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OVID'S THEBAN HISTORY: THE FIRST 'ANTI-*AENEID*'?[1]

The magnificence of Augustan Rome is the indispensable setting for Ovid the urbane love poet, *rusticitas* is the one unforgivable sin.[2] Yet in Ovid's *perpetuum carmen* cities are for the most part invisible, at best incidental backdrops; the countryside, present in many vividly drawn landscapes, constantly thrusts itself on our attention, a place where mysterious powers menace the individual's identity.[3] This neglect of the city makes a striking, and deliberate, contrast with the *Aeneid*, a ktistic epic whose meaning is governed by constant reference forward to the 'altae moenia Romae'. Ovid, whose main epic time-scale does include the foundation of Rome, devotes five words to the making of those walls.[4] The one major exception to this indifference to the central theme of Virgilian epic is the Theban episode in *Metamorphoses* 3.1–4.603. The story of Cadmus and his family forms a self-contained unit within the flux of Ovid's epic of transformation. It tells of a *ktisis* that goes wrong: Cadmus obeys Apollo's injunction to found a city (3.13 'moenia fac condas'), but in the end the exile who had founded a new home is driven into a second exile: 'exit | conditor urbe sua' (4.565f.).[5]

The episodes that span the distance between foundation and second exile strongly support the idea that Ovid's fascination with the rural *locus amoenus* is in tension with the idea of the city, for books 3 and 4 contain some of the most haunting of Ovid's landscapes, in the stories of Actaeon, Narcissus, Pentheus, and Salmacis. There is in fact a typically Ovidian imbalance between the frame, which tells of what is to a degree the archetypal Greek foundation legend,[6] and the infill with its proliferation of wilderness settings. Ovid's manipulation of the contrasts between city and country, civilization and savagery owes much to tragic models, and in particular to the *Bacchae*.[7] To found a city is to impose culture on untamed nature; in the case of

[1] In general on Ovid's imitation of the *Aeneid* see O. S. Due, *Changing Forms* (Copenhagen, 1974), pp. 36ff.; G. K. Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 14–25, ch. 5; S. Döpp, *Virgilischer Einfluß im Werk Ovids* (Munich, 1968); R. Lamacchia, 'Ovidio interprete di Virgilio', *Maia* 12 (1960), 310–30. On the Ino episode: B. Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet*[2] (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 131ff., 401ff.; E. J. Bernbeck, *Beobachtungen zur Darstellungsart in Ovids Metamorphosen* (Munich, 1967), ch. 1. Bernbeck conducts a *stylistic* analysis of the episode in which, with reference to Virgilian models, he demonstrates the way in which Ovid consistently ruptures the epic texture; this may be set beside my analysis of the *thematic* and *structural* inversions that Ovid performs on the models in the *Aeneid*.

[2] cf. *Ars Am.* 3.127–8.

[3] cf. C. P. Segal, *Landscape in Ovid's Metamorphoses* (*Hermes* Einzelschrift 23, Wiesbaden, 1969).

[4] *Met.* 14.774–5.

[5] Beginning and end are marked by other linguistic features: at 4.564 the matter of the previous two books is described as 'luctu serieque malorum'; at 3.138–9 the 'prima... causa... luctus' had been Actaeon. *profugus* occurs at 3.7 and 4.568; Cadmus is a wanderer at 3.6 ('orbe pererrato') and 4.567 ('erroribus actus' = *Aen.* 6.532).

[6] So F. Vian, *Les Origines de Thèbes. Cadmos et les Spartes* (Paris, 1963), p. 231.

[7] For discussion of the themes sketched out in this paragraph see C. P. Segal, *Dionysiac Poetics and Euripides' Bacchae* (Princeton, 1982), esp. ch. 4, and pp. 137–40 on Cadmus' civilizing activity. The pattern of Cadmus' career, from exile to the height of royal prosperity and back to a bestial existence in exile, is also that of Oedipus; note the version at Sen. *Phoen.* 12ff., where Oedipus describes his return to the wilds as entry into the landscape of Actaeon, Zethus, and Ino.

Thebes the inaugural act is the slaying by Cadmus of the serpent that dwells in the virgin forest on the site. But nature keeps breaking in to undo civilization; the countryside around Thebes remains as a mortal threat to those, like Actaeon and Narcissus, who are tempted by its beauties. Even more insidious is *la bête humaine* that lurks within the city: immediately after the slaying of the serpent Cadmus creates the inhabitants of his new city by another act of the civilizer, as agriculturalist, when he sows the serpent's teeth to produce a crop of human beings. This legend transfers to the foundation of a city the cosmogonic motif of the creation of the ordered universe out of the body of a slain monster,[8] but in Thebes the exorcism of the chaos and violence of the origin is incomplete. The serpent re-emerges at the end of *Metamorphoses* 3 in the figure of Pentheus, the son of Echion ('viperman', the one Sown-Man who is mentioned by name at 3.126). Pentheus presents himself as the defender of the city founded by Cadmus, the colonist from the city of Tyre (3.538–9); but his speech opens with an impassioned appeal to the indigenous population, the *anguigenae* (3.531). His misjudgement of the true state of affairs is further hinted at in the first words that he hurls at his citizens (3.531), 'quis furor ...?' – a question that he might with more propriety address to himself.[9] Pentheus' rage is as elemental in its fury as the violence of the serpent;[10] it will lead him out of the city to Cithaeron where his mother will mistake him for a wild boar and destroy him. Cadmus' founding begins with the transformation of a serpent into men; it ends with the transformation of the twice exiled Cadmus and his wife into snakes (4.576–603). This is the end of the story for Thebes' founder, but not for the city: the *civilia bella* and fratricide (3.117–19) of the Sown Men will break out again in the time of the children of Oedipus;[11] later still Thebes will become a byword for the great city annihilated, for example in Pythagoras' discourse on mutability (15.429): 'Oedipodioniae quid sunt nisi nomina Thebae?'

