VIRGIL'S CAMILLA AND THE TRADITIONS OF CATALOGUE AND ECPhRASIS (AENEID 7.803–17)

Hos super advenit Volsca de gente Camilla
tagmen agens equitum et florentis aere catervas,
bellatrix, non illa colo calathisve Minervae
femineas adsueta manus, sed proelia virgo
dura pati cursuque pedum praevertere ventos.
illa vel intactae segetis per summa volaret
gamina nec teneras curru laesisset aristas,
vel mare per medium fluctu suspensa tumenti
ferret iter celeris nec tingeret aequore plantas.
illam omnis tectis agrisque effusa iuventus
turbaque miratur matrum et prospectat euntem,
attonitis inhians animis ut regius ostro
velet honos levis umeros, ut fibula crinem
auro internectat, Lyciam ut gerat ipsa pharetram
et pastoralem praefixa cuspide myrtum.  

(Aeneid 7.803–17)

1. ETHNOGRAPHY, CATALOGUE, AND PATTERNS OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The placement of Camilla’s portrait at the close of the catalogue of Italian forces in Aeneid 7 has provoked more than its share of puzzlement. Many commentators have wondered at Virgil’s intention in giving the “place of honor” (Ehrenplatz) to a woman, especially since she is unheard of elsewhere in the tradition surrounding the Trojan invasion of Italy.1 Williams offers a solution to the puzzle by effectively excluding her from the catalogue, seeing in the list a symmetrical design framed by the two most mighty warriors, Mezentius and Turnus; Camilla is “a sort of pendant, bringing the book to a close on a note of strange


beauty.” Recently, Courtney has suggested that the solution lies not in attempting to exclude Camilla from the list proper, but in observing the parallel between her placement and that of Artemisia in Herodotus’ catalogue of Persian and allied forces before Salamis (7.61–99). Courtney suggests that a now lost epic catalogue of the army of Xerxes in the *Persica* of Choerilus of Samos also ended with Artemisia, and so served as intermediary between Herodotus and Virgil.

The question of catalogue structure is a good one, for it is reasonable to suppose that, as so often in the *Aeneid*, here too Virgilian design is meaningful. The solutions offered by scholars from Williams to Courtney, however, tend to consider form as something distinct from function, and generally ignore the role of the catalogue as a whole in the larger narrative. The question remains, therefore: Why a woman at the end of Virgil’s catalogue?

Perspective provides an important clue. From the standpoint of Virgil’s audience, the leaders and troops surveyed in the catalogue are, however sympathetic, the enemy: enemies of Aeneas and the Trojan cause, enemies of the “progress,” however ironically sensed, of Roman civilization. Virgil’s review of Italian forces plays upon the national sympathies of his readers: the old place-names and stories evoke the prehistory of Rome, without themselves being Roman in any historical sense; it is rather only through defeat of these forces that a new national identity will be forged. In this context, the naming of a female as last


4 Courtney (note 1 above) 5–8.

among the leaders is ominous, with its overtones of abnormality and weakness: a woman’s leadership has already once in the Aeneid been proven problematic.\(^6\)

On this point the analogy provided by Herodotus proves instructive, for Artemisia too is listed last among enemy forces. She is also of interest to Herodotus for nationalistic reasons: like him, Artemisia is from Halicarnassus. Nonetheless, she and he are at opposite poles in respect to the European Greeks, for she is allied with Xerxes. Herodotus admires her; at the same time, he notes that even Xerxes himself saw her relative audacity as ominous, and as an indictment of his men: οἶ μὲν ἄνδρες γεγόναοί μοι γυναῖκες, αἰ δὲ γυναῖκες ἄνδρες (8.88.3).\(^7\)

The link between Herodotus and Virgil, at least the most important one, is to be found in the ethnographical tradition. Pembroke, Hartog, and others have shown that, in exploring the customs of non-Greek peoples, Herodotus draws upon the Greek ethnographical convention of inversion, which finds evidence in other cultures for behaviors that are “unnatural” among the Greeks.\(^8\) Again and again, the implication of inversion is that, among the Greeks, it is unnatural, οὐ κατὰ νόμον, for women to have any sort of dominant role or to be particularly visible in the company of men. In accordance with this pattern, we find that almost none of the women who play an active role in Herodotus’ history are themselves European or ethnic Greek in origin or are Greek allies; conversely, European or ethnic Greek women,


or women of peoples allied to the Greek cause, are generally passive, and frequently victims of rape.9

Similarly, Camilla’s behavior marks her as unnatural and un-Roman: “bellatrix, non illa colo calathisve Minervae / femineas adsueta manus, sed proelia virgo / dura pati” (7.805–7). Her lack of interest or skill in spinning and weaving precludes her from any association with the faithful passivity so valued by Roman men in their women,10 the image of whom Virgil will soon revise in a homely simile comparing the vigilance of Vulcan in his work on Aeneas’ new armor to that of a woman rising early to spin (8.407–14):

inde ubi prima quiues medio iam noctis abactae
curculio expulerat somnum, cum femina primum,
cui tolerare colo vitam tenuique Minerva
impositum, cinerem et sopitos suscitat ignis
noctem addens operi, famulasque ad lumina longo

9 S. Flory, The Archaic Smile of Herodotus (Detroit 1987) 41–46 discusses the prominence of the “vengeful queen” motif in the Histories. Of those he discusses—Candaules’ wife, Amyris, Nitocris the Egyptian, Nitocris the Babylonian, Phereetima, Amestrina—one is allied with the European cause (a point not observed by Flory). Phereetima is of course ethnically Greek, and so it is appropriate that, when she first requests from Euelthon of Cyprus an army to help her return to power in Cyrene, he refuses, and sends her instead a spindle, distaff, and wool as befitting her womanly nature (4.162.3–4); the horrible death she eventually suffers (4.205) seems intended to indict a woman who, although Greek, had behaved like an Asiatic queen. The most effective, if not personally powerful, Greek woman in the Histories is the wife of Pisistratus and daughter of Megacles (1.61.1–2): because Pisistratus refused to have regular (οὐ κατὰ νόμον) intercourse with her, and so prevented her from becoming pregnant, she complained to her mother; Megacles was then able to use political muscle to drive Pisistratus out of Attica. Noteworthy in this story are two elements which limit and define the extent of the Greek woman’s sphere of influence: it is the father who takes direct vengeful action, not his daughter; and the daughter’s complaint is based on the fact that her husband has not permitted her to assume the “normal” role of a Greek wife, i.e., as a mother. Many of the motifs in this “historical” tale are identical to those related by Hesiod concerning Rhea, Kronos, and Gaia. Cf. also P. Walcot, “Herodotus on Rape,” Arethusa 11 (1978) 137–47 and C. Dewald, “Women and Culture in Herodotus’ Histories,” in Reflections of Women in Antiquity, ed. H. P. Foley (New York/London 1981) 91–125.

