

VIRGIL RE-PURPOSED IN THE OLD FRENCH ROMAN D'ENEAS

In the twelfth-century French “romances of antiquity” we can observe the unmistakable impact of scientific renewal on the process of vernacularization. We can grasp as well the palpable freedom these harbinger texts exercised with regard to their prestigious models. However, it remains to be determined whether these medieval adaptations will fit into the context of rhetoric, hermeneutics and academic discourse so artfully illuminated by Rita Copeland.¹ For mere reference and contextualization, we include here the *Thebes* and *Troy* romances, as well as Wace’s *Roman de Brut* and the triad adapted from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.² Indeed, I do wonder if the romances of antiquity, and of course the *Roman d’Eneas* in particular, may be said to challenge by a kind of hermeneutic and ideological replication the established Latinized continuity. We could say that the aim was to substitute for, effect a rupture with, and thus appropriate in a metonymic or metaphoric mode, the privileged discourse of the *auctores*. But that idea remains to be developed – lack of space here will keep our discussion confined to the “marvelous”, as found specifically in three non-Virgilian embellishments to the anonymous *Roman d’Eneas*, an expanded re-interpretation of the *Aeneid*.

«Seuls les mauvais manuels et les demis savants contestent désormais l’existence d’un humanisme médiéval» opined Jean-Charles Payen in 1984.³ In other words, most medievalists would concur that unmistakable signs of a new era appear on the horizon around 1050 A.D. in western Europe. Indeed, a nascent humanism emerges in this period of

¹ Copeland 1991: *passim*, 103-7.

² Cormier 1986, Cormier 2000. On the *Enéas*, see the interesting and recent Tagliani 2013. Earlier studies are comprehensive on the subject of the romances of antiquity, e.g.: Angeli 1971; Petit 1985. For thorough background on the genre, see: Mora-Lebrun 1994; Logié 1999; and again Mora-Lebrun 2008.

³ Payen 1985: 95-101 (95). See also Payen 1984: 386-8, at p. 387: «[Au XII^e siècle, l’humanisme] définit une qualité complexe, fait de culture et de civilité. Afficher son *humanitas*, c’est manifester son appartenance à une élite qui s’est initiée aux belles lettres, et qui sait vivre dans le monde parce qu’elle évite les excès et les démesures».

ebullient and effervescent vitality. In what is dubbed the long European twelfth century (1050-1250), French humanism predominated, a phenomenon that has already been analyzed at length historiographically. As Italianist Ronald Witt recently put it (2012: 317): «The term “humanism” aptly describes French culture in the period [...]».⁴ In this context, interior monologue and dialogue arose from a new awareness of the interior life (the unique individual is now consciously separate from the court), which was further linked to the chivalric adventure/quest whereby audiences yearned for the unusual and the marvelous – now stimulated especially by wondrous stories brought back from the East by returning Crusaders, in particular the first (ca. 1100) and second (ca. 1150). The twelfth-century imagination was swept along by all that; as well as by the resultant new interest in Arabic and Greek culture, just as intellectuals were encouraged by the rise in medical science and a more systematic study of philosophy and theology, and were stimulated by the progress of national vernaculars. All this was suggested long ago by Lynn White as he chronicled the shift in modes of thought from rather unscientific teleological, symbolic and anthropocentric tendencies to a more realistic, naturalistic and objective methods.⁵

As far back as the 1920s, Charles Homer Haskins demonstrated in two landmark studies that this new modality received its impetus from a notable scientific revival.⁶ Important steps were taken in astronomy, mathematics, philosophy, geography, medicine, architecture and even zoology. It was in fact through a series of translations that much new information became available in the West, channeled mainly from Greek and Arabic sources. In addition, for the period under consideration here, the first and second Crusades brought back a whole new

⁴ See Witt 2012.

⁵ White 1947. Deep insights into the intellectual achievements of this era may be noted in the *Quaestiones naturales* of Adelard of Bath, a work that illustrates a devotion to and harboring of such subjects as physics, the natural sciences, and possibly even metaphysics.

