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Marrying Apollo and Diana

Virgilian Reception in the *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri*

ABSTRACT: The anonymous *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* has attracted significant critical commentary in recent years, not the least on questions of authorship and date, and on its relationship to other extant Greek and Latin romances and novels. Close study of certain aspects of its plot reveals a carefully wrought, intertextual engagement with Books I and IV of Virgil's Aeneid and the poet's comparison of Dido and Aeneas to Diana and Apollo.

KEYWORDS: Apollo, Diana, Aeneas, Dido, Apollonius, Virgil

The *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* has attracted significant scholarly attention with respect to the difficult and contentious questions of (among others) date, authorship, text and transmission.[1] The matter of a putative

[1] We have employed the text of Schmeling 1988 as a base reference without pledging allegiance to any particular position on the notorious controversies surrounding the work; in a supplement to him, see Schmeling 1994a and Schmeling 1994b. There are several noteworthy editions and studies that have appeared as part of a major late twentieth- and early twenty-first century renaissance of scholarship, reaching conclusions vastly different from Schmeling and others: *inter alia*, Kortekaas 2004 and Kortekaas 2007 contain a wealth of information, so too the more recent work of Panayotakis 2012, which is especially good on intertextual matters, vocabulary and

Greek original for the story has engendered critical debate, as has the related matter of the relationship of the *Historia* to other extant Greek and Latin prose fictions.[2] Three Latin *redactiones* of the work exist ("each with its own author, its own style, its own family of MSS"),[3] all relating the same story in 51 chapters, with appreciable (though usually relatively minor) differences (for example, in word order).

Immensely popular in the medieval world, this surviving example of late antique Latin literature offers a plethora of puzzles and problems for students of what is conventionally (if sometimes misleadingly) labeled the ancient novel.[4] Whatever its literary estimation, there is no question of the popularity and influence of the *Historia* on later works, and of the appeal that it has had for would-be solvers of its difficulties.[5] From Gower's *Confessio Amantis* to Shakespeare's *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (not to mention the Old French *Jourdain de Blaivies*), it has cast its reception spell.[6] Its misty, murky origins have occasioned no less interest.[7] But hard evidence to help to resolve its tantalizing enigmas is elusive.[8] Its plot is one of its most perplexing features, for all its beguiling simplicity. "It both does and does not conform to the expectations of ancient romance."[9]

Our purpose will not be to revisit familiar and perennial controversies surrounding the *Historia*. We shall not seek to discover ciphers

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syntax. Another contender in the Apollonian fray deserving of special mention is Garbugino 2004.

2 Robins 1995: 207–215.

3 Hunt 1999: 341–355.

4 Hägg 1983 is an indispensable introduction to the genre. Cf. also Schmeling 1996; Whitmarsh 1998.

5 Enk 1948: 222–237 is a classic study that retains much of value.

6 Much ink has been spilled on the aforementioned problems, and comparatively less on literary criticism. For an introduction, see Garbugino 2014: 133–145.

7 See especially here: Kuhlmann 2002: 109–120.

8 Cf., e.g., Kortekaas 1998: 176–191: "Until the present day, despite diligent searches, no scrap of papyrus, as we shall see below, has revealed anything on the text's actual origins" (p. 176).

9 Archibald 2004: 20. Some have argued that the *Historia* does not qualify as a "love story" (Tilg 2010: 3). On the "peculiar" arrangement of amatory episodes and the "horrendous" prefatory incestuous union to herald an amorous tale, see Konstantakos 2021: 159–178.

to explicate its alleged deeper meaning, astrological or otherwise.[10] Rather, we shall focus narrowly on one facet of the work's intertextual engagement with Virgil's *Aeneid*: the anonymous author's reception of the Augustan poet's Apollo and Diana imagery in his narrative of the disastrous love affair between the Trojan Aeneas and the Carthaginian Dido.[11] Our investigation will demonstrate that the text produced by the unknown author of the earliest surviving version of the *Historia* offers a deliberate reworking of certain elements from the Virgilian account of Aeneas and Dido from *Aeneid* 1 and 4, with the aim of providing the story with the happy ending that its Augustan epic context did not permit.[12]

The focus of our study does not require engagement with the thornier problems of *Historia* research. Rather, it depends on a careful reading of the progression of certain plot elements that present what we would argue constitutes a deliberately crafted response to the Aeneas and Dido narrative that dominates the first third of Virgil's epic.