Many critics have felt that Pythagoras' list of cities that are now mere names sheds doubt on the future eternity of the city of Rome, whose rise Pythagoras goes on to prophesy. That interpretation might find support from the thesis that I propound here (although neither is dependent on the other): I shall argue that the tragic story of Cadmus and Thebes in *Metamorphoses* 3 and 4 is constructed with constant reference to the great epic of Rome, Virgil's *Aeneid*.[12] It is in fact the first example of an 'anti-

[8] cf. Vian, op. cit. (n. 6), pp. 158ff., 171ff. Vian suggests, p. 175, that in the Ovidian version the fratricide of the Sown Men, followed by Echion's pledge of fraternal *fides* (*Met.* 3.126–8), may be read in terms of a cathartic sacrifice which gives military *furor* free rein before the process of socialization can begin. But this is overoptimistic in the light of subsequent Theban history.

[9] 'quis furor ...?' are also the first two words addressed by Lucan to the citizens of Rome, *Bell. Civ.* 1.8; see below for further discussion of analogies between Theban and Roman civil war.

[10] 3.568–71 (Pentheus' anger) 'sic ego torrentem, qua nil obstabat eunti, / lenius et modico strepitu decurrere vidi; / at quacumque trabes obstructaque saxa tenebant, / spumeus et fervens et ab obice saevior ibat'; 3.79–80 (the serpent) 'impete nunc vasto ceu concitus imbribus amnis / fertur et obstantes proturbat pectore silvas'.

[11] 3.123 'mutua vulnera' is used of the later war at Thebes in *Trist.* 2.319. That war is alluded to at *Met.* 9.403ff. Cf. also 7.141–2 (Colchis) 'terrigenae pereunt per mutua vulnera fratres / civilique cadunt acie'.

[12] Association of Thebes and Rome is also suggested by the ecphrasis of the cup presented to Aeneas by Anius at *Met.* 13.681–99, with its scenes of the daughters of Orion sacrificed in expiation of the plague devastating Thebes and of their subsequent rebirth, of obvious relevance to the Trojans' own story (pointed out by G. K. Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* [Oxford, 1975], p. 221); but that is not the end of the history of Thebes, any more than Aeneas' foundation in Italy is the end of the history of Rome.

Aeneid', and so the precursor of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* and Statius' *Thebaid*.[13] The epic model coexists easily with the patterns from tragedy sketched out above: Virgil's epic is already heavily indebted to tragedy, especially in books 4 and 7, which are particularly important as models for *Metamorphoses* 3 and 4.[14]

Ovid's Theban story will be considered in its relation to the *Aeneid* under three headings: (1) The foundation legend. (2) The tension between man within the city and the natural world outside the walls. (3) The repeated intervention of a vengeful god as a way of structuring the narrative.

1. FOUNDATION

Allusion to the *Aeneid* is particularly dense at the beginning of Ovid's Theban narrative, predisposing the reader to extended comparison of the two narratives. This in itself is a Virgilian device, for the first book of the Roman Homer calls attention to its *aemulatio* through particularly close and dense imitation of Homer.[15] Virgil and Ovid both begin the third book of an epic with the tale of an exile who wanders over the world in search of a place to settle; that place is marked out, in fulfilment of a divine prophecy, by a recumbent animal. On reaching the promised land the hero gives thanks to the spirits of the place.[16] In the sequel Cadmus sends his men to fetch water for the sacrifice to Jupiter, and they discover a vast serpent which devours or poisons them; Cadmus comes in search of his men, and succeeds in killing the serpent

[13] The 'longa retro series' of Stat. *Theb.* 1.4–16 is virtually a summary of Ovid's Theban books (cf. *Met.* 4.564 '*serie*que malorum').

[14] The origin of the people of Thebes is illustrated with the famous simile comparing the Sown-Men rising from the ground to figures on the *aulaea* rising in the theatre (*Met.* 3.111–14). In the Roman theatre at this time the curtain rose at the end of a play (W. Beare, *The Roman Stage*[3] [London, 1964], pp. 267f.), but may it still be that with this simile introducing the men of Thebes Ovid signposts entry into a stagey, tragic world? Here too there would be Virgilian precedent: the stage for the tragedy of Dido and of Carthage in *Aeneid* 1 is set with the sylvan *scaena* behind the harbour at Carthage at 164; the prologue to the tragedy is given by Venus *cothurnata* (1.337): cf. E. L. Harrison, *PVS* 12 (1972–3), 10–25. It is perhaps not coincidental either that the setting for the last catastrophe in the house of Cadmus, the rock from which Ino throws herself into the sea, seems to echo Virgil's Carthaginian harbour: *Met.* 4.525–7 '*imminet aequoribus scopulus*; pars ima cavatur / fluctibus et tectas defendit ab imbribus *undas*, / summa riget *frontem*que in apertum porrigit aequor'; *Aen.* 1.162–6 'hinc atque hinc vastae rupes geminique minantur / in caelum scopuli, quorum sub vertice late / aequora tuta silent; tum silvis scaena coruscis / desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbra. / fronte sub adversa scopulis pendentibus antrum' (where *frons* [*scaenae*] continues the theatrical image). Other examples of figurative 'staging' in the *Metamorphoses*: 11.22ff. (Orpheus in the amphitheatre); S. Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 33ff., on *Met.* 5.388f. ('amphitheatre' setting for rape of Persephone).

[15] For example Aeneas' first words in the epic, *Aen.* 1.94, are a virtual translation of *Od.* 5.306.

