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SUBJECTIVITY AND AMBIGUITY IN TWO VERSE TRANSLATIONS OF THE *AENEID*[1]: "HE LOVES MOST THE THINGS THAT PROFESS TO MATTER LEAST"[2]

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755 iam gravis aequabat luctus et mutua Mavors
funera: caedebant pariter pariterque ruebant
victores victique, neque his fuga nota neque illis.
di Iovis in tectis iram miserantur inanem amborum et
759 tantos mortalibus esse labores:

Virgil, *Aeneid* 10.755-759[3]

Now the heavy hand of Mars was dealing out equal woe and mutual death. Alike they slew and alike they fell—victors and vanquished, and neither these nor those knew flight. The gods in Jove's halls pity the useless rage of both armies, and grieve that mortals should endure such toils.

Rushton Fairclough trans. 1934, 10.755-759[4]

The ever-present narrator of Virgil's *Aeneid* comments on the epic's events and characters through a subjective stance. As Heinze claimed in 1903, Virgil is most (or perhaps only) interested in rousing an emotional effect within his audience, rather than relating a purely objective plot (288-296). However, this subjective characteristic only represents one facet of the *Aeneid*'s complex narrative. In fact, there is no single subjective perspective, and the third person narrator is not the only voice through which Virgil tells his story. His is rather a *polysubjective* narrative, comprised of multiple subjective narrative voices and focalisers (Fowler 2000: 40-63).[5] There can be contradiction, creating ambiguity both within the narrative voices (Parry 1966: 107-123, especially 121; Lyne 1987: 218-220) and between the narrator's authorial and the characters' participatory voices (Segal 1999: 43-44).[6] In the example above, Mars is described as *gravis*, indicating either a subjective narrative description of him acting severely, or a feeling of guilt focalised through him. Following this, the gods 'pity' (*miserantur*) the 'useless rage' (*inanem iram*) of the armies, again showing either subjective narrative or focalisation through the gods.

The *Aeneid's* multiple voices, made up of differing (at times contradictory) narrators and characters, reflect a chaotic world without a standard moral model or unique truth (Conte 2007: 31-33). The subsequent narrative ambiguity results in a Barthian decision for the audience (the outcome of which is determined by contextual influences and individual reading): that of deciding upon the meaning behind the text.[7] Undoubtedly Virgil offers an official Augustan reading, but he also invites inquisitive readers to question this imperialist message. This space for interpretation creates further complications when the text is translated,[8] since translators are at once readers and (re)writers, with the potential (or the necessity) to introduce a new voice into the narrative. In translation, Virgil's original polysubjectivity is manifested as either conscious ambiguity or decisive interpretation. By *decisive interpretation*, I mean to say that the translator will reduce the polysubjectivity to one single voice, because they are unable or unwilling to present multiple narrative layers. Each translator's relationship with Virgil's narrator thus becomes a complex web of interweaving (and intertextual) subjectivities, as they are inevitably led by their own interpretation of Virgil's ambiguity. The translator can control the narrator's visibility, and the degree of control which they exert will affect their own visibility as a translator,[9] as well as the narrative subjectivity and ambiguity. Such translator modifications can be seen on the very first line:

arma virumque cano

Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.1[10]

Arms and the man I sing

Rushton Fairclough, 1.1

This is a tale of arms and of a man

Jackson Knight trans. 1956, 1.1

I tell about war and the hero

Day Lewis trans. 1952, 1.1

In this example, Jackson Knight shows his inclination to align with contemporary novelistic convention, which he discusses in his preface (21-22), by removing the first person verb, and therefore the epic tradition of a present, active narrator. To those with knowledge of the Latin, this proactive deviation from Virgil's narrative emphasises Jackson Knight's presence as a translator. However, to those with little or no knowledge of the Latin, Jackson Knight here brings the *Aeneid* closer to his readers and their context, and allows them to believe they are reading a contemporary novel rather than a translation of an ancient epic. Writing just a few years earlier, Day Lewis takes a very different approach, choosing to retain Virgil's narrative presence, but modifying the subjectivity. He translates *vir* as 'hero', which does not simply describe the physicality of a male human, but rather subjectively attributes a sense of his bravery and valour, building a description of the protagonist much earlier than Virgil does. This decision to show a more explicit subjectivity not present in the original is perhaps to convey the subtle implication of heroism within the word *vir* when used in a warlike context (in contrast to *homo*, a neutral, biological term for 'man', which Virgil chose not to use).

These two translators are writing just four years apart, and therefore temporal context cannot be a significant factor in the differences between them. However, their publication contexts and audiences varied (Jackson Knight wrote in prose, Day Lewis in verse for a radio broadcast), as well as their individual background and their objective in translating. Jackson Knight was primarily a scholar, who states his objective was to "let Virgil pass on what he has to say with as little impediment as possible… to let it come in spite of the translator, not to force it by efforts to translate the untranslatable", and without colouring it with the translator's contextual or stylistic preferences (Jackson Knight 1956: 22). On the other hand, as a poet writing a translation initially commissioned for radio broadcast, Day Lewis may tend more towards subjectivity and interpretation, to produce a poetic version which reflects his authorial style and satisfies a primary function of artistic entertainment rather than education.

This example shows how differences in translation can arise due to the translator's philosophy, background, and motivation. But the way that translators treat Virgil's subjectivity and ambiguity will also change depending on the time in which they are writing, as different contexts create different relationships with the source text. In the case of the *Aeneid*, a product of its own time both in terms of its political purpose and the Roman epic form, not only are the poet and his contemporary audience dead, but "the significance of the poem in its context is dead too" (Bassnett 1980: 85-6). When it is translated, the *Aeneid* then becomes significant, in a new and different way, to its translator, their context, and their audience's relationship with the original text or culture. This paper will consider how contextual factors might influence the way in which two translators, separated by over 300 years, deal with Virgil's narrative: the poet John Dryden, who produced in 1697 the first complete, single-author translation of the *Aeneid* into English, and the Classical scholar Frederick Ahl, who has written one of the most recent, widely popular verse translations of the *Aeneid* (Oxford World Classics, 2007).[11] Incidentally, while their translations are significantly different, their first lines are distinguished only by a comma: 'Arms and the man I sing' (Ahl), 'Arms, and the Man I sing' (Dryden).