The Virgilian love affair between the Trojan wanderer and the Carthaginian colonist ended tragically. Certainly, the *Historia* commences with a dark story: Antiochus, king of Antioch, was lustfully smitten with his (unnamed) daughter, and he sought to live with her as if she were his spouse.[13] This incestuous tale is familiar to the account given in the *Erotika Pathemata*, *Filia Clymeni*, by Virgil's Greek tutor, Parthenius of Harpalyce, whose tale is parallel to the Antiochene

[10] Kortekaas 1991: 71–85.

[11] "Author" is a problematic term to employ in the case of this work. In this study, we use it to refer to the composer of the oldest extant redaction of the text (R.A.), with no implicit judgment on such issues as the existence of a Greek original or earlier Latin version.

[12] Our thesis does not depend on peculiar features of any of the three Latin *redactiones* we possess. We do not take a position on such questions as, e.g., the preexistence of a Greek original, or the influence of Christianity on the text, given that the solutions to such puzzles are not germane to our focus.

[13] D. Konstan 1994: 100–113 offers a useful discussion on the incest theme that opens the story. There is also relevant information in Archibald 2001 (especially Chapter 2 on "The Classical Legacy" and Chapter 4, on "Fathers and Daughters"). For problematic relationships between fathers and daughters as a facet of the novel's alleged reception of comic tropes, see Archibald 2013: 449–454. More generally on paternity in the novel, cf. Archibald 1989: 24–40.

fiction with respect to the depraved passion of a libidinous, wicked father.[14] "Shocking as it is, the father-daughter incest occurs at the opening of all versions of the Apollonius story."[15] King Antiochus carries out his wicked plans.[16] The loss of the daughter's virginity to her own sire is the subject of lurid detail, as blood and a blush betray her violation to her nurse.[17] Father and daughter are joined in an illicit union, and the nurse encourages the girl's cooperation in the horror to keep her from committing suicide (2).

In the first book of the *Aeneid* Virgil mentions a Harpalyce (1.314–320).[18] Aeneas' mother, Venus, dons the garb of a huntress to appear to her son in disguise soon after his shipwreck in North Africa, on the outskirts of Dido's Carthage. Compared by Virgil (as narrator) to a Spartan girl or to a "Thracian Harpalyce," Venus is mistakenly thought by Aeneas to be Diana or one of the nymphs. It is a playful charade: the goddess of sexuality dresses as if she were the preeminent virgin huntress, the deity which in some sense is her opposite. Having donned her Diana dress, Venus proceeds to relate the fateful story of Aeneas' future romantic partner.

Complicating the mythological record, it would seem that there were two Harpalyces, one the aforementioned daughter of Clymenus, the other the daughter of Harpalycus.[19] For information about Harpalyce *filia Harpalyci*, we are reliant mostly on Servian commentary on Virgil, where we learn of a girl who (true to her name, with its semantic evocation of lupine rapacity) was a predator of flocks, a girl reared on animal milk in sylvan haunts, a veritable she-wolf who was slain in consequence of one of her cattle raids.

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[14] See here: Lightfoot 1999: 446ff. The *Erotika Pathemata* was dedicated to the celebrated, ill-fated Cornelius Gallus.

[15] Rupp 1996: 225–234. See further Chiarini 1983: 267–292. For the possible evocation of such Cypriot lore as that of Myrrha and Cinyras, see Fakas 2023: 276ff.

[16] For the theory that the king's name deliberately recalls that of the wicked Antiochus Epiphanes, see Pickford 1975: 599.

[17] Panayotakis 2003: 153–157.

[18] On Harpalyce, note the encyclopedia entries of Arrigoni 1985: 323, and of Knox 2014: 587; cf. Knaack 1894: 526–531; Brucia 2001: 305–308. For commentary on passages from *Aeneid* 1, see *ad loc*. Austin 1971; cf. Conway 1935; Marmorale 1946.

