A Tale of Two Carthages: History and Allusive Topography in Virgil's Libyan Harbor (Aen. 1.159-69)

Veronica S.-R. Shi, Llewelyn Morgan

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A Tale of Two Carthages: History and Allusive Topography in Virgil's Libyan Harbor (*Aen.* 1.159-69)*

VERONICA S.-R. SHI
Stanford University

LLEWELYN MORGAN
Brasenose College, Oxford

SUMMARY: Although Virgil's description of the Libyan harbor at *Aeneid* 1.159–69 is generally thought to be a poetic invention, some readers in antiquity, according to Servius's commentary, believed the harbor to be modeled after the port of Carthago Nova in southern Spain. This paper argues for the merit of this reading by exploring how a topographical allusion to Carthago Nova, the site of a famous siege during the Second Punic War, activates historical memories that have rich implications for the narrative and thematic concerns of Books 1 and 4 of the *Aeneid*.

EARLY IN THE FIRST BOOK OF THE *AENEID*, THE STORM-BATTERED AND depleted Trojan fleet takes refuge in a natural harbor near Carthage (*Aen.* 1.159–69).[1] It was a moment that, according to Servius's commentary, prompted divergent opinions even in antiquity. In Servius's view, the harbor is a product of Virgil's imagination, a *topothesia*. However, he also mentions—and seems to accept as reasonable—a traditional interpretation that

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[1] This article follows the editions of R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969) for the text of Virgil, F. W. Walbank and C. Habicht (Harvard, 2011) for Polybius, R. S. Conway and S. K. Johnson (Oxford, 1968) for Livy, O. Skutsch (Oxford, 1985) for Ennius, and T. J. Cornell et al. (Oxford, 2013) for the fragmentary Roman historians. All translations are the authors' own. All dates are B.C.E. unless otherwise specified.

identifies Virgil's poetic landscape with the harbor of Carthago Nova, known today as Cartagena, on the southern coast of Spain[2]:

> EST IN SECESSU: Topothesia est, id est, fictus secundum poeticam licentiam locus. ne autem uideatur penitus a ueritate discedere, Hispaniensis Carthaginis portum putatur descripsisse. ceterum hunc locum in Africa nusquam esse constat. nec incongrue propter nominis similitudinem posuit. nam τοπογραφία est rei uerae descriptio.
>
> EST IN SECESSU: It is a *topothesia*, i.e., a place invented in accordance with a poet's license. However, he [Virgil] is thought to have copied the harbor of Spanish Carthage, lest the scene appear to depart too radically from reality. It is agreed at any rate that this place is not to be found anywhere in Africa, and by virtue of the similarity of the name his depiction is not unfitting. It is a *topographia* when it is a description of a real thing.

Modern critics have largely dismissed the identification with Carthago Nova's harbor out of hand and commended Servius's personal view of the harbor being a *topothesia*, a poetic fabrication, as a rare instance of good judgment from the commentator.[3] However, while granting that Virgil's Libyan harbor owes a considerable amount to poetic invention, we believe that the possibility of a reference to the port of Carthago Nova is worth investigating.[4] As we shall show, Virgil's landscape does in fact recall that of the Spanish port quite specifically—although not entirely in the way a modern reader might expect. And although, in Servius's view, Virgil could have copied a real landscape in order to impart some realism into an otherwise fictional location (*ne autem uideatur penitus a ueritate discedere*), we shall suggest that there may be a great deal more to this topographical reference.[5] As famous as Carthago

[2] That Servius is speaking of a received interpretation, distinct from his own reading of the harbor as a *topothesia*, is indicated by the word *putatur* ("[Virgil] *is thought* to have copied"); see further Austin 1971 ad loc.

[3] Cf. Austin 1971 ad loc.; Horsfall 1985: 200 ("Even Servius gets it right"). However, see below, n5, on how Servius's own reading and the popular interpretation he reports are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

[4] Other proposed models have included the approach to the original Carthage across the Bay of Tunis (Conway 1935: 47), the port of Utica, and even the Bay of Naples (Schnayder 1930: 70–74). In each case the argument has turned on how accurately Virgil's harbor relates to the real-life location in question, an approach which we will argue fails to account for the ways in which the Romans in fact understood geographical information.

[5] Exactly as Servius reports, no harbor such as Virgil describes exists anywhere near Carthage in reality (*ceterum hunc locum in Africa nusquam esse constat*). The closest real-life equivalent on the African coast to what Virgil describes may be the bay behind the

Nova was in antiquity for its exemplary harbor,[6] it was undoubtedly even more famous for the role it played in Carthaginian and Roman history—a role whose various implications, in the context of the *Aeneid*'s first book and broader Carthaginian episode, would complement and speak compellingly to Virgil's narrative and thematic aims.

Our first task will be to determine how Virgil's illustration of the Libyan harbor could have reminded an ancient audience of Carthago Nova's port, as Servius claims it did. One's initial instinct may be to compare Virgil's description with the appearance of the purported model in actual life. However, such an approach would be mistaken: while no doubt some of Virgil's contemporary audience might have personally observed the harbor of Carthago Nova, the vast majority, given not only the difficulty of travel but also the remarkably limited geographical knowledge typically possessed by Roman readers (and expected of them by Roman authors), would have been familiar with Carthago Nova's topography only through written descriptions in texts.[7] It is through close imitation of these descriptions that Virgil could have most successfully evoked Carthago Nova's harbor for his audience, if this was indeed his intention; thus evidence for an association is best sought in parallels, ideally on a verbal level, between Virgil's text and extant passages describing Carthago Nova's harbor.

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island of Meninx (modern day Djerba), located at the southern extremity of the Gulf of Gabes, but it lies some few hundred miles south of Carthage, whereas the harbor Aeneas arrives at is suggested not to lie far from Carthage itself (see below, n35, for further discussion). Virgil's harbor is therefore still strictly speaking fictional, even though (as we will argue) it is modeled in some respects after an existing location. This explains why Servius does not dispute the interpretation of the harbor as a facsimile of Carthago Nova: such a reading does not, in the end, run against his declaration that the harbor is essentially the product of poetic license.

[6] According to Silius Italicus, Carthago Nova was *impenso naturae adiuta fauore* ("blessed with the great good will of Nature," 15.220). The port's reputation lasted well into the modern era: in the sixteenth century, the great Genoese admiral Andrea Doria was in the habit of saying that he considered the most secure harbors in the Mediterranean to be "[those] of Cartagena and June and July" (Braudel 1995: 1.257).

[7] The low standards of geographical accuracy displayed by a writer such as Livy—and the equally limited expectations he had of his readers' interest in such matters—would have been typical of Roman authors: see further, e.g., Walsh 1961: 153–57; Levene 2010: 71–72 and nn172–73. Maps were neither freely available nor, where they did exist, designed to communicate more than was practically required by landholders or soldiers; as such they fell far short of displaying the precision we take for granted in modern cartography. See below, p. 114–15, for a fuller treatment of this issue.

Let us first consider the relevant lines from Virgil (*Aen*. 1.159–69):

est in secessu longo locus: insula portum
efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto
frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.
hinc atque hinc uastae rupes geminique minantur
in caelum scopuli, quorum sub uertice late
aequora tuta silent; tum siluis scaena coruscis
desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbra.
fronte sub aduersa scopulis pendentibus antrum;
intus aquae dulces uiuoque sedilia saxo,
Nympharum domus. hic fessas non uincula nauis
ulla tenent, unco non alligat ancora morsu.

There is a place in a deep inlet: an island forms a harbor by the barrier of its flanks; all the waves coming from the open sea are broken by it and divide as they flow into the distant recesses of the bay. Here and there huge cliffs loom skywards, twin headlands, and beneath their peaks the broad waters are safe and still. Above rises a backdrop of shimmering woods, a dark forest with quivering shadows. Under the cliff face straight ahead there is a cave of hanging crags, and within it fresh water and seats of living rock, the home of nymphs: here no chains moor weary ships; no anchor ties them down with its hooked grip.