Despite the generation gap, Dryden and Ahl appear to have similar intentions: to construct a poetic translation which balances fluency and literalness (one is slightly more intent on the former, and the other the latter: Dryden [1697: 330] comments "On the whole Matter, I thought fit to steer betwixt the two Extreams, of Paraphrase, and literal Translation: To keep as near my Author as I cou'd, without losing all his Graces, the most Eminent of which, are in the Beauty of his words"; Ahl [2007: xlvii] "I

wanted it to be a version that the literary-minded could appreciate, but which would not play fast and loose with the original to win approval […] I tried to stay close enough to the original for a struggling Latin student […] to be able to use it as a crib"). Their similar intentions, however, are motivated by different contexts and expectations. Before I look at how these differences are manifested in their translations, I will offer a brief introduction to each author.

John Dryden lived from 1631-1700, through the English civil war, the *interregnum*, and the Restoration. He was a Catholic, and a monarchist who supported Charles II and James II, both of whom selected him as their poet laureate. His poetry had always, to some extent, been politically minded (Brown 2004: 62), and, early in his career, he explored imperial themes with a sense of optimism.[12] When James II was deposed in 1688 by Protestants Mary and William III, Dryden refused to swear allegiance to the new monarchs, and thus fell out of favour and lost his royal patronage. Subsequently, his relationship with empire and monarchy became more complex.[13]

The parallels between Augustan Rome and Restoration England are clear here: both had experienced a period of civil unrest, now faced excitement and anxiety surrounding a new imperial rule (Brown 2004: 61, 68-9), and questioned its legitimacy and longevity (Widmer 2017: 5; Thomas 2001: 124). Of course Dryden and his educated contemporaries were well versed in the demise of previous empires: Greece, Rome, Egypt and others (Brown 2004: 73-7). Comparison with Augustan Rome only resulted in more uncertainty, since the rift between its ideals and the realities of Restoration England seemed to be ever-widening (Davis 2004: 79).[14]

Translation gave Dryden the perfect platform through which to explore these themes: being dispossessed of his laureateship increased the political nature of his work (Hammond 1999: 10), meant he had to look beyond his previous roles as satirist and propagandist (Frost 1955: 1), and provided him with a mask through which to convey his sentiments (Zwicker 1984: 63). The multiple voices within translation allow Dryden to control the extent to which he distances himself or accepts authorial responsibility for his subject (Hammond 1999: 145). By the end of his career, translation had become incredibly significant for Dryden, representing two thirds of his oeuvre[15] (his Virgil is as long as all his original poetry combined). Thus, although he was not the first to draw comparisons between British monarchs and Augustus, his extensive translations of Horace, Virgil and Ovid, three primary Augustan poets, certainly made him well-qualified to do so (Davis 2004: 76).

Dryden's opening is charged with contemporary political content:

1 Arms, and the Man I sing, who, forc'd by Fate,
And haughty *Juno*'s unrelenting Hate,
Expell'd and exil'd, left the *Trojan* Shoar:
Long Labours, both by Sea and Land he bore,
5 And in the doubtful War, before he won
The *Latian* Realm, and built the destin'd Town:
His banish'd Gods restor'd to Rites Divine,
And setl'd sure Succession in his Line:
From whence the Race of *Alban* Fathers come,
10 And the long Glories of Majestick *Rome*.

Dryden trans. 1697, 1.1-10

The words 'forc'd', 'expell'd, and 'exil'd' allude to James II (Winn 1987: 488, Thomas 2001: 131-2, Hammond 1999: 232-3),[16] and line 8, Dryden's own invention, "And setl'd sure Succession in his Line," the issue of legitimacy of rule (Winn 1987: 488). There is also implication of the Restoration in his translation of *inferet,* "brought back" (Hammond 1999: 232-2). However, whilst Dryden uses his *Aeneid* to reflect on contemporary political issues, it is not a straightforward comparison of Aeneas to one monarch; indeed at other occasions, it has been posited that Dryden's Aeneas refers instead to William III.[17] In this complex way, Dryden is using Roman history combined with language that very much places

him in a contemporary English setting, to explore themes of civil-war, personal exile, invasion, defeat, restoration and empire.[18]

The extent to which Dryden's *Aeneid* interacts with his context means he gives the epic to his audience in a way which they had not experienced before, in a way which almost makes Virgil a "Restoration Poet" (Venuti 1995: 189; Gillespie: 2011: 12, 32). This historical engagement combined with a firm foothold within the contemporary literary context to ensure immediate success for Dryden. It satisfied the contemporary fashion of classical translation, crafted by poets, which aimed to capture the "poetic essence" of the text (Balmer 2013: 21, 23; Bassnett 1980: 63-4).[19] The demand for creative literary translation required a high degree of fluency, aiming to "make the foreign recognizably, even splendidly English" and any grammatical phrasing that sounded too Latinate was considered vulgarly literal (Venuti 2000: 55, 56). Indeed, Dryden's adherence to the heroic couplet form is so strict that some assert it would have caused him restrictions.[20]

Dryden's audience was large and varied. In the preface to his translation of Juvenal's *Satires*, alongside the traditional audience of well-educated men (Gillespie 2011: 11), he addresses both non-scholarly and non-Latin-literate men and women (for whom translation was often the only access to classical texts [Dryden 1693: line 3140-3149, p447]).[21] However, a large portion of his audience would have been familiar with the original text (if not in the Latin, then at least on a plot level), and would therefore be interested in how Dryden had interacted with Virgil to make it a Restoration text. Of course, it may have split opinion. England was a divided nation in 1697: those who supported William III, those who supported James II, and those who supported the reconstruction of the Republic. Davis comments that "For Dryden the voice of Virgil, spanning the extremes of civic strength and civil smoothness, as his life had spanned the last years of the Roman republic and the first of the Augustan principate, was the voice not of the royalist or republican interest in British culture but, potentially, of that culture as a whole" (2004: 86-7) .