⁶ Haskins 1924, Haskins 1927. More recently, d’Alverny 1982. For a vivid illustration, Omont 1882: 44; the partial list of manuscripts of this text shows five of eight dating from the twelfth century. See especially Faral 1913 for full details on all these matters. See now also Ziolkowski 2009, for whom the long twelfth century is a «fraught period» (44); C. Stephen Jaeger 2011 draws on the example of humanist John of Salisbury.

world of oriental exotica, marvels and wonders to the eager and curious eyes of western Europe.⁷ The twelfth century was a significant pre-Humanistic high-water mark between the Carolingian Renaissance and the Renaissance associated with Petrarch and his quest for the elegant wisdom of the ancients. As the contemporary scholar John of Salisbury observed in his prescient *Polycraticus* (1159; dedicated to Thomas Becket), discreet and moderate but zealous members of the Academy embrace reasoning and skepticism, pursue and preserve liberty just as they cherish humility and frugality.⁸

Haskins raises a second issue which deserves our notice in this context, namely, the literalness of typical medieval translations. He emphasizes that they are faithful to the original, «so not to obscure the truth»,⁹ as the style of works translated into Latin remains dependent on the original. But what we find in the *Roman d'Eneas* is a remarkably fierce independence of style, so that the divergences, or anomalies, as I have called them elsewhere, appear in many cases to be intentional. If this is so, it remains for future scholarship to uncover the detail, to discover the models and the author's rationale for his work, which even rather recently has been called a “travesty” of Virgil.¹⁰

Of the several *merveilles* scattered throughout the *Eneas* that have been commonly noted in previous scholarship, three surprising cases suffice for an initial discussion. These are non-Virgilian “marvels” that have stumped concerned philologists for at least one hundred years (beginning with Faral 1913). Their strange otherness deserves examination as problems in textual reception. My explanations for the non-

⁷ Beaujouan 1982: 484-7, on cultural dynamism and the external and internal factors leading to a «predisposition to Arabic influences» (p. 485).

⁸ See John of Salisbury (Keats-Rohan); John of Salisbury (Nederman): 175-91 (liberty), 160-78 (moderation).

⁹ Haskins 1924: 233.

¹⁰ Cormier 2011. See da Fonseca-Wollheim 2013 on the subject of adaptation, to follow on the recent remarks of celebrated conductor John Elliott Gardiner: «[...] In the 1920s [...] the freedom of the interpreter began to be curtailed by composers demanding exact adherence to an ever-more-precisely notated text. “It represents the absolute break of the tradition from Monteverdi to early Stravinsky, whereby the interpreter has freedom to use gesture and rhetoric and passion to articulate, vary and embellish what’s written down”, Mr. Gardiner said. “If you think about it, the written page of music is so limiting. It’s one stage: the moment when the butterfly is being pinned to the board and chloroformed. What you are trying to do as a conductor is to get to the previous stage, where it is still fluid in the imagination of a composer”».

Virgilian “re-purposings” are tentative and provisional, awaiting further elucidation. In these pages, I deal with three “sticky bits” in the Old French text (vv. 483-496, 534-539, and 9792-9814).¹¹ The first segment deals with the crocodiles found in the waters of *Libya* (i. e., Dido’s Carthage); mysteriously, they have no bowels (vv. 483-496). Next, the Capitol building in Carthage possesses special acoustics, we are told, that make distant whispers audible (vv. 534-539). Finally, Pallas’ baldric (ripped off by Turnus once he slays the youth) is changed by the anonymous romancer to a finger ring (vv. 9792-9814).

The first two illustrations of “amazing marvels” deal with that *urbs nova*, or Carthage, the citadel where Aeneas lands after the destructive Mediterranean storm. In the epic narrative Virgil observes (*Aeneid* I, 419-493, 505-508) that the prosperous and thriving new city will one day have to be destroyed by Rome. The former grandeur of the capital is reflected of course in Rome’s present glory. Carthaginian dwellings, Senate building, harbors, theater and a temple dedicated to Juno – all are under construction when Aeneas first sees the city. Ironically, he is overcome by sorrow and longing for his beloved home, razed by the Greeks in the Trojan War. But it is especially the representations of scenes from the battle at Troy that move the hero to tears of great sadness and amazement. Within the panorama of Roman mythical history, and not unlike the hero’s huge, studded buckler (*Aeneid* VIII), this view of Carthage emblemizes at once the past, the present and the future. Yet in the hands of the Old French romancer, Carthage becomes a typical fortified medieval town with unusual characteristics. Gone are the absorbing and artistic depictions on the city walls. Now we have a twelfth-century seaside fortress, a marvelous urban complex and represented as a typical “rich antique city” for Pauphilet, a complete town with a vital populace.¹²

¹¹ Textual citations from *Eneas* (Salverda de Grave); all translations from *Eneas* (Yunc).

