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The eloquence of Dido: exploring speech and gender in Virgil's *Aeneid*¹

Helen Lovatt

- ¹ Dido is a powerful speaker: Highet calls her 'the most eloquent character in the *Aeneid*' and Feeney 'the most impassioned and eloquent speaker in the poem'.² Women, however, are garrulous if they talk at all;³ women's share of any mixed interaction is almost always smaller than you would expect. Women who speak out are seen as speaking too much.⁴ But Dido is not simply a woman, or even a Roman woman; her position of monarch is in tension with her femininity; her representation as the barbarian 'other' contrasts with her universal appeal as a character.⁵ Recent scholarship has explored the relationship between real women's speech and that imagined and constructed for female characters by male writers.⁶ Dutsch has used Roman comedy, and the responses of its readers, to show how Romans envisage feminine discourse.⁷ Each genre has its own engagement with women's speech; James, for instance, argues that the purported and often reported speech of women in love elegy assimilates female characters to the stock types of Roman comedy.⁸ This paper presents a starting point for thinking about female speech in Roman epic. My aim is not to unearth real female Latin, or to refine our understanding of attitudes to femininity in Roman culture, but rather to use a gendered reading of speech to move towards a richer understanding of the subtlety of Virgil's *Aeneid*.⁹ Women's speech is characterised by ancient writers as fundamentally concerned with intimacy, personal connections and domestic concerns.¹⁰ Dido's elegiac laments in book 4 correspond closely to the sort of speech expected of women: self-pitying, over-emotional, hysterical. But does Virgil still represent her as playing a female role when she is speaking in her powerful position as queen in book 1? This paper takes Dido as an example of gender-specific communication and examines her public speech, looking at presentation, style, rhetoric and comparing it with the analogous speeches of Latinus in *Aeneid* 7 to open up a new perspective on Dido as a character, and Virgil as a writer of female characters.¹¹

- 2 The methodology of identifying characteristics of speech that can be labelled 'female' is far from secure. Modern discourse analysis, and here the work of Deborah Tannen is particularly useful, has shown that every generalisation can be undercut and problematised.¹² To quote Tannen: 'The interpretation of a given utterance, and the likely response to it, depends on the setting, on the individuals' status and relationship to each other and also on the linguistic conventions that are ritualised in the cultural context.'¹³ Even when analysing the real speech of real people in a culture and society available for interpretation, there are endless problems and subtleties associated with mapping the interactions of the genders. How much more difficult this must be in a literary text, governed by literary conventions, set in a fictional society and written for an ancient society whose social conventions are themselves accessible only as the constructions of history. Further, the conscious use of gender stereotypes by critics and readers of Virgil through the centuries, in combination with the unconscious persistence of these stereotypes even among female readers and those who are self-consciously feminist, can make it hard to isolate and analyse gendered characteristics. Despite these difficulties, however, there is much to be learnt from pursuing and investigating further, even if any conclusions must be hedged about by reservations. Epic in particular has been presented as a masculine genre; the interactions between genre and gender in women's speech in epic are particularly intriguing.¹⁴
- 3 Female latinity is often relegated to the margins; I start from a central episode of the most canonical of all Latin literary texts, Dido in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Feeney's analysis of the taciturnity of Aeneas already sets Dido in the context of gendered discourse. Taciturnity, in his words, is a characteristic typical of 'more modern heroes, when faced with an uncompromising attack from wife or lover'.¹⁵ Feeney suggests that Dido's mix of half-truths with emotional fire characterises the power of oratory, and equally implies that it is typical of women. Further, he contrasts the success of Aeneas' speech acts in public and official contexts with their failure in the domestic sphere.¹⁶ What, then, of Dido as orator in a public context? Is she equally characterised as a woman when making her speech of welcome to the Trojans at 1.561-78, and responding to Aeneas' sudden appearance at 1.613-30, as she is in book four, making impassioned pleas to Aeneas to stop him leaving, or cursing him after he has left?¹⁷
- 4 This paper compares Dido's public speeches with those of Latinus in the remarkably similar situation of book 7 (192-211 and 249-73), both negotiating with Ilioneus about the Trojan arrival in their land. How similar and how different are they and how can we explain the differences? Is gender significant, or only the subtle differences in the situations (the ship-wreck of the Trojans in book 1, and the initial absence of Aeneas; the more long-term aims of the Trojans in book 7), or the rather less subtle differences of characterisation, which are not limited to gender? Dido's foreignness in contrast to Latinus' latinity? Or Latinus' old age in contrast to Dido's parity with Aeneas? This paper examines the speeches of Dido and Latinus both through the way the two are represented as speakers, and through the detail of what they say and how they say it; it aims to explore the complexities of Dido's eloquence and to stimulate discussion about gender, rhetoric and power in the *Aeneid*.