[16] Both stories of course conform to common patterns of foundation legends (Vian, op. cit. [n. 6], pp. 76ff. on the Theban legend with many parallels; J. Rykwert, *The Idea of a Town* [Princeton, 1976], p. 44; T. J. Cornell, 'Gründer', *RAC* 12 [1983], 1129–32); the verbal parallels between Ovid and Virgil therefore bear a greater weight of proof: exile: *Met.* 3.5; *Aen.* 2.780, 798 etc. Wandering over the world: *Met.* 3.6 'orbe pererrato'; *Aen.* 1.756 'omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus'. Cf. also *Aen.* 2.294–5 'his moenia quaere / magna pererrato statues quae denique ponto'. Animal omen: *Met.* 3.10ff. (*bos*); *Aen.* 3.389ff., 8.42ff. (*sus*); recumbent: *Met.* 3.23 *procubuit* = *Aen.* 8.83, in same *sedes*. Thanksgiving to new-found land: *Met.* 3.24–5; *Aen.* 7.135–8; *Met.* 3.25 *ignotos*, *Aen.* 7.137 *ignota*. Ovid sets a fashion in his structural imitation of the opening of the third book of the *Aeneid*: Lucan 3 opens with Pompey fleeing from Italy, in a pointed inversion of Aeneas' departure from Troy; Silius 3 like *Aeneid* 3 begins with the word *postquam*, continuing the narrative after the destruction of a city (Saguntum).

after a heroic struggle. Here Ovid switches from the model of Aeneas' journey to that of the fight between Hercules and Cacus in *Aeneid* 8, and by this switch approaches an area of more specifically *Roman* allusion.[17] Evander tells the story of Hercules and Cacus to Aeneas during the latter's visit to the site of the future Rome, but within the overall structure of *Aeneid* 8, preceding the descriptions of the site of Rome and of Roman history (on the shield), it functions as a kind of foundation story of a well-known kind: before Rome can be built the site must be cleared of a destructive and elemental monster by a hero who prefigures the founder.[18] Cadmus goes in search of his lost companions, as the Virgilian Hercules goes in search of the cattle that Cacus has stolen. Two details in particular in the Ovidian narrative alert us to the Herculean model: firstly, Cadmus goes to meet the serpent clad in a lion-skin (3.52–3, 81), the constant attribute of Hercules. Secondly, Cadmus first attacks the serpent with a great mill-stone, *molaris* (3.59), a word found only here in the *Metamorphoses*, and in the *Aeneid* only at 8.250, as one of the weapons used by Hercules against Cacus. Thus far Cadmus is successful in the role of Herculean civilizer. In *Aeneid* 8 the story of Cacus is followed by a hymn to Hercules celebrating his monster-slaying as both proof of his divine parentage and justification for his apotheosis (8.301 'salve, vera Iovis proles, decus addite divis'). A very different comment follows Cadmus' victory: a mysterious voice speaks (3.98–9): 'quid, Agenore nate, peremptum / serpentem spectas? et tu spectabere serpens'. This is the first sign that Cadmus' story will not trace the same path as that of Aeneas and Hercules.

Cacus is not a serpent, although the language that describes Hercules throttling the monster at *Aeneid* 8.260–1 is echoed in the following hymn to Hercules that tells of the snakes strangled by the infant Hercules (8.288–9). Ovid's real serpent borrows many of his features from the two serpents that attack Laocoon and his sons in *Aeneid* 2.203ff.[19] By this 'combinatorial imitation' of features from two separate books of the *Aeneid* Ovid reveals an alertness to significant structural correspondences in that poem: within the wider symmetry between *Aeneid* 2 and 8 (books that tell, respectively, of the destruction and creation of a city) the death of Laocoon and Hercules' killing of Cacus stand in an inverse relation to one another; for, if the slaying of the monster Cacus is a necessary taming of the wilderness before the business of city-building, attended with suitable religious ritual, can start, the death of Laocoon, the sacrificer sacrificed, is an omen of the destruction of Troy; the savage serpents then proceed to instal themselves at the centre of the city, in the temple of Minerva.

2. TO THE HILLS AND THE VALES

In *Metamorphoses* 3 the Theban serpent is destroyed, but the seeds of its resurrection are sown in the soil of the newly founded city; the descendants of Cadmus wander, or are driven away, from the city to become the victims of a natural world hostile to man. In the final disaster before Cadmus decides that he has had enough and himself leaves the city, Athamas and Ino are driven mad by Tisiphone. Athamas repeats the delusion of Agave when he calls for nets to hunt down 'a lioness and her twin cubs'

[17] The parallels with the Cacus story are noted by F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso Metamorphoses I-III* (Heidelberg, 1969), pp. 464f.

[18] Vian, op. cit. (n. 6), pp. 101f.: e.g. Apollo's slaying of Python at the same time that he built the temple at Delphi (cf. J. Fontenrose, *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins* [Berkeley, etc., 1959], p. 592 s.vv. 'Building of temple or palace after god's victory'); J. Trumpf, 'Stadtgründung und Drachenkampf (Exkurse zu Pindar, Pythien 1)', *Hermes* 86 (1958), 129–57; N. S. Rabinowitz, 'From Force to Persuasion: Aeschylus' *Oresteia* as Cosmogonic Myth', *Ramus* 10 (1981), 159–91.

[19] The parallels are noted by Bömer, p. 458.

– his wife and children (4.513–14). Hunting was always a fatal attraction for Ovid's Thebans, but the theme reaches its final intensity here as Athamas pursues his imaginary prey within the city itself, 'media furibundus in aula' (4.512). His wife Ino, however, repeats the Maenad's rush into the real countryside taking her surviving son with her. She also repeats the furious departure from the city of Virgil's Amata (part of the larger imitation of *Aeneid* 7 discussed in the next section), who likewise takes a child with her, 'simulato numine Bacchi' (*Aen.* 7.385): Ino's 'Bacchic' fury is in reality the result of infatuation by Juno operating through Tisiphone. 'Euhoe Bacche' is the cry of both Amata and Ino.[20] Aeneas has come to Italy to found a city; the effect of his arrival is to destroy the cohesion of the city already there,[21] as its inhabitants revert to nature. Aeneas seems doomed to repeat in Italy the destruction that he had wrought in the city of Dido in book 4; Carthage too is undone when man falls prey to the uncontrollable forces of nature. Virgil's *locus inamoenus* outside the safety of the city walls is the cave of Aeneas and Dido's 'wedding'. And Virgil also works the tale of the snaring of Dido through the imagery of a hunt that takes place inside the city.

