

Aeneid 1 and the Epic Gaze in the *Carlias* of Ugolino Verino

*Revised from a paper given to the Virgil Society on 22 November 2008**

There are more Latin epics surviving in the world than most people ever imagine. When Virgil is more or less disappearing under a flood of publications and even Statius has inspired four monographs in English in the last five years, it is hard to believe that there exists such a huge number of poems often unappreciated and unread. As Hofmann's survey, stretching over five centuries and three continents, shows, Neo-Latin epic is a vast field.¹ To choose among these epics must almost inevitably be arbitrary and personal: for me in particular the choice of studying Ugolino Verino's *Carlias* is a deeply personal one. Legend, in the shape of an unpublished and unattributed type-written document, allegedly produced by great-aunt Marguerite, has it that Ugolino Verino is one of my ancestors.² What you are reading represents the beginning of a long-term project: I have begun a rough English translation of Nikolaus Thurn's 1995 text, which, along with his 2002 commentary, makes the *Carlias* a serious candidate for study for the first time.³ In the long run, I hope the *Carlias* will become well known: it is a fantastic, rich, allusive and complex text from a fascinating period. My aim in this paper is to provide a brief introduction to the poem and focus on a case study of the first book's reception of Virgil. In line with my current work on vision in epic, the paper focuses on the arrival of Charlemagne and his companions at the court of King Justinus in Epirus, and Verino's re-reading of the visuality of Virgil's first book, as he turns hidden viewing into open

*I would like to thank Andy Fear, Anna Mastrogianni and members of the Cambridge Society for Neo-Latin Studies for encouraging me in this new direction and Nikolaus Thurn for sending me his text and commentary; audiences in Cambridge, Keele and London offered much helpful advice and constructive criticism. Philip Hardie read and immensely improved this: I lack a sufficiency of panegyric tropes through which to convey my gratitude.

¹ Hofmann (2001).

² Verini (unpublished).

³ The text in this paper is from Thurn. I apologise for the roughness of the translation, which is my own and very much unpolished and with no literary pretensions.

spectacle and the ekphrasis of inner sorrow about the past into an appropriation of Greek history to reflect on the text's present.

First, some background. Ugolino Verino (1438-1516) was writing in Florence at the end of the fifteenth century; according to his biographer, Lazzari, Verino was the third-best poet of quattrocento Florence, after Landino and Poliziano, and the only one who wrote an epic.⁴ He was the pupil of Cristoforo Landino.⁵ The *Carlias*, which is Verino's *Hauptwerk* according to Thurn, is an epic extolling the exploits of Charlemagne, dedicated to King Charles VIII of France.⁶ Verino was part of the flourishing literary circle of Florence at this time; a literary exchange between him and Poliziano is extant; Marsilio Ficino wrote him a letter of consolation on the death of his son.⁷ He was perpetually struggling for patronage in his attempt to support a large family: as well as writing prolifically, he taught various Medici offspring, probably including the future Pope Leo X, and also held down an administrative job.⁸ In his Herculean struggles to obtain patronage, he wrote a poem on the death of Cosimo de' Medici, a panegyric for Ferdinand and Isabella on the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the *Carlias*, optimistically aimed at King Charles VIII of France, who unfortunately died before it was completed, and a set of epigrams for King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary, for which he actually obtained some money. Tragically, when his brother Salvestro was bringing the money back, he was captured by the Venetians who were helping Pisa to besiege Florence; the money was lost and his brother was condemned to the galleys.⁹ Verino did, however, produce a great deal of poetry.

The *Carlias* is an epic in fifteen books written in Latin hexameters, an intriguing mixture of classical allusion, with many similarities to Petrarch's *Africa* and other Christian epic,¹⁰ Italian poetry (he includes what is essentially the whole of Dante's *Divine Comedy*) and medieval romance; Christ is cheek to cheek with Calliope; the first crusade meets the *Chanson de Roland*. Six different versions of the poem or parts of the poem exist; the first full version was produced in 1480; the changes between versions are themselves fascinating, but for now I shall concentrate on the later revised version (R), the "finished" text, as Thurn (1995) presents it.

⁴ Lazzari (1897) 211. Lazzari's work draws on the seventeenth century biography of Bartolozzi, as well as independent research in the libraries of Florence.

⁵ Lazzari (1897) 34.

⁶ Thurn (2002) 13.

⁷ Lazzari (1897) 44.

⁸ Thurn (1995) 11; Lazzari (1897) 99-100.

⁹ Lazzari (1897) 106.

¹⁰ Although Petrarch's *Africa* was relatively unknown at this point, Verino refers to him in *Epigrammata* 3.27. Thurn (2002) 100.

In his prose preface to the *Carlias*, Verino makes a specific claim to be following in the footsteps of Homer, Virgil and Dante: *huius sum gesta heroico carmine prosecutus, poetarum principes Homerum, Virgilium compatriotamque meum Dantem immitatus* (“I have followed the deeds of this man in a heroic song, imitating those princes among poets, Homer, Virgil and my compatriot Dante”).¹¹ Lazzari, writing in 1897, dismisses this as a “conventional paying of tribute at the shrine of Virgil” and is keen to play up Verino’s originality, sincerity and Christianity.¹² However, the proem in fact sets Christ up as a Muse, not using Christianity to reject classical literary values, but fusing the two:¹³

*Proelia magnanimi canimus victricia Carli
armaque Francorum nullis impervia terris
edomitumque orbem Longobardosque feroces
impiaque horrendis miserorum Tartara poenis
Elysiumque nemus civesque ardentis Olympi.
insuetum per iter ferimur, nullisque priorum
orbita currenti monstrat vestigia signis.
Christe, potens rerum, aeterni sapientia patris,
aspira coeptis, vatem nec, diva, precantem,
Calliope, spernas (res ardua), pande recessum
Parnasi memorans breviter compendia rerum.*

(1.1-11)

(“We sing the victorious battles of great-hearted Charlemagne
and the weapons of the Franks unfelt in no land
and the earth tamed and the fierce Longobardi
and impious Tartarus with the horrific punishments of the wretched
and the Elysian grove and the citizens of burning Olympus.
We are carried on an unaccustomed road, and by no marks of former men
does the path show tracks to the runner.
Christ, powerful over all things, in the wisdom of the eternal Father,
breathe inspiration into my beginnings, and, divine Calliope, don’t spurn
your poet (a difficult thing) who prays to you; open the secret places
of Parnassus, relating in brief an abridgement of huge things”).

¹¹ *Preface*, 7-9.

¹² For instance Lazzari (1897) 152, on the panegyric to Ferdinand and Isabella.

¹³ The *Carlias* follows in the footsteps of many Latin poems which melded together Christianity and the appropriation of antiquity. For a sense of this tradition see Green (2006) and Gregory (2006).

