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Virgil's Indebtedness For the Dido Episode

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VIRGIL'S INDEBTEDNESS FOR
THE DIDO EPISODE

By

Thomas David McMahon, S.J.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master
of Arts in Loyola University.

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1945

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. VIRGIL'S MOTIVES FOR WRITING THE DIDO EPISODE.....	7
III. APOLLONIUS OF RHODES AND THE FOURTH AENEID.....	25
IV. NAEVIUS AND THE FOURTH AENEID.....	47
V. CATULLUS AND THE FOURTH AENEID.....	61
VI. CONCLUSION.....	74
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	79

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Roman Virgil, thou that singest
Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,
Ilion falling, Rome arising,
wars, and filial faith, and
Dido's pyre.

"Dido is perhaps Virgil's greatest creation and surely one of the greatest in all poetry."¹ Moreover Ovid² tells us that no part of the Aeneid was so popular as the Dido episode. In the twelve books of the epic from the glorious wording of the whole theme of the Aeneid - Tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem³ - to the death of Turnus at the end of the twelfth and final book, no character matches Dido, the Tyrian queen. When Virgil puts her on the stage of his epic, she completely dominates the scene. So powerful was Virgil's conception of Dido's character and so expert his skill in transmitting his conception into the difficult vehicle of the Latin hexameter that Dido eclipses the dignity of pious Aeneas. It seems that the critics who condemn Aeneas as a poor conception of an epic hero, find their strongest arguments for his condemnation in the story and character of Dido. Though they

1 J. Mackail, Virgil and His Meaning To the World of Today, Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1927, 106.

2 Ovid, Tristia, II, 533, Loeb Classical Library, translated by A.L. Wheeler, William Heinemann, London, 1924, 95.

3 Virgil, Aeneid, I, 33, Loeb Classical Library, translated by Henry Rushton Fairclough, William Heinemann, London, 1929, 2.

claim that on many counts Aeneas falls short of Homeric epic tradition, their loudest criticisms and censures fall upon the action of the hero in the fourth book. This chapter is not designed as a defense of Aeneas nor of Virgil's conception of him, for more competent minds have already adequately refuted the critics of Aeneas. The correct conclusion is that he is a true epic hero, not in the Homeric sense, for such was not Virgil's intention or design, but rather an epic hero of Roman stamp.⁴

With this admission we come face to face with one of the interesting problems in Virgil: why is there a Dido episode in the Aeneid at all? While his work would surely lose some of its greatest lustre were there no Dido story, yet the epic would remain as glorious testimony of Rome's greatness and grandeur. For the second and sixth books would remain, and in them, enough fine poetry to place the Aeneid on a par with the other great epics of the world. Even without the Tyrian queen and her tragic tale, Rome would still rule the nations in her sway, spare the humble and tame the proud in war.⁵ Besides, there were positive disadvantages involved for Virgil if he included the Dido episode in his epic. Such a theme as the Dido story is really a departure from clear-cut lines of the Homeric epic. True, in the Odyssey the hero Odysseus is delayed on his journey by Calypso but such a

4 Cf. Gerard Grant, "Aeneas - Epic Hero, True or False?", Classical Bulletin, IX, 17ff.

5 Aen. VI, 852-855.

digression does not enter so largely into the whole structure of the Odyssey as does Aeneas' stay at Carthage. The love motif was another of Virgil's devices that had no counterpart in the Iliad or the Odyssey. Most of all it must be admitted that Dido has ruined the character of Aeneas with nine-tenths of Virgil's readers.⁶ Why, then, did Virgil include the story? Obviously he must have seen that the character of Aeneas would suffer in comparison with his piercing portrayal of Dido. With these facts in mind, let us look behind the story of Dido and attempt to discover the more important reasons and considerations which prompted Virgil to include the Carthagian episode in the Aeneid.

Once the reasons that prompted the inclusion of the story are manifest, we will enter upon the other and more interesting phase of the problem, a phase which follows logically from the previous consideration: Virgil's debt to his predecessors, both Greek and Roman for the Dido story. For hand in hand with his decision to include the story in the epic of Rome went the necessity of creating the character of Dido. Dido did not spring forth in the pages of Virgil as a completely novel character. Rather was her character delineation the result of Virgil's own peculiar genius coupled with his knowledge of the literature of the past. We shall examine the earlier the earlier Greek and Roman writers from whom Virgil drew his raw material. Such an investi-

gation will go far toward revealing Virgil's debt to his predecessors and at the same time point out to what extent he surpassed them in his own creation of the epic heroine.

For the actual historical connection between Aeneas and Dido we shall investigate the fragments of the Bellicum Punicum of Naevius. From this inquiry we can establish the probability of the Trojan-Punic connection which is at the heart of the Dido episode. In other words, we intend to prove that Naevius in his lost dramatic poem, of which only fragments survive, brought Aeneas to Carthage and the court of Dido. Thus we maintain that he offered Virgil a legend fully worked out, at least as far as Aeneas' coming to Dido's Carthage. If Virgil decided to make use of this legend and if the meeting of Dido and Aeneas was to take up an important place in his epic, Virgil's decision would be in keeping with literary tradition after Homer. For had not Euripides and Apollonius of Rhodes brought the wandering hero to the land and home of the heroine? These two poets, the former the Hellenic, the latter the Alexandrine representative of poetry were among the first to give women an important place in poetry and they were also the first to dwell at length on the passion of love. To these two, but particularly to Apollonius, Virgil turned for the background of the Dido episode. Lastly in any inquiry into the back-

⁷ Henry W. Prescott, The Development of Virgil's Art, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1927, 297-299.

ground of Virgil, to omit the name of Catullus, "tenderest of Roman poets," would be to overlook one to whom Virgil owed much for the creation of Dido's character. Truly might it be said that nowhere is it easier to prove Catullus's influence on Virgil than in Virgil's borrowing of the picture of the injured and abandoned queen. Though Catullus writes of Ariadne, Virgil of Dido, yet the story, circumstances, characters portrayed, spirit and language of the two poets are marvelously akin. Indeed Virgil deserves great credit in that he knew and recognized the merits of some of the most beautiful passages in all of Catullus.

Here, then, is the general outline which this thesis will fulfill: firstly, we want to uncover the reasons that prompted Virgil to include the Dido episode in the Aeneid despite the obvious disadvantages such an episode would involve. These reasons are by no means apparent at a glance but require a good measure of investigation into Virgil's purpose and intentions. Secondly, after these reasons have been given and explained in detail we shall continue with the second aspect of the problem: an inquiry into Virgil's debt to his predecessors, both Greek and Roman, who furnished him the raw material for the Dido story. This second aspect of the problem is the natural complement of the first. For granted that Virgil had decided to include the story of Carthage in his epic, the question naturally arises: Was this heroine to be a completely novel character? Or was she to be drawn from former models yet differing from them because of the master touch of Virgil's

pen? From the evidence it appears that Virgil chose the latter course. Our investigation, therefore, will examine the extent of these borrowings and point out Virgil's excellence and good taste manifested in the borrowings.

CHAPTER II

VIRGIL'S MOTIVES FOR WRITING THE DIDO EPISODE

Though Aeneas and his Trojan comrades arrive at Carthage at the end of Book I of the Aeneid, yet it is not until the beginning of the fourth book that the story of Aeneas and Dido really begins to unfold. The second and third books are taken up with Aeneas' description of the burning and sack of Troy. During this recital of Trojan woes, Dido is smitten with love for Aeneas through the darts of Cupid.

The fourth book opens with a description of Dido's passion and love for Aeneas as she struggles with her sense of devotion and honor toward her former husband, Sychaeus. Juno then plans with Venus a device for uniting Dido and Aeneas in marriage. While on a hunting party, the two are driven by the divine plot to take shelter in the same cave. Immediately Jupiter despatches Mercury to command the departure of Aeneas. Caught in the act of summoning his companions Aeneas is bitterly reproached by Dido for his intended flight. As Aeneas listens, unmoved by the queen's entreaties, the Trojan fleet is made ready. The queen, maddened, resolves on death, first seeking magic incantations. All through the sleepless night, she rants against the Trojan unfaithfulness. Meanwhile Mercury in a vision again warns Aeneas to flee. As Aeneas hastens the departure of the fleet, Dido's despair increases

and she invokes curses upon the fugitive and his posterity. Simulating religious rites, she causes her chamber to be prepared, and slays herself, after a last appeal to her sister to stay the flight of Aeneas. Juno sends Iris to release her tormented spirit. This, in short, is the story of the fourth Aeneid.

1

Many critics have conjectured that in the original plan of the fourth book, Dido was to be a Cleopatra or Alcina, a mad figure from whose clutches Aeneas was to be rescued; but they go on to say that somehow or other the "tears of things" and Virgil's tender pity for the injured queen imperceptibly altered the poet's concept of Dido to the striking character we find in the Aeneid.

If for us the character of Aeneas suffers by his desertion of Dido, that is simply because the poet, seized with intense pity for the injured queen, seems for once, like his own hero to have forgotten his mission in the poem. 2

This interpretation is probably true in part, but I do not believe that Virgil failed to see what his readers have seen. There were definite objectives in his mind that he wished his epic to accomplish. Some of these objectives would be well fulfilled by the story of the fall of Troy and the subsequent wanderings of the Trojans; others could be completed by the founding of Latium and the story of the early struggles of the mighty people that were

1 W. Warde Fowler, The Religious Experience of the Roman People, MacMillan and Co., London, 1922, 415.

2 Ibid., 416

to rule the world. But for various reasons Virgil knew his epic would be incomplete without the story of Dido and Aeneas. We shall seek to determine what constituted these reasons. Attempts have been made to discover what Virgil's chief motive was for the creation of Dido but any such solution must of necessity remain in the realm of the probable. We have no intention of determining what Virgil's prime motive was; it will suffice to point out and explain the more important ones.

Virgil's first and most logical reason for writing the Dido episode was because it offered him the opportunity for splendid artistic development. Virgil wanted an opportunity to introduce the pathetic element into his epic. ³ A devoted follower of the latest bloom of Greek and Alexandrine poetry, he was quick to see the advantages to be reaped from the inclusion of the love motif which Euripides and Apollonius had introduced. Virgil was too much of a student of Greek poetry to neglect the examples and lessons of any period in that noble literature. True, Homer was Virgil's first master; almost any page of his epic reflects in some measure his devotion to the Blind Bard. Yet Virgil was also a very discerning critic of Hellenic and Hellenistic poetry, and very early he perceived the advantage that it offered to touch the human heart.

3 Richard Heinze, Virgils Epische Technik, Druck Und Verlag Von B.G. Teubner, Leipzig, 1903, 116.

To help him in the characterization of Dido, Virgil had no lack of Greek models. He himself had felt the powerful poetry of Euripides describing the passion of love that gripped Phaedra in the Hippolytus. He thrilled to the pathos, agony and shame of Medea, the abandoned queen in the tragedy of the same name. Somehow or other, he too must labor to include such pathos in his poem. The Alexandrine Movement introduced for the first time into epic order of poetry a love story as subject for detailed epic treatment. So then Virgil too wanted to follow the new love motif with which Apollonius had enriched the epic tradition.

A poet of the Roman people must be expected to bring to his inspiration, all the noble works of his predecessors as well as a careful study of history and the theory of art; he must be a member of a great artistic guild with a common store, upon which he might draw not merely of general lessons, but even of particular phases. 4

Virgil succeeded admirably in his aims and Dido is acknowledged to be one of the most tragic figures in all the realm of poetry. We of a later date can agree with Macrobius when he writes that Dido has been a most excellent model for painters, sculptors, and craftsmen since the time of Virgil.⁵ Virgil's deep understanding of human nature enabled him to weave a story not at all incredible and one wherein the heroine has our sympathy.

