THE SENTIMENTALITY, ROMANTICISM AND EMOTIONALISM OF THE ANCIENT GREEKS AND ROMANS, WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO AENEID 4

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One of the most persistent defences of Aeneas' conduct in the Dido-Aeneas episode is that the modern reader tends to side with Dido because of the sentimental and romantic ethos of our culture but Vergil's contemporaries were Stoic, or at least stoic, or at very least stoical in their attitudes and sensibilities. To cite just one of innumerable possible examples, A. Pease in the introduction to his commentary on Book 4, which is scientia plenissimus of all commentaries on it, talks about 'modern readers' as 'Heirs of a tradition of romantic and sentimental self-expression', but 'Aeneas, if judged by the standards intended by the author rather than by those of some modern sentimentalist, will not unfairly represent the Roman ideal of the ruler'. Modern scholars make various assertions as to when this distortion began. For example, H. Prescott calls this 'modern prejudice' a 'twentieth-century attitude', although he notes that 'The Dido episode is largely responsible for the depreciation of both poet and poem from the eighteenth century on'. More recently, K. Mcleish pushed this prejudice further back in time: 'we are post-Romantics: our view of Dido is filtered through Purcell, Dryden, Berlioz ...' Indeed, twenty-one years before Purcell's 'Dido and Aeneas', R. de Segrais in the preface to his translation of the Aeneid, published in Paris in 1668, was using exactly the same argument as that used by Pease, Prescott, Mcleish and countless other twentieth-century scholars. For example,

Ceux qui jugent d'un auteur ancien ... et qui les veulent soumettre au goût, aux moeurs, et aux sentiments de notre siècle, n'en jugent pas mieux que ceux qui reprendroient ... quelque vieil auteur francais de ne parler pas comme l'on parle aujourd'hui (page 8)

And:

Je passe à cette ingratidude, ou du moins à cette insensibilité, dont on accuse Enée envers Didon ... il ne faut pas juger d'un siècle par un autre. Comme les jeunes esprits [of today] ... sont plutôt touchés de la passion de l'amour, ils ont tourné en habitude, non seulement de trouver la poésie amoureuse la plus belle, mais aussi d'excuser toutes les fautes que l'amour fait faire. (page 35)
It is the purpose of this article to demonstrate that, on the contrary, Vergil's contemporaries, and the ancient Greeks and Romans in general, were much more sentimental, romantic, and emotional than people are today. Therefore, for over three centuries a totally illegitimate defence has been used for Aeneas, and, even more significantly, a completely inaccurate and misleading conception of ancient culture has been presented.

The sentimentality of the ancient Greeks and Romans can be demonstrated most easily by its most obvious manifestation: crying. For centuries critics have attacked Aeneas for being lachrymose. Other scholars have defended him by pointing out that crying was common and acceptable among the ancient Greeks and Romans, as opposed to our culture. In fact, from *Iliad* 16, 459 on, their literature depicted gods crying (cf *Aeneid* 10, 465). Indeed, Scholiast A commented approvingly on *Iliad* 18, 428 that this increases pathos. Crying seemed so natural and all-pervasive to the ancient Greeks and Romans that they thought horses did it and even statues.

For the student of ancient Greek and Latin literature perhaps the most important manifestation of their sentimentality is in their reaction to literature. Jasper Griffin has shown that ancient scholars were incomparably more sensitive to and appreciative of the pity and pathos of Homer than modern scholars are. Similarly, B. Vickers pointed out the same difference in reactions between ancient and modern audiences to tragedies: 'Since to a modern audience an appeal for pity might seem like self-indulgence it must be stressed that no such reaction is expected by . . . the . . . Greek dramatists. Their characters appeal frankly, openly, for our sympathy'. In the same way, one of the most striking aspects of the commentaries on Vergil by Ti. Donatus and Servius is their persistent approval of subjects and manners of expression which serve *ad misericordiam/miserationem eliciendam/commovendam*.

I will now demonstrate that Roman thought and feeling in the late Republic and early Principate were dominated by passionate, tormented love, i.e. that 'Venus reigns in her Aeneas' city' (Ovid, *Am.* 1, 8, 42; cf. *Ars* 1, 60). It is a remarkable fact that all the poets of the 'Golden Age' whose work is extant devoted a considerable amount of attention to passionate-painful love. Lucretius attacked it. Horace sometimes attacked it and sometimes described it. For all the others, amatory poetry was a major, and usually the major, type of poetry they wrote.