¹² Pauphilet 1929: 207. See also Macabies 1967: 145-51; for this scholar, the citadel draws metonymically on direct reality, on a knowledge of government and feudal-fortress architecture and also prefigures the ideal, celestial city that will fall under the Law of Love, thus foreshadowing the Lavinia episode and representing one aspect of civilization’s continuity, its perennial nature, which must include the experience of failure. See also Petullà 1968: 420-1.

A good example of scientific awakening in the *Eneas* is revealed with certain wonderful maritime animals present in the waters around Carthage, for our purposes, the crocodile (vv. 471-486):

En cel mer joste Cartage,	
iluec prent l'an, a cel rivage [...]	472
les noires refont an Cartage	
del sanc d'un grant serpent evage,	
que l'en apelle cocadrille,	
dunt molt a iluec an une isle;	476
serpanz sont granz a desmesure	
et de molt diverse nature;	
quant a sa proie devoree,	
donc si s'endort gole baee;	480
il nen a noiant de boiel;	
el cors li antrent li oisel	
et pasturent an son dormant	
ce que mangié ot de devant;	484
ne s'espurge pas autrement,	
car n'a mie de fondement. ¹³	

The anecdote about Nile crocodiles, as a source for scavenger birds that feed off the amphibian, has been attributed to Pliny, but in some medieval texts the animal's intestines are punctured.¹⁴

¹³ «In the sea by Carthage, near the shore, they catch a sort of fish [... with which] they make black dyes in Carthage from the blood of a great water serpent, which is called the crocodile, of which there are many on an island. These serpents are enormously large, and of a very unusual nature; when one of them has devoured his prey, then he falls asleep with gaping jaws. He has no bowels whatever. The birds enter inside his body and during his sleep feed on what he has previously eaten. He does not purge himself otherwise, for he has no fundament» (*Eneas* [Yunc]: 65).

¹⁴ Faral 1913: 92. The source in Apuleius – see *Eneas* (Salverda de Grave): 131n – describes birds that remove leeches from crocodile mouths, but no exact parallel to the *Eneas* version has been found. Pliny's account (Plinius, *Naturalis Historia* [Mayhoff]) describes similarly the cleaning activity of the birds (*ichneumon*), but there is no mention of the fundament; see also Seneca, *Naturales quaestiones* (Corcoran), following Pliny, on Nile dolphins that puncture the crocodile underbellies, that is, their saw-tooth back, kills crocs by cutting their soft belly (repeated by Isidore, Isidore of Seville [Barney]: XII, vi, 11, who notes that the crocodile is «the only animal that moves its upper jaw», XII, vi, 19-20, following Pliny's remark nearly word for word, *Natural History*, VIII, 37-89). See Adelard of Bath (Mütter): 14, and now Adelard of Bath (Burnett): 108-11, for a discussion of the digestive system (doubtless following Aristotle and Galen), with the comment that sand animals have no stomach – which

Such earlier textual authorities vis-à-vis the natural world seem to have worked their way into numerous medieval collections, glosses and etymologies. Beyond Pliny's description,¹⁵ the closest late antique model I have found is in a third century epitome of Pliny, written by Solinus. In his *Collectanea rerum memorabilium*, he describes the crocodile as a beast with no tongue and sharp teeth, and which spends its nights in the mud, its days in the waters of the Nile River.¹⁶ In general, these attributes of the Nile crocodile go back to Aristotle and Herodotus, and are reiterated by Pliny, then Solinus. There being no scientific evidence whatsoever for the anecdote of symbiosis between sandpiper and crocodile, it may be mythical or allegorical in nature. And yet, given the infamous details regarding the hero's purported homosexual behavior, I am inclined to speculate here that the reference to "no fundament" may very well be an inside joke by the romancer.¹⁷

