NOTES

1. Biographical information from *DNB.*
2. H.T. Swedenberg Jnr., *The Theory of the Epic in England 1650-1800* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1944); T.W. Harrison, "English Virgil: *The Aeneid* in the XVIII Century", *Philologica Pragensia* X, 1–11, 80–91; R.D. Williams, "Changing Attitudes to Virgil, a study in the history of taste from Dryden to Tennyson" in *Virgil: Studies in Latin Literature and its Influence,* ed. D.R. Dudley (1969), 119–138. For a detailed bibliography, see H. Brown, *The Classical Tradition in English Literature: A Bibliography (Havard Stud. Phil.* 18, 1935).
3. I have discussed the political reading of the Aeneid by the English Augustans in *Arion* 8, 359–79.

'Why did Venus wear boots? – Some reflections on Aeneid 1.314f'

A paper read to the Virgil Society, January, 1973,
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In Book One of the *Aeneid,* after Aeneas has been shipwrecked off the North African coast, Venus appears to him disguised as a huntress and converses with him prior to his meeting with Dido. This scene has not escaped adverse criticism. Henselmans, in his quest for discrepancies in the *Aeneid,* believed that these lines provided him with no fewer than five. Buchheit maintained that they involve a pointless anticipation of the subsequent meeting between Dido and Aeneas, with Aeneas' words in particular lacking any noticeable function. And in his recent commentary on the *Aeneid* Quinn, while conceding that the scene contains what he calls 'some nice touches', considers it on the whole to be unsatisfactory, one which 'hardly earns its keep in a book where the general standard is so high'.[1] My aim in this paper will be to suggest that the lines in question do considerably more than earn their keep, and that in fact they constitute a key passage in the development of the Dido tragedy.

The opening scenes of the *Aeneid* are based on the beginning of what we might call the *Odyssey* proper, when Odysseus leaves Calypso for what he hopes will be the final stage of his voyage home (*Od.*2.228f.) In each epic an angry deity intervenes when the destination seems near, Poseidon in the *Odyssey* because he wishes to avenge the blinding of his son, Polyphemus, by Odysseus (cf. *Od.* 1.68), Juno in the *Aeneid* because of her traditional hatred of the Trojans, and also because she has heard that one day their descendants will be responsible for the destruction of her favourite city, Carthage (*Aen.* 1.12f.) As a result of the storm thus produced Odysseus is shipwrecked on the coast of Scheria, where Alcinous rules over the Phaeacians, and Aeneas is cast up on the North African coast, where Dido rules over the Tyrian colonisers of Carthage. And the parallelism continues both in general structure and in particular detail. While Odysseus is among the Phaeacians, for example, he is helped by his patron-deity, Athene, and gives a long account of his adventures while feasting in the court of King Alcinous; and while Aeneas is at Carthage he is helped by his mother, Venus, and describes the fall of Troy and his subsequent trials while feasting in the court of Queen Dido.

All this parallelism is of obvious importance, and I shall come back to it shortly. But meanwhile let us follow the fortunes of Aeneas and his comrades after the storm contrived by Juno with the help of Aeolus. Their ships are scattered, but as a result of Neptune's intervention all but one of the original twenty are saved, and seven, including that of Aeneas, reach the security of a secluded cove. While his comrades make a fire to dry out the grain they have salvaged, Aeneas reconnoitres to see if any other survivors are to be found, and shoots down seven stags from a herd he encounters, one for each crew. The Trojans feast on these, and as they turn to mourning their missing comrades Virgil switches from the earthly scene to Olympus. There Venus complains tearfully to Jupiter about the troubles inflicted on the Trojans, and Jupiter assures her in a long prophecy that all will be well – her son's descendants will indeed one day rule over a world at peace as she has been promised. In the meantime, however, Mercury is despatched to ensure that Dido and her people will give the Trojans a friendly reception. And this takes us back to earth again, with our Venus episode about to begin. Aeneas has had a restless night worrying about his next move. But after ensuring that his ships are safely concealed he goes off to reconnoitre the area more thoroughly, this time accompanied by Achates. And now his mother meets him (1.314f.), disguised as a huntress: she carries a quiver on her back, and she wears a dress tucked up above her knees and purple hunting boots. In a long dialogue she tells Aeneas about Carthage and (more especially) its queen: and after reassuring him that all the missing ships are safe except one she assumes her true identify and vanishes, leaving Aeneas complaining bitterly about the cruelty of her deceit.

In this paper I should like to ask four separate questions, and suggest possible answers to each of them. First: Why did Virgil decide to disguise Venus in this scene? Secondly: why did he choose the figure of a Diana-like huntress for her disguise? Thirdly: why did he made the disguise only partial, with Venus suddenly revealing her true identity at the very end of the scene? And finally – the question which provides the title to the paper – why did he choose to dress Venus in boots rather than sandals?

In his book on the *Aeneid* W.S. Anderson referred to our scene as follows: 'It is a poignant meeting, for Aeneas does not realise until it is too late that he is talking with his mother, and she refuses to present herself directly. Why this should be so has never been clearly articulated by critics, and possibly it is better to leave the question to the readers' imagination.'[2] Anderson is certainly correct regarding past investigation of this question: the disguise has not been adequately explained by critics. But I hope to show that there is no need to leave the problem in the air as he suggests: for although various ideas have been mooted in the past, none of which is really satisfactory, there remains one compelling dramatic consideration that has been overlooked. We will come to it in a moment; a word first about previous explanations and why I think them inadequate.