Over 300 years later, the American Professor of Classics Frederick Ahl translated the *Aeneid* in 2007 for Oxford World's Classics. He wrote in verse, and aimed to write a translation which was exciting, readable, performable, and which would carry the spirit of the Latin ("an epic poem must sing" [Ahl 2007: xlvii]), at the cost of its idioms (xlix, xlvi). Ahl was born in 1941, and is Professor of Classics at Cornell University, with an extensive background in Classical scholarship, primarily Greek and Roman epic and drama. As a professor turned translator, he faces completely different pressures than Dryden, a poet turned translator. Ahl's desire (or commission) to translate stems from a background that is scholarly, and underpinned by academic appreciation of the text, rather than one which is literary and creative. These differences in the conception of a translation very much affect its reception. In a bookshop or library (certainly in the library which I use), Ahl's translation is likely to appear with scholarship of the *Aeneid*, perhaps alongside his other works, placing it very much in the context of academic classical criticism. Thus we open it with very different expectations compared to Dryden's, which appears alongside his creative work. Ahl's translation arrives to us as a result of scholastic tradition, rather than a purely creative endeavour.

Ahl's encounter with the *Aeneid* follows years of additional criticism, with a particularly key movement being the anti-imperial reading, propelled by American scholars after (and perhaps as a result of) the Second World War and Vietnam War.[22] Ahl himself has hinted at the ambiguity which he reads into Virgil: he (Virgil), at least superficially, endorses the Caesars (1976: 58), but suggests 'labyrinthine possibilities of thought and reflection' (75); his vision of Rome, Aeneas and Augustus was 'highly ambivalent' (65); and the role he gives to the gods makes it difficult to attribute criticism or blame to characters, since they are never responsible for their own actions (65).

Like Dryden, Ahl's audience varies widely. From the scholarly (students who value literalness for a true reading of the text or to help their own translation efforts) to a wide public audience (who value fluency and readability), many are reading a translation due to declining Latin literacy (Gillespie 2011: 2-3, 155). Ahl aimed to please both types of reader, by balancing a version which "the literary minded could appreciate, but which would not play fast and loose enough with the original to win approval", whilst

also staying close enough to the Latin in order to be used as a student aid, and using modern, direct, “normal” idiom as much as possible (2007: xlvi).

In terms of form, Ahl uses what he calls “a version of Virgil’s ancient hexameter”, and allows himself to move freely between tense, although (by his own admission) not always in the same place as Virgil does (xlvii). Ahl’s motivation for writing in verse was that he “[didn’t] know how to refashion poetry into prose without losing the essence of what makes the original poetic” (xlvii). He is therefore not trying to stick to the Latin semantically and syntactically, rather to aim to reproduce it in modern English, so that readers will read it for enjoyment, rather than “solemn homage” (xlix).[23]

I will now consider two key ambiguous passages from the *Aeneid*.

ROME’S RELUCTANCE

Whilst the first half of the epic sees Aeneas passive and unwilling, “suffering destiny as it comes” (Putnam 1999: 414), book six observes his transition to taking an active control of his own fate, as both his and Virgil’s focus shifts from *virum* (the individual desires and interests of the man) to *arma* (the needs of the future Roman empire and its peoples).[24] Aeneas sets out to visit his father in the underworld, with the aim of discovering more about his quest and his inescapable destiny. He is instructed by the Sibyl to retrieve the golden bough as a sign that he is worthy of being granted access. She advises him that if he is the one chosen by the fates for this task, the branch will come freely and with ease (*uolens facilisque*, 146)[25]; but if he is not, it will not come at all. What actually follows is that he is able to snap the branch off the tree, although it lingers (*cunctantem*):

210 corripit Aeneas extemplo auidusque refringit
211 cunctantem, et uatis portat sub tecta Sibyllae.

Virgil, *Aeneid* 6. 210-211[26]

Forthwith Aeneas plucks it and greedily breaks off the clinging bough, and carries it beneath the roof of the prophetic Sibyl.

Rushton Fairclough 6.210-211

This episode, which sees emotional and mental (and to an extent, physical) burdens being overcome, requires Aeneas to suppress any individual desires he may have (either wilfully or under the influence of a higher being) in order to play the role of Augustan hero which the plot of the *Aeneid* seeks to form.[27] Scholars and commentators have been divided between interpreting the lingering as a simple emphasis of the arduousness of Aeneas’ task, or as Aeneas consciously resisting the foundation of Rome.[28] The second option is more likely; whilst the Sibyl had referred to a positive outcome where the branch comes away easily, and a negative outcome where no amount of force would move it, this intermediate outcome of a struggle with the branch eventually yielding was not mentioned.[29] If indeed there is meant to be an implication here that Aeneas is unwilling to perform the task, it is an example of subjective focalisation from either Aeneas, the narrator, or fate.[30] This ambiguity can be retained by a translator, or interpreted decisively. Dryden chooses the latter:

217 Look round the Wood, with lifted Eyes, to see
The lurking Gold upon the fatal Tree:
Then <u>rend</u> it off, as holy Rites command:
220 The willing Metal will obey thy hand,
Following <u>with ease</u>, if, favour'd by thy Fate,
Thou art foredoom'd to view the *Stygian* State:
If not, no labour can the Tree constrain:
224 And strength of stubborn Arms, and Steel are vain.

