

Translation and Interpretation: Reading Fagles Reading Virgil

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Ia. *Aeneid* 4.129-39:

Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit,
 it portis **iubare exorto** delecta iuuentus,
retia rara, plagae, lato uenabula ferro,
 Massylique ruunt equites et **odora canum uis.**
reginam thalamo cunctantem ad limina primi
 Poenorum exspectant, ostroque insignis et auro
 stat **sonipes** ac frena ferox spumantia mandit.
 tandem progreditur **magna stipante caterua**
 Sidoniam picto **chlamydem** circumdata limbo;
 cui pharetra ex **auro**, crines nodantur in **aurum**,
aurea purpuream subnectit fibula uestem.

Metaphrase by BWB:

Meanwhile, Aurora, rising, left Ocean. The chosen youth go [out] from the gates, the light of the sun having risen, the wide-meshed nets, snares, hunting spears with broad iron [blade], and the Massylian horsemen rush forth and the keen-scented strength of dogs (i.e., a pack of keen-scented dogs). The first men of the Phoenicians await at the thresholds the queen, delaying in the bed-chamber, and [the horse] of resounding hoof stands, outstanding in both purple and gold, and fierce[ly] chomps on the foaming reins. Finally she comes forth, with a great troop surrounding [her], having been encircled (i.e., clothed) in (lit., with respect to) a Sidonian mantle with embroidered border; her (lit., whose) quiver [is] of gold; her tresses are tied into a knot of (lit., into) gold, a golden pin fastens her purple garment below.

Fagles:

Meanwhile Dawn rose up and left her Ocean bed
and *soon as her rays have lit the sky*, an elite band
of young huntsmen streams out through the gates,
bearing the nets, wide meshed or tight for traps
and their hunting spears with broad iron heads,
troops of Massylian horsemen galloping hard,
packs of powerful hounds, keen on the scent.

Yet the queen *delays, lingering* in her chamber
with Carthaginian chiefs expectant at her doors.
And there her proud, mettlesome charger prances
in gold and royal purple, *pawing with thunder-hoofs*,
champing a foam-flecked bit. At last she comes,
with a great retinue crowding round *the queen*
who wears a *Tyrian cloak* with rich embroidered
fringe.

Her quiver is *gold*, her hair drawn up in a *golden*
torque
and a *golden* buckle clasps her purple robe in folds.

Mandelbaum:

Dawn came up meanwhile from the Ocean stream,
And *in the early sunshine* from the gates
Picked huntsmen issued: wide-meshed nets and
snares,
Broad spearheads *for big game*, Massylian horsemen
Trooping *with hounds in packs keen on the scent.*
But Dido lingered in her hall, as Punic
Nobles waited, and her mettlesome *hunter*
Stood nearby, cavorting in gold and scarlet,
Champing his foam-flecked bridle. At long last
The queen appeared with courtiers in a crowd,
A *short Sidonian cloak* edged in embroidery
Caught about her, at her back a quiver
Sheathed in *gold*, her hair tied up in *gold*,
And a brooch of *gold* pinning her scarlet dress.

cf. 1.496-97:

regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,
incessit **magna iuuenum stipante caterua.**

Fagles:

(...)

the queen aglow with beauty approached the temple,
Dido, *with massed escorts marching in her wake.*

Ib. *Aeneid* 6.201-11:

inde ubi uenere ad fauces graue olentis Auerni,
 tollunt se celeres liquidumque per aëra lapsae
 sedibus optatis gemina super arbore sidunt,
discolor unde auri per ramos aura refulsit.
 quale solet siluis brumali frigore uiscum
 fronde uirere noua, quod non sua seminat arbos,
 et croceo fetu teretis circumdare truncos,
talis erat species auri frondentis opaca
ilice, sic leni crepitabat **brattea** uento.
 corripit Aeneas extemplo auidusque refringit
cunctantem, et uatis portat sub tecta Sibyllae.

Metaphrase by BWB:

Thereupon, when they came to the jaws of foul-smelling Avernus, the swift [birds] raise themselves up and, having glided through the liquid air, sit above the twin tree on [their] chosen seats, from where different-colored air of gold shone through the branches. Just as in the woods in wintry cold the mistletoe is accustomed to flourish with new leaf, [the mistletoe] which its own tree does not bear, and [is accustomed] to surround the smooth trunks with yellow offspring, such was the appearance of leafy gold in the shady holm-oak, [and] thus in the light breeze the foil rustled. Aeneas snatches [it] at once and eager[ly] breaks [it] off, as it clings (lit., delaying), and he carries it beneath the halls of the prophetess Sibyl.