In her recent monograph on Virgil's Venus Antonie Wlosok stressed that it is normal for epic gods to assume disguises in their dealings with mortals: and she went on to suggest that Virgil, by conforming with the convention here, emphasises the gap that exists between gods on the one hand and men on the other.[3] But this view, which Lieberg has endorsed,[4] is scarcely supported by the evidence. In Homer, for example, although the adoption of disguise by deities is indeed common in both epics, there is no parallel in either of them for the employment of such subterfuge by a divine mother in her dealings with her own son: when Thetis and Aphrodite appear to their sons, they do so undisguised.[5] Moreover in the *Aeneid* not only is this convention respected elsewhere, with Venus appearing undisguised to Aeneas in Books Two and Eight,[6] but in addition there is not a single case among the other divine visions experienced by Aeneas where a disguise is employed by the deity concerned. The Penates in Book Three, Mercury twice in Book Four, and the Tiber-god in Book Eight all appear to Aeneas in their own easily recognisable shapes.[7] There are plenty of disguised deities elsewhere in the epic, but in no case is Aeneas the victim of the subterfuge.[8] The disguise of Venus, then, far from being conventional, as Wlosok suggests, is in fact doubly unique, involving as it does, on the one hand, a mother deceiving her son, and, on the other, the deception of Aeneas. All of which, surely, implies that the poet must have had a very compelling motive for introducing it. And that motive could hardly have been to stress the gap that exists between god and man, since elsewhere Aeneas is not merely granted easy recognition of deity, as we have already seen, but in Book Eight he is in fact fondly embraced by Venus when she presents him with the arms forged for him by Vulcan (8.615). Indeed, it would scarcely have been logical of Virgil to select Aeneas to illustrate the notion of man's distance from divinity, since we are emphatically told more than once in the epic that one day this hero will in fact become a god himself.[9]

A different explanation has been advanced by Ville de Mirmont in his book on Apollonius and Virgil.[10] His idea is that Virgil disguised Venus for modesty's sake; it would have been inappropriate for the lascivious goddess of Cyprus, as he calls her, to reveal herself to her son in the voluptuous nudity with which people tend to associate her. But this overlooks the fact that by Virgil's day the poet, no less than the painter and the sculptor, had available to him a variety of Venus types whose characteristics he could select and emphasise according to his own immediate requirements. She could indeed be the sensuous love-goddess who appears on the wall-paintings of Pompeii and elsewhere: but she could also be the stately goddess who figures on other Pompeian well-paintings as the protectress of that city, or the one who, during the closing decades of the Republic, assumed such importance at Rome as the *Venus Felix* of Sulla, the *Venus Victrix* of Pompey, and above all the *Venus Genetrix* of Julius Caesar and Octavian, mother of the gens Iulia and ancestress of the Roman race.[11] And in fact, when Venus turns to go and reveals her true identity, Virgil blends features of these various Venus-types. Initially there is a sensual quality about the goddess's beauty and fragrance that recalls the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite:[12]

1.402 dixit et avertens rosea cervice refulsit
ambrosiaeque comae divinum vertice odorem
spiravere...[13]

But the voluptuousness is restrained and the goddess's sexuality minimized, the result being quite consistent with dignified majesty. And it is precisely this last quality that the poet goes on to impart to Venus as he concludes the description of her departure. For the dress which up to now has been tucked up over her knees is suddenly loosened, and flows down to her feet to lend a matronly gravity to the goddess as she takes her leave. Indeed, it is the majestic tread of Venus that above all betrays her godhead as she goes:

1.404 pedes vestis defluxit ad imos,
et vera incessu patuit dea...

lines which are best illustrated by the majestic statue of Venus Genetrix in the Louvre.[14] To return then to Ville de Mirmont's view: the notion that Virgil disguised Venus to spare Aeneas' blushes is surely untenable. For the goddess who reveals herself at the close of our scene could easily have appeared undisguised from the start without causing the slightest embarrassment to anyone.

A further explanation of Venus' disguise was advanced in the *Classical Journal* by W.D. Anderson,[15] who took the view that it is simply intended as a joke on Venus' part, a clue to this being provided by the colloquialism *'heus'* with which she opens the conversation. But there is no trace elsewhere of any such playfulness in her treatment of her son, and it could scarcely be more misplaced than in the present context, when Aeneas' morale is already so very low. As for *heus,* that surely is a simple piece of characterisation, suited to the young huntress-figure, and, as it were, part of the disguise.[16]

A final and at first sight more plausible explanation of Venus' disguise is suggested by the presence of Achates. For on all the other occasions when deities appear to Aeneas, doing so (as we have seen) undisguised, Aeneas is in fact alone. But if there really was some kind of taboo on Venus' revealing herself undisguised to anyone outside the family-circle, then why is the taboo broken at the end of the scene, when the disguise is dropped? Indeed, if the presence of Achates had proved some sort of hindrance that prevented Virgil from complying here with his usual practice, then the poet had a very simple solution open to him: he could have eliminated Achates from the scene without further ado. For the four lines he utters at 1.582f. (Achates' only speaking part in the whole of the Aeneid) make no significant contribution to the progress of the action.[17]

