica* presents Venus as successfully inducing sexual passion in Medea. Thus the Valerian Medea foreshadows both of the female agents primarily responsible for the Trojan War: Thetis, mother of Achilles, and Helen, wife of both Paris and Menelaus.'

<sup>46</sup> Zissos (2008), 26, claims that: 'The most widely accepted explanation for the poem's incompleteness is that the poet died before finishing it. The rival theory, first proposed by Heinsius, that the poem was completed, but subsequently lost its ending when the manuscript of the archetype was damaged in transmission, has never enjoyed widespread support. Both Quintilian's obituary notice and the pattern of Statius' 'response' to *Arg.* seem to indicate an unfinished work. Internal evidence also suggests an unfinished work: the narrative is at times

As Zissos (2015, p.361) correctly observes, it is a tantalising moment for the narrative to leave off (8:463-467).

haeret, et hinc praesens pudor, hinc decreta suorum  
dura premunt. Utcumque tamen mulcere gementem  
temptat et ipse gemens et dictis temperat iras:  
“mene aliquid metuisse putas? Me talia velle?”

He hesitates; on one side urgent shame, on the other the stern counsels of his men sway him. Yet as best he may he tries to soothe her as she sobs, sobbing himself the while, and calms her anger by his words: “Thinkest thou that I had fear of aught? That such is my wish...”

Like Dido, her Virgilian counterpart, who was subject to the fate of Aeneas, Medea was similarly subject to the fate of Jason: At 7:446 Medea tells Jason *sed fatis sum victa tuis* (But I am overborne by thy destiny). The final line of the text, (as it is received), intertextually reflects the ending of *Aeneid* 4. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that Jason’s last words closely echo Virgil’s climatic unfinished line, when Aeneas tells Dido, “*Italiam non sponte sequor...*” (“It is not by my wish that I make for Italy...” *Aeneid* 4:361).

### 3.8 THE INTENTIONAL RESOLUTION OF VF’S ARGONAUTICA

This narrative is specifically designed to remain unresolved and it is a necessary requisite that the epic ends at this point. Valerius Flaccus uses the primary narrative of Jason and the Argonauts for the main narrative structure. At the beginning of the epic, Jupiter prophesied the successful acquisition of the Golden Fleece, a venture supported by Juno on this occasion.

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lacunose, inconsistent or disconnected in ways that do not seem to derive from the poet’s elliptical or discontinuous style. Moreover, Thilo and many thereafter have pointed out that the incomplete eighth book is easily the least polished of the epic, suggesting that it was never finished or subjected to even cursory revision. Metrical and codicological evidence for incompleteness has also been adduced.’



At the close of the epic, Jason returns home, having been swayed by the stern councils of his men and resisting his companions no longer (*haud ultra sociis obsistere pergit, Argonautica* 8:404).<sup>47</sup> The loss of Hercules from the Argonautic mission, (when he goes in search for Hylas and is consequently abandoned by the Argonauts), results in discord at the close of book 3. Book 4 opens with Jupiter accosting Juno regarding her treatment of her stepson (at *Argonautica* 4:1-14). Jupiter tells Juno, that sooner or later, she will see (her favourite), Jason, in trouble, afraid and beset by Scythian powers and will turn to him for help. (As a consequence of this, Jupiter bids Juno to do as she pleases with Medea). At the close of the epic Juno neither enlists the aid of Jupiter, nor does she attempt to frustrate Jason's mission. The many possible endings (frequently hinted at throughout the text) suggest an incomplete narrative for the Medean narrative, but a narrative specifically designed for continuation.<sup>48</sup> Unlike Jupiter in the *Aeneid*, Jupiter in the *Argonautica* is a more infallible narrator: what he predicts comes to pass. Unlike Juno in the *Aeneid*, where the goddess opposes the protagonist and his epic mission in the *Aeneid*, in the *Argonautica*, Juno supports Jason in his quest for the Golden Fleece. At the close of the epic, Jason's (human/historical) narrative has reached a successful 'closure', as ordained by Jupiter's prophecy. Medea's (human/historical) narrative, on the other hand, remains (quite deliberately)

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<sup>47</sup> Herschel Moore (1921), 160-161, shows that, 'Before the Argo was launched Jason was encouraged to hope for success by the appearance of an eagle which carried off a lamb in its talons (1:156-162) and many times the ultimate success of the expedition is foretold: Idmon, inspired by Apollo, encourages the heroes dismayed by Mopsus' dire foretellings (1:234-238). The departure is hastened by a vision in which the *tutela navis* appears to the sleeping Jason, promises to be with him, and bids him start; and the shade of Cretheus, Aeson's father, called up by Alcimede in her anxiety for her son, foretells a prosperous outcome for his bold undertaking, and forecasts his proud return.

<sup>48</sup> See the predictions by Mopsus (1:242-260) and Idmon (1:281-2), etc.

unresolved. There are many possible endings available for the Medean storyline.<sup>49</sup> As Hershkowitz (1998a, p.34) has rightly shown:

‘The presence of these multiple possibilities is what characterizes the epic’s openness, and this openness is complemented by the poem’s incompleteness, which signals the epic’s poetic potential: anything could happen next, anything might happen next. To affix an ending onto the incomplete *Argonautica* is to close off this potential, and it is this predicament which the text protests in its last words: *me talia velle?* Did I want the end to be like this?’

### 3.9 BEYOND THE ENDING OF VALERIUS FLACCUS’ *ARGONAUTICA*: THE CONTINUATION OF MEDEA’S STORYLINE

The Epic Medea, who resembles Dido, has played her part in this epic, but the tragic Medea remains an unknown quantity. As Davis (2014, p. 210) has correctly shown:

‘Valerius Flaccus confronts the problem of reconciling the Medea familiar from Epic (the princess who helps the foreign hero) with the Medea well-known from tragedy (the woman who kills her sons) more explicitly and in greater detail than Apollonius of Rhodes. In doing so, he creates a Medea radically different from his predecessors, a girl manipulated by divine forces and so destined to become a murderer with a pivotal role to play in human history.’

Valerius resolves this dichotomy by inventing subsidiary prophecies that supply proleptic information, thus creating the tragic future narrative of Medea beyond the epic ending. Medea, for example, even predicts her own grisly future (*Argonautica* 5:329-340). Mopsus predicts the future of the epic: the voyage of the Argo on the sea, the loss of Hylas to the nymph Dryope (3.560-564), the victory of Pollux when he kills Amycus (4.296-314), the fire-breathing bulls and the earthborn tamed by Medea’s noxious art (8:106-7), and finally,

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<sup>49</sup> See Slavitt (1999), who deals with different variations of the myth of Medea, and Lemprière’s *Bibliotheca Classica* (1792).

Jason's acquisition of the Golden Fleece (8:117-120), when Medea sends the serpent to sleep (1:211– 226). But, more importantly, Mopsus also (mysteriously) predicts Medea's (possible) future beyond the epic's ending: "*quaenam aligeris secat anguibus auras/ caede madens? quos ense ferit? miser eripe/ parvos/ Aesonide. cerno en thalamos ardere iugales.*" ("What woman is this, drenched with slaughter, that cleaves the air upon winged serpents? Whom doth she strike with the sword? Unhappy Jason, snatch the little ones away! Yonder I discern the bridal chambers all ablaze!" 1:223-226). An ecphrasis (5:410- 454) on the temple also illustrates the Argonautic story, Medea's narrative beyond the epic ending, and, once more, envisages her revenge on Glaucus. Later, on Jason and Medea's wedding day, (another wedding that was not a wedding), Mopsus, who sees no concord in the frankincense, similarly predicts that the couple will only enjoy, (or rather endure), "*breve tempus amorum*" ("a brief term of love", 8: 247-251).

### 3.10 THE ROLE OF HERCULES IN THE *ARGONAUTICA* AND THE (ON-GOING) VIRGILIAN RESOLUTION

If VF is following the Virgilian structure, as suggested, this evidence indicates that the poem, (as it is received), is 'complete', and has reached an intentional resolution.<sup>50</sup> Clearly recognising that harmony amongst the gods

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<sup>50</sup> Certain textual evidence could indicate that the poem, (as it is received), is 'complete', and has reached an intentional resolution. For example:

1) Idmon predicts that, "*quantum augur Apollo/ flammaque prima docet, praeduri plena laboris/ cerno equidem, patiens sed quae ratis omnia vince!*", ("as surely as the seer Apollo and that first tongue of flame teach me, so do I behold all our course full of toil and grievous to be borne; yet shall the ship with long suffering overcome all things", 1:234-236)

2) Jupiter rebukes Juno for her part in the loss of Hercules from the expedition. (Dryope) (4:13ff.). In 'Venus and the Furies', Jupiter foreshadows the love of Medea (the sinful maid) for

resulted in 'closure' of the historical/ human narrative, whilst disharmony between Jupiter and Juno resulted in a text which, (although having achieved a satisfactory 'closure'), remained 'open' to continuation on the historical/human plane, VF had to find another antagonist, and this is supplied in the figure of Hercules. This claim is also supported by Hershkowitz (1998a, p.160), who argues: 'While Juno is traditionally the main supporter of Jason, she is, of course, also traditionally the main antagonist of Hercules, splitting her purpose and, to a certain extent, her personality in the *Argonautica*.' Juno's harangue against Hercules begins at 1:113-19, (Where Juno wishes he was not aiding an enterprise which she favours, but if it had been a task imposed on Hercules alone, she says, she would soon have roused sky and sea against him), but her relentless hatred continues until after his apotheosis.<sup>51</sup> Smith (1937, p.256) claims that 'When the pile was burning, a cloud came down from heaven, and amid peals of thunder carried him to Olympus, where he was honoured with immortality, became reconciled to Hera, and married her daughter, Hebe.'

Juno's hostility had continued from the *Iliad* to the *Aeneid*, and from the *Aeneid* to the *Punica*. Juno is once again hostile in the *Argonautica*, but this time on different grounds. In the *Argonautica*, no compromise is required by Jupiter and Juno in the reconciliation scene because they both agree upon the success of Jason's epic mission, therefore an alternative way had to be found in order to bring all (3) narratives to a standstill. In order to follow the Virgilian

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Jason, and the murder of her brother, Absyrtus. Jason's subsequent (and intentional) desertion of Medea will result in Aeetes becoming avenged.

2) Phineus' lengthy prophecy (4:553-624) ends on a deliberately ambiguous note: "*iamque ultima nobis/ promere fata nefas: sileam, precor*" ("And now 'tis forbidden me to reveal the final destiny; suffer me, I pray, to be silent", 4:623-4).

<sup>51</sup> Zissos (2008), 29

structure, and to allow for epic continuation, Valerius has to break the code. Hercules becomes part of VF's reworking of the Virgilian model. Reference to Hercules occurs 26 times in this epic, and his role in the narrative cannot be underestimated.<sup>52</sup> In the first instance, VF measures analeptic time and proleptic time in relation to Hercules exploits. For example:

1) Pelias gauges the present peace of Greece in relation to Hercules earlier labours: 'But nowhere was there any sign of warfare nor of any monsters throughout the cities of Greece; long ago had Alcides covered his temples with the huge jaws of the Cleonaeon beast, long since had Arcadia been guarded from Lerna's serpent, and the horns of the two bulls broken... (1:33-36).

2) VF anticipates the initiation of the Trojan War, offering an alternative cause for the Trojan War via the myth of Hesione (2:451ff.). Hesione was the daughter of Laomedon, king of Troy, and was chained to a rock, in order to be devoured by a sea-monster, that he might thus appease the anger of Apollo and Poseidon. Hercules promised to save her, if Laomedon would give him the horses which he had received from Zeus as a compensation for Ganymedes. Hercules killed the monster, but Laomedon broke his promise. Hercules took Troy, killed Laomedon, and gave Hesione to Telamon, to whom she bore Teucer. Her brother Priam sent Antenor to claim her, and the refusal of the Greeks was one of the causes of the Trojan War.

3) VF anticipates later events, (ten years into the Trojan War), which lead to the Fall of Troy. This is achieved via Laomedon (2:451ff.). Laomedon considers slaying Hercules because he had heard that '*twice must Troy fall to the shafts of Hercules*' (2:570-1). This reference is to Philoctetes, son of Poeas,

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<sup>52</sup> References to Hercules: 1:33-37; 1:107-11; 1:252-3; 1:353-4; 1:374-6; 1:434-5; 1:634-5; 2:373-384; 2:451ff.; 2:570-1; 3:167-72; 3:485ff., 3:565ff.; 3:577-580; 3:662-3; 3:714-740; 4:5; 4:15-17; 4:25-37; 4:78; 5:43; 5:113-115; 5:130-1; 5:574; 6:462-4; 8:230-1.

who was the most celebrated archer in the Trojan War. He was the friend and armour-bearer of Hercules, who bequeathed to him his bow and the poisoned arrows. Philoctetes was one of the suitors of Helen, and thus took part in the Trojan War. On his voyage to Troy, while staying in the island of Chryse, he was bitten on the foot by a snake, or wounded by one of his arrows. The wound produced such an intolerable stench that the Greeks, on the advice of Ulysses, left Philoctetes on the solitary coast of Lemnos. He remained in this island till the tenth year of the Trojan War, when Ulysses and Diomedes came to fetch him to Troy, as *an oracle had declared that the city could not be taken without the arrows of Hercules*.<sup>53</sup> He accompanied these heroes to Troy, and on his arrival Aesculapius or his sons cured his wound. He slew Paris and many other Trojans.<sup>54</sup>

4) Finally, Jupiter delays the War of Troy until the *Iliad*, by sending Iris to Hercules to rescue Prometheus: "*i, Phrygas Alcides et Troiae differat arma./ nunc*" *ait "eripiat dirae Titana volucris."* ("Go," he says, "let Alcides put off the Phrygians and the War of Troy. Now let him rescue the Titan from that dreadful bird" 4:78-9).

### 3.11 CONCLUSION

As has been illustrated, VF replicates the Virgilian model, situating his epic as a precursor to the Homeric and Virgilian models. Valerius Flaccus adheres to the Virgilian structure by creating an epic ending, where one narrative is closed (Jason's story), and the other narrative remains open (Medea's story). Furthermore, recognising that divine discord leads to an

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<sup>53</sup> (my italics)

<sup>54</sup> Smith (1937), 388-9

ongoing narrative, Valerius Flaccus follows the Virgilian theme of disharmony amongst the gods by substituting Juno's mythological grievance (the Judgement of Paris) from the *Iliad/Aeneid* with an earlier grievance. Hercules becomes the alternative antagonist for Juno's ire, in order to perpetuate the narrative beyond the epic's ending. This is achieved by the many proleptic references to the Trojan War, and by VF's choice of Hercules as Juno's 'alternative' antagonist. Divine disharmony results in an ongoing narrative: utilising this 'Virgilian' structural device enables VF to 'close' Jason's narrative, so the Argonautic quest ends in an assured success, whilst Medea's narrative remains 'open' to a myriad of possibilities. Valerius Flaccus not only follows the Homeric/Virgilian theme of disharmony amongst the gods, but pre-empts it. It is not until the Judgement of Paris, that the two spurned goddesses, Hera (Juno) and Athena (Pallas), became the sworn enemies of Aphrodite's (Venus's) beloved Troy. The inclusion of a new protagonist allows for epic continuation: By breaking the code, Juno's (new) and unresolved grudge against Hercules, which continues way beyond the epic's ending, therefore suggests that Jupiter and Juno remain in partial disagreement, which thereby indicates that the human/historical narrative remains ongoing, (and will be further continued in the *Iliad*, and later, in the *Aeneid*).

## CHAPTER 4: SILIUS ITALICUS' *PUNICA*

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Unlike Valerius Flaccus, who locates his poem as a prequel to Homer and therefore as the predecessor of all other Flavian epics, Silius Italicus locates his epic as a sequel to Homer and Virgil.<sup>55</sup> In contrast to V.F.'s *Argonautica*, the theme of the *Punica* is historical rather than mythological. Even though the orientation of the two poems is significantly different in terms of mythological and historical subject matter, 'there is an important point of contact: the Flavian ideological code promoted in both poems with Vespasian and the *gens flavia* occupying a prominent role as the new family ruling Rome (according to Jupiter's *Weltenplan*, V.F. 1:555-60 – *Sil.Punica* 3:594-629)' Augoustakis (2014, p.342). This epic is a narrative account of what Livy had called Rome's most memorable war, the Second Punic War (218-201 BCE), beginning with Hannibal's attack on Saguntum, highlighting the heroic efforts and bitter struggles surrounding the Roman defeat at Cannae, as well as his retreat from the walls of Rome, and ending with Rome's glorious triumph at Zama. It is evident that Silius relied extensively on Livy for historical detail and on Ennius for his annalistic paradigm. It is equally clear that Silius is greatly indebted to Virgil. Not only is the *Punica* steeped in Virgilian parallels and allusions, but its central historical situation is presented as the inevitable outcome of the mythological events narrated in the *Aeneid* (4:622-29), where Dido's curse, called down upon Aeneas and his descendants, is presented as the root-cause of Hannibal's relentless pursuit of Rome, (whilst also recalling Hannibal's invasion of Italy in 218BC in *Aeneid* 10). Following, as well as

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<sup>55</sup> Augoustakis (2014), 342



continuing, the *Aeneid*, the storyline is positioned along a temporal continuum that extends backwards to the time of Aeneas and forwards to the time of the author and his audience, and beyond. Like the *Aeneid*, the *Punica* similarly begins with Juno's anger, and her anger continues beyond the narrative's limits. As Wilson (1996, p.220) has rightly noted, 'Juno has driven the action of the poem from her igniting of Hannibal's aggressive instincts near the beginning of book 1:55, until her reluctant withdrawal from the field of Zama just before the end of book 17:604',<sup>56</sup> when 'Juno returned ill-pleased to her home in heaven': (*superas Iuno sedes turbata revisit*).

Silius Italicus appears to be the most faithful adherent to the Virgilian model. In the *Punica*, the human narrative is developed in the same way as in the *Aeneid*: via an initial prophecy scene, given by Jupiter to Venus (3:557ff; 3:571ff.), which correlates with, and is resolved by, a final reconciliation scene between Jupiter and Juno (17:341ff.).<sup>57</sup> The prophecy scene makes a late appearance in the narrative and is delayed until the third book. As in the *Aeneid*, Venus petitions Jupiter on behalf of the Romans. Jupiter's reply, once again, functions as a prophecy of the Roman empire, in which he explains the future struggles, as well as the coming defeats, that the Romans will have to endure in order to achieve their aim (*Punica* 3:571-629).<sup>58</sup> This speech outlines the future of Aeneas's descendants. In the *Punica*, which continues the historical narrative of Roman and Carthaginian hostility, Silius Italicus explicitly responds to the Virgilian ending by creating an ending which reaches the same

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<sup>57</sup> This chapter will compare Silius Italicus' *Punica* 3:557-629 with *Aeneid* 1:223-296, *Punica* 17:341-384 with *Aeneid* 12:791-842, and *Punica* 17:618-654 with the ending of the *Aeneid*

<sup>58</sup> The prophecy given by Jupiter to Venus in the *Punica* has to be envisaged as a later speech than that uttered by Jupiter to the gods in V.F.'s *Argonautica*, and a later speech than that spoken by Jupiter to Venus in the *Aeneid*.

type of conclusion as the ending of the *Aeneid*: the human narrative remains unfinished, and the divine narrative achieves only a partial reconciliation.

Silius follows the ‘Virgilian’ structure (the inclusion of a prophecy scene which correlates with a reconciliation scene, resulting in an ending which achieves closure, but remains able to be historically continued). Silius adheres closely to the Virgilian model (*Aeneid* 1:227-296) for Venus’s speech to Jupiter (at *Punica* 3:559-569) and Jupiter’s subsequent reply (at *Punica* 3:571-629).<sup>59</sup> This conversation between Venus and Jupiter recalls the conversation with the same two gods in the first book of the *Aeneid* when Jupiter calms Venus, angry at the suffering of Aeneas (*Aeneid* 1:257-296). The Silian dialogue also recalls the Ovidian dialogue between the same two gods in the fifteenth book of the *Metamorphoses*, when Jupiter comforts Venus on the death of Julius Caesar, and subsequently promises her that her offspring will be raised to great heights, leaving a great legacy behind in the form of his descendants (Augustus).

With near unanimity, critics have read this dialogue as an “encomium” of the Flavians (especially 3:594-629), the second half of Jupiter’s reply.<sup>60</sup> Tipping

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<sup>59</sup> Although Penwell (2010), 223, takes an opposing stance, and argues that, ‘As is well-known, (and well-known to Silius and his readers also), in the *Aeneid* Jupiter’s prophecy is the first of three major ideological passages each of which represents Augustus as the end-point of the historical process (the other two, of course, are Anchises’ parade of future Romans and the shield in Book 8...We could say rather than encode a negative vision into his version of Jupiter’s prophecy in Book 3, its essential hollowness is exposed by its lack of follow up, the refusal to follow the Virgilian model and the Virgilian vision, after making sure that we get the fact that he has followed it to the letter in the prophecy, for Scipio’s visit to the underworld is pretty blatant. Virgil’s set of three – prophecy, underworld, shield - are all there. It’s not the case that Silius simply adopted the prophecy and left the others out, the fact that they are included and that Silius conspicuously passes up the opportunity to see the other two in the same way seems clearly designed to make a point. Penwell continues (228), ‘Silius, in his more methodical and circumspect way, creates the expectation of a Virgilian triad of ideological glimpses into a future already present, but by conspicuously failing to follow up his rewriting of the first casts serious doubts on his endorsement of it. Indeed, one might say, that by putting this prophecy in the mouth of Jupiter rather than speaking in *propria persona* as the other Flavian poets do, Silius displays an understanding of Virgil’s own way of distancing the poet from the ideological position advanced and the problematic nature of that position’.

<sup>60</sup> See Jacobs (2010) who argues that this passage is ambiguous, claims that, ‘until recently, only McGuire had (correctly) perceived the ambiguous nature of the passage (again, especially 3:594-629).

(2010, p.45) shows that 'Jupiter's extensive panegyric at *Punica* 3:593-629 of contemporary virtue in the persons of Vespasian and his sons obviously recalls that contained within the equivalent theodicy at *Aeneid* 1:257-96, where Virgil's Jupiter predicts the achievements of the Julian line.' Spaltenstein (1986, p.249, Note 3,594) claims that, from Silius' perspective, a panegyric to Domitian was justified because of the Virgilian model used for Augustus. In contrast to the *Aeneid*, the *Punica* creates no ancestral connection between its Roman heroes and the Flavian dynasty. Tipping (2010, p.45) shows that, 'It is Scipio Africanus Maior through whom Silius' theodicic Jupiter connects the heroes of the Second Punic War and Flavian Romans, who are characterized not as degenerates or reprobates, but as military conquerors and empire-builders on the model of Scipio himself.' As Bernstein (2008, p.158) has correctly shown, 'Scipio and other Roman heroes serve as ethical models rather than consanguineous ancestors of the Imperial house.'

#### 4.2 THE PROPHECY SCENE (*PUNICA* 3:557-569)

The conversation in the *Punica* is divided into three parts: first, the dialogue from Venus (3:557-569), then, in the first half of his reply, Jupiter speaks of the Second Punic War and of Rome's great heroes (Paullus, Fabius, Marcellus and Scipio) (3:570-593),<sup>61</sup> then finally, Jupiter speaks about the Flavians (Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian) (3:594-629). In the *Punica*, the dialogue between gods opens with a picture of a timorous Venus, whose 'heart was shaken with doubt and fear' (*Punica* 3:558), a far cry from the sad Virgilian Venus, whose 'bright eyes brimmed with tears' (*Aeneid* 1:228). In her

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<sup>61</sup> Spaltenstein (1986), 248 Note 3, on 586 suggests that 'Silius is inspired by Virgil's *Aeneid* 6:756ff. when Anchises enumerates for Aeneas the future great men of Rome.'

demeanour, Silius's Venus more closely resembles an Ovidian Venus, pale and anxious, although her grievances remain Homeric.<sup>62</sup> <sup>63</sup> Spaltenstein (1986, p.246, Note 3,557) suggests that the Venus to Jupiter speech in the *Punica* is a merging of two passages taken from the *Aeneid*: 'one thinks of Virgil's *Aeneid* 1:261ff. (Jupiter reveals to Venus the destiny of Aeneas) and again at 6:756ff. (Anchises reveals to Aeneas the destiny of Rome)'. According to Spaltenstein (1986, p.246, Note 3,557), 'Silius adapts these two passages to the idea that this war is a divine test, whilst integrating a compulsory praise of Domitian. Venus feared for the descendants of Aeneas as she feared for Aeneas himself at *Aeneid* 1:229ff, and again at 10:16 ff. of which passage Silius also draws inspiration.' If Spaltenstein's analysis is correct, this would indicate that Silius drew inspiration from the 'second', and 'implicit', model of Jupiter's prophecy scene found in the *Aeneid* when Venus speaks to Jupiter *ironically*: at *Aeneid* 10:25-38, where (the perpetually-suffering) Venus recalls the inflicted wound in *Iliad* 5:335-40, when she asks Jupiter: 'Will you never suffer the siege to be raised? Once more a foe, a second army, threatens the walls of infant Troy; and once more against the Trojans there rises from Aetolian Arpi a son of Tydeus (Diomedes). Truly, I think my wounds are yet to come.'

This same passage, which is already ironic in the *Aeneid*, becomes parodied by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* (15:768-774) when Venus asks Jupiter:

'Shall I alone for ever be harassed by well-founded cares, since now the Calydonian spear of Diomedes wounds me and now the falling walls of ill-defended Troy o'erwhelm me, since I see my son driven by long wanderings, tossed on the sea, entering the abodes of the silent shades and waging war with Turnus, or, if we speak plain truth, with Juno rather?'<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> *Metamorphoses* 15:764 and 15:779 respectively

<sup>63</sup> See Manuwald (2006)

<sup>64</sup> See Hardie (2015), 597, on *Metamorphoses* 15:768-76

At *Punica* 3:559, Venus asks Jupiter ‘shall Rome be taken and the doom of Troy be repeated once more?’ recalling *Aeneid* 10:59ff, where Venus asks Jupiter whether it would have been better to settle on the last embers of their country and on the site where Troy once stood. (But, once again, Venus is being ironic, and does not mean a word that she says. Her sole intention is to deliberately goad her father). Thus, in a combinatorial allusion, Silius combines the irony of the Virgilian Venus speech with the parodic intent of the Ovidian Venus speech, whilst the Silian Venus utters similar sentiments, but with serious intent.<sup>65</sup>

#### JUPITER’S REPLY TO VENUS (*Punica* 3:571-629)

At *Punica* 3.571-629, Jupiter reassures Venus that the Second Punic War accords with his plan for the Roman future (recalling *Aeneid* 1:257-96), (but neglects to mention the defeat of the Romans at Cannae).<sup>66</sup> At *Punica* 3:571-92, Silius describes the conflict as a test for Rome, a martial nation that he believes has grown soft, and maintains that such a trial will produce great men. Jupiter presents the Flavians as a *bellatrix gens* (3:596), a “warrior family”, which he compares with the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Yet the Flavians not only assure the continuity of the Julio-Claudians actions, they even surpass them: the Silian’ Jupiter promises Venus that a ‘warrior-race’ (*bellatrix gens*), (the Flavian Emperors), *sacris augebit nomen Iulis* (‘will increase the fame of the

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<sup>65</sup> Taking this allusion even further back still, the Venus to Jupiter speech obviously recalls Homer’s *Iliad* 1:495-527, where Thetis petitions Zeus on behalf of Achilles.

