

# Parnassus: Classical Journal

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# PARNASSUS

VOLUME VIII • MMXXI

CLASSICAL JOURNAL

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS



# PARNASSUS

CLASSICAL JOURNAL

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS | VOLUME VIII | MMXXI

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### **Editor's Note**

Dear Reader,

Another academic year has come and gone, which can only mean one thing: another issue of *Parnassus* (obviously)!

What a joy it is to bring this issue of *Parnassus* to all of you. It goes without saying that the past year and a half has been anything but normal due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and faculty alike have had to overcome such strenuous obstacles such as navigating the new online format of classes, escaping screen time fatigue perpetuated by incessant, back-to-back meetings, and figuring out the mute function on Zoom. The past academic year has had its share of highs and lows, but I think it is safe to say that the Holy Cross community has only come out stronger in the face of all this adversity. Many of us were able to return to campus this spring for an albeit restricted semester, but, even so, we all made the most of it while staying safe. We have also remained connected to one another, utilizing the platforms meant for classes to facilitate calls and virtual hangouts with friends. Togetherness is more important now than ever, and I have a good feeling that this upcoming year will allow for that in the best ways possible.

The Holy Cross Classics Department has had an especially wonderful year. We were overjoyed to have one of our own senior Bean Scholars, Maia Lee-Chin '21, chosen as the 2020-2021 Fenwick Scholar. She shared her year's work with the entire school at the end of the spring semester, and we all could not be prouder. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, several students were

still able to travel abroad in the spring, making memories that will last them a lifetime. We hosted the annual Homerathon in person on the Hoval and were visited by the spirit of Homer himself in the form of a pigeon who kept begging our readers and volunteers for food. Additionally, the college announced back in April the creation of the Billy Collins '63 Scholarship for Studies in Classics. According to a statement put out by Holy Cross, "Two scholarships will be awarded annually to current students who have demonstrated a commitment to major in Classics and also show financial need." This gift from Mr. Collins speaks volumes to the effects of our Classics Department, the largest and most active Classics program in the U.S. I am extremely hopeful that these new scholarships, along with all the other achievements made by the department as a whole, will provide sufficient incentive for new majors to join our Classics family at Holy Cross.

This issue of *Parnassus* consists of an extremely diverse array of submissions. We have some beautiful art pieces depicting the often-violent relationships between gods and humans. We also have some excellent papers on the *Aeneid*, highlighting a variety of characters such as Dido, Lavinia, and, of course, Aeneas himself. We also have essays on topics that are not solely "Classical," such as musical history and Dutch art. Poems and creative pieces also pepper our eighth issue, as our talented contributors have provided interesting translations of poets like Horace, Sappho, and Catullus. All in all, this volume of *Parnassus* is filled to the brim with strong writing and creativity, and I am excited for you to experience it for yourself.

Due to the craziness of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are bringing *Parnassus* to you all a little later than usual. Our Editor-in-Chief, William Brown '21, has graduated, and, since the journal was incomplete at the time of his graduation, *Parnassus*' fate was up in the air for a while. I am very thankful to Professors Aaron Seider and Timothy Joseph for their help in wrapping up and finalizing the journal. Additionally, many thanks to our editorial board for selecting and editing the pieces included in this issue. Finally, I am also deeply indebted to Paul Topazio '23, since this journal, from the front cover to the layout of each page, would simply not exist without him. The two of us have worked so hard this summer to bring this journal to you all and to do our great submissions authors justice. After all, *verba volant, scripta manent* (spoken words fly away, written words remain).

I hope that you enjoy reading as much as I have.

Until next year!  
Stacey Kaliabakos '23  
Associate Editor

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## A Pair of Horatian Odes Translated into English Verse

Carl Quist, '23

### Ode I.3

“Propempticon to Vergil on the Occasion of the Poet’s  
Voyage to Athens”

Sic te diva potens Cypri<sup>1</sup>,  
    sic fratres Helenae<sup>2</sup>, lucida sidera,  
ventorumque regat pater<sup>3</sup>  
    obstrictis aliis praeter Iäpyga,<sup>4</sup>

navis, quae tibi creditum  
    debes Vergilium; finibus Atticis  
reddas incolumem precor  
    et serves animae dimidium meae.

Illi robur et aes triplex  
    circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci  
commisit pelago ratem  
    primus, nec timuit praecipitem Africum

decertantem Aquilonibus<sup>5</sup>  
    nec tristis Hyadas<sup>6</sup> nec rabiem Noti<sup>7</sup>,  
quo non arbiter Hadriae  
    maior, tollere seu ponere vult freta.

---

<sup>1</sup> The goddess Venus, born from the sea near Cyprus, was a patroness of sailors.

<sup>2</sup> Helen’s twin brothers, Castor and Pullox, protected seafarers as well.

<sup>3</sup> Aeolus, usually the master of winds, is here depicted as their father. Aeolus famously appears in *Aeneid* I.52ff.

<sup>4</sup> Iäpyx, a wind, blew from the Northwest, and thus was favorable for those sailing from Brundisium to Graecia.

<sup>5</sup> The North winds.

<sup>6</sup> A set of stars visible in October and November, coinciding with gloomy, rainy weather.

<sup>7</sup> The South wind.

Quem mortis timuit gradum  
qui siccis oculis monstra natantia,  
qui vidit mare turbidum et  
infamis scopulos Acroceraunia?<sup>8</sup>

Nequiquam deus abscidit  
prudens Oceano dissociabili  
terras, si tamen impiae  
non tangenda rates transiliunt vada.

Audax omnia perpeti  
gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas;  
audax Iapeti<sup>9</sup> genus  
ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit;

post ignem aetheria domo  
subductum macies et nova febrium  
terris incubuit cohors  
semotique prius tarda necessitas

leti corripuit gradum.  
Expertus vacuum Daedalus aëra  
pinnis non homini datis;  
perrupit Acheronta<sup>10</sup> Herculeus labor.

Nil mortalibus ardui est;  
caelum ipsum petimus stultitia neque  
per nostrum patimur scelus  
iracunda Iovem ponere fulmina.

---

<sup>8</sup> The 'Thunderbolt Cliffs' are a mountain ridge near Epirus, known both for treacherous rocks and storms.

<sup>9</sup> Iapetus, the father of Prometheus.

<sup>10</sup> The Acheron, a river of the Underworld, here stands for the Underworld as a whole.

If thou the pow'rful Cypran Lady should,  
If ye will it, thou shining Helen's twins,  
Or thou, winds' kingly father, command them  
Obstruct the others but not Iäpyx.

Thine, ship, the promise-note of Vergil, friend;  
To Attic shores the belov'd debt is owed.  
Return him dry, unharm'd I pray you, ship;  
And preserve thou the half-part of my soul.

To him hard oak and triple bronze nail'd round  
His heart; for he, the first to commit his  
Frail barque 'gainst angry sea, did not  
Once tremble before headlong Africus.

Contending 'gainst the northern Aquilo,  
Or gloomy Hyades or Notus' rage,  
than whom no greater master of the deep,  
the rage who storms or calms, yet fearless he.

What chance for death feared he, by courage driv'n,  
Whose stone-dry eyes gazed 'pon deeply monsters?  
Beheld the mutinous deep, spied th'infamed  
Epiran Thunder Cliffs, those deathly rocks?

In vain the prudent Ocean tore off land  
From sea discordant, so impious we  
Might not leap over his expanse with rafts  
Impious he forbade land-men to touch.

So reckless they the sum of men, and rash;  
They always rush to suffer through their sins.  
Yes rash the gens of Iäpetus he  
Whose son's impious fraud to men fire gave.

For after fire's theft from Olympian house  
Brought wasting illness and new fevers now  
On men's lands unclean the horde settled death.  
They threat'ning firstly slow corruption but

Death's pace they hasten now insatiable.  
Renowned, the expert craftsman Daedalus  
With feathers not to man bestowed took flight,  
just as through Acheron broke Heracles.

To mortals nothing is too arduous;  
in foolishness we seek the sky itself.  
For all men's scandals, we will suffer not  
Jove to lay down his wrathful thunderbolts.

Ode I.4  
“Solvitur Acris Hiems”

Solvitur acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni<sup>11</sup>,  
trahuntque siccas machinae carinas,  
ac neque iam stabulis gaudet pecus aut arator igni,  
nec prata canis albicant pruinis.

Iam Cytherea choros ducit Venus<sup>12</sup> imminente luna,  
iunctaeque Nymphis Gratiae decentes  
alterno terram quatiunt pede, dum gravis Cyclopum  
Vulcanus<sup>13</sup> ardens visit officinas.

Nunc decet aut viridi nitidum<sup>14</sup> caput impedire myrto  
aut flore, terrae quem ferunt solutae;  
nunc et in umbrosis Fauno decet immolare lucis,  
seu poscat agna sive malit haedo.

Pallida Mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas  
regumque turris. O beate Sesti,  
vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam.  
Iam te premet nox fabulaeque Manes

et domus exilis Plutonia, quo simul mearis,  
nec regna vini<sup>15</sup> sortiere talis

---

<sup>11</sup> The West wind, better known as Zephyrus, accompanied the arrival of Spring.

<sup>12</sup> The Island of Cythera, in addition to the Island of Cyprus, claimed to be the birthplace of Venus.

<sup>13</sup> The lightning bolts here being forged by Vulcan's Cyclopes will compose the imminent summer storms.

<sup>14</sup> During spring festivals, it was customary to anoint the heads with perfumed oil, wear garlands of myrtle and flowers, and sacrifice to Faunus, the god of shepherds and farmers, to secure bountiful herds and agriculture in the coming year.

<sup>15</sup> The master of a symposium is chosen by lot; it would be his responsibility to run the party.

nec tenerum Lycidan mirabere, quo calet iuventus  
nunc omnis et mox virgines tepebunt.

Dissolved is bitter ice by welcome spring;  
Dry winches haul dry hulls as west wind warms;  
Now the herd from stalls, tiller from his hearth  
Emerge; the meadow's hoarfrost grey melts green.

Cytheran Venus leads now under moon  
Her dancing Graces, partner'd Nymphs thrice fair  
They pound the earth with steps so quick while visits  
Forg'd Vulcan his bright Cyclopes shaping storms.

And now is meet to crown our brows with green  
New myrtle or with flowers perfum'd which  
Earth unchain'd fruits. In shade-groves Faunus bids  
The lamb or goat-kid which to him is due.

Yet Pallid Death with equal fist the hut  
Of paupers or the tow'rs of kings knocks still;  
For, blest dear Sestus, brief life forbids long  
Hope. Soon black night will oppress you, and  
Shades

Will greet at dreary Pluto's gate your soul.  
No more by dice will you be supper's king;  
Nor shall you admire tender Lycidas,  
Who attracts young men and soon virgins mild.

The Underworld's Influence on Vergil's Male  
Protagonists, Aeneas and Orpheus  
Stacey Kaliabakos, '23

*“Si potuit manis accersere coniugis Orpheus / Threicia  
fretus cithara fidibusue canoris,”*<sup>1</sup> said Aeneas to  
Apollo's Sibyl, his predestined guide on his journey  
through Vergil's Underworld. These lines are more  
significant than a mere evocation of an ancient myth--  
Orpheus, another one of Vergil's protagonists, serves as  
a stark reminder of loss, pain, and suffering that Aeneas  
simultaneously experiences and escapes throughout *the*  
*Aeneid*. Both of these characters have their stories and  
trajectories transformed for the better or for worse by  
their time in the Underworld. On the one hand, Aeneas  
emerges from the ivory gates of the Underworld  
understanding his destiny as the founder and father of  
Rome. On the other, Orpheus emerges as a failure, a

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<sup>1</sup> “If Orpheus brought out his dead wife's spirit / With melting sounds strummed on  
his Thracian lyre” (*Aeneid* VI, 119-120), translation by Sarah Ruden.



prophet who was blind to his own fate, succumbing to mourning his deceased lover, fated to die in violence. The intriguing parallels between Orpheus and Aeneas have enamored Classicists for years, and with good reason. It is indubitable that Vergil has used the Underworld to mark the divergent turning points in the stories of Aeneas and Orpheus and to also emphasize that while on the surface they may be similar, the two men are, in fact, quite different.

In Vergil's Underworld, the "ethical scores" of the dead-- or even those who are passing through-- are settled.<sup>2</sup> The people who have done good deeds in their lifetimes attain their coveted beautiful afterlives and happy endings in Elysium. On the other hand, those that have done evil in their lives are physically punished for eternity. Vergil is able to establish what

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<sup>2</sup> <https://louisecharente.wordpress.com/2013/06/25/virgil-and-the-underworld/>

his Underworld looks like and how it functions in his writings by building upon Roman theological ideas regarding their gods in addition to originally Greek philosophies. After Vergil crafted this specific Underworld, it became the normalized version of it, especially in the west, and has even been adopted into conventional Christian theology and art.<sup>3</sup> The idea of the afterlife as a place to take care of ethical scores is very powerful, and Vergil's notion of this has transcended through the ensuing millennia. We as readers can see the importance of ethics and its ties to predestination in the Underworld in the cases of both Aeneas and Orpheus.

Aeneas's journey to and through the Underworld in Book VI can be split into three parts: Aeneas' arrival at Cumae and preparations for his

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<sup>3</sup> <https://mirabiledictu.org/2018/02/18/our-winter-of-the-aeneid-the-underworld-and-twin-gates-in-book-vi/>

descent into the Underworld (lines 1-263); his actual journey through the Underworld to Elysium (lines 264-678); and his encounter with Anchises, when he discusses what lies beyond the grave and how a line of great future Roman heroes displays the inevitable splendor and influence of Rome (lines 679-901).<sup>4</sup>

With the encouragement of the Sibyl and having picked the necessary golden bough, he traverses the River Styx on Charon's boat. Afterwards, Aeneas enters what is known as the realm of Limbo, where we can see those who endured untimely deaths, such as infants, people who were unjustly condemned to die, suicides, and those who died in the name of love. It is here where he meets Dido, the once beautiful and powerful queen reduced to a mere shade of what she was in life.

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<sup>4</sup> Ganiban, Randall T. *Vergil Aeneid Books 1-6*.

Aeneas is shocked upon finding out that  
Dido is dead. Still experiencing bitter love for the  
Phoenician Queen, he calls out to her, saying:

“infelix Dido, verus mihi nuntius ergo  
venerat extinctam ferroque extrema secutam?  
funeris heu tibi causa fui? per sidera iuro,  
per superos et si qua fides tellure sub ima est,  
inuitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi.  
sed me iussa deum, quae nunc has ire per umbras,  
per loca senta situ cogunt noctemque profundam,  
imperiiis egere suis; nec credere quivi  
hunc tantum tibi me discessu ferre dolorem.  
siste gradum teque aspectu ne subtrahe nostro.  
quem fugis? extremum fato quod te adloquor hoc est.”<sup>5</sup>  
(Book VI, 456-467)

Aeneas begins his speech by addressing the deceased  
queen as “infelix,” or “unlucky” Dido. It is interesting  
that the hero utilizes this word first in his speech. A  
man not particularly known for his ability as an orator,

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<sup>5</sup> “Poor Dido, then the messenger was right-- you stabbed yourself and brought about your own end? And it was my fault? By the stars, the high gods, and any truth below the earth: my queen, it was against my will I left your country, and by the orders of the gods, who now compel me to pass through this shadowed squalor, these depths of night. No, I did not believe that I would bring you so much pain by leaving. Stay here-- don't back away, but let me see you. Who are you running from? Fate gives me this last chance to speak to you.” (*Aeneid* VI, 456-467), translation by Sarah Ruden.