[19] Cf. Hyginus, *Fabulae* 193 (*filia Harpalyci*), and *Fabulae* 252 (*eadem*) and 255 (*filia Clymeni*).

King Antiochus entered into an incestuous relationship with his daughter. Additionally, the author of the *Historia* depicts the king as demanding death as the penalty for any prospective suitor of his daughter who fails to answer a riddle; the king was jealously interested in keeping his daughter for himself. We may think here of the similar lore of Atalanta, whose father made a similar demand of his child's potential husbands, involving a race and not a riddle.[20] It is plausible that the *Historia* borrowed the detail of the capital contest from the story of Atalanta, just as the account of the incestuous behavior of Antiochus was taken from tales such as that of Clymenus and Harpalyce.[21]

The noble Apollonius of Tyre arrives as one of the would-be contestants for the girl's hand.[22] Although he solves the king's riddle all too successfully, he is condemned as a failure – the game was rigged, after all, with the king eager to have all contenders killed. Given a month's reprieve, Apollonius is told to return to face the same terms: solve the riddle or assuredly face death.[23] Apollonius returns to Tyre; he realizes

[20] The surviving ancient sources for this heroine notably include Hesiod (*Catologue of Women* fr. 72–76 M.–W.) and Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 8.317–344 on the Calydonian boar hunt, and 10.560–707 on the race and the Hesperidean apples). See further, Barringer 1996: 48–76; Fratantuono 2008: 342–352; Ziogas 2011: 249–270. Just as there were two Harpalyces, it seems that there were two Atalantas, one the daughter of Iasus and Clymene and the other the daughter of Schoeneus. But it is possible that the adoption of lore about the same girl in different regions resulted in more or less minor divergences of detail, especially in matters of genealogy. In any case, a regular feature of stories about the seemingly otherworldly, Artemisian huntresses, is a problematic relationship with fathers, alongside the expected matter of aversion to marriage and the troubles occasioned by nuptial unions.

[21] It is impossible to prove that the author of the *Historia* had Harpalyce in mind as background to his Antiochus incest story (as opposed to other, similar tales). But given the clear references elsewhere in the novel to *Aeneid* 1 and 4, the relationship of Dido and Aeneas, it is a reasonable supposition that Harpalyce was on his mind. We may note that the name "Harpalyce" occurs among the lemmata (R. 19) of the *Expositio Notarum* (with the inaccurate, albeit forgivable gloss "nomen est Amazonae"); see further Dionisotti 2022: 325. Relatively obscure to moderns, Harpalyce merited inclusion in the late antique shorthand handbook, which may constitute circumstantial evidence of the popularity of the figure.

[22] On how Apollonius "ping-pongs around the Eastern Mediterranean," note Publicover 2017: 45.

[23] Useful analysis of moment's such as this in the narrative, where one wonders exactly why a character behaves in a given fashion, may be found at Panayotakis 2006: 211–226.

that the king intends to have him slain, so he takes leave of his native land. The king's would-be assassin arrives subsequently, only to be told that Apollonius has vanished. Apollonius arrives in T(h)arsis, where by saving the people from famine he secures his immunity (at least temporarily) from the king's efforts to have him hunted down.[24] The various plot twists of the fast-moving story are underway with vigor and rapidly shifting changes of scene.[25] "The story consists of a medley of episodes which are complete in themselves, but which are not linked together. with the stringent coherence one might expect of a novel's plot; occasionally they even seem to contradict one another."[26]

Apollonius' plan is to sail to Cyrene, to seek refuge there from the bounty on his head. A storm destroys his ships and nearly drowns him; the author of redaction RA employs hexameters to describe the tempest, in a sequence that is reminiscent of how Aeneas was driven to Carthaginian shores by Aeolus' Junonian storm (11).[27] Allusions to the *Aeneid* continue: Apollonius will manage to ingratiate himself with the king of the region; in the context of a banquet, his daughter will ask the stranger to relate the story of his origins and recent travails (15). The princess makes a display of playing the lyre, but in a charmingly wrought scene, Apollonius announces that the girl has not learned music, and he will demonstrate the art to his hosts. The novelist explicitly announces that Apollonius was like Apollo as he performed on the lyre for the banqueters:

[24] The identification of the locale has been the source of significant controversy. For the identification of this "Tharsish" with Carthage, see Lipiński 2004: 258–259; cf. Lipiński 1994: 605–607. Any such Carthaginian setting would serve to underscore the evocation of the Dido/Diana-Aeneas/Apollo relationship.