Now we turn to the Capitol building in Carthage that possesses special acoustics, we are told, that make distant whispers audible (vv. 528-548):

Li Capitoilles sist a destre,	528
fors del chastel a une part,	
ou fussent par comun esgart	
li senator mis por jugier,	
por tenir droit, por tort plaissier :	532

might have suggested to the *Eneas* author that crocodiles have no fundament. See Le Blay 2007: 114-30, who views the cowardice of the crocodiles fleeing the bold dolphins in an historical-allegorical mode.

¹⁵ Cf. also Lucian (Harmond): I, 15 for a humorous and possibly homophobic twist, from a text that doubtless influenced Rabelais and Voltaire. Anderson Cooper 2013: with the TV reporter swimming in a Botswana river among these killer reptiles that predate the dinosaurs: though sluggish in winter, Nile crocodiles tend not to attack unless one swims and floats over them. Cloaca and penis were quite visible. Online, one finds this unattributed observation, very much inspired by Pliny's observations on this monstrous "scourge" (see *Natural History*, VIII. 36-38): «Il existe une étrange symbiose entre les crocodiles et certains oiseaux. Le pluvian d'Égypte nettoie la gueule des crocodiles (en particulier des sangsues) en échange d'une protection de son nid et ses poussins contre les prédateurs. Il n'est pas rare de voir un pluvian évoluer en pleine tranquillité à l'intérieur même de la gueule d'un énorme crocodile du Nil» (<http://www.pratique.fr/crocodile-crocodiles.html>).

¹⁶ Solinus (online & *Catalogus*), especially xxxii, 22. See also Burger Munk Olsen 1982-1985: II, 485-520.

¹⁷ See Cormier 1987.

ce fu leus a tenir les plaiz.
 Par merveillos angin fu faiz;
 molt fu biaus et larges dedanz,
 voltes et ars i ot dous cenz ; 536
 ja n'i parlast hom tant an bas,
 ne fust oïz eneslopas
 par tot lo Capitoille entor.¹⁸
 Li vint et quatre senator 540
 i estoient ja esgardé.
 Puis ot Rome la poësté,
 d'iluec a molt lointaing aage,
 que Dido volt metre an Cartage. 544
 Encor idonc ne par ert mie
 cele cité tote fornie,
 encor faisoit Dido ovrer
 as murs entor por miauz fremer. 548

It is possible that Dido's Capitol was built of limestone, as that material, used in the ancient amphitheater of Epidaurus for the rows of limestone seats, reflects high-frequencies back towards the audience, and this design, it has been discovered, enhances the effect of reverberation.¹⁹ Like light or matter, photon waves and sound waves create an

¹⁸ «The Capitol was situated on the right, outside the castle, to one side. There by common consent the senators would gather to do justice, to uphold the right, to curb the wrong: this was the place where court was held. It was made with wonderful ingenuity, very beautiful and spacious within, with two hundred vaults and arches. However softly anyone might speak, he would be heard immediately throughout all the Capitol around him. The twenty-four senators were chosen there. Later, at an age long distant from that one, Rome had the power which Dido wished to bring to Carthage. Her city was not yet entirely completed; Dido was still having work done on the walls around it, to strengthen them» (*Eneas* [Yunc]: 66). Faral 1913, referring to the theater of Heracles in Athens, tentatively concludes that the *Eneas* author obtained this acoustical detail, as well as other facets of the buildings in Carthage, from some medieval version of the *Septem orbis miraculis*. Pliny's account describes seven towers in Prytania that repeat sounds, like the phenomenon in an enclosed valley, or the "heptaphone" created in Olympia (Plinius, *Naturalis Historia* [Mayhoff]: 23. 99-100).