Aeneas may be unaware of how insensitive he seems here, since he himself is the root of Dido's unhappiness. The Trojan goes on to ask if he had actually been the cause of her death-- another relatively abrasive question. What possible reason, other than the sudden and initially unapologetic abandonment by her lover, could have driven Dido into such a devastating act as suicide? Additionally, he even goes on to attempt to excuse himself from any blame, saying that his destiny forced him to leave and that the fates essentially were responsible for her death. Although it may seem that Aeneas does, to a certain extent, have genuine concerns for Dido's well-being, it should have been at the front of his mind to maintain a tactful and respectful manner towards Dido's evident emotional turbulence in this situation ("illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat / nec magis

incepto vultum sermone movetur).<sup>6</sup> There is no doubt that Aeneas should-- and must-- carry much of the blame for Dido's suicide. Using his "destiny" as a pardon is not what a true hero should do. Finally, almost at the end of his address, Aeneas gives Dido several direct commands, telling her to stop and stay with him. Rather than commanding her in this bitter moment with such rashness, it probably would have been better for him to use more soothing or kind words so that they could possibly have a productive conversation. I would argue that Vergil has Aeneas speak to Dido the way he does in order to highlight that Aeneas is used to commanding others (in a militant sense) with confidence. This is his folly-- Dido is not just another one of his companions, she is (in her mind) his wife. A less intense approach could

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<sup>6</sup> "Her eyes stayed on the ground, her face averted, as changeless in expression, while he spoke" (*Aeneid VI*, 469-470), translation by Sarah Ruden

have involved a more delicate appeal to her emotions. After Dido's refusal to answer him and her return to Sychaeus, a relatively saddened Aeneas continues on his journey, quickly forgetting Dido and her fate. Would someone who was truly in love give up so easily?

Orpheus and Eurydice arguably endure an even more tragic fate than the mainstream ill-fated lovers, Romeo and Juliet. In *Georgics IV*, Vergil elects to detail the heart wrenching myth in his own words, his rendition only superseded in fame by perhaps Ovid's version of the tale. Orpheus and Eurydice were a happily married couple; however, Eurydice was fated by the gods to live a short life. While running along a riverbank, a serpent attacked and bit the young woman, killing her with its poison shortly thereafter. Orpheus, consumed by grief,

turned to the lyre and his gift of music, bestowed to him by his father, Apollo, and mourned every day for his beloved. Unable to bear his pain, however, he decided to journey to the Underworld to strike a deal with the god of the dead. Using his formidable musical skills, Orpheus was able to convince him to allow Eurydice back to the human world, but under one condition, demanded by Proserpina: he was not to look back at her, or else all of his efforts to get her back would be fruitless. Their journey back home went well, up until they were nearly to their destination-- a “madness” overtook Orpheus, and, distrustful of the promise the gods had made, he looked back at Eurydice. Crying out to him, she lamented his poor choice, and was taken back to the depths of the Underworld. Orpheus tried to cross back over through the River Styx but was not allowed to. Devastated by his failure, he lived the rest of his life in misery,



eventually succumbing to death by the hands of Bacchus' maddened Maenads.<sup>7</sup>

It is said that perhaps Vergil was the original author who put the devastating twist-- the backwards glance-- in his telling of the Orpheus and Eurydice myth:

“Vergil’s version of the Orpheus story is unlikely to have been canonical at the time of the composition of the *Georgics*... In portraying Orpheus failing at the eleventh hour, Vergil seems to be following a little-known variant of the myth, if not rewriting the story completely.”<sup>8</sup>

But why would Vergil do this? At the moment when Orpheus-- a man who, to our knowledge, has made no transgressions that would warrant such a devastating end to his life-- has successfully traversed the Underworld twice

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<sup>7</sup>[https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195397703/student/archives/vergil\\_aristaeus/](https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195397703/student/archives/vergil_aristaeus/)

<sup>8</sup> Gale, Monica R. “Poetry and the Backward Glance in Vergil’s *Georgics* and *Aeneid*,” 333-334

over to take back his wife, he makes one small error that costs him everything. It's almost as if he were unable to control himself, forgetting the seemingly simple rule set forth by Proserpina:

“Restitit Eurydicenque suam iam luce sub ipsa /  
immemor heu! victusque animi respexit.” (490-

491, *Georgics IV*)<sup>9</sup> It is unfortunate and

heartbreaking, but purposeful on Vergil's part.

“Respexit,” from the verb “respicio,” can have a multitude of conventional meanings, such as “to look back, look behind, look back

upon.”<sup>10</sup> However, it can also have another

meaning, according to Lewis & Short, which is

“to have a care for, respect.” It almost seems as

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<sup>9</sup> He stopped and looked back at his Eurydice now under the light itself, alas, forgetful, and conquered in his mind.

<sup>10</sup> Lewis & Short Entry “respicio”

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=respexit&la=la&can=respexit0&prior=animi&d=Perseus:text:1999.0>

2.0059;book=4;card=453&i=1#Perseus:text:1999.04.0059;entry=respicio-contents

if Orpheus cared so much for Eurydice that it was his undoing. (Interestingly, this word is actually found in Book VI of *the Aeneid*-- just not in reference to Dido, and with the regular definition of “to look back.” It can be found not long after Aeneas encounters Dido in line 548, which says “Respicit Aeneas subito et sub rupe sinistra.”<sup>11</sup> This underscores the evidently small to nonexistent amount of remaining love Aeneas harbors for Dido.) The very act of looking back towards Eurydice in frantic love essentially *destroys* their love. However, Eurydice calls out to him claiming that it is Orpheus’ madness that is their undoing:

“Illa, Quis et me, inquit, miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu,  
quis tantus furor? En iterum crudelia retro  
Fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina somnus.

---

<sup>11</sup>“Aeneas turned, and right there to his left stood a fortress” (*Aeneid VI, 548*), translation by Sarah Ruden

Iamque vale: feror ingenti circumdata nocte  
invalidasque tibi tendens, heu non tua,  
palmas!”<sup>12</sup> (*Georgics IV*, 494-498)

Although his action does seem mad, it can be argued that Orpheus did, ultimately, act out of pure love and longing for Eurydice. After his error and Eurydice’s second death, the demigod was never the same. Unable to carry on as before and unable to get over her death, he wasted away. The fates had a tragic death in store not only for Eurydice, but for Orpheus as well. When looking at the happy couple, it is hard to imagine how this ending could possibly be fair. What lesson could Vergil have in mind with the backward glance?

Many different parallels can be drawn between Aeneas and Orpheus. After all, their

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<sup>12</sup> “What terrible madness has destroyed both you and me. Hear! A second time the cruel fates call me back and sleep covers my swimming eyes. Farewell. Stretching out my powerless hands to you, I am borne away, enveloped in endless night, yours no longer.” translation via [https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195397703/student/archives/vergil\\_aristaeus/](https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195397703/student/archives/vergil_aristaeus/)

personalities and characteristics were crafted by the same author, Vergil, and they are both the male protagonists of their respective tales. Despite each having an immortal parent, they both are not always favored by the gods, having to endure immeasurable horrors in their lives. But where these characters seem to be different, they are entirely divergent. One is known for his dedication to love, and one is known for abandoning his love. This is an irrefutable fact-- but what truly sets the men apart is what they do after realizing what they have done wrong to lose their beloveds. Aeneas' strength (and his weakness) is that he does not look back for Dido. Although he does experience a certain level of anguish in seeing Dido in the Underworld, his emotional speech does not go much farther than producing futile (and late) tears of woe that really have no implications on where his journey will take

him. Dido was used-- not just by Aeneas, but by the gods as a tool in the founding of one of the greatest cities on earth. Her despair and sacrifice were fated-- Aeneas knows that and uses it to his advantage. Aeneas' journey in the Underworld also forces him to decide what is of more value to him: public duty or personal interests. Monica R. Gale notes that "[Aeneas is] turning from the individuals who made up his past to dedicate himself to a largely unknown future. It is striking and perhaps not coincidental that neither Dido nor Creusa is mentioned by Aeneas after he leaves the Underworld."<sup>13</sup> After speaking to Dido and Anchises in particular, Aeneas understands that he cannot afford to look back on the past-- he must push forward to achieve his destiny. He knows

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<sup>13</sup> Gale, Monica R. "Poetry and the Backward Glance in Vergil's *Georgics* and *Aeneid*," 340

that if he were to truly care for Dido, like Orpheus cares for Eurydice, he could not fulfill his fortune.

Orpheus' story tells us that sometimes, love is so strong that it can be destructive. His inability to move past Eurydice after almost getting her back in the Underworld tells the readers how intense his love for her was. Their bond was so strong that Orpheus, with his god-given music skills and talents, deliberately chose a life of solitude in order to stay true to his dead lover. His journey through the Underworld proved how far he would go for his one true love, and his failure underscored his unwillingness to love anyone else-- he cared for Eurydice too much for that. In contrast to Aeneas, however, he did not have a crucial destiny to fulfill. It is unknown whether having

another important task in his life following the demise of Eurydice would have changed his trajectory after losing her in the Underworld, but most readers would probably agree that Orpheus' love was simply too strong to be swayed by anything else the fates could have had in store for him. Aeneas-- the prototypical Roman-- trampling Carthaginian Dido and her broken heart serves as a parallel to the Roman trampling of Carthage in the Punic Wars. Through Aeneas, Vergil conveys a personification of the harsh mentality of a conquering Roman in contrast to the ruinous and tragic queen representing a ruinous and tragic enemy.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, Vergil's Orpheus is

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<sup>14</sup> <https://mirabiledictu.org/2018/02/18/our-winter-of-the-aeneid-the-underworld-and-twin-gates-in-book-vi/>



not Euridyce's fated enemy; therefore, he has no need to move past her if he believes he belongs to her for eternity. Orpheus' future is naught *without* Eurydice, while Aeneas' future is naught *with* Dido. Ultimately, Vergil's seemingly similar characters come to their respective realizations about their futures after their time in the Underworld, where their fates are sealed. Though the future may be more difficult to comprehend than the past, Aeneas is ready to take it on, but Orpheus has no future without his past, lost love.

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*Minerva*

Casa de Pilatos. Seville, Spain. March 2020.

Picture by Mary Whitney '23

Nature, Glory, Lineage in *Iliad* 6.145-151

Anne-Catherine Schaaf, '22

“Great-hearted son of Tydeus, why do you ask my  
lineage?  
As a generation of leaves, so is the generation of men.  
The wind scatters some leaves to the ground, but the  
forest grows others  
that flourish and in the time of spring come to succeed  
them;  
so a generation of men either grows, or it dies.  
But if you indeed wish to learn these things, so as to  
know well  
my family’s lineage, many men know of it.”

Many similes in the *Iliad* serve to amplify, to quicken. A man is stronger when he is like a lion, faster when he is like the raging wind, and more brutal when he is like the cornered boar. This epic simile in book 6, lines 145 to 151, does just the opposite: it slows, it silences. It drags down the tension of the battle scene like a loom weight pulling a thread out of place. This epic simile is particularly interesting to me in how it

subverts *aristeia* and the traditional battlefield narrative to reflect on the deeper themes of memory and devotion in the *Iliad*.

When Glaukos and Diomedes meet here, the battle is well underway. They are both ready to advance, but interestingly, they stop and greet each other with courtesy. Diomedes proudly describes his lineage, then asks Glaukos for his. Before Glaukos lists his heritage, however, he offers this unusual reflection. The theme of succession and the child versus the father is present throughout the *Iliad*, from Achilles being destined to be better than his father, to the acknowledgement among other warriors that they do not measure up to the great heroes of the past. Still, it is an unusual thing to meditate upon when meeting an enemy in the battlefield. Men, when they are compared to plants, are often mighty oaks or poplars, but here they are fragile and forgettable, one leaf out of many

doomed to fall and be reabsorbed by the earth. Not exactly a self-aggrandizing simile for a hero. Glaukos is not claiming any special strength or skill; rather, he is putting himself and Diomedes in the position of the thousands of nameless warriors who will be forgotten as the seasons pass.

The statement seems to express that Glaukos feels acutely the ten long years of the war. After his respectful address, “Great-hearted son of Tydeus,” it would be natural for him to counter Diomedes with his own god-like heritage, as a natural lead up to their physical sparring (before they realize they are ancestral guest-friends), but instead, through this simile he reaches out to Diomedes (145). It acknowledges that they are both in a situation beyond their control, they both seek *kleos*, and that their entire generation is in with them. Since the simile does not mark out distinctions between the Trojans or Achaeans and refers

to a universal “generation of men,” Glaukos is empathizing with Diomedes (146). Their battle might not be important or meaningful to either of them, and the glory of victory is fleeting, for their fighting is as neutral and forgettable as the growth cycle of leaves. Still, while the *Iliad* has many moments where soldiers of the opposing sides address one another, this is unique as a simile that casts them all as equal and indistinguishable. We are not given Diomedes’ emotional reaction to this statement, yet I cannot help but be reminded of the famous incident in WWI where soldiers from opposing sides played soccer together on Christmas before resuming fighting the next day. Instead of glorifying the individual warrior, this simile finds common ground among them all as the foundation for empathy across the battle lines.

I believe this simile can also be read through the lens of gender. I first noticed a gendered aspect to this



with Alexander's choice of the gendered word "men," for the leaves, which brought to mind an interesting tidbit of plant biology. Robin Wall Kimmerer in her book *Gathering Moss* briefly touches on the incredibly complex world of moss reproduction. Mosses are generally monoecious, with both female and male reproductive organs. The "females" concentrate on producing one large stable gamete with a good chance of surviving the harsh conditions the mosses live in. The "males" instead bet on numbers and produce many small gametes, of which many will die, but some will eventually find a female gamete. While it is a long stretch from mosses to trees and modern biology (recounted by someone who is most definitely not a biology expert) to epic poetry, there appears to be common ground here. Women in the *Iliad*, and in this simile, are essentially a homogenous mass, spinning, feeding, nurturing and sexually serving the men around

them, whether Trojan or Achaean. They do not gain glory for themselves, but they are responsible for the propagation of the next generation, and pass on the memory, not just the genes, of the past generation of heroes. Those heroes might be beautiful for a little while, like brilliant leaves in autumn or purple jacaranda blossoms, but they will quickly decay and be replaced. Ultimately, no one will remember any particular hero, just as people do not remember any particular leaf or blossom.

The line “so a generation of men either grows, or it dies” made me pause (149). Isn’t Glaukos’ point here that a generation will die and be forgotten anyway? Perhaps this, taken in conjunction with the preceding two lines, can be understood slightly differently as growth being equivalent to the pursuit of glory. In Achilles’ case, that would mean by staying at Troy and dying young he is, conversely, flourishing,

while to go home and live in anonymity would be equivalent to death. “The wind scatters some leaves to the ground” could be understood here as a fall from glory as equal to death (147). While this simile clearly seems to find commonality between the warriors, which can lead to empathy among them, it also acknowledges their fundamental conflict. They cannot help but try and seek glory; it is in their psychological nature as much as it is in leaves’ biological nature to seek the energy of sunlight. The entire simile is very concise and definite. There is no room for deliberation, detail, or exception. Glaukos’ ancestors sought *kleos*, so he must do the same, and more so than any strong feelings over Helen or knowledge of the gods’ designs.

Glaukos acknowledges what drives them all forward, yet his own act of reflection is, counterintuitively, against that said driving force. He defies the spirits of dark death that want to drag him

into battle. Instead, he pauses and reflects on the futility of their whole enterprise. It will not change his fate, or Diomedes', but its poignancy gives the reader the chance to step back, just like the characters do, from the battlefield frenzy. This simile, not just their common connection, allows them to trust one another, and try to be decent in the midst of an impossible situation. We may be drawn into the battle as readers, but Glaukos' epic simile serves to remind us that the battle is not what makes the *Iliad* timeless, but the humanity and vulnerability of its countless characters, all striving against dark death to reach the golden, glorious sunlight.