10 For the archetypal image linking wifely pudicitia and lanificium, see Livy’s Lucretia, 1.57.9; the epitaph of Claudia (CIL I2. 1211 = VI. 15346; ILS 8403) brings this scene to life. Note also the anecdote that Augustus required his daughters to learn spinning and weaving (Suet., Aug. 64.2). Cf. G. Williams, “Some Aspects of Roman Marriage Ceremonies and Ideals,” JRS 48 (1958) 18–29, and S. Dixon, The Roman Mother (Norman, OK 1988) 71–73.
exercet penso, castum ut servare cubile
coniugis et possit parvos educere natos:
haud secus ignipotens . . .

So Vulcan hurries to support Aeneas’ cause, acting to preserve, Virgil suggests, the Roman familia yet to come.\textsuperscript{11}

As we have seen, Virgil portrays Camilla’s lack of both interest and skill in women’s work as corresponding to her role as virgin warrior: the approximately one–and–one–half lines describing the domestic activities she forswears are balanced by approximately one line describing her martial devotion (806–7). In making Camilla’s virginity so prominent a feature in her characterization, Virgil suggests a parallel which he will later make explicit, viz., that between Camilla and an Amazon leader (“at medias inter caedes exsultat Amazon / unum exserta latus pugnae, pharetrata Camilla,” 11.648–49; cf. 655–63). The Amazon–type, i.e., warrior maiden, is a familiar ethnographical topos, representing a culture that is topsy–turvy in two respects: at least some of its women perform activities otherwise typical of men, and this same group of women maintains its autonomy by refraining from sexual intercourse.\textsuperscript{12} Most apt for the sake of comparison are the Sauromatae, alleged to be descendants of the Amazons and Scythians. Herodotus indicates that the women of this tribe do indeed marry, but not until after killing an enemy in battle (4.110–17); their Amazon ancestors characterize themselves as using the bow and arrow, and as being unacquainted with women’s work (ήμεις μὲν τὸξυομέν θε καὶ ἀκοντίζομεν καὶ ἱππαξώμεθα, ἔργα δὲ γυναικῆα οὐχ ἔμάθομεν, 4.114.3).\textsuperscript{13} Similarly, in his brief summary of the interrelationship between climate and ethnic character, the Hippocratic author of Airs, Waters, Places reports that the women of the Sauromatae do not marry until they have killed


\textsuperscript{13}It is noteworthy that Herodotus’ description of the Sauromatae, their women in particular, comes last in his brief catalogue of the tribes who surround the territory of Scythia.
three enemies; meanwhile, as long as they remain virgins, they are able to ride horses, shoot with bow and arrow, throw javelins, and fight the enemy: αἱ γυναίκες ἵππαξονται τε καὶ τοξεύονται καὶ ἀκοντίζουσιν ἄπο τῶν ἵπτων καὶ μάχονται τοῖς πολεμίοις, ἐως ἃν παρθένοι έσοιν, aer. 17. Their activities exactly parallel those of Camilla virgo: agmen agens equitum (804), Lyciam . . . gerat ipsa pharetram (816), (gerat) pastoralem præfixa cuspidem myrtum (817),14 bellatrix (805), proelia . . . / dura pati (806–7). It has been demonstrated elsewhere that the traditions of Greek ethnography, and in particular those represented in the Hippocratic Airs, Waters, Places, had a decisive influence on Virgil’s work;15 it is no coincidence, then, that in a catalogue describing non-Roman leaders, a place has been found for a woman whose leadership is an inversion of typical or normative roles for women in Roman society.16

We can now see that striking differences exist between Camilla and Artemisia. The marital status of the latter is given little significance by Herodotus; he tells us simply that she is widowed and the mother of a son, and finds in this second fact all the more reason to remark upon her valor (7.99.1).17 All in all, she appears to be much more a realistic precursor of the Hellenistic queens than a fantastical Amazon.18 Nonetheless, in narrative terms Artemisia and Camilla share two characteris-

14The likelihood that what Camilla carries is an iron–tipped javelin typical of nomadic peoples, rather than a herdsman’s staff, has been demonstrated recently by N. Tarleton, “Pastoralem præfixa cuspidem myrtum (Aeneid 7.817),” CQ 39 (1989) 267–70.


16Even in giving her a Lycian quiver, Virgil may well intend to point to a convention of ethnography, viz., that in Lycia alone does there appear to be evidence for matriliny: so Herodotus 1.173, and Heraclides. Lemb., FHG ii. 217; Nic. Dam., FGrHist 90F103(k); Nymphis, FGrHist 432F7, all cited by Pembroke (note 8 above) 18–29. Cf. also his article “The Last of the Matriarchs: A Study in the Inscriptions of Lycia,” JESHO 8 (1965) 217–47.