What then is the likeliest explanation of Venus' disguise? We can be helped in our inquiry by Homer. But it will not suffice simply to refer vaguely to one or two parallels in Homeric epic and leave it at that, as commentators so often do. For we are looking, it will be recalled, for a motive compelling enough to have led Virgil to introduce a disguise that is doubly unique: and the whimsical echoing of a Homeric motif scarcely ranks as that. However, we shall come back to Homer in a moment: the crucial point that explains Venus' disguise is the simple fact that when she intervenes in Book One she is entering hostile territory. For Carthage is the undisputed domain of Juno, the implacable enemy of the Trojan race in general and of Venus and Aeneas in particular. It was Juno, it will be remembered, who first indicated with the portent of the horse's head where the Tyrian settlers were to establish their new city;[18] and it is Juno's cult that Dido has established as supreme in the religious life of her people, centring it on the splendid new temple which figures so prominently in the developing action of Book One.

And what a daunting adversary this Juno is! For in the *Aeneid* she, no less than Venus, is a composite creation. She is not simply the Juno of Italian religion (though this aspect of her character is clear enough, for example, in the frequent use of the epithet *Saturnia,*[19] with its old Italian associations, in her role as *Iuno pronuba,* goddess of marriage,[20] and in various allusions to local cults[21]) but she embodies also characteristics of two other deities besides. On the one hand she is equally the Homeric Hera, scourge of the Trojan race, characterised in *Aeneid* One as *saeva, aspera,* and *atrox:*[22] a deity who, according to Zeus in the *Iliad,* would only really glut her hatred of the Trojans if she were able to eat them all, raw.[23] And on the other she clearly embodies elements of that formidable Phoenician warrior-goddess, Tanit, who in Roman Carthage had in fact been equated with Juno and was worshipped under the cult-title *Juno Caelestis.*[24] Hence lines 16-17 in Book One: *hic illius arma, hic currus fuit.* Dido's great temple naturally contains a cult statue depicting the warrior-goddess driving her chariot into the fray.[25]

It is scarcely surprising, then, that Venus takes the elementary precaution of disguising herself before venturing to trespass on such a deity's preserve, revealing her true identity to her son only when her mission is complete and it is too late for Juno to do anything about it. And in this connection we should note a small but significant detail in the text that mars the general impression of Venus' majestic bearing as she departs. For in striking contrast to the slow and stately *incessu* of line 405 we have, in the very next line, the extremely rapid *fugientem.* And who indeed can blame Venus for speeding things up in this way, once the protection of her disguise is gone?

This suggested explanation of Venus' disguise in the *Aeneid* is strongly supported by Homeric precedent. The convention whereby deities adopt disguises in order to deceive other deities as well as mortals is clearly illustrated by the behaviour of Poseidon in the *Iliad.* For there, when Zeus places a ban on divine intervention in the action at Troy, Poseidon defies it with impunity by appearing on the battlefield disguised, first as the prophet, Calchas, then as Thoas, and finally as an anonymous old man.[26] But, not surprisingly, it is the parallelism in the *Odyssey,* to which I have already referred, that provides the most striking confirmation: for there we have a situation remarkably close in all its basic essentials to that of *Aeneid* One, and in due course we are actually given, by the poet himself, an explanation of the divine disguise which exactly matches the one I have just suggested. The relevant passages are in Books Six and Seven of the *Odyssey.* Odysseus has been washed ashore on the island of Scheria as a result of Poseidon's storm, and here too the place proves to be the hostile deity's special preserve: for Poseidon is not only the patron of this specially privileged sea-faring community, but he is also the founder of its royal house.[27] Throughout his stay on the island Athene helps her protégé, Odysseus: but whenever she intervenes she does so either without putting in an appearance,[28] or else after adopting a suitable disguise. For example: just as Venus in our passage disguises herself as a huntress in order to give guidance to Aeneas about Carthage, so Athene disguises herself as a young Phaeacian maiden to give Odysseus guidance about Scheria. And elsewhere she appears to Nausicaa, daughter of King Alcinous, disguised as one of his subjects, and to the Phaeacians themselves disguised, first as a herald, and later as a spectator at their games. And at the end of Book Six the Homeric poet explains, for the benefit of his audience, why the goddess adopts such subterfuge: *she does so because she is afraid of Poseidon.*[29]

I want to consider now my three remaining questions, bearing in mind the main theme of Books One and Four, the tragedy of Dido. For in each case I hope to show that once Virgil had introduced into his text the motif of a disguise to protect Venus from the attentions of Juno, he went on to exploit it to the full with that theme in mind; So that it is here above all, in this early episode, that the tragedy of Dido has its true beginning.

Question 2, then: why did Virgil choose to make a huntress of Venus, making her look so very like Diana, with whom in fact Aeneas is quick to identify her?[30] After all, in the Homeric analogue Athene appears to Odysseus disguised as a maiden carrying a pitcher of water, and that would have been just as effective a disguise here too, as far as evading Juno was concerned.[31] The answer involves us at once in the tragedy of Dido, and introduces us to a typical feature of the poet's technique: the employment of a motif throughout a section of his work, now at one level of meaning, now at another, in such a way as to give the section in question added poetic depth on the one hand, and overall structural unity on the other. (The second of these considerations – the imparting of unity – is especially important here, since the Dido tragedy is split into two halves, with the fifteen hundred lines of Books Two and Three intervening between them). In this case the motif in question is that of the hunt. It is a key symbol of the Dido tragedy, and it is in our passage, in the form chosen for Venus' disguise, that Virgil introduces it in this role for the first time. To appreciate more fully the significance of this development we need to review briefly the passages concerned.

