

Trans-(En)gendering Aeneas' Shield: Male-Female Chiasmus through Narrative, Intertext, and Ekphrasis in *Aeneid* 8

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1. Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 730a-b (trans. Peck)

(730a)...τὸ θῆλυ πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν οὕτω συμβάλλεται τοῖς συνισταμένοις ὡς τὸ ἄρρεν, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἄρρεν ἀρχὴν κινήσεως, τὸ δὲ θῆλυ τὴν ὕλην, δηλον ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων. διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο οὐτ' αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ γεννᾷ τὸ θῆλυ, δεῖται γὰρ ἀρχῆς καὶ τοῦ κινήσοντος καὶ διοριστοῦτος (ἀλλ' ἐνίοις γε τῶν ζώων, οἷον τοῖς ὄρνισι, μέχρι τινὸς ἢ φύσις δύναται γεννᾶν· αὐτὰ γὰρ συνιστάσι μὲν, ἀτελεῖ δὲ συνιστάσι τὰ καλούμενα ὑπηνέμια ὡά),

(730b) ἢ τε γένεσις ἐν τῷ θήλει συμβαίνει τῶν γινομένων, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰς τὸ ἄρρεν οὐτ' αὐτὸ τὸ ἄρρεν προΐεται τὴν γονὴν οὔτε τὸ θῆλυ, ἀλλ' ἄμφω εἰς τὸ θῆλυ συμβάλλονται τὸ παρ' αὐτῶν γιγνόμενον, διὰ τὸ ἐν τῷ θήλει εἶναι τὴν ὕλην ἐξ ἧς ἐστὶ τὸ δημιουργούμενον. καὶ εὐθὺς τὴν μὲν ἀθρόον ὑπάρχειν ἀναγκαῖον ἐξ ἧς συνίσταται τὸ κύημα τὸ πρῶτον, τὴν δ' ἐπιγίνεσθαι ἀει² τῆς ὕλης, ἵν' αὐξάνηται τὸ κρούμενον.³ ὥστ' ἀνάγκη ἐν τῷ θήλει ὑπάρχειν τὸν τόκον· καὶ γὰρ πρὸς τῷ ξύλῳ ὁ τέκτων καὶ πρὸς τῷ πηλῷ ὁ κεραμεύς, καὶ ὅλως πᾶσα ἡ ἐργασία καὶ ἡ κίνησις ἢ ἐσχάτη πρὸς τῇ ὕλι, οἷον ἡ οἰκοδόμησις ἐν τοῖς οἰκοδομουμένοις.

(730a)... the contribution which the female makes to the embryos when they are being “set” and constituted is on different lines from that of the male; in other words, the male contributes the principle of movement and the female contributes the material. This is why on the one hand the female does not generate on its own: it needs some source or principle to supply the material with movement and to determine its character (though in some <female> animals, as in birds, Nature can generate up to a point: the females of these species do actually “set” a fetation, but what they “set” is imperfect, viz., what are known as wind-eggs);

(730b) on the other hand, the formation of the young does in fact take place in the female, whereas neither the male himself nor the female emits semen into the male, but they both deposit together what they have to contribute in the female—it is because that is where the material is out of which the creature that is being fashioned is made. And as regards this material, a good quantity of it must of necessity be available immediately, out of which the fetation is “set” and constituted in the first place, and after that fresh supplies of it must be continually arriving to make its growth possible. Hence, of necessity, it is in the female that parturition takes place. After all, the carpenter is close by his timber, and the potter close by his clay; and to put it in general terms, the working or treatment of any material, and the ultimate movement which acts upon it, is in all cases close by the material, e.g., the location of the activity of house-building is in the houses which are being built.

2. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* I (trans. Leonard)

A. Aeneadum genitrix, hominum divomque voluptas,
alma Venus, caeli subter labentia signa
quae mare naverum, quae terras frugiferentis
concelebras, **per te quoniam genus omne animantum
concipitur** visitque exortum lumina solis: 5
te, dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila caeli
adventumque tuum, **tibi suavis daedala tellus
summittit flores**, tibi rident aequora ponti
placatumque nitet diffuso lumine caelum.