303 He seiz'd the shining Bough with griping hold;
And <u>rent away, with ease</u>, the ling'ring Gold:
305 Then, to the Sibyl's Palace bore the Prize.[31]

Dryden 6. 217-224, 303-305

In his translation of these passages, Dryden makes a striking alteration to Virgil's original text, through the addition of just two words. He repeats the phrase 'with ease' in both his description of the Sibyl's direction and of Aeneas snatching the branch (and also uses the same verb - 'rent' / 'rend'), where Virgil had chosen to differentiate between the two. Dryden translates *cunctantem* as 'ling'ring', which contrasts to his addition 'with ease', in the second passage.[32] This contrast brings to the translation an element of Virgilian ambiguity, however, the conscious repetition of 'with ease' makes the task seem an easy feat for the hero, and any stubbornness is simply attributed to the bough. Like Arthur pulling the sword from the stone, this task is not much of a challenge for Aeneas. Corse claimed that "Like Virgil, Dryden offers an ironic view of heroic valor together with a shrewd awareness of the human greed and folly that undermine these characters" (Corse 1991: 13). However, that seems to be far from the case here. Dryden seems to go out of his way to make Aeneas as heroic as possible, befitting his interpretation of Virgil's protagonist; he commented in his introduction that a hero does not have to be virtuous through and through, but that Aeneas himself is, and that he is in fact the "idea of perfection" (Dryden 1697: 271). In fact, his presentation of Aeneas is often "godlike", even when not supported by the Latin (Mason 2012: 115).[33]

Dryden therefore chooses not to translate ambiguity, but rather to use a modified narrative subjectivity and to superimpose a new, interpreting narrator. This is surely inevitable of a translation which is never intended to be a close replication of the original, but always a new creative work (Dryden 1697: 329, Gillespie 2011: 95), since "Dryden's aim was to translate poetry, not simply the words of poems" (Frost 1955: 49). Dryden's clarification of Virgil's ambiguous bough scene would not have gone unnoticed by his readers, as he tells them exactly how to interpret it: Aeneas had no difficulty in seizing the bough, and neither the hero, fate, nor the narrator are resisting Aeneas' journey towards the founding of Rome. His subjectivity here promotes the Augustan message of the *Aeneid*, by consolidating Aeneas' right to rule rather than drawing it into contention.

210 Instantly grabbing the bough from its seat, though it struggles, Aeneas,
211 Greedily snaps it and takes it home to his seer, the Sibyl.

Ahl trans. 2007, 6. 210-211

The rhythm of Ahl's two lines is disrupted by the repetition of the monosyllabic 'it' and the surprisingly archaic word 'seat', contrary to Ahl's aim to actively avoided archaisms (Ahl 2007: xviii). This old fashioned register is emphasised further through jarring juxtaposition with colloquial 'grabbing', 'snaps' and 'greedily', with emphatic vertical parallelism of the 'a' sound in the fourth syllable. Whilst the informal language could domesticate the translation, the archaic 'seat' could foreignize it, thus pulling the audience in different directions, perhaps an effort from Ahl to make his audience feel the same tensions as he did. This makes us more aware of the fact that Ahl is operating across cultures, bringing his position as translator to the fore, as he deals with an ancient text but tries to appeal to a modern audience.[34] These radical word choices and contrasting registers disrupt the fluency of his translation, and thus make him more visible as a translator.[35]

Towards the end of line 210, the pace steadily slows until the reader hears the striking juxtaposition of 'struggles' and 'Aeneas'. 'Struggles' is quite a subjective translation of *cunctantem*, implying physical inability and unwillingness, whereas the more typical 'hesitate' or 'delay' implies more of an active suspension. Even though the grammatical subject of 'struggles' remains the bough, its position next to Aeneas is visually and aurally significant. This line forces a pause after 'Aeneas', slowing down the pace until reaching the reluctant hero himself. The next line rushes forwards, beginning 'Greedily', when the hand (and by extension, Aeneas) suddenly pushes forward and decides to snatch it. Impatiently, perhaps rashly, he performs the deed which will spark the beginning of the foundation of Augustus' empire. The adverb 'greedily' could indeed be an anti-imperial voice, depicting negative qualities required to found and lead such an empire.

Whilst *avidus* in Latin does suggest greed in a negative sense (Oxford Latin Dictionary gives 'Greedy for gain' as its top entry, and Lewis and Short give the slightly milder 'Longing eagerly for something (lawful or unlawful)'), other meanings available for translators to choose include 'ardent', 'eager', or the more positive 'desirous of' (fourth and fifth Oxford Latin Dictionary entries). Definitions for 'greedy' in

the Oxford English Dictionary, by contrast, are similar to all the negative words associated with *avidus*, including 'avaricious', 'covetous', 'greedy of gain'.[36]

Ahl notes in his preface that Virgil's persona is very elusive, and that the translator "has no business" accommodating either the generally accepted imperial message of the *Aeneid*, or the increasingly popular anti-imperial message, but rather must allow the epic to sing for itself as much as possible (2007: xlix). He also writes openly about Virgil's ambiguity, and his aim to portray it in his translation (l):

> "Virgil rarely presents us with a consistently binary opposition between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, reality and illusion. His is more the world of paradox, of multiple and apparently conflicting simultaneous realities which often flare in unexpected ways as different planes of meaning intersect. Wherever I sensed the text leading me in different directions at the same time, I have left the reader the ambiguity or contradiction Virgil left me."

The ambiguity of Virgil's narration within this key scene can be translated as such, or re-voiced in such a way as to clearly signpost a suggested interpretation for the reader. Dryden interprets the scene and casts his own layer of subjectivity, presenting Aeneas as a true willing hero who is destined by fate to fulfil his quest and is unhindered by his own resistance or that of a higher being. This modification could be due to interpreting the *Aeneid*'s imperial message and to engaging with current political issues surrounding rights of succession. Ahl has decided to maintain a level of ambiguity in his translation, presenting a similar polysubjectivity to Virgil, leading us to question whether Aeneas is the rightful, willing hero. However, maintaining ambiguity in such a way can itself be subjective, and Ahl clearly has as much of an agenda here as Dryden.