Dido in the solitude of her madness is compared to the furied Pentheus when he saw Thebes double (*Aen.* 4.469–70); in the preceding lines, 467–8, she is described as seeming, in her dreams, 'semper longam incomitata... / ire viam[22] et Tyrios deserta quaerere terra'. By a coincidence that will not have been lost on Ovid *Tyrii* might also be used of the Thebans, whose founder was, like Dido, a refugee from Tyre (or Sidon) and a descendant of Agenor.[23] Thebes shared the fate of Carthage in being a great city that was deliberately and utterly destroyed in historical times, Thebes by Alexander the Great. Virgil's story of the city of Carthage is a suggestive model for Ovid's Thebes for these reasons, and also because *Aeneid* 4 provides an account in brief compass within a longer epic of the whole history of a city, from foundation (the activity on which Aeneas is engaged at 4.260) to final destruction (figuratively and proleptically at 4.669–71). As we have seen, Ovid imitates Virgil in casting out into exile the founder-to-be at the beginning of the third book of an epic; we might also see Ovid's story of Thebes as short-circuiting the Virgilian vision of an enduring foundation, but one deferred beyond the limits of the poem, by fusing into one the themes of (i) departure into exile with the final goal of the foundation of Rome (*Aeneid* 3), and (ii) premature termination of a newly-founded city (*Aeneid* 4). Cadmus, like Dido, makes his exit in the fourth book of an epic.[24]

Within the *Aeneid* the story of Carthage forms a counter-example to the story of Rome. The wanderings of Dido and her settlement in Africa might already be called an 'anti-*Aeneid*': her early history, flight from her home city, makes her especially

[20] *Aen.* 7.389, *Met.* 4.523. Cf. also *Met.* 4.521 *exululat* with *Aen.* 7.395 *ululatibus.*

[21] A city that has some distinctly Roman features: see W. A. Camps, *CQ* 53 (1959), 54.

[22] In her dream she suffers the fate literally undergone by Cadmus, cast back into exile, *Met.* 4.567, 'longisque erroribus actus'. The theme of exile renewed occurs in another context at *Aen.* 4.545–6 'quos Sidonia vix urbe revelli, / rursus agam pelago'.

[23] Agenor: *Aen.* 1.338 'Agenoris urbem'; *Met.* 3.51, 97 etc. Ovid does not in fact use *Tyrii* = 'Thebans' in *Met.* 3 and 4, but he alludes to the Tyrian origin at 3.35, 258, 539. With Virgil's *Sidonia Dido* cf. *Met.* 3.129 *Sidonius hospes* (Cadmus), and see also 4.543, 572; at *Met.* 14.80 Dido is *Sidonis.*

[24] The temptation to this fusion will have been increased by the fact that Virgil sandwiches his books 3 and 4 between visions of a fire-ravaged city: 3.3 'omnis humo fumat Neptunia Troia'; 5.3–4 'moenia respiciens, quae iam infelicis Elissae / conlucent flammis'. The Carthage books are also the story of *Aeneas*' attempt to help found an alternative city to Troy (cf. esp. *Aen.* 4.260) and *his* enforced return into exile, 'rursus harenosae fugiens nova moenia terrae', as Ovid puts it, *Met.* 14.82.

sympathetic to Aeneas' plight, but her eventual antipathy is the personal expression of an opposition between the two cities which will only be resolved with the total destruction of the one, and the unlimited expansion of the other. But an alternative reading of the *Aeneid* might see the story of Aeneas itself as containing its own 'anti-*Aeneid*', the text at war with itself.[25] This raises the wider question of the meaning of Ovid's Theban story: is it just the clever inversion of Virgilian themes tested on a city that is emphatically *not* Rome, or does the Ovidian Thebes hint at a darker interpretation of the *Aeneid* itself, suggesting a warning to the Roman reader? I have noted the pervasive presence of the themes of Attic tragedy in Ovid's Theban tales, and it is again to tragedy that Ovid might have looked for this admonitory use of the legendary city of Thebes. Froma Zeitlin has discussed the ways in which the Thebes that the Athenians saw represented before them on the stage of the theatre of Dionysus functioned as an 'anti-Athens', in which 'Athens acts out questions crucial to the *polis*, to the self, the family, and society, but [where] these are displaced upon a city that is imagined as the mirror opposite of Athens'. 'Events in Thebes ...[instruct] the spectators as to how their city might refrain from imitating the other's negative example.'[26] Ovid's Roman reader might observe that prominent in Cadmus' new prosperity is the fact that for parents-in-law he has Mars and Venus, parents of Harmonia – but also of the Romans themselves.[27] The serpent, beast of Mars (*Met.* 3.32), lingers in the Theban citizenry; what is the significance of the wolf on the Capitol?[28]

Aeneid 8 presents us with a number of myths of Roman origin, perhaps not finally reconcilable. The story of Cacus and the dragon-slaying Hercules reads (at least on one level) as the extirpation of bestiality by the godlike hero, and is a complement to the *laudes Italiae* in *Georgics* 2.136ff. which praise Italy as a land blessed by the absence of savage beasts, both natural and unnatural: no crops of armed men springing from dragon's teeth here (140–2). At the other end of *Aeneid* 8 we are shown another beast that dwells in a cave on the site of Rome, but this time there is no pest-control: Virgil's scenes of Roman history on the Shield of Aeneas open with Romulus and Remus and their 'mother',[29] the she-wolf, also an animal of Mars (8.630–4): what is it that they suck in with their mother's milk? This origin is not put aside with

[25] This is of course a very common reading; in formulating it in this way I think of the older fashion of seeing an 'anti-Lucrèce' in Lucretius.