4 R.M. Henry, "Medea and Dido", Classical Review, 44, 99.

5 Macrobius, Saturnalia, Franciscus Eyssenhardt, Lipsiae, B. G. Teubner, 1868, V, 17.

Building upon the most sacred of themes, the mutual love of man and woman, the poet brings out many varied emotions before the Dido episode is brought to a close. The pictures range from pity and admiration through love and passion to agony, shame and finally despair. Into the Dido story, Virgil pours all his insight into the human heart and his sense of human tragedy. His finished product is as he wished it, a tragic and extremely pathetic figure over whom St. Augustine could shed tears.⁶ No doubt Virgil pondered deeply before deciding to take such a daring step as to include the story of Dido in the epic of Rome. Such a tale might have disadvantages in the telling, but he himself found that the power of his own creation to stir the human heart and to show human beings in all reality more than even balanced the bad effect which could have possibly resulted. Besides, the story could revivify the old Greek theme of individual inclination versus the will of the gods. So then, to insure the success of the pathetic element Virgil determined to go to predecessors who had already used it successfully and to draw from them whatever his discerning judgment showed him was the best.

A element of religion, too, must be included in the poem that was to be the summit of the Augustan revival and consequently we should look for a motive which allowed Virgil to expand on Roman religion. For never in Rome's history did the City stand

6 Augustine, Confessions, I, 21, Loeb Classical Library, translated by W. Watts, William Heinemann, London, 1912.

mightier than after Actium. At this time when the Roman eagle was beginning to spread its powerful wings over the world, Virgil first decided to devote himself to a national poem. After so many years of strain and alarm, strife and anxiety, came peace. After so long a time of bloodshed and war and, worst of all, the war of internecine strife of Roman against Roman, there was to begin a golden age in which Actium was the culminating point of the past and the starting point of a greater future. Horace had felt its approach when in joyous song he sang:

Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
pulsanda tellus. 7

Virgil, however, was to represent the deeper tendencies of the age. His duty was to revivify the old Roman Virtus and Pietas that had moulded the mighty Roman empire from the simple beginnings of the early Latin settlers. He was to make live again that typically Roman devotion to family, state, and the gods, which in spite of trial and danger, overcomes all enticement to individual passion or selfish ease. For Rome must return her pristine norm if she is to achieve the great destiny that the poet sees in store for her. Even Horace had tried his hand at moralizing and offered his never-to-be-forgotten picture of Roman manliness in the Regulus ode.⁸ Even old Cato would be proud of men like Regulus. For Regulus

7 Horace, The Odes and Epodes, Loeb Classical Library, translated by Charles E. Bennett, William Heinemann, London, 1929, Odes, I, 37.

8 Ibid., III, 5

turned his back upon his chaste wife and child (and how Horace emphasizes the pu dicae conjugis!) and went to his death in Carthage with as much unconcern as if he were leaving the tedious business of his clients and were speeding to his country villa at Lacedaemonian Tarentum. This was a really convincing example of the old Roman Virtus! But Regulus was not the mythical founder of the Roman race, and consequently he did not have the same power of commanding respect, devotion and especially imitation.

In bringing Aeneas to Carthage and Dido, Virgil put the most formidable obstacle that Aeneas encountered in his efforts to found the city, "genus unde Latinum Albanique patres atque⁹altae moenia Romae." To leave Carthage required the greatest personal sacrifice that the Trojan chief was ever called upon to perform. Many trials and anxieties confronted him in his wanderings before Carthage but the supreme test of his vocation came at Carthage. He had been Pius Aeneas in mourning the loss of his friends and the scattering of his fleet by Juno's guile and the strength of Aeolus; he had been Pius Aeneas in Troy's last hour as he carried his aged father from the flames of the burning city, but his greatest act was to leave Dido because the gods willed it, no matter what the personal feelings. The victory of duty over pleasure showed the true path of virtue to all succeeding generations of

9 Aen. I, 6-7.

10 Aen. IV, 361, Italiam non sponte sequor.

Romans. Through frequent repetition of the epithet, pius, with which Virgil characterizes his hero, he gives the key by which he wants us to unlock the door to the understanding of all Roman virtue and greatness. And nowhere is pius Aeneas more pius than when he sails away from Carthage and leaves broken hopes and dreams behind. To provide the setting in which his hero can make this heroic sacrifice and renunciation Virgil looked to Euripides and Apollonius for the material of his story. Naevius in his Bellum Punicum had spoken of Dido, and now all Virgil needed was to cast Dido in the role of the lover of Aeneas.

To a clever mind such as Virgil's, the technical advantage of the Carthaginian episode would be quickly apparent. In a long epic in which interest must be sustained throughout, there is a decided technical advantage in telling a story of past action in the first person to some other character who could show special interest in the narrative.¹² By such a device, Virgil could keep his epic from losing interest by keeping his characters before the eyes of the reader without many useless repetitions of past stories and events. Furthermore, he could manipulate the story better if he is not tied down to a strict chronological reckoning of the narrative. Such clever handling of material was first used by Homer when he pictured Odysseus telling the story of his past ad-

11 Prescott, 295.

12 Ibid.

ventures to Alcinous and Arete. But the adventures of Odysseus were not the adventures of the founder of a mighty empire, "buffeted by the Fates and tossed much on land and sea."¹³ Nor did the fate of a great nation hang upon the outcome of Odysseus's travels. The tale of Aeneas must tell of Troy's downfall and of the flames that consumed the last vestige of the Trojan kingdom of Priam, driving the exiles over land and sea to the shores of Italy. So then, the listener of Aeneas' litany of woes must be much more profoundly interested in his narrative than were Alcinous and Arete in the story of Odysseus. After all, were it not for this plucky band of Trojans and their tale of adventure, would the City of the Seven Hills and the royal line of the Caesars have ruled the world?

As Virgil pictured the meeting of Aeneas and Dido, who better than Dido could be the listener of Aeneas' epic adventures? Who could show more interest than a woman sentimentally interested in the narrative? Dido can stir up unusual interest and earnestly request Aeneas to tell his tale; her eager queries can draw from the hero the least details of Troy and its burning citadels. Does she not want above all to hear about the man to whom Cupid and Venus are turning her heart more and more?¹⁴ To the choice of a woman¹⁵ Virgil was drawn by the epic convention of his day. The sentimental situation is the result of Virgil's devotion to the Hellenis-

¹³ Aen. I, 2-3

¹⁴ Ibid, I, 748.

¹⁵ Prescott, 295.

tic tradition. If Aeneas is to succeed as an epic hero, he must be very heroic and every bit as good as Odysseus and Jason. He too must have a Calypso or a Medea if he is not to fall short of the measure of the traditional epic hero.

The last major reason I will treat is the motive of historical foreshadowing. While I will not try to give it more prominence than is its due, yet it must receive considerable treatment. For one can hardly read the first half of the Aeneid and particularly the fourth book without realizing that Virgil was drawing a picture of contrast. While never ceasing to be the imaginative poet, he was giving an historical preview of the great struggle between Rome and Carthage-- that struggle which was to prove such a dangerous threat to the power and even to the very existence of Rome herself. ¹⁶ Just how familiar the historical struggle of the Punic Wars was to the Roman of Virgil's time is well proven from other sources. ¹⁷ Virgil in his epic recalled that terrible struggle which might have changed the history of the world if the outcome had favored Carthage. Our poet is not slow in assuming his appointed task. The twelfth line of the poem brings in the story of Carthage and introduces the lasting enmity between Rome and Carthage under the guise of Juno's love for the Tyrians and her hatred for the Phrygians. This enmity would continue un-

16 R.S. Conway, "Under Hannibal's Shadow, Harvard Lectures on Virgilian Age, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1928, 73.

17 Horace, Epodes, XVI,6; Odes, II,1; II,5; IV,4.

ceasingly until the battle of Zama; there in 202 B.C., Hannibal and the Punic power would finally be crushed forever by Scipio. From the Aeneid's twelfth line of the first book through the second, third and fourth books, Carthage is ever in the mind of the reader.

Virgile, qui est bien de la grande nation en cela, n'a perdu aucune occasion dans les endroits décisifs de son poème, et à chaque intervalle, de nous faire toucher en quelque sorte l'anneau d'airain, j'appelle ainsi la chaîne de la destinée romaine. Voyez! il a commencé son poème en montrant du doigt Carthage, la grande rivale: Urbs antiqua fuit! ..., et la grande rivale qui n'est plus! il y revient en plus d'un moment. 18

In Dido's moving prayer for vengeance, Hannibal is not named:

Haec precor, hanc vocem extremam cum sanguine fundo.
tum vos, o Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne futurum
exercete odiis, cinerique haec mittite nostro
munera, nullus amor populis nec foedera sunt.
exoriare, aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor,
qui face Dardanio ferroque sequare colonos,
nunc olim, quocumque dabunt se tempore vires.
litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas
imprecor, armis armis; pugnent ipsique nepotesque. 19

But what intelligent Roman reader failed to think of him here, and think of him very definitely? Mere suggestion by Virgil of the terrible scourge who was to bring Rome almost to ruin strikes a note of fear into the heart of every true Roman as he reads Dido's words and reflects upon the great disasters of Trebia, Lake Trasimene and Cannae.

Il est donc bien à Virgile d'avoir fait d'Anni-

18 C.A. Sainte-Beuve, Etude Sur Virgile, Calmann-Levy, Editeurs, Paris, 1855, 165.

19 Aen. IV, 621-629.

bal une des perspectives directes de son poème. Penser à Annibal et aux perils qu'il avait fait courir aux descendants d'Enne et de Romulus, à la fumée de son camp qu'on voyait du Capitole; y faire penser du temps d'Auguste, et quand les aigles romaines ne s'arrêtaient plus qu'à l'Euphrate, c'était d'autant mieux dieux d'avoir terminé par un tel couronnement de si longs et si laborieux....Mais admirons que ce soit à propos de Didon, et dans la bouche d'une amante égarée et mourante, que soit venue se placer si naturellement cette prédiction historique du plus terrible vengeur. 20

Even the fifth book opens with Aeneas looking back on Dido's burning pyre. Recall too Dido's meeting with Aeneas in the underworld in book six. ²¹ It is as if Virgil did not want us to forget the intimate connection that existed between Carthage and Rome. It has been cleverly noted that the epithets Sidonian and Phoenissian often applied to Dido are doubtless to remind the readers that Dido was a Carthaginian, though no extant use of these words in the sense of Carthaginian is found prior to Virgil's epic. ²² Virgil achieved another admirable effect by his use of anachronism in the first book in attributing to Carthage the power and splendor that was Rome's under the sway of the Caesars. For he cleverly succeeded in making his readers feel the might and lordly prowess of the nascent city of Carthage and its potentialities for harm to Trojan and future Roman. Last of all the government of Carthage was portrayed in a form most repugnant to Roman feeling--under the

20 Sainte-Beuve, 165.

21 Aen.VI, 470-476.

22 Nicholas Mosely, Characters and Epithets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1926, 23.

leadership of a woman, Dux femina facti.

Immediately we observe in the words of Dido the picture of a passionate woman, while the contrast in the character is most noticeable--a naturally phlegmatic man. But yet over and above this observation, Virgil had in mind to contrast two different modes of living, two different philosophies of life. Since Rome and Carthage had engaged in a death struggle during the Punic Wars and the most patriotic cry on a Roman's lips had been Delenda est Carthago, the hopes and aims of Rome must be idealized and Carthage Rome's enemy, must be revealed as all that was utterly incompatible with Roman ideals. It is to be noted that Virgil accomplished this idealization of Rome not as the historian but rather as the poet. He does not narrate as the historians Naevius and Ennius often do in their epic verses but relying more on suggestion he succeeds in so coloring the whole episode that the distinctly Roman virtues of Aeneas stand out: his devotion first to the people he is to found, to his child whom he will not cheat of a destined throne, to his gods who have destined him to be the progenitor of the line of the Caesars. In the meeting of Aeneas and Dido we have the meeting of the West and East and all that such an antithesis suggests in character, law, government and culture. The picture of Dido willing to sacrifice her fair name and her honor is heinous enough. But her neglect of duty to her people and their rising nation

23 Charles Knapp, "Legend and History in the Aeneid", Classical Journal XIX, 1924, 198ff.

in order to gratify her passionate desires makes her the very antithesis of all that Aeneas stands for. With his personal feelings should and must come second to the will of the gods and Fate. The desertion became a duty. Virgil means his readers to feel that. It cannot be judged or understood by the standards of chivalry but it is clear to the Roman mind that Aeneas must go, count what the cost.²⁴ The great empire that he is to found across the seas must be placed second to nothing, and the pathetic cry of non sponte sequor must be united with Roman pietas of which he, Aeneas, is to be the prime example. Virgil would claim that the rough and simple home life of the early Romans with its humble existence and almost Stoic ascetism, which raised Rome from just another Italian tribe to a mighty world power could be traced back to the virtues and ideals springing from his epic hero.