MARRIAGE MISCONCEIVED

As we have seen, translators have the power to manipulate textual ambiguities. The extent to which this can affect the text's meaning depends on the level of ambiguity in the original. Empson described seven types of ambiguity, the sixth of which amounts to contradiction to such an extreme extent that the reader must supply an interpretation (Empson 1930: 192). Such ambiguity exists during an episode in book 4, and results in Dido's suicide after Aeneas ends their love affair in order to pursue his destiny in Rome. The mystery surrounding their love affair, in particular a 'marriage' scene, contains ambiguities which may be altered by the translator to control reader empathy: has Aeneas proven his piety by sacrificing love in order to achieve his destiny, or is Dido too much of a victim, and her loss too great, for Aeneas' actions to be seen as heroic here?[37]

I shall discuss this passage in two halves: firstly the build-up to the event, when the group of hunting Trojans and Tyrians are scattered by the storm, leading Dido and Aeneas down into the same cave, and secondly the description of the events within the cave themselves, immediately concluded by what appears to be a narratorial self-contradiction.

160 interea magno misceri murmure caelum
incipit; insequitur commixta grandine nimbus;
et Tyrii comites passim et Troiana iuuentus
Dardaniusque nepos Veneris diuersa per agros
tecta metu petiere; ruunt de montibus amnes.
165 speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem
deueniunt.

Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.160-166[38]

Meanwhile in the sky begins the turmoil of a wild uproar; rain follows, mingled with hail. The scattered Tyrian train and the Trojan youth, with the Dardan grandson of Venus, in their fear seek shelter here and there over the fields;

torrents rush down from the heights. To the same cave come Dido and the Trojan chief.

Rushton Fairclough 4.160-166

231 Mean time, the gath'ring Clouds obscure the Skies;
From Pole to Pole the forky Lightning flies;
The ratling Thunders rowl; and *Juno* pours
A wintry Deluge down; and sounding Show'rs.
235 The Company dispers'd, to Coverts ride,
And seek the homely Cotts, or Mountains hollow side.
The rapid Rains, descending from the Hills,
To rowling Torrents raise the creeping Rills.
The Queen and Prince, as Love or Fortune guide,
240 One common Cavern in her Bosom hides.

Dryden 4.231-240

Evident from the start is the surreal effect Virgil achieves by placing emphasis on the role of nature in orchestrating this event, as well as the focalisation of the scene through Dido to make the marriage seem a fantasy.[39] Dryden exaggerates nature's control, even changing some of the verbs so that nature becomes the active subject (where it was not before) - 'Clouds obscure the skies' (231) 'the forky Lightning flies' (232) and 'the ratling Thunders rowl' (233).[40]

As well as nature, Juno also has a strong role in the event. By exact repetition of many of the phrases which she used in lines 4.117-27 to describe the cave scene she planned to engineer, there is no doubt that she is the author of events here.[41] Dryden again emphasises Juno's role by adding her as a verbal subject a few lines earlier than her appearance in the Latin, 'Juno pours / A wintry Deluge down' (233-4). Dryden thus heightens Virgil's choice to make this event quite obviously one which the gods (and nature) have designed, which contributes to our later confusion as to whether it has been a true ceremony, or a divinely inspired daydream.

Another significant change (and also linked to him heightening the role of fate) in Dryden's narrative is to the main verb in the climactic clause. When Dryden writes 'The Queen and Prince, as Love or Fortune guide, / One common Cavern in her Bosom hides' (239-240), his characters are not subjects of an active verb, as in Virgil (and, to add to their passiveness, they are not even named as subjects, whereas Dido is in Virgil). Rather, they are fatefully driven into the cave together, without being willing instigators of their actions. The heightened sense of fate and the gods controlling the action makes his scene seem more fantastical than Virgil's does.

160 Meanwhile the massive rumbling of thunder begins to roil turmoil
All through the heavens then follows a cloudburst of rain mixed with hailstones.
Tyrian troopers and Troy's young warriors mingle at random,
Venus' Dardan grandson too, all hunt in fear for such scattered
Shelter as fields offer. Now it is rivers that rush down the mountains!
165 Dido and Troy's chief come down together inside the same cavern.

Ahl 4.160-165

In contrast, Ahl names Dido but not Aeneas, just as Virgil does, making her the main instigator, with Aeneas a projected and detached object of her fantasy (as he is throughout book four). However, he and Dido remain the plural subjects and active participants of the verb *deueniunt* ('they go down [into the cave]').

Next I shall examine the 'ceremony' itself.

166 prima et Tellus et pronuba Iuno
dant signum; fulsere ignes et conscius aether
conubiis, summoque ulularunt uertice Nymphae.
ille dies primus leti primusque malorum
170 causa fuit: neque enim specie famaue mouetur
nec iam furtiuum Dido meditatur amorem;
172 coniugium uocat; hoc praetexit nomine culpam.

Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.166-172[42]

Primal Earth and nuptial Juno give the sign; fires flashed in Heaven, the witness to their bridal, and on the mountaintop screamed the Nymphs. That day the first of death, the first of calamity was cause. For no more is Dido swayed by fair show or fair fame, no more does she dream of a secret love: she calls it marriage and with that name veils her sin.

Rushton Fairclough 166-172

This scene is ambiguous: was this a wedding or not? Our interpretation (and that of the characters) is significant, since this misunderstanding will lead to tragedy (Austin 1955: 4.149). Much of the vocabulary here suggests a legitimate Augustan marriage, and it is even labelled such (*conubium*).[43] However, by line 172, it has suddenly become a shameful event, a *coniugium*, a term which implies more the physical consummation of marriage.[44] The fact that Virgil uses different vocabulary must be significant: the event which Juno oversees is a civil ceremony, but Dido's sin (*culpa*) is the act of sexual intercourse, as she loses her concern for *pudor* (honour).[45] Critics often assert that no marriage ceremony has taken place and that the event which had seemed real was no more than an "allusion" to a wedding scene (Wlosok 1999: 168).[46]

Similar to the choices he made during the golden bough episode, Dryden purposefully crafts his poetic translation in such a way as to cast his own interpretation over the scene:

241 Then first the trembling Earth the signal gave;
And flashing Fires enlighten all the Cave:
Hell from below, and *Juno* from above,
And howling Nymphs, were conscious to their Love.
245 From this ill Omend Hour, in Time arose
Debate and Death, and all succeeding woes.
The Queen, whom sense of Honour cou'd not move
No longer made a Secret of her Love;
But call'd it Marriage, by that specious Name,
250 To veil the Crime and sanctifie the Shame.