Speech presentation

- 5 First, who speaks to whom, what are their situations and how are they described ? This is roughly the set of questions that concern Andrew Laird in his study of speech presentation in Latin literature, in which he makes some sweeping (and largely convincing) points about the *Aeneid*.¹⁸ First, 'that the formal techniques of speech presentation in the *Aeneid* help constitute power relations between groups and characters in the story of the poem' (206) ; second and more provocatively, that speech in the *Aeneid* is an index of power : 'In the *Aeneid* far more than in previous epics, it seems to be for those in authority to speak and the inclination or the duty of those with less power to remain silent' (192).¹⁹ The two scenes under discussion here show a striking difference in order of speakers. In *Aeneid* 1, Ilioneus appears to initiate the exchange, Dido replies, Aeneas bursts out of his cloud, speaks to Dido, who again replies. In *Aeneid* 7 the exchange begins with Latinus asking what they want, Ilioneus making his petition, finishing with Latinus' response. Immediately we can see that the position of agency has been somewhat removed from Dido : she is continually put into the position of respondent, and I will come back to this below. To take this further, the fact that Aeneas is a hidden audience of her first speech puts them into an odd situation : she does not know that she is addressing him ; when he appears he immediately holds the position of power in the dialogue precisely because she did not know he was there. Against this is the point that Aeneas is hidden precisely because his situation (ship-wrecked in a foreign country) is so powerless. Concealment provides added protection against the possibly hostile Carthaginian forces. Yet perhaps the underlying truth is that Dido's position of superior power in her own country is only superficial (and precarious), trumped by the power of Aeneas' divine backing, his status as hero, man and protagonist. Aeneas' power is much less compromised than that of Odysseus in *Odyssey* 6, at the point when he confronts Nausicaa, similarly ship-wrecked, but also naked, alone, starving, and with no ship at all.
- 6 How are the speakers actually represented ? Ilioneus' speech to Dido is set up with the lines :
- postquam introgressi et coram data copia fandi
 maximus Ilioneus placido sic pectore coepit (1.520-1)
 After they had gone in, and had been allowed to speak in her presence,
 great Ilioneus began with a tranquil heart.
- 7 He is, then, given the right to speak, presumably one among many petitioners. The only response to Ilioneus is among the Trojans : *cuncti simul ore fremebant / Dardanidae*. ('All the Trojans were shouting at the same time.' 559-60). Dido's reaction is to avert her gaze downwards : *tum breuiter Dido uultum demissa profatur* ('Then Dido, face down-turned, speaks out briefly', 561).
- 8 It is difficult to know what to make of this gesture. Ricottilli carries out a survey of different approaches and explanations for it, before coming to her own conclusion.²⁰ A major group, of whom Austin is one, reads the down-turned gaze as gendered, reflecting modesty or *pudor*.²¹ Servius attributes the gesture to *verecundia*.²² Another major group, including Donatus and Pöschl, suggests that the gesture 'delicately shows her embarrassment at the harsh treatment afforded the ship-wrecked Trojans.'²³
- 9 Muecke comments on this gesture in her discussion of Dido in book 6.²⁴ As she rejects Aeneas, *illa solo fixos oculos auersa tenebat* ('she turned away and held her eyes fixed on

the ground', 6.469). For Muecke the downward gaze can represent modesty, sorrow or 'silence and hesitation before a reply.' This particular example she compares with Hypsipyle at Apollonius *Argonautica* 1.790-1, an important intertext for this passage. As Muecke says, the gesture 'foreshadows the erotic encounter' between Hypsipyle and Jason; it is in fact a direct response to the visual impact of Jason's presence, while Dido has not yet seen Aeneas. The combination with a blush and the different direction of the averted gaze (Hypsipyle is looking ἑγκλιδόν which might mean either downwards or aslant/askance, while Dido is definitely looking downwards) makes this quite a different sort of action. Ricottilli rejects embarrassment (not signalled clearly enough in the speech; 186), a beginning of erotic susceptibility (Mercury inspires benevolence not love; that must wait for Cupid; 186) and pity for the Trojans (the gesture is not associated elsewhere with pity; 187-8), but accepts that on some level the gesture may have symbolic overtones which foreshadow Dido's death, as suggested by Heuzé.²⁵

- 10 Ricottilli's own preferred interpretation is that this downward gaze represents a pause for thought before answering a difficult and significant request (190). She compares the gesture at length with that of Latinus, who also looks down as he contemplates the speech of Ilioneus:

talibus Ilionei dictis defixa Latinus
 obtutu tenet ora soloque immobilis haeret,
 intentos uoluens oculos.(7.249-51)
 In response to these words from Ilioneus, Latinus holds
 his gaze downwards and, staying immobile, fixes his face on the ground,
 flicking his eyes intently.

- 11 For Ricottilli the two gestures are identical, except that Dido's is compressed: Dido's gesture is narrated as an 'allegroform' while that of Latinus allows access to his thoughts in more detail and is a 'lentoform' (194). It is interesting to me that Ricottilli works hard to minimise the importance of gender and maximise similarities between Latinus and Dido. As Schiesaro feels that mutually contradictory implications of intertextual links can resonate at the same time, so I feel that gestures can be polyvalent. Dido's downward gaze can both imply feminine modesty and regal caution, as well as implying an emotional susceptibility which will later become more apparent. I felt that the representation of Latinus' gesture has quite a different tone to it: we are told that he is thinking hard and calculating. Immediately afterwards the narrator allows us access to his thoughts, his excitement and concern about Lavinia's prophesied marriage to a foreigner. His gesture, too, has stimulated differing readings: Nelis (2001) 286 suggests that this gesture and description create a suspenseful pause, by implying that Latinus will respond angrily as Aeetes did to Jason; Horsfall (2000) 186 disagrees: 'he pauses only to see if the pieces of the story really add up to their eventual total [...] arousing only pleasant expectation in the Trojans as in the attentive reader'. Either way, Latinus' gesture is taken as one of power: controlling the pace of the exchange, making his listeners wait.²⁶ Dido's does not occasion the same narrative pause, and we are not allowed into the inner workings of her mind. Her emotional responses remain obscure.
- 12 *Profatur* too is intriguing:²⁷ Austin marks it as 'old-fashioned' (180), which could imply a regal grandeur later seen in such archaisms as *urbem quam statui*. Horace uses the verb in his description of his first meeting with Maecenas: *ut ueni coram, singultim pauca locutus / infans namque pudor prohibebat plura profari* ('when I came into his presence, I spoke few words gaspingly, for speechless shame prevented multiple pronouncements',

Satires 1.6.56-7). *Profari* could be the index of what Horace does *not* do in the presence of Maecenas, i.e. to make grand announcements. Or it could reflect the deference of a client with his patron. So Dido could be taken as anything from regal and controlling to diffident; Dido's situation as a queen just represented giving laws to her people, and now confronting a stranger who is making accusations as well as requests, calls both for a display of power and for careful handling, which perhaps determines the ambivalent nature of her representation here.