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## Juvenal Essay

Aiden Largey, '21

Juvenal (55 AD -130 AD) was a Roman satirist and polemicist. His style of satire is characterized by aggressiveness and combativeness, and these qualities can be plainly seen in Juvenal's book of polemical poems, the *Satires*. The aggressive style of the *Satires* serves as a medium through which Juvenal critiques his many targets.

A common target for Juvenal is the wealth inequality that existed in Rome at the time. Juvenal lived during the apex of the Roman Empire's power, with its territory stretching from Britain to the eastern Mediterranean. During this time, the population of the city of Rome numbered one million, the largest population a European city would attain for centuries, and the empire's wealth reached new heights. It is in this context that Juvenal published his *Satires*. In Book

1, he begins his endeavor by lamenting the dreariness of epic poetry. “Why should I always be a listener?” he asks and bemoans the various epic poems which he considers dull. He explains that, because Rome has become depraved in his eyes, he strongly believes he should produce a work that sheds light on this depravity. He writes that it’s impossible for him *not* to write satire when the elites are so wealthy that “their fingers cannot endure any more jewels.”<sup>1</sup> This obscene wealth enrages Juvenal to such an extent that it sickens him. He describes his rage “burning” his insides, and rhetorically asks “what is a disgrace if their money is safe?”<sup>2</sup> Here, Juvenal is criticizing the double standard for morality that existed in Rome. The elite and the wealthy are guilty of outrageous acts, but they do not

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<sup>1</sup> Susanna Braund, *Juvenal: Satires Book 1* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), 45.

<sup>2</sup> Susanna Braund, *Juvenal: Satires Book 1* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), 46.

receive proper punishment because their wealth allows them to avoid it. For Juvenal, excessive wealth goes hand in hand with immorality and corruption. The more wealth an individual has, the more immoral he is.

One of the main reasons that Juvenal abhors excessive wealth is that it deprives the poor of basic needs. In his characteristically aggressive manner, Juvenal denounces the rich as wanton gamblers who view Rome's poor with contempt. He questions whether there was ever a time in which people were greedier or more obsessed with gambling, and claims that gamblers are so wealthy that they are betting not from wallets but treasure chests. He questions, "Is it not madness to lose a hundred thousand sesterces and not give a tunic to a shivering slave?"<sup>3</sup> A hundred thousand sesterces could give clothing, food, and shelter to great

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<sup>3</sup> Susanna Braund, *Juvenal: Satires Book 1* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), 47.



numbers of Romans in poverty, and these men are instead choosing to gamble it away. This grotesque image comprises a major motivation for the Satires and is one of the reasons behind the anger and the polemical style of Juvenal. His imagery, coupled with the polemic, is highly persuasive, thus demonstrating Juvenal's success as a satirist.

Juvenal's first satire is highly passionate and sets the tone for the rest of the work. According to Michael Coffey, "In a series of rhetorical questions and insistent expressions of anger Juvenal incites the audience to share his indignation ... Juvenal's listeners are appealed to as if present at the scene."<sup>4</sup> It is not enough to simply express his opinion; he also wants his audience to agree with him and paints a convincing case for them to do so. The highly emotive aspect

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<sup>4</sup> Michael Coffey, *Roman Satire* (London, Methuen & Co Ltd., 1976), 124-125.

renders the polemic more convincing because it appeals to human's basic instincts. Juvenal appeals to justice by presenting Rome's wealthy as taking advantage of the lower classes by their extravagance and wantonness.

The polemical style of the *Satires* is also highly influenced by the historical context. Many of the themes Juvenal discusses relate to Domitian, the emperor considered to be an autocratic and severe tyrant. No satires were published about Domitian because the emperor controlled the Roman press. The *Satires* were published during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, two of the 'good emperors' who allowed for a freer press. Because of this, according to Kirk Freudenburg, "Juvenal, now that the terror has passed, seizes the moment ... this is satire in a time warp, making up for all the satires never written in the last

twenty years or more.”<sup>5</sup> The satirist, by writing these satires, is bringing justice to those who were never punished during their lifetimes. The poet is punishing Domitian and his associates for the crime of corrupting Rome and desecrating the institutions important to it, such as the Senate. The polemical style of writing serves to disgrace those responsible for Rome’s moral failings.

Another key argument in Juvenal’s criticism of Rome under Domitian is the precedence of wealth over the gods. He says, “For we consider the greatness of wealthy most holy, even though deadly Money does not yet have a temple to live in.”<sup>6</sup> Here, Juvenal is attacking the materialism of the Roman elite. In prioritizing wealth over worship, they are earning disapproval and

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<sup>5</sup> Kirk Freudenburg, *Satires of Rome: Threatening poses from Lucilius to Juvenal* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 214-215.

<sup>6</sup> Susanna Braund, *Juvenal: Satires Book 1* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), 48.

condemnation from the gods. This adds another dimension to Juvenal's diatribe against the elites. Not only is what they are doing wrong in the eyes of Juvenal, but it is also wrong in the eyes of the gods, who have much more power than a single satirist. Juvenal adds another layer of gravity to the wrongdoings of Domitian and his associates by using righteous anger to criticize them.

Along with the elites, there are many other groups of people in Rome that Juvenal considers immoral. The groups that Juvenal targets in the first satire include eunuchs who marry, women who fight as hunters in the arena, teenage adulterers, and Egyptians. The commonality between them is their abnormality in Juvenal's estimation. According to Amy Richlin, "They all act in the same way and annoy the poet for the same reason: each has acted contrary to the way he or she is supposed to act. Through his bitter critique, the satirist

reassures himself and his audience that they themselves are not abnormal or vicious, and are not deceived by those who are.”<sup>7</sup> In this way, the targets of the satire encompass two types of people: the upper class and the marginalized in Roman society. Both groups do not find into Juvenal’s notions of proper Roman morality and thus are targeted with polemical satire, with the intention that the offenders will correct their behavior accordingly.

The third satire gives the reader an in-depth, inside look at urban life, and the satirist brims with anger as he relates the injustices. Among the many injustices that ordinary Romans faced is the decrepit state of the tenements and the laziness of the *vilicus*, or estate manager. Juvenal explains, “We live in a city supported for the most part by thin props. Once he

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<sup>7</sup> Amy Richlin, *The Garden of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1983), 199.

covers a gaping old crack, he orders us to not worry and sleep in a collapsing building.”<sup>8</sup> Working class Romans are forced to live in homes that could collapse on them at any moment, and the *vilicus* is either incompetent and doesn’t realize this or is simply apathetic about it. On top of this, the wealthiest of Romans are holding extravagant parties and living in the highest luxury while thousands of Romans suffer. The circumstances that Juvenal describes are enough to make anyone seethe with anger.

Juvenal’s *Satires* critique the poet’s main targets, excessive wealth and those who transgress his conception of morality, with a bitter and aggressive style that helps convey his message.

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<sup>8</sup> Susanna Braund, *Juvenal: Satires Book 1* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), 60.

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## *Aeneid*: A Depiction of Dido in Dutch Golden Age Art

Rebecca Rose Kaczmarek, '23



(<https://sammlung.staedelmuseum.de/en/work/dido-and-aeneas>)

Vergil's *Aeneid* has been the muse of artists for centuries, even millennia, after its publication in 19 BCE. Such was the case in the seventeenth century Netherlands, an interesting situation due to the dichotomy between the Dutch people's strict moralist faith of Calvinism, and their desire to depict risqué themes in art, such as bordello paintings and tavern scenes. As a student of classics, I sought to learn why



the Dutch loved Ancient Roman and Greek myths despite its anti-Christian themes. How did such themes fit into the Dutch artistic culture of the seventeenth century when they seemed to directly contradict Dutch values? I found that the Dutch expressed their immoral desires in art as a form of catharsis: they were able to retain their Christian identity by making something beautiful out of their demons instead of actually committing sin. Artists were allowed to depict those scenes because they placed a moralist lens on the scandalous subjects, one example being a painting of a drunken family party that had the proverb “in luxury, look out” written in Dutch in the corner.<sup>1</sup> In terms of the *Aeneid*, I wanted to find out what the Dutch thought of Dido, an immigrant queen and a woman of color, as shown in Dutch art. While it may seem unrelated, it is

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<sup>1</sup> *In Luxury, Look Out* (1663) by Jan Steen.

important to note that at the time, the Dutch were world leaders not only in art, but also in trade. The rise of the Dutch East India and Dutch West India companies also increased African slave trade: I argue that the Dutch people's prejudice against people of African descent is reflected through their depictions of Dido. Therefore, their catharsis denied Dido her race, a fundamental part of her identity. As I demonstrate later in this essay, Dutch and Flemish artists illustrate Dido as a woman with pale white Nordic coloring, when she should have been brown based on her ancestry and location in the Mediterranean. With these ideas in mind, I compare descriptions of Dido and her surroundings in the *Aeneid* to *Dido and Aeneas* by Flemish artist Jan van den Hoecke. I then explain how those similarities and differences reflect onto Dutch culture.

Before comparing the paintings to the original Latin descriptions, it is necessary to summarize the

findings of Shelley Haley, a professor at Hamilton College and a prolific expert on critical race theory in the ancient world. She has written several papers on the topic, one of which I will discuss in the following two paragraphs. As Haley mentions, Dido's skin color is not explicitly described in the *Aeneid*, the only physical description of her being her hair color. However, as Haley illustrates, there is still much to infer from the *Aeneid* – and ancient Rome itself – about Dido's appearance. Haley describes that the Romans did not think about race as people do now. According to her, the Romans referred to different skin tones as *albus*, *candidus*, *ater*, *fuscus*, and *niger*, meaning white, glistening white, lusterless black (opposite of *albus*), and shining/glistening black (opposite of *candidus*), respectively (Haley 31). However, *albus* does not mean 'white' in the twenty-first century sense of a 'Nordic or European coloring,' because "the 'developed world' of

Roman world view was definitely the world of pale-brown Mediterraneans” (Haley 31). So with that in mind, “the reference point for *albus* is pale-brown..... *ater, candidus, fuscus*, and *niger* become degrees of brownness” (Haley 31). Now, if Dido’s skin color were mentioned at all, one would not have to speculate using race terminology of Vergil’s time. However, her skin color is not mentioned once in the Aeneid, which is in itself an indication of the color:

In the character of Dido, gender, culture, and geographical location, rather than the somatic trait of skin color, are the factors construing difference. If Dido had belonged to the gene pool for which “having fair hair and skin and usually light eyes” is the norm, then it seems to me that Vergil, whose reference is *candidus* (pale brown) would have found that remarkable and would have mentioned it when we first

encounter Dido. However, he does not describe her physically at all, making it all the more plausible that Vergil conceived of Dido as what I call the “beautiful norm”: southern Mediterranean and Semitic women who were *candidae*, with black hair, pale brown skin, and dark eyes. (Haley 37)

As Haley points out, Vergil would have found it astonishing if Dido had Nordic white skin and blond hair, and as a result he would have described such a notable difference; however, he wrote no such description. Therefore, Dido’s skin color must have appeared the same as other women at the time – at the lightest, she was pale brown.

Now, her hair – it is likely that Dido’s hair was darker than the blond it is described as in the *Aeneid*. Vergil describes Dido’s hair once at the end of Book 4 when she sees that Aeneas has left the port: *terque*

*quaterque manu pectus percussa decorum flaventisque  
abscissa comas* (Vergil 4.589-90).<sup>2</sup> At this moment in  
the Aeneid, Dido's hair is blond, which is only  
naturally possible for someone of European descent.  
However, as Haley points out, diction makes it clear  
that her hair was not always that way:

“Translators render *flaventis* as “golden” or  
“yellow,” but the word is a participial adjective  
from the verb “*flaveo*,” “to be yellow,” so that  
in line 590 there is a sense that Dido's hair has  
just become yellow.” (Haley 39)

Thus, her hair must have been darker before the ritual.  
The reason why Haley believes Dido had her hair dyed  
is because Dido turned to an indigenous African  
priestess to complete rituals in order to cope with

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<sup>2</sup> She struck her lovely chest three and four times with her hand, she tore her  
yellowing hair

Aeneas' impending departure (Haley 38, Vergil 4.483).

According to Haley:

“One important aspect of ritual in some traditional African religions involves dousing the worshippers and presiders with a yellow mud made from ochre. I suggest also that Dido had been doused with a similar mud, hence the description of her as having yellow hair (*flaventis abscissa comas*, 1.590).” (Haley 38-39)

Therefore, it is likely that Dido's hair turned yellow because of the African ritual she took part in. Vergil had knowledge of African customs, so it is likely that he was aware of this one and deliberately used *flaventis* to subtly demonstrate such knowledge. (Haley 37)

Thus, Dido must have had naturally dark hair.

Now that I have explained Dido's appearance, I will present some background on the information on the artist that painted Dido and Aeneas, which will inform my analysis of the painting. Not much is known about van den Hoecke, as he was a minor Flemish artist and

tapestry maker. However, art historians know that he mainly painted portraits and history paintings, and was a pupil of Rubens, who had a classical style and followed Caravaggio; naturally, van den Hoecke's own style derived from his master's.<sup>3</sup> After he spent time in Rubens' studio, van den Hoecke lived in Italy from 1635-1646, studying the Italian masters and further developing his style. This period of his life influenced him in his later years. Even though he made *Dido and Aeneas* before his trip to Italy, or perhaps in his first year there, it is clear that he has always been interested in classical themes. However, it is unclear how deep his interest goes because it is not known whether he knew Latin. If he knew the language, he would have been able to read the *Aeneid* the way it was written, and therefore could have depicted Dido accurately. There is

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<sup>3</sup> The term 'history painting' includes not only paintings of historical events, but also of Greek and Roman mythology.



one painting of his called *Amor vincit omnia*, which may indicate that he knew Latin, but most painting titles that people use today are different from what they are called when they are created. If van den Hoecke knew Latin, it is possible that he painted *Dido and Aeneas* and used the original Latin as a source, but it is also possible that he read an English translation or read their story in an emblem book.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, if he were classically educated, he would have known Dido's true hair color was dark and that her skin was brown. Regardless, van den Hocke had a deep interest in both the classics and the classical style of painting.

