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Sisters in Death: Callimachus' *Apotheosis of Arsinoë* and Virgil, *Aeneid* IV

Callimachus' prolific production in poetry and prose has not been treated well by the ravages of time<sup>1</sup>. Notwithstanding his great popularity with the poets of Augustan Rome, hymns and epigrams are all that survive integrally from his vast output. His great *Aetia* is largely lost, his iambic poetry is frustratingly fragmentary, and the epyllion *Hecale* has fared no better, if not worse<sup>2</sup>. Callimachus wrote *inter alia* epic, elegiac, and lyric poetry, none of it shown much mercy in the reaping of the temporal sickle.

From the meager corpus of extant Callimachean lyric, we have fragments of a piece on the apotheosis of Arsinoë II, the so-called *Ἐκθέωσις Ἀρσινόης*<sup>3</sup>. The principal scholarly controversy surrounding this poem and its three lyric siblings is whether they constitute a verse collection separate from the thirteen *Iambi*<sup>4</sup>. Notwithstanding the relatively little that remains of these lyrics, critical attention has not been wanting<sup>5</sup>. The stichic archebouleions of the Arsinoë poem have elicited academic reflection on the historical context of the work and its Homeric (in particular) intertextuality<sup>6</sup>. Its charm alone has been noted, amid reflections on the aforementioned question of Callimachus' intent with his four lyric compositions, not least in

<sup>1</sup> The three-volume Loeb Classical Library edition of Dee L. Clayman provides a complete text and English translation of all the surviving material that is available, with significant annotations. Volume I contains the fragments of the *Aetia*, the *Iambi*, and the four lyric poems.

<sup>2</sup> "Epyllion" here is a controversial, if conventional label. Note here L.C. WATSON, *A Commentary on Horace's Epodes*, Oxford 2003, especially pp. 14-7, R.O.A.M. LYNE, *Structure and Allusion in Horace's Book of Epodes*, in S.J. HARRISON (ed.), *R.O.A.M. Lyne: Collected Papers on Latin Poetry*, Oxford 2007, pp. 314-340.

<sup>3</sup> This is fragment 228 in the magisterial edition of R. PFEIFFER, *Callimachus* (2 vols.), Oxford 1949-1953; it is *Iambus* XVI in I. LELLI, *Callimachi Iambi XIV-XVII*, Rome 2005. Among other modern editions, note in particular M. ASPER (ed.), *Kallimachos Werke*, Darmstadt 2004, G.B. D'ALESSIO, *Callimaco* (Vol. 2, *Aitia, Giambi e altri frammenti*), Milano 2007 (fourth edition of the 1996 original), and Y. DURBEC, ed., *Callimaque: Fragments poétiques*, Paris 2006.

<sup>4</sup> D.L. CLAYMAN, *Callimachus' Iambi*, Leiden 1980 is indispensable for study of these poems; cfr. B. ACOSTA-HUGHES, *Polyeideia: The Iambi of Callimachus and the Archaic Iambic Tradition*, Berkeley 2002, and A. KERKHECKER, *Callimachus' Book of Iambi*, Oxford 1999. Pfeiffer labeled these four poems μέλη, with at least the support that in the Suda entry for Callimachus, such a title may be found (though for necessarily with reference to these works).

<sup>5</sup> See here especially ACOSTA-HUGHES, *Aesthetics and Recall: Callimachus frs. 226-9 Pf. Reconsidered*, in *The Classical Quarterly* 53, No. 2, 2003, pp. 478-489, and the same author's *A Lost Pavane for a Dead Princess (Call. Fr. 228 Pf.)*, in J.J.H. KLOOSER, M.A. HARDER, R.F. REGTUIT, G.C. WAKKER (eds.), *Callimachus Revisited: New Perspectives in Callimachean Scholarship* Leuven 2019, pp. 5-26.

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. R.J. GREENE, *Post-Classical Greek Elegy and Lyric Poetry*, Leiden 2021, pp. 87-88. For the Homeric engagement in this lyric note V. DI BENEDETTO, *Callimaco di fronte al modello: il fr. 228 Pf.*, in *Rivista di filologia e di istruzione classica* 122, 1994, p. 273.

light of Horace's collection of seventeen (i.e., thirteen plus four) *Epodes*, in evident response to Callimachus' seventeen poems<sup>7</sup>. Some have argued for Callimachus' interest in displaying expertise in diverse meters, while expressing doubt as to whether there ever was a discrete "lyric book" of the Hellenistic poet<sup>8</sup>. Certainly the Arsinoë poem has been praised as displaying the classic hallmark of Callimachean artistry: the aforementioned «reworking of famous archaic models»<sup>9</sup>. It is a celebration of queenly dignity and honor, featuring one Ptolemaic royal already among the gods, and another soon to be<sup>10</sup>. It has been studied not only for its place in the reception of Greek lyric and hymnic poetry, but for its possible influence on such later writers as Ennius<sup>11</sup>. Callimachus' apotheosis lyric stands forth one of the most lavish praises of a famous woman from extant classical literature<sup>12</sup>.

The poem we shall consider is the third of the four Callimachean lyrics, a work in honor of Arsinoë II, the spouse and sister of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, the third-century B.C. patrons of Callimachus<sup>13</sup>. It is by far the best preserved of the four lyric pieces, with seventy-five partial verses owed mainly to a Berlin papyrus<sup>14</sup>. Our investigation of this text will focus on a hitherto unappreciated instance of its *Nachleben*: its influence on certain aspects of Book IV of Virgil's *Aeneid*. In particular, we shall explore how Virgil evokes Callimachean lyric in a web of allusions that connects the Carthaginian sisters Elissa and Anna to Cleopatra VII Philopator and her sister Arsinoë IV<sup>15</sup>.

The extant remains of Callimachus' poem commence with a call for Apollo to lead the singing and the dance (1-4)<sup>16</sup>. The opening line is cited in the *Diegesis* (in ac-

<sup>7</sup> Note, e.g., K. GUTZWILER, *A Guide to Hellenistic Literature*, Malden, Massachusetts 2007, p. 68; cfr. G. ZANKER, *Realism in Alexandrian Poetry: A Literature and Its Audience*, London 1987, p. 192. The question is of particular interest to scholars of Horace's seventeen *Epodes*.

<sup>8</sup> So A. CAMERON, *Callimachus and His Critics*, Princeton 1995, p. 148. The use of the Doric dialect in the poem is discussed by S.A. STEPHENS, *Callimachus: The Hymns...*, p. 35.

<sup>9</sup> So R. HUNTER, *Theocritus: Encomium of Ptolemy Philadelphus ...*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 2003, p. 50. Cfr. S.A. STEPHENS, *Callimachus and His Narrators*, in A. FAULKNER, O. HODKINSON (eds.), *Hymnic Narrative and the Narratology of Greek Hymns*, Leiden-Boston 2015, pp. 51-52.

<sup>10</sup> See here A. COPPOLA, *L'Apoteosi di Arsinoe di Callimaco: una regina e i suoi modelli*, in *Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes* 83, 2, 2014, pp. 59-64.

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. Z. ADORJANI, *Bemerkungen zur Ektheosis Arsinoes des Kallimachos: Gattung, Struktur und Inhalt*, in *Philologus* 165, 1, 2021, pp. 2-24.

<sup>12</sup> For Callimachus' depiction of Arsinoë as surpassing even Homeric heroines, see J.A. FOSTER, *Arsinoë II as Epic Queen: Encomiastic Allusion in Theocritus, Idyll 15*, in *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 136, 1, 2006, pp. 133-148.

<sup>13</sup> The title "Apotheosis of Arsinoë" is owed to the so-called *Diegesis*. On the absence of Arsinoë's name in the extant poem, see J. DANIELEWICZ, *Arsinoë-Anagram in Callimachus' Ektheosis Arsinoes*, in *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 63, 1, 2017, pp. 11-15 for the detected of a possible hidden anagram at verse 46a; cfr. in 68, 2, 2022, pp. 233-245 of the same journal his *Worträtsel, Etymologie und Ideologie in der Ektheosis Arsinoes des Kallimachos*.

<sup>14</sup> *P. Berol.* 13417a recto, verso; cfr. *Diegesis* 10.10-3. We owe the original editing thereof to Wilamowitz.

<sup>15</sup> The Cleopatra-Antony parallel for Dido-Aeneas is related to the similar evocation of Helen-Paris that some have detected in Virgil's account of the tragic, misguided love affair in Carthage. Cfr. here Y. NADEAU, *The Lover and the Statesman*, in T. WOODMAN, D. WEST (eds.), *Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 63 ff.

<sup>16</sup> On «the assimilation of the performance of the song to a divine one» see A.D. MORRISON, *The Lyres of Orpheus: The Transformations of Lyric in the Hellenistic Period*, in L. SWIFT (ed.), *A Companion to Greek Lyric*, Malden, Massachusetts 2022, pp. 396-397.

cord with its usual practice for identifying Callimachean poems), which provides additional information about the poem<sup>17</sup>. We learn that the dead Arsinoë was snatched up by the Dioscuri, and that she was deified<sup>18</sup>. Such is the basic outline of the work. The Dioscuri were prominent in Ptolemaic ideology in this period; the Gemini were associated with sailors, and offered suitable divine patronage for ambitious merchants and would-be empire builders<sup>19</sup>.

Apollo leads the dance<sup>20</sup>. It is a conventional enough commencement, though from the start, we may see Callimachean influence on Virgil's *Aeneid* 4, 143-50, the simile that compares the Trojan hero Aeneas at Dido's hunt to the god Apollo as he rouses choruses (4, 145 *instauratque choros*)<sup>21</sup>. Virgil's Aeneas is associated with Apollo, as Dido is with Diana (1, 496-504)<sup>22</sup>. The divine sibling association deliberately evokes incestuous Ptolemaic unions; the matter was of particular concern for the Augustan poet because of the recent conflict with the Ptolemaic Cleopatra and her lover Mark Antony<sup>23</sup>. The Aeneas-Apollo simile comes just before the fateful union of Aeneas and Dido, a liaison that invites allegorical consideration of the ill-fated coupling of the *quondam* triumvir and his foreign queen<sup>24</sup>. Scholars have noted the pervasive in-

<sup>17</sup> Fr. 228a Pfeiffer. On how the *Diegesis* cites Callimachean works, see M.R. FALIVENE, *The Diegesis Papyrus: Context, Format, and Contents*, in B. ACOSTA-HUGHES, L. LEHNUS, S.A. STEPHENS (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Callimachus*, Leiden-Boston 2011, p. 90.

<sup>18</sup> For an example of a possible relic of her cult, see S. BARBANTANI, *Mistress of the Sea: Notes on a Hellenistic Hymn to Arsinoë-Aphrodite (P. Lit. Goodsp. 3, I-IV)*, in *Ancient Society* 35, 2005, pp. 135-165.

<sup>19</sup> See here G. PAPANTANIOU, *Religion and Social Transformation in Cyprus: From the Cypriot Basileis to the Hellenistic Strategos*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2012, p. 253. Cleopatra represents a defeated would-be imperialist (cfr. Y. SYED, *Virgil's Aeneid and the Roman Self: Subject and Nation in Literary Discourse*, Ann Arbor 2022 (second edition of the 2005 original), pp. 190-191).

<sup>20</sup> Cfr. fr. 227 Pfeiffer, which opens with mention of Apollo in the dance. Phoebus and Zeus are invoked at the start of fr. 229.

<sup>21</sup> *Aeneid* IV is well served by the commentary tradition; *ad loc.* see C. BUSCAROLI, *Il libro di Didone ...*, Milano-Genova-Roma-Napoli 1932; A.S. PEASE, *Publi Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1935; R.G. AUSTIN, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus*, Oxford 1955; B. TILLY, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus*, London 1968; K. MCLENNAN, *Virgil: Aeneid I*, London 2007; J. O'HARA, *Virgil: Aeneid 4*, Newburyport, Massachusetts 2011, and L.M. FRATANTUONO, R.A. SMITH, *Virgil, Aeneid 4: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Leiden-Boston 2022. I. GILDENHARD, *Virgil, Aeneid 4.1-299*, Cambridge 2012, is exemplary on the first movements of the book. Quotes from the *Aeneid* are cited from G.B. CONTE (ed.), *Publius Vergilius Maro: Aeneis*, Berlin-New York 2019 (editio altera).

<sup>22</sup> The (Homeric; cfr. *Odyssey* 6, 102-9) simile and its implications for the poet's characterization of Dido have been the subject of a rich bibliography; see e.g. H.N. COUCH, *Nausicaa and Dido*, in *The Classical Journal* 37, 8, 1942, pp. 453-462; B. OTIS, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry*, Oxford 1964, pp. 70 ff.; G.S. DUCLOS, *Dido as Triformis Diana*, in *Vergilius* 15, 1969, pp. 33-41; M.K. THORNTON, *The Adaptation of Homer's Artemis-Nausicaa Simile in the Aeneid*, in *Latomus* 44, 3, 1985, pp. 615-622; M.P. WILHELM, *Venus, Diana, Dido and Camilla in the Aeneid*, in *Vergilius* 33, 1987, pp. 43-48; G.C. OLK, *Virgil's Penelope: The Diana Simile in Aeneid 1.498-502*, in *Vergilius* 42, 1996, pp. 38-49; R.A. SMITH, *The Primacy of Vision in Virgil's Aeneid*, Austin 2005, pp. 117 ff.; C. NAPPA, *Unmarried Dido: Aeneid 4.550-52*, in *Hermes* 135, 3, 2007, pp. 301-313, and G. CELOTTO, *Amor Belli: Love and Strife in Lucan's Bellum Civile*, Ann Arbor 2022, pp. 30-32.

<sup>23</sup> Essential reading here is P. HARDIE, *Virgil's Ptolemaic Relations*, in *The Journal of Roman Studies* 96, 2006, pp. 25-41. The implications of the practice of sibling marriage are considered at length by S.L. AGER, *Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 125, 2005, pp. 1-34.

<sup>24</sup> The nature of the relationship between Aeneas and Dido is a matter of dispute for the two characters; Aeneas does not consider himself to be married, while Dido does. L. LOPEZ, *Dido y la impotentia muliebris: La subversion del ideal de matrona en la Eneida de Virgilio*, in *Studia Historica Antiqua* 40, 2022, pp. 179-206 is useful here. For the historical controversy concerning the same problem in

fluence of Egypt's ruler on the Virgilian depiction of his North African monarch<sup>25</sup>. Cleopatra was a notorious enemy according to Augustan propaganda, and Aeneas' dalliance with Dido recalls such uncomfortable unions as that of Cleopatra with both Antony and Caesar before him. The comparison does not redound to Dido's favor, any more than do allusive shades of the Medeas of Apollonius and Ennius; such a negative view of Dido is found also, for example, in Petronius' references to Virgil's Dido and Anna in his *Matrona Ephesi* narrative, with its reflections on an unfaithful wife<sup>26</sup>. The sexual union of Aeneas and Dido in *Aeneid* IV comes during the Carthaginian hunt; Aeneas and Dido enter the fateful cave that will witness their illicit union and nuptial parody after having been compared (incongruously, one might argue) to Apollo and Diana. The evocation of the divine siblings recalls Ptolemaic royal marriage practice, and the seemingly innocuous, readily paralleled allusion to Apollo leading the dance recalls poems such as Callimachus' *Apotheosis*, though in the Virgilian context the normally happy and lighthearted recollection of Apollonian choruses and the god of the dance is a harbinger of something baleful and grim.

Callimachus' Arsinoë is described as having been stolen (that is, from our mortal sight): now, under the starry wagon, she races along beside the moon (5-6). This is the celestial locus of Arsinoë's catasterism<sup>27</sup>. Here there are two points of interest with respect to Callimachean influence on Virgil. First, the mention of the "starry wagon" (that is, of Ursa Major) recalls another Ptolemaic royal accession to the gods (after a fashion) that occupied a nearby heavenly home, as well as the poet's tribute to it in what has become known as the celebrated *Coma Berenices*, the work on the celestial lock of hair famous for its prominent place in Book IV of Callimachus' *Aetia*<sup>28</sup>. That famous passage (distilled through Catullan verse, c. 66) is referenced in Virgil's depiction of Aeneas with Dido's shade in the *Lugentes Campi* of *Aeneid* VI, where the epic protagonist insisted that his departure from the queen's shores was not voluntary<sup>29</sup>. *Invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi* (6, 460): Aeneas echoes the language used by Berenice's lock of hair as it laments its stellar separation from her head<sup>30</sup>. Second,

the case of the onetime triumvir and his Egyptian lover, see S.L. AGER, *Marriage or Mirage? The Phantom Wedding of Cleopatra and Antony*, in *Classical Philology* 108, 2, 2013, pp. 139-55.

<sup>25</sup> See especially here J.M. BENARIO, *Dido and Cleopatra*, in *Vergilius* 16, 1970, pp. 2-6, and P. ASTORINO, *Dido como alusión a Cleopatra en la Eneida*, in *Myrtia* 35, 2020, pp. 275-292.

<sup>26</sup> *Satyrica* 111-2; for the implications of the Petronian intertext, cfr. the analysis of E.D. FINKELPEARL, *Metamorphosis of Language in Apuleius: A Study of Allusion in the Novel*, Ann Arbor 1998, pp. 144-145. For a somewhat different of Virgil's Dido that distinguishes her motivations from those of the historical Cleopatra, see S. POMEROY, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*, New York 1995 (second edition of the 1975 original).

<sup>27</sup> See here D.L. CLAYMAN, *Royal catasterisms: Arsinoë II and Berenice II translated to the stars*, in C.S. ZEREFOS, M.V. VARDINOYANNIS (eds.), *Hellenistic Alexandria: Celebrating 24 Centuries: Papers Presented at the Conference Held on December 13-15 2017 at Acropolis Museum*, Summertown, Oxford 2018, p. 201.

<sup>28</sup> Fr. 110 Pfeiffer. For commentary see *ad loc.* M. HARDER, *Callimachus: Aetia* (2 vols.), Oxford, 2012. *Aeneid* IV closes with the severing of Dido's fateful lock, in a neat nod to the *Coma Berenices* of *Aetia* IV.

<sup>29</sup> R.D. GRIFFITH, *Catullus' Coma Berenices and Aeneas' Farewell to Dido*, in *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 125, 1995, pp. 47-59; cfr. P.A. JOHNSTON, *Dido, Berenice, and Arsinoë: Aeneid 6.640*, in *The American Journal of Philology* 108, 4, 1987, pp. 649-654.

<sup>30</sup> Cfr. Catullus, c. 66, 39.

lunar imagery is associated with Virgil's Dido<sup>31</sup>. *Inter alia*, we may note the moonlight that figures in the queen's growing obsession with her guest (4, 80-3), besides playing a significant role in the depiction of her shade in the underworld (6, 450-4, following on the ominous lunar allusion at 6, 270-2). These lunar echoes connect with the association of Dido with Diana (the moon, in the celestial of her three realms)<sup>32</sup>.

Thus in the brief space of a half dozen verses, Callimachus' lyric thus offers significant points of relevance to an allusive reading of Virgil's Dido drama. The rationale for the Virgilian appropriation of Callimachean lore is twofold: Dido was a North African monarch, and so was Cleopatra, the last of the Ptolemaic queens whose lineage included such celebrated women as Arsinoë II and Berenice II.

Verses 7-38 of Callimachus' poem are exceedingly poorly preserved (especially 16-33). Some clues remain to tell us something of the narrative. There were laments on account of Arsinoë's death (7). Voice and report were clear: the queen was gone (8-9)<sup>33</sup>. There was wonderment as to the cause of her demise (10). Tremendous grief was instructive (perhaps with respect to how loved Arsinoë was?), and her great husband was somehow (not surprisingly) involved in whatever was going on or being said (11-12). Fire was kindled as an offering (13), probably with reference to the queen's funeral pyre. There was a little water (14 – as a libation, maybe, or to wash the bones?). Rites of some sort seem to have been conducted before the altar of Thetis (15), who may have participated in a dirge for Arsinoë<sup>34</sup>. The mention of Thetis in such a context invites Homeric intertextual consideration<sup>35</sup>. The goddess leads the lament for the one who will, in her own turn, be raised to the ranks of the immortals.

Verses 16-33 afford little evidence of context. We learn that "the city will build other things" (34), which may refer to the great funerary temple that we know was commenced but never finished<sup>36</sup>. Likewise it is difficult to infer much from the paltry remains of 34-8. It is difficult if not impossible in the absence of additional evidence to make much sense from the references to "scales" (37) and "beautiful things" (38) referenced in these verses.

True reports were brought to the renowned mythological shapeshifter Proteus, whose watery abode was near Alexandria (39)<sup>37</sup>. (One should be cautious about over-

<sup>31</sup> L.M. FRANTUONO, *Alma Phoebe: Lunar References in Virgil's Aeneid, in Graeco-Latina Brunensia* 24, 1, 2019, pp. 62-79.

<sup>32</sup> The "wandering moon" (*errantem lunam*) is one of the subjects of Iopas' song at Dido's banquet (1, 742); the bard sings also of the stars in Ursa Major (1, 744). There may be significance in Iopas' choice of songs, not only given the lunar associations of "Dido *errans*" (see here see J.J. O'HARA, *True Names: Vergil and the Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Wordplay*, Ann Arbor 2017 ("new and expanded edition" of the 1996 original), pp. 152-153, but also with respect to the Ptolemaic catasterisms.

<sup>33</sup> Scholars argue as to the date of Arsinoë's death (270 or 268). Cfr. B.F. VAN OPPEN DE RUITER, *The Death of Arsinoë II Philadelphus: The Evidence Reconsidered*, in *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 174, 2010, pp. 139-150. The same author has considered the opposite problem in his *The Birthdate of Arsinoë II Philadelphus*, in *Ancient Society* 42, 2012, pp. 61-69, arguing that it cannot be dated precisely.

<sup>34</sup> D.L. CLAYMAN, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, Oxford 2014, pp. 75-76 discusses the rationale in context for the reference to this goddess.

<sup>35</sup> E.g. *Iliad* 18, 35-64, of the lament for Patroclus.

<sup>36</sup> See further B. ACOSTA-HUGHES, S.A. STEPHENS, *Callimachus in Context: From Plato to the Augustan Poets*, Cambridge, 2012, p. 11; cfr. pp. 109-110 on our poem.

<sup>37</sup> «Proteus is near enough to hear the sounds of lamentation» (F. NISETICH, *The Poems of Callimachus*, Oxford 2001, p. 125).

interpreting the detail about rumor, which plays so signal a role in *Aeneid* IV; mention of reports and rumors is commonplace, though it is true that in both Callimachus' lyric and Virgil's Dido drama, the topos plays a prominent role). Philotera noticed the fire, namely from the queen's funeral pyre (40-41). It is «a panorama of Egypt in mourning, the smoke from the funeral pyre visible over the Thracian sea ...»<sup>38</sup>. Philotera was the sister of Arsinoë, and dead before her sister; our knowledge of her is scanty, though this poem serves as clear enough evidence that she too was deified<sup>39</sup>. Her addition to the ranks of the gods was noteworthy given her relative obscurity<sup>40</sup>. In our poem, she serves as something of a mouthpiece for sentiments that Callimachus does not express directly<sup>41</sup>. Fittingly, a deified royal will speak of another apotheosized Ptolemaic woman; as befits the honor of Arsinoë, this is a poem in which the characters are all divinities.

Philotera does not know what has happened to her sister (45b); she had been with Deo/Demeter in Sicilian Enna, and now she was on Lemnos, the traditional haunt of the god of the forge (43-45a)<sup>42</sup>. Mention of Demeter in Enna is not mere poetic ornament; in context the one sister is in distress over the fate of the other, and the evocation of the goddess recalls her own celebrated lament and uncertainty as to the fate of her lost daughter. Philotera inquires of Hephaestus' bride Charis as to the source of the fire, in wonder as to which city was ablaze (47-49)<sup>43</sup>. The source of the fire is a funeral pyre, and yet it inspires something of a hyperbolic reaction, as if Philotera were witnessing some urban conflagration<sup>44</sup>. Virgil echoes Callimachus in his description of the scene in the aftermath of the suicide of Dido (4, 665b ff.), in the ninth and final simile of the book<sup>45</sup>. Dido stabs herself, and the news of what the queen has done spreads quickly through her city, and it is as if Carthage were being invaded and destroyed: *non aliter quam si immisis ruat hostibus omnis / Karthago aut antiqua Tyros flammaeque furentes / culmina perque hominum volvantur perque deorum* (4, 669-671). Aeneas and his Trojans will see the flames from the pyre as they sail away from Carthage, in what they take to be an ominous omen (5, 1-7)<sup>46</sup>. Significantly, the fiery destruction envisaged in the dramatic simile includes the ruin even of the temples of the gods (4, 681). Callimachus' Philotera thinks that a city has been destroyed; likewise there is an evocation of the reality of the destruction of Carthage (ancient history in the future tense, we might think) in the immediate aftermath of Dido's suicide.

<sup>38</sup> So S.A. STEPHENS, *Battle of the Books*, in K. GUTZWILER, ed., *The New Posidippus: A Hellenistic Poetry Book*, Oxford 2005, p. 244.

<sup>39</sup> G. HUBL, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, London-New York 2001 (English translation of the 1994 German original, with corrections and updates), p. 103 discusses the deification of both sisters.

<sup>40</sup> So E.D. CARNEY, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, Oxford 2013, p. 98.

<sup>41</sup> Cfr. F.T. GRIFFITHS, *Theocritus at Court*, Leiden 1979, p. 82.

<sup>42</sup> On the syntax of this passage see J.N. O'SULLIVAN, *Propertius 1.1 and Callimachus, Lyrica, Fr. 228?*, in *The Classical Quarterly* 26, 1, 1976, pp. 107-109.

<sup>43</sup> On the conventions of the scene note J.K. NEWMAN, *The Classical Epic Tradition*, Madison 1986, pp. 31-32.

<sup>44</sup> For the assimilation of the death of a ruler with that of a city, see G.O. HUTCHINSON, *Hellenistic Poetry and Hellenistic Prose*, in R. HUNTER, A. RENGAKOS, E. SISTAKOU (eds.), *Hellenistic Studies at a Crossroads*, Berlin-Boston 2014, p. 35.

<sup>45</sup> There is perceptive analysis of this simile by R.O.A.M. LYNE, *Further Voices*, Oxford 1987, pp. 19-20.

<sup>46</sup> On this passage see *ad loc.* R.D. WILLIAMS, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quintus*, Oxford 1960, and L.M. FRATANTUONO, R.A. SMITH, *Virgil, Aeneid 5: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Leiden-Boston 2015.



The deified sister of Arsinoë is fearful, and she urges Charis to see if Libya is in discomfiture. There is mention of the airy south wind, which would be the natural aide to a journey from Lemnos to Mount Athos, from whose height Philotera wants Charis to survey the southerly scene (50-51). "Libya" is imprecise, strictly speaking, given that Philotera is speaking of Egypt; Callimachus' synecdoche is useful for Virgil's intertextual engagement with the poem, given that his tale of two sisters takes place in Carthage, on the other side of Libya with respect to Alexandria – Libya is between the two<sup>47</sup>. "Libya" is used poetically for Carthage frequently in the *Aeneid*, even from the beginning with Juno's complaint *hinc populum late regem belloque superbum / venturum excidio Libyae* (1, 21-22). The more expansive references to the African continent underscore the ambitions of both Ptolemaic Egypt and the Carthaginian empire.

Charis views the incendiary scene from her perch on Athos. She sees the famous Alexandrian coast of Pharos (52-55). Faint of heart from anxiety on account of the dread sight of the flames, she reports the thick smoke and the occurrence of some great event (55-57). The text becomes more fragmentary again, but there is an indication of the cutting of presumably one's hair, in mourning, it would seem, given the death of the royal (59-60)<sup>48</sup>. Charis' spouse Hephaestus traveled to his mother-in-law, that is, Eurynome (60-61), on some mission the details of which the mutilated state of the text does not make clear. Likewise the reference to the "long-lived ones" (that is, the Ethiopians) at 62 is of uncertain import. Hephaestus is lame and slow of foot, but at once he will return home (63-65); what Charis' husband is supposed to do is not clear from the fragmentary verses.

What remains of the poem depicts Charis consoling Philotera as to the death of her sister with commonplace sentiments, urging her not to weep (67-68), and noting that the mourning of the people is not for someone of low status (71-72), and that Arsinoë is of the same womb as her sibling (73-74)<sup>49</sup>. The extant poem breaks off on a note of mourning, with the observation that cities are swathed in black (74-75); the integral work closed on a triumphant, happy note of stellar glory, as Arsinoë joined her sister Philotera in celestial honor. How different would be the fate of two later Ptolemaic sisters.

Callimachus' poem, for all its textual difficulties owing to its poor state of preservation, is straightforward. Arsinoë is dead, but like Philotera, she will be received among the stars as a revered goddess. The *Diegesis* summary helps us to understand the contents, but even without scholiastic help, we would be able to make a reasonable assessment of the lyric.

We have noted the connections between Virgil's Dido and Cleopatra. A prominent character in the Virgilian Dido drama is her sister Anna<sup>50</sup>. Cleopatra too had a

<sup>47</sup> «... Libya included the whole of North Africa from the territory of Carthage to the west of Cyrenaica as far as the west bank of the Nile ...» (S. STEPHENS, *Remapping the Mediterranean*, in D. OBBINK, R. RUTHERFORD (eds.), *Culture in Pieces: Essays on Ancient Texts in Honour of Peter Parsons*, Oxford 2011, p. 197). For the possible political motivations of such a conflation, see E. MARSHALL, *Reading Symbols of Roman Cyrene*, in H.M. PARKINS, ed., *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City*, London-New York 1997, pp. 198-199.

<sup>48</sup> The gesture is conventional enough in a context of mourning, but it does accord well with both the *Coma Berenices* and the snipping of Dido's lock.

<sup>49</sup> Sororial closeness is emphasized in Virgil at *Aeneid* 4, 8 *cum sic unanimum adloquitur male sana sororem*, where Dido is insane and Anna *unanima*, a theme borrowed from the first verse of Sophocles' *Antigone*.

<sup>50</sup> This complex figure has been studied both for her literary and her mythological significance; cfr.

(half-)sister, the ill-fated Arsinoë IV. There are numerous questions about Arsinoë's history (in particular, her actions and role during Caesar's Alexandrian War), but one thing is certain and relevant to our investigation: she was killed in 41 B.C. while in exile at the Temple of Artemis (not that of Artemis Leucophryne in Miletus, as Appian reports, but at the goddess' most famous shrine, at Ephesus, as Josephus records) by order of Mark Antony, who was acting on behalf of his paramour Cleopatra<sup>51</sup>. Sibling rivalry in this case resulted in the execution of Arsinoë IV, who like Cleopatra was one of the last members of the dynasty of the Ptolemies<sup>52</sup>. Ultimately both sisters would be doomed, the first by murder, the second by suicide. The Hellenistic Age would end not with catasterism, but with catastrophe.

The tensions that develop between Virgil's Dido and Anna come in the wake of the disastrous breakdown of the queen's relationship with Aeneas, in particular because of the question of Dido's jealousy of Anna's conversational intimacy with her Trojan lover<sup>53</sup>. Whether the intimation of jealousy constitutes a Virgilian nod to variant lore about the two women, it contributes appreciably to the atmosphere of overbearing tension that imbues so much of the book<sup>54</sup>. Notwithstanding whatever dreams Cleopatra and Antony shared, there would be no new dynastic union in Alexandria<sup>55</sup>. Anna had encouraged Dido to surrender to passion for Aeneas (thus providing another reason for sisterly conflict); needless to say there will be no incestuous union of the would-be Diana and Apollo pair<sup>56</sup>. Virgil depicts Aeneas' mother and divine patroness Venus as being responsible for the instigation of a love

G.S. WEST, *Vergil's Helpful Sisters: Anna and Juturna in the Aeneid*, in *Vergilius* 25, 1979, pp. 10-19, and L.M. FRATANTUONO, *Virgil's Rival Sororities: Dido and Anna, Camilla and Acca*, in *Pallas* 114, 2020, pp. 329-344.

<sup>51</sup> For a brief account of the relevant history see S.M. BURSTEIN, *The Reign of Cleopatra*, Norman 2004, p. 76. The ancient citations for the murder of Arsinoë include Josephus, *Apion* 2, 57, and *Antiquitates Iudaicae* 15, 89, also Appian, *BC* 5, 9. Dio 49, 24 speaks of the dragging of Cleopatra's brothers from the temple at Ephesus, but this must be an error for the sister. «Cleopatra thus used Antony's power for her personal vendettas. Antony may have calculated the advantages of an Egyptian ally freed from factional struggles. But, basically, he seems to have been sacrificing expendable foreign lives to satisfy the queen» (E.G. HUZAR, *Mark Antony: A Biography*, Minneapolis 1978, p. 154). See further H.A.M. Van Wijlick, *Rome and the Near Eastern Kingdoms and Principalities, 44-31 B.C.*, Leiden-Boston 2021, pp. 128-129. It has been conjectured that the Asian proconsul Lucius Munatius Plancus may be complicit in the killing of the girl (H.W. LAALE, *Ephesus (Ephesos): An Abbreviated History from Androclus to Constantine XI*, Bloomington, Indiana 2011, p. 161 n. 631). It is perhaps noteworthy that we cannot rely on Plutarch's *Antony* for any help in learning more about Arsinoë.

<sup>52</sup> Regarding the assassination of the supplicant Arsinoë, Josephus (*Antiquitates Iudaicae* 15, 89) observes that Cleopatra could not resist plundering temples; in any case the use of Antony to eliminate her sister was among her more condemnable acts.

<sup>53</sup> Dido expresses her resentment of this at *Aeneid* 4, 420-2; on the question of her jealousy and its legitimacy see J.K. NEWMAN, F.S. NEWMAN, *Troy's Children: Lost Generations in Virgil's Aeneid*. Hildesheim-Zürich-New York 2005, pp. 193-194. Cfr. Servius *auctus* on 4, 682 («Varro ait non Didonem sed Annam amore Aeneae inpulsam se super rogum interemisse»).

<sup>54</sup> See further here S. MCCALLUM, *Rivalry and Revelation: Ovid's Elegiac Revision of Virgilian Allusion*, in G. MCINTYRE, S. MCCALLUM (eds.), *Uncovering Anna Perenna: A Focused Study of Myth and Culture*, London-New York 2019, pp. 22 ff.

<sup>55</sup> «The Ptolemies were masters at manipulating Hellenistic preoccupations with dynastic marriage» (M.S. VISSCHER, *Beyond Alexandria: Literature and Empire in the Seleucid World*, Oxford 2020, p. 123).

<sup>56</sup> J. ROHMAN, *Le Héros et la Déesse: Personnages, stratégies narratives et effets de lecture dans l'Enéide de Virgile*, Paris 2022, pp. 364-365 offers an insightful study of the interaction between Anna and Dido.

affair between the Trojan exile and his Carthaginian host, and Venus (with Juno) plays a central role in the subsequent unfolding of events in North Africa; it may be noteworthy that Arsinoë II was associated with Aphrodite, not least because of the goddess' traditional role as a protector of mariners<sup>57</sup>.

In Callimachus' apotheosis lyric, one sister awaits another in catasterism; and all the emphasis is on the deification of the two royal siblings. The only hint of trouble is the charmingly depicted concern of Philotera for her beloved North Africa when she sees smoke and fire rising over the water. In Virgil, once again there are two royal, North African sisters, though now the context is decidedly grim. The Carthaginian queen commits suicide, and the flames from her funeral pyre offer a *triste augurium* for the Trojans (cf. *Aeneid* 5, 7) as they sail away, while the poet emphasizes the connection between the fiery pyre and the flames of an invaded, ruined city – a harbinger, one might think, for how Carthage would one day be destroyed in the wake of the Third Punic War. There is no apotheosis for Dido, whose afterlife fate is revealed by the poet in the Fields of Mourning of his underworld. The lack of any apotheosis for the North African royal is underscored by Aeneas' verbal recollection of Catullus' response to Callimachus' poem on Berenice's lock<sup>58</sup>. Dido is not like the Ptolemaic Berenice II, or the Ptolemaic sisters Arsinoë II and Philotera; Dido's lock of hair is not magically transformed into a constellation, but is simply snipped by Iris to allow for release from her botched suicide<sup>59</sup>. The suicide of Dido recalls the similar end of Cleopatra, indeed also Antony's failure to end his own life with a swift, single stab<sup>60</sup>. The historical Cleopatra had her dramatic serpentine suicide; Virgil's literary Cleopatra recalls Antony with respect to his less than efficient use of the sword, a parallel that is made all the more effective when one considers that the sword of Dido's suicide may have been Aeneas', and that the Trojan hero evokes thoughts of Antony for the duration of his time in a Carthaginian love affair.

Dido turned against even her beloved sister Anna in her descent into increasingly frenzied, furious emotions in the wake of Aeneas' abandonment of her; Anna con-

<sup>57</sup> «Following her death, Arsinoë II was recognized as divine and received cult under the name Arsinoë Aphrodite Zephyritis at her temple on Cape Zephyrion, between Alexandria and Canopus...» (I. DU QUESNAY, *Three Problems in Poem 66*, in I. DU QUESNAY, T. WOODMAN (eds.), *Catullus: Poems, Books, Readers*, Cambridge 2012, p. 165). Cfr. M. KANELLOU, *Ἐρμιόνην, ἢ εἶδος ἔχε χρυσέης Ἀφροδίτης* (*Od.4.14*): *Praising a Female Through Aphrodite – From Homer into Hellenistic Epigram*, in A. EFTATHIOU, I. KARAMANOU (eds.), *Homeric Receptions Across Generic and Cultural Contexts*, Berlin-Boston 2016, p. 197. There has also been speculation about the possible connections of Arsinoë II to Isis cults; on this see L. BRICAULT, *Isis Pelagia: Images, Names, and Cults of a Goddess of the Seas*, Leiden-Boston 2020 (“second version”, translated from the 2006 original *Isis, Dame des flots* by G.H. Renberg), p. 38. Any such connections between Arsinoë II and Isis would add another layer of relevance to any Callimachean allusions in Virgil, given Cleopatra's own preoccupation with the goddess. On all of this see further G.L. IRBY, *Conceptions of the Watery World in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, London-New York 2021, pp. 178 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Union with her husband Sychaeus is Dido's consolation (*Aeneid* 6, 472-4); Virgil's evocation of Catullus' version of the Callimachean Berenice passage serves in part as a reminder that there will be no starry apotheosis for the Carthaginian queen. The most that Elissa receives is union with Sychaeus in death; the detail invites comparison with the image of Cleopatra and Antony in a similar sepulchral state.

<sup>59</sup> *Aeneid* 4, 693 ff.

<sup>60</sup> On this see L.M. FRATANTUONO, *Virgil's Dido and the Death of Marcus Antonius*, in *Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis* 56, 2020, pp. 351-356

siders Dido's suicide an act of betrayal (4, 675 ... *me fraude petebas?*), and wishes that the same sorrow and the same hour had borne them both off by the sword (4, 679 *idem ambas ferro dolor atque eadem hora tulisset*).

Centonized for a quite different context, these statements of Anna over the body of her dying sister could have been uttered by Arsinoë IV against Cleopatra, as she faced Antony's executioner at Artemis' Ephesian temple. Indeed, when first we meet Virgil's Dido, in some regards she is not unlike the image of Arsinoë in exile: Arsinoë was slain in the Temple of Artemis, while Dido at her advent likewise is in a temple, and she is compared to Diana. Dido was in flight from members of her own family, in particular an angry sibling (Pygmalion); Arsinoë was in exile on account of the internecine troubles that roiled the Ptolemaic royals in the last years of the dynasty. An argument could be made that Virgil's Dido is introduced as an Arsinoë, only to emerge as a Cleopatra; by the time of her suicide at the close of the fourth *Aeneid*, she is fully invested in the dubious role<sup>61</sup>. A Virgilian contemporary aware of Cleopatra's involvement in Antony's ordering of Arsinoë's murder in so sacred a place as Artemis' celebrated sanctuary would appreciate the poet's subtle dark humor in having Dido depicted in a temple as if she were Diana, especially once it emerges by the end of *Aeneid* I that she recalls not Arsinoë, but Cleopatra. In *Aeneid* IV, Dido's sister (unmentioned in the first book) plays a significant role; to the degree that we think of Cleopatra when we encounter the North African queen, we may remember Arsinoë when we meet Anna, especially after there is a breakdown in their relationship<sup>62</sup>. The story of the sisters has a strikingly different resolution in Callimachus and in Virgil. The Hellenistic poet is concerned with the apotheosis of a Ptolemaic royal under whose patronage he composes his verses. The Augustan bard alludes to the last Ptolemaic monarch, who was defeated by his poetic patron. In the catalogue of questionable acts that could be imputed to Cleopatra and her Roman lover Antony, the assassination of Arsinoë in a temple of Diana constituted a noteworthy instance of impiety<sup>63</sup>. There is thus no surprise that Virgil might wish to allude to it in his *Aeneid*; it was one of the more prominent items on the docket of Cleopatra's crimes, and an effective element of propaganda against the queen for the Augustan poet to raise<sup>64</sup>.

<sup>61</sup> The banquet scene with which *Aeneid* I closes is reminiscent of Cleopatra's storied repasts with Caesar (cfr. here E. BERTI, *M. Annaei Lucani, Bellum Civile Liber X*, Florence 2000, pp. 122 ff.; for how Lucan would be influenced by Virgil in his account of the notorious decadence of those feasts, see P. HARDIE, *The Last Trojan Hero: A Cultural History of Virgil's Aeneid*, London-New York 2014, p. 57, and E. PYY, *Women and War in Roman Epic*, Leiden-Boston 2021, p. 54.

<sup>62</sup> Virgil's was not the only tradition about Dido's sister. Servius *auctus* on 4, 682 notes "Varro ait non Didonem sed Annam amore Aeneae impulsam se super rogum interemisse"; cfr. Servius on 5, 4 "sane sciendum Varronem dicere Aenean ab Anna amatum." The second of these traditions may be subtly alluded to by Virgil in his depiction of Dido's jealousy; the story that Anna killed herself on a funeral pyre may have inspired something of the description of the anguished sister at Dido's side just after the stabbing.

<sup>63</sup> Virgil's Anna disappears from the narrative; it would be for his poetic successor Ovid, for one, to reflect further on her complicated lore. She does not die in Virgil, but she is left wishing that she did in the wake of the loss of her sister; as we have observed, there was a tradition that she died, even if she would enjoy a more revered place in Roman memory than her sister.

<sup>64</sup> The violation of Diana's temple is the main crime, perhaps, but there is also the reminder of the specter of civil war in Cleopatra's sororicide.

In *Aeneid* IV, Virgil indulges in intertextual engagement with Callimachus' apotheosis of Arsinoë II, though in the quite different context of the downfall (and not the deification) of a North African queen. By evoking the memory of that Hellenistic poem in honor of the catastrophe of Arsinoë as he depicts the drama of the Cleopatra-like Dido and her sister Anna, Virgil implicitly recalls the homonymous sister Cleopatra wanted to see slain, the girl who found death in an Artemisian temple, and not astral honors in Alexandrian lyric<sup>65</sup>.

#### ABSTRACT

The Homeric, Apollonian, and tragic influences on Virgil's depiction of Dido in the *Aeneid* have been the focus of significant scholarly attention, together with the historical comparand Cleopatra VII Philopator. Close study of Callimachus' fr. 228 Pfeiffer (the *Apotheosis of Arsinoë* lyric) in conjunction with *Aeneid* IV (and related passages in Book I) reveals intertextual engagement that alludes to the ordering of the death of Arsinoë IV by her half-sister Cleopatra, as part of an attempt to highlight one of the more notorious acts of impiety ascribed to the queen and her lover Mark Antony.

Le influenze omeriche, da Apollonio Rodio e tragiche sulla rappresentazione di Didone nell'*Eneide* sono state oggetto di una notevole attenzione da parte degli studiosi insieme al paragone storico con Cleopatra VII Filopatore. Lo studio ravvicinato del fr. 228 Pfeiffer di Callimaco (*l'Apotheosi di Arsinoë*) in connessione con il libro IV dell'*Eneide* (e con i relativi passaggi del libro I) rivela un coinvolgimento intertestuale che allude all'ordine di uccidere Arsinoë IV da parte della sorellastra Cleopatra, come parte di un tentativo di mettere in evidenza uno dei più noti atti di empietà attribuiti alla regina e al suo amante Marco Antonio.

KEYWORDS: Virgil; Callimachus; Dido; Cleopatra; Antony; Arsinoë.

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<sup>65</sup> There may be interesting implications to this analysis with respect to the criticism of Cleopatra and Antony that is prominent in Augustan propaganda, if there were any hint in Virgil's allusive Callimachean interplay of an Augustan rehabilitation of Arsinoë's memory, namely as a victim of impious and regrettable behavior at the hands of her sister.