We can best begin by stressing that in Books One and Four the role of the hunt as a symbol is erotic:[32] and that in the course of its employment it changes direction,[33] as symbols are wont to do,[34] so that in Book One Dido is the huntress, Aeneas the quarry, while in Book Four this relationship is reversed. With a touch of irony that we will meet again in Book Four Virgil begins by letting the quarry appear as a real-life hunter: for Aeneas' first act on Carthaginian soil is to shoot down seven stags to provide food for his men (1.184f.) But before long Dido and her supporting huntress figures take over, and Aeneas in due course quietly succumbs to their symbolic archery. The process begins, as I have already suggested, in our own passage, where Venus with her quiver acts as a kind of stand-in for Dido, who has still to make her appearance. And she goes to work on Aeneas without delay: for in answer to the hero's query about the territory on which the Trojans have landed she gives a lengthy reply which develops into a lavish encomium of Dido, filled with personal detail which has little direct bearing on Aeneas' query, but is calculated to produce sympathy and admiration in the potential lover's breast. All that is missing is praise of the queen's beauty: and Aeneas will soon see that for himself. However, before we move on to that scene we should note how in this one, both in his imagery and in the words of his symbolic huntress, Virgil assails us with references to yet other quiver-bearing females. For first the poet compares Venus herself to other huntresses similarly armed, such as a Spartan *virgo* or Thracian Harpalyce. Then Venus inquires about her fictitious sister, who is supposed to be likewise girt with a quiver. And finally Venus conjures up a formidable picture of a whole regiment of quiver-carrying females:

> 1.336 *virginibus Tyriis mos est gestare pharetram.*

Nor is this all: for when Dido actually makes her appearance, and Virgil is about to bring his exploitation of this motif to a climax, Aeneas, it will be remembered, is surveying scenes on the frieze of Juno's temple: and the last figure his eyes dwell on before the queen arrives is that of yet another quiver-carrying female, the Amazon queen, Penthesilea.[35] And then the poet continues:

> 1.494 'haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda videntur,
> dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno,
> regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,
> incessit, magna iuvenum stipante caterva.'

In other words, at this precise moment Aeneas is at his most impressionable, Dido at her most impressive. And now there follows the celebrated simile, recalling both Homer and Apollonius, in which Dido is compared with Diana, and of which only two elements need concern us here. As she arrives to dispense justice among her subjects Dido, naturally, is unarmed. And yet on the shoulder of the goddess with whom she is compared we see yet again that inescapable quiver: *illa pharetram fert umero* (1.500-1). At the symbolic level, that is to say, Dido *is* a huntress after all. And what of her quarry, Aeneas, in the meantime? Virgil carefully avoids involving his hero in the extravagant imagery of the erotic wound, but instead echoes Homer to suggest, with appropriate brevity and restraint, that Aeneas has succumbed. For the joy of Latona, the watching mother in the Homeric simile, is reproduced by Virgil to suggest the joy of his own silent spectator, as he looks upon Dido for the very first time:

> 1.502 *Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus.*[36]

The imagery of the hunt is not employed again until Book Four, by which time the symbolism has changed its direction. And the way to that shift is prepared in the rest of Book One. For as Aeneas reveals himself to Dido for the first time, emerging from his protective cloud, Venus sheds upon him a grace and beauty that leaves Dido spell-bound:

> 1.613 *obstipuit primo aspectu Sidonia Dido.*

And before long the goddess substitutes Cupid for Ascanius so that *he* can complete the process while Dido fondles him in her lap. And he does so, notice, by infusing his poison into her mouth with his kisses, instead of by firing the conventional arrow, as in Apollonius. The device is brilliantly effective, and of course it leaves the way open for Aeneas to emerge as the real erotic marksman in Book Four. But we should not miss the essential irony behind this development: for in the very book where erotic hunt-imagery is so widely exploited, Cupid, the archetypal exponent of erotic archery, has been deprived by Virgil of his bow.

When Book Four opens the hunt imagery is used at once to present Dido not as a huntress any longer, but as the quarry:

4.1 'at regina gravi iamdudum saucia cura
vulnus alit venis et caeco carpitur igni.
multa viri virtus animo multusque recursat
gentis honos, haerent infixi pectore vultus
verbaque...'

The image of the wound, which was avoided in the case of Aeneas, is now applied to Dido with grim appropriateness, anticipating as it does the literal wound at the end of the book. And when it recurs some sixty lines later the poet introduces an elaborate simile which allows him to clarify the situation within the same symbolic framework. Aeneas as the hunter is unaware of the wound he has inflicted, and Dido as the quarry is doomed to die:

4.67 'tacitum vivit sub pectore vulnus.
uritur infelix Dido, totaque vagatur
urbe furens, qualis coniecta cerva sagitta,
quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit
pastor agens telis, liquitque volatile ferrum
nescius; illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat
Dictaeos, haeret lateri letalis harundo.'