- 13 After her first speech, the point of view switches abruptly to Aeneas within the cloud, and Achates, encouraging him to show himself. The focus does not return to Dido until just before her second speech begins :

Obstipuit primo aspectu Sidonia Dido
casu deinde uiri tanto, et sic ore locuta est :
'quis te, nate dea, per tanta pericula casus
insequitur ? quae uis immanibus applicat oris ?
tunc ille Aeneas quem Dardanio Anchisae
alma Venus Phrygii genuit Simoentis ad undam ?
Aeneid 1.613-8

Sidonian Dido was thunderstruck, first at the sight,
then at the great trials of the hero, and so she spoke out loud :
'What fortune pursues you, goddess born, through such great
dangers ? What force directs you to these wild shores ?
Are you really that Aeneas whom gentle Venus bore
to Dardanian Anchises by the waters of Phrygian Simois ?

- 14 Aeneas has made his speech of greeting and premature thanks and is now greeting the colleagues he thought he had lost. As if she is paralysed by shock, we are taken back in time a few seconds to view his emergence through Dido's eyes. *Obstipuit primo aspectu* carries a clear suggestion of love at first sight.²⁸ The problem is whether to read *primo* with *aspectu* or in apposition to *deinde* : Austin prefers the first option. It seems to me that the first and second reading of these lines might differ. When you begin to read the sentence, it looks like it is going to describe how Dido fell in love at first sight. What it actually describes is the double impact of Aeneas' epiphanic appearance and his tragic story. We are taken briefly into Dido's thoughts and shown how her empathy for Aeneas' sufferings affects her. Which makes *ore* in line 614 rather pointed : the first few lines of her speech seem to carry on her inner thoughts out loud. 'Free indirect discourse', to use the terms of Fowler and Laird, the representation of a character's thoughts, becomes direct speech.²⁹ This gives the reader a strong impression of Dido's sincerity and emotional directness : she says just what she is thinking.³⁰ In contrast, Latinus does not mention what he has been thinking about (his daughter) until line nine of his fourteen line speech. Both speeches convey sincerity, but Dido's conveys a more impulsive directness.

The speeches themselves : style and tone

- 15 This sense of directness is the hallmark of readings of these speeches. For instance, Austin says 'The style of this speech, like that of 562 ff., is simple and direct : Dido has no affectations ; her sincerity is transparent.'³¹ The first speech begins with a very straightforward answer to their requests : *soluite corde metum, Teucrici, secludite curas*. ('Loosen fear from your hearts, Trojans, put aside your cares', 562) which immediately tells them not to worry. She then apologises for her subjects' hostility with simple

words: *res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt/moliri* ('hard things and the newness of my kingdom force me to do such things', 563-4). In contrast, Latinus' speech has been called dry and academic: Fordyce called line 208 'Virgil's most prosaic line',³² but Horsfall exults in the profusion of distancing devices, puns and allusions.³³ First he points out the pun on Latium as Saturn's hiding place (*latuit*), then an 'elegant double antithesis' (164) at lines 203-4, drawing to a climax with the 'Nestorising grandiosity' (165) of Latinus' reminiscence (*memini*, I remember) in line 205 and the obscure reference (joke in *obscurior*?) to Dardanus' progress from Italy to Phrygia via Thracian Samos, known as Samothrace. Horsfall suggests that this play on names might be a reference to Callimachus fr. 583, and notes the 'ingeniously riddling hysteron proteron' (168) achieved by putting Troy before Samothrace, reversing in the text the order of Dardanus' imaginary journey from West to East. Just the opposite, then, of Dido's directness: a mobilisation of allusion and scholarly rhetoric to create masculine exclusivity. Latinus' obscurity and scholarliness may well characterise him as an old man.³⁴

- 16 Yet emotion and cultured scholasticism are not mutually exclusive (or at least not in Virgil). Dido's most emotional line in the passage we looked at last is *tune ille Aeneas quem Dardanio Anchisae* (617), noted by Quintilian (11.3.176) in a discussion of the different intonations appropriate to the word *tu*, presumably for its dramatic emphasis (two elisions and a hiatus add to the emotional tone). Yet Austin points out the Greek effect of this line, with its spondaic fifth foot and hiatus between epithet and noun. 'Are you really the Aeneas of myth and legend?' is Dido's question, made doubly pointed by her own stylistic allusion to Greek language and culture. Likewise, Austin remarks the ornate quality of line 568: *nec tam auersus equos Tyria Sol iungit ab urbe* ('Nor does the Sun yoke his horses so far turned away from the Tyrian city' translated, for instance, by Day Lewis as 'Nor is our city quite so out of the way or benighted'). Even those lines which seem simple on the surface are artfully constructed: so *solute corde metum, Teucrici, secludite curas* has a careful parallel structure (first putting fear and then cares aside) reinforced by double alliteration. Perhaps what we can say is that Virgil works hard to characterise Dido as direct on the surface, even if art hides itself, and that the tone of her rather awkward engagement with Greek culture is strikingly different from Latinus' learned allusions.
- 17 Let us come back now to the question of emotion. I say 'awkward' of Dido deliberately, since there is a remarkable number of elisions in these two speeches.³⁵ Elision is more common in Virgil than other Latin poets (51.9 % of lines in the *Eclogues*, *Georgics* and *Aeneid* have at least one elision; the *Aeneid* clocks in at 54.3 %).³⁶ Lines with multiple elisions are much less common than lines with one: of the 4513 verses with elisions in the *Aeneid*, 82.36 % have one elision, 16.22 % have two, 1.4 % (63) have three and only one (0.02 %) has four. In Dido's two speeches, of 35 lines in total, 21 contain elisions (60 %); of the lines with elisions, 14 have one elision (66 %), 6 have two elisions (28 %) and 1 has 3 elisions (5 %).³⁷ Dido's speeches here, then, are very much above the norm for elision in Virgil. I have also compared them with the speeches of Latinus, Ilioneus and Aeneas, to gauge whether this is a characteristic of the situation or of Dido's speech. I have used the less cumbersome absolute ratio of lines to elisions in the table below:

Character	Lines	No. of lines	Total no. of elisions	Percentage ratio of elisions to lines	Lines with one elision	Lines with two elisions	Lines with three elisions
Ilioneus 1	1.522-58	36.5	16	44 %	14	1	
Dido 1	1.561-78	17	14	82 %	8	3	
Achates	1.581-5	4	1	25 %	1		
Aeneas	1.595-610	15	4	27 %	4		
Dido 2	1.613-30	18	15	83 %	6	3	1
Latinus 1	7.195-210	17	10	59 %	8	1	
Ilioneus 2	7.213-48	35	16	46 %	10	3	
Latinus 2	7.259-73	15.5	8	52 %	6	1	
Whole Aeneid		9896	5267	53 %	3610	732	63

- 18 What we can see from this is that measured by elisions per line, Dido's speech is far above the average for the *Aeneid*, compared to Latinus who is roughly equivalent to the average, while Ilioneus is a little below, and Achates and Aeneas are well below. Much more research is needed before labelling this a characteristic of female speech in the *Aeneid*, or even of Dido's speech in the *Aeneid*. However, we might want to endorse the idea that elisions can be an index of emotional intensity.³⁸ Turnus' speech to Juturna as he realises his own death is inevitable, for instance, has a similar level of elision to Dido's speeches (*Aeneid* 12.631-49 ; 18 lines : 17 elisions ; 94 % ; 5 lines with 1 elision, 3 with 2, 2 with 3). Is there any reason, however, for Dido to be that much more emotional than Aeneas, who has just rediscovered the ship-mates he thought he had lost, and found a safe haven from his own personal storm? Certainly it seems remarkable that Dido's empathy for Aeneas should inspire the same level of emotional intensity as Turnus' engagement with his own imminent death.
- 19 Soubiran suggests a whole range of different possible effects of different types of elisions, which makes a statistical approach less attractive, but opens opportunities for more nuanced readings of particular lines.³⁹ Dido's first speech begins with soft elisions of a/i plus short e, which might indicate speed ; at 566, the two elisions in *viroscque, aut tanti incendia* one of which crosses a sense break while the other features a clash of two occurrences of the letter i (pointed out by Soubiran as a particularly harsh combination), suggests both a horror at the sufferings of the Trojans and awareness of the accumulation of those sufferings. When Aeneas appears at 613, *primo aspectu* clearly fits with Soubiran's examples of *bouleversement* and a pause before coming back to one's senses. There is a particularly large number of harsh elisions in lines 625-7 where Dido asserts kinship with the Trojans through her father's guest friendship with Teucer : this

may indicate her awareness of the awkwardness and complexity of the negotiations involved in this claim (Teucer is both Greek and Trojan, both enemy and friend).⁴⁰

- 20 What of Dido's choice of words? How does Virgil present her through register and diction? We have already looked at the first few lines of the first speech and remarked on their simplicity. Dido is not always simple, however. At 565-6 she speaks two lines clearly in epic register:

quis genus Aeneadum, quis Troiae nesciat urbem,
uirtutesque uirosque aut tanti incendia belli?

Who does not know the race of the sons of Aeneas, the city of Troy,
the heroic deeds and heroes both, or the fires of such a great war?

- 21 *Quis nesciat* itself signals a reference to poetic tradition, and the description of the Trojans as *genus Aeneadum* signals not just her awareness of Aeneas, but also high epic style, reinforced by the repetition of *que* in 566, a Virgilian imitation of the Homeric repeated *te*. The metaphor in *incendia belli* equally marks these lines as self-consciously poetic. There is a metaphor too in the next line (*obtusa pectora*, 'our hearts are not so blunt'); yet it is difficult to claim that Dido's fondness for metaphor is a female characteristic.⁴¹ Aeneas, too, in his heartfelt attribution of eternal *honos* to Dido hints at the image of the stars as flock of sheep (*polus dum sidera pascet*, 'while the sky feeds the stars', 608).⁴² There was an ancient perception that women had a fondness for archaism:⁴³ for that we could point to *urbem quam statuo, uestra est* ('the city which I am founding, is yours', 573). Austin points out that this case of inverse attraction (the noun *urbem* is attracted into the case of its relative pronoun) is 'an archaic construction that occurs nowhere else in classical poetry and nowhere in classical prose: a remarkable and surprising turn of phrase. In offering to share with the Trojans her great treasure, her city, she speaks in the tone of some antique proclamation.'⁴⁴ At this moment of sharing her city, she emphasises that it is *her* city to share, speaking like a woman but also a monarch.⁴⁵ The public nature of the speech gives it the tone of a proclamation; but, as Dutsch points out, female archaism suggests female attachment to older generations; any female ownership of the Latin language is limited to female connections with past men.⁴⁶ Yet towards the end of the second speech, she uses an intensifier with a command: *quare agite, o tectis, iuuenes, succedite nostris* ('Come on, then, young men, come into our palace', 627).⁴⁷ Austin labels it a 'lively dramatic style' which looks back to comedy, and Adams has shown that this sort of 'imperative intensifier' is a masculine speech trait in comedy.⁴⁸ To go back to Austin's reading of Dido's style then, he says of the second speech: 'the style of this speech is simple and direct: Dido has no affectations; her sincerity is transparent.' What a closer look suggests is rather that her speech sends mixed messages, both archaic and colloquial, epic and comic, feminine and masculine; that the power of women is always severely limited and conditional upon inheritance from (and ratification of) men.