[26] F. Zeitlin, 'Thebes: Theater of Self and Society in Athenian Drama', in J. P. Euben (ed.), *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory* (Berkeley, etc., 1986), pp. 101–41.

[27] *Met.* 3.132. In the *Aeneid* this joint parentage is focused in the description of the Shield of Aeneas, the gift of his mother Venus, displaying a pageant of Roman history that begins with the sons of Mars, Romulus and Remus.

[28] Augustan poets raise similar doubts about the *Italian* character: the phrase *genus acre* occurs twice in the *Georgics*, once in the *laudes Italiae* of the peoples of Italy (2.167), and once of wolves (3.264).

[29] *Aen.* 8.632 *matrem*, a striking usage. Cf. Sil. 5.143–4 'umentique sub antro, / ceu fetum, lupa permulcens puerilia membra' (the shield of Flaminius, a Roman certainly not in control). Note also Tarpeia's disparagement of Romulus at Prop. 4.4.53f. 'quem sine matris honore / nutrit inhumanae dura papilla lupae'; and Prop. 2.6.19–20 'tu criminis auctor, / nutritus duro, Romule, lacte lupae'. Nurse's milk appears in Dido's outburst against Aeneas at *Aen.* 4.367 'Hyrcanaeque admorunt ubera tigres', on which Favorinus, ap. Aul. Gell. 12.1.20, comments 'quoniam videlicet in moribus inolescendis magnam fere partem ingenium altricis et natura lactis tenet'; cf. also Ovid, *Ibis* 229–31 'gutturaque imbuerunt infantia lacte canino: / hic primus pueri venit in ore cibus. / probibit inde suae rabiem nutricis alumnus'; Bömer on Ov. *Met.* 7.32–3; Luck on Ov. *Trist.* 1.8.43f. There will be further analogies between the she-wolf and the Virgilian Cacus if it is correct that the Lupercal was an entry to the Underworld and the *lupa* an infernal animal (A. Alföldi, *Die Struktur des voretruskischen Römerstaates* [Heidelberg, 1974], p. 98).

childish things: at *Aeneid* 1.275 Romulus makes his entry into the poem in the disguise of the wolf, clad in his nurse's hide. The picture on the Shield of the lupine 'mother' is cast into greater relief by the immediately preceding scene of maternal protectiveness, where Aeneas receives his new armour from his mother, the goddess Venus (608–16). Thebes also has a dual origin, firstly in the refugees from Tyre, average specimens of humanity led by a descendant of Zeus, but secondly in the children of the serpent (*Met.* 3.538–45). The first scene on the Shield of Aeneas plays on the contrasts of war and peace;[30] recent work has brought out the wider ambivalence of the wolf as an animal living either in an image of human society or as an outcast; embodying either the unanimity of the *Männerbund* or the *pleonexia* of the tyrant; dwelling on the dangerous boundaries of war, civil war, and sacrifice. Thus the wolf problematizes the centrally epic topic of the nature and objects of *furor* or λύσσα.[31] Can the Roman military spirit be safely channelled into conflict with the outsider, and prevented from turning against itself?[32] Certainly the later inhuman crime of Romulus in killing his brother leaves a stain that is not easily washed out: Rome, like Thebes, is founded in fratricide, and to fratricide it will return in later civil wars.[33] And for Virgil the chain of family strife extends figuratively back into the past: Allecto is called on by Juno as an agent of civil war (7.335): 'tu potes unanimos armare in proelia fratres'. The formulation is in fact more apt of Eteocles and Polynices than of Romulus' unpremeditated attack on Remus or of the war between the father-in-law Latinus and his prospective son-in-law Aeneas; the peasants' war that breaks out later in *Aeneid* 7 is a ghastly prefiguration of historical wars fought on Italian soil. The metaphor at 7.526, 'horrescit strictis seges ensibus', suggests the myths of self-destructing Sown-Men, and acquires extra and tragic point if we remember *Georgics* 2.142. The following simile of the sea rising gradually before the blast of storm-winds (*Aen.* 7.528–30) was among the materials for Ovid's simile of the rising *aulaea* used to describe the Sown-Men.[34] By the time of Lucan the analogy between the fratricides and civil wars of Thebes and Rome is well established;[35] the question of how much the *Aeneid* may owe to epic and tragic versions of the Theban story is one that requires further research.[36]

[30] P. R. Hardie, *Virgil's Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 360ff.

[31] See M. Detienne and J. Svenbro, 'Les loups au festin ou la cité impossible', in M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant (edd.), *La cuisine du sacrifice en pays grec* (Paris, 1979), pp. 215–37, esp. 228ff.; A. Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 29), chs. 1 and 4; R. G. Buxton, 'Wolves and Werewolves in Greek Thought', in J. Bremmer (ed.), *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London and Sydney, 1987), pp. 60–79. On *furor* see G. Dumézil, *Horace et les Curiaces* (Paris, 1942), ch. 1. Enemies of Rome sometimes used the *lupa* as index of the city's bestial rapacity: Livy 3.66.4; Vell. 2.27.2; Justin 38.6 (Mithridates). On possible connections between 'wolf-man' Arruns in *Aeneid* 11.759ff. and the hero Aeneas see L. R. Kepple, 'Arruns and the Death of Aeneas', *AJPh* 97 (1976), 344–60. The neoclassicist painter David exploits the dark side of the *lupa* in his 'The Lictors bringing Brutus the Bodies of his Sons', discussed by N. Bryson, *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 234.

[32] The complaint of Lucan, *Bell. Civ.* 1.8ff. On warrior-classes and their dangers see Vian, op. cit. (n. 6), chs. 7, 11.

[33] Zeitlin, art. cit. (n. 26 above), p. 126, characterizes the tragic Thebes as the city 'where the past inevitably rules, continually repeating and renewing itself so that each new generation, each new episode in the story, looks back to its ruin even as it offers a new variation on the theme'.