It would be leaving the motive of historical foreshadowing incomplete were we not to weigh the interpretation many have given to Dido. So important have some judged the historical and religious significance in the Dido story that they have read into Virgil's lines that he meant to condemn Dido wholly.

The great scenes in which she [Dido] gives vent to her indignation - scenes which have won the pity of the entire world - are in reality meant to exhibit a spirit and temper entirely out of place in Roman family life.... He [Virgil] would have said that Dido's character as he conceived it was utterly incompatible with

24 Glover, 206, for excellent treatment of this difficult theme of the Aeneid.

Italian ideals. She does not understand the combination of virtue which makes up the ideal Roman matron.... Virgil altered the story of Dido from the historical legend in order to contrast the fury of ungovernable love, love of the animal type, with the settled order, affection and obedience of Roman family life. 25

Accordingly, such a stand claims that Virgil in his portrayal of Dido used all his resources to draw a woman whose real nature was that of Medea, of Clodia, of Cleopatra: a woman whose nature was monstrous and completely divorced from all Roman ideals of family and social life. This claim seems to be far from the truth! In the picture of infelix Dido, does Virgil want us to see the fatale monstrum that Cleopatra certainly was to Horace. Or again is the picture of Clodia the immoral "Medea of the Palatine", as Cicero calls her, in Virgil's mind? Is he painting a woman utterly alien to the ideal of the typical Roman matron to whose pure blood the race of Romulus owed its preeminence? True, as has already pointed out, Virgil was contrasting two philosophies of life but there are unmistakable signs that his portrayal certainly does not extend to a condemnation of Dido as an unworthy woman. Even historically speaking, the proof lies in Dido's favor. For the only reference to Dido in the historical references of Virgil's time shows that far from being a Cleopatra or a Medea, Dido was received by the Roman people as another Lucretia, dear to the heart of every

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- 25 W. Warde Fowler, Roman Essays and Interpretations, Clarendon Press Oxford, 1920, 185ff.
 26 Horace, Odes, I, 37.
 27 Cicero, Pro Caelio, Loeb Classical Library, translated by J.H. Freese, William Heinemann, 1933, #8.

Roman. There are touches given to Dido's character that are incompatible with the Medea or Cleopatra type. Virgil clearly pardoned Dido by the beautiful symbolism at the end of the fourth book of the Aeneid. The modesty of Dido's countenance, a characteristic much cultivated and highly prized among young women of ancient times ill befits a Cleopatra. The deep and kindly heart of Dido is exposed by her words to the Trojan exiles: "Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco."³¹ The poet would dispel any idea that Dido is anything but admirable when he had Aeneas use the robe he received from the hands of Sidonian Dido as the burial robe of his young friend Pallas.³² Aeneas pathetically parts with the dearest memorial of a treasured past for his youthful warrior comrade. Dido can surely be no Cleopatra to Aeneas' mind here. If she was supposed to be such, then the only conclusion is that art proved greater than the artist.

We are sure that the Roman readers who most enjoyed the Aeneid, did not go to the story of Dido for a political allegory. Nor did the youthful Augustine shed tears for the memories of the Punic Wars, nor is this why Macrobius includes a lengthy treatment of Book IV under the rubric of pathos.³³

28 Trogi Pompeii Fragmenta, Justin, Delphin Classics with Variorum notes, Curante et Imprimente A.J. Valpy, London, 1922, XVIII, 64ff.

29 Aen. IV, 693-705.

30 Aen. I, 567.

31 Ibid., I, 630.

32 Ibid., IX, 72 ff.

33 Edward Kennard Rand, The Magical Art of Virgil, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1931, 356.

Well may Virgil use suggestion and no doubt he did, but to say that Dido is drawn from Cleopatra is stretching an analogy too far. Virgil's method, here as elsewhere, is to combine traits observed in his own experience or borrowed from literary sources, and to make up a new imaginative creation.

Considering, then, the advantages to be gained from the inclusion of the Dido episode, Virgil decided to tell the story despite the seemingly unfavorable role in which it cast his hero. Virgil was quick to see the powerful element of pathos that it afforded him. How better could he fulfill his wish than by including the love story with its tragic ending and its opportunity for expression of all emotions. Secondly, the story of Rome's greatness must have place for the religious element that Romans of the Augustan Age believed to be responsible for the pristine Roman Virtue! The picture of Aeneas obeying the gods to the utter disregard of his own inclination is Virgil's masterpiece. For in it we see Roman Virtue clothed in flesh and blood. Thirdly, in the first conception of his epic Virgil saw the danger of dryness in the telling of stories and past events that are part and parcel of epic lore. How could he counteract any possible monotony? He decided that an interested listener whose enthusiasm could lend color to the story and spur on the teller would solve the difficulty. Dido, the woman who would be captivated by Aeneas could best fill the role. His choice is a wise one. Lastly, any story of Rome which would exclude the story of the Punic Wars would not be the

complete story of Rome. For the Roman empire of Augustus's time looked upon the struggle with Carthage and its victorious issue for the Roman arms as the turning point of Roman history. After the defeat of Hannibal, Rome was a world power. Virgil used the Dido episode to remind the writer and readers of his day of the enmity between Roman and Tyrian in all its important phases. The average Roman found great solace in the action of Aeneas in leaving Dido for the welfare of the future city of Rome. With the completion of the tale of Dido and Aeneas, Virgil poetically sowed the seeds of discord that were to grow into the Punic Wars. Thus, in short, we see the compelling reasons that ultimately decided Virgil to write the fourth book of the Aeneid.

CHAPTER III

APOLLONIUS OF RHODES AND THE FOURTH AENEID

The investigation of the sources of the fourth book of the Aeneid proves a most interesting study. The more one searches, the more convinced one becomes that it is almost impossible to review every writer and his works which had a positive influence on Virgil. Undoubtedly extensive reading was necessary to furnish him with the necessary background from which he might choose as he would in the delineation of the characters in the Dido episode. All writers of great literature are consciously or unconsciously influenced in their writings by the works of their predecessors in a particular field. While in the case of Virgil, the finished product is vastly superior to the exemplars, and shows, as Horace puts it so well, much labor limae et mora, yet Virgil was no exception to the tendency noted above. In fact, Virgil borrowed from his predecessors much more than any modern critic would be willing to permit, for the ancients had a much different outlook on what we of a later day would label downright plagiarism! Virgil, then, did not scruple to take what fitted his designs. From Apollonius of Rhodes, the author of the Alexandrine epic, the Argonautica, more than from any other author Virgil borrowed material for the Aeneid. This statement may seem surprising, especially in the face of all the material that could be traced to Homer in Virgil's poetry yet it stands as the truth.

In essence the poetry of the Aeneid is never Homeric, despite the incorporation of many Homeric lines. It is a sapling of Virgil's Hellenistic garden, slowly acclimated to Italian soil, fed richly by years of philosophical study, braced, pruned and reared into a tree of noble strength and classic dignity. 1

Apollonius is an important figure in the Alexandrine Movement. His poem, the Argonautica, written in four books, is the first instance as far as we know where a love theme was the subject for a detailed epic treatment. Most of the Homeric traditions are followed by Apollonius: the language is that of the conventional epic of the past, and the consecrated epic theme - $\kappa\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\upsilon$ - the glorious deeds of heroes - is present in the story and adventures of Jason. But Apollonius departed from Homer's path by introducing a love story as a major episode in his epic. This certainly was an innovation not to be found in Homeric tradition. Virgil chose to follow the lead of Apollonius in the telling of the Dido episode.

Another difference in Apollonius was that he did not make use of Greek ladies as his heroines, but introduced a barbarian princess, Medea. If, as has been said,² Dido would have been an impossibility for Homer, it may be as truthfully asserted that Apollonius's Medea would also be foreign to Homer's Muse. Homer's

1 Tenney Frank, Virgil, Henry Holt & Company, New York, 1922, 168.

2 J. Wight-Duff, A Literary History of Rome To the Close of the Golden Age, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1932, 460.

native simplicity would pass by so deep a study of feelings and would give no such proportions to such an erotic theme. The ambition of Apollonius was to express the love of Jason and Medea in a medium in which the subject had never before been handled. The novelty of his plan was not slow in bringing him into sharp disagreement with his contemporaries, especially with his former teacher, Callimachus, whose literary aims and tastes differed considerably from those of his pupil.³ This is not at all surprising since, for Callimachus, Homer was the Alpha and Omega of epic, and he was convinced that any departure from Homeric epic tradition was a grave literary blunder. However he disregarded the criticism and introduced a novelty in his epic. Moreover the Argonautica prospered and was much admired by Roman writers who received inspiration from the great classical writers by way of Alexandria. Due to Apollonius, Medea was handed down to the Romans not only as the tragic and embittered figure of Euripides but also a girl who had abandoned all at the call of her loved one, and in the end found⁴ the bitterness of a love.

Before proceeding to the connection between Apollonius and Virgil, we must give a word of warning. This chapter has no intention of making Virgil an Alexandrine, for he never fashioned his poetry according to the Alexandrine mold. His learning never

3 Cf. J.W. Atkins, Literary Criticism in Antiquity, Cambridge at the University Press, 1934, Vol. I, 177ff. for treatment of this point.

4 Henry, R.M., 98.

degenerated into pedantry or obscurity, nor did the Alexandrine avoidance of everything commonplace in subject, sentiment or allusion ever find place in his poetry. This chapter is designed merely to show the intimate connection between the fourth Aeneid and the Argonautica.

We could surmise that Virgil would borrow from Apollonius for a new phase had been added to epic tradition; and it had proved to be a highly interesting phase. Virgil knew that somehow he must utilize what Apollonius had made practically imperative, but how was he to introduce an erotic theme into his plan of Rome? The lines of Roman history were clearly cut but the career of Homer's Aeneas after the sack of Troy was unknown and consequently Virgil could use a free hand in treating of the Trojan hero. The opportunity for including the new love motif of Apollonius was presented to Virgil by the work of his predecessor, Naevius, the Roman dramatic poet of Punic War days who included both Dido and Aeneas in his Bellum Punicum.

The first bit of evidence for Virgil's debt to Apollonius is found in the commentators on Virgil. Macrobius offers an interesting text to begin the examination:

de Argonauticorum quarto, quorum scriptor est
Apollonius, librum Aeneidos suae quartum totum
paene formaverit ad Didonem vel Aenean amatoriam
incontinentiam Medae circa Jasonem transferendo. 5

An even more clear statement of fact is found in Servius:

Apollonius Argonautica scripsit et in tertio
inducit amantem Medeam: inde totus hic liber
translatus est. 6

First of all, we know that the fourth book of the Aeneid is far indeed from a direct translation of the third book of the Argonautica.⁷ Now at the beginning before a review of the facts has been taken it would be difficult to point out the exact meaning of the above statement of Servius; it will, I believe, be clear at the conclusion.

The surest, clearest and most obvious way to attack our problem is to review the stories of Medea and Dido from the beginning. Dido is the Tyrian queen, beautiful, industrious, clever. Virgil summed up her character in three words of eulogy - Dux femina facti.⁸ By this he meant that her industry, cleverness and constancy were directly responsible for the rise of her country. Medea, too, is of royal blood, being the princess daughter of the King of the Colchians.

The first likeness that strikes one is that the union of both pairs of lovers, Jason and Medea, Dido and Aeneas, is the result of divine machinations. By the plan of the goddesses Hera and Athena, Medea fell in love with Jason. With her assistance

6 Servius, Grammatici, George Thilo and Herman Hagen, Aeneidos Librorum I-V Commentarii, Lipsiae, Teubner, 1891, Vol. I, auctus ad Aen. IV, I.