What greets us at first sight is a seemingly fantastical panorama, filled with beetling cliffs, limpid springs, and the dwellings of nymphs. Scholars have been right to point out how this landscape pays homage to harbors in Homer and Apollonius[8] and also anticipates the tragic stage that Carthage will become in Book 4.[9] However, the picture painted by the first three lines in particular of this passage also unmistakably agrees with two extant descriptions of Carthago Nova's harbor left by historians.[10] One of these writers is Polybius, who de-

[8] Austin 1971 ad loc. cites parallels with the harbor of the Cyclopes (Hom. *Od*. 9.116–41: an island outside a harbor, a cave, a spring, and conditions so calm no mooring is required), of the Laestrygonians (*Od*. 10.87–96: dramatic cliffs), and of Phorcys in Ithaca (*Od*. 13.96–112: headlands breaking the waves, a home of nymphs). On allusions here to the arrival of the Argonauts at the river Phasis (Ap. Rhod. 2.1266–70, 1281–83), see Nelis 2001: 249–50. There is also an exact repetition at line 161 of a phrase in Virgil's description of Proteus's home in the *Georgics* (*G*. 4.418–21)—a symbol, perhaps, of poetic continuity between the epic endeavor of the *Aeneid* and the quasi-epic episode of Aristaeus in *Georgics* 4.

[9] Harrison 1989: 4–5; Pobjoy 1998: 42–43; cf. Williams 1968: 642–43.

[10] Strabo 3.4.6 gives an overview of the geography of Carthago Nova and its immediate surroundings, but there is no detailed description of the site such as one finds in Polybius and Livy.

scribes the topography of the harbor as a prelude to his account of Carthago Nova's capture by Roman forces during the Second Punic War (10.10.1–3):

> κεῖται μὲν οὖν τῆς Ἰβηρίας κατὰ μέσην τὴν παραλίαν ἐν κόλπῳ νεύοντι πρὸς ἄνεμον λίβα· οὗ τὸ μὲν βάθος ἐστὶν ὡς εἴκοσι σταδίων, τὸ δὲ πλάτος ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς ὡς δέκα· λαμβάνει <δὲ> διάθεσιν λιμένος ὁ πᾶς κόλπος διὰ τοιαύτην αἰτίαν. νῆσος ἐπὶ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ κεῖται βραχὺν ἐξ ἑκατέρου τοῦ μέρους εἴσπλουν εἰς αὐτὸν ἀπολείπουσα. ταύτης ἀποδεχομένης τὸ πελάγιον κῦμα συμβαίνει τὸν κόλπον ὅλον εὐδίαν ἴσχειν, πλὴν ἐφ' ὅσον οἱ λίβες καθ' ἑκάτερον τὸν εἴσπλουν παρεισπίπτοντες κλύδωνας ἀποτελοῦσι.
>
> [New Carthage] lies halfway down the coast of Spain in an inlet facing the southwest wind. The inlet is about twenty stades in depth and about ten in breadth at its entrance. The whole inlet serves as a harbor for the following reason: at its mouth lies an island which leaves only a narrow channel on either side into the inlet, and as this stands in the way of the waves from the sea, the whole inlet is calm, except when southwesterlies blow on both channels and raise billows.

The other description that is left to us, by Livy, also belongs to an account of the famous siege, and appears to have been modeled virtually element for element upon Polybius's (Livy 26.42.7–8)[11]:

> etenim sita Carthago sic est. sinus est maris media fere Hispaniae ora, maxime Africo uento oppositus, <ad duo milia> et quingentos passus introrsus retractus, paululo plus passuum <mille et ducentos> in latitudinem patens. huius in ostio sinus parua insula obiecta ab alto portum ab omnibus uentis praeterquam Africo tutum facit.
>
> The situation of (New) Carthage is as follows. There is an inlet from the sea about halfway along the coast of Spain, directly exposed to the southwest wind, extending inland two and one-half miles, and in breadth a little more than one and one-fifth miles. In the mouth of this inlet a small island set in the way on the seaward side makes the harbor safe from all winds except the southwest wind.

The superficial similarities between these passages and Virgil's are striking: both historians describe, as does the poet, a deep inlet, an island sitting at the

[11] On the relationship between Polybius and Livy, see esp. Walbank 1967a: 193–94 on Polyb. 10.2.1–20.8. Livy's account clearly owes much to Polybius's (to such an extent, in fact, that emendations to the former's deficient text have been made by consultation of the latter), but as Walbank cautions, the relationship is not entirely straightforward: Livy could have accessed information from Polybius via the mediation of Coelius Antipater, and here and there Livy includes "information not in [Polybius] which is not always due to elaboration" (1967a: 194). Below, n20, we will suggest that Livy could well have had an additional source for this particular passage: Ennius.

entrance, a narrow entrance on either side of the island (not actually represented by Virgil, but evoked by the description of waves parting, *scindit sese unda*), and the protective function of the island (again, implied rather than made explicit by Virgil in his description of calm waters at 1.164, *aequora tuta silent*). On top of this, there are also several close verbal parallels between Virgil and Livy to be observed: compare Virgil's *insula portum | efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto | frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos* with Livy's *huius in ostio sinus parua insula obiecta ab alto portum ab omnibus uentis praeterquam Africo tutum facit*.

Some facts of chronology stand in the way of a simple explanation that Virgil copied directly from Livy's description of Carthago Nova's harbor. While Livy could well have been drafting parts of his third decade as early as the middle to late 20s, there are no firm grounds for believing that this part of his history was published before the death of Virgil in 19 B.C.E.[12] But lest it be thought that these echoes are merely accidental, or perhaps even the result of Livy being influenced artistically by Virgil's description of an imaginary harbor, it must be reiterated that Livy's sketch is not an original creation, which he might have tailored after a Virgilian harbor that caught his fancy, but a near-exact paraphrase of Polybius's description of Carthago Nova.[13] When we additionally consider how closely the topography of Virgil's harbor answers to that of Polybius's Carthago Nova, the conclusion that is urged is still that Virgil's description is related in some meaningful way to these historians' sketches of the Spanish port.

How then may we explain the association among the three passages we have seen, and the verbal parallels between the Latin passages in particular? It is not impossible that Virgil directly followed Polybius's text; however, a likelier scenario may be that Virgil derived his description from a lost Latin text which was itself closely related to Polybius's history (and by extension, to Livy's too) and which therefore depicted Carthago Nova in a very similar manner. Such a text could well have been Ennius's *Annales*.[14] We should recall that Polybius and Livy provide their descriptions as part of their accounts of the Roman siege

[12] The limited evidence for the dating of the third decade provided by Livy 28.12.12 on the final conquest of Spain "under the leadership and auspices of Caesar Augustus" (*ductu auspicioque Augusti Caesaris*) is discussed by Luce 1965: 210.

[13] The rhetorical influence of this passage of Virgil is more clearly to be seen in Luc. 2.616–21 and Pliny *Ep*. 6.31.16 (discussed below, nn31–32).

[14] See Skutsch 1985: 13–14 for a useful overview of the extent and nature of the *Aeneid*'s debt to Ennius's *Annales*.

of Carthago Nova during the Second Punic War: the same war was treated by Ennius in Books 7 through 9 of the *Annales*,[15] and for his sources Ennius drew in all likelihood upon the same ones that informed Polybius (and indirectly, Livy), Fabius Pictor and the Hellenistic historian Silenus.[16] Although no fragment which survives from *Annales* 7–9 can be attributed with complete confidence to an account of the siege of Carthago Nova,[17] it is virtually certain, given the engagement's prominence in the history of the war,[18] that Ennius narrated the battle and furnished in the course of his account a description of the harbor.[19] An imitation of such a description by Virgil might have yielded the close similarity that we see in the Libyan harbor to the Carthago Nova described by Polybius and Livy.[20] Furthermore, an Ennian *topographia* of the

[15] Skutsch 1985: 366–67, 370–72. References to the war continue through Book 9 (Skutsch 1985: 475).

