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EURIPIDES' CORINTHIAN PRINCESS IN THE *AENEID*

YELENA BARAZ

AS HE BEGINS his commentary on the fourth book of the *Aeneid*, Servius declares the entire book to be derived from Apollonius' depiction of Medea in love in the third book of the *Argonautica*: *Apollonius Argonautica scripsit et in tertio inducit amantem Medeam: inde totus hic liber translatus est.*¹ While the makeup of Dido's character is one of the most complex in the poem (it alludes to, among others, Nausicaa, Ariadne, and Cleopatra²), Medea may be the most powerful and sustained presence. Two Medeas are evoked in Vergil's depiction of his heroine. Encouraged by Venus and Juno to fall in love with the handsome stranger who needs her help to continue on his quest, Dido is likened to the young Medea of Apollonius. In the bitter exchange of speeches with Aeneas, and her turn to magic in despair, she is linked to the older, aggrieved Medea of Euripides.³ But there are echoes in the poem that point to another young princess, similar in many ways to the young Medea of Apollonius, but tragically connected to the destructive Medea of Euripides.⁴ My goal is to explore Dido's relationship to the Corinthian princess who burns and melts by Medea's design in Euripides' play. I will argue that this additional Euripidean connection complicates the allusions to Medea and sheds new light on two important episodes, the gift-giving scene in Book 1 and Dido's suicide in Book 4.⁵ I will also show that, once initiated through the character of Dido, the presence of the princess contributes to the allusive makeup of other characters, especially Creusa and Lavinia, who are connected to each other and to Dido within the poem through their relationship to Aeneas.

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1. Serv. ad *Aen.* 4.1. Cf. Macrobian *Sat.* 5.17.4: . . . *de Argonauticorum quarto, quorum scriptor est Apollonius, librum Aeneidos suae quartum totum paene formaverit, ad Didonem vel Aenean amatoriam incontinentiam Medae circa Iasonem transferendo.*

2. Vergil explicitly links Dido with Pentheus and Orestes as characters in a play (Oliensis 1997, 306). Nausicaa: e.g., D. West 1969, 43–44; Oliensis 1997, 305. Ariadne: e.g., Oksala 1962; Wills 1998. Cleopatra: Parry 1963, 73 and 77–78; Keith 2000, 68.

3. E.g., Pease 1935, 13 and passim; Collard 1975. On Apollonius, see Nelis 2001.

4. The presence of the princess as an intertext for Lavinia was identified by Reckford (1961) and will be discussed later on.

5. Pace Hill (2004, 106), who holds that the critical focus on borrowings in the construction of Dido's character results in lack of "detailed consideration of the nature of Dido's acts in *Aeneid* 4."

At the exact point when Dido falls in love with Aeneas, the connection between her and the Medea of Apollonius seems to break down: the reader of Apollonius expects Cupid to make Dido fall in love by shooting her with an arrow, but instead, Cupid in the guise of Ascanius is shown poisoning Dido through his touch and the gifts presented to her by Aeneas, an image that lacks precedent in Apollonius. This scene of gift giving is based instead on the presentation of gifts to the young princess-bride by Medea's children in Euripides. In the *Medea*, the gruesome and memorable scene (1136–1230), reported through a messenger, is a tragedy in miniature. Starting out as a hopeful reconciliation that fills all the unknowing participants with joy, it sharply transforms itself into a decisive destruction of all the major players. It literally destroys the princess and her father, king Creon, and seals the fate of Medea's children, since the completion of this act of murder is for her a point of no return.

The structure of the Vergilian episode corresponds closely to that in the *Medea*. In both cases, the gifts are presented through the giver's children (Medea's sons and Cupid in the guise of Ascanius), whose safety and ability to remain in the land under the recipient's control are threatened. The presentation is conducted under the watchful eyes of the children's father: Jason explicitly asks the princess to allow his children to remain in Corinth, and Aeneas sends for Ascanius and the gifts together. Vergil locates Aeneas' motivation in *patrius amor*, fatherly love, and inability to quell his anxiety for his son when he is away from him (1.643–44).

Aeneas' gifts themselves also reflect Medea's gifts to the princess. Strong verbal correspondences indicate the similarity between the two sets of gifts in their hidden content. Both sets of gifts are poisoned: Medea's, literally, Aeneas', figuratively. As the messenger narrates, Medea's poison sets the princess' body on fire and melts her flesh (Eur. *Med.* 1186–89):

χρυσοῦς μὲν ἄμφι κρατὶ κείμενος πλόκος
θαυμαστὸν ἴει νῆμα παμφάγου πυρός,
πέπλοι δὲ λεπτοί, σὼν τέκνων δωρήματα,
λευκὴν ἔδαπτον σάρκα τῆς δυσδαίμονος.

The golden wreath around her head produced an awesome stream of all-consuming fire, and the delicate robe, your children's gift, was devouring the miserable girl's white skin.