Fagles:

And once they reached the foul-smelling gorge of
 Avernus,
 up they veered, quickly, then slipped down through
 the clear air
 to settle atop the longed-for goal, the twofold tree,
its green
a foil for the breath of gold that glows along its branch.
 As mistletoe in the dead of winter's icy forests
 leafs with life on a tree that never gave it birth,
 embracing the smooth trunk with its pale yellow
 bloom,
so glowed the golden foliage against the ilex evergreen,
so rustled the sheer gold leaf in the light breeze.
 Aeneas grips it at once—*the bough holds back*—
 he tears it off in his zeal
 and bears it into the vatic Sibyl's shrine.

Lombardo:

But when they came to the jaws of Avernus,
 With its foul smell, they ascended swiftly,
 And then, gliding down through the limpid air,
 They sat side by side on their chosen perch,
 A tree through whose branches there shone
A discordant halo, a haze of gold.
During winter's cold, deep in the woods,
Mistletoe blooms with strange leafage
On a tree not its own and entwines
The burl'd branches with its yellow fruit.
 Such was *the gold seen on the dark ilex,*
 And so rustled its *foil* in the gentle breeze.
 Aeneas seized it at once, *and though the bough*
Hesitated, he broke it off eagerly and brought it
 Safely back beneath the Sibyl's roof.

Ic. *Aeneid* 12.938-49:

stetit acer in armis

Aeneas uolvens oculos dextramque repressit;
 et iam iamque magis **cunctantem** flectere sermo
 coeperat, infelix umero cum apparuit alto
 balteus et notis fulserunt cingula bullis
Pallantis pueri, uictum quem uulnere Turnus
strauerat atque umeris inimicum insigne gerebat.
 ille, **oculis** postquam **saeui monumenta doloris**
 exuuiasque **hausit**, furiis accensus et ira
 terribilis: ‘tunc hinc spoliis indute **meorum**
eripiare mihi? Pallas te hoc uulnere, Pallas
 immolat et poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.’

Metaphrase by BWB:

Aeneas stood fierce in his arms, moving his eyes,
 and he restrained his right hand; and now [Turnus']
 speech had begun to bend him as he hesitated more
 and more, when the unlucky baldric appeared high
 up on [Turnus'] shoulder, and the swordbelt of the
 youth Pallas with its familiar studs gleamed,
 [Pallas] whom Turnus had defeated and laid low
 with a wound, and [whose] enemy insignia
 [Turnus] now bore on his shoulders. After he drank
 in with his eyes the reminder of his savage grief,
 [Pallas'] spoils, inflamed by rage and dreadful in
 his wrath, that one [said]: “Are you now to be
 taken from me here, clothed [as you are] in the
 spoils of my people? Pallas offers you up with this
 wound, Pallas, and exacts his penalty from your
 defiled blood.”

Fagles:

Aeneas, ferocious in armor, stood there, *still*,
 shifting his gaze, and held his sword-arm back,
holding himself back too as Turnus' words began
 to sway him more and more ... when all at once
 he caught sight of the fateful sword-belt of Pallas,
 swept over Turnus' shoulder, gleaming with
 shining studs
 Aeneas knew by heart. *Young Pallas*, whom Turnus
 had *overpowered*,
 taken down with a wound, and now his shoulder
 flaunted
 his enemy's battle-emblem *like a trophy*. Aeneas,
 soon as *his eyes drank in* that plunder,--*keepsake*
of his own savage grief—flaring up in fury,
 terrible in his rage, he cries: “Decked in the spoils
 you stripped *from the one I loved*—*escape my clutches?*
Never—
 Pallas strikes this blow, Pallas sacrifices you now,
 makes you pay the price with your own guilty
 blood!”

Fitzgerald:

Fierce under arms, Aeneas
 Looked to and fro, *and towered*, and stayed his hand
 Upon the sword-hilt. Moment by moment now
 What Turnus said began to bring him round
From indecision. Then to his glance appeared
 The accursed swordbelt surmounting Turnus'
 shoulder,
 Shining with its familiar studs—the strap
Young Pallas wore when Turnus wounded him
And left him dead upon the field; now Turnus
 Bore that enemy token on his shoulder—
Enemy still. For *when the sight came home to him*,
 Aeneas raged at *the relic of his anguish*
Worn by this man as trophy. Blazing up
 And terrible in his anger, he called out:
 “You in your plunder, *torn from one of mine*,
Shall I be robbed of you? The wound will come
 From Pallas: Pallas makes this offering
 And from your criminal blood exacts his due.”

II. *Aeneid* 7.493-99:

hunc procul errantem rabidae uenantis Iuli
 commouere canes, fluuio cum forte secundo
 deflueret ripaque aestus uiridante leuaret.
 ipse etiam eximiae laudis succensus amore
 Ascanius curuo derexit spicula cornu;
nec dextrae erranti deus afruit, actaque multo
 perque uterum sonitu perque ilia uenit harundo.