7 Rand, 393.

8 Aen. I. 364.

he was enabled to bring back the Golden Fleece to Greece. Hera addresses Athena:

Come, let us go to Cypris, let us both accost her Venus and urge her to bid her son (if only he will obey) speed his shaft at the daughter of Aetes, the enchantress, and charm her with love for Jason. And I deem that by her device he will bring back the fleece to Hellas. 9

In the Aeneid, Juno, realizing Dido's infatuation for the Trojan leader, determined to keep Aeneas at Carthage so that he might never found his destined kingdom in Italy. She slyly addresses Venus:

egregiam vero laudem et spolia ampla refertis
tuque puerque tuus; magnum et memorabile numen,
una dolo divum si femina victa duorum est.
nec me adeo fallit veritam te moenia nostra
suspectas habuisse domos Karthaginis altae.
sed quis erit modus, aut quo nunc certamine tanto?
quin potius pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos
exercemus? habes, tota quod mente petisti;
ardet amans Dido traxitque per ossa furorem.
communem hunc ergo populum paribusque regamus
auspiciis; liceat Phrygio servire marito
dotalisque tuae Tyrios permittere dextrae. 10

As one might well expect from the passages just quoted, the next point of comparison is naturally the role of Cupid in both poets. Here again Virgil directly follows in the steps of Apollonius. Working at the request of his goddess mother, Cupid in the third Argonautica is thus described accomplishing his

9 Apollonius, Argonautica, Loeb Classical Library, translated by R.C. Seaton, William Heinemann, 1921, III, 25-29.

10 Aen. IV, 93-104.

11 Argonautica, III, 278-287.

mission:

And quickly beneath the lintel in the porch
 he strung his bow and took from the quiver an
 arrow unshot before, messenger of pain. And
 with swift feet unmarked he passed the thresh-
 old and keenly glanced around; and gliding by
 Aeson's son he laid the arrow notch on the cord
 in the center, and drawing wide apart with both
 feet he shot at Medea; and speechless amaze-
 ment seized her soul.

Virgil's Cupid has a slightly subtler role. Cast in the guise of
 Ascanius, Aeneas' son, Cupid slowly but surely plies his appointed
 task, causing Dido to forget the memory of Sychaeus, her former
 spouse, and at the same time rousing her to a burning love for
 Aeneas:

praecipue infelix, pesti devota futurae,
 expleri mentem nequit ardescitque tuendo
 Phoenissa, et pariter puero donisque movetur.
 ille ubi complexu Aeneae colloque pependit
 et magnum falsi implevit genitoris amorem,
 reginam petit. haec oculis, haec pectore toto
 haeret et interdum gremio fovet, inscia Dido,
 insidat quantus miserae deus. at memor ille
 matris Acidaliae paulatim abolere Sychaeum
 incipit et vivo temptat pravertere amore
 iam pridem resides animos desuetaque corda. 12

Before proceeding further with the comparison, let us
 note two other observations. In Homer, we notice that Odysseus is
 a traveler and hand in hand with his travels go his adventures. In
 the Argonautica of Apollonius, Jason is also cast as a traveler.
 The reason is because travel offers the opportunity of visiting
 many and strange places and of unfolding adventures in epic story.

In the light of this prevailing tendency Virgil would be much inclined to cast Aeneas as a traveler. Hence we see a reason for the introduction of Carthage and Dido. Another point of similarity in the two stories is the arrival of the Argonauts and the shipwrecked Trojans. Immediately on touching the shore and meeting the Tyrian dwellers, the sailors hasten to explain that not for violence or plunder have they come to Carthage, but that a storm has driven them thither and they seek only a temporary refuge:

non nos aut ferro Libycos populare Penatis
venimus aut raptas ad litora vertere praedas;
non ea vis animo nec tanta superbia victis. 13

The same tone is apparent in the language of Jason as he addresses Aetes, the king of Colchis, on the arrival of the Argonauts at the Colchian shores:

Aetes, bear with this armed band, I pray.
For not in the way thou deemest have we come
to thy city and palace, no, nor yet with such
desires. For who would of his own will dare
to cross so wide a sea for the goods of a
stranger? 14

After listening to the plea of the shipwrecked Trojans, Dido shows her magnanimous spirit and drops all the barriers to her realm. Opening wide the gates of the city, she invites the men of Aeneas to stay a while or even, should they so desire, to settle in her realm; she will treat them as citizens of equal rights with the Tyrians.

13 Aen. I, 527-529.

14 Argon. II, 386-389.

seu vos Hesperiam magnam Saturniaque arva
 sive Erycis finis regemque optatis Acesten,
 auxilio tutos dimittam opibusque iuvabo.
 voltis et his mecum pariter considerare regnis?
 urbem quam statuo vestra; subducite navis;
 Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur. 15

For the counterpart of this passage we look to the first book of the Argonautica. In the early stages of the trip for the Golden Fleece, Jason landed at Lemnos and was greeted by Hypsipyle, daughter of King Thoas. The same display of selfless generosity is not so clearly present in the invitation of Hypsipyle. Yet a warm welcome and an evident desire to be hospitable, and the same joy in giving the invitation is evident in the language of the princess.

Stranger, why stay ye so long outside our towers? Do ye therefore stay and settle with us; and shouldst thou desire to dwell here, and this finds favor with thee, assuredly thou shalt have the prerogative of my father Thoas; and I deem that thou wilt not scorn our land at all; for it is deep-soiled beyond all other islands that lie in the Aegaeon sea. But come now, return to thy ship and relate my words to thy comrades, and stay not outside our city. 16

After the arrival of Jason and Aeneas, the passages concerned with the reaction of the two heroines are almost identical, even to the wording. The effect of Cupid's darts on each is the same. The narrative of Apollonius is not quite as moving as that of Virgil, and Virgil's trick of making Dido speak out her con-

15 Aen. IV, 569-574.

16 Argon. I, 793, 827-833.

dition makes it more vivid and realistic. Apollonius begins his description of Medea:

and the maiden looked at him with stealthy glance, holding her bright veil aside, her heart smouldering with pain; and her soul creeping like a dream flitted in his track as he went. So they passed forth from the palace sorely troubled. And Chalciope, shielding herself from the wrath of Aetes, had gone quickly to her chamber with her sons. And Medea likewise followed and much brooded in her soul all the cares that Loves awaken. And before her eyes the vision still appeared - himself what like he was, with what vesture he was clad, what things he spake, how he sat on his e his seat, how he moved forth to the door - and as she pondered, she deemed there never was such another man; and ever in her ears rung his voice and the honey sweet words which he uttered. 17

After reading the above passage, let us turn to Virgil. He develops Dido's character, first, by a short description of her first reactions to Aeneas' coming, letting her own words describe her state of mind. Lastly, he lets her actions speak louder than her words. Notice here the same stress on the words and actions and appearance of the hero which is likewise emphasized in the above passage of Apollonius:

multa viri virtus animo multusque recursat
gentis honos; haerent infixi pectore voltus
verbaque, nec placidam membris dat cura quietem.
... quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes,
quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!
credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum.
... nunc eadem labente die convivia quaerit,
Iliacosque iterum demens audire labores
exoscit pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore....
illum absens absentem auditque videtque,
aut gremio Ascanium, genitoris imagine capta,

detinet, infandum si fallere possit amorem. 18

Apollonius plainly tells us that Medea is torn between *αἰδώς* and *ἔμπερος*, shame and passion. *αἰδώς*, that noble Greek Virtue, akin in a way to Roman pietas, that would render to her father and family their due, is pitted against *ἔμπερος*, natural desire, spurred on, in this case, by the shaft of Cupid. Medea wishes to go to her sister and tell her of the infatuation for the stranger, but finds she cannot bring herself to do it:

and verily she desired to go to her sister and crossed the threshold. And for long she stayed there at the entrance of her chamber, held back by shame; and she turned back once more; and again she came forth from within, and again stole back; and idly did her feet bear her this way and that; yea, and as oft as she went straight on, shame held her within the chamber, and though held back by shame, bold desire kept urging her on. 19

Dido's struggle is also between this same *αἰδώς* and *ἔμπερος*. Her devotion to the memory of her dead husband, Sychaeus, makes her better self recoil from the strong desires that Virgil has put into her character. Yet we see almost from the beginning that her constancy to faith and promise will be gradually worn down:

heu! quibus ille
iactatus fatis! quae bella exhausta canebat!
si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet,
ne cui me vinclo vellem sociare iugali,
postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit;
si non pertaesum thalami taedaeque fuisset,
huic uni forsitan potui succumbere culpa.

18 Aen. IV, 3-5; 10-12; 77-79; 83-85.

19 Argon. III, 644-652.

Anna, fatebor enim, miseri post fata Sychaei
coniugis et sparsos fraterna caede Penatis
solus hic inflexit sensus animumque labentem
impulit. 20

The reaction of Medea as she reviews the wild thoughts flitting through her mind is to think of the disgrace she will bring upon herself if she helps Jason. Even death seems more preferable than that she should surrender and assist Jason in seizing the Golden Fleece. Yet while she speaks words of self-condemnation, she had already half decided in her mind to help the man she loved:

What disgrace will not be mine? Alas for my infatuation! Far better would it be for me to forsake life this very night in my chamber by some mysterious fate, escaping all slanderous, before I complete such nameless dishonor. 21

The first words that come to Dido's lips in the same circumstances are a curse that she calls upon herself. She exceeds Medea's hope for death by calling upon Jupiter to cast her down to Hades if ever she should so forget her promised fidelity and honor:

sed mihi vel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat
vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
pallentis umbras Erebi noctemque profundam,
ante, Pudor, quam te violo aut tua iura resolvo.
ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores
abstulit; ille habeat secum servetque sepulchro. 22

Some see in Dido's curse upon herself, Virgil's attempt to restore poetic justice for the sorrowful outcome of Dido's life. But

20 Aen. IV, 13-23.

21 Argon. III, 797-801.

22 Aen. IV, 24-30.

rather they are merely words by which Dido hopes to awe herself into fidelity to her word; they are the last noble effort to struggle against the treacherous Cupid.

At this point in the narrative it is most fitting to notice a most important point in both the Argonautica and the Aeneid: the roles of the two sisters of the respective women play in the story. Their parts are similar in many ways. For Medea, her sister, Chalcioppe, is a confidant, one to whom she can speak out her thoughts. Yet Medea refuses to pour forth her story of her love for Jason into her sister's ear. Chalcioppe is indeed one to be trusted, but Medea does not fully trust her secret to anyone. Dido on the other hand has the fullest confidence in Anna, her sister. Her candid admission of her state of mind to Anna throughout the fourth Aeneid bespeaks kinship between the two much deeper than that between Medea and Chalcioppe. In the Argonautica, Chalcioppe is interested only in her sons; Anna in the Aeneid has no interest beyond that of serving her sister. Anna is the perfect foil for Dido's character, even as Chalcioppe is for Medea. Anna's words of worldly wisdom warning Dido to forget the memory of a dead husband and to consult her present interest gradually undermines Dido's determination to be faithful to the memory of her former spouse. With an increasingly softening attitude Dido looks upon a Trojan-Tyrian bond that would result from wedlock with Aeneas. Or again

Apollonius uses Chalcioppe's intervention to serve the purpose of a second plot and give a dramatic turn to the narrative; Virgil with

a juster appreciation of the epic makes no such use of Anna. Anna is her sister's natural counsellor and friend who merges in with the story and is in fact the heroine's second (if less noble) self. 23

In describing the beauty of their main characters, both Apollonius and Virgil go back to Homer. It is interesting here for the sake of comparison to see what both poets have made out of borrowed and pliable material. The imagery is much the same in both - admiring throngs, youthful retinue, dancing nymphs, and finally the use of the Diana simile to emphasize the beauty of each heroine. Apollonius extended his description further than Virgil:

And going forth she [Medea] mounted on a swift chariot and with her went two maidens on each side. And she herself took the reins and in her right hand the well-fashioned whip, and drove through the city; and the rest, the handmaids, laid their hands on the chariot behind and ran along the broad highway; and they kilted their light robes above their white knees. And even as by the mild waters of Parthenius, or after bathing in the river Amnisus Leto's daughter stands upon her golden chariot and courses over the hills with her swift-footed roes to greet from afar some richly-steaming hecatomb; and with her come the nymphs in attendance, gathering, some at the spring of Amnisus itself, others by the glens and many-fountained peaks; and round her whine and fawn the beasts cowering as she moves along. 24

Virgil's description is built upon the same Homeric model as the above lines of Apollonius.