Venus' intention is for Cupid to go to Dido *donisque furem / incendat reginam atque ossibus implicet⁶ ignem*, "to set the mad queen on fire with gifts and to weave fire into her bones" (1.659–60). Vergil's language alludes not only to the burning action of the poison,⁷ but also to the fact that the burning strips flesh from the victims' bones.⁸ Unlike the simultaneous allusion

6. On the connection between weaving/textiles and trickery, see, e.g., Paschalis 1997, 21–22, 154, 165.

7. The effect of the fiery poison on Dido is lasting, and mention of the fire's penetration to her bones early in Book 4 serves to reactivate the allusion to the princess: *est mollis flamma medullas*, 4.66; *ardet amans Dido traxitque per ossa furem*, 4.102. The verb *incendere* reoccurs at the end of Aeneas' speech to Dido (*desine meque tuis incendere teque querelis*, 4.360), where Aeneas detects and resists Dido's attempt to pass on the poison to him, as the princess did to her father.

8. Eur. *Med.* 1200 (the princess) and 1217 (Creon).

to young Medea's falling in love with Jason in Apollonius,⁹ the allusion to the princess' fiery death contributes to the poet's more explicit indications of the doomed fate of the union to which this scene will lead. That more than just fire of love is meant here is made clear in Venus' speech to Cupid, in which, in addition to continuing the more ambiguous fire imagery (itself implicated in ideas of disaster and destruction after Book 2¹⁰), she makes an explicit reference to poison: *occultum inspire ignem fallasque veneno*, "breathe a hidden fire into her and deceive her with poison" (1.688). *Veneno* is particularly emphatic since it is the last word that concludes Venus' twenty-five-line-long speech: the idea that what is about to happen to Dido will be an act of poisoning is the one that is left to linger in the audience's mind.

It is not only that both sets of gifts contain poison; Vergil's description of its action on the victim is also modeled on Euripides' account of the effect of Medea's poison on Creon and his daughter. As Dido begins to burn, *ardescit* (1.713), from her contemplation of the gifts, Cupid-Ascanius approaches her, and Vergil describes her reaction to the child as follows: *haec oculis, haec pectore toto / haeret*, "she clings (to him) with her eyes, she (clings) with her entire heart" (1.717–18). The enjambment of *haeret* serves to emphasize the verb. Dido's clinging to Cupid alludes to the clinging effect Medea's poison had on the princess, who was unable to separate herself from the clinging garment, and on her father, who was fastened onto his daughter's corpse. The significance of the idea of clinging to the action of Medea's poison is indicated by the fact that Euripides not only uses a verb that means "to cling" (προσέχομαι), but also employs a brief simile that compares Creon's body in relation to his dead daughter's poisoned garments to ivy as it clings to shoots of a laurel tree (Eur. *Med.* 1211–14):

ἐπεὶ δὲ θρήνων καὶ γόων ἐπαύσατο,
 χρήζων γεραῖον ἐξαναστῆσαι δέμας
 προσείχεθ' ὥστε κισσὸς ἔρνεσιν δάφνης
 λεπτοῖσι πέπλοις, δεινὰ δ' ἦν παλαίσματα.

but when he ceased from wailing and weeping, wanting to raise up his old body, he
 clung to her fine robe, just as ivy to laurel branches, and terrible was their wrestling.

The allusion to the scene from the *Medea* at this moment in the narrative complicates the allusion to Medea of Apollonius and points to the inevitability of destruction of the one who receives these gifts as much as the inevitability of her falling in love.

The clinging with its poisonous origins in Dido's case becomes a defining quality of her destructive passion: when we come back to Dido and her emotional state at the beginning of Book 4, Vergil uses *haerere* again, this time to describe the constant presence of Aeneas in her mind: *haerent infixi pectore vultus / verbaque* (4.4–5). The new image contained in the verbal idea of *infixi* combined with *haerent* additionally emphasizes the victim's physical inability to separate herself from the agent of destruction.

9. Collard 1975, 143; Nelis 2001, 93–96.

10. For a classic analysis of the significance of the fire imagery in Book 2, see Knox 1950.

If the effect of Aeneas' gifts is closely modeled on that of Medea's, what about their meaning? Medea sends to the princess objects that could belong to a bride's attire as wedding gifts¹¹ and explicitly identifies them as intended to be a part of the trousseau (φερνὰς τάσδε, 956). The wedding she has in mind, however, is not the one to Jason that the princess awaits, but a fiery marriage to death. This ambiguity of the *peplos* and the *stephanos* has been well studied by Richard Seaford and Rush Rehm. Tragedy, as they show, in its focus on failed and perverted weddings builds on the overlap between the rituals that surround the transitional moments of marriage and death.¹² In addition to the tragic wedding connotations that Medea's gifts have, *stephanos* brings with it another important connotation. A word used to designate a bridal wreath, *stephanos* also refers to a range of objects whose function is to acknowledge the owner's high status or accomplishments. Medea's sending the crown to the princess is then a deceptive concession of defeat on two levels, a pretense of abdication of any claim both to her marriage and to the superior position of dignity that the possession of the *stephanos* could signify.