<sup>66</sup> Alongside Juno’s anger as a concurrent theme, runs the perpetual lament of Venus – the doom of the repetition of the Trojan War and her wound inflicted by Diomedes. See Homer’s *Iliad* 5:336, Virgil’s *Aeneid* 10:25-38, *Metamorphoses* 15:768-776, *Punica* 3:569. This theme is alluded to once again at *Punica* 7:484 when Proteus announces the Battle of Cannae. Spaltenstein’s commentary on line 7:484 reads as follows: ‘Sil. pense a Verg. *Aen.* 10,28 ‘atque iterum in Teucros Aetolis surgit ab Arpis/Tydides’, mais dans un idee artificielle: les Etoliens ne predront pas part a cette bataille;...’. Spaltenstein confuses the meaning of this particular line and it is not to be read in its literal state. Silius is surely speaking metapoetically. *Punica* 7:484 picks up on Venus’s fear from *Punica* 3:569 suggesting that, with the defeat of the Romans at Cannae, her well-founded fears were not unjustified after all.

deified Julii') (3:595-6), thus Flavian achievements will surpass even the expansiveness of Augustus, whose sacred name outdoes the superlative Maximus. According to Tipping (2010, p.118) 'Scipio's martial heroism is in harmony with the emulative virtues of the Flavii, a warrior-race, fated to surpass the Iulii and inclusive of Domitian, who is destined to outdo the military achievements of his father and his brother'.

The Silian Jupiter also informs us that 'heavenly excellence', *virtus caelestis*, embodied in the Flavian family, will ascend to the stars (3:594-5). Summarising Vespasian's main actions, Jupiter mentions his service on the Rhine in 42CE (3:599), the military operations led in Britain from 43-47 CE (3:597-599), his proconsulship of Africa in 62-63 CE (3:599) and the military campaigns led in Judaea from 66 CE (3:600). Then, Jupiter briefly mentions Titus's actions and presents him as the upholder of his father's policy, especially in Judaea (3:603-606). Despite his young age, Domitian is explicitly presented by Jupiter as transcending his father and his brother (3:607) Tipping (2010, p.615). Jupiter praises his involvement in the Batavian war in 70 CE and the title *Germanicus* recalls his victory over the Chatti in 83CE (3:607). This title itself also prompts comparison and association with Scipio, whose acceptance of the title *Africanus* began the trend for celebrating victorious commanders with the name of the conquered people. Spaltenstein (1986, p.250, Note 3,607) shows that Domitian received the name of Germanicus in 84 after a victory over the Chatti in 83. Martius and Statius allude to his triumph, as does Silius at 3:614. Following Virgil, Silius's Jupiter mentions also imaginary campaigns, claiming that Domitian will submit Bactra and the people from the Ganges. The

claim that Domitian would outdo Bacchus in military conquests (3:614-5)<sup>67</sup> clearly recalls Augustus's example (*Aeneid* 6:756-853). Domitian is thus considered as superior to the other Flavians because of his real or imaginary exploits as a military commander, but he even surpasses them because of his literary skills (3:618-621).

Finally, Jupiter prophesises and justifies Domitian's superiority over all previous emperors because of the special relationship which exists between the god himself and the emperor. Jupiter recalls that Domitian was saved from death during Vitellius's revolt because he took refuge in the Capitoline Temple (3:609-610). That particular moment was the start of a close and long partnership, *longa consortia* (3:611) between them, *nam te longa manent nostri consortia mundi* (for in the distant future thou shalt share with me the kingdom of the sky'), but, unlike the *Aeneid*, this is not a consanguineous association. The main event symbolising this association was the fourth restoration of the Capitoline Temple achieved by Domitian in 82CE. Jupiter announces this restoration in hyperbolic terms: the temple will be a "golden Capitol", with a supernatural height, recalling *Aeneid* 8:347. Jupiter ends his speech by promising divinity to Domitian in order that he may join his father and brother (3:625-629). Jupiter predicts that Quirinus, (who could be a deified Romulus or Augustus),<sup>68</sup> will leave his throne so that Domitian can take centre-stage in a "new Capitoline Triad".<sup>69</sup> Jupiter ends with an allusion to Domitian's offspring by

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<sup>67</sup> Spaltenstein (1986), 252, Note 3,614 states 'The triumph of Bacchus in the East is famous. (See Virgil *Aeneid* 6:804, Horace *Carm.* 3, 3, 3; Silius 15:79; 17:647). Bacchus has travelled all over the world, to which Silius refers to well here. He certainly gives directions to the North and to the East as well, instead of East and West, which would be more natural, but it is an insignificant modification. It is an allusion to the campaign against the Chatti.'

<sup>68</sup> Spaltenstein (1986), 253

<sup>69</sup> Penwill (2013), 48

claiming that the ruling emperor is a “maker of god” (3:625).<sup>70</sup> He also mentions his prematurely dead son, *natus* (3:629). Thus, with such an ending, Jupiter reaffirms that Domitian will have to perpetuate the Flavian dynasty.

#### 4.3 THE RECONCILIATION SCENE (*PUNICA* 17:341-384)

At *Punica* 17:341ff, the interview between Jupiter and Juno replays the interview between Jupiter and Juno at *Aeneid* 12:791-842, where the outcome of the war, and the epic itself, is played out between the gods. Spaltenstein (1990, p.467, Note 17,341) has shown that Silius takes inspiration for this scene from Virgil’s *Aeneid* 12:791ff where Juno learns from Jupiter that the Latins will retain Latium and *Aeneid* 10:606ff where Jupiter grants, on the prayers of Juno, a respite to Turnus. In his closing words, Virgil’s Jupiter chastises Juno, and tells her that ‘*ventum ad supremum est. terris agitare vel undis/ Troianos potuisti, infandum accendere bellum/ deformare domum et luctu miscere hymenaeos/ ulterius temptare veto.*’ (‘The end is reached’. To chase the Trojans over land or wave, to kindle monstrous war, to mar a happy home and blend bridals with woe, this power you have had; I forbid you to try any further). 12:803-6). In the *Aeneid*, Juno’s fight all along has been against the rebirth of Troy, yet now the conversation takes an unexpected turn. Juno asks Jupiter for one favour:

illud te, nulla fati quod lege tenetur,  
pro Latio obtestor, pro maiestate tuorum:  
cum iam conubiis pacem felicibus (esto)  
component, cum iam leges et foedera iungent,  
ne vetus indigenas nomen mutare Latinos

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<sup>70</sup> Spaltenstein (1986), 253, shows that this example of paronomasia *o nate deum divosque dature* (O son of gods and father of gods to be) recalls *Aeneid* 9:642 *dis genite et geniture deos* (‘you son of gods and sire of gods to be’) alludes to the apotheosis of the emperors. (In the *Aeneid*, the “gods to be” are the future Caesars, descended from Aeneas and Ascanius, who are of “the house of Assaracus.” There is a reference to the closing of the temple of Janus by Augustus in 29 B.C. at 9:642ff).



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.

This boon, banned by no laws of fate, I beg of you for Latium's sake, for your own kin's greatness: when anon with happy bridal rites –so be it! – they plight peace, when anon they join in laws and treaties, do not command the native Latins to change their ancient name, nor to become Trojans and be called Teucrians, nor to change their language and alter their attire: let Latium be, let Alban kings endure through ages, let be a Roman stock, strong in Italian valour: Troy is fallen and fallen let her be, together with her name.

Jupiter tells Juno: *do quod vis, et me victusque volensque remitto* ('I grant your wish and relent, willingly won over' *Aeneid* 12:833). Yet Jupiter's words also betray his oblique recognition of her other *unspoken* grievance – Carthage.<sup>71</sup> Throughout the *Aeneid*, Juno has had two motivations: one mythological (hostility to the Aeneadae, and Troy), the other historical (what will happen to Carthage at the hands of Aeneas and his descendants?). *Aeneid* 12 successfully resolves the question of Aeneas' settlement in Latium and the final passing away of Troy, but it does not resolve any more of Juno's grudges. Reconciliation on the divine plane is only partial – it reflects only so much as the Roman endeavour that has been accomplished so far. It leaves open what historically remains open.<sup>72</sup>

In the *Punica*, the reconciliation scene follows the same setting: in the *Aeneid* Jupiter addresses Juno, 'as from a golden cloud she gazes on the fray' (12:791), whilst in the *Punica*, the final scene shows Jupiter addressing Juno, who is watching the battle from a cloud in the distant sky (17:341-2). Spaltenstein (1990, p.468, Note 17,349) shows that Silius emphasizes the extent

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<sup>71</sup> Feeney (1991)

<sup>72</sup> Feeney (1991)

of Juno's efforts, as in Virgil's *Aeneid* 12:803, but where the Virgilian Jupiter solemnly marks that his patience is at its end, Silius, on the other hand, lends Jupiter the air of a debonair husband, who is sorry for his wife's sorrows, and one cannot exclude an amused intent. At *Aeneid* 12:803, Jupiter tells Juno: *ventum ad supremum est* ('The end is reached') whilst, at *Punica* 17:355-6, the Silian Jupiter replicates the Virgilian model, similarly informing his wife that: *tempus componere gentes/ ad finem ventum est; claudenda est ianua belli* ('The time has come to quiet the nations. We have reached the end and the gate of war must be shut').<sup>73</sup>

As in the *Aeneid* (12: 806-7), Juno's reply is humble (*Punica* 17:357).<sup>74</sup> Once again she acquiesces to Jupiter's request, and once again she bargains to win her point: *vertat terga Hannibal hosti, ut placet, et cineres Troiae Carthagine regnent*. ('Let Hannibal retreat before the foe, since such is your pleasure, and let the ashes of Troy reign at Carthage'). Following the Virgilian model, Juno plays upon her womanly wiles and her kinship with Jupiter: *quae donare potes (quoniam mihi gratia languet, et cecidit iam primus amor) nil fila sororum adversus posco* ('I ask only what you have power to grant – since my influence has waned and your first passion for me has cooled; I do not interfere with the spinning of the Three Sisters'). Juno's speech recalls *Aeneid* 10:613: *si mihi, quae quondam fuerat quamque esse decebat/ vis in amore foret/ non hoc mihi namque negares/ omnipotens, quin et pugnae subducere Turnum/ et Dauno possem incolumem servare parenti*. ('Had my love the force that it once had and still should have, this boon you surely would not deny me the power to withdraw Turnus from the fray and preserve him in safety for his father

<sup>73</sup> Spaltenstein (1990), 468, Note 17,357, shows that it is a replay of *Aeneid* 12:807ff.

<sup>74</sup> Spaltenstein (1990), 468, Note 17,357, has correctly shown that 'this solitary meditation is a picturesque touch. Verses 360ff. resume *Aeneid* 10:613, with Virgil, as in Silius, this traditional point is an allusion to the disturbed loves of the divine couple.'

Daunus'). Juno requests that Hannibal's life be spared: *tranare pericla magnanimum patiare ducem vitamque remittas neve sinas captum Ausonias perferre catenas. stent etiam contusa malis mea moenia, fracto nomine Sidonio, et nostro serventur honori* ("suffer the noble leader (Hannibal) to pass safe through danger, and spare his life; let him not be taken captive to carry Roman fetters, *Punica* 17:365-367).

But Juno's (earlier) hitherto *unspoken* grievance from the *Aeneid*, (Carthage), becomes glaringly explicit in the *Punica*, when she requests that, in order to preserve her honour, her beloved city may remain standing long after the Carthaginian name has perished (17:368-9). As in the *Aeneid*, Jupiter is able to offer only a partial fulfilment to her request, Jupiter tells her:

"do spatium muris, ut vis, Carthaginis altae:  
stent lacrimis precibusque tuis. Sed percipe, coniux,  
quatenas indulsisse vacet. Non longa supersunt  
fata urbi, venietque pari sub nomine ductor,  
qui nunc servatas evertat funditus arces.  
aetherias quoque, uti poscis, trahat Hannibal auras,  
ereptus pugnae. miscere hic sidera ponto  
et terras implere volet redeuntibus armis.  
novi feta viri bello praecordia. sed lex  
muneris haec esto nostri: Saturnia regna  
ne post haec videat, repetat neve amplius umquam  
Ausoniam. nunc instanti raptum avehe leto,  
ne, latis si miscebit fera proelia campis,  
Romulei nequeas iuvenis subducere dextrae"

"I grant to the walls of lofty Carthage the reprieve you seek. Let them stand, in answer to your tears and entreaties. But hear how far your husband is able to grant your requests. The days of Carthage are numbered, and another Scipio shall come, to raze to the ground the towers which for the present are safe. Further, let your prayer for Hannibal be granted: let him be rescued from the fray and continue to breathe the air of heaven. He will seek to throw the world into confusion and to fill the earth with renewed warfare. I know his heart, which can bring forth nothing but war. But I grant him life on one condition: he must never hereafter see the land of Saturn and never again return to Italy. Snatch him away at once from imminent death; or else, if he joins in fierce battle on the broad plains, you may be unable to rescue him from the right hand of the young Roman general."

Following the Virgilian model, Silius includes an ambiguous line. As Spaltenstein (1990) notes, in a deliberately mysterious expression, Jupiter tells Juno that another leader (*ductor* 17:374, i.e. Scipio) shall come to raze to the ground the towers which for the present are safe (17:373-375). Jupiter grants her request regarding Hannibal: *aetherias quoque, uti poscis, trahat Hannibal auras/ ereptus pugnae* ('further, let your prayer for Hannibal be granted: let him be rescued from the fray and continue to breathe the air of heaven' 17:376-7). This request for Hannibal's life has one condition, he must become an exile from Italy: *sed lex/ muneris haec esto nostri: Saturnia regna/ ne post haec videat, repetat neve amplius umquam/ Ausoniam*. ('But I grant him life on one condition: he must never hereafter see the land of Saturn, and never again return to Italy', 17:380-2). This also intratextually recalls the prediction of the priestess at 13:874-5, who reassures Scipio that Hannibal will not be buried in his native land:

“ne metue,” exclamat vates. “non vita sequetur  
inviolata virum: patria non ossa quiescent”

“Fear not,” cried the priestess: “no life of untroubled prosperity shall be his; His bones shall not rest in his native land”.

Jupiter's parting words at *Punica* 17:382-4, also recall the final confrontation between Aeneas and Turnus, when Jupiter tells Juno to withdraw Turnus from the fray (*Aeneid* 10:622-4):

“si mora praesentis leti tempusque caduco  
oratur iuveni meque hoc ita ponere sentis,  
tolle fuga Turnum atque instantibus eripe fati”

“If your prayer is for a respite from present death, and a reprieve for the doomed youth – if you understand that such is my will, take Turnus away in flight, and snatch him from impending fate.”

What constitutes the first in a series of delays to an ending in the *Aeneid* becomes the means for a rapidly achieved ending in the *Punica*. In the *Aeneid*,

having told Juno to remove Turnus from the fray, Jupiter warns Juno: *sin altior istis/ sub precibus venia ulla latet totumque moveri/ mutarive putas bellum, spes pascis inanis* ('But if thought of deeper favour lurks beneath your prayers, and you think that the war's whole course may be moved or altered, you are nursing an idle hope', 10:625-7). Having received this admonishment, Juno devises the first delay for Turnus: *tum dea nube cava tenuem sine viribus umbram/ in faciem Aeneae (visu mirabile monstrum)/ Dardaniis ornat telis, clipeumque iubasque/ divini adsimulat capitis, dat inania verba/ dat sine mente sonum gressusque effingit euntis/ morte obita qualis fama est volitare figuras/ aut quae sopitos deludunt somnia sensus* ('Then the goddess from hollow mist fashions a thin, strengthless phantom in the likeness of Aeneas, (a monstrous marvel to behold), decks it with Dardan weapons, and counterfeits the shield and plumes on his godlike head, gives it unreal words, gives a voice without thought, and mimics his gait as he moves: like shapes that flit, it is said, after death or like dreams that mock the slumbering senses', *Aeneid* 10:636-642).<sup>75</sup>

In the Virgilian model, the phantom is given unreal words and a voice without thought, but at *Punica* (17:524-533), Silius replicates the bodiless phantom, but also includes a phantom steed. This is noted by Spaltenstein (1990, Note 17, 524-31) has correctly shown 'as is his habit, Silius develops his model by redundancy and multiplication here by adding this equally fictitious horse'.

effigiem informat Latiam propereque coruscis  
attollit cristis; addit clipeumque iubasque  
Romulei ducis atque umeris imponit honorem  
fulgentis saguli; dat gressum habitusque cientis  
proelia et audaces adicit sine corpore motus.  
tum par effigies fallacis imagine vana  
cornipedis moderanda cito per devia passu

<sup>75</sup> For a sketch of this motif see also *Iliad* 5:449, when Apollo rouses a ghost of Aeneas

belligerae datur ad speciem certaminis umbrae.  
sic Poeni ducis ante oculos exultat et ultro  
Scipio lunoni simmulatus tela coruscat.

Therefore she made haste to fashion a shape in the likeness of Scipio, and adorned its high head with a glittering plume; she gave it also Scipio's shield and helmet, and placed on its shoulders the general's scarlet mantle; she gave it Scipio's gait and his attitude in battle, and made the bodiless phantom step out boldly. Next she made a phantom steed, as unsubstantial as his rider, for the phantom warrior to ride at speed over the rough ground to a mock combat. Thus the Scipio whom Juno had fashioned sprang forth before the face of Hannibal and boldly brandished his weapons.

The disappearance of the phantom at *Punica* 17:547:

tum fallax subito simulacrum in nubila cessit.

Then the delusive phantom vanished suddenly into the clouds.

echoes *Aeneid* 10:663-4:

tum levis haud ultra latebras iam quaerit imago  
sed sublime volans nubi se immiscuit atrae.

Then the airy phantom seeks shelter no longer, but soaring aloft blends with a dark cloud.

At 17:578-80 Juno, unbeknown to Hannibal, saves his life against his will, and Hannibal departs the battlefield:

praecipitem et vasto superantem proxima saltu  
circumagit Juno ac, fallens regione viarum,  
non gratam invito servat celata salutem.

Starting forward, he moved with great bounds over the surrounding plain; but Juno in disguise led him by a circuitous way, and, misdirecting him, earned no gratitude by saving his life against his will.

17:581ff. sees the entrance of Scipio:

Interea Cadmea manus, deserta pavensque,  
non ullum Hannibalem, nusquam certamina cernit  
saevi nota ducis. pars ferro occumbere credunt,  
pars damnasse aciem et divis cessisse sinistris.  
ingruit Ausonius versosque agit aequore toto  
rector. iamque ipsae trepidant Carthaginis arces:  
impletur terrore vago cuncta Africa pulsus  
agminibus, volucrique fuga sine Marte ruentes  
tendunt attonitos extrema ad litora cursus.

Meanwhile the Carthaginian army, deserted and affrighted, could see no sign of Hannibal nor of his famous achievements in the field. Some thought he had

been slain by the sword; others, that he had abandoned the battle in despair, unable to cope with the ill-will of the gods. On came Scipio and drove them in flight all over the plain; and now even the towers of Carthage trembled. When her armies were routed, all Africa was filled with terror and confusion: flying, not fighting, panic-stricken men rushed with utmost speed to the most distant shores.

At 17:606-618, Hannibal's inner soliloquy:

“caelum licet omne soluta  
In caput hoc compage ruat, terraeque dehiscant,  
non ullo Cannas abolebis, Jupiter, aevo,  
decedesque prius regnis quam nomina gentes  
aut facta Hannibalis sileant. nec deinde relinquo  
securam te, Roma, mei; patriaeque superstes  
ad spes armorum vivam tibi. nam modo pugna  
praecellis, resident hostes: mihi satque superque,  
ut me Dardaniae matres atque Itala tellus,  
dum vivam, expectent nec pacem pectore norint.”  
sic rapitur, paucis fugientum mixtus, et altos  
inde petit retro montes tutasque latebras  
Hic finis bello.

“Though the earth yawn asunder, though all the framework of heaven break up and fall upon my head, never shalt thou, Jupiter, wipe out the memory of Cannae, but thou shalt step down from thy throne ere the world forgets the name or achievements of Hannibal. Nor do I leave Rome without dread of me: I shall survive my country and live on in the hope of warring against Rome. She wins this battle, but that is all; her foes are lying low. Enough, and more than enough for me, if Roman mothers and the people of Italy dread my coming while I live, and never know peace of mind.” Then he joined a band of fugitives and hurried away, seeking a sure hiding-place among the high mountains in his rear. Thus the war ended.

#### 4.4 THE FINAL SCENE

Unlike Virgil, Silius closes his epic with the pomp and ceremony that was lacking at the end of the *Aeneid*. Whilst it is clear that Silius relied on Virgil for the structure of his epic,<sup>76</sup> it is also evident that Silius relied extensively on Livy for historical detail. Thus, following Livy 30, 45, 1, Silius concludes his poem with Scipio's triumph: *Mansuri compos decoris per saecula rector/ devictae referens primus cognomina terrae,/ securus sceptri, repetit per caerula*

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<sup>76</sup> Penwell (2010), 223, would disagree.

*Romam/et patria invehitur sublimi tecta triumpho* ('Scipio had gained glory to last for ages; he was the first general to bear the name of the country he had conquered; he had no fear for the empire of Rome. And now he sailed back to Rome and entered his city in a triumphal procession', *Punica* 17:625-8).

The captives preceded the triumphant: *ante Syphax, feretro residens, captiva premebat/ lumina, et auratae servabant colla catenae* ('Before him went Syphax, borne on a litter, with the down-cast eyes of a captive, and wearing chains of gold about his neck *Punica* 17:629-30). Spaltenstein (1990, p.485, note 17.630) suggests that 'these golden chains make one think of Prop. 2, 1, 33 *regum auratis circumdata colla catenis*, Vell.2,82 *regem...catenis, sed ne quid honori deesset, aureis vinxit*, Iust.5,2,4 (and Sen.Tro.153, in imitation of Roman triumph), or one would readily see signs of derision (cf. the Crown of Thorns of Christ). Syphax is carried on a stretcher perhaps with the same intention'. Silius departs from Livy in his historical details on Syphax. Spaltenstein (1990) p.484 Note 17,629 shows that Livy claimed that Syphax died earlier in Tibur (30, 45, 4). Silius follows Polyb.16, 23, 6, Val.Max.6,2,3 Tac.ann.12, 38, 1, who say, on the contrary, that Syphax was led to the triumph. Spaltenstein (1990, p.484, Note 17,629) notes that, 'Silius naturally preferred the version more in conformity with the poetic coherence: this triumph should not be amputated at one of its' strong moments'.

Syphax was borne on a litter, but Hannon followed Syphax on foot: *Hic Hannon clarique genus Phoenissa iuventa/ et Macetum primi atque incocti corpora Mauri/ tum Nomades notusque sacro, cum lustrat harenas,/ Hammoni Garamas et semper naufraga Syrtis* ('Hannon walked there, with noble youths of Carthage; also the chief men of the Macedonians, with black-skinned Moors and Numidians, and the Garamantes whom the god Ammon sees as they scour



the desert, and people of the Syrtis that wrecks so many ships', *Punica* 17:631-634). Spaltenstein (1990, p.485, Note 17,630) has shown that Hannon was taken prisoner in Spain. That he was led in triumph (as captive) does not appear in Livy. Silius was able to imagine it for himself. As for the Macedonians (17:632) they were made prisoners in Zama (17:418ff.), which is not in Livy either. Spaltenstein (1990, p.485, note 17,630) claims that it is useless to think of a divergent source. This scene is followed by images of conquered cities, mountains, and rivers that were regularly carried in triumphal processions, as well as the painted representations of the various countries (at *Punica* 17: 635-642).<sup>77</sup>

Hannibal was defeated by Scipio at Zama and the Second Punic War was ended in 202 BC. The epic closes with a memorable vision of Hannibal and Scipio:

sed non ulla magis mentesque oculosque tenebat,  
quam visa Hannibalis campis fugientis imago.  
ipse, adstans curru atque auro decoratus et ostro,  
Martia praebebat spectanda Quiritibus ora:

'But no sight attracted the eyes and minds of the people more than the picture of Hannibal in retreat over the plains. Scipio himself, erect in his chariot and splendid in purple and gold, gave to the citizens the spectacle of martial countenance', *Punica* 17:643).

At 17:645, Scipio is clad in his *paludamentum*, 'splendid in purple and gold', recalling *ostro insignis et auro* ('brilliant in purple and gold', *Aeneid* 4:134), but this line also recalls *nec non mediis in militibus ipsi/ ductores auro volitant ostroque superbi* ('No less amidst their thousands, do the captains dart to and fro, brilliant in gold and purple, *Aeneid* 12:125-6). Like Augustus, Scipio is compared to Bacchus and Hercules (17:647):

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<sup>77</sup> See Duff (1934), 485.

qualis odoratis descendens Liber ab Indis  
egit pampineos frenata tigride currus;  
aut cum Phlegraeis, confecta mole Gigantum,  
incessit campis tangens Tirynthius astra.

So looked Bacchus, when he drove his car, wreathed with vine-leaves and drawn by tigers, down from the incense-breathing land of the Indians; and so looked Hercules, when he had slain the huge Giants and marched along the plains of Phlegra, with his head reaching the stars.

The triumph of Bacchus is a well-known motif, and for this comparison Silius is, once again, inspired by Virgil: *nec qui pampineis victor iuga flectit habenis/ Liber, agens celso Nysae de vertice tigris* ('nor he who directs his chariot in triumph, Liber, driving his tigers down from the lofty peak of Nysa', *Aeneid* 6:804ff.). The parallels which Virgil alleges Augustus was to surpass were namely Hercules and Dionysus. Bosworth (1999, p.2) has shown that, 'For Vergil, Augustus was to cover more ground than the triumphant Father Liber, who returned in state from Indian Nysa in a car drawn by tigers', whilst Hercules was 'the traditional benefactor of humanity, who traversed the world and purged it of criminals and monsters.'

Many parallels exist between the prophecy scene in 3 and the ending in 17.<sup>78</sup> At 17:647-8 Scipio is compared to Bacchus, prompting comparison and association with Domitian where, at 3: 614-5, Jupiter had declared that Domitian would outdo Bacchus in military conquests.<sup>79</sup> Scipio is then compared to Hercules, reversing the imagery in Virgil's description: *qualis odoratis descendens Liber ab Indis/egit pampineos frenata tigride currus/ aut cum Phlegraeis, confecta mole Gigantum/incessit campis tangens Tirynthius astra* ('So looked Bacchus, when he drove his car, wreathed with vine-leaves and

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<sup>78</sup> See Tipping (2010), 45-46

<sup>79</sup> At *Punica* 3:614-5, Jupiter predicts Domitian's multiple and surpassing triumphs. At 3: 614-5, he declares that Domitian will outdo Bacchus in military conquests. At 15: 79-81, Virtue associates Scipio with 'world-conquering, heaven-bound Bacchus' (Tipping 2010).

drawn by tigers, down from the incense-breathing land of the Indians; and so looked Hercules, when he had slain the huge Giants and marched along the plains of Phlegra, with his head reaching the stars', *Punica* 17:647-650). At 3:627-8, Jupiter promises that Quirinus himself will cede his throne on Domitian's arrival in heaven. Silius places Scipio's glory on a par with Quirinus: *salve, invicte parens, non concessure Quirino/ laudibus ac meritis non concessure Camillo!* ('Hail to thee, father and undefeated general, not inferior in glory to Quirinus, and not inferior to Camillus in thy services, *Punica* 17:651-2). At *Punica* 3:625, Jupiter calls Domitian the son of gods. At the close of the epic, Scipio is given divine origins, again prompting comparison and association with Domitian. The question of Scipio's parentage comes into question in the final line of the poem, when Silius affirms that Jupiter is Scipio's father: *nec vero, cum te memorat de stirpe deorum/ prolem Tarpei mentitur Roma Tonantis* ('Rome tells no lie, when she gives thee a divine origin and calls thee the son of the Thunder-god who dwells on the Capitol', *Punica* 17:653-4).<sup>80</sup> & <sup>81</sup>

The final line of the poem (17:653-4), (as well as the final outcome of the *Punica*), also requires recall of the final lines of Proteus' prophecy to Cymodoce (7:487-493): *hinc ille in furto genitus patruique piabit./ idem ultor patrisque necem; tum litus Elissae/ implebit flammis avelletque Itala Poenum/ viscera torrentem et propriis superabit in oris./ huic Carthago armis, huic Africa nomine cedet./ hic dabit ex sese, qui tertia bella fatiget/ et cinerem Libyae ferat in*

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<sup>80</sup> See Tipping (2010), 45-46

<sup>81</sup> Pomponia is Scipio's mother: the divine maternity of Scipio was revealed earlier: *Adstabat fecunda Iovis Pomponia furto./ namque ubi cognovit Latio surgentia bella/ Poenorum Venus, insidias anteire laborans/ Iovis, fusa sensim per pectora patrem/ implicuit flamma/* ('Pomponia now stood near. The secret love of Jupiter had made her Scipio's mother. For, when Venus learnt that the arms of Carthage were rising against Rome, she strove to anticipate the wiles of Juno, and entrapped her father's heart with a slow-spreading flame', *Punica* 13:615-619).