[16] See further Skutsch 1985: 7 on Ennius's sources. Polybius names (and also criticizes) Fabius as a source for the Second Punic War (3.8); for his probable use of Silenus, see further Walbank 1970: 28, 316. For discussion of Polybius's sources for the episode of Carthago Nova in particular, see also Scullard 1970: 14–16; Walbank 1967a: 193. Opinion is divided on whether any direct link between Polybius and Ennius exists: Scullard speculates that Polybius "must also have read" Ennius (1970: 16), but Walbank 1972: 80–81 doubts Polybius made any significant use of Latin sources, even if he could read Latin.

[17] Vahlen 1903 suggests that a fragment attributed to Book 8 (227–29 Vahlen = 294–96 Sk.), describing naval exercises, is related to the episode of Carthago Nova as well; Skutsch 1985: 473 is non-committal. Skutsch, for his part, tentatively suggests (640–41) that fr. 480, one of the *sedis incertae fragmenta*, might have belonged to the narrative of the siege on the basis of a verbal echo between it and a moment in Livy's account of the battle (*hic tum, ut ait Ennius, 'nostri cessere parumper*,' "At this point, to use Ennius's expression, 'Our men *momentarily gave ground*,'" *BHisp*. 23.2 = Enn. *Ann*. fr. 480 Sk.; cf. Livy 26.44.3, *Romani duce ipso praecipiente parumper cessere, ut propiores subsidiis ... essent*, "The Romans, at the command of the general himself, *momentarily gave ground* so as to be closer to the reinforcements"). Skeptics may however note a degree of circularity in Skutsch's argument that "[t]he author of the *Bell. Hispan*. is perhaps most likely to quote from a Spanish context [in Ennius's narrative]," and that "one might therefore suspect that the fragment belongs to the incident [i.e., the siege of Carthago Nova] in describing which Livy uses very similar phrasing" (640).

[18] Discussed below, p. 123–24.

[19] See further Skutsch 1985: 431, 472–73, 476, speculating that the siege was described in Book 9, as well as Skutsch's discussion of *Ann*. fr. 480 cited and summarized above, n17.

[20] In view of how close the similarities between Virgil and Livy are, it is additionally possible for a description in Ennius directly to have influenced Livy's at the same time. One may consider the parallel example of Livy's description of the fall of Alba (1.29), whose close resemblance to Virgil's description of distraught Trojan women at *Aen.* 2.486–90 has been argued (with the aid of Servius's testimony ad loc.: *de Albano excidio*

place in question would, just as importantly, have been a logical and potent choice of model for Virgil to evoke—if indeed it was Virgil's aim to make his description of the Libyan harbor sound recognizably like a known depiction of Carthago Nova—in view of the *Annales*'s status and popularity as an epic poem and vehicle of historical memory in Roman culture.

That Virgil's topographical reference cannot, on the other hand, have been based on a true-to-life depiction of the actual harbor at Carthago Nova (and that, accordingly, it would be incorrect to evaluate the possibility of a topographical allusion on such grounds, as modern readers may be inclined to do) is a claim worth revisiting and elaborating on at this point. We have already mentioned the likelihood that few among Virgil's audience would have known the harbor from autopsy; this would have made an accurate description of the actual terrain, in the absence of other cues, useless in helping to evoke the location in question. Even more fundamentally, however, it is doubtful, given the rudimentary nature of Roman geographical knowledge, whether a depiction of Carthago Nova that is sufficiently true to life by our standards could even have been possible for Virgil to produce (especially if, as we might assume, Virgil himself had never visited the place).[21] Many of the tools and intellectual resources we deploy (and take for granted) in apprehending space and place, the Romans lacked: maps were hardly ever used,[22] while those which

translatus est locus, "This passage is copied from the destruction of Alba") to indicate a debt held in common by Virgil and Livy to Ennius (Austin 1964 ad loc.; Skutsch 1985: 279–80; Casali 2007: 108–10). Skutsch's speculation regarding *Ann.* fr. 480 (above, n17) entails the hypothesis that Livy relied on Ennius's narrative for his own account of the siege, but it is a hypothesis which cannot be proven as the evidence stands.

[21] It is worth noting that geography as an intellectual discipline did not hold much interest for the Romans, despite the immense stimulus to geographical knowledge and theory provided by their conquests during the mid to late Republic. Geography was predominantly a Greek discipline, and during the late Republic and Principate "the authors working in Rome who made the most determined attempts to assimilate and propagate Greek geographic and ethnographic knowledge were themselves Greeks, Diodorus Siculus and Alexander Polyhistor" (Rawson 1985: 252). The Romans, for their part, "were far less interested in pure science, and acquired new geographical information mainly from military conquests. They used very simple maps, and they were satisfied with mere *itineraria* to discover locations and distances" (Dueck 2012: 18).

[22] On ancient cartography (or perhaps the striking lack of it), see in general Brodersen 2012, summarizing conclusions reached in Brodersen 2003. Although we have references to maps answering various needs, including military activity, in the surviving literature (e.g., Vitr. 8.2.6; Veg. 3.6; see Brodersen 2003: 26–27, 188–90 for discussion), they will not have been commonly available or used, and they will have been in certain important respects only a very rudimentary (by modern standards) representation of the territory assessed (see following note). Cf. Rawson 1985: 258–59.

might have existed did not seek to represent geographical information in any way reflective of spatial reality,[23] and even a vocabulary precise enough to orient a geographical or topographical description objectively was wanting in Latin.[24] Exactitude or accuracy with regard to reality was accordingly the exception, not the norm, in ancient geographical or topographical descriptions. The passages we have considered are fairly typical in this respect: both Polybius and Livy are seriously mistaken about the position of the island near Carthago Nova's harbor, depicting it as sitting in the harbor's entrance when, in reality, it lies some three miles away from the entrance to the southeast.[25] Any comparison of Virgil's text (which, like Livy's and Polybius's, describes an island sitting *in* not *off* the harbor's entrance) to the actual geography of Carthago Nova would thus also fail, given these specific facts on the ground; but that would not at all mean that Virgil cannot be evoking the harbor of Carthago Nova, for his evocation, if such it be, is achieved not by delineation of the actual terrain but by imitation of pre-existing and (as it happens) fundamentally erroneous descriptions of the place.

If it is primarily a matter of verbal allusion that we are dealing with, however, there is still an important complication for our investigation to consider. While most writers necessarily would have drawn upon existing written descriptions in referring to particular locations, they seem just as often to

[23] Brodersen 2012: 99–110 discusses the very limited evidence for ancient mapmaking, which even at the level of a townscape, such as the *Forma Urbis Romae*, or a section of agricultural land, was little concerned with scale. He also sees no evidence that a supposed "map" (in the modern sense) like Agrippa's celebrated "map of the world" in Rome (mentioned by Pliny the Elder, *HN* 3.17) actually involved graphic representation of space; rather it may just have been "an inscription offering some geographical detail" (109).

[24] Rivers and streams in particular are *loci* ripe for producing confusion: Polybius and Livy, e.g., disagree on which side of the River Trebia the eponymous battle against Hannibal took place (Polyb. 3.74; Livy 21.54–56), and Horsfall 1985: 204 points out as a further example Horace's comment on the flooding Tiber (*sinistra labitur ripa*, "He brims over his left-hand bank," *Carm.* 1.2.18–19), which can be understood to refer to either bank in the absence of further cues. See further Horsfall 1985: 204–5 on these and other instances, with literature cited there.