Rhetoric and persuasion

- 22 These mixed messages come out also in what Dido says and the rhetorical strategies that make it persuasive. Let us go back to Austin's words in his introduction: 'When Ilioneus asks for her help, her reply is impulsive and unselfish and magnificent [...] In welcoming Aeneas she [speaks] words of deep humanity, a manifestation of true *pietas*, simple, direct, humble. There is nothing here of deviousness or self-seeking or

seductive wiles. Dido is a woman whose highmindedness and honour match the most exacting Roman ideal of conduct and person : a woman worthy of Aeneas'.⁴⁹ The sense of Dido's humanity is created by her expressions of empathy and generalisation of suffering, particularly in the second speech. Her awareness of the Trojan war as *casus* is equally an expression of her own focus on *lacrimae rerum* ('the tears of things').⁵⁰ Her characterisation of the Trojan war as *tanti incendia belli* ('the blaze of such a great war', 565) relates it to the suffering of all wars ; in the following line, her claim that Phoenicians do not have 'blunt hearts' (*obtusa pectora*) insists on their capacity to empathise with suffering as well as their involvement with world events. The second speech begins and ends with expressions of empathy : the impassioned questions at 615-6 (*quis te, nate dea, per tanta pericula casus / insequitur ? Quae uis immanibus applicat oris ?* 'What suffering, son of the goddess, pursues you through such great dangers ? What force drives you to land on hostile shores ?') demand justice from a hostile world, as well as marvelling at Aeneas' story. Dido here echoes the narrator's demands of the muse at 1.8-11 :

Musa, mihi causas memora, quo numine laeso
quidue dolens regina deum tot uolueret **casus**
insignem pietate uirum, tot adire **labores**
impulerit. tantaene animis celestibus irae ?
Muse, tell me the reasons, by what power was she wounded,
or what was the queen of the gods grieving, that she should drive
a hero famed for his piety through so much suffering,
so many toils. Are the angers of heavenly minds so great ?

- 23 If the phrase *immanibus oris* can be read as referring to his most recent ship-wreck in Carthage (which seems likely), she seems here to be particularly empathising with Aeneas, seeing her own country as monstrous. On another level, this might be the narrator showing through, a foreshadowing of what Carthage will become in the Roman imagination. Most effective of all, however, in creating the image of Dido as empathetic, are the links she draws between her own fate, that of Teucer and that of Aeneas. Teucer is expelled from his fatherland and seeking a new kingdom (620). He stands above his enmity with the Trojans to praise them and recognise shared roots, and Dido honours him for that attitude. The final three lines of the speech explicitly draw out the comparison between herself and Aeneas :

me quoque per multos similis fortuna **labores**
iactatam hac demum uoluit consistere terra ;
non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco. (628-30)
I also was thrown about through many toils; a similar fortune
has willed me finally to stand here on this land;
not unaware of evil, I learn to bring aid to the wretched.'

- 24 Dido is equally a passive victim of fortune, storm-tossed by life, suffering the same labours. To be an exile and a refugee is part of the human condition (Aeneas is famously *iactatus* at 1.3). The final line emphasises her humility : the similarity of their situations does not give her the right to pronounce on what they should do. She makes no claims to superior knowledge, although *her* fortune has brought her to a standstill. She does not demand recognition of her achievements in founding Carthage, and even in the process of helping fellow-sufferers she represents herself as a novice, finishing on *disco* (I learn).⁵¹
- 25 How does this compare to Latinus ? Latinus does make one generalising statement at 7.200 : *qualia multa mari nautae patiuntur in alto*, 'the sort of things which sailors suffer a

great deal on the deep sea'), but this statement is bland in comparison, distancing him emotionally from the suffering of the Trojans. The difference in situations here (he notes at 196 that he knows the Trojans have purposefully steered their course to Latium) must be important; but equally his 'memories' of the Trojans (linked strongly to Dido's memories of Teucer by the repeated phrase *atque equidem memini* at 7.205, 1.619) are distanced and impersonal, the remote and unreliable stories of old men, heard years in the past. Where Dido emphasises her own personal experience, Latinus emphasises his learning.

- 26 Another characteristic which we might want to consider as evoking the feminine is Dido's responsiveness. Ilioneus begins his speech by emphasising her good fortune as founder of a city (522-5), and asking her to restrain her people (525-9). He goes on to explain that *est locus, Hesperiam Grai cognomine dicunt* ('there is a place which the Greeks call Hesperia', 530); this is where they are going, so why forbid them from standing on the earth (*consistere terra*, 541). Then he mentions Aeneas and Acestes and asks if they can draw up their fleet (*subducere classem*, 531). If they can find their allies, they will head on to Italy, if not they will go back to Acestes. Dido, in her two speeches, responds specifically and carefully to each of his points. First she explains, but does not quite apologise for, the actions of her people in attacking the Trojans (563-4). She then counters Ilioneus' lengthy and perhaps somewhat patronising explanations of who they are and where they are going with a demonstration of her own knowledge, both of the Trojan war, and of Italy, doubling Ilioneus' *Hesperia* with *Hesperiam magnam Saturniaque arua* ('Great Hesperia and the Saturnian fields'). Equally she adds the epithet *Erycisfinis* to her description of Acestes, nodding towards the fact that Eryx is in some senses a brother of Aeneas. She thus clearly re-states the two options Ilioneus suggested, Italy or Sicily, and trumps both by adding her invitation to join her in Carthage. Finally she finishes by responding to his description of Aeneas and his worries about his ship-mates by empathising with his feelings: she, too, wishes that Aeneas were here; and most importantly by acting on it. She thus responds systematically to everything that Ilioneus says. She even picks up his words, with *subducite nauis* (573) echoing *liceat subducere classem* (551).
- 27 In the same way, Dido's second speech responds to Aeneas' speech, but also continues to look back to Ilioneus, showing a subtle understanding of the dynamics of the situation. She now has two audiences, Aeneas and his men, and more justification is needed to show Aeneas that she realises he heard the earlier exchange. The final expression of empathy in lines 628-30 picks up Aeneas' description of her as *sola infandos Troiae miserata labores* ('The only one to pity the unspeakable toils of Troy', 597), repeating the key word *labores*, and echoing *miserata* with *miseris*. Equally, *consistere terra* in the second last line (629) answers Ilioneus' complaint at 541 (*bella cient primaque uetant consistere terra*, 'they stir up wars and forbid us to stand on the edge of the land'). Only now does fortune allow Dido to stand upon this land. She was in the same situation as they were, and with her *disco* she acknowledges, again without explicitly apologising, that the Carthaginian reception of the Trojans was not what she would have wished it to be, and takes full responsibility for it herself.
- 28 In many aspects, Dido's speeches give an impression of strength and assertiveness. She uses frequent imperatives (*soluite, secludite*, 562; *subducite*, 573; *agite, succedite*, 627) and emphatic first person singular future verbs (*dimittam, iuuabo*, 571; *dimittam, iubebo*, 577). The repetition of *dimittam*, first used of Ilioneus and his fellow Trojans, and then