Of these poets, Vergil, is the one who is generally least thought of as a love poet. Yet he 'used Parthenius as a *grammaticus*' (Macrobius, 5, 17, 18), which probably means he studied under him, and the dominant subject of his *Bucolics* is love. In the *Bucolics* Vergil explicitly puts himself in neoteric tradition. *Bucolic* 6, 1–8 announces his fidelity to the precepts of Theocritus and Callimachus. The Roman poets mentioned are above all Gallus, but also Cinna (9, 35) and Pollio, about whom Vergil says (3, 86), 'he also (i.e. in addition to me: 84–5) composes nova carmina'. The only *Bucolic* that does not mention love, at least in passing, is 4. Even there, however, the predictions of the *Wunderkind's* future glory end
with a goddess—eventually considering him to be worthy of her bed. Vergil ended the *Bucolics*, except for the personal valediction, with a categorical acceptance of exactly the type of love now under consideration (10, 69).

Furthermore, Vergil’s contemporaries and successors regarded the *Bucolics* as love poetry. That is why Horace says the Muses gave him *molle* (*Serm. 1, 10, 44*). Propertius (2, 34, 68–74) mentions various erotic scenes from them and concludes that they are popular among easygoing girls at Rome. Ovid (*Tr. 2, 533–8*), as part of his defence of his writing erotic poetry, points out that the *Dido–Aeneas* episode is the most popular part of the *Aeneid* and that as a young man Vergil wrote love poetry. Apuleius (*Apol. 10*) mentions Corydon and Alexis among pseudonyms used by love poets.

As for the *Georgics*, its last memorable episode describes Orpheus’ overwhelming agony at the loss of Eurydice (4, 456–527), which is presented powerfully in an elliptical, empathetic–sympathetic manner, very different from the bland, objective style of its *Aristaeus* frame. Propertius (2, 34, 81–2) says that the *Georgics* ‘will gain gratitude from any reader, whether he will be a beginner in love or experienced in it.’

As for the *Aeneid*, V. Poschl has aptly described it as ‘the epic of love’. To take just one small, but indicative, example of how it shared the romantic ethos of its time, in 1, 350–2 Sychaeus’ murder by Pygmalion is made more horrible because he was *securus amorum germanae* and *lusit amantem*. Both *amorum* and *amantem* are the last words in their lines, which gives them emphasis. But it is especially the *Dido–Aeneas* episode, which from antiquity to the present has been regarded as the *Aeneid*’s highpoint, that reflects, and in many ways is the supreme expression of, the pathetic-romantic ethos of its culture. Ancient scholars viewed this episode as being in the tradition of amatory literature. Servius (*ad A. 4, 1*) observes, and typically overstates, its dependence on *Argonautica 3* because its subject is love (*cf. Macrobius 5, 17, 4*). The same consideration leads him to state that its style is ‘nearly Comic’. Aelius Donatus (*ad Ter., An. 718*) cites as the two prototypical examples of the *odi et amo* syndrome Dido and Catullus. Even in his style, although Vergil was in many ways a revolutionary without predecessors or followers, he shared many attributes with the neotérics and Elegiac poets. Especially Catullus was an extremely pervasive influence on all of Vergil’s works. So it is understandable that Martial states (4, 14, 13–14) as a well-known fact that Catullus sent his sparrow to Vergil, obviously symbolizing that Vergil was his follower.

So powerful was the romantic–pathetic orientation of late Republican–Augustan culture that its poets made earlier literature conform to their own outlook. R. Heinze cites Propertius 1, 15, 11–12 (*multos ilia* [Calypso] *dies incomptis maestis capillis / sederat iniusto multa locuta solo*) as an example. The most startling illustration, however, is the frequent mention of Achilles and Briseis as paradigms of people possessed by passionate, distraught love. This was a radical distortion of the *Iliad*’s presentation of their relationship and of its overall ethos. But then again, Homer himself was used as an example of
someone who was overcome by love (Propertius 2, 34, 45).

