describe Cinna's poem and then, introduced by *at,* the same number describe Volusius'. The second period (9–10) repeats this on a smaller scale: a verse on Cinna; then, introduced by *at,* another on Volusius. This produces a conclusion that satisfies as much by its structural rhythm as by its meaning.

Among the many proposals made for filling the lacuna at the end of line 9, Bergk's *Philetae* has obvious appeal, since it contrasts Philetas, as the type of refinement, with Antimachus, as the type of long-winded inelegance.[15] The presumptuous familiarity in saying "*my* Philetas" renders this unlikely, however. On the whole, the supplement *sodalis* (cf. 10. 29), provided by Catullus' *concittadino* Avantius for the first Aldine edition (1502), seems best. If this is right, Catullus draws a triple contrast between Cinna and Volusius to justify the former's success and coming renown: the linked points of comparison are care in composition (small vs. swollen), subject and (by implication) narrative form (epyllion vs. annals), and intended audience (coterie of friends vs. the common people). About the nature of the literary criticism in poem 95 I shall have more to say elsewhere. I hope, however, that this study of the poem's structure and the questions that attend it has helped recapture the original form of the text.

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15. The principal passages in Roman literature indicating Antimachus' reputation for long-windedness are Cic. *Brut.* 191, Prop. 2. 34. 45, Quint. *Inst.* 10. 1. 53, Porph. ad Hor. *Ars P.* 146. Philetas' reputation for refinement is attested by Propertius, sometimes indirectly: 2. 34. 31–32, 3. 1. 1 (verse 8 defines what Philetas represents: *exactus tenui pumice versus eat*), 4. 6. 3–4 (cf. Callim. *Ap.* 105–12, a passage that also clearly influenced Catullus 95). It hardly needs to be stressed that poem 95 is Callimachean in its literary stance as well as its form and that in praising the *Smyrna* it both declares and demonstrates its own poetic ideals as well.

AENEAS AND THE OMEN OF THE SWANS (VERG. *AEN.* 1. 393–400)

aspice bis senos laetantis agmine cycnos,
aetheria quos lapsa plaga Iovis ales aperto
turbabat caelo; nunc terras ordine longo
aut capere aut captas iam despectare videntur:
ut reduces illi ludunt stridentibus alis
et coetu cinxere polum cantusque dedere,
haud aliter puppesque tuae pubesque tuorum
aut portum tenet aut pleno subit ostia velo.

When Aeneas first lands at Carthage, his mother Venus, in disguise, is able to communicate her superior knowledge of events only through the humanly accessible medium of augury. She points to twelve swans that have escaped from the attack of an eagle and assures her son that just so the ships he thought lost are even now either safe in port or approaching port. Her words make it plain that there is a correspondence in detail between the omen and its fulfillment: thus to the harrying of the swans by the eagle *aperto . . . caelo* (394–95) corresponds the

scattering of the Trojan ships on the open sea;[1] both swans and ships, according to the received text, reach land safely; the ships are either fast approaching, or have already reached, land (400 *aut . . . aut. . .*), and to this must correspond the two aspects of the action of the swans in line 396 (*aut . . . aut. . .*). At this point difficulties enter. If *capere* corresponds to *subit ostia* (400), then how does *captas iam despectare,* which must be subsequent to the present infinitive *capere,* correspond to *portum tenet,* the sequel to *subit ostia?* Second, how does the description of the swans' landfall at lines 395–96 consort with line 398, in which the swans are described as flying high in the sky?

Housman proposed to solve both problems by reading *stellas* for *terras* in line 395;[2] his suggestion has not been generally welcomed. In this article I wish to adduce some further arguments in support of the emendation.

The first group of arguments is of a negative kind: none of the interpretations of the received text, whether proposed before or after Housman's note, is satisfactory; they achieve consistency only by the introduction of complication where none is required. Servius' suggestion, supported by Warde Fowler,[3] that *capere* means *capere oculis* as at *Georgics* 2. 230, makes the correspondence with line 400 indirect; the point is not that the ships are careful to select the right spot to put in to land, but that they are eager to make any possible landfall. This interpretation also goes against the most natural way of taking *capere* here, as "reach, place oneself on," a sense found elsewhere in the *Aeneid,*[4] and which is especially common of ships "making" harbor;[5] a subdued hint at a metaphor of this sort is quite in keeping with Vergil's practice, particularly in his transfusion of terms from the narrative into the body of a simile (to which the literary omen and its interpretation are closely related).

Most interpreters take *capere* to mean "reach," but beyond that they are divided. We may reject J. Henry's version, in which the swans, after alighting, rise again to sport in the sky to show their contempt (*despectare*) for the land in their new-found security;[6] this is overelaborate, obscure, and destructive of the parallelism with the Trojan ships. Others rob *capere* of its full force of actually making landfall and understand "reach" in the sense of "arrive in the vicinity of, or over" land, in order to avoid the oddity of *despectare* being used of creatures that actually stand on the earth.[7] But again this goes against the natural sense of *captas* as "which they had finally and definitively reached, i.e., landed on," and it does not really help with *despectare,* which would be applicable even if the swans were a mile high. Such an approach only yields sense if we read back from

1. Compare the explicit interpretation by Tolumnius of the flight of the eagle into the clouds, in the omen of the swans and eagle at 12. 247–56, as foretelling the flight of Aeneas over the sea (note the repetition of *penitusque* at lines 256 and 263).