Structurally, this proem has much in common with the proem of the *Aeneid*: a seven line statement of subject matter, followed by a four line request for inspiration. The first word of the *Aeneid*, *arma*, is put in place at the beginning of the second line, clearly expressing a Virgilian agenda. Thurn takes this further by suggesting that *proelia Carli* in the first line is the equivalent of *virum*.¹⁴ Virgil's invocation is not to Apollo but to an unnamed Muse: *Musa, mihi causas memora* (*Aen.* 1.8) and Verino's Calliope is also *memorans*. Christ becomes a sort of Ovidian god, breathing inspiration into his beginnings, and consubstantial with the Holy Spirit (Ovid's inspiring gods are unnamed; Ovid *Met.* 1.2-3).

Even if we take only a brief look at the plot of the *Carlias*, it becomes clear that the *Aeneid* was a very important model, and that other classical literature is mixed in with elements from the tradition of stories about Charlemagne and the crusades. To briefly summarise the plot of the *Carlias*: Satan stirs up a storm which wrecks Charlemagne's fleet at Buthrotum, where he is welcomed and invited to tell his story (book 1). He narrates his crusade and the storming of Jerusalem, the conquest of Egypt, Babylon and Persia (books 2-4). Stuck at Buthrotum, the Franks mend their fleet, go hunting, and celebrate games (book 5). Charlemagne goes down to the underworld where he briefly recapitulates Dante, travelling through Hell, Purgatory and Paradise (books 6-8). He then undertakes a military campaign against the Longobards in Italy and Spain, including a river-battle for the hero Rinaldus (10.526-615), heroes called Hector and Ajax, a battle of Cannae, a battle with the Moors, whose general is called Hasdrubal. Finally, Charlemagne is crowned king in Rome and returns to Aachen to celebrate a triumph.

Let us look in more detail at the correspondences between the first book of the *Aeneid* and the first book of the *Carlias*:

<i>Aeneid</i> 1	<i>Carlias</i> 1
Proem (1-11).	Proem (1-11).
Juno's anger; she stirs up a storm (12-80).	Satan's Anger; he stirs up a storm (12-58).
Storm; Aeneas' despair; storm calmed by Neptune (81-156).	Storm; Charlemagne's prayer; storm calmed by Christ (59-124).
The Trojans land; Aeneas encourages them (157-207).	The Franks reach land; Charlemagne encourages them. (125-64).

¹⁴ Thurn (2002) 102.

<i>Aeneid</i> 1	<i>Carliás</i> 1
They eat (208-22).	They eat and sleep (165-79).
Venus supplicates Jupiter (223-304).	
Aeneas meets Venus in disguise; she explains the situation (305-417).	Charlemagne and Orlando meet a hermit who explains the situation (180-246).
Aeneas enters Carthage in concealment and watches the busy building work (418-40).	Exchange of messengers between Charlemagne and Justinus (247-76).
Aeneas looks at the pictures of the Trojan war on the walls of the temple of Juno (ekphrasis) (441-93).	The women of Buthrotum watch Charlemagne and his men approach (teichoscopy) (277-301).
Aeneas watches Dido and Ilioneus exchanging diplomatic speeches (494-578).	Description of central square and mosaics (ekphrasis) (302-34).
Encouraged by Achates, Aeneas reveals himself to Dido (578-642).	Charlemagne and Justinus exchange greetings (335-360).
The substitution of Cupid for Ascanius (643-94).	
The banquet (695-722).	The banquet (361-395).
Libation and song of Iopas (723-47).	Song of Amon (396-447).
Dido asks for Aeneas' story (748-56).	Justinus suggests that Charlemagne tells the story of his conquests the next morning after a good night's sleep (447-58).

From the table it is clear just how closely the structure of the *Carliás* follows the *Aeneid* in book 1. There is a sense in which Verino is concerned to correct the *Aeneid*, both in the flow of the wider narrative and in the details. His re-working gives us a fascinating insight into how he read the *Aeneid*: given that the *Carliás* is a panegyric work and we have external evidence (e.g. the prose preface) that he hoped for concrete and financial reward

from its dedicatee, his corrections of Virgil's complexities remove the elements which cause problems for a straight panegyric reading of the *Aeneid*. Charlemagne cannot even be tainted by the faintest suggestion of defeat; in the storm he prays but does not despair:

*Heroum postquam vires rectoris et omnem
imperiosa maris tempestas vicerat artem,
Francorum princeps geminas ad sydera palmas
substulit ac nudo supplex ita vertice fatus:*

(1.97-100)

("After the imperious tempest of the sea had conquered the strength of the heroes and all the skill of the helmsman, the leader of the Franks raised twin palms to the stars and spoke thus in supplication with his head bare").

The phrase *geminas ad sydera palmas / substulit* clearly links Charlemagne's prayer to Aeneas' despair at 1.94-101:

*extemplo Aeneae solvuntur frigore membra;
ingemit et duplicis tendens ad sidera palmas
taliam voce refert: 'o terque quaterque beati ...'*

(1.92-94)

("Immediately the limbs of Aeneas are dissolved in cold; he groans and raising his twin palms to the stars speaks in this way: 'O three times and four times more blessed ...'").¹⁵

As is well known, the phrase *solvuntur frigore membra* is also used to describe the death of Turnus in the second last line of the poem (12.951) and Aeneas' speech is a lament that he did not die at Troy. Only the demonstration of *pietas* remains in the *Carlias* (1.101-13). For the same reason there is a narrative not of defeat but success in books 2-4. Much also is changed by the Christian context: Satan simply causes the storm himself; the political machinations of Olympus are gone; the ambivalence of Neptune's intervention, for instance, in which he is concerned with reinforcing his own power over his realm, rather than helping Aeneas, becomes Christ answering a prayer, clearly taking responsibility for calming the storm and blaming Satan for starting it:¹⁶

¹⁵ The text of the *Aeneid* is from Conte (2009) and the translations are my own.

¹⁶ Gregory (2006) explores this phenomenon in other epics, leading up to Milton's Satan.

*Ecce adsum; depone metum; confide! Vetamus
ulterius rapidis Sathan seuire procellis.*

(1.119-20)

(“Behold, I am present; put aside your fear; trust! We forbid Satan to rage any further with swift storms”).

Both panegyric and Christian agendas coincide in the matter of Dido and the love story of *Aeneid* 1; the complexities of gender and sexuality in *Aeneid* 1 are entirely effaced. Venus’ appearance as an attractive and disguised woman is replaced with a hirsute monk; Dido’s problematic status as female ruler is transformed into a stately alliance between men. Two smaller examples will show how Verino goes about “correcting” Virgil. First the reaction of Charlemagne himself to the feast provided by Justinus brings out the implicit Virgilian criticism of Carthaginian luxury in such a way as to securely distance the hero from involvement in it:

*Ipse throno residens Carlus sublimis in alto
tanta laboratae damnat miracula cenae
et tacitus carpit tanti ludibria luxus.
sublatis promunt primis bellaria mensis,
nec biferi tot habent florentia culta Damasci
Hesperidumque horti vigilataque mala dracone.*

(1.386-91)

(“Charlemagne himself, sitting sublime on a high throne, condemns the great miracles of the hard-toiled dinner and silently criticises the mockery of such great extravagance. When the first courses have been removed they offer dessert, Nor did the flourishing plots of twice-bearing Damascus possess so much, nor the gardens of the Hesperides, with their apples watched over by a dragon”).