¹⁹ *Mystery of Greek Amphitheater's Amazing Sound Finally Solved* (<http://www.livescience.com/7269-mystery-greek-amphitheater-amazing-sound-finally-solved.html>, accessed 21 March 2013). See now Cox 2014: especially 145, 153-6, 166-77, for numerous illustrations of whispering galleries. See also the Saflieni Hypogeum's Oracle Room in Malta: «one of the smallest side chambers has the peculiarity of producing a powerful acoustic resonance from any vocalization made inside it» (<http://brashawfoundation.com/malta/saflieni.php>). Cf. The Old Temples Study Foundation (<http://www.otsf>).

echo effect, as they adhere or cleave to a wall's circumference. This acoustic feature can occur even in caves, in irregularly-shaped frictionless-walled galleries, such as the so-called legendary Ear of Dionysius in Syracuse, Sicily, the Pantheon in Rome, or the ritualistic ball-game park (the Mayan *pitz*), made of stone, as found in Chichen-Itza, Mexico. On the other hand, relatively modern examples of the phenomenon come from Grand Central Station in New York City, the Taj Mahal or the well-known Whispering Gallery in the Dome of St. Paul's Cathedral at London. The results of a detailed investigation showed the presence, with a steady source of sound, of an interference-field in the gallery having radial and circumferential nodal lines. That is, according to an investigation that drew on several comparanda,

the study of the propagation of *impulsive* sounds in these whispering galleries showed that the multiple sounds heard are not echoes as might be thought at first, but are due to the fact that the sound wave travels circumferentially round the gallery several times before it is sensibly extinguished, and is heard each time as it passes the observer. The smallness of the decrement in successive returns is a measure of the strength of the whispering gallery effect. The interval between successive returns is equal to the circumference of the gallery divided by the velocity of sound within an accuracy of one per cent. The waves travelling in opposite directions round the gallery can be differentiated by ear.²⁰

Thus, a whispering gallery may be formed by a «circular, hemispherical, elliptical [...] enclosure, often beneath a [...] vault wall», as well as by an ellipsoid-shaped dome or even with «concave parabolic dishes, serving as acoustic mirrors».²¹ Exactly how this unusual *merveille* was transported to our twelfth-century romancer remains to be determined. And yet, it is tempting to perceive Dido's Whispering Gallery as an ironic take on the court of Henry II Plantagenêt. Reading Nicholas Vincent's precious and detailed account of life at that tumultuous and roving royal site leads less to speculation and more to a convincing and humorous

org/Archaeoacoustics.htm). Both Web pages accessed 31 May 2014; the last two references thanks to my Road Scholar friend, Jan Jannett.

²⁰ Raman 1921-1922: 215. This article draws on the work of Harvard scholar Sabine 1922.

²¹ See, e.g., Seife 1997, Lancaster and Bentele 2010. A special exhibit, opened in 1938 at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, made the acoustic phenomenon available to public-school children.

model, however elusive, for the unusual vernacular intervention. At that court, even whispers, *soto voce*, could be heard and might incriminate.²²

Finally, Pallas' sword belt or baldric (ripped off by Turnus once he slays the youth) is reduced or miniaturized by the anonymous Old French poet to a finger ring. Here is Turnus, on his knees, begging for mercy:

«[...] tes hom serai, a toi me rant».
 Donc prist son hialme, se li tant;
 Eneas en ot grant pitié.
 Turnus li a l'aume laissié;
 andementres qu'il li tendoit, 9795
 an son doi l'anel Pallas voit,
 qu'il li toli, quant il l'ocist;
 tot son grant duel en refreschist,
 quant de Pallas li remembra;
 toz taint d'ire, si sospira 9800
 et dist: «Tu m'as crié merci,
 tot m'as laissié et tot guerpi,
 cest reigne o la fille lo roi.
 Ge aüsse pitié de toi,
 ne perdisses vie ne membre, 9805
 mais par cest anel m'en remembre,
 de Pallas que tu occïs;
 el cuer m'en as molt grant duel mis:
 ne t'ocirra mie Eneas,
 mais de toi se venche Pallas.» 9810
 A icest mot sailli avant,
 se l'a feru de maintenant,
 o le branc que Vulcans forja
 an prist lo chief: Pallas vanja.²³

²² Vincent 2007; cf. Walter Map, *De nugis* (James–Brooke) – First and Fifth sections – a satirical comparison of royal courts with Hell and its mythical inhabitants.