*Capitolia victor* (Next the offspring of stolen love <sup>82</sup> shall duly avenge his father and his uncle as well; then he shall spread fire over the coast of Dido, and tear Hannibal away from the vitals of Italy on which he is preying, and defeat him in his own country. To him Carthage shall surrender her arms, and Africa her name. And his son's son shall finish a third war with victory and bring back the ashes of Libya to the Capitol').<sup>83</sup>

#### 4.5 THE RESOLUTION OF THE *PUNICA* (17:618-654)

The *Punica*, like the *Aeneid*, thus remains open to historical continuation. The *Punica* achieves reconciliation on the mortal plane, (with Scipio's triumph), but only partial reconciliation on the immortal plane. Jupiter and Juno remain unreconciled. The *Punica*, therefore, reaches exactly the same conclusion as the *Aeneid*, (although the timescale is obviously further on). The battle of Zama (202) at the ending of the *Punica* constitutes but one stage in the longer history to which the *Aeneid* alludes. The close of this epic anticipates the next story as mysteriously predicted in Jupiter's prophecy – the coming of another Scipio, who will also raze Carthage to the ground. The conclusion of the *Punica* is thus left historically open, anticipating the Third Punic War (149), and beyond. As discussed in the introduction, Feeney's analysis has proved the human narrative in the *Aeneid* can be (historically) continued on the human plane, and is subsequently taken up by Silius Italicus in the *Punica*. Horsfall (1995, p.288) rightly argues, 'Juno's hostility to the Trojans in the *Aeneid* will continue to the Second Punic War; she does not abandon her hostility entirely in her

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<sup>82</sup> Scipio Africanus, conqueror of Hannibal.

<sup>83</sup> Scipio Africanus Aemelianus

negotiation with Jupiter in *Aeneid* 12:791ff. Virgil anticipates what Ennius had described. So Silius describes what Virgil had anticipated.'

## CHAPTER 5: VEGIUS: THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF THE AENEID (1428)

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The abrupt ending of the *Aeneid*, in addition to generating lively debate among critics, has also prompted many subsequent writers to supply the conclusion to the story of Aeneas that is so conspicuously absent in Virgil's text. By far the most popular continuation of the *Aeneid* is *The Thirteenth Book* published in 1428 by a young Milanese humanist named Maphaeus Vegius (1407-58). As this chapter will show, in his desire to supply a 'happier' ending to the *Aeneid*, Vegius used the same Virgilian structural device in his epic and brought about complete closure by making the God's agree. (This was cleverly achieved by his intertextual reference to an Ovidian line in his closing line). This *Supplementum* is of particular importance because, (not only does it prove Feeney's theory, as discussed in the introduction), but it also proves that Vegius was clearly aware of this particular Virgilian 'formula'- that the appeasement of Juno's anger would result in a total closure of the epic storyline.

Maphaeus Vegius's commentary was written in 1428 and was first published alongside the Virgil of 1471, in Venice, by Adam de Ambergau, and continued to accompany the *Aeneid* until 1650.<sup>84</sup> In 1450, with the introduction of the art of printing, publication became prolific, and more than 180 editions of Virgil appeared before 1500, the following century, too, was equally prolific. Vegius's *Supplementum* was included in more than twenty Venetian editions, more than half a dozen Parisienne editions, and over a dozen London editions,

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<sup>84</sup> Craig Kallendorf (1989) 100, notes that 'Vegio's *Supplementum* immediately began circulating along with the *Aeneid* and survives in almost fifty fifteenth and sixteenth century manuscripts, a respectable tally for a Neo-Latin poem. Not surprisingly, it was printed very early as part of Adam de Ambergau's 1471 edition of the *Aeneid*, and Mambelli's census indicates that it was regularly published along with the works of Virgil for the next sixty years.' Information on the publishing history of Vegio's *Supplementum* can be found in Giuliano Mambelli, *Gli annali delle edizioni Virgiliane*, (Florence, Leo Olschki, 1954).

as well as editions printed in many other European cities.<sup>85</sup> The commentary's final publication appeared alongside Virgil in Lemaire's *Bibliotheca Classica*, Paris 1820.

Vegius's *Supplementum* not only provides a concrete realisation of the fruits of Aeneas' victory in Italy (a Roman triumph); but also includes the wedding of Aeneas and Lavinia, to ensure Trojan dynastic aspirations, and the apotheosis of Aeneas to give the moral seal of approval to the entire Trojan endeavour. There is little evidence to suggest that the assignment of praise and blame that fuels the optimism/pessimism debate on the ending of the *Aeneid*, was a divisive force in this Quattrocento exposition of Virgil's epic.<sup>86</sup> Wilson-Okamura's study (2010, p.210-211) indicates that 'during the early Renaissance such readers were "sporadic" and "isolated", neither "developing nor initiating a tradition of pessimism".<sup>87</sup> Neither was the *Supplementum* included alongside the *Aeneid* on 'moral' grounds. Franklin (2014, p.128) has rightly pointed out that 'in Renaissance pedagogy, Aeneas' value as a hero was inextricable from Vergil's standing as a philosopher nonpareil, and the *Aeneid* was canonical for teaching both *norma loquendi* (the proper use of Latin) and *norma vivendi* (the proper way to live)."<sup>88</sup>

## 5.2 STRUCTURE IN VEGIUS'S *SUPPLEMENTUM*

In the *Thirteenth Book*, Maphaeus Vegius uses Virgil's bricks and mortar, his paint and paper, his furniture and part of his floor plan.<sup>89</sup> Like Ovid, and

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<sup>85</sup> Source: Janet McMullin, Assistant Librarian, Christchurch, Oxford.

<sup>86</sup> Franklin (2014), 128

<sup>87</sup> See also Kallendorf (2008)

<sup>88</sup> See Comparetti (1908) for a discussion of the literary reception of Virgil, and the reception of the poet in popular culture, relating many of the fascinating tales which abounded during the early Renaissance.

<sup>89</sup> This comment re-uses Horsfall's comment (1995), 279.

Statius, Vegius only partially uses the Virgilian structure to reach the epic's resolution. Vegius indicates a detailed knowledge of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and a familiarity with Seneca and (possibly) with Horace.<sup>90</sup>

Like the *Aeneid*, this epic operates on the principle of a dual dynamic narrative structure, and includes one human narrative and one supernatural narrative. Vegius provides a continuation to the human and supernatural narratives of the *Aeneid* by using the Virgilian beginning in order to formulate a different resolution to the *Aeneid*: in other words, the human narrative is constructed by using the prophecy scene already imposed by Virgil (*Aeneid* 1:257-296) which corresponds with a reconciliation scene devised by Vegius. Unlike the *Aeneid*, where the reconciliation scene involves Jupiter and Juno, in this epic the reconciliation scene involves Jupiter and Venus. At the close of the *Aeneid* (12:791ff.) Juno does not abandon her hostility entirely in her negotiation with Jupiter but, in the reconciliation scene at the close of the *Thirteenth Book*, it will be shown that Vegius provides the complete resolution to Juno's hostility. This is achieved by the explicit use of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as an intertext. Vegius thus provides complete resolution of the supernatural narrative, which results in complete resolution of the human narrative. Closure of the *Aeneid* and closure of the *Thirteenth Book* is therefore not only simultaneous, but also complete.

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<sup>90</sup> The sixth simile in the *Thirteenth Book* (226-231) is an anomaly and appears to have no precedent in either Virgil, Homer, or Ovid, but may have derived from an epistle of Seneca, *On instinct in animals, Epistulae Morales, CXXI*:

'And certain animals with hard shells, when turned on their backs, twist and grope with their feet and make motions sideways until they are restored to their proper position. The tortoise on his back feels no suffering; but he is restless because he misses his natural condition and does not cease to shake himself about until he stands once more upon his feet.'



### 5.3 THE PROPHECY SCENE

Vergil uses Jupiter's prophecy from the *Aeneid* in order to create a different ending. Vergil picks up and continues the storyline of the *Aeneid*. Vergil resolves the first three years of Jupiter's prediction, up to the founding of Lavinium. In the first speech of the *Aeneid*, Venus, (who is worried by Aeneas' present circumstances, shipwrecked on the coast of Africa), petitions Jupiter on behalf of her son (1:229-241):

“o qui res hominumque deumque  
aeternis regis imperiis et fulmine terras,  
quid meus Aeneas in te committere tantum,  
quid Troes potuere, quibus tot funera passis  
cunctus ob Italiam terrarum clauditur orbis?  
certe hinc Romanos olim volventibus annis,  
hinc fore ductores, revocato a sanguine Teucris,  
qui mare, qui terras omnis ditione tenerent,  
pollicitus. quae te, genitor, sententia vertit?  
hoc equidem occasum Troiae tristisque ruinas  
solabar, fatis contraria fata rependens;  
nunc eadem fortuna viros tot casibus actos  
insequitur. quem das finem, rex magne, laborum?”

“You that with eternal sway rule the world of men and gods, and frighten with your bolt, what great crime could my Aeneas – could my Trojans – have wrought against you, to whom, after many disasters borne, the whole world is barred for Italy's sake? Surely it was your promise that from them some time, as the years rolled on, the Romans were to arise; from them, even from Teucer's restored line, should come rulers to hold the sea and all lands beneath their sway. What thought, father, has turned you? That promise, indeed, was my comfort for Troy's fall and sad overthrow, when I weighed fate against the fates opposed. Now, though tried by so many disasters, the same fortune dogs them. What end of their toils, great king do you grant?”

Jupiter reassures Venus (1:257-266):

“parce metu, Cytherea; manent immota tuorum  
fata tibi; cernes urbem et promissa Lavini  
moenia, sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli  
magnanimum Aenean; neque me sententia vertit  
hic tibi (fabor enim, quando haec te cura remordet,  
longius et volvens fatorum arcana movebo)  
bellum ingens geret Italia populosque feroces  
contundet moresque viris et moenia ponet,  
tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas,

ternaque transierint Rutulis hiberna subactis...”

“Spare your fears, Lady of Cythera; your children’s fates abide unmoved. You will see Lavinium’s city and its promised walls; and great-souled Aeneas you will raise on high to the starry heaven. No thought has turned me. This your son-for, since this care gnaws at your heart, I will speak and, further unrolling the scroll of fate, will disclose its secrets—shall wage a great war in Italy, shall crush proud nations, and for his people shall set up laws and city walls, till the third summer has seen him reigning in Latium and three winters have passed in camp since the Rutulians were laid low...”

#### 5.4 DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN NARRATIVE IN *THE THIRTEENTH BOOK* (THE PARTIAL RESOLUTION OF (THE VIRGILIAN) JUPITER’S PROPHECY)

a. Picking up the text where the *Aeneid* breaks off, the human narrative in the *Thirteenth Book* opens with an episode that describes the Rutulians’ surrender to Aeneas, and closes with the apotheosis scene. Vegius begins by resolving the issue of the Rutulian’s surrender to Aeneas. This is achieved via the second simile (13-22) in the *Thirteenth Book*.<sup>91</sup> This simile has a precedent in the final book of the *Aeneid* (12:715-24), where Aeneas and Turnus are likened to two bulls locked in mortal combat, but in the *Thirteenth Book* the timescale of the simile becomes advanced and is used to describe the Rutulians after the combat between Turnus and Aeneas, as they prepare to surrender to Aeneas. In this particular epic the bull simile, which is used on one sole occasion, is employed to describe the process by which the vanquished acknowledge the victor, and how peace comes to be restored.<sup>92</sup> The use of the bull simile in Vegius might also be felt to recall the excessive reworking of this motif in Statius’ *Thebaid*.

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<sup>91</sup> The *Thirteenth Book* contains eight similes: lines 6-7, 13-22, 107-121, 134-141, 220-225, 226-231, 297-301 (These are further discussed by Cox Brinton (1930), 4).

<sup>92</sup> Kallendorf (1989) shows how Vegius picks up the Virgilian intertext, developing and continuing similes and speeches in order to ‘close’ down the storyline of the *Aeneid*.

b. Vegius resolves the issue of Turnus' burial: Latinus returns Turnus' corpse to his father who performs the rites, Aeneas returns Pallas' belt to Evander. These episodes are resolved via an apostrophe given by Aeneas (Thirteenth Book, 39-43)<sup>93</sup>:

“Nunc, Rutuli, hinc auferte ducem vestrum, arma virumque  
largior, atque omnem deflendae mortis honorem.  
sed quae Pallantis fuerant ingentia baltei  
pondera, transmittam Evandro, ut solacia caeso  
haud levia hoste ferut, Turnoque exsultet adempto.”

“Rutulians, it is time to bear forth hence your lord. Weapons and corpse I bestow, along with every honor due to a death worthy of lamentation. But the baldric's heavy weight, once Pallas's, I will convey to Evander that he might feel some strength of consolation in the slaughter of the foe, and revel in Turnus's demise.”<sup>94</sup>

c. Vegius resolves the marriage of Aeneas to Lavinia, the founding of Lavinium, and the succession of Aeneas to Latinus' kingdom.<sup>95</sup> These episodes are collectively resolved via a speech given by Aeneas to his comrades (85-102 / *Thirteenth Book* 89-94):<sup>96</sup>

“O socii, per dura ac densa pericula vecti,  
per tantos bellorum aestus, duplicesque furores  
armorum, per totque hiemes, per quicquid acerbum  
horrendum, grave, triste, ingens, per quicquid iniquum  
infaustum, et crudele foret, convertite mentem

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<sup>93</sup> This speech simultaneously responds to the beginning and ending of the *Aeneid*. The sense that the first actions in Vegius' poem signal a (new) 'beginning' are furthered reinforced by the Virgilian echo resounding in the first speech. Picking up the Virgilian text from its opening words, '**arma virumque**' (*Aeneid* 1:1), Vegius cleverly rewrites the Virgilian beginning into his own beginning in Aeneas' address to the vanquished men: '*nunc, Rutuli, hinc auferte ducem vestrum, **arma virumque** largior, atque omnem deflendae mortis honorem*' (39). In the next sentence of this apostrophe, Vegius transports the reader back to the very ending of the *Aeneid* itself, via his explicit reference to the belt of Pallas, recalling the final Virgilian combat scene between Turnus by Aeneas (*Aeneid* 12:938-52).

<sup>94</sup> Putnam (2004), 5

<sup>95</sup> Vegius fulfils the prophecy given by Faunus to Latinus. Faunus advises Latinus to marry his daughter, not in Latin wedlock to Turnus, but to a stranger, Aeneas (*Aeneid* 7:96-101)

<sup>96</sup> This speech is a development of, and a resolution to, an earlier speech given by Aeneas to his comrades (*Aeneid* 1:198-207)

in melius: iam finis adest: hic meta malorum  
dabit, et optatem Latia cum gente quietem  
iungemus: dabit inde mihi Lavinia coniux  
bello acri defensa, Italo cum sanguine mixtam  
Troianam transferre aeterna in saecula gentem.”

“O comrades, who have travelled through cruel, constant dangers, through massive surges of war and the redoubled madness of fighting, through a siege of tempests, through whatever harsh, dread, oppressive, piteous, threatening might come our way, whatever unjust, accursed and savage, turn your thoughts to better things! Now the conclusion is at hand. Here will be the end-goal of our trials. With the Latin race we will establish the peace for which we have yearned. Thence will my wife Lavinia, sheltered through the bitter war, grant me to transmit the destiny of the Trojan race, commingled with Italian blood, into all ages to come. I ask one thing, comrades: treat the Italians justly with kindred minds and grant respect to our father-in-law, Latinus. He will wield the glorious scepter. This my mind has decreed. But, as warriors, learn to emulate me, both in the excellence of your soldiering and in your piety. The glory that has accrued to us is plain to see. But I will call the heavens and stars to witness: I, who have rescued you from the calamity of such great evils, will myself, in power, guide you to still greater rewards.”<sup>97</sup>

d. Vegius rewrites the omen of Lavinia’s burning hair (*Aeneid* 7:72-80). In the *Aeneid* (7:45-106), divine portents prevented Lavinia’s marriage to Turnus (7:58), but in the *Thirteenth Book*, Lavinia’s blazing tresses signify her happy, and fruitful, union with Aeneas. Venus explains the meaning of the divine portent to her son (552-570):

“Nate, animo pone hanc curam, et meliora capesse  
signa deum, gaudensque bonis succede futuris.  
nunc tibi parta quies, nunc meta extrema malorum:  
nunc tandem optatam componunt saecula pacem.  
nec flammam ad caelos perlatam e vertice carae  
coniugis horresce; at constantem dirige mentem.  
namque erit illa, tuum celebri quae sanguine nomen,  
Troianosque auctura duces ad sidera mittat.  
haec tibi magnanimos sublimi prole nepotes  
conferet, egregiis totum qui laudibus orbem  
complebunt, totumque sua virtute potentes,  
sub iuga, victoresque trahent: quos gloria summo

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<sup>97</sup> Putnam (2004), 7-8

Oceanum transgressa ingens aequabit Olympo:  
quos tandem innumera ardens post illustria rerum  
gesta deos factura vehet super aethera virtus.  
hanc flammam ventura tuae praeconia gentis  
designant; hoc omnipotens e culmine signum  
sidereo dedit: at tantarum in munera laudum,  
quam statuis, dicas a nomine coniugis urbem.”

“My son, put this worry from your mind, lay claim to the god’s more propitious omens, and, glad at heart, enter upon your auspicious future. Now peace is granted to you, now at last is the end of your sufferings. Finally, now, the ages accept the covenant of peace long craved. Have no fear of the flame carried to the heavens from the crown of your dear wife’s head. Stand firm, with mind assured. For she it will be who enhances your line’s repute with glorious offspring and exalts the heroes of Troy to the stars. She will bequeath you high-souled descendants with august progeny, whose extraordinary praise will fill earth’s whole orb, which in its entirety, victors through the power of their courage, they will draw under the yoke. Their glorious grandeur, surpassing the bounds of Ocean, will find its measure in the heights of Olympus. Nobility, their source of godhead, in the wake of countless valorous deeds accomplished, will lead them beyond the heavens. This flame heralds the signal achievements of your race; the Almighty has furnished this token from his starry precincts. As gesture for such acclaim to be yours, give the city you are founding your wife’s name.”<sup>98</sup>

## 5.5 THE RECONCILIATION SCENE

The first prophecy scene between Jupiter and Venus in the *Aeneid* (1:257-296) operates as a ring-composition which both corresponds, and reaches its resolution, in the final reconciliation scene in the *Thirteenth Book* (606-619), which is unusually between Jupiter and Venus, rather than Jupiter and Juno. In the final scene it will be shown that, although Juno is an absent party from this final negotiation, her presence has not been forgotten. In this epic, the reconciliation scene functions to bring about the complete closure of both the human and supernatural narrative structures. The decision to halt the human narrative is determined in the final speech between gods.

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<sup>98</sup> Putnam (2004), 35-37

In the final speech of the *Thirteenth Book* (595-605), Venus addresses her father, reminding him of his earlier promise (in the *Aeneid* at 1: 257-266):

“Omnipotens genitor, qui solus ab aethere summo  
cuncta moves, qui res hominum curasque recensens,  
dum Teucros traheret fortuna inimica, recordor,  
spondebas finem aerumnis rebusque salutem.  
Nec tua me promissa, pater, sententia fallit;  
namque omnes gaudere sacra tris pace per annos  
viderunt Italiae nullo discrimine partes.  
Verum ad siderei missurum culmina caeli  
pollicitus magnum Aenean meritumque ferebas  
illaturum astris. Quid nunc sub pectore versas?  
Iamque optat matura polos Aeneia virtus.”

“Almighty sire, who from heaven’s zenith solely guide the affairs of all and scan man’s enterprises and his cares, it is my memory that, when ill-fortune held the Trojans in its grip, you promised them security and an end to trouble. Your judgment’s pledge never failed me, father. Everyone has seen the whole of Italy, with no exceptions take delight in three years of holy peace. You also gave solemn assurance that you would convey noble Aeneas to the peak of the glittering heavens and make his worth known to the stars. What now are you pondering in your heart? Already Aeneas’s virtue in its fullness lays claim to the celestial pole.”<sup>99</sup>

Vergil concludes the human narrative by providing resolution to the Trojan’s misfortunes. In the prophecy scene in the *Aeneid*, Venus had remonstrated with her father over the sufferings of the Trojans. Jupiter’s reply, which implies the hostile will of Juno, reassures Venus of Juno’s eventual reconciliation: *consilia in melius referet, mecumque fovebit Romanos* (‘she will bring her policies around for the better, and will cherish the Romans along with me’ *Aeneid* 1: 281-2). In the prophecy scene in the *Aeneid*, Venus had asked Jupiter, “*quem das finem, rex magne, laborum?*” (What end of their toils, great king do you grant?”, *Aeneid* 1:241). In the *Thirteenth Book*, Jupiter reassures Venus that the end of the Trojan’s misfortunes has finally been reached.

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<sup>99</sup> Putnam (2004), 39

Jupiter's reply (which implies Juno's favourable will) specifically states that she, at last, approves of his final decision: '*tandemque malis Iunone secunda imposui finem*' (At last with Juno's approval I put an end to their woes, 611-12). In this episode, one aspect of (Virgilian) Jupiter's earlier promise to Venus has thus been fulfilled. Jupiter gives the following reply:

Olli hominum sator atque deum dedit oscula ab alto  
pectore verba ferens: "Quantum, Cytherea, potentem  
Aeneam Aeneadasque omnes infessus amavi  
et terra et pelago et per tanta pericula vectos,  
nosti, et saepe equidem indolui commotus amore,  
nata, tuo, *tandemque malis Iunone secunda  
imposui finem. Nunc stat sententia menti,  
qua ductorem alto Phrygium succedere caelo  
institui, et firma est; numeroque inferre deorum  
constat, et id concedo libens. Tu, si quid in ipso  
mortale est, adime, atque astris ingentibus adde.  
Quin si alios sua habet virtus, qui laude perenni  
Accingant sese et gestis praestantibus orbem  
exornent, illos rursus super aethera mittam.*"

The father of men and gods kissed her and from his inmost heart spoke: "From my very words, goddess of Cythera, you know how much I have always loved stalwart Aeneas and all his followers, as they fared through such great perils whether on land or on sea, and, touched by your love, my child, indeed I grieved for them time and again. *At last with Juno's approval I put an end to their woes. My mind's decree, my determination that the Trojan leader should enter the lofty heavens, stands steady. To accept him within the congress of the gods is the decision. It is one I gladly grant. Yours the task to erase what might remain mortal in him, and to engage him to the mighty stars.* Also, if others possess his excellence, who encompass themselves with immortal praise and embellish the world through outstanding feats, I will convey them in turn beyond the Aether."<sup>100</sup>

## 5.6 THE FINAL SCENE - THE APOTHEOSIS OF AENEAS.

In the final scene, which shows the complete fulfilment of (the Virgilian) Jupiter's promise to Venus, Vergil draws the narrative to a complete close by concluding the human narrative and the supernatural narrative simultaneously.

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<sup>100</sup> Putnam (2004), 39

Vegius shows Juno's acquiescence in the apotheosis of Aeneas by using the Ovidian intertext.<sup>101</sup> In the *Metamorphoses* (14:593-5), (Ovid's) Venus asks (Ovid's) Jupiter to grant apotheosis to Aeneas, and Jupiter replies, "My daughter, you deserve this gift from heaven, both you who ask, and he for whom you ask it. Have your desire!" Jupiter's decision is met with unanimous approval from the other divinities (14:592-3):

Adsensere dei, nec coniunx regia vultus  
inmotus tenuit placatoque adnuit ore;

The gods gave their approval, and even the royal consort was not unmoved: she nodded her consent, and showed by her expression that she had been appeased.

Adopting the very sentiments uttered by Ovid, Vegius rewrites this as follows (620-622):

Assensere omnes superi, nec regia Iuno  
abnuit; at magnum Aenean suadebat ad altum  
efferrī caelum, et voces addebat amicas.

All the gods granted approval. Nor did royal Juno demur. To complement her words of friendship, she urged that Aeneas be borne to heaven itself.<sup>102</sup>

Once again, Vegius relies on Ovid for the apotheosis scene from the *Metamorphoses* (14:581-608), which was lacking in the *Aeneid*:

Tum Venus aeras descendit lapsa per auras  
Laurentumque petit. Vicina Numicius undis  
flumineis ibi currit in aequora harundine tectus.  
Hunc corpus nati abluere et deferre sub undas,  
quicquid erat mortale, iubet. Dehinc laeta recentem  
felicemque animam secum super aera duxit,  
immisitque Aenean astris, quem Iulia proles  
indigitem appellat templisque imponit honores.

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<sup>102</sup> Putnam (2004), 39



Then Venus slips sliding down the breezes of air and seeks Laurentum. There the Numicius, veiled in reed, courses with the ripples of his stream into the nearby sea. She commands him to wash away from her son's body whatever is mortal and to carry it beneath his waves.<sup>103</sup> Then in happiness she conducted the fresh, blessed soul with her above the air, and fixed Aeneas among the stars. His Julian offspring entitle him *Indiges* and in his temples decree the honors of his cult.<sup>104</sup>

## 5.7 THE RESOLUTION OF THE *THIRTEENTH BOOK*

At the end of the *Aeneid*, the resolution on the human plane successfully resolved the question of Aeneas' settlement in Latium and the finally passing away of Troy, but the resolution between Jupiter and Juno on the supernatural plane remained only partial. Juno's anger remained an unresolved issue. Vegius has resolved this issue by the use of Ovidian allusion in the reconciliation scene. At the end of the *Thirteenth Book*, the supernatural resolution achieved by Jupiter and (an absent) Juno is now finally complete: both her mythological grievance, and her historical grievance, have become fully resolved. Jupiter and Juno are finally reconciled. Closure of the supernatural narrative has resulted in the complete closure of the human narrative. At the close of the *Thirteenth Book*, the Trojans' misfortunes are resolved and their woes are over, Aeneas has been translated to the stars,<sup>105</sup> and Juno finally approves of Aeneas's 'just reward'. The final resolution of Juno's anger is not only confirmed by Vegius but also by a later commentator, Iodocus Badius Ascensius, who produced a long-lived and elaborate commentary to accompany the *Thirteenth Book*. On the verso of his

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<sup>103</sup> Badius Ascensius (Virgil's *Opera* 1507 Paris, Fol.CCCCCXXI.v.) cites Tibullus as the source for the purification of Aeneas in the waters of the Numicius. The deification of Aeneas is also discussed in this commentary: "Ecce Dionei processit caesa vis astrum" (See! The star of Caesar, seed of Dione, has gone forth!). Cf. *Eclagues* 9:47 and Hor. *Carm.*1.12.47.