Now that van den Hoecke's artistic background is laid out, it is time to discuss his painting *Dido and Aeneas* (circa 1630-1635). Even though Dido is the

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<sup>4</sup> Painters across Europe used emblem books to incorporate symbols into their paintings and add meaning. For example, dogs represented loyalty, and pipes and tankards represented sin (Westermann). Some emblem books, such as Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boeck* included a summary of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. I am not sure if there is an emblem book that contains a summary of the *Aeneid* (as I cannot read Dutch and could not find one).

focus of this essay, it is imperative to describe the whole painting and see how accurate it is to the Latin so that we have a full analysis. The foreground of the painting shows Aeneas helping Dido off a horse, and the background shows men hunting stags with a storm looming ahead. These are the lines from the *Aeneid* that match the painting:

*alia de parte patentis / transmittunt cursu  
campos atque agmina cervi / pulverulenta fuga  
glomerant montisque relinquunt. / at puer  
Ascanius mediis in vallibus acri / gaudet equo  
iamque hos cursu, iam praeterit illos, /  
spumantemque dari pecora inter inertia votis /  
optat aprum, aut fulvum descendere monte  
leonem. / Interea magno misceri murmure  
caelum / Incipit, insequitur commixta grandine  
nimbus / Et Tyrrii comites passim et Troiana  
iuventus / Dardaniusque nepos Veneris diversa  
per agros / Tecta metu petiere; ruunt de  
montibus amnes. / Speluncam Dido dux et  
Troianus eandem / deveniunt. (Vergil 4.151-  
66)<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup> Deer from another refuge / Sped off in crowding ranks across the bare plain, / In a dusty panic to escape the mountain. / The boy Ascanius, keen-horsed, keen rider, / Kept racing past them on the valley floor, / wanting a tawny lion from the mountain

It is interesting that the foreground and focus of this painting is the most inaccurate to the Latin. As shown by the quote above, Dido's physical appearance is not mentioned in this scene. But drawing from Haley's article, Dido is not as white as the woman depicted in the painting, nor at this point in the story does she have yellow hair. When Dido enters the cave with Aeneas, her hair is most likely black or dark brown like the hair color of most Mediterranean people and Semites at the time. Dido's hair turns yellow long after they have solidified their relationship in the cave and shortly before Aeneas leaves her. Therefore, the way van den Hoecke painted Dido's hair is inaccurate to her true hair color at that point in the story. Additionally, Vergil does not write that Aeneas helped Dido get off her

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/ Or a foam-mouthed boar among so many tame things. / But a racket and now a tumult now erupted / From the sky; a storm cloud shot in, full of hail, / Scattering the trojans and their Tyrian escorts / And Venus' Trojan grandson through the fields / Toward urgent shelter. Streams rushed from the hillsides. / The Trojan lord and Dido found the same cave. (Ruden 4.151-66)

horse when the storm arrived, though it may seem plausible. The most incredible part of the painting is the two naked children with wings. One sits on a horse, and the other flies directly above Dido's head. If we are to understand such children as angels in the painting, they do not belong to the Roman pantheon of gods. Another possibility is that the babies are manifestations of Cupid, though he is only one god. But, the baby on the horse is Ascanius, whom Cupid disguised himself as in Book 1. But if he is Ascanius, he is not chasing deer as he does in the *Aeneid*. Nevertheless, these two figures are not in the Latin text. The only textually accurate part about the painting is the background. Just as in the *Aeneid*, deer run away from the men chasing them – one man is clearly visible on the left side of the painting, and the other's only visible part is the tail end of his horse. The rest of his body and the horse fall off the left side of the painting.

So, if the background of the painting is accurate, why did van den Hoecke make the foreground so different from the *Aeneid*? It was not difficult to obtain brown colors at the time. Open market paintings were made mostly brown because the color was so inexpensive, not to mention that the upper right part of the painting is mostly brown, and so is the child's horse. Thus, if the artist had the means to paint it accurately, why did van den Hoecke make this stylistic choice? There is no way to know for sure, but it is possible to surmise a few things. The artist was clearly interested in classics. He only painted a few mythological paintings, but he spent considerable time in the studio of Rubens, who did paint a lot of them. Van den Hoecke was also able to style the background of his painting directly as the Latin instructed. Perhaps the addition of the winged children was a nod to Cupid to show Aeneas and Dido's budding love, but there is

no explanation for why Dido is lighter in skin tone than she should be. To be fair, van den Hoecke did not have a modern understanding of race. He may not have known the African customs that involved dyeing one's hair – it could be unintentional ignorance. However, he did live in a time and place where slave trade was on the rise. Van den Hoecke lived just south of the Northern Netherlands in Flanders. There was close contact between the Flemish and Dutch, especially artists traveling back and forth from Flanders to Amsterdam and Utrecht and even Italy, where they had firsthand contact with Mediterranean inhabitants. It was entirely possible that van den Hoecke encountered African slaves and traveling artists since he was a member of Rubens' studio. Also, if he knew anything about the *Aeneid*, which he clearly did as shown by the painting's background, he knew Dido was from Tyre

and immigrated to North Africa. Thus, he would have known that she was a brown woman at the very least.

While van den Hoecke did whitewash Dido, it is important to note that he was not the only one. In the Dutch and Flemish tradition, paintings such as Cornelis Troost's *Aeneas und Dido brecken zur Jagd auf*, Gerard Hoet the Elder's *Aenas und Ascanius beim Festmahl der Dido*, and Thomas Willeboirts Bosschaert's *Dido and Aeneas in the Cave* do the same thing to varying degrees. There are only a few known paintings of people of color in the seventeenth century Dutch catalogue at all, due to their racist society as demonstrated by their use of African slaves. But Dido was whitewashed by artists from other countries, such as Italian artists who should have had a better understanding of Mediterranean coloring. Though race is a construct, it has real societal impacts. Therefore, by erasing one's race, one strips away people of color's

humanity. Dido cannot be Dido without her race - by making her a Nordic white woman, it takes away her history in Tyre and her founding of Carthage in North Africa - her place in the world. This paper seeks not to condemn van den Hoecke nor any Flemish, Dutch, or other artists, but to call attention to the rampant erasure of people of color in Netherlandish art of the seventeenth century, and in turn, the erasure of people of color from narratives in antiquity.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> However, that is not to say that black and brown people were completely absent from Dutch art. Artists such as Frans Post painted the Black people of Brazil in his landscape paintings, but he made them more part of the landscape than the principal figures, even then erasing their importance.



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## Caligula's Fence

Sophie Cassarino, '24

I can just imagine him  
Place his hand on a wooden fence  
Or a strong stone wall  
And say “this is merely a pebble  
A piece of wood with which  
To break a spine in  
You can’t hold me  
For I see  
No lines drawn in my mind  
No lines, no lines...”  
A free mind had he  
A free hand with free power  
He says to himself  
“I lived adult as a child  
Now I play a child as adult  
For any other method is fallacy  
There is no other way that I can be  
For I am he who is still as I once said  
For I have no lines drawn in my head  
No lines, no lines...”

He says on the city street  
“I am he who shall be free  
Draw your daggers down my skin  
You can never win me  
Though blood desert my body  
You will never win  
For I have no lines drawn in my mind  
No lines, no lines...  
Not a single stone wall  
Not a single speck of wood”

Yet when I place my hand on a picket fence  
Falling apart at my fingertips  
I shudder  
For my head is full of lines  
And I would rather than traverse it  
Kneel before every fence  
I say "I love you, ancient fence"  
I mean to say "I fear you"  
For I have lines drawn in my head

Lines

Lines

Lines

Lines

Lines

## Rebirth and Reinvention: The Influence of Italian Humanism on Tinctoris' Musical Treatises

Christopher Hornbuckle, '21

The “rebirth” of classical ideology in Renaissance Europe was not exclusive to non-musical disciplines. Composer and theorist Johannes Tinctoris (1435-1511) addressed his awareness for the development of a “new art” in Europe by the end of the fifteenth century in accordance with his distaste for the music predating the past forty years. His twelve musical treatises<sup>1</sup>, written between 1474 and 1484 during his time serving the Aragonese court of King Ferdinand I, serve as an outstanding showcase of the changes in musical criticism, practice, and composition of fifteenth-century Europe, as well as connections suggesting both direct and indirect quotations in

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<sup>1</sup>De Arte Contrapuncti, “Johannes Tinctoris: Complete Theoretical Works,” prologue, <http://arlynmusictheory.org/Tinctoris/texts/deartecontrapuncti/#pane0=Translation>.

classical Greek and Roman writings. How did a new understanding of musical scholarship develop in a composer such as Tinctoris in their geographical, societal, and educational contexts? This “new art” would not have been attainable in the field of music without a wave of revitalized thinking across Europe. Selections from Tinctoris’ treatises illustrate a humanist “rebirth” of classical antiquarian rhetoric and theory in polyphonic music. This is evident through his application of Ciceronian oratory as a framework for his theory on counterpoint — *varietas* — and his own discourse on humanist and classical ideas. The application of these literary and musical elements suggests a link between his own music’s superiority and the artistic and literary “glory” of classical Antiquity.

## The Framework for Humanism

Humanist ideology lies on the theory and practice of attachment to classical studies and the consideration of classical antiquity as standardization in which most, if not all, aspects of cultural activities would be most important. Humanist concepts of rediscovery, translation, and <sup>2</sup>reintegration of classical theory and texts were dictated by early Italian humanists Petrarch and Boccaccio in the preceding century. Its pervasiveness in Italian society certainly sparked intellectual reconsideration for the concepts in which humanists and polymaths approach their own scholastic methods, which is evidently found

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<sup>2</sup> Willem Elders, *Humanism and Early Renaissance Music: A Study of the Ceremonial Music by Ciconia and Dufay*, *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 27.2, 1977, 69.

throughout examples of humanist writings in art, sciences, technology, and music.<sup>3 4</sup>

In an attempt to understand the role humanism played in its influence on Tinctoris, as both a student and a teacher of Renaissance music, it is essential to first understand the roots that allowed for its growth in a sociopolitical context. The middle of the fifteenth century served as a pivotal stimulus for success within the Italian Peninsula. The Treaty of Lodi in 1454 and an alliance of Italian city-states helped institute sociopolitical security following continuous territorial friction between Venice and Milan, as well as diplomatic strife in Rome as the papacy sought to reclaim Rome against the city nobles. Despite these conflicts, the latter half of the century following

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<sup>3</sup>Iain Fenlon, "Music in Italian Renaissance Paintings," *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 197-198. Elders, *Humanism and Early Renaissance Music*, 71.

<sup>4</sup>Klaus Pietschmann, "Musical Institutions in the Fifteenth Century and Their Political Contexts,"

resolutions saw the establishment of a stable environment which promoted humanist thought and academics to flourish. The courts of Milan, Mantua, Naples, and Modena began to adopt competitive tendencies amongst each other in this timeframe, through the construction of new chapels and recruitment of Franco-Flemish musicians from the north.<sup>5</sup> The growing foothold of Italian humanism in society may have attributed its qualities of individualism to the courts of Ferdinand I, Sixtus IV, and Galeazzo Maria Sforza, and helped establish a rise in artistic competition.<sup>6</sup> It is clear the administrative artistic improvements made amongst the courts resulted from economic solidity to fund the various cultural components glamourised by humanism.

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<sup>5</sup> The Cambridge History of Fifteenth-Century Music, ed. Anna Berger and Jesse Rodin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 416-417.

<sup>6</sup> Pietschmann, "Musical Institutions," 418.



Humanism's theoretical character in the scholastic study was certainly an attractive quality in consideration for its adoption as the primary method of education and thinking in the fifteenth century. The cultural model of humanism was structured in the education of the commoner and nobleman alike, which created a coherent framework the ideal person could use to achieve well-roundedness and fulfillment as educated individuals. The *studia humanitatis*, the classically influenced principal study of secular literacy and academics, was composed of grammar, rhetoric, poetry, moral philosophy, and history. The synthesis of subjects employed the Ciceronian concept of harmonious equilibrium in the perfection and enhancement of oneself, to which the ultimate goal culminated in the search for citizenry and the

engagement in a civic lifestyle through articulations, rhetoric speech, and logic.<sup>7</sup>

The self-proclaimed humanist equilibrium had begun to expand into new disciplines such as mathematics, natural sciences, and other branches of philosophy. Music had not been included in the primary concerns of study to humanists for some time. As a discipline, music lacked a traditional connection to the center of humanistic studies, as neither Petrarch nor Boccaccio in their writings provide primary evidence of inquiry on the subject. However, the common motivations for its inclusion in the *studia humanitatis* include a humanist desire for comprehensiveness, balanced education, a parallel “rebirth” compared to other fields such as art or writing, and the cultivation of individualistic competition amongst contemporaries as

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<sup>7</sup> Elders, Humanism and Early Renaissance Music, 69.

musicians and composers.<sup>8</sup> The motivations for inclusion reflect further on the courtly atmosphere of the latter half of the fifteenth-century.<sup>9</sup> This environment likely would have been a principal source for the promotion of discussion of contrasting fields of humanist studies, and in fact promoted a synthesis amongst humanist contemporaries of the time.

Music's eventual inclusion in the *studia humanitatis* contributed to the application of humanist research methods in the context of musical analysis, as well as the revival and rediscovery of ancient texts on the subject. Petrarch's foundation for research surged the interest in musical humanists to seek previously ignored antiquarian musical texts. The majority of manuscripts rediscovered and translated consisted of

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<sup>8</sup> Fenlon, *Music in Italian Renaissance Paintings*, 197.

<sup>9</sup> Reinhard Strohm, "Music, Humanism, and the Idea of a 'Rebirth' of the Arts," In *Music as Concept and Practice in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Reinhard Strohm and Bonnie J. Blackburn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 361.

Greek texts on music theory and harmony, which would lay the foundation for theoretical concepts on Renaissance musical composition.<sup>10</sup> Methods of historiography also began to shape Renaissance narrative in the establishment of historical time periods. In his treatise *Proportionale Musices* (c. 1473), Tinctoris categorized three distinct historical periods: a pre-Christian period, a church period, and a chapel period influenced by Christian princes and worthy of the title *ars nova*. The inclusion of such scholastic concepts further propagates the positive extent of humanist influence on music, not only as an administrative concept in courtly function, but also perceivable in areas such as history and rhetoric,

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<sup>10</sup> James Hankins, "Humanism and Music in Italy," *The Cambridge History of Fifteenth-Century Music*, ed. Anna Berger and Jesse Rodin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 241.

<sup>11</sup> Hankins, "Humanism and Music in Italy," 242.

principal components of the main humanistic studies.<sup>12</sup>

As this essay will explore, humanist traces can be further found through analysis of Tinctoris' treatises through his application of historiography, and application of classical rhetoric in relation to musical theory and academic philosophy.

The inspiration of the individual pushed the boundaries for musical humanists in their studies and well-versed education. As they looked to Aristotle's writings in *Politics* for perspective on music in elite education, they would find controversy in and beyond the canonical text. Questions arose surrounding the proper method of educational philosophy for the student versus the performer. An abundance of texts, contrary to desire, led to a number of disagreements on the proper "completed" education, especially on topics

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<sup>12</sup> Proportionale Musices, Thesaurus Musicarum Latinarum, 153, <http://www.chmtl.indiana.edu/tml/15th/TINPRO>.

of age in education, musical theory, and societal function of the musician. Individualism, as a byproduct of humanism, further fueled disagreements amongst humanists and musicians alike, who struggled to agree on a centralized approach.<sup>13 14</sup>

The motivations for music's "rebirth" into the *studia humanitatis* sparked new visions beyond disagreements, which focused on the centralization of collecting music, pushing the limits and boundaries of musical composition, and the abilities of the musician as a competitor. The concept of a "completeness" in music was a goal in attempts to produce fulfilled portraits of composers and musicians. This can also be attributed to a shift in secular humanist thought, which clearly showcases a disregard for dedicated monastic life and the anonymity of sacred medieval vocal music,

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<sup>13</sup> Hankins, "Humanism and Music in Italy," 234.

<sup>14</sup> Strohm, "Music, Humanism, and the Idea of a 'Rebirth' of the Arts," 361.

and an appreciation for the previously disregarded complex forms of polyphony (multiple contrasting voices together) and secular song in the late fifteenth-century.<sup>15</sup> Towards the end of the 1470s, Tinctoris began to exhibit a greater extent of appreciation towards classical concepts, specifically abstractions of Ciceronian rhetoric in speech writing, in addition to other antiquarian writings on rhetoric.