of her own people, sent out to look for Aeneas, makes literal already the statement that there will be no distinction between Trojan and Tyrian in her beneficial rule (*Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*, 574). She is just but firm with her own people, and will act the same way towards the Trojans. However, her commands do not ask the Trojans to do anything they have not already told her they want to do: your wish is my command. *Quare agite ... succedite* is the strongest command in form, but functions more as invitation than as command. *Subducite* as we have seen echoes Ilioneus' own words; put aside your fears is a reassurance rather than a true command. In the same way, the emphatic first person singular verbs (to which we might add *statuo*, 573, and *memini*, 619) are offset by frequent representations of herself as passive and objectified; most notably *res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt / moliri* ('Hard times and my young kingdom force me to do such things', 563-4). Equally, 'Trojan and Tyrian will be treated by me' (*Tros Tyriusque mihi agetur*) uses an indirect and passive structure which puts the emphasis on to *Tros Tyriusque*. In the second speech, she does not say 'I know about you and Troy', but 'your name is known to me' (*mihi cognitus*, 623). In the last three lines, she is strikingly the object of malicious Fortune (*me ... iactatam*, 'me tossed about', 629-30). And she finishes with a double negative (*non ignara mali*) and a first person verb (*disco*) which serve to emphasise her personal humility.

- 29 Latinus, in contrast, takes the initiative: his first word is *dicite* ('tell me', 7.195), though he quickly also inserts a claim to knowledge (*neque enim nescimus*, 'for we are not ignorant', 195). He is more likely to use the royal we (here; also at *nostra incepta* (259); *nostri* (263); *nostrae* (268); *nostrum nomen* (271-2)). Dido's references to 'we' are: *Poeni gestamus*, 567 (specifying 'we Phoenicians') and *nostris tectis*, 627. He is keen to present the Latins as citizens of the golden age (202-4), and is more wordy, establishing his own authority by requiring his audience to listen to his dubiously relevant obscurities; he finishes his first speech with the complex allusion to Dardanus and Corythus discussed above. Most strikingly he refers to himself as *rege Latino* at 261 and his own name and immortality is his ultimate concern: *qui sanguine nostrum / nomen in astra ferant* ('who will bear our name to the stars in his blood'). It is notable that Dido does not pick up on Aeneas' promise to her of eternal honour, name and praise (*semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt*, 609) except to stress her awareness of Aeneas' name (*nomenque tuum*, 624). Latinus' whole answer, in fact, although he says he is giving them what they want (*dabitur, Troiane, quod optas*, 'what you long for will be given, Trojan', 260), is concerned with his own desires and hopes, the prophecies for his own race.
- 30 Dido, too, is clearly concerned with self-presentation, with how she and her kingdom are perceived. She justifies her actions, asserts her own and her people's cultural literacy, and albeit subtly, her achievement in founding and ruling a nation. In particular, the section on Teucer in the second speech (619-26) has multiple resonances. Teucer was seeking help from her father, as Aeneas is now seeking help from her. Her father was the victorious ruler of rich Cyprus; she too is victorious and rich in comparison to Aeneas. Her inherited connection is with Aeneas' enemies; she has heard of the *duces Pelasgi* ('Greek leaders') as much as the fall of Troy. She sets out her independence, her importance and perhaps a slight warning to Aeneas, after his almost fulsome thanks.

Conclusions

- 31 Is Dido, then, characterised as female in her speeches? I think that she is. There is no one feature that you can point to which makes her Latin feminine, while Latinus' is not. Rather the overall effect of what she says, how she says it, her empathy, responsiveness, and emotion, produces a distinctly different tone and characterisation from the speeches of Ilioneus or Latinus. Yet, she is continually negotiating the contradictions of her position, protecting and displaying her power as a monarch and her pride in her city, while assuming a position of humility and unpretentiousness, deftly and concisely displaying her knowledge and culture. She is not straightforwardly a dangerous rhetorician, the queen of spin, perhaps; rather, her rhetorical skill negotiates a complex situation (or rather series of situations) in a subtle way, keeping hold of her authority, but using the height of art to give an impression of simplicity. As Austin says, she is a match for Aeneas, at least in book 1, saying less but conveying significantly more than Ilioneus and Latinus.
- 32 Most interestingly, Dido, like Aeneas in books 2 and 3, has close connections with the narrator, as well as the audience of the poem.⁵² Her response to Aeneas' sufferings is analogous to the response of the narrator in the proem; her excitement to see Aeneas in the flesh and her association of him with stories she has only heard before in myth align her with the reader/audience, also seeing Aeneas for the first time through Virgil's text. This foreshadows her role in books 2 and 3 as the audience of Aeneas' epic narrative. Dido desires to become part of the story, like the women on the walls who fall in love with the warriors they watch; becoming part of the story is a step too far for femininity, a step from epic into tragedy, across the boundaries of genre. Dido's public speeches show that she is a match and a mirror for Aeneas, yet remains distinctly feminine. By writing Dido, Virgil makes his own voice (at least partly) feminine.