Dryden 4.241-250

166 Earth gives the sign that the rites have begun, as does Juno, the nuptial
Sponsor. The torches are lightning, the shrewd sky's brilliance is witness,
Hymns for the wedding are howling moans of the nymphs upon high peaks.
That first day caused death, that first day began the disasters.
170 Dido no longer worries about how it looks or what rumour
Says, and no longer thinks of enjoying a secret liaison.
172 Now she is calling it marriage; she's veiling her sin with a title.

Ahl 4.166-172

Both Ahl and Dryden attribute to this scene a general sense of doom, as in Virgil. In both, *ulularunt* becomes 'howling', making it more of a lamentory rather than a celebratory cry.[47] And Dryden once again makes a crucial modification to Virgil's text, by not using any word at all to describe the scene as a wedding. Surprisingly, Dryden noted, "Virgil confess'd it was a Lawful Marriage betwixt the Lovers", which he considered was included in order to create a scenario which mirrored Augustus' divorce, and

thus add weight to the claim that Augustus was descended from Aeneas (Dryden 1697: 302-3). This causes surprise when Dido refers to the marriage, and immediate agreement with Dryden's narrator that she is to blame for the misunderstanding; she is only using the term in order to cover up her sins. However, although Dryden's vocabulary in lines 245-6 make it seem like this marriage is a "crime of the first magnitude" (Corse 1991: 30), he omits a possessive pronoun from *culpa*, to retain the idea that the characters are being forced into this action by nature and by Juno.[48] While Dryden's attribution of blame is thus still uncertain here, what is clear is that no marriage ceremony has taken place.

Dryden's choice to ignore Virgil's marriage terms during the ceremony itself means that we side with his narrator, and with Aeneas, that Dido has misconstrued the situation (though it is perhaps not her fault). Once again Dryden is willing to interfere with the narrative, and to present Aeneas as focused on his primary imperial mission, befitting Thomas' assertion that, "Dryden was constantly at pains, even outside the *Aeneid*, to remove any hint of ambiguity in the Virgilian depiction of Rome or of Octavian" (147).[49]

In contrast, Ahl is quite willing to reflect the ambiguity, as he had stated in his preface that the scene is presented as a marriage, but immediately afterwards, Virgil "changes his wording" and suddenly it is only Dido who thinks of it as a marriage (2007: xxvii). He uses stock marital phrases including 'rites', 'nuptial sponsor', and 'hymns for the wedding', and is not interpreting the Latin, but rather leaves his reader with the same ambiguity which he no doubt faced when translating. He again places an emphasis on the roles of nature, leaving us with ambiguity over who is orchestrating this event: 'the torches are lightning, the shrewd sky's brilliance is witness, / Hymns for the wedding are howling moans of the nymphs' (167-168), either implying that the elements are in control, or the marriage is not real, and Dido is simply interpreting all of these typical aspects of nature as signs of the marriage she hopes is taking place.[50]

Ahl does also follow Virgil in using different words to describe the state of marriage – he translates *conubiis* (168) as 'wedding' and *coniugium* (172) as 'marriage'. In using different vocabulary he aims to mirror Virgil's style and possibly to lessen the sense of contradiction, however, the semantic difference is subtle. The term 'marriage' indicates the ongoing status and legally binding element as well as the act of being joined together, whereas 'wedding' implies the ceremony, with the various traditional elements and rituals, such as the wedding-cake, dress, reception etc. Ahl therefore presents an ambiguity here; one which is slightly different to Virgil's, but which is an ambiguity all the same, and which therefore leaves an element of control over the text's meaning up to the reader.

Once again, we see in Ahl an attempt to translate ambiguity, with careful consideration of semantics. Dryden however chooses to translate in such a way that offers clarity to the scene, making the character of Aeneas less at fault, without calling into question his heroism or virtue.

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Virgil's subjectivity and ambiguity make even the most minor of translator's decisions significant. Both translators here fulfil contemporary requirements and expectations, which, along with their cultural and personal backgrounds, insist that they treat these areas differently.

For Dryden, Aeneas is always focused on his mission, rather than being distracted by the obstacles which hinder him. His audience are not made to sympathise with Dido to the extent that Aeneas is put at fault, just as they are not meant to believe that there was any reluctance in Aeneas locating and obtaining the bough. This is partly because of Dryden's background as a poet: he is creating an original piece of work, has higher status as a storyteller in his own right, takes control of the narrative and speaks the main voice. His audience's requirement, or expectation, is less for a literal version, and more for a fluent, poetic translation which will interact with their own culture. Since some of them are widely familiar with the *Aeneid*, and since literalism was considered vulgar, he exploits his flexibility to treat the text as he wishes, knowing his interpretations will be appreciated. His historical context invites him to create parallels which tempt him to manipulate the text to engage with his contemporary politics. And while his presentation of the *Aeneid* over the course of the epic may be ambiguous, and may not be a simple allegory, his decisive interpretation of Aeneas' heroism in these particular passages is positively Augustan. While translators are at once readers and writers of a text, Dryden positions himself more as

a writer, situating the *Aeneid* in Restoration England. He tells us what the text means, or at least, what it means to him in his culture.

The pressures acting on Ahl are very different, and while his translation will be read widely, a large portion of his audience may be experiencing the *Aeneid* for the first time. He retains the ambiguity, offering readers multiple interpretations, positioning himself as more of a reader, detached from Rome but trying to bring it to us (or sometimes, us to it). He therefore has no business interfering with the ambiguity of the text or interpreting it: he leaves this up to his readers. Since he is a scholar rather than a poet, he takes a subservient position as translator, and allows Virgil's voice to shine through more so than Dryden's, reminding us this text has a double voice (and making himself more visible as a translator). He tries to replicate the experience of reading Virgil, which he himself had, to readers of his translation (whereas Dryden was happy for his readers to read Dryden). Ahl is also influenced, naturally, by the body of scholarship that has occurred since Dryden's time, itself often a response to cultural situations, such as the anti-imperial arguments which have grown to their strongest after the Second World War and the Vietnam War.