17The Suda s.v. Herodotus reports that the tyrant Artemisia was succeeded by her son Pisendelis, who in turn was succeeded by Lygdamis; it is because of the tyranny of the last of these that Herodotus left Halicarnassus.

tics besides their placement at the close of their respective catalogues: they are leaders of enemy troops, and so representative of the enemy; and, in spite of their personal excellence in battle and/or strategic shrewdness, they are doomed, along with their allies, to fail.19

We see, then, that a parallel based on ethnographical conventions exists between the placement of Artemisia in Herodotus’ catalogue and the placement of Camilla in Virgil’s catalogue. In both cases, ethnographical curiosity about the customs and society of “barbarians” is combined with a stereotype about powerful women to indict the peoples led by such women as either figuratively effeminate (in Herodotus’ case) or literally female (in Virgil’s case). Doubtless, this same design affected the structure of other literary catalogues now lost; Courtney has suggested, though without tangible proof, that such was the case with Choerilus’ Persica.20 But Herodotus is not the first to make the ethnographical topos of barbarian effeminacy an integral part of his narrative design; rather, the tradition has its beginnings in Homer, in a passage which Virgil appears to have in mind as he describes Camilla:

\[
\text{Nάστης αἱ Καρών ἡγήσατο βαρβαροφώνων, . . .}
\text{τών μὲν ἄν Ἀμφίμαχος καὶ Νάστης ἡγησάθην,}
\text{Νάστης Ἀμφίμαχος τε, Νομίμον ἀγλαὰ τέχνα,}
\]


20 It has recently been shown that Sempronia plays an identical role in the catalogue of conspirators in Sallust’s Bellum Catilinae (BC 25); see Boyd (note 19 above). It is clear that Virgil’s Aeneid 7 catalogue in turn influenced Ovid, who not only places Atalanta at the end of the Calydonian catalogue (Met. 8.316–28) but also describes her in language and images intended to recall Camilla: see especially 318–23, “rasilis huic summam mordebat fibula vestem, / crinis erat simplex, nodum collectus in unum; / ex umero pendens resonabat eburnea laevo / telorum custos, arcum quoque laeva tenebat. / talis erat cultu, facies, quam dicere vere / virgineam in pueru, puerilem in virgine possis”; see also N. Horsfall, “Epic and Burlesque in Ovid, Met. viii. 260ff.” CJ 74 (1979) 322. I find implausible the assertion by Courtney (note 1 above) 3 that Atalanta’s position last in the Calydonian catalogue is “not remarkable.”
These lines come from the close of Homer’s catalogue of forces allied to the Trojan cause (II. 2.816–77), and contain the last purely descriptive elements in the catalogue; the Carians Nastes and Amphimachus are followed only by the Lycians Sarpedon and Glaucus, who, though far more essential to the narrative proper of the Iliad than are the Carians, receive from Homer only the briefest of notices here as the catalogue closes: Σαρπηδῶν δ’ ἠρχεν Λυκίων καὶ Γλαύκος ἀμύμων / τηλόθεν ἐκ Λυκίης, Ξάνθου ἀπὸ δινήντος, 876–77. Rather, it is the Carians for whom Homer provides the last bit of ethnographical interest at this point; and his indication that they are βαρβαροφωνοι has attracted the most lively curiosity of modern commentators.21 Virgil notes his observance of the Homeric ordering by giving Camilla a quiver which is specifically Lycian (Lyciam pharetram, 816),22 but otherwise uses the Carians, not the Lycians, as his model. Even here, however, Virgil is selective: for him as for the ancient commentators, it is not the language spoken by the Carians so much as the ornament of one of their leaders that attracts attention. In saying that the Carian went to war χρυσὸν ἔχων, like a girl, Homer indicates not that the man carried gold weapons, but that he wore golden ornaments.23 While tactfully avoiding any


22 On the place of Lycia in ancient ethnographical writing, see also note 16 above.

23 Whether the relative δς of 872 refers to Nastes or to Amphimachus has been a matter of debate since antiquity: see Kirk (note 21 above). The scholia indicate that Aristarchus disagreed with Simonides’ (frag. 60P) interpretation of this passage in two ways: Aristarchus (rightly) believed Amphimachus to be the antecedent of δς, and that χρυσὸν refers not to ὀπλα but to κόσμον, as made clear by ἠτέ κούρη. Aristarchus goes on to compare Amphimachus with Euphorbus, who at II. 17.52 is described as having his hair bound with silver and gold: πλοχμοι θ’, οἱ χρυσὸ τε καὶ ἀργύρῳ ἐσφήκοντο; thus, at least for Aristarchus, Amphimachus’s ornamentation is likely to be specifically for the hair, as it is with Camilla. See H. Erbse, ed., Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem I (Berlin 1969) ad loc. For Virgil’s familiarity with the Homeric scholia, see R. R. Schlunk, The Homeric Scholia and the Aeneid (Ann Arbor 1974) esp. 1–7; this is an area of Virgilian scholarship which demands far more attention than it has yet received.
more explicit statement of his effeminacy, Homer thus suggests that the man's girlish extravaganza leads directly to his doom.24

With Homer in mind, let us look again at the appearance of Camilla which so astounds her viewers (814–16):

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\ldots \text{ut regius ostro}\\
\text{velet honos levis umeros, ut fibula crinem}\\
\text{auro internectat, \ldots}
\]

As commentators observe, her ornamentation here is not consistent with the extended narrative about her life and death in Aeneid 11.25 There we learn that, growing up as the daughter of a Volscian exile and devoted to Diana, Camilla is without any ornament other than the skin of a tiger: "pro crinali auro, pro longae tegmine pallae / tigridis exuviae per dorsum a vertice pendent" (11.576–77). Why does Virgil so openly contradict himself? It has been suggested that, with this detail as with others in Camilla's biography, good reason exists to believe that the narrative in Aeneid 11 remains in an unrevised state;26 the evidence here gathered for the function of ethnographical material in ancient catalogues, however, suggests that Virgil places Camilla so adorned at the close of Aeneid 7 to evoke a long tradition of alien effeminacy. In this instance, Camilla, elsewhere unornamented and austerely heroic, is marked by her garb as a harbinger of doom for the Italian cause.