It was by no means only professional poets who wrote love poetry. Many prominent Roman political and military leaders also did so. This was true since the beginning of Latin amatory poetry at the time of Q. Lutatius Catulus. The most important instance in the period under consideration was, of course, Gallus. Many other examples are provided by Ovid (Tr. 2, 431–44) and Pliny (Ep. 5, 3).23

Poets do not compose in a vacuum and the poets, both professional and amateur, from Catullus through Ovid were giving expression to the outlook of their culture. They wrote for similes amantis (Propertius 1, 15, 41) who will recognize their own experiences and emotions in the poetry they read (e.g. Propertius 1, 7, 13–14, 23–24; Ovid, Am. 2, 1, 5–10). Because they expressed the sentiments of their culture, the erotic poets were very popular with their contemporaries. Propertius says that ‘Cynthia/Cynthia is read in the entire forum’ (2, 24, 1–2, cf. 2, 5, 1) and ‘I am spoken of as powerful in the whole city’ (2, 26, 22). In 4, 7 Cynthia tells him that he has won fame through her (78) and she herself is famous (86). Similarly, Ovid states that he has made Corinna common property (Am. 3, 12, 7–8) and that ‘she was sung throughout Rome’ (Tr. 4, 10, 59). In Ars Amatoria 3, 535–8 he talks of the widespread fame of Nemesis, Cynthia Lycoris and Corinna. In addition, the Elegists constantly make statements which are based on the assumption that erotic poetry is very popular.24

Because of the popularity of their poetry, the love poets ran the risk of becoming subjects of scandal. This fear had been expressed by Callimachus (Fr. 195, 30 in Pfeiffer), then by Propertius (2, 24A; 3, 25, 1–2), Tibullus (1, 4, 83–4), and Ovid (Am. 3, 14, 11). Indeed, in Amores 3, 1, 19–22 Tragedy uses the public disgrace that Elegy brings as one of her main arguments against writing it. Elsewhere, Catullus (5, 2–3), Propertius (2, 13, 13–14) and Tibullus (1, 1, 58) say that public condemnation does not bother them. It was to be expected that their poetry made the Elegists and their mistresses so well known. After all, thanks to Catullus' poems, 'Lesbia is more famous than Helen herself (Propertius 2, 34, 87–8). Statements such as these could not be made in any literary circle today, even allowing for exaggeration. But we have conclusive evidence that they were in no way exaggerated.

One witness to the popularity of erotic poetry with all sections of the population is the literary graffiti from Pompeii, among which 'the expression of the emotion of love predominates'.25 For that reason, 'Ovid . . . is the king of the Augustan poets who immigrated to Pompeii, and . . . among the most agreeable and dearest poetic forms . . . the elegy . . . has the first place'.26 Among Ovid's poems the popular ones were those which expressed the passion and torment of love, which was typical.27 Similarly the most quoted part of Vergil's Bucolics was Corydon's monologue, again typical of the fascination which the Pompeian graffiti manifest in poetry which describes the agony of unrequited love.28 Vergil's poems in general were popular 'for the sweet harmony of his verse and constant pathos of his poetry', especially episodes like those of Simon and Nisus.29

Another indication of how popular the subject of love was with the entire
population is the theatre. Love was the crucial emotion in Roman Comedy. As for the erotic literature of the late Republic and early Principate, Vergil ‘published his Bucolics with such success that even on stage they were often delivered by singers’ (Vita Donati, 92–3); and Ovid’s love poetry ‘was often danced out for the people’ (Tr. 2, 519). Indeed, during Vergil’s lifetime, that is before the publication of his Aeneid, ‘when verses of Vergil were heard in the theater, the entire populace rose and reverenced Vergil, who happened to be present in the audience, as if he were Augustus’ (Tacitus, Dial. 13).

The evidence of graffiti and the theater is corroborated by painting since ‘Roman painting, as we know it from the interiors of houses, reflects the attitudes and beliefs of the Romans in general.’ A. Maiuri summed up the orientation of Roman mythological paintings thus:

... we find an aura of romanticism clinging to all their pictures, whose basic theme was love’s ineluctable dominion over the hearts of men and gods. Thus Hercules is... love’s victim and its henchman... Theseus’ famous victory over the Minotaur... had an inglorious sequel in his desertion of Ariadne... and this theme of the lovely, hapless victim marooned on the desert island... was very popular with Campanian painters.