²³ Vv. 9791-9814: «Eneas had great pity on him. Turnus gave up his helmet to Eneas. While he was holding it out, Eneas saw on his finger the ring of Pallas, which Turnus had taken from him when he killed him. All his great sorrow was renewed when he recalled Pallas. All dark with anger, he sighed and said: “You have begged mercy of me, and have left and abandoned to me all this realm, and the king's daughter. I would have had pity on you, nor would you have lost life or limb; but because of this ring I remember Pallas, whom you killed: you have put very great sorrow in my heart by that. Eneas will not kill you, but Pallas avenges himself on you”. With this word he jumped forward, struck Turnus immediately with the sword which Vulcan forged, and took his

As did Virgil to Homeric epic – with a grasp of delicate Callimachean aesthetics – so does the vernacular romancer, deploy the “nutshell effect” (what Young dubs the technique, 65, 68). The authorial intervention perhaps reiterates Virgil’s synecdoche.²⁴

Abbreviation does not occur by chance, as Zumthor observed.²⁵ Biblical style and letter writing both suggested that brevity is one of the «virtues of narration» (Curtius 1963: 305, 309). Attenuation in this sense forms part of a certain medieval aesthetic.²⁶ To take it to the level of rhetoric, concision and the laconic support of *brevitas* or *breviloquium*: adornment is then lost, embellishment nullified, and like a short vs. long epic or a brief short story vis-à-vis a developed romance, compres-

head: he had avenged Pallas» (*Eneas* [Yunk]: 250). See Nelis and Polleichtner 2009: 101-13 on the «legitimate anger» of Aeneas, who delivers a «stoic blow».

²⁴ Regarding the ekphrasis of the baldric in Virgil, I cite the apt words of Virgil specialist Michael C. J. Putnam 1994: 178, 187; he observes that «[the] belt that the beautiful young Pallas, whose name implies both femininity and virginity, has worn into battle, that the handsome, prideful (and equally virginal) Turnus assumes after he has killed Pallas and the sight of which arouses Aeneas to kill Turnus in a furious rage at the epic’s end, has depicted on it one of the most violent scenes in Greek tragedy, the treacherous mass murder of forty-nine (here) nameless husbands by their equally nameless wives inspired by a vendetta of their father against his brother or by their own hatred or by both emotions. [...] Much, even about the deed itself, is left to our imagination. [...] Therefore both in theory and in practice, in the topos of ekphrasis and in the tale it tells, the description of the baldric is in certain key senses a synecdoche for the poem as a whole. In the compressed simultaneity with which it feigns the stoppage of time, it echoes those larger poetic tools, repetition and circularity, which [...] also help poetry mimic the stasis of art and which allow the poem itself, from one angle of vision, to assume the semblance of a large continuous ekphrasis. As for the tale itself, we can also see how it represents the poem as a whole». Curiously and perhaps ironically, the Old French text has a prior reference to a *baudrier/baldric* of white silk and precious stones (see Thiry-Stassin 1985: 69). See the relevant remark of Marichal 1968: 465: «Le traducteur remplace le baudrier par un anneau, sceau par lequel le chevalier authentifie ses actes, bijou personnel grâce auquel, dans la littérature, enfants, parents, amants se retrouvent après des années de séparation». Historical overview in Ward 1981; see also the influential monograph by Cherry 1992: 51 ss.

²⁵ Zumthor 1982: 3-8. Representing the diminutive challenges the pictorial artist as well as the author: cf. Stewart 1993: 52: «language describing the miniature always displays the inadequacy of the verbal». As the saying goes, «Less is Best», but yet as Horace complained famously *brevi esse laboro, obscurus fio* («When I try to be concise I become obscure»), *Ars Poetica*, vv. 25-26. See also Curtius 1963; Murphy 1974: 370-1, 373, on brevity, “miniaturizing” and conciseness in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

²⁶ See now Croizy-Naquet–Harf-Lancner–Szkilnik 2011.

sion and condensation rule.²⁷ The signifier is reduced and metonymy or metaphor suggest a lesser for greater object: a round sword belt (long-winded, prolix epic) is diminished, one might almost say it is understated or feminized. Functional battle gear becomes decorative jewelry.²⁸ Curtius notes as well (400) that the *via brevitatis* represents a more modern mode, a twelfth-century turn from superfluity. Beyond this, the Old French poet, with virtuosity,²⁹ has again captured and reinvented Virgil's poem, this time with the smallest of ornamental detail: the immensity of the task to found Rome is contrasted, perhaps by means of self-referentiality and a «sublime turn» (Young 2013: 62), with the tiny finger ring.