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NOTES

1. Thanks to Judith Mossman, John Henderson, Susanna Braund and Philip Hardie for reading and improving this paper, and to the participants in the seminar on 'The gender of Latin' at the APA annual conference in Boston 2005 for enthusiasm and comments, and participants at 'Mars and Venus' in Nottingham, 2008, and the rhetoric colloquium at King's College London in February 2012. The text of the *Aeneid* is from Mynors' *OCT* and all translations (inelegant as they are) are my own.
2. Highet (1972) 45; Feeney (1990) 190.
3. On women perceived as garrulous in the ancient world, particularly in situations of self-pity, see Dutsch (2008) 199.
4. For an introduction to issues in gender and discourse, see Holmes and Meyerhoff (2003); on the trope of women talking too much: Holmes (2008).
5. From the vast literature on Dido, a selection: Burden (1998), Desmond (1994) on reception, Spence (1999); on gender and ethnicity, Syed (2005); Reed (2007) 73-100. On Dido's oscillations

between masculine and feminine roles, see West (1980). On Dido's use of double meaning in book 4 see Murgia (1987) with response by Casali (1999-2000). On Dido's psychological complexity and potentially threatening tragic nature, see Schiesaro (2008).

6. Farrell (2001) 56 proved an important starting point, although he focuses mainly on the evidence for Latin produced by real women, and dismisses female speech within literary texts as male-authored representation. On Greek literature, see De Martino and Sommerstein (1995); Lardinois and McClure (2001); one book: McClure (1999); various articles including Mossman (2001). See also Gilleland (1980), Fögen (2004).

7. Dutsch (2008).

8. James (2010).

9. Adams (1984) and Gilleland (1980) both attempt to approach real female Latin through literary texts; Dutsch (2008) is also tempted by this; see 228-31.

10. See McClure (1999) 38-40 on ancient perceptions of women's speech, citing Plato *Cratylus* 418c.

11. Ricottilli (1992) 194-99 compares Dido's opening gesture (looking down) to the analogous gesture of Latinus, and has much of interest to say about the two scenes, but does not analyse the speeches themselves in any detail. See further on gesture in the *Aeneid* Ricottilli (2000).

12. For a good introduction to the problem, see Tannen (1994) 19-52.

13. Tannen (1994) 34.

14. On epic as a masculine genre, see Keith (2000); on women in the *Aeneid* see Nugent (1999). Women's speech in epic includes, but is not limited to, lament: on lament in epic see Perkell (1997), Fantham (1999); on sisterhood and narration in Ovid see Salzman-Mitchell (2005); on Hypsipyle as narrator in Statius see Gibson (2004).

15. Feeney (1990) 172-3. See further Braund (1998) who argues that the taciturnity of Aeneas accords with ancient ideas of decorum and is an appropriately Roman feature.

16. Against Feeney, Pollio (2006) argues that Aeneas in book 8 and Ilioneus in book 1 are only successful in their diplomatic approaches because of divine intervention and fate, not through persuasive oratory. This does not account for the layered nature of causation in epic, in which divine and human action and motivation work alongside each other, and the one does not make the other obsolete.

17. Dido's speeches in book 1 have not stimulated much detailed comment in the secondary literature: Austin (1971) in his commentary makes reasonably detailed remarks. In his introduction he says: 'When Ilioneus asks for her help, her reply is impulsive and unselfish and magnificent [...] In welcoming Aeneas she [speaks] words of deep humanity, a manifestation of true *pietas*, simple, direct, humble. There is nothing here of deviousness or self-seeking or seductive wiles. Dido is a woman whose highmindedness and honour match the most exacting Roman ideal of conduct and person: a woman worthy of Aeneas' (xvii-xviii). Heinze (1993) 96-8 views the sequence of scenes as setting up love between Aeneas and Dido; Cairns (1989) 42 analyses the lines to show how Dido begins as a 'good king' before degenerating; Pöschl (1966) 70-71 focuses on her great and noble soul; Highet (1972) 52-5 compares Ilioneus' two speeches to Dido and Latinus and analyses Aeneas' speech to Dido at 115. Moorton (1989) compares Dido's response to Aeetes' response to Argus, and Nelis (2001) provides the most complex discussion of this passage's forebears in Homer and Apollonius, at 86-93 drawing strong parallels between the arrival of Aeneas in Carthage and the arrival of Jason in Colchis, and at 112-7 equally reflecting on the similarities between Dido and Hypsipyle in book 2 of the *Argonautica*.

18. Laird (1999).

19. Though Tannen (1994) 36-9 suggests that volubility can equally be an index of powerlessness and taciturnity an index of power: well-reflected by Feeney's analysis of *Aeneid* 4. It is also worth remembering that Aeneas may be taciturn in book 4, but he is far from taciturn in books 2 and 3; instead he holds the role of 'lecturer' while Dido is listener.