[25] Curiously enough, Strabo (3.4.6) situates the island accurately, 24 stadia (c. 3 miles) from New Carthage. It is possible that either Polybius himself, who visited the city in 151 or 133 (Polyb. 10.11.4), or Polybius's source was deceived by the misleading view one might have of the island from the city: "[Viewed] from the innermost part of the bay of Cartagena, the island of Escombreras seems to close off the mouth of the harbor almost completely" (Peréz, Soler and Martinez 2005: 13). Also see further Droysen 1875: 65–66; Strachan–Davidson 1888: 316.

have resorted to using common rhetorical tropes and forms.[26] It has been appreciated for some time that Virgil's landscapes tend to adhere to certain patterns[27]; and Nicholas Horsfall, who first argued for the widespread nature of this phenomenon in Latin literature and posited that it was the inevitable result of the rhetorical training that writers received,[28] has shown how historical descriptions of battlefield sites often deliberately echo the settings of other famous military episodes[29] or are dramatized for emotional effect.[30] While we still maintain that the parallels between Virgil, Livy, and Polybius are too precise to be the accidental products of common rhetorical influences, Horsfall's insight does recommend an additional test of the evidence before we can fully entertain the idea of a topographical allusion to Carthago Nova at *Aen*. 1.159–69. For if we may expect many descriptions of harbors to sound similar, given that ancient writers could and often did resort to using typical tropes at the expense of specificity, it follows that any topographical allusion by Virgil meant to recall Carthago Nova's harbor in particular—if there indeed be one—would need to be precise enough to recall a description specifically of that location over descriptions of other, similar places.

Although the state of the evidence permits no conclusive proof in this regard, we still may settle some doubts by establishing that Virgil's passage relates measurably more closely to the descriptions of Carthago Nova by Livy and Polybius than to anything similar in the extant Latin corpus. Of the numerous illustrations of harbors that do survive, five passages in Latin describe harbors which resemble Carthago Nova's closely enough possibly to be confused, in that they duplicate a critical (and perhaps the most conspicuous) feature shared by Virgil's harbor and Carthago Nova's: the island near the harbor's

[26] That Menander Rhetor was able in the third century C.E. to produce an entire treatise on how to praise landscapes (among which, harbors: 351.20–52.5) is some testament to the prevalence of these conventions; see further Russell and Wilson 1981: 253. Harbors in particular were a theme for *ekphrases* in Greek *progymnasmata* or rhetorical exercises (Ps.-Hermog. *Prog.* 10.2; Aphthonius *Prog.* 12.1, citing Thuc. 1.46; Nicolaus *Prog.* 68.14); an example of one is preserved by Lib. *Prog.* VIII.12.8.

[27] See especially Rehm 1932: 96–98.

[28] Horsfall 1985: 201.

[29] See Horsfall 1982: 51–52, on Livy's description of the Caudine Forks (9.2.6–10) possibly being inspired by the locations of Alexander's military exploits in Cilicia and Persia.

[30] So Horsfall 1985: 203 on Livy's Caudium (9.3.2): "[I]t is dramatically desirable that the Romans should be surrounded in a terrifying landscape, it heightens the pathos if they contemplate a breakout in the face of appallingly adverse terrain."

entrance. Two of these passages, in Lucan (2.616–21, on Brundisium)[31] and the younger Pliny (*Ep*. 6.31.16, on Centum Cellae),[32] postdate the *Aeneid* and are clear instances of later writers adapting an exemplary topographical description—in this case, Virgil's very harbor—for an illustration of an entirely unrelated location for aesthetic purposes.[33] The remaining three, which we will consider in closer detail, are all from Caesar's *Bellum Civile* (3.23.1, 3.100.1, 3.112.2).

Two of these three instances (3.23.1, 3.100.1) describe the port of Brundisium and its offshore island (the modern Isola di Sant' Andrea). In these we have at first sight another close match for the topography of Virgil's harbor; at 3.100.1 in particular, the island is described as facing the harbor in language reminiscent of Virgil's (*insulam obiectam portui Brundisino tenuit*,

[31] The text of Lucan's passage is worth reproducing in full (Luc. 2.616–21):

> nec tamen hoc artis immissum faucibus aequor
> portus erat, si non uiolentos insula Coros
>
> exciperet saxis lassasque refunderet undas.
> hinc illinc montes scopulosae rupis aperto
> opposuit natura mari flatusque remouit
> ut tremulo starent contentae fune carinae.
>
> But the water that entered by the narrow mouth would not be a harbor, were it not for an island that met the fierce northwesterlies with its rocks and threw back the tired waves. On both sides Nature has set mountains of craggy cliff against the open sea, and has taken the blasts of wind away, so that the ships might lie at rest, happy with a swaying cable.

Compare especially the description of dying waves (cf. *Aen*. 1.160–61, *omnis ab alto | frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos*), beetling cliffs (cf. *Aen*. 162–63, *uastae rupes geminique minantur | in caelum scopuli*), and presence (or in Virgil's case, stated absence) of moored ships (cf. *Aen*. 1.168–69, *hic fessas non uincula nauis | ulla tenent*); see further Fantham 1992 ad loc.

[32] *In ore portus insula adsurgit, quae inlatum uento mare obiacens frangat, tutumque ab utroque latere decursum nauibus praestet* ("There is an island that rises in the mouth of the harbor, designed to act as a breakwater when the wind blows inland, and to offer safe passage to ships on either side"). Note Pliny's artful *variatio* in several places: *assurgit* for Virgil's *efficit*, *obiacens* for *obiectu*, *mare ... frangat* for *ab alto frangitur*, and *in ore* making explicit what is implied in Virgil (viz., the island's position in the harbor entrance).

[33] One determined to see a meaningful connection between Lucan's Brundisium and Virgil's Carthage could attempt to argue that it generates an interesting contrast between the beginning of Aeneas's westward journey in the *Aeneid* (an arrival at a foreign city) and the beginning of Pompey's eastward journey in the *Bellum Civile* (a departure from native soil); but rather likelier is the possibility that Lucan appropriated Virgil's description on account of Brundisium's vague resemblance to it in its possession of an offshore island. Sherwin-White 1966 on Plin. *Ep*. 6.31.16 observes (*contra* Guillemin 1929: 118) that Pliny's description similarly was suited to the actual appearance of Centum Cellae, as archaeological reconstructions of the harbor reveal (cf. Horsfall 1985: 201).

"[Pompey's forces] occupied an island facing the port of Brundisium"; cf. *Aen.* 1.159–60, *insula portum | efficit obiectu laterum*). Yet Caesar's description lacks a detail that is present in the Virgilian passage as well as in the illustrations of Livy and Polybius: Brundisium's island, although strategically important in its location, is nowhere presented as being a protective feature of the harbor or as being otherwise essential to the harbor's proper functioning. Livy, on the other hand, states plainly that the presence of the island "makes Carthago Nova's harbor safe from all winds except the southwest" (*ab omnibus uentis praeterquam Africo tutum facit*). (Polybius mentions this too and, additionally, avers that "the whole inlet serves as a harbor" for the precise reason that "there is an island lying at its mouth": λαμβάνει <δὲ> διάθεσιν λιμένος ὁ πᾶς κόλπος διὰ τοιαύτην αἰτίαν. νῆσος ἐπὶ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ κεῖται κτλ., 10.10.2) In a similar way, the remaining Caesarean passage, describing the port of Alexandria (3.112.2), falls short of exactly replicating the descriptions we find in Virgil, Livy, and Polybius. While Alexandria too has its island, Pharus (which, unlike Brundisium's island, is described as the geographical peculiarity "which *makes* the harbor of Alexandria" a harbor: *haec insula obiecta Alexandriae portum efficit*), there is again no insistence by Caesar on the island having any protective effect; rather Caesar's point regarding Pharus seems to be that without the island, there would be no enclosed port space at all.[34]

A deliberately precise reproduction at *Aen.* 1.159–69 of the topography of Carthago Nova therefore seems, at the very least, possible in view of how *uniquely* specific and detailed the connections between Virgil, Livy, and Polybius appear to be. If we finally accept this possibility as a real one, we then come to the question that really matters: *why* would Virgil employ an allusion to this particular site, at this particular moment?