To conclude, I return to the titillating marvels and exotica of the East and their powerful impact particularly after the first and second Crusades. But more than that, from a narrative viewpoint, perhaps our medieval author inserted these and other marvels to his retelling in order to compensate for all the classical mythology he felt obliged to suppress. A simple appeal to “Christianising” will not explain all the mythological omissions here, although many secondary deities or characters, like Aeolus, Cupid, or Allecto, Laocöon, Iarbas, or Palinurus, are elided. Similarly, the romancer eliminates Olympian councils and dreams and apparitions (Hector or Creusa). The opening of the gates of Janus' temple (signifying wartime) or the funeral games in honor of Anchises, presumably lacking meaning for a twelfth-century audience, are eliminated, as is much of the narration by the hero (Book III) of his fi-

²⁷ See especially Payen 1980: 7-23 (difficulties of genre identification).

²⁸ See Faral 1924: 85: since *amplificatio* was preferred, *abbreviatio* is infrequent in medieval vernacular texts! See further Geoffroi de Vinsauf, *Poetria nova*, in Faral 1924: 194-262, especially 218-20, *de l'abréviation* (vv. 700-732), of the seven techniques of compression, blended propositions seems most relevant here, *sensus multarum clausus in una*, v. 709: «fusion of many concepts in one, so that many may be seen in a single glance of the mind. By such concision you may gird up a lengthy theme [...]» – many hammer blows of the craftsman on the “anvil of nouns” will lead to apt concision, cf. Geoffroi de Vinsauf (Nims): 41-42. Varvaro 1967: 113-41, with attention to rhetorical matters, points out (115) how Virgil's rhetorical *ordo artificialis* contrasts with the chronological order of events in the *Enéas*, the *ordo naturalis*. See also Thomas, *Tristan* (Payen): vv. 444, 2518, *et alii*; for reminiscence of the rôle of King Mark's significant ring in the *Tristan* story, v. Corbellari 2005: 157-68.

²⁹ See Curtius 1963: 313, as well as his excursus, *Brevity as a Ideal of Style*, 487-94.

nal hours in Troy. To compensate and explain, he expands, as has been noted, upon the Judgment of Paris and Dido episodes, as well as the Venus and Mars adultery story, and the 2000-line amplification devoted to Lavine is of course infamous. In the authoritative words of W. Wetherbee, characterizing the thrust of Servius' commentary, so influential on the medieval poet,

Writing at the end of a century of polemic between pagan and Christian over the religious and philosophical significance of myth, he is content to compile different views, and places euhemeristic, naturalistic and semi-mystical interpretations side-by-side without acknowledging their inconsistencies or relative importance. At times he even seems impatient with Virgil's recourse to *fabula*, and dismisses his mythic imagery as no more than poetic license, arbitrarily and superfluously juxtaposed with more meaningful utterance.³⁰

By simply saying that the romancer substitutes human for divine intervention, or that he ignores the idea of Roman glory under Caesar Augustus may be true, from a certain point of view. But there is much more to be said indeed on the subject of audience and patronage for such a re-purposing of classical models – once one includes discussion of the *Thebes* and *Troy* romances, as well as Wace's *Roman de Brut* – all of which adaptations belonging to a related codicological grouping.

The French scholar Daniel Poirion once referred to the processes of adaptations as found in the romances and lays of Antiquity as a «re-mythologisation littéraire», apparent in «manifestations du merveilleux».³¹ And as Sir Richard Southern reminded us some thirty years earlier³² a new medieval humanism in this period, post-1050s A.D., sought

³⁰ Wetherbee 2005: 99-144 (103).

³¹ Poirion 1982: 35.