[25] Cf. here Montero 1983: 291–334.

[26] Holzberg 1995: 18–19.

[27] R.B. does not have the verses in imitation of the *Aeneid* 1 storm. "It appears from time to time, however, that R.B. does not have as direct a line to the original history as does R.A." (Schmeling 1999: 123). Carmignani 2014: 19–36. Janka 1997: 168–187 provides an invaluable guide to its subject.

*Et <***> induit statum <lyricum>, et corona caput coronavit, et accipiens lyram introivit triclinium, et ita stetit, ut discumbentes non Apollonium sed Apollinem aestimarent.* (16)[28]

The hero is true to his name, a veritable Apollo as he displays his musical talents.[29] This is the only reference to the god in the *Historia*; the paucity of allusions to Apollo is understandable, given that the hero of the novel already recalls the deity with every nominal citation. The present scene is thus accorded greater prominence, as Apollonius is explicitly equated with Apollo, just as the romantic plot element with the princess commences.

Indeed, notwithstanding his insult of her artistic abilities, soon Apollonius is the object of the unquenchable love of this daughter of the local monarch (17); the text employs explicit references to Virgil's fourth *Aeneid* to evoke the memory of the parallel case of Dido's passion for Aeneas via direct quotation: *Sed 'regina gravi iamdudum saucia cura' Apollonii figit in 'pectore vultus verba<que>', cantusque memor credit 'genus esse deorum'. Nec somnum oculis nec 'membris dat cura quietem'.* (18).[30] The text also harkens back to *Aeneid* 4.1: *At regina gravi iamdudum saucia cura*, 4–5 … *haerent infixi pectore vultus* / *verbaque nec placidam membris dat cura quietem*, and 12 *credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum*. The novelist allows no chance that the reader will not think of Aeneas and Dido; the storm scene was reminiscent of Virgil, as was the banquet – but now the verbatim references firmly bring to life nascent Carthage and the ill-fated queen, and if the scene is Carthage, the memory of the first third of the *Aeneid* is all the more palpable.

Eventually Apollonius is married; his wife becomes pregnant. While walking along the seashore the happy couple sees a Tyrian ship; inquiry reveals that the incestuous king Antiochus and his daughter were struck by lightning and killed. The dark plot element that opened the work has

[28] The texts of R.B. and R.C. offer relatively minor changes. On the textual difficulties of the passage, note Hunt 1987: 283–287.

[29] May 2020: 61–80 provides a detailed analysis of this key scene of the novel.

[30] Cf. R.B.: *Sed puella Archistratis ab amore incensa inquietam habuit noctem; figit in 'pectore vultus verbaque'*; R.C. has the same text without the king's name and with *vulnus* for *vultus*.

been dispensed with by a timely Jovian bolt that ends the unspeakable union.

The Kingdom of Antioch, the young couple learns, has been reserved for Apollonius. This unexpected, welcome development is soon followed by the apparent death of Apollonius' young bride in childbirth. The mother's body is consigned to the waves in a coffin; it washes ashore at Ephesus, where it is fortunately discovered that the woman is alive. She is established among the priestesses of Diana (27 … *et inter sacerdotes Dianae feminas [se] fulsit et collocavit, ubi omnes virgines inviolabiliter servabant castitatem*). Her priesthood thus serves as an expedient to preserve her chastity; she is not a virgin devotee of the goddess, but in the context of the author's tale she is not unlike Dido, the widow of Sychaeus, Diana-like as she preserves her *univira* status. In this case, however, it is the wife who has "died."