<sup>104</sup> Putnam (2004), 39-41

commentary, Ascensius informs the reader that: “nec regia Iuno abnuit: quia iam placata”.<sup>106</sup> & <sup>107</sup>

To a certain extent, this particular epic requires a contemporary reader to suspend disbelief and to enter into the mindset of a fifteenth-century audience. Juno’s hostility to the Aeneadae which had motivated the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, and the *Punica*, has reached its resolution with Jupiter’s closing words in the *Thirteenth Book*, although clearly the Punic Wars still remain in the narrative future. Emotional closure between the gods is achieved in this epic and, as readers of Vegius’ *Supplementum*, we are required to ignore Juno’s anger as witnessed in the *Punica*. However, for Vegius and his audience, at least, many epics, and many centuries later, Juno’s unappeasable wrath has finally abated. From the very first speech spoken by Venus to Jupiter in the prophecy scene of the *Aeneid*, to very last speech spoken by Jupiter to Venus in the reconciliation scene of the *Thirteenth Book*, shows that everything has now come full circle. Jupiter’s promise to Venus has finally become fulfilled. Vegius has simultaneously brought the human narrative and the divine narrative(s), in both the *Aeneid* and the *Thirteenth Book*, to their sublime, and finite, conclusion(s).<sup>108</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This epic was written as a direct response to Virgil’s ending, but created to result in a different resolution to the *Aeneid*. Vegius achieves an explicit

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<sup>106</sup> Virgil’s *Opera* (1507) Fol. CCCCCXXI.v

<sup>107</sup> Anna Cox Brinton (1930), 174, n.620f. *nec regia Iuno/abnuit*. compare *Aeneid* vii.438f., *nec regia Iuno/ immemor est*. Compare also Ovid *Metamorphoses* xiv.593f.

<sup>108</sup> The ending of the *Thirteenth Book* echoes Hor. *Carm.* 3.3, (where Juno gave over her anger, and allowed Romulus to become a god). See also Feeney (1991), 125-6. Also found in Ovid, (*Metamorphoses* 14:592-3), as illustrated.

resolution of the Virgilian storyline via the adaptation and integration of material drawn from the *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Whilst Ovid parodied the divine relationship, (at *Metamorphoses* 14:581-608), it is not until the early Renaissance (1428) that we see a full (and seriously intended) 'happy' reconciliation between Jupiter and Juno, and the final resolution of the goddess's unabatable wrath. Unlike Ovid, Maphaeus Vegius's *Thirteenth Booke* illustrates a full (and seriously intended) reconciliation between Jupiter and Juno, and the final resolution of Juno's anger.

## Chapter 6: Sannazaro's *De Partu Virginis*

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

During the Renaissance, poets writing Latin Biblical epic endeavoured to combine the classical Virgilian pattern with their new Christian subject. As Brazeau (2014, p.225) has shown, 'During the fifteenth century a number of Italian humanists sought to compose a religious epic similar in tone and style to the great epics of antiquity'.<sup>109</sup> Of all these poems, Jacopo Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis* (1526) would come to be considered by several writers in the late sixteenth century as the first modern Christian epic.<sup>110</sup> Sannazaro considered *De Partu Virginis* as his greatest project. The preface of Pontano's *Actius* (1507) refers to it as a poem to which he is putting the finishing touches.<sup>111</sup> Sannazaro spent more than twenty years refining its 1,443 hexameters, having begun its composition upon his return from exile in 1506, by 1513 he had completed at least a sketch for the entire poem, and it was first published in 1526.

### 6.2 BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE TEXT

The Virgin Mary is the central figure of this epic and the focal event in her life is the birth of Christ. Inspiration for the subject matter of this epic – the Virgin Birth - came from Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue* which was frequently interpreted as a prophecy of the coming of Christ.<sup>112</sup> People had been expecting a new age of the world to begin and Virgil takes advantage of this idea in order to laud his friend Pollio and to represent him as ushering in the joyous era by being the

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<sup>109</sup> Maffeo Vegio's *Antonias* (1436), Girolamo delle Valli's *Jesuida* (1446), Battista Spagnoli (Mantuan)'s *Parthenice Mariana* (1481), and Macario Muzio's *De Triumpho Christi* (1499) all testify to this desire to create a Christian epic

<sup>110</sup> See Brazeau (2014), 225, Note 2

<sup>111</sup> Kidwell (1993) 236 Pontano, *Actius*, *Dialoghi*, ed. Previtiera, 124.

<sup>112</sup> See Comparetti (1929)

means of relieving Italy from her long-continued misfortune. Sannazaro takes advantage of this Virgilian idea in order to laud the Virgin Mary and to represent her as ushering in the joyous era by being the means of relieving mankind from its long-standing misfortune, brought about by the Fall. As Michael Schulze Roberg (2011, p.171) has shown, the figure of Mary is examined in three decisive situations: the Annunciation, Jesus's birth, and Jesus's death.

### 6.3 STRUCTURE IN *DE PARTU VIRGINIS*

Sannazaro follows the 'Virgilian' structure (the inclusion of a prophecy scene which correlates with a reconciliation scene, resulting in an ending which achieves closure, but remains able to be historically continued). This epic, however, follows a hybrid structure, utilising a combination of structural patterning that resembles both the Virgilian and Valerian models, thereby suggesting that Virgil is Sannazaro's primary, but not exclusive model. The reception of VF's *Argonautica* appears to have been slight, and evidently in limited circulation in the Middle Ages, but enjoyed a vogue during the Renaissance.<sup>113</sup> It is clear that Vegius did not know Valerius Flaccus when he composed *Vellus Aureum*, published in 1431, but by the time we reach the *De Partu Virginis*, published in 1526, the literary reception of Valerius Flaccus can be felt in the structure of the poem. Evidence supplied by Zissos (2006, p.174) attests to this:

'From the late 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Valerius' epic was available in a burgeoning number of editions and commentaries, and there are numerous attestations of popularity and influence. In the early 16<sup>th</sup> century the renowned Dutch humanist Cornelius Aurelius praises the poet Baptista Mantuano for his unrivalled ability to imitate Virgil, Ovid, Horace – and Valerius Flaccus.'

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<sup>113</sup> Zissos (2006),170

Sannazaro uses a prophecy given by God in order to develop the storyline of Mary and Christ and to formulate a human resolution to the *De partu Virginis*. Like the Valerian model, this epic similarly operates on a triple-dynamic narrative structure where the divine narrative simultaneously governs the action on the human plane for two protagonists. Unlike the Virgilian model, but like the Valerian model, this epic operates on a triple-dynamic narrative structure where the divine narrative simultaneously governs the action on the human plane for two protagonists. Sannazaro uses a prophecy given by God in order to develop the storyline of Mary and Christ and to formulate a human resolution to the *De partu Virginis*.

Like the methodology employed by Valerius Flaccus, Sannazaro's strategy is best defined in terms of a 'primary' and 'subsidiary' narrative structure.<sup>114</sup> The focus of this epic is the primary narrative of Mary, which occupies book 2. This narrative is made up of separate episodes. Subsidiary narratives create the life of Christ, following the Virgin birth. King David's prophecy and Jordan's speech govern the Christian narrative and form an outer frame to the (inner) Marian narrative. Jordan's lengthy speech at the close of Book 3 (3:331-497) mirrors King David's prophecy at the close of Book 1. Whilst David's prophecy provides a progressive view of the private life of Christ, Jordan's prophecy provides a retrospective view of his public life. Throughout the course of the narrative the reader is able to piece together the life of Christ, although, 'Time, as is the poet's prerogative, is re-ordered, recorded history is

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<sup>114</sup> By 'primary' narrative I mean the top levels of the story's narrating as opposed to 'subsidiary' narratives that are reported within it. The 'subsidiary' narrative is no less important than the 'primary' narrative, and it remains connected to the 'primary' narrative, but performs a different function.

remade, scripture rewritten', so we find different 're-ordered episodes' as follows: preaching to the elders, the passion and ultimate triumph in book 1, the nativity scene in book 2, the Baptism of Christ and the miracles He performed in book 3. The story of Christ's life is incomplete at the end of this epic, but Sannazaro's *De Morte Christi Domini Ad Mortales Lamentatio* functions as a continuation of *De Partu Virginis*. The densest concentration of biblical allusion is contained in the prophecies given by the spirit of King David at the end of book 1, and by Proteus, via Jordan's song, at the end of book 3. Biblical material is taken from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. David's prophecy outlines Christ's life from His birth to His Resurrection, incorporating episodes from the Gospels,<sup>115</sup> whilst Jordan's song, relating Proteus' prophecy, tells of the miracles Christ performed.<sup>116</sup> An ecphrasis of Jordan's urn depicts the

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<sup>115</sup> 1:256: The Adoration of the Magi (Matthew 2:1-12); 1:265-270 The Song of Simeon (Luke 2:25-35); 1:274 The slaughter of the innocents and the flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:16-18); 1:283-295 The Loss of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52) & the finding of Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:46-52); 1:305-367 Christ's Passion & 1:333ff. The Crucifixion (John 19); 1:333ff. Mary meets Jesus on the way to the cross (John 19:1ff. & Luke 23:26-32); 1:369-381 Christ's Death and Darkness (Luke 23:44-49)/ Virgil *Georgics* 1:463-468); 1:381-386 The Resurrection (Matthew 24 & the Apocalypse 10-11); 1 : 407, the quadriga Christi; 1 : 436, the genealogy of Christ (Matthew 1-16); 1:444-452 Olympus merges into heavenly Jerusalem (Revelations 21:10-22).

<sup>116</sup> 3:349 Christ heals the lepers, (Matthew 8:1-3), (Mark 1:40-42), (Luke 5:12-14& 17:12-15); 3:351 Christ heals the sick (fevers) (Matthew 8:14-15), (Mark 1:29-32), (Luke 4:38-39); 3:355 Christ heals the lunatic and the dumb, (Matthew 17:15-18), (Mark 9:17-27); 3:361, Christ heals the dropsy (Luke 14:2); 3:363, Christ heals the dumb (Matthew 9:32-33); 3:362-365, Christ causes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak (Mark 7:32-35), (Luke 11:14); 3:363-365 Christ heals the blind (Matthew 9:27), (Matthew 20:29-34), (Mark 10:46-52); 3:370, Christ cures those vexed by the devil, (Matthew 15:21-31), Christ cures the blind and the lame (Matthew 21:14); 3:373, Christ cures those with the palsy (Matthew 8:5-13) (Mark 2:3-12) (Luke 5:18-25) (John 5:12); 3:380, Christ cures a man with a withered hand (Matthew 12:10-13) (Mark 3:1-5) (Luke 6:6-10); 3:381ff Christ cures a woman with emission of blood (Matthew 9:20-22) (Mark 5:22-34) (Luke 8:41-48) (John the Baptist's ministry, then Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee after John's arrest, (Mark 1:12-15); 3:385 Christ cures those with unclean spirits (Matthew 8:16) (Mark 1:23-27) (Mark 5:8-9) (Luke 4:33-35) (Luke 6:18) (Luke 8:27-33); 3:391 Christ cures those with unclean spirits (Matthew 9:23) (Mark 1:27) (Luke 7:12-15) (John 11:1-44); 3:391 Christ performs a miracle (The Resurrection of Lazarus) (John 11:1-44); 3:430 The fishermen/Disciples (Matthew 4:18-21); 3:437, The powers of the Disciples (Matthew 10:1) (Mark 3:15& 16:18-19) (Luke 9:1); 3:443, The twelve thrones (Matthew 19:28) (Luke 22:30); 3:469 Christ performs miracles

Baptism of Christ, again with references to the gospels.<sup>117</sup> These two sets of prophecy scenes cluster around the central core of the epic - book 2 – which is devoted entirely to the Virgin Mary and the Virgin Birth. The Marian Narrative and the Christian Narrative are thus two separate (although mutually dependant) narrative structures, which are governed by a third - the divine narrative.

As in the Virgilian model (*Aeneid* 1:227-296), where Jupiter revealed his *Weltenplan* for Rome, in this epic, it is now God who reveals his world plan for Christianity. God only makes three speeches throughout the epic: a soliloquy to a silent audience (1:40-54); an address to the angel Gabriel (1:58-81); and an address to the assembled angels (3:34-88).<sup>118</sup> The first speech (1:41-54) operates as the prophecy scene, the second speech, (1:58-81), which recalls Jupiter's speech to Mercury at *Aeneid* 4:222-3, is a command by God to the angel Gabriel to convey his message to the Virgin Mary, whilst the final speech to the angels (3:34-88) operates as the reconciliation scene. These three speeches form the back-bone of the epic.

#### 6.4 GOD'S PROPHECY SCENE

Following the Virgilian model, the opening dialogue is initiated by God, who exhibits the same concerns for his own people as Venus had shown in the *Aeneid*. In His opening passage, God internally elaborates on his long-term

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(loaves and fishes) (Matthew 14:16-21) (Mark 6:38-44) (Luke 9:13-17) (John 6:9); 3:472, (Matthew 14:15); Jesus walks upon the sea (Mark 6:48) (John 6:18-19), 3:479 See language of John (20:30, 21:25).

<sup>117</sup> *De partu virginis* 3:298-497

<sup>118</sup> In comparison to the *Aeneid*, where Jupiter's voice is heard ten times, for a total of 125 lines,<sup>118</sup> in *De Partu Virginis*, God's speeches are few. As in the *Aeneid*, as noted by Hightet, 'Jupiter makes his most impressive speeches at the beginning of the epic and its end.' These speeches are the prophecy scene where Jupiter replies to the request of Venus (1:257-296), and the reconciliation scene, where Jupiter addresses and chastises Juno (12:793).



agenda for the human race, setting out the scene, and stressing the importance of his major protagonist, Mary, and the part that the Incarnation will play in the coming of Christendom. In his opening soliloquy, God ponders on the past, (the Fall (the Old Covenant), and plans ahead for the immediate present (the Annunciation) in anticipation of the divine redemption (the New Covenant) which will be brought about by Mary and the birth of Christ (in the immediate future) and which will find its conclusion in his final speech, and its ultimate conclusion (even beyond the ending of *De partu Virginis*), at the ending of *De Morte Christi Domini Ad Mortales Lamentatio* (in the far distant future).

God's words, his innermost thoughts spoken aloud, echo those of Jupiter, when he gives his penultimate speech to Juno at *Aeneid* 12:793-806:

“quae iam finis erit, coniunx? quid denique restat?  
indigetem Aenean scis ipsa et scire fateris  
deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli.  
quid struis? Aut qua spe gelidis in nubibus haeres?  
mortalin decuit violari vulnere divum?  
aut ensem (quid enim sine te Iuturna valeret?)  
ereptum reddi Turno et vim crescere victis?  
desine iam tandem precibusque inflectere nostris,  
ne te tantus edit tacitam dolor et mihi curae  
saepe tuo dulci tristes ex ore recursent.  
ventum ad supremum est. terris agitare vel undis  
Troianos potuisti, infandum accendere bellum,  
deformare domum et luctu miscere hymenaeos:  
ulterius temptare veto.”

“What now shall be the end, wife? What remains at the last? You yourself know, and admit that you know, that Aeneas, as Hero of the land, is claimed by heaven, and that the Fates exalt him to the stars. What are you planning? In what hope are you lingering in the chill clouds? Was it well that a god should be profaned by a mortal's wound? Or that the lost sword – for without you what could Iuturna do? – be restored to Turnus, and the vanquished gain fresh force? Cease now, I pray, and yield to my entreaties so that your great grief may not consume you in silence, nor your bitter cares often return to me from your sweet lips. The end is reached. To chase the Trojans over land or wave, to

kindle monstrous war, to mar a happy home and blend bridals with woe – this power you have had: I forbid you to try any further.”

The first speech by God is a private rumination, ‘a stream of thought unspoken’ (1:40-54): <sup>119</sup>

40 Tum pectus pater aeterno succensus amore  
sic secum: ‘Ecquis erit finis? tantis ne parentum  
prisca luent poenis seri commissa nepotes,  
ut quos victuros semper superisque crearam  
pene<sup>120</sup> pares, tristi patiar succumbere leto  
45 informesque domos obscuraque regna subire?  
Non ita, sed divum<sup>121</sup> potius revocentur ad oras,  
ut decet, et manuum poscunt opera alta mearum,  
desertosque foros vacuique sedilia coeli  
actutum complere parent, legio unde nefandis  
50 acta odiis trepidas ruit exturbata per auras;  
cumque caput fuerit tantorumque una malorum  
foemina<sup>122</sup> principium lacrimasque et funera terris  
intulerit, nunc auxilium ferat ipsa modumque  
qua licet afflictis imponat foemina rebus.’

Then the father, inflamed with everlasting love,  
thus said to himself: ‘When will there be an end?’  
Then shall the late descendants pay for the ancient sins  
with such penalties so that those whom I had created to  
live forever, almost equal to the Heavenly beings, that I  
suffer them to succumb to gloomy death, and go into ugly  
dwellings and dark kingdoms?  
Not so, but rather they may be recalled towards the region  
of the gods, as is fitting, and as the high works of my own  
hands demand, so that they quickly prepare to fill up the  
deserted rows of seats and chairs of unpeopled Heaven,  
from whence the legion, impelled with heinous animosity,  
and driven out in a state of alarm, rushes down through the  
trembling airs. The source, however, and the  
commencement of such ills was a single woman, who  
brought tears and destruction upon the whole world.<sup>123</sup> A  
woman herself may now bring help<sup>124</sup> and place a limit on  
ruined circumstances, as much as she is able.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> This term coined by Hight (1972), 159.

<sup>120</sup> sc. paene

<sup>121</sup> sc. divorum

<sup>122</sup> sc. femina

<sup>123</sup> Eve.

<sup>124</sup> Mary.

<sup>125</sup> The translation of the chosen passages in *De Partu Virginis* throughout this chapter are my own.

God's speech functions as an introduction to the first theological model of Mary as the 'Second Eve', the central theme of *De partu virginis* (1:50-53). This speech introduces Eve and Mary in a single frame: '*cumque caput fuerit tantorumque una malorum foemina principium lacrimasque et funera terris intulerit, nunc auxilium ferat ipsa modumque qua licet afflictis imponat foemina rebus*', (Since the source of such great misfortune, which had brought tears and death to the earth, originated in a single woman (Eve), now let a woman (Mary) herself bring help and place whatever end she may to their troubled affairs', 1:50-53). The source for this theme, known as 'the dialectic of Eve and Mary', is drawn from the Marian tradition of the late second century, or possibly even earlier. St Justin Martyr, a philosopher by training and a Christian apologist who lived in the Second century, made one of the first theological statements about Mary, contrasting her with Eve from the Old Testament Genesis story. The Book of Genesis (3:15) contains the promise of the redemption of mankind after the Fall of Adam and Eve. The Incarnation of Christ was the result of that promise and it was fulfilled by Jesus Christ's sacrificial death and Resurrection. The New Testament portrays Jesus as the 'Second Adam' whose obedience and death on the cross undo Adam's disobedience.

While Eve chose disobedience to God leading to humanity's catastrophic fall, Mary is hailed as the opposite – a role model of obedience and fidelity. Later, the Christian writer, St Irenaeus of Lyons, (c. 130-200 C.E.), was to amplify this dialectic theme,<sup>126</sup> extending this Pauline idea to include the Virgin

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<sup>126</sup> This concept of Mary as the Second Eve was expounded in both of his surviving writings: in a passage from his treatise *Against Heresies* (written in Greek but preserved largely in a Latin translation), but also in a work that was long thought to have been permanently lost but that was discovered only in this century, and in an Armenian translation, the *Epideixis*, or *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*.

Mary.<sup>127</sup> Through her action of accepting God's Will, Mary enabled the Coming of Christ, who would crush the serpent that led to humankind's ejection from the Garden of Eden. This trope of opposition,<sup>128</sup> once introduced into the vocabulary, soon took on a life of its own: the connection between Eve and Mary appears frequently in Christian theological literature from the eighth century on, and became a popular theme not only in literature, but also in art.<sup>129</sup> *The Annunciation and Expulsion from Paradise* (circa 1435) by Giovanni di Paolo di Grazia, (as illustrated in the appendix), is a fifteenth-century painting which perfectly epitomises the central theme of Sannazaro's *De partu virginis*.

Like the pictorial images found in Fra Angelico's painting, these literary images portrayed by God in Sannazaro's poem operate to link the Expulsion to the Annunciation. Incorporating, and fusing, the early Christian dialectic of Eve/Mary within the 'Virgilian' pattern of a prophecy given by God, allows Sannazaro to create a teleological timescale.<sup>130</sup> This important clause, with its implicit inference to the Biblical figures of Eve and Mary, links the Expulsion from Paradise to the Annunciation, and hence, by inference, to Mary herself, the poem's major protagonist, whose role is pivotal in bringing about the epic's conclusion, from Paradise lost to Paradise regained.

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<sup>127</sup> And just as it was through a virgin who disobeyed [namely, Eve] that mankind was stricken and fell and died, so too it was through the Virgin [Mary], who obeyed the word of God, that mankind, resuscitated by life, received life. For the Lord [Christ] came to seek back the lost sheep, and it was mankind that was lost: and therefore He did not become some other formation, but He likewise, of her that was descended from Adam [namely, Mary], preserved the likeness of formation; for Adam had necessarily to be restored in Christ, that immortality be absorbed in immortality. And Eve [had necessarily to be restored] in Mary, that a virgin, by becoming the advocate of a virgin, should undo and destroy virginal disobedience by virginal obedience.

<sup>128</sup> The 'disobedient' virgin Eve contrasted with the 'obedient' virgin Mary, where one figure brought about the fall of mankind whilst the other figure was instrumental in its salvation

<sup>129</sup> Ann Dunlop has shown that there are eighteen surviving paintings juxtaposing Mary and Eve in this way, all created in central Italy between about 1335 -1445.

<sup>130</sup> See also figure 2 in Illustrations (Giovanni di Paolo), who deals with the same theme.

This internalised monologue then changes tempo, from silence to speech, when God summons the Angel Gabriel to deliver his Annunciation to Mary (1:58-81):<sup>131</sup>

60 'Te, quem certa vocant magnarum exordia rerum,  
fide vigil, pars militiae fortissimo nostrae,  
te decet ire novumque in saecula iungere foedus:  
nunc animum huc adverte atque haec sub pectore  
serva.  
Est urbes Phoenicum inter lateque fluentem  
Iordanem regio nostris sat cognita sacris:  
Iudaeam appellant armisque et lege potentem.  
65 Hic claris exorta atavis, vatumque ducumque  
antiquum genus et dignis licet aucta hymenaeis,  
pectoris inlaesum virgo mihi casta pudorem  
servat adhuc, nullos non servatura per annos,  
mirus amor, seniumque sui venerata mariti  
70 exiguis degit thalamis et paupere tecto,  
digna polo regnare altoque effulgere divum  
concilio et nostros aeternum habitare penates.  
Hanc mihi virginibus iam pridem ex omnibus unam  
delegi prudensque animo interiore locavi,  
75 ut foret intacta sanctum quae numen in alvo  
concuperet ferretque pios sine semine partus.  
Ergo age, nubivagos molire per aëra gressus,  
deveniensque locum, castas haec iussus ad aures  
effare et pulcris cunctantem hortatibus imple,  
80 quandoquidem genus e stygiis mortale tenebris  
eripere est animus saevosque arcere labores.'

“You, whom they call the firm beginning of great affairs,  
Trust in vigilance! The part of our campaign in great might,  
It is fitting for you to go and join the races in a new alliance.  
Now direct you mind thither, and preserve within your breast.  
Between the cities of Phoenicia and broadly flowing River Jordan  
is a land they call Judaea, adequately recognised for our holy men,  
and mighty in arms and laws. Risen from famous ancestors, an ancient race of  
prophets and leaders, and increased by worthy marriage, is a virgin, and  
although pure in heart, in my opinion, she still maintains her modesty  
untouched, and is destined to preserve it throughout the coming years -  
wondrous love! - venerated by the elders of her husband, yet she resides simply  
in a humble dwelling with small rooms, although worthy to rule heaven and to  
shine forth with the high opinion of the gods and to inhabit our houses eternally.  
Yet, some time ago, I purposely chose one woman from all virgins, and placed  
the spirit within, in order that divine will might be received within the virgin

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<sup>131</sup> See Hightet (1972) p.160, for the soliloquies in the *Aeneid*.

womb, and so that she might bear a pious offspring without seed. Go, therefore, and begin your journey, wandering through the clouds and breezes, declare the decree to her holy ears and fill her hesitation with sweet encouragements, since the human race has been rescued from Stygian darkness and the heart has hindered harsh labours.”

## 6.5 THE MARIAN NARRATIVE (THE PRIMARY NARRATIVE)

The Marian narrative provides the key point of reference for the dramatic account of the Virgin Birth. Brazeau (2014, p.230) has claimed that ‘Sannazaro’s narrator describes Mary’s interior state with a complexity not found in classical epic or the Christian Bible’, yet it could be argued that Sannazaro’s construction of the Marian narrative closely resembles the structure of the Medean narrative in VF’s *Argonautica*. The Marian narrative sequence is created by a series of chronological vignettes which chart her life. The Marian narrative is best understood as a series of stages of the Annunciation. In Sannazaro’s highly pictorial epic, these vignettes show Mary from her early life to her eventual Assumption into the heavenly realms, and her ultimate Coronation. Classical allusion is often used because of the lack of available Scriptural evidence. The story of Mary begins with an invocation to Mary as Muse, and closes with an encomium to the Virgin and the Virgin Birth. This section of my paper will entail detailed illustration.

### 6.5.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNUNCIATION SCENE

The Annunciation scene (1:109-123) occupies a major part of this epic.<sup>132</sup> This scene, in which the Angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will become the Mother of Christ, has a drama and a poignant simplicity. This section attempts to illustrate what Brazeau (2014, p.244) has already correctly

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<sup>132</sup> Luke 1:28-38

pointed out, that ‘the emphasis on Marian emotion does not appear to be simply a literary exercise, but (is) rather an integral part of the devotional itinerary staged by the poem’. Brazeau (2014, p. 238) shows that:

‘Sannazaro’s contemporaries considered the imagining of Mary’s emotional states during the Annunciation as a devotional practice and the *De partu Virginis* appears to stage such a practice. Sannazaro gives a new emphasis to Mary’s emotions at the moment of the Annunciation, both in the extended description of her reaction to the divine messenger and in Gabriel’s prophecy. This emphasis on Mary’s emotions continues throughout the poem.’