This observation can be verified from another source: the large number of descriptions of mythological paintings from Pompeii and Herculaneum provided by C. Dawson in Y. Cl. S. 9, 1944, 80–115. The most popular subject is Artemis and Acteon (14 times), then Polyphemus and Galatea (10), Perseus and Andromeda (9), Daedalus and Icarus (7), the judgement of Paris (6), Hercules and Hesione (5). These subjects are all romantic and/or pathetic in some way. It is also significant that Paris appears in two other paintings, but there is only one with another Homeric character (Odysseus and the Sirens) and the only painting with a Roman subject concerns the birth of Romulus and Remus.

My last demonstration is also statistical. It is the relative numbers of papyri of the works by ancient poets which survive. Since these come from Egypt and most are from the first through third centuries, A.D., they are only indirect evidence for literary taste in Rome in the late Republic and early Principate. But because they show the same orientation as the other evidence, they can be considered as a corroboration of it as well as an indication that Roman taste of the period under discussion was typical of much of the Empire over a long period of time. The poet of whom the most papyri survive is, of course, Homer (681), second is Euripides (77), then Callimachus (51), Hesiod (49), Pindar (36), Aeschylus (30), Menander (28), Alcaeus (22), Aristophanes and Sophocles (20), Sappho (18), Archilocus (16) and Apollonius of Rhodes (15). Euripides’ popularity extended beyond the political borders of the Graeco-Roman world (Plutarch, Crassus 33, 2). He was regarded as ‘the most tragic of the poets’ (Aristotle, Poetics 1453A, 29–31) and ‘easily supreme in those emotions which arouse pity’ (Quintilian, Inst. 10, 1, 68). Most important for our interest is that he was viewed as the poet of powerful, unrestrained love (Aristophanes, Thesm. 386 ff, 547–8; Frogs 1043–4). Menander was seen as very similar to him. Also
very significant is the great respect for Sappho among the later Greeks and Romans. By contrast, the Stoics, whom Aeneas' defenders tend to regard as the dominating force of late Republican and Imperial culture, are represented very meagrely among the extant papyri. Pack lists six by Chrysippus and none by any other Stoic, although one citation each of Cleanthes, Crates and Zeno is listed among those papyri which are devoted mainly to other authors. Citations of this nature were not included by me in the numbers of papyri attributed to the other authors.

The extremely romantic orientation of Roman sensibilities at this time is totally different from the orientation of our culture. The last major English love poet was Donne. Love has had very little appeal as a subject for European painters from Giotto to the present. It is very difficult to imagine strange men in our culture writing love poetry and even more difficult to imagine anyone writing fragments of love poetry on walls. The only area of our culture in which love predominates is popular music.

The difference between the modern attitude and the ancient Roman attitude is illustrated by one of the most famous verbal exchanges in modern literature. In Act III of Ibsen's A Doll's House Helmer says, 'But no man would sacrifice his honour for the one he loves'; to which Nora replies, 'Hundreds of thousands of women have'. But the Roman Elegiac poets gloried in their servitude and debasement to their beloveds.

In fact, Helmer and Nora are not even considering the type of distracting, tormenting love which dominated Roman literature from Catullus through Ovid. In our culture that is regarded to be at most an adolescent phase. Indeed, most adolescents today regard it as passé. When I read Sappho 2 D 1. (φαινεται μου) to my students, they react with amused incredulity. Yet before Sappho, that tough, cynical mercenary soldier Archilochus had described his erotic experiences as a similar overpowering, all-consuming force (112 D 1.-B.), and later Greek and Roman writers constantly described erotic experiences the way Sappho did. To take as an example one aspect of it, pallor could be used as a synonym for love and lack of it could be used as an accusation of lack of love (Propertius 1, 18, 17–18; Ovid, Am. 2, 7, 9–10). After all, Palleat omnis amans; hic est color aptus amanti (Ovid, Ars, 1, 729; cf 730–8).

The fact that we experience love with incomparably less intensity than the ancient Greeks and Romans did makes it very difficult for us to appreciate that descriptions like those in the paragraph above were of normal, everyday feelings. For instance, S. Commanger during a very sensitive and thought-provoking discussion of Catullus' use of Sappho 2 D 1. falls into an error which is natural for someone in our culture. He says that 'Catullus adapts himself ... to her emotions'. But Catullus did not have to 'adapt' his emotions since Sappho's poem was popular because it gave effective expression to feelings which were nearly universally experienced. That is exactly what 'Longinus' says when he quotes it: Sappho 'on every occasion' took erotic experiences 'from the truth itself' (10, 1) and 'all such experiences occur to lovers' (10, 3). Plutarch records
that a doctor could tell that Antiochus was in love with Stratonice because whenever he was in her presence, ‘there occurred all those well-known symptoms described by Sappho.’ (Demetr. 38, 4; cf Moralia 763A).