Apollonius' spouse is thus lost to him, now seemingly relegated permanently to the status of chaste priestess of the virgin goddess of the hunt.[31] His daughter T(h)arsia is entrusted to the care of Stranguillo and Dionysias (28).[32] Not only does Apollonius leave her with them for an inordinate amount of time as he travels to distant Egyptian locales, but jealousy conspires against the girl when she is favored by the local citizenry over Dionysias' own daughter Philomusia (31). A murder plot is hatched, which is circumvented both by the hesitation of the commissioned assassin and the timely intervention of pirates (31–32). Tharsia is brought to Mytilene, where she becomes the object of contention between the noble Athenagoras and an unscrupulous scoundrel of a *leno* (33–36). Sequences like these invite the interest of those eager to compare the *Historia* to the plots and drama of Greek romances, not least in the matter of the expedience of employing those familiar stock characters of such narratives, pirates and procurers.

[31] On the *topos* of the "missing mother" (with reference to the *Historia*), see Laes 2021: 15–42.

[32] For the possible plot influence of Euripides' depiction of Alcmaeon entrusting his children to Creon of Corinth, see Krappe 1924: 57–58. For those concerned with the plot holes and inexplicable motivations of characters in this section of the work in particular, see, e.g., Perry 1967: 310.

After 14 or 15 years, Apollonius returns at last to recover his child (37).[33] The stage is set for his adventure in trying to track down his daughter, who will be discovered via an elaborate recognition scene in Mytilene amid a festival in honor of Neptune; the mechanism for the recognition will include the girl's employment of riddling enigmas, including several texts found in the extant collection of Symphosius' *Aenigmata*.[34]

Apollonius' child Tarsia will marry Athenogaras, and the happy family of father, rescued daughter and honorable son-in-law will prepare to depart. A dream intervention will warn Apollonius to proceed first to Ephesus, since, after all the remaining loose ends of the story is the fate of his long lost wife, now a priestess of Diana, the goddess' most favored attendant. Apollonius is to relate his adventures to the *sacerdos*, with his report of wanderings and varied happenings guaranteed, the reader anticipates, to secure recognition. When the priestess enters the temple, Apollonius and his companions think that Diana herself has appeared in their midst, in all her loveliness:[35]

> *at illa audiens regem advenisse, induit se regium habitum, ornavit caput gemmis, et in veste purpurea venit stipata catervis famularum. templum ingreditur. quam videns Apollonius cum filia sua et genero corruerunt ante pedes eius; tantus enim splendor pulchritudinis eius emanabat, ut ipsam esse putarent deam Dianam.* (48)[36]

[33] On the possible evocation of Odysseus and Penelope, see Schmeling 2003: 549; cf. Holzberg: 1989: 91–101.

[34] Leary 2014 offers an extensive introduction and commentary, alongside a critical text and English translation. The same author explores the affinities between the two poets, see Leary 2021: 125–152. Ohl 1932: 209–212 has a useful *précis* of the major problems. For the relationship of the riddle collection to our novel, cf. Muñoz Jiménez 1987: 307.

[35] On the significance of the reference to the *pulchritudo* of the goddess, see Strelan 1996: 93.

[36] R.B. and R.C. have almost the same text; cf. their identical ending: *ut ipsa dea videretur*.

After hearing the rendition of his adventures the priestess confesses her true identity, and she flings herself into the arms of her husband.[37] There is no question at all about what this priestess of Diana will do. Happily reunited with her spouse and child, she prepares to make her departure from Ephesus. The local population is said to be aggrieved that the beloved priestess is departing, but there is no difficulty or question about her family reconciliation and exit from Ephesus (49). Certainly, Diana is not discomfited by the exit of her favored priestess; there is no question that wife and husband will resume their nuptial life. The romance of Apollonius and the nameless girl has a happy ending; Apollonius of Tyre is reunited with his lost love, the now former priestess of Diana.[38] The malefactors are summarily eliminated. Apollonius will enjoy both family and kingship.[39] A quiet and serene life will ensue, with death in old age (51). *In fine*, one's verdict may be that the novel is escapist entertainment, with enough ludic intertextuality to amuse the literate reader.[40]

We may more closely consider the engagement of the *Historia* with Virgil's doomed love story of Aeneas and Dido. The *Historia* opens with an allusion to the same sort of tale as was told of Harpalyce, the daughter of Clymenus. In Virgil, the mention of Venus' Diana-like, Thracian Harpalyce costume comes as the goddess relates the background of Dido's landing and settlement in Carthage to Aeneas and Achates. Soon enough, Aeneas will see the queen in person as she makes her entrance into her temple to Juno. Virgil compares Dido to Diana in the company of her mountain nymphs:

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[37] On how the recitation of the adventures triggers the recognition (as opposed to mere physical recognition, even after more than a dozen years), see Montiglio 2013: 191.