The subject of the Annunciation has also proved irresistible to artists over the centuries. During the early Renaissance in Italy, the purpose of the painter was as a professional visualizer of the holy stories. The pictures they produced were used as lucid, vivid, and readily-accessible stimuli to meditation on the Bible and the lives of Saints. Most fifteenth-century pictures are ‘religious pictures’, but this refers to more than just a certain range of subject matter. This type of picture existed to meet institutional ends, to help with specific intellectual and spiritual activities. It also means that the pictures came within the jurisdiction of a mature body of ecclesiastical theory about images. But what was the religious function of religious pictures? In the Church’s view the purpose of images was three-fold. John of Genoa’s late thirteenth-century *Catholicon*, still a standard dictionary of the period, summarised them in this way:

Know that there were three reasons for the institution of images in churches: first, for the instruction of simple people, because they are instructed by them as if by books. Second, so that the mystery of the incarnation and the examples of the Saints may be the more active in our memory through being presented daily to our eyes. Third, to excite

feelings of devotion, these being aroused more effectively by things seen than by things heard.<sup>133</sup>

Quattrocento people, painters and public attended to visual experience in distinctively Quattrocento ways, and the quality of their attention became part of their pictorial style. The Church and the Art of the period were thus closely intertwined. Baxandall (1988) p.48, has demonstrated that 'Sermons were a very important part of the painter's circumstance; preacher and picture were both part of the apparatus of a church and both took notice of the other...The popular preachers were no doubt tasteless and inflammatory sometimes, but they filled their teaching function irreplaceably; certainly they drilled their congregations in a set of interpretative skills right at the centre of the fifteenth-century response to paintings.'<sup>134</sup> In an attempt to understand the fifteenth-century Italian mind-set more clearly, and to comprehend what was happening in the 'religious paintings' of the period, Baxandall closely analyses one particular sermon given by a certain preacher, Fra Roberto Caracciolo da Lecce, who preached on the Annunciation. This preacher distinguished three principal mysteries of the Annunciation: 1) The Angelic Mission 2) The Angelic Salutation and 3) The Angelic Colloquy. Each of these principals is discussed under five main headings. For the Angelic Mission, Fra Roberto expounds: a) Congruity – the angel as the proper medium between God and mortal; b) Dignity- Gabriel being of the highest order of angels ('the painter's' licence to give angels wings to signify the swift progress in all things' is here noted); c) Clarity – the Angel manifesting itself to the corporeal vision of Mary; d) Time – Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March, perhaps at sunrise or perhaps at midday, but certainly at the

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<sup>133</sup> Baxandall (1988), 40-1



season when the earth is covering itself with grasses and flowers after the winter; e) Place – Nazareth, meaning ‘Flower’, pointing at the symbolic relation of flowers to Mary. For the Angelic Salutation, Fra Roberto is much briefer. The Salutation implies: a) honour, the Angel kneeling to Mary; b) exemption from the pains of childbirth; c) the giving of grace; d) union with God; e) the unique beatitude of Mary, both Virgin and Mother. For the Angelic Colloquy, Fra Roberto analyses the account of St Luke (1:26-38)<sup>1</sup> and lays out a series of five successive spiritual and mental conditions or states attributable to Mary. These are the five Laudable Conditions of the Blessed Virgin: a) *Conturbatio* – Disquiet; b) *Cogitatio* – Reflection; c) *Interrogatio* – Inquiry; d) *Humiliatio* – Submission; e) *Meritatio* – Merit (*Annunziata*). Fifteenth-century viewers of the Annunciation would have recognised not only its general subject but also the particular moment the artist chose to paint. They differentiated more sharply than us between the successive stages of the Annunciation scene, and thus developed a more nuanced reading than we are capable of today. Street preachers gave vivid accounts of Gabriel’s message to Mary about Christ’s birth and audiences would have also seen the Annunciation re-enacted on its feast day.<sup>135</sup> Stefano Prandi has also has rightly observed that the sequence of mental states described by Fra Roberto corresponds precisely with what occurs in Sannazaro’s poem.<sup>136</sup>

#### 6.5.2 (GOD’S SECOND SPEECH): THE ANGELIC MISSION

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, ‘Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

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<sup>135</sup> See Annunciations by Simone Martini (1333), Merode Altarpiece (1435) by Robert Campin, The Annunciation (c.1450) by Fra Angelico.

<sup>136</sup> Sannazaro, il parto della Vergine, 36

In his second speech of the epic, God summons the Angel Gabriel to carry out the divine plan illustrated in his first prophecy. In this scene, Gabriel is no Renaissance *putti*, but a resplendent heavenly angel, cleaving through the clouds, making his way to earth (1:82-108). Gabriel manifests himself to the corporeal vision of Mary where he finds her engrossed in reading the ancient prophets: ‘She had heard that a time was at hand when the Holy Spirit, gliding down from the celestial stars, would fill the untainted womb of a saintly mother.’ The text she was reading was presumably the prophecy in the book of Isaiah (7:14): ‘Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.’ This representation of Mary is illustrated in a painting by Duccio (1308-11) where Mary is holding a book with Latin text. Yet, at present, Mary is blissfully unaware that she, ‘alone of all her sex’, is the Virgin chosen by God:

Ille altum Zephyris per inane vocatis  
 carpit iter, scindit nebulas atque aera tranat,  
 ima petens pronusque leves vix commovet alas.  
 85 Qualis, ubi ex alto notis maeandria ripis  
 prospexit vada seu placidi stagna ampla Caystri,  
 praecipitem sese candenti corpore cygnus  
 mittit agens, iamque implumis segnisque videtur  
 ipse sibi, donec tandem potiatur amatis  
 90 victor aquis: sic ille auras nubesque secabat.  
 Ast ubi palmiferae tractu stetit altus Idumes,  
 reginam haud humiles volventem pectore curas  
 aspicit; atque illi veteres de more Sibyllae  
 in manibus, tum siqua aevo reseranda nepotum  
 95 fatidici casto cecinerunt pectore vates.  
 Ipsam autem securam animi laetamque videres  
 authorem sperare suum: nanque<sup>137</sup> affore tempus,  
 quo sacer aethereis delapsus spiritus astris  
 incorrupta piae completeret viscera matris,  
 100 audierat. Pro quanta alti reverentia coeli  
 virgineo in vultu est! Oculos deiecta modestos  
 suspirat matremque dei venientis adorat,

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<sup>137</sup> sc. namque

felicemque illam humana nec lege creatam  
 saepe vocat, nec dum ipsa suos iam sentit honores,  
 105 cum subito ex alto iuvenis demissus Olympo  
 purpureos reteggit vultus, numenque professus  
 incessuque habituque, ingentes explicat alas  
 ac tectis late insuetum diffundit odorem.

He picks his route through the empty heights and, calling on the Zephyrs, rends the clouds and swims across the sky, leaning forwards and seeking inwards, barely moving his smooth wings. Just like the swan who sends himself headlong into a snowy-body and now, to himself, appears unfledged and slow-moving, when he saw from the heights the noted streams of the winding Maeandria, in the distance, or the great pools of the peaceful river Caystros, until, finally, the victor is reigning over the beloved waters: thus is he severing the airs and the mists. But when he saw the queen revolving cares in heart, which were by no means lowly, whilst in her hands she held the writings of the ancient Sibyls, and whatever else prophetic seers compose as revelations for their descendants.

For, in fact, she had heard that a time is about to be nigh when the Holy Spirit will descend from the celestial skies in order that he might fulfill the unspoiled flesh of the tender mother. How much awe of the heavens is in her virginal expression! She sighs, casting down her modest eyes, and pays homage to the mother of the coming god, neither summoning often that blessed woman who had begotten these human affairs by divine law, nor yet does she know the honour is her own. When suddenly an angel was sent from high Olympus, revealing his purple face, (and God having declared both his advent and his intention), he unfurls his lavish wings and, in the dwellings far and wide, he diffuses an extraordinary perfume.

### 6.5.3 THE ANNUNCIATION SCENE: THE ANGELIC COLLOQUY (1:123-134)

And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, 'Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Stupuit confestim exterrita virgo,  
 demisitque oculos tososque expalluit artus:  
 125 non secus ac conchis siquando intenta legendis  
 seu Micone parva scopulis seu forte Seriphi  
 nuda pedem virgo, laetae nova gloria matris,  
 veliferam advertit vicina ad litora puppim  
 adventare, timet, nec iam subducere vestem

130 audet nec tuto ad socias se reddere cursu,  
sed trepidans silet obtutuque immobilis haeret;  
illa Arabum merces et fortunata Canopi  
dona ferens, nullis bellum mortalibus infert,  
sed pelago innocuis circum nitet armamentis.

The virgin was astounded, suddenly struck with fear, and she lowered her eyes and her entire body turned very pale. Like a little girl with her bare feet, the darling of her happy mother, who, whilst intent on gathering shells among the rocks of Micone or perhaps Seraphos, perhaps notices a sail-bearing ship arrive at the neighbouring shore. Now afraid, she neither ventures to remove her garments, nor to return in safety to her comrades by running, but remains silent, hesitating anxiously, with a fixed gaze. That ship, bearing gifts, the merchandise of the Arabs and the wealth of Egypt, makes war on no one, but with its harmless armaments it strives upon the open sea.

Mary's position at the Annunciation spawned a great deal of speculation and interpretation: was Mary reluctant, fearful, or accepting of her mission? Rubin (2010) p.343, suggests that most representations attempt to convey a sense of gentle modesty and to steer away from reluctance or resistance. In this scene, Mary reflects upon the type of salutation she has received from the angel. The angel Gabriel's opening salutation to Mary disturbs and puzzles her, because, say Catholic exegetes, it departs from conventional words of greeting to echo the rapture of the prophet Zephaniah (Sophonias in the Vulgate) when he invokes fair scion, the true remnant of Israel, and asks her to sing of her coming triumph (Zephaniah 3:14-17). Mary, say the apologists, was well-versed in the Bible, and, recognizing the Messianic ring in the angel's words, was alarmed by its weighty significance. The association of Mary with the true remnant of Israel is later deepened by Luke in her triumphant hymn the *Magnificat*.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Warner (1976), 11

Sannazaro shows a Biblical Mary: dramatically startled, pale, numb with fright, speechless and mesmerised.<sup>139</sup> Troubled at the angel's words, Mary's disquiet is described via a simile which compares her to a 'barefoot maiden gathering shells on the sea-shore' (1:125-34).<sup>140</sup> In this simile, a virgin watches fearfully at the approach of a vessel that turns out to be carrying a precious cargo. Critics have found a connection between this simile and the opening of Heliodorus's *Aethiopica* (1:2), but the resemblance is slight. In Heliodorus we come upon the heroine Charikleia, tending her lover in the midst of a scene of carnage associated with a merchant-ship become a form of battlefield. Putnam (2009), p. 387 has suggested that a more likely source could be found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (5:391-401) where we find Proserpina gathering flowers (*legendo*, 394), calling on her mother (*matrem*, 397 *bis*), her clothes torn (*vestem*, 398), displaying the grief of a virgin (*virgineum dolorem*, 401), at the approach of Dis.<sup>141</sup>

quo dum Proserpina luco  
 ludit et aut violas aut candida lilia carpit,  
 dumque puellari studio calathosque sinumque  
 inplet et aequales certat superare legendo,  
 paene simul visa est dilectaque raptaque Diti:  
 usque adeo est properatus amor. dea territa maesto  
 et matrem et comites, sed matrem sepius, ore  
 clamat, et ut summa vestem laniarat ab ora,  
 collecti flores tunicis cecidere remissis,

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<sup>139</sup> This representation of Mary comes closest to the painting of the Annunciation by Lorenzo Lotto (as illustrated in the appendix), and shows a startled Angel, an unnerved cat, as well as a fearful Mary.

<sup>140</sup> John Sparrow (1960), 388, Note 2, suggests that the origins for this simile can be traced to 'The Ethiopian Girl' by Heliodorus, whilst Putnam (2009), 387, suggests that Ovid *Met.* 5.391-401 is a more likely source.

<sup>141</sup> Putnam (2009), 387

tantaque simplicitas puerilibus adfuit annis,  
haec quoque virgineum movit iactura dolorem.

Within this grove Proserpina was playing, and gathering violets or white lilies.<sup>142</sup> And while with girlish eagerness she was filling her basket and her bosom, and striving to surpass her mates in gathering, almost in one act did Pluto see and love and carry her away: so precipitate was his love. The terrified girl called plaintively on her mother and her companions, but more often upon her mother. And since she had torn her garment at its upper edge, the flowers which she had gathered fell out of her loosened tunic; and such was the innocence of her girlish years, the loss of her flowers even at such a time aroused new grief.<sup>143</sup>

Putnam tells us that the description of Mary at the arrival of Gabriel might recall Proserpina at the approach of Dis, but in classical times we would usually consider the (troubling) implications of this, given that Dis was, of course, a rapist. Following Putnam's line of enquiry, however, it could be argued that what this scene really reminds us of is Zeus impregnating Leda. The following sonnet by W.B. Yeats (1923) focuses on the story from Greek myth in which Zeus, having adopted the form of a swan, rapes the girl Leda and impregnates her with the child who would later become Helen of Troy:

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still  
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed  
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,  
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push  
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?

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<sup>142</sup> Proserpina's chosen bouquet of violets, denoting modesty, and lilies, denoting purity, is surely an Ovidian allusion to, and a pun on, Lavinia's blush at *Aeneid* 12:67-9: 'Indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro/ si quis ebur, aut mixta rubent ubi lilia multa/ alba rosa, talis virgo dabat ore colores', (As when someone stains Indian ivory with crimson dye, or white lilies blush when mingled with many a rose – such hues her maiden features showed). (Translation by H. Rushton Fairclough).

<sup>143</sup> Translation by Frank Justus Miller (1916)

And how can body, laid in that white rush,  
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?  
A shudder in the loins engenders there  
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower  
And Agamemnon dead.  
Being so caught up,  
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,  
Did she put on his knowledge with his power  
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

This single act of divine rape is instrumental in inaugurating the Trojan War, and with it, the end of Greek civilisation and the dawn of a new (largely) Christian age.

#### 6.5.4 INQUIRY, IMMACULATE CONCEPTION & INCARNATION (1:135-184)

Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

In this scene Mary gives her most precious speech in Mariology, for it implies her innocence and virginity – ‘How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?’ (Luke 1:34).<sup>144</sup> The concept that divine paternity was the precondition of virgin birth and of Christ’s divinity overcame all others in Christian orthodoxy. Gabriel answers Mary, and tells her that she ‘is destined to give birth to a

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<sup>144</sup> Warner (1976), 8

divinity revered by the saints' (1:139). Paraphrasing Luke at 1:35, 'The Spirit shall come and the Power of the Most High shall tabernacle you in holy fashion'), Sannazaro's Archangel reassures the Virgin that the Holy Spirit would 'come upon her' and 'overshadow' her (1:184-193). Gabriel tells Mary about the Immaculate Conception (1:185-202):

165 'Immo istas (quod tu minime iam rere) per aures'  
excipit interpres 'foecundam spiritus alvum  
inluet implebitque potenti viscera partu,  
flammifero veniens coelo atque micantibus astris.  
At tu, virgineum mirata tumescere ventrem,  
haerebis pavitans; demum, formidine pulsa,  
gaudia servati capies inopina pudoris.

"By no means," the messenger states expressly, "(a thing you now scarcely imagine), indeed through your very ears the Holy Spirit will flow and will fill your fruitful womb with a mighty birth, coming from the flaming heavens and the glittering stars. But you, amazed that your virgin belly is swelling, will hesitate in fear. Then, when your fear has subsided, you will receive the unexpected joys of virginity preserved." (1:164-169).

Art work of the period shows a variety of ways in which the Incarnation could be depicted.<sup>145</sup> The Holy Spirit was most usually symbolised as either a ray of light, or as a dove, entering Mary's womb, but, as Rubin (2010) p.343, has shown, 'reference to the womb strained propriety; it was the most private feminine part, perceived as the site of disorder and habitually associated with pollution. Mary's body had to be shown at the precise moment of penetration, but artists devised strategies that made that entry pure: for example, the substitution of chest, or even head, for womb. Paintings by the following artists illustrate these strategies: Gentile da Fabriano (1419) (chest), Masolino (1425-

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<sup>145</sup> See *The Immaculate Conception* (1635) by Ribera, *Immaculata Conceptio* (1635) by Francisco de Zurbaron.



30) (head), Robert Campin (1425) even shows a little Christ child soaring towards Mary (as illustrated in the appendix). The early Christian writers had developed a manner of thinking about the conception of Jesus in Mary as an act of hearing.<sup>146</sup> An Annunciation painting by Fra Angelico (c. 1432) illustrates this concept (See figure 1 in the Appendix). This idea originated with the Egyptian theologian Origen (c. 185-c. 254) who, by mining the multi-layered meanings of the word *logos*, suggested that Mary had conceived Jesus the Word at the words of the angel. Origen's idea quickly acquired a literal stamp, celebrated by Ephrem of Syria and many medieval poets after him. This idea became developed in Syriac poetry and, by the twelfth century, was absorbed into Latin through the writings of Bernard of Clairveaux.<sup>147</sup> Sannazaro's incarnation scene reflects Origen's idea.

This scene of the Incarnation closes with Mary's (submissive) consent. Mary's words echo those of Hannah, who calls herself handmaid no less than five times in the first chapter of the first book of Samuel. It is her *leit-motif*, borrowed by Mary when she answers Gabriel's greeting.<sup>148</sup> The Incarnation traditionally took place at the Annunciation, but in this poem (1:184-201) the results are felt by Mary directly after Gabriel's departure, when, *sine labe pudoris*, 'without the stain of shame'(1:189), and with her chastity intact, *venter...arcano intumuit verbo*, 'her womb swelled with the mysterious Word

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<sup>146</sup> Rubin (2010) 37

<sup>147</sup> Rubin (2010), 342

<sup>148</sup> Warner (1976), 12

(1:190). This scene concludes with God resembling Jupiter, making a typically Roman sign of his approval (1:198-202):<sup>149</sup>

200        succutitur tellus laevumque sereno  
             intonuit coelo rerum cui summa potestas,  
             adventum nati genitor testatus, ut omnes  
             audirent late populi, quos maximus ambit  
             Oceanus Tethysque et raucisona Amphitrite.

The earth shook and the Almighty thundered,  
on the left, from a clear sky. The Father, who has the  
highest power over things, bore witness to the  
arrival of His Son, so that all the native peoples, far  
and wide, who embraced mighty Ocean and Tethys,  
and raucous Amphitrite, might hear.

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#### 6.5.5 THE *PIETA*: MARY AS *MATER DOLOROSA* (1:333-367)

Sannazaro interrupts the flow of his Annunciation scene with an image of Mary as the suffering mother. This representation of Mary stands in stark contrast to the preceding representation of her at the Incarnation. This representation of the *Mater Dolorosa* comes within a prophetic passage given in the Song of David at 1:245-452. Part of this prophetic message is a lengthy exposition of Christ's passion at 1: 305-67, in which Mary's coming fate is predicted:

335        At mater, non iam mater sed flentis et orbae  
             infelix simulacrum, aegra ac sine viribus umbra,  
             ante crucem demissa genas, effusa capillum,  
             stat lacrimans tristisque irrorat pectora fletu.  
             Ac si iam comperta mihi licet ore profari  
             omnia, defessi spectans morientia nati  
340        lumina, crudeles terras, crudelia dicit  
             sidera, crudelem se se, quod talia cernat  
             vulnera, saepe vocat; tum luctisono ululatu  
             cuncta replens, singultanti sic incipit ore,  
             incipit et duro figit simul oscula ligno,  
             exclamans: "Quis me miseram, quis culmine tanto  
345        deiectam subitis involvit, nate, procellis?..."

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<sup>149</sup> *Aeneid* (2:693): Aeneas & Anchises, (7:141-144): Aeneas, (9:630-1): Ascanius.

But the mother, not now a mother but a wretched image of weeping bereavement, and a sad shadow without strength, sinking to her knees before the cross, with her hair dishevelled, she stands sobbing, and her breast is sodden with mournful tears, And now, (if it is permitted to me to utter in speech all that I have found gazing on the dying eyes of her exhausted son). She declares that the lands are cruel, the stars are cruel, and she calls herself cruel, because she can see such wounds. Often she calls, then, filling all the air with her sad-sounding wailing; thus, sobbing, she begins to speak, at the same time implanting kisses on the wooden cross, exclaiming: 'Who has wished me to be miserable, to have been hurled from such a height, my Son, in such a sudden storm?'

This type of Mary, as *Mater Dolorosa*, was to become in the later medieval centuries the most cherished mode of apprehending her and of approaching the Crucifixion.<sup>150</sup> Kennedy (1983), pp. 184 -5, has shown how Sannazaro uses lofty Virgilian phrases to depict Mary's sorrow at the cross. King David, for example, predicts that Mary will disquiet the golden stars with her unremitting prayers— *pulsabis sidera votis* (1.286), but the thought and diction of this poem also owes much to medieval texts. The lamentation of Mary is worthy of the best traditions of the vernacular 'pianti della virgine', exemplified by the famous dialogue between the dying Christ and his mother, of Jacopone da Todi, and the *Stabat Mater*.<sup>151</sup> This hymn, which was part of a Roman Catholic sequence, is one of the most powerful and immediate of extant medieval poems, which meditates on the suffering of Mary during her son's crucifixion. Later representations of this type developed into a calmer grief, and by the late sixteenth century Mary is silent.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid 109

<sup>151</sup> Fantazzi (1997), p.245, has shown that 'the *Stabat Mater* is variously attributed to Pope Innocent III (d.1216), St. Bonaventure, or more commonly, to Jacopone da Todi (1230-1306). This hymn is based on the prophecy of Simeon that a sword was to pierce the heart of His mother, Mary (Luke 2.35). The hymn originated in the thirteenth century during the peak of Franciscan devotion to the crucified Jesus.

<sup>152</sup> See Spivey Ellington (2001), 198

#### 6.5.6 THE VISITATION (2: 30- 48)<sup>153</sup>

And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.

This scene depicts *The Visitation*, and has been depicted by Sebastiano del Piombo (1521) and, later, by Jacopo Pontormo (1530). The Annunciation was a supreme moment of contemplation. At the moment when the Virgin Mary said 'let it be with me according to thy word (*Luke*1:38) her womb, by the power of the Holy Spirit, became the bridal chamber where, in an indissoluble marriage, divinity became one flesh with humanity in the person of Christ. Immediately after the Annunciation, because Gabriel had told her that her cousin Elisabeth 'in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her' (*Luke* 1:36-8). Mary thus set out in haste to visit her cousin, 'And Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, into the city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost; (*Luke* 1:39-41).

At the Annunciation, Mary was informed that Elisabeth was already six months pregnant (*Luke* 1:36), so she went south to Judea, to visit her cousin. In Sannazaro, this predominantly Biblical scene illustrates the fusion of Arabic, Classical, and Early Christian influences. In her preparations for the journey, Mary resembles an Arabic Mary from the Koran: 'And make mention in the Book

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<sup>153</sup> Luke 1: 39-45

of Mary, when she went apart from her family eastward. And took a veil to shroud herself from them...' Sannazaro's Mary was similarly clothed (2:11-16):

Ergo accincta viae, nullos studiosa paratus  
induitur, nullo disponit pectora cultu,  
tantum albo crines iniectu vestis inumbrans:  
qualis stella nitet, tardam quae circuit Arcton  
15 hiberna sub nocte aut matutina resurgens  
Aurora aut ubi iam Oceano sol aureus exit.

Therefore, prepared for the journey, she dresses with little care, her breasts display no finery, adorning only a pale veil, casting a shadow over her hair: just like a shining star which, during a wintry night, encircles slow Arctos, or like the resurgence of early dawn, or whenever the golden sun comes forth from Ocean.

Sannazaro, however, expands on this theme and elaborates the description with classical imagery. The imagery of Paradise regained through Mary inspired the luxuriant praises of one of the Virgin's earliest and most eloquent poets, Ephrem of Syria, who catches the sudden splendour of his native country's spring when he sings of the Creation clothed once more "in a robe of flowers/ and a tunic of blossoms" at the moment of the Annunciation. Ephrem writes that 'Eve had covered Adam in a shameful coat of skins, but Mary has woven a new garment of salvation. Mary is the bright eye that illuminates the world, Eve the other eye, "blind and dark." The wine Eve pressed for mankind poisoned them; the vine that grew in Mary nourishes and saves the world.' Sannazaro's representation of an early Christian Mary at the Visitation echoes Ephrem's description at the Annunciation. Sannazaro's description is also fused with classical imagery as Mary's journey is described as being like the passage of Venus:

Quaque pedes movet, hac casiam terra alma ministrat  
pubenteisque rosas nec iam moestos hiacynthos  
narcissumque crocumque et quicquid purpureum ver

- 20 spirat hians, quicquid florum per gramina passim  
suggerit, immiscens varios natura colores.  
Parte alia celeres sistunt vaga flumina cursus,  
exultant vallesque cavae collesque supini  
et circumstantes submitunt culmina pinus  
25 crebraque palmiferis erumpunt germina silvis.  
Omnia laetantur: cessant Eurique Notique,  
cessat atrox Boreas; tantum per florea rura  
regna tenent Zephyri coelumque tepentibus auris  
mulcent, quaque datur gradientem voce salutant.

Wherever she treads, here, the bountiful earth supplies both marjoram and burgeoning roses, and hyacinths, no longer mournful; both narcissus and crocus – and whatever purple spring breathes forth, whatever blossoms Nature produces, here and there, amongst the grassy meadows, as she mingles her dappled hues. Elsewhere meandering streams check their wandering courses, both the deep valleys and sloping hills take delight, and the encompassing pines bow their tree-tops, whilst in the palm-bearing groves, abundant buds burst forth. Everything rejoices: the East and South winds rest, the fierce North wind holds sway; only the West winds possess the powers of the heavens, caressing her with their temperate breezes, greeting her with the only voice they have been given.

The imagery in this passage derives from Lucretius' *De rerum natura* and his invocation to Venus (1:6-20):

te, dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila caeli  
adventumque tuum, tibi suavis daedala tellus  
summittit flores, tibi rident aequora ponti  
placatumque nitet diffuso lumine caelum.  
nam simul ac species patefactast verna diei  
et reserata viget genitabilis aura favoni,  
aeriae primum volucris te, diva, tuumque  
significant initum percussae corda tua vi.  
inde ferae pecudes persultant pabula laeta  
et rapidos tranant amnis: ita capta lepore  
te sequitur cupide quo quamque inducere pergis.

denique per maria ac montis fluviosque rapacis  
frondiferasque domos avium camposque virentis  
omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem  
efficis ut cupide generatim saecla propagent.

Thou, goddess, thou dost turn to flight the winds and the clouds of heaven, thou at thy coming; for thee, earth, the quaint artificer, puts forth her sweet-scented flowers; for thee the levels of ocean smile, and the sky, its anger past, gleams with spreading light. For when once the face of the spring day is revealed and the teeming breeze of the west wind is loosed from prison and blows strong, first the birds in high heaven herald thee, goddess, and thine approach, their hearts thrilled with thy might. Then the tame beasts grow wild and bound over the fat pastures, and swim the racing rivers; so surely enchained by thy charm each follows thee in hot desire whither thou goest before to lead him on. Yea, through seas and mountains and tearing rivers and the leafy haunts of birds and verdant plains thou dost strike fond love into the hearts of all, and makest them in hot desire to renew the stock of their races, each after his own kind.<sup>154</sup>

#### 6.5.7 THE *MAGNIFICAT* (2:49-75)<sup>155</sup>

This scene shows Mary's arrival, Elizabeth praising and welcoming her guest, and Elizabeth feeling her own unborn baby move (DPV 2: 34-48 / Luke 1:42-3):

Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.  
And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?  
Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.  
How have I deserved to be thus visited by the mother of my Lord?