24 Comparison of a man with a foolish girl occurs only once elsewhere in the Iliad, in the simile in which Achilles compares Patroclus to a frightened child: 16.7–10. Cf. H. Fränkel, Die homerischen Gleichnisse (Göttingen 1921) 89; C. Moulton, Similes in the Homeric Poems, Hypomnemata 49 (Göttingen 1977) 90; W. C. Scott, The Oral Nature of the Homeric Simile, Mnemosyne Suppl. 28 (Leiden 1974) 74. It is worth noting that G. Knauer, Die Aeneis und Homer, Hypomnemata 7 (Göttingen 1964) 440 (cf. also 96–98) cites only one suggestion that Homer’s Carians have found an echo in the Aeneid: F. G. Eichhoff, Etudes grecques sur Virgile ou recueil de tous les passages des poètes grecs imités dans les Bucoliques, les Géorgiques, et l’Enéide (Paris 1825) identified II. 2.871–72 as the model for A. 11.768–77 describing Chloeus, the effeminate priest to whom Camilla is fatally attracted. (I have not had direct access to Eichhoff’s work.)

A colleague has recently suggested that Dido's display of gold at A. 4.138–39 is similarly ominous; cf. my discussion of this passage below.


26 Cf., e.g., J. W. Mackail, ed., The Aeneid (Oxford 1930) 417–18; Fordyce (note 11 above) on 7.803.
2. ETHNOGRAPHICAL ΘΑΥΜΑΤΑ, ECPhRASIS, AND AN Omen

Herodotus explains the introduction of Artemisia to his catalogue by remarking that she is a great marvel: τῶν μὲν υνν ἄλλων οὐ παρα-
μένυμαι ταξιάρχων ὡς οὖχ ἀναγκαζόμενος, Ἀρτεμισίς δὲ, τῆς μά-
λιστα θώμα ποιεῦμαι ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα στρατευσαμένης γυναικός,
7.99.1. In doing so, he employs a convention which runs parallel to the
investigation of νόμοι in the ethnographical tradition, viz., the descrip-
tion of marvels and curiosities (θαυμάσια or θαύματα) found in foreign
lands; the more distant the land, the stranger its marvels tend to be.27 In
fact, the very designation of Artemisia as θώμα enhances her strange-
ness: there is an analogy here between the spatial ἐσχατία of localized
θώματα, like the Egyptian labyrinth (2.148), and the narrative ἐσχατία
of Artemisia at the close of Herodotus’ catalogue.28 She is at the end of
the list precisely because she is paradoxical; seeing is believing, and her
appearance here is credible only because she is visualized in such de-
tail.

Similarly, Virgil emphasizes the visual nature of Camilla’s appear-
ance among the Italian forces. After describing her entrance (hos super
advenit, 803), her status as warrior maiden (804–7), and the graceful
speed with which she surpasses the winds (807–11), Virgil describes
how the youths and women pour out of their homes and fields to look
upon her as she passes (812–14):

illam omnis tectis agrisque effusa iuventus

\textit{turbaque miratur matrum et prospectat euntem,}

\textit{attontis inhians animis . . .}

27 Trüdinger (note 8 above) 34–37; H. Barth, “Zur Bewertung und Auswahl des
Stoffes durch Herodotus (Die Begriffe, θώμα, \thetaωμάζω, θωμάσιος und θωμαστός),” \textit{Klio}
50 (1968) 93–110; A. B. Lloyd, \textit{Herodotus: Book II} v. 1, 141–47; Thomas (note 15 above) 4;
and Hartog (note 8 above) 243–49 [\textit{= Mirror} 230–37].

28 Barth (note 27 above) distinguishes between ethnographical θώματα (including
artistic and architectural marvels) and historical θώματα, and puts Artemisia in the latter
category (109): in such cases, θώμα and related words have the simple, positive function
of indicating outstanding virtue. In the former category, on the other hand, θώμα ranges
in meaning from ‘noteworthy’ to ‘astonishing’ to ‘marvelous’ to ‘abnormal’, and often
strongly underlines the visual aspect of a thing and its affect on its audience (107–8). This
distinction, however, seems to me to beg the question: the θώμα Artemisia is both note-
worthy for her excellence and an astonishing, even abnormal, marvel.
Servius reports that others have thought that Virgil specifies an audience of *matres* and *iuventus* so that the women, appropriately, may serve as an audience for Camilla’s ornaments, and the men as an audience for her weapons. He continues: “sed melior sensus est, si... accipiamus: ea enim sexus uterque miratur quae sunt posita contra opinionem, ut mirentur feminae arma in muliere, viri ornatum in bellatrice.”

Servius is right: as Virgil indicates with his threefold emphasis on how her audience looks at her, it is the paradoxical appearance of Camilla that adds to her fascination. She is a μέγα θάνατα. Equally curious, however, is an aspect of this scene which has gone unnoticed by Servius, namely, the fact that there is an audience at all. As we shall see, Virgil is especially fond of incorporating a viewer or viewers into his visual narratives in order to emphasize that what he is describing is something meant to be understood in pictorial terms.

As a start, it will be useful to review the narrative function of a catalogue within a larger composition. Williams observes that the function of a catalogue is much like that of an epic simile; although the latter is generally on a much smaller scale, both devices halt the narrative proper. A catalogue, he continues, offers “varied pictures”; the “reader’s view is not limited to the one place” or scene. On the catalogue in *Aeneid* 7, he comments: “the pictorial aspect of the presentation is most marked of all at the end when we are shown the onlookers watching Camilla’s arrival. . . ." All in all, he suggests, Virgil conceived the episode as a “great pageant, which in itself gave full scope for decorative writing.”

A similar awareness of the pictorial aspect of a catalogue appears in Myres’ description of the Herodotean episode. Observing that the catalogue is a major flaw in the symmetry of Book 7, he draws an analogy to the visual arts: “We are familiar with the contrast of structure and style, between metope and frieze in architecture, between medallion and zone in vase-painting, and between epic and dramatic literature. The presentation of armed forces, in line or in column, is an exemplary subject for a frieze. . . . Wherever it was placed in a pedi-

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29Serv. *ad* 7.813; his immediate concern is with whether or not this is an example of hysteron proteron.