[38] Outside the scope of the present study, with respect to the Diana motif there is the question of possible allusion in the *Historia* to issues of ascetism and virginity as part of living a Christian ideal. For the argument that "the Latin *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* seems to have existed as a known literary landmark against which … Christian writers charted their own hagiographic designs," see Robins 2000: 531–557.

[39] On the *Historia* as commentary on contemporary imperial social and political realities, see Wheaton 2019: 263–276.

[40] R.B. closes with a note that Apollonius left *duo volumina* of his adventures: one copy for the Ephesian temple of Diana and one for his own *bibliotheca*. R.C. has the same detail; R.A. has no mention of the matter.

qualis in Eurotae ripis, aut per iuga Cynthi
exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae
hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades: illa pharetram

fert humero, gradiensque deas supereminent omnes;
Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus.
talis erat Dido, talem se laeta ferebat
per medios, instans operi regnisque futuris. (1.498–504)[41]

This simile influenced the description of the entrance of the priestess of Diana in the *Historia* (48); there the goddess' votary was Apollonius' wife, the woman who had been thought to have died in childbirth. In Virgil the simile invites a host of interrelated associations, not to say problems.[42] These difficulties are exacerbated once Dido falls passionately in love with Aeneas, and a sexual affair commences.

Virgil's Dido-Diana simile is balanced by the poet's later comparison of Aeneas to Apollo:

qualis ubi hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta
deserit ac Delum maternam invisit Apollo
instauratque choros, mixtique altaria circum

Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt pictique Agathyrsi;
ipse iugis Cynthi graditur mollique fluentem
fronde premit crinem fingens atque implicat auro,
tela sonant umeris: haud illo segnior ibat
Aeneas, tantum egregio decus enitet ore. (4.143–150)

The simile, like its companion piece from Book 1, has attracted appreciable critical comment.[43] In the context of the first third of the *Aeneid*, the comparison of Dido and Aeneas to the divine children of

[41] Quotes from the *Aeneid* are cited from Conte 2019.

[42] See further here Thornton 1985: 615–622; Wilhelm 1987: 43–48; Polk 1996: 39–49.

[43] Cf. *ad loc*. the editions of Buscaroli 1932; Pease 1935; Austin 1955; Tilly 1968; Fratantuono, Smith 2022; note also Clausen 2002: 41; Fratantuono 2017: 176–177.

Latona is deeply problematic, with shades of the incestuous sibling unions familiar to Ptolemaic Egypt, the realm of that favorite target of Augustan propaganda, Cleopatra VII Philopator.[44] To the degree that Aeneas is a resident in North Africa in the company of a foreign queen he is uncomfortably reminiscent of Mark Antony. Apollo and Diana were deities of particular significance for the Augustan regime; there is no room anywhere in the complex allegorical equation for the Carthaginian royal to be involved with the Trojan hero.[45]

In Virgil, we progress from (1) Venus disguised as if she were a Spartan girl or Harpalyce, only to be mistakenly identified by Aeneas as the goddess Diana, all in the context of the Trojan hero learning about Dido, to (2) Dido's entrance, where she appears as if she were Diana with her oreads, to (3) Dido with Aeneas at her Carthaginian hunt, where the queen's guest is compared to Apollo.[46] Between the matched pair of divine comparisons, Dido falls madly in love with Aeneas on account of the machinations of Venus and Cupid; at one point she is compared to a deer that has been wounded by an unknowing shepherd:

uritur infelix Dido totaque vagatur
urbe furens, qualis coniecta cerva sagitta,
quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit

pastor agens telis liquitque volatile ferrum
nescius: illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat
Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo. (4.68–73)

The same Dido who was associated with the goddess of the hunt is now relegated to the status of comparand of a wounded animal.[47] Virgil thus employs a careful progression of similes: first Dido is like Diana

[44] Hardie 2006: 25–41 explores Virgil's evocation of the recent political, dynastic situation in Egypt lucidly and skillfully.