23 Henry, 105.

24 Argon. III, 868-885.

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 choris, 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. 25

Comparing the above descriptions we cannot help but admire the fine work of both poets. In this description of Apollonius we detect none of the faults that sometimes mar his efforts: too great display of learning, pedantry or obscurity. Virgil's, too, is no inferior effort; but here Virgil must yield the palm to his Alexandrine predecessor.

When Medea finds that the Argonauts are undecided whether to return her to her father's house or to bring her with them to Hellas, she calls Jason aside from the throng and with angry words confronts him with this accusation:

What is this purpose that ye are now devising
 about me, O son of Aeson? Has thy triumph utterly
 cast forgetfulness upon thee, and reckest thou
 nothing of all that thou spakest when held fast
 by necessity? 26

Note the same reaction and similarity of language when Dido learns of Aeneas' planned departure; she cannot conceal her bitterness.

Dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide, tantum

25 Aen. I, 494-504.

26 Argon. IV, 355-358.

posse nefas tacitusque mea decedere terra?
 nec te noster amor nec te data dextera quondam
 nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido? 27

The inevitable psychological reaction set in again for both heroines. Medea immediately recalled all the sufferings and sacrifices that she had undergone for Jason's sake. She raged at the black ingratitude of the son of Aeson:

I have left my country, the glories of my home and even my parents -- things that were dearest to me; and far away all alone I am borne over the sea with the plaintive kingfishers because of thy trouble, in order that I might save thy life in fulfilling the contests with the oxen and earthborn men. Last of all the fleece -- when the matter became known, it was by my folly thou didst win it; and foul reproach have I poured on womankind. 28

For Dido, too, Aeneas' ingratitude is hardest to bear. Her litany of woes revealed her love of Aeneas and also sympathetically showed what a high price she had paid for it:

te propter Libycae gentes Nomadumque tyranni
 odere, infensi Tyrii; te propter eundem
 exstinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam,
 fama prior. cui me moribundam deseris, hospes,
 hoc solum nomen quoniam de coniuge restat? 29

And lastly in their fury, both women follow the same course, cursing their lovers and calling the direst threats of the powers of heaven down upon them. It is, as if realizing their own failure and powerlessness to stop the plans of Jason and Aeneas, they call upon the gods to be their avengers. The Eumenides,

27 Aen. IV, 305-308.

28 Argon. IV, 360-368.

29 Aen. IV, 320-324.

as the Avengers of the wronged are invoked in both prayers.

Medea's words are calculated to force Jason to change his plans:

What revenge, what heavy calamity shall I not endure in agony for the terrible deeds I have done? And wilt thou win the return that thy heart desires? Never may Zeus's bride, the queen of all, in whom thou dost glory, bring that to pass. Mayst thou some time remember me when thou art racked with anguish; may the fleece like a dream vanish into the nether darkness on the wings of the wind! And may my avenging Furies forthwith drive thee from thy country, for all that I have suffered through thy cruelty! These curses will not be allowed to fall unaccomplished to the ground. A mighty oath hast thou transgressed, ruthless one; but not long shalt thou and thy comrades sit at ease casting eyes of mockery upon me, for all your covenants. 30

Dido's curse upon Aeneas differs slightly in its desired effect from that of Medea upon Jason. The curse of Dido is that of a person who realizes that the last ray of hope has vanished and all that is left is stark, cold vengeance. Nowhere is it more clearly manifest than here that love turned to hate is the terrible kind of hate! In her curse, Dido runs through a list of divinities, the Sun, Juno, Hecate, the Furies and all the minor deities of Tyrian name:

Sol, qui terrarum flammis opera omnia lustras,
tuque harum interpretur curarum et conscia Juno,
nocturnisque Hecate triviis ululata per urbes
et dirae Ultrices et di morientis Elissae,
accipite haec, meritumque malis advertite numen
et nostras audite preces. si tangere portus

infandum caput ac terris adnare necesse est,
 et sic fata Iovis poscunt, hic terminus haeret:
 at bello audacis populi vexatus et armis,
 finibus extorris, complexu avolsus Iuli,
 auxilium imploret videatque indigna suorum
 funera; nec, cum se sub leges pacis iniquae
 tradiderit, regno aut optata luce fruatur,
 sed cadat ante diem mediaque inhumatus harena. 31

Two minor points that help to further bolster the close parallels between Virgil and Apollonius are the dreams of Dido and Medea and the introduction of magic ceremonies into the story of Dido. Both of these points are borrowed from the Argonautica. In the Alexandrine epic, the dream of Medea is a pleasant episode in which she pictures to herself that Jason was sent to Colchis just for her. Then in her land of make-believe, she marries him with the blessing of her father. Virgil, on the other hand, uses the dream episode for a different purpose. Dido's dream is just before Aeneas' departure ³² and merely adds to her frenzy and heightens the already strained atmosphere in the Carthaginian city. Dido even turns to magic ceremonies in her desperation but her wails to the heavenly powers go unanswered. In the Argonautica Apollonius makes Medea to be a wielder of magic arts. Argus speaks these words in the third book:

There is a maiden, nurtured in the halls of
 Aetes, whom the goddess Hecate taught to han-
 dle magic herbs with exceeding skill -- all
 that the land and flowing waters produce.
 With them is quenched the blast of unwearied

31 Aen. IV, 607-620.

32 Ibid. IV, 466-470.

flame, and at once she stays the course of rivers as they rush roaring on, and checks the stars and the paths of the sacred moon. 33

Virgil adopted the use of magic for Dido though he makes her protest that she turns to it against her will. The staying of the course of rivers and the turning of the stars in the sky seem to be the examples of divine power Virgil owed to Apollonius. The exact signification of these ceremonies is not too clear but Virgil's source in using them is plain enough. Dido speaks to Anna:

hinc mihi Massylae gentis monstrata sacerdos,
Hesperidum templi custos, epulasque draconi
quae dabat et sacros servabat in arbore ramos,
spargens umida mella soporiferumque papaver.
haec se carminibus promittit solvere mentes
quas velit, ast aliis duras immitere curas;
sistere aquam fluviis et vertere sidera retro; 34

Even the cave scene in the Aeneid where the marriage of
35

Aeneas and Dido was celebrated is but a counterpart of the cave
36
scene in the Argonautica in which Jason and Medea are wed.

Apollonius was very clever in handling his plot inasmuch as he nowhere bound Jason to Medea by an explicit and spoken promise. Consequently nowhere is it possible to level any charges against Jason of unfaithfulness or definite attempt to hoodwink Medea. In this point, Virgil has followed Apollonius. In fact Aeneas denies he ever believed he was entering into a marriage con-

33 Argon. III, 529-539.

34 Aen. IV, 483-489.

35 Ibid. IV, 160 ff.

36 Argon. IV, 1128 ff.

tract with Dido. This is no attempt to "white-wash" the character of Aeneas; but amidst the many passages avowing Dido's love and hopes for marriage, the text is strangely silent regarding Aeneas' actual words to Dido. Assuredly we are led to believe as the fourth book progresses that the feeling between the two was one of mutual affection; but Virgil handles it skillfully by never committing Aeneas to a spoken promise of marriage which would later be forced asunder.

Thus far our comparisons have all been between the heroines; but not because the heroes do not lend themselves to many points of similarity but rather because the divergence of their characters is so complete. Aeneas is by far the more appealing of the two. He has more color, courage and appeal than Jason. Jason's men know that he is no leader of men, while the Trojans in their miseries look upon pius Aeneas as one to lead them to the land of destiny.

37

One other fine echo is found in both poets. Apollonius shows his Alexandrine weakness by an overfondness for *ἱστορία*, that is, the unfolding of the mythological origins of persons, places and events. Founding of towns and villages, or explanations of the beginnings of religious rites connected with some particular

37 Cf. Rand, 398 ff. for detailed analysis of the characters of Jason and Aeneas as well as an excellent comparison of the heroines Dido and Medea; the superiority of Aeneas over the Argonaut hero is most evident in Rand's treatment.

place are scattered throughout the poem. In the middle of adventuresome episodes Apollonius was wont to come out with a remembrance of a little-known myth, tracing its origin, or again naming some ancient epic character in close connection with the myth. The mythological origins in themselves are not bad, for a certain amount of such material serves to spice and flavor a story of epic proportions and make it more impressive. Rather it is the abuse of such material that makes these ἀίτιαι tiresome, monotonous collection of facts, marring the beauty of the epic. Virgil, recognizing the value of these ἀίτιαι, showed great skill and good taste in scattering a few throughout the Aeneid. No doubt in his years spent in gathering material he had collected a wealth of such matter. However, he chose just a few, just enough to lend variety and background. By this wise selection, he satisfied readers who expected them, without at the same time allowing them to dull the lustre of his story.

After a review of the facts in these pages we are much better qualified and prepared to understand just what Macrobius and Servius meant when they made such a strong literary connection between Virgil and Apollonius. The statement that Virgil was as well acquainted with the Argonautica as he was with the Iliad or the Odyssey is now clear. Virgil borrowed from Apollonius but he was not content to rest there. All the suggestions and ideas that he culled would amount to nothing if he merely re-assembled them. Medea indeed stirred his fancy but Dido could not be the exact

duplicate of Medea. For Dido was the mature queen of Carthage, a widowed wife, the power behind the Tyrian throne; Medea even admitting her wonderful delineation by Apollonius, is after all, but a maiden facing moral issues for the first time. She is a girl without a hint of greatness except the rather dubious honor of being a wielder of magic arts under Hecate's power. The many striking similarities observed in these pages are the points where Virgil considered imitation would best bring out his heroine's true character. What he has borrowed, he has used well and, in all fairness to Apollonius and his Alexandrine genius, the character of Dido is far more powerfully conceived and drawn than that of Medea, the maiden princess of Colchis.

CHAPTER IV

NAEVIUS AND THE FOURTH AENEID

Investigating the sources of the fourth book of the Aeneid, we find that one of the difficult problems to settle categorically is the question whether or not Virgil invented the Dido story. Surely that part of the Aeneid which the modern reader, at least, finds most deeply moving deserves our special attention. Whence came the idea for the Dido episode in the story of Aeneas and his wanderings?

If Virgil himself was wholly responsible for the sources and the character of Dido, his glory is so much the greater, but such seems not to be the case. Indeed one thing alone can be certainly stated at the start of this investigation before a bit of evidence has been examined: we cannot determine categorically if Virgil invented the meeting and love story of Aeneas and Dido. Yet by examining the fragments that remain, a strong case can be argued for attributing the meeting of Aeneas and Dido to Naevius, the Roman dramatic poet who lived about the time of the Second Punic War.

Even when he first dreamed of writing an epic poem on the story of Rome, Virgil doubtless realized that he must, in some way, combine legend and history. Naevius and Ennius had established for all the times the convention of going back to beginnings, and of finding

1

these beginnings in the Trojan-Roman story.

It is unfortunate that there remain but scanty fragments with which we may work but considerable light is thrown on the question by the statements of several of the ancient commentators and critics of Virgil, especially Servius and Macrobius. From these fragments even though they are but indicative, we can argue to the probability that it was Naevius who first brought Aeneas and Dido together; Virgil, taking the bare outlines of the Naevian story, fashioned it into the Dido episode. We are well aware that there is scholarly opposition on the part of some authors to attributing the meeting of Aeneas and Dido to Naevius. We believe, however, that the facts can be so interpreted as to warrant the statement that it was Naevius who brought about the meeting of Aeneas and Dido.