30Williams (note 2 above) 147, 149; note that he calls Camilla “a sort of pendant.” Cf. his commentary (*The Aeneid of Virgil, Books 7–12* [London 1973]) on A. 7.64ff.: “in the final *cameo* of Camilla the emphasis on the visual aspect is very marked indeed” (italics mine).
mental composition, it necessarily interrupted rhythm and symmetry.”

I quote these two scholars at some length because, for however disparate reasons, each senses the pictorial nature of catalogue descriptions. Myres’ comparison of a literary catalogue to a monumental frieze is particularly apt: the sort of detailed description in which all action comes to a standstill and offers instead a snapshot, as it were, of the person or thing described shares much in common with the tradition of literary ecphrasis. Virgil offers one extended ecphrasis of a frieze, that on Juno’s Carthaginian temple (A. 1.466–93), which makes the interrelation of catalogue and ecphrasis abundantly apparent. The scenes and characters depicted here include the fleeing of the Greeks, Achilles routing the Trojans, the raid on Rhesus’s camp, the death of Troilus, the supplication of Athena by the Trojan women, the mutilation and ransoming of Hector’s body, Aeneas, Memnon, and Penthesilea with the Amazons. As Aeneas scans the images before him, he progresses in what is ostensibly a loose chronological order (cf. the ambiguous words videt Iliacas ex ordine pugnas, 456): he “reads” the scenes as they appear (although in fact the sequence is not purely and straightforwardly Homeric). The narrative follows a linear sequence complementing the linear design of the frieze. As with a catalogue, we read

34 The relative placement of scenes depicted in the literary ecphrases of, e.g., shields and woven tapestries is far more perplexing, since linear design provides no guide. Nonetheless, for the purpose of “reading” such scenes, their composers typically arrange them in a verse sequence that is logical and, when necessary, at least apparently chronological; cf. Thomas (note 33 above). D. Clay, “The Archaeology of the Temple to Juno in Carthage (Aen. 1.446–93),” CP 83 (1988) 202–4 finds ex ordine ironic, for he considers the panels in this ecphrasis not literally chronological, only psychologically so; and E. W. Leach, The Rhetoric of Space: Literary and Artistic Representations of Landscape in Republican and Augustan Rome (Princeton 1988) 311–18 discusses the ambiguity of visual representation in Virgil’s ecphrastic narrative, and associates it with Aeneas’ subjective emotionality as viewer. For an introduction to methodological approaches to the inter-
this ecphrasis as a series of scenes beginning, presumably, with what comes first and ending with what comes last temporally and logically. This sequential ordering is particularly noteworthy at the end of the ecphrasis. Virgil describes the two last and greatest opponents of the Greeks besides Hector himself (489–93):

[agnovit]
Eoasque acies et nigri Memnonis arma.
ducit Amazonidum lunatis agmina peltis
Pentesilea furens mediisque in milibus ardet,
aurea subnectens exsertae cingula mammæ
bellatrix, audetque viris concurrere virgo.

Memnon and Penthesilea were introduced to the Trojan cycle by Arctinus in the Aethiopis; Achilles’ defeats of these two Trojan allies appear to have been among the major episodes in this poem (Procl., Chr. pp. 105–6 Allen). Our evidence for the poem is generally scanty, but one feature at least is clear from Proclus: viz., the description of Penthesilea’s encounter with Achilles preceded Memnon’s appearance on the scene. Thus, when Virgil describes the scenes on the temple frieze, he reverses the traditional epic order, putting Penthesilea in the most prominent final position; and he underlines his intention to make her stand out more than Memnon by giving her three verses to Memnon’s one.35

Of course, any number of reasons may be adduced to explain the position in which Virgil locates Penthesilea. First and foremost is the fact that he intends now to introduce Dido to the poem; and the immediately subsequent passage, comparing Dido’s entrance upon the scene to that of Artemis among her nymphs, establishes a number of features important in Virgil’s subsequent characterization of Dido and hints at an elaborate and subtle network of correspondences in the Aeneid. By


35 W. Clausen, Virgil’s Aeneid and the Tradition of Hellenistic Poetry (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1987), following Heinze (note 25 above) 81, believes that Triphiodorus is independent of Virgil, and that, where the former’s sequence is similar to the latter’s, as it is here, both are drawing on a “traditional” choice and arrangement of scenes: 131–32, n. 12 and 138, n. 27. Clausen does not, however, observe the difference in the Aethiopis–sequence as indicated by Proclus.
concluding his ecphrasis proper with the depiction of another dux fena-
mina, whose end at the hands of Achilles, although repressed by Virgil, 
would be well known to his readers, the poet adumbrates the future of 
Dido’s passion for Aeneas; at the same time, he foreshadows the ap-
pearance of Camilla upon the scene, as well as her ultimate doom.36 We 
have already seen that Camilla partakes of the literary tradition sur-
rounding the Amazons; another look at his description of Penthesilea 
(bellatrix; audet . . . viris concurrere virgo) shows that Virgil intends her 
to presage the Volscian leader. I would suggest that he does so not only 
with his choice of diction, but also by exploiting the similarity between 
ecphrasis and catalogue in his positioning of the two warrior maidens. 
As in the tradition of literary catalogues, the appearance of a female at 
the conclusion of the temple–frieze ecphrasis is implicitly ominous for 
the forces with which she is allied.37 

By means of both stylistic and structural echoes, then, Virgil sug-
gests an analogy between catalogue and ecphrastic narrative. The ob-
vious function of ecphrasis is vividness, the emulation of an object’s 
visual nature, or the creation of the illusion of visualization, through 
language.38 Virgilian ecphrases are distinctive in their tendency to place 
emphasis as well on the audience looking at the object visualized. A 
consideration of the three major ecphrases in the Aeneid will illustrate 
my meaning:

Juno’s temple at Carthage:
“... animum pictura pascit inani / multa gemens, largoque umectat flu-
mine vultum,” (1.464–65)

“Haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda videntur; / dum stupet obtutuque 
haeret defixus in uno,” (1.494–95)

36 For suggestions of equivalence between Camilla and Dido, see K. Stanley, 
“Irony and Foreshadowing in Aeneid, I, 462,” AJP 86 (1965) 275–76; also note 6 above, 
and the discussion below. Further on Penthesilea, see W. R. Johnson, Darkness Visible: A 
Study of Vergil’s Aeneid (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1976) 104.