The humanist development of musical criticism stemmed from an earlier origin by example of Alberti's analyses of painting; however, this wouldn't occur until the mid-fifteenth century in an attempt to establish moral criteria between good and bad music. The acceptance of music in the *studia humanitatis* enhanced an already existing development in music away from the pre-modern period, the *ars nova*, as polyphonic

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<sup>15</sup> Elders, *Humanism and Early Renaissance Music*, 73.

music began to hold its ground as the dominant compositional technique in Europe. Musicologist Gustave Reese in *Music in the Renaissance*, suggests the basis of evidence for humanist influence in the Renaissance can be found in cinquecento-madrigal composition, an early sixteenth-century secular vocal song sung in the vernacular with an expression of emotion evoked as a reflection of the words of the set poem.<sup>16 17 18</sup>

However, the origins of this application of a humanist compositional technique can be traced to Tinctoris' most extensive and complex treatise *Liber de Arte Contrapuncti* (c. 1477), where Tinctoris addresses the state of the field on polyphonic music of his day. The treatise carefully attributes classical influence to

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<sup>16</sup> Hankins, "Humanism and Music in Italy," 245.

<sup>17</sup> Hankins, "Humanism and Music in Italy," 251.

<sup>18</sup> Gustave Reese, *Music in the Renaissance* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co, 1959), 311-313.



the rationale for the music of his day to be the most “superior” to that preceding the past 40 years. The notion of musical “rebirth” is presented in such a way that invalidates previous concepts of composition in the European Christian Medieval era. Tinctoris’ framework for new compositional technique, evidently influenced by<sup>19</sup> classical quotations on rhetoric, served as the fundamental guide for how to compose the most in, what he considered, the most important genre of the Renaissance.

If humanism had evident presence and significance in the musical criticism of music education, then how did Tinctoris through his education engage in civic life, in addition to seeking personal achievement? Methods of education in the common society are present. The classical revival of the

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<sup>19</sup> De Arte Contrapuncti, prologue.

notebook and commonplace book brought their utility as a method for the printing of music. In addition, the success of the printing press in the 1440s contributed to the large-scale distribution of music, educational books, and even transcriptions of manuscripts for study. This technological feat would have boosted the ability to transmit these teachings across Italy and other various neighboring regions.<sup>20</sup> In addition to its role as a distributor of music and teachings, there was also the capacity for the printing of guidebooks to play a role in the public perception of music. In various cases, guidebooks would have been used by the noble and commoner alike in the dissemination of classical perspectives on music. Several of these guidebooks stressed the necessity to educate children in the

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<sup>20</sup> Anthony Grafton, "The Humanist and the Commonplace Book: Education in Practice," In *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Russell E. Murray Jr., Susan Forscher, and Cynthia J. Cyrus (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 142.

performance of an instrument, the therapeutics of listening to song while healing, and restrictions on the musical education of girls. The examples of works often followed the Greek classical writings of Plato and Aristotle,<sup>21</sup> while also considering the contemporary approaches for self-remedy on their own various topics.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Application of Humanism Through Tinctoris' Biography and Treatises**

Tinctoris's biography, while vastly incomplete, offers significant insight into the development of his own opinions on music, composition, and education through his years working at French cathedrals and influence from Italian humanism during his time living in Naples. The incompleteness of his biography is often

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<sup>21</sup> Rudolph M. Bell, "How to Do It" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 185, 193. Bell, "How to Do It," 169.

<sup>22</sup> Rudolph M. Bell, "How to Do It" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 185, 193. Bell, "How to Do It," 169.

attributed to an evident lack of primary source documentation on his life, leaving little to no noteworthy information regarding his origins. Tinctoris' birthplace had been attributed by a secondary biography written in his time by historian Trithemius as the small town of Braine-L'Alleud, located in the dioceses of Cambrai.<sup>23</sup> Despite an evident gap in his chronology, Tinctoris is said to believe to have been involved in an educational role at the Cambrai Cathedral in 1460, possibly linking his education to his success as one of the most recognized and celebrated musicians of the Renaissance.<sup>24</sup> He is seen again two years working as a student in The University of Orléans, furthering his compositional techniques.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ronald Woodley, "Johannes Tinctoris: A Review of the Documentary Biographical Evidence," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34, No. 2 (Summer 1981): 217.

<sup>24</sup> Reese, *Music in the Renaissance*, 138-139

<sup>25</sup> Alexis Luko, "Tinctoris on Varietas," *Early Music History* 27 (2008): 99.

His role in both of these academic functions does not suggest any real connection to a dedicated humanist education and was perhaps more focused on music and pedagogy. The slow progression of humanism and significant religious presence in the northern sectors of Europe, specifically the Low Countries and Northern France, of which Tinctoris spent half of his life, attributed to a lack of assumption on that part. Tinctoris' departure from Northern Europe is unknown, as the period between his enrollment at the University of Orléans and arrival at the Aragonese court in Naples around 1472 is lost or undocumented.<sup>26</sup> The lack of any notable humanist writings from universities in the Low Countries and northern France until the fourth quarter of the fifteenth-century allude to Tinctoris receiving none, if any, humanist

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<sup>26</sup> Christopher Page, "Reading and Reminiscence: Tinctoris on the Beauty of Music," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 49, No. 1 (Spring 1996): 6-7.

education until the 1470s with the cultivated influx of Italian humanism spreading across all disciplines in a search for elegance, clarity, and style.<sup>27 28</sup>

Tintoris' arrival at the court of King Ferdinand I of Naples marked the catalyst for the cultivation of his humanist influence and education in Italy. The relative cultural stability of Naples in this time aided the recruitment and hospitality of humanists who would have likely come into contact with Tintoris during their stay at the court of Ferdinand I.<sup>29</sup> It was during this time where all twelve of Tintoris' musical treatises were written. The Aragonese court, of which Tintoris was positioned court tutor and legal advisor, was a brilliant center for the societal flourishing of Italian

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<sup>27</sup> Reinhard Strohm, "Fifteenth-Century Humanism and Music Outside Italy," *The Cambridge History of Fifteenth-Century Music*, ed. Anna Berger and Jesse Rodin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 269-270.

<sup>28</sup> Elders, *Humanism and Early Renaissance Music*, 70.

<sup>29</sup> Woodley, "Johannes Tintoris: A Review of the Documentary Biographical Evidence," 229. 10

humanism. In contrast to the world of northern scholasticism, where focus lay primarily on the Christian life, the humanistic social atmosphere had shown to be much more significant in influencing his academic studies and teachings.<sup>30</sup> Tinctoris' writings evidently illustrate clear musical cultivation to stimulate musical achievement in composers and musicians alike. In the introduction to his *Proportionale Musices*, Tinctoris demonstrates an understanding of humanist significance to oneself. He addresses the role of music in education and its contribution to living a happy life, as "the artists derive glory and riches from their own expertise." Further analysis of several of Tinctoris' treatises suggests his consistent usage of a variety of classical references evokes a mind able to access an assortment of specified

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<sup>30</sup> Woodley, "Johannes Tinctoris," 231-232.

texts, in addition to a number of translations available to cross-reference with one another in a scholarly context.<sup>31</sup> This would be supported by the evidence of a cultural stimulation under Ferdinand I's court, inspiring humanists and other writers alike to access the classical and modern documents available to them.

Tinctoris' treatises are grounded on an education in humanist ideology and the application of those studies in their presentation of musical technique, form, and criticism. They showcase a great aptitude for understanding musical theoretical principles synthesized with antiquarian rhetoric. Through his texts, Tinctoris attempts to address what is perceived as a wide and complicated range of issues surrounding musical theory and intellectualism, while addressing the

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<sup>31</sup> *Proportionale Musices*, 153-154.



perception and generalization past music Tinctoris criticizes the music preceding the past forty years, citing a number of extravagant composers of recent times, including his contemporary Dufay, of whom he believed could serve as the new model for monumental musical achievement. The employment of harsh musical criticism towards the predecessors in music, in accordance with the presentation of material composed by himself as textual examples, exhibits a conscious application of the discussed characteristics found from the *studia humanitatis*.<sup>32</sup>

The advancements in compositional philosophy in the latter half of the fifteenth-century beyond *ars nova* are significant through the lens of Tinctoris' monumental achievement in his treatises. Two of Tinctoris' earlier works, written between 1443 and

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<sup>32</sup> De Arte Contrapuncti, prologue.

1476, *De Imperfectione Notarum* and *Proportionale Musices*, emulate Ciceronian expository writing, demonstrating the free-play between grammar and rhetoric when applied to music. Tinctoris uses the rhetorical format in *Proportionale* to discuss the chronology of music, as well as present a clear historical narrative. In this, he explains the reverence of ancient music is glorified for its philosophical and theoretical principles, however, it had lost its importance since the compositions of the Greek classics no longer exist. Rejection of Christian music of the medieval era is explained in both treatises as the result of the Christian Church's written tradition, such as music theory, Gregorian chant, and recitation rites that had been greatly disseminated throughout Europe, diluting its significance as a performed genre

inseparable from its sacred ritual.<sup>33</sup> Instead, Tinctoris' own teachings, backed by humanist influence and training, are to be seen as the perfection of composition.<sup>34 35</sup>

As classical rhetoric influenced Tinctoris' scholarly criticism, it also functions in his compositional treatises on the rules for polyphonic counterpoint. His monumental treatise *Liber de Arte Contrapuncti*, written in 1477 with a dedication to King Ferdinand I, is split into three books which analyze and discuss various contrapuntal techniques and the ability to employ them properly. Quotations by Horace in the prologue tell of the King, or any reader of this treatise, to "acquire more knowledge about musical composition." The first two books pertain to the structure of a classical grammar treatise, emphasizing

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<sup>33</sup> Proportionale Musices, 153-154.

<sup>34</sup> Strohm, "Music, Humanism, and the Idea of a 'Rebirth' of the Arts," 366.

<sup>35</sup> De Arte Contrapuncti, Prologue - I.i.

how to construct a “correct” composition, whereas book three uses rhetoric directly to analyze how to compose “well” in the style of Cicero’s treatise writings.<sup>36</sup> Book three presents eight rules of counterpoint, with each rule creating a contrapuntal technique based on the rhetorical style. The rules outline sequentially, beginning with the perfect consonances and ending with stylistic rationale, and progress from simple definitions to the more complex concepts of constructing effective counterpoint.<sup>37</sup> The eighth rule of book III indirectly quotes a rhetorical concept from Ciceronian grammar treatises. The rule states that *varietas* must be sought in all music, but not excessively.<sup>38</sup> Various fifteenth-century and classical translations of this phrase exist, each with variance based on their context. Scholars had come together to

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<sup>36</sup> De Arte Contrapuncti, Prologue.

<sup>37</sup> Luko, “Tinctoris on Varietas,” 108-109.

<sup>38</sup> De Arte Contrapuncti, III.viii.

understand the phrase as “diversity” in melody, rhythmic changes, and harmonic variance. The phrase exists in context of the treatise as an application of Cicero’s speech philosophy on rhetoric in *De Oratore*, as the structure of musical composition as proposed in the musical treatise is modeled after a Ciceronian influence on speech, structured on the relationship between subject, composition, writing, and delivery. The goal of the treatise was to institute a solution for a compositional paradox where unifying sound could be established without the blandness of excessive repletion, just as *De Oratore* highlights persuasiveness through unified speech, without excessive word patterns and language choices.<sup>39</sup> *Liber de Arte Contrapuncti* functioned as Tinctoris’ attempt to create a systemic linkage between classical theories on

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<sup>39</sup> Luko, “Tinctoris on Varietas,” 114.

rhetoric, and his own innovate theories on counterpoint.

Musicologist Alexis Luko discusses how Tinctoris' desire for connection between oratorical rhetoric and conventions of contrapuntal technique, through *varietas*, are supplemented by rules 6 and 7 of book III, which attempts to establish a model for employing the contradicting concepts of repetition and variety. The accompanying example to rule 7 offers a complex answer to what appears to be a simple explanation for the achievement of effective counterpoint.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Luko, "Tinctoris on *Varietas*," 100-101.14

Figure 1.



Figure 1 illustrates a modern-notated example of the mensural-notation example provided by Tinctoris in his treatise. The upper voice of counterpoint contrasts the drawn-out tenor line and features three marked cadences. What is striking in regard to this example is Tinctoris' exclamation condemning consecutive cadences and contrapuntal repetition in the previous lines before providing his own example of proper technique.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> De Arte Contrapuncti, III. vi-vii.

However, the concept of *varietas* in rhetoric establishes the coexistence of variety through combination of ideas and arguments, while retaining a non-repetitive dialogue. In the way the orator must connect their thoughts and ideas together to create a unified argument, which simultaneously avoids excessive repetitions of linguistic motifs, Tinctoris suggests this is achievable by variance in the *way* of cadencing. Luko addresses examples from the identified cadences showing a 7-6 suspension (bars 8-9), resolution to the fifth (bars 12-13), and a refigured octave resolution (bars 18-19). The ambiguity of Tinctoris' example sheds itself from the shroud of contradiction as the analysis of the rule's application becomes evident when considering its musical technique in context.<sup>42</sup> The presence of rhetorical

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<sup>42</sup> Luko, "Tinctoris on Varietas," 117.



technique and inspiration exists not only through Tinctoris' discussions in his treatises' prologues and epilogues, but substantially in his approach to create a framework for exceptional composition in the timeline of his identified "new art."

As such, it is clear Italian humanism and the rebirth of classical theory greatly influenced Tinctoris' writings and development of new compositional style, as well as his cultivated perspectives on music as a historical and critical study. The surviving musical treatises of Tinctoris suggest a strong linkage between classical thoughts on rhetoric, theory, and music's incorporation in the *studia humanitatis* as a considerable field of study for scholars. Tinctoris' twelve treatises serve as exemplary works which stand today as influential manuscripts. They bring meaningful discussion when examining the spread of Italian humanism in the fifteenth-century, as well as the

techniques of “new art” polyphonic counterpoint. The geographical and sociopolitical climate of Italy at the time of the latter half of the fifteenth-century were essential in understanding the context for the cultivation of Italian humanism, as well as its inclusion in the *studia humanitatis*, and its likely influence into the education of Tinctoris. Application of classical research methods and rhetoric in musical criticism and academic study strengthened the identified presence of humanism in musical education and composition. The awareness and pursuit of a “new art” by means of influence and radical change in education showcased an individualistic and humanist approach in musical scholarship.

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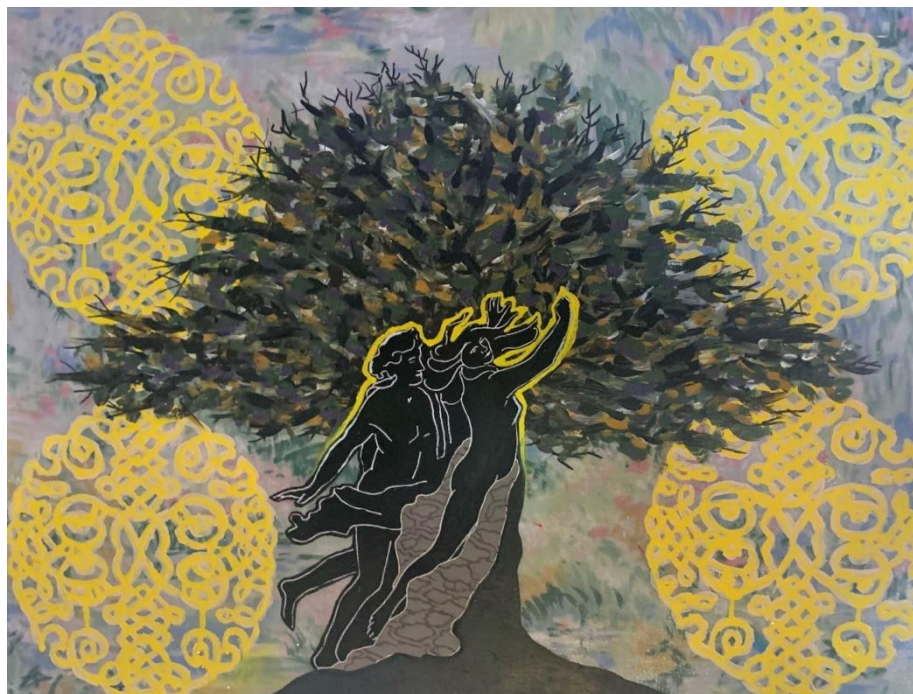
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*Apollo & Daphne in Ovid's Metamorphoses*

By Isabella Miko-Rydzaj, '21

Fire of Passion  
George Caldwell, '24

Many of the *Aeneid*'s most pivotal scenes are set against a backdrop of fire. In the burning of Troy, Dido's self-immolation, and the epic's various fire-omens, Vergil uses fire like the Hollywood pyrotechnics of today to bring a thrilling sense of danger to the epic. However, Vergil also employs the image with great subtlety to illustrate his character's struggles to control their passions.