[34] *Met.* 3.111–14 'sic ubi tolluntur festis aulaea theatris, / surgere signa solent primumque ostendere vultus, / cetera paulatim, placidoque educta tenore / tota patent imoque pedes in margine ponunt'; *Aen.* 7.528–30 'fluctus uti *primo* coepit cum albescere vento, / *paulatim* sese *tollit* mare et altius undas / erigit, inde *imo* con*surgit* ad aethera fundo.'

[35] Lucan, 1.549–52, 4.549–51. See E. Narducci, *Maia* 26 (1974), 103ff.

[36] What might Propertius' friend Ponticus have done in his *Thebaid* (Prop. 1.7.1)?

3. THE INTERVENTIONS OF JUNO

Ovid's Theban narrative is framed by the arrival and departure of Cadmus, but he is not an actor in the intervening episodes, in the way that Aeneas and his adventures are the source of narrative unity in the *Aeneid*. Unity within these intervening episodes is provided by devices of thematic and structural repetition: I have mentioned the recurrent motif of the opposition between city and wilderness, man and beast. The subunit formed by the episodes in book three constitutes a set of variations on the (appropriately tragic) themes of sight, blindness, and recognition.[37] But the recurrent narrative structure that links all the Theban stories (with the exception of the inset songs of the Minyeides) is that of the intervention of a vengeful god to punish a mortal who errs, wittingly or unwittingly;[38] the choice of this basic narrative unit provides the occasion for close and intricate imitation of the *Aeneid*. This is imitation that cleverly mimics the overall shape of the *Aeneid* by emphasizing the episodic aspect of the Virgilian structure, at the same time as it shows itself acutely aware of the way in which Virgil draws together widely separated parts of his poem by structural and thematic correspondences of one sort or another (indeed the method which Ovid himself uses *throughout* the Theban narrative). Much of the fun lies in Ovid's exploitation of the features of repetition and self-reference within the Virgilian model in order to recombine the components in new and surprising ways.[39]

The simplest structural symmetry in the *Aeneid*, that between the first and second halves of the poem, is grandly signposted by the twofold intervention of Juno seeking agents of her wrath, at 1.34ff. and 7.286ff.; the parallels between the raising of the storm through the Titanic winds of Aeolus and the infuriation of the Italians with a blast from Hell have often been analysed.[40] Supernatural, natural, and human violence are closely comparable, and intersect in the figurative elaboration of each episode.

Like the *Aeneid*, the story of the house of Cadmus contains two large-scale interventions by Juno in pursuance of her hatred and anger: at 3.256ff. against the mother of Bacchus, Semele, and at 4.420ff. against the new god's aunt and nurse, Ino. Virgil's Juno conducts a one-woman feud with Aeneas, whereas Ovid's goddess is only one of a number of vengeful gods who contribute to the undoing of Cadmus' founding activity (Diana, Nemesis, Bacchus),[41] and her interventions cannot therefore motivate the whole narrative as is the case with the *Aeneid*. Ovid nevertheless manages by a variety of means to heighten the importance of Juno in the Theban story. Firstly, she has particular grounds for hostility, both the *prior causa* (3.258–60)

[37] The coherence of book 3 as a unit is ensured by the ring formed by the allusions in the last story, the death of Pentheus, to the first in the series of Cadmus' woes, the death of Actaeon.

[38] B. Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet*[2] (Cambridge, 1970), ch. 5; ibid. pp. 131–3 on imitation of Virgil in the Ovidian interventions of Juno.

[39] This 'combinatorial imitation' of Virgil becomes part of the stock-in-trade of Latin epicists after Ovid: see my article 'Flavian Epicists on Virgil's Epic Technique', forthcoming in A. J. Boyle (ed.), *The Imperial Muse:* Ramus *Essays on Roman Literature of the Empire*, vol. ii.

[40] e.g. Heinze, *Virgils epische Technik*[3] (Leipzig and Berlin, 1915), pp. 182f.; V. Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil* (Ann Arbor, 1962), pp. 24ff.

[41] But note that Virgil also uses Dionysiac imagery in the context of the destruction or disintegration of the city: see n. 49 below. On the night of the sack of Troy Helen led a band of 'Maenads' inside the walls, *Aen.* 6.517f. 'illa chorum simulans euhantis orgia circum / ducebat Phrygias.' Furthermore Ovid's Acoetes, devotee of Bacchus, owes a little to Virgil's deceptive stranger Sinon (cf. *Met.* 3.575 with *Aen.* 2.57, *Met.* 3.586 with *Aen.* 2.87); was Euripides' insidious Dionysiac stranger already one of the models for the insinuations of Virgil's Greek?

of Europa, and the *causa recens* (3.260) of her husband's affair with Semele; this distinction between old and new causes for Juno's wrath is Virgilian (*Aen.* 1.23ff.).[42] Secondly, the two Juno-episodes mark the beginning and end of the important subplot of the birth and nursing of Bacchus. Thirdly, the Ino-episode, with its elaborate Tartarean machinery, functions as the climax to the whole sequence of divine vengeances that runs through the story of Cadmus' race. Both interventions of Juno, against Semele and against Ino, obviously rework *Aen.* 1.34ff.;[43] the second, describing Juno's enlistment of Tisiphone against Ino, takes as its primary model the second of the Virgilian passages, the evocation of Allecto, but also alludes to the first Virgilian passage, recombining in one episode the two structurally linked episodes in the *Aeneid*.