As he alludes to Medea's gifts, Vergil, in a way that is typical of his allusive technique,¹³ expands the list of gifts so as to bring to the fore what was only implicit in his source (*Aen.* 1.647–55):¹⁴

munera praeterea, Iliacis erepta ruinis,
ferre iubet, pallam signis auroque rigentem,
et circumtextum croceo velamen acantho,
ornatus Argivae Helenae, quos illa Mycenis,
Pergama cum peteret inconcessosque hymenaeos,
extulerat, matris Ladae mirabile donum;
praeterea sceptrum, Ilione quod gesserat olim,
maxima natarum Priami, colloque monile
bacatum, et duplicem gemmis auroque coronam.¹⁵

11. On the meaning of Medea's gifts, see Mueller 2001, 490–500.

12. On the overlap between the two rituals, see generally Seaford 1987, 106–7; Rehm 1994, 11–29, with specific correspondences summarized on 29. On the *Medea*: Rehm 1994, 97–109. On the gifts and the death of the princess: Rehm 1994, 103–5; Seaford 1987, 110.

13. Condensation is more common, but for expansion in a list, cf. Farrell 1991, 70–77 (five tools in Hesiod to nine in Vergil, 73; plow parts, 74).

14. Cf. Farrell's (1991, 84–94) reading of the "Plague of Noricum" as bringing out the latent emotionalism of the Lucretian model.

15. The gifts are ominous by virtue of their connection to the fall of Troy. Three of the objects are identified by their previous owners: the first two, the *palla* and the *velamen*, joined together as *ornatus* (cf. Medea's repeated reference to her combined gifts as *kosmos*: 787, 951, 954, 972, 981; also the messenger at 1156), were brought to Troy by Helen when she abandoned her husband and set the wheels of war and destruction in motion. The last, *sceptrum*, belonged to Ilione, the eldest daughter of Priam. The choice of Ilione is significant in light of Dido's future, both because her very name evokes Troy (Ilium) and its fate, and especially since Ilione's marriage to the murderous Polymestor of Thrace ended in tragedy: according to Hyginus she blinded and killed her husband, and later killed herself; the tradition about her suicide is preserved in Servius Auctus as well, though there the reason given is her husband's repudiation of her following the fall of Troy (*Serv. Dan.* ad *Aen.* 1.653; *Hyg. Fab.* 109.5, 240.2, 243.5; see also 254.1 in the list of the most pious men and women: Ilione's murder of her husband is interpreted as an act of *pietas* toward her parents and her brother). The various strands of the tradition thus prefigure Dido's suicide, her abandonment by her presumptive husband, Aeneas, and her murderous rage against him.

Besides, he orders [Achates] to bring gifts snatched from the ruins of Troy, a cloak, stiff with embroidery and gold, and a veil with a woven border of yellow acanthus, adornment of Argive Helen, which she carried away, when she sought Pergamum and forbidden marriage, from Mycenae, a marvelous gift of her mother, Leda. Besides, a scepter, which Ilione had once carried, the eldest of Priam's daughters, and a pearl necklace, and a double crown of precious stones and gold.

The Roman equivalents of Medea's *peplos* and *stephanos*, a *palla* and a *corona*, frame Vergil's description of Aeneas' gifts: the former opens and the latter closes the list. The bridal connotations of *stephanos* are absent from its Latin equivalent *corona*; instead, other objects with bridal and feminine associations, *velamen* and *monile*, are added to mark the entire group as wedding gifts. The second strand of meaning is also picked up and expanded: *corona* does contain the honorific association of *stephanos* and even points to royal status, as the word is first attested in the meaning of "royal crown" in the *Aeneid* (8.505). Vergil further emphasizes this meaning of Aeneas' gifts by adding another markedly royal object, a *sceptrum*, and the entire group of gifts is referred to as *regia* (1.696).¹⁶ Yet the similarity between the two sets of gifts points to a significant difference deriving in large part from the gender difference between the givers. Medea's gifts, though deceptive, add up to a consistent presentation of the giver's intentions towards the receiver: on the surface level, a rejected wife sends wedding gifts to the new bride as an acknowledgment of defeat and an attempt to initiate an exchange of favors. The gifts that Aeneas presents to Dido, however, while serving to establish on a general level the Trojans' ability to participate in exchange,¹⁷ form a rather ambiguous group. On the one hand, the royal objects signal a recognition of her stature; on the other hand, the wedding objects, given by an available newcomer in need of help, in emphasizing Dido's femininity and nubility, constitute a bid to replace her in her royal functions by marrying her.