We come finally to the great hunt-scene itself, in which the motif is exploited at both the literal and the symbolic levels at the same time. For as Aeneas emerges he is compared to Apollo mingling with his devotees, a quiver of arrows rattling on the god's shoulder as he goes (4.141f.) Commentators usually stress the parallelism between this simile and that in Book One, where, as we saw, Dido is compared with Diana: a parallelism that is emphasized by the echoing of the superlative (*pulcherrima* of Dido, 1.496, *pulcherrimus* of Aeneas, 4.141). I would stress, not the parallelism, but rather the continuance of that switch in direction we have already noted: the simile insists once more that in Book Four Aeneas is the symbolic hunter, Dido the quarry. And although the queen now plays out the huntress role in the real-life hunt, the intervening symbolism of the mortally wounded hind stays fixed in our minds, and through it we know that Dido is doomed, and that her real-life role as huntress is a mere charade. Moreover a further symbol is introduced at this juncture to drive the point home with renewed force: the extravagant splendour of purple and gold which, in Greek Tragedy, is the mark of impending destruction.[37] For Dido's horse is brilliantly caparisoned in purple and gold; she wears a purple robe and a purple cloak; and her quiver, hair-clasp, and brooch are all of gold. Here, surely, we have an echo of that banquet in Book One, where Dido's troubles first began. For there too we find the same ominous combination of purple and gold: first at 1.639f., in the earlier references to the queen's tapestries of 'proud' purple, and her heavy, gold-embossed plate, and later at 1.698f., when she reclines beneath a purple canopy, again described as *'superbus'*, on a couch of gold.[38]

Virgil, then, in choosing the actual form of Venus' disguise, took the opportunity of introducing the symbolism of the hunt, which is so integral an element of the Dido tragedy. I come now to my third question: why did the poet make the disguise only partial, with the goddess resuming her true appearance for a fleeting moment as she departs (1.402f.)? Like the choice of the huntress disguise, this element too is original: in the corresponding Homeric scene on the island of Scheria Athene remains disguised as a water-carrying maiden throughout. Why then the change? Primarily no doubt Venus reveals her identity at the last moment in order to reassure Aeneas that she is still watching over him, as she did at Troy.[39] But Virgil, in working the episode out, chose to develop it in a totally different direction. For leaving Aeneas blind to such considerations, the poet lets him concentrate instead on what he takes to be the cruelty of his mother's deceit, and the callousness of her sudden departure:

1.407 'quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis
ludis imaginibus? cur dextrae iungere dextram
non datur, ac veras audire ac reddere voces?
talibus incusat gressumque ad moenia tendit.'

The poet's purposes in letting Aeneas unleash this extravagant outburst is, I think, clear; these lines mark the culmination of a process that began for Aeneas on the night Troy was sacked. One by one his ties with his environment have been severed. He has lost his city, and with it most of the comrades he knew. He has lost his wife, Creusa, whose disappearance during the Sack he calls the most cruel thing that happened to him at Troy (2.746). At his very last port of call he lost his father, Anchises, up to then an unfailing source of comfort and encouragement. And now comes the last straw: on this forbidding shore, where he wanders, as he himself puts it, unknown and destitute over a Libyan desert,[40] he feels himself abandoned by his goddess mother as well. The hero, in other words, is now primed and ready to receive and reciprocate the sympathetic love of Dido. Nor has he long to wait for that: for soon after Dido has made her first entrancing appearance, she reveals herself, by her generous words to Ilioneus, to be a ready source of that sympathetic understanding which Aeneas needs so much. And the hero is quick to respond, addressing her at once as

1.597 *o sola infandos Troiae miserata labores.*

The contrast between these words and the earlier outburst against Venus is most striking. Nor should we miss the underlying irony of the situation: for that outburst against Venus comes in the very book where Venus is most active on her son's behalf. In the course of Book One she petitions Jupiter with Aeneas' welfare in mind; gives Aeneas guidance regarding Carthage and its queen; protects him with a concealing mist; enhances his appearance when he meets Dido; and finally despatches Cupid to ensure his safety.[41]

In making Venus' disguise only partial, then, Virgil once again has in view the development of the Dido tragedy. And that brings me to my final question: why does Venus in this scene wear boots rather than sandals? Before suggesting an answer, I should like to prepare the way with some detached but (I hope) relevant observations.

The first point I should like to make is that through concentrating on Book Four, which admittedly contains so many of the formal elements of Greek Tragedy, commentators tend to overlook Book One in this connection, although it is there that the tragedy of Dido really begins.[42] This has led them to miss what seems to me to bear all the marks of a divine prologue of the type that is so common in Greek Tragedy. This occurs (as we might by now expect) in our present passage, when the goddess Venus comes on stage, as it were, and explains the setting of the action that is about to unfold, in much the same way as, for example, Aphrodite in the Hippolytus of Euripides, or Poseidon in the Trojan

Women. The relevant section of her speech comes at 1.338f.