B. nam tu sola potes tranquilla pace iuvare
mortalis, quoniam belli fera moenera Mavors
armipotens regit, **in gremium qui saepe tuum se
reiicit aeterno devictus vulnere amoris,**
atque ita **suspiciens tereti cervice reposta** 35
**pascit amore avidos inhians in te, dea, visus
eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.**
hunc tu, diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
circum fusa super, suavis ex ore loquellas
funde petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem. 40

3. Aeneid 8.387-53

A. dixerat et niveis hinc atque hinc diva lacertis
cunctantem amplexu molli fovet. ille repente
accepit solitam flammam, notusque medullas
intravit calor et labefacta per ossa cucurrit, 390
non secus atque olim tonitru cum rupta corusco
ignea rima micans percurrit lumine nimbos;
sensit laeta dolis et formae conscia coniunx.

B. tum pater aeterno fatur devinctus amore:
'quid causas petis ex alto? fiducia cessit 395
quo tibi, diva, mei? similis si cura fuisset,
tum quoque fas nobis Teucros armare fuisset;
nec pater omnipotens Troiam nec fata vetabant
stare decemque alios Priamum superesse per annos.
et nunc, si bellare paras atque haec tibi mens est, 400
quidquid in arte mea possum promittere curae,
quod fieri ferro liquidove potest electro,
quantum ignes animaeque valent, absiste precando
viribus indubitare tuis.' ea verba locutus
optatos dedit amplexus placidumque petivit 405
coniugis infusus gremio per membra soporem.

C. inde ubi prima quies medio iam noctis abactae
curriculo expulerat somnum, **cum femina primum,**
cui tolerare colo vitam tenuique Minerva
impositum, cinerem et sopitos suscitatur ignis 410
noctem addens operi, famulasque ad lumina longo
exercet penso, castum ut servare cubile
coniugis et possit parvos educere natos:
haud secus ignipotens nec tempore signior illo
mollibus e stratis opera ad fabrilia surgit. 415
insula Sicanium iuxta latus Aeoliamque
erigitur Liparen fumantibus ardua saxis,
quam subter specus et Cycloperum exesa caminis
antra Aetnaea tonant, validique incudibus ictus
auditi referunt gemitus, striduntque cavernis 420
stricturae Chalybum et fornacibus ignis anhelat,
Volcani domus et Volcania nomine tellus.
hoc tunc ignipotens caelo descendit ab alto.

D. ferrum exercebant vasto Cycloper in antro, 424
Brontesque Steropesque et nudus membra Pyragmon.
his informatum manibus iam parte polita
fulmen erat, toto genitor quae plurima caelo
deicit in terras, pars imperfecta manebat.
tris imbris torti radios, tris nubis aquosae
addiderant, rutuli tris ignis et alitis Austri. 430
fulgores nunc terrificos sonitumque metumque
miscabant operi flammisque sequacibus iras.
parte alia Marti currumque rotasque volucris
instabant, quibus ille viros, quibus excitat urbes;

aegidaeque horriferae, turbatae Palladis arma, 435
certatim squamis serpentum auroque polibant
conexosque anguis ipsamque in pectore divae
Gorgona desecto vertentem lumina collo.
'tollite cuncta' inquit 'coeptosque auferte labores,
Aetnaei Cycloper, et huc advertite mentem: 440
arma acri facienda viro. nunc viribus usus,
nunc manibus rapidis, **omni nunc arte magistra.**
praecipitate moras.'

E. nec plura effatus, at illi
ocius incubuere omnes **pariterque laborem**
sortiti. fluit aes rivis aurique metallum 445
vulnificusque chalybs vasta fornace liquescit.
ingentem clipeum informant, unum omnia contra
tela Latinorum, septenosque orbibus orbis
impediunt. alii ventosis follibus auras
accipiunt redduntque, alii stridentia tingunt 450
aera lacu; gemit impositis incudibus antrum;
illi inter sese multa vi brachia tollunt
in numerum, versantque tenaci forcipe massam.

4. Aeneid 8.628-34

illic genus omne futurae
stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella.
fecerat et viridi fetam **Mavortis in antro** 630
procubuisse lupam, geminos huic ubera circum
ludere **pendentis** pueros et lambere matrem
impavidos, **illam tereti cervice reflexa**
mulcere alternos et corpora fingere lingua.