The establishing of the connection between Naevius's Bellum Punicum fragments and the Trojan story is very simply done. We are indebted to Servius for preserving the first fragment we shall use. In this first fragment Naevius goes back to the first beginnings of Trojan-Roman history, bringing us the picture of Aeneas and Anchises leaving Troy with their wives. Thus reads Servius's comment on line ten of the III Aeneid:

'Litora cum patriae lacrimans' Amat poeta quae
legit immutata aliqua parte vel personis ipsis

1 Knapp, 201.

2 Duff, 132; Knapp, 203.

verbis proferre. Naevius enim induxit uxores
Aeneae et Anchises cum lacrimis Ilium relinquen-
tes his verbis---

Amborum uxores
noctu Troiad exhibant capitibus opertis,
flentes ambae abeuntes lacrimis cum multis. 3

Fragments eight, nine and ten further bolster the connection of Aeneas and his wanderings with the poem of Naevius. Again we owe the preservation of the lines to Servius. In his commentary on Aeneid, II, 797, he writes:

Naevius Belli Punici primo de Anchisa et
Aenea fugientibus haec ait---

4

'Eorum sectam sequuntur multi mortales'

5

Ecce hoc est 'invenio admirans numerum'

Servius continues to comment on the Aeneid and by stating Virgil's loci in Naevius, he proves Virgil's close acquaintance and use of Bellum Punicum:

6

'Multi alii e Troia strenui viri...'

7

Ecce hi sunt 'animis...parati' (Aen. II, 799)

The tenth fragment of Naevius formed Virgil's model for line 799 in the second Aeneid:

8

'Ubi foras cum auro illic exhibant'

9

Ecce et 'opibus instructi' (Aen. II, 799)

3 Naevius, Bellum Punicum, Liber Primus, fragment 5-7, Remains of Old Latin, translated by E.H. Warmington, London, 1936, 48.

4 Ibid., fragment 8.

5 Servius, II, 797.

6 Naevius, fragment 9.

7 Servius, II, 799.

8 Naevius, fragment 10.

9 Servius, II, 799.

That Naevius said something about the ship that was to carry Aeneas in his wanderings is apparent from the note of Servius on Aeneid, I, 170:

Naevius Bello Punico dicit unam navem habuisse
Aeneam quam Mercurius fecerit.

Hence from the fragments we can argue to a general indebtedness of Virgil to Naevius. But what about a Dido episode in Naevius? As yet we have no right to infer anything. Such statements of Servius as the following comment on Aeneas's words of courage to his comrades: "Et totus hic locus de Naevii Belli Punico Libro
10
translatus est." make Virgil's general debt clear.

We shall proceed further in our effort to establish the close connection between Naevius and the story of Aeneas and his wanderings. Macrobius writes:

In principio Aeneidos tempestas describitur
et Venus apud Jovem queritur de periculis filii,
et Juppiter eam de futurorum prosperitate solatur.
Hic totus locus sumptus a Naevio est ex
primo libro Belli Punico, illic enim aequè Ve-
nus Troianis tempestate laborantibus cum Jove
queritur et secuntur verba Jovis filiam conso-
lantis spe futurorum. 11

His words attest to the fact that Virgil's use of divine machinery whereby Venus complains to Jupiter in behalf of Aeneas, her son, and receives from the Father of the gods a comforting reply, found its exact counterpart in the first book of Naevius's Punic War.

10. Servius, I, 198.

11 Macrobius, VI, 2, (italics mine).

All that we have been trying to establish thus far is the close relationship that exists between the lost fragments of Naevius and the story of Aeneas as found in Virgil. The ancient commentators had much, perhaps all, of Naevius's text at their disposal and their comments have given us brief glimpses into the important connection between Virgil and Naevius in the story of Aeneas and his Trojans. It is clear, then, that Naevius did tell much of the story of Aeneas, his wanderings and adventures. The Trojan hero and founder of Rome formed the subject matter of the early part of his dramatic poem.

The first mention of Dido is in a purely historical connection. Timaeus the Greek historian of the third century B.C.,
 12
 mentions her in a fragment which tells her story. Referring to her as Elissa, he relates that when Dido's brother, the king of the Tyrians, kills Dido's husband, she, with a chosen band of citizens set up a regime in Libya. Rather than submit to a distasteful marriage with a neighboring king in Libya, she chose rather to build a pyre and cast herself upon it in suicide. Timaeus makes no mention of Anna, Dido's sister in the fragment.

Much more of Dido's story and background is preserved in the account of Justin, a Roman historian of the second century of the Christian era. Probably using the complete text of Timaeus in

12 Timaeus, Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum, edited by Charles and Theodore Mueller, Editore Ambrosio Firmin Didot, Instituta Francise typographo, 1874, Vol. I, 197, frag. 23.

writing his Latin account, he tells that Dido married her uncle. When Pygmalion, her husband's slayer and her blood brother did his foul deed, she with a chosen sailed to the shores of Africa. Obtaining enough land to found a city by the ruse of cutting up a bull's hide so as to cover a great expanse, she started building a city. Iarbas, a neighboring barbarian king, tried to force her into a distasteful marriage but Dido still proved loyal to her first husband. Pretending to accept the chieftain's offer, she made preparations and finally, lighting up a pyre, she cast herself upon it to die. As is patent, in neither of these two historical accounts is there any mention of Aeneas. Any mention of Dido's sister, Anna, is also conspicuous by its absence.

From Timaeus and Justin we can gather information regarding Dido but in these authors we find no facts that attest to Aeneas and Dido being together at Carthage. Since these sources fail to supply the necessary nexus we are seeking, other sources must provide the material. No Roman writer before Naevius makes mention of Dido, the queen of Carthage nor does any of them bring Aeneas into Dido's life at Carthage.

The first link we have in the Dido-Aeneas story is in an important sentence in the commentary of Servius. Very casually he gives us a lead of consequence when he comments on the ninth

13 Justin, The Delphin Classics with Variorum notes, Curante et Imprimente A.J. Valpy, A.M., London, 1922, Vol. I, XVIII, 6.

line of the fourth Aeneid, where Dido addresses Anna, her sister:

cujus filiae fuerint Anna et Dido Naevius dicit.

From this statement it is evident that Naevius, as well as Virgil, knew Dido and Anna as two separate persons. Also another fact becomes clear. Naevius in writing his history was the first writer to include both the characters of Aeneas and Dido in his work. Servius adds a still stronger link to the chain of evidence with these words:

Varro ait, non Didonem, sed Annam, amore Aeneae impulsam se super rogum interemisisse. 14

The above words of Servius are a very good argument for supporting the view that Naevius brought Aeneas and Dido together. For here is Varro, a contemporary of Cicero, saying that Anna and not Dido was the one who killed herself for love of Aeneas. Evidently some Romans knew the story naming Dido as dying for love of Aeneas; but where could they have become acquainted with such a story? No mention of Dido can be found in preceding Roman writers and no subsequent Roman writer handled these characters until Virgil wrote the Aeneid. But obviously someone worked out the Dido legend, otherwise how could Varro make such a statement? A very logical inference we could make is that Naevius in his lost fragments gave this story to Roman tradition and Virgil fashioned the raw material into the story in the fourth Aeneid. Again, too, Varro's mention of Anna is truly reminiscent of Naevius. For Anna is absent in

14 Servius, IV, 682.

the Greek sources and in other Roman writers before Virgil, except in Naevius. Varro's purpose in naming Anna rather than Dido was to reconcile the historical and poetic tradition. The former stated that Dido killed herself out of love for her husband, the latter that she killed herself out of love for Aeneas. Varro reconciled the two by naming Anna as the one who died for love of Aeneas. However the real importance of Varro's statement is a chronological one: a generation before Virgil the story of Dido dying for love of Aeneas was known at Rome. We contend that Naevius gave the germ of the story in his Bellum Punicum. The fact that Naevius and Virgil both used the character of Anna, Dido's sister is another point in favor of our hypothesis.

Now let us turn our attention to the most important fragment of all. On its correct interpretation will depend a strong argument for attributing the meeting of Aeneas and Dido to Naevius. Though we have already given several good arguments in support of our stand, this is one of the most important:

blande et docte percontat Aeneas quo pacto
Troiam urbem liquisset. 15

Nonius Marcellus, a grammarian of the fourth century A.D., is responsible for the fragment. He cites this verse of Naevius twice but neither time does he mention the context of Naevius from which he took the verse. The first time he quotes the lines to demon-

strate the fact that linquo can be used in the sense of relinquo. The second time he wishes to point out that percontor may be used as an active verb, though usually it is taken as deponent. In view of the close connection already established between Naevius and Aeneas, and Naevius and Dido, it seems no stretching of evidence to say that in this fragment of the Bellum Punicum, Dido was the questioner, asking Aeneas to tell her of Troy's last hour.

There is a variant reading on the word, Aeneas,¹⁶ with one manuscript reading Aenean, the accusative: but the reading Aeneas is by far the more accepted and probably correct one. As Baehrens so logically points out,¹⁷ not only are blande and docte especially appropriate for Dido but also there is a familiar Virgilian passage expanding on the above-mentioned fragment of Naevius:

multa super Priamo rogitans, super Hectore multa
nunc, quibus Aurorae venisset filius armis,
nunc, quales Diomedis qui, nunc quantus Achilles.
'immo age et a prima die, hospes, origine nobis
insidias' inquit, 'Danaum casusque tuorum
erroresque tuos; nam te iam septima portat
omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus aestas.' 18

It might plausibly be asked how could Naevius bring Aeneas to Carthage with both a wife and stepmother accompanying him, as fragments five, six and seven of Naevius clearly show. The obvious answer is that Naevius could dispose of them as cleverly as Virgil disposed of Anchises: Anchises died in order that the

16 Pease, 19.

17 Baehrens, W.A., Hermes, Literarhistorische Beitrage, 50, 262.

18 Aen. I. 750-756.

way could be cleared for a Dido episode - an intrigue which the watchful eye of Anchises would have quickly discovered and have averted for Aeneas. As to the question proposed by Knapp,¹⁹ whether Aeneas is the subject of percontat or liquisset, Pease²⁰ ably answers: "the strong division between the halves of the Saturnian verse between percontat and Aeneas makes the former much less natural." On the subject of this important fragment of Naevius a chronological difficulty has been proposed which, if true, could considerably weaken any attributing of the meeting of Aeneas and Dido to Naevius. Wight-Duff thus proposes the difficulty:

Apparently both Naevius and Ennius push the foundation of Rome back to a period contemporaneous with that of Carthage, and they make Romulus, the founder of Rome, a grandson of Aeneas. Aeneas, then, must have reached Italy before the foundation of Carthage; and the words of Naevius, 'blande et docte percontat Aeneas quo pacto Troiam urbem liquisset,' in which some have impulsively seen Dido's request that he should, as in Virgil, recount the 'unutterable woe' of the downfall of Troy, may be more appropriately, if less romantically, be referred to old King Latinus. 21

We readily admit the possibility that it could be old Latinus or for that matter any character Aeneas might have met in his travels and which Naevius might have included in his poem. But surely the evidence does not point that way. For corroboration

19 Knapp, 202-203.

20 Pease, 20.

21 Duff, 132.

of his statement, Duff appeals to the comment of Servius on line 272 of the first Aeneid as his reference. Servius writes in comment:

Eratosthenes Ascanii, Aeneae filii, Romulum parentem urbis refert. Naevius et Ennius Aeneae ex filia nepotem Romulum conditorem urbis.

With the above comment in mind, we can readily see the authority for Duff's statement that Naevius and Ennius make Romulus the founder of Rome and grandson of Aeneas. But the first part of his statement that asserts that "apparently both Ennius and Naevius push the foundations of Rome back to a period contemporaneous with that of Carthage," has no substantiation either in Ennius or Naevius. True, Naevius related the origins of both countries but the narration of the early beginnings of both countries by no means necessitates their simultaneous origin. Duff is not arguing from historical evidence, for here his statement would be manifestly wrong. The origin of Carthage under Dido is set at about 850 B.C.²² While "most Roman historians date the founding of Rome at about 753 B.C."²³ And since there seems to be no evidence for believing the simultaneous origin of Rome and Carthage in Naevius, there is no internal contradiction in naming Dido as the questioner and Aeneas the one questioned in the fragment under consideration. The cumulative evidence

22 Alfred J. Church, Carthage, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1901, XI.

23 Charles W. Reinhardt, An Outline of Roman History, B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1939, 5.

rather favors such an interpretation.

Heinze quotes Macrobius as saying that Virgil falsified the Dido tradition.²⁴ Why would Virgil falsify the Dido tradition and in what way is Heinze's statement to be understood? Fowler thus explains why Virgil changed the historical tradition of Dido dying out of love for her husband to the story found in the fourth Aeneid.