Having Medea as the gift giver in the allusive background also serves to sharpen the emphasis on the nature of Venus' and Cupid's intentions in this scene. Venus' structural position mirrors Medea's: she is a mother sending her son to deliver poison to a woman who, she believes, threatens her family. The language that Vergil uses underlines the plotting and deception that go into Venus' plan: *at Cytherea novas artis, nova pectore versat / consilia* ("but Venus ponders in her heart new tricks, new plans," 1.657–58). *Consilia* here is exactly parallel to Medea's βουλευματα to kill the princess with poisoned gifts.¹⁸ As Venus describes the content of her plan, *quocirca capere ante dolis et cingere flamma / reginam meditor* ("wherefore I intend to capture the queen first with artifice and surround her with fire," 1.673–74), *cingere* means to surround, but also to crown or wreath—another reference to the burning

16. The meaning of the word *regia* here is multivalent: these are gifts (1) from a king, (2) to a queen, (3) worthy of royalty, i.e., splendid, (4) that belonged to other royal figures in the past.

17. Gibson 1999, esp. 194.

18. Eur. *Med.* 772: πάντα τάμά . . . βουλευματα.

stephanos that destroyed the Corinthian princess. Venus' specific directions to Cupid begin with *falle dolo* ("deceive her with artifice") at line 684 and close with *fallas veneno* ("deceive her with poison") at line 688. The repeated references to the *doli* of Venus and Cupid highlight their kinship with the scheming Medea,¹⁹ whose very name the ancients linked etymologically to trickery, just as the name of Venus is connected to another word central to the two acts, *venenum*.²⁰

So far the allusion to the *Medea* figures Dido as the victim bride, about to die a fiery death as a result of deception, and Venus and Cupid as the schemers whose intent is to destroy her. But Aeneas' own role in choosing the bridal gifts puts his intentions into question as well. This choice of gifts pregnant with meaning is particularly significant since, in the search to assign blame for Dido's death, or in simply trying to pin down Aeneas' understanding of the status of their relationship, critics have noted²¹ that we have very little indication of Aeneas' feelings and intentions towards Dido until Mercury directs him to leave Carthage.²² The only clues are circumstantial. We see Aeneas taking over the building of the city for Dido²³: a replacement that, as I argued above, is suggested by the gifts with which he presents her in Book 1, gifts she reciprocates by giving him, among other things, her city.²⁴ Another sign is his donning of Dido's lavish gifts, the cloak and the decorative sword that he is wearing when Mercury comes upon him,²⁵ and that lead to the assignment of the ignoble label *uxorius* (4.266).²⁶ As she addresses herself in despair on seeing that Aeneas' ships have left Carthage, Dido refers to the exchange of roles that has taken place in words that reinforce its connection with the gifts in Book 1: she designates the time of their union *cum sceptras dabas* (4.597), recalling the *sceptrum* of Ilione that Aeneas had given her in Book 1.²⁷ My interpretation of the gift-giving scene in Book 1 thus adds another point of access to Aeneas' earlier stance, particularly important since the exchange of gifts is the only occasion on which an act in the relationship between Dido and Aeneas is initiated and its meaning intentionally

19. Mastronarde 2002, 14 and 237, ad 402.

20. Ernout-Meillet, q.v.; cf. O'Hara 1996, 128: there is no explicit ancient testimony, but plausible parallels are found in Lucretius.

21. Feeney 1983, 205: "By directing his focus away from Aeneas until the intervention of Mercury . . . Vergil is able to maintain a silence over his hero's own beliefs on this score [i.e., the status of his relationship with Dido]." Cf. Lyne 1987, 161; 1998, 77; Cairns 1989, 50.

22. On his behavior following Mercury's visit, Perkell's (1981, 208–16) analysis that emphasizes Aeneas' emotional distance and lack of sensitivity and Feeney's (1983) much more generous account represent two poles of the scholarly opinion. Perkell (1981, 210) notes his use of *dolos* and the presence of other language of deceit in the description of his plans to present his intentions to Dido. This language further implicates Aeneas by linking him to the destructive scheming of Venus and Cupid in Book 1.

23. *Aenean fundantem arces et tecta novantem*, 4.260; cf. Mercury's speech at 4.265–67.

24. See Paschalis 1997, 151, on 4.75 (*Sidoniasque ostentat opes urbemque paratam*), in light of the semantics of gift giving inherent in *Sidonias* as established in Book 1.

25. Cloak and sword: 4.261–64. These gifts form the second stage of the gift exchange that Aeneas initiates in Book 1. The last stage is Aeneas' gift of a sword to Dido, *quaesitum munus* (4.647), which she uses to kill herself (*pace* Quinn 1968, 148; see, e.g., Basto 1984).

26. Antony's behavior and way of dressing in Egypt are clearly in the background. Cf. Lyne 1998, 189; on the meaning of *uxorius*, 43–48.

27. The plural *sceptras* is a common metonymy for royal power, but this choice rather than, e.g., the metrically identical *regna* is significant. Cf. *regni demens in parte locavi* in Dido's earlier speech, 4.374.

put together by Aeneas himself. The allusive background of the episode points to his awareness and conscious reinforcement of his suitor-like position vis-à-vis Dido.²⁸

In his allusion, then, Vergil divides Medea's function between Venus and Aeneas, each of whom sends her/his child to deliver deadly gifts to a helpless victim. He thus complicates the questions of intention and responsibility, which are unambiguous in Medea's case. On the one hand, Venus' open hostility and clear intentions seem by contrast to absolve Aeneas of consciously willing Dido harm. At the same time, the parallel with Medea is what leads the reader to notice the intentional quality of the gifts' meaning and to ask what Aeneas could have intended by presenting himself as a suitor while on a divine mission to another land. While Venus carries the burden of guilt for poisoning Dido, Aeneas too bears responsibility for her eventual destruction.