Hence, both translators are trying to give Virgil to their audience. For Dryden, this means showing them how it interacts with them. For Ahl, this means presenting it in English for non-Latin literate audiences. And it is the intended contemporary audiences who demand these different styles of translation: for Dryden, primarily an audience who knew Virgil, and for Ahl, primarily an audience who do not. These different audiences require different types of translation with different levels of interaction with the text, and the way in which the translator achieves this can be seen through their narrator's identity, narrative decisions, and the extent to which they control their own narrator.

This paper has illustrated the significance of the role of the translator, the translator as interpreter of ambiguity and meaning, and as mediator of narrative voice. Due to the polysubjective nature of Virgil's narrative, the power of the translator and the effect of the translator's interpretations on general reception of Virgil is an area which requires more research. The vast number of readers who only interact with Virgil through a translator, a number which is growing generation upon generation due to declining Latin literacy, require an awareness of the potential for translations to become interpretations. We must understand what translations show us about what Virgil means to us, and how our context can interact with him and his text.

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2 E.M Forster (in his preface to Michael Oakley's 1957 translation of the *Aeneid*) writes that "[Virgil] loves most the things that profess to matter least – a simile rather than the action that it illustrates, a city full of apple-trees rather than the soldiers who march out of it, the absent friends of a dying man rather than the dying man" (ix).

3 There are no major discrepancies between the Bristol Classical Press text which I have used, and the Second Edition of the Delphin text, published in Paris in 1682. I have indicated where there are minor changes: here, for instance, the Delphin edition has *dii* instead of *di*, and the line change after *inanem* instead of after *et*.

4 Where I have supplied the Loeb edition (translated by Rushton Fairclough), it is intended as a literal translation for reference. Whilst all translations are interpretations, the Loeb series aims to present a close translation with a facing text, to aid students in translating the text themselves. It is therefore a relatively neutral rendition.

5 Also see Laird (1999: 36, 98) for examples of focalisation in the *Aeneid*.

6 Also see Hardie (1999: 8), for a discussion on a similar opinion held by both Heinze and Otis, that Virgil's narrative consisted of one voice in which the actors express their own emotions, and one in which the narrator expresses his (Otis termed these "sympathy" and "empathy" respectively [1964, 1995 ed.: 48]).

7 Barthes (1967, 1995 ed.: 125-130).

8 For an excellent introduction to translation studies, and its particular relevance to Classical texts, see Hardwick (2000).

9 See Hardwick (2000: 11) on how the translator creates a new rendition of the work, and thus a new work in itself, and Burrow (1997: 33) on how the attempt to eradicate the unconscious identity of the

translator produces a kind of "non-being". See Venuti (1995, 2003 ed.: 1-2) for the sense of invisibility which translators are expected to create, due to their audience's requirement for fluency.

10 The only difference in this extract with the Delphin edition is a comma after *arma*.

11 I have tried to combat the immediate disadvantage I faced when comparing these two poets, in that I share a context with Ahl but not with Dryden. I have made every effort to establish critical distance between both.

12 In *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), for example, a poem composed at a time when its future was uncertain, Dryden idealized the British empire, which he posited would be founded on humanity and benevolence (Brown 2004: 66).

13 Davis notes him becoming more sceptical by 1684 (2004: 80-1).

14 For straight comparison between the authors, of course, there are also differences. Crucially, Virgil was sponsored and endorsed by his leader, whereas Dryden had just lost his laureateship (Widmer 2017: 6-7).

15 As Gillespie notes, this was not uncommon; in fact, to be a poet in Dryden's era carried with it an expectation that you would also be a translator (2011: 31, 93-94, 98).

16 But also to Dryden himself, who faced his own form of exile as a Catholic in a Protestant land (Hammond 1999: 233-4).

17 See Zwicker 1984 (185-6) on Virgil's portrayal of leadership and kingship, and how Dryden himself might draw on the lessons Virgil seeks to teach Augustus in his own discourse with William III. When Aeneas is compared to William III, this may be, according to Zwicker, an attempt for Dryden to scorn the legitimacy of William's rule, pointing out that his rule was arranged due to revolution and usurpation.

18 On this topic, see, among others: Hammond 2004; Venuti 1995: 65; Zwicker 1984: 66-7, 177, 184; Davis 2004: 75-76; Hammond 1999: 218-9, 220-1, 231, 233-4.

19 A movement led by Dryden (Wilson 2012: 31).

20 See Balmer (2013: 23), and Corse (1991:14), who writes that his "formal patterns" inhibited flexibility.

21 See Hopkins and Martindale (2012: 22) on how the volume of translation in this period meant that classical texts were available to a wider audience, including women (previously denied access due to their education). See Wilson (2012: 496) on how the fact that women could not enjoy education in classical languages did not mean that they were not interested in learning about the classics (hence why translations became an entry route for them). Also see Hammond (1999: 42-3) on the split requirements of his audience: "So for some of Dryden's readers his English verse substituted for Latin, the translations giving them an idea of the major Roman poets, with Dryden's whole oeuvre increasingly taking on a classic, canonic force of its own. For others, Dryden's English was enticingly engaged in an intricate dialogue with Latin, a play which contributed importantly to the meaning and pleasure of the text."

22 Some of the early proponents of this theory were: Clausen 1966, Otis (1964), and Parry (1966). Thomas (2001: 224-5) adds that these critics, of the "Harvard School", found different ways to explore the 'troubled' aspects of Virgil.

23 In reality, it is commonly acknowledged that some aspects must be lost in translation, and an attempt to preserve every aspect of what makes Virgil's text what it is, will be in vain.

24 See Brooks (1953: 260), who considers book six "the still point between [...] the predominantly individual experience of the man, and the predominantly social experience of arms".