Virgil altered the story in order to contrast the fury of ungovernable love, love of the animal type, with the settled order, affection and obedience of the Roman family life. 25

Whether one would agree entirely with Fowler's opinion is very doubtful but this much is clear, the Aeneid is the story of Aeneas the founder of Rome. The historical original tradition of Dido was out of place in the narration of the wanderings of Aeneas simply because in such a narrative Aeneas the hero would not have a prominent role. By altering the historical tradition and following the poetic tradition he was better able to obtain the pathetic, historical, religious, and technical advantages we have already pointed out in the second chapter. Virgil seems more than justified in deserting the historical tradition of Dido when we behold the wonderful literary beauty in the story of Dido.

24 Heinze, 115.

25 Fowler, Roman Essays and Interpretations, 185.

Why, then, if we have so much evidence on the word of the commentators, do we not find Servius or Macrobius or Nonius mentioning the fact that Naevius connected Dido and Aeneas and brought Aeneas to Carthage? Such a question must remain unanswerable for there is no adequate response to the argument from silence. To argue, however from what people should have said in a given circumstance is much more unsatisfactory than working with what they actually have said. If we may with probability ascribe the Dido-Aeneas liason to Naevius, it was indeed a stroke of great genius and an appropriate and natural means of motivation for the Punic Wars. The evidence is there and a sympathetic interpretation of the facts can bring it out without going beyond the bounds of reason and truth. Just how detailed any amatory episode between Aeneas and Dido really was in Naevius's work would be just mere conjecture on our part. We do not necessarily claim that such a detailed love story appeared in Naevius as we find it in the Aeneid. Our point is well proved if Naevius merely brought Aeneas to Carthage and Dido.

Names and authorities can offer no satisfactory solution for opinions are so at variance. We have discussed the pros and cons offered by respective authors and believe we have interpreted the facts fairly and correctly. It can also be truthfully asserted that the trend of more recent scholarship seems to coincide with the view taken in this thesis as the more sympathetic one. In speaking of this question, Prescott in his

fine book on Virgil sums the whole question very succinctly and correctly:

though the evidence is too scanty to warrant positive assertions, it is probable that the Carthaginian episode was inserted in the Greek legend, or at least developed by the Roman poet Naevius, about the time of the Second Punic War, obviously for political purposes, and a singular instance of the happy role which a poet's imagination may play in the enlargement of a prosaic legend. 26

CHAPTER V
CATULLUS AND THE FOURTH AENEID

We have discussed the historical and poetic tradition of the story of Aeneas and Dido, tracing the influence of Apollonius of Rhodes on Virgil in the delineation of Dido's character. Our investigation, however, would remain incomplete if we were to omit the possibility of Virgil's borrowings from his Latin predecessors. Were Virgil's models all Greek ones? Did Apollonius furnish all the literary clay from which the character of Dido was fashioned? Was there not any Roman literature that could have influenced Virgil in the creation of Dido and if so, to what degree was he influenced?

Here again, as we have done before, we must distinguish between the Aeneid as a whole and the Dido episode. Ennius and Lucretius surely formed fine models for Virgil in the composition of his epic as far as the Latinity of the diction was concerned. Clearly these two Roman poets influenced Virgil considerably in all that he wrote. Yet, as regards the particular application to the fourth Aeneid, Virgil's borrowings (to use the word in the good sense, as it was understood in Virgil's time) from them were negligible. Who, then, was the Roman poet, if any, to whom he was indebted for the development of the character of Dido? It was Catullus, "tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years

ago." This may come somewhat as a surprise to the student of Latin literature, for while one might be ready to admit that Virgil shows distinct traces of Catullus throughout the whole Aeneid, yet the connection between Catullus and Virgil's fourth Aeneid is not too clear. The influence of Catullus on Virgil is so plain in the Aeneid taken as a whole that a few verbal parallels will suffice to prove the point. Now, it was some striking epithet, or again, just a phrase that captured Virgil's fancy:

ferarum gelida stabula¹

stabula alta ferarum²

carbasus obscurata decet ferrugine Libera³

pictus acu chlamydem et ferrugine clarus Hibera⁴

Troia virum et virtutum omnium acerba cinis⁵

Troia...virtutesque virosque aut tanti incendia belli⁶

At other times Virgil would borrow an entire verse if it appealed to his taste:

Quae Syrtis, quae Scylla rapax, quae vasta Charybdis⁷

Quae Syrtes, aut Scylla mihi, quid vasta Charybdis⁸

1 Catullus, Loeb Classical Library, translated by F.W. Cornish, William Heinemann, London, 1928, LXII, 53.

2 Aen. VI, 179.

3 Catullus, LXIV, 227.

4 Aen. IX, 582.

5 Catullus, LXIV, 90.

6 Aen. I, 566.

7 Catullus, LXIV, 156.

8 Aen. VII, 302.

9

Invita, o regina tuo de vertice cessi

10

Invitus regina tuo de litore cessi

Moreover not always was it the word or rhythm Virgil appropriated but in several instances the original setting was uppermost in the poet's mind:

Virgil was deeply impressed, like many readers since his day, with the tender sadness of the one hundred and first poem of Catullus - Frater Ave Atque Vale. Various scholars of the Renaissance detected an echo of the poem in the splendid passage at the opening of the eleventh Aeneid, where Aeneas pronounces the last words over the body of Pallas (v.97): 'Salve aeternum mihi, maxime Palla, aeternum-que vale!' If here the coincidence is due rather to the fact that both poets are repeating independently the formal language of the burial rite, at least in the following instance which, strangely, editors have not noticed, Virgil repeats Catullus directly. The first line of the poem - Multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus - reappears in the words with which Anchises welcomes Aeneas in the world below (Aen. VI, 692) - Quas ego te terras et quanta vectum accipio! This is the larger kind of imitation. Virgil takes more than the words; he infuses something of the pathos of the tenderest of Roman poets into the longing of Anchises for his son. 11

Yet it was in the sixty-fourth poem of Catullus that Virgil saw the model which would offer him the material for the creation of Dido. The model was Catullus's character, Ariadne.

9 Catullus, LXVI, 39.

10 Aen. VI, 460.

11 E.K. Rand, "Catullus and The Augustans", Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1906, XVII, 24-25.

It was the Ariadne of Catullus who become the inspiration for, and ultimately develops into, the Dido of Virgil; and nowhere more clearly than in this tragic figure of the disappointed and abandoned queen Ariadne do we see how much of his characteristic sense of "pity" and "tears for things" Virgil owed to tender-hearted Catullus. 12

The similarity of the two stories, especially in the development of Dido and Ariadne, the respective heroines, is amazing. The heroine of Catullus's tale is Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, the king of Crete. After extricating Theseus from the Labyrinth, she accompanied him on his return to Greece, but was deserted by him at Naxos. Catullus took the story and made it into beautiful poetry in his sixty-fourth poem. We shall see more clearly after investigating the texts that Ariadne is the counterpart of Dido.

The very beginning of the Dido episode with the description of Dido's palace - At domus interior regali splendida
 13
 luxu - hearkens back to the picture of the royal house in which
 Peleus and Thetis wed - Tota domus gaudet regali splendida gaza.
 14
 At the opening of the fourth book of the Aeneid, as the story of Dido begins, reminiscence of Catullus's poem at once appears.
 The line, "Quis novus his nostris successit sedibus hospes"
 15

12 Karl Pomeroy Harrington, Catullus and His Influence, Marshall Jones Company, Boston, Massachusetts, 1923, 81.

13 Aen. IV, 637.

14 Catullus, LXIV, 46.

15 Aen. IV, 10.

takes the reader back to

Utinam ne...malus hic celans dulci crudelia forma
consilia in nostris requiesset sedibus hospes. 16

The heroes are both referred to as hospes and the use of this word claims an implicit comparison of the heroines at the beginning of the Aeneid.

Then as the story proceeds and the stranger Theseus comes to Crete, Ariadne burns with love for the stranger just as Dido too is smitten with love for Aeneas. Catullus writes of Ariadne:

non prius ex illo flagrantis declinavit
lumina, quam cuncto concepti corpore flammam
tunditus atque imis exarsit tota medullis. 17

Virgil writes much in the same vein of Dido as she gazes on Aeneas. The eager look of the lover, the metaphor of the fire of love are present in both descriptions and are equally effective in both:

praecipue infelix, pesti devota futurae
expleri mentem nequit ardescitque tuendo
Phoenissa et pariter puero donisque movetur 18

The description of the desertion of the two heroines by the heroes is most powerful. Ariadne awakens to find Theseus sailing away over the waves. Her pathetic figure as she stands on the shore, looking out over the waters at her escaping lover

16 Catullus, LXIV, 75.

17 Ibid., 91-93

18 Aen. I, 712-714.

is matched only by the flames of Dido's pyre slowly consuming her members as the Trojan fleet hurries from the Carthaginian shores. Ariadne cries to Theseus of his treachery and reminds him of his promises:

At non haec quondam blanda promissa dedisti
voce mihi; non haec miseram sperare iubebas,
sed conubia laeta, sed optatos hymenaeos. 19

Before Aeneas sails away, the moment Dido discovers the efforts of the Trojans to prepare for a secret sailing, she confronts Aeneas with his guile and bursts into a mighty tirade. Pleading with him by their quasi-marriage and wedlock begun and by all that she has ever been or meant to him, she begs him to change his mind and stay in Carthage. Both the italicized line above and the one below show great similarity:

per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos
si bene quid de te merui, fuit...
oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem. 20

Examining the sentiments and language of the two heroines in their reaction to their desertion one finds interesting matter for a study of just how familiar this poem of Catullus was to Virgil. The first lines in both poets, containing the first spoken words of the heroines after their desertion, have the word, perfide, to describe their respective deserters, Theseus and Aeneas. Ariadne's first burning question was:

19 Catullus, LXIV, 139-141, italics in 141 mine.

20 Aen. IV, 315-319, italics in 315 mine.

sicine me patriis avectam, perfide ab aris
 perfide, deserto liquisti in litore, Theseu? 21

Virgil opens with these words in Dido's first reproach of Aeneas:

Dissimulare etiam sperasti, perfide, perfide, tantum
 posse nefas tacitusque mea decedere terra? 22

It seems as if Virgil in building up his delineation of Dido's character was adhering very closely to the story of Ariadne, for the general outlines down even to particular phases is almost exactly the same in thought and there exists a remarkable similarity even in diction and language.

Ariadne reminds Theseus what an ingrate and wretch he is proving himself to be by deserting one who took him in, saved him and offered him so much:

certe ego te in medio versantem turbine leti
 eripui, et potius germanum amittere crevi
 quam tibi fallaci supremo in tempore dessem. 23

Dido's bitter words, too, tell of ingratitude and her wasted generosity disturbs her spirit. The rescue from the angry waves of the sea and a watery grave is contrasted with Ariadne's assistance in helping Theseus extricate himself from the Labyrinth. Dido hopes and believes that a recital of generous deeds will cause her deserter to pity her, feel shame and change his plans to forsake her.

nusquam tuta fides; ejectum litore, egentem

21 Catullus, LXIV, 133-134.

22 Aen. IV, 305-306.

23 Catullus, LXIV, 154-156.

excepti et regni demens in parte locavi
amissam classem socios a morte deduxi 24

25

Ariadne had rather fail her father and brother than fail Theseus. She fled with him like Medea of old, leaving family, friends, everything to be at the side of her beloved. The recounting of Dido's woes and sacrifices recalls those lines of Catullus. Because of Aeneas, she is a woman hated by both Tyrian and Numidian alike. She has surrendered to Aeneas her honor, her former fame and has nothing left.

te propter Libycae gentes Nomadamque tyranni
odere, infensi Tyrii; te propter eundem
extinctus pudor et, qua sola sidere adibam
fama prior, cui me moribundam deseris, hospes
hoc solum nomen quoniam de conjuge restat. 26

At the height of her righteous anger, Dido's language is strikingly similar to that of Ariadne's. Both assail the hardness of heart manifested by their former lovers in much the same tone. Ariadne accused Theseus:

Quaenam te genuit sola sub rupe leaena?
quod mare conceptum spumantibus expuit undis?
quae Syrtis, quae Scylla rapax, quae vasta Charybdis
taliam qui reddis pro dulci praemia vita. 27

Similes with rocks, animal progenitors, and birth from the cold waves of the sea are predominant. Dido's hysterical outburst

24 Aen. IV, 373-375.

25 Catullus, LXIV, 150.

26 Aen. IV, 320-324.

27 Catullus, LXIV, 154-157.

when she realized she could not delay Aeneas or turn him from his plan to withdraw, follows for comparison:

Nec tibi diva parens generis nec Dardanus auctor,
perfide, sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens
Caucasus, Hyrcanaeque admorunt ubera tigres 28

The same metaphor is also used by both authors in describing the surge of passion in the hearts of both women. Catullus wrote:
"prospicit et magnis curarum fluctuat undis."²⁹ Virgil's close imitation is as follows: "saevit amor, magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu."³⁰

Dido's wish in her last hour was that she had never laid eyes on Aeneas and the Trojans. She reviewed her accomplishments: the building of a noble city, vengeance for the death of her husband, Sychaeus, exaction of penalty from her brother and all her foes. Aeneas alone was her downfall! Would that she had never seen him and his Dardan exiles!

felix heu, nimium felix, si litora tantum
numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae! 31

Catullus, a generation before, had put into the mouth of Ariadne a like query as she reviewed the course of her unhappiness.