37 Another noteworthy parallel exists in the fact that, just as Vergil positions Turn-
us, the greatest male opponent of Aeneas, immediately before Camilla in the catalogue 
of Aeneid 7, so he positions Memnon, the greatest male foe of Achilles in the Aethiopis, 
immediately before Penthesilea in the series of scenes depicted on the temple frieze.

38 G. Zanker, Realism in Alexandrian Poetry (London 1987) 39–42 et passim pro-
vides a valuable introduction to the subject.
The temple doors at Cumae:
“. . . quin protinus omnia / perlegerent oculis,” (6.33–34)39

The shield of Aeneas:
“ille deae donis et tanto laetus honore / expleri nequit atque oculos per
singula volvit, / miraturque,” (8.617–19)
“Talia per clipeum Volcani, dona parentis, / miratur,” (8.729–30)

Spectators are present for all three, not just passively observing what they see but responding passionately and emotionally—responding, in fact, as if what they saw really were alive.40

The lifelike illusion achieved in such ecphrases has been with good reason compared to the painterly device of trompe- l’oeil representation: the people and/or objects depicted appear actually to breathe and move.41 We see with Camilla that the converse is true as well: Virgil’s description of her relies so much on visual effects that she appears, at least momentarily, to be not a living, breathing character but an artistic creation, her movement frozen by the static close of the catalogue review.

Let us return briefly to the lines in which Virgil describes the viewing of Camilla by matres and iuventus:

illam omnis tectis agrisque effusa iuventus
turbaque miratur matrum et prospectat euntem,
attonitis inhians animis . . .

As we have already seen, Virgil’s emphasis on Camilla’s appearance borrows from the ethnographical tradition of describing foreign marvels, μέγαλα θαύματα; simultaneously, Virgil suggests a parallel between her appearance and that of a character or object in an ecphrasis. The word miratur in particular is suggestive of her twofold function within the narrative: it and its cognates are frequently used, by Virgil

39 Linear sequence is suggested here by both perlegerent and protinus: “protinus hier, wie bei Vergil noch oft . . ., räumlich: διηνεκώς” (E. Norden, P. Vergilius Maro Aeneis Buch VI [Berlin 1927] ad loc.).
40 Clausen (note 35 above) 17; cf. Williams (note 33 above) and Leach (note 34 above).
41 Zanker (note 38 above) 42–50; and see the discussion below.
and others, to mark an ecphrasis;\textsuperscript{42} and it and its cognates are likewise regularly used to mark an ethnographical θαύμα.\textsuperscript{43} Finally, it is no coincidence that the two objects of ornament specified by Virgil, the cloak and the pin, are themselves often the subjects of ecphrasis from Homer onward: especially relevant here is the brooch or pin, περόνη, described as belonging to Odysseus at \textit{Od.} 19.226–31 and said to be marvelously lifelike in its presentation of a hunting dog (τὸ δὲ θαυμάξεσοιν ἀπιαντὲς, 229);\textsuperscript{44} the cloak of Jason at \textit{Arg.} 1.721–67, depicting numerous mythological episodes;\textsuperscript{45} and the prize cloak described by Virgil himself at \textit{A.} 5.250–57, depicting the rape of Ganymede.\textsuperscript{46} Last but not least is Dido, who in \textit{Aeneid} 4 emerges at last from her palace wearing a Sidonian chlamys with decorative border (136–39):

\begin{quote}
tandem progreditur magna stipante caterva \\
\textit{Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo}; \\
cui pharetra ex auro, crines nodantur in aurum, \\
aurea purpuream subnectit fibula vestem.
\end{quote}

Like Camilla, she carries a quiver, and has her hair fastened with gold; and the diction of 139, contrasting the gold of her brooch with the purple of her cloak, echoes in details if not in exact sense the language used of Camilla’s cloak and hairpin.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{42}In addition to the ecphrastic frames from \textit{Aeneid} 1 and 8 cited above, cf., e.g., Cat. 64.50–51; and see the discussion of ecphrasis by R. F. Thomas, “Callimachus, the \textit{Victoria Berenices}, and Roman Poetry,” \textit{CQ} 33 (1983) esp. 105–12 (at 110, n. 104, Thomas notes that \textit{miror} is a frequent indication of ecphrasis).


\textsuperscript{44}Note that the pin is fastened to a purple cloak: χλαίναν πορφυρην οὐλην ἔχε δίος Ὀδυσσεὺς, / διπλήν· αὐτάρ οἱ περόνη χρυσοῖο τέτυχε / αὐλοίῳν διδύμοιοι... (\textit{Od.} 18.225–27).


\textsuperscript{46}Not surprisingly, cloaks, mantles, and other woven items are frequently the subjects of ecphrasis: see, e.g., the two most elaborate instances in Latin poetry, Cat. 64.50–266 and Ovid, \textit{Met.} 6.68–128. Cf. Shapiro (note 45 above) 266–71; Thomas (note 33 above) esp. 181–84; and Thomas (note 42 above) esp. 109–11.

\textsuperscript{47}The most pointed difference is that Camilla’s \textit{fibula} is in her hair, while Dido’s is on her cloak; cf. also Ovid’s Atalanta, described above, note 20. The \textit{fibula} in Camilla’s hair is all but unique: see R. O. A. M. Lyne, ed., \textit{Ciris: A Poem Attributed to Vergil} (Cambridge 1978) on 127–28, and cf. Homer’s description of Euphorbus, quoted above,
The Volscian warrior maiden is, then, a θαῦμα in both senses: outlandishly abnormal, and vividly alive. With the words attonitis in-hians animis, Virgil hints at one other connotation of θαῦμα as well. Inhians, Pease tells us, is “expressive of open-mouthed wonder”; Virgil uses it at A. 4.64 to describe Dido as she consults the exta of sheep she has sacrificed. And at A. 5.529, the men of Sicily and Troy react with amazement, attonitis . . . animis, to the ominous fiery arrow shot by Acestes: subitum . . . magnoque futurum / augurio monstrum, 522–23. Like an omen sent to mortals by the gods, Camilla’s presence in the catalogue of Aeneid 7 signals the common fate of the Italian cause. Inscrutable in meaning to those who view her, she nonetheless presages their end.