5. Vita Suetonii vulgo Donatiana 22-23 (ed. Ziolkowski and Putnam, trans. Rolfe)

[22] Cum Georgica scriberet, traditur quotidie
meditatos mane plurimos versus dictare solitus ac per
totum diem retractando ad paucissimos redigere, **non**
absurde carmen se more ursae parere dicens et
lambendo demum effingere. [23] Aeneida prosa
prius oratione formatam digestamque in XII libros
particulatim componere instituit, prout liberet quidque,
et ni- hil in ordinem arripiens. [24] Ac ne quid impetum
moraretur, quaedam imperfecta transmisit, alia
levissimis versibus veluti fulsit, **quos per iocum pro**
tibicinibus interponi aiebat ad sustinendum opus,
donec solidae columnae advenirent.

6. *Georgics* 4.149-227 (trans. Mackail)

Nunc age, **naturas apibus quas Iuppiter ipse
addidit, expediam, pro qua mercede canoros** 150
**Curetum sonitus crepitantiaque aera secutae
Dictaeo caeli regem pavere sub antro.**
Solae communes natos, consortia tecta
urbis habent magnisque agitant sub legibus aevum,
et patriam solae et certos novere penates, 155
venturaeque hiemis memores aestate laborem
experiuntur et in medium quaesita reponunt.
Namque aliae victu invigilant et foedere pacto
exercentur agris; pars intra saepta domorum
Narcissi lacrimam et lentum de cortice gluten 160
prima favis ponunt fundamina, deinde tenaces
suspendunt ceras: aliae spem gentis adultos
educunt fetus, aliae purissima mella
stipant et liquido distendunt nectare cellas.
Sunt quibus ad portas cecidit custodia sorti, 165
inque vicem speculantur aquas et nubila caeli
aut onera accipiunt venientum aut agmine facto
ignavum fucos pecus a praesepibus arcent.
Fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella.
ac veluti lentis Cyclopes fulmina massis 170
**cum properant, alii taurinis follibus auras
accipiunt redduntque, alii stridentia tingunt
aera lacu; gemit impositis incudibus Aetna;
illi inter sese magna vi bracchia tollunt
in numerum versantque tenaci forcipe ferrum:** 175
**non aliter, si parva licet componere magnis,
Cecropias innatus apes amor urget habendi,
munere quamque suo.** Grandaevis oppida curae
et munire favos et **daedala fingere tecta.**

...

Illum adeo placuisse apibus mirabere morem,
quod neque concubitu indulgent nec corpora segnes
in Venerem solvunt aut fetus nixibus edunt:
verum ipsae e foliis natos, e suavis herbis 200
**ore legunt, ipsae regem parvosque Quirites
sufficiunt aulasque et cerea regna refigunt.**
Saepe etiam duris errando in cotibus alas
attrivere ultroque animam sub fasce dedere:
tantus amor florum et generandi gloria mellis. 205
Ergo ipsas quamvis angusti terminus aevi
excipiat, neque enim plus septima ducitur aestas,
at genus immortale manet multosque per annos
stat fortuna domus et avi numerantur avorum.
Praeterea regem non sic Aegyptus et ingens 210
Lydia nec populi Parthorum aut Medus Hydaspes
observant. Rege incolumi mens omnibus una est;
amisso rupere fidem constructaque mella
diripuerunt ipsae et crates solvere favorum.
Ille operum custos, illum admirantur et omnes 215
circumstant fremitu denso stipantque frequentes
et saepe attollunt umeris et corpora bello
obiectant pulchramque petunt per vulnera mortem.
**His quidam signis atque haec exempla secuti
esse apibus partem divinae mentis et haustus** 220
**aetherios dixere; deum namque ire per omnes
terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum.
Hinc pecudes, armenta, viros, genus omne
ferarum,
quemque sibi tenues nascentem arcessere vitas;
scilicet huc reddi deinde ac resoluta referri** 225
**omnia nec morti esse locum, sed viva volare
sideris in numerum atque alto succedere caelo.**

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- Watch for a special 2021 edition of *Vergilius* on Vergil and the Feminine, ed. Elena Giusti and Victoria Rimell!**

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Comments from CAMWS participants are welcome by Q&A or email: nandini.pandey@wisc.edu.