The examples of Lucan and Pliny mentioned above suggest that the answer could be fairly pedestrian: given Carthago Nova's reputation as an ideal ship's refuge, Virgil could have engaged in literary imitation of a description of Carthago Nova's harbor purely for aesthetic purposes—and additionally perhaps, as Servius speculates, in order to make his fantastical harbor seem more believably lifelike (*ne autem uideatur penitus a ueritate discedere*). Such an explanation could well satisfy a responsibly skeptical reader of Virgil. Yet if we are willing to follow Servius's lead in interpreting the purpose of this allusion, it must also be pointed out that, in the same comments in which he encourages a conservative reading, Servius also offers—in an entirely offhand manner it seems—a second justification for Virgil's allusion which

[34] For maps of this ancient harbor, see McKenzie 2007: 19–30.

potentially explodes this conservative reading. This comment therefore repays a closer look.

It is, namely, the observation that a reference to Carthago Nova's appearance in the harbor would not be unfitting "on account of the similarity of [the city's] name" (*nec incongrue propter nominis similitudinem posuit*). Similarity to what, Servius does not spell out, but the answer should be obvious enough not to need stating: to the original Carthage, the city at which Aeneas and his Trojans will arrive soon after making landfall in the harbor. What this comment indicates is that Servius has equated—or rather, conflated—Virgil's unnamed harbor on the coast of Libya with the city of Carthage itself. In doing so Servius has, strictly speaking, taken liberties with the hard facts of Virgil's narrative, as the harbor lies at a remove from the city proper[35]; nevertheless some reflection on the expectations propounded by Virgil's narrative suggest that this conflation could be a natural and even logical equation to make. Certainly few modern readers, and (almost certainly) fewer ancient readers, would have been in the dark about where Aeneas would soon end up after his first appearance in the narrative: apart from the electrifyingly unexpected introduction of Carthage at *Aen*. 1.12–14, which is bound to have fixed the city in the minds of Virgil's audience, Aeneas's destination will also have been foreshadowed immediately before the Trojans' arrival in the harbor by Virgil's use of the toponym Libya (*Libyae vertuntur ad oras*, 1.158), which appears earlier in the poem as a metonym for Carthage.[36] Such cues could

[35] Exactly how far, Virgil does not make clear, but the text does not seem to suggest a long journey. The Trojans remain at the harbor until the morning after their arrival (cf. *Aen*. 1.194, 310–12); when Aeneas and Achates set out from their mooring-place, they encounter Venus immediately (1.312–17), and do not take long after her departure to reach Carthage along the route she points out (*corripuere uiam interea, qua semita monstrat | iamque ascendebant collem, qui plurimus urbi | imminet aduersasque aspectat desuper arces*, "Meanwhile they made haste along the route which the path indicated; *and now already* they were climbing the hill which loomed large over the city, overlooking the opposing towers from above," 1.418–20).

[36] Cf. *Aen*. 1.21–22, of the Romans being fated to destroy Carthage: *hinc populum late regem belloque superbum | uenturum excidio Libyae* ("This people, sovereign over wide realms and haughty in war, would venture forth to Libya's destruction"). Virgil frequently uses the toponym Libya in this capacity, to denote either Carthage or the realm of Carthage's influence in general: cf. *Aen*. 1.301, 556; 4.36, 173, 257; 6.694, 843. Reinforcement of the idea that the harbor is an aspect of Carthage proper also appears to come after the fact in the mission Jupiter gives to Mercury at 1.297–304 and Venus's words of explanation to Aeneas at 1.335–39, which both imply that by making land at the harbor, the Trojans have entered what is essentially Dido's domain.

well incline the reader to understand the harbor as (an aspect of) Carthage itself.[37] That Virgil's harbor might have looked recognizably to some readers like another Carthage, as we have shown it could have, would in addition only have encouraged such an inclination to associate this harbor with the actual city which Aeneas eventually visits.

If we are inclined to adopt the lead that Servius hands us, and to see Virgil's text as encouraging a reading of the Libyan harbor as a symbolic stand-in for Carthage, the result is that Virgil's allusive harbor may hold for us (and others in Virgil's audience) not merely an evocative resemblance of one Carthage, but also an assimilation of *two* Carthages, the Old and the New. The effects of this assimilation repay examination; for, in allowing us to consider all the ways in which Carthago Nova—its meaning, its role, its significance in the Roman experience—might bear upon the role and function of Carthage in Virgil's text, they potentially open the door to a far more complex and rewarding interpretation of the allusion itself. The remainder of our paper will be devoted to exploring these possibilities generated by the assimilation of two Carthages. Although all the observations that follow will be made in the spirit of speculation, we suggest that the combined force of these may offer the most persuasive incentive, even if it cannot constitute hard evidence, for seeing more than a desire to create a convincingly realistic panorama behind Virgil's topographical allusion.

Let us start with the congruence of names to which Servius draws attention. Servius himself seems to have been unaware of any interpretative potential here (the mere coincidence of names seems in his judgment to be incentive enough for Virgil's choice of topographical model), but we will note that within the particular circumstances of Virgil's text, the juxtaposition of Carthage and Carthago Nova would produce no small amount of meaning by virtue of the peculiar etymology of the name *Carthago*, Punic for "new city" (Qrṯḥdšt)—a bit of trivia which would have been well known at Rome

[37] Another possibility is that the precedent of Naevius's *Bellum Punicum*, unquestionably an important model for the *Aeneid*'s first book and possibly for Book 4 as well, might have foreshadowed Aeneas's destination for educated members of Virgil's audience. It is debated whether Naevius depicted Aeneas visiting Dido at Carthage as Virgil does, but the storm which precedes Aeneas's landing is certainly in Naevius (Macrob. *Sat*. 6.2.31 = fr. 14 Strzelecki). A statement attributed to Varro by *Serv. Dan.* (on *Aen*. 4.682) that it was Dido's sister Anna who killed herself for love of Aeneas could also refer to events in Naevius's poem. For discussion see, *inter alia*, Mariotti 1955: 29–31; Barchiesi 1962: 477–82; Austin 1971: x–xi; Wigodsky 1979: 29–34; Goldberg 1995: 54–55.

thanks to a famous speech by Cato the Elder.[38] In the name Carthago *Nova*, one has an emphatic (over)translation of *Carthago*, the "New 'New City'"; thus an initial presentation of Carthage as a "New" Carthage would offer an apt (if overdetermined) explication of the status of Carthage in Virgil's narrative—a colony only recently established in a frontier territory by a distant mother city (Tyre), and a city which, upon Aeneas's arrival, is still in the process of being built (*Aen.* 1.421–29).

Along related lines, the assimilation of the two sites could also serve as a commentary upon the curiously unstable temporal status of Carthage in the *Aeneid*. Although at this point in the narrative Carthage is literally a new city, it is first introduced in the narrative as an ancient city, *urbs antiqua* (1.12), a distant perspective to which we return in certain historically charged scenes such as that of Dido's death (*non aliter quam si immissis ruat hostibus omnis | Karthago aut antiqua Tyros*, "Just as if Carthage or ancient Tyre were crumbling under the onslaught of enemies," 4.669–70). In a scene which presents Carthage in the guise of its homonymous colony, both perspectives, which are equally important to the concerns of Virgil's narrative, may be summoned and entertained to interesting effect: Virgil's audience could, to their surprise, recognise a different, younger locale in the place of the one that is meant, but the allusion itself would also be inescapably intertwined with, indeed predicated upon, the idea of the existence of an older city, and of the real Carthage in Africa being *antiqua* not *nova*. A potential association of Carthage with Carthago Nova can thus be read as a sophisticated way of illuminating the paradoxical nature of Carthage's status as both old and new in the *Aeneid*, and by extension, of drawing attention to the curiously duplex nature of the audience's perspective upon the poem's events.

A full exploration of the possibilities opened up by the assimilation of the two Carthages, however, must also take into account the notable role of Carthago Nova in Carthaginian and Roman history and the fruitful ways in which these historical resonances mesh with the concerns of Virgil's text. We may start with the fact that Carthago Nova was itself a Punic colony. Originally called Mastia, it was refounded as Qrṯḥdšt/Carthage by Hasdrubal in 228–27, and served as a base for the Carthaginian conquest of Spain. Ten years later, after the outbreak of the Second Punic War, it was from this city that Hannibal set out to invade Italy. But even before his threat emerged from Carthago

[38] ORF[4] fr. 194 Malcovati (= *Or.* fr. 37.4 Jordan; fr. 149 Cugusi); the speech in question was probably the *De Bello Carthaginiensi*. Cf. Maltby 1991: s.v. "Carthago"; Austin 1971 on *Aen.* 1.298.