20. Ricottilli (1992).
21. Austin (1971) 180 suggest that the gesture implies 'both modesty and emotion'.
22. Ricottilli (1992) 181.
23. Pöschl (1966) 70. Donatus *ad loc.* talks of both feminine modesty and embarrassment: *vultum demissa potest sic accipi, ut non solum propter femineam verecundiam vultum deiecerit verum etiam propter obiecta*. See further Ricottilli (1992) 186.
24. Muecke (1984) 109-10.
25. Ricottilli (1992) 188; Heuzé (1985) 498-9.
26. On the averted gaze as at least partly an index of power, see Lovatt (2013) 71-7.
27. The same verb describes Dido's most violent speech against Aeneas at 4.362-4: *talía dicentem iamdudum auersa tuetur / huc illuc uoluens oculos totumque pererrat / luminibus tacitis et sic accensa profatur*: ('As he was saying such things, all the time she watches him slant-wise, rolling her eyes here and there, and wandering all over with her silent gaze and thus aflame addresses him:'). The two situations are intimately linked: now is the moment that Dido most eloquently recalls her kindness to him in book 1; but the verb seems to have opposite implications (or this occurrence encourages us to read Dido in book 1 as sending mixed messages) and her active eyes reveal her agitation and lack of control. Latinus too (also *uoluens oculos*) has every reason to be agitated and emotional, and the longer pause in the narrative gives the impression that he is bringing himself under control.
28. Clausen (1987) 28 n.7, *obstupesco* of lovers: Prop 1.3.28, 2.29.25, 4.4.21; it is also a standard reaction to epiphany.
29. Fowler (1990), Laird (1999) esp. 79-115.
30. This might be an example of a feminine tendency to blur the boundaries between self and other, as Dutsch observes of the women in Roman comedy (Dutsch (2008) 41).
31. Austin (1971) 193.
32. Fordyce (1977) 107.
33. Horsfall (2000) 160-69.
34. Old men have some common ground with women, both excluded from the action of epic; see Lovatt (2013) 217-50 on teichoscopy; 220 on Priam. On *makrologia* as characteristic of old men in Greco-Roman culture, see Dutsch (2008) 191.
35. On elision, see Soubiran (1966) 613-45; some thoughts also in Morgan (2010) 326-32.
36. Statistics on elision in Virgil come from Bonaria (1985).
37. For the sake of this analysis, I have included as part of Dido's speech the two preceding lines, 613-4, which describe her state of mind.
38. West (1957) 102.
39. Soubiran (1966) 624: 'l'élision est protéiforme: autant que le silence qui se prolonge, elle saura peindre un cri qui se répercute d'écho en écho.' Some effects considered by Soubiran: stupefaction leading to a pause (624); emotion (632), with examples of Nisus at the death of Euryalus (9.427 – two elisions); Juno on hatred of the Trojans (1.47-50; 7.293-311); deceptive sincerity (A put-on effect ? Or words out of harmony with true emotions? Speech of Sinon). The awkwardness and ugliness of two vowels crunched together, especially those synaloepha involving vowel plus m or h plus vowel, can be mimetic; horror at war; grief (the lament of Euryalus' mother, 9.481-97, is rich in elisions). A series of elisions can imply accumulation, a heaping up; similarly Soubiran suggests a link to sublimity, the immeasurable.
40. On Teucer in Dido's speech, see Seo (2013) 44-7. 'As Dido uses the keywords of poetic allusion (*memini, ferebat*), here they underscore her claim's anomaly; she speaks from a position of traditional authority where none exists, and thus Virgil underscores her Zelig-like intrusion into the literary narrative.' (45)
41. Mossman (2005) suggests that abstraction and possibly sententiousness can be read as male qualities, while metaphor seems more feminine, at least in Euripides' *Trojan Women*. Cassandra,

however, continually takes metaphors literally. Mossman (2001) argues of Electra that women can be sententious in the presence of men as part of being slightly ill at ease.

42. Austin (1971) 189; he also points out that these lines were used on a funerary monument (*Carm. Lat. Epigr.* 1786, 825).

43. Adams (1984) 44 citing Cic. *De oratore* 3.45; Dutsch (2008) 200-02 argues that women's linguistic conservatism marks them as secluded from society, hence preserving the linguistic characteristics of the older male generations of their family: 'The ideal woman would thus seem to be a sort of vessel in which language, like a child, can be stored and through which it passes without being altered.' (201-2)

44. Austin (1971) 182-3.

45. Austin (1971) 191-2 also suggests that 619 in the second speech (*memini ... uenire*) reflects an earlier construction.

46. Does the fact that *urbs* itself is feminine have any significance? It is as if Dido is giving her city away as a bride (along with herself).

47. Used three times elsewhere in the *Aeneid*: 7.130 (Aeneas); 7.429 (Allecto pretending to be Calybe, priestess of Juno); 8.273 (Evander). Allecto is obviously a complex case, being a fury, pretending to be an elderly woman and priestess.

48. Adams (1984) 67-8: used by women only 11 out of 90 times in Plautus; restricted to men in Terence. But usage did change through time. Some features which are masculine or feminine in our extant comedy have lost those associations in later times (77). Methodologically, this is a big problem for transferring the sort of tactics used in Greek literature to Latin. Comedy and tragedy were being produced at roughly the same time; Latin comedy comes almost 150 years before the *Aeneid*.

49. Austin (1971) xvii-xviii.

50. Of course the phrase itself belongs to Aeneas, who sees his own suffering depicted on the walls of Dido's temple (1.462) and is moved by the power of *kleos*; similarly Dido sees her own suffering in that of Aeneas. Mirroring is a feature of the Carthaginian episode, where a poetics of incestuousness lurks; see Hardie (2006), Schiesaro (2008).

51. See Dutsch on empathy as a feminine characteristic in contrast to masculine competitiveness: 'Women use language to draw themselves closer to their interlocutors, while men use it to distinguish themselves from their companions.' (37)

52. O'Hara (1993) explores the unresolved ambiguities of Dido's extispicy as a representation of the unresolved ambiguities of reading the *Aeneid*. She certainly functions as an 'interpreting character' in her response to the speeches, and as a 'reader in the text' in her role as audience of *Aeneid* 2 and 3. See also Fowler (1990) on Dido as focalising character in book 4.

RÉSUMÉS

This paper explores the idea of female speech in Roman epic by comparing the public speeches of Dido welcoming first Ilioneus and then Aeneas at 1.561-78 and 1.613-30 with the analogous speeches of Latinus at 7.192-211 and 7.249-73. It applies concepts, ideas and observations about feminine discourse developed by scholars of Greek tragedy and Roman comedy to Virgil's *Aeneid* with the aim of nuancing approaches to Dido as speaker and public persona. The article treats speech presentation, stylistic features, tone, metre and rhetoric and argues that it is very hard to

extract gender from other aspects of the text, but that on balance Dido is presented as feminine in a number of ways. Her power is qualified and limited, she is more responsive and passive than Latinus and shows an emotional intensity and directness in contrast with the subtlety of her handling of the situation.

INDEX

Mots-clés : Dido, Virgil/Vergil, Aeneid, gender, female speech, feminine discourse, speech presentation