3. VISUAL ILLUSION AND LITERARY ALLUSION

In an admonitory epistle to Philo regarding the proper way to write history, Lucian describes at some length the faults to be found in modern historical writing. Noting in particular the tendency of modern historians to disregard the differences between history and poetry, Lucian describes the freedom available to the poet but not, properly, to the historian: ἔκει μὲν γὰρ ἄριστὴς ἡ ἑλευθερία καὶ νόμος εἰς—τὸ δόξαν τῷ ποιητῇ. ἐνθεος γὰρ καὶ κάτοχος ἐκ Μουσῶν, κἂν ἐπιων ὑποπτέων ἄρμα ξεύξασθαι ἑθέλη, κἂν ἐφ᾽ ὑδατος ἄλλους ἢ ἐπ᾽ ἀνθρώπων ἄρων θευομένους ἀναβιβάσηται, φθόνος οὐδεὶς (hist. conscr. 8). Lucian’s mention of horses running on the surface of the water or over tops of flowers as purely poetic detail is a direct reference to Homer’s description of the horses of Erichthonius at Il. 20.226–29; in making this refer-

note 23. On Dido’s coiffure, see A. S. Pease, ed., Publì Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus (Cambridge, MA 1935) ad loc.; and on the threefold use of gold in Dido’s dress, see Clausen (note 35 above) 22.

48 Pease (note 47 above) on 4.64; see also R. G. Austin, ed., Publì Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus (Oxford 1955) ad loc. Cf. Geo. 2.463; Ciris 132 and Lyne (note 47 above) ad loc.

ence, Lucian suggests that, whatever the merits of Homeric epic, historicity is not among them. Furthermore, in choosing a detail from Homeric epic, Lucian mocks this and other flights of fancy whether they appear in history or poetry itself: even the greatest poets can go to extremes under the influence of the Muse.

At the close of *Aeneid* 7, Virgil uses the same Homeric detail. In fact, it holds central position in Camilla's catalogue entry, a 15-verse section divisible into three distinct units. The passage opens with a five-line unit establishing Camilla's credentials as warrior maiden, and closes with six lines describing her with weapons and ornaments, vividly ready for battle. At the center of the passage are four lines, 808–11, apparently intended to gloss what Virgil has just said, namely, that Camilla surpasses the winds in speed (*cursu . . . pedum praevertere ventos*):

illa vel intactae segetis per summa volaret
gramina nec teneras cursu laesisset aristas,
vel mare per medium fluctu suspensa tumenti
ferret iter celeris nec tingeret aequore plantas.

This is exactly the sort of description to which Lucian objected, at least in historical narrative; it is worth our while to consider, therefore, why Virgil devotes so much attention to Camilla's potential speed, and, indeed, places it at the heart of her portrait. Unfortunately, we have only the ancient testimony that, according to Callimachus, Camillus meant Mercury in Etruscan; thus, the likelihood is great that, in devoting so much attention to her speed, Virgil wishes to gloss her Callimachean name by developing a similarity between her and the god most noted for swiftness. Another part of the explanation is likely to lie in a desire by Virgil to suggest an equation between Camilla and Harpalyce, the Amazon-like woman to whom the disguised Venus is compared at *Aeneid* 1.315–17:

*virginis os habitumque gerens et virginis arma*
Spartanae, vel qualis equos Threissa fatigat
Harpalyce *volucremque fuga praevertitur Hebrum*.

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On A. 1.317, Servius Danielis tells the story of Harpalyce, who, like Camilla, was the daughter of an exiled king, and who, again like Camilla, was raised as a huntress in the wild. One important detail in Harpalyce's appearance in Aeneid 1 does not reappear when we turn to Camilla, however—namely, the association of speed with racing on horseback (equos fatigat). Of course, Virgil first introduces Camilla as the leader of a band of cavalry (agmen agens equitum, 7.804), and, as we have seen, her equestrian expertise is essential to her Amazon-like nature. When he describes Camilla's swiftness, however, it is fleetness of foot rather than speed on horseback that he specifies: cursuque pedum praevertere ventos, 7.807.

We must look to Homer to explain the discrepancy. Camilla's speed is not that of a huntress on horseback, but rather that of a horse itself (II. 20.226-29):

ai δ' οτε μὲν σωρτὼν ἑπὶ ξείδωρον ἄρουραν,
ἄχρον ἐπ' ἀνθερίκων καρπῶν θέον οὐδὲ κατέκλων·
ἀλλ' οτε δὴ σωρτὼν ἑπ' εὐρέα νώτα θαλάσσης,
ἄχρον ἑπὶ ἡγημίνος ἀλὸς ποιμνὸ θέεσκον.

These lines describing the magic horses of Erichthonius provide the obvious structural model for Virgil as well: four verses organized as two sets of two, with the first pair describing the horses' movement over a field of grain, the second describing their movement upon the sea.

As is so often the case with Virgil, however, the influence of the Homeric passage on the Aeneid is not direct and unmediated. Rather, Virgil builds into his four “Homeric” lines references to two other poets who had likewise looked to Erichthonius' horses to describe human speed. One of these references is well known; the other has not to my knowledge been noticed before as mediating between Homer and Virgil. Taken together, they provide a good example of an imitative poetic device which Thomas has recently dubbed “window reference.”