Another significant result of Vergil's deployment of this allusion is that in light of the familiar and persistent allusion to Dido as Medea herself, Dido is likened simultaneously to the agent and the victim of the same act. Creation of such complicated and contradictory relationships is typical of Vergil's allusive technique,²⁹ the most famous and large-scale example being the shifting allusive identification of the Trojans and the Italians in the second half of the poem alternately with Trojans and Greeks in Homer's Trojan War.³⁰ In the case of Dido, the allusive relationship that Vergil creates brings into sharp relief the tragic contradictions of Dido's character and her fate. She is at the same time both a helpless victim and a figure of heroic statue in control of her own fate. The two sides of this depiction culminate in Dido's suicide at the end of Book 4.³¹

Self-destruction is by nature an act that uniquely combines passivity and activity. Vergil's account of Dido's suicide emphasizes this inherent feature: it is conceived by Dido as a self-immolation, a death that is passive like that of the Corinthian princess, but committed by her falling onto Aeneas' sword, an active warriorlike self-murder. Both halves contain further ambiguities. The actual kindling of the pyre is never described; it has been suggested that Dido herself kindles the pyre before she falls on the sword and, alternatively, that it is set on fire later by the servants.³² Dido's lack of active involvement

28. Cf. Lyne 1987, 123–25, on Aeneas as Apollo the plague bringer, where the allusive background also implies an active role for Aeneas in Dido's destruction.

29. A particular type of *contaminatio*/conflation. On *contaminatio*, see Farrell 1991, 94–104. Farrell's main discussion treats *contaminatio* as imitation of different passages of the same work, but his method can be easily extended to interpret *contaminatio* of several different works/authors, as he himself demonstrates at, e.g., 155–57.

30. Discussed in a classic article by Anderson (1957) and further illuminated by Quint (1993, chap. 2, "Repetition and Ideology in the *Aeneid*," esp. 65–83).

31. Cf. Oliensis 1997, 306, on Dido's suicide as an enactment of two opposing identifications, in this case with Orestes and Pentheus, "the victimized sons," on the one hand, and Agave and the Furies of Clytemnestra, "their maddened mothers," on the other.

32. Pease 1935, ad 4.661 (*ignem*), Austin 1955, ad 4.662 (*mortis*). I would argue that the fact that Vergil chooses not to mention how the fire is started is significant in itself. This is the fire that seems to consume Carthage as if it were another fallen Troy and that prefigures the city's destruction by the Romans. The fact that its origin is left ambiguous is in part what helps it carry this larger symbolic meaning: it is as if the fire starts on its own or through the will of the gods.

in the actual burning of her body picks up the allusive line of Dido as the princess, set on fire by Aeneas' gifts and the touch of Cupid.³³ The active part of the suicide also carries double connotations: on the one hand, it alludes to the suicide of Ajax, which, as Vassiliki Panoussi has most recently discussed, contributes to the depiction of Dido's actions as those of a male tragic hero.³⁴ At the same time, the location of the suicide in the bedroom, next to what she considered to be the marriage bed, also alludes to the suicide of Deianira in the *Trachiniae* and, more generally, to a tragic *topos* of the wife committing suicide on the marriage bed using a sword.³⁵ Thus even in the active part of the suicide there is a mixing of feminine and masculine connotations, Dido as a hero and Dido as an abandoned wife.³⁶ The allusion to the princess and to Medea contributes to the ambiguity in the depiction of agency in this suicide. The allusion to Medea serves to presage that Dido's passion for Aeneas will lead her to commit a murderous act; the allusion to the princess figures her as the future passive victim of others' hostile plotting. These two allusive threads come together to create the identity between the agent and the victim, which expresses itself perfectly in the act of suicide.³⁷

Vergil often complicates his portrayal of a character by intertwining multiple allusions. He also frequently breaks up a character alluded to into a number of reflections, thus creating a link between the different personages within his poem.³⁸ So in this case as well, the presence of the Corinthian princess in the *Aeneid* is not limited to her connection with Dido. While in this, the first locus of her allusive presence, the connection is close and detailed, operating on several levels and condensing the characters of Medea and her antagonist into one, the subsequent appearances are highly diffuse, in that the attributes of the princess and elements of her burning are divided among several interconnected characters.³⁹ The thread that holds them together is the link between Dido and the other major characters who occupy

33. If Lyne (1987, 21–23) is correct in interpreting *Iliacas vestis* at 4.648 and *exuviae* at 4.496, 507, and 651 as Aeneas' gifts, rather than Aeneas' own clothes, a kind of reciprocity is in fact achieved: Dido burns with her the gifts that set her on fire.