> 'Punica regna vides, Tyrios et Agenoris urbem;
> sed fines Libyci, genus intractabile bello...'

and so on. I feel sure that if these lines had occurred at the start of Book Four, or indeed if they had not been preceded in Book One by several lines of small-talk between Venus and Aeneas, their prologue character would have been more readily recognised.[43]

The second point I want to make concerns the prevalence in Augustan poetry of a tendency towards studied cleverness with individual words as regards both their placing and their significance. One could illustrate this Alexandrian feature with abundant examples from Horace's Odes and from the *Aeneid:* here I will confine myself to one, taken from *Aeneid* Seven. At the beginning of the book, lines 25-36, we find one of the most beautiful passages in the epic, describing the arrival of the Trojans on the banks of the Tiber. All is gaiety, brightness, and bird-song: or so it seems until we come to the very last word of the passage, which, in typical Virgilian fashion, casts a sudden shadow in all the brightness, and ominously suggests the grim events that loom ahead in the rest of the Book. For the last word is – *opaco.*[44]

The third point concerns Virgil's use of symbols, a theme which has been so successfully investigated by Pöschl, although, as Eicholz has stressed, it should be approached with caution.[45] The huntsman's quiver, and purple and gold, we have already considered in this connection: and here I want to cite a further specific example, this time from Book Eight. There Evander, King of Pallanteum, on the site of the future Rome, gets up on the morning after Aeneas' arrival to the sound of bird-song, and dresses before joining Aeneas.[46] The dominant motif of the book is that of rustic simplicity, and King Evander is presented as its very embodiment: yet at this point he puts on, among other things which are entirely appropriate, a pair of Etruscan sandals. Since everything Etruscan, and especially Etruscan footwear,[47] suggests an element of luxury, commentators at this point tend either to prevaricate or else look the other way. But all we have here, I believe, is a very simple example of a poetic symbol. For these same sandals are about to take Evander to what will prove the most decisive development in the whole course of events in Italy: the entrusting to Aeneas of the great Etruscan command. On the previous day Evander avoided any reference to the subject, since Virgil had other things he wanted the king to do first. But now the time has come for Evander to approach Aeneas with this grave mission in mind: and the poet indicates the fact by this brief symbolic gesture, even though the reference involves some slight conflict, at the literal level, with the theme of simplicity. Anyone who finds symbolic footwear difficult to accept should follow the text further: for, of all the structural features that characterize Virgil's epic style, the most persistent of all is his tendency to enclose sections of his work, be they large or small, within a frame formed by two corresponding elements. And just as this section dealing with the Etruscan command opens with symbolic Etruscan sandals, so it is brought to a close with a matching symbol as Aeneas accepts: for an Etruscan trumpet blares in the heavens as part of the prodigy which finally clinches that acceptance, after some initial hesitation on the part of Aeneas (8.526).

So far, then, we have noted a tragic prologue beginning at 1.338; significant word-placing, illustrated by *opacao* at 7.36; and symbolic footwear at 8.458. I want to end now by taking a last look at the detail of Venus' disguise. If you consult Austin on the subject in his latest contribution to the admirable series of Oxford editions, you will find he has this to say with regard to Venus' Diana-like appearance: 'Virgil's description accurately fits representations of the huntress Artemis in art, for example the Versailles figure in the Louvre.'[48] And earlier editors such as Knapp and Escott clearly held the same view, since this is the figure they reproduce in their editions in order to illustrate our passage.[49] But in fact the Versailles figure, a Roman copy of an original by Leochares, differs from Virgil's description in one important respect: it has the quiver, and the short skirt, but, like the equally famous Artemis of Gabii,[49A] wears sandals instead of boots. For Virgil's booted figure we have to go to another type of Diana found in a variety of places ranging from the great temple-frieze at Pergamum to an amethyst of the Augustan period.[50] It is a type which clearly held a special attraction for Virgil,[51] since in the Seventh *Eclogue* he lets the goatherd, Corydon, promise Diana:

> 31 'si proprium hoc fuerit, levi de marmore tota
> puniceo stabis suras evincta cothurno.

(That is to say, if things stay as they are he will see to it that the goddess gets a full-length marble statue, complete with purple hunting boots). Now if we take just one more look at the text of our *Aeneid* passage we find a quite remarkable but hitherto unnoticed feature that explains why commentators have tended to refer us to the wrong Diana. For when the disguised Venus arrives on the scene and the poet describes her in the narrative (1.314-320), in spite of all the detail he supplies, there is no mention at this stage of the most striking item of all, namely the purple boots: the very item which, in the Seventh *Eclogue*, is actually picked out to the exclusion of all the rest! Meanwhile sixteen lines of dialogue follow before the poet decides that the time is right to bring in this detail too. Whereupon Venus reverts to the subject of dress, and at last supplies the missing item, the boots:

> 1.335 'tum Venus: haud equidem tali me dignor honore.
> virginibus Tyriis mos est gestare pharetram
> purpureoque alte suras vincire cothurno.'

And then at once she embarks on her tragic prologue:

> Punica regna vides...

Here, surely, if anywhere, we have a case of significant word-placing: *cothurno* held over for fifteen or more lines in order to present it as the very last word before the tragic prologue begins. And as for symbolic footwear, there is surely no need to expatiate on that point. Ovid, for example, uses *cothurnus* or *cothurnatus* fifteen times in all, and on every occasion the reference is to the tragic buskin.[52]

I have tried in this paper to show that the scene in which Venus appears at Carthage disguised as a huntress is by no means a sterile episode, as some critics would have us believe. I have suggested that Virgil disguised Venus in the first place as an elementary precaution against opposition from Juno, and that he went on from there to exploit the disguise to the full with the Dido tragedy in mind. First, he saw in the form of the disguise an opportunity for introducing the vital motif of the hunt symbolism; next, he chose to make the disguise incomplete in order to bring to its climax the emotional isolation of Aeneas; and, finally, he chose a booted rather than a sandalled figure for Venus' disguise because this allowed him to introduce a tragic prologue with an ingenious combination of word-placing and dress-symbolism.