[45] Miller 2011 offers a sound introduction to the place of the god in the political regime and its reception in the court poets.

[46] Cf. Dunkle 1973: 127–142.

[47] On this simile, note Morgan 1994: 67–68; Thornton 1996: 389–393; Jenkyns 1998: 506ff; Chew 2002: 616–627.

in *Aeneid* 1, before Venus and Cupid secure her passionate *amour* for Aeneas. Then she is a like a wounded deer, and finally Aeneas is compared to Apollo on the verge of his carnal dalliance with the queen. According to the standards of Augustan Rome, there can be no sexual or nuptial union between Diana and Apollo; the same was not true for Cleopatra's Egypt in the matter of sibling dynastic marriages, and the same is not true in the romantic fantasy world of the *Historia*.

In the *Historia*, Apollonius recalls "Apollo" not only by virtue of his name but also on account of the scene where the hero is compared explicitly to the god on account of his musical talents, in proof of his *nomen omen*. In the end, "Apollo" finds "Diana," and without any controversy or further ado, husband and wife are reunited, able to depart from the goddess' shrine to resume their nuptial life with daughter and son-in-law in accompaniment.[48] Apollonius is able to remove his Diana-like from the very midst of the goddess' most sacred precinct, without controversy or hint of impiety. The married couple may resume the domestic life of the royal family that had been interrupted by so many and a so improbable set of circumstances.

The story of Apollonius opens with a tale of incest and violent amatory pursuit, with the threat of death looming over those who would seek the hand of a princess. The evocation of Harpalyce-Atalanta lore works simultaneously on several levels. First and foremost, Apollonius will be spared any harm or ill consequences with respect to Antiochus' daughter. There will be no problematic union, no leonine metamorphosis and yoking to Cybele's chariot in the manner of Atalanta's suitor Hippomenes. There will be no cannibalism and avian metamorphosis in the manner of the story of the Thracian Tereus and Philomela, as was told of Harpalyce *filia Clymeni*. Instead, incestuous father and daughter will be erased from the story by the convenient, incendiary plot device of a timely lightning bolt. In Virgil, Venus' Harpalyce masquerade as she related Dido's story to her son was a harbinger of what would

[48] Significantly, in the *Historia* the lover is compared to Apollo during the crucial scene in which the girl first falls in love; in Virgil, the comparison of Aeneas to Apollo comes when the queen is deeply ensconced in her passion and just on the cusp of the fateful sexual coupling in the cave. The Virgilian Apollo description comes as something of a shock, certainly a reminder of the impropriety of the union once we are forced to recall that Dido had been compared to Diana.

prove to be the ominous Diana-Apollo associations that characterized the union of the Carthaginian queen and Trojan hero. There were two Harpalyces known to the mythographic tradition, and both presented grim implications. In the *Historia*, the incestuous opening that recalls one of the Harpalyces serves to recall the *milieu* of the first *Aeneid* for the reader, even as the destruction of Antiochus and his "Harpalyce" serve to relieve Apollonius and his "Diana" from any lasting threat or permanent harm.[49]

The author of the *Historia* thus crafted a decidedly positive, optimistic reworking of the Apollo and Diana imagery from Virgil's unforgettable narrative of the catastrophic affair of Aeneas and Dido. The *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* blissfully and blithely resolves all its controversies, allowing its Apollo to live happily ever after with his Diana. The *Aeneid* employed Diana/Harpalyce imagery as part of a nexus of grim associations and allusions for Dido. Such was not to be the case for the *Historia*, a work whose author decided to compose a brighter destiny for his lovesick Diana-like Dido. Such a decision would have been especially fitting if the anonymous writer were a native speaker of Phoenician, a North African *raconteur* who decided that the storied Punic princess deserved something approaching a happy sequel to her tragic Virgilian tale, or at least a more positive appropriation of the Augustan poet's imagery of the divine siblings.[50]

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[49] Doody 1996: 83 perceptively observes how the *Historia* begins with darker imagery than that usually found anywhere in the extant novels; the shocking plot element of its inception serves to render its happy ending all the more noteworthy.

[50] Such is the intriguing theory of authorship and date proposed by Mastrocinque 2019: 190–255.

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