34. Panoussi 2002, 101–15.

35. On Deianira's suicide, see Rehm 1994, 77. On the *topos*, see Seaford 1987, 123 with n.169 (refers to Medea imagining killing the princess at line 41).

36. Deianira's suicide is also "transgendered," a "male death . . . confused by female elements": Wohl 1998, 36. See also G. S. West 1980, on Dido's shifting sexual roles focused by an allusion to Caeneus.

37. Hill (2004, 120) sees the suicide as a "disorganized act expressing no single purpose." While my discussion, like his, has sought to bring out many of the contradictions in Dido's position and in the suicide itself, I believe that a focus on the active/passive dichotomy imposed by the allusive background provides a narrative logic to the very contradictions and figures the suicide itself as their culmination and a resolution of sorts. Cf. West 1980, 322: "we can . . . discern in her [Dido's] effort to die an effort to resolve the discord created by the two ways of life she has embraced."

38. What Wills (1998) terms "divided allusion," in this case on the level of character rather than diction. Cf. 285 n.14: "In a thematic way this type of internal connection also happens thematically when two characters of the *Aeneid* are assigned different attributes or actions of a singly Homeric character, as, perhaps, the varying assignment of Hector's role to Aeneas and Turnus. As a consequence, the two heroes refer to each other in a way that is visible only to a reader who knows their common link through the *Iliad*." Cf. Nelis 2001, 278 with nn. 62–63.

39. Cf. Wills' (1998) treatment of Vergil's allusion to Catullus' *Coma Berenices*. Here, as well, the presence of a prominent allusion serves to sharpen the attention of the reader familiar with the source to its less obvious allusive presence in the rest of the poem.

the same structural role as Aeneas' companion: Aeneas' wife, Creusa, in Book 2,⁴⁰ and, in the second half of the poem, his destined bride, Lavinia, and his young guest-friend, Pallas.

Unnamed in Euripides, the princess was known in Corinth as Glauke, but Latin poets, from Propertius to Statius, refer to her as Creusa, the daughter of Creon.⁴¹ It was an innovation of Vergil's time to use that name for Aeneas' first wife, who was lost during the burning of Troy: her traditional name, the one that Ennius had used, was Eurydice.⁴² The new tradition made her a daughter of Priam, a suitably royal mate for the progenitor of the Romans, but it is the connection to the Corinthian princess that makes the use of this name for another woman who perishes while flames of a burning city rage around her particularly appropriate.⁴³ The actual burning, however, is displaced from Creusa herself to two characters closely connected to her in Book 2, her son Ascanius and her father-in-law, Anchises. Aeneas will not save himself and his son without his father's agreement to leave with them. But Anchises refuses to go, and, in his refusal, portrays himself as useless, *inutilis*, because of his burning in the past as a victim of Zeus' thunderbolt: *me divum pater atque hominum rex / fulminis adflavit ventis et contigit igni* ("the father of gods and the king of men breathed winds of his thunderbolt on me and touched me with fire," 2.648–49). This perception of his state causes Anchises to cling to his seat (*sedibus haeret in isdem*, 2.654), and thus, like the princess, become a source of destruction not only for himself, but for his entire family, as Aeneas in turn is unable to separate from his father and is ready to go back into battle. The combination of fire and the resulting destructive clinging marks this moment as connected to the earlier allusion to the princess in the gift-giving scene and it is further picked up in Creusa's own action; as she falls at Aeneas' feet to prevent him from returning to battle, the verb *haerere* appears yet again: *ecce autem complexa pedes in limine coniunx / haerebat, parvumque patri tendebat Iulum* ("but look, having embraced my feet, my wife was clinging to the threshold, and was holding little Iulus out to his father," 2.673–74). In this act of clinging, Creusa herself is reminiscent of the princess as well, in that her only purpose at this stage is to ensure that they face death together.

It is the portent that burns on Ascanius' head that changes Anchises' mind and stops both Anchises and Creusa from their respective acts of clinging. The portent figures Ascanius, the child whose head is burning while his father is looking on in fear, as the princess, making him the third character to be associated with her in the short span of this scene (*Aen.* 2.682–86):

40. On the similarities in Aeneas' treatment of Creusa and Dido, see Perkell 1981, esp. 202–3.

41. Prop. 2.16.30 and 2.21.12; Ov. *Her.* 12.53, *Ars am.* 1.335; Sen. *Med.* 495, 508, 817, 922; Stat. *Silv.* 2.1.142.

42. For the relationship between Aeneas and Creusa, see Lyne 1987, 149–51, and 167–75 on its similarity to his relationship with Dido.

43. On the traditions surrounding the wife of Aeneas, see Austin (1964, ad 2.795), who shows the difficulty in pinning down the origin of the change; cf. Perkell 1981, 204. On the fire imagery in Book 2, see Knox 1950.

ecce levis summo de vertice visus Iuli
fundere lumen apex, tactuque innoxia mollis
lambere flamma comas et circum tempora pasci.
nos pavidi trepidare metu crinemque flagrantem
excutere et sanctos restringere fontibus ignis.