Juno's approach to Semele at *Met.* 3.273ff. is simple and direct (in both episodes she goes on her own missions rather than operating through Virgilian intermediaries): impersonation by the goddess of Semele's nurse, Beroe, and an almost too easy inveigling of the naive Semele into calling for her own destruction. Her method wittily reworks the Virgilian Juno's wish that, like Pallas, she could use the weapon of Jupiter against her mortal enemy (*Aen.* 1.39ff.). This in a sense she achieves, through the thunder and lightning of the storm (*Aeneid* 1.90); Ovid's Juno works a more satisfying revenge, by tricking Jupiter himself into using his thunderbolt on his mistress (272 'ab Iove suo'). Her disguise as an old woman reminds us of Allecto's disguise as the aged priestess Calybe at *Aeneid* 7.415–19.[44] But the name of Semele's nurse, Beroe (278), points to another Virgilian model, Iris' disguise as a Beroe at *Aen.* 5.620 when she is sent down by Juno in order to persuade the Trojan women to fire the Trojan ships. Again Ovid compresses elements in the Virgilian model: here it is Semele herself who gets too close to the fire; and it is a fire that is caused by Jupiter, whereas in *Aeneid* 5.693–9 Jupiter's thunder is heard in a storm that extinguishes the burning ships. The combination of models from *Aeneid* 1 and 5 coincides with modern perceptions of the parallelism between the storm and its sequel in book 1 and the firing of the ships and its sequel in book 5.[45]

Ovid, like Virgil, uses verbal and thematic repetition to link his two Juno episodes. In both cases it is the thought of a *paelex* (*Met.* 3.258, 4.422) that enrages Juno. The goddess will prove her power over Semele by submerging her in the waters of the Styx (3.272 *mersa*), an allusion to the Virgilian Juno's aim of sinking the Trojan ships (*Aen.* 1.40 *summergere*, 69 *submersas*), but also a foreshadowing of the end of Ino and her son, immersion in the sea.

That end is anticipated in Juno's monologue at 4.422ff., where she rehearses the *exempla* provided by her stepson Bacchus' vengeance on the Etruscan sailors, Pentheus, and the Minyeides; her success in repeating in the case of Ino and her associates Dionysiac metamorphosis, immersion (423 *immergere*), mutilation of a son, and avian transformation, coincides with the narrative tactic whereby this, the last of the woes of Cadmus, recapitulates and amplifies earlier disasters. The rehearsal of *exempla* is itself based on the example of the Virgilian Juno (*Aeneid* 1.39–45, 7.304–7).

[42] I do not know what to make of the fact that Juno's redoubled anger is paralleled by that of the serpent at *Met.* 3.72–3 'postquam solitas accessit ad iras / causa recens'.

[43] There are verbal echoes of Juno's speech at *Aen.* 1.37–49 in Juno's monologues at *Met.* 3.262–72 and 4.422–31. See Otis, pp. 131f., 137ff. Döpp, op. cit. (n. 1 above), p. 121 observes that Juno is not prominent in Ovid's version of the story of Aeneas in books 13–14, and that her Virgilian role is displaced onto the Ino episode.

[44] 275 *anum*: *Aen.* 7.419 *anus*. 276 *rugis*: *Aen.* 7.417.

[45] J. Perret, *Virgile* (Paris, 1965), pp. 113f.

Juno's attack on Ino opens with pronounced verbal echoes of Virgil (*Met.* 4.422–3):

> nec tulit et *secum* '*potuit* de paelice natus
> vertere Maeonios pelagoque im*mergere* nautas...'

From book one of the *Aeneid* Ovid repeats the elliptical *secum* that opens Juno's monologue (*Aen.* 1.37), and alludes to Juno's example of Pallas who was able to drown in the sea the returning Greeks (40 'potuit summergere ponto'). But the successful immersion of Ino comes about only as the end-result of a lengthy reworking of the intervention of Juno and Allecto in book *seven* of the *Aeneid*. Juno's onslaught against Ino comes suddenly at a point when the relationship between Thebes and the gods seems to have been settled with the acceptance city-wide of Bacchus at 4.416–18 (who had been the divine antagonist since 3.528); just as Juno's intervention at *Aeneid* 7.286ff. comes after what had seemed to be the end of Aeneas' troubles, with the establishing of peace between Italians and Trojans. In *Aeneid* 1 Juno uses the elements of the natural world against Aeneas; in book 7 she turns to an agent of domestic disruption (7.335–7). In the case of Ino *furor* is unleashed within the *domus* itself, whereas in the case of Semele the too prosperous *domus* had been destroyed from outside by the Jupiter who wields the force of the storm. Ovid varies his Virgilian model by substituting Tisiphone for her sister Allecto, but also thereby reminds us that it was Tisiphone that we had met with Aeneas during his *katabasis* in *Aeneid* 6.[46] In *Aeneid* 6, and also on the Shield of Aeneas in 8, Virgil shows us an Underworld whose rewards and punishments sanction the 'correct', Roman, order of things; book 7, sandwiched in between, demonstrates other uses to which the powers of Hell may be put. Ovid's combination of allusions to adjacent books of the *Aeneid* may suggest reflection on the juxtaposition. Later, the Statian Thebes will find that the Underworld is the source of nothing but destruction.[47]

But the manner of Juno's approach to Tisiphone owes less to the abrupt evocation of Allecto in *Aeneid* 7 and more to the Juno and Aeolus scene in *Aeneid* 1, in the detailed description of the dwelling-place of the power called upon and in the 'commands, promises and prayers' (472) with which Juno inundates the Fury. Tisiphone's response (476–8) is as compliant as Aeolus' (*Aen.* 1.76–80).[48] Tisiphone's eruption from the Underworld, taking with her some of the personifications that are stabled at the threshold of the Virgilian Underworld, reads largely as a pastiche of the effects of Allecto on Amata, but with the emphasis directed away from Virgilian psychology to the picturesque externals of a literary Fury with her witch's brew (500ff.). Juno uses the power of Bacchus against his own family (512ff.), as she had diverted against Semele the thunderbolt of her lover in her earlier intervention; Ovid thus offers a neat motivation for the combination of inFuriation and Maenadism that in Virgil seemed rather arbitrarily thrown together.[49]

[46] There are further echoes of *Aen.* 6 at 4.436 (*Aen.* 6.462), 439 (cf. 127), 446 (642), 453 (555), 484ff. (273ff.).