Similarly, Apuleius (Met. 10, 2) introduces similar erotic reactions by stating, ‘there is no-one who does not know’ them. So strongly was love felt that the word ‘love’ could be used metaphorically for any ecstatic emotion (e.g. Sophocles, Aj. 693).

Another proof that the incredibly (to us) vehement descriptions of love in ancient literature were accurate depictions of what was commonly felt were the attacks against it. For example, Cicero in Tusculan Disputations 4 attacks all emotions since he assumes that they all are experienced in a very violent manner (e.g. 37). But ‘of all the perturbations of the mind there is certainly none vehementior than love’ (75). The most powerful attack on passionate love is Lucretius 4, 1048–1207. As is usual for Lucretius, he describes what is commonly observed in life. In fact, he begins his main section with Haec Venus est nobis (1058), which S. Smith aptly translates as ‘This is sexual love as we know it.’

Lucretius then mentions nearly all the standard metaphors and situations found in erotic poetry as genuine facts of life. The passionate lover really is wounded (1048–55; as opposed to the non-passionate lover, 1278), really is miser (1076, 1159, 1179), on fire (1077, 1086, 1199), insane (1083, 1117), a slave to his beloved (1122), wastes his paternal property (1123, 1129–32), loses his good name (1124), suffers from jealousy (1137–40), deceives himself about his beloved’s appearance (1153–69) and ‘often’ lacrimans exclusus amator (1177–9). In addition, Lucretius describes the violence of the physical embrace of lovers, a topic on which the Roman love poets only commented ‘under silent sheets’, although they often described the results.

Such violent erotic feelings did not exist in a vacuum. From Homer on, ancient writers described the effect of many experiences in the way Sappho described love; for instance, ‘we see’ ‘often’ the same reactions when the mind is moved by fear (Lucretius 3, 152–8); alcohol makes one feel that he is struck, wounded, etc.; even ‘to a young man who has tasted genuine progress in philosophy, these verses of Sappho apply . . .’ (Plutarch, Moralia 81D).

For a student of ancient Greek and Roman literature, it is especially important to be aware of the extent to which their extremely emotional nature affected their reaction to literature. The sentimentality of their responses has already been demonstrated. This was only one aspect of the overwhelming emotional effect literature had on them. Gorgias said that poetry produces reactions such as ‘terrified shudders, tearful pity and longing which indulges in grief’ (Helen 8–9). When Plato’s Ion recited Homer’s works to an audience, which already knew them nearly by heart, he would look down on them ‘crying, looking awestruck, and sympathising in amazement with the words’ (535E), and among the most popular parts of the Iliad were ‘the miseries of Andromache, Hecuba, and Priam’ (Ion 535B). Later, ‘even the Indians experience the sufferings of Priam and the wailings and cries of Andromache and Hecuba’, in short, Homer ‘has mastered'
them (Dio Chrys. 53, 7–8). A reading of the Aeneid could also produce profound emotional responses (Vita Donati 113–116). So a person who pretends to like a poetic work grows pale, cries, dances, and beats the ground with his feet while listening to it (Horace, Ars 429–30).

The emotional impact of tragedy is obvious from the most famous literary observation of antiquity: Aristotle’s doctrine of terror/panic (the usual diluted translation ‘fear’ is caused by our inability to empathise with the intensity of ancient audience reactions), pity, and catharsis (whatever its exact meaning). He also assumed that the purpose of tragedy is Ὑπαγωγία (Poetics 1450A 33), a term which was also often applied to rhetoric. Post-Aristotelian literary criticism continued to use the same and similar descriptions for the effect literature should and does have. Aristotle usually worked from observable facts (e.g. Poetics 1453A, 27–9). Indeed, the power of even a few lines from tragedies to arouse pity and indignation could be relied on for political purposes (Suetonius, Jul. 84, 2). In fact, according to the Vita of Aeschylus (2, I1f.), the mere appearance of the chorus of the Eumenides caused children to faint and infants to be aborted. Even if this did not happen, it was thought possible. The actor Polus, while playing Sophocles’ Electra, used the ashes of his dead son for Orestes’ ashes to produce realistic lamentations (Aulus Gellius 6, 5). But if an actor performed poorly, he could be hissed from the stage (Demosthenes 19, 337).