Look, a nimble point of fire⁴⁴ seemed to pour light from the very top of Iulus' head, and a flame, harmless to the touch, seemed to lick his soft hair and feed itself around his temples. We, terrified, were trembling with fear and were shaking off the burning hair and quenching the holy fires with water.

The emphasis on the flames devouring the boy's head (*comas, tempora, crinem*), and the parents' desperate attempts to shake the flames off recalls the fire from the *stephanos* that was burning the princess and her attempts to throw it off by shaking her head: σείουσα χαίτην κρᾶτά τ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοσε, / ῥῖψαι θέλουσα στέφανον ("shaking her head and hair this way and that, wanting to throw off the crown," Eur. *Med.* 1191–92). At the same time, the essential difference is foregrounded: the flame is *tactu innoxia*, harmless to the touch.⁴⁵ The choice of *tactu* looks at the potential harm of the flame from the perspective of the parents, not the child himself; that perspective, unexpected in the immediate context, is informed by the harm the princess caused her father in the allusive model.⁴⁶

The situation in which the allusion is actualized thus bears a resemblance to the Euripidean scene through a series of shifting connections, and it does so on the broader thematic level as well, in its emphasis on the significance of relationships between parents and children. In the *Medea*, the children of Medea and Jason are doomed by the actions of their parents, while the princess destroys her father. We can read the episode in Book 2 as using its departure from the allusive model to comment on the potential danger inherent in women to the privileged patrilineal relationships:⁴⁷ in the *Medea*, the female characters, Medea and the princess, are the agents of destruction that cause the deaths of the (male) children and Creon, and the ruin of Jason. In contrast, it is through emphasizing the bonds between the male members of the family and displacing the only female, Creusa, that Aeneas is able to

44. If Servius' interpretation of *apex* in this passage is correct, and, rather than the tip of the flame, we are to imagine Iulus as wearing a *flamen's* cap, the cap provides a parallel for the princess' crown, as it too indicates his status and future importance. For an argument against Servius' reading see Austin 1964, ad 2.683.

45. Knox (1950, 396–98) sees this final appearance of the fire/serpent imagery in the Book 2 as its transformation and rehabilitation. The close echo of the portent in Lavinia's scene in Book 7, among other instances of negative fire imagery in the poem, which lie outside the scope of Knox's study, renders his reading too optimistic.

46. Another father who clings to the body of a dead child is Evander: *feretro Pallante reposito / procubuit super atque haeret lacrimansque gemensque* (11.149–50). His reference to joining hands with Aeneas in *hospitium* (11.165) reinforces the parallel with Creon and Jason, whose relationship leads to the death of the princess. Pallas himself is destroyed through his connection to Aeneas, which is also characterized by physical clinging at 8.124. In this figuration of the allusion, Aeneas himself is tainted by the poison that he passed on to Dido with his gifts and his contagion spreads to Pallas and Evander.

47. On women as a source of danger in the poem, see Nugent 1992; as instigators of war and conflict, see Keith 2000, 67–78. Cf. Perkell 1981, 208, 216–17, on the exclusion of women from Aeneas' *pietas* and his mission.

lead his father and son out of the flames. The fire that burns on Ascanius' head is harmless and points to future glory; it is this fire that stops Anchises from his destructive clinging. Creusa, unlike the princess whose father was unable to escape her embrace, is neutralized through avoidance of contact. As they leave Troy, she is the only member of the group who is not connected to the rest through touch,⁴⁸ while the close contact between the male members of the family and its innocuousness is further emphasized by the use of *implicare* to describe Ascanius' grasp on his father's hand: *dextrae se parvus Iulus / implicuit* (2.723–24); the same verb was used to describe the fire of love penetrating Dido's bones in Book 1. When Aeneas wants to touch Creusa at the end of the book, he cannot: lost, she is now only an *imago*.⁴⁹

The burning of the princess is also reflected in Lavinia's two flaming moments.⁵⁰ The first is the omen in Book 7, when her hair appears to be on fire under a bejeweled crown, as she stands next to her father during a sacrifice (*Aen.* 7.71–77):

... castis adolet dum altaria taedis,
et iuxta genitorem adstat Lavinia virgo,
visa (nefas) longis comprehendere crinibus ignem
atque omnem ornatum flamma crepitante cremari
regalisque accensa comas, accensa coronam
insignem gemmis; tum fumida lumine fulvo
involvi ac totis Vulcanum spargere tectis.

While the maiden Lavinia sets the altars on fire with chaste torches and stands next to her father, she seems (unspeakable!) to catch fire in her long hair and to burn in all her ornaments with a crackling flame, on fire her royal hair, on fire her crown, with its glory of jewels; then, covered in smoke, she was wrapped in yellow light and sprinkled fire throughout the palace.