2. "A Note on Virgil," *TCPhS* 3 (1894): 239–41 = *Classical Papers,* ed. J. Diggle and F. R. D. Goodyear, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 348–50.

3. *Roman Essays and Interpretations* (Oxford, 1920), pp. 181–82.

4. *Aen.* 5. 315, 6. 754, 9. 267, 12. 562.

5. *OLD,* s.v. *capio* 7b.

6. *Aeneidea,* vol. 1 (London and Edinburgh, 1873), pp. 657–58. In line 396 P reads *respectare:* with *captas,* this yields no satisfactory sense; with emendations of *captas* (e.g., Ribbeck's *capsos*), unwanted additional notions are introduced.

7. Austin on *Aen.* 1. 396.

the description of the action of the ships an opposition between sea and land, so that the sense is "reach (and fly over) the land," after having been out at sea.[8] But there is no other suggestion in the text that the attack by the eagle had taken place over the sea, and such a thought, with the consequent contrast between land and sea, is pushed out of the mind by the opposition, in the received text of line 395, between *caelo* and *terras*. A third approach, offered by Burmann and Conington, is to understand two groups of swans as the respective subjects of *capere* and *captas,* so that *captas* is elliptical for *captas ab aliis;* this is to destroy the elegance of the device, so frequent in Ovid, in which a past participle picks up the action of another form of the same verb preceding it.

There is a further, subsidiary problem common to all these solutions: the infinitives *capere* and *despectare* are dependent on the verb *videntur*. Austin interprets this as a "true passive," in the sense "are seen to," of which one can only say that it is otiose. The problem is that the natural sense, "seem to," is awkward if it is a matter of an event observed at close quarters and with nothing unusual or doubtful about it.[9]

Housman adequately exposes the shifts to which interpreters are put to explain away the second problem, whereby the account of the landfall of the swans is followed by the description of their flight in the upper air. To understand this as a reference to their behavior before they land is impossibly contorted; to take it as subsequent to their landing, as Henry does, makes nonsense of the parallelism with the ships' safe return to port. I know of no more satisfactory interpretation produced since Housman's strictures. It should be noted in addition that *et coetu cinxere polum* is not the Latin for "have circled the sky in convoy" (so Austin), as if *cingere* could mean *circumire;* rather it should mean "with their company they have put a ring about the sky" (or even "about the pole," with *polum* taken literally and regarded as the geometrical center of their circle).[10]

Housman's *stellas* neatly obviates all these problems. The swans end up in the upper sky, which was where they were heading; *videntur* in the sense "seem" is appropriate for such remote and unusual birdwatching; the division of the flight of the swans into the approach to and the surmounting of the stars corresponds to the division between the approach of the Trojan ships to port and their safe arrival. The dichotomy may also be at work in lines 397–98 "ut reduces illi ludunt stridentibus alis / et coetu cinxere polum cantusque dedere." *Stridentibus alis* corresponds to *pleno . . . velo* in line 400 (*stridere* may be used of a ship's ropes in the wind, and the equation of wing with sail or of wing with oar is poetic commonplace[11]). The present tense *ludunt* then matches that of *subit* in

8. So P. Brommer and W. K. Kraak, "Notes sur Verg. *Aen.* 1. 393–400," *Mnem.* 10 (1957): 56–57.

9. The nearest parallel appears to be *G.* 3. 108–9, "iamque humiles iamque elati sublime videntur / aëra per vacuum ferri atque adsurgere in auras," where *videntur* expresses the illusion that the hurtling chariots are about to take off and should be translated as "seem."

10. Cf. 5. 13 "tanti cinxerunt aethera nimbi." The idea of a continuous ring is found in Stat. *Theb.* 3. 529–30 (in a swan-omen modeled on the present passage), "nam sese immoti gyro atque in pace silentes / ceu muris valloque tenent."

11. See West on Hes. *Op.* 628; examples in this book at lines 224, 301. For *ludere* of flight, see *G.* 4. 103.

line 400 and *capere* in line 396, while the perfect *cinxere,* expressing the continuing existence of the circle put around the sky by the swans, corresponds to the perfect participle *captas* and to the perfect sense of *tenet.*

Housman objected to the frigidity of the hyperbole that he had introduced but admitted that it was not alien to Vergil. To his parallels may be added material bearing more specifically on the behavior of Vergilian swans. Traditionally these birds are at home in marshes and by rivers,[12] but they may take a loftier flight. Note especially *Eclogues* 9. 27–29:

> Vare, tuum nomen