[47] Ovid, apparently without substantial precedent (Bömer, p. 146), elaborates a picture of the *city* of Dis, *Met.* 4.437–46; indeed it is one of the most detailed cityscapes in the poem. Is there a point about the real *urbs aeterna* in the context of a story of failed *ktisis*?

[48] *carceris* of the Underworld at 453 may echo the *carcer* of the winds at *Aen.* 1.54; cf. *Met.* 4.663. Is there point in the use of Athamas' patronymic in 'postes Aeolii' at 486f.? In Virgil the winds break out of the gates of (another) Aeolus.

[49] *Aen.* 7.385ff.; note esp. 389 'euhoe Bacche' = *Met.* 4.523. Maenad and Erinys are often virtually interchangeable in the language of Attic tragedy: J.-P. Guépin, *The Tragic Paradox* (Amsterdam, 1968), pp. 21–2; W. Whallon, 'Maenadism in the *Oresteia*', *HSCPh* 68 (1964), 321–2.

Ino's Maenadic frenzy, no more the result of actual Dionysiac possession than Amata's (*Aeneid* 7.385), drives her to fling herself and her son into the sea. At 531 there is a surprise: the episode had begun with a stepmother's hostility worked out on her stepson's aunt, and it now concludes with a grandmother's pity as Venus intercedes for her granddaughter with her uncle Neptune.[50] The words *at Venus* also introduce Venus' plea at *Aeneid* 5.779ff. to Neptune to grant her Trojans a safe voyage to Italy.[51] Neptune's reassurance there that she could trust in the briny kingdom whence she had her birth (5.800f.) is remembered by the Ovidian Venus etymologizing on her Greek name (*Met.* 4.536ff.); or perhaps Ovid hints at a Bloomian reversal of influence when in the sea-thiasos of Neptune at *Aen.* 5.823 there appears the propitious form of *Inousque Palaemon.*[52]

In *Aeneid* 5 Venus' immediate cause for complaint is Juno's attempt to bring about the firing of the ships (an episode already exploited by Ovid in Juno's attack on Semele); but that sequence of attempted destruction of ships followed by the favourable intervention of Neptune repeats, as he himself reminds Venus at 5.801f., the programmatic calming of the storm in *Aeneid* one. There Venus appears on the scene only *after* the tempest is assuaged, to complain to her father Jupiter; but in one way Ovid's Venus and Neptune scene is closer to Neptune's calming of the waves in *Aeneid* 1 than it is to the Venus and Neptune scene in *Aeneid* 5: in Ovid help is requested not prospectively for the coming journey, but immediately for a favourite already at the mercy of the waves, as Neptune in *Aeneid* 1 intervenes to save a victim of Juno *in articulo mortis.*[53] Thus Ovid's remodelling of the Juno and Allecto episode in *Aeneid* 7 is framed by allusions to the corresponding storm scene in *Aeneid* 1.

How does the score stand between the gods at the end of the Theban story? Venus is successful in her intercession on behalf of her granddaughter and great-grandson, as she had been on behalf of Aeneas in Virgil. In both cases her *protégés* are rewarded with apotheosis, of a watery kind.[54] But this is no consolation for her son-in-law Cadmus, who is ignorant that his daughter and grandson have become gods of the sea (4.563–4).[55] This ignorance, with the consequent departure of the founder from his city and his eventual bestialization, means that at the end of Ovid's 'anti-*Aeneid*' Juno has at least partly succeeded in her vendetta against a hated race, as she does not against the Trojans. In the Roman myth apotheosis of the leader is associated with the foundation or refoundation of the city (Aeneas, Romulus, Julius Caesar, Augustus); Ovid does not suggest that the new gods Leucothoe and Palaemon will have any special care for the city that they left as mortals. In the *Aeneid* Juno finally abandons her vendetta against Aeneas, her wrath converted to joy after reconciliation with Jupiter (12.841f.): 'adnuit his Iuno et mentem laetata retorsit; / interea excedit caelo nubemque relinquit.' In *Metamorphoses* 4 Juno moves in the other direction after her katabasis, to resume her place as queen of the sky (4.479f.): 'laeta redit Iuno;

[50] This version is previously unattested: see Bömer on *Met.* 4.531.

[51] 'at Venus' also occurs at line beginning at *Aen.* 1.411, 691; 8.370, 608. In each case, with the exception of 1.691, it marks a fresh intervention by the goddess on behalf of her son.

[52] Ino–Leucothoe rescues Odysseus from the storm on which the storm in *Aen.* 1 is based (*Od.* 5.333ff.); with *Od.* 5.336 ἐλέησεν cf. *Met.* 3.531 *miserata.*

[53] *iactari*, *Met.* 4.535, is almost a *vox propria* for the trials of Aeneas: *Aen.* 1.3, 29, 332, 668, 3.197, 4.14, 6.693, 10.48.

[54] With *Met.* 4.539–40 'adnuit oranti Neptunus et abstulit illis / quod mortale fuit' compare 14.603 (the apotheosis of Aeneas by Venus in the waters of the Numicus) 'quidquid in Aenea fuerat mortale repurgat'.

[55] 564 'aequoris esse deos': cf. *Aen.* 9.102 'aequoris esse deas', the ships of Aeneas saved from Turnus' attempt to fire them, indirectly another assault on the Trojans by Juno (*Aen.* 9.2–3). Unlike Cadmus, Aeneas comes to know all about these sea-deities at *Aen.* 10.215ff.

quam caelum intrare parantem / roratis lustravit aquis Thaumantias Iris.' Of Jupiter there is no trace; and yet one might expect that the god who started it all off when he led Cadmus on a merry dance round the world to end up in Boeotia would feel some responsibility for the well-being of Thebes. Powerless to reverse his wife's victimization of Semele (*Met.* 3.295ff.) and of Teiresias (3.336–7), he has no immovable Capitol in Thebes.[56]

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