Mary responds to Elisabeth with her *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46ff.):

'My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour'

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<sup>154</sup> Translated by Cyril Bailey (1910)

<sup>155</sup> Luke 1: 46-55

Warner (1976) p.12, has shown that Hannah provides a particular model for both Elisabeth and Mary and echoes of her story, that of the most faithful and loyal mother in the Bible, reverberate through the Visitation and the *Magnificat*, the Presentation and finding of Jesus in the temple. Samuel, prodigy child and wise adult, is Christ's prototype as mythic hero, and his mother Hannah is Mary's forbear, a relationship so close that by the second century Mary's mother was believed to be called Anna, another form of the name of Hannah, according to the legendary *Book of James*.

Hannah gives thanks to God in an exultant hymn of rich psalmodic imagery that is the *Magnificat's* direct ancestor. It is also ten verses long, and phrases and feelings overlap unmistakably. If the *Magnificat* was originally recited in some manuscripts by Elisabeth, as Irenaeus and Nicetas of Remesiana both describe, and not by Mary, then the circumstances are identical; for Hannah sang to give thanks for the conception of Samuel after years of barrenness. Few Christians now consider the *Magnificat* to be Mary's spontaneous creation at the moment Elisabeth saluted her. The complex allusions to the Old Testament are widely recognized, and although this would not by itself rule out the authorship of Mary, it was a well-established practice for an author to ascribe a hymn of praise to his subject: Mary praises God, but she also extolls herself. The tangle of biblical motifs, images, and echoes in the *Magnificat* and Zacharias' *Benedictus* has been unscrambled by M.D.Goulder and M.L.Sanderson in their article on St Luke's Genesis, and the results reveal Luke's literary method.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Nash (1996), Appendix D, 206-8, see Nash for detailed discussion on *Magnificat*.



The bellicose and triumphalist character of the *Magnificat* echoes both Hannah's hymn and the paeon of Miriam, the sister of Moses, who struck her timbrel and danced for joy with the women of Israel when Pharaoh and his army were swallowed up by the Red Sea. Thus Mary's thanksgiving is not a psychological poem on the mystery of the conception of Christ, or even on the miracle of the virgin birth – which she does not mention at all – but a rousing, and triumphant, cry that the Jewish Messiah promised by God has arrived to vanquish his enemies and to rehabilitate the true remnant of Israel who have remained faithful to the law.<sup>157</sup>

#### 6.5.8 THE VIRGIN BIRTH (2:354-376)

Sannazaro creates the atmosphere for the actual birth of Christ from passages found both in Apollonius and Virgil, where a similar contrast is made between the sleeping world and the wakeful heroine. In Apollonius (2:744-771) we see at first wakefulness at night, the sailors watching the stars, the wayfarer and the sentinel longing for repose, then sleep comes, the bereaved mother at last finds slumber, the sound of dogs barking in the city and men talking is stilled, but Medea could not sleep:

Then did night draw darkness over the earth; and on the sea sailors from their ships looked towards the Bear and the stars of Orion; and now the wayfarer and the warder longed for sleep, and the pall of slumber wrapped round the mother whose children were dead; nor was there any more the barking of dogs through the city, nor the sound of men's voices; but silence held the blackening gloom. But not indeed upon Medea came sweet sleep.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid 12-13

<sup>158</sup> Translated by R.C Seaton (1912)

Virgil, on the other hand, confines his picture to the stillness of the countryside and its creatures, using his exquisite poetry to convey rest and silence (4:522-531):

nox erat, et placidum carpebant fessa soporem  
corpora per terras, silvaeque et saeva quierant  
aequora, cum medio volvuntur sidera lapsu  
cum tacet omnis ager, pecudes pictaeque volucres,  
quaeque lacus late liquidos, quaeque aspera dumis  
rura tenent, somno positae sub nocte silenti.

*lenibant curas et corda oblita laborum.*

at non infelix animi Phoenissa, neque umquam  
solvitur in somnos, oculisve aut pectore noctem  
accipit;

It was night, and over the earth weary creatures were tasting the peace of slumber; the woods and wild seas had sunk to rest – the hour when stars roll midway in their gliding course, when all the land is still, and beasts and coloured birds, both those that far and near haunt the limpid lakes, and those that dwell in the thorny thickets of the countryside, are couched in sleep beneath the silent night. They were soothing their cares, their hearts oblivious of sorrows. But not so the soul-racked Phoenician queen; she never sinks into sleep, nor draws darkness into eyes or heart.

Unlike Medea, who cannot sleep for love of Jason, and unlike Dido, who cannot sleep for love of Aeneas, (*Aeneid* 4:529-31) Joseph sleeps, 'his limbs steeped in the late hours stillness' whilst the embers warmly glow (DPV 2:309-321):

Tempus erat, quo nox tardis invecta quadrigis  
nondum stelliferi mediam pervenit Olympi  
ad metam et tacito scintillant sidera motu,  
cum silvaeque urbesque silent, cum fessa labore

accipiunt placidos mortalia pectora somnos;  
non fera, non volucris, non picto corpore serpens  
dat sonitum, iamque in cineres consederat ignis  
ultimus et sera perfusus membra quiete  
scruposo senior caput acclinaverat antro:

It was the time when Night rides on her slow four-horse chariot,  
not yet reaching the mid turning-point of starry Olympus,  
and the stars are sparkling on their silent course,  
when both the forests and the cities are at rest,  
when mortal hearts, wearied by toil, take peaceful slumber;  
not a wild animal, not a bird, not a snake with ornate body  
utters a sound, and now the very last flame had subsided into  
embers,  
and the elderly man, his body overcome by the late night's  
stillness,  
had laid his head down upon the rough cave:

Sannazaro's reference to this particular passage in Apollonius imports the supernatural elements associated with Medea in preparation for the next 'supernatural/divine' event. Mary is awakened by brilliant light and celestial music and recognises that the time of birth is drawing nigh (DPV 2:318-323):

ecce autem nitor ex alto novus emicat omnemque  
exuperat veniens atrae caliginis umbram  
auditique chori superum et coelestia curvas  
agmina pulsantum citharas ac voce canentum.  
agnovit sonitum partusque instare propinquos  
haud dubiis virgo sensit laetissima signis.

But, behold! An extraordinary brightness is shining forth from above, and, in its' coming, illuminates every shady nook of dismal gloom and choirs of angels and the heavenly host are heard, plucking curved lyres and singing harmoniously. The virgin, in her utmost joy, recognised the sound and felt, by the obvious signs that the time of birth was soon approaching.

For the actual Birth of Christ, Sannazaro follows the Biblical account found in the Gospels:<sup>159</sup>

iam laeta laborum,  
iam non tacta metu saeculi regina future  
stabat adhuc, nihil ipsa suo cum corde caducum,  
350 nil mortale putans: illam natusque paterque  
quique prius quam sol coelo, quam luna niteret,  
spiritus obscuras ibat super igneus undas,  
stant circum et magnis permulcent pectora curis.  
praeterea redeunt animo quaecunque verendus  
355 dixerat interpres, acti sine pondere menses  
servatusque pudor, clausa cum protinus alvo  
(o noctem superis laetam et mortalibus aegris!),  
sicut erat foliis stipulaque innixa rigenti,  
divinum, spectante polo spectantibus astris,  
360 edit onus: qualis rorem cum vere tepenti  
per tacitum matutinus desudat Eous  
et passim teretes lucent per gramina guttae;  
terra madet, madet aspersa sub veste viator  
horridus et pluviae vim non sensisse cadentis  
365 admirans gelidas hudo pede proterit herbas.

Now rapt in childbirth, no longer stricken in awe, the queen of the coming age remained still, meditating in her heart on nothing fleeting, thinking nothing mortal: the Son, the Father, and the fiery Spirit who passed over the dark waves, before the sun shone in heaven, before the moon shone, stand near and soothe her heart with mighty cares. In addition, all that the awe-inspiring messenger had foretold returns to her mind, the months spent without impediment, and her modesty having been preserved, when suddenly, from her confined womb (O joyous night for gods and suffering mortals!), as she supported herself upon foliage and stiff straw, she gives birth to her divine offspring, whilst heaven watches, whilst the stars look on.

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<sup>159</sup> (Luke 2:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25)

Just like the early morning star in temperate springtime when it silently exudes its dew, and rounded - droplets, dispersedly placed, sparkle amidst the grass; The earth is drenched, the unkempt traveller is sodden beneath his rain-splashed clothing, and, surprised not to feel the force of the plummeting rain, he treads the cold turf with sodden-foot.

In the morning-star simile, by his reference to the unkempt wayfarer longing for repose, Sannazaro also continues the thread from Apollonius. The traveller not only spans the centuries from the Hellenistic age to the early sixteenth-century, but also operates as a figure in transit, carrying the narrative forward from the depths of dark night to the warmth of a sparkling spring morning and the birth of Christ. Following the actual event, reference to the painless labour, pregnancy without burden, and the preservation of chastity all serve to emphasise the purity of the Virgin Birth (see 2:369-371). This is illustrated further via the incorporation of a simile (at 2:372-376) where the Virgin's womb is compared to a pane of glass, penetrated by a beam of sunlight:

haud aliter quam cum purum specularia solem  
admittunt; lux ipsa quidem pertransit et omnes  
irrupens laxat tenebras et discutit umbras;  
illa manent inlaesa, haud ullia pervia vento,  
non hyemi, radiis sed tantum obnoxia Phoebi.

Not unlike window-panes when they let in pure sunlight; indeed the very light filters through, and bursting forth it dissolves all darkness and scatters the shadows; The glass-panes remain unscathed, impervious to any wind, impervious to stormy weather, but exposed only to the rays of Phoebus.

Medieval theologians used to compare the Virgin to a spotless glass window penetrated by a beam of sunlight, itself symbolic of the word or spirit of God during the conception of Christ or his birth. The sunlight simile can be traced to the New Testament and Christ's famous statement (John 8:12) that

*“ego sum lux mundi”* (“I am the light of the world”). This comparison became a fully developed topos by the ninth century, and can be found in texts of Peter Damian, Hildebert of Lavardin, and William of Champeaux. In the twelfth century, Bernard of Clairvaux explained in clear terms the essence of the simile:

‘Just as the brilliance of the sun fills and penetrates a glass window without damaging it, and pierces its solid form with imperceptible subtlety, neither hurting it when entering, nor destroying it when emerging: thus the word of God, the splendour of the Father, entered the virgin chamber and then came forth from the closed womb.’<sup>160</sup>

#### 6.5.9 THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY (2:409-443)<sup>161</sup>

This scene shows a representation of the ‘Immaculate Mary’ at her Assumption. This representation of Mary has been illustrated by Titian (1518) and Correggio (1524-30), and later, by Caravaggio (1606). In Sannazaro’s epic, following the Virgin Birth, Mary is described as inanimate, levitating and surrounded by a winged gathering of angels, glowing with a greater radiance, bathed in celestial light, and orchestrated by a heavenly concert of praise (2:409-415). Joseph’s first vision of mother and child is described thus:

Vocibus interea sensim puerilibus heros  
410 excitus somnum expulerat noctemque fugarat  
ex oculis, iamque infantem videt et videt ipsam  
maiolem aspect maiori et lumine matrem  
fulgentem, nec quoquam oculos aut ora moventem  
sublimemque solo, superum cingente caterva  
415 aligera:

Meanwhile, the hero, gradually roused by childish cries, had banished sleep and put night to flight from his eyes, and now he sees the baby, now he sees the mother herself, more beautiful to behold and glowing with a greater radiance, not changing her gaze, nor changing her

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<sup>160</sup> Bloch (2016), 73-4

<sup>161</sup> See Shoemaker (2002)

expression, elevated from the ground, surrounded by a winged-flock of angels.

Mary is then compared to a Phoenix (2:415-421), which was itself a symbol of Resurrection.<sup>162</sup> The myth of the Phoenix was told throughout antiquity, appearing in different forms in the works of such writers as Herodotus, Ovid and Pliny. Among Christians it is clear that the myth was seized upon either as providing a symbol of resurrection in the natural world, as an analogy to Christ's resurrection, or was interpreted typologically as applying to Christ'.<sup>163</sup> In the later Middle Ages, and during the Renaissance, the Phoenix came to be used a symbol for Mary, rather than as a symbol for Christ.<sup>164</sup> Sannazaro's account is as follows:

420 qualis nostrum cum tendit in orbem  
purpureis rutilat pennis nitidissima phoenix,  
quam variae circum volucres comitantur euntem;  
illa volans solem native provocat auro  
fulva caput, caudam et roseis interlita punctis  
caeruleam; stupet ipsa cohors plausuque sonoro  
per sudum strepit innumeris executus alis.

Just like a Phoenix in full-splendour, rosily-glowing with its purple plumage, when it directs itself into our realm, whilst coloured birds escort her as she flies; soaring, her tawny head challenging the sun with natural gold, her caerulean

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<sup>162</sup> Another possible source could have been '*The Phoenix*' attributed to Lactantius.

<sup>163</sup> Carolinne White (2000), 27

<sup>164</sup> Recent research by Heffernan (1988) indicates an earlier association with Mary and a larger role for maternal and feminine principles than was previously thought to exist in early medieval Christian thought.<sup>164</sup> The association of the Virgin with the Phoenix specifically at the moment of childbirth appears to have its source in a fifth century Coptic sermon preserved at the University of Utrecht. The phoenix sermon was part of a celebration of the *Commemoration of Mary*. The most significant event celebrated in this Marian feast was the event that distinguished the life of Mary: the virgin birth of Christ. According to the Coptic text, the last known appearance of the Phoenix marked the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.

tail smudged with rose-coloured spots, its' very entourage is astounded and a flock with countless wings resounds applause throughout the clear sky.

Sannazaro emphasises Mary's role as co-redemptrix with Christ by fusing the 'Immaculate Mary' with 'Mary as a symbol of Resurrection'. The earliest Christian writers and Fathers of the Church explained Marian co-redemption with great profundity in simplicity in the first theological model of Mary as the 'Second Eve' They articulated that as Eve, the first 'mother of the living' (Genesis 3:20), was directly instrumental with Adam, 'the father of the human race', in the loss of grace for all humanity, so too Mary 'the Second Eve', was directly instrumental with Jesus Christ, whom St Paul calls the 'Second Adam' (Corinthians 15:45-48), in the restoration of grace to all humanity. In the words of Irenaeus: 'just as Eve, wife of Adam, yet still a virgin, became by her disobedience the cause of death for herself and the whole human race, so Mary, too, espoused yet a virgin, became by her obedience the cause of salvation for herself and the whole human race.'<sup>165</sup>

#### 6.5.10 AN ENCOMIUM TO THE VIRGIN MARY AND THE VIRGIN BIRTH (3:201-210)

Echoing Virgil's *Eclogue* 4.4, the Encomium to Mary takes the form of a song, given by Lycidas (3:192-236):

195 at Lycidas vix urbe sua, vix colle propinquo  
cognitus aequoreas carmen deflexit ad undas –  
et tamen hi non voce pares, non viribus aequis,  
inter adorantum choreas plaususque deorum,  
rustica septena modulatur carmina canna:  
'Hoc erat, alme puer parrils quod noster in antris

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<sup>165</sup> See Irenaeus, *Adversus haeresus* III, 22



Tityrus attritae spreuit rude carmen avenae,  
 et cecinit dignas romano consule silvas.  
 200 Ultima cumaei venit iam carminis aetas,  
 magna per exactos renovantur saecula cursus;  
 scilicet haec virgo, haec sunt Saturnia regnas,  
 haec nova progenies coelo descendit ab alto,  
 progenies per quam toto gens aurea mundo  
 205 surget et in mediis palmis florebit aristis.  
 Qua duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri  
 irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras  
 et vetitum magni pandetur limen Olympi;  
 ocediet et serpens, miseros quae prima parentes  
 210 elsuit portentificis imbuta venenis.  
 Tu ne deum vitam accippies divisque videbis  
 permistos heroas et ipse videberis illis  
 pacatumque reges patriis virtutibus orbem?  
 Aspice felici diffusum lumine coelum  
 215 camposque fluviosque ipsasque in montibus herbas  
 aspice, venturo laerentur ut omnia saeco.  
 Ipsae lacte domum referent distenta capellae  
 hubera nec magnose metuent armenta leones,  
 agnaeque per gladios ibit securas nocentes  
 220 bisque superfusos sevabit tincta rubores.  
 Interea tibi, parve puer, munuscula prima  
 contingent ederaeque intermixtique corymbi;  
 ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores  
 et dufae quaecumque sudabunt roscida mella  
 225 mella dabit quercus, omnis feret omnia tellus.  
 At postquam firmata virum te fecerit aetas  
 et tua iam totum notescere facta per orbem,  
 alter erit tum Tiphys et altera quae vehat Argos  
 delectos heroas; erunt etiam altera bella  
 230 atque ingens stygias ibis praedator ad undas.  
 Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem,  
 cara dei soboles, magnum coeli incrementum

Whilst Lycidas, scarcely recognised in his own city,  
 Scarcely recognised on the neighbouring hills, bent  
 his melody to the sea's waves –And yet these,  
 though unequal in voice, inadequate in power,  
 Perform their rustic music on seven-fold reed,  
 amongst the dancing and applause of the

worshipping angels, "It was for this reason, beloved boy, that our Tityrus, in his ancestral caverns, spurned the crude music of the well-worn reed pipe, and sang of woods fit for a Roman consul.

Now the last age of the Cumae has come, the mighty ages are being renewed by means of their accomplished course; this, for certain, is the Virgin, these are the kingdoms of Saturn, this new offspring descends from lofty Heaven, an offspring through whom a golden race will arise throughout the world and a vine will flourish in the harvest's midst. If any traces of our sin remain, under his command they will become in vain, and release the earth from her everlasting fear and the once-forbidden threshold of mighty Olympus will be thrown open; and the serpent will perish, which, dripping with monstrous poisons, first deceived our wretched parents. Will you undertake the life of God, and will you behold the hero walking together with the gods? And will you yourself be seen by them? And will you rule over a peaceful world with ancestral values?

Behold the heavens, and the meadows, and the rivers, and the very grasses on the mountain slopes, suffused with a blessed radiance; Behold how all things rejoice with the coming age!

The she-goats, unbidden, will bring home milk-swollen udders, the herds will not fear mighty lions, and the ewe-lamb will advance through injurious swords and, having been twice stained, will preserve the shame spilled over it. Meanwhile, the first small gifts of ivy intermingled with its clustered berries, will be granted to you, small child; the very cradle will pour forth tender blossoms for you and sturdy oaks will exude dripping honeys; oaks will distil honey, and, in all respects, the earth will bear all things.

But after established age has matured you to manhood and then your achievement will become known throughout the whole world, then there will be another Tiphys and another Argo to carry chosen heroes; there will also be other wars and you will go, a mighty plunderer, to the Stygian waters. Begin, small child, beloved offspring of God, mighty

progeny of the heavens, to acknowledge your  
mother with a smile.’<sup>166</sup>

Through the birth of Christ, Mary has brought about the reversal of Eve’s legacy. Eve’s disobedience resulted in the Fall into Sin of the entire human race. The result was death – physically and spiritually. The Virgin’s obedience to God resulted in the offer of the gift of salvation to the entire human race. The result was a spiritually eternal life. The ending of the Marian narrative thus takes the reader back to the very beginning and Sannazaro’s first theological model of Mary as the ‘Second Eve’, as ordained by God in his opening prophecy scene. Virgil’s *Messianic Eclogue* not only provided Sannazaro with the germ of the epic’s storyline but also provided a neatly conclusive ending to the Marian narrative.

#### 6.6 THE CHRISTIAN NARRATIVE (THE SUBSIDIARY NARRATIVE(S): KING DAVID’S PROPHECY & JORDAN’S SPEECH).

The densest concentration of biblical allusion is contained in the prophecies given by the spirit of King David at the end of book 1, and by Proteus, via Jordan’s song, at the end of book 3. Biblical material is taken from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. David’s prophecy outlines Christ’s life from His birth to His Resurrection, incorporating episodes from the Gospels,<sup>167</sup> whilst

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<sup>166</sup> Compare the final lines of this passage with Virgil’s *Eclogue* 4:60-1: Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem/: matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses, (Begin, baby boy, to recognize your mother with a smile: ten months have brought your mother long travail).

<sup>167</sup> 1:256: The Adoration of the Magi (Matthew 2:1-12); 1:265-270 The Song of Simeon (Luke 2:25-35); 1:274 The slaughter of the innocents and the flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:16-18); 1:283-295 The Loss of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52) & the finding of Jesus in the temple

Jordan's song, relating Proteus' prophecy, tells of the miracles Christ performed.<sup>168</sup> An ecphrasis of Jordan's urn depicts the Baptism of Christ, again with references to the gospels.<sup>169</sup> These two sets of prophecy scenes cluster around the central core of the epic - book 2 – which is devoted entirely to the Virgin Mary and the Virgin Birth. However, the subsidiary prophecies do not come into play until after the birth of Christ. The poet's persona introduces Christ's purpose as redeemer in the opening lines of the epic when he informs the reader that he was: 'Born of a virgin, offspring coeval with his mighty Father who, sent through the lofty breezes of heaven, washed away from ailing mortals the ancient taint of their race and thrust open the blocked path to Olympus (1:1-4).'

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(Luke 2:46-52); 1:305-367 Christ's Passion & 1:333ff. The Crucifixion (John 19); 1:333ff. Mary meets Jesus on the way to the cross (John 19:1ff. & Luke 23:26-32); 1:369-381 Christ's Death and Darkness (Luke 23:44-49)/ Virgil *Georgics* 1:463-468); 1:381-386 The Resurrection (Matthew 24 & the Apocalypse 10-11); 1: 407, the quadriga Christi; 1 : 436, the genealogy of Christ (Matthew 1-16); 1:444-452 Olympus merges into heavenly Jerusalem (Revelations 21:10-22).

<sup>168</sup> 3:349 Christ heals the lepers, (Matthew 8:1-3), (Mark 1:40-42), (Luke 5:12-14& 17:12-15); 3:351 Christ heals the sick (fevers) (Matthew 8:14-15), (Mark 1:29-32), (Luke 4:38-39); 3:355 Christ heals the lunatic and the dumb, (Matthew 17:15-18), (Mark 9:17-27); 3:361, Christ heals the dropsy (Luke 14:2); 3:363, Christ heals the dumb (Matthew 9:32-33); 3:362-365, Christ causes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak (Mark 7:32-35), (Luke 11:14); 3:363-365 Christ heals the blind (Matthew 9:27), (Matthew 20:29-34), (Mark 10:46-52); 3:370, Christ cures those vexed by the devil, (Matthew 15:21-31), Christ cures the blind and the lame (Matthew 21:14); 3:373, Christ cures those with the palsy (Matthew 8:5-13) (Mark 2:3-12) (Luke 5:18-25) (John 5:12); 3:380, Christ cures a man with a withered hand (Matthew 12:10-13) (Mark 3:1-5) (Luke 6:6-10); 3:381ff Christ cures a woman with emission of blood (Matthew 9:20-22) (Mark 5:22-34) (Luke 8:41-48) (John the Baptist's ministry, then Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee after John's arrest, (Mark 1:12-15); 3:385 Christ cures those with unclean spirits (Matthew 8:16) (Mark 1:23-27) (Mark 5:8-9) (Luke 4:33-35) (Luke 6:18) (Luke 8:27-33); 3:391 Christ cures those with unclean spirits (Matthew 9:23) (Mark 1:27) (Luke 7:12-15) (John 11:1-44); 3:391 Christ performs a miracle (The Resurrection of Lazarus) (John 11:1-44); 3:430 The fishermen/Disciples (Matthew 4:18-21); 3:437, The powers of the Disciples (Matthew 10:1) (Mark 3:15& 16:18-19) (Luke 9:1); 3:443, The twelve thrones (Matthew 19:28) (Luke 22:30); 3:469 Christ performs miracles (loaves and fishes) (Matthew 14:16-21) (Mark 6:38-44) (Luke 9:13-17) (John 6:9); 3:472, (Matthew 14:15); Jesus walks upon the sea (Mark 6:48) (John 6:18-19), 3:479 See language of John (20:30, 21:25).

<sup>169</sup> *De partu virginis* 3:298-497

The spirit of King David, (the King of Israel, the writer of psalms and Messianic prophet) enters the frame at the close of book 1. By this choice of poetic narrative in the canonical gospels: Luke 3:23-38 and Matthew 1:1-17. While Luke traces the genealogy upwards towards Adam and God, Matthew traces it downwards towards Jesus. Both gospels state that Jesus was begotten not by Joseph, but by God. Both accounts trace Joseph back to King David and from there to Abraham. David is thus an appropriate omniscient narrator capable of prophesising the story to come.

David's prophecy operates as a BILDUNGSROMAN of the first thirty years of Christ's private life, his personal story, from his birth to his ultimate triumph. Various episodes from the Gospels are juxtaposed to achieve this linear effect.<sup>172</sup> Luke and Matthew describe Jesus being born in Bethlehem, in Judea, to a virgin mother. In Matthew, wise men follow a star to Bethlehem to bring gifts to Jesus, born King of the Jews. David's prophecy opens with the introduction of the Eastern kings, following the star, symbolically illustrating the infancy of Jesus, following the account found in Matthew. The next allusion is to Simeon, whose mention in later Biblical history is as the righteous and reverent old man who entered the temple on the very day that Joseph and Mary brought in the child Jesus for the ceremony of consecration of the first-born son (not the

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<sup>170</sup> According to the Gospels, at the Annunciation, Gabriel told Mary that she would have a son called Jesus and that the Lord God would give him the throne of his father, David. According to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, "Jesus Christ, Son of David," was both the legal and natural heir to the throne of David. Paul said that Jesus was the offspring of David according to the flesh. The common people also identified Jesus as the "Son of David". It is important to establish this, for, as the Pharisees admitted, Messiah would be David's son. The resurrected Jesus himself also bore witness, saying: "I, Jesus ... am the root and the offspring of David."

<sup>171</sup> Revelations 22:16

<sup>172</sup> 1:256: The Adoration of the Magi (Matthew 2:1-12); 1:265-270, The Song of Simeon (Luke 2:25-35); 1:274 Christ's Passion & 1:333ff. The Crucifixion (John 19); 1:333ff. Mary meets Jesus on the way to the cross (John 19:1ff. & Luke 23:26-32); 1:369-381 Christ's Death and Darkness (Luke 23:44-49)/ Virgil *Georgics* 1:463-468); 1:381-386 The Resurrection (Matthew 24 & the Apocalypse 10-11); 1: 407, the quadriga Christi; 1: 436, the genealogy of Christ (Matthew 1-16); 1:444-452 Olympus merges into heavenly Jerusalem (Revelations 21:10-22).

circumcision, but rather after the time of Mary's purification: at least forty days after the birth). It had been divinely revealed to Simeon that, before his death, he would see Christ. He therefore took the baby up in his arms, blessed God, and with the Holy Spirit upon him, declared to the child's mother 'Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against.'<sup>173</sup>

David prophecy continues with the slaughter of the innocents and the flight into Egypt (1:283-295), as described in Matthew.<sup>174</sup> The narrative then fast-tracks to Christ's youth showing the visit to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years old,<sup>175</sup> and, six years later, when he was eighteen, preaching to the elders at Nazareth.<sup>176</sup> The harrowing scenes of the Passion – the Garden of Gethsemane, the Crown of Thorns, and the Crucifix constructed from Palm-wood (1:305-332) - prepare the reader for Christ's Crucifixion (1:333ff.).<sup>177</sup> & <sup>178</sup> various supernatural events accompany the Crucifixion including darkness of the sky, an earthquake, and (in Matthew) the Resurrection of saints. Sannazaro portrays Christ's death and darkness with a mixture of Biblical and Classical imagery (1:372), <sup>179</sup> drawing on Luke 23:44-49, and Virgil (*Georgics* 1:463-468) which illustrates the sun's eclipse at the murder of Julius Caesar.<sup>180</sup> At 3:236-

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<sup>173</sup> Luke 2:34

<sup>174</sup> Matthew 2:16-18

<sup>175</sup> Luke 2:41-52

<sup>176</sup> Luke 2:46-52

<sup>177</sup> See John 19 & Luke 23:26-32;

<sup>178</sup> Mary receives the dead body of her son see John 19:31-34, 38; Lamentations 1:12; Jesus is laid in the tomb, John 19:39-42

<sup>179</sup> See also Luke 23:46, Mark 15:22, Mark 15:34, John 19:18, 19: 25-27

<sup>180</sup> *'solem quis dicere falsum audeat? ille etiam caecos instare tumultus/saepe monet fraudemque et operta tumescere bella./ille etiam exstincto miseratus Caesare Romam/ cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine textit/impiaque aeternam timuerunt saecula noctem'*.