The *Aeneid*'s hero, Aeneas, shows fortitude as he fights for his people through hardships. However, as often as he displays self-mastery, Aeneas also struggles to master his own passions, such as rage and lust. Vergil often likens these passions to an uncontrollable fire. While the Greeks are burning down Troy, fiery spirits from within call Aeneas to fight for a doomed cause:



*Sed glomerare manum  
bello et concurrere in  
arcem  
cum sociis ardent animi;  
furor iraque mentem  
praecipitat, pulchrumque  
mori succurrit in armis.  
(II.315-317)*

But my spirits burn to  
gather a company for war  
and charge with comrades  
into the hilltop; rage and  
anger hurry the mind  
along, to die in war  
comes to mind as  
beautiful.

Notable in this first person account is that Aeneas shifts agency away from himself by saying that his *animi*, or “spirits,” are what burns for war, not himself. Aeneas gives in to the urge and brashly marches into battle, risking his life unnecessarily.

Aeneas’ fiery passion and bloodlust threaten him further when he ponders murdering Helen for revenge:

*Exarsere ignes animo;  
subit ira cadentem  
ulcisci patriam et  
sceleratas sumere  
poenas. (II.575-576)*

The flames in my spirit  
blazed up; it comes to  
mind to avenge the falling  
fatherland with wrath and  
to inflict wicked  
punishments.

Once again, agency is shifted away from Aeneas to the flames within him, or, “*ignes*.” Although he does not act on this particular urge, his passion almost leads him to murder a woman, which would have made him an unsuitable founder of Rome. In these scenes of battle, the image of fire makes Aeneas’s internal conflicts more accessible to the reader.

Vergil also makes great use of the fire image in passages on love and lust. During Aeneas’ time in

Carthage, Queen Dido is consumed by lust for him and tortured by memories of her deceased husband.

Throughout this romance, the flame of passion continues to harm those it possesses. Vergil describes Dido's love as agonizing:

*At regina gravi  
iamdudum saucia cura  
vulnus alit venis et caeco  
carpitur igni. (IV.1-2)*

And the queen long since  
wounded by heavy  
sorrow nourishes the  
wound in her veins and is  
torn by an invisible  
flame.

Another similarity between Aeneas and Dido is that despite their lack of control, they are aware of the flame that burns within them. Dido admits that Aeneas is rekindling the love she had for her late husband:

*Agnosco veteris vestigia  
flammae. (IV.23)*

I recognize the remnants  
of the old flame.

The narrator, the gods, and the humans themselves are all aware of this fire, talking about it at length.

Aeneas again falls to lust when he enters a sexual union with Dido, despite his duty to found the Roman race across the sea. Just as when he raved through burning Troy with no thought for destiny, Aeneas is controlled by his passion. In fact, the Trojan requires divine intervention to remind him of his priorities. Jupiter sends Mercury to remind Aeneas to leave for Rome to fulfill his duties to his son. Dido, seeing that Aeneas is leaving, curses him and returns to her palace. There, she burns herself to death on a pyre covered with objects that remind her of Aeneas. The Queen's death is a visual representation of passion's consequences: to be wholly consumed by an object of desire and then reduced to nothing.

The final passage of the *Aeneid*, in which Aeneas kills the surrendering Turnus, calls the hero's virtue into question. Aeneas has defeated Turnus in a duel, who admits defeat and begs for mercy. The hero considers the proposition but sees that Turnus is wearing the belt of his friend Pallas, whom Turnus killed:

*Ille, oculis postquam  
saevi monimenta doloris  
exuviasque hausit, furiis  
accensus et ira  
terribilis (XII.945-947)*

That one, after he took in  
with his eyes the  
reminders and spoils of  
wild grief, inflamed with  
furies and terrible with  
anger...

He is again inflamed, *accensus*, with rage, just as he was in Troy. He slays Turnus:

*Ferrum adverso sub  
pectore condit fervidus.*  
(XII.950)

Boiling, he buries his  
sword under the opposite  
chest.

If one had hoped that Aeneas would have cooled his  
fiery, destructive passions by the end of the epic, this  
last scene is a disappointment.

Furthermore, Aeneas' vengeance violates the  
commandment of mercy that his dead father gave him  
in the underworld:

*Tu regere imperio  
populos, Romane,  
memento  
(hae tibi erunt artes),  
pacique imponere morem,  
parcere subiectis et  
debellare superbos*  
(VI.851-853)

Remember to rule the  
peoples with law, Roman,  
(these will be your arts),  
to impose custom to  
peace, to spare the  
conquered and subdue the  
proud.

An attentive reader of the *Aeneid* will be struck by the failures of Aeneas, which do not seem to befit the father of the Roman race. Throughout the poem, Aeneas's struggles with his passions are made striking and accessible through this image of fire.

Sappho 31 and Catullus 51  
Zachary Tympanick, '23

**Sappho 31**

That man over there seems to be as lucky as the gods  
To me, he whoever sits across from you,  
And he sweetly listens close to you  
Speaking  
And laughing charmingly, truly this moment was  
Making the heart in my breasts tremble  
For me. For whenever I look at you briefly,  
No words come out.  
But my mouth has broken to pieces entirely, while  
A thin flame immediately ran under my flesh, while  
I see nothing with my eyes, while  
My eyes whirl.  
While sweat pours down down me,  
While fear seizes me wholly,  
While I am more green than a meadow,  
While I seem to be little short of dying <...>.  
But all can be dared...



### **Catullus 51**

That man seems to be equal to a god to me  
That man, if it is divinely so, seems to surpass the gods,  
That man who sitting across [from you] gazes at you  
and hear you  
Again and again  
Laughing sweetly, which snatches every sense from  
Miserable me: for as soon as I look at you,  
Lesbia, there is no voice in  
My mouth,  
But tongue is numb, a thin flame runs  
Down my body, my ears ring with its own sound,  
My eyes are covered with  
Twin night.  
Idleness, Catullus, is annoying to you.  
Idleness is with which you rejoice for excessive  
exploits.  
Idleness destroyed both kings first and then their  
Fortunate cities.



Ceres

Casa de Pilatos. Seville, Spain. March 2020.

Picture by Mary Whitney, '23

## Lavinia: The Weaver and the Mother Wolf

Anne-Catherine Schaaf, '22

Over the course of Ursula Le Guin's *Lavinia*, the titular character transitions from a maiden bound to the pages of another's story, to a strong heroine who writes her own. Le Guin shows this by having Lavinia move from identifying as a spinner to identifying as a weaver. While spinning is a repetitive, mindless task, weaving requires active concentration and results in a unique creative output. Lavinia's social role also changes, from an obedient princess to a queen who defies control to pursue her own agenda. The metaphor of spinning, weaving, and fabric is multilayered, quite literally woven throughout the text to display Lavinia's ascending self-growth.

The ancients, with perhaps the exception of the Egyptians, recognized weaving as the domain of women. A woman could even start a business and gain

independence through her weaving, although doing so usually required slave labor. Yet, weaving during the time of Augustus when Virgil wrote was considered the proper domain of high class Roman ladies. The story of Lucretia characterizes the chaste *exempla* of a woman by having her stay home and weave for her household instead of banqueting. Augustus additionally required his wife Livia to weave his clothes, according to Judith Sebesta. Le Guin does note that their clothing was simple. We don't see any gorgeous tapestries, but the clothing Lavinia produces would be useful and highly valued by members of her community. Most Romans likely had only a few garments apiece, given the time and labor a piece of cloth took to produce. Of course, what looks to us like a simple piece of cloth would still have required hours of labor with eight women spinning the wool required by one weaver.

Le Guin does appear to make one noticeable error in the text, when she talks about carding wool. "Pulling wool drawing apart the blobs and hunks of a washed fleece to separate the fibers so they can be carded, was always my favorite housework;" (p. 17) Carding was actually not a common process in the ancient world, as the tools required were not invented until the Middle Ages. Instead, Lavinia and the women of her time would have combed their wool. "Combing the unspun fibers to lie parallel results in a strong, hard thread. Carding, on the other hand, makes the fiber lie all which way —just like teasing one's hair —and gives a soft, fluffy thread like our knitting yarn. Most wool yarn now available is of this latter sort, but the process wasn't invented until the Middle Ages." (Wayland Barber) Regardless, Le Guin emphasizes to her raiders that Lavinia's work as essential not just to the

development of her character, but to the economic foundation of her household.

Lavinia's personal growth is charted through the motif of weaving. Anyone could spin wool, as Lavinia herself says, it was mindless. Before her marriage, Lavinia noted "I was a good spinning-woman, I made as strong and even a thread as any, but I was slow and clumsy at the loom (pp.82)." Le Guin's ancient Rome exists in three temporal spaces, the ancient coasts of Lavinium, the bustling Rome of Virgil's time, and the modern western society we shared with Le Guin before her untimely passing. All three of these time periods imported themselves into Le Guin's work.

Spinning is a natural part of Lavinia's girlhood. "I sat and spun and thought and gazed out over the hills and woods of Latium, all green with May." (Le Guin, 60) Likewise, "They probably had no cotton or linen yet; the women carded, spun, and wove wool into the

togas and pallas they wore.” (Le Guin, 278) The wool Lavinia spins is white, and in her girlhood color symbolism is noteworthy, while interestingly it is not that prominent in the latter half of *Lavinia*. Lavinia herself, at least at the start of the text, is associated with the color white, as in the white sacred robes she wears that have a red border. Purity plus blood, perhaps? While Le Guin does take some historical liberties (see the afterword) it is quite likely women in pre-Republic Rome did not have access to vibrant dyes. Her mother Amata is associated with the color red, the color of passion, of blood. Amata’s life is characterized by violence perpetuated by and against her, and throughout the course of the novel she descends into a Bacchic-like madness. Can we apply a specific metaphorical meaning to each of the tasks involved in cloth production? Perhaps not, but weaving has such a rich history of symbolism, that to put spinning in contrast to

it necessitates a careful analysis. None of the other drudgery of cloth production is given quite so much attention. Le Guin is unique among authors of classical reception in her focus on spinning.

Her encounter with Virgil is the transition point in which her fate changes “I was a spinner, not a weaver, but I have learned to weave.” (pp.141) Clothes define a person’s identity. Lavinia dreams of being a wolf or a sacred goose, the prophetic female animals that save Rome. She gains power in her role as mother, even though she is not openly transgressive. Her writing her own story would appear subtle to the people who know her. It is in large part internal development. “I learned at last to weave well, that winter, for if I had no work to keep my hands and mind occupied, I could do nothing but hide in my room and weep.” (Le Guin, 228) With few other options available to her as she



begins to chafe under her mother's strictures, weaving offers her an escape, and a recognition of her destiny.

Weaving is also a key part of Lavinia's role as a wife and mother. Now that Lavinia has escaped her mother's house, she can self-actualize and take on a role of caring for an entire household. "Those warriors, those kings are my descendants," he said to his friends. As he spoke, I passed by carrying little Silvius on my shoulder, as Aeneas had carried the shield." (p. 195)

Lavinia weaves her own tale. Aeneas in contrast, has his shield to display his stories. A woman must make something out of nothing, but also Le Guin suggests she has greater creative power, despite the obstacles. Le Guin notes the women are changing things, while men largely stay the same throughout their lives. It is important to note Lavinia is probably thinking of cisgender individuals here, with a stereotypical binary between what men and women are physically capable

of doing. She refers to puberty, with the onset of menstruation serving as a major event in many girls lives, but also to social roles. According to her, a woman plays many roles, while a man is just a man. In Ancient Rome and in our time, women are defined by their sexuality and marital status in ways men aren't. Cisgender women are also capable of having their bodies physically change in ways to carry a fetus. In Lavinia's world a woman also had to leave her father's house as she took on the new identity of wife.

Yet, women are dangerous. Women's creation is uncontrolled. They can make something beautiful or, as the tale of Arachne's shows, something offensive. They can resist violent patriarchal power through weaving, as Procne did, or using their art to distract and deceive those who would harm them, in the case of Penelope.

Lavinia is often mentioned as a spinner or weaver, the similar role that the Fates take on as they

dictate human lives. “So, my mind ran from possibility to possibility like a hare dodging hounds, while the three old women, the Fates, spun out the measured thread of what was to be.” (238) By comparing her to the Fates, Le Guin suggests that Lavinia is a figure in control, even if it is just her own life and story. In Roman and Greek poetry, weaving is often associated with writing, as both the warp and weft and the words pull together to create a thing of beauty. With the poet’s guidance, she spun her own fate, but now the situation has become more complicated. She cannot follow a straight thread anymore-- instead, she must fill in the pattern of her own life while striving to make the correct final result.

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## Metamorphosing Metamorphosis in the *Metamorphoses*

Zachary Tympanick, '23

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: a fifteen-book long poem composed of mythical episodes involving transformations in one way or another, with notable episodes such as Daedalus and Icarus, Orpheus and Eurydice, and so many more! Although the previously mentioned stories involve some element of tragedy with a transformation, some of the lesser-known episodes discuss more serious matters such as rape and the abuse of women. Take, for example, the story of Io. After spotting Io's beauty, Jove rapes her under the cover of storm clouds, and then transforms Io into a white heifer to hide his crime from Juno. The act of transforming Io here hinders her ability to speak out about Jove's crime. Io shows up later again in the *Metamorphoses* as the goddess Isis, who helps to transform a female Iphis into

a male, so she can marry her fiancée Ianthe. By linking the myths of Iphis and Io, Ovid illustrates the progress of transformation from damaging female bodies in Io's myth to empowering them in Iphis's myth.

Ovid establishes a link between Io and Isis in his Iphis narrative through the use of Io's patronymic. In this retelling of the myth attributed to Nicander, Ovid decides to swap out the goddess Leto for the Egyptian goddess Isis. Although both goddesses perform genderbending transformations in their respective myths, Isis has a linguistic connection to the character Io who was previously mentioned in the *Metamorphoses*. While the pregnant Telethusa was sleeping, "the goddess [Isis] stood...before [Telethusa's] troubled bed" and told Telethusa "to raise this child whatever it will be" (*Met.* 9.991-2, 1011, tr. Martin). In this encounter, Isis is referred to as *Inachis*, or "the daughter of Inachus," or Io (*Met.* 9.687). This

patronymic appears earlier in the *Metamorphoses* to explicitly refer to Io as *Inachidos* (*Met.*1.611).

Although there are two instances of the substantive masculine form of *Inachides*, *Inachidae* that refer to “male descendants of Inachus” like Phaethon (1.753) and Perseus (4.720), Io and Isis being the only female recipients of the term strengthens the connection between them. As a result, the importance of referring to Isis as Io is the way in which Ovid links the Iphis narrative to that of Io in Book 1.