It is significant that in the works discussed in the previous two paragraphs literature is described as a religious activity and the terms used for it, such as Ὑπαγωγία and catharsis, are also religious. For that reason, Plato said that it required a φάρμακον (Rep. 595B) or ἐπιφυσή (Rep. 608A) to avoid falling into ‘the love of the masses’ (ibid.) for poetry. So Vergil’s contemporaries did not think that they were using metaphors or literary cliches when they made statements like sacra facit vates.

Plato’s opposition to poetry is only intelligible if one understands how powerfully it affected people in his culture. This fact is crystallized in the following passage from his Republic (605C–D), in which I have included the original Greek of those words which modern translators weaken or actually mistranslate because of our inability to empathise with ancient reactions to literature:

... the greatest accusation against poetry [is that] it is able to mutilate (λοβόσθαι) even reasonable people... for the very best of us while listening to Homer or one of the tragedians imitating one of the heroes being in pain and stretching out a long speech in his wailing... surrendering ourselves, follow, feeling his suffering (συμπάθειν) eagerly praise as a good poet the one who most arranges us (διαθή) in this way.

Similarly, when people looked at paintings, statues or relief carvings they lost self-awareness and became mentally and physically immobilized.

I think that it has now been proved that one premise which is constantly used by Aeneas’ defenders is correct. Vergil’s contemporaries and the ancient Greeks and Romans in general were very different from us in their outlook, feelings and reactions to literature, and we must keep this difference in mind when we judge
an ancient work of literature. But the nature of the difference is the exact opposite of what is asserted by Aeneas' defenders.

I will end this article with one example of how ignoring the difference between ancient and modern temperaments led to a serious error in a very popular and highly regarded book on Greek tragedy. H. Kitto says that Medea 'is no tragic heroine . . . she is too extreme.' He points out that 'Aristotle's tragic hero is “like” us, for we should not feel pity and fear [actually only fear] for one unlike us'; but 'Medea is not like this; it would be difficult to find a Euripidean hero who is, until we come to Pentheus'. Kitto says that the reason for this is that Aristotle's observations are applicable to 'the Sophoclean pattern', from which Euripides 'diverges'.49 However, Aristotle quotes with agreement Sophocles' statement that Euripides differed from him in portraying people 'as they are' (Poetics 1460B, 35; cf. Dio Chrys. 18, 7 on Euripides' πιθανόντας). The fact is that Euripides did portray characters 'like us' and 'as people are' if we realise what type of people Aristotle, Sophocles, Euripides and their readers and audiences were. It is also significant that the only Euripidean character whom Kitto recognises as being 'like us' (i.e. modern people) is the emotionally tepid Pentheus.

NOTES

3. ‘Dido, Aeneas and the Concept of Pietas’, G & R. S. S. 19 (1972) 127–135 (especially 127). His first example, Purcell, is interesting since he was very much a court composer and the librettist for his ‘Dido and Aeneas’ was the poet laureate to be (in 1692) Nahum Tate. So one would expect them to glorify Aeneas, especially since the British royal family claimed descent from Brutus of Alba, about whom Tate had earlier written a play.
4. Some of the arguments which will be advanced here were adumbrated on pages 42–3 of my article ‘The Aeneas — Dido Episode as an attack on Aeneas’ Mission and Rome’, G & R. S. S. 27, 1 (1980) 34–47. But some of the points made there will not be repeated here.
5. E.g., R. de Segrais on page 40 of the preface to his translation defends Aeneas against this charge. Dryden cites approvingly Segrais’ defence in the preface to his translation (pages 183–4 in Essays of John Dryden, vol. II, selected and edited by W. Ker, Oxford 1926). But Saint-Evremond, Réflexions sur nos traducteurs, Vol III, 1740, 217 disagreed with Segrais and found Aeneas ‘faible et dégoûtant’. Probably most familiar to the modern scholar is T. Page, The Aeneid, Books I–VI, 1894; rept. London 1964, ad 1, 459 (cf ad 4, 692). A more recent example is R. Fitzgerald’s complaint that Vergil’s lament for slain princes are overdone to the point of bathos’. (Dryden’s Aeneid, Arion 2, 3 (1963) 30.)
9. ‘Homeric Pathos and Objectivity’, C. Q., N. S. 26 (1976) 161–87 and Homer on Life and Death, Oxford 1980 (especially chapter 4). (On page 185 of his article Griffin asserts that ‘epic avoids the violent gestures and wild cries of passionate woe which are admitted in Attic tragedy: the
That the poets whose work has survived were regarded as the major poets of their time by their contemporaries is demonstrated by their own comments on each other and the Pompeian graffiti, which will be discussed below. The only major poet whose works have not survived seems to be Gallus. Most minor poets (besides those in e.g. the Appendix Vergiliana and Corpus Tibullianum) are shadowy figures, known mainly through brief references. A good example is that shortly after Ovid invented a new literary form with his Heroides (L. Purser, apud A. Palmer, P. Ovidi Nasonis, Horoides, 1898; rept Hildesheim 1967, XI–XIII), a poet named Sabinus immediately adopted it. (Am 2, 18, 27–34).