Nova, the city already represented, for the Romans, a significant and menacing projection of Carthaginian power, one which emphasized "to the Iberian peoples and the outside world the confident resurgence of [Hasdrubal's] homeland"[39] after the First Punic War. These historical implications befit, and indeed underline, what Dido's newly-founded city in the *Aeneid* represents, in spite of the remarkably benign and even strangely familiar face it displays at first[40]: an existential threat to the inchoate Roman project.

Further circumstances surrounding Carthago Nova's founding and early years, as related by the early Roman historical tradition, also have implications for the way Virgil's audience might view Dido herself. Fabius Pictor reportedly claimed that the Carthaginian presence in Spain, for which Carthago Nova was an indispensable anchor, was in fact nurtured by Hasdrubal in an act of political rebellion against Carthage, and that the rogue state which grew out of Hasdrubal's efforts later enabled Hannibal, his brother-in-law, to precipitate conflict between Carthage and Rome against the wishes of the Carthaginian senate.[41] Similarly, Virgil's Dido founds her Carthage in an act of rebellion and separation from her mother city (Tyre), and although the act, in Venus's account of it (*Aen*. 1.340–68), reflects advantageously on her (even if it also renders her highly unconventional as a female leader, *dux femina facti*, 1.364), its legitimacy would also be intriguingly tempered, and the danger that it poses to Aeneas's project illuminated and reinforced, by the historical parallel of Fabius's secessionary Barcids.

By far a more important and powerful point of historical resonance in Virgil's topographical allusion, however, would be the memory of the siege and capture of the city in 209 by P. Cornelius Scipio, the future Africanus. Again, it is worth keeping in mind that the relevant intertexts for Virgil's allusion—Polybius, Livy, and possibly Ennius's *Annales*—make or are likely to have made a narrative of the siege the occasion for a description of the harbor. On this basis, Virgil's evocation of the harbor of Carthago Nova could well

[39] Hoyos 2011a: 212.

[40] The busy building site viewed by Aeneas at *Aen*. 1.421–29 recalls nothing so much as Rome itself in the 20s, especially in the mention of a theater (427–28), a highly anachronistic concept in a mythical setting: see further Austin 1971 on 1.429.

[41] Q. Fabius Pictor *FRHist* F22 = Polyb. 3.8.1–8 (with commentary at *FRHist* 3.38–39). Polybius vehemently criticizes Fabius's version of events, and professes to include it mainly as an encouragement to his reader to be skeptical of the Roman's account (3.8.9–9.5). For a modern discussion of the Barcids' relations with the mother city, and the value of Fabius's analysis, see Hoyos 2011a: 212–13.

have held, for those who recognized it, a reminder of the battle that was fought in that famous harbor. But given how critical the capture of Carthago Nova was to Rome's fortunes in the Second Punic War, it can fairly be said that any reference to the location in a Latin text—to say nothing of a text as explicitly focused upon the historical consequences of the Romano-Carthaginian relationship as Virgil's—might have conjured the memory of the event.

The capture of Carthago Nova was a noteworthy moment in Roman history for several reasons. Not the least among these is that it marked a decisive turning point in the Spanish theater of the Second Punic War, and to a great extent, in the broader conflict itself. Two years earlier, the Romans had come close to being driven out of Spain when their commanders, the elder P. Cornelius Scipio and his brother Gnaeus, were killed in the Segura Valley and their forces nearly annihilated.[42] With Carthago Nova in their possession by the spring of 209, however, the Romans were able within five years to reverse their losses in Spain entirely, expelling the Carthaginians from the territory[43] and using the financial gains reaped from the silver mines near Carthago Nova and in Turdetania to the west to turn the tables of the wider conflict decisively in their favor.[44]

Carthago Nova's capture also marked the entrance upon history's stage of the man destined to conclude the war and defeat Hannibal, P. Cornelius Scipio. It was a debut made under remarkable circumstances, and one which the future Africanus handled with extraordinary grace under pressure. A year before the engagement, Scipio had been appointed to command of the Roman forces in Spain at the unprecedented age of 25, with hardly any experience of high office,[45] despite the trenchant skepticism of his countrymen[46] and

[42] Lowe 2000: 39. For a more detailed account of this ultimately disastrous campaign, see Lazenby 1978: 125–32; Richardson 1986: 31–42; Scullard 1970: 32–38.

[43] One notes it is with a certain hindsight that Livy can put in Scipio's mouth the plausible claim that in "this one city [his soldiers] would be capturing the whole of Spain" (*in una urbe uniuersam ceperitis Hispaniam*, 26.43.3).

[44] Barceló 2011: 364.

[45] Livy 26.18. The appointment was most unusual in its conferral of *imperium pro consule* upon a *privatus*, and moreover one who had not held any office higher than that of curule aedile (in 213): see further Lazenby 1978: 132–33; Richardson 1986: 45–46.

[46] The procedure for electing Scipio to the command is obscure, but had irregular features, and the appointment of a more seasoned commander, M. Iunius Silanus, to assist Scipio, along with limitations placed by the Senate on the two generals' tenure of command, point to a measure that many in Rome found controversial; see further Richardson 1986: 45–46.

the fact that his own father and uncle were the commanders who earlier had nearly lost Spain to the Carthaginians (at the cost of their lives). At stake in his daring assault on Carthago Nova were not only Rome's fortunes, then, but also those of his family, who had gambled everything on the military enterprise of subjugating Spain.[47] Carthago Nova's capture—undoubtedly "one of the most daring exploits accomplished in the whole Hannibalic War," as one modern historian has put it[48]—put both back on a firm footing while thoroughly vindicating Scipio's talent for military leadership. The remarkable luck Scipio enjoyed during his risky venture also helped, in the popular tradition at least, to launch his reputation for being a favorite of the gods (a quality eventually immortalized in the so-called "Scipionic Legend")[49]: both Polybius and Livy relate how Scipio, prior to the siege, promised his soldiers the aid of Poseidon-Neptune in capturing Carthago Nova,[50] and saw that promise honored in dramatic fashion when a miraculous change of tide in the harbor made possible a successful assault of the city from behind its defenses (Polyb. 10.11.7, 14.11–12; Livy 26.45.9).[51]

Not a few of these elements which make the siege distinctive and memorable in Roman tradition would resonate productively with several strands in Virgil's narrative at the moment of the Trojans' arrival in Libya. To begin

[47] On the elder P. Scipio's role in formulating and pushing the strategy of confronting the Carthaginians in Spain, see Richardson 1986: 31–35.

[48] Scullard 1970: 40.

[49] On the Scipionic legend in general, see Scullard 1970: 19, 235–37; Haywood 1933: 1–29; on its genesis in the events of the battle of Carthago Nova, see also Walbank 1967b.

[50] Virgil's narrative offers a curious parallel to this point, in that it is also a timely intervention by Neptune that allows Aeneas and his men to gain the safety of the Carthago-Nova-like harbor. Although to call it deliberately engineered on Virgil's part might be to go too far, it is not impossible that this coincidence would help in recalling or reinforcing a reminder of the siege at the moment of Aeneas's arrival in the harbor.