280, the Angelic host prepare for Christ's Crucifixion (3:236-280). Sannazaro's text shows the darkening of the sun and the moon, symbolising the Crucifixion (1:368-378), the Harrowing of Hell (and the release of the just from Limbo), followed by the Resurrection (1:378-386).<sup>181</sup> David's speech closes with an ecphrasis illustrating the *Quadrigi Christii* symbolising the triumph of Christ (1:405-442). This ecphrasis, at the close of the first book, is a particularly important scene which, as will be shown, correlates with the final words of Jordan's speech at 3:415ff.

Jordan's song, on the other hand, continues the story of Christ, but in a different vein. Jordan relates information passed on to him by (the mutable) Proteus concerning the life of Christ. Proteus tells of events long-passed, so, on the one hand, this account is retrospective, although its function is to show future events. Proteus informs Jordan of the Baptism of Jesus which will bring glory to his waters and the events that will occur with the arrival of Jesus. In stark contrast to King David's account, which has biblical grounding, this is 'second-hand' information, 'hearsay', and not necessarily the Gospel truth. Jordan's song narrates the public life of Jesus and his ministry. This is achieved by relating a selection of the miracles he performed, although they do not follow a strictly chronological order.<sup>182</sup> The Baptism of Jesus marks the beginning of

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<sup>181</sup> Matthew 24 and the Apocalypse 10-11

<sup>182</sup> 3:349 Christ heals the lepers, (Matthew 8:1-3), (Mark 1:40-42), (Luke 5:12-14& 17:12-15); 3:351 Christ heals the sick (fevers) (Matthew 8:14-15), (Mark 1:29-32), (Luke 4:38-39); 3:355 Christ heals the lunatic and the dumb, (Matthew 17:15-18), (Mark 9:17-27); 3:361, Christ heals the dropsy (Luke 14:2); 3:363, Christ heals the dumb (Matthew 9:32-33); 3:362-365, Christ causes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak (Mark 7:32-35), (Luke 11:14); 3:363-365 Christ heals the blind (Matthew 9:27), (Matthew 20:29-34), (Mark 10:46-52); 3:370, Christ cures those vexed by the devil, (Matthew 15:21-31), Christ cures the blind and the lame (Matthew 21:14); 3:373, Christ cures those with the palsy (Matthew 8:5-13) (Mark 2:3-12) (Luke 5:18-25) (John 5:12); 3:380, Christ cures a man with a withered hand (Matthew 12:10-13) (Mark 3:1-5) (Luke 6:6-10); 3:381ff Christ cures a woman with emission of blood (Matthew 9:20-22) (Mark 5:22-34)



his public ministry. The event is recorded in the Canonical Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In John 1:29-33, rather than a direct narrative, John the Baptist bears witness to the episode. In Luke, John the Baptist preached a 'baptism with water', not of forgiveness but of penance or repentance for the remission of sins (Luke 3:3), and declared himself a forerunner to one who would baptise 'with the Holy Spirit and with fire' (Luke 3:16). In so doing he was preparing the way for Jesus. Jesus came to the Jordan River where he was baptised by John.

In preparation for the Baptism, Jordan and his array of daughters, clad in white garments and red buskins, lay out snow-white towels of linen, 'fit for a god', on the riverbank (3:281-297).<sup>183</sup> An ecphrasis of Jordan's urn depicts the Baptism of Christ (3:298-312) and, (at 3:307) there is a reference to John the Baptist,<sup>184</sup> which precedes the actual Baptism (3:309- 317).<sup>185</sup> Three of the four Gospels agree on the details of the Baptismal scene which includes the Heavens opening, a dove-like descent of the Holy Spirit, and a voice from Heaven saying, 'This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.'<sup>186</sup>

Sannazaro's text closely adheres to the biblical account: 'The Father himself

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(Luke 8:41-48) (John the Baptist's ministry, then Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee after John's arrest, (Mark 1:12-15); 3:385 Christ cures those with unclean spirits (Matthew 8:16) (Mark 1:23-27) (Mark 5:8-9) (Luke 4:33-35) (Luke 6:18) (Luke 8:27-33); 3:391 Christ cures those with unclean spirits (Matthew 9:23) (Mark 1:27) (Luke 7:12-15) (John 11:1-44); 3:391 Christ performs a miracle (The Resurrection of Lazarus) (John 11:1-44); 3:430 The fishermen/Disciples (Matthew 4:18-21); 3:437, The powers of the Disciples (Matthew 10:1) (Mark 3:15& 16:18-19) (Luke 9:1); 3:443, The twelve thrones (Matthew 19:28) (Luke 22:30); 3:469 Christ performs miracles (loaves and fishes) (Matthew 14:16-21) (Mark 6:38-44) (Luke 9:13-17) (John 6:9); 3:472, (Matthew 14:15); Jesus walks upon the

sea (Mark 6:48) (John 6:18-19), 3:479 See language of John (20:30, 21:25).

<sup>183</sup> Acts 1:10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel.

<sup>184</sup> Matthew 3:4: 'Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey.'

<sup>185</sup> John 1:29-34

<sup>186</sup> Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:32-34.

gave clear signs far and wide in the cloudless heavens. For his Son he sent through the void a nimble dove, striking for its rays and shimmering fire (3:312-315).’

After his Baptism, Jesus’s Early Galilean Ministry begins when he goes back to Galilee from his time in the Judean desert. In this early period he preaches around Galilee and recruits his first disciples who begin to travel with him and eventually form the core of the early Church. The Major Galilean Ministry, which begins in Matthew 8, includes the commissioning of the Twelve Apostles, and covers most of the ministry of Jesus in Galilee. Sannazaro’s account of the miracles shows episodes from the Major Galilean Ministry, although not necessarily in chronological order.<sup>187</sup> After the raising of Lazarus episode which took part in Bethany, and following the death of John the Baptist, the Final Galilean Ministry begins with the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem.<sup>188</sup>

## 6.7 GODS FINAL SPEECH: THE RECONCILIATION SCENE (ECPHRASIS)

At the end, after the miraculous event of the Virgin Birth, in his third and final speech (3:32-88), God addresses a host of Angels. God’s speeches operate as a ring-composition, and his intention, as specified in his first speech, reaches fruition in his closing speech. In the reconciliation scene, the omission

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<sup>187</sup> Christ’s healing of lepers (3:349)<sup>187</sup>; Christ’s healing of the sick (3:351)<sup>187</sup>; Christ’s healing of the lunatic, and the dumb (3:355)<sup>187</sup>; Christ’s healing of the dropsy (3:361)<sup>187</sup>; Christ heals the dumb (3:363)<sup>187</sup>; Christ causes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak (3:362-365)<sup>187</sup>; Christ heals the blind (3:363-365)<sup>187</sup>; Christ cures those vexed by the devil (3:370)<sup>187</sup>; Christ cures the blind and the lame (?)<sup>187</sup>; Christ cures those with the palsy (3:373)<sup>187</sup>; Christ cures a man with a withered hand (3:380)<sup>187</sup> DPV Book 3:381ff. see Matthew 9:20-22, & Mark 5:22-34, also Luke 8:41-48. (John the Baptist’s ministry, then Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee after John’s arrest, (Mark 1:12-15)). Then Unclean spirits (3:385); <sup>187</sup>Then Sannazaro refers to the various resurrections Christ performed: the raising of Jairus’ daughter,<sup>187</sup> the raising of the widow’s son at Nain,<sup>187</sup> and the raising of Lazarus.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>188</sup> Matthew 21 and Mark 11

of a Juno figure, (or a replacement recipient), is once again significant. Following the 'Virgilian' pattern once again, the 'typical' final speech between the divine couple is deliberately omitted and replaced by God's lengthy address to an assembly of silent, (and unresponsive), angels (3:34-88). God expands on his earlier

Hic faustos ortus pueri noctemque verendam  
discursu per inane levi passimque canoris  
laudibus excipite et plausu celebrate faventes  
omnia felicem ventura in saecula pacem

certatimque renascentis cunabula mundi,  
victum anguem victumque anguis furiale venenum  
sic placitum, sic aversos coniungere terris  
coelicolas, sic ferre homines ad sidera certum est.

Both here and everywhere, receive along with the tuneful praises  
the auspicious birth of the child and the awe-inspiring night  
following the light descent through the sky's expanse, and, expressing your  
applause, earnestly honour the blessed peace destined to come amongst all  
generations, and the cradle of the newly-born world, the serpent subdued, and  
the serpent's avenging poison overcome. Thus it is my resolved plea, to join  
estranged angels to the earth in such a manner, so that mankind can be raised  
to the stars.

With a stylish, and particularly Virgilian flourish, therefore, Sannazaro closes his  
storyline with an intertextual reference to *Eclogue* 4.4ff. (The serpent is

subdued, subdued the serpent's frenzied poison). God's plan has now reached fruition.<sup>189</sup>

## 6.8 THE FINAL SCENE: THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST

Sannazaro draws upon two separate strands of intellectual history for the Triumph of Christ and the *Quadriga Christi*. The first strand of intellectual history is the progress of Christ after the crucifixion visualised as a continuous triumphal procession, beginning with the Harrowing of Hell (and the release of the just from Limbo), followed by the Resurrection and the Ascension into heaven. With Christ's Ascension, Olympus merges into heavenly Jerusalem (1:440-452):

Tali sidereas curru subvectus in auras,  
indutos referens spoliis pallentibus axes,  
perveniet, recto qua panditur orbita tractu  
lactea et ad sedes ducit candentis Olympi.  
illic auratae muros mirabimur urbis  
auratasque domos et gemmea tecta viasque  
stelliferas vitreosque altis cum montibus amnes.  
atque ibi, seu magni celsum penetrale Tonantis  
sive alios habitare lares ac tecta minorum

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<sup>189</sup> A century earlier, Maphaeus Vegius had closed his epic *The Thirteenth Book of the Aeneid* (1428) intertextually, and created an ending to end all endings, via an Ovidian line.

coelicolum dabitur, stellas numerare licebit

surgentemque diem pariter pariterque cadentem

sub pedibus spectare et longos ducere soles

longaque venturis protendere nomina saeculis.

He will arrive, in such a manner, conveyed upwards in the starry skies, bringing home his chariot clothed with pallid spoils, whereby the right path spreads out into the Milky-Way, and it leads towards the palaces of shining-white Olympus. And there, He will marvel at the walls of the golden city, and the buildings adorned with gold, and the roof-tops set with precious stones, and the star-bearing streets, and the glassy rivers with high mountains. And there, he will be granted to dwell either in the high shrines of the Mighty Thunderer, or the dwellings of the lesser gods (the Saints). He will be able to count the stars beneath his feet, and watch the day equally rising, and equally falling, and to guide the distant suns and to prolong their long-enduring names in future generations.

In the second strand of intellectual history drawn upon, Christ is carried in a chariot drawn by the four evangelists in their symbolic guises – Luke as an ox, Mark as a Lion, John as an eagle, and Matthew as an angel. In origin the scenario goes back to Roman triumphal practice, which was adopted, and adapted, in early Christian painting for illustrations of Christ, in a chariot, in the pose of a *triumphator*. Fantazzi (1997) has shown that this subject has been a favourite one in the figurative arts as well as poetry, and several humanist poets have experimented with it. Macario Muzio, for example, in his *De Triumpho Christi*. Both Muzio and Sannazaro draw on the legends contained in the

apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, in which a vision of Christ's triumphal entrance into Limbo is portrayed. As Guilia Calisti (1926, p.69, note 2), has shown, Sannazaro may well have been aware of it through the widely-circulated *Legenda aurea* of Jacopo da Voragine.<sup>190</sup> Another possible source, especially for the description of the *Quadrigi Christi* is the procession of the Church triumphant in Canto XXIX of the *Purgatorio* (vv.106-154). To introduce the scene the poet adds the paean to Christ which David sings, punctuated by a ritual exclamation from Roman religion: "Victor, io; bellator, io!" (1.404). In both representations the four living creatures from the vision of Ezechiel and the apocalypse representing the four evangelists draws the chariot of Christ. As Fantazzi (1997, p. 247), has illustrated, Sannazaro's account is very descriptive, 'as if it were based on a miniature, richly adorned with gold and various colours in some manuscript.' At the end of his description he makes specific reference to its pictorial qualities: '*vero agnoscere vultus est illic, verso montes et flumina credas et vera extreme Babylon nitet aurea limbo*' (1.437-9). This description, however, is not describing the Chariot of Christ, but a luxurious cloak that the winged-youth is wearing (1.432-439). (This second, minor, ecphrasis, (embedded within this major ecphrasis), describes Matthew's cloak (1:432-438) shows the genealogy of Christ). Fantazzi (1997) p.247, continues, 'He had composed such triumphs before in his *Farsa per la presa di Granata*, and he must himself have witnessed such pageants in Naples. As the glorious procession continues, 'select souls' (?) follow their liberator to the starry realms and the magnificent habitations predicted in the Book of Revelation.' Yet, it can be argued, that the use of the noun *patres* (at 1.453) appears to encourage different readings. What Fantazzi (1997) p.247, interprets as meaning 'select

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<sup>190</sup> *Il De Partu Virginis di Jacobo Sannazaro* (Citta di castello, 1926), 69, n.2.

souls', and what Kennedy (1984) interprets as the representing 'the souls of the Blessed dead', appears to be incorrect. Sannazaro's reference here is, in fact, to the 'Church Fathers', where he infers an image of expansive Christianity and its subsequent diffusion throughout the wider world (1.453-455). This scene thus allows Sannazaro to close his epic with a scene of Christian triumph, elaborate with the pomp and ceremony that was lacking at the end of the *Aeneid*.<sup>191</sup>

## 6.9 THE RESOLUTION OF *DE PARTU VIRGINIS*

Sannazaro achieves closure to his epic by the deliberate omission of the major players - Venus and Juno. Unlike the speeches in the *Aeneid*, the speeches are addressed to a silent audience. The deliberate exclusion of Venus from the prophecy scene indicates that the (historical) Biblical narrative can neither be questioned, nor altered, whilst the deliberate exclusion of Juno from the resolution scene indicates that God's decision cannot be frustrated. Yet the removal of the divine players results in a different (singular) narrative structure and the removal of the anger which fuelled an(y) epic ending results in an epic 'dynamic' that has now been fractured. Sannazaro's deconstruction of the Virgilian formula thus lays bare the very workings of the structure imposed by that model. Unlike the *Aeneid* which failed to reach closure because of Juno's on-going wrath, and unlike the *Thirteenth Book* which achieved closure

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<sup>191</sup> In *Aeneid* 6:756-886, Anchises shows his son Aeneas the roll call of Roman descendants, which gives a view forwards from the narratives present. He shows him Caesar, the son of a god, who will restore the golden age to Italy and extend Roman power and influence to the utmost limits of the earth (*Aeneid* 6: 781-800). Jupiter's speech did not achieve the ending the reader expected. At the close of the *Aeneid*, the poem ends neither with the magnanimous exercise of Roman power envisaged by Anchises (6:756-886), nor with the triumphant assertion of Roman power depicted on the shield (8:625-728) (the Roman Imperial ending), but, ironically, with Aeneas for the first time having his heart truly in his task and truly a victim of his own grim destiny.

because of the appeasement of Junonian anger, a (sacred) silence, (and an epic finality), bring closure to this particular storyline of Mary, and her mission within this epic has reached fulfilment. Nonetheless, the Virgilian model still prevails – one narrative structure must close, one narrative structure must remain open: the Marian narrative has achieved its predicted closure, but the Biblical narrative remains open to a perpetual continuity. This effect is achieved by following the Valerian device of a subsidiary narrative. At the Annunciation, the Angel Gabriel, following God’s command, told Mary about Jesus, the Son of God, whose mission was to restore the golden age, and to extend Christian power and influence over the whole earth (1:139-154):

“Exue, dia, metus animo, paritura verendum

coelitibus numen sperataque gaudia terris

aeternamque datura venis per saecula pacem.

Haec ego siderea missus tibi nuntius arce,

sublimis celeres vexit quem penna per auras,

vaticinor, non insidias, non nectere fraudes

edoctus: longe a nostris fraus exulat oris.

Quippe tui magnum magna incrementa per orbem

ipsa olim partus, virgo, sobolisque beatae

aspicies: vincet proavos proavitaque longo

extendet iura imperio populisque vocatis

ad solium late ingentes moderabitur urbes,



nec sceptri iam finis erit nec terminus aevi;

quin iustis paulatim animis pulcherrima surget

religio: non monstra, piis sed numina templis

placabunt castae diris sine caedibus arae.”

“Cast off the fear in your heart, divine one, you are destined to give birth to a divinity who will be revered by the inhabitants of heaven, and you are destined to bring longed-for joy to the earth, and eternal peace through the ages. Sent as your messenger from the starry citadel, I, whom the wing has borne aloft through the swift breezes, make this prediction, well-taught not to weave wiles and deceit – fraud is far in exile from our shores. Indeed you yourself, Virgin, will one day witness great fruitfulness pervading the great earth through your childbearing and through your blessed offspring. He will surpass his forebears, and will extend his ancestral rites by vast empire, and, when the peoples have been summoned to his throne, he will raise mighty cities far and wide. There will never be an end to his rule, nor a boundary to his age. So it is that in the minds of the just the most beautiful form of worship will arise. Not monsters but chaste altars in holy shrines will appease divinities without abominable bloodshed.”

#### 6.10 BEYOND THE ENDING OF *DE PARTU VIRGINIS*

At the close of *De Partu Virginis*, God’s prophecy brings about the anticipated ending, but the Christian narrative, which is perpetual, shows the diffusion of Christian influence as envisaged by God in his prophecy scene, but this does not occur until the following poem. King David’s vision of Heaven in *De Partu Virginis* (1:440-452) corresponds with the final passage, and most specifically with the very final line of *De Morte Christi Domini Ad Mortales Lamentatio* (118).<sup>192</sup> In *De Partu Virginis* we see Christ’s Ascension into

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<sup>192</sup> The function of this closing line in the *Lamentatio* is to retrospectively fashion both poems, the Virgin Birth and the Death of Christ, into an *oeuvre*.

heaven, but in *De Morte Christi Domini Ad Mortales Lamentatio* (114-118)

God's promise of heaven for a Christian finally becomes fulfilled:

Postque tot exhaustos vitaeque obitusque labores,

illo quo pluvias, quo pellit nubila vultu,

ablutos labe excipiet, laetusque reponet

sidereos inter proceres sanctumque senatum,

sub pedibusque dabit stellantia cernere claustra.

And after the many toils and exertions of life and death, with that countenance which banishes the showers, which drives away the clouds, he will receive you, purged from dishonour, and, joyful, he will restore you amongst the Saints and the Holy Senate, and will allow you to see, beneath your feet, the cloisters adorned with stars.

## CONCLUSION

An understanding of how Jupiter and Juno interact is central to an understanding of how the epic genre operates. Virgil follows the Homeric model but capitalises on Juno's propensity to anger and makes her role in the *Aeneid* a purely structural and defining feature of the epic genre.<sup>193</sup> As Ernst Robert Curtius (1953, p.170) correctly noted, 'The epic fable of the *Iliad* is set in motion by the anger of Achilles. Without the angry hero (Achilles, Roland, the Cid) or god (Poseidon in the *Odyssey*, Juno in the *Aeneid*), there is no epic.'

In this study of epic continuity, (from Virgil's *Aeneid*, as far as Sannazaro's *De Partu Virginis*), it soon became apparent that the same 'Virgilian' formula was being used time and time again. All of the subsequent epics, in the broadest sense, appear to be following the Virgilian structure in order to formulate their beginnings and their endings. This suggests that writing an epic, and devising a new ending, was merely a matter of getting the formula right:

- 1) Like the *Aeneid*, their poems had to include a first prophecy scene and a final resolution scene or, in the absence of this, an episodic parallel/substitute.
- 2) Like the *Iliad*, and like the *Aeneid*, their epics had to be engineered to achieve either a mythological closure, a historical closure, or closure on

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<sup>193</sup> Murnaghan (1997, p.27, note 7), states: 'At *Iliad* 15:49-77 Zeus offers Hera an outline of future events, including the linked deaths of Sarpedon, Patroclus, and Hector and the ultimate destruction of Troy, and makes it clear that his promise to Thetis and Hector's consequent success are implicated in that larger scheme. At this point, right after his awakening from Hera's seduction of him in book 14, he is exhorting her to cooperate with him and suggesting that their interests are really the same. Thus the impression he gives in book 1 that he is acting in opposition to Hera is (like the impression that he is capitulating to Thetis and Achilles against his own will) is here revealed to be false'. This, therefore, suggests that a similar (and apparent) tension exists between Zeus and Hera in the *Iliad*.

both planes. This was (generally) achieved by operating on a dual dynamic narrative structure – one human (historical) and one divine.

- 3) The ending of the epic had to be dependent either on divine wrath in order to continue, or on divine harmony, if complete closure was required.

It now remains to summarise how the Virgilian structure was utilised and to show how the subsequent poets took Juno's anger as a 'given' requirement of the epic genre. The following questions will come under scrutiny: How does the poet adhere to the Virgilian model? How do they alter or break the code? And what effect does this have?

#### OVID'S *METAMORPHOSES*

Ovid illustrates the effect of what happens when Juno is removed from the equation. In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid offers the reader two alternative endings to the *Aeneid*. In the first example, at *Metamorphoses* 14:581-608, Ovid follows the Virgilian model in order to resolve the Virgilian narrative, with the specific intention of providing full 'closure' to the *Aeneid*. This passage functions as a direct response to Virgil: Ovid answers, continues, and then concludes, Jupiter's first prophecy from the *Aeneid*. Ovid creates a human narrative by picking up and continuing from the beginning of the *Aeneid*, essentially leaving no break between texts. Although a specific response to Virgil's prophecy scene in *Aeneid* 1, this scene opens with an allusion to the final dialogue between Jupiter and Juno in *Aeneid* 12, where Jupiter tells Juno about the (anticipated) apotheosis of Aeneas: "*indigetem Aenean scis ipsa et scire fateris/ deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli*" (You yourself know, and admit that you know, that Aeneas, as Hero of the land, is claimed by heaven, and that

the Fates exalt him to the stars, 12:794-5). In *Aeneid* 1, Jupiter tells Venus that she will eventually translate her son to the skies: “*sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli magnanimum Aenean*” (and great-souled Aeneas you will raise on high to the starry heavens, 1:259-60). Jupiter then describes the remaining events in Aeneas’s life on earth: “*bellum ingens geret Italia populosque feroces contundet moresque viris et moenia ponet/ tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas/ ternaque transierint Rutulis hiberna subactis*” 1:263-266, ((he) shall wage a great war in Italy, shall crush proud nations, and for his people shall set up laws and city walls till the third summer has seen him reigning in Latium and three winters have passed in camp since the Rutulians were laid low). Later in the same passage he tells her, “*quin aspera luno/ quae mare nunc terrasque metu caelumque fatigat/ consilia in melius referet/ mecumque fovebit Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam*” (Spiteful Juno, who now in her fear troubles sea and earth and sky, shall change to better counsels and with me cherish the Romans, lords of the world and the nation of the toga 1:279-282). Ovid introduces the Virgilian prophecy scene in *medias res*: “*iamque deos omnes ipsamque Aeneia virtus lunonem veteres finire coegerat iras/ cum, bene fundatis opibus crecentis Iuli/ tempestivus erat caelo Cythereius heros*”, *Metamorphoses*, (Now had Aeneas’s courageous soul moved all the gods and even Juno to lay aside their ancient anger, and, since the fortunes of the budding Iulus were well-established, the heroic son of Cytherea was ripe for heaven 14:581-584). Ovid picks up the Virgilian intertext from the moment of Aeneas’s death, omitting the remainder of his life depicted in the *Aeneid*. The implacability of Juno is immediately dealt with when Ovid provides a resolution to Juno’s anger once and for all., Virgil clearly recognised that the animosity between the gods resulted in an ongoing narrative. Ovid toys with this concept,

thereby undermining the wrath that fuelled the *Aeneid*. At the close of the *Iliad*, as Feeney (1991, p.?) has shown, 'the last book re-establishes the relentless natures of the gods' animosities, and similarly in the *Aeneid*, the immortal sphere remains unreconciled with itself at the close', but in this particular Ovidian passage, the gods, for once, are in complete agreement, two aspects of Jupiter's prophecy from the *Aeneid* have thus been resolved: the issue of Aeneas's apotheosis, and the issue of Juno's anger.<sup>194</sup> The harmony achieved between Jupiter and Juno in the *Metamorphoses* indicates that both the human/historical narrative and the divine narrative of the Virgilian text are simultaneously resolved. Ovid thus 'closes' the storyline of the Virgilian narrative, thereby not only undermining the entire purpose of the *Aeneid*, (an epic dependent on the wrath of the gods), but also, more importantly, prevents the means of epic regeneration. A 'happy' Juno results in no future (historical) narrative.

In the second example, the reconciliation scene at the end of the *Metamorphoses* (15:807-39) is a dialogue between Jupiter and Venus, but in two parts: Venus to Jupiter from 15:765-778, then an insert at 15:779-806, followed by Jupiter's reply to Venus at 15:807-842. Some scholars suggest that this scene is a parody,<sup>195</sup> but Ovid's utterly chilling reconciliation scene completely subverts the Virgilian prophecy scene. Ovid's utilisation of this alternative model changes the register and provides a new (anti-Augustan) epic code. This episode is Ovid's rewriting/replacement of the final reconciliation scene between Jupiter and Juno in the *Aeneid* (12:793ff.). This dialogue,

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<sup>194</sup> Ovid, however, shows an experimental, but inconsistent, (and therefore infallible), use of the gods because an earlier episode showed that the animosity between Jupiter and Juno remains unresolved (*Metamorphoses* 9:243-58).

<sup>195</sup> See Fowler 292.

instead, is between father and daughter, but Juno is conspicuous by her very absence. No Juno indicates that Jupiter's decision will be final and the historical narrative will come to an end, (unless a different narrative strategy for continuation is put in its place).

In summary, in Book 14, Ovid creates a divine resolution, and, for the very first time, concord is achieved between Jupiter and Juno. In Book 15, Ovid creates an (imminent) mortal resolution, thereby achieving an ending which appears to be immune to continuation both on a mythological and historical plane. Ovid's consolation speech for the death of Caesar, given to Venus, which functions as an episodic parallel to Virgil's final reconciliation scene, does not appear to look forward to a future beyond Augustus. The final speech achieves an historically and politically closed ending. 'The Empire without End' has become 'The End of Empire.'