That melle is here a literary term is obvious from the contrast with ater Varius, who writes forte epos (cf. Propertius, 2, 1, 1–2).


The most logical reference for haec in 81 is the Georgics. Propertius discusses first the Aeneid, now being written, then goes back to the Bucolics, followed by the Georgics, which have an Apollonian quality (80), tamem appeal to lovers. Then, when Vergil’s three works have been covered, the next distich praises Vergil in general. As far as I know, however, the only commentator who interpreted haec as referring to the Georgics is F. Paley (London 1872, ad 67). He says that 81–2 mean that the Georgics ‘occupy a middle place between the two [Bucolics and Aeneid] and are adapted for all tastes’. But, as all the major twentieth century commentators have noticed, the haec in 81 is picked up by the haeces in 85 and 87. So it must refer specifically to lovers, not to ‘all tastes’. Therefore Paley’s interpretation has been ignored by subsequent commentators. Some, (e.g. M. Rothstein, 1920; rept. 1966, ad loc) argue that haec refers to Propertius’ poetry; others (e.g. H. Butler and E. Barber, Oxford 1933, ad loc; Camps, note 13 above, ad loc; and P. Enk, Leyden 1962, ad loc) argue that haec refers to love poetry in general and Propertius in particular; others (e.g. D. Bailey, Propertiana, Amsterdam 1967 ad loc) argue that it refers to the Bucolics. But in all these cases, as B. and B. point out, ‘The digression to the Georgics (77–80) forms a clumsy interruption’; unless 77–80 are transposed to follow 66, the arguments in favour of which are given by Enk, who, however, finally rejects them. All these commentators dismiss the Georgics from consideration because (like Paley) they do not regard them as amatory poetry (e.g. B. and B.: ‘haec cannot refer to the Georgics . . . since it . . . refers to the poetry of love. Bailey: ‘haec . . . means ‘your love poetry’, i.e. the Eclogues’). But Propertius’ tamem covers exactly the paradox that the Georgics interest lovers (perhaps because of the Orpheus episode) despite their overall subject and tone. After all, this is part of an argument in favour of love poetry, so it is natural for Propertius to claim whatever he can for that genre. Moreover, the adjective Ascreus (77) is used by Propertius of love poetry in 2, 13, 4 (although not in 2, 10, 25).


In my article (note 4 above, 43–6) I give a few examples of the popularity of the Dido–Aeneas episode from antiquity on. I hope to supplement these soon. The resemblances between the Dido–Aeneas episode and the love of Catullus and Lesbia, Propertius and Cynthia, Tibullus and Delia and Nemesis, and, to an extent, Ovid and Corinna are obvious. For its Hellenistic antecedents in subject and style, see R. Conway, New Studies of a Great Inheritance, London 1921, 146–8, and R. Heinze Virgilis episcpe Technik, 1915, rept. Darmstadt 1965, 133–8 and 371, who also points out Dido’s superiority to her Hellenistic predecessors. Propertius does not refer to the Aeneid as erotic poetry in 2, 34 because, except for its beginning (63–4), he obviously knew nothing about it (nescio quid, 66) and assumed that its contents would be what one would expect from a propagandistic work (61–2).