[51] This, admittedly, is not quite the version of events the historians endorse. Rather, both Polybius and Livy allege that Scipio in fact learned well in advance of the battle of a natural and predictable change in the tide of the lagoon, and knowingly fabricated the miraculous explanation of the god's intervention in order to inspire confidence in his leadership. However, the aggressive efforts of both historians, particularly Polybius (cf. 10.9.2–3), to demythologize Scipio's "miracle" do betray the outlines of a "vulgate" story which could have constituted the foundation of the Scipionic legend. (Haywood 1933: 14 reads Polyb. 10.9.2–3 as suggesting that the "miracle" at Carthago Nova was foundational to the Scipionic legend: "That spectacular exploit must have seemed most 'divine' of all.") A comprehensive modern analysis of the battle's events, including a discussion of the mysterious tide (a problem which has vexed many historians of the siege), can be found in Lowe 2000.

with the remarkable personal story contained within the broader narrative of the siege, we suggest that a reminder of Carthago Nova in the Libyan harbor might enable and encourage one to view Aeneas as a mythical forerunner of Scipio. The parallels, while not precise, are close and numerous enough to encourage the association. Like Scipio, Aeneas is the head of a cause in desperate straits (albeit not quite so newly-minted or inexperienced as a leader), recently bereft of his father, who labors under the burden of preserving his nation and family line.[52] And although Virgil's hero cannot be said to enjoy the favor of the gods free of complications, as Scipio might have seemed to at the battle of Carthago Nova and in his career generally,[53] he is nevertheless unquestionably a man possessed of his own version of the "Scipionic legend": Aeneas is dear to the gods, destined to enjoy a divine status in his afterlife, and fated to succeed in his mission in large part thanks to the favor of Jupiter.[54]

This assimilation of Aeneas and Scipio would be a quite productive one for Virgil's poem for several reasons. Obviously it underscores Aeneas's role as a bereaved embodiment of authority, and suggests that Virgil's hero will in a similar manner, in spite of the grave difficulties which face him at present, gloriously realize his duty as a Roman leader in the fullness of time. But the association is also one which, in the shorter term, projects expectations that

[52] It is tempting to compare how Scipio is presented in the historiographical tradition with the famous speech of exhortation which Aeneas gives on the coast of Libya (1.198–207), even though we cannot be sure of any direct connection between these scenes. Both Polybius and Livy depict the general prefacing his assumption of his duties as commander at Carthago Nova with speeches of reassurance, with Livy's Scipio, in particular, giving free rein to themes of *pietas* as might be expected in a Roman text (Polyb. 10.6.1–2; Livy 26.41). Aeneas's speech, for its part, has a comparably *de profundis* quality, dwelling on past sufferings but insisting that the future is bright because the Trojans have the gods on their side: "Nowhere else does Aeneas speak to his men in this fashion, nowhere else with such emotion" (Clausen 2002: 20).

[53] One may reflect, for instance, on the personal cost to Aeneas's happiness of following Jupiter's orders to leave Carthage, even though they also serve to remind Aeneas of how his only chance of true fulfilment lies in doing his duty by his family and people (*Aen*. 4.340–61).

[54] Jupiter Optimus Maximus was the god with whom Scipio became most closely associated throughout his career, even though it was a story involving Neptune's aid which supposedly launched Scipio's "legend": see literature cited above, n49. Tradition held that Aeneas became Iuppiter Indiges (Jupiter the "Ancestor") upon his death (Livy 1.2.6; cf. Weinstock 1971: 10, 10n6); in Virgil's poem, his close identification with Jupiter becomes especially prominent during his duel with Turnus in Book 12 (see further, e.g., Hardie 1986: 147–54, 177–80; Putnam 1995; Tarrant 2012: 329 on 12.923–24).

(quite pertinently for Virgil's narrative concerns) cast Aeneas in a rather more ambivalent light. This is especially true if we take into account that a persistent historical tradition made the capture of Carthago Nova the context for a celebrated display of Scipio's virtue of sexual *continentia*: Polybius (10.19.3–7), Livy (26.50), Valerius Maximus (4.3.1), Silius Italicus (15. 268–71) and others relate, with mild variations, Scipio's refusal after the capture of the city to accept a beautiful Spanish captive, who was offered to him in spite of her betrothal to a Spanish prince.[55] This popular episode, if recalled as a part of Aeneas's association with Scipio, might neatly anticipate the moral dilemma Aeneas faces at Carthage in his encounter with the comparably beautiful Dido. One could furthermore say it would appropriately make Aeneas subject to a certain level of moral scrutiny and indictment for his actions later in Book 1 and in Book 4: for whereas Scipio displays self-control in his dealings with a surpassingly attractive woman in an unfamiliar country, emphasizing instead his obligations as a public official and establishing lasting good relations with the native Spanish as the result of his actions (Livy 26.50.5; Polyb. 10.19.4–5; Val. Max. 4.3.1), Aeneas fails—initially at least—to control his attraction to Dido, creating an unacceptable alliance between Trojans and Carthaginians which ultimately sows the seeds of a destructive conflict. Ultimately, of course, Aeneas *will* display *continentia* and renounce his relationship with Dido, thereby allowing the history of Roman success to be resumed; however, his initial failure to remember the importance of sexual self-discipline, of subordinating personal pleasure to policy, may appear all the more conspicuous if he is made to seem in other respects like a convincing forerunner of Rome's greatest general.[56]

By far the most obvious (and disquieting) implication of a connection between Scipio and Aeneas, however, would concern the ultimate outcome of his stay at Carthage. If Aeneas is made to appear to arrive in Libya in a manner

[55] For further references see *FRHist* 3.344 (Valerius Antias F29 = Gell. 7.8.6). Antias seems to have been a (self-conscious) exception, claiming on the contrary that Scipio kept the captive.

[56] A number of other allusive models for the relationship of Aeneas and Dido articulate the same (or similar) moral dilemma confronted by Aeneas. The affair between Cleopatra and Mark Antony is of course an important historical point of contact (see further, e.g., Pease 1935: 24–28; Cairns 1989: 57; Weber 2002: 339; Hardie 2006: 31–32), but the mythical and epic models of Odysseus and Nausicaa on Scheria (Knauer 1964: 153–58); Jason and Medea at Colchis (Nelis 2001: 72); and Jason and Hypsipyle on Lemnos (Nelis 2001: 112–17, with further literature cited at 113n193) are also prominent in Virgil's text.

reminiscent of Carthago Nova's conqueror, it would surely be a keen reminder that, for all the charm and graciousness he exudes in his first appearance before Dido (*Aen*. 1.588–610), he is nevertheless fated to be a *hostis*, the founder of the race which will destroy Dido's descendants. Similarly, the ultimate effect of a hint of Carthago Nova's capture in the context of the Trojans' arrival in Libya would be to divest Virgil's audience of any illusion that the Trojans' accidental visit will be peaceful in its outcome. The very incongruity of such a reminder in this scene, the projection of militant attackers upon the desperate and unaggressive survivors of a storm, would be disquieting in a manner reminiscent of several other scenes from Books 1 and 4 which surely would have unsettled a Roman audience: the depiction of Aeneas moved to tears in the temple of his implacable enemy, Juno-Tanit (1.441–93), Dido's invitation to the shipwrecked Trojans to settle at Carthage and become one people with hers (1.572–74), and the assimilation of Aeneas and Dido's hunting party to a marriage ceremony (4.129–59), come especially to mind in this regard.[57]

That Virgil's Carthaginian episode is thoroughly sown with such moments of subtle malaise, moments which remind the audience of the very unnaturalness of a friendship between Carthage and Rome's forerunners, might seem to make such a projection redundant even if appropriate in its context. Yet among these moments, a proleptic glimpse in the Libyan harbor of the capture of Carthago Nova would still be singularly potent and sophisticated as a narrative device for the *Aeneid*. Coming where it does in Virgil's text, it would elegantly communicate what the Carthaginian interlude really is at its very outset: a sweeping aetiology of the conflict which would shape the Mediterranean world and define the Roman experience. Comparable moments in Virgil's poem—that is, moments which explicitly hint at the historical consequences of Aeneas's actions—are few, and come only near the end of the Carthaginian episode: apart from Dido's curse foretelling the rise of Hannibal (4.625–29), and the comparison of Dido's death to the fall of Carthage itself (4.667–71), there is only, perhaps, a simile comparing Aeneas's industrious men, in their haste to leave Carthage, to ants ravaging a field (4.401–7), an image which could hint at the eventual sack of the city