Ovid then portrays Io as a helpless character in order to amplify her lack of agency in her own story. This daughter of Inachus endures torture and pain from the gods: Jove raped and “metamorphosed Io,” and “[Juno had] placed this heifer in the care / of Argus” as well as “set a horrifying Fury...[to] her Grecian rival” (*Met.* 1.847, 868-9, 1002, 1004). In neither of these instances is Io the subject of the clause, which denies

her any sort of power in her own life at this moment. Although there are places where she is the subject of a clause, the verbs serve to flesh out the story rather than giving her any sort of power like running away from Jove or grazing the fields as a cow. The only action that grants her a voice in her cow form is when “she drew lines in the dust...[that] told the sad story of her transformation” to her father, which while it creates sympathy for her, does not help her current situation. Juno’s rage finally subdues, which allows for Jove to transform Io back to her original form: another transformation that Io is unable to control. However, it is at this point of the story where things start to look uphill for Io. She settles in Egypt and “she is cared for as a most celebrated goddess by the linen-wearing people” (*Nunc dea linigera colitur celeberrima turba*, *Met.* 1.747). At last, Io has now undergone one final transformation into a goddess worshipped by the



Egyptians. In conjunction with the context of a shared patronymic between Io and Isis, this scene portrays Io metamorphosed into the goddess Isis, who is a being of immense power within the Egyptian pantheon of gods.

Io, with the authority of Isis, transforms Iphis in order to empower the recipient of the transformation rather than hinder. Now, with Io as Isis, a rape survivor has attained an authority on par with the deities who abused her. However, instead of continuing this cycle of violence, the goddess decides to perform a transformation for Iphis when the latter needs it. Right before the wedding day, Telethusa takes Iphis to the temple of Isis where Telethusa asks “O holy Isis... spare [them] both and offer your aid” (9.1112, 1124). Rather than deciding to transform Iphis whenever the goddess finds it convenient for herself, as Jove does for himself, Isis grants the transformation because the recipient, Iphis, desires it. By subverting the use of

metamorphosis to hinder and oppress as seen in the story of Io, Isis empowers Iphis to pursue a relationship with Ianthe within her own society.

In addition to her lack of agency, Io undergoes different stressors in her altered form in order to illustrate the negative impacts that forced transformation has on an individual. As previously mentioned, Jove was the one who transformed Io to hide his crime of rape. However, while Io was a cow, she experienced different stressors in her new form: “When she tried to utter a complaint / she only mooed—a sound which terrified her,” and “when she beheld her own slack jaws and newly sprouted horns / in the clear water, she fled, terrified” (1.8883-4, 888-9). As a result of her forced transformation, Io undergoes a disconnect between her psychological and bodily states, which Sasha Barish broadly describes as an experience similar to “gender dysphoria” for transgender people

(Barish, 2018). Although I do not personally identify as transgender, Barish elaborates on his experience as being very negative where he would “want to scream at the sight of [his] reflection in a mirror” or how “nobody saw that [he] was obviously out of place in the girls’ locker room!” (Barish, 2018).

Iphis too experiences distress in her own form since she loves her bride-to-be Ianthe but cannot marry her in her own society. Generally, within Greco-Roman societies, there would be an age gap between the bride and the groom where the male would be significantly older than the female. When the narrator describes Iphis and Ianthe together, “the two were similar in age and in looks,” and they are at the age of being able to be married off, or the onset of secondary sex characteristics for the both of them (9. 1036). Not only is the idea of two girls in this society getting married unnatural, but the lack of an age gap is also abnormal

for the situation. It is through this lack of age gap that Isis' intentions of delaying the transformation become clear. If Isis had transformed Iphis when she was a baby, Iphis the boy would have to wait even longer before being of wedding age. However, by waiting until Iphis is both about to be married and developing secondary sex traits, the transformation removes the issue of the age gap and gender by having Iphis gain more masculine features like "longer strides, / [a] darker complexion... and with more vigor than a woman has" (9.1132-3, 1136). Instead of replicating the pain Io experienced in her altered form, Io as Isis not only removes the stressors on Iphis to pursue a happy marriage with Ianthe, but also grants agency to another female body where she did not have that luxury.

When I first learned the story of Iphis, the professor asked if this episode was a proto-trans or a proto-lesbian narrative. Although there are aspects of

the story that can equate to these perspectives, I do not believe that we can say the story is either or. Since the notions of transgender and lesbian are modern concepts, it would not be productive to try and understand a past culture with modern ideas. Such actions will only reveal more about our own culture and how we try to understand others rather than taking the story within the context of its culture. Thus, when looking at the myths of Io and Iphis as one cohesive narrative from the time of Ovid, it tells the story of a woman whose rape and abuse by the hands of higher authorities fuels her to be the change that she wants to see in the world (and she succeeds, too)! By also connecting these two myths together, it paints a liberatory narrative that shows recovery and healing from gendered violence. By removing the attribution of modern concepts to ancient stories, we can better understand the motivations and purposes behind certain stories. Rather than looking at

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as one giant collection of rapes and atrocities, we as the collective readership should continue to examine this work from an open perspective to liberate our negative perceptions and uncover hidden ideas unseen in translation.

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## The Meaning of Excess in a Dutch Maenad Painting

Rebecca Rose Kaczmarek, '23



Maenads and Dutch art seem like a paradoxical pair. Maenads were well known symbols of revelry in ancient Greece, and the seventeenth century Dutch



population were known to be mostly Calvinist and Catholic, all with strong belief in the necessity of temperance. The maenads and the Dutch obviously clash morally: in fact, there are not many paintings of these mythological figures in the seventeenth century Dutch catalogue. The only depictions I could find were *Bacchante with an Ape* by Hendrick ter Brugghen and one of a man, not a maenad, called *Smiling Young Man Squeezing Grapes* by Gerrit van Honthorst.<sup>1</sup> These two paintings are both from the Utrecht art market and both inspired by Caravaggio, who made several paintings of Bacchus himself. So, what do these paintings demonstrate about Dutch society? Through analyzing the paintings' symbols of grapes, an ape, walnut, and pear, it is clear that the Dutch took a moralist lens on maenads in order to remind the viewers about

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<sup>1</sup> I analyze both ter Brugghen's and van Honthorst's paintings in this essay, but I mostly focus on ter Brugghen's work.

temperance and morality. But the compositions and the skin tones of the figures in these paintings allow the seventeenth-century Dutch viewers to identify with the depicted figures. The artists bring the maenads out of history, out of mythology, and make them look like the audience could reach out and touch them. This portrayal takes away some of their mythical power, but in doing so it brings the temptation closer to reality. Thus, the symbols, compositions and colors in Dutch maenad paintings show that the Dutch scorned revelry and excess but at the same time acknowledge the fact that temptation was part of the human condition.

Before discussing the paintings, it is necessary to give a background on maenads.<sup>2</sup> They were women in Ancient Greece who worshipped Dionysus, the god

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<sup>2</sup> 'Bacchante' is the Latin term for maenad. In this essay I refer to the woman depicted in ter Brugghen's painting as a maenad even though the title says 'bacchante' because maenads lived in ancient Greece, not in ancient Rome.

of wine and revelry. Women were restricted in ancient Greek society, so every second winter the men gave them the chance to climb up a mountain to be free from responsibility and the pressure of a male-dominated society for a while. While on the mountain, Dionysus inspired them into ritual frenzy and sacrifice.

Sometimes they sacrificed cakes, at other times, animals. They also “removed their shoes, left their hair down, and pulled up their fawn-skins,” to resemble animals, and to symbolically let go of the garments of proper society (Bremmer). Once they began their rituals, “stimulated by the high-pitched music, the flicker effects of the torches, the whirling nature of the dances, the shouting of *euhoi*, the headshaking, jumping, and running, the maenads eventually fell to the ground—the euphoric climax of their ecstasy” (Bremmer). In these ceremonies they let their

inhibitions run wild. When most people hear the word maenad, or bacchante, they think of the *Bacchae* by Euripides, in which maenads would “tear animals apart, handle snakes, eat raw meat, and [were] invulnerable to iron and fire.” (Bremmer) They likely did not do this in real life, though it was entirely possible that they did not feel pain in their frenzy; even so, people think of maenads as wild and ferocious. (Bremmer) According to the Oxford Classical Dictionary, the maenads did not actually consume alcohol, even though Dionysus is their patron god. (Heinrichs) Nevertheless, maenads and wine are linked because of their relationship to Dionysus.

## **PART I: SYMBOLS OF LUST AND EXCESS**

In ter Brugghen’s *Bacchante with an Ape*, the fruit and ape symbolism point to the sins of lust and

excess. The main figure of the painting is a pale woman covered in cloth and wearing a turban. She looks directly out at the viewer and her shoulders and collarbone are exposed, as is her right arm, which crosses in front of her body, and her hand is squeezing grapes into a gold chalice. To her right is a small monkey on a table, which is holding its own grapes. Next to the monkey is a walnut and a pear. She seems like she is a happy woman about to hand the glass to the viewer, but the painting is more complex than this simple appearance. It conveys quite a lot about morality, and even illustrates how it disapproves of excess (despite the wine glass). The symbols within the painting reveal it all.

The ape in the left corner represents lust and lawlessness. In art, apes are associated with Dionysus

and Bacchus and have been depicted with him before:  
“since the middle ages the ape has been associated with drunkenness and was sometimes represented in the company of Bacchus.” (van Suchtelen 35) This close association between the animal and the god further proves that this is a maenad painting and warns about lust and excess. According to Dutch painter and engraver Karel Van Mander, who wrote the most famous Dutch emblem book of the seventeenth century, the *Schilder-boecke*, “the ape means the vicious person... An ape can symbolize impudence as well; because he shows his shameful part to everybody / and he does other shameful things in everybody’s presence.” (van Suchtelen 40) Thus, the ape symbolizes lust - one of the seven cardinal sins - in this painting. There is an abundance of Dutch bordello paintings that categorize lust as immoral, so this portrayal should not

be any different.<sup>3</sup> In *Bacchante with Ape*, specifically, the ape is ““an illustration of the foolish actions of the drunkard’s more particularly the irrational act of squeezing grapes that, without fermentation, obviously cannot produce wine” and it represents “the sinner, the fool, and the degenerate person; it is associated with the sense of taste, with drunkenness, and with lust.” (van Suchtelen 39, 35) These similar interpretations of apes in art must have informed ter Brugghen’s representation of the ape in this painting, especially when one takes into account the meaning of the different fruits as well.

Next, the fruits in the painting also symbolize sin. The grapes that the woman and ape hold do not have any specific moral connections according to other scholars, but they do relate to Dionysus, and therefore

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<sup>3</sup> Some examples of bordello paintings: *The Matchmaker* by Gerrit van Honthorst (1623), *The Procureess* by Dirch van Baburen (1623), *Merry Company* by Gerrit van Honthorst (1619-1620)

are connected to excess. Grapes once made into wine symbolize lust as well. Ariane van Suchtelen, a research assistant at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, agrees: “in ter Brugghen’s painting, the sense of taste – the sense that, with touch, was in worst repute – can be related to the temptation of wine and carnal pleasures: the sexual provocation of the woman – the smile which she looks at the viewer, the forward-looking, half-uncovered body – is clearly related to the wine she prepares in her cup.” (van Suchtelen 40) The wine, made of the grapes she squeezes, is connected to the maenad’s implied lewdness. As for the other fruit, the pear and walnut are “shown prominently in front of the animal, [and] should be interpreted in a negative sense that is related to the ape and the woman” because alone, the pear has “negative associations because of its tendency to rot quickly.” (van Suchtelen 39) Thus, ter



Brugghen included the pear in the painting to send the message that if a person engages in loose behavior or imbibes excessively, they themselves will rot.

Another way the fruits in the painting demonstrate morality is through the senses, making *Bacchante with an Ape* an Allegory of Taste and an Allegory of Touch painting. Paintings that depict the five senses were also moral in meaning: they illustrate to the viewer that the senses are responsible for committing sins and warn them not to fall prey to them. Of the five senses, the Dutch frowned upon taste and touch the most because of their connections to gluttony and lust. The maenad exemplifies an allegory of touch by squeezing the grapes and holding the wine chalice. Similar to the maenad, the ape also represents touch because it holds grapes. Even though neither the woman nor the monkey explicitly tastes anything, the

monkey is clearly about to eat the grapes it holds, and therefore is still an example of the Allegory of taste. In terms of the maenad, it is clear from her arm placement that either she intends to drink the wine herself, or, more likely, offer it to the viewer. “Ter Brugghen has [...] chosen to employ Bacchanalian iconography” of apes, grapes, and wine, instead of apples, which are more common in Allegory of taste paintings. (van Suchtelen 40) Thus, this painting doubles down on morality – the senses trick people into sinning and through the temptation of the maenad and wine.

## **PART II: REALISM, PORTRAITURE, AND IDENTITY**

Beyond the symbols of the ape and fruits, the composition of the painting makes it look like a portrait and invites the viewer into the frame and humanizes the

figure. The maenad in the painting pierces the viewer's gaze with her own. And her smile has a slight tilt to it, like a smirk. By the look on her face, it seems she is conspiring with the viewer. Her arm crosses in front of her body and it feels like the juice from the grapes in her tight grip will fly out at you. She is leaning out towards the viewer, like she is about to whisper at them, too. Even with her bodily contortions, her frame is still shaped like a pyramid, a common device used in portraits to demonstrate the importance of the figure. These details bring the viewer into the painting and make her seem more real. Additionally, an arm in front of the body is a typical pose seen in portrait paintings, as a way to bring the subject closer to reality. Since the Dutch were obsessed with realism, these details are not surprising. "However, this moral lesson is contained in

a painting that strikes us instantly by its cheerfulness, charm, and attraction, leaving it up to the beholder to decide how seriously to take the implicit warnings.” (van Suchtelen 41) The cheerfulness of her smile and the redness of her cheeks show just how innocent temptation can look.

Furthermore, when *Bacchante with an Ape* is paired with *Young Man Squeezing Grapes* by Gerrit van Honthorst, the two paintings seem like pendants. Though they were painted five years apart by different artists, these two paintings are eerily similar. There are slight differences, though – instead of a woman, van Honthorst painted a man. There is also a lack of an ape or other fruit. But still, there are haunting similarities that make the two alike. The smiling man’s left shoulder is exposed, and he is squeezing grapes into a ceramic mug. He is even closer in this painting than the

maenad in the other painting. It is clear that he wishes to hand the mug to the viewer when he is finished. He has slitted eyes and ruddy cheeks, just like the maenad. These paintings, though they are not pendants, work together. As pendants, they act as a married couple – they could be real people with real lives who commissioned portraits. These depictions, when put together, strip the fantasy away from the viewer and make the temptations they offer real. If the viewer is married himself, perhaps he could see himself and his spouse in the pendants. Yet, these paintings are not technically pendant portraits. However, it is entirely possible that these artists knew about each other's paintings - ter Brugghen and van Honthorst's had worked together in the past.

The final detail of this painting that brings the viewer into the painting and allows the Dutch people

viewing her to identify with her is her skin color. The maenad is a pale white in this painting, when in reality maenads living in Greece in the fifth century BCE should have been at the lightest a pale brown.<sup>4</sup>

According to Shelley Haley, a professor at Hamilton College and expert in ancient critical race theory, *albus*, *candidus*, *ater*, *fuscus*, and *niger*, meaning white, glistening white, lusterless black (opposite of *albus*), and shining/glistening black (opposite of *candidus*), respectively (Haley 31).<sup>56</sup> But *albus* is not white in the sense of Nordic coloring because “the “developed world” of Roman world view was definitely the world of pale-brown Mediterraneans.” (Haley 31) Therefore,

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<sup>4</sup> To be fair, the yellowing varnish makes her look slightly more tanned, but she obviously does not have any brown pigmentation in her skin or otherwise olive undertones.