Kenneth Reckford has noted that this passage is based on the Euripidean scene, pointing to *ornatus* and *corona* as echoes of Euripides' *kosmos* and *stephanos*.⁵¹ Through this divided allusion Lavinia is also connected to Dido, Creusa, and Ascanius. The burning of her hair is closely modeled on that of Ascanius, except for the sinister smokiness of her flame, which is reminiscent of Dido's pyre.⁵² Lavinia then, here encountered for the first time as a potential substitute for Creusa and Dido, is associated with their danger, but her very youthfulness and passivity, emphasized through her link

48. On Creusa's marginal position resulting from the emphasis on patrilineal relations, and on her disappearance as typical of female "tendency toward incorporeality" in the poem, see Nugent 1999, 264–66. Cf. Lyne 1987, 150: "Aeneas' lack of contact with Creusa, physical, and, apparently, emotional."

49. On Aeneas' isolation and forgetfulness of Creusa, see Perkell 1981, 204–8.

50. Other allusive models shared by Dido and Lavinia include Nausicaa and the Medea of Apollonius (cf. Nelis 2001, 276–80, 377–81). Cairns (1989, 152–53) discusses their inappropriateness as "major epic original[s]" for Lavinia, but also points out the similarities; see n. 10 on Lavinia's blush as a conflation of Medea's in Apollonius. See also Reckford 1961, 267–68; Keith 2000, 73–74, on Lavinia as Helen.

51. Reckford 1961, 258–59 with n. 19. Cairns (1989, 175) suggests a possible Ennian antecedent, but emphasizes the lyric flavor of the depiction of Lavinia; he mentions the burning of the princess in Euripides (n. 76) as a "macabre variant upon lyric descriptions," but does not connect it to the Vergilian scene. Cf. Nelis 2001, 277.

52. Reckford 1961, 259.

to Ascanius, serves to diminish, if not remove, her destructive potential. But Lavinia is not the only reflection of the princess in Book 7. The language used to describe the effect of Cupid's poison on Dido in Book 1, with its allusive reflection of the fire stripping flesh from the bones of the Corinthian princess, reoccurs in Allecto's attack on Amata, Lavinia's mother (*Aen.* 7.351–56):

fit tortile collo
aurum ingens coluber, fit longae taenia vittae
innectitque comas et membris lubricus errat.
ac dum prima lues udo sublapsa veneno
pertemptat sensus atque ossibus implicat ignem,
necdum animus toto percepit pectore flammam . . .

The enormous snake becomes a twisted piece of gold for her neck, it becomes a ribbon in the long headband twisted into her hair and, slippery, it wanders over her limbs. While the beginning of the corruption makes trial of her senses with dripping poison and weaves fire into her bones, and her spirit has not yet received the flame with the entire heart . . .

Line 355 repeats Venus' command to Cupid in Book 1, *ossibus implicet ignem* (1.660), in the same metrical position, with only a change of the verb's mood,⁵³ and both poison and flame, central to the scene in Book 1 and in the *Medea*, occur closely together. The snake that Allecto hurls at Amata takes the shape of a necklace and part of a headdress,⁵⁴ the former recalling the *monile* that Aeneas gives to Dido, the latter, both the *corona* presented to her and the poisonous *stephanos* that destroys the princess. Dido as the princess, then, is divided in Book 7 into the figures of Lavinia and Amata. As we have seen, in the case of Dido the allusive presence of the princess culminates in her suicide. Book 12 shows the outcome of the allusion for Lavinia and her mother. The second instance of Lavinia's burning, her famous blush, simultaneously alludes to the physical burning of the princess and the fire of love that consumes the young Medea of Apollonius:⁵⁵ an allusive combination we saw in the depiction of Dido in Book 1. Here, as well, the burning is contagious: Turnus's desire, further stimulated by Lavinia's blush, sets him on fire (*ardet*, 12.71) and propels him to destruction at the hands of Aeneas. But the self-destructive element of the princess' allusive presence in Dido's character is reserved for Amata, who ends her life as well.⁵⁶ As Aeneas struggles to replace both the city and the woman lost in flames, the allusive connection to the Corinthian princess links the three women that punctuate his quest. The first two, Creusa and

53. Lyne (1987, 16) cites this line as one of several parallels to Dido that suggest that Amata's passion is erotic, with major allusive presences being Phaedra and Jocasta (13).

54. I owe this observation to one of the anonymous referees.

55. Nelis 2001, 377–81; Lyne 1987, 114–22 (connection to Dido, 120–21). On the blush as "symbolic deflowerment," see Oliensis 1997, 308.

56. Amata's suicide, *informe letum* (12.603) is not heroic like Dido's: its tragic parallels are Phaedra and Jocasta; see Lyne 1987, 17. Cf. Nugent 1999, 267–68. On the connection of Dido's and Amata's suicides see Putnam 1965, 176–79.

Dido, follow the fate of their prototype and are destroyed. Lavinia's flames, though by no means devoid of sinister connotations, do not burn, and in overcoming the destructive force of the allusion, which is displaced onto her mother, she emerges at the end of the poem as the successful bride for Aeneas.

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