Juppiter omnipotens utinam ne tempore primo
Gnosia Cecropiae tetigissent litora puppes
indomito nec dira ferens stipendia tauro
perfidus in Creta religasset navita funem
nec malus hic celans dulci crudelia forma

28 Aen. IV, 365-367.

29 Catullus, LXIV, 63.

30 Aen. IV, 532.

31 Ibid., IV, 657-658, italics mine.

consilia in nostris requiesset sedibus hospes!

As the ship on the horizon carried away Theseus and snuffed out all hope of reconciliation, Ariadne raved and broke into a pitiable soliloquy. The short-clipped sentences and questions of self-pity reveal her broken mind and spirit; the fact that she had placed everything on the love of Theseus left her no or no place to turn upon her desertion.

nam quo me referam? quali spe perdita nitor?
 Idoneosque petam montes? a gurgite lato
 discernens poni truculentum ubi dividit aequor!
 an patris auxilium sperem? quemne ipsa reliqui,
 respersum iuvenum fraterna caede secuta?
 conjugis an fido consoler memet amore
 quine fugit lentos incurvans gurgite remos? 33

Dido revolves like thoughts and sentiments in her insane fury as the full significance of her tragic downfall begins to dawn upon her. She too knew not where to turn. Overcome with grief and wild wandering of the mind she decides that death alone is the solution to her troubles:

en quid ago? rursusne procos inrisa priores
 experiar, Nomadumque petam connubia supplex,
 quos ego sim totiens iam dedignata maritos?
 Iliacas igitur classis atque ultima Teucrum
 iussa sequar? quiane auxilio iuvat ante levatos
 et bene apud memores veteris stat gratia facti?
 quis me autem, fac velle, sinet ratibusve superbis
 invisam accipiet? nescis, heu! perdita, necdum
 Laomedontaeae sentis periuria gentis?
 quid tum? sola fuga nautas comitabor ovantis?
 an Tyriis omni que manu stipata meorum
 inferar et, quos Sidonia vix urbe revelli,

32 Catullus, LXIV, 171-176, italics mine.

33 Ibid., LXIV, 177-183.

rursus agam pelago et ventis dare vela iubebo? 34
 quin morere, ut merita es, ferroque averte dolorem.

The last note of similarity between the two women is the cursing of their respective lovers. After all has failed and they are alone with their broken hopes, with the passionate anger of scorned lovers, they called down the powers of the Almighty to avenge them. Ariadne's plea was addressed to the Eumenides, the Avenging Furies, that they might bring Theseus to ruin:

quare facta virum multantes vindice poena,
 Eumenides, quibus anguino redimita capillo
 frons expirantis praeporat pectoris iras,
 huc huc adventate, meas audite querellas,
 quas ego, vae, misera exterminis profere~~e~~ medullis
 cogor, inops, ardens, amenti caeca furore.
 quae quoniam verae nascuntur pectore ab imo,
 vos nolite pati nostrum vanescere luctum;
 sed quali solam Theseus me mente reliquit,
 tali mente, deae funestet seque suosque. 35

Dido cried first to the Sun, then to Juno the patron of Carthage, to the Furies as did Ariadne, and finally to the minor deities of Carthage. She cursed Aeneas with the hope that he ever be driven over the earth as an exile, be torn from his child's embrace, see his friends murdered and finally she adds the most dire curse of all in the eyes of the ancients: may he be slaughtered and lie unburied on the sands of the seashore.

Sol, qui terrarum flammis opera omnia lustras
 tuque harum interpretis curarum et conscia Juno.
 nocturnisque Hecate triviis ululata per urbes
 et Dirae ultrices et di morientis Elissae

34 Aen. IV, 534-547.

35 Catullus, LXIV, 192-201.

accipite haec, meritumque malis advertite numen
 et nostras audite preces. si tangere portus
 infandum caput ac terris adnare necesse est,
 et sic fata Jovis poscunt, hic terminus haeret:
 at bello audacis populi vexatus et armis,
 finibus extorris, complexu avolsus Iuli,
 auxilium imploret videatque indigna suorum
 funera; nec cum se sub leges pacis iniquae
 tradiderit, regno aut optata luce fruatur
 sed cadat ante diem mediaque inhumatus harena. 36

The only conclusion one can draw, after a careful reading of both pieces of literature is that Catullus's sixty-fourth poem was in the background of Virgil as he delineated the character of Dido. The parallels in many cases are so striking that it is evident to the reader that Virgil did not even hesitate to use the same phrases and turns he had read and culled from the love poet of Republican days. It is comforting to find a scholar of generations past adverting to the fact that he believed that Catullus's Ariadne was Virgil's model in forming the character of Dido. For Roger Ascham in his Scholemaster writes "how Virgil himself in the story of Dido doth wholly imitate Catullus in the like matter of Ariadna."³⁷ A most fitting finish to a chapter dealing with the above material is found in the view so capably presented by E.K. Rand:

Virgil in preparation for his story of Dido, had studied and absorbed the sixty-fourth poem of Catullus and all along by intentional imitation he invites the reader to compare the two heroines and the two stories. This is, in part,

36 Aen. IV, 607-620.

37 Harrington, 145-146, quoting Roger Ascham.

a sign of homage to his predecessor, in part a challenge to him. For Virgil has nothing to lose by the comparison. While Catullus gives us pathos at its highest, the fourth Aeneid is a tragedy - tragedy of which Sophocles would not have been ashamed. 38

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In the beginning of this thesis, we determined to investigate a single problem with a two-fold aspect. The first aspect was to show the reasons why Virgil wrote the Dido story. It is patent that the story of Dido hurt the character of Aeneas. Yet we maintained that Virgil saw the disadvantages entailed in the episode for his epic hero but was persuaded to write it because the good to be gained for his epic greatly overbalanced the possible loss of epic dignity for his hero. We arrived at this conclusion by an investigation of the objectives Virgil had in mind and which he wished his epic to accomplish. The other aspect of the problem, and one intimately bound with the first named, was the intimate relation between Virgil and his literary predecessors for the creation of Dido's character. The unfolding of their influence formed chapters three, four and five.

Why a Dido episode? The first and obvious reason was that Virgil wanted an opportunity to use the element of pathos in his work. Euripides and Apollonius before him had used it to great success; if Virgil's epic was to be complete, he hardly could afford to overlook this new turn that these men had given to literature. Virgil's tender understanding of human nature could find no better avenue of expression than in the drawing of

Dido and Aeneas and their feelings in the fourth Aeneid. Virgil no doubt knew his ability to draw a portrait of pathos and was resolved to use that as another reason why he should include the pathetic element in his epic.

At a time when Augustus was creating the great revival in religion and the Roman world was at last enjoying the first fruits of the Pax Romana, the story of Rome's splendor and grandeur would naturally reflect the spirit of Roman religion. Virgil understood this and deliberately set out to include the religious element in his epic. All through the Aeneid, the hero is pius Aeneas and his courage and tenacity in spite of all obstacles to his efforts of founding the city of Rome is a shining example of virtue to all Romans. To be worthy of their forefathers would be the lessons a loyal Roman would draw from the reading of the Aeneid. The Dido episode which so nearly succeeded in turning the Trojan hero from his land of destiny was a most powerful illustration of typical Roman pietas. Feelings and inclinations must be conquered and no matter what the cost to himself he cannot stay at Carthage with the woman of his choice. Fate and the will of the gods must be obeyed and Aeneas must show the greatest spirit of sacrifice, coupled with all the other virtues which the word pietas implies. The Dido story is the great test for Aeneas, and Romans saw in his victory over himself the certainty that the city of Rome would be founded.

The last two advantages Virgil wanted to gain was the technical advantage and the historical advantage. The technical advantage is apparent in a long epic where a story of action is necessary. By the device of an interested listener Virgil is not tied to a strict chronological order in unfolding his plot. By making Dido that interested spectator Virgil has solved all his problems at one bold stroke. With the hero Aeneas as the narrator, Dido shows special interest in the narrative; the story of the fall of Troy becomes a very gripping part of the Aeneid. Aeneas speaks in the first person, thus avoiding monotonous repetition of past stories and events. As for the historical foreshadowing, in view of the death struggle in which Rome and Carthage had engaged in during the Punic Wars, it was only natural that Virgil should paint the origins of Carthage as inimical to the first beginnings of Rome. This he accomplished by the Carthaginian episode with its tragic end for Dido. From the very first part of the poem, Virgil by clever suggestion always has in our mind's eye the story of Carthage and Rome and all the subsequent history that made Rome the mistress of the world.

In treating the second aspect of our question we investigated the works of Virgil's predecessors who most especially influenced him in the formation of the character of Dido and the bringing of Aeneas and Dido together in the Carthaginian episode. As regards Greek authors, the man to whom Virgil undoubtedly owed most for the Dido episode was Apollonius of Rhodes. Fol-

lowing the pattern of the Argonautica of Apollonius, Virgil made his story strikingly similar to the love story of Medea and Jason. In the general outlines and even down to particular scenes, and at times even to the same diction and imagery Virgil draws Dido along the lines of the Colchian princess, Medea. We have tried to show this by parallels and comparisons and we believe that the facts amply prove Virgil's debt to Apollonius.

The most interesting study of all was attempting to prove that Naevius first brought Aeneas and Dido together at Carthage. We contended that it was from Naevius in his Bellum Punicum that Virgil received the poetic tradition of the meeting of the Trojan prince and the Tyrian queen. The whole question is a much disputed one among authoritative scholars. Many important names could be mustered in defence of either proposition: Naevius did or did not give Virgil the meeting of Aeneas and Dido at Carthage. A decision must be reached from fragments of Naevius that survive. Yet as I have shown in the chapter on Naevius a few other major considerations enter into calculation which decided us in our stand. It is safe to assert with a fair degree of probability that after a careful weighing of the evidence, Naevius did give Virgil the meeting between Aeneas and Dido. Under the master pen of Virgil it has become one of the greatest examples of tragic poetry.

But Apollonius was not the only writer who influenced

Virgil as he began the tedious work of accepting and rejecting material suitable for the Dido episode. It is surprising to find a distinctly Roman influence working on Virgil. Catullus in his sixty-fourth poem furnished a surprisingly close picture of infelix Dido as he drew his picture of the tragic grief of Ariadne. The traces of the influence of this poem are unmistakable. For the stories of Dido and Ariadne have the same general cast and finish. Further, since both Catullus and Virgil were writing in Latin, their choice of language is, at times, almost identical even to the use of the same metaphors in the embellishment of their poetry. Virgil pondered much over the choice of material and culled what he considered best from Apollonius and Catullus. The result was a character far greater than either Medea or Ariadne; a character whose fame and story have traveled far beyond the walls of Rome to every part of the world where good literature is read and enjoyed.

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