

Catullus' *Coma Berenices* and Aeneas' Farewell to Dido*

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Recent studies of the *Aeneid* have focused on that poem's relation to other, prior texts via Vergil's *arte allusiva*, whether conceived under the psychological guise of a Bloomian anxiety of influence, or *aemulatio*, or under the more austere rubric of Riffaterrian intertextuality, or *imitatio*. A test case in this debate by virtue of its subtlety and complexity is the riddling line 6.460, which, in a context of great emotional pathos, quotes a lighthearted Greek poem by Callimachus as rendered into Latin by Catullus, who—a major poet in his own right—is a singularly untrustworthy translator. I suggest in the remarks that follow both that Catullus has used Callimachus' poem ironically as a cover for his underlying model, the funeral of Patroclus episode of the *Iliad*, and that the *Aeneid*, across the space of the Callimachean and Catullan texts, reappropriates that Iliadic model to itself. My remarks fall into three parts: a review of the scholarly debate so far, a reevaluation of Catullus' poem, and an assessment of the relevance of Catullus' poem as so reevaluated to *Aeneid* 6.460.

I.

Invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi (*Aen.* 6.460): the line from Aeneas' address to the ghost of Dido in the underworld recapitulates his last words to her in life, *Italiam non sponte sequor* (*Aen.* 4.361). A host of emotions converges upon this line: guilt, grief, expectation. Yet with stunning insouciance, the verse quotes almost verbatim a line from Catullus' translation of the *Coma Berenices* of Callimachus, *invita, o regina, tuo de vertice cessi* (Catull. 66.39;

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no equivalent in the surviving portion of Callim. fr. 110 Pfeiffer¹) in which a sometime lock of hair now transformed into a star addresses Berenice, on whose head it once grew. The background to this situation, as far as we can reconstruct it from Callimachus' poem, is as follows. When Ptolemy III Euergetes of Egypt left for the third Syrian war in 247-246 B.C., his wife Berenice vowed a lock of her hair to the gods in compensation for his safe return.² After a brief interval, he did return safe and victorious, and the vow was fulfilled with the dedication of the lock either in an otherwise unknown Pantheon (lines 9, 33) or in the temple of Arsinoe Aphrodite at Zephyrium (line 54). One day the lock was found missing from the temple. We are nowhere told, but might well assume, that this discovery provoked a minor scandal, not least because the lock could be used magically to work harm against the queen if it fell into malevolent hands (cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 513, Theocr. 2.53, Luc. *Dial. Mer.* 4.4, Apul. *Met.* 3.18). The court astronomer, Conon, saved the day by announcing that he had discovered a new constellation between Virgo and Leo, which he claimed to be a metamorphosis of the lock. Callimachus commemorated this event with his poem, which takes the form of a farewell addressed by the constellation to the queen.

Fletcher and Williams (ad *Aen.* 6.460) and Fordyce (ad Catull. 66.39) argue that the reminiscence by Vergil of such a "trivial," "mock-heroic" and "highly artificial poem" in a passage of intense emotional pathos is so incongruous that it must be unconscious (cf. Hudson-Williams 61 n. 1). Norden and Austin (ad *Aen.* 6.460) argue that Vergil "knew what he was about" and that the reminiscence is too close (*fast wörtlich*) not to be conscious, for the contexts of both passages refer to oathtaking (*adiuro*, Catull. 66.40, *iuro*, Verg. *Aen.* 6.458) and to the scissors or sword that made the fatal cut (*ferrum*, Catull. 66.42, Verg. *Aen.* 6.457, both in ablative). These scholars do not address the incongruity seen in the reminiscence by their predecessors.³

¹ Barber 351 reconstructs, ἄκων, ὃ βασίλεια, σέθεν κεφαλῆφιν ἀπῆλθον, fitting well with the following line, which is among the preserved fragments, viz. ἄκων,] σὴν τε κάρην ὤμοσσά σόν τε βίον = Catullus' *invita: adiuro teque tuumque caput*.

² Rouse 245 sensibly enough catalogues this vow among examples of hair "vowed in time of peril and offered in gratitude"; nevertheless, in view of the fact that Ptolemy departed on his campaign on the day after his wedding (Catull. 66.13-4: one hopes that there is some exaggeration here on Callimachus' part), the offering may also be connected with the bride's hair-offering at the temple of Aphrodite, which is attested at Troezen and elsewhere in the Greek world. See Barrett 3-6.

³ Perhaps relevant to this is the fact that Vergil had already quoted Catullus' poem (line 47) in *Ecl.* 3.16, a poem that refers to Conon (line 40); see Clausen 1994: 96.

More recent studies accept the reminiscence as intentional and try to explain its effect. Thornton argues that the "sweetness of emotional attachment" between lock and mistress fits Aeneas' feelings for Dido. Harrison (1970) argues that it is a mere display of Vergil's cleverness, indifferent to the clash of emotional registers. More convincingly, Tatum (443) follows Clausen (1970: 90-94) in pointing out that while Callimachus' poem was straightforwardly light-hearted, Catullus' translation was complicatedly and poignantly so. This reading of Catullus 66 emphasizes that it is preceded in the collection by an envoy sending the translation to orator and fellow-poet Q. Hortensius Hortalus and explaining the circumstances of its composition. Catullus had promised Hortalus an original poem and was working on it when news reached him of his brother's death at Rhoeteum (modern Baba Kale) in the Troad. His grief prevented him from composing an original work, but he could at least manage a translation to fulfill his promise.⁴ Catullus' Callimachus-translation, while remaining largely faithful to the words of the text, acquires in its new context an altered spirit:⁵ the poetic conceit of a court-poet celebrating the immortality of Berenice's lock and so of her name, when situated in the context of Catullus' life, seems to confine violent emotion within the narrow confines of Alexandrian λεπτότης: "for his brother, there is no stellification, no immortality, and for him, accordingly, no consolation."⁶

Tatum (444, cf. now Rank) was also the first interpreter to see the intertextual reference to a votive lock now that we meet Dido in the underworld (*Aen.* 6.460) as significant in light of the fact that when we last saw her, Iris

⁴ His grief later led him to sign on to the cohort of C. Memmius during his propraetorship of Bithynia in 57-56 B.C., which allowed him to visit the grave; cf. Catull. 101.

⁵ One is reminded of his nearly verbatim Sappho-translation (Catull. 51 = Sappho fr. 31 L-P, Voigt), which had acquired by virtue of its changed context a radically new meaning according to one of the many views of the two poems. This view holds that Sappho's poem is a public epithalamium praising the *Götterkraft* of the groom while Catullus' translation is, by contrast, a private "feeler" expressing under the guise of a literary exercise jealousy at the godlike good fortune of the man whose place in the company of his wife, "Lesbia," Catullus hopes to supplant. All of these points are controversial. The idea that Sappho's poem is an epithalamium was championed by Wilamowitz-Moellendorf 58 and Snell; the view has its detractors, notably Page 19-33, but it is an argument in favour of its acceptance that Catullus' translation is seen thereby to be far more creative. That Sappho's phrase ἰσος θεοῖσιν refers to divine strength, rather than divine good fortune, was first suggested by Welcker. That the *raison d'être* of Catullus' translation is to serve as a tentative erotic advance is suggested by Wilkinson 47, quoted with approval by Quinn 241. On the whole question of the relation of the Sapphic and Catullan poems, see Knox, Edwards, and Vine, who cite earlier bibliography.

⁶ Tatum 443. Lyne 192, who, unlike myself, considers Catullus' translation to partake of the "witty but trivial" (188) nature of the Callimachean original, sees its intertextual presence in *Aen.* 6.460 as working in a way comparable to a Homeric "contrast simile."

was cutting a lock of her hair to release her soul from her ravaged body (*Aen.* 4.700-5). He has been followed in this by Skulsky (451), Johnston (649), Smith, and Lyne (190). The hair-offering of Berenice, both thank-offering upon her reunion with her husband and star that will receive no offerings from adulteresses (Catull. 66.83-5), provides a bitter foil for Dido, whose own hair-offering released her from life and so reunited her with the dead husband whom she betrayed by breaking her self-imposed vow of chastity (Verg. *Aen.* 4.17, 552). The hair-cutting episode in Book 4, like the Callimachean quotation in Book 6 that these scholars have invoked it to explain, is also, as Servius (ad *Aen.* 4.703) and Macrobius (*Sat.* 5.19.2) note, an adaptation of a Greek source: at Euripides, *Alcestis* 74-6 Death releases the title-character from life by cutting a lock of her hair. This, the last of several echoes of *Alcestis* and other Greek tragedies in Book 4,⁷ is part of Vergil's project of presenting the Dido-episode as a tragedy hinging upon her *culpa* or ἀμαρτία (*Aen.* 4.19, 172), a project signalled in Book 1 by the stage-like setting (*silvis scaena coruscis*, 164) in which Venus appears in tragic buskins (337) to speak, as it were, the prologue-speech.⁸ Dido's ἀμαρτία is an intellectual error of a type common in Greek drama:⁹ she thinks she is married (*Aen.* 4.172) when her marriage is at best problematic (what would constitute a marriage between a Trojan and a Carthaginian?) and at worst, as from Aeneas' point of view (4.338-9), non-existent. As Creon confuses the prerogatives of the living with those of the dead (Soph. *Ant.* 773-80, 1068-71, 1192-1205), Deianira mistakes a poison for a philtre (Soph. *Trach.* 578) and Ajax mistakes a sheep for Agamemnon (Soph. *Aj.* 51-70), so Dido has mistaken *amicitia* for *coniugium*.

⁷ Dido vowed to be *univira* (*Aen.* 4.15-29) and Alcestis elicited an unparalleled vow of monogamy from Admetus (Eur. *Alc.* 305, 328-31). Both vows were broken (*Aen.* 4.552 = Eur. *Alc.* 1108). Aeneas broke his—very different—promise to Dido because of the public obligations of *pietas*; Admetus broke his to Alcestis because of the public obligations of ξενία (Eur. *Alc.* 551-69). Dido committed suicide (*Aen.* 4.630-71) while Alcestis sacrificed herself (Eur. *Alc.* 17-18). Both threw themselves weeping on their beds at the moment of death (*Aen.* 4.648-54 = Eur. *Alc.* 175-80). Dido, who possessed an effigy of Aeneas (*Aen.* 4.508), placed his armour on her bed (*Aen.* 4.648) while Admetus promised to place an effigy of Alcestis on his bed (Eur. *Alc.* 348-54). Dido did not speak to Aeneas in the underworld after her death (*Aen.* 6.469-71); Alcestis did not speak to Admetus after her resurrection (Eur. *Alc.* 1143-6).

⁸ On the Dido-episode as tragedy: Harrison 1972-73, Foster, Wlosok, Heurgon, Muecke, Moles, and Harrison 1989.

⁹ Aristotle's concept of ἀμαρτία (*Poet.* 1453a 8-23) is claimed to refer to intellectual error by van Braam and Bremer. Other interpretations are possible, however. The best general discussion is that of Stinton.

II.

The observations of these various scholars have gone far to improve our understanding of *Aen.* 6.460,¹⁰ but I believe that the inquiry may fruitfully be broadened by exploring one further area. Let us return for a moment to Catullus. Vergil alludes to Catullus rarely by comparison with Homer and Ennius, and a Catullan echo in Dido's story is *de facto* significant, because in the affair with Lesbia recounted in his poems Catullus applies to their liaison the moral standards that Romans traditionally applied to marriage. He prays that they may have an "eternal pledge of holy friendship" (Catull. 109.6), censors her for her incapacity for monogamy (68.135), calls her other lovers "adulterers" (11.17) and "divorces" her in Roman fashion by means of emissaries (11 *passim*). As Williams (1958: 25; cf. Mayer) says, "Catullus extended . . . marriage-concepts to his *amicitia* with Lesbia. In that lay the tragedy of their relationship." To put it another way, Catullus shares Dido's tragic flaw.

While any Catullan allusion would thus have been appropriate at this moment, why has Vergil chosen precisely this one? The answer involves, I believe, a reassessment of Catullus' poem. And here, too, we must ask essentially the same question. As the penultimate poem in Callimachus' *Aetia* (the last poem is an epilogue effecting the transition to the *Iambi*), the *Coma Berenices* was in some ways an obvious choice for Catullus to translate, because Catullus' *liber* owes much to the *Aetia* (Wiseman 183-4), but that was a work of some 7,000 lines (Trypanis 2), and we must suspect that Catullus had a further reason for choosing the *Coma* over the *Tomb of Simonides* or *Acontius and Cydippe*. What was this reason? To pose this question is not necessarily to accept as ingenuous Catullus' claim that he has been forced by grief to translate another writer's poem. Any *recusatio*, like a preterition writ large, is inherently paradoxical (Davis 28-9), and Catullus 65 in particular arouses our suspicions, because Catullus' confession that he is psychologically unable to write poetry takes such a poetically artful form (Selden 474). Nevertheless, whether Catullus has composed poem 65 as a deliberate rhetorical strategy or as transparent, artless autobiography, he has situated his Callimachus-translation

¹⁰ Another line of interpretation of the relationship between Verg. *Aen.* 6.460 and Catull. 66.39, which is of great interest, sees the reminiscence, with its implicit importation of Berenice into Vergil's poem, as part of the allegorical equation of Dido with her descendant Cleopatra that was detected in the epic by Drew 82 and Buscaroli 500. See Skulsky 452, Johnston 652, and Nadeau. This observation is irrelevant to the argument that I advance here, except in so far as Cleopatra and Patroclus can be equated through the anagrammatic interchangeability of their names.

firmly in the context of his brother's death, and we are entitled to ask the significance of this juxtaposition.

Catullus' reason for situating in the context of his brother's death precisely the *Coma Berenices* and no other poem, I suggest, is as follows. Most obviously suited to the project of responding to news of one's brother's death at Rhoeteum by translating a passage of Greek literature would be some treatment of the Ajax-legend. Ajax' tomb at Rhoeteum was a major landmark in Catullus' day, and the misfortunes of his half-brother Teucer, exiled from Salamis because he had failed to bring Ajax home, were well known from the tragedies of Sophocles (fr. 576-79 *TrGF*; see Sutton 132-39) and Pacuvius (fr. 313-46 Klotz). The latter was popular among Catullus' contemporaries (cf. *de orat.* 1.246, 2.193, *Fin.* 5.31, 63, *Div.* 1.24, 1.80, *Tusc. Disp.* 5.108, etc.), as it was known later to Vergil (Pacuvius fr. 319 Klotz = *Aen.* 1.87; cf. Serv. ad loc.), and the powerful emotional resonance of this story for a society operating under *patria potestas* may be inferred from Horace *Odes* 1.7.21-32. Ajax' tomb was surmounted by a statue, which was later taken to Egypt by Anthony and restored by Augustus (Strabo 13.1.30). Strabo's description, μνημα καὶ ἱερὸν Αἴαντος καὶ ἀνδριάς, has led some (e.g. Cook 88) to conclude that the statue depicted Ajax, but the formulation is vague and Asclepiades and Antipater of Sidon say specifically that the statue depicted Areta, the personified Virtue, whose appropriateness for representation on a sepulchral monument is proved by a surviving funerary stele from Philadelphia in Lydia (Balty 582). Areta was depicted on Ajax' tomb with her hair cut short, not so much in mourning for Ajax as in acknowledgement of her defeat in the contest over the arms of Achilles by Apata, or Guile (*Anth. Pal.* 7.145-46).

A different, but closely related, parallel to Catullus' situation, and one that likewise involves the motif of hair cut short as a gesture of recognition, is that of Ajax' cousin and fellow warrior,¹¹ Achilles, most famous of all who died at Troy before their time (cf. Catull. 65.7, 68.88-104). The shared themes of place, untimely death, loss of homecoming, and separation from brother Catullus or father Peleus make Achilles' story, no less than Ajax', a typological prefiguration of his own suffering. Although Achilles' death was excluded from the time-frame of the *Iliad* (it was narrated in the *Aethiopis*, T 3 Davies),

¹¹ While Homer associates Telamonean Ajax primarily with Ajax Oileus in the phrase Αἴαντε δῶω (*Il.* 2.406 etc.; they are also associated in the *Teucer* of Sophocles and Pacuvius, in which Telamon and Oileus consoled each other for the loss of their sons), certain later writers, notably Pindar, associate Ajax major with Achilles, calling them collectively "the Aeacids." Interestingly, Aristotle associates them with each other in his ode to Virtue, writing, σοῖς τε πόθοις Ἀχιλεὺς Αἴας τ' Αἴδαο δόμονυς ἦλθον (842.13 *PMG* = fr. 675.11 Rose).

it was symbolically recuperated into the narrative economy of that work by, among other things, having Achilles come to recognize as he cremates his companion Patroclus that he will never return home. Achilles marks the moment of this recognition by a striking gesture: his father Peleus has vowed that Achilles would dedicate his hair upon his homecoming to the Phthian river Spercheius as a thank-offering for his rearing (θρεπτήρια), just as Orestes dedicates upon his return home a lock of hair, which becomes a recognition-token in his reunion with his sister (Stesichorus 217 *PMG*, Aesch. *Cho.* 6, 166, Eur. *El.* 527-31, Ar. *Nub.* 536, Arist. *Poet.* 1455a5). At *Iliad* 23.140-51 Achilles cuts off his hair and places it instead in the hands of his dead companion, thereby acknowledging not only his great grief, but his recognition that he will never again see the river of his homeland, since he is fated to die at Troy and enter the underworld, where we meet him at *Od.* 11.466-540. This passage provides a heroic, and hence consolatory, precedent for Catullus' brother's death at Troy. There is no overt mention of Achilles' gesture in the envoy-poem 65 or elsewhere in the Catullan corpus, but indirect hints of it can be—indeed have been—found in poem 66 itself.

The most striking of these hints involves the rules for votive hair-offerings. Catullus' Berenice resembles Achilles in that she is portrayed as cutting all her hair, while the Callimachean (and presumably the historical) Berenice cut only a single lock. We may conclude this because the rules governing votive hair-offerings were as varied in antiquity as are those governing the Christian rite of tonsure:¹² one could have long hair and dedicate all of it, or only a single lock, or one could have otherwise short hair and grow a single longer votive lock, a ἱερὸς πλόκαμος (Eur. *Bacch.* 494) or *sacer crinis* (Verg. *Aen.* 7.391); Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 6-7 suggests that Orestes had two such tresses (Rouse, 241). It is not always certain from the texts which custom is being followed, not least because βόστρυχος and πλόκαμος, "lock," can both be used in the collective sense (e.g. Eur. *Hipp.* 202, Aesch. fr. 313 *TrGF*). It is clear from Callimachus' poem, however, that Berenice cut off and dedicated only a single lock of her long hair (fr. 110.8, 51, 62). Yet in the first reference to her hair in his poem (line 8), Catullus translates Callimachus' βόστρυχος (= Latin *cirrus*) by *caesaries*, which "elsewhere . . . always refers to a head of hair" (Fordyce 330). Moreover, at line 51 Catullus has translated Callimachus' unambiguous ἄρτι νεότμητόν με κόμαι ποθέεσκον ἀδε[λφεαί by *abiunctae paulo ante comae mea fata sorores! lugebant*, which is a studied ambiguity, for *abiunctae* might be understood in accordance with Callimachus'

¹² Harrison (1927: 441) writes, "[t]he tonsure may have varied with each group."

line as genitive with *mea*, or as nominative plural, and the line rendered as “my sister-tresses, recently sundered (from me or from Berenice’s head?), were bewailing my fate . . .” Again at 62, Callimachus’ straightforward καλῶς . . . πλόκαμ[ος] has become *devotae flavi verticis exuviae*, in which once more the image of a single lock is decidedly blurred. The key to this deliberate vagueness may be *caesaries* (Catull. 66.8), which in both sound and sense recalls χαίτη,¹³ the word whereby Homer describes Achilles’ hair at the moment of its shearing (*Il.* 23.141).

Now all of Achilles’ hair was long (he was still young, a warrior,¹⁴ and one of the κάρη κομῶντες Ἀχαιοί), yet, by contrast to Berenice, we may be sure that he cut all of it. The offering promised by Peleus was of a traditional type to the local river as κουροτρόφος (cf. Hes. *Theog.* 347) in which by barbering (ἀποκείρειν, cf. *Il.* 23.141) one’s hair, one passed from the stage of being a youth (κόρος, κοῦρος) like the eternally adolescent Apollo ἀερσεκόμης to the stage of adulthood. In this type of offering it is usually all the hair, and not just a single lock, that was shorn (cf. *capillus*, Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 1.378); the exception that proves this rule is Theseus, who followed Thracian custom (*Il.* 2.542, 4.533, Hipponax fr. 115.6 West) in cutting only the front of his hair (Plut. *Thes.* 5.1). Moreover, at funerals, too, all the hair was apparently cut (cf. *Il.* 23.135-6). Whatever the prevailing custom, Achilles in his grief was not one to settle for half-measures: the insomniac (*Il.* 24.4-5), fasting (19.205-14, 304-8), raw-flesh-eating (22.346, 24.207) mourner, like the histrionic heroine of Euripides’ *Helen* (1187-8), could not cut any of his hair, without cutting it all.

There are two lesser echoes of Achilles’ story in Catullus 66, in which again Catullus alters (as far as we can tell) the Callimachean portrait of Berenice to make her conform to the situation of Achilles, namely by associating her vow with blood-sacrifices, and by characterizing its fulfilment as “novel.” First, Berenice’s offering of her lock is made *non sine . . . sanguine* (Catull. 66.34; Callimachus’ original is lost), although a hair-dedication is not normally accompanied by blood-sacrifice, although it may be by libation (cf. Aesch. *Cho.* 6, Eur. *Hipp.* 1425-26, Eupolis fr. 146 *PCG*, Paus. 1.43.4). This recalls Achilles’ hair-dedication, which—coinciding as it does with the funeral of Patroclus—is accompanied by the bloodiest sacrifice in Homer, involving

¹³ The words *caesaries* and χαίτη are not likely to be etymologically related, although this possibility is mooted by Tucker (40).

¹⁴ A full head of long hair was a mark of the military among the Greeks for generations: the Spartans (Hdt. 1.82.8, 7.208.3, 209.3) and Athenian cavalrymen wore long hair (Ar. *Eq.* 580, 1121, *Nub.* 14, *Lys.* 561, *Vesp.* 466).

many sheep and cows, four horses, two dogs, and twelve Trojans. Second, Catullus describes Berenice's dedication with the words *pristina vota novo munere dissolvo* (38; Callimachus' original is lost), whose implied remoteness of time (cf. *priscus, pri[s]mus*) is hyperbolic, since, as we have just been told (35), Berenice's vow was fulfilled *haut in tempore longo*, whereas Peleus' vow was indeed "long-standing" in that between the swearing and its fulfillment there stretches the entire life-span of Achilles. If, on the other hand, we translate *pristina* as "old-fashioned" in contrast to the "modern" sacrifice that fulfills the vow (cf. Simpson, 147), the phrase is equally inappropriate to Berenice, for her vow and its fulfillment agree perfectly. By contrast, to fulfill a vow made to a river as a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood by burning one's hair on a friend's funeral-pyre is indeed a novelty.

II. 23.140-51 was therefore the most obvious literary precursor to Catullus' own situation; nevertheless he has chosen to translate a poem that has all the ingredients of this sad episode, but transposed into a major key. Commentators have noted the similarity between the Iliadic passage and Catullus 66 in a piecemeal way (Ellis 368; Quinn, 357, 360), but they have failed to realize that this similarity is the principle that governed Catullus' choice to translate this particular poem. King (384-385) has recently argued that Catullus 65 rejects Hortalus' request not just for an original poem but specifically for an epic, while at the same time offering in the appropriate elegiac metre a quasi-Callimachean $\alpha\lambda\tau\iota\omicron\nu$ for this refusal (namely grief over his brother's death). This compelling suggestion can be made more precise. Catullus is rejecting not only the epic form as a whole but a specific epic passage in particular. The poem that he substitutes is not only different from, but in fact opposite to the epic one.

On two important points the situation of Catullus when he translated the *Coma Berenices* parallels the scene in *Iliad* 23 and is opposed to that in Callimachus' poem. First, Catullus' brother is separated in death from his ancestors and from funeral rites celebrated *prisco . . . more parentum* (Catull. 101.7) as Achilles is separated from his father; Berenice is reunited with her husband, whom she calls "brother" after the formal, although in his case inaccurate, honorific fashion for the Egyptian royal couple (Catull. 66.22).¹⁵ Second, Catullus' brother, like Achilles, died in Asia far from home and perhaps after long absence; Ptolemy returned swiftly in triumph from his Asian campaign (Catull. 66.35). On a third point, both the situation of Catullus

¹⁵ This confusion of brother and husband may (like the entire poem) have had ironic overtones for Catullus, if the repeated allegations about Clodia Metelli and P. Clodius Pulcher were true (Cic. *Cael.* 32, 36, 78, *Pis.* 28, *Sest.* 16, cf. Catull. 79).

and that of Achilles are in different ways opposed to Berenice: the ashes of Catullus' brother are mute (Catull. 101.4)¹⁶ and Achilles' hair is consumed by fire; the new constellation can talk as it burns eternally in the heavens. In short, the *Coma Berenices* is the photographic negative of—as the Iliadic funeral of Patroclus is a positive paradigm for—Catullus' situation. Catullus uses it to express his grief *per contrarium*, in keeping with the commonplace that it is especially painful to recall good things in a time of adversity (Pind. *Pyth.* 4.288, Boethius, *de consolazione* 2.4.2, Dante, *Inferno* 5.121-3).

III.

It was already apparent to Servius (ad *Aen.* 6.468) that the encounter of Dido and Aeneas in the underworld (Verg. *Aen.* 6.450-76) is modelled upon Homer's scene of Ajax' shade shunning Odysseus in silence because he had been the provocation for his suicide (*Od.* 11.541-64; Knauer 108-12). This context is appropriate to the quotation from Catullus' *Coma Berenices*, since, as I have argued, that poem refers obliquely in part to Ajax. I would further suggest that Vergil saw the story of Achilles as well as that of Ajax behind the *Coma Berenices* as Catullus used it, for to however great a degree he was influenced in his shaping of the Dido-episode by Hellenistic verse or Attic and Roman tragedy, the overall generic allegiance of his poem is to epic and its primary models throughout are the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (Camps 9-10). Indeed, we may attribute to the Iliadic intertext some of the details of Dido's death, such as the role of the pyre and the fact that it is Iris rather than the Thanatos of Euripides' *Alcestis* who cuts her hair.

This form of reference, in which a model otherwise very closely adapted is interrupted in such a way as to allow reference back to the source of that model, although near the upper limit of complexity for Vergil's allusive art, is not unparalleled. Thomas (188-9) characterizes this type of allusion as a "window reference," a species of "correction," and offers as an example *Georgics* 1.373-82 in which a close adaptation from Varro of Atax (apud Serv. ad *Georg.* 1.375) is altered to invoke Varro's source, Aratus (*Phaen.* 946-7). In the present case, Vergil's correction of the Catullan line, which makes of it a window allowing for reference to Catullus' ultimate source in *Iliad* 23, consists in placing it in the epic context that Catullus in poem 65 explicitly refuses to provide. As Conte expresses it, "Virgil does nothing more than peel away the extraneous quality of the rhetoric in its Catullan context. Once the irony is

¹⁶ As Electra complains of Orestes' lock (Aesch. *Cho.* 195). Dido too will be mute in the underworld à la Ajax (Verg. *Aen.* 6.470); perhaps a further parallel to this scene.

removed, the original register is restored, and the values and functions of the stylistic signs are *reconnected* within their own literary system" (89).

Interpretative consequences for Vergil's underworld-scene follow from my suggestion that the funeral of Patroclus episode lies behind Vergil's Catullan-quotation. As well as a ἁμαρτία and a περιπέτεια, a good tragedy requires an ἀναγνώρισις. Epics, too, often turn on such scenes, as for example Odysseus' recognition by Eurycleia.¹⁷ In the most moving cases, the recognition occurs once the damage has been irrevocably done (e.g. Soph. *OT* 1182-5, Eur. *Bacch.* 1273-84). Aeneas' *cognitio* in the Dido-tragedy occurs at *Aen.* 6.450-76. It is a recognition in two senses. First, he recognizes (*agnovit* 452) obscurely, through the shades, Dido's physical form despite its dramatic transformation since their last encounter (4.387). Second, he now realizes for the first time that he was the cause of the flames of Dido's pyre in Carthage that he had seen from shipboard (5.4-5), which is to say that he was the cause of her death (6.458). The quotation from the *Coma Berenices* in line 460 has some bearing on this theme, since the Callimachean poem recounts the happy accident of Conon's recognition of the lock under the changed form of a constellation (Callim. fr. 110.7 Pfeiffer = Catull. 66.7), but by seeing a deeper reference to the *Iliad*, we catch the full tragic force of Vergil's scene. Just as Achilles marks the loss of his beloved Patroclus¹⁸ and his recognition of his own impending death by cutting his hair, so Aeneas, upon recognizing his role in the death of his lover Dido, usurps the voice of Berenice's votive lock. Here, poetic form perfectly mirrors function: Vergil's reader performs a cognitive feat similar to that of Aeneas in recognizing obscurely, through the shades of the Catullan quotation, these "hairs less in sight," in the words of Alexander Pope, this covert reference to the lock of Achilles.

¹⁷ See on epic, Murnaghan, on tragedy, Stuart, and in general, Cave.

¹⁸ Post-Homeric tradition made Achilles Patroclus' ἑραστός (Aesch. fr. 134a-136 *TrGF*, Pl. *Symp.* 180A, Xen. *Symp.* 8.31, and Aeschin. 1.142). Achilles' hair has already proved instrumental in his recognition of Athena, who pulled it to announce her epiphany (*Il.* 1.197-200); Orestes' haircut provides the token for his recognition by Electra. We also find hair-cutting and recognition together (how exactly, we cannot say) in Menander's *Perikeiromene*.

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