[57] On Aeneas's misreading of the Trojan War mural see, *inter alia*, Stanley 1965: 276–77; Johnson 1976: 103–4 ("What in the world does Aeneas see here that cheers him up?"); Horsfall 1990: 136–38; Fowler 1991: 31–33. Hardie 2006, building on Weber 2002: 338–40, discusses how insinuations of sibling incest contained within Aeneas's portrayal as Apollo (*Aen*. 4.143–50) and Dido's resemblance to Diana (1.498–504) add yet another disturbing dimension to the hunting scene.

by their historical descendants.[58] A memory of Carthago Nova at the beginning of Book 1 could thus be singularly powerful and jarring as a vision of things to come, for it will have come at a point when Virgil's audience has yet to be informed of the exact reasons why Aeneas's descendants are destined to "venture forth to Libya's destruction."[59] At the same time, on the other hand, it could also be read as bestowing a sense of symmetry upon the entire Carthaginian episode, in concert with the proleptic visions which close Book 4. Given that Virgil ends his aetiological tale with a vision of Carthage's final capture and destruction at the hands of Scipio Aemilianus, it indeed would not be anything but deliberate and appropriate for the very beginning of his tale, the arrival of the (future) Romans in Libya, to be presented in a way reminiscent of the capture of another Carthage by another Scipio,[60] and of an engagement which in actual history heralded, arguably more than any other battle, the beginning of the eclipse of the Carthaginian threat to Rome.[61]

Now that a full view is finally emerging of the potential complexity of Virgil's engagement with the historical tradition, it becomes possible for us to sum up why there is likely to be a reference to Carthago Nova at *Aen.* 1.159–69, and additionally for there to be a concerted and sophisticated program of meaning behind it. Undoubtedly Virgil's harbor bears a remarkable resemblance to the topography of the Spanish harbor (as presented in the

[58] Virgil's ants evoke the actions of highly organized, faceless troops who "pillage" a stack of corn (*farris aceruum ... populant*, 4.402–3), "carry spoils" (*praedamque ... conuectant*, 404–5) and "join ranks" (*agmina cogunt*, 406). On the militaristic language of this simile, see further Austin 1955: 125–26 ad loc. Skutsch 1985: 656–57 speculates that Virgil could have lifted the image of "a dark column march[ing] through a field" (*it nigrum campis agmen*, *Aen.* 4.404) from a description by Ennius of Carthaginian elephants on the march toward or through Italy (= *Ann.* 502 Sk.); if indeed so, the implication—not to mention historical irony—of Virgil's simile would be all the more fitting in its context.

[59] *Aen.* 1.19–22 (on the causes of Juno's hatred of Troy): *progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci | audierat Tyrias olim quae uerteret arces;| hinc populum late regem belloque superbum | uenturum excidio Libyae* ("She had heard that descendants of Trojan blood would one day topple the Tyrian towers; that this people, sovereign over wide realms and haughty in war, would venture forth to Libya's destruction").

[60] Worth noting, perhaps, is that when the Scipios are finally named in Virgil's poem they are recalled as the destroyers of Carthage (*Aen.* 6.842–43): *geminos, duo fulmina belli,| Scipiadas, cladem Libyae* ("The Scipios, two thunderbolts of war, the catastrophe of Libya").

[61] In view of the fact that Carthage was rebuilt as a Roman city after its capture and destruction, the Trojans' coming to Libya, if analogized to the capture of Carthago Nova, could also be read not only as an act with hostile repercussions but also as one which anticipates Rome's eventual conquest of Carthage itself.

historiographical tradition at least)—remarkable enough, judging from the surviving evidence, to have been deliberately engineered on the poet's part. A skeptical view, as we have mentioned, may hold the purpose of this allusion to be purely cosmetic; yet if one additionally considers the various associations that attend the location of Carthago Nova, and the peculiar circumstances of Virgil's narrative at the beginning of *Aeneid* 1—Aeneas's arrival at a city which his actions are fated eventually to destroy, told as part of an aetiological tale of the enmity between Carthage and Rome—it becomes difficult to imagine that a poet as sensitive to history as Virgil, and as consummately skilled at blending history and poetry, would not be alluding to the topography of Carthago Nova as a means of touching upon the city's historical significance and thereby anticipating, connecting and exploiting all at once the various strands of his aetiology of the Carthaginian Wars. In its name, origin, import in the career of Scipio Africanus, and finally the critical role it played in the Second Punic War, Carthago Nova is possessed of a significance which would answer in rich ways to the several elements of Virgil's Carthaginian episode, and which would accordingly make its exemplary harbor much more than an appealing model for a fictional locale. Worthy of rescue, then, is Servius's brief comment, *Hispaniensis Carthaginis portum putatur descripsisse*, from the bin of contempt that it has occupied for so long.

It may be objected, at the end, that all of this is a great deal to infer from a brief reminiscence of a Spanish landscape in Africa. But a subtle yet expansive reference to history by way of geography or topography is by no means atypical of Virgil's technique within the *Aeneid*. Examples of these abound, but it may suffice to mention two especially well-known instances: the various locations at the site of Rome trodden by Hercules and Aeneas in Book 8, which are crucial to an appreciation of the two heroes' visits to the city[62]; and the sojourn of the Trojans at the future site of Nicopolis, overlooking the location of the battle of Actium, which is also deliberate and significant.[63] This particular case which we have explored may still stand out for its telegraphic quality and the way one very famous location has been boldly transplanted to an entirely different part of the Mediterranean; but even then this would not be unparalleled in the poem. Readers of Virgil, for instance, have long noted a curious resemblance between the location which Turnus selects for an ambush at *Aen*. 11.522–31 and the setting of the Battle of the Caudine Forks as described by Livy (9.2.7–9).[64] Of course, to posit a connection between

[62] Gransden 1976: 29–36.

[63] Stahl 1998: 61–70.

[64] Gransden 1991 ad loc.; Horsfall 1982: 50 and 1985: 200.

Virgil and Livy here would require a leap of faith, as it would entail speculating that Virgil is alluding to a passage in a lost work of history (or, possibly, a lost historical epic) which also informed Livy's. But an implication that we are about to see a rendition of the notorious Roman disaster cannot be a vain one in light of how ironic and surprising it renders the denouement of the engagement between the Italians and Trojans, in which it is the former who are utterly routed, and in which Turnus abandons his carefully planned ambuscade moments before Aeneas would have sprung the trap.

In the end, our inability to appreciate the full meaning of some, or possibly most, of Virgil's topographical and geographical references surely is as much a consequence of the poverty of the surviving historiographical tradition as it is of the common misunderstanding of how the Romans conceived of places beyond which they intimately knew. Undoubtedly Virgil, like most other Romans, "got his places out of books,"[65] and the corollary of this is not that the landscapes of the *Aeneid* are inconsequential fabrications, but that their significance—whether mythological or historical—is inevitably opaque to us when so many of these books are lost. Among these books we may count not only the output of the vast majority of Rome's historians (writing in Greek as well as in Latin), but also Virgil's predecessors in the Roman epic tradition—Naevius and Ennius being only the most prominent among them—for whom historiography and poetry were part of the same enterprise[66]; indeed, as we have said, had more of Ennius's *Annales* or other accounts of the Second Punic War survived, we suspect the connection between Virgil's harbor and Carthago Nova would be much more transparent. The bold assimilation of two Carthages into one, and of the history of Carthago Nova into Virgil's aetiological poem, offers merely a fortunate glimpse of the depth and complexity of Virgil's engagement with a rich and incomplete historical tradition.

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[65] Horsfall 1985: 203, following Rehm 1932: 96–98.

[66] Attested authors of historical epics include A. Furius Antias (an epic on the Cimbrian War), M. Furius Bibaculus (the *Annales Belli Gallici*), Hostius (the *Bellum Histricum*), and P. Terentius Varro Atacinus (the *Bellum Sequanicum*); Cicero, too, (in)famously tried his hand at versifying recent events in the *Marius*, *De Consulatu Suo*, and *De Temporibus Meis*. See further Courtney 1993 on the surviving fragments of these historical poems.

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