<sup>5</sup> Critical race theory is the exploration of society through the lens of race.

<sup>6</sup> Haley wrote her piece about ancient Rome, but because Greece is in close proximity to Rome and also in the Mediterranean, I argue that her conclusions still apply to Greek maenads.

“the reference point for *albus* is pale-brown..... *ater*, *candidus*, *fuscus*, and *niger* become degrees of brownness.” (Haley 31) And so, maenads were brown skinned based on their geographic location in the Mediterranean. Ter Brugghen should have known, since he lived in Italy for a time, saw Italians face-to-face, and clearly had some knowledge of the classics, that people in the Mediterranean are darker than those native to the Netherlands. In addition, “it was not difficult to obtain brown colors at the time. Open market paintings were made mostly brown because the color was so inexpensive.” (Kaczmarek 7) There was no economic reason not to portray the maenad in a racially accurate way. It is possible that he painted the maenad like a Nordic white woman because of a racial prejudice against brown and black people, which was a rampant issue at the time due to the Dutch East India

Company's increase in African slave trade. But I propose another reason. I argue that ter Brugghen made the maenad Nordic, white, and blond-haired to create realism in a different way. A truly 'real' depiction of a maenad would have been brown and dark-haired, but in order for a Dutch woman or man to identify with the subject of the painting and feel the realness of the maenad, she would have to look like them. The maenad is no longer an illustration of a woman from millenia ago or from thousands of miles away in the Mediterranean, but a woman the viewer could see on the streets or at a dinner party in the seventeenth century Northern Netherlands. In this way, the viewer realizes that they could be the maenad, and they could rot for their sins like a pear. The viewer, seeing themselves in her, reaffirm that temptation is real and that they have to control themselves.



Ter Brugghen was not the only artist to display warnings against temptation in his paintings. Other artists mostly painted tavern and bordello scenes to make statements about morality, due to the strong Calvinist influence in Dutch society in the seventeenth century. He used his painting in a clever way, displaying a classical theme with subtle hints that it was wrong to give into temptation like the maenad did. From the ape to the grapes, ter Brugghen makes it clear that drinking leads to lawless and lust-filled activities, and the pear signifies that those activities are wrong. Even so, the maenad herself invites the viewer to drink with her anyway, and her strong resemblance to them with her white skin and her blond hair make the Dutch viewers see themselves in her. This painting reveals to them that temptation is close, looks like they do, and that they could become the maenad, sure to rot like a

pear, if they are not careful. Ter Brugghen successfully brought into Dutch art an immoral classical figure while not compromising Calvinist values.

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## Letters To and From Julian the Apostate

Stacey Kaliabakos, '23

Anastasia Kaliabakos Sends her Fondest Greetings to  
Our Reverential Lord and Emperor, Julian the  
Second:

My old friend, it seems as if it were just yesterday that we were students at the Academy, devouring ancient texts and philosophies without a care in the world, without any idea of what the future had in store for us. Now, you are emperor -- Constantius has suddenly perished, and who is more fit than you to take over his throne, ruling the entire empire with your mighty right hand? Frankly, when we were young and your elder brother, Gallus, was chosen to be Caesar by Constantius, I could not picture your future in politics or military command. The Julian I remember was

humble, shy, an aspiring scholar in the Classics, who would have deep discussions with me about Plato and Aristotle until the sun rose in the distance and dew would form on the grass at our feet. What I would give to have those old days back! But your life has changed, and you have been tasked with being the leader of the most powerful empire in history. You made yourself into an acclaimed general within just a few years, and a fine candidate for emperor in the same stretch of time. I have no doubts that you are well-equipped for the job and that you will make the finest emperor that Rome has ever seen. I trust that the gods will guide you and fill you with their divine blessings. I know that I personally have made sacrifices in your honor each day before I recline for dinner with my family.

However, Julian, there is one matter that I believe I must advise you on. I know of your distaste for the Christians, as that was one of our most discussed topics when we were close at the Academy. Your Neoplatonic views are inspiring, and I understand your dislike for that group of religious fanatics, in no small part because they have labeled you an “apostate.” I remember the scorn and hatred you possessed for your ancestor, Constantine, the first Christian emperor. While he was so revered by all the empire and respected among the people, you saw through to what he really was -- an egotistical coward. What better example is there to display his arrogant personality than when he had that gargantuan sore thumb of a statue built -- a statue where his head alone was twenty feet tall! How conceited must one be to have such a large statue made? You were one of the few who understood how hypocritical his “Christian” values

were, and I cannot blame you. After his death... you remember what nearly unspeakable thing happened. When his three terrible sons had to split up the empire, they set out to get rid of all others who were a threat to their power, killing your entire family, including your parents. You still do not even know how you and Gallus survived, although I am forever grateful that you did. And it did not stop there -- after Constantius thought Gallus was abusing power in the Western provinces (though all evidence I have acquired points to the contrary), he had him killed as well. Your own brother, dead because of that Christian. I know, as you do, Constantius did this because Gallus was a Hellenophile and a believer in the traditional gods, like us. It is no surprise that you abhor Constantine and Constantius' Christian legacies and that you wish to do away with the remaining Christians who were loyal to them in the royal family. An imminent purge of those



Christians must undoubtedly be what is on your mind...

I know that you are settled in Antioch for the time being. The people there, so I have heard, are distrustful of you and your “pagan” beliefs and customs. I would just like to warn you, brother, that you must mull over the consequences of your desires. Even if you strive to live peacefully with the people of Antioch, their unrest with your rule could only grow if you decide to purge the royalty of the Christian people. Believe me, I do not particularly like the Christians based on what they have done to you, my dear friend, but during my free time I have begun to do some research on the past treatments of Christians within the Roman Empire itself, and what I have found... it concerns me greatly. And I have grown to believe that your ancestors, the Christians who killed your parents and brother, might

not accurately represent Christians as an entire group.

One text I came upon was a letter by Pliny the Younger, written about 200 years ago. In the letter, he addresses the mistreatment of Christians... after discussing his letter, I hope that you may think twice about what you may do to the Christians in your own family.

In his letter to the Emperor Trajan (Letter 47, *On the Punishment of Christians*), Pliny gives a brief account of how the trials for the execution of Christians were conducted and the various verdicts that were decided upon. He says that he first would ask the accused if they were, in fact, Christian: if they confessed that they were, he interrogated them twice more, threatening them with death if they continued to confirm their beliefs to him. If they did not renounce their faith, then he ordered them to be executed. On

the other hand, if they were Roman citizens, he ordered them to be released and taken to Rome:

*“Fuerunt alii similis amentiae, quos, quia ciues Romani erant, adnotauī in urbem remittendos.”*

Despite his uncertainty about the offenses connected with being a Christian, Pliny says that he has no doubt that, whatever the nature of their “creed” is, at the very least their stubbornness deserves punishment.

Their attitude showed that the Christians were hostile to the government, openly defying an official who was asking them to abandon a superstitious cult. In my opinion, Julian, Pliny’s trials of the Christians made me think of what you would like to do. The royals you know are *Romans* -- you cannot forget that, my friend. No matter what they have done in regard to their personal beliefs, they are Romans. Following Pliny’s logic, your purge should not come to pass. Spare them!

If this does not convince you, consider what Pliny writes next. Pliny details the practices of Christians, describing how they would meet on a certain day before sunrise, gathering to sing hymns to Christ (as we would sing hymns to the gods during our time at the Academy). They all bind themselves by oath to never commit any crimes such as fraud, theft, or adultery: “*stato die ante lucem conuenire, carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum inuicem sequi sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta ne latrocinia ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum adpellati abnegarent.*” This is interesting in comparison with Constantine’s cult of Christians, as they seem to attempt to be just and good people. Pliny states that the Christians subsequently abandoned these practices after he prohibited any of their political associations. Emperor Trajan pushed for the abolition of Christian groups, as he believed they

would stir up unrest, leading to grumbling about the state of civic and political affairs, and ultimately doing grave harm to the empire. Look at this evidence, my friend. Some Christians do seem to have a standard by which they live their lives! Perhaps some of the royal Christians will not follow the paths of their predecessor Constantius. It seems as if some of that group is *good*, Julian -- give them a chance to prove it. If I have still not won you over, brother, Pliny adds that he thought it was necessary to investigate further by having two female slaves called “deaconesses” tortured in the hopes of gaining information. Who knows what kind of torture he inflicted upon them! Is that not cruel? Ultimately, he discovered, in his own words, nothing but depraved, excessive superstition: “*Nihil aliud inueni quam superstitionem prauam et immodicam.*” In calling Christianity a superstition rather than a religion, Pliny denigrates the Christians’

beliefs as being outside our traditional religious practices. By abandoning the old temples of the gods, Pliny believes (and I think you would agree here) that the Christians were threatening the *pax deorum*, the harmony or accord between the divine gods and mere humans. But we are not gods, Julian. We cannot expect to control others and their beliefs. Just as you are trying to coexist with the people of Antioch, let the Christians of your own family coexist beside you! But I will go further... Pliny ends his epistle by saying that Christianity is endangering people of every age and rank, spreading not only through the cities but also through the rural villages as well, like a disease: “*Neque ciuitates tantum, sed uicos etiam atque agros superstitionis istius contagio peruagata est; quae uidetur sisti et corrigi posse.*” However, he does say that it will be possible to keep this superstition in

check. Keep the superstitious ones at bay, but do not try to get rid of them altogether.

As you have known me since I was young, you are aware of the fact that I am not extremely keen on executions of any people -- even those I despise. I think that your hatred of the Christians is somewhat justified, since, as Pliny writes, their beliefs align more with superstition than reality. However, I know you well, my friend. I have not forgotten your stubborn nature. I understand what I am about to write may come as an unexpected surprise, but although I deeply care for you, I also wish to preserve as much human life as I am able to; therefore, I will draw on whatever sources I must to try to convince you to alter your mindset.

In his letter to Romans, written about three hundred years ago, “Saint” Paul, formerly Saul, the Apostle discusses how his “God” will be the ultimate judge of his people, basing his decision on their true character. He writes “For at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself because you who pass judgment do the same things.” (Romans 2:1) “The judgment of God” is not what men face in this life, but what will follow after death, which is called judgment to come. According to the Christians, it will be universal as to persons and things and is here called “the judgment of God,” in opposition to the judgment of men. Since it will be carried on by God only, who is apparently omniscient and omnipotent, it will be definitive: this is and will be the ultimate truth. All hypocrisy and unrighteousness, the law and light of nature belonging to the Gentiles, the law of Moses proclaimed by the Jews, and the Gospel of Christ by



which all have enjoyed the Gospel Revelation will be judged.

In summary, my dearest Julian, you can see that there are at least some things worthy of condemnation in Pliny's letter and many things to be admired in Saint Paul's approach to divine matters. Even if we both do not agree with the Christians on every matter, it is important that we can coexist beside them, setting an example as superior Romans to the rest of the known world as inclusive and merciful leaders. Take my letter to heart as you proceed in making this heavy decision.

I will keep you in my mind as I await your response. Farewell, or *Vale*, dearest, and I hope to hear from Your Excellency soon.

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The Emperor Julian Caesar Augustus Sends his

Deepest Regards to Anastasia Kaliabakos:

Upon receiving your letter, my dear comrade, I daresay I let out an unparalleled and unprecedented cry of joy! For it has been entirely too long, my friend, since our last correspondence. I had it in my mind to perhaps set about a search for you to ensure your safety, as it is a priority of mine that such a close confidante should always remain in the best condition. Before I continue to address the content of your letter, I must take it upon myself to inquire about the health of your family. I hope that your parents are faring well and that you are collectively flourishing.

After removing the bindings of your epistle and perusing the lines and words several times over, I am

slightly taken aback that you would think I have not already read Pliny's *On the Punishment of Christians*, as it was one of the first epistles by Pliny the Younger I read in my youth, apart from his letter on the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. I have considered Pliny to be one of my favorite authors. I even relate to him because he was governor of Bithynia, one of the multitudes of provinces in which my family is in possession of a small piece of property. And I enjoy Pliny's letter on punishing the Christians due to the fact that it is inherently cold and wicked in nature -- he displays minimal sympathy to those heathen peoples -- a trait I happen to share. I am somewhat appalled at you, therefore, that you would seek to draw the unfit comparison of our hymn singing to that of those beastly and ghastly wrongdoers. Our songs, dedicated to Lord Apollo, Lady Bellona, the revered Neptune -- to speak only of a few of the multitude of our divine

masters -- were pure, gleaming in the iridescent moonlight as they rose from our mouths into the heavens above on their journey to lofty Mount Olympus. In contrast, the Christians' songs disturb the tranquility and serenity of my heart and my soul -- their mouths, silenced by the courageous and wonderful Pliny, deserve the punishment they received. And my darling friend, those base *ancillae*-- or what you called them, "deaconesses," as such -- in my oh-so-humble opinion, deserved death as well. In all honesty, I doubt their fate should have bothered them too much, as they, clouded by their mystical, superstitious, and witch-like beliefs, certainly found solace in the fact that they would embark on a journey to their holy father after they had been sentenced by Pliny the Younger.

I scorn the fact that you have brought St. Paul the “Apostle” into your argument in the hope of winning over my already made-up mind. As an apostate myself, I disregard every word that disgusting excuse for a Roman had to say on the subject of judgment and Christianity. He was a dissenter of the Christian faith, that *agros superstitionis istius contagio* -- a firm disbeliever, was he not? The only aspect of his futile being that managed to preserve the skin on his bones was his Roman citizenship -- if it were not for that fact, he would have been executed like the Christians who fell at Pliny’s hand.

I realize I am not a god; I recognize, unlike my predecessor, the *great* Constantine, that I am merely human. However, I am justified in believing that I have been sent by our divine gods to protect the Roman Empire as best as I see fit. Therefore, your

argument about the “Judgment of God” placed forward by *that* Saint Paul is futile. I am fit to judge who lives or dies. This is revenge for what those disgusting Christians did to my family, to my Greek mother, to my dearest brother, Gallus. Their blood will run down the hallways of my palace, and I will tremble with joy and satisfaction when I am fortunate enough to witness the carnage in person after my arrival home from Antioch.

I understand your concern with death. Your kind, innocent, and womanly nature always left you weaker in resolve in matters such as the one we find ourselves confronting right now. However, this is not a fitting time to turn your back on the opinions you have spent all your life forming in favor of a duplicitous enemy. This weakness of your womanhood never precluded you from having quite brilliant and remarkable ideas -

- that is why you were able to study at the Academy and one of the many reasons I have enjoyed your company for the past several years, considering you one of my closest friends in the world, bestowed upon me by the divine nature of the gods themselves.

I would recommend that you tread carefully, my friend. Do not let the perfidious words of the malicious Christians penetrate and dull your evidently and disappointingly susceptible mind. Remember your beliefs, and keep in mind my past. I will go ahead with my plans as expected. The Christians in the government will be no more after the next Ides, and I hope that I may have your full support in my endeavors, as your friendship still means the world to me. I will be praying to the gods so that they may guide you during what I regard as a troubling phase in your intellectual development.

Farewell.

### Resources

“On the Punishment of Christians” or “Letter 47” by  
Pliny the Younger

The Book of Romans by St. Paul the Apostle

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*Juno & the Aeneid*  
By Isabella Miko-Rydzaj, '21