#### SILIUS ITALICUS' *PUNICA*

Silius Italicus is the most faithful adherent to the Virgilian model: he replicates the Virgilian model in an advanced timescale to the *Aeneid*, takes Juno's anger as a 'given' requirement of the epic genre, and breaks no codes. In the *Punica*, the human narrative is developed in the same way as in the *Aeneid*: via an initial prophecy scene, given by Jupiter to Venus (3:557ff; 3:571ff.), which correlates with, and is resolved by, a final reconciliation scene between Jupiter and Juno (17:341ff.). The prophecy scene makes a late appearance in the narrative and is delayed until the third book. As in the *Aeneid*, Venus petitions Jupiter on behalf of the Romans. Jupiter's reply, once again, functions as a prophecy of the Roman empire, in which he explains the future struggles, as well as the coming defeats, that the Romans will have to

endure in order to achieve their aim (*Punica* 3:571-629).<sup>196</sup> This speech outlines the future of Aeneas's descendants. Like the *Aeneid* (12:793ff.), Silius includes his own version of the Virgilian Jupiter to Juno reconciliation scene (17:341ff.). Like the *Aeneid*, at the close of the epic, Silius Italicus' *Punica* achieves no reconciliation on the mortal plane, (but triumph for Scipio), and only partial reconciliation in the immortal sphere, thus leaving the text historically open to continuation. The triumph of Scipio that comes at the very end of the epic is not the end of the story. The battle of Zama at the ending of the *Punica* constitutes but one stage in the longer history to which the *Aeneid* alludes. This conclusion is left historically open, anticipating the Third Punic War (149), and beyond. The close of this epic also anticipates the next story as prophesied in Jupiter's speech – the coming of another Scipio<sup>197</sup>, who will also raze Carthage to the ground. This refers to a battle even beyond the 3<sup>rd</sup> Punic War, when in 146 B.C., Carthage will be destroyed by P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus.

#### VALERIUS FLACCUS' *ARGONAUTICA*

Valerius Flaccus follows the Virgilian model, but complicates it in a variety of ways. This epic is based on a triple dynamic narrative structure. In the *Argonautica*, one line of the human narrative (Jason's narrative) is developed in the same way as in the *Aeneid*: via an initial prophecy scene, given by Jupiter to Venus (3:557ff; 3:571ff.). Book 1 includes a decree given by Jupiter, in which he explains his reasons for the Argonautic voyage, declaring that this is a time for Greek victory, rather than Roman triumph, but that Rome will eventually prosper

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<sup>196</sup> The prophecy given by Jupiter to Venus in the *Punica* has to be envisaged as a later speech than that uttered by Jupiter to the gods in V.F.'s *Argonautica*, and a later speech than that spoken by Jupiter to Venus in the *Aeneid*.

<sup>197</sup> This anticipates the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C



and rule the world. (*Argonautica* 1:531-560). Medea's narrative is developed differently. The more complex storyline of Medea, which occupies books 5-8 as a further (inset) narrative, is made up of separate episodes, partly reliant on the Virgilian intertext. This ultimately creates two separate (human) narrative structures, (which are simultaneously operative, as well as being mutually dependant), which are governed by a third (the divine narrative).

Valerius Flaccus follows the Virgilian model by the inclusion of a prophecy scene and an episodic substitute, which stands as a reconciliation scene. The ending to Jason and Medea's narratives meet in the reconciliation scene. Both narrative structures (i.e. Jason's narrative and Medea's narrative) correlate with, and are resolved by, this particular passage. Jupiter's prophecy, (which controls Jason's storyline), and Medea's narrative, are both brought to a close in book 8, when, in the final moments of the epic, in a reworking of the reconciliation scene, the Argonauts engage in conversation, attempting to persuade Jason to leave Medea behind (*Argonautica* 8:385-399). At this crucial point, Valerius can be seen to be drawing a comparison between Medea and Helen, referring to Medea as a Greek Fury, 'Erinys', recalling the *Aeneid* 2:573<sup>198</sup>, "*Troiae et patriae communis Erinys*", where Helen is portrayed as the personification of the force leading to destruction both for Greece and Troy.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> These verses from the *Aeneid*, (2:567-588), are now pronounced spurious by the most recent critics. See further Goold (1970). These verses, not given in any ancient MS or quoted by any ancient commentator, rest solely on the authority of Servius, who says that they were removed by Virgil's editors. (Loeb, p.354) Lucan, in the *Bellum Civile*, also imitates this phrase at 10:59ff, with reference to Cleopatra- '*Latii feralis Erinys*'.

<sup>199</sup> This passage, however, as I have noted above (19), is considered spurious. Later, at *Aeneid* 2: 601ff. Venus unclogs Aeneas' mortal vision to reveal the gods at their terrible work. She assures Aeneas that the Trojan War is not the result of mortal behaviour, but of the Gods.

Jason agrees to the decision of his comrades, deciding to take the Golden Fleece, return to his homeland, and leave Medea behind (*Argonautica* 8:400-404). In the closing moments of the story, Jupiter's decree can be regarded as reaching fruition. If the epic fails to reach closure at this point, Medea will now be in danger of bearing a resemblance to Helen, (and thus becoming yet another woman, or, (rather more accurately, the very first woman), in a causal chain, responsible for the initiation of war.<sup>200</sup> Jupiter's decree, however, specifies that this role awaits Helen and Paris, rather than Medea and Jason, and will be continued in the *Iliad*, the epic which will chronologically follow. The Argonautic expedition had to end in success (the *Argonautica*), in order to be followed by the Trojan War (the *Iliad*), and the founding of Rome (the *Aeneid*).

At the beginning of the epic, Jupiter prophesied the successful acquisition of the Golden Fleece, a venture supported by Juno on this occasion. Jason therefore returns home, having been swayed by the stern councils of his men and resisting his companions no longer (*haud ultra sociis obsistere pergit*, *Argonautica* 8:404). The loss of Hercules from the Argonautic mission, (when he goes in search for Hylas and is consequently abandoned by the Argonauts), results in discord at the close of book 3. Book 4 opens with Jupiter accosting Juno regarding her treatment of her stepson (at *Argonautica* 4:1-14). Jupiter tells Juno, that sooner or later, she will see (her favourite), Jason, in trouble, afraid and beset by Scythian powers and will turn to him for help. (As a consequence of this, Jupiter bids Juno to do as she pleases with Medea).

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<sup>200</sup> A small number of formal and thematic correspondences occur between books 1 and 8, which generate a ring-composition effect for the poem overall. Lines 1:549-551 correspond with 8:395-399. VF uses the 'Helen episode' as an allusion that is both analeptic and proleptic in character: this allusion simultaneously looks backwards, in homage, to Virgil, and forwards to Homer, and its function is principally to locate the *Arg.* as the precursor to the Homeric and Virgilian epics. This effect is also fortified by the many proleptic references to the Trojan War, via the many references to Hercules.

Unlike the ending of the *Aeneid*, where Jupiter forbids Juno to try any further, in the *Argonautica*, although Jupiter's prophecy simultaneously governs the human storyline of the two protagonists, Juno is given full authority over Medea's storyline, and closure of this narrative rests upon her decision alone, rather than that of Jupiter, (although ultimately it was Jupiter's authority that ordained it). At the close of the epic Juno does not enlist the aid of Jupiter, neither does she thwart Jason's mission, so the reader can safely assume that now Jason is no longer in trouble, he is no longer afraid, and he is no longer beset by Scythian powers. The many possible endings (frequently hinted at throughout the text) suggest an incomplete narrative for the Medean narrative, but a narrative specifically designed for continuation.<sup>201</sup> Unlike Jupiter in the *Aeneid*, Jupiter in the *Argonautica* is a more fallible narrator: what he predicts comes to pass. Unlike Juno in the *Aeneid*, where the goddess opposes the protagonist and his epic mission in the *Aeneid*, in the *Argonautica*, Juno supports Jason in his quest for the Golden Fleece,<sup>202</sup> but what she chooses to do with Medea is anyone's guess.<sup>203</sup> VF thus 'closes' Jason's narrative but 'leaves open' Medea's narrative, offering the reader many possible endings.

In the *Argonautica*, because there is no opposition from Juno, no compromise is required between them in the reconciliation scene, (hence the inclusion of a different sort of reconciliation scene), therefore VF had to find an alternative way of bringing all narratives to a standstill. This is achieved in a conversation between the Argonauts themselves. Hercules becomes part of VF's reworking of the Virgilian model. In the *Aeneid*, Juno's (Homeric) wrath provided the impetus for the supernatural storyline throughout the epic, and her

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<sup>201</sup> In predictions, by Mopsus (1:242-260), by Idmon (1:281-2), etc.

<sup>202</sup> See Heerink (? :76)

<sup>203</sup> Slavitt (1999:164-5) suggests alternatives to Medea's continuing narrative. .

specifically Carthaginian wrath perpetuated further epics beyond the epic's resolution. Valerius Flaccus takes Juno's anger as a 'given' requirement of the epic genre. VF recognised the importance of alluding to the 'model', but also realised that he had the freedom to 'change the code'. VF thus has to break the code and find another sworn enemy of Juno's in order to perpetuate the epic cycle. With great sophistication, VF turned the model on its head – by finding an earlier cause for the Trojan War (that also involved the stealing of a woman) and by a new antagonist, in the shape of Hercules. VF thus changes the model for Juno's anger (now she hates Hercules, rather than Aeneas and the Romans), enabling this epic to continue as far as its literary successor(s) – the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, etc. VF anticipates the initiation of the Trojan War, but, (unlike Homer who relied on the Judgement of Paris, and Virgil who relied on Juno's hatred of the Carthaginians), offers an alternative, and earlier (?), cause for the Trojan War via the myth of Hesione (2:451ff.), a venture that was aided by our new hero – Hercules!<sup>204</sup> Yet Hercules's role in this epic is two-fold: not only is he Juno's new enemy, but he is used as an agent to measure analeptic and proleptic time, thereby transporting the reader into the next epic.

VF, therefore, follows the Virgilian structure: he creates an epic ending, where one narrative is closed (Jason's story), and the other narrative is open (Medea's story). VF not only follows the Homeric/Virgilian theme of disharmony amongst the gods, but pre-empts it. It is not until the Judgement of Paris, that the two spurned goddesses, Hera (Juno) and Athena (Pallas), became the

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<sup>204</sup> Hesione was the daughter of Laomedon, king of Troy, and was chained to a rock, in order to be devoured by a sea-monster, that he might thus appease the anger of Apollo and Poseidon. Hercules promised to save her, if Laomedon would give him the horses which he had received from Zeus as a compensation for Ganymedes. Hercules killed the monster, but Laomedon broke his promise. Hercules took Troy, killed Laomedon, and gave Hesione to Telamon, to whom she bore Teucer. Her brother Priam sent Antenor to claim her, and the refusal of the Greeks to give her back was one of the causes of the Trojan War.

sworn enemies of Aphrodite's (Venus's) beloved Troy. The inclusion of a new protagonist allows for epic continuation: By breaking the code, Juno's (new) unresolved grudge against Hercules, which continues way beyond the epic's ending, therefore suggests that Jupiter and Juno remain in partial disagreement, which thereby indicates that the human/historical narrative can be continued, (and will be continued in the *Iliad*).

#### MAPHAEUS VEGIUS' *THIRTEENTH BOOK*

Vegius uses the Virgilian Jupiter's prophecy in order to formulate a different resolution to the *Aeneid*: the human narrative is constructed by using the prophecy scene already imposed by Virgil (*Aeneid* 1:257-296) which corresponds with a reconciliation scene devised by Vegius. Vegius uses Jupiter's prophecy from the *Aeneid* in order to engineer a different ending. Vegius picks up and continues the storyline of the *Aeneid*. Vegius resolves the first three years of Jupiter's prediction, up to the founding of Lavinium. Unlike the *Aeneid*, where the reconciliation scene involves Jupiter and Juno, in this epic the reconciliation scene involves Jupiter and Venus. The final speech between Jupiter and Venus in the *Thirteenth Book* (607-619) is engineered to correspond and resolve the first speech between Jupiter and Venus in the *Aeneid* (1:254). Vegius thus creates a circular narrative so that the ending of the *Thirteenth Book* leads back to the beginning of the *Aeneid*. By reworking Virgil's beginning, Vegius engineers another ending. The final scene between Venus and Jupiter in the *Thirteenth Book* picks up, and resolves (Virgil's) Jupiter's prophecy. In the advanced timescale of the *Thirteenth Book*, three years have since elapsed. Venus refers back to the two promises her father had made earlier in the story (*Aeneid* 1:234ff.). In his prophecy, Jupiter had promised the

fulfilment of two issues: first, in order to compensate for the miseries of the Trojan War, the survivor's heirs would enjoy future glory, and second, Aeneas would be granted the gift of apotheosis. Vegius' *Thirteenth Book* picks up and continues the earlier dialogue held in the *Aeneid*. Venus thanks Jupiter for the fulfilment of the first promise, but now proceeds to remind him that, with the passing of time, the fulfilment of the second promise is now overdue (595-605). Jupiter then proceeds to grant Venus her request, and the second promise reaches fruition. The issue of her son's apotheosis is finally resolved, and the text reaches a point of sublime closure with Aeneas having been translated to the stars.

Vegius thus provides complete resolution of the supernatural narrative, which results in complete resolution of the human narrative. Closure of the *Aeneid* and closure of the *Thirteenth Book* is therefore not only simultaneous, but also complete. Maphaeus Vegius' *Thirteenth Book* achieves full reconciliation on the mortal plane, and full reconciliation in the immortal sphere. The text is therefore not historically open to continuation, on either a historical or mythological level. By providing the resolution to Virgil's prophecy, and by continuing the historical storyline to its ultimate conclusion, all the loose ends have been tied off. Vegius thus attempted to have the very last word. At the close of the *Aeneid* (12:791ff.) Juno does not abandon her hostility entirely in her negotiation with Jupiter but, in the reconciliation scene at the close of the *Thirteenth Booke*, Vegius provided the complete resolution to Juno's hostility both within the text itself, and by the explicit use of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as an intertext. Maphaeus Vegius, therefore, not only resolves his own epic, but also the *Aeneid*. Furthermore, like Ovid, he prevents any epic regeneration. To summarise, the conclusion of Vegius's *Thirteenth Booke* thereby illustrates that

Feeney's analysis holds true, not just for the *Aeneid*, but in epics subsequent to Virgil's epic, (at least as far as 1428): it takes an 'agreeable' resolution on both the human and divine planes to effect a complete epic 'closure'.

As this paper has shown, continuity remains a defining feature of the epic genre. In the majority of cases, this held true, and epic continuity relies on the participation of Juno in some form, at the epic's ending, even if she is conspicuous by her very absence. Clearly Statius' *Thebaid* and Lucan's *Civil War* are thought to stand as anomalies to the pattern suggested, in the fact that Juno does not participate at their endings. Statius' radical departure from both Homeric poems, and the *Aeneid*, lies in his removal of the gods, and especially of the supreme god, from the resolution of the poem's action – Jupiter's place is taken by the mortal Theseus. A comparison is drawn between Theseus and Jupiter, as Theseus marches against Thebes:

qualis Hyperboreos ubi nubilus institit axes  
Iuppiter et prima tremefecit sidera bruma,  
rumpitur Aeolia et longam indignata quietem  
tollit Hiems animos ventosaque sibilat Arctos;  
tunc montes undaeque fremunt, tunc proelia caecis  
nubibus et tonitrus insanaque fulmina gaudent.

*Thebaid* 12:650-50

Juno, who was so vindictive at the close of the *Aeneid*, now adopts a kindly role, and does so secretly, in order to deceive Jupiter (*Thebaid* 12:292). Feeney notes, 'Her participation, so much at odds with her traditional epic persona, is made part of the resolution in order to highlight the fact that Jupiter and the other gods persist in their absence.' Last appearance of Juno in text, at 12:301, where she refuses to follow up her resentment against the goddess for

her actions on the night of Hercules' conception: *ueteres sed mitto querellas* ('but I leave out my old grudges'), (p357). The ending of Statius' *Thebaid* achieves reconciliation on the mortal plane, but no reconciliation in the immortal sphere, of either the upper or lower worlds, hence an unusual (and unstable?) ending. Masters (1993, p251), who clearly thinks Lucan's epic remains open to great possibility, claims that 'the civil war can have no ending. Everything about the poem is boundless, illimitable, infinite'. So were these epics exceptions to the rule? It could be argued, however, that these epics similarly exhibit endings which also replicate the Virgilian model – in that one narrative is designed to close, whilst the other narrative remains open.

The actual method of developing a Virgilian ending differed in Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* and Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis*. Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* achieves no reconciliation on the mortal plane, but full reconciliation in the immortal sphere. The mortal plane remains open to further mythological speculation, and remains historically open to continuation via literature- the *Iliad*, and the *Aeneid*, and therefore will be continued in the following epics. In Valerius' *Argonautica*, the Argonautic voyage which, in this epic, has to be envisaged as 'representing' the 'historical narrative', does reach fulfilment, therefore the *Argonautica* is not a story to be continued - it has reached not only a successful historical (but also a 'literary') closure. The mythological narrative, on the other hand, has not reached fulfilment. The future story of Medea has yet to be continued. In this epic, subsidiary narratives are put in place in order to create a future (mythological) narrative for Medea. Finally, in the *Argonautica*, no compromise is required by Jupiter and Juno in the reconciliation scene, therefore an alternative way had to be found in order to bring all (3) narratives to a standstill. In order to follow the Virgilian structure,



and to allow for epic continuation, Valerius had to break the code. Valerius, therefore, devises an earlier cause for the Trojan War in the figure of Hercules.

### SANNAZARO'S *DE PARTU VIRGINIS*

Sannazaro's epic is unique in that it follows a hybrid structure that resembles both the Virgilian and Valerian models, suggesting that Virgil is Sannazaro's primary, but not exclusive model. Following the Virgilian model this epic includes a prophecy scene which correlates with a reconciliation scene, resulting in an ending which achieves closure, but remains able to be historically continued). (Unlike the Virgilian model), but like the Valerian model, this epic operates on a triple-dynamic narrative structure where the divine narrative simultaneously governs the action on the human plane for two protagonists. Sannazaro uses a prophecy given by God in order to develop the storyline of Mary and Christ and to formulate a human resolution to the *De partu Virginis*. The focus of this epic is the primary narrative of Mary, which occupies book 2 as a further (inset) narrative made up of separate episodes, whilst subsidiary narratives create the future story of Christ, following the Virgin birth. This creates two separate (although mutually dependant) narrative structures, which are governed by a third, in other words, the divine narrative.

Sannazaro adheres closely to the structure of the Valerian model in his use of multiple, subsidiary prophecies in order to supply the background for his other major protagonist - Christ. King David's prophecy and Jordan's speech govern the Christian narrative and form an outer frame to the (inner) Marian narrative. Jordan's lengthy speech at the close of Book 3 (3:331-497) mirrors King David's prophecy at the close of Book 1. Whilst David's prophecy provides a progressive view of the private life of Christ, Jordan's prophecy provides a retrospective view of the public life of Jesus.

God's speeches operate as a ring-composition, and his intention, as specified in his first speech, reaches fruition in his closing speech. In the resolution scene, the omission of a Juno figure, (or a replacement recipient), is once again significant. Following the 'Virgilian' pattern once again, the 'typical' final speech between the divine couple is deliberately omitted and replaced by God's lengthy address to an assembly of silent, (and unresponsive), angels (3:34-88).

Sannazaro's ultimate, and triumphal, ending is an inversion of the Virgilian model. At the close of *De Partu Virginis*, God's prophecy brings about the anticipated ending. The Biblical narrative ends with the diffusion of Christian influence as envisaged by God in his prophecy scene. Sannazaro achieves closure to this particular storyline of his epic by the deliberate omission of the major players - Venus and Juno. Unlike the speeches in the *Aeneid*, the speeches are addressed to a silent audience. The deliberate exclusion of Venus from the prophecy scene indicates that the (historical) Biblical narrative can neither be questioned, nor altered, whilst the deliberate exclusion of Juno from the resolution scene indicates that God's decision cannot be frustrated. Yet the removal of the divine players results in a different (singular) narrative structure and the removal of the anger which fuelled an(y) epic ending results in an epic 'dynamic' that has now been fractured. Sannazaro's deconstruction of the Virgilian formula thus lays bare the very workings of the structure imposed by that model. Unlike the *Aeneid* which failed to reach closure because of Juno's on-going wrath, and unlike the *Thirteenth Book* which achieved closure because of the appeasement of Junonian anger, a (sacred) silence, (and an epic finality), bring closure to this particular storyline of Mary, and her mission within this epic has reached fulfilment. Nonetheless, the Virgilian model still

prevails – one narrative structure must close, one narrative structure must remain open- the Marian narrative has achieved its predicted closure, but the Christian narrative, on the other hand, remains open to continuity. Rather than using Juno as a means of epic continuity, Sannazaro achieves this effect following the Valerian device of a subsidiary narrative.

#### EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE: NO JUNO = NO CONTINUATION

Whilst Juno's wrath is used to perpetuate the majority of narratives in this paper, unfortunately anomalies to the 'pattern' I have suggested do occur in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 14 and 15 and Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis*. Ovid's deliberate exclusion of Juno from the reconciliation scene indicates that Jupiter's decision will not be frustrated. This epic exhibits an ending which closes down the Virgilian model – both on the divine plane (in *Metamorphoses* 14) and on the mortal plane (in *Metamorphoses* 15). Unlike the *Aeneid*, the *Metamorphoses* cannot be continued.

Sannazaro's *De partu Virginis* also stands outside the pattern suggested, in the fact that Juno does not participate in this epic at all. Sannazaro achieves closure to this particular storyline of his epic by the deliberate omission of the major players - Venus and Juno. Unlike the speeches in the *Aeneid*, in this epic the speeches given by God are addressed to a silent audience, on both occasions. The deliberate exclusion of Venus from the prophecy scene indicates that the (historical) Christian narrative can neither be questioned, nor altered, whilst the deliberate exclusion of Juno from the resolution scene (as in Ovid) indicates that God's decision will not be frustrated. Sannazaro brings an ultimate and triumphant closure to this epic by the use of an ecphrasis, a pictorial ending, depicting the Chariot of Christ, designed both to mirror, then

invert, the Virgilian ending. Nevertheless, this epic similarly exhibits an ending which echoes the Virgilian model - in that one ending is designed to close and the other remain open. Like the *Aeneid*, this epic can be continued, but unlike the *Aeneid*, Juno's wrath is not used to perpetuate the narrative. Therefore, in order to achieve epic continuation, Sannazaro follows the Valerian strategy by creating a subsidiary narrative that is designed to continue outside the boundary of the epic in question. (In this epic, Sannazaro creates two Christian narratives in the form of prophecies – one (given by David) reaches fulfilment during the epic, and the other (given by the River Jordan, in the form of a song) is designed to continue (perpetually) beyond the epic ending).

SO, THE FINAL QUESTION REMAINS: WAS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JUPITER AND JUNO EVER 'A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN?'

Concord between the divine couple only occurs three times:

- 1) First, in *Metamorphoses* 14, when Ovid concludes the theme of Junonian anger, thus closing down the both the human and divine narratives, and Juno is effectively removed from the equation.
- 2) Secondly, in Maphaeus Vegius's *Thirteenth Book*. The final speech between Jupiter and Venus in the *Thirteenth Book* (607-619) is engineered to correspond and resolve the first speech between Jupiter and Venus in the *Aeneid* (1:254). Vegius thus creates a circular narrative so that the ending of the *Thirteenth Book* leads back to the beginning of the *Aeneid*. The final scene between Venus and Jupiter in the *Thirteenth Book* picks up, and resolves (Virgil's) Jupiter's prophecy. In the advanced timescale of the *Thirteenth Book*, three years have since elapsed. Venus refers back to the two promises her father had made earlier in the story (*Aeneid* 1:234ff.). In his prophecy, Jupiter had promised the

fulfilment of two issues: first, in order to compensate for the miseries of the Trojan War, the survivors heirs would enjoy future glory, and second, Aeneas would be granted the gift of apotheosis. Vegius' *Thirteenth Book* picks up continues the earlier dialogue held in the *Aeneid*. Venus thanks Jupiter for the fulfilment of the first promise, but now proceeds to remind him that, with the passing of time, the fulfilment of the second promise is now overdue (595-605). Jupiter then proceeds to grant Venus her request, and the second promise reaches fruition. The issue of her son's apotheosis is finally resolved, and the text reaches a point of sublime closure with Aeneas having been translated to the stars. Maphaeus Vegius' *Thirteenth Book* thus achieves full reconciliation on the mortal plane, and full reconciliation in the immortal sphere. The text is therefore not historically open to continuation, on either a historical or mythological level. By providing the resolution to Virgil's prophecy, and by continuing the historical storyline to its ultimate conclusion, all the loose ends have been tied off. Vegius thus attempted to have the very last word. This fifteenth-century epic is of particular importance in this paper because not only does it validate my use of Feeney's theory, but it also proves that Maphaeus Vegius was clearly aware of this Virgilian 'formula'- and that the appeasement of Juno's anger would result in a total closure of the epic storyline.

3) Finally, Sannazaro's ending. Sannazaro creates an ending which is like the Virgilian ending – where one dynamic is designed to close, whilst the other remains open, but, at the same time, Sannazaro creates an ending which echoes the Ovidian model in *Metamorphoses* 14, recalling the 'happy' ending, where Jupiter and Juno achieve harmony. In *De partu Virginis*, the final scene

of the Marian narrative sequence would naturally presume the Coronation of the Virgin.



Figure 7: Gentile da Fabriano (1370-) Coronation of the Virgin, (about 1420). Tempera and gold leaf on panel, Height: 876mm (34.48 inches); Width: 64 mm (25.47 inches), J.Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

This scene is illustrated above, by Gentile da Fabriano. In a seamless continuity, therefore, Christian epic comes to supersede Classical epic, and the divine harmony achieved between God and Mary in the Heavenly realms, supersedes the concord achieved between Jupiter and Juno in Olympus.



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### Bibles

*King James, Douay Bible, Editio Vulgata,*



Figure1: Fra Angelico, *Annunciation of Cortona*, tempera on panel, 1750x1800mm, Museo Diocesano, Cortona, Italy.

In this painting, the belief that Mary rectified the sins of Adam and Eve is made explicit; the artist has depicted the expulsion from paradise almost as if it were happening just beyond her garden fence. This episode of the Old Testament is frequently found alongside the Annunciation.





Figure 2: Duccio, *The Annunciation*, egg tempera on wood, 445x458mm, National Gallery, London





Figure 3: Lorenzo Lotto, *Recanati Annunciation*, oil on canvas, 1660x1140mm, Museo Civico Villa Colloredo Mels, Recanati





Figure 4: Robert Campin, *Annunciation Triptych (Merode Altarpiece)*, oil on oak, 641x273mm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Fifteenth-century theologians were critical of the way some artists showed the Christ child floating down to earth – it contradicted the doctrine that Christ derived his earthly form from Mary. Here Robert Campin has kept the motif but makes the figure so small that it is almost invisible. The contemporary domestic setting was also very innovative for its time.<sup>205</sup>

<sup>205</sup> *Annunciation*, Phaidon Publication, (Non-Mint copy), pp. 48-9.



Figure 5: Jacopo Pontormo, *The Visitation*, oil on wood, 2020x1560mm, Parish Church of San Michele e San Francesco, Carmignano





Figure 6: Titian, *Assumption of the Virgin*, oil on panel, 6900x3600mm, Basilica di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice