Dux femina facti: Women wielding power in Vergil's *Aeneid*

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Thesis accepted for the degree *Magister Artium* in Ancient Languages with Latin at the North-West University

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Graduation: July 2022

Student number: 26197669

PREFACE

And acknowledgements

I would like to begin by thanking my family for their support during all my university studies. I want to particularly thank both my parents Drs Desiree and Francois Muller and my dearest husband Adriaan de Lange for consistently being my Samwises on the days I felt like Frodo. *Volo quoque gratias maximas agere Ilsae et Andreae, qui semper mihi adsunt— per noctem per diemque. Vos estis optimi magistri etiam meliores amici.* I would also like to thank my supervisors, especially Prof Hein Viljoen, for the support and guidance that he provided during this entire process. *Deinde, Magistra Marianne Dircksen, tu semper eris magistra mea et ego semper ero Sophia tua.* Finally, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Faculty of Theology at the NWU for not only enabling me financially to write this dissertation but for all the administrative staff who have supported and encouraged me since my undergraduate studies. Among them, I would like to particularly thank me. Erika Meyer, me. Antoinett Moerdyk and me. Hester Lombard.

ABSTRACT

This study examines female agency in the *Aeneid* to determine to what extent women are characterized as strategists. Since this study discusses the political agency of women, the emphasis is on the elite, non-divine women in the *Aeneid*, who also seem to count amongst the primary plot drivers in this epic.[1] The focus will therefore be on Dido, Anna, Camilla, and Amata. The effectiveness of their strategizing is also examined, i.e., to what extent their decisions affected the course of events.

In the public sphere of patriarchal Augustan Rome, one finds that women and their political activity were largely relegated to the background. Certain aristocratic women were able to play political roles (Maclachlan, 2013:85), but political participation *per se* was an activity that was deemed to be reserved exclusively for men. Women were expected to concern themselves with domestic matters and to bear children – all to realize male success. Even the aristocratic women, who partook in high politics (Pomeroy, 1995:149), were expected to act according to the domestically orientated life that the Augustan ideology prescribed.

Yet, the *Aeneid*, Rome's national epic, puts a number of politically active women in the foreground of the narrative. Even domestic matters, such as bearing children, seem to be described in terms of assets for their own gain, not only for that of their husbands. The political activity portrayed in the *Aeneid* does not seem to portray politics in terms of activities reserved for men but in terms of activities that are equally performed by women. An extensive comparison of female political activity in the *Aeneid* and historic female political activity is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but certain historical figures and events are referred to and compared to their literary Vergilian counterparts where necessary.

The characterization of the women in the *Aeneid* includes the dialogues that take place amongst the elite non-divine female characters who are also portrayed in the epic as plot drivers in their own right. Their attributes that are revealed through indirect discourse or dialogue with other characters will also be considered. The sections in the *Aeneid* where women converse with other women reveal that the female mind is, in fact, not occupied primarily with either domestic trifles or men, but rather with their own political ambitions. This especially pertains to securing the survival of their lineage to preserve their honour and to realize their own glory.

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1 This study focuses on the elite or aristocratic women in the *Aeneid*, since it was primarily upper-class or powerful families that formed alliances through marriage with the purpose of political gain (Finley 1977: 153).

Key Words: The *Aeneid*, Vergil, female warriors, matrons, narratology, plot-drivers, Roman politics.

ABSTRAK

Hierdie studie verken vroulike agentskap in die *Aeneïs* om vas te stel in hoeverre vrouens as strateë gekarakteriseer word. Gegewe dat hierdie studie die politiese agentskap van vrouens onder die loep neem, val die klem op die elite, niegoddelike vrouens in die *Aeneïs*, synde van die karakters primêr verantwoordelik vir die voortstuwing van die plot.[2] Gevolglik word daar op Dido, Anna, Camilla en Amata toegespits. Die effektiwiteit van hul strategieë word ook nagegaan; dit wil sê, in welke mate hul besluite aan die verloop van gebeure verander.

In die openbare sfeer van patriargale Augustiese Rome is vrouens en hul politiese bedrywighede meestal tot die agtergrond verskuif. Sekere aristokratiese vrouens kon politiese rolle beklee (Maclachlan, 2013:85), maar politiese betrokkenheid *as sodanig* is beskou as iets wat vir mans voorbehou moes word. Daar is van vrouens verwag om hul by huishoudelike sake te bepaal en kinders te baar – alles ter wille van manlike sukses. Selfs van die aristokratiese vrouens wat hul met hoë politiek besig gehou het (Pomeroy, 1995:149), is verwag om op te tree volgens die huishoudelik-georiënteerde lewe wat die Augustiese ideologie voorgeskryf het.

Tog plaas die *Aeneïs*, Rome se nasionale epos, ’n aantal polities betrokke vrouens op die narratiewe voorgrond. Selfs huishoudelike kwessies soos kinders baar, word beskryf as winste tot hul eie gewin, en nie tot dié van hul mans nie. Die politiese aktiwiteit wat in die *Aeneïs* voorgestel word, blyk nie politiek voor te stel as ’n sfeer wat gereserveer is vir mans nie, maar met verwysing tot aktiwiteite wat ewenwel deur vrouens uitgevoer is. ’n Uitgebreide vergelyking van vroulike politiese aktiwiteit in die *Aeneïs* en historiese vroulike politiese betrokkenheid val buite die omvang van hierdie studie, maar daar word verwys na sekere historiese figure en gebeure en daar word waar nodig vergelyking getref met hul literêre Vergiliese eweknieë.

Die karakterisering van die vrouens in die *Aeneïs* sluit in die dialoog tussen die elite niegoddelike vroulike karakters wat in die epos uitgebeeld word as plotvoorstuwers in eie reg. Die kenmerke wat deur middel van indirekte diskoers of dialoog met ander karakters van hul na vore kom, sal ook bespreek word. Die afdelings in die *Aeneïs* waar vrouens met ander vrouens in gesprek tree, dui naamlik daarop dat die vroulike psige nie hoofsaaklik op huishoudelikhede of mans toegespits is nie, maar op hul eie politiese ambisie. Dít het veral betrekking op die versekering van die voortbestaan van hul geslagslyn om daardeur hul eer te behou en om hul roem te besorg.

[2] Hierdie studie is toegespits op die elite of aristokratiese vrouens in die *Aeneïs*, aangesien vernaamlik vooraanstaande of maghebbende families deur middel van huwelike alliansies aangegaan het met die oog op politiese invloed (Finley, 1977:153).

Sleutelwoorde: Die *Aeneïs*, Vergilius, vroulike krygers, matrone, narratologie, voortstuwing van plot, Romeinse politiek

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

This study examines female agency in the *Aeneid* to determine to what extent women are characterized as political strategists and strategists concerning matters of the heart. Since this study discusses the political agency of women, the emphasis is on the elite, non-divine women in the *Aeneid*, who also seem to be important plot drivers in this epic.[3] The focus will therefore be on Dido, Anna, Camilla, and Amata. The effectiveness of their strategizing is also examined, i.e., to what extent their decisions affected the course of events.

In the public sphere of the patriarchal Augustan Rome, one finds that women and their political activity were largely relegated to the background. Certain aristocratic women were able to play political roles (Maclachlan, 2013:85), but political participation *per se* was an activity that was deemed to be reserved exclusively for men. Women were expected to concern themselves with domestic matters and to bear children – all to realize male success. Even the aristocratic women, who partook in high politics (Pomeroy, 1995:149), were expected to act according to the domestically orientated life that the Augustan ideology prescribed.

Yet, the *Aeneid*, Rome's national epic, describes a number of women politically active in the foreground of the narrative. Even domestic matters, such as bearing children, seem to be described in terms of assets for their own gain, not that of their husbands. The *Aeneid* does not seem to portray politics in terms of activities reserved for men but in terms of activities that are equally performed by women. An extensive comparison of female political activity in the *Aeneid* and historic female political activity is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but certain historical figures and events are referred to and compared to their literary Vergilian counterparts where necessary.

The women in the *Aeneid* are characterized both directly and indirectly by the poem's primary narrator (the assumed author Vergil) and secondary narrators who are often implicitly appointed. The dialogues between women that concern both public and private issues reveal what is important to them, and therefore inform us about what is important in our understanding of them. Their attributes provided through indirect discourse or dialogue with male characters are also considered. In this dissertation, I examine sections in the *Aeneid* where women converse with their fellow characters, and I explore the possibility that they are concerned with their own political

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[3] This study focuses on the elite or aristocratic women in the *Aeneid*, since it was primarily upper-class or powerful families that formed alliances through marriage – with the purpose of political gain (Finley 1977: 153).

ambitions rather than having their thoughts demoted to a preoccupation with either domestic trifles or men. These political ambitions will be seen to pertain especially to securing the survival of their lineage and to preserve their honour and dynasties, thereby realizing their own success. The view of the women's agency and its portrayal in the *Aeneid* is, however, in opposition to much that has been written in academia about the women in this epic.

1.2 Problem statement and literature review

Our understanding of the primary roles and functions of mortal women in the *Aeneid* is inadequate. These women have been simultaneously underrepresented and often misrepresented in Vergilian scholarship. These statements are not only the result of my own review of the literary criticism concerning the *Aeneid,* Vergil's epic poem, but the recently published edition of the journal *Vergilius* (2021) also notes and addresses this issue. In the latest edition of this journal, that focuses on examining Vergil's poetry, Giusti and Rimell (2021) provide an extensive overview of scholarship and research on women in the *Aeneid*, particularly regarding the androcentric and (in reaction to this) feminist readings on the subject. Their overview confirms that there has not been a sufficient and sustained effort to supplement and develop our understanding of Vergilian women and the different roles and functions that they serve. The solutions that they discuss highlight the need to re-evaluate what we view as seminal works in the field of Vergilian studies and to re-examine how women are portrayed in Vergil's works. The reasons why there is a need to re-evaluate our position and re-examine the role these women play, will be explained in the course of my primary discussion and this literature review will only serve as an introduction to the issue, since the body of secondary scholarship on the *Aeneid* is too vast to cover comprehensively in a study such as this one.

One of the factors that indicate that these women are consistently underrepresented, is that they are wholly omitted from or only briefly featured in recent scholarly work. An example of this is Weeda (2015) who, in his book focused on the political commentary in Vergil's works (including the *Aeneid*), fails to discuss Dido's sister Anna as a figure in her own right. This underrepresentation disregards the extent of the women's political agency as well as their contributions to the plot development of the epic. Pomeroy (1991:263) notes that much of the 20th century scholarship concerning women in antiquity has presented readers with generalisations about the roles of these women. Despite the lack of a sustained and systematic re-evaluation, such misrepresentations and subjective generalizations concerning Vergilian women are being addressed by certain 21st century scholars, as has been mentioned. This dissertation aims to contribute to the ongoing effort to correct this underrepresentation and aims to present a nuanced understanding of women and their roles in the *Aeneid.*

1.2.1 The perception of male activity and female passivity

In Vergilian scholarship, critics have dedicated a substantial amount of work to studying the roles of the *Aeneid*'s male characters (and their roles as actors) and the functions that their female counterparts serve in relation to them. In short, the questions that are explored by scholars tend to focus on what the women say about the men, not on what the men say about the women, or on what the women say about each other. One of the issues that arise from primarily focusing on the women's actions and roles only in relation to the men (such as the primary subject Aeneas), and not in relation to each other, is that our understanding of their agency and ability to affect the plot by causing certain events is limited. It is because of this shortfall that certain scholars have begun to contribute to a better understanding of how women in the *Aeneid* affect matters and how these women express their agency.

Notable scholars such as Keith (2006:7) have argued that women in the *Aeneid* use their female networks to realize their political strategies and ideals for the future. Keith undertakes the task of evaluating the actions of women in the *Aeneid* in the context of Rome during both the triumvirate as well as the time of the Principate. Keith (2006:2) points out that previous research regarding the *Aeneid* generally limits the epic's context, by only regarding its themes and characters in the light of the Greek and Roman literary tradition to which Vergil ascribed. This dissertation aims to not only consider the *Aeneid's* relevant socio-historic context as well as its Greek and Roman literary foundation, but furthermore aims to evaluate the actions and decisions of its characters in the context of the poem's story world. Keith has significantly broadened our understanding of the way that most Vergilian women utilize their networks. Due to the nature of her investigation (focusing on historic sources), her research does not address all the *Aeneid*'s significant female characters, such as the Volscian warrior Camilla.

1.2.2 Motherhood and the (mis-)interpretation of the women's wishes to secure specific heirs

McAuley (2016:60), in her book which discusses the concept of motherhood in the works of authors like Vergil, suggests that Dido's desire for a child from Aeneas (*A*. 4.327-30) is not only emotionally but also politically motivated. Even though decades of research have been dedicated to describing the function of certain characters such as Dido, there is still an evident need for a better understanding of the portrayal of female characters as strategists in epic literature, especially regarding less renowned characters such as Anna, Amata, and Camilla. There is also a need to further investigate the function and character of Dido, not as a scorned lover but as a scorned ruler. It is also necessary to question whether we would have regarded certain elements in Dido's story as relevant issues if she was treated purely as a monarch and not as a woman.

An example of this is the matter of Dido requesting a child from Aeneas treated by Gutting (2006:265-269), Hughes (2002:348) and Oliensis (1997:305). The latter also illustrates the common intertextual comparison of Dido to Phaedra in Euripides' play *Hippolytus*, whose suicide was motivated by her passion for her son-in-law.

In contrast to previous studies that have focused on the epic's erotic elements, I evaluate the role and actions of Dido (and other women such as Amata) in the light of their maternal desire as well as their political ambition. I will argue that the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive and I will question whether scholars of Vergil would have been equally perplexed by their motivations if they were not women (queens) but men (kings) asking for an heir. In a chapter about the *Aeneid* Williams (1982:355) describes how Dido's relationship with Aeneas and her alleged preoccupation with him led her to a suicide in which she "rejected all her obligations to her people and destroyed herself for reasons entirely personal to her" in book four. This critical stance, which demotes Dido from strategic ruler to abandoned lover, is important in describing the tradition of literary criticism that has been established surrounding Dido's portrayal and the motivations for her suicide. As Gransden (1990) notes, this work by Williams is one of the most influential studies of the *Aeneid*.

Another queen in the *Aeneid* who commits suicide is the Latin queen Amata. Amata's character has traditionally been compared to female characters in Greek tragedy, specifically Queen Jocasta from Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*. This comparison is based on trends in scholarship that focus on Amata's relationship with the Rutulian prince Turnus, whom Amata wants her daughter to marry. My aim is to shift the focus from exploring the possible sexual aspects of their relationship to rather examining the relationship between Amata and Turnus in order to identify its possible political import. Amata has been treated by select scholars, such as Burke (1976:25-28), as an incestuous maternal figure, whom they accuse of completely neglecting her duties as a mother to Lavinia and a wife to Latinus.

I will therefore re-examine the extent to which Amata is focused on her role as a mother, wife, and ruler by comparing her to another parental ruler guilty of misinterpreting a prophecy surrounding Aeneas' fate: Anchises, Aeneas' father. While scholarship traditionally refrains from describing Anchises in antagonistic terms and villainizing the delays that he caused to Aeneas' mission by misinterpreting a prophecy (which also bore fatal consequences), Amata is credited with exemplifying the impiety of the war between the Trojans and Latins and it has been suggested that her suicide is in keeping with her unalloyed evil (Burke, 1976:27-28). Her role in the plot and *fabula* will therefore be re-examined by comparing her to other actors within the *Aeneid*'s narrative that resemble her status and her actions. The purpose of the re-evaluation is to obtain a more nuanced understanding of her functions and motivations.

1.2.3 Female warriors as the foreign Other

> "The crucial role female characters play in the constitution and negotiation of the heroism on display in epic has received scant attention in the critical literature" (Keith, 2004:i).

In this remark, Keith deplores the scant attention paid to the role played by women in the constitution of heroism in epic. This study aims to contribute to redressing this issue, by studying the strategic and heroic acts of women in the *Aeneid* by determining how these acts are employed in the epic to not only question the nature of heroism but also to serve as examples of heroic and political success. The roles of hero and politician are not always conflated in the *Aeneid*, but certain characters, such as the warrior queen Camilla, has the potential to embody both.

Sharrock (2015) also emphasizes that fierce women who pursue careers and activities, which were (according to patriarchal ideologies) deemed to be masculine pursuits, are often marginalized and relegated to the role of the unnatural and dangerous "Other", not only by poets before and after Vergil but by scholars of Roman epic as well.

1.2.4 Literature review conclusion

The paper concerning the women in the *Aeneid* that has arguably had the greatest impact amongst the scholars of Vergil is Sarah Nugent's "The Women of the *Aeneid*: Vanishing Bodies, Lingering Voices" in Perkell's *An Interpretive Guide to the Aeneid* (1999). With this title Nugent indeed sums up the fate and effect of these female characters. The matter is, however, not as simple as that. Nugent (1999:263) suggests that the women challenge the poem's "dominant voice", but that their efforts to subvert Aeneas' mission and the patriarchal Augustan ideologies that are prevalent in the poem fail. She also proposes that the function of their deaths be considered in the light of the psycho-analytical concept of being "under erasure" which involves their removal from the rest of the story, signifying the condemnation of their actions (Nugent, 1999:263).

In this dissertation, I will question whether the primary purpose of each female character's death is truly to signify how unsuccessful these alternative modes are. I do not propose that we completely disregard the theory of being "under erasure". I will, however, argue that there are other interpretations available to the reader. If the examination of the circumstances surrounding the women characters' deaths indicates that they are indeed "under erasure" in order to indicate the futility of resistance, the objective will be to determine whether they are removed from the story because they are women who challenge future Roman gender norms, or whether they are removed because they represent political opposition that challenges Aeneas' mission and thereby the Roman Empire. Nugent (1999:269) concludes the following:

> In various ways, at a number of significant points, women present an oppositional point of view – through their choices, their words, and their acts they question what has been called the dominant voice of the epic, they resist. The evaluation of that resistance is not clear. Although women raise opposition, the alternative views they present seem largely discredited by their own failure. They are shown to be lacking in authority, their counterclaims are repudiated, their personal passions are discredited, and they die ingloriously.

This dissertation aims to re-examine whether the opposition that these women offer against the "dominant voice of the epic" truly is a theme marked by failure or whether they succeed to a certain extent in the strategies that are explicitly revealed to the audience. This will be done by examining their decisions and the strategies they use and then evaluating the outcomes to see whether they have any real agency or success. Nugent also makes a truly significant contribution to our understanding of these women by underscoring their paradoxical nature. Nugent (1999:252) upholds that: "this presentational strategy, which casts the woman both as what must be rejected, even destroyed, and as what remains most indelibly present, is not unique to Dido, but characterizes Vergil's representation of the other women in the *Aeneid* as well."

The portrayal and characterization of these women will be examined and discussed – not necessarily to resolve the paradoxes that are presented, but to discover how the different aspects of their character contribute to their portrayal as strategists and politicians.

1.3 Research problem

The primary research problem that this study addresses is: Do the elite mortal women in the *Aeneid* have significant socio-political agency?

This study will therefore focus on describing the primary functions and roles of the elite mortal women in Vergil's *Aeneid*. The research problem is separated into the following key questions. This study will strive to provide solutions to these questions.

a) To what extent are women in the *Aeneid*, especially Dido, Anna, Amata, and Camilla, concerned with politics?

b) In what way do women such as Dido, Anna, Amata, and Camilla catalyze events?

c) How effective are these women's political strategizing and to what extent do they achieve their political aims?

1.4 Aim and objectives

The primary aim of this study is to understand the roles and functions of the elite mortal women in the *Aeneid*. A better understanding of the roles and functions of these four mortal women in the

Aeneid will enrich our understanding of the characterization in the epic and of the gender dynamics in the poem. The objectives of this study are to indicate to what extent women in the *Aeneid* concern themselves with politics and to determine whether they influence the plot of the poem. These objectives will be pursued across chapters 3 to 5 in which the potential agency of Dido and Anna (Chapter 3); Amata (Chapter 4) and Camilla (Chapter 5) are examined.

1.5 Central theoretical argument

The central argument of this dissertation is that the elite mortal women (such as Dido, Anna, Amata, and Camilla) in Vergil's *Aeneid* are characterized as politically active figures and plot drivers in their own right; that their strategizing takes place in the foreground of the poem, and to a significant extent for their own sake.

In the *Aeneid*, women strategize in both public and private spaces, and their strategies concern both public and private matters. This overt political activity is evident despite the norms presented in the ideologies of Augustan Rome and Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, in which women were dissuaded from speaking publicly or to concern themselves with public issues. Women were expected to concern themselves with domestic matters and to bear children, all to realize male success.

This chapter has provided a brief overview of some of the issues concerning the literature that has helped to shape our understanding of women in the *Aeneid.* The scholarly and literary tradition surrounding these Vergilian characters will be discussed in greater detail in the rest of this dissertation where relevant. I have constructed my literature review in this way because I believe it is more sensible to inform the reader of the scholarship and literary criticism surrounding certain matters when it can be accompanied by the relevant extracts from the *Aeneid* in combination with my own interpretations and arguments regarding those passages. The next chapter (Chapter 2) will explain the different approaches that I employ in my examination of a selection of the *Aeneid*'s elite mortal women.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Narratology and Classics

This dissertation's research questions will be addressed by employing a combination of narrative analysis methods, such as close-readings and narratological methods. Bal (2017:3) describes narratology as a field of research that integrates a variety of narrative theories, texts, images and even events to study and evaluate narratives. The field of narratology received its name in 1969 when it was labelled by the structuralist literary critic Tzvetan Todorov. Some of its foundational concepts can, however, be traced back to antiquity when philosophers such as Plato began to distinguish between different levels of text (*diegesis* as narrator-text and *mimesis* as character-text) (de Jong, 2014:3).

In Segal's diagnosis (1968) of the state of Classical studies at the time (cited in de Jong, 2014:7) he writes that by the 1960s it was becoming increasingly apparent that classicists were no longer focusing on the development of different methods of literary analysis that could contribute to the understanding of ancient literature, and that they were therefore progressing much slower in this regard than scholars in other literary fields.[4] According to de Jong (2014:7), "the tradition of close-reading prevented classical scholars from coming up with large, sweeping literary theories". Classical studies may with reason be wary of "sweeping literary theories" that could lead to erroneous generalizations, but the fear of innovation can potentially lead to the reality of stagnation. As highlighted by Scholes and Kellogg (1966), the incorporation of narratology into the study of ancient literature will not only contribute to our understanding of those narrative texts, but the field of narratology will be enriched by understanding literary archetypical models that laid the foundation for most of the later literary forms (cited in de Jong, 2014:11).

I do not intend to make "sweeping literary theories" based on conjecture, but to introduce readings on a selection of women in the *Aeneid* using in-depth analyses that employ the contemporary literary approach of narratology. Narratology is by no means contemporary in its origins, but it is a field that is adapted and developed continuously – even more so in the 21st century.

Relevant sections of Vergil's epic poem, the *Aeneid,* will still be analysed through a close reading, which involves a critical examination of the text and all its relevant elements to determine which interpretations are available to the reader. A full narratological analysis of the *Aeneid* is not possible within the limitations of this study, but the textual analytical tools of narratology will be incorporated as a vital part of the close reading process. This dissertation will offer a more

[4] It is important to note that when I refer to the "Classics" I am referring to the field of "Ancient studies" and the study of ancient literature.

nuanced reading of the mortal women in the *Aeneid* than heretofore by exploring the different roles that they play as actors in the plot. Such a nuanced reading would also allow for the notion that these women are not restricted to being characterized as women whose actions are exclusively informed either by personal desires or by political ambitions, but that they are motivated by both.

2.2 Development of postclassical narratology

Narratology is one of the most insightful approaches that has emerged in the ever-developing field of literary analysis, specifically concerning narrative analysis. Harrison (cited by de Jong, 2014:8) remarks that “classical scholarship and modern theoretical ideas need to work together in the common task of the interpretation of texts”. This study aims to achieve such a synthesis by using certain principles of postclassical narratology and close reading techniques to study the characterization of women in the *Aeneid*. Narratology is a formal approach that can increase our understanding and highlight the intricacies of any era of narrative and will hopefully prove to be particularly insightful regarding the study of an ancient text such as the *Aeneid*.

> Postclassical narratology (which should not be conflated with poststructuralist theories of narrative) contains classical narratology as one of its “moments” but is marked by a profusion of new methodologies and research hypotheses: the result is a host of new perspectives on the forms and functions of narrative itself. Further, in its postclassical phase, research on narrative does not just expose the limits but also exploits the possibilities of the older, structuralist models (Herman, 1999:2-3).

Initially, one could simply view postclassical narratology as a reaction to the restrictive nature of classical narratology inasmuch as it challenges the limitations of the classical model by permitting one to discern which external methodologies, themes, and historical contexts impact a narrative and to determine the extent of its influence on that narrative (Alber & Fludernik, 2010:2).

Alber and Fludernik suggest four categories that summarize the primary movements in postclassical narratology (2010:3). The first such category of movement is constituted by the researchers who focus on further expanding the realm of narratology on an interdisciplinary level, by attempting to reveal areas of theory that can be improved or elements that the classical model failed to address (Alber & Fludernik, 2010:3). Second, the “methodological extension” aims to discover and include innovations regarding theory and methodology, such as “narratological speech act theory (Pratt 1977), psychoanalytic approaches to narrative (Brooks 1984, Chambers, 1984, 1991)” (*ibid.*). Third, the thematic focus includes “variable emphases into the classical model, whose core had consisted of invariable, i.e., universal, categories.” Examples provided are “feminist, queer, ethnic or

minority-related, and postcolonial approaches to narrative" (*ibid.*). The fourth category of postclassical narratology focuses on context and "extends the narratological analysis to literature outside the novel" (Alber & Fludernik, 2010:3).

The third and fourth categories of postclassical narratology that focus on a narrative's themes and context will be the most relevant to this study, in the sense that this dissertation aims to better understand the *Aeneid*'s female characters and the gender norms that are presented in the narrative, and how these women serve as a reaction that either echoes or challenges their preceding literary models (if they have any discernible literary models at all). The primary focus will not be on the historical context of Vergil's contemporary audience or even the historical context of the literary critics (both from antiquity and the contemporary age) that inform the reader on how the *Aeneid* should be understood. These historic backgrounds nevertheless remain relevant, as the cultural and political contexts of various audiences that have read and received the *Aeneid* informed our readings and analyses of this text and have therefore inevitably influenced our understanding of the actants and characters.

Certain difficulties arise when one tries to limit the political or ideological context of the *Aeneid* to one society or era. As Conte (1999:277) notes, even the Roman audience found themselves in a foreign world, but the ideologies of the Homeric, Hellenistic and Augustan Roman worlds will have certainly informed the orientation of the epic (Conte, 1999:277). It is, however, clear that the predominant patriarchal ideology of Western society, particularly concerning gender norms, has strongly influenced our perceptions concerning the women in the *Aeneid*. It is not surprising, however, that our ideologies shaped our understanding of the *Aeneid,* as Vergil composed the poem in a way that allowed an increase in subjectivity and provided greater initiative to the reader (Conte, 1999:283). As Lovatt (2019:389) notes in her chapter entitled *Character in Virgil*:

> I believe that what matters is not just the intention of the poet writing the text or the response of the immediate contemporary audience; different readers in different periods will bring their own psychological and social models to their readings of the text. We need to take account of all these things. A mixture of biological and cultural factors determines the representation and reception of personality, emotion and behavior.

One of the key issues that need to be considered, is whether certain assumptions have been made regarding the character and nature of the women in the *Aeneid* without proper textual support, because of its reception by individuals who ascribed to certain ideologies that limit the role and function of women to private and domestic matters. These assumptions arise due to inferences that are based on unsound reasoning. An example of this is how Dido's actions are evaluated and dealt with by Williams (1982:253). He presumes that when Aeneas first observes Dido (4.86-89) she is initially characterized by Vergil as a successful and capable ruler.

Williams claims, however, that as the epic progressed Dido stripped herself of these qualities and her responsibilities towards her queendom by allowing herself to yield to her passion for Aeneas. Williams goes on to assert the following:

> "The first half of the fourth book depicts how she yields completely to a love which she must have known was impossible; she allows it to annihilate all her other qualities and Carthage comes to a halt (4.86-9)." (Williams, 1982:253)

By essentially claiming that she should have known better, Williams implies that Dido was aware of Fate and wilfully rebelled against the will of the gods and pursued Aeneas because she was infatuated with him. First, it is not reasonable to assume that a character can be all-knowing when they are never directly or indirectly characterized as such; and second, it is inaccurate to attribute the full scale of Dido's infatuation with Aeneas to her judgement and own agency, thus completely disregarding Venus' explicit influence and manipulation of Dido. By implying that Dido's success in a sexual relationship eclipses her success as a ruler, Williams places these two facets of Dido's life in opposition to each other and provides an unnuanced and arguably inaccurate interpretation of Dido's political activities.[5] This passage will be examined in this dissertation by employing a narratological approach that will allow us to evaluate her motivations and determine the extent to which she was informed of Aeneas' destiny. I will also establish whether her agency extends to the point that she had the power to abandon her nature as a strategist and subvert her capabilities as a ruler.

Therefore, I would argue that there is a need to reassess the prevalent ideas of how these women are presented in this narrative (which is political in its nature and purpose), to determine whether they are portrayed as characters who actively participate in matters of state, strategize, and affect the plot, or whether they function as relatively passive obstacles in the path of the male politicians in the poem. The roles and functions of the female characters as they are presented in the epic must be re-examined and re-evaluated. This could be achieved by reconsidering which conclusions concerning these women have been made because of their narrative presentation and which are presuppositions that have resulted from prevailing restrictive ideologies. It will unfortunately not always be possible to differentiate between the two.

Among the research methodologies that have emerged under the movement of postclassical narratology since the 1980s, is feminist narratology. Herman and Vervaeck (2019:220) deem feminist narratology to be the "most famous ideology-related development of contemporary narrative theory". It would not be unreasonable to suggest that this branch of narrative theory

[5] This issue will be discussed again in Chapter 3, where it is also noted that her construction of the city was only temporarily halted while she initiated a relationship with Aeneas. After Aeneas became her Dido's consort, building resumed.

owes its popularity to the need to better understand sex, sexuality, and gender in literature (and other narrative modes).

2.3 Feminist narratology

This dissertation does not intend to incorporate all the evaluative aspects that feminist narratology offers but will provide a feminist reading of select female characters in the *Aeneid*, by utilizing the analytical tools provided by narratology. A feminist perspective is important, as the narrative of the *Aeneid* treats themes (which were then seen as gender-specific) such as motherhood and the responsibilities that are associated with womanhood. However, the light in which these themes are treated seems to differ from the standard patriarchal treatment (Cohen, 1995:25). The portrayal of the women in the *Aeneid* will be approached using narratological analysis but will include a feminist focus that entails focusing on the women in the poem and evaluating their actions based on their success and in light of their roles in both the plot and *fabula; a* post-feminist narratological perspective, if you will.

Feminist narratology differs from classical narratology, in the sense that it upholds that gender and sexuality are important elements in the construction and interpretation of the narrative text (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019:221).[6] By evaluating the influence of the writer's gender, sex, and sexuality on the composition and reading of the narrative one seeks to answer *why* the women are portrayed as they are. Yet, this dissertation simply aims to answer *how* and in what manner they are portrayed.[7]

One of the principles of feminist narratology that will be expanded on later in this dissertation is a greater focus on the ideological contexts of gender roles that are at play in the narrative, which reveal the significance of the power relations between the characters.[8] This study, therefore, employs postclassical narratology (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019:112) to bring about a more nuanced reading of the text of the *Aeneid* and in particular of the women in the narrative.

The construction of the women in Vergil's *Aeneid* was inevitably influenced by the gender ideologies that were prevalent in Augustan Rome (Clark, 1993:62). Although this dissertation does not claim that gender shapes the narrative, it does concur with Warhol (cited in Herman &

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[6] Herman & Vervaeck (2019) use "sex" as referring to the biological distinction between men and women, and "gender" as referring to the social construct of the sexes.

[7] "By asking this question, Lanser proposes a connection, perhaps an implicit affiliation, between an author's sexuality and narrative form, following a kind of inductive method through which queerness is uncovered in texts rather than discovered deductively through a universal systemic framework" (Young, 2018:916).

[8] "By paying attention to the more general and ideological context, feminist narratology is part of the expansion that is typical of nearly all postclassical forms of narratology" (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019:222).

Vervaeck, 2019:222) who proposes that "the narrative text shapes gender". This is understood in the sense that the narrative text will either set or challenge the activities that certain genders may partake in and the qualities and traits associated with that gender in the specific narrative text. This, of course, relates to the perception of gender norms and how these norms are constructed in the narrative. The narrative often questions or alters the gender norms dictated by ideology outside the text. Literature is simultaneously a product of certain ideologies while constructing and deconstructing and challenging those very ideologies at the same time.

This dissertation will look anew at the function and roles of the women in the *Aeneid* in the light of the power dynamics that are at play in the poem, much like the views of scholars who contributed to the writing of the book *The Distaff Side*, edited by Cohen (1995). They investigated the representation and significance of the women in Homer's epic the *Odyssey*. This dissertation will evaluate the actions of the women in their own right, and not evaluate their actions based on how far they stray from the patriarchal ideal of what their actions were supposed to be.

> "It would be simplistic to adopt the standard, patriarchal reading of Penelope and the roles of women and other females in the *Odyssey* generally without recognizing how the poem partly undoes the reading" (Cohen, 1995:25).

This dissertation is in accord with Schein's (Cohen, 1995) remark concerning the existing patriarchal readings of the *Odyssey*. This dissertation aims to question the standard patriarchal readings of the *Aeneid* and to look anew at the roles of women in the *Aeneid* in order to allow for a more nuanced reading and understanding of the roles and purposes of select female characters within this poem. The "standard patriarchal reading" to which Schein refers concerns the conclusion that Penelope and other strong women and wives in the *Odyssey* make their decisions according to the will of their husbands; that they make decisions that will preserve the *oikos* for the sake of their husbands, and not for their own sake and their ambitions.

It is important to note that this dissertation's primary intention is not to evaluate the validity or ethical merit (from a Roman and Hellenic cultural ideological perspective) of these women's political activity but to determine the extent and effect of such activity in the *Aeneid*. The socio-political situations that influenced the poem will not constitute a large part of the focus of this discussion of the epic, but certain conventions and ideologies are indeed relevant to this discussion. To understand the significance of Vergil's female characters actively and openly participating in matters that affect the state or the community better, it is important to iterate that overt political activity by women was generally suppressed and discouraged by the ideologies of the Augustan Romans (Beard, 2017:13). Hellenic women being discouraged from expressing their opinion in public spheres is also something that is presented in Homeric literature (Beard, 2017:3).

2.4 Parameters for text analysis and relevant narrative theory

The sections of the *Aeneid* to be studied in this dissertation are taken from book(s) one, two, four, seven, and eleven to twelve. What follows is a summary and explication of the narrative theory and narratological terms that will be used in this dissertation.

2.4.1 Public and private spheres

The ‘public versus private sphere’ distinction that has been made and used for a very long time can perhaps be improved on, by using more nuanced terms that better address the issue at hand. One might, for example, address public matters within a private sphere. A sharp distinction between public and private spheres when determining the nature of an action or discussion becomes problematic when examining select scenes that occur in the *Aeneid.*

An instance of this occurs in the fourth book (4.1-55), where a discussion takes place between Dido and her sister Anna. Like the characters themselves, the nature of the discussion is complex, as it takes place both in a type of public sphere (a monarch talking to her advisor about something that could have a severe impact on her country) and a type of private sphere (a sister seeking advice concerning a potential lover that will have a profound impact on her personal life).

Cooper (2007:25) suggests a model that better delineates the nature of certain scenes. She suggests that we instead evaluate the actions and discussions in terms of spheres that are either of public or private *interest* rather than in terms of them occurring in public or private *spaces*. Cooper's entire model is much more intricate and her criteria more extensive, but her model will not be used in its entirety for this dissertation.

2.4.2 Narrator

In the *Aeneid*, the implied author (Vergil) acts as the primary narrator. The narrator conveys information to the audience and can either narrate and focalize the events from ‘within’ or ‘without’: the former implying that he can see within the mind of the actor and perceive their internal thoughts and emotions; the latter suggesting that he can only convey that which has been made manifest in their actions.[9] The primary narrator sometimes hands over the narration (either implicitly or explicitly) to secondary narrators, in this case to mortals, such as Aeneas who narrates the fall of Troy (books one to three), as well as goddesses, such as Venus in book one and Diana in book eleven.

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[9] See Rimmon-Kenan (2002:78).

2.4.3 Characters and characterization

This study limits its analysis to select elite mortal women in the *Aeneid.* This includes Queen Dido, Anna, Queen Amata, and Queen Camilla. The focus will be on mortal women, but references will also be made to select immortal women (such as Juno, Venus, Diana, and Allecto) where relevant to the characterization of the mortal women. Mention will also be made of the corresponding women (both divine and mortal) in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (such as the Amazon queen Penthesilea, the princess Nausicaa, and the goddess Artemis).[10] Characterisation can be defined as:

> ... the process of ascribing properties to names which results in agents having these properties in the storyworld, a process known as characterization. Characterization may be direct, as when a trait is ascribed explicitly to a character, or indirect, when it is the result of inferences drawn from the text based partly on world knowledge and especially the different forms of character knowledge mentioned above. (Jannidis, 2013:§2–3).

According to Lovatt (2019:389), virtually all aspects of Vergil's poetry can contribute to creating a character. These aspects include but are not limited to, the stress of the meter, wording, discourses, focalization, and imagery. Laird (1997:283) notes that Vergil primarily characterizes figures in the *Aeneid* through a combination of the character's words and thoughts indicated in direct or indirect discourse, along with the poet's description of their attributes. Characterization through embedded narratives that are narrated by secondary narrators will also contribute to a deeper understanding of how these women are characterized. The examples of these that will be studied in this dissertation include Venus' characterization of Dido in book one (1.338-368) and Diana's characterization of Camilla in book eleven (11.532-598). Considering the aspects mentioned above by Lovatt and by Laird, characterization using the choice of words (by both the narrating agent and characters), speech (by the character and other characters), actions of the character, along with focalization will be the most important for this dissertation.[11] De Jong (2014:122) also notes that, in the *Aeneid,* the interpretation and impressions drawn by the narratees are chiefly determined by the primary narrator (the implied author Vergil). How the characters resemble or contrast with one another will also form part of the analysis.

The instances where the characters speak, whether to other characters or in a monologue, are often where their inner workings are revealed.[12] A character's speech can reveal their traits both

[10] Penthesilea is not explicitly mentioned in the Homeric epics, but her arrival is anticipated and implied in the *Iliad* (3.185 ff).

[11] See Lovatt (2019:389).

[12] Highet (1972:26) has drawn attention to the length, measured by the number of lines, of the speeches by characters in the *Aeneid* and points out that after Aeneas, the three characters whose speeches primarily dominate the poem are Anchises (with 235 lines), Turnus (233 lines), and Queen Dido (231

through the form and the contents of the speech (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002:65). According to Lovatt (2013:§2), ancient writers primarily depicted women's speech as essentially being about intimacy, personal relationships, and domestic matters. Yet, in the *Aeneid,* women's speech is concerned with intimacy, personal connections as well as public matters. Even domestic matters are intrinsically connected to matters of state. Women's speech in the *Aeneid* may pertain to domestic matters, but their speech and actions are often motivated by both personal and political matters.

Rimmon-Kenan (2002:61) states that a character is a "construct within the abstracted story" that can be described as composed of a "network of character traits". These character traits can also be described in terms of certain properties that are overall ascribed to an actor for characterization (Jannidis, 2013). This dissertation intends to unlock the network of character traits and character indicators of the women in the *Aeneid*, as they appear in the text to obtain a more vivid understanding of these female characters.

Jannidis (2013) notes that the nature of a character can seemingly be altered from the character's original conception, through the attribution of properties to that character which differ from the character's initial representation. One of the instances where this will be examined, is in the apparent inversion of Dido's nature as a leader. Williams (1982:353) suggests that Dido regressed from being an "admirable queen" in book one of the *Aeneid*, who led her people to a new home, to a ruler that simply "rejected all her obligations to her people and destroyed herself for reasons entirely personal to her" in book four (Williams, 1982:355). Is the inversion of Dido's character as strong as Williams suggests? This will be clarified by re-evaluating her motivations for suicide, by looking within the narrative text of the *Aeneid* not only at her speculated motives, but at the motives that are provided in the narrative. These motives are postulated by the queen herself and other characters surrounding her during monologues and dialogues (specifically private conversations) between the queen and her only advisor. As will be seen in chapters 3 and 5, both queens Dido and Camilla have advisors (Anna and Acca) who are described as the only sharers of their hearts (minds). This description is significant as it suggests that the information provided by the queens in this context will reveal an unpretentious and more reliable reflection of their feelings and intentions.

Information provided in focalized comments by the implied author himself on the transpiring events will also be evaluated in each case. Women in the *Odyssey* (both mortal and divine) are

lines). He suggests that the speech length of the characters, which are an indication of their importance within the narrative, cannot be coincidental. This is due to Vergil's focus on balance and symmetry within the poem (Highet, 1972:26). The text allows Dido the same amount of 'talk time' as it does Anchises and Turnus. This suggests that her words and opinions were at least as important as those of the two prominent male characters.

mostly described by the voice of the narrator of the epic (Cohen, 1995:17). This study will attempt to ascertain whether this is also the case in the representation of women in the *Aeneid*. The women are also characterized through literary allusions made by narrating agents (often the primary narrator) who compare the women (implicitly and explicitly) to intertextual and intratextual figures.

2.4.4 Focalization

The narratological concept of *focalization* will also be discussed and utilized where it is relevant and useful in our understanding of the text. When the general term "focalization" is used, it refers to the term's usage by Mieke Bal (1980).[13] Bal (1980:108) defines focalization as "de relatie tussen gepresenteerde elementen en de visie van waaruit deze worden gepresenteerd" ("the relation between the presented elements and the perspective from which they are presented"). In brief, it is the difference between who sees and who tells the events. Focalization is not limited to the narrator but can also be adopted by characters in the narrative. Bal refers to the focalizer as giving information that is both partial and limited (1980:111).[14]

2.4.5 Plot

The term *plot* is understood as the arrangement of a series of events that are experienced and caused by the characters in a narrative.[15] It is important to discuss the women's role and function in the plot of the *Aeneid*, as it helps us to better understand their significance in the story or the *fabula* (which is defined as the underlying logical-chronological sequence of events that are inferred from the plot). It is easier to determine the extent and nature of the women's influence on events and other characters by looking at the effect their actions and decisions have on the plot. One must, however, keep in mind that a character can be in a position of power and can have political influence in the story, without his or her actions having a significant effect on the course of events.

It is useful to indicate who the focalizing party is in the narrative and whether the primary author might be imbedding focalized pieces of information into scenes that are presented as though they are viewed from the perspective of another party, such as a character. This helps the reader to understand what information is known to the other characters about the specific character who is being discussed, and whether the information provided concerning a character is trustworthy or

[13] Genette coined the term in 1972, but the English translation of his work was published in 1980.

[14] For an extensive explanation of the difference between Bal's (1980) usage of focalization and her predecessor Genette's (1972) usage of the term, see Liebenberg (1996).

[15] For a full discussion on the development of plot, see Kukkonen (2013).

not. It also contributes to our understanding of how a character is represented and characterized by a narrator and how they are then interpreted by the narratees.

2.5 Text editions and translations

For access and reference to the primary text of the *Aeneid*, I have made use of the text by Mynors (1986). I have, however, adapted Mynor's text by replacing the consonantal *u*'s with *v*'s. The translations used in this study will primarily be my own. In addition to my translations, I have made use of the translations of the *Aeneid* by Mandelbaum (2004) and the *Iliad* by Fagles (1998). I will indicate the source where I have used these translations. I have also employed some of the modern research resources and tools that accelerate the process of analysing and comparing texts.

One such resource is the collaborative Tesserae Project, led by Neil Coffee at the Department of Classics at the University of Buffalo, which allows one to efficiently compare texts and establish their similarity on a structural and syntactical level.[16]

2.6 Chapter conclusion

As set out, the aim of this dissertation is to study the relevant sections of the *Aeneid* by utilizing modern research tools and combining them with both classical and contemporary approaches. An approach such as narratology can be viewed as contemporary to a certain extent, but it is also rooted in ancient thought. Methods and approaches to the study of texts and narratives are continually being developed. I will incorporate the different methodologies that I have set out in this chapter – employing and even adapting them to achieve the objective of this dissertation. I aim to provide a nuanced reading of the behaviour and political activity of the Carthaginian queen Dido, her sister Anna, the Latin queen Amata and the warrior and Volscian queen Camilla. By studying these women with the relevant critical approaches, I intend to better our overall understanding of elite mortal women in the *Aeneid*. I believe that new approaches will lead to renewed insights.

[16] "Tesserae is a freely available tool for detecting allusions in Latin poetry. It was created by the Textual Analysis Working Group, a collaborative, interdisciplinary research team based at the University at Buffalo" (Coffee *et al.*, 2008-2021).

CHAPTER 3: THE EXTENT TO WHICH WOMEN IN THE *AENEID* ARE CONCERNED WITH POLITICS AND WARFARE: DIDO AND ANNA

3.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter is the first step towards determining the extent to which women in the *Aeneid* are occupied with politics and warfare. Each chapter aims to answer the research questions that have been set out for this dissertation. The focus will shift, but the objective will remain the same. Chapter 3 focuses on the Carthaginian sisters, Queen Dido and Anna; Chapter 4 focuses on the Latin queen Amata; and Chapter 5 focuses on the Volscian warrior queen Camilla. As with each subsequent chapter, this chapter (Chapter 3) aims firstly to determine the extent to which these women are characterized (directly or indirectly) as strategists who are concerned with politics, and whether their actions are aimed at increasing their autonomy and strengthening the political positions of their dominions. Second, this chapter aims to determine the function and role of the selected female characters (Dido, Anna, Amata, and Camilla), and to determine whether their decisions and actions have significant effects on the plot of the epic – whether they have any true agency in the narrative. An analysis of the power dynamics between the different characters will therefore be useful not only in determining the authority and agency of these women, but in helping to reveal the instances where they attempt to challenge the established power relations. The discussion, therefore, focuses on the narrative sections that pertain to decision-making and strategizing, specifically those scenes in which the decisions that are made, have a substantial effect on the rest of the events, thus influencing the plot. It examines the roles women play in these decisions. By looking at these primary aspects, one can better understand the overall portrayal of women in the *Aeneid*.

Two significant underlying themes in the poem are those of marriage and offspring. In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas loses his wife Creusa, while fleeing with his young son Ascanius. By losing a wife, Aeneas is enabled to pursue a new and destined kingdom and can accept a bride to signify his union with a new country and to signal his ascension as a ruler of a new kingdom. The destined bride is ultimately Lavinia, and the kingdom is Latium. These themes consistently recur throughout the poem, although the mortal characters of the epic are initially ignorant about what Aeneas' destiny entails precisely, and only gradually become aware of the specific components of this predestined union (who will be the bride and where the country will be). Both these themes, therefore, represent outcomes that are essential to the story-world of the *Aeneid*. A marriage can signify a peace treaty or be the prize of the conqueror. Marriage and the fruits thereof (children) have the power to either secure or destabilize the power dynamics of a region.

Such private domestic matters can have a direct and significant influence on public matters. The actions and decisions of these women (that pertain to both the private and public spheres) will be examined to understand whether they are primarily driven by political ambitions or personal desires. Each sphere will inevitably bear consequences in the other.[17] This dissertation examines the narratological portrayal of select women in Vergil's epic world, to discern which issues these women primarily discuss and what mainly occupies them. The conversations that take place between the different women are central in answering this question, particularly the conversations between Dido and Anna in book four, since their discussions tend to implicate both private and public matters.

3.2 Divine influence in the *Aeneid*

Before attempting to determine how much agency these women have, it is necessary to briefly look at the influence and motivations of the gods, particularly the goddesses Venus and Juno who are the primary plot drivers of the poem (Schiesaro, 2008:68). These two goddesses explicitly influence the mortal characters in the poem and therefore help to shape the whole epic. Their actions and decisions will not be discussed in detail, due to the limited focus of this dissertation. The context that this examination of Juno and Venus provides is, however, essential for understanding the actions and motivations of the mortal characters.

The goddesses Venus and Juno are involved in a feud that takes place in the divine sphere. Their rivalry places Aeneas and Dido in a position where they represent more than just two lovers but where they symbolize two kingdoms. Dido and her sister Anna represent Carthage, the powerful city-state that Juno wants to protect and cultivate. Aeneas, who is protected by his mother Venus, does not only represent the fallen and famous kingdom of Troy. Aeneas also signifies the future glory that is the Roman Empire. Following the story of Dido and Aeneas (books one to four) and Aeneas' departure from Carthage, Aeneas will encounter other kingdoms (books seven to twelve), particularly Latium, which will have certain rulers and inhabitants that are encouraged by Juno to challenge Aeneas' (i.e., Rome's) future in Italy. By understanding that Venus and Juno are partaking primarily in a political feud, we can better understand the nature and motivations of the mortal characters.

The most relevant factors of the dispute between these two goddesses are revealed in book four (4.90-128) when Juno and Venus have a strategy session concerning a marriage alliance between Venus' son Aeneas and "Juno's Dido". This planned union is not about bringing two

[17] These spheres are not necessarily designated as either private or public based on the status of the space they occupy (be it a private room in a house, or in a public royal court), but rather on the primary concern at stake in the scene.

matched lovers together or about the potential happiness of Venus' son with Juno's cherished queen; but about the ambitions Venus has for the future of Rome and that Juno has for her Carthage. It will, in effect, be a peace treaty between Rome and Carthage, between Juno and Venus. As Juno says in lines 98-100 & 102-103 of the *Aeneid*:

> "Sed quis erit modus, aut quo nunc certamine tanto?
> quin potius pacem aeternam pactosque hymenaeos
> exercemus?" (4.98-100).
>
> "But what will be the end, what good is all our strife now?
> Come, why don't we rather practice peace?
> Eternal peace sealed with the bonds of marriage."[18]
>
> …
>
> "communem hunc ergo populum paribusque regamus
> auspiciis;" (4.102-103).
>
> "Let us rule these people in common: joint command."[19]

The goddesses are both aware that Venus will not go along with Juno's proposition for the sake of Aeneas' happiness, but rather for his and inevitably Rome's safety. For as Juno tells Venus in these lines

> "nec me adeo fallit veritam te moenia nostra
> suspectas habuisse domos Karthaginis altae." (4.97-98),
>
> "I have not been blind. I know you fear our fortresses,
> you have been suspicious of the houses of high Carthage."[20]

Juno's insight into Venus' feelings towards Carthage is also evidence that suggests that the two goddesses are well experienced with politics. Venus, likewise, is not fooled by Juno's sudden flattery (Verg. *A.* 4.93-94) or by her proposed marriage alliance. Instead of shying away from Juno's trap, she uses this to her advantage by spinning an equally sly response:

> Olli (sensit enim simulata mente locutam,
> quo regnum Italiae Libycas averteret oras)
> sic contra est ingressa Venus: "quis talia demens
> abnuat, aut tecum malit contendere bello?" (4.105-108).
>
> Perceiving at once that this was all a ruse to shift the kingdom of Italy onto Libyan shores, Venus countered Juno: "Now who'd be so insane as to shun your offer and strive with you in war?"[21]

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18 Own translation.
19 Own translation.
20 Own translation.
21 Own translation.

Their feud predates the events in the *Aeneid,*[22] but this discussion takes place in both the *fabula* (in the sense of the poem's chronological order) and the plot (the rearranged representation of events) after they have already manipulated Dido to fall in love with Aeneas. But by keeping the motivations of the divine in mind from the beginning, one has a more nuanced understanding of the characters, because their actions and motivations are informed by those of the divine. If we consider their possible roles in the *fabula*, Venus and Juno act as enabling powers (senders) who are in opposition to each other. Venus aids Aeneas in his mission and serves as the sender who helps Aeneas (subject actant and receiver) reach his object (Italy). Venus' intentions also align with that of Aeneas, in the sense that her primary goal is for Aeneas to complete his mission and found Rome. Juno, on the other hand, acts as an oppositional sender whose primary mission is to delay and overthrow Aeneas' mission. In turn, however, Dido as an actor (the queen of Carthage) fits into a scheme that presents her as a 'sub-receiver' in the sense that Juno wants Dido to be a successful ruler in the same way that Venus wants Aeneas to succeed, and Venus wants Dido to fail in the same way that Juno wants Aeneas to fail.

Juno is a benefactor to Dido and Carthage; Venus is a benefactor to Aeneas and Rome. According to Lyne (1987:63), Juno's actions and hatred towards Aeneas and Rome are not, as could be expected, caused by her history with the Trojans and those past events that gave rise to the Trojan War, but by Rome's future and their destruction of Carthage. My argument is that if one considers Juno's accusation that Venus fears the rising house of Carthage (Verg. *A*. 4.97-98), Venus ultimately wants Dido to fail, not only because the goddess is in a dispute with Juno, but also because she views Carthage (and future Carthage) as a direct threat to the Trojans (and future Rome).

It is, however, important to note that even though the mortal characters are influenced by the gods and subject to the outcomes of Fate (which as an actant serves as a higher power or higher sender), they do still have some control over themselves and their actions (Lyne, 1987:68-70). The influence of the gods will therefore be considered in each case where relevant, specifically the characters' reaction towards their influence. This will be done to help to identify which actions are products of the characters' own reasoning and motivations and whether they are merely products of divine control and manipulation.

3.3 Understanding Dido and Carthage in context

In the first book of the *Aeneid*, the reader is informed of Dido's character for the first time, when the goddess Venus is implicitly appointed as secondary narrator and tells the story of how Dido

[22] Juno's anger towards the Trojans is mentioned in the *Aeneid*'s introduction in verse 4. Its prominent position in the beginning of the narrative, marks its importance to the plot.

became queen of Carthage. Venus disguises herself in the form of a mortal Tyrian maiden and equips Aeneas with information regarding the queen of the region in which he has been stranded. Venus thus functions as a guide to the hero in a strange land and situation (as she often does throughout the entire epic in her role as helping power). Aeneas encounters his mother (Venus) after his fleet was dispersed by a great storm. Like both the Roman and contemporary reader, Aeneas finds himself in an unfamiliar and imagined quasi-Homeric world (Conte, 1999:277).[23]

To help guide Aeneas on his journey to establish a new city, Venus provides Aeneas with a roadmap to the Punic terrain through an *epyllion*. Aeneas' perception and initial impression of the queen (Dido) are inevitably influenced by Venus's information. By highlighting the similarity between their personal and political circumstances, Dido is not characterized as a foreign threat and solely as a possible enemy, but as a potential (although dangerous) ally who will hopefully uphold the proper customs regarding *hospites* ("guests"). By taking the time to narrate Dido's tale to Aeneas, and despite the goddess' warning that it is a "long and tragic tale" (*longa est iniuria, longae ambages; sed summa sequar fastigia rerum,* "long during is the pain, lengthy are the tales, but I will relate the principal events of these things", Verg. *A*. 1.340), it is suggested that Aeneas needed to understand Dido's political and personal context before seeking her assistance. Venus' narration also evokes sympathy for Dido in the mind of the epic's audience and it grants her significant narrative depth. It is important for both Aeneas and the audience (the reader) to understand Dido's past actions, which aptly display and explain her complex political and emotional nature. These can serve as an indication of the nature of her future behaviour. She has used her personal situation and resourcefulness to further her position of power once before and is therefore capable of doing so again.

3.3.1 Dido's personal and political situation regarding her emigration from Tyre

Venus portrays Dido not as a maiden in distress or a pawn to be moved according to Aeneas' will, but as someone similar, perhaps even equal, to Aeneas. This is ironic as Venus and Juno will later use Dido as a pawn for their own agenda.[24] But it is still important that Aeneas knows he alone does not have the power to conquer her. Like him, she has lost her spouse, she was a refugee, a ruler of a people seeking a safer home. Dido is not explicitly introduced as a warrior, but Venus' description paints her as a queen who fights for herself and her people. Venus characterizes Dido as someone not to be underestimated, by directly telling Aeneas how Dido took the gold Pygmalion was seeking and expanded her empire by exploiting the size of a bull's

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[23] "Vergil's Roman readers find themselves in the midst of a Homeric world, removed from the familiar present by a legendary space of more than a thousand years." (Conte, 1999)

[24] The more poignant irony is that Aeneas would use the similarity of their situations when he explains why he is going to abandon her in 4.347-350.

hide. This introduction may even have acted as a warning because Venus needs to ensure that Aeneas can recover in Carthage following the damage the Trojans suffered at sea, but without delaying his journey too long by being deceived or endangered by the ruler of the area – much like Odysseus during his journey back home in Homer's *Odyssey*. Though Venus does not portray Dido as one being in distress or need of aid, she does inform Aeneas of the difficult political position the queen finds herself in (Verg. *A*. 1.338-368):

> 'Punica regna vides, Tyrios et Agenoris urbem;
> sed fines Libyci, genus intractabile bello.
> imperium Dido Tyria regit urbe profecta,
> germanum fugiens. longa est iniuria, longae
> ambages; sed summa sequar fastigia rerum.
> huic coniunx Sychaeus erat, ditissimus auri
> Phoenicum, et magno miserae dilectus amore,
> cui pater intactam dederat primisque iugarat
> ominibus. sed regna Tyri germanus habebat
> Pygmalion, scelere ante alios immanior omnes.
> quos inter medius venit furor. ille Sychaeum
> impius ante aras, atque auri caecus amore
> clam ferro incautum superat, securus amorum
> germanae; factumque diu celavit et aegram,
> multa malus simulans vana spe lusit amantem.
> ipsa sed in somnis inhumati venit imago
> coniugis ora modis attollens pallida miris;
> crudelis aras traiectaque pectora ferro
> nudavit, caecumque domus scelus omne retexit.
> tum celerare fugam patriaque excedere suadet
> auxiliumque viae veteres tellure recludit
> thesauros, ignotum argenti pondus et auri.
> his commota fugam Dido sociosque parabat.
> conveniunt quibus aut odium crudele tyranni
> aut metus acer erat; navis, quae forte paratae,
> corripiunt onerantque auro. portantur avari
> Pygmalionis opes pelago; dux femina facti.
> devenere locos ubi nunc ingentia cernes
> moenia surgentemque novae Karthaginis arcem,
> mercatique solum, facti de nomine Byrsam,
> taurino quantum possent circumdare tergo.

> "You see a Punic realm, the Tyrians and the city of Agenor, and the borders of the Libyans, a people fierce in war. Dido rules the Tyrian empire, which she established while fleeing from her brother. Long during is the pain, lengthy are the tales, but I will relate the principal events of these things. 'Sychaeus was her husband. He was the wealthiest of all the Phoenicians. He was also greatly loved by the tragic girl, to him her father had given the maiden and joined with marriage auspices. But the kingdom of Tyre was held by her brother Pygmalion, monstrous in crime above all others. Fury came between them. For Pygmalion, impious and blinded by his greed for gold, caught Sychaeus off guard and murdered him in front of the altars with a sword, all in secret and with no regard for his sister's love. He concealed what he had done for a long time, and with many wicked pretences deceived Dido, suffering in her love, with false hope. But the very image of her unburied husband came to Dido in her sleep, raising his pallid face in an unfathomable manner, he exposed the cruel altars and his

> chest that was pierced by the sword. He revealed each hidden crime of the house. Then he persuaded her to quickly flee and escape the country. To aid her in her flight, he revealed to her ancient treasures that are hidden in the ground: a load of silver and gold, known to no one else. Urged on by this, she prepared her allies and her escape: they assembled, those who either bitterly loathed or feared the tyrant. They seized the ships, that by chance were ready, loading them with the gold. The riches of greedy Pygmalion are carried across the sea – a woman is the leader of the enterprise. They arrived at the region where you now see the stronghold and towering walls of a new Carthage rising; and they bought the territory called Byrsa, "the Hide", named after that transaction, where they were able to obtain that which the circumference of the bull's hide could encompass."[25]

Notably, Dido is introduced under the name "Dido" (4.340) and not "Elissa". The etymology of a character's name, especially when used in a wordplay on the attributes of that character, can be representative of their essential natures and roles (Cohen, 1995:20). The commentator Servius notes that Dido is a name that was attributed to the queen of Carthage by the Carthaginians, following her death (Austin, 1971:125-126). Servius claims that the word Dido originates from the Punic word for the Latin *virago* ("female warrior") because she chose to die honourably at her own hand, instead of having to submit to an African king (Austin, 1971:125-126). The historian Timaeus, on the other hand, proposed that the name Dido was given to the queen due to her various wanderings (Austin, 1971:126).[26] The etymology of names is an important aspect of Vergilian characterization because it tends to lend insight into the framework within which the characters should be understood. Vergil often uses paronomasia and etymological references to reveal the key themes in the *Aeneid* (O'Hara, 2017:3).

Venus' choice to appear in mortal form (as a Tyrian maiden) implies that the information she provides to Aeneas would have been accessible in the mortal sphere, since she is actively trying to hide her divine status. This decision would frame her role as a guiding power and the contents of her narration in the context of the narratological parameters assigned to an external secondary narrator (in this case Venus) who is relating information to an external secondary narrator (Aeneas).[27] The narration was implicitly handed over to Venus by the primary narrator (the implied author Vergil) and both her and Aeneas' positions in this scene are 'external' since neither of them directly participated in the events described in Dido's background story. Venus' information would therefore most likely relate to actions and emotions that were outwardly manifested since Venus avoids providing information that she obtained through divine insight. As a mortal external narrator, Venus would therefore avoid providing internal information on Dido's character, such as Dido's private thoughts and dreams. There are therefore certain pieces of information that one

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25 Own translation.

26 Timaeus (3BC (FGrH 566 F82)).

27 For a further explanation of the terminology and theory that is used here, see de Jong (2014:30-32).

would initially assume to be private and internally manifested, but that could provide further insight into Dido's character if one were to examine them in the light of externally manifested events.

The most important re-evaluated informational element is the appearance of Dido's murdered husband Sychaeus, whose ghost appears to Dido in her sleep to reveal his fate to her and to exhort her to flee with hidden treasure (Verg. *A*. 1.353-359). Since Sychaeus appeared to Dido in her sleep, one would assume that it is an internal event that only she would have knowledge and details about. But Venus' description of his appearance is vivid, even describing his pallid face. By viewing this scene through a narratological lens, I argue that Dido possibly informed other people about this event to convince them to flee with her. Furthermore, I propose that Dido may have used the horrible and emotional description of her dead husband as a persuasive appeal to her advantage and to the disadvantage of her brother Pygmalion.

The contents of Sychaeus' message also bear greater significance in this light. Sychaeus informs his wife of his own murder and "every concealed crime of their house" (1.355), of which most people were still unaware (1.351-352). Another important element of Sychaeus' revelation is the treasure (of which no one else had previous knowledge, 1.358-359) that Dido was to use to enable her to flee her country. All these elements provided Dido with the strategic upper hand, as she could now be the source of crucial information that people were previously unaware of, thus increasing her *ethos* and authority. One could therefore argue that, according to the image that Venus created of Dido, Dido used Sychaeus' apparition as the foundation of her campaign against her brother and for her planned escape. It is also important to note that Sychaeus only exhorted Dido to use the funds and flee the country. He did not specify that she should first delay her flight to gather an army and citizens over which she could rule, using the treasure to fund and support her campaign. Fleeing was not her own idea, but uniting people for her to rule over in a new kingdom was. This is indicative of her agency.

The two groups of people that Dido decided to unite for her cause were those who either feared or despised her brother, their king (1.360-362). To convince and mobilize these two groups, Dido had to emphasize the horror and sheer impiety of Pygmalion's crimes against Sychaeus. By highlighting what her brother has already done, she evokes fear for what he might further do if they were to stay. She furthermore makes it clear that she has the means to execute their escape successfully by having the treasure loaded onto the ships that they seized (1.363), actions which "they" (*corripiunt onerantque auro*) are described as doing. *Ergo*, Dido did not somehow miraculously manage to load the treasure onto the ship alone and unbeknownst to her followers. The *imperium Dido… regit* ("Dido… rules", 1.340) that Venus uses to first introduce Dido's story and the *dux femina facti* ("a woman is the leader of this action", 1.363) that Venus uses near the end of this embedded narrative, frames Dido's past actions and accomplishments. Furthermore,

it indicates that the information provided regarding Dido throughout books one and four should be understood in the context of Dido's primary trait, which is her ability and instinct to rule and devise strategies that will protect not only herself but also her people.

In a commentary that focuses on the political ideologies in Vergil's poetry, Weeda (2015:128) upholds that the phrase *dux femina facti* (1.364) indicates that it was abnormal for a woman to have overseen such an event. This interpretation is also maintained by certain ancient commentators, such as Servius who claims that the phrase should be read aloud in a manner that conveys surprise (*dux femina facti pronuntiandum quasi mirum*, Serv. *A*. 1.364). Keith (2004:24) addresses the remark by Donatus (1.80.2-3), who claims that this phrase was used with the intent of ridiculing Pygmalion. Keith proposes that this inference by Donatus implies that the mere suggestion of female competence in the *Aeneid* is only used to emphasize the extent of a man's incompetence to rule and that Donatus' interpretation of the text is limited to his "androcentric gaze" (2004:24). Without intending to blatantly disregard the authority of ancient commentators, I suggest that it would be sensible to re-evaluate this position on the purpose of the phrase *dux femina facti*.

My argument is that the field of narratology with an optimistic feminist reading offers new insights in this specific regard because it allows us to view the phrase, not as something that is used to characterize Pygmalion but to characterize Dido on whom the entire passage focuses. For as Austin (1971:133) concludes – in contrast to Servius – this phrase highlights "Dido's spirit and quality". I believe that a study of the narrative in this manner furthermore challenges the idea that the mere mention of a female leader apparently conveys surprise as propagated by Servius' critical view. Though one could reasonably conceive that Venus intended to surprise Aeneas to some extent with this revelation, Aeneas himself does not seem to be surprised by either the phrase or any other aspect of the tale. He does not even demonstrate any direct reaction to this story (1.370-384). He rather responds to Venus' questions regarding his origins and identity (1.369-370). His only explicit reaction of surprise to this encounter is when he realizes the identity of the Tyrian maiden (1.407-409). His lack of reaction is a reaction *per se*, because it indicates that Aeneas was not shocked or disdained at the news of a woman being in charge. Aeneas' reaction to Dido's position as ruler and his impression of her ability to rule is important for understanding Dido's character, because the narrative's primary subject's (protagonist and hero) experience and interpretation of the other actors in the epic contribute to their characterization and help the reader to discern the extent to which they are portrayed as sympathetic and competent characters.

3.3.2 Dido's position and competence as ruler of Carthage

It is my impression that Aeneas was neither threatened nor surprised by Dido's power or her accomplishments. This is made evident in the passages where Aeneas first sees Carthage (1.418-449) and Dido (1.494-508). The passage where he observes Carthage intricately describes the activities of the people and its growth as a city, providing both Aeneas and the reader with an important overview of their advancement. Even the Carthaginians' commitment to their cause is described when they are compared to bees. This passage, moreover, describes the current state of Carthage after the initial arrival of Dido and reveals what she has accomplished as a ruler. This is important because it directly relates to Dido's competence as a ruler and her ability to act on the promises one could imagine she made during her campaign to be a new ruler to the Phoenicians that followed her. This scene is narrated by the primary narrator to describe what Aeneas' must have seen. But certain elements indicate inserted focalization by the primary narrator, such as knowledge concerning their anthropological development from huts to houses (de Jong, 2014:54-55). Aeneas is also described as marvelling (*miratur*, 1.421) at the advanced developed state of Carthage, specifically at its buildings (*molem*, 1.421), gates (*portas,* 1.422), the noise permeating from the city (*strepitum,* 1.422), and paved streets (*strata viarum*, 1. 422) (de Jong, 2014:54-55). His surprise at what he is seeing does not evoke a sense of disbelief on his part that people can be so successful despite having a woman ruler. In contrast, his reaction is made clear through his exclaiming *o fortunate, quorum iam moenia surgunt* ("o fortunate are they, whose walls are already rising", 1.436). These words reveal Aeneas' desire to found and build a city like the one he is seeing in front of him.

The narrative space in which Dido is first placed is significant because it is one of the elements that contribute to her characterization. Dido is first placed in a public and religious space because this is where Dido is erecting a temple and enacts her official duties as ruler. The space, therefore, emphasizes Dido's ambitions for her people and their drive. … *sic nam fore bello / egregiam et facilem victu per saecula gentem. / hic templum Iunoni ingens Sidonia Dido / condebat, donis opulentum et numine divae* … ("for thus will be the race famous in war and rich in substance through the ages. Here Sidonian Dido was founding to Juno a mighty temple, rich in gifts and the presence of the goddess", 1.444-447). While merely waiting for the queen to appear, Aeneas seems to be aware of her actions and her official duties and dedication and devotion to Juno.

Dido's success as a ruler is further emphasized through allusions that are made by the primary narrator. The first allusion is to the Amazon warrior Queen Penthesilea (1.490-494) when Aeneas' eyes move from the mural depicting the warrior to Dido herself, and the second is to the goddess Diana (1.498-502) whose image is used to describe Dido's movements as he first observes her. The reference to Penthesilea is made when he encounters a mural that recalls the events of the

Trojan War and the image of the warrior queen transitions into the image of the Carthaginian queen herself as he sees Dido for the first time. Dido is then compared to the goddess Diana by the primary narrator. By using the martial image of a warrior leading her troops to first introduce Dido, her role as a strategist is suggested. The mural of Penthesilea is viewed by the hero as follows:

> ducit Amazonidum lunatis agmina peltis
> Penthesilea furens mediisque in milibus ardet,
> aurea subnectens exsertae cingula mammae
> bellatrix, audetque viris concurrere virgo. 1.490-493.
>
> Penthesilea in her fury leads the ranks of crescent-shielded Amazon warriors. She rages amongst the thousands of warriors; underneath her bare breast, a golden belt; a warrior and maiden who dares to face men on the battlefield[28]

The image of the Amazon warrior simultaneously emphasizes Dido's status as a foreign leader and as a woman who is not intimidated by the idea of challenging and warring against men. *Ducit Amazonidum… Penthesilea furens* echoes the *dux femina facti* in book one. Bellatrix and *virgo* – whose opposing placements in verse 493 (first and last word) are used to contrast these two concepts – here highlight Dido's multi-faceted nature and foreshadow not only her downfall but her potentially ardent nature. It is also noteworthy that Vergil uses the same participial (*furens*, *1.490*) to describe both the Amazon queen Penthesilea and Queen Dido (*furentem*, 1.659). Other warriors in the epic are also described as *furens*, but most notably Camilla (e.g., 11.762) and Turnus (e.g., 11.486).

Following Dido's indirect comparison to Penthesilea, the queen is compared directly to the goddess Diana and associated with her when Aeneas sees Dido in person for the first time. Her actions and movements are described from Aeneas' perspective, thus focalizing our impression of her character through the hero's gaze:

> Haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda videntur,
> dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno,
> regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,
> incessit magna iuvenum stipante caterva.
> qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi
> exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae
> hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades; illa pharetram
> fert umero gradiensque deas supereminet omnis
> (Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus):
> talis erat Dido, talem se laeta ferebat
> per medios instans operi regnisque futuris.
> tum foribus divae, media testudine templi,
> saepta armis solioque alte subnixa resedit.

[28] Own translation.

> iura dabat legesque viris, operumque laborem
> partibus aequabat iustis aut sorte trahebat: (1.494-508).

> But while the Dardan watched these scenes in wonder, / while he was fastened in a stare, astonished, / the lovely-bodied Dido neared the temple, / a crowding company of youths around her. / And just as, on the banks of the Eurotas / or through the heights of Cynthus, when Diana / incites her dancers, and her followers, / a thousand mountain-nymphs, press in behind her, / she wears a quiver slung across her shoulder; / and as she makes her way, she towers over / all other goddesses; gladness excites / Latona's silent breast: even so, Dido; / so, in her joy, she moved among the throng / as she urged on the work of her coming kingdom. / And then below the temple's central dome – / facing the doorway of the goddess, guarded / by arms – she took her place on a high throne. / Dido was dealing judgments to her people / and giving laws, apportioning the work / of each with fairness or by drawing lots;[29]

The Diana simile firstly echoes Venus' disguise when she appeared as a Tyrian guide to Aeneas, and secondly, it evokes the image of Nausicaa and Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey*, specifically the passage where Nausicaa is compared to the goddess Artemis. The first time Aeneas (and the reader) observes the queen in person, she is focused on her duties as ruler, and she seems to favour this role above all else. This deduction is supported by the absence of the epithet *infelix* ("unhappy"), with which she is most often associated. She is instead described as being happy (*laeta*, 1.503). She is also described as actively working towards the future of Carthage (1.504), a priority and ambition that she does not necessarily lose sight of following her relationship with Aeneas.[30] Also, she moves directly from opening the dedicated temple to advance through the city and oversee construction while making her way towards her throne where she makes decrees and where she will next decide on Carthage's policy concerning the Trojan refugees.

Dido is described on her throne and moving through her people as happy. The space where she acts publicly as ruler (throne and temple) depicts her happiness, and she is even directly characterized as being *laeta* ("happy"). By emphasising that Dido's mood is elevated while she is in this public space and that she derives joy from her duties as ruler, both the space in which she moves and the focalization by the narrator are psychologizing in their purpose.[31] These elements reveal that Dido was elated when she was able to perform her duties actively and publicly. The first in-person impression of Dido is that her routine and life revolve around her kingdom and that

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[29] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:19).

[30] This is supported by the fact that the construction of the city was resumed once the relationship had been consummated. Aeneas is actively helping Dido to build Carthage when Mercury finds him to remind him that his kingdom is in Italy and not in Africa.

[31] Space is here serving a psychologizing function because it focuses on her as an individual and reveals to us her mood at that moment when she was still undisturbed by outsiders and could conduct herself in that public sphere in the way that she originally wanted. For space that serves a psychologizing function, see de Jong (2014:128).

it is something she enjoys doing. This hints at her true character and ambitions when she is unrestrained by the bonds of marriage.

The women with whom Dido is instantly associated highlight multiple layers of her role as host to the Trojans because this association reinforces Dido's intratextual links to Diana and Penthesilea as well as her intertextual links to Princess Nausicaa (who welcomes Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey* and who is also associated with Diana). The similarities between Dido and Nausicaa have been well established and discussed by scholars of Vergil and are often seen as the primary intertextual reference for this scene (e.g., Oliensis, 1997:304-305). The hero and audience might initially view Dido through a lens coloured by the image of Nausicaa, yet Dido is so much more than a young girl helping a hero as Nausicaa is portrayed (Hom. *Od*. 6.102-9), for Dido herself is the ruler with whom the hero must find favour.

Dido therefore equally plays the role of King Alcinous (Nausicaa's father and king in the *Odyssey* to whom Odysseus tells his tales of woe). Dido's primary role as ruler is indicated not only by the devotion with which her people follow her in the same way Diana's devotees would follow her but also through Dido's activities which centre on her religious and civic duties. The comparisons to Diana and Penthesilea, therefore, colour the reader's impression of Dido with the image of Penthesilea, Diana, Nausicaa and even Alcinous, thus, identifying and contextualizing her with three rulers and a nourishing helper. This emphasizes both Dido's sovereignty and caring nature, two aspects of her character that must be considered throughout to obtain a nuanced understanding of her actions and decisions later in the narrative.

Dido is initially characterized as an excellent ruler by the passage following the Diana-simile. That passage primarily serves as a testament to Dido's capabilities emphasising that she is focused on the interests of her people and the success of Carthage (Weeda, 2015:128). She is here characterized by the primary narrator through the kind of activities she partakes in, which focus on the future stability and sanctity of her queendom and portrays her as actively creating order by establishing laws and administering justice. Since the queen is conducting these activities in public spheres and places, one can reasonably assume that she is aware that she is being observed by her subjects. She is, however, unaware that she is being observed by Aeneas because he and his comrade Achates remained hidden from view (1.516-519). The activities that portray her as a fair and active ruler are also described before the other Trojans enter the scene (1.509-512), thus making it clear that she did not merely pretend to be a ruler who is focused on justice and who listens to her people.

Dido then directs her efforts to the negotiation of the imminent conflict caused by the arrival of the Trojan refugees. Her strategy is to welcome the Trojans and to permit them to stay in Carthage.

She even claims that her peace treaty extends to the seemingly absent Aeneas, whom she hopes will be found safely. Her actions create peace and restore order to three chaotic and disorderly elements: first, the chaos that the Trojans' arrival has created (*orantes veniam et templum clamore petebant*, "craving grace amidst great clamour made their way to the temple" 1.519); second, the barbaric treatment that Ilioneus (the group's chosen speaker) accuses her people of (*quod genus hoc hominum? quaeve hunc tam barbara morem / permittit patria? hospitio prohibemur harenae; / bella cient primaque vetant consistere terra,* "what race of people is this? What kind of land is so barbarous to permit such customs? We have been withheld from the right to be welcomed on the beach, those people of yours stir up war and forbid as to set foot on the land's border", 1.539-541). She also redeems the actions of her people by informing Illioneus of the necessity of their drastic measures (1.563-564). Thirdly, by granting them refuge, she grants them peace and shelter following the storm they faced on the oceans that left them shipwrecked.

Dido even offers them a choice between safely passing through her queendom or freely residing in her queendom. Despite Illioneus' impression that the Carthaginians are barbaric, he seems to instantly recognize that Dido is a civilized and fair ruler to whom he can calmly make his case, for if he truly believed that her disposition matched the violent reactions of her people, then he might have opted for a different approach. The peace she restores and the calm and respectful tone that Illioneus addresses her with, her words stirring both Aeneas and his companion, strong Achates (1.579), all speak to her capability as ruler. Her generosity and reaction towards the Trojans furthermore show agency on Dido's part, since it is this act that incited Venus to proactively intercede to ensure that Dido does not change her disposition towards the Trojans (Schiesaro, 2008:90).

3.3.3 Anna's role and function in the *Aeneid*

To help Dido maintain her 'work and life balance', she enlists the help of her sister Anna, who is only introduced into the story after the meeting with the Trojans has already taken place. Anna's primary role in the *Aeneid* seems to be that of a royal advisor and trusted confidant to both Dido and Aeneas. Anna has a lot of responsibility as a councillor because she is the only council member in Carthage that is mentioned besides Dido. Aeneas has an entire supporting network of people guiding him (both mortal and divine) and giving him advice (Anchises in books one to three, Venus throughout the entire narrative, Mercury in book four and King Evander in books eight to twelve), but in Carthage and all of book four, Dido only has Anna. This also drives Anna toward the foreground of the epic. Anna is first introduced in book four (4.8-9) where she is described as the person to whom Dido first reveals her feelings for Aeneas since her sister is *unanimam* ("sharer of one's heart", 4.8).

Each time *unanima* is used in the *Aeneid*, it seems to be ironically paired with the idea of impending war. Examples of *unanima* being used in a martial context include: *tu potes unanimos armare in proelia fratres* ("For you can arm for battle brothers, though they feel at one", 7.335)[32] ; *vos unanimi densete catervas / et regem vobis pugna defendite raptum* ("You of one mind, close your ranks, and defend in this battle your king of whom you have been robbed", 12.264-265).[33] One could also argue that *unanima* of book four (4.8) is also used in a martial context, since the advice that Anna will give Dido as her *unanima*, will result in the personal and political dispute between Dido and Aeneas that will eventually lead to Rome's war with Carthage. Anna's position as advisor seems to be an important aspect and function of her character, as this role is used to introduce her character in the narrative in book four. Anna's position is arguably like that of Acca who acts as a sole confidante to the Volscian queen Camilla (11.820-822). Her advisory role is, however, not restricted to her sister, since it becomes apparent near the end of book four that this role also extends to Aeneas (4.421-424):

> … solam nam perfidus ille
> te colere, arcanos etiam tibi credere sensus;
> sola viri mollis aditus et tempora noras.
> i, soror, atque hostem supplex adfare superbum.
>
> "For you alone that faithless man cared, he even trusted you with his secret sentiments, you alone know the hour for easy access to him. Go, sister, and speak with a gentle manner to our proud enemy."[34]

Anna's close relationship with her quasi-brother-in-law is marked by the verb (*colere* "he cares" 4.422), which is used in the sense of *colere aliquem* ("to care for someone") and this meaning of the verb is supported by *arcanos etiam tibi credere sensus* ("he even trusted you with his secret ambitions") in the same verse which suggests that she was not only a friend but the only person whom Aeneas entrusted with his secret thoughts. Barrett (1970:23) also discusses the iterative nature of *colere* but suggests that it further conveys a possible sexual aspect to their relationship. Though this conclusion is not unreasonable, I would rather argue that the frequency of their meetings is not unusual if one considers her advisory role.

The phrase only tells us that it is Aeneas that cares for Anna, she is only represented as the object of his respect, Anna's feelings towards him are not explicitly revealed. This is significant because it means that, even though we are not entirely certain what Anna's feelings towards Aeneas were, she was able to get him to care for her and to gain access to him in a way that even her sister was not able to. This resembles the access that Anna had to Dido, something even Aeneas was unable to attain. The verb *colere* does, however, bear erotic undertones, as it can also be used

[32] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:172).
[33] Own translation.
[34] Own translation.

to describe the agricultural activity of tilling a field, which was commonly used with sexual innuendo in Roman love elegy (Gold, 2012:378).

I propose that the nature of Anna and Aeneas' relationship was primarily platonic in its purpose and that this is emphasized by the type of secrets that Aeneas shared with Anna. The word *arcanos* that is used here only occurs four times in the *Aeneid*, and in all these instances the context is religious or pertaining to a 'greater scheme', particularly secrets that have bearing on Aeneas' future. *Arcanos* is not in its usage here, however, further qualified to reveal the exact nature of the secrets he related to her. On the other hand, it is not unreasonable to evaluate this occurrence with the other instances where it is used, as the word is always used to describe some sort of information exchange concerning Aeneas and a guiding figure: Jupiter uses this when he describes the secrets of the Fates, *arcana fatorum* (1.262), to Venus; when Aeneas prays to Apollo through the Sybil asking them to help him on his journey by having the Sybil guide him through the underworld, and he specifically vows to keep their *sortes arcanaque fata*, in a shrine in Italy if they help him (6.71-72); and finally and most significantly, Aeneas uses the phrase to refer to the secret signs that his father Anchises revealed to him that confirm that he has arrived in Italy, their destined location (*hic domus hic patria est. genitor mihi talia namque (nunc repeto) Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit,* "here is my home, here is my fatherland. For such were the designs of fate (I now recall) my father Anchises imparted to me", 7.122-123).

While Austin (1955:129) notes that this word (*arcana*) is used to comment on Dido's inability to understand Aeneas, I would argue that it is more to emphasize Anna's ability to do just that. The significance of Anna's apparent insight into Aeneas' private desires and her knowledge of how to gain access to him, is emphasized by Dido's and even the readers' limited access to these things. Though Aeneas' inner thoughts concerning his departure are briefly described (4.393-396), his thoughts during most of his stay in Carthage are not described. Anna's position as a confidante to Aeneas is briefly described by Dido in these lines, but her relationship with Aeneas is never elaborated on. This suggests that Anna may have had more influence on the temporary co-rulers of Carthage than the poem divulges.

The relationship between Dido, Anna and Aeneas is also described in other literary works. Servius' commentary on the *Aeneid* mentions (for 4.421-423) that some of these versions, particularly a version recorded by Varro, offer an alternative plotline in which it is Anna and Aeneas who have a sexual relationship – not Aeneas and Dido.[35,36] But in the passage discussed

[35] The possibility of a sexual relationship between Anna and Aeneas is also explored by Barrett (1970:21-24).

[36] For a fuller discussion of Servius' discussion of Anna and of the Varronian intertext, see Schiesaro (2008:91-96).

below (4.1-55), Anna and Aeneas have not had time to form a relationship of any kind, and the scene is concerned with the possibility of a relationship between Dido and Aeneas. It is also noteworthy that, despite Dido asserting that Anna knows Aeneas better than anyone, she instructs Anna to maintain a soft-spoken attitude when she goes to speak to the man that Dido has demoted from a man whom she welcomed as a citizen to a *hospes*, a foreigner. Dido's exact intentions with her specific instructions to Anna are not entirely clear, but it would not be unreasonable to assume that Dido had hoped that Aeneas would be persuaded to extend his time in Carthage, if he were visited by a friend.

3.3.4 Dido and Anna discuss the potential benefits of allying with a foreign power

To better understand the motivations behind the discussion that Dido and Anna have at the very beginning of book four regarding Aeneas, it is necessary to first examine Venus' agency and her drive regarding Dido's emotions and thoughts surrounding Aeneas that resulted in her consulting her sister Anna in the matter. The goddess' agency and role in Dido's life provide insight into the greater power dynamics of the epic, particularly between the goddesses Venus and Juno. Venus' decision to manipulate Dido originates from her fear that Aeneas might be permanently detained in Carthage, which would entail great power and success for Carthage and unfulfilled potential power for Rome. This can firstly be seen in Venus' reaction and intervention following Dido's reception of the Trojans and the queen's proposed alliance. Secondly, the discussion that takes place between Venus and Juno reveals that Venus fears the Carthaginians almost as much as Juno hates the Trojans. All of this, arguably, suggest that Venus did not seek Dido's downfall because the goddess disregarded Dido as a ruler, but that she thought that it was necessary to overthrow Dido because she feared her capability as ruler and the power she could obtain.

Dido cannot, however, simply yield to the desires which have been brought on by Venus' interference, because she has a duty to herself and her people to follow the right course of action. It is due to the difficult political situation in which Dido finds herself that she as queen must seek counsel concerning her relationship with the foreigner Aeneas whom she has welcomed into her queendom. Dido chooses to consult her sister Anna on these affairs. When one is in the position of a ruler, even one's private matters and relationships almost always affect public matters.

Dido's relationship with Aeneas not only affected her personal life and situation but was of great significance to her city, as she would not only be marrying a divinely favoured ally, but she would be further scorning the suitors from the surrounding warring African tribes which could potentially catalyze political unrest. This will become evident through her sister's insistence that this union will not only be profitable to Dido's well-being but to the well-being of Carthage. Dido's already

affected well-being is described by the primary narrator right before the two sisters converse on the matter:

> At regina gravi iamdudum saucia cura
> vulnus alit venis et caeco carpitur igni.
> multa viri virtus animo multusque recursat
> gentis honos ; haerent infixi pectore vultus
> verbaque nec placidam membris dat cura quietem (4.1-5).
>
> But the queen, already wounded by an aching anxiety, feeds the wound with the blood in her veins and is consumed by the hidden flame. Over and over this man's virtues and the honour of his lineage come back to her mind. His face and words cling firmly to her chest and her worry gives no calm rest to her limbs.[37]

Austin (1955:25) notes that the *at regina* that begins book four marks Dido as the dominant character of this chapter of the epic. This phrasing also signals that the focus will turn from the struggles that the Trojans endured in the past (as narrated by Aeneas to Dido and her court, in the analepsis that takes up book two to three) to the suffering that Dido will actively endure throughout the Trojans' stay in Carthage. Dido's suffering is catalyzed by the interference of Venus, who has afflicted the queen with love to the point that it burns in her bones (4.101). That Venus exploits Dido's solitary state and turns it into sexual desire toward Aeneas is undeniable, but the specific characteristics of Aeneas that Dido finds attractive are worth discussing. The three things that Dido desires are, first, his *virtus* which is a notable Roman ideal; second, his honourable lineage (his divine and honourable ancestry will inevitably increase the prominence and influence of his descendants); and third, his face and his words (which refers to the analepsis that occupies books two to three in which Aeneas gives a detailed and emotional account of the fall of Troy and the trials that brought them to her shores and that display his bravery).

3.3.4.1 Dido addresses Anna

One of the key passages in which Dido voices her thoughts is when she and her sister discuss a possible relationship with Aeneas in the fourth book of the *Aeneid* (4.1-53). Highet (1972:219) explicates various possible intertextual models for Dido's speech where a woman is filled with admiration for a man while there are certain obstacles (such as vows of chastity) that prevent their union. One of the models that he notes, which is relevant for this discussion, is the scene where Princess Nausicaa tells her handmaids of Odysseus' potential as a husband (Hom. *Od.* 6.239-246). This example is significant because of Dido's previous links to Nausicaa, and as with that passage, it is important to note that Dido fulfils more than one role in a scene such as this. Schematically, she is both the young woman who wants to marry a foreign prince/hero – as well

[37] Own translation.

as the sovereign figure who must consent to and suffer the public consequences if such personal desires are made manifest. The initial perception that this private discussion between Dido and Anna is merely a case of two sisters talking about a man is misleading. It is not merely a woman speaking to a woman, but also a ruler to her adviser. They must not and do not primarily discuss the marriage for its romantic aspects, but also for its political implications and practical advantages:

> “Anna soror, quae me suspensam insomnia terrent!
> quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes,
> quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!
> credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum.
> degeneres animos timor arguit. heu, quibus ille
> iactatus fatis! quae bella exhausta canebat!
> si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet,
> ne cui me vinclo vellem sociare iugali,
> postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit;
> si non pertaesum thalami taedaeque fuisset,
> huic uni forsan potui succumbere culpae.
> Anna (fatebor enim) miseri post fata Sychaei
> coniugis et sparsos fraterna caede penatis,
> solus hic inflexit sensus animumque labantem
> impulit. agnosco veteris vestigia flammae.
> sed mihi vel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat
> vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
> pallentis umbras Erebo noctemque profundam,
> ante, pudor, quam te violo, aut tua iura resolvo.
> ille meos, primus qui me sibi iunxit, amores
> abstulit; ille habeat secum servetque sepulchro.”
> sic effata sinum lacrimis implevit obortis (4.9-30).
>
> “Oh, Anna, sister, what matters keep me from sleep! Who is this new foreigner, who came to our shores? The expression his face carries, and such a strong chest and arms. For I believe, without a doubt, that he is indeed born of the gods.” [38]
>
> “For in the face of fear / the mean must fall. What fates have driven him! / What trying wars he lived to tell! Were it not / my sure, immovable decision not / to marry anyone since my first love / turned traitor when he cheated me by death, / were I not weary of the couch and torch, I might perhaps give way to this one fault. For I must tell you, Anna, since the time Sychaeus, my poor husband, died and my own brother splashed our household gods with blood, Aeneas is the only man to move my feelings, to overturn my shifting heart. I know too well the signs of the old flame. But I should call upon the earth to gape and close above me, or on the almighty Father to take his thunderbolt, to hurl me down into the shades, the pallid shadows and deepest night of Erebus, before I'd violate you, Shame, or break your laws! For he who first had joined me to himself has carried off my love, and may he keep it and be its guardian within the grave.” She spoke. Her breast became a well of tears.[39]

[38] Own translation.
[39] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:80).

Dido goes to Anna in the morning and confesses not only her love for Aeneas, but the tension she feels it creates between her public and private life. Her speech instantly reveals the inner turmoil that has taken a physical toll on her. The intermingled state of these two spheres is emphasized by the conversation taking place in private but having immense public consequences (Manioti, 2012:27). Dido cannot simply engage in a relationship with Aeneas because she vowed to never remarry following the death of her husband, Sychaeus. Adler argues that the queen's personal vow to her husband symbolizes her public role as Carthage's leader because his demise caused her to flee her home country and enabled her to establish and rule her queendom (Adler, 2003:109). The vow, therefore, symbolizes not just Dido's liberty as an independent woman who has been freed from the tiresome marriage torch (*pertaesum… taedaeque* 4.18), but it also symbolizes her liberty as an autonomous leader who escaped the tyranny imposed by her brother, King Pygmalion. Dido's vow and its symbolic value is arguably a vital aspect of Dido's speech because she relates the details of her vow and marriage as though Anna (who is the sharer of her heart) is unaware of it. This suggests that Dido relates this information not just to contextualize and explain her predicament to Anna, but to impress its importance on the audience (readers as narratees).

Dido's speech demonstrates the struggle between her personal desire and her public duty which has been kindled by Venus and Cupid's manipulation, but which still has not taken full effect. It is reasonable to think that if erotic madness had already taken complete possession of Dido, this discussion would not have taken place as it would not have been necessary: Dido would not have gone to the trouble of seeking her sister's private counsel, but she would have simply publicly taken action. Adler (2003:111) notes that even though Dido's weakened physical state and deteriorating mental resolve are emphasized by a flood of tears at the end of her speech, she still needs to be swayed by her sister to betray her vows.

3.3.4.2 Anna responds to Dido

Dido and Anna do not discuss the marriage only for its romantic or emotional aspects, but also for its political implications and practical advantages. Not only do the divine and mortal women share a topic of conversation, but their reasoning concerning the subject matter bears striking similarities. Anna's main argument for why Dido should form a union with Aeneas is that it would be beneficial for Carthage and Dido as its queen. We are told that Dido knows of his deeds and what he is capable of, in terms of fighting for his country, and his dedication to the cause. His noble birth *per se* is venerable and would possibly ward off any rivalling countries. On a mortal level, the female focus on the future also becomes evident in the fourth book of the *Aeneid* (4.1-49). The conversations that take place between Anna and Dido, characterise Anna as a political advisor, whose strategies are all aimed at the future. According to Highet (1972:80-81), Anna

convinces Dido to forget the past (her former husband and vow of celibacy) and to embrace Aeneas, all for the sake of the future of Carthage.

> Anna refert: “o luce magis dilecta sorori,
> solane perpetua maerens carpere iuventa
> nec dulcis natos Veneris nec praemia noris?
> id cinerem aut manis credis curare sepultos?
> esto: aegram nulli quondam flexere mariti,
> non Libyae, non ante Tyro; despectus Iarbas
> ductoresque alii, quos Africa terra triumphis
> dives alit: placitone etiam pugnabis amori?
> nec venit in mentem quorum consederis arvis?
> hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello,
> et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis;
> hinc deserta siti regio lateque furentes
> Barcaei. quid bella Tyro surgentia dicam
> germanique minas?
> dis equidem auspicibus reor et Iunone secunda
> hunc cursum Iliacas vento tenuisse carinas.
> quam tu urbem, soror, hanc cernes, quae surgere regna
> coniugio tali! Teucrum comitantibus armis
> Punica se quantis attollet gloria rebus!
> tu modo posce deos veniam, sacrisque litatis
> indulge hospitio causasque innecte morandi,
> dum pelago desaevit hiems et aquosus Orion,
> quassataeque rates, dum non tractabile caelum.”
> His dictis impenso animum inflammavit amore
> spemque dedit dubiae menti solvitque pudorem. (4.31-55).

> And Anna answers: “Sister, you are more dear / to me than light itself, are you to lose? / all of your youth in dreary loneliness, / and never know sweet children or the soft rewards of Venus? Do you think that ashes / or buried Shades will care about such matters? / Until Aeneas came, there was no suitor / who moved your sad heart – not in Libya nor, / before, in Tyre: you always scorned Iarbas / and all the other chiefs that Africa, / a region rich in triumphs, had to offer. / How can you struggle now against a love / that is so acceptable? Have you forgotten / the land you settled, those who hem you in? / On one side lie the towns of the Gaetulians, / a race invincible, and the unbridled / Numidians and then the barbarous Syrtis. / And on the other lies a barren country, stripped by the drought and by Barcaean raiders, / raging both far and near. And I need not / remind you of the wars that boil in Tyre / and of your brother's menaces and plots. / For I am sure it was the work of gods / and Juno that has held the Trojan galleys / fast to their course and brought them here to Carthage. / If you marry Aeneas, what a city / and what a kingdom, sister, you will see! / With Trojan arms beside us, so much greatness / must lie in wait for Punic glory! Only / pray to the gods for their good will, and having / presented them with proper sacrifices, / be lavish with your Trojan guests and weave / excuses for delay while frenzied winter / storms out across the sea and shatters ships, / while wet Orion blows his tempest squalls / beneath a sky that is intractable.” These words of Anna fed the fire in Dido. / Hope burned away her doubt, destroyed her shame.[40]

[40] Mandelbaum (2004:81).

Anna begins by expressing her love for her sister and begins her reply by voicing her concerns for Dido’s emotional well-being which she argues must be addressed with urgency. Anna acknowledges Dido’s heightened emotional state and further cultivates it by highlighting the significance of her affections for Aeneas considering the greater political context.

Austin (1955:34) notes that Anna's speech is marked as being emotional because of her use of *o* (4.31), which is only used for passages of "heightened feeling". But if one considers the proposal made by Highet (1972:80) to take this discussion as a "formal deliberative speech", and accepts his suggestion that *o luce magis dilecta sorori* as part of Anna's "affectionate exordium", then it is entirely possible to reason that the emotional tone Anna introduces is not to serve as an indication of her personal emotion but of the emotional tone she deemed most suitable, given Dido's apparent emotional state. Anna matches Dido’s emotion because it is an effective way to express empathy and to persuade her sister by suggesting that she has her best interests at heart because she knows and understands her heart.

In contrast to Dido’s consistently passionate personality, this scene characterizes Anna as a very practical and level-headed individual. Not only does she claim to sincerely doubt that the dead would care how the living conduct themselves if they can no longer be affected by their actions, but she also moves swiftly from the suggestion that Dido should accept Venus’ reward – which can refer both to the pleasing of sexual desire by engaging in an intimate relationship or to children which would be the product of such a union. She next mentions the range of African suitors that Dido has refused to marry and posits that Dido would be foolish to reject a union (which is apparently of the essence *per se*) when she finds it *placitone* (“pleasing”). Note the contrasting passions of the sisters: where Dido feels an intense burning passion (the effect and presence of which Anna does not fully realize), Anna simply refers to the possible union as “pleasing” or “acceptable”. I propose that this is because Anna is more focused on the benefits to be had from Aeneas’ as a comrade rather than as a lover.

Anna’s argument is largely based on the notion that their socio-political climate is too unstable for Dido to continue as a lone ruler with no external political protection or a lineage to secure the future of her dynasty. The two greatest threats that Anna mentions are the Numidians and the sisters’ brother Pygmalion. The legitimacy of her fears is furthermore confirmed by Venus in book one. The realization of their fears is not described within the narrative scope of the *Aeneid.* They are, however, described as having occurred in Ovid’s *Fasti* (book three) which describes Anna’s fate following Dido’s death. In the *Fasti*, the Numidians invade and sack Carthage directly after Dido’s suicide and Anna has trouble finding reliable refuge due to her brother’s ongoing pursuit (Rantala, 2019:188).

Rantala (2019:192) argues that Anna's vision of an alliance between Romans and Carthaginians would have been an "entirely foreign ambition within the Augustan cultural context". Though the notion of such an alliance may have been strange, it was not necessarily inherently inconceivable. The noticeably sympathetic tone that Vergil uses to describe these Punic sisters could suggest that the poet was not using his depiction of Carthage in the *Aeneid* to illustrate how treacherous Carthage was from the beginning, but to explain how and why they became the cruel foes that the Augustan Romans were familiar with. This foreign union helps to establish Dido's role as a referential character in the *Aeneid* since her character evokes the Egyptian Cleopatra. Even though the image of Cleopatra evokes the historic civil war that Rome faced in Augustan times, Anna is depicted as a unifying figure who acts as a mediator between feuding parties.

Anna's role as a uniting force is revealed through her ambition to unite Rome and Carthage, which is more than merely an attempt to make Dido happy by dispelling her loneliness (Rantala, 2019:191). Whereas Austin (1955:28) calls Anna "not very clever", I argue the exact opposite. My view is based on Anna's ability to instantly recognize Dido's needs while reminding Dido of her duties as ruler. My argument is that Anna urges Dido to pursue a relationship with Aeneas because she believes that Dido's personal desire for Aeneas coincides with Dido's public responsibilities. This discussion between the two sisters illustrates the scope of Anna's agency since she is never directly manipulated or influenced by the goddesses Venus or Juno, but she can recognize the potential of a Punic and Trojan alliance before the goddesses themselves have even discussed it.

Anna may be acting in the role of advisor in this passage, but the structure and content of her speech closely resemble that of another ruler, King Latinus (sovereign of Latium, Aeneas' destined kingdom) discussing the pending Trojan alliance with Turnus (Prince of the Rutuli, Princess Lavinia's primary opposing suitor) and exhorting him to accept a peace treaty (12.19-45). Highet (1972:80-81) highlights certain similarities between these two persuasive speeches (by Anna and Latinus) and indicates that they both involve a monarch deliberating over personal matters that have great public and civic consequences. In light of the resemblance that Highet (1972: 80-81) has briefly yet convincingly indicated, I propose that it is sensible to further highlight corresponding elements between these two speeches, as it helps us to better understand Anna's motivations concerning the union and also places the nature of her speech's contents in perspective.

The theme of marriage and creating a proper lineage is similarly addressed in this passage (4.31-53) and in the passage (12.19-45) where King Latinus exhorts Turnus. Anna's exhortation is more than just concern for her sister's happiness since Dido denies herself "sweet children and the soft rewards of Venus" (4.32). Her sister cannot afford to deny "such an acceptable love" (4.48), for

as Anna reminds her: “have you forgotten the land you settled, those who hem you in?” They are threatened on all sides by the other kingdoms, such as the Gaetulians and the Numidians (4.38-44). Highet (1972:80) asserts that the fact that Anna mentions children emphasizes that she recommends that her sister commits to a marriage with Aeneas and not a secret affair since no one would approve of a queen giving birth to illegitimate children.

Highet also suggests that Anna is possibly making use of an appeal to *iucundum*, the rhetorical appeal to pleasure. But Anna’s appeal to *iucundum* is not used in the traditional sense of arguing for something based primarily on whether it will provide pleasure. One could argue that it is here used rather in the sense of “added benefits” instead, something to make the union seem more acceptable. Anna makes the union seem even more enticing, by reminding her of how much she hated the other suitors that pursue her in marriage. Anna is perhaps motivated by the idea that the growth of the city and Dido’s duties as a ruler should take precedence over Dido’s personal honour. This is similar to King Latinus’ initial attempts to convince Turnus (the Rutulian prince to whom Lavinia was originally promised) by mentioning an array of other women Turnus can marry instead of Lavinia.

It is noteworthy that King Latinus’ attempt to dissuade Turnus from waging war with Aeneas (12.19-45) is also marked and initiated with *o* (*o praestans animi iuvenis*, 12.19), despite Latinus being described by the narrator as being in a very calm mood (*olli sedate respondit corde Latinus*, 12.18). This resembles the long syllables in the words that are used by both Anna and Latinus to initiate the conversations with Dido and Turnus respectively, both of which lead to a phrase that suggests the affection that the speakers have for their addressees. Where the long *o* is used to display Latinus’ calm temperament, that same rhetorical element is used interpreted by Austin as an indication of Anna’s temperament being the exact opposite. I suggest that an unnecessary distinction is made between the interpretations of each case. Both Latinus and Anna are characterized as typically being calm and practical people who must advise and relate to people that they care for and who have, in contrast to themselves, ardent dispositions. I suggest that the usage of these kinds of dialogues in both passages convey the same rhetorical effect, as they suggest that the speaker can recognize and relate to the overtly passionate state of their addressee. Anna and Latinus both attempt to gradually move the conversation from allaying emotional desires toward reminding the person of their duties to their country which should take precedence over personal desire. This argument is supported by the overall purpose of rhetoric in a formal speech such as this, namely, to move the audience from one position to another. Furthermore, in this case its purpose is to move an enflamed person from their state turmoil to the acceptance of a marital union. In both instances Aeneas is directly involved and both situations will result in a peace treaty (also involving the Trojans).

The other ruler that Anna's recommendations echo is Emperor Augustus. "By reviving temples, ancient religious customs, and promoting family values, the emperor pushed for this moral 'rebirth'. With stories of the past, Augustus legitimized his moral reform and, as a part of that, legislation promoting marriage and procreation" (Rantala, 2019:195). We first meet Dido when she is opening a temple dedicated to Juno, goddess of marriage. Then Anna encourages Dido to partake in a kind of moral 'rebirth' by forgetting her oath to a dead man and rather embracing the living, by partaking in a legitimate marriage and producing legitimate offspring, which aligns with Augustus' ideologies (Manioti, 2012:32). It is also made evident that it was important to Anna that Dido does this correctly, by first asking for forgiveness from the gods and seeking permission from them by performing the proper sacrifices. Dido's inflamed emotional state interfered with the legitimacy of the process, but one could argue that Anna's intentions were not tainted by the same romantic passions and that her advice was greatly the product of her ambitions for a truly great kingdom, in much the same way that Augustus used such reforms as an attempt to establish and maintain Rome's power.

"Anna was a potentially unifying figure between Rome and Carthage – two powers with a mutual antagonism and hostility, on which Roman self-understanding was significantly based" (Rantala, 2019:199). This is part of Anna's symbolic function in the *Aeneid*. Her position as both *unanima* to Dido and Aeneas' only true confidant represents the possibility of a common and unifying element between Rome and Carthage.

> "quam tu urbem, soror, hanc cernes, quae surgere regna
> coniugio tali! Teucrum comitantibus armis
> Punica se quantis attollet gloria rebus!" (4.47-49).
>
> "With such a union, what a city and a queendom,
> sister, will you see! With Trojan arms beside us,
> so much greatness must lie in wait for Punic glory!"[41]

The peace treaty that Anna suggests, paired with the description of the sisters "seeking peace at every altar" (4.56-57) directly following Anna's conception of their chosen strategy, contributes to the sisters' function as referential figures (representing the relationship between Rome and Carthage) and emphasizes their influence on the plot. Their peace-seeking actions serve a referential function because it introduces the idea that Dido and her council were the first to offer a peace treaty to the Trojans (Romans). However, we learn by the end of book four that this proposed peace treaty extended to the Trojans on the condition that they stayed and contributed to the Carthaginian realm. Dido did perhaps not intend that the treaty should extend beyond her borders into foreign territory (Italy). The treaty was thus binding with the intention that Aeneas

[41] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:80-81).

becomes the Trojan leader of Carthage and not Aeneas the Trojan leader of Italy. This will result in the Carthaginians also being the first to explicitly call for war between their peoples.

Even though the primary narrator may imply that it is Amor's fault (4.411-412), Dido's decision to pursue Aeneas was not made solely based on romantic notions contrived by "Amor" and instigated by Venus. The order of the actions indicates that Dido and Anna had initiated such a discussion of their own accord, and that it was Anna who was first to suggest the possibility of Dido marrying Aeneas. Juno and Venus merely exploited the already-present ideas and desires. Notably, Dido did not give in to her desires merely at the prospect of fulfilling her sexual and emotional needs, but she had to be persuaded to proceed with her sister's assurance that she should not refuse this union, based on the political and personal advantages it poses. The notion of Punic glory is placed at the end of Anna's speech, making it the climax of her argument. Dido's reaction to Anna's words follows directly after Anna's climactic and dramatic ending in which she envisions great political success. The order of events clearly imply that it was in the final instance talk of power, not merely talk of love that swayed the queen. The two women decide that it is strategically better for Dido to be joined with this foreigner, accepting Venus' reward, which in this case is Aeneas. How will they accomplish this political move of forming an alliance with the Trojans for the glory of Carthage? By praying and sacrificing to the gods, while "weaving excuses for the Trojans to delay" (4.50-51).

If we were to describe Anna's role in the plot and *fabula*, she is both a helper to Dido and an obstacle to Aeneas, though her opposition is usually through her relationship with Dido and she is rarely described as directly challenging Aeneas. The only instance where Anna directly tries to make Aeneas stay is when she tries to persuade him to delay his departure (4.421-424), after having been sent by her sister. But she is ultimately an obstacle to the hero since it was her speech and suggestion of strategic delay that led to Dido temporarily suspending the hero's mission. But it seems that Anna's roles in both the plot and *fabula* layers of the text, namely that of an obstacle actant and a royal advisor and confidant, indicate that she is primarily a strategist.

3.3.5 Dido's relationship with Aeneas

The legitimacy of Dido's marriage to Aeneas has been the subject of much debate, not only by Dido and Aeneas themselves in the narrative but by scholars of Vergil. Discerning the exact legality of the union is not necessarily important for this dissertation. What is, however, important is that Dido believed that her relationship with Aeneas was sanctioned by the gods. Dido was also under the impression that she followed the correct procedures so that her marriage would not jeopardize her honour and cause her to lose the respect of her people and the surrounding

kingdoms. Their marriage would signify a new dynasty that unites the admirable and renowned Trojans with her own powerful and hardworking Carthaginians.

It is also important to note that in both the *fabula* and plot levels of the text, Dido offered the Trojans peace and citizenship before her mind and actions were manipulated by Venus.[42] This shows agency on Dido's part, and demonstrates that before she became the pursued, she was first the pursuer. This notion is suggested by the Homeric metaphors surrounding a hunter and stag.[43] In the *Aeneid,* a political figure (like Aeneas) is associated with a hunter that pursues a kingdom (like Latium) which is associated with the image of a deer. Initially, Dido is associated with the goddess of the hunt Diana. The physical hunt she and Aeneas partake in (before they consummate their relationship in a cave) also places Dido in the metaphorical position of the hunter. This supports the notion that Dido pursued Aeneas not merely for erotic purposes, but her association with the hunter aligns her with the role of political pursuant.

Dido has already founded her queendom yet is working towards ensuring the dynasty that Anna convinced her to pursue. But this pursuit will ironically lead to her own death, as she is 'hunted' by Venus who "besieges" the queen. The metaphor is fitting, as hunting bears undertones of both power and eroticism. Dido embodies both the roles of hunter and hunted deer, which will link her character intertextually with Turnus and Camilla (Fratantuono, 2009:174), who both pursue Aeneas and find themselves wounded and consequently pursued by Aeneas the hunter.

Dido is often demoted in scholarship on the *Aeneid* from a queen who (from her perspective) re-enters into a sanctioned union with a man of noble birth, to a mere obsessed delusional lover of Aeneas. For instance, Clausen (1966:86) refers to Dido as "his [Aeneas'] mistress, who killed herself for chagrin and grief". This phrase is important, as it echoes the general impression of Dido by many scholars of Vergil. Clausen's relegation of Dido to primarily a sexual role is disproven by the argument above that clearly illustrates Dido's role as so much more than a sexual distraction for Aeneas. My view is that, given the extensive attention paid to Dido in book four, Dido is a character in her own right and not merely a marginal character in Aeneas' story. She is also much more than a sexual hindrance for Aeneas because she is an intelligent and formidable political opponent that threatens the establishment of Rome.

Moreover, in this stage of the power dynamics, Aeneas is merely the leader of a group of immigrants from the conquered kingdom of Troy, while Dido is the official ruler of the powerful and growing city-state of Carthage. Dido is already a queen, while Aeneas is not even a king yet.

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[42] This refers to the passage in book one where she offered Illioneus and the Trojans safe passage or refuge in Carthage (Verg. *A.* 1.571-578).

[43] For a full discussion of the usage and interpretation of this Homeric metaphor, see de Villiers (2013).

He is at most referred to as a leader or a “lord” by Iarbas.). In the light of these descriptive terms, one could ask why Dido is the one that is reduced to no more than an erotic figure. It is also inaccurate to refer to Dido as Aeneas' mistress, since neither of them is actively betrothed to other spouses. They are, however, indeed lovers, and when describing their relationship using modern terminology (i.e., not contemporary to Augustan times) it would perhaps be more appropriate to refer to Aeneas as consort to Dido. The position that Aeneas currently holds in Carthage i.e., at the time of the events described in book four, enables him to take over the planning and construction of the city. This privilege has been granted to him only because the queen views him as her husband.

As has been discussed above, Dido’s union with Aeneas would have had a considerable effect on her rule in Carthage. On the one hand, she would have been breaking a vow and would run the risk of becoming known as impious and unfaithful. On the other, if the union were to be successful, Dido would be able to witness the Punic glory that her sister Anna had hoped to achieve. The question this section discusses, however, is whether Dido is portrayed as a mere delusional lover obstructing the course of a hero’s journey, or with some sympathy as someone who is under the impression that she was once more a participating party in a marriage pact?

Many scholars of the *Aeneid*, e.g., Gutting (2006:271), describe Dido as abandoning her people and her queendom, all because she lusts for Aeneas. This sentiment is echoed by Rumour in the *Aeneid* (4.173-195), who spreads damaging allegations throughout the cities of Libya (concerning Dido’s behaviour and relationship with Aeneas). The rumour finally reached King Iarbas, one of Dido’s rejected suitors and a potential threat to the safety of the queen and her city. I believe that there is a clever ambiguity in the description of the contents of Rumour’s message (4.188-197):

> tam ficti pravique tenax quam nuntia veri.
> haec tum multiplici populos sermone replebat
> gaudens, et pariter facta atque infecta canebat:
> venisse Aenean Troiano sanguine cretum,
> cui se pulchra viro dignetur iungere Dido;[44]
> nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa, fovere
> regnorum immemores turpique cupidine captos.
> haec passim dea foeda virum diffundit in ora.
> protinus ad regem cursus detorquet Iarban
> incenditque animum dictis atque aggerat iras.

> “… for she holds fast to falsehood and distortion / as often as to messages of truth. Now she was glad. She filled the ears of all / with many tales. She sang of what was done / and what was fiction, chanting that Aeneas, / one born of Trojan blood, had come, that lovely / Dido has deigned to join herself to him, / that now, in lust, forgetful

[44] There is an earlier occurrence of the verb *dignor* (deem worthy) being used to describe a marriage. In book three, Anchises is described by his men as being a man deemed worthy (*dignate*) of a union (*coniugio*) with a goddess (Venus) (Verg. *A*. 3.475).

> of their kingdom, / they take long pleasure, fondling through the winter, / the slaves of squalid craving. Such reports / the filthy goddess scatters everywhere / upon the lips of men. At once she turns / her course to King Iarbas; and his spirit / is hot, his anger rages at her words."[45]

This description suggests that some of these statements are true, but some are not entirely accurate. Austin (1955:74) suggests that the ambiguity can be resolved by eliminating that which we know to be true, and the rest of the rumour will then be revealed to be falsehood and mere slander. We know that Aeneas is a Trojan who has indeed arrived at Carthage and that Dido has decided to partake in a *coniugium*, which in her mind at least qualifies as marriage. What is, however, unclear is whether they truly abandoned their responsibilities and surrendered to their sexual desires. Austin upholds that the only logical conclusion is to view the accusations that cast Dido as living in *luxu* with Aeneas and *turpique cupidine captos* as a "malicious twist to the truth, and so is *immemores*" (Austin, 1955:74).

One could, however, better determine whether Dido's desire for Aeneas was solely fuelled by lust or whether it was also intensified by regal ambition. The rumour suggests to the Tyrians that their queen has abandoned them. The severity of Dido's alleged behaviour is emphasized by the specific kind of abandonment that is implied. As their queen, Dido carries the responsibility of cultivating and caring for Carthage in the same way that their patron goddess Juno does (Verg. *A*. 1.18-19).[46] The unacceptable nature of this neglect is highlighted by the close resemblance of the description in which Dido forgets her responsibility to her queendom due to a man sprung from Trojan blood (*Aeneid* 4.191-194) to the description of Juno's cultivation of this very queendom and her fear of the race sprung from Trojan blood (Verg. *A*. 1.17-21) (… *hoc regnum dea gentibus esse, / si qua fata sinant, iam tum tenditque fovetque. / progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci*, *audierat, Tyrias olim quae verteret arces*: "… that here should be the capital of the nations, should the fates perchance allow it, was even then the goddess's aim and cherished hope. Yet in truth she had heard that a race was springing from Trojan blood, to overthrow someday the Tyrian towers").[47] The words *regnum* (referring to Carthage), *Troiano…sanguine*, and *fovet* are used in both passages, albeit in different forms.

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[45] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:85).

[46] The verbs *tendit* and *fovet* describe Juno's desire for Carthage to be the capital of all nations but considering a preceding verse (Verg. *A*. 1.15) that indicates that Juno cared for Carthage most of all, it is reasonable to assume that her care and cultivation would also apply to Carthage as a nation itself and not just the prominence of its position. Austin (1971:36) notes that *fovet* in book one can be understood in the sense of "cherish". He takes *fovet* in book four to represent its other meaning, "to keep warm" (Austin, 1955:74). I suggest that the two translations of the same verb can be reconciled, if one takes the *fovere* in book four to be a wordplay on the *fovet* of book one.

[47] Translation by Fairclough (1967:243).

3.3.6 A queen tries to secure an heir in a desperate attempt to prevent the destruction of her city and herself

Dido's conviction that she and Aeneas have a legally binding marriage is further emphasized when she confronts Aeneas (4.296-330), having learned that he is preparing to depart from Carthage (on account of Mercury's insistence that he resumes his journey to Latium). She asks him to stay and tries to appeal to him by reminding him of their *conubia* (316) and the *hymenaei* (316) that they have begun – both of which are terms that refer to legal marriage (Austin, 1955:101). It is important that their *amor* ("love", 307) and the status of their relationship be official and legal because it would enable Dido to follow Anna's advice to advance Carthage's power through the establishment of a new and powerful dynasty.

It is therefore not only Dido's passion for Aeneas that can be better understood from a political perspective. Her request for a child can also be re-evaluated in this light. Her safety and political security will be in jeopardy if Aeneas were to leave. As Weeda (2015:129) observes: "In this passage, the childless Dido also displays her frustration over her failure to start a new dynasty with him." She also makes it clear to him that it is because of him that she is in this precarious political position and that if he leaves, her death will be inevitable.

> "te propter Libycae gentes Nomadumque tyranni
> odere, infensi Tyrii; te propter eundem
> exstinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam,
> fama prior. cui me moribundam deseris hospes
> (hoc solum nomen quoniam de coniuge restat)?
> quid moror? an mea Pygmalion dum moenia frater
> destruat aut captam ducat Gaetulus Iarbas?
> saltem si qua mihi de te suscepta fuisset
> ante fugam suboles, si quis mihi parvulus aula
> luderet Aeneas, qui te tamen ore referret,
> non equidem omnino capta ac deserta viderer." (4.320-330)

> "Because of you, the Libyan tribes and Numidian chiefs hate me, even the Tyrians are hostile; because of you, also, my reputation has been tarnished and my past fame, the only way I would reach the stars. To whom do you leave me, to die, O guest, as this is the only name I can call you by, you whom I once called my partner? For what should I wait? Until my brother Pygmalion, tears down the city walls or Iarbas the Gaetulian drags me off as a captive? If at least there had been a progeny for me, from you, before your flight, if in my palace court a little Aeneas were playing, whose appearance would at least bear your resemblance, I should not seem to be entirely vanquished and deserted."[48]

It is clear that Dido believes (perhaps not unreasonably) that Aeneas' departure will result in her downfall as a ruler. Yet having his child might have prevented this since the child would be

[48] Own translation.

descendent of a divine bloodline and would one day be heir to the throne of the kingdom that Aeneas seeks (McAuley, 2016:60). It is therefore not just a child that Dido seeks, but a powerful political asset. The repetition of *te propter* that emphasizes Aeneas' guilt in ruining her reputation suggests that he has already caused her to lose her good name, but if he leaves, he will be the reason that she loses her life as well.

Rumour may have suggested that Dido is too preoccupied with Aeneas to notice the state of her queendom, but her speech confirms that she is still thoroughly informed of the political climate in and around Carthage. As she mentions, the threats to her life are the Libyans, Numidians, Gaetulians (Iarbas), Phoenicians (her brother Pygmalion) and now even her own Tyrians have turned against her due to the slanderous rumours surrounding her relationship with Aeneas.[49] Dido's awareness of the escalating political tensions is hinted at by her reference to Iarbas as a Gaetulian here at the end of book four, despite the fact that Anna drew a distinction between the Gaetulians and Iarbas at the beginning of book four.

This distinction indicates a separate (even historical) progression of events because Iarbas, the historical figure, was probably the inspiration for Iarbas as a Vergilian character. The historical Iarbas was initially a ruler of only one kingdom (the Numidians), but he later ruled both the Numidians and the Gaetulians. If one does not take this to be an embedded focalized aspect by the omniscient primary narrator, but rather a piece of information that Dido herself knows and relates to Aeneas, it would indicate that Dido is still focused on her duties as ruler. Dido's knowledge of the increasingly threatening political climate suggests that she is aware of the extent to which the rumours surrounding her conduct have been spread and accepted (4.173-197). She thus desires an heir that could help her fight her wars and vanquish her foes when the time comes.

The diminutive form used to describe the child as a "little Aeneas" (*parvulus Aeneas*) is not commonly found in epic but is often used in Roman love elegy to convey erotic undertones (Austin, 1955:104). The elegiac usage of the word has contributed to a common (and arguably disturbingly sexist) trend in scholarship that completely disregards the reasons and arguments that Dido explicitly offers in her plea for a child and rather infers the motivations behind her request in the light of certain erotic (even perverse) desires that Dido apparently has for Aeneas and her future child.[50] An example of this is Gutting (2006:269) who argues that Dido wants a child with Aeneas firstly because of her "erotic fixation on Aeneas" and secondly because she only wants

[49] "Tyrians" here refers to the citizens of Carthage (Austin, 1955:102-103).

[50] Though this interpretation can be inferred considering the scene where Cupid poses as Ascanius and makes Dido cradle him in her lap with dubious intentions, it is still an unnecessarily perverse interpretation of Dido's desire as a woman to be a mother and her desire to establish a lineage as a monarch.

the child so that she can have something that will remind her of Aeneas once he has abandoned her. I suggest that this interpretation and persistent quest to discern her motivations is erroneous and that it is reasonable to question whether her motivations to want a child would have been under such scrutiny if she were a male monarch demanding an heir from his consort.

I further suggest that Dido's desire to have a child should be evaluated not only in the light of her desires as a woman, but with consideration of her needs as a monarch. I would rather opt for the interpretation of her request, provided by McAuley (2016:60), that Dido's request for a child is entirely understandable given its political potential as heir to both the Italian (Roman) and Carthaginian dynasties. The child is therefore perhaps not to serve as someone bearing Aeneas' physical resemblance (*parvulus Aeneas*), which would purely serve as an emotional substitute for Aeneas. Instead, the child would function as someone who represents Aeneas and the power that his divine lineage secures. This is emphasized by the climax of her plea, claiming that the child would alter the perception that she is completely *capta ac deserta* (conquered and abandoned). This phrase echoes the description of a city that has been sacked (Austin, 1955). Dido and Aeneas' relationship is especially complex since their domestic situation has public and political consequences. The dual nature of their relationship is moreover supported by Dido's request, in the first part of her speech, that Aeneas should have pity for a falling house (*misere domus labentis*, 318).[51] I believe that Dido uses metonymy here, which evokes both the idea of their failing household (as a childless husband and wife) and the sense of the house of Carthage that represents her country.

Characters in the *Aeneid*, including divine characters like Juno, are unable to entirely thwart the outcome of Fate, but they can delay it (Austin, 1971:34). Dido acts within the limits that have been established, trying to further delay Aeneas. Her situation would, however, be altered if she were to secure a child from him. Even if Aeneas leaves at that point, the child (a little Aeneas) will enable her to regain respect as a ruler and help her to protect herself and her queendom against her enemies by producing the heir to a powerful Italian kingdom especially since he is also the child of a renowned even mythic war hero.

One of the enemies that Dido must protect herself from, whose name is also mentioned in the *Fama* episode, is the Numidian king Iarbas. He is one of the suitors that Dido scorned, and he has interpreted her courtship with Aeneas as a direct insult. He might have been able to comprehend Dido's rejection if it were based on an honourable oath concerning her dead husband, but he deems it unacceptable that she rejects him only to marry a foreigner. Austin

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[51] *Domus*: Charlton T. Lewis, Ph.D. and. Charles Short, LL.D. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1879. When used in metonymy, *domus* can be used in a wider sense to refer to either A. one's native place or country, or B. a household or family.

(1955:75) notes that Iarbas is a despot who considers Dido to be his rightful property. Iarbas' sense of entitlement, jealousy, and the unbridled nature of his people (4.41) make him a threat to Dido's safety and quality of life. Iarbas is her opposite when one considers the extent to which Dido's intellect and innovative nature are depicted (1.357-369). As has been mentioned, other accounts of Dido confirm that she committed suicide to preserve her honour rather than be subjected to a marriage to a king like Iarbas (Austin, 1971:125-126). Dido's fear that she will become like a sacked city is realized in Iarbas' reaction upon hearing that she chose to marry a man other than himself (4.198-218), when he claims that Aeneas is another Paris who holds possession of the *raptum* (used as a noun in 4.217), the spoil – a reference to Dido and her queendom which he feels he should possess. In the metaphor, Iarbas simultaneously compares Dido to Helen (wife of Spartan King Menelaus) and reduces her to a looted object (Austin, 1955:78-79).

Dido may not be the primary subject of the epic (which is Aeneas), but it is still important to examine her as a subject who has a primary intention and an object, because it points to her role in the *fabula* layer of the text. If one relegates her to the function of Aeneas's temptress, based on her sexual desire for him, she will intend to remarry, and he (Aeneas) would be her object. If, however, one takes her political ambitions into account, the structural theme would rather be that Dido (subject) wants to build up and strengthen (intention) her queendom which ties into her power as ruler (object). If we combine these two and opt for a more nuanced interpretation, then one can see how it seems that her original intention was merely to be more successful as a ruler (object), but how it gradually becomes evident that her intention is also to be more successful as a woman (object). Both ambitions (the intentions to become a better ruler and a better woman) can be accomplished by marrying Aeneas and by having his child. This makes her role similar to that of Aeneas, in that he wants to reach Italy and found (intention) Rome (object). A secondary goal lies in his desire to build up and strengthen his Trojans (future Rome). Similarly, Aeneas must marry Lavinia and have her children in the same way that Dido wanted to marry Aeneas and have his children. But concerning Aeneas, who is the primary subject (actant), Dido functions as more than an obstacle to his mission in the form of a temptress (like Circe or Calypso to Odysseus); she also functions as an obstacle in terms of political opposition (future Punic Wars).

3.4 Dido's suicide

Dido's removal as an obstacle to Aeneas' mission is complete when she commits suicide after his departure. Earlier in the story Dido had told Anna that if Aeneas delayed his departure for a short while longer, she would not only desist from further pursuing their relationship, but that his obedience to her will also be repaid with full interest in the form of her death (*quam mihi dederit, cumulatam morte remittam.* "… if he has given this to me, I shall return it with full interest at my

death", 4.436). Schiesaro (2008:72) argues that Dido's death implicitly serves as a gift to Aeneas because it signifies that she will no longer be able to compromise his mission. It would initially be reasonable to assume that Aeneas' departure would remove Dido as an obstacle, but one should bear in mind that on a political and theoretical level, she is now an angered ruler of a powerful city-state that might pose a more imminent threat to him and his new kingdom if she were to stay alive.

I furthermore suggest that Dido's self-inflicted death indicates the extent of her agency and that her actions were an attempt to regain power and authority over her own life – preferring death by her own hand to death at the hand of an enemy such as Iarbas, whom Dido believes she will inevitably be subjected to once Aeneas departs.[52] This interpretation aligns the motivations for her suicide in the *Aeneid* with the pre-Vergilian literary traditions surrounding her death, which describe Dido as committing suicide to avoid marrying one of her suitors and in that way preserving her honour.[53] Dido's agency is demonstrated when she kills herself because she dies in a time and manner that was, according to the goddess Juno, neither fated nor deserved (4.696).

Though her death was not ordained by Fate, it was foreshowed by a few instances in the narrative. An example of this is when Aeneas unknowingly suggests the death of both Sychaeus and Dido when he says to the goddess Venus: *multa tibi ante aras nostra cadet hosta dextra* ("many victims will die at our hand before your altars", 1.334). The goddess responds by denying that she requires that kind of sacrifice (1.335) but then proceeds to narrate how Sychaeus died before the *arae* ("altars") because of Pygmalion's love of wealth (*auri caecus amore*; "blind with a love for gold", 1.349). Later in book four, Dido takes her own life at the *arae* as well (4.509 & *altaria*, 4.517). The narrator also ascribes the tragic repercussions of the Trojans' visit to the god Amor (4.411-412), and by association to Venus who instructed the god to slowly poison Dido's mind. Yet Dido did not die solely as a result of her love for Aeneas but also because of her love for her position as ruler – which has now been inevitably compromised. The motif of *pietas* is also central to both Sychaeus's and Dido's death. Sychaeus is described as dying "impious" (*impius*, 1.349) at the altars, but not because of his impiety, but because of Pygmalion's impiety. Similarly, Dido is described as dying with pious hands at the altars (*manibusque piis altaria iuxta*; "with pious hands at the altars", 4.517). I would even suggest that the placement of *piis* next to *altaria* (despite

[52] The theme of death rather than subjugation reveals her character's links to the Egyptian ruler Cleopatra, who is said to have committed suicide to avoid being paraded as spoil of war by the Emperor Augustus. The parallels that connect Dido's depiction in the *Aeneid* to the historical and literary accounts of Cleopatra have been discussed at length by scholars of Vergil, but further elaboration on this topic falls beyond the scope of this dissertation.

[53] The political nature of Dido's suicide is also supported within the framework of Hellenic culture, in which it was acceptable (even laudable) for female rulers to preserve their honour by committing suicide (James & Dillon, 2015:313).

their unmatching cases) reminds the reader of the sacrifices that a pious life commands. This then emphasizes that Dido fell victim not only at the altars of *amor* but also at the altars of Aeneas' piety and his obedience to his mission.

Dido's motivation for taking her life can be understood by examining the reasons that she offers. Sharrock (2015:167) contrasts Dido's final words with those of Camilla (book eleven), upholding that Dido simply "cursed Aeneas and bemoaned her abandoned state, whereas Camilla's thoughts and words are only for the furtherance of the war."[54] This conclusion may be true to a certain extent, but I argue that it disregards some of the vital and non-romantic reasons for Dido being overwhelmed by her abandoned position. I further argue that Sharrock's view of Dido's final words fails to consider all the facets of Dido's curse on Aeneas, which is crucial for a nuanced understanding of the motivations behind her suicide as well as her role in the plot and *fabula*.

An examination of the different aspects of Dido's curse reveals the following: First, the curse on Aeneas was not limited to him as a private person but it extended to a war between two countries. In her curse on the Trojans, Dido provides a teleological reason for the historic war between Rome and Carthage. By ordering a war between Carthage and Rome Dido brought the dispute between the goddesses Juno and Venus to a climax. The war between Carthage and Rome that has been fought on a divine level will in future be waged on a mortal level. Dido's curse, therefore, extends beyond the story-world of the narrative into the history of Carthage and Rome. This referential aspect of her death is also supported by Dido referring to herself by her original name, Elissa, in the verses leading up to Dido's explicit uttering of the curse. The name Elissa is also used historically in reference to the Carthaginian leader Hannibal.[55] He is also the "unknown avenger" (that is, unknown to her but not to the Roman audience) that she (4.625) predicts and commands to rise from her bones. It is also noteworthy that Hannibal committed suicide to avoid being subjugated and taken into Roman custody.

Secondly, Dido provides possible reasons for her suicide when she explicitly contemplates which course of action she should take and weighs their possible outcomes. In her monologue, which takes place in the queen's private court, Dido (4.534-553) considers different courses of action but concludes that she should take her own life. I suggest that the location where she delivers the monologue is significant because it signals that her words (which she utters alone) will not be veiled in pretence but will reveal her innermost thoughts. Dido senses that she can no longer successfully rule her people because she has angered her former suitors and she realises that

54 Camilla's final words are discussed in Chapter 5.

55 "Ĕlissa or Ĕlīsa , ae, f., = Ἔλισσα, another name (occurring only in poetry) for I. Dido, Verg. *A*. 4, 335; 610; 5, 3; Ov. *Am*. 2, 18, 31; id. *F*. 3, 553 al.—Hence, II. Ĕlis-saeus (Elīsaeus), a, um, adj., poet. for Carthaginian: "patres," Sil. 6, 346: "tyrannus," i. e. Hannibal, id. 2, 239: "lacerti," id. 15, 524." Dictionary entry in Charlton T. Lewis, Ph.D. and. Charles Short, LL.D. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1879.

going back to them is not an option. She also decides that neither fleeing with the Trojans nor fleeing again with her people to a new destination are viable courses of action, because she feels that she has lost their respect (likely because of the slanderous allegations that were spread by Rumour). Dido never claims to kill herself because of her love for Aeneas but feels instead that she must die because that is what she deserves and furthermore that she deserves to die in this way.

Dido uses her final words (4.650-662) to provide a concise summary of what she believed were her life's greatest events and achievements. She mentions the city that she has built and how she successfully fled from her brother and avenged her husband's death through her queendom. This is significant because it provides insight into what was significant to Dido – significant enough to be her final words. Her list of accomplishments focuses on the political successes that she has achieved because of (or despite) her relationships. This characterizes her as a politician who was aware of her success and nature as a strategist. She summarizes these accomplishments before she kills herself with a sword that was left by Aeneas on a pyre in the courtyard of the palace.

Dido's aptitude for creating a distracting ruse to obtain what she wants is emphasized by the construction of her funeral pyre. The pyre was built under the guidance of her sister Anna, whom Dido coaxed into building it by putting on a hopeful face and telling her that the pyre plays a vital role in a religious ceremony that will not only heal her pain but will in turn also inflict pain on Aeneas (4.478ff). Dido instructs Anna to build the pyre after she herself has resolved to die – deciding even on the time and manner of her death. Dido, therefore, achieves her goal by enlisting her sister's help to end a relationship that Anna had helped Dido to begin. I suggest that Dido decides not to tell Anna of the true purpose of the pyre because her sister has previously proved that she has the persuasive ability to prevent her from executing her plan.

The primary narrator emphasizes the success of Dido's deception by lending insight into Anna's thoughts and perceptions on the matter, or rather into that which she did not think:

> non tamen Anna novis praetexere funera sacris
> germanam credit, nec tantos mente furores
> concipit aut graviora timet quam morte Sychaei.
> ergo iussa parat (4.500-503).
>
> Anna, however, does not think that her sister had concealed her funeral with these strange rites, nor does she imagine such acts of madness, nor does she fear her to be in a graver state than with the death of Sychaeus. Therefore, she makes the preparations as instructed.[56]

[56] Own translation.

Austin (1955:150) comments that, despite Anna being the person that knows Dido the best, she is here proven to be “not very perceptive”. I agree with his remark to the extent that Anna should have been able to discern the extent of Dido’s distress. I would, however, argue that Anna’s inability to imagine the extremes that her sister would go to is rooted in her level-headed and practical nature (as has been explained regarding their discussion in 4.1-55). Furthermore, I suggest that this comment by the narrator is aimed less at Anna’s inability to perceive the truth than at Dido’s ability to conceal it. This entire interaction illustrates Dido’s skill as a strategist. Manioti (2012:40) notes that, in Dido’s request, the queen is mindful of her tone and purposely continues to address Anna in endearing terms which emphasize their kinship (*germana* 4.478), in order to prevent Anna from suspecting that anything is amiss.

3.4.1 Anna’s reaction to Dido’s suicide

Dido’s true intentions in constructing the pyre become apparent to Anna and the rest of the city when Dido has fallen on a sword belonging to Aeneas. The news of her death causes the city to fall into a near-instant and growing turmoil (4.663-671). Anna realizes what her sister has done and rushes in great anguish to her sister’s side to hold her as she dies (4.672-692). As Anna climbs the pyre, she cries out a series of rhetorical questions directed at Dido that illustrate Anna’s realization that she was misled by her sister. These rhetorical utterances also reveal how angered Anna is at Dido’s decision to leave her behind (4.672-685).

To better understand Anna’s reaction to her sister’s suicide and her disbelief when realizing the true purpose of the pyre which Dido instructed her to build, it is necessary to recall one of their earlier discussions which has already been examined in this dissertation, namely when Dido instructed Anna to go to Aeneas (4.430-436). Dido asked Anna to try and make him delay his departure by promising him that his obedience will be rewarded. The section of her instructions that needs to be examined once more is the phrase: *quam mihi dederit, cumulatam morte remittam*. (“… if he grants me this, I shall return it with full interest with my death”, 4.436). Schiesaro (2008:72) suggests that Anna could have understood *morte* in the sense of a mere delay of time. It would also have been reasonable for Anna to interpret Dido’s statement as meaning that he will be rewarded someday after she dies, or at her death (Austin, 1955:132). Scholars such as Schiesaro (2008:73) criticize Anna’s inability to comprehend the various levels of meaning that a word such as *morte* can denote, claiming that Anna could not be expected to understand what Dido meant since she has been at various instances been credited with only “a limited flair for lateral thinking”.

I would argue that this is an unwarranted underestimation of Anna’s skill as an advisor and of her ability to approach issues at hand with a creative and ambitious approach (as demonstrated

earlier in this chapter). I further suggest that the challenges that Anna faces in determining the exact meaning of Dido's words in this phrase; speak to the intersecting levels of interpretation and uncertainty that surround the meanings of certain Vergilian phrases. This sense of uncertainty is shared between the scholars of Vergil (outside the text) who attempt to interpret the meanings of certain Vergilian phrases, and between the characters within the epic who try to interpret and discern the meanings of the Vergilian phrases assigned to their fellow participants. While Anna is criticised for not knowing the exact meaning of *morte* here, scholars of Vergil themselves are still trying to discern its exact meaning. Mackail (cited in Austin 1955:131) claims that this verse is renowned to be one of Vergil's most challenging statements. Austin (1955:132) notes that the interpretation of *morte* consistently presents challenges for exact interpretation. I would, however, argue that this phrase is not an indication of Anna's lack of mental complexity but rather an indication of Dido's skill as a strategist and politician. Dido selected her words with care.

Austin (1955:34) considers it noteworthy that when Anna rushes to Dido's side, she does not address Dido by name, but rather refers to her as *germana* (675), "her very own sister". Austin does not, unfortunately, elaborate on its significance. However, Manioti (2012:20-44), in an insightful and elaborate explication of the significance of *germana*, notes that its usage in this scene not only emphasizes Anna's unwavering affection for her sister, but also indicates a shift in their power dynamics. Where it was previously often Dido who spoke to Anna (with Anna's verbal response being entirely omitted), it is now Anna who speaks to an unresponsive Dido (Manioti, 2012:42).

Furthermore, I propose that the usage of this word functions as a pun that conveys information firstly between characters and secondly between narrator and audience. *Germana* is firstly used in a personal sense, as Anna reminds Dido that she was her *germana*, her "very own sister", even perhaps all that she had. *Germana* is secondly used in a more public and civic sense, as the narrator has Anna address Dido as *germana*, evoking the Ciceronian idea of *patria germana*, "one's true homeland".[57] Anna and Dido are still essentially Phoenician immigrants in North Africa, and Dido was the only genuine blood tie Anna still had in Africa to her homeland. Dido furthermore represents the dynasty that her sister helped to found and in which Anna played an essential role as royal advisor and confidant. Anna, therefore, uses *germana* to address Dido not only as a person and a familial relation but as the primary public representative for the specific Phoenician dynasty that ruled Carthage.

[57] "*haec est mea et huius fratris mei germana patria: hinc enim orti stirpe antiquissima sumus*," Cic. Leg. 2, 1, 3.

3.5 Chapter conclusion

Whether one takes Dido's motivations surrounding her death to signify her love for Aeneas or her final heroic and strategic act as a queen, Dido clearly uses her final words to reflect on both her private relationships and her political success. Dido also achieved success as a result of her personal relationships (with her husband, brother, and consort) by avenging her husband and revolting against her brother and by building a successful and powerful city that serves as her legacy. It is, however, her relationship with Anna which exemplifies the intricate balance between the private and political interests that these women represent. The two sisters fulfil a variety of roles for each other. Most notably, they serve as each other's kinswomen, personal confidants, ruler (Dido) and political advisor (Anna). Their actions and decisions were aimed at realizing both their private desires and their political ambitions – that they had hoped to achieve not only for their own sake but for the glory of Carthage. This is emphasized by Anna's reaction to Dido's death when she is distraught at the realization that Dido has not only left her behind but the people of Carthage too. The dual nature of Dido's self-sacrifice (ending her feud with Aeneas and catalysing a future war between the Romans and Carthaginians) also demonstrates how women in the *Aeneid* are concerned with both matters of the heart and with politics.

CHAPTER 4: AMATA, KINDLED BY A WOMAN'S ANXIETIES AND ANGER

4.1 Chapter introduction

The theme of *furor* "rage" and its dangers are illustrated in the first (*Odyssean*) half of Vergil's *Aeneid*. There Dido's dual-natured passion (personal and political) is exemplified in her curse on the Trojans and their descendants in which she declares eternal strife between her people and theirs. This curse serves an aetiological function in the narrative and explains the cause of the Punic Wars and connects the military general Hannibal to Dido as an avenging figure (Conte, 1999:283-284). For the *Aeneid*'s second (*Iliadic*) half, similar aetiological themes are at play to explicate Rome's relationship to the native Italian tribes and kingdoms (Conte, 1999:281-282). Dido and other prominent characters (Camilla, Amata, Turnus and Aeneas) have ambitions and desires that are amplified to the point that they are described as being of a fiery nature and that they burn with passion. The Latin word that is often used to describe this burning passion is *ardor* ("burning"). Their *furor* is often expressed and illustrated through their ardent passion for both personal and political issues. The theme of rage and burning passion also becomes increasingly prevalent because the plot is now concerned with war and marriage.

The second half (books seven to twelve) of the *Aeneid* introduces and focuses on a variety of new characters. The most significant of these, especially for the central argument of this dissertation, is Queen Amata and her husband, King Latinus, who are the rulers of Latium (the kingdom Aeneas is destined to rule and the location of future Rome); their daughter Princess Lavinia; the Rutulian prince Turnus (to whom Lavinia's hand in marriage was originally promised) and the warrior Camilla, who is the queen of the Volscians (one of the allied tribes that comes to the aid of the Latin effort against the Trojans).[58] Most of these actors are characterized through their symbolic links to the characters in the first half of the *Aeneid* and it is important to note this retrospective characterisation that becomes evident through our analysis of these women.[59] This is because the better we understand the characters in the second part of the hero's journey, the better we understand the motivations and actions behind the characters in the first part of the hero's journey. By reflecting on the retrospective characterisation that takes place between the mortals, the reader can understand Dido, Anna, Camilla, and Amata better, because their actions can be evaluated in the context of the overarching narrative.

[58] Lavinia will be referred to where relevant, but she will not be examined in depth, as she has no verbal dialogue to analyse, which is a vital element of our narratological analysis.

[59] For an example of possible retrospective characterization between Dido and Camilla, see Bednarowski (2015:143).

The symbolic links that bind them to each other as well as their actant roles and functions will be discussed where relevant in each case, but this chapter focuses on Queen Amata. The next chapter (Chapter 5) will discuss the warrior queen Camilla. Both these women function as obstacles to the primary subject actant (Aeneas). Their roles are, however, multi-layered, and an examination of their passions is essential in understanding the motivations and actions that contribute to their characterization in the plot and their actant roles in the *fabula.*

The image of fire and burning passion (*furor* and *ardor*) takes many forms in the *Aeneid*. It is applied to men and women alike. *Furens* is often used to describe the warrior preparing for war or raging across the battlefield.[60] It is therefore an element that links Penthesilea (*furens, 1.490*) to both Camilla (*furens*, 11.762) and Turnus (*furens*, 11.486), because they are all described as fighting for their causes in this fashion.[61] The character who is most prominently described as *ardens* ("burning") is Dido (1.713, 4.101, 6.467). Other prominent characters who are described in this fashion are first, Camilla, who is described as *femineo praedae et spoliorum ardebat amore* ("burning with a woman's passion for plunder and spoils", 11.782); second Amata, who is described as *femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque coquebant* ("who is, seething, kindled by a woman's angst and ire, [over the Trojan arrival and the marriage of Turnus]", 7.345). It is even applied to pious Aeneas. He is described in 4.281-282 as *ardet abire fuga dulcisque relinquere terras, / attonitus tanto monitu imperioque deorum* ("He burns to flee away and quit those pleasant lands, awed by that warning and commandment of the gods"). The Latin matrons are described as *praecipites primaeque mori pro moenibus ardent* ("each burn to die first for her city's sake", 11.895).[62]

Turnus is described more than once as burning with passion. He is described as burning with wrath after seeing the weakened state of the Latins and realizing that he will likely lose the princess and the kingdom he was promised (*ardet*, 12.3). He is then described as the burning son-in-law of Amata (*ardentem generum,* 12.55).

4.2 The extent of the gorgon Allecto's influence on Queen Amata (7.341-358)

This section explores the extent to which Amata's desires were created and injected into the queen, and to what extent it was an already present desire that was simply exploited when she found her *femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque coquebant* (7.345). Though it is not the aim of this dissertation to examine what constitutes "female passion" in contrast to "male passion", it is still noteworthy that some of the instances of ardent passion are marked as being distinctly feminine activities. It is, however, crucial to keep in mind the following observation made by

[60] For further reading on *furor* and its connection to arming scenes in ancient epic, see Reitz (2019:19).
[61] *Furens* is also applied to Dido and has been discussed in Chapter 3.
[62] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:298).

Oliensis (1997:310): “If masculinity means the ability to harness passions, no character in the *Aeneid* is fully masculine – not even Jupiter”. On the other hand, I do believe that the focus and motivations for these passions are indeed relevant. I will therefore continue my examination of the elite mortal women’s motivations by studying Queen Amata in this chapter (Chapter 4) and Queen Camilla in the next chapter (Chapter 5). As with my analysis regarding the actions and motivations of Dido and Anna in Chapter 3, I will study Queen Amata and Camilla in order to determine which of their motivations are their own and which are the result of divine manipulation. Drawing this distinction is essential, because it reveals the extent to which the women are preoccupied with politics and the extent of their agency.

In the second part of the *Aeneid*, from book seven, Aeneas is once again lined up for a marriage union for the sake of the peace and glory of a kingdom (7.260-90). This time, however, the peace-treaty is arranged by men, not women. This solely male-planned pact is met with strong female resistance, both human and divine. Juno expresses her disapproval of the *gener atque socer coeant* (“father and son-in-law’s alliance”, 7.317) between Aeneas and King Latinus in terms which Highet (1972:162) suggests are typically used for describing a civil war. Not only is there unrest on the divine level of the narrative, but the Latin queen Amata is also already described in the following passage as “seething with all a women’s anguish, fire and fury” (7.344-5) over the prospect that her daughter will no longer be marrying Turnus. Amata’s anger is a result of her own desires and not a foreign emotion that is planted by a higher authority. For it is only then, when the queen is already upset, that the fury Allecto comes to Amata to incite further rage against the marriage. Juno asks Allecto to do this for her so that neither her honour nor her fame is torn from its high place (7.332-3). Allecto kindled and exploited Amata’s rage towards Aeneas, but it is a rage that was already present in Amata’s mind. Amata’s hostility was amplified, not created. Amata’s inner desire to prevent her daughter from marrying Aeneas is presented as a liminal state:

> Exim Gorgoneis Allecto infecta venenis
> principio Latium et Laurentis tecta tyranni
> celsa petit, tacitumque obsedit limen Amatae,
> quam super adventu Teucrum Turnique hymenaeis
> femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque coquebant (7.341-345).
>
> From there, Allecto, tainted with a Gorgon’s poison, first seeks Latium and the lofty palace of the Laurentine leader. There she besieges Amata’s silent threshold, [she] who is seething, kindled by a feminine angst and ire, over the arrival of the Trojans and the marriage of Turnus.[63]

[63] Own translation.

The liminality of Amata's desires is emphasized by the fact that the fury Allecto is described as lingering at the queen's silent threshold (*tacitumque obsedit limen Amatae,* 7.343). The nature of the *limen* is ambiguous at first, since it does not specify that the *limen* belongs to a door (although that can easily be understood) but that it takes Amata as its possessor.[64] This ambiguity is a possible indication that Allecto is about to make Amata cross a *limen* that presents not merely a physical threshold but a symbolic and emotional boundary. The idea that the *limen* is not relegated to a physical object is supported by the *limen* being described as *tacitum* (silent). By engaging this threshold, Allecto causes Amata to gradually move across and implicitly encourages the queen to break her silence and take action against the Trojans. The gods in the *Aeneid* tend to only kindle and exploit pre-existing thoughts and emotions (Lyne, 1987:66). This scene fits into that pattern, and Amata's thoughts and emotional turmoil will soon be kindled and amplified to the point that it catalyzes physical uproar.

The nature of Amata's thoughts and concerns are worth examining as well as the language that is used to describe Allecto's manipulation. Amata's concerns surrounding the marriage have been deemed by many scholars of Vergil to be solely erotic, arguing that she wants Turnus to succeed because she herself desires him sexually, and not for her daughter's sake. An example of this is Lyne (1987:15) who suggests that Amata wants Turnus to emerge the victor because she is "in love with him" despite being oblivious to that fact. In contrast to this, I agree with Adler (2003:180) who suggests that Amata wants Turnus to succeed because her primary focus is preserving a pure Italian bloodline and subverting Aeneas as a suitor for Lavinia, because she believes that Turnus is the predestined candidate. The success of this union is of the utmost importance to Amata because, without Lavinia's hand in marriage, Turnus will no longer be Latinus' successor and will thus forfeit his position as future ruler and heir to the Latin kingdom (Fantham, 2009:141).

My argument is that the martial and political nature of Allecto's utilization and catalyzation of Amata is emphasized, especially in view of a specific passage in the second book of the *Aeneid* that describes the war between the Greeks and the Trojans. The phrase *Danaique obsessa tenebant / limina* (2.802f) is used to describe the Greeks besieging Troy's threshold. The language that is used here patently resembles the *obsedit limen Amatae* of book seven (343). The verb *obsedit* now also bears more significance because it indicates that Allecto's interaction with Amata can be understood in terms of one army laying siege to another. That is why Allecto is described as laying siege to Amata's threshold. My interpretation coincides with Lyne's (1987:13) who also

[64] "The wider symbolic field of the limen is exposed and explored by Propertius throughout book four, as the aims of the new aetiological elegiac world attempt to restore the limen to its rightful place, so that we see it not (or not only) as the house door of a fickle mistress (4.5, 4.8) but also as the threshold of a temple (4.9), the gates of the city (4.3, 4.4, 4.7) the borders of the empire (4.10), and even the boundary between life and death (4.7, 4.11)" (Debrohun, 2003:118).

notes that these two passages echo each other through their militaristic imagery and martial language. This is important for my discussion, because it gives significant insight into Amata's actions and frames her decisions in a political context.

In the wake of Amata's poisoning, Allecto's influence continues to increase after she has "assailed Amata's senses" (*pertemptat sensus*, 355). The primary narrator again uses language that evokes militaristic imagery to describe Amata's increasingly dangerous state (Fordyce, 1977:129).

> ac dum prima lues udo sublapsa veneno
> pertemptat sensus atque ossibus implicat ignem
> necdum animus toto percepit pectore flammam,
> mollius et solito matrum de more locuta est,
> multa super natae lacrimans Phrygiisque hymenaeis: (7.354-358).
>
> And while it first, with damp poison, starts to seep into her thoughts and interweaves fire with her bones, her mind has not yet felt the force of the flames filling her chest. She speaks softly, in the way that mothers often do, with great weeping over her young daughter and the Phrygian marriage.[65]

The martial and political language (*pertemptat*, *implicat*, *percepit*) that is employed is suited to Amata's actions because she next goes to her husband, King Latinus, and she entreats him to dissolve the alliance. Allecto's poison, however, has not entirely taken hold of the queen yet, since she is still able to speak to her husband "softly, in a mother's tender way" (7.357). Her agency is therefore indicated by her resistance to the poison and her ability to control her tone of voice. I believe that a nuanced reading of this scene is obtained by recognizing that Allecto's poison does not instantly take complete control of Amata and that she is still able to resist it to some degree.

4.2.1 Amata makes her final plea to Latinus

The combination of militaristic language and maternal tones, as discussed above, highlights the complexity of Amata's character and the variety of roles that she fulfils. When Amata goes to speak to Latinus (7.359-372), she speaks to him both as a mother to the father of their daughter, and as a wife to her husband and as a queen to her king. It is also noteworthy that Amata softens her tone. This indicates that she is capable of implementing strategies and that she adapts the tone of her voice, a technique of rhetorical persuasion, to actively engage in political discourse. The location of their discussion is not provided, and I believe that this emphasizes the dual nature of her plea, as the space is neither exclusively private nor public, but both. Her plea to Latinus is described as follows:

[65] Own translation.

"exsulibusne datur ducenda Lavinia Teucris,
o genitor, nec te miseret nataeque tuique?
nec matris miseret, quam primo Aquilone relinquet
perfidus alta petens abducta virgine praedo?
at non sic Phrygius penetrat Lacedaemona pastor,
Ledaeamque Helenam Troianas vexit ad urbes?
quid tua sancta fides? quid cura antiqua tuorum
et consanguineo totiens data dextera Turno?
si gener externa petitur de gente Latinis,
idque sedet, Faunique premunt te iussa parentis,
omnem equidem sceptris terram quae libera nostris
dissidet externam reor et sic dicere divos.
et Turno, si prima domus repetatur origo,
Inachus Acrisiusque patres mediaeque Mycenae." (7.359-372)

"O husband, shall Lavinia become / the wife of Trojan exiles? And have you / no pity for your daughter and yourself? / No pity, either, for her mother, whom / the faithless robber, with the first north wind, / will leave behind as he seeks out high seas / and steals away the virgin as his prey? Did not the Phrygian shepherd use this plan / to enter Lacedaemon, taking Helen, / the daughter of Leda, to the towns of Troy? / What of your sacred pledge? Of your old love / for your own people? What of your right hand / you swore so often to your kinsman, Turnus? / And if the Latins are to seek a son / from foreign nations, and this must be done, / and father Faunus' orders hold you back, / then I maintain that every land is foreign / that lies apart and not beneath our rule, / and so the gods have said. For if you ask / the early origin of Turnus' house: / his ancestors were Inachus, Acrisius; / and his first home, the middle of Mycenae."[66]

If one compares Amata's speech to Queen Dido's final speech to Aeneas (4.305-330), one is struck with several significant similarities. I propose that the majority of these reveal the political and strategic nature of the speeches and the women that deliver them. First, despite both queens being under the influence of an external power, they both seem to try and reason with their partners by appealing to a sense of familial duty as well as referring to the political ramifications that their chosen course of action will have. Second, it is also noteworthy that both women try to persuade their partners by reminding them of the oaths that they took (*data dextera Turno*, 7.368; *data dextera*, 4.307; *dextramque tuam te*, 4.314). Third, both speeches begin almost abruptly and *in medias res*, each launching a series of rhetorical questions that are strengthened by the repetition (anaphora) of the word *nec.* I propose that the series of rhetorical questions that have been launched, almost in arrow-like fashion, reflect the invective skill of a political orator whose aim is to overwhelm the other person with their argument – making it increasingly difficult for their opponent to refute the accusations that have been made against them.[67] This pattern is then

66 Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:173).

67 I propose that the series of rhetorical questions that their speeches open with, paired with the repetition of *nec,* echoes Cicero's first Catilinarian, in which Cicero accosts Catiline in the senate. Their questions are arguably a combination of *pysma* (asking a series of questions in short succession) and *epiplexis* (questions that are aimed at expressing grief or disdain).

followed by an “if” (conditional) statement and their speeches are both concluded with their primary arguments.

Amata’s first statement focuses on the political status of the Trojans, specifically Aeneas, stating that it is beneath their daughter to enter into a union with a man she regards to be of lower status. Next, she appeals to Latinus’ sense of pity (employing the persuasive appeal of *pathos*), which she implies will be much needed if the wedding takes place. Amata furthermore believes that she and by implication Latium will be abandoned as soon as Aeneas has married their daughter. It is evident that Amata does not believe Aeneas will settle in Latium and that she is unaware that he is destined to remain in Italy and found Rome. Her limited knowledge regarding the future of the epic’s primary subject (Aeneas) is arguably a result of her own limited role since she is merely an obstacle to Aeneas and is not as directly informed by the powers (the gods) of the workings of Fate. She is merely informed of prophecies surrounding her daughter and the man she should marry. Amata interprets these prophesies using a line of reasoning that differs from that of her husband. If, in turn, we examine Amata’s intentions (as a possible secondary subject for book seven), she would probably still object to the Trojan marriage, because it does not align with her ambitions for Latium and her daughter.

Amata’s reference to Aeneas as a faithless pirate and a Phrygian shepherd plays on Paris’ abduction of Helen and she uses the image of a pirate to emphasize his social status – which in her mind is lowly and inadequate. Anderson (1999:77-85) has written at length about the invalidity of the comparison between Aeneas and Paris, particularly focusing on why Amata is misguided in her interpretation of the prophecy and her rejection of Aeneas. Her comparison of Aeneas to Paris may ultimately be proven to be inaccurate, but it is not entirely without precedent. Oliensis (1997:296) highlights the similarities that Aeneas’ opponents recognized between him and Paris: both men are Trojan and therefore come from the East (associated with extravagance and indulgence), both men claim the hand of women who were set aside for other men (Helen was married and Lavinia was promised to Turnus), and both are aided by the goddess Venus.

Regardless of the credibility of these allegations, by comparing Aeneas to Paris, Amata is characterized as a politician because she aligns herself with and establishes her place amongst Aeneas’ political opponents such as Juno (7.321), Turnus (9.138) and Iarbas (4.198-218) who have also viewed Aeneas as a second Paris. In much the same way that Iarbas detested the fact that Aeneas had (in the king’s mind) claimed Dido as his (Aeneas’) prize, Amata fears that Aeneas will view Lavinia as a spoil of war. Amata wants her daughter to be part of a ruling union instead, particularly one that was arranged and agreed on based on honour and oaths and not through war. This resembles Dido’s situation because she was willing to enter into a marriage with

Aeneas, which Dido believed was sealed through "the right hand" and with fidelity, and not out of submission to a king that married a woman because he viewed her as his rightful possession.

After attempting to appeal to Latinus' emotions, Amata explicates her interpretation of the prophecy to justify her championing of Turnus. Her argument is important because it indicates that she was not merely acting from irrational emotion, but that she had made logical deductions concerning the matter. By attempting to persuade Latinus with her interpretation of the prophecy, it reveals that her actions were not determined by emotions (particularly *furor*) but that she had a strategic approach to the issue at hand. I propose that Amata's insistence on the possibility of a different interpretation of the prophecy should be treated in the same manner as Anchises' misinterpretations concerning the prophecies about the fate of the Trojans in the first half of the *Aeneid*.

4.3 A mother's concern: Amata's choice of children and attempts to preserve a pure bloodline

It is therefore not only the *limen* imagery that connects Amata and Aeneas' father Anchises but both regal and parental characters misinterpret prophecies that are vital to the continuation of their kingdoms. It is also Amata's interpretation of Faunus' prophecy (which she believes designates Turnus as the man Lavinia should marry) that gave rise to her distrust and anger concerning the Trojan marriage. Amata and Anchises echo each other both as characters in the story and as actors in the *fabula*. This is partly because they both want to preserve what is familiar to them, but mostly because they interpret significant prophecies concerning the hero's fate according to their own reasoning and they, therefore, align it with their ambitions. Quint (1999:126) argues that Anchises' interpretation of the oracle of Delos in book three (which he believed signified that Crete was the location where Rome must be founded) suggests that he wants to replicate the past instead of being willing to "confront a new and unknown future". It is however my contention that Amata wants to preserve the past by having her daughter marry a prince that simultaneously qualifies as a native and foreigner (and who is her relative),[68] while simultaneously focusing on the future of Latium and its future royal descendants. Amata and Anchises are both removed as obstacles from the primary subject's mission because their ambitions prevent Aeneas from taking over as king in Latium and laying the groundwork for Rome. Anchises' role changes following his death, when he becomes a helper to Aeneas' mission by appearing to him in dreams

[68] McAuley (2016:74) points out that Amata's theory still was granted some legitimacy when the primary narrator confirms a premise of the queen's, that Turnus can indeed qualify as a foreigner because he is related to Danaë, the founder of Ardea (7.409).

and by showing him his future and the future glory of Rome and thus encouraging him to journey on in book six (Quint, 1999:129).

While Amata remains an obstacle to Aeneas' mission, only increasing in her resistance, she also functions as a helper to Aeneas' greatest opponent and anti-subject Turnus. As has been discussed, the queen wants her daughter to marry Turnus, whose success and prominence as a suitor are due to Amata's partisanship and her influence on the marriage. Turnus is introduced in book seven as *Turnus, avis atavisque potens* (57)*,* which refers to his strong and important ancestry. Other ancient literary accounts mention that Amata and Turnus (not coincidentally) have distant blood relations.[69]

Amata functions as a helper to Turnus, and even joins Latinus in cautioning and advising Turnus against facing Aeneas in single combat (*A*. 12.54-62). Latinus and Amata's motivations may be vastly different, but they are still united in their efforts to prevent Turnus's death and the destruction of the city. This also lends insight into the description of Amata as *femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque.* The queen is convinced that she will either be executed or become a slave if Aeneas wins the war and if Turnus is not there to protect her. One can imagine that her fears would echo the fate of the women who were killed or taken captive at the siege of Troy, as described by Andromache whom Aeneas encountered on his journey in book three. Amata's active efforts and strategies against the Trojan marriage are thus more than attempts to protect a man in whom she emotionally invested; rather, she must actively counter the Trojan effort because their success will mean the end of Amata's dynasty.

4.3.1 The weight of Amata's name and her influence on the Latin matrons

It is not only Dido's request, in book four, to have an heir that reveals that women in the *Aeneid* can view motherhood as a political rather than a domestic advantage. Amata's plea to Latinus suggests that she is equally politically motivated in her insistence on having a specific heir. Highet (1972:288) proposes that Amata's ardent opposition to the union between Aeneas and Lavinia is fired not by maternal concerns for her daughter's happiness, but by her disgust at the prospect of their daughter and kingdom falling into the hands of "Trojan exiles" (7.359), led by a "treacherous pirate" (7.362). I suggest a more nuanced interpretation and propose that her concerns can be fuelled by both, and that Amata uses her position as a mother to try and realize her strategies to overthrow Latinus' choice of successor.

When Amata's appeal to Latinus proves unsuccessful, her tender temperament subsides. After her words are left unheeded by men, Amata turns to more desperate measures.

[69] For the blood relation between Amata and Turnus, see Fantham (2009:137 & 150).

Amata rushes without delay through the city like a person who has been driven mad (7.377). Her objective is, ironically, to delay the Trojan wedding (*quo thalamum eripiat Teucris taedasque moretur*, 7.388). The power of Allecto's poison continues to increase, and Amata finally transitions from an indirect to a direct obstacle to Aeneas' mission (7.385-403):

> quin etiam in silvas simulato numine Bacchi
> maius adorta nefas maioremque orsa furorem
> evolat et natam frondosis montibus abdit,
> quo thalamum eripiat Teucris taedasque moretur,
> euhoe Bacche fremens, solum te virgine dignum
> vociferans: etenim mollis tibi sumere thyrsos,
> te lustrare choro, sacrum tibi pascere crinem.
> fama volat, furiisque accensas pectore matres
> idem omnis simul ardor agit nova quaerere tecta.
> deseruere domos, ventis dant colla comasque;
> ast aliae tremulis ululatibus aethera complent
> pampineasque gerunt incinctae pellibus hastas.
> ipsa inter medias flagrantem fervida pinum
> sustinet ac natae Turnique canit hymenaeos
> sanguineam torquens aciem, torvumque repente
> clamat: "io matres, audite, ubi quaeque, Latinae:
> si qua piis animis manet infelicis Amatae
> gratia, si iuris materni cura remordet,
> solvite crinalis vittas, capite orgia mecum."
>
> "She pretends / that Bacchus has her; racing to the forest, / Amata now tries greater scandal, spurs / to greater madness. She conceals her daughter / in leafy mountains, stealing from the Trojans / that marriage, holding off the wedding torches: / "Evoe Bacchus!" is her shriek and cry, / "For only you are worthy of the virgin; / for you she has taken up the supple thyrsus; / she circles you in dance, for you she saves / her sacred hair." The news flies on. Straightway / all of the matrons feel the same zeal, kindled / by Furies in their breasts, to seek new homes. / And they desert their houses, bare their necks / and hair before the wind. Still others crowd / the skies with quivering cries; dressed in fawn hides, / they carry vine-bound spears. And at the centre / Amata lifts a blazing firebrand / of pine and, raging, sings the wedding song / of Turnus and her daughter as she rolls / her bloodshot eyes; her cry is savage, sudden: / "O Latin mothers, listen now, wherever / you are: if any love still lives within / your pious hearts for sad Amata, if care for a mother's rights still gnaws at you, / then loose the headbands on your hair, take to / these orgies with me." "[70]

Amata's plea to the other Latin matrons can not only be ascribed to her emotional concern as a mother but also to her distress at the implication that an outsider will rule her country. Keith (2006:7) asserts that Amata uses her position as a mother to convince the Latin matrons to revolt against the king, to prevent Aeneas from becoming the ruler of the Latins. According to McAuley (2016:78), Amata's exploitation of the *ius maternum* ("motherly right") in this speech amalgamates subjective passion with political resistance. McAuley (2016:79) also suggests the possibility that

[70] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:173-174).

Amata was aware that the Bacchic rituals provided a platform for voicing maternal madness and that she then used this uncontrollable maenadic behaviour to remove the blame from the true source of her *furor*.

The passage quoted above describes Amata dispatching her network of matrons, manipulating them, and exploiting the rites of Bacchus in the process (Keith, 2006:7). Amata achieves this by feigning to be under the influence of Bacchus. The notion that Amata used her maddened state to manipulate the Latin matrons by sweeping them up into a frenzy is supported by the words *simulato numine Bacchi* (7.385) which describe Amata's simulated Bacchic madness. By using *simulato* Vergil implies that Amata is feigning her madness. Amata is therefore pretending to be something that she is not. It seems clear that Amata used the matrons and their devotion to Bacchus to destabilize the kingdom of Latium. Amata thereby achieves her goal to delay the marriage and also reveals the extent of her agency by directly and indirectly commanding the respect of the matrons.

I also propose that the use of *simulato* (7.385) should be interpreted similarly to Aeneas' usage of *simulant* (2.18) when he describes the Trojan horse that the Greeks deceived them with by pretending that it was part of a religious offering.[71] Amata is in a sense the embodiment of the wooden horse. Like the Greeks, she too engages with the citizens under false pretences as part of a strategy to undermine the Trojans – using the honour of a god as an excuse for lucrative (strange) behaviour.

I have focused so far on Amata's ambitions for Latium, specifically regarding the man that her daughter Lavinia is predestined to marry. I have shown that Amata is primarily concerned with the marriage between Prince Turnus and Princess Lavinia and that she has actively worked towards realizing the union – not only as the result of maternal affection – but because she wants Turnus to be the next ruler of Latium. Having discussed the elements that Amata was concerned with during her life, I will now focus on the issues that were important to Amata in the moments leading up to her death.

4.3.2 Amata's suicide

As the war was building to a climax, Amata viewed the city from the palace and saw that her city was in ruins and that the Trojan army was approaching them rapidly and without any visible defence from the Rutulian army. This led her to believe that Turnus has already been killed (12.593-599). As a result, she commits suicide by hanging herself (12.600-603). The news of her

[71] "Aeneas continues his story with subsequent states of affairs. The Greeks first interweave the ribs of the horse with planks of fir (*intexunt*) and, next, pretend that it is an offering (simulant), after which the rumour goes abroad (*vagatur*)" (Adema, 2019:2).

death causes devastation throughout the city, and the primary narrator immediately describes the distress of her daughter and husband (12.604-613). The brevity of the description of her death contrasts with Dido's death scene which elaborately describes Dido's suicide. Amata's death is merely summed up and the primary narrator focuses less on her death and more on the dramatic reaction it elicited from her daughter Lavinia, her husband Latinus, and the people of Latium.

Scholarship surrounding Amata and her motivation for suicide tends to focus on the personal aspects of her relationship with Turnus and particularly her feelings towards him, consistently comparing her to figures such as Queen Iocasta (in Sophocles' tragedy) who kills herself after she uncovers that she has unwittingly committed incest with her son Oedipus.[72] Oliensis (1997:307) describes Amata as an insane maternal figure who is "doomed to kill herself for love of her quasi-son Turnus". I propose that this focus on Amata's similarity to figures of Greek tragedy dissuades the reader from taking Amata's full intentions into account. Amata certainly was focused on Turnus and his victory, but she clearly states that she is convinced she will be treated cruelly by Aeneas and will be taken as a slave, in effect losing her power and being forced into submission.

I argue that it is unreasonable to limit Amata's suicidal motivations to her passion for Turnus and to disregard her desire to save herself and preserve her dignity. Amata's fear concerning Aeneas' victory was emphasized when she revealed her dread to Latinus and Turnus (12.56-63). In her speech, she addresses Turnus as follows: … *simul haec invisa relinquam / lumina nec generum Aenean captiva videbo* ("at the same time as you, I will leave this hated light and I will neither see Aeneas as my son-in-law nor be subjugated by him", 12.62-63). Tarrant (2012:12&105) notes that this phrase, uttered when she tries to dissuade Turnus from engaging in single combat with Aeneas, confirms that Amata believes that Aeneas will be an oppressive ruler who will enslave her. The nature of the conversation is thus complicated in that it is between a potential son-in-law and mother-in-law, between wife and husband, but equally between queen, king, and potential ruler of Latium. As with the conversation that takes place between Dido and Anna at the beginning of book four, the personal and political roles of the characters underscore the mixed political and personal nature of their actions and motivations.

Amata's final words before her suicide provide her motivation. The primary narrator claims that her words were mostly crazed muttering, but what is crucial to note is that she claims to kill herself because she has realized that she is responsible for all that has happened (*se causam clamat*

[72] Lyne (1987:17) argues that Amata is a Jocasta-like figure because she was driven to suicide by her unnatural, nearly incestuous, desire for Turnus who would have been her son-in-law. Manioti (2012:134) maintains that Amata killed herself because of her guilt over Turnus (whom she believes has died because of her actions) and that she behaves like "an incestuous lover".

crimenque caputque malorum, "she exclaims that she is the guilty one and the cause of all misery", 12.600). Tarrant (2012:243) points out that Amata's words echo those of Latinus at 11.471-2, in that they both admit their part in causing the war and the resulting death and suffering of their people. Amata's reason for committing suicide is also clarified by her statements toward Latinus and Turnus that emphasized her fear of how she will be treated if the Latins lose the war.

While the primary narrator's comment on her lack of sanity calls the credibility of her final words into question, her final words should still bear some significance, because they seem to only be revealed to the reader. The example set by Amata illustrates that neither remorse nor complete sanity are prerequisites for being a politician. The impact of her death on the Latin people reveals Amata's symbolic representation of Latium and their fallen city, similarly to Dido whose death represented the destruction of her queendom (Tarrant, 2012:241). The two women both represent fallen empires, and this representation enhances their characterization as politicians.

Burke (1976:28) asserts that Amata fittingly committed suicide because of the shame she deserves for betraying her household and country out of disproportionate love for Turnus. I instead propose that Amata kills herself because she realizes to a certain extent her contribution to the fall of Latium. Additionally, Amata liberates herself from the maltreatment that she believes she would have received if she were forced into subjugation. This of course resembles Dido's motivations for taking her own life. By indicating that she is aware of the consequences of her strategies to oppose the Trojans, Amata redeems herself to a certain (albeit limited) extent. Amata's realization concerning her misinterpretation of the prophecies recalls Anchises who realized that he had misinterpreted the prophecy concerning the location of their destiny. Like Amata, Anchises paid for his mistake with his life, albeit merely in an implicit way. Furthermore, in reaction to Burke's view, I suggest that Amata did not kill herself merely because of an obsession with Turnus, but that she believed she could not survive without him – not because his absence will kill her, but because Aeneas' presence and reign will lead to her demise. Fucecchi (2019:213) upholds that Amata killed herself in recognition of her defeat and her inability to prevent the Trojan assault and the subsequent invasion of the kingdom by foreigners. Concerning the function of Amata's death, Genovese (1975:25-26) observes:

> Amata symbolises the incompatibility of the old and the new; she embodies a misguiding past and therefore must be removed. She, like Mezentius, comes to recognize too late the harm she has caused and wilfully yields herself to death (12.598-603).

This also aligns her removal from the narrative with that of Anchises. Amata and Anchises both represent old ideologies and former dynasties. Amata's suicide was motivated by both her fear of being harmed and grief for the harm she has caused. It is also significant that of the two rulers of

Latium it is she, and not King Latinus, who fulfils the role of presenting the fallen dynasty. I propose that this emphasizes the prominence of her role and her portrayal as a political figure.

4.4 Chapter conclusion

Acting in her role as an obstacle to Aeneas' mission, Amata's overarching objective was to prevent the Trojan marriage. The queen hoped to achieve this by delaying the union. We can assume that her goal was not realized because Aeneas defeated Turnus in battle, thus winning Lavinia's hand and with it the throne of Latium. Their marriage and the events that transpire after the Trojan triumph do, however, fall outside the narrative of the *Aeneid*, since the poem ends with the death of Turnus. One could therefore argue that Amata is not entirely unsuccessful as a strategist, as her delay-tactics held off the marriage long enough to start the war and to push the event beyond the poem's narrative scope.

This aspect of her success recalls the image of the *limen* ("threshold") that Allecto crossed, to catalyze Amata into acting on that which she was contemplating, thus enabling her to cross the threshold herself. The image of the *limen* underscores the liminal political nature, not only of Amata but of the women in the *Aeneid*. The aptly used image illustrates how their political and strategic motivations constantly move between the public and the private, because most of the aspects of their lives have both personal and political import. Amata uses her position as a mother to exercise authority over other women in the epic and she even uses it to influence her prospective son-in-law Turnus.

My examination of Dido and Anna (Chapter 3) and Amata (Chapter 4) have revealed that these women are indeed focused on political issues and that even their political activity is portrayed in the foreground of the epic. In the next chapter (Chapter 5), I will focus on Camilla who is the leader of the Volscians. She is a female character that receives a significant amount of narrative time in the second half of the *Aeneid*. Camilla also dominates the narrative space in book eleven. I will focus on comparing Camilla not only with her intratextual female counterparts, but I will also compare her to some of the men in the epic. The comparisons between Camilla and her male counterparts will be made in the same way as the comparisons drawn in my previous chapters. In Chapter 3 I briefly compared both Queen Dido and her sister Anna to King Latinus, and in Chapter 4 focused on highlighting the similarities between Queen Amata and Anchises (Aeneas' father).
Chapter 5 will examine the similarities between Camilla and Turnus as well as a few Homeric male heroes.

CHAPTER 5: A WOMAN'S LOVE FOR WAR AND SPOILS: CAMILLA

5.1 Chapter introduction

While Amata is relegated to an advisory role in Turnus' battle plans, there is another queen who not only offers to advise and physically support Turnus in this war, but he, in turn, seeks and heeds her council and greatly relies on her support. Her name is Camilla, leader of the Volscians, and she is introduced into the narrative for the first time in book seven where she appears in the catalogue of Latin allies and Italian forces (7.647-817). Her role as a military leader and the significance of her contribution to the Latin effort is noted more than once throughout the narrative. Turnus even upholds her involvement as a vital and potent element on the Latin side of the battle (11.432-433) in the scene where he explains his position to King Latinus and tries to convince him that they can successfully defend themselves against the Trojans and even emerge as the victors.

This chapter discusses Camilla's role(s) in the plot and *fabula*. I propose that this character serves as a helper to the Rutulian prince Turnus, who enlists Camilla's help to fight against the Trojans and thus to aid him in his mission to win back Princess Lavinia and therefore the throne of Latium. Camilla opposes the narrative's primary subject, but she is portrayed in a greatly sympathetic tone (much like Dido). She also dominates the narrative in the second half of book eleven (Knox, 2008:23). The amount of narrative time spent on her is important, since it hints at the importance of her character, not only to the war effort but to the whole narrative. The duration of book eleven spans two days, of which the first two are merely briefly described (Gransden, 1991:9).[73] This chapter will therefore evaluate her role(s) in the same way as it has analysed Dido's role(s). Camilla's actions and decisions will be examined to determine their contribution to not only her role as Turnus' helper but to her role as a secondary subject. This will increase our understanding of her character and will reveal the extent to which her actions and decisions are politically motivated and whether she is portrayed as a strategist.

Apart from her supportive role, Camilla also has a referential purpose in the *fabula*. Her narrative enables the epic to expand themes concerning Italy which reflect native Italians in a somewhat positive and sympathetic light – a politically necessary element in the depiction of Rome's origins (Knox, 2008:3). Fratantuono (2009:164-166) argues that there is not enough evidence to

[73] "The war in Latium occupies the last four books of the *Aeneid*. It lasts only a few days, and here Virgil shows his mastery of narrative technique. In the annalistic tradition this war consisted of several campaigns spread over a number of years. Virgil has dramatically compressed and concentrated these diffuse stories into a highly structured sequence, modifying the order of events and the roles of the chief characters in order to produce a kind of re-enactment of the *Iliad*" (Gransden, 1991:4-5).

determine exactly whether Camilla is wholly an original product of Vergil's creativity or whether she has other direct intertextual origins. There are, however, elements of her character that one can argue allude to both literary characters, such as the Amazon queen Penthesilea, and historical figures such as the Roman statesman Marcus Furius Camillus (Fratantuono, 2009:164-166). Her referential function is also signalled by the near plethora of etymological possibilities that her name conveys (discussed in the next section). By calling her "Camilla", Vergil not only introduces this character into the narrative, but he ushers in a rich variety of allusions to examples of historic and literary valour. Camilla's valour as a warrior is made evident from the moment that she is introduced at the end of book seven of the *Aeneid* (803-817).

5.2 Camilla in the catalogue of warriors

At the end of book seven, there is a catalogue that lists the Italian forces that Aeneas must face in battle (7.647-817). This catalogue is framed by Aeneas' most daunting rivals. Camilla's character is introduced into the narrative for the first time, notably at the end and climax of the catalogue. This marks her prominence in the war and her importance to the narrative. The primary narrator describes the Volscian queen as *hos super advenit … Camilla,* "surpassing them came Camilla", 7.803). *hos* refers to the Italian forces listed before her, of which the most notable is Turnus who directly precedes Camilla in the scene. The queen and the effect of her arrival are described as follows in 7.803-817:

> hos super advenit Volsca de gente Camilla
> agmen agens equitum et florentis aere catervas,
> bellatrix, non illa colo calathisve Minervae
> femineas adsueta manus, sed proelia virgo
> dura pati cursuque pedum praevertere ventos.
> illa vel intactae segetis per summa volaret
> gramina nec teneras cursu laesisset aristas,
> vel mare per medium fluctu suspensa tumenti
> ferret iter celeris nec tingeret aequore plantas.
> illam omnis tectis agrisque effusa iuventus
> turbaque miratur matrum et prospectat euntem,
> attonitis inhians animis, ut regius ostro
> velet honos levis umeros, ut fibula crinem
> auro internectat, Lyciam ut gerat ipsa pharetram
> et pastoralem praefixa cuspide myrtum.

> "And surpassing these, came Camilla born of the Volscians, leading a cavalry of horsemen and forces glistening with bronze, a warrior, her womanly hands unaccustomed to Minerva's distaff and basketwork."[74] "A virgin, she was trained to face hard battle / and to outrace the wind with speeding feet. / Across the tallest blades of standing grain / she flies – and never mars the tender ears; / or poised upon the swelling wave, she skims / the sea – her swift soles never touch the water. / And as Camilla passes, all the young / pour out from the field and house the matrons crowd

[74] Own translation.

> / and marvel, staring, in astonishment / at how proud royal purple veils Camilla's / smooth shoulders, how a clasp of gold entwines / her hair, at how she bears her Lycian quiver, / her shepherd's spike of myrtle tipped with steel."[75]

It is important to understand the reason for Camilla's position in the catalogue because it can show her to either be relatively insignificant or essential to the Italian war effort. The meaning behind her placement has been the cause of much scholarly debate, often diverse in their outlook (Boyd, 1992:213-214). On one hand, scholars such as Williams (1961:149) uphold that Mezentius and Turnus are the only significant threats to the Trojans and that their positions, therefore, frame the catalogue (Mezentius at the beginning and Turnus close to the end) and that Camilla is mentioned last merely as a token. On the other hand, Sharrock concludes as follows:

> "Despite the best efforts of scholars to exclude Camilla from the massed ranks of Italian allies, what the poem offers is an honorific account of a female soldier who joins the muster on equal terms with the men". (Sharrock, 2015:161)

Gransden (1991:10) also acknowledges Camilla as one of the three primary opponents that Aeneas must face and writes that there are various structural parallels throughout the last books of the *Aeneid* that present Mezentius, Turnus and Camilla as his chief military opponents. An example he provides is that each of them meets their demise within the scope of the final three books of the *Aeneid* (Mezentius in book ten, Camilla in book eleven, Turnus in book twelve) (Gransden, 1991:10). This line of reasoning arguably also supports a tripartite structure for the catalogue, which would then be framed by Aeneas' three principal mortal opponents.

Camilla's position in the catalogue is further qualified by *hos super* which can typically be translated with a phrase, such as "last of these", which simply indicates the conclusion of a list. However, in the context of this catalogue, Egan (2012:42) argues that it should be translated with a phrase, such as "surpassing them", which suggests Camilla's superiority over the preceding warriors. Camilla's description is the culmination of the catalogue and indicates her martial and political prominence. Her overall description in the catalogue further characterizes her as a political figure because the depiction of her arrival resembles the description of a magistrate returning to his city (Reitz *et al.*, 2019:683).

Camilla is mentioned last in the catalogue, much like the depiction of Penthesilea (book one) is the last to be described when Aeneas studies the mural on the temple of Juno in Carthage. This emphasizes that her character is an intertextual (and intratextual) reflection of and reaction to the warrior queen of the Amazons. Penthesilea's character is notably also linked to other characters during the poem, most prominently Queen Dido (1.490-508) (Sharrock, 2015:162). Camilla's leadership is further linked to that of Queen Penthesilea, whose Amazons solely

[75] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:187).

consisted of women, through a group of female warriors whom Camilla has individually hand-picked to be her closest comrades (11.655-658). The description in the *aristeia* of Camilla and her closest comrades warring similar to an Amazon queen with her female troops beside her may give the impression that Camilla leads only women, but my analysis of the text suggests that this all-female description is primarily for symbolic purposes, like the figures and creatures that Camilla is compared to in that war scene. The warriors that were chosen to be at Camilla's side on the battlefield are women, but the rest of her troops are given masculine (albeit grammatical) genders in the descriptions that precede this occurrence (7.804; 11.498). One of the elements that set Camilla apart from Penthesilea, therefore, is that she leads both men and women into battle.
This distinction is significant because a single-sex society forms a vital part of the mythology surrounding the Amazons (Sharrock, 2015:159).

I believe that Camilla's inclusion of both men and women emphasizes the way she challenges gender norms and grants both men and women the right to be on the battlefield. As Viparelli (2008:13) notes, the only criticism she receives for ruling as a woman is from her enemies. Camilla receives unchallenged respect from her fellow commanders, and most significantly from Turnus who trusts her to lead the rest of the Latin allies into battle (thus including both male and female forces).[76] This is important for understanding that Camilla is a threat to Aeneas because she is a formidable commander and politician, not because she is a woman who transgresses gender norms.

Another formidable commander, who by patriarchal standards transgressed gender norms in an equal fashion to Camilla, is the semi-historic figure Artemisia. She was the queen of Halicarnassus (c. 480 BCE) and she fought as a naval commander and ally to King Xerxes in the Persian wars. Camilla's position in the *Aeneid*'s catalogue of Latin allies even echoes Artemisia's position in the *Histories*' catalogue (Hdt. 7.61-99) in which Herodotus describes the Persian allies (Boyd, 1992:214). Both women bring their separate catalogues to a close. It is also noteworthy that Camilla's patron is the Roman goddess Diana (as is revealed in book eleven of the *Aeneid*) and that the goddess Artemis is Diana's Greek counterpart. The similarity between the names of the goddess Artemis and Queen Artemisia is unmistakable.

Although the scope of this dissertation does not allow a full discussion on the parallels between Camilla and Artemisia, I will note that they both have to face sexual discrimination – not only from scholarly tradition but also from the characters with whom they interact within their distinct narratives (Artemisia in the *Histories* and Camilla in the *Aeneid*). This is highlighted by the famous

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[76] This is discussed in more detail at 5.3 ("Camilla as a strategist and a politician").

phrase uttered by King Xerxes about Artemisia's accomplishments at the battle of Salamis. He only acknowledges her success by contrasting it to the performance of his male commanders: "It seems that my men have become women, and my women have become men!" (Hdt. 8. 88.3).

As has been noted, Camilla's character is not only modelled on women, but she also represents the Roman statesman and soldier Marcus Furius Camillus. Egan (2012) explicates an array of possible allusions in Camilla's character to this annalistic figure. I will, however, only discuss those that are essential to this dissertation. Like Camilla, Camillus was a powerful leader who was moved by both military and religious obligations (Egan, 2012:25). Camillus succeeded in his role as a military leader and religious devotee to the extent that he was referred to by the poets of the Augustan era as a model of excellence and bravery (Egan, 2012:25). Egan (2012:24) also notes that Camillus is described in Livy's history (books five to seven) as a near super-human figure. I therefore believe that Camilla's description in the catalogue, which emphasizes her fame and her excellence (surpassing even the best of the male Latin warriors), is an essential part of her characterization as a political figure, because she is described in similar awe-inspiring terms as Furius Camillus.

The other significant aspect of Camilla that emphasizes her connection to Furius Camillus, is her name and the epithet with which she is often associated; *Camilla furens*. Egan (2012:35) not only confirms the link between Camillus and Camilla, but he argues that her name is equally bound to the name Casmilla. The goddess Diana (in her implicitly appointed role as secondary narrator) reveals in book eleven that Casmilla is Camilla's mother. The goddess also claims that Camilla's name is derived from her mother's name Casmilla. Sharrock (2015:164) suggests that this etymological note in the embedded narrative (11.532-596) is used in an almost tongue in cheek manner – due to Camillus' fame. Regardless of the poet's intentions with the onomastic clarification, Egan (2012:31-35), in an elaborate explanation, argues not only that Camilla, Casmilla, and Camillus are (grammatically) male and female variations of the same name, but that these variations are used to associate Camilla with religious activity, political prowess, and heroic valour.

Egan (2012:35) further points out that Camilla is associated with religious activities by the mere sound of her name since it is virtually indistinguishable from the proper noun *camilla*, which can be translated as "priestess". He proposes that, if one accepts the premise that Camilla is primarily an invention of Vergil, then it is reasonable to assume that Vergil's audience would only have fully realized that Camilla is the name of a specific person in book eleven, and not merely an anonymous "priestess of the Volscians" (2012:35). It is, however, not merely Camilla's name that characterizes her as a religious figure, but the regal purple cloak that she wears in the catalogue hints at both her possible religious activities as well as her status as a powerful political figure.

Purple denoted a diverse set of symbolic meanings in the Roman Republic, but it was used as a status symbol. Purple was found on the attire of senators, emperors as well as religious figures (Stocks, 2014:173).[77] The purple cloak also functions as a link between Dido and Camilla since the Carthaginian queen is described in book four as being clothed in a Tyrian purple cloak before they embarked on a hunting expedition. The significance of the blended roles of queen and huntress will later become poignant when this regal depiction of Camilla in the catalogue (book seven) is contrasted in book eleven to her humble beginnings which reveal that she was not always the established political figure that she later becomes. The differences between Camilla's description in books seven and eleven reveal that she is a character of many seemingly contradicting qualities. In this next section, I will examine the most significant of these deviations. I will do this in order to determine whether these descriptions oppose each other or whether they can coexist within the narrative depth of her character.

5.2.1 Camilla's training and upbringing

Camilla is introduced as a young and successful woman at the end of book seven, but book eleven reveals that before Camilla was the leader of the Volscians she was a devotee of the cult of Diana. Book eleven provides an overview of Camilla's whole life in the sense that it relates to her first steps as an infant as well as her last steps as a warrior. Camilla's upbringing and history are narrated by the goddess Diana in a miniature *epyllion* (11.532-596) (Hömke, 2019:448). The presentation of this embedded narrative in the format of an *epyllion* (a short epic) arguably signals that the focus of the second half of book eleven will be on Camilla, who will dominate the narration again in an *aristeia,* which is a scene that illustrates her actions and decisions on the battlefield (11.664-724).

Before Camilla actively engages in combat, the goddess Diana is implicitly appointed as a secondary narrator to explain how Camilla came to be a devotee to her, but it neglects to describe precisely how she transformed into a leader of the Volscian warriors. In her position as narrator, Diana signals that the narrative treats Camilla with a sympathetic tone by narrating Camilla's tale in such detail – even including the description of Camilla as a vulnerable babe. In Diana's position as an actor in the epic, the goddess reveals her own affection for Camilla by calling her "dear to me", *cara mihi*, 11.586). Within a matter of a few pages, the reader is witness to Camilla taking her first steps as an infant and also to Camilla taking her last breath as a warrior on the battlefield. Her father's dedication and her rearing are described as follows (11.557-586):

[77] For a full discussion on the different meanings of purple in the *Aeneid*, see Stocks, C.A. 2014. Dying in Purple: Life, Death, and Tyrian Dye in the *Aeneid*. *Proceedings of the Virgil Society*, 28, pp.173-196.

““alma, tibi hanc, nemorum cultrix, Latonia virgo,
ipse pater famulam voveo; tua prima per auras
tela tenens supplex hostem fugit. accipe, testor,
diva tuam, quae nunc dubiis committitur auris.”
dixit, et adducto contortum hastile lacerto
immittit: sonuere undae, rapidum super amnem
infelix fugit in iaculo stridente Camilla.
at Metabus, magna propius iam urgente caterva,
dat sese fluvio atque hastam cum virgine victor
gramineo, donum Triviae, de caespite vellit.
non illum tectis ullae, non moenibus urbes
accepere (neque ipse manus feritate dedisset),
pastorum et solis exegit montibus aevum.
hic natam in dumis interque horrentia lustra
armentalis equae mammis et lacte ferino
nutribat teneris immulgens ubera labris.
utque pedum primis infans vestigia plantis
institerat, iaculo palmas armavit acuto
spiculaque ex umero parvae suspendit et arcum.

pro crinali auro, pro longae tegmine pallae
tigridis exuviae per dorsum a vertice pendent.
tela manu iam tum tenera puerilia torsit
et fundam tereti circum caput egit habena
Strymoniamque gruem aut album deiecit olorem.
multae illam frustra Tyrrhena per oppida matres
optavere nurum: sola contenta Diana
aeternum telorum et virginitatis amorem
intemerata colit. vellem haud correpta fuisset
militia tali conata lacessere Teucros:
cara mihi comitumque foret nunc una mearum.”

“O generous/ Diana, virgin daughter of Latona, / who makes your home in groves, I dedicate/ this child as your attendant – I, her father:/ for through the air as a suppliant, she flees/ the enemy: and this first weapon she/ holds fast is yours. I pray you/ goddess, take/ her as your own whom I must now entrust/ to the uncertain winds.” This said, with arm/ drawn back, he casts the twisting shaft; although/ waves thunder, his Camilla flies across/ the racing river on the hissing lance. / Then Metabus, as many troops draw near, plunges into the torrent; and in triumph, / now safe upon the other shore, he plucks/ his lance and daughter, offerings to Diana, / up from the grassy turf. No cities took him/ within their walls, their houses; he was much/ too wild to yield to city ways. He lived/ the life of shepherds in the lonely mountains. / Here Metabus, among the underbrush/ and bristling dens of beasts, would nurse his daughter/ feeding her wild milk from a brood mare’s teats; / into her tender lips he squeezed the udder. / As she took her first steps, he placed a pointed/ lancehead within her hand, and from that little/ girl’s shoulder, he made bow and quiver hang. / In place of golden hairbands and long robes, / a tiger skin hangs from her head and down/ her back. And even then her tender hand/ would hurl her childish shafts and whirl about/ her head a sling with its smooth thongs and bring/ to earth Strymonium cranes or snow-white swans. / And there were many mothers in the towns/ of Tuscany who wanted her, in vain, / as daughter-in-law. But she is happy with/ Diana; intact, she cherishes an endless/ love of her arms and of virginity. I wish this war had never swept her away /

> and tempted her to try the Teucrians; / so would she still be dear to me and one of my companions."[78]

The former Volscian king and warrior Metabus is therefore described as her father, and he is the one who is responsible for Camilla's devotion to Diana and her training as a warrior. The crossing of gender norms that occur in this tale is noteworthy, but a discussion of the subject matter falls beyond the scope of this dissertation. It is, however, reasonable to assume that Metabus' unconventional raising of his daughter would lead to her growing up to be a woman who does not necessarily conform to certain gender norms. My discussion of Camilla as a warrior and a politician in the next section (5.3) also explores the extent to which Camilla is characterized, not just as a different kind of woman, but as a different kind of warrior.

I also believe that the purpose of this mini-*epyllion* (that functions as an *analepsis*), is not to show that there is tension between Camilla's origins and her current occupation, but that it rather highlights the complexity of her character. Unlike the miniature *epyllion* that Venus narrates to Aeneas, which functions as a symbolic roadmap that supplies him with information regarding Carthage's geopolitical situation and an explication of how Dido came to power, the purpose of Diana's choice of narratee is initially less obvious. She tells her attendant, the nymph Opis, the story of Camilla and how she came to be under her protection. Since Opis is Diana's attendant in the *Aeneid*, one would expect her to have been aware to a certain extent of the significant events surrounding Diana's life. Camilla may be just a devotee of Diana, but the goddess shows remarkable affection towards her. It becomes clear that Diana tells the tale to Opis because she wants her to avenge Camilla's death which she fears will occur because of all the ill-omens surrounding this war (11.587-596).

Diana and Opis' direct involvement in Camilla's death, is noteworthy, especially since Opis' task will be the only occurrence in the *Aeneid* of a deity directly killing a mortal (Gransden, 1991:8). This will also emphasize the significance of Camilla's participation in the war, for, despite the goddess being so willing to participate in her life, Camilla (like Anna) is never described as being directly influenced by a deity, unlike either Dido or Amata. Diana's wish that Camilla would rather not take up arms (11.584-585) is significant as it indicates that Camilla has enough agency to exercise power over her actions and the course of her life so that she participates in the Latin war effort, despite it not aligning with the will of her patron goddess. Camilla's transition from a religious and almost primitive devotee to a revered warrior queen, which occurred without the explicit consent or aid of the gods, attests to her ability to transform herself and to affect radical change.

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[78] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:288).

One of the elements that suggests that Camilla's upbringing and background as a hunter and devotee do not contradict her status as a queen and commander, but rather complement it, is the presence of crowds of admiring matrons. The matrons from the native Italian tribes are attached to her, regardless of Camilla's occupation. I propose that the matrons' opinions (here and in book eleven) are significant because they enable us to better understand the overall reception of Camilla's character and actions in the narrative by other characters. The importance of the matrons' opinion regarding Camilla is implied in its repetition. It is first noted in the catalogue in book seven (812-817) and then repeated in book eleven (581-582). The motivation behind their admiration in book seven is not marked as being for a specific purpose, for instance as a daughter-in-law in book eleven (*multae illam frustra Tyrrhena per oppida matres / optavere nurum: sola contenta Diana,* 11.581-582), but both youths and mothers admired her.

The matrons' perception of Camilla is significant for our understanding of the nature of the political activity of female characters in the *Aeneid* because it enables us to see whether descriptions of women strategizing and participating in matters of state are used to mark conventional or unorthodox female activity within the story realm. The opinions of these matrons in the *Aeneid* are important, because, as Nugent (1992:256) notes, the groups of women (typically described as matrons), are often used as a vehicle to convey certain meanings and denote specific intentions and designs of the author. Unexpectedly, this also ties into the theme of motherhood. The mothers desiring Camilla as a daughter provide the reader with a glimpse into the ambitions and desires mothers have for their children in the *Aeneid*. They want the best, and according to them, that entails having Camilla as a daughter-in-law. This awe-evoking aspect of her character emphasizes not only the sympathy that she will potentially receive from the narrator in the rest of the narrative but also the power that she commands within the plot. Some of the characters admire her for who she was, much like Aeneas marvelled at Dido's accomplishments – not out of fear but out of respect.

5.3 Camilla as a strategist and a politician

Camilla's success as a strategist and negotiator is evident from the result of her efforts, but precisely how she transformed herself from an exile and a subject of Diana into the leader of the Volscians is not explicitly described. By omitting the process of her transformation and promotion in status, Camilla's past and future are juxtaposed. I would even argue that Camilla's story, in this limited sense, resembles the basic "rags to riches" plot structure.[79] By juxtaposing who Camilla was as a girl with who she has become as a woman and a leader, Camilla is characterized as a

[79] For further reading on this plot structure, see Kukkonen (2013 §17).

powerful individual who can bring about radical change. Her significance to the war effort is also signalled by her position and description in the catalogue of warriors and allies in book seven.

Camilla only re-enters the story in book eleven, in a scene that describes the Latin council that takes place after the Latins suffered great losses on the battlefield. The council argue about whether they must continue with this war or whether they should rather opt for a peace treaty with the Trojans. Camilla herself does not participate in the heated debate, but Turnus mentions her and other Latin forces (singling out only two others by name, Messapus and Tolumnius). Here, too, she receives more attention, since the help of Messapus and Tolumnius is only summed up, but Camilla (who is once again mentioned last) is once again described as being 'sprung from the Volscians'. Turnus also enumerates her troops and cavalry to emphasize the magnitude of her support.

After the debate, Camilla displays her ability to successfully manoeuvre her way up the political ladder, when she approaches Turnus to offer her support. Camilla approaches Turnus, and as she moves towards him, her troops glide down from their horses in unison to follow and respect her every move (11.498-502). At 11.502-531 Camilla and Turnus have their first discussion, in which they discuss war tactics and their strategy for the battle. Camilla offers to brave the Trojans and lead the first assault to spare Turnus the general fray and to enable him to guard the walls and better protect the city. Turnus acknowledges her direct and proactive approach and sings her praises by calling her the "pride of Italy" (*decus Italiae*, 508). While he does accept her offer, his respect for her is emphasized when he immediately shares his strategy for the battle with her (making her the only one of his commanders with whom he explicitly shares his plans) and then promotes her to his second-in-command as well as the cavalry leader. The reader also only learns of Turnus' battleplans when he relates them to Camilla. This is noteworthy because it reveals that she also has an explicative function in the narrative.

As a result, Turnus leaves the field to determine Aeneas' progress (and to remove himself from the foreground of events until book twelve), while Camilla leads the Latins' defence against the approaching enemies (Horsfall, 2003:xii). Turnus' absence makes her the primary threat and foe that the Trojans must face. More importantly, this illustrates the direct influence Camilla has on the course of the battle and her active influence on the plot. Not only does she affect the battle with her physical fighting on the frontline, but she actively strategizes and helps to determine the Latins' battle plans. It is also important to keep in mind that Camilla's position as cavalry leader and second-in-command to Turnus was not fated, unlike the roles of many of the other players in this fight.
Camilla negotiated her promotion in ranks and position of the battle by approaching Turnus, discussing their battle-tactics, and by proving her valour and willingness to fight.

The three women whom Camilla chose to serve as her lieutenants, Larina, Tulla, and Tarpeia, also contribute to her characterization as a political figure and elaborate on her referential function. This function does not only serve as a literary reference to the Amazons who solely consisted of female warriors, but these three women are Italian and therefore emphasize Camilla's ties to Italy (Sharrock, 2015:164). Their introduction reads as follows (11.655-658):

> at circum lectae comites, Larinaque virgo
> Tullaque et aeratam quatiens Tarpeia securim,
> Italides, quas ipsa decus sibi dia Camilla
> delegit pacisque bonas bellique ministras:
>
> "But surrounding her, her chosen companions: the virgin Larina, Tulla, and Tarpeia, shaking a bronze axe, all daughters of Italy, which the godlike Camilla appointed for herself, as honourable ministers who are good in both times of peace and war:"[80]

These women contribute to Camilla's characterization, because their names refer to semi-historic figures who made a political impact on Rome as well as geographic locations that are significant in Roman history (Sharrock, 2015:164). First, Larina evokes the name of the town Larinum (where the Samnite tribes settled). Second, Tulla is the feminine form of Tullus which refers to Rome's third king, Tullus Hostilius, and it can also equally hint at Tullius in the name of the Roman orator and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero (Sharrock, 2015:164). Third, Tarpeia refers to the woman who betrayed Rome by conspiring with the Sabines and whose death is marked by the Tarpeian rock (Gransden, 1991:125; Sharrock, 2015:164). Gransden (1991:126) further notes that the usage of their names, particularly alongside the annalistic (Ennian) epithet *dia* that is used here for Camilla, emphasizes Vergil's focus on consistently portraying ancient Italy in a positive light. Particularly, how Camilla is the heroic embodiment of ancient Italy.

Fratantuono (2009:216) interprets "times of peace", for which these women were appointed, as referring to their time together in the forest, before the battle and the "times of war" as a reference to the present war in Latium. In contrast, I propose the possibility that these "times of peace" refer not to Camilla's past but her ambitions for the future. We are not told that she entered the battle with any foreknowledge of her death and, given her status as queen to the Volscians, she would likely have entered the battle with the aim of returning to her people once she had claimed more honour for herself and her army. Camilla's motivations regarding their selection would therefore emphasize her sensibility and capability as a strategist. She considers the future because she chooses them because they are effective in "both times of war and peace". I argue that this decision also lends insight into Camilla's nature as a ruler because it reveals that she does not

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[80] Own translation.

exclusively base her decisions on *furor* and her desire to fight. Camilla focuses on waging war as well as upholding peace.

I will now shift my focus from Camilla's training and her life before the Trojan-Latin war, to Camilla as one of the warriors who are actively participating in the battle. In this next section (5.3) I examine Camilla in her role as a military leader and I evaluate her actions and decisions as a fighter. I also explore the extent to which Camilla is associated with figures from other epics, particularly Homeric heroes, and Amazon warriors.

5.3.1 Camilla as a warrior and her honorary status as Homeric hero

Following the description of Camilla and the women that she chose to be her lieutenants, who echo a band of Amazon warriors (11.648-663), the primary narrator addresses Camilla in an apostrophe, asking her *quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera virgo, / deicis aut quot humi morientia corpora fundis?* ("whom first does your spear, whom last, fierce maiden, strike down? How many bodies did you send down dying to the ground?", 664-665). The direct transition from the mythical description of Camilla and her warriors to this apostrophic question is a clear indication that the focus will turn to Camilla specifically and to her present actions on the battlefield. Adema (2019:30-31) argues that this summary of Camilla's first and last victims, along with the use of temporal sequence markers such as *primum* ("first", 664 & 666); *tum* ("next", 670); *his addit* ("she adds to these", 673); *sequitur* ("following these", 674) that follow directly after the apostrophe, emphasizes Camilla's ability to conquer and swiftly move between opponents. These aspects of her character are important to the research question that aims to determine how the women in the *Aeneid* reach their objectives.

Following Turnus' instructions, Camilla takes up the role of Turnus' second-in-command and leads the cavalry flank into battle. Her conduct on the battlefield is described in detail in an *aristeia* near the close of book eleven (11.648-724). To stay within the parameters of this dissertation, I will not be providing an in depth-analysis of her entire *aristeia*, given the length of and richness of the scene. I do, however, discuss its primary events and the most significant aspects of the scene. The first part of the *aristeia* reflects Camilla's predominant behaviour on the battlefield. It also demonstrates her primary combat strategy, which includes identifying and challenging the opponent of her choice. Camilla fights with both rage and valour. She is characterized in the scene by the primary narrator as a formidable and ruthless warrior. These aspects of her character are emphasized by the adjective *aspera* ("fierce", 11.664) that the narrator describes her with, as well as the swiftness with which she conquers her opponents.

It is my impression that the efficiency with which Camilla approaches the battle and kills her opponents also recalls Dido's movement through Carthage (1.503-508) where she swiftly and happily performs her duties as queen. Both queens work efficiently and without delay for the sake of the futures of the kingdoms that they want to protect. It is also noteworthy that they both only delay the plot's progression implicitly, in the sense that they both delay Aeneas' mission. Camilla also delays Turnus's active participation on the battlefield. This is important in understanding the women's agency and, to an extent, how they exercise it. The primary narrator spends a significant amount of time describing Camilla's fighting style in detail, including the gruesome death of the warriors that fall at her feet. Camilla's *aristeia* evokes the Homeric grandeur of a warrior on the battlefield – focusing on and emphasising her success as an individual hero to the extent that she is depicted as a "one-woman army" (Gransden, 1991:19).

Camilla's final target is a warrior and former priest to Cybele, Chloreus, who Camilla notices is clad in magnificent armour (11.768-782). Chloreus and his magnificent outfit (11.768-777) are described in an ekphrastic scene by the primary narrator (Gransden, 1991:134). This scene resembles the description of Aeneas observing Dido and the temple walls. The purpose of the ekphrasis in book eleven is to describe how Camilla would have seen (focalized) the priest. There are, however, details in the description (such as Chloreus' former occupation) that were likely inserted by the primary narrator. After Camilla has studied Chloreus, she homes in on him as her next target and actively pursues him. Her pursuit is described in terms of a hunter hunting down prey. The primary narrator informs the reader that she is either pursuing him to dedicate his armour in a temple to Diana, or to keep the spoils for herself:

> hunc virgo, sive ut templis praefigeret arma
> Troia, captive sive ut se ferret in auro
> venatrix, unum ex omni certamine pugnae
> caeca sequebatur totumque incauta per agmen
> femineo praedae et spoliorum ardebat amore (11.778-782).
>
> "Here, the virgin, whether to dedicate the Trojan arms in a temple or to equip herself with the captured gold – a huntress, both blind and brave, she pursued him through the battlefield. Burning with a woman's love for plunder and spoils."[81]

Her pursuit and the ambiguity of her motivation have been treated by several scholars throughout the ages.[82] Some argue that these two possible motivations for her pursuit are inserted by the primary narrator to condemn her for her actions.[83] Fratantuono (2009:15&260) assigns the confusion of how to utilize Chloreus' armour and weapons to Camilla herself. Fratantuono also

81 Own translation.
82 See Basson (1986:65), Viparelli (2008:15-23).
83 See Gransden (1991:135).

takes 778-779 to be a reflection of Camilla's inner thoughts. He further notes that the primary narrator implicitly contrasts her ignorance to the way that Aeneas had appropriately disposed of certain war spoils at the beginning of book eleven (11.5-11). In reaction to Fratantuono's interpretation of the source of the confusion, I would instead argue for a different narratological reading for the passage which interprets the role of the primary narrator (as external narrator-focalizer) here as observing the object (Camilla) from "without" (i.e., he cannot directly perceive her thoughts).[84] He would therefore only be able to describe ambitions and emotions that he ascribes to her, or which manifest themselves through her actions. This would then ascribe the confusion, not to Camilla, but to the primary narrator. A similar occurrence of the primary narrator observing the object from "without" is when, in an apostrophe, the narrator asks Dido what her feelings were when she saw Aeneas preparing to leave Carthage (4.408-411). My interpretation of Camilla's thoughts surrounding the armour is more in keeping with Camilla's assertive approach and the confidence with which she has previously approached matters.

Concerning the consequence of her intentions with Chloreus' armour, Sharrock (2015:159-160) notes that Camilla's possibly pious motivation for wanting the spoils, to offer them in a temple, is well within the "range of heroic behaviour" and that Camilla's motivations certainly "do not imply the actions of a woman going shopping" (Sharrock, 2015:160). I would even argue that Camilla's actions characterize her as a politician and a military leader because it evokes the Roman law of *manubiae*, which permitted a military leader to obtain *praedae* and to use it as they deemed fit but to use it preferably in a manner that would in some way be in the public interest (Churchill, 1999:112-115). One should therefore keep in mind that while Camilla's motivation for wanting to kill Chloreus might help us to better understand the nature of her character, her desire to seize his armour is not significant *per se*. Camilla's ambitions surrounding the spoils fit into the framework of an epic hero and do not indicate her incapability as a warrior; rather, it helps to confirm her status as one.

Sharrock (2015:159) notes that this desire is masculine in its pursuit of "magnificent spoils" in contrast to a "womanish love for finery". Yet, the primary narrator marks this desire for spoils as something distinctly feminine since her desire for the armour arises from a *femineo praedae et spoliorum ardebat amore* (11.781), a "woman's passion for booty and spoils". One could even argue that this feminine aspect of her passion for war spoils contributes to her characterization as the special kind of woman and martial hero that Sharrock (2015:157) argues Vergil has created. Camilla represents the kind of woman who, as Sharrock (2015:157) describes, has a desire to willingly fight and partake in war and who claims the position of an epic martial hero for

[84] See Rimmon-Kenan (2002:78).

herself. She is constructed as a type of warrior whose warlike nature is not intended to contradict her womanhood but rather to contribute to her humanity in a unique way (Sharrock, 2015:157).

In addition to Sharrock, other and more contemporary works by scholars suggest that Vergil uses Camilla and her conduct on the battlefield to question the nature of heroism and challenge its boundaries. Fratantuono (2007, cited in Stocks, 2019:53) observes that, in the surviving epic tradition, Camilla is the only woman to whom an *aristeia* is dedicated. He also asserts that this is merely one way in which she challenges the limitations of literary norms and that she accomplishes this by proving that excellence in war is not an activity exclusive to men. The following excerpt is from the introduction of commentary by Ganiban *et al.* (2013). The statement concerns the *Aeneid* in general, but it is reasonable to apply it in this instance to his portrayal of Camilla specifically:

> By weaving together the past and present, myth and history, religion and politics, the Greek literary tradition and the Roman, Vergil explores abiding questions about the nature of heroism, the morality of war, the power of the gods, and the value of empire. At the same time, he examines what it means to be Roman, and, with the *Aeneid*, Roman literature could be said to have equalled – if not surpassed – that of Greece.[85](1)

Vergil questioning the nature of heroism, or rather positing an alternative kind of heroism, is evident in his representation of the warrior Camilla whom the primary narrator describes with great sympathy, despite her being one of the Trojans' most formidable opponents. By challenging gender norms, she is not only used to question the nature of heroism but to represent both a different kind of hero and a different kind of woman. Vergil may have created Camilla as a new kind of hero, but she is still intricately connected to older heroes – Homeric heroes. Camilla's links to an older tradition of epic heroes in combination with her representation as a new kind of hero emphasize that Camilla is a character that has many qualities that do not entirely contradict but certainly challenge one another.

Camilla's character is connected to Homeric epics in more than one way. Not only is she an Amazon-like figure reminiscent of Penthesilea, or her death, like Patroclus', but the rage with which she fights is essentially Homeric. Such actions and passions suited a Homeric hero, but not a Roman one (Gransden, 1991:3). She is portrayed as a warrior whose skill and capability as a combatant and leader are almost without fault, but it is only the blinding passion (*furor*) that drives her in battle and eventually to her death, which is an undesirable attribute from a Roman perspective. Stocks (2019:54) notes that rage, as found in Homer's *Iliad,* is essential to a warrior's

[85] Dido's curse on the Trojans, asking that there be war between her peoples (Carthage) and the race sprung from Aeneas (Rome), is an example of this. Though this is an explicit example of Vergil's integration of history into his epic, the mere use of Dido's other name "Elissa" also implies this historic connection.

success and drive on the battlefield, especially considering the purpose of their *aristeia* (which describes them as being "the best"), but that it is this same passion (*furor*) that bears fatal consequences in the *Aeneid*. The repercussions that are associated with unbridled passion, even for a warrior, indicate that Camilla resembles a kind of warrior that will no longer be desirable or needed once the Trojans have obtained their victory.

As with the indiscernibility of Camilla's exact intentions regarding Chloreus and his armour, Camilla's intentions for fighting in the war against the Trojans are difficult to limit to one specific cause. It is, however, still rewarding to analyse Camilla as though she were a subject in her own right, given the attention that is given to her at the end of book seven and throughout book eleven of the *Aeneid*. The sympathetic tone with which she is described further suggests that she plays a role in the plot and *fabula* that is more than just that of an opposing actant figure to Aeneas or an actant helper to Turnus. If we examine Camilla's actions as a subject, one could argue that her goal is like that of Turnus, in that she wants to defeat the Trojans, but her reasons are slightly different.

One could, however, argue that Camilla is, as Sharrock (2015:157) suggests, fighting the war for the sake of fighting and being a successful warrior. Camilla fights the Trojans to defend Italy and to gain acclaim as a leader of the Volscians, thus redeeming her exiled father who was once their king. As has been noted, Camilla's ambition for individual success as a warrior and a leader casts her in the role of a Homeric hero, for whom there is no place in Augustus' empire and his *Pax Romana*.[86] McGill (2020:24) concludes that Camilla is successful in her role as a warrior (which is typically a male pursuit) but that she dies because she combined masculine desire (for war and spoils) with a heightened and intensified form of that desire (which forms the feminine part of her motivations) and that she ultimately died because she is a woman. While it is not unreasonable to view the explicit reference to her femininity as an explication of one of the elements that contributed to her death, I do not agree that her feminine way of desiring spoils is the primary cause of her downfall. The intensity of Camilla's zeal and *furor* does not significantly differ from that of other warriors such as Turnus.

5.3.2 Camilla's death on the battlefield and its effect on others

While Camilla is entirely focused on conquering Chloreus at this point of the battle, the primary narrator reveals that Camilla herself has become a target. Arruns, an Etruscan soldier on the Trojan side, is stalking her with the intent of killing her from a distance with a projectile.[87]

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[86] For more on the rejection of *furor* and war to comply with the Augustan ideals of peace, see Williams (1982:335).

[87] Arruns' prayer and attack is described from 11.784-801.

The scene describes how Camilla's position shifts from being the hunter to being the hunted. Before Arruns attacked Camilla, he prayed to the god Apollo to grant him success in his pursuit of killing her and to permit him to return safely to his homeland. Apollo did not grant him a safe return, but he did sanction Camilla's death. Fratantuono (2009:270) notes that Arruns' choice to kill Camilla with a weapon from a distance underscores his cowardice. Arruns fled into the woods after the weapon had successfully struck Camilla, hitting her in her chest.

The significance of the placement of the wound has been analysed and discussed by various authors whose conclusions have contributed significantly to our conceptions, and, as I will argue, misconceptions of Camilla and the purpose of her death. An important example is Oliensis (1997) who focuses on the sexual and erotic aspects of the wound's description (*hasta sub exsertam donec perlata papillam / haesit virgineumque alte bibit acta cruorem*, "the spear was driven in under her breast, fixed deeply in her, it drinks her virgin blood", 11.803-804).[88] Oliensis (1997:308) upholds that: "the ghastly 'penetration' of the only female fighter of the epic; the spear that pierces Camilla's nipple and drinks her blood … figures a grotesquely accelerated sexual maturation, from virgin to bride to nursing mother."[89] Her claim that Camilla is the only woman to fight in the war is inaccurate if one considers the group of women that are explicitly mentioned to be fighting at Camilla's side at the beginning of Camilla's *aristeia* as well as her comrade Acca, who is introduced when Camilla utters her final words (11.820-827).[90]

Acca is revealed separately to be one of Camilla's closest comrades, arguably because she has a separate function. This function does not only refer to the role she serves to Camilla as a comrade (being Camilla's confidant and advisor), while the first three women's primary purpose is to aid Camilla on the battlefield, but Acca reflects Anna (book four). As has been discussed in Chapter 3, Sharrock (2015:167) recognizes the connections between the two female leaders Dido and Camilla, but she upholds that Dido's final words were focused on herself, whereas Camilla's final words are only focused on the battle and on completing her duty as a leader by sending instructions via her closest companion to Turnus to inform him of her death and advise him on how he should strategically proceed with the battle (11.823–7). I have demonstrated in this dissertation that Dido's final words were not only focused on herself, but that Camilla's final words are indeed more practical and strategically motivated. Finkmann (2019:514) comments as follows: "Camilla's message, which stands out among the messages of the Trojan, Latin, and

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[88] *Papillam* can be literally translated as "nipple".