25 This passage is the same in the Delphin edition.

26 The only difference with the Delphin edition is a reordering of *extemplo Aeneas*.

27 See Otis (1966: 95-96) on how the fundamental purpose of the plot of the *Aeneid* is to mould Aeneas into an Augustan hero.

28 For examples of the former, see Williams (1972) and Austin (1977); for the latter, see Putnam (1999: 418-419).

29 See Conington (1884, 2008 ed.: 6.148, 6.211).

30 Attributing the reluctance to fate here relies on it being considered as either subjective in its own right, or as being objective, but working towards a mysterious anti-Aenean agenda. See Conte (2007: 49-50) for a discussion of fate as an objective, external anchor which judges and combines all subjective points of view.

31 Underlining emphasis is my own, capitalisation and italicisation are as published in this edition of Dryden's text (in all extracts).

32 Adding 'with ease' to the description of Aeneas seizing the bough is mentioned by Servius (in his efforts to deal with the boughs' questionable 'lingering') and, crucially, by Ruaeus in the Delphin edition [Thomas 2001: 137]).

33 Thus Dryden puts more emphasis on the verdict rather than the evidence (Proudfoot 1960: 221-222), overstating what Virgil understands (Corse 1991: 88).

34 On foreignization and domestication see Schleiermacher (1813, 2012 ed.: 49) and Venuti (1995, 2003 ed.: 19-20).

35 "The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator" Venuti (1995: 1); see also Bassnett (1980: 12, 14).

36 OED Online. September 2016. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/81153?redirectedFrom=greedy (accessed October 02, 2016).

37 There is an abundance of literature on this subject. See, for example, Poschl on how the love affair is a means by which to transform Aeneas from a hero in the "Greek sense of existence" to a hero in the "Roman sense of duty", on Virgilian versus Homeric heroes and Aeneas' heroic transformation, and on how book four is a coinciding of the basic forces "respect for duty, firmness of resolution, and human feeling" within Aeneas (1962, 1966 ed.: 39-40, 43). See Mackail (1922: 106) and Forster (preface to Oakley's *Aeneid*, 1957: x) on audience sympathy for Dido. On the decreased use of *pius* as an epithet to describe Aeneas in book 4, see Jackson Knight (preface to his *Aeneid*, 1956, 1958 ed.: 14) and Perkell (1981: 370), who points out that Virgil does not use it between line 1.378 and 4.393, when Aeneas leaves Dido (making his leaving the action which affirms his *pietas*). Finally see Williams (1984: 34) on how instances where Aeneas "negates his own personal desires for the common good", such as book four, arguably show him being more pious, rather than less.

38 The Delphin edition has a full stop after *nimbus*, and commas after *passim*, *iuventus*, *veneris*, *Dido*, *Troianus*, and *deveniunt*.

39 This is a good example of Otis' opinion that Virgil's projected "subjective and symbolic" narrative goes so far as to render his characters unreal, simply pathetic instances of emotion indelibly attached to their creator, rather than tangible beings (1964, 1995 ed.: 51).

40 For the significance of nature in Dryden, see Frost (1995: 42, 44).

41 his ego ningrantem commixta grandine nimbum,
dum trepidant alae saltusque indagine cingunt,
desuper infundam et tonitru caelum omne ciebo.
diffugient comites et nocte tegentur opaca:
speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem
deuenient. (4.120-125).
Servius notes the same in his commentary of 4.161, 4.168.

42 The Delphin edition has *connubii* instead of *conubiis*.

43 For example, Juno is described as the *pronuba* (166) (maid of honour).

44 *Coniugium* can specifically refer to the physical union of marriage whereas *conubium* implies the civil ceremony aspect (Lewis and Short 1879, 1975 ed.). Indeed, it is *coniugium* which Aeneas specifically denies (4.338).

45 See Hardie (2012: 357).

46 See Panoussi (2009) for further discussion on this, e.g. "the narrator declares that this is a wedding in name only, but a wedding his readers have witnessed nonetheless. The stark incongruity between this fictional representation of a wedding rite and the actual ceremony heightens the paradox of a bond that the gods are shown to abet yet that is doomed to be dissolved by the demanding forces of destiny" (49). Also a discussion on how this true perversion of "the fundamental nature of ritual", which is supposed "to provide a space controlled by humans so that communication with the divine can be achieved" (95), could be what leads to the confusion. "The differing interpretations that Dido and Aeneas draw from the events in the cave may be explained as a consequence of the distorted ritual in which they participate" (95). The perversion is strengthened by the links this scene has to the first day of Dido's death; her marriage becomes the start of her funeral (Segal 1990: 9ff).

47 In his commentary, Servius cites Lucan (*Bellum Civile* 6.261) *non tu laetis ululare triumphis* "you do not howl in happy triumphs" (Servius 2004 ed.: 4.168)). Austin also notes to the same effect: *ululare* can be taken as a cry to indicate grievance or terror, and therefore howling is more likely to be part of lamentation than celebration (Austin 1955, 1966 ed.: 4.168).

48 This questions Thomas's assertion that Dryden purposefully constructs a Dido who is more dangerous than Virgil's, but can also be solely to blame for her fate, and thus she loses some of the sympathy Virgil allowed her (2001: 162). Thomas and Proudfoot have also both commented on Dryden's apparent misogynism (Thomas 2001: 159, 162), which leads him to treat Dido as a tyrant rather than a victim, and coarsens Virgil's delicate descriptions of love (Proudfoot 1960: 208-219).

49 See Thomas (2001: 146-9) on Dryden and ambiguity.

50 David West, in his 1990 Penguin translation, translates the word "marriage" in both scenes - "Fires flashed and the heavens were witness to the marriage… From now on Dido gave no thought to appearance or her good name and no longer kept her love as a secret in her own heart, but called it marriage, using the word to cover her guilt" (underlining is my own emphasis). This translation of this passage leaves the audience as confused as Dido, and as confused as Virgil's contemporary audience, believing the marriage to be so when it is taking place, and then immediately being condemned for that very same thought.