Fagles:

This fine beast,
 straying from home, chanced to be floating down a
 stream,
 cooling off on a grassy bank when the frenzied hounds
 of the hunter Iulus started it—Iulus himself, fired
 with a love of glory, aimed a shaft from his tensed
 bow
and Allecto steadied his trembling hand and the arrow
 shot
 with a whirring rush and pierced through womb and
 loins.

Mandelbaum:

But while he
 was wandering far off, the maddened dogs
 of hunter Iulus startled him, just as
 he chanced to swim downstream to cool his heat
 along the green banks. Now Ascanius
 himself, inflamed with love of praise, had aimed
 an arrow from his curving bow; *some god*
did not allow his faltering hand to fall;
 the shaft was driven, hissing loud; it pierced
 both flank and belly.

Lombardo:

The stag had wandered far from home
And, having swum downstream, was cooling off
On the green riverbank when Iulus' dogs
Started it running. Ascanius himself,
Eager for glory, aimed an arrow
From his curving bow, *and the goddess steadied
His trembling hand.* The reedy shaft
Whistled through the air and pierced
The stag's belly and flank.

Fitzgerald:

Now as he wandered far from home, the hounds
Of Iulus on the hunt, furiously barking,
Started the stag. He had been floating down
A river, keeping cool by the green bank.
Ascanius himself, now on the chase
And passionate for the honor of the kill,
Let fly a shaft from his bent bow; *Allecto's
Guidance did not fail his hand or let him
Shoot amiss,* and the arrow whizzing loud
Whipped on to pierce the belly and the flank.

III. *Aeneid* 1.494-504:

Haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda uidentur,
 dum stupet, obtutuque haeret defixus in uno,
 regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido,
 incessit magna iuuenum stipante caterua.
 Qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi
 exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae
 hinc atque hinc glomerantur oreades; illa
 pharetram
 fert umero, gradiensque deas supereminet omnis
 (Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus):
 talis erat Dido, talem se laeta ferebat
 per medios, instans operi regnisque futuris.

Metaphrase by BWB:

While these things appear to Dardanian Aeneas to be marvelled at, while he stands agape and clings fastened on one view, the queen proceeds to the temple, Dido, most beautiful in appearance, with a great band of youths thronging about. Just as [when] Diana trains [her] choruses on the banks of Eurotas or along the ridges of Cynthus, [Diana] whom a thousand mountain nymphs follow (lit., having followed) and are gathered from this side and that: she bears a quiver on her shoulder and, stepping, surpasses all the [other] goddesses (joy possesses the silent heart of Latona): such was Dido, so she carried herself, happy, urging on the work and the future kingdoms through the midst [of those about her].

Fagles:

And now

as Trojan Aeneas, gazing in awe at the scenes of Troy,
 stood there, spellbound, eyes fixed on the war alone,
 the queen aglow with beauty approached the temple,
 Dido, with massed escorts marching in her wake.
 Like Diana urging her dancing troupes along
 the Eurotas' banks or up Mount Cynthus' ridge
 as a thousand mountain-nymphs crowd in behind her,
 left and right—with quiver slung from her shoulder,
 taller than any other goddess as she goes striding on
 and silent Latona thrills with joy too deep for words.
 Like Dido now, striding triumphant among her people,
 spurring on the work of their kingdom still to come.

Dryden, *Aeneis* 1.695-708:

Thus while the Trojan prince employs his eyes,
 Fixed on the walls with wonder and surprise,
 The beauteous Dido, with a numerous train,
 And pomp of guards, ascends the sacred fane.
 Such on Eurotas' banks, or Cynthus' height,
 Diana seems; and so she charms the sight,
 When in the dance the graceful goddess leads
 The choir of nymphs, and overtops their heads.
 Known by her quiver, and her lofty mien,
 She walks majestic, and she looks their queen:
 Latona sees her shine above the rest,
 And feeds with secret joy her silent breast.
 Such Dido was; with such becoming state,
 Amidst the crowd, she walks serenely great.

cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 6.99-109 (Fagles' translation):

Now fed to their hearts' content, the princess and her
 retinue
 threw their veils to the wind, struck up a game of ball.
 White-armed Nausicaa led their singing, dancing beat ...
 as lithe as Artemis with her arrows striding down
 from a high peak—Taygetus' towering ridge or
 Erymanthus—
 thrilled to race with the wild boar or bounding deer,
 and nymphs of the hills race with her,
 daughters of Zeus whose shield is storm and thunder,
 ranging the hills in sport, and Leto's heart exults
 as head and shoulders over the rest her daughter rises,
 unmistakable—she outshines them all, though all are lovely.
 So Nausicaa shone among her maids, a virgin, still unwed.