An example of a frequently occurring mannerism of this type is the postponement of connective and explanatory particles (R. Austin, P. Vergilii Maronis; Aeneidos, Litter Quaernae, Oxford 1955, ad 33 and C. Fordyce, Catullus, Oxford 1961, ad 23, 7). An example of a single word is requiescere as an active verb in Bucolics 8, 4 (see T. Page, P. Vergilii Maronis, Bucolica et Georgica, 1898; rept. London 1963, ad loc).
19. This influence is obvious to anyone acquainted with both poets. It has been pointed out in innumerable articles. Perhaps the most thorough and careful short analysis is R.E.H. Westendorp Boerma, ‘Vergil’s Debt to Catullus’, A. Class. 1, (1958) 51–63. Of the commentaries on the Aeneid, the ones that give by far the most attention to Catullan influence are those by R. Williams (Aeneid 1–6, London 1971 and 7–12, London 1973). The influence of Catullus’ Ariadne on Vergil’s Dido is especially obvious and has been much studied. But Oris (note 14 above, 190–2) points out that as far as overall manner of narration is concerned, the true prototypes of the Dido–Aeneas episode are Catullus’ Lepid poems.


21. Achilles: Horace, Carm. 2, 4, 3–4; Ep. 1, 2, 13; Propertius 2, 8, 35–6; Ovid, Am. 1, 9, 32–3; 2, 11–13; Ars 2, 711–12; Tr. 2, 373. Briseis: Propertius 2, 9–14; Ovid, Ep. 3. Their love was also a subject of art (K. Bulas, ‘New Illustrations to the Iliad’, A.J.A. 54 (1950) 115).


23. A very valuable discussion of these references is in S. Owen, P. Ovidi Nasonis, Tristium Liber Secundus, Oxford 1924, ad loc; although he does not consider the possibility that Cato in 436 is M. Porcius Cato Ulicensis (Plutarch, Cato 7, 2). A list of references to the poets cited by Pliny is given by A. Sherwin-White, The Letters of Pliny, Oxford 1966, ad loc. Apuleius (Apol. 9–10) cites examples of erotic poems composed by Greek philosophers, the Greek equivalent of Roman satire.

24. E.g., Propertius 2, 5, 6; 27–30; 3, 2, 17–18; 4, 1, 63–4; Ovid, Am. 1, 3, 25–6; 10, 60–2; 15, 27–30; 2, 12 (ille), 3, 15, 7–14.


27. Gigante, note 26, 121–3 and passim.


29. Gigante, note 26 above, 121.


33. Dio Chrys. 18, 7; Quintillian, Inst. 10, 1, 69 and W. Petersen, M. Fabi Quintiliani, Institutionis Oratoriae Liber X, Oxford 1891, ad loc.


37. R. Pichon, De Sermone Anatorio apud Latinos Eligiatum Scriptores, Paris 1902, 224–5 supplies several examples of this, and others where pallor accompanies other emotions.

38. Note 36 above.


in erotic and other literature; to which may be added Sextus Empiricus, *P. 1, 108.* After all, *credula res amor est* (Ovid, *Ep.* 6, 21).

42. Propertius 1, 4, 14, where I agree with the ms. reading *dicere* since it forms a nice contrast with *tacita* (I owe this observation to Professor S. Commanger from a course I took with him). In 1, 13, 18 Propertius says *pudor* prevents him from going too far in his description of Gallus' embrace of his beloved, but he still gives a very vivid impression of overwhelming physical passion.

43. K. Smith, *The Elegies of Albicius Tibullus,* 1913; rept. Darmstadt 1964, ad 1, 6, 14 and 1, 8, 38; and Ovid, *Am.* 1, 7, 41–2.

44. Turyn, note 36 above, 33–57 and passim. D. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus,* Oxford 1955, 29 lists some of Turyn's examples from Homer and on 30 points out where Sappho is original. Such violent emotional reactions are characteristic, to some extent, of many pre-modern societies (e.g., J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages,* 1924; in English, N.Y. 1949, chapter 1).

45. Smith, note 43 above, ad 1, 2, 3.

46. R. Heinze, note 17 above, 466–9.

47. E.g., Gorgias, *Helen* 16; Plato, *Ion* 533D, 534B.


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