Let us look at the unfamiliar reference first. In providing a bio-

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51 See also Brill (note 25 above) 3–7.
52 R. F. Thomas, “Virgil’s Georgics and the Art of Reference,” HSCP 90 (1986) 171–98; the case at hand is similar, although not identical, to the instances of “window reference,” i.e., complex reference to more than one model combined with correction of the model(s), as discussed by Thomas at 188–89.
graphical notice for Iphiclus (I. 2705), said to be the swiftest of mortals,53 Eustathius ad loc. quotes Hesiod (frag. 62 West):

\[ \text{άχρων ἐπ' ἀνθέρίκων καρπόν θέεν οὐδὲ κατέκλα,} \]
\[ \text{ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πυραμίνων ἀθέρων δρομάσασκε πόδεσσιν,} \]
\[ \text{kai oú σινέσκετο καρπόν} \]

The Hesiodic lines are clearly modelled on the Homeric passage, particularly the first verse. As the Homeric scholia indicate, however, there is some controversy over the exact meaning of ἀνθέρικος in Homer, a controversy resolved by the Hesiodic detail πυραμίνων: that is, ἀνθέρικος refers not to asphodel, as elsewhere, but to an ear of grain. Hesiod has also added clarification for κατέκλων, by supplementing it with σινέσκετο: not only does the runner not break (κατακλάω) the ears of grain as he passes; he does not even harm (σινέσμαι) them. When we return to Virgil, we find that he has been sure to incorporate both of the Hesiodic refinements into his version: with segetis and aristas in addition to gramina, he makes the reference to grain certain;54 and with laesisset in addition to intactae, he takes precise notice of Hesiod’s added σινέσκετο.55

Next we turn to Apollonius, who also offers an example of marvelous speed in Euphemus (Arg. 1.182–84):

\[ \text{κεῖνος ἀνήρ καὶ πόντου ἐπὶ γλαυκοίο θέεσκεν} \]
\[ \text{οἴδματος, οὐδὲ θουύς βάπτεν πόδας, ἀλλ' ὀσον ἄχροις} \]
\[ \text{ἰχνεσι τεγγόμενοις διερῆ πεφόρητο κελεύθω.} \]

Apollonius has not attempted to suggest a strong dependence on Homer (or Hesiod, for that matter) here; little in his diction is reminiscent of the earlier passages, and in describing Euphemus as a man able to glide over the surface of the sea, Apollonius develops only the second half of the Homeric imagery for swift passage. Virgil, however, has made the synthesis avoided by Apollonius, for Euphemus, like Camilla,

53 The speed of Iphiclus is remarked by Homer at Il. 23.636, and is proverbial in Call., Aet. 3, frag. 75.46Pf.: ὁφυρὸν Ἰφίκλειον ἐπιτρέχον ἀσταχύεσσιν.
54 As, indeed, had Callimachus: see the description of Iphiclus above, in note 53, as ἐπιτρέχον ἀσταχύεσσιν.
55 For the possibility that Vergil knew the discussion in the scholia, see note 23 above.
appears in a catalogue; and with the words *celeris nec tingeret . . . plantas*, he translates Apollonius’ ὀὐδὲ θοουσ βάπτειν πόδιας.\(^{56}\) Thus, with Homer as structural archetype, Virgil proceeds to incorporate a Hesiodic reference into the first two lines of his description, and an Apollonian reference into the second pair. The result is a remarkably subtle nod to tradition in the best Alexandrian style.

At the same time, however, Virgil maintains an important distinction between his version and the verses of his models: the earlier poets’ indicatives have been modified by Virgil in order more aptly to describe what is *not* seen.\(^{57}\) The subjunctives he uses instead are potential in force: *volarat, laesisset, ferret, and tingeret.* Thus, what he describes is not now visible to Camilla’s audience of *iuventus* and *matres*; rather, it suggests only how she could move were she to run or race, as opposed to her progress here, expressed in rather flat language (*advenit*, 803; *euntem*, 813).

It is the essence of the trompe-l’oeil nature of ecphrasis to describe as alive and breathing or moving that which is in fact simply and statically depicted. As early as Homer, we find the scene on Odysseus’ brooch described as remarkably lifelike, depicting as it does a dog seizing and strangling a fawn and the fawn in turn writhing and striving to flee (*Od*. 19.228–31);\(^{58}\) the pictorial realism of the scene is made even more remarkable by the fact that it is imbedded in one of Odysseus’ Cretan lies. Virgil’s detailed description of Camilla’s appearance in *Aeneid* 7 makes her a character who seems almost to move on the page even as she becomes the object of ecphrastic artifice in the catalogue. But the elaborate network of literary associations established by Virgil in his portrayal of Camilla, as well as his correction of the mood of the scene from real to simply possible, makes Virgil’s Camilla as intangible as the brooch of Odysseus, a figment crafted from words alone.

What we have, then, is a visual paradox: Virgil uses language to visualize as real what cannot in fact be seen. In assimilating Camilla’s speed to that of so many estimable predecessors, Virgil reinforces the


\(^{57}\) A colleague has reminded me of a comment made by Maecenas on the shield ecphrasis in *A*. 8, as recorded by the elder Seneca (*Suas.* 1.12): “Vergilius quid ait de navibus? credas innare revolsas / Cycladas [*A*. 8.691–92]. non dicit hoc fieri sed videri.”

\(^{58}\) Later, mainly Alexandrian, examples abound: see, e.g., Shapiro (note 45 above) 272–74; Zanker (note 38 above) 42–50. Cf. also Thomas (note 42 above) 96 on *spirantia signa.*
contrast between her and her models; she only appears potentially capable of doing what they in fact did do. In other words, Virgil has intentionally conflated history and poetry, making out of Camilla a figure who can neither be dismissed as pure figment nor comprehended as simple history. Virgil's mixture of narrative traditions at the close of Aeneid 7 is not only quintessentially Alexandrian in the way that it draws on its predecessors, but also indicative of his desire to create a wholly Roman epic. Lucian's bias, after all, should not divert us from recognizing a poet's intentional transcendence of generic boundaries in the composition of his narrative; like Camilla, Virgil himself skirts the border between history and imagination.59

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59For a very different but sympathetic review of Virgil's creativity in the Camilla episode, see the article by Horsfall cited above, note 7.

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