NOTES

1. V. Henselmanns, *Die Widersprüche in Vergils Aeneis,* Würzburg 1913, 7f.; V. Buchheit, *Vergil über die Sendung Roms,* Heidelberg 1963, 50; K. Quinn, *Virgil's Aeneid: A Critical Description,* London 1968, 106.
2. W.S. Anderson, *The Art of the Aeneid,* Englewood Cliffs 1969, 76.
3. A. Wlosok, *Die Göttin Venus in Vergils Aeneis,* Heidelberg 1967, 86f. *Cf.* also Anderson, *op.cit.* 27.
4. G. Lieberg, *Vergils Aeneis als Dichtung der Einsamkeit,* 186, in *Vergiliana,* edited by H. Bardon and R. Verdière, Leiden 1971.
5. Il. 1.357f., 5.311f., 19.1f. W. Kühn, *Götterszenen bei Vergil,* Heidelberg 1961, 29, rightly stresses this point.
6. 2.589f., 8.608f.
7. 3.147f., 4.265f., 4.356f., 8.31f.
8. *E.g.* 5.620f., 5.841f., 7.419f. Cupid disguised as Ascanius scarcely ranks as an exception, since his mission is centred on Dido, not Aeneas (1.685f., 717f.) In this connection there is no need to be put out by Aeneas' use of *totiens* in line 407: for such exaggeration as typical in the language of complaint *cf.* my comment in *Phoenix* 15 (1961) 42, note 6.
9. *Cf.* 1.259f., 12794f.
10. H. de la Ville de Mirmont, *Apollonios de Rhodes et Virgile,* Paris 1894, 641.
11. *Cf.* R. Schilling, *La Religion Romaine de Vênus,* Paris 1954, *passim.* For the political aspect of Venus' role coins are especially important: cf. H.B. Mattingly, *The Denarius of Suffenas and the Ludi Victoriae,* Numismatic Chronicle 16 (1956) 200f.; H. Mattingly, *Roman Coins from the Earliest Times to the fall of the Western Empire,* London 1960, 64; A. Alföldi, *The Main Aspects of Political Propaganda on the Coinage of the Roman Republic,* in *Essays presented to Harold Mattingly,* Oxford 1965, 81f.
12. Cf. C.A. Sainte-Beuve, *Étude sur Virgile,* Paris 1883, 257.

13. The quality of these lines with their sound effects and rhythms, should be compared with that of 1.415-7 and 1.691-4 (describing Venus' haunts on Cyprus) and 1.588-91 (where Venus passes on some of the sensuality to her son). Of the fourteen lines in these passages only 1.404 does not begin with a dactyl. Wlosok analyses some of them, *op. cit.* 84f.

14. L.R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States,* Oxford 1896, Vol. II 692 contains a good reproduction. On the popularity of the type, of which there are several extant versions, cf. G.M.A. Richter, *The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks,* New Haven 1950, 239. Schilling (*op. cit.* 313) prefers to link the lines with the *Genetrix* carved by Arkesilaus for the temple dedicated to the goddess in 46 BC. by Julius Caesar. For this work, of which five small copies survive, see M. Bieber, *Die Venus Genetrix des Arkesilaus,* Mitt. des deutsch. archaeol. Inst., Roem. Abteilung, 48 (1933), 263f. (with illustrations).

15. Venus and Aeneas: *The Difficulties of Filial Pietas,* CJ 50 (1955) 234.

16. Cf. E. Mensching, *Die Interjektion heus in der Aeneis,* Rh M 113 (1970) 265f.

17. Aeneas is already disposed to reveal himself without any promptings from Achates (1.597f.), and the dispersal of the protective mist provides any necessary impetus to the action. It should be noted that there is never any actual dialogue between the two heroes: here there is no reply from Aeneas, and there is none from Achates after Aeneas' words at 1.459f., which could easily have become a monologue.

18. 1.441f. *Cf.* J. Bayet, *L'omen du cheval à Carthage,* REA 1941, 166f.

19. *Cf.* R.D. Williams, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quintus,* Oxford 1959, 159.

20. 4.59; *cf.* 1.71f and 4.166f.

21. *Cf.* C. Bailey, *Religion in Virgil,* Oxford, 1935, 129f.

22. 1.4; 1.279; 1.662. Note how at 7.286f. she comes from her home in Argos.

23. Il. 4.34f.

24. *Cf.* E. Burck, *Das Bild der Karthager in der römischen Literatur* (in J. Vogt, *Rom und Karthago,* Leipzig 1945) 335f.; R. Bloch, REL 45 (1967) 335f.; J. Brisson, *Carthage et le fatum* (in *Hommages à M. Renard,* Brussels (1969) I 165f.

25. *Cf.* R.G. Austin, *P. Vergili Maronis Aneidos Liber Primus,* Oxford 1971, *ad loc.*

26. Il. 8.1f.; 13.43f., 13.206f., 14.135f.

27. Od. 7.56f., 13.128f., 7.34f.

28. Od. 6.110f., 139f., 229f.; 7.14f. and 13.121.

29. Od. 7.18f.; 6.20f., 8.7., 8.193.; 6.329f.

30. Aen 1.328f.

31. *Cf.* Od. 7.19f. Wlosok, *op. cit.* 77, considers the huntress disguise a natural one in the wild surroundings: but one would surely expect men rather than women to be out hunting. On that score it would have been more natural to retain the Homeric disguise.