³² Southern 1970. My colleague, Maud McInerney, has offered some further comments upon reading this essay: «[...] The whispering phenomenon [...] does seem to be connected to the ideal politics of the room, though [...]. If everyone can hear everything, no secrets can be kept. In this context, the idea that Dido's chamber is an inspiration for the Roman Senate seems provocative, though I've not really got an idea of where to go from there. The thing that strikes me about the conversion of Pallas' baldric into a ring is that it's sort of the opposite of what happens to Camille's desire for loot. In the *Aeneid*, what attracts her are the soft and flowing garments of a Trojan priest, all soft and flowing (and crocus yellow, if memory serves). In *Eneas*, on the other hand, it's actually armor that she desires. Her desire for loot, in other words, is masculine, indistinguishable from that of any other warrior, interesting because in

to limit or abolish the supernatural from human concerns. Scientific knowledge was the tool for introducing a «single coherent rational view of the whole of nature, including the nature of man» (29). While perhaps hard to conceive in our modern highly-secularized and sophisticated day, God's creatures in nature possessed dignity, splendor and grandeur: the whole of creation «[...] is seen as an orderly system» (32), with humankind as its keystone.

Now, are we in the end to take the unusual crocodile description as a jest? It seems to me one explanation, given the current dearth of other possibilities. Dido's Whispering Gallery, within the context of the whole episode in "Libya", appears fraught with referentiality, given what we have learned about Henry II's hectic and highly competitive court atmosphere. And the replacement of Pallas' baldric with a small object of personal adornment also seems ironic as the romancer turns away from or at least ignores lexical precedent in the *Vie de St. Alexis* and within his own textual adaptation. We are reminded on this subject of the insightful remarks by Francis Gingras on *le merveilleux* and its consistency: «Cette hyperbolisation de la merveille est conditionnée [...] par la vocation édifiante de stratégie énonciative, la force de sa représentation n'a d'égal que la constance et la rigueur de sa résolution».³³

Strange amphibians, wonderful echoes and symbolic accessories all fit into this "butterfly"- a boundless and marvelous curiosity cabinet that is the *Roman d'Eneas* – something like Virgil in a nutshell.

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every other way (her hair!) she is so much more feminine than Virgil's heroine. The reduction of the baldric into a ring, a mere ornament rather than a functional piece of military equipment seems to work in the opposite direction. [...].

³³ Gingras 2006: 44

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ABSTRACT: In these pages, I deal with three “sticky bits” in the twelfth-century *Roman d'Eneas* (vv. 483-496, 534-539, and 9792-9814). These are vernacular “marvels” that have stumped concerned philologists for at least one hundred years (beginning with Edmond Faral, 1913). The first segment deals with the crocodiles found in the waters of “Libya” (i.e., Dido’s Carthage); mysteriously, they have no bowels. Next, the Capitol building in Carthage possesses special acoustics, we are told, that make distant whispers audible. Finally, Pallas’ baldric (ripped off by Turnus once he slays the youth) is changed by the anonymous Old French poet to a finger ring. I attempt to offer suggested explanations for the three non-Virgilian embellishments.

KEYWORDS: *Roman d'Eneas*, Virgil’s *Aeneid*, translation.

RIASSUNTO: In questo contributo mi occupo di tre “divagazioni” che l’autore del *Roman d'Eneas* compie rispetto alla fonte latina (vv. 483-496, 534-539 e 9792-9814), tre elementi del “meraviglioso” che hanno disorientato, per un centinaio d’anni (a partire da Edmond Faral, nel 1913) i filologi che se ne sono occupati. Il primo segmento tratta dei coccodrilli trovati nelle acque della “Libia” (ovvero, la Cartagine di Didone): misteriosamente, essi sono privi di viscere. Nel segmento successivo è descritto il Campidoglio di Cartagine, la cui speciale acustica consente – così ci dice l’autore – di ascoltare i sospiri anche a distanza. Infine, il bälteo di Pallante (sottratto da Turno nel momento in cui egli uccide il giovane) è sostituito dall’anonimo poeta antico-francese con un anello. Per ciascuno di questi abbellimenti non virgiliani, tento di offrire una spiegazione convincente.

PAROLE CHIAVE: *Roman d'Eneas*, *Eneide*, traduzione