In the *Aeneid* there is a simple description of the luxury of Dido’s preparations but no explicit authorial comment or suggestion of Aeneas’ reaction to it:

*at domus interior regali splendida luxu
instruitur, mediisque parant convivia tectis:
arte laboratae vestes ostroque superbo ...*

(1.637-39)

(“But the splendid interior of the house was drawn up with royal luxury, and they prepared banquets in the central hall: there were covers worked with skill and proud purple ...”)

Most emphatic, however, is the end of book 1 where the beginning of the hero’s narrative is displaced from an all night affair, obsessively absorbed by an already love-sick Dido, to a sensible project for the next day:

*sopierat mortale genus, cum ductor Achivum,
‘tempus’, ait, ‘placidae, rex optime, fessa quieti
membra dare insomnem nec totum ducere noctem.
crastina puniceis cum lux invecta quadrigis
lampade Phoebea caelo discussisset astra
retuleritque diem, procerum miranda tuorum
gesta renarrabis nobis tantosque labores
Europa atque Asia domitis terraque marique
undique permenso spatio victricibus armis
primaque foelicis repetes exordia pugnae’.*
(1.446-58)

(“The mortal race was sound asleep, when the leader of the Achivi said: ‘It is time, O best of kings, to give our tired limbs to peaceful rest and not spend the whole night unsleeping. Tomorrow when the light, brought in on scarlet chariots, will have scattered the stars from sky with its Phoebean lamp and brought back the day, you will tell again to us the wondrous deeds of your leaders and the labours so great, with Europe and Asia tamed, both on land and at sea and everywhere that space measured out by conquering arms, and you will seek again the first beginnings of that fortunate fight”).

Verino regulates time and measures it in the ordered arrangement of his books and his characters, contributing to the sense of an ordered cosmos ruled over by God and the beneficent king. The universal success and victory of Charlemagne’s conquering labours is set in opposition to Aeneas’ sufferings and defeats. Compare the end of *Aeneid* 1:

*nec non et vario noctem sermone trahebat
infelix Dido longumque bibeat amorem,
multa super Priamo rogans, super Hectore multa;*

*nunc quibus Aurorae venisset filius armis,
nunc quales Diomedis equi, nunc quantus Achilles.
'immo age et a prima dic, hospes, origine nobis
insidias' inquit 'Danaum casusque tuorum
erroresque tuos; nam te iam septima portat
omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus aestas'.*

(1.748-56)

(“Unfortunate Dido was drawing out the night with varied talk and drinking long of love, asking much about Priam, and about Hector much; now she asks what arms did the son of the Dawn wear when he came, now what sort of horses Diomedes had, now how great was Achilles. ‘Come now and tell us from the first beginning, my guest, the traps of the Greeks and the disasters of your people and your wanderings; for now the seventh summer carries you wandering through all the lands and waves’”).

infelix Dido compares to the fortunate fights of Charlemagne (*foelicis pugnae*); Charlemagne’s great labours (*tantosque labores*) in conquering most of the known world look back to Virgil’s proem and the *labores* which Aeneas suffers at the hands of Juno (1.10).

The relationship of the present to the past is an important theme for both the *Aeneid* and the *Carlias*: that there is no simple way of reading Verino’s attitude to Virgil becomes clear from the choice of Buthrotum to replace Carthage. Justinus is king of Epirus and his capital is Buthrotum; he is inhabiting the landscape not of *Aeneid* 4 but *Aeneid* 3. There Buthrotum is the site of Helenus and Andromache’s empty replica of Troy which Aeneas visits, only to reject it in favour of a new start in Latium.¹⁷ Here Buthrotum is represented as in some senses a “new Rome”; look briefly, for instance, at the speech of the monk:

*rex est Iustinus Romanae stirpis alumnus:
nam lachrymosa Gethes cum ferret bella Latinis
milliaque Hesperiam decies centena Gelonum
impeterent quassisque ruens Concordia muris
barbarico preberet iter cursumque furori,
misit in has furtim tunc Caesar Honorius oras*

¹⁷ For more detail on *Aeneid* 3, see Bettini (1997).

*Archadium natum, qui post successit Aminctae
Aepiri regi. generum nam legerat illum
Iustinae natae, soboles cum nulla virilis
esset; et ex isto iusti fluxere nepotes.*

(1.227-36)

(“The king is Justinus, sprung from Roman roots: for when Gethes bore tearful war against the Latins and ten times a hundred thousand of the Gelones attacked Hesperia and Concordia was destroyed along with the shaken walls, and opened a way and a route for barbarian rage, Caesar Honorius then furtively sent Arcadius his son to these shores, who after that succeeded king Aminctas of Epirus. For he had chosen that man as a son-in-law, married to his daughter Justina, when he had no male offspring. And from that union flowed legitimate descendants”).

Buthrotum has sprung from the ruins of Rome destroyed by the barbarians in the same way that Rome sprang from the ruins of Troy destroyed by the Greeks. The narrative of escape, marriage and the acquisition of a kingdom is Aeneas’ story as much as Arcadius’. There is a suggestion, then, that Charlemagne is the founder of a new Roman empire which significantly breaks from the old, that the attempt to reproduce classical literature in the same form is as empty as Helenus’ attempt to rebuild a miniature Troy in exile. Just as Virgil creates himself in the image of a Roman Homer, yet distances himself and his characters from Homeric and Greek qualities and attitudes, so Verino fashions himself as a Florentine Virgil, yet distances Charlemagne from a straightforward acceptance of Romanness.

The ekphrasis and teichoscopy of *Carliis* 1 similarly re-work the *Aeneid* and I hope the comparison will reveal interesting insights into power and vision in both poems. I want to begin with some thoughts about looking and being looked at. To simplify a complex subject, the theory of “the gaze”, as described in Laura Mulvey’s seminal article ‘Visual pleasure and narrative cinema’, holds that the viewer is in a position of power over the object of his gaze.¹⁸ Gender is also central: to look is male and to be looked at is female. The cinematic spectator, hidden in the darkness of the cinema, watches through the mediation of the camera and in doing so turns what he watches into an object. Responses to Mulvey

¹⁸ Mulvey (1975).

have emphasised female spectatorship, the importance of race and class, even questioning the psychoanalytic basis of the theory, but theories of “the gaze”, whether Mulveyan or from other discourses, originating with thinkers such as Sartre and Foucault, have been extraordinarily influential.¹⁹ Vision has become a hot topic in the study of the *Aeneid*: Syed (2005) uses the gaze to think about audience identification and Roman identity; Smith (2005) has convincingly shown the importance of vision in the *Aeneid*, though I am less convinced by his argument that this is in opposition to a distrust in the power of words and reflects the movement of Augustan society away from oratory and towards the *Power of Images*, the title of Zanker’s seminal discussion of Augustus’ visual propaganda.²⁰ Most recently Reed (2007) has brilliantly explored the legacy of the Hellenistic *Epitaph on Adonis* by Bion of Smyrna and the visual dynamics of our engagement with the death of young heroes in the *Aeneid*.

As part of my current project on vision in epic, I have explored the phenomena of teichoscopy and ekphrasis. Both form an important part of my conception of the epic gaze: the former (viewers, often women, looking from the walls at heroes) often offers a feminine, oppositional perspective, while the latter is associated with the authorising divine gaze.²¹ The perspective of the viewers on the walls is similar in some respects to that of the divine audience: they look down from above, and see the grand narrative unfold. Unlike the gods, though, they are disempowered and passive watchers. It is no surprise then that they are largely female: old men and those too young to fight are also there, but the viewpoints of women are often privileged. Do they offer an anti-epic agenda, a feminine perspective? Tragic concerns with death, abandonment and family bonds meet elegiac tendencies to look at the bodies of heroes in quite the wrong way. Yet do they ultimately reinforce the masculine code of epic, providing the necessary audience to create *kleos* and validate *virtus*? Teichoscopy is a key narrative tactic, a visual catalogue and an exploration of internal viewing (and narrating) which has not been studied in the obsessive detail spent on other ways of visualising epic, in particular ekphrasis.

An important angle on ekphrasis which has been less thoroughly explored, at least in ancient epic, focuses on ekphrasis and the other, the way that ekphrasis brackets off and objectifies women, places, stories, and the interactions between the ekphrastic mode and the imperial gaze, such as that of Silius’ Hannibal as he looks at Rome, operating the

¹⁹ For a lucid introduction see Fredrick (2002) 1-30.

²⁰ Zanker (1988). On Smith see Rogerson (2007).

²¹ Lovatt (forthcoming) is an exploration of the theme of vision in epic from Homer to Nonnus, with chapters on the divine gaze, the mortal gaze, the prophetic gaze, teichoscopy, ekphrasis, heroic bodies, the assaultive gaze and monumentality.

penetrative gaze of the would-be conqueror. This imperial gaze is particularly important in the *Carliās*. As a text that produces the conquest of the infidel East and brings it back West, the *Carliās* can make uncomfortable reading in a multicultural society. Can this approach offer a new perspective on the linked episodes of teichoscopy and ekphrasis at *Carliās* 1.277-339?

The hallmark of the visual narrative in *Aeneid* 1 is concealment. When Aeneas enters Carthage, he takes on the role of the viewer rather than the viewed. Venus hides him in a cloud:

*at Venus obscuro gradientis aëre saepsit,
et multo nebulae circum dea fudit amictu,
cernere ne quis eos neu quis contingere posset
molirive moram aut veniendi poscere causas.*

(1.411-14)

(“But Venus hedged them as they went with dark mist, and the goddess poured a great veil of cloud around them, so that no one could see them or touch them or create delay or ask the reasons for their coming”).

From the cloud he watches the people of Carthage building their city and Virgil continues to emphasise the fact that he cannot be seen:

*infert se saeptus nebula (mirabile dictu)
per medios, miscetque viris neque cernitur ulli.*

(1.439-40)

(“He bore himself onwards hedged by cloud (miraculous to say) through the middle, and mixed with the men and was not seen by anyone”).

He next finds his way to the temple of Juno in which he gazes at the pictures of his own Trojan past, and then watches the arrival of Dido from the temple. When Ilioneus and the other Trojans arrive they want to break out of the cloud but are still too uncertain:

*obstipuit simul ipse, simul percussus Achates
laetitiaque metuque; avidi coniungere dextras
ardebant, sed res animos incognita turbat.
dissimulant et nube cava speculantur amicti
quae fortuna viris ...*

(1.513-17)

(“Aeneas himself is struck dumb, Achates simultaneously stricken
 by joy and fear; they eagerly burn to join
 right hands, but unknown things disturb their minds.
 They pretended and watched from the hollow veil of cloud
 to see what the fortune of the men would be ...”)

Finally, when they hear Dido’s friendly response, Achates suggests that Aeneas leave the cloud and reveal himself:

*his animum arrecti dictis et fortis Achates
 et pater Aeneas iam dudum erumpere nubem
 ardebant. prior Aeneas compellat Achates:
 ‘nate dea, quae nunc animo sententia surgit?
 omnia tuta vides, classem sociosque receptos.
 unus abest, medio in fluctu quem vidimus ipsi
 submersum; dictis respondent cetera matris’.
 vix ea fatus erat cum circumfusa repente
 scindit se nubes et in aethera purgat apertum.
 restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit
 os umerosque deo similis; namque ipsa decoram
 caeseriem nato genetrix lumenque iuventae
 purpureum et laetos oculis adflarat honores:
 quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo
 argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro.*

(1.579-93)

(“At these words brave Achates and father Aeneas, who had been burning
 to break out of the cloud now for a long time, were eager
 in their minds. First Achates addressed Aeneas:
 ‘Child of the goddess, what feelings rise in your mind now?
 You see that everything is safe, that your fleet and allies have been welcomed.
 one ship is not here, which we saw ourselves sunk in the middle
 of the sea; the other things fit with your mother’s words’.
 Scarcely had he said these things when suddenly
 the cloud poured around cut itself and dissolved into the open sky.
 Aeneas stood out and shone in the clear light
 and his face and shoulders were like a those of a god. For his mother herself

had breathed grace upon the hair of her son and the bright light
of youth and joyful honours on his eyes:
just as when hands add grace to ivory, or when silver
or Parian stone is surrounded by yellow gold”).

At this moment Aeneas makes the transition from subject to object of the gaze, from being hidden in a cloud to being a literal source of light. Smith²² reads this Aeneas as a *voyant-visible*, in the phenomenological theory of Merleau-Ponty, someone who both sees and is seen, is both voyeur and spectacle. He brings out the similarities between Aeneas’ concealment and revelation and Venus’ earlier disguise and epiphany, and the strong erotic undertone in both. To quote Smith (31): “Aeneas’ sudden appearance transforms him from invisible voyeur to *voyant-visible*, and his attractiveness evokes a compassionate gaze that will lead to an emotional connection with Dido ... The power of vision and visual deception seen here will characterise and qualify the relationship of these lovers, just as deception and vision are aspects of Aeneas’ relationship with Venus”. The gulf between divine and human vision is mirrored by the gulf between readers and characters, while Aeneas takes on a semi-divine, semi-readerly role as he watches Carthage, hidden, like the viewer in the cinema, seeing but not able to be seen. There is scale of viewing power which starts with Jupiter and works down through Venus, and Aeneas, to Dido, the object of all our gazes. Dido, it seems is ultimately vulnerable, while Aeneas is protected. Yet when Aeneas appears, he is objectified even more clearly by the image which compares him to a work of art, an artefact created by his mother (as well as the poet). Now Dido looks at him, and the wound that he carries away from his encounter with Dido leads to her averting her gaze like a polluted god in their encounter in *Aeneid* 6, and, I would argue, ultimately to his over-identification with the dead Pallas, and too-passionate killing of Turnus. The viewer is both powerful and vulnerable.

Let us turn now to the arrival of Charlemagne at Buthrotum and the operation of the gaze in this very different passage:

*Iamque propinquabant portis, cum protinus omnis
visendi studio pubes sese extulit urbe.
ipsae etiam matres innuptaque turba, puellae,
velato vultu plenis procul ora fenestris
extendunt Carlumque oculis digitisque secuntur,
ostenduntque senes pueris et nomina pandunt*

²² Smith (2006) 26-31.

heroum, ut seri possint meminisse nepotes:
'En Namus, eloquio qui Nestora vinceret! Ille
est Clarus, alter Diomedes. Alter Ulixes
ille est Uggerius, nisi quod procerior aequo est.
ille autem, cuius sevis innitibus auras
implet et horrendos efflat de naribus ignes,
- stat sonipes pictus radiantia tergora guttis
Pestanis acrique ortus de gente Pironis
perque viam obliquus saltat cervice superba, -
Amonis soboles, alter Telamoniuss Ajax:
non animo minor est, non robore corporis impar.
cuius parva latent sub torva lumina fronte,
Ponterius rector Ganus Magantius astus.
en ille Orlandus, Francorum magnus Achilles
alter et Alcides et regi proximus armis!
sed longe ante omnes maiestas regia Carlum
ornat, et ex ipsis celestis fulgurat ignis
luminibus, miramque auget reverentia formam,
Phoebeoque acies hebetat splendore videntum'.

(1.277-301)

(“And now they were approaching the gates, when straightaway all the young men brought themselves out of the city with their keenness to see. Even the mothers themselves and that unmarried crowd, the girls, with their faces veiled, stretch out their heads far from the full windows, and follow Charlemagne with their eyes and their fingers and the old men show the heroes to their boys and reveal their names, so that their descendants to come might be able to remember: ‘Behold Namus, who conquered Nestor in eloquence! That man is Claron, another Diomedes. Another Ulysses is that man, Uggerius, except that he is taller than average. But he, whose horse fills the air with his savage neighing and breathes horrendous fire from his nostrils – the loud-hoofed horse stands with dapples painted on his glowing back, risen from the fierce race of Paestan Piro, and leaps obliquely through the street with his head proud –

is the offspring of Amon, another Telamonian Ajax:
 nor is he less in courage, nor is he unequal in strength of body.
 The man whose small eyes lie hidden under fierce brows
 is the Pontarian ruler, cunning Ganus Magantius.
 There, behold, Orlando, the great Achilles of the Franks,
 both another Hercules and nearest to the king in his weapons.
 But far above all, royal majesty adorns
 Charlemagne, and celestial fires shine from his eyes
 themselves, and reverence increases his marvellous shape,
 and with the splendour of Phoebus he blunts the gaze of those looking”).

So, far from hiding his hero in a cloud, Verino evokes the tradition of the epic teichoscopy to achieve the greatest possible impact of display. Gender is clearly important; the young men can leave the city but women must remain hidden; in their enthusiasm to see they lean out of the full windows, like Valerius' Medea protruding only too far from the walls as she watches Jason ever more greedily; even so, the girls remain veiled so that the approaching heroes cannot see them. Epic heroism is here very much a spectacle. Yet despite their fascination, these women nevertheless have power over the heroes through description and memorialisation: they preserve the glory of heroism both for their own listeners and descendants, and for a more general posterity in the shape of the readers of epic: "the old men [and by implication also the women] show the heroes to their boys and reveal their names, so that their descendants to come might be able to remember". It is significant that the internal audience is envisaged as male: the mothers are not telling their daughters in order to make them fall in love with epic heroes, but their sons in order to display *exempla* for them to follow. From the content of the mothers' description, comparing the heroes to various Homeric heroes, it is clear that the primary intertext for this passage is *Iliad* 3.161-242.²³ In *Iliad* 3, too, a knowledgeable woman identifies the heroes for men: Helen is called to the walls to watch the duel between Paris and Menelaus, and Priam calls her over to point out the leaders of the Greeks. Helen points out Agamemnon, Odysseus, Ajax and Idomeneus. Here Helen has power over the representation of the war; further, at the

²³ Thurn (1994) 952 comments on the various identifications: that of Orlando with Achilles, Rinaldo with Ajax, and Namus with Nestor are easily understood; Uggerius (Oggiero) as Odysseus he explains through comparison with the vernacular Oggiero romance. Thurn (2002) also points out that Verino could have read the well-known translation of the *Iliad* by Politian, though he may have read Greek in any case. There is little similarity here to the extended Callimachean narrative of Antigone's guardian in the *Thebaid*.

moment when she is called away to the walls by Iris, she is busy weaving a tapestry of the events of the war:

ἡ δὲ μέγαν ἰστὸν ὕφαινε,
δίπλακα πορφυρέην, πολέας δ' ἐνέπασσεν ἀέλθους
Τρώων θ' ἰπποδάμων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων,
οὓς ἔθεν εἵνεκ' ἔπασχον ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων.
(3.125-28)

("She found her weaving in the women's hall
a double violet stuff, whereon inwoven
were many passages of arms by Trojan
horsemen and Achaeans mailed in bronze –
trials braved for her sake at the war-god's hands"). (trans. Fitzgerald)

However, unlike with the women in the *Carlias*, her account is not allowed to stand on its own: Antenor corroborates her identification of Odysseus, bringing in another early episode of the Trojan war when he and Menelaus went to Troy to attempt to negotiate Helen's return. The comment that Uggiero is like Odysseus except that he is taller than average (*nisi quod procerior aequo est*) alludes to Priam's and Antenor's comments in the *Iliad* about the height of Odysseus (*Il.* 3.193-94 and 209-11). Like Statius' Antigone, and Valerius' Medea, Helen, too, displays deeply personal concerns in her watching: desire for Menelaus, regret that she left her former life, as well as worries about her brothers Castor and Pollux whom she cannot see (the narrator points out that this is because they are dead). She is clearly separated from the narratorial voice by her lack of up-to-date knowledge. Verino's impersonal multiple narrators, on the other hand, are more clearly identified with the narrator and with epic tradition itself in their concern to create lasting memories.²⁴

There is a strong contrast between the movements of the Homeric teichoscopy and that of the *Carlias*. While Homer's begins with Agamemnon (with Achilles absent, undisputably the most powerful) and tails off on Idomeneus and the absent Castor and Pollux, Verino's builds up to a clear climax with the figure of Charlemagne. The Homeric comparisons peak with Orlando as Achilles, and Charlemagne seems to go beyond the *Iliadic* teichoscopy: he is literally above comparison (*sed longe ante omnes*). He stands

²⁴ Thurn (2002) 143-52 is more interested in the tactics of using Homeric equivalence than in issues of viewing. This passage opens up Homeric intertexts for the rest of the poem, equating knights with heroes, and acting as an interpretive key to later Homeric allusion.

on his own as a figure who goes beyond the Homeric scheme, becoming more like Turnus in the catalogue of Italians (*Aen.* 7.783-802).²⁵ And far from being vulnerable in his position as object of the gaze, he blazes like the sun and bedazzles his viewers; in Verino's extraordinarily striking imagery, he is like a powerful natural force, a thunderbolt (*fulgurat*) or the sun (*Phoebeo splendore*) and blunts the gaze of the viewers (*acies hebetat videntum*).²⁶ This is a more active and threatening version of Aeneas revealed to Dido, who is surrounded by the light of youth (*claraque in luce refulsit*, 1.588; *lumenque iuuentae purpureum ... adflarat*, 1.590-91). Thurn (2002, *ad loc.*) points out that there are an extra four lines added to this description in the earlier version L:

*Quin toto heroas collo supereminet omnes,
Qualis Amicleos fratres ipsumque Pelasgae
Aesonidem navis rectorem et Thesea magnum
corporea mole Alcides superabat et armis.*

(1.301b-e)

("Indeed he towered above all the heroes by a head,
Just like Hercules used to outdo the Amiclean brothers,
the son of Aeson himself, leader of the Pelasgian ship, and Theseus great,
both in the size of his body and with his weapons").

Here a sidestep into the Argonautic tradition (possibly inspired by the rediscovery of Valerius Flaccus, first edition in 1474) sets up a different dynamic to the Achilles / Agamemnon contrast between Orlando and Charlemagne, casting the latter rather as the truly old-style heroic Hercules. It also brings us back to the end of the *Iliad* 3 passage, through the mention of Castor and Pollux, the last poignantly absent figures of Helen's teichoscopy. But the reference to Dido as Diana (*Aen.* 1.501) in *supereminet omnes* perhaps complicated these lines, turning our Aeneas on display rather into a Dido figure to be watched.²⁷ Instead the later version ends with the blazing visual power of Charlemagne,

²⁵ Virgil's catalogue has already been evoked by the resonance at 1.277-78 of *Aen.* 7.812-13, in which the Latins pour out to wonder at Camilla. I am grateful to Philip Hardie for this point.

²⁶ This whole passage is almost certainly drawing on the tradition of describing the *adventus* of the emperor in the *Panegyrici Latini*. Rees (forthcoming) reads this tradition in conjunction with the discourse of epic spectacle. For instance, there is sun imagery: *sed neque Sol ipse neque cuncta sidera humanas res tam perpetuo lumine intuentur quam vos tuemini*. ("But neither the sun itself nor all the stars gaze on human affairs with such perpetual light as you gaze"). *Pan. Lat.* 8(4).4.3; see also *ibid.* 11(3).11.

²⁷ Thurn (2002) 150-52 insists this is the primary reference, arguing against Ratkowitsch, who prefers to see a link to the earlier Charlemagne poem known as the *Aachener Karlsepos*.

which Thurn *ad loc.* suggests is a cosmic allegorical allusion. However it ties in equally well with the blazing visual power of both Achilles, when he turns the tide of battle around the Patroclus at *Iliad* 18.202-29, and Aeneas, when he returns to battle at *Aeneid* 10.260-75. In neither case is the hero compared to the sun as such (Aeneas is Sirius, while Achilles is a flare or a watch-fire). But this display of visual power portrays Charlemagne as a hero returning to battle, about to have an *aristeia*, rather than an Argonaut just setting out on his voyage. In contrast to this, the reference in *acies hebetat* to the moment in *Aeneid* 2 when Aeneas is about to kill Helen, and Venus intervenes and allows him to see like a god, suggests Charlemagne's semi-divine status, while drawing out a further contrast between Aeneas, who fails, flees and despairs, and Charlemagne who dazzles and conquers.

By splitting the visual games of *Aeneid* 1 into *teichoscopy* and *ekphrasis*, the *Carlias* interrogates the relationship between Homer and Virgil. The Virgilian *ekphrasis* itself gives a Trojan take on the Homeric material; it has been shown how the scenes are focalised through Aeneas, how he interprets the display of Trojan defeat as representative of sympathy for his suffering:²⁸

*sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi,
sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.
solve metus; feret haec aliquam tibi fama salutem.*

(1.461-63)

(“Here already are the rewards of praise and the tears of things;
mortal suffering touches the mind; lose your fear;
fame will bring some safety for you”).

Verino's *teichoscopy* looks rather to the tactics of the Sibyl's prophecy in *Aeneid* 6 in its explicit mapping of the heroes in the current text onto archetypes from the Homeric poems:

*non Simois tibi nec Xanthus nec Dorica castra
defuerint; alius Latio iam partus Achilles,
natus et ipse dea; nec Teucris addita Iuno
usquam aberit, cum tu supplex in rebus egenis
quas gentis Italum aut quas non oraveris urbes!
causa mali tanti coniunx iterum hospita Teucris
externique iterum thalami.*

(6.88-94)

²⁸ For a summary of scholarship on the passage see chapter 1 in Putnam (1998).

(“You won’t lack a Simois or a Xanthus or a Greek camp; another Achilles has already been born in Latium, also born of a goddess; nor will Juno be absent anywhere, added to the Trojans, when you as a suppliant in desperate circumstances will beg for the help of all the tribes of Italy and all the towns! The cause of such great evil for the Trojans will again be a stranger bride, and again a foreign marriage bed”).

If Buthrotum is a Roman version of false Troy, the Franks stand in for the Iliadic Greeks as well as the Trojans of the *Aeneid*, complicated by the fact that Epirus is also Greek. The *Carlias* avoids identifying the Franks with the defeated Trojans by giving the material of Virgil’s ekphrasis a Greek twist, eliminating the Trojan references and putting the Homeric connection into the separate teichoscopy. The ekphrasis remains, an inset narrative, with important interpretive connections to the wider story, but the viewer is the reader of the text, not Charlemagne himself; it provides a model for Charlemagne’s conquests, but there are fewer possibilities for conflicting interpretation based on different focalisers. Let us look at the passage:

*Dum sic alternis pubes Butrotia dictis
Belgarum signat proceres, ad limina ventum est
regia. campus erat medio latissimus urbis
marmoreis stratus tegulis, ac plurima circum
buxus erat platanusque virens Daphneaque laurus,
et late vernis mulcebant questibus auras
assuete volucres circumque supraque volare;
quin etiam aurato nitidae de fornice lymphae
Hippocrinei stillabant fluminis instar.
Editiore loco nascentis lampada Phoebi
regia marmoreis spectabat nixa columnis,
undique quam Pario cingebat porticus ingens
marmore suffulta et paries emblemate pictus:
a leva Xerxem frenantem Nerea ponte
atque Athon effossum siccoque haerentia fundo
flumina et exhaustos Persis potantibus amnes
Palladaque iratam subversis pinxit Athenis
Tuscus Alexander, Choi successor Apellis,
Cecropidasque feros pelago pensare ruinas,*

pulsus ut invidia (populus sic premia reddit)
hostilem Graius ductor migravit in urbem.
a dextra magnus Pellei seminis heros
Persepoli capta flammis ultricibus aulam
Persarum urebat; mox fulminis instar ad Indos
pervolat affectans ortum transcendere solis.
parte ferox alia super atri tergore barri
squamosa tectus serpente in bella ruebat
Porus et in pugnam extremos ductabat Eoos.
nec procul Euphrates mediam Babylona secabat.
pro foribusque aulae liventi corpore princeps
exanguis fedabat humum: sine honore iacebat,
cui victus quondam bellanti cesserat orbis.
Haec mira Etruscus depinxerat arte Philippus.

(1.302-34)

(“While thus the young of Buthrotum pointed out the leaders of the Belgae with their exchanged words, the procession arrived at the royal threshold. There was an extremely broad square in the middle of the city, laid with marble tiles, and around were many box trees and flourishing plane trees and the laurel of Daphne, and widely the resident birds were soothing the breezes with their spring-time complaints and around and above they flew; yes, even shining waters were trickling from a golden arch, the image of the Hippocrene river. From a higher place, the palace looked towards the torch of rising Phoebus, resting on marble columns, and a huge portico surrounded it on all sides, supported on Parian marble, and a wall coloured with mosaic. On the left, Tuscan Alexander, the successor of Choan Apelles, depicted Xerxes reining in the sea with a bridge, Mount Athos dug up, rivers sticking with a dry bed, waters drained by the Persians drinking, Pallas angered by Athens overturned, the fierce Cecropians atoning for the ruins at sea, how the Greek leader, expelled by envy,

(thus the people rewarded him) migrated to a hostile city.
 On the right, the great hero of the seed of Pella
 was burning the palace of the Persians at captured Persepolis
 with avenging flames; soon like a thunderbolt he flies across
 to the Indies, aiming to climb beyond the rising of the sun.
 In another part, fierce Porus, covered with a scaly
 serpent, was rushing into battle on the back of a black
 elephant, and was leading the men of the extreme East into the fight.
 Not far away, Euphrates was cutting through the middle of Babylon.
 The bloodless prince with his livid body was befouling the ground
 before the doors of the palace; he was lying without honour, now
 to whom once as he fought the whole conquered world had yielded.
 These things the Etruscan Philippus²⁹ had depicted with wondrous skill”).

Charlemagne is not represented as looking at the images at all: in fact the only viewer in this passage is the palace itself which watches (*spectabat*) the sun-rise, even if only metaphorically. The ekphrasis substitutes two images for Virgil's one: each mixes defeat and victory; first Xerxes is set up for a fall when Pallas takes vengeance for the destruction of Athens; Themistocles is responsible for victory at the battle of Salamis, but then his victory is soured by exile, with the ultimate irony that he ends up in Persia. In the other panel, the Greeks conquer the world, with the sack of Persepolis and another oriental leader about to be defeated in the person of Porus (complete with elephant). However, Alexander's attempt to become a living god, as in the image of a thunderbolt, leads only to death at Babylon (is this a reference to his too enthusiastic assumption of the trappings of Persian kingship?) The despotism of Xerxes who turns the world upside down is set against Alexander, called *magnus heros* (323); the representation of Alexander as a thunderbolt going beyond the Eastern limit of the world (*mox fulminis instar ad Indos / pervolat affectans ortum transcendere solis*, 325-26) links back to the imagery at the end of the teichoscopy of Charlemagne as both thunderbolt and sun. The narrative is one of West versus East, which clearly foreshadows Charlemagne's conquests in books 2-4 of Jerusalem, Egypt and Babylon. The Greeks defeated and then coming back for vengeance are an image for Christendom evicted from the Holy Land and then retaking it, and taking the battle

²⁹ There are clearly many other things going on in this passage; due to lack of time and space I have not been able to explore Walter de Châtillon's *Alexandreis* or other works in the voluminous Alexander tradition. On this see Stoneman (2008).

to the heartland of the infidel.³⁰ While Virgil's ekphrasis gives us a taste of the sorrow to come in Aeneas' tale, Verino's provides a historical model for the fantastic world conquest achieved by his Charlemagne, but one tempered by corruption and death. It is no surprise then that he should figure his Franks as Greeks, given that the Trojan war can also be read as a victory of West over East. The names of the artists, called Alexander (319) and Philip (334), also make an equation between art and image, between the creator and the conqueror, which presumably suggests that his own conquest of both the Roman and Greek past is equivalent to Charlemagne's success in subduing the known world. These names also (almost certainly) refer to Alessandro Botticelli and Filippino Lippi respectively, identifying Verino's own conquest of Greco-Roman epic with the fame and success of Florence's best known painters. The anachronism of the Florentine artists set amongst the heroic furniture of the problematic imperial conquest suggests an identification of Florentine art and culture as an alternative to military success, perhaps even evoking an association between Florence and those defeated by Rome, who instead achieve their own cultural victory: as Anchises says at *Aeneid* 6.847-48: *excudent alii spirantia mollius aera / (credo equidem), vivos ducent de marmore vultus* ("Others will strike out breathing bronze more softly (for so I believe), others will lead out living faces from marble").

Thurn (2002, *ad loc.*) suggests that this ekphrasis is not modeled on Virgil, but instead on Silius Italicus 6.653-716, in which Hannibal views the temple at Liternum, decorated with images of the First Punic War; he destroys the images and plans to replace them with his own images of victory and revenge from his current campaign.³¹ While Silius offers us victory and revenge, the second ekphrasis is only in Hannibal's mind; Verino literalises these competing images and complicates them with competing messages. Fowler points out the way that the ekphrasis of the First Punic war is viewed both from a Roman and a Carthaginian perspective. From a Roman perspective, we know that Hannibal's erasure of the images will remain futile; Carthage, like Troy, will fall (and on the negative reading of Silius these implications carry over to Rome). Thurn suggests that the moral message of Verino's ekphrasis is one of the futility of victory and the triumph of *fama* (158-59). As with Achilles in Ovid, Alexander's greatness comes to nothing; his remains are as small as

³⁰ This sort of two-way conquest and recapture is rather unstable as panegyric. However: it is worth remembering that Alexander's empire only lasted as long as he lived, and the Crusader kingdom was also long gone by the time of Verino. Contemporary political resonances may well be at play: Thurn suggests Cosimo de' Medici's exile in 1433 as a potential referent for Themistocles' exile.

³¹ See Fowler (2000).

anyone else's.³² But this passage does have strong Virgilian overtones: not just the frescos in the temple of Juno are at play, but the body of Priam read as Pompey in *Aeneid* 2:

*haec finis Priami fatorum, hic exitus illum
sorte tulit Troiam incensam et prolapsa videntem
Pergama, tot quondam populis terrisque superbum
regnatorem Asiae. iacet ingens litore truncus,
avulsumque umeris caput et sine nomine corpus.*

(2.554-58)

("This was the end of the fate of Priam, this allotted death removed him, as he watched Troy burnt and Pergama overturned, once the proud ruler of Asia with so many peoples and lands. He lies a huge trunk on the shore, the head torn away from his shoulders and a body without a name").

The dead body of Alexander is the figure of Pompey conquered by Caesar. There is a clear echo in *sine honore iacebat, / cui victus quondam bellanti cesserat orbis*. ("He was lying without honour, now, to whom once as he fought the whole conquered world had yielded"). Perhaps Verino underscores the ultimate irrelevance of military achievements, by drawing a correspondence between the successful Alexander and the defeated Priam. Another way to think about these paired images of defeat and victory might be to set against one another the frescos in *Aeneid* 1 showing the defeat of Troy and the description of the battle of Actium in *Aeneid* 8, climax of the shield of Aeneas, and showing the victory of Rome over the East, the victory of Augustus. This implicates Augustus as Alexander (and Hannibal), another ruler, whose empire is destined to come to an end. Is Charlemagne ultimately the same? Or is the difference at stake that between Greece and Rome? Epirus is a Greek state, but Justinus a Roman king; even so his luxury is represented as too oriental for the taste of Charlemagne. More positively, in the context of panegyric, perhaps the passage suggests that Greece, the kingdom of *ratio*, nevertheless needs the military strength and vigour of the Franks.

These ekphrases capture and objectify defeated foreign enemies and successful victors alike. The cosmic tradition exemplified by both the shield of Achilles and the shield of Aeneas is evoked by Xerxes' attempts to overturn the world order and Alexander's

³² Thurn (2002) *ad loc.* mentions Juvenal *Satires* 10.173 but Ovid *Metamorphoses* 12.615-17 seems even more apposite.

transformation into an image of a thunderbolt, aiming to transcend the world, but coming only too literally down to earth. Hand in hand with panegyric goes prescriptive praise. We are given no sense of the audience response to these ekphrases: they are simply the backdrop for the meeting of Charlemagne and Justinus.

Conclusion

We have begun to look at the visual and intertextual play of Verino's teichoscopy and ekphrasis in *Carlias* 1 in some detail. Perhaps the two scenes work against each other: Greek victory evoked in the Iliadic teichoscopy; victory mixed with defeat in the ekphrases; heroes glorified and semi-divinised in the teichoscopy; the hubris of ambition and imperial rule on display in the ekphrases. The combination of the two offers an uncomfortable reading of the *Aeneid* and at best prescriptive praise for the object of the panegyric. Or perhaps Epirus is an empty Greece (or indeed an empty New Rome), obsessed by defeat and futility, dreaming only about the past, just like Virgil's Buthrotum, which the conquering Franks will transcend like Aeneas transcends Carthage.

This engagement with the *Carlias* is the beginning of a long journey for me. Thurn's commentary, a learned and extraordinarily rich collection of material, is nevertheless one volume on fifteen books of epic. My tentative investigation of these passages suggests that the *Carlias* is an extremely complex reading of Virgil, even before you take into account all the other influences at play. Just as Flavian epic has gone beyond its epigonal status as material only read for its reworkings of Virgil, to meet a growing fascination with the texts in their own right, I hope that this brief introduction to Verino will encourage others to explore new territory in Latin epic.

University of Nottingham

HELEN LOVATT

Bibliography

- M. Bettini (1997) 'Ghosts of Exile: Doubles and Nostalgia in Virgil's *parva Troia* (*Aeneid* 3.294ff.)', *ClassAnt* 16, 8-33.
- G. B. Conte (ed.) (2009) *P. Virgilius Maro, Aeneis*, Berlin.
- D. Fowler (2000) 'Even better than the real thing: A tale of two cities', in D. Fowler (ed.), *Roman constructions*, Oxford, 86-108.
- D. Fredrick (ed.) (2002) *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power and the Body*, Baltimore.
- R. Green (2006) *Latin Epics of the New Testament: Juvenecus, Sedulius, Arator*, Oxford.
- T. Gregory (2006) *From Many Gods to One: Divine Action in Renaissance Epic*, Chicago.
- H. Hofmann (2001) 'Von Africa über Bethlehem nach America: Das Epos in der neulateinischen Literatur', in J. Rüpkke (ed.), *Von Göttern und Menschen erzählen: Formkonstanzen und Funktionswandel vormoderner Epik*, Stuttgart, 130-82.
- A. Lazzari (1897) *Ugolino e Michele Verino*, Turin.
- H. V. Lovatt (forthcoming) *The Epic Gaze: Vision, Gender and Narrative in Ancient Epic*, Cambridge.
- L. Mulvey (1975) 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', *Screen* 16.3, 6-18.
- M. C. J Putnam (1998) *Virgil's Epic Designs: Ekphrasis in the Aeneid*, New Haven CT.
- J. D Reed (2007) *Virgil's Gaze: Nation and Poetry in the Aeneid*, Princeton.
- R. Rees (forthcoming) 'The look of praise: ekphrasis and the emperor in Late Antique panegyric', in H. V. Lovatt and C. Vout (eds), *Epic Visions*.
- A. Rogerson (2007) Review of Smith, *The Primacy of Vision in Virgil's Aeneid*, *CR* 57, 389-91.
- R. A Smith (2005) *The Primacy of Vision in Virgil's Aeneid*, Austin, TX.
- R. Stoneman (2008) *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, New Haven.
- Y. Syed (2005) *Vergil's Aeneid and the Roman Self: Subject and Nation in Literary Discourse*, Ann Arbor MI.
- N. Thurn (1994) 'Die *Carlias* des Ugolino Verino und ihre volkssprachlichen Vorbilder', in R. Schnur (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Copenhagen, 12 August to 17 August 1991*, Binghamton NY, 947-55.
- N. Thurn (1995) *Ugolino Verino Carlias: Ein Epos des 15. Jahrhunderts erstmals herausgegeben*, Munich.
- N. Thurn (2002) *Kommentar zur 'Carlias' des Ugolino Verino*, Munich.
- M. Verini (unpublished) *The Family of Vieri of Verini*.
- P. Zanker (1988) *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Ann Arbor MI.