32. F. Klingner, *Virgil,* Zurich 1967, 397, and Wlosok, *op. cit.* 101, regard the huntress element in Venus' disguise as foresahdowing the masculine heroism of the Carthaginian queen who is soon to appear. But that is to take much too narrow a view of its role (*cf,* Brooks Otis, *Virgil, A Study in Civilised Poetry,* Oxford 1964, 75f.). The perspective is wrong, too: Virgil is concerned, not with Dido's heroic past, but with her tragic future. Cf. V. Pöschl, *The Art of Virgil,* Ann Arbor 1962, 68.

33. This crucial point tends to be overlooked, but it is rightly stressed by R.A. Hornsby, CJ 60 (1965) 339. Note how the poet repeats the process in the case of Turnus, who changes from hunting beast (9.59f., 9.561f., 9.730) to quarry (9.791f., 12.1f.) And in each case the shift is marked by the introduction of an ominous wound (4.2, 12.5).

34. *Cf.* D.H. Lawrence, *Selected Literary Criticism,* ed. by A. Beal, London 1955, 157. As he puts it, symbols have 'a life of their own'. For similar shifts in Greek drama cf. Aesch. *Choeph.* 248 and 549; Eur. *H.F.* 631f. and 1421f.; and Eur. *Bacchae* 228 and 817. (On the last, see R.P. Winnington-Ingram, *Euripides and Dionysus,* Cambridge 1948, 107f.)

35. Penthesilea is depicted as both hoplite and archer in Greek Art (*cf.* M. Hirmer and P.E. Arias, *A History of Greek Vase Painting,* London 1962, Plates XVIII and 168). But the close correspondence between her and *pharetrata Camilla (cf.* 11.649) makes it clear that Virgil visualised her as an archer. As R.D. Williams puts it (*The Aeneid of Virgil, 1-VI,* London 1972, *ad* 1.490f.) 'Penthesilea is a prototype of Camilla.' Both appear at the end of a series of male warriors, to become objects of wonder (1.490f., 7.803f.); both fight with one breast exposed (1.492, 11.649). In each case Virgil clearly had in mind the kind of figure that was carved in the fifth century by Polycleitus, Pheidias, and Kresilas, of which a series of Roman copies survive. Cf. Richter, *op. cit.*, 229f., 251f., and figs. 620, 627, 655.

36. *Cf.* Pöschl, *op. cit.* 67; Williams, *op. cit.* (see note 35), *ad loc.*

37. *Cf.* Aesch. *Ag.* 910f., where Clytemnestra involves Agamemnon in the dangerous excess of treading on purple; and Aesch. *Persae,* 159f., where Atossa's opening reference to a palace decked with gold leads on to reflections about such wealth proving disastrous.

38. R.B. Lloyd, *Superbus in the Aeneid,* AJP 93 (1972) 129, sees in these earlier passages a foreshadowing of the fate that will one day overtake the queen and her city. It is worth noting here how, although Aeneas and the Trojans are naturally brought into contact with Dido's opulence, *their* purple is described merely as *stratus* (1.700). As

for the hunt, in contrast with Dido, Aeneas is kept away from both purple and gold, apart from the single reference in the Apollo simile to the god's golden hair-clasp (4.148). The high point of his 'infection' comes later, brilliantly symbolizing the life he must renounce, in answer to Mercury's call; for the gods find him clad in a cloak of purple and gold made for him by Dido, and wearing a jewelled sword (4.261f.)

39. 2.589f. One could of course refer the incident more closely to her words, and regard it as lending them emphasis (R. Heinze, *Virgils epische Technik,* Berlin 1915, 312) or confirming their validity (Kühn, *op. cit.* 33).

40. 1.384.

41. 1.227f., 338f., 411., 589., 657f.

42. Quinn's analysis of the tragedy of Dido, *Latin Explorations,* London 1968, 47, is from this point of view fundamentally unsound. Austin in his edition of Book Four (27) insists on the importance of Book One in this connection.

43. E.g. by Kühn, who concedes (op. cit. 33) that Venus' speech tells us all we need to know, yet earlier (13) sees a prologue, not here, but at 1.37f., where in fact Juno's impassioned monologue is in no sense expository, but more like the introspective utterance of a Medea or a Phaedra. Buchheit, *op. cit.* 69f. on the other hand compares Jupiter's words at 1.279f. with a Euripidean prologue. But although such a prologue may indeed contain references to the future, its primary role is to explain relevant events in the past, which Jupiter's words fail to do.

44. *Cf.* Pöschl, *op. cit.* 144.

45. D.E. Eicholz, GR 15 (1968) 105 f.

46. 8. 454f.

47. According to Pollux (7.22) Etruscan sandals decorated Pheidias' very costly masterpiece, the Athene Parthenos.

48. *Op. cit.* 120. So too Ville de Mirmont, *op. cit.* 544.

49. C. Knapp, *The Aeneid of Vergil,* New York 1901, 134; E.H.S. Escott, *Vergil Aeneid Book I,* London 1900, 52.

49A This also has been reproduced in connection with Venus' disguise: cf. A.G. McKay, *Vergil's Italy,* Bath 1971, 179.

50. Cf. W.H. Schuchardt, *Die Meister des grossen Friezes von Pergamon,* Berlin 1925, Plate 19; A Furtwangler, *Die antike Gemmen,* Amsterdam 1964, I Pl ate XLIX, No. 8.