[89] "But warriors such as Euryalus, Lausus, Pallas, and Turnus also die in language that assimilates death to defloration." (Oliensis, 1997:308)

[90] Like Camilla's female companions which were mentioned earlier (Larina, Tulla and Tarpeia), Acca also evokes a female figure who is significant to Roman history and mythology, thus further contributing to Camilla's characterization as a political figure and purpose as a referential actor. Acca recalls the name of the mother of Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome (Sharrock, 2015:164).

Etruscan leaders, singles out her death and her actions in the final moments of her life as those of an exemplary warrior."

If Camilla was indeed the only female warrior, the wound might bear more significance, perhaps conveying commentary on the success of women on the battlefield. But, as Oliensis (1997:308) notes herself, the deaths of a selection of male characters (such as Turnus and Pallas) are described in similar possibly erotic terms. Though I am not in a position to convey the entire discussion and argument upheld by Sharrock (2015:166-167), I do agree with her conclusion that one should not over-sexualize Camilla's death scene because she has consistently been described in unerotic terms that here remove her from the highly erotic death of Penthesilea (who is killed by Achilles). I further believe that the wound in Camilla's chest is reminiscent of Euneus, who is the first soldier Camilla killed by piercing his exposed breast with her lance (*Eunaeum Clytio primum patre, cuius apertum / adversi longa transverberat abiete pectus*, "The first: Euneus, son of Clytius, / whose bare chest, as he faced her, she impaled / on her long fir-wood lance", 11.666-667).[91] The language used to describe their chest wounds is different, but the wounds are the same. The symbolic significance of this reference to her first victim would signify that her *aristeia* and time as the one who kills has ended.

Viparelli (2008:21) notes that Camilla may not have received the glorious death that a single-combat death can grant a hero, but that a wound still befits a warrior. This would also challenge the stance taken by Nugent (1999:269), that all the women in the *Aeneid* die inglorious deaths. Camilla's death is certainly not without honour, as her body will be retrieved and carried by Diana's decree to be buried in her homeland. The goddess Diana tells her that she shall have honour, "even in death's last hour" (11.845-846), and her death is instantly avenged by the decree of Diana (11.840-864). In dying, Camilla is aligned with the rest of the soldiers who are described in the verses directly preceding her *aristeia: funditur ater ubique cruor; dant funera ferro / certantes pulchramque petunt per vulnera mortem* ("On every side the black blood pours; they fight, / and each of them gives death by steel and seeks / the wounds that will bring honorable death", 11.646-647).[92] This description by the primary narrator reflects the goal of any soldier or warrior, which was to die fighting for their country on the battlefield. This kind of death was honourable in itself.

Scholars such as Oliensis (1997:307), deny Camilla her full status as a warrior by comparing her function in the war (and plot) to the function of other women who do not have any martial status. By placing Camilla in the same position as the women who function as potential sexual partners

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[91] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:291).
[92] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:290).

and spouses for Aeneas and Turnus, they reason that Camilla was not granted the opportunity to fight Aeneas directly as a result of her gender:

> Virgil does not grant Aeneas an interview with Camilla any more than with Lavinia. Aeneas cannot be allowed the kind of like-minded union Odysseus praises to Nausicaa in *Odyssey* 6 (182-4) because Virgil's epic regularly construes heterosexual desire as the enemy, never the support, of social order (Oliensis, 1997:307).

Oliensis (1997:307) as well as Fratantuono (2009:301) view Camilla as a possible replacement for Lavinia as Turnus' wife and thus demotes her from the role of independent ruler and Volscian queen to the wife of a Rutulian prince.[93] Her function in the plot and *fabula*, as explicated in this dissertation, leaves little room for Camilla as a potential sexual partner for Turnus, and certainly not as an obstacle to Turnus as a result of how sexually attractive she is, as bizarrely upheld by Fratantuono (2009:301). I argue that it is senseless to compare Lavinia to Camilla because they serve different roles in the plot and *fabula*.

In addition to this, Aeneas does not face Camilla in battle because the author constructed the strategy of the war in such a way that Turnus must face Aeneas in battle. These two men are the opposing suitors in the story, and they are direct foils to each other on a narratological level. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that the hand-to-hand combat must therefore present the climax of the epic between these primary opposing parties. I also agree with McGill (2020:26) who observes that Arruns killed Camilla in this fashion (from a distance) because he was too cowardly to face her in battle and therefore, she had to die in this way because anyone who faced her in direct combat would have been unsuccessful.

Turnus greatly relied on her support and was understandably devastated at losing her as a comrade. Fratantuono (2009:11&301) goes as far as to blame Camilla for Turnus' death, because of the emotional reaction elicited by her death. Though this would indeed show great agency on her part and her ability to affect the plot, I disagree. I do not think that this is part of her function in the plot and *fabula*. Camilla is an aid to Turnus, and I would argue that there is very little evidence to suggest that she is either an obstacle to him or an alternative to Lavinia. By ascribing this essentially erotic function to Camilla's character, Fratantuono disregards Camilla's celibacy and does not seem to consider whether she would consent to such a union. I would furthermore argue that if this is indeed an important aspect of her character, Latinus would have mentioned her as a possible spouse when he tried to convince Turnus to rather marry someone else (12.23-24).

[93] "A plausible and more interesting alternative to Lavinia is furnished by the heroic Italian warrior Camilla, another virginal avatar of Dido." (Oliensis, 1997:307).

Though Turnus may very well have found Camilla sexually attractive, I would argue that he respects her more for her capabilities as a warrior and a ruler rather than desiring her for her potential as a sexual partner. This is supported by Turnus enlisting Camilla's help to win Lavinia's hand and by entrusting her with such an important and prominent rank in the battle as leader of the cavalry. He also trusts her with the battle plans, and the reader only learns what the military strategy of the Latins is in the dialogue that takes place between Turnus and Camilla. Turnus' devastation at the loss of Camilla is not only personal but also symbolic of the Italian's deteriorating position since they have just lost "their last hope".

Turnus' focalization and reception of Camilla are important in the same way that Aeneas is to Dido. One must, however, keep in mind that although his view of her is important, his eyes are not the only ones through which Camilla is focalized. She is also focalized through the primary narrator, the goddess Diana, and personages such as the Italian matrons. Our understanding of Camilla would be unnecessarily restricted if we were to limit her depiction to Turnus' opinion of her. In conclusion, her relationship with Turnus contributes to her characterization and forms a vital part of her function in both the plot and *fabula* but his view of her does not define her.

I propose, in contrast to the notion that Turnus' reaction to her death portrays her as a fallen lover, that Turnus' devastated reaction highlights the symbolic resemblance between the death of Camilla and the death of Hector in the *Iliad.* His death signalled and foreshadowed the fall of Troy (Gransden, 1991:3). After hearing about Camilla's death from her first officer Acca, Turnus realizes the magnitude of the losses they have suffered and which the reader observes with him as his eyes scan over the field of death and carnage. Having lost Camilla, his second-in-command, and a vital part of the Italian forces, he decides to find and face Aeneas (Basson, 1986:65). I would suggest that Turnus' reaction does not constitute the reaction of a man who is disappointed at the loss of a potential sexual partner, but that he mourns more than the individual Camilla – he also mourns the loss of a vital component of their forces.

This interpretation is supported by the similarity of the deaths of Camilla and Hector in the *Iliad,* who also had an *aristeia* before his death that ensured the loss of many lives on the Greek side of the battle. Sharrock (2015:167) also notes that Camilla's status as a warrior is once more confirmed by the phrase that describes the life leaving her body (*vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras*, "and so the life flees with a groan flees in indignation beneath the shades"). This phrase not only links Camilla's death to that of Turnus, whose death is described by the identical phrase is repeated when he is killed by Aeneas at the end of book twelve, but it also links Camilla to the warriors Patroclus and Hector in Homer's *Iliad*. Horsfall (2003:439) notes that this phrase is likely modelled on both Patroclus' death (Hom. *Il.* 16.856f) and Hector's death (Hom. *Il.* 22.362f).

This greatly contributes to Camilla's characterization as a warrior, who in her death is given the same description as other formidable warriors.

The apostrophe, where the primary narrator addresses Camilla at the beginning of her *aristeia* and asks her who her first and last victim will be (*quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera virgo, deicis?*, 11.664), echoes the *Iliad's* primary narrator's apostrophic address of Patroclus (16.692-3), where he is asked similar questions "Then who was it you slaughtered first, who was the last, Patroclus, as the god called you to your death?" (Gransden, 1991:126-127).[94] In addition to this, I suggest that it is the contents of Patroclus's final speech that resonates with the circumstances surrounding Camilla's demise (Hom. *Il.*16.844-850):

> "Boast, while you can, Hector, for Zeus and Apollo it was who gave you victory. They conquered me: they stripped the armour from my shoulders. If twenty men like you had faced me alone, all would have died at the point of my spear. But Fate the destroyer and Apollo, Leto's son, have conquered: only then came Euphorbus the mortal, while you are but the third to claim my life".[95]

Not only do the circumstances surrounding Camilla's death evoke these words of Patroclus, but I propose that they provide insight regarding the way she was killed and the purpose of her death. Camilla was such a formidable warrior that she presented a great threat to the Trojans and the only way to defeat her was not through bravery or skill in direct combat, but with divine assistance and from a safe distance.

It is not only Camilla's efficacy as a warrior that is made evident by the reactions to her death; her nature as a politician and her relationship to the mothers of the city is also revealed. When the matrons of the city heard that they have lost Camilla, they react by taking up arms themselves and defending their city (11.891-895):

> ipsae de muris summo certamine matres
> (monstrat amor verus patriae, ut videre Camillam)
> tela manu trepidae iaciunt ac robore duro
> stipitibus ferrum sudibusque irnitantur obustis
> praecipites, primaeque mori pro moenibus ardent.
>
> "Even the mothers / along the walls, remembering Camilla, / are rivals in their eagerness to cast / their shafts with anxious hands; true love of homeland / points out the way; they rush to imitate / steel with their sturdy oak clubs and charred stakes; / each burns to die first for her city's sake."[96]

Their reaction illustrates Camilla's agency and ability to catalyze events and refutes the statement made by Nugent (1999:269) who argues that women in the *Aeneid* do not have significant

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[94] Translation by Gransden (1991:127).
[95] Translation by Kline (2009:347).
[96] Translation by Mandelbaum (2004:298).

authority. These Latin matrons go into a frenzy and act more than once in book seven (7.392-405 & 582-585), primarily because of Amata's request that they do so, also because of the "weight of Amata's name" (7.580-581). The mere death of Camilla had a similar effect on the Latin matrons and sparked their violent participation in the battle, thus hinting at the influence she had while she was alive.

5.4 Chapter conclusion

One can argue that Camilla's death and her defeat as a warrior are not used to illustrate the repercussions for women in war, but rather the repercussions of war itself. Turnus already acts as the primary opposition to Aeneas, and although Camilla's role and object are similar to that of Turnus (which involves defeating the Trojans to have greater and honourable success as a leader and defender of Italy), she is more than just a complementary female figure to Turnus. She has a different role altogether and represents a different kind of hero. Regardless of Camilla's primary role in the epic, in each scheme, her role serves a political and ideological function. Basson (1986) offers the following clear and concise conclusion as to how Camilla is characterized and what her purpose is:

> Camilla clearly emerges from our analysis as an extraordinarily complex character, uniting in herself a rich diversity of apparently contradictory qualities. (Basson, 1986:65). Vergil intended not only to remind the Romans of 'the tremendous cost of Italy' but intended also, I for my part firmly believe, to stress the futility of war as a mere means to an end, however noble that end may prove to be. (1986:66)

We should also bear in mind that Turnus also came to a fall, doing exactly what he was supposed to do, defending his country, and fighting for his bride. His death might be an indication of his lack of success, but then death in the *Aeneid* should point to the futility of people that take a stance against the Roman Empire, not the futility of women taking a stance *per se*. Camilla died fighting for what she believed in, and her death's effect on Turnus and the Latin matrons emphasizes that not even death can eradicate her political influence and ability to affect others.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

The primary research question I set out to answer in this dissertation was: Do the elite mortal women in the *Aeneid* have significant socio-political agency?

In Chapter 1, I focused on providing an introduction, not only to my own work, but to the scholarly tradition surrounding the women in Vergil's *Aeneid*. I addressed the primary research question by examining three key issues, namely a) the extent to which women in the *Aeneid*, especially Dido, Anna, Amata, and Camilla are concerned with politics; b) the way in which these women catalyze events; and finally, c) the effectiveness of these women's political strategizing and the extent to which they achieved their political aims. In Chapter 2, I stated my methodology and indicated my utilization of close readings to analyse the relevant passages of the *Aeneid*. In addition to this, I discussed the relationship between narratology and the Classics (Ancient studies) and how a narratological approach deepens our understanding of ancient literature – especially of Vergil's *Aeneid*. Regarding the structure that I employed, I did not address the issues that I highlighted in chapters 1 and 2 separately. Instead, I discussed each matter where it was most relevant across chapters 3 to 5 in which I dealt with the four women, namely Dido and Anna in Chapter 3; Amata in Chapter 4; and Camilla in Chapter 5. Where applicable, I also referred to other female characters, such as the goddesses Venus and Diana as well as the matrons of the city. I interacted with commentators and scholars throughout the study.

6.2 The extent to which women in the *Aeneid* are concerned with politics

Chapter 3, which focused on Dido and Anna, has shown that these two women and their relationship exemplify how personal and political matters are intricately woven into the lives and concerns of women in the *Aeneid*. When they discuss Aeneas in the opening of book four, the two sisters are not merely speaking as two sisters who are evaluating the "pros and cons" of pursuing a sexual relationship with a man, but they are a queen and her advisor discussing the possibility of acquiring a consort to secure a dynasty and a glorious future for their queendom. Anna's role in the *Aeneid* is vital in understanding its political commentary because it is she who convinces Dido to pursue Aeneas and her arguments are motivated by political ambition and an explicit objective to secure a powerful union that can withstand the difficult geo-political position they are faced with.

Chapters 4 and 5 focused on two women from the second, *Iliadic* half of the *Aeneid*, Queen Amata, and the warrior queen Camilla. The theme of *furor* ("rage") and *ardor* ("ardent passion")

was discussed in their chapters, because it emphasizes their literary connections to the *Iliad*'s central theme of rage that compels the hero to war, and that drives the warrior across the battlefield. Though I do not claim that Amata's behaviour warrants the title of hero, her actions as a woman and mother are inextricably bound to her role as a queen who is inflamed enough by her ambitions that she is willing to sacrifice herself and her loyalties to her husband in order to fight for the future royal house of Latium. She is significantly concerned with politics because her strategies and actions centre around her daughter, the son-in-law of her choice, and the political ramifications of a foreigner usurping the Latin throne.

The analysis of Camilla's role and purpose in the plot and *fabula,* as explicated in this dissertation, indicates that she is multi-faceted and in no way relegated to one singular function. She interacts only indirectly with the primary subject of the narrative (Aeneas) but serves as a great obstacle to his quest because she leads the first assault team and oversees the cavalry forces against the Trojans and is notably deemed as the last hope for the Latins as well as one of their greatest assets. She thus plays a vital role in the challenges that Aeneas must face to succeed in his objective. On the one hand, she is an obstacle to the primary subject, but she is more significantly and schematically a helper to Turnus, who plays the role of anti-subject to Aeneas in the *fabula*. Even her function as a referential character ties her to other political leaders who also served as warriors (Penthesilea, Artemisia, Furius Camillus). Camilla's role(s) and functions in the epic therefore indicate and underscore her extensive political activity and motivations.

My findings regarding the ways that Camilla and the other women pursue their ambitions and affect the plot by implementing different strategies is summarised in the next section (6.3). I will also discuss the success of those strategies and to which extent their ambitions are realized. Due to the interconnected nature of sub-questions "b" and "c" of my primary research problem, I will be addressing both (b) "In what way do women such as Dido, Anna, Amata, and Camilla catalyze events?" as well as (c) "How effective are these women's political strategizing and to what extent do they achieve their political aims?", in the next section (6.3).

6.3 How women catalyze events and the success of their strategies and political aims

Some of the women in the *Aeneid* are portrayed by the primary narrator as well as key focalizers (such as the goddess Venus) as decision-makers, strategists, and politicians who have a significant amount of socio-political sway and power. They are portrayed not as simple, but as complex characters who aim to both preserve the present good and embrace the future. These two aims do not seem to be mutually exclusive regarding these women's ambitions. Dido wants to continue building and expanding her queendom (appointing Aeneas to oversee the construction) and wants to strengthen her position as ruler by continuing her dynasty with a

renowned and powerful man (Aeneas). In the sequence of events, Dido's desire for a political alliance with the Trojans preceded her desire for a sexual relationship with Aeneas. This sexual desire for Aeneas was created by Venus who used love (Amor) to compromise Dido's ability to treat Aeneas purely from a political perspective, and in doing so compromised (though not completely overthrew) Dido's ability to rule.

Dido's rule was not dominated by her own decisions, but she employed her sister Anna who acted as her confidante concerning both personal matters and matters of state. It was her sister Anna who directed Dido's desire to have a personal relationship with Aeneas towards political ends by having her strengthen the alliance and amplify its political potential by convincing Dido to marry Aeneas. This is only one of the instances that confirms the proposition made by Keith (2006) that the women in the *Aeneid* catalyze events by employing female networking. Other examples of this, that were discussed in this dissertation, included Dido sending her sister to Aeneas, Dido asking Anna to prepare the pyre and Anna's discussion with Dido.

The ability of the epic's elite mortal women to influence events and strategize by networking with other women indicates their agency and their active participation in the narrative. They are in no way passive characters. They consciously and actively strategize to realize their own ambitions. This ploy is for example illustrated by the way in which they modified their tones of speech to create certain effects. The adopted tone of voice is often initially deliberately soft (*supplex*, 4.424; *mollius*, 7.358) or in a gentle motherly manner (*solito matrum de more locuta est*, 7.358). The softened tone creates an innocent guise to conceal the true threat they pose.

Similar strategies are also used by the women in the second half of the *Aeneid*, such as Amata who mobilizes the Latin matrons to help her in her cause by feigning to be under the influence of the god Bacchus. The women in the second half of the epic also display the ability to exert their influence not only on the women but also on the men to whom they are connected. Amata's responsibility for Turnus' success as a suitor is indicated at the beginning of book seven by the primary narrator and King Latinus admits in book twelve that one of the primary factors that influenced his decision to allow Turnus to pursue Lavinia was that he was compelled by his wife (Amata). Amata's influence on the narrative is therefore seen in Turnus' prominence and presence in the palace. Many suitors courted Lavinia, but it was Amata's swift approval and whole-hearted support of his advances that afforded Turnus the position he had within the family, and thus the right to function as the antagonist to the protagonist Aeneas.

The warrior queen Camilla displays the ability to successfully lead both men and women, but she surrounds herself with a band of women to serve as her lieutenants on the battlefield. She also utilizes female networking when she sends tactical instructions to Turnus through her comrade

Acca. Politics and strategies are of such great importance to certain women in the *Aeneid* that they even use their final words to reflect on their political achievements and to ensure the success of the causes they are championing.

The findings in this dissertation indicate that Dido was indeed a successful ruler throughout her reign in Carthage and that she and her sister Anna were successful in what they explicitly set out to do, which was to delay the Trojans' stay in Carthage. They may have ultimately intended to prolong the stay indefinitely, but their strategy was indeed successful in the sense that they caused the Trojans to prolong their stay for over a year. The aim to delay the Trojans was also achieved by Amata who set out to delay Aeneas marrying Lavinia. She too, however, was only partially successful if one considers that her ultimate objective was to have Lavinia marry Turnus and to completely prevent the Trojan marriage. The warrior Camilla sought glory in war and obtained it by dying as a valiant warrior on the battlefield.

Camilla's death brings us to one of the key aspects of the argument (which I have challenged) that women are ineffective and that they are shown to be wholly unsuccessful by dying without honour and thus being placed under erasure.[97] One of the supplementary views that this dissertation has addressed is that the women in the *Aeneid* are unsuccessful in their actions and endeavours to achieve political success and that they are primarily placed in the background. Another example of this viewpoint that this dissertation has challenged is iterated in the following quote by Oliensis (1997:310):

> In the *Eclogues*, women enable but do not perform pastoral song; in the *Georgics*, their ideal place is the deep background of the fruitful landscape and household. This relegation is dramatized by the *Aeneid*, which kills off its most visible and powerful women (Dido, Amata, Camilla) while preserving Lavinia as an instrument of dynastic reproduction.

Based on the analyses in my previous chapters, I would respond to Oliensis' observation by proposing alternative solutions, reminding the reader that the women in the *Aeneid* are not in fact relegated to obscure positions in the background. Concerning the space that women occupy in Vergilian poetry, women such as Anna do indeed move primarily in the background – Anna even functions as a go-between for Dido and Aeneas. The nature of the conversations that she partakes in, however, are public as they likely take place in the queen's court and concern matters that directly relate to the government and citizens of Carthage. By being the only advisor that Dido

[97] "In various ways, at a number of significant points, women present an oppositional point of view, through their choices, their words, and their acts they question what has been called the dominant voice of the epic, they resist. The evaluation of that resistance is not clear. Although women raise opposition, the alternative views they present seem largely discredited by their own failure. They are shown to be lacking in authority, their counterclaims are repudiated, their personal passions are discredited, and they die ingloriously." (Nugent, 1999:269).

explicitly consults and the only person that the poem's overarching primary subject (Aeneas) shares his plans and thoughts with (if we accept Dido's statement regarding the matter), her actions are focused on and brought to the foreground. Anna may be placed more in the background than Dido, but her position in relation to Dido is no more hidden from the public than any other royal advisor's. She moves and strategizes from her allocated position, not because she is a woman who should keep to the shadows but because it is an essential part of her role as advisor.

If one considers the narrative time that Anna receives in the epic and the focus that is given to her conversations with Dido and the great influence she exercises, it becomes clear that Anna qualifies as one of the powerful women in the *Aeneid*. I recommend that Oliensis' observation regarding the deaths of the powerful women in the *Aeneid* be updated, because her observation does not consider Anna, who does not die in the *Aeneid*. She may not feature again in the narrative, but I would argue that her life is preserved in equal measure as Lavinia's (but that she received substantially more narrative attention than Lavinia), whose exact fate is also not explained in the narrative scope of the *Aeneid*. Both women live on in narratives, such as Ovid's *Fasti*, that followed and drew inspiration from Vergil's epic.

I also challenge the claim made by Oliensis (1997:310) (quoted above) by analysing the alternative interpretations and motivations for the women's deaths as discussed in chapters 3 to 5 of this dissertation. I further found that their deaths should not necessarily be interpreted differently than the deaths of some of the powerful and visible men that feature in and dominate certain parts of the narrative. These include, but are not limited to, Anchises, Turnus and Mezentius. Amata and Anchises both represent royal parental figures who misinterpreted oracles concerning the destiny of their children. They both represent older kingdoms (Amata represents Latium and Anchises represents the fallen Troy) that must be replaced for Aeneas to establish a new kingdom.

Some of the motivations behind Dido's death are that she represented the wrong kingdom (queendom) for Aeneas to settle down in and that her death functioned as an opportunity for the poem to teleologically incorporate the Carthaginian Wars and evoke the image of Hannibal. If we view Dido's death in this light – by viewing her as the precursor for the enemy that Rome saw in Carthage – it also becomes clear that she is far more than a woman pining for her lover to the point that she kills herself because she cannot emotionally bear to live without him. In addition to this, Dido's monologue before her death, in which she mentions both personal and political motivations for her suicide, emphasizes the possibility that Dido killed herself because of the fears that she and Anna had regarding the unstable geopolitical situation that Carthage faces with Dido as its (isolated) ruler. Dido believed that she would not be able to successfully protect herself and

her people from their enemies since she has inflamed the anger of her former suitors with the Trojan marriage and had lost the respect of her people by abandoning her vow to her first husband. Dido's decisions throughout her life and even her choice to die, indicate that she is not only motivated by personal and emotional matters but that she is concerned with the political ramifications of her actions.

Camilla defended Italy and the kingdom of Latium, and in the process died in the same way as the other warriors who sought glory on the battlefield. One of the primary reasons why her death should not be interpreted as vastly different from that of any other hero is that her death alludes in various ways (as set out in Chapter 5) to the deaths of Hector, Patroclus and Turnus. I believe that Camilla's death is not meant to signify the consequences of transgressing gender norms, but to highlight the consequences of war and to symbolize the death of a specific kind of hero, who fights with fury and whose ambition is not explicitly directed towards the success of the Roman empire. Stocks (2019:54) argues that Turnus' death was a result of his ambition to be individually successful and his single-minded focus on killing Aeneas that made him vulnerable. I suggest that the purpose of Camilla's downfall fits into a similar framework of Vergil's reception and repurposing of Homeric heroes. Another possible purpose for Camilla's death is that if she had not met her end in book eleven, she would have been a formidable opponent for Aeneas. But she does not fight him, as he is not hers to fight, but Turnus'. The passion that catalyzed Camilla's death does not signal the failings of women as warriors, but the failings of unchecked passion in Vergilian war.

Perkell (2021:126) highlights the possibility that Vergil employs social commentary in his portrayal of Creusa (Aeneas' first wife), particularly in her death and erasure from the narrative. Perkell proposes that Vergil uses Creusa's demise and the fact that she was left to follow separately from Anchises, Aeneas, and Ascanius, to criticize certain ideologies and cultural principles. I conclude that this interpretation of Creusa and her death applies not only to her, but to the female characters that have been discussed in this dissertation as well. If one were to read women's deaths as an example of "being under erasure", this new interpretation – as employed by Perkell where she blames Aeneas for Creusa's death – suggests that the women are not necessarily removed from the narrative because of their own failings. Instead, they are removed from the narrative because of the consequences of challenging and forcibly being subjected to Augustan patriarchal ideals which I argue would apply to the *Aeneid*'s men and women alike.

These women do not fail (to a certain extent) because they are women who dare to challenge the Roman Empire, but because they dare to challenge it all. The women are not considered to be the opposition because of their sex and gender *per se*, but because of their opposing political ambitions that would not have allowed Roman history and destiny to transpire as it did. Based on

the findings explicated in this dissertation, I propose that the removal of these women from the narrative occurred because they challenged the primary subject (Aeneas), who represents the future Rome – and that their defeat and removal should be interpreted no differently than those of the men (such as Turnus or Anchises). They are presented as political obstacles who directly challenge the subject's political goal. They do not die because they are women. They are strategists and politicians that present obstacles to Aeneas' destiny.

6.4 Conclusion and recommendations

Dido and Anna, whether it be in life or death, are vital examples of how women in the *Aeneid* negotiate their roles in both the public and private spheres. I have highlighted Anna's political nature and clearly indicated that she is a character in her own right whose role in the plot and *fabula* as an aid to Dido and Aeneas is fulfilled in her function as their political advisor whose ambitions and actions can be viewed independently from Dido. I therefore suggest, based on the analysis of this dissertation, that Anna warrants even further investigation. I believe that by further exploring and comparing the similarities between Anna's ideals and the ideologies that were promoted by Augustus in his moral reforms, new light will be shed on Anna's character. I also argue that a comprehensive examination of Anna's use of rhetoric and her skill as a rhetorician will deepen our understanding of Anna's function as an advisor. Anna is more than just a mirror for Dido's thoughts; she is a prism for them.

Dido's actions and decisions in the story are also shaped by her function in the *fabula* as a referential character, and as a secondary subject with her own ambitions separate from her role as a helper or opponent to Aeneas. I believe that it will be beneficial to continue studying Dido and evaluate her roles and actions as a primary subject of the narrative in book four. I furthermore suggest that Dido's actions should be studied in ungendered terms, in the sense that we as scholars of Vergil should question whether her desires to have a child would truly have sparked such a long tradition of inquest and criticism if she were a male monarch demanding an heir from his wife.

I would also suggest a further investigation into the possible interpretations of the term *amor,* and a continuation of the views upheld by this dissertation that suggest that, in the *Aeneid*, the idea of love or desire is not limited to sentiments regarding other people, but also extends to the idea of love for one's country. Aeneas says to Dido (when referring to Latium), "there is my country, there is my love" (*hic amor, haec patria est*, 4.347); yet *amor* in the sense of love for one's country is frequently used to describe the patriotic passions that women have regarding their countries, specifically their homelands. Vergil underscores the complex nature of female desire and objective in the *Aeneid* by using the term *amor* to describe both a woman's personal desire

(sexual desire, greed, platonic affection) and her political desire (ambition to gain greater public power and influence). For women in the *Aeneid*, these two aspects tend to intersect. Anna's recommendations to Dido in which she encourages her to pursue Aeneas (4.30-55), are motivated by both love and concern for her sister, as well as by her ambitions for Carthage. Dido's desire for Aeneas and to have his child is arguably equally fuelled by her desire to successfully reign as monarch and to prolong the continuation of that reign. Amata's predilection for Turnus as a son-in-law (7.57-58) is simultaneously motivated by the maternal pride of a mother who wants the best for her daughter and by her desire to preserve a pure royal bloodline, thus ensuring the Italian ethnic status of Latium.

When discussing women's political capabilities, it is important to assess their level of naiveté (or rather lack of naiveté) and ability to engineer strategies. This helps to determine whether the women strategize and act because of their agency and whether they passively act according to the instructions of the gods. Based on the findings that have been set out in this dissertation, I propose that there are indeed women in the *Aeneid* who formulate strategies and actively participate in politics because of their ambitions and agency. Despite often being unaware of the interference of the gods and the greater designs of Fate, the women act within the boundaries of their knowledge and display their agency in those contexts. When they are moved by the gods to take physical action, they are catalyzed based on desires that were already present and not created or inserted by the gods.

It is my conclusion that the women that have been studied in this dissertation are concerned with politics to the extent that it influences most of their actions and that they are capable of strategizing and exercising behaviour that is independent of the will of the gods or the primary protagonist Aeneas. They are women with political ambitions and if one considers their roles as secondary subjects (sub-subjects on the *fabula* level of the books in which they feature), they have significant political agency and can influence the characters around them – and they do so independently. In addition to this, I recommend that Amata's behaviour and strategies should be further investigated, particularly the way she uses a maenadic guise and feigns religious devotion as a form of demagoguery.

Delay as a preferred tactic for women in the *Aeneid* has been generally accepted by the scholarly tradition of the *Aeneid*, and this dissertation has also confirmed this premise. Based on the analyses and arguments that are set out in this dissertation, I have shown that women in the *Aeneid* do not completely conform to a singular pattern of behaviour but that they employ a variety of strategies to obtain their objectives. These women had an interest in preserving the present and they sometimes achieve this by creating and affecting strategically planned delays. They certainly also have great interests and ambitions for both their own future and the future of their

countries.

They work towards their futures by either delaying events or by urging on the rapid progression of events. I believe that, even though these women are not necessarily successful in all their endeavours, they are constantly and actively challenging any *status quo* that would prevent them from realizing their personal and political ambitions. They challenge anything that aims to relegate them to mere sexual or domestic roles – be it by other characters in the *Aeneid* or by any literary or historical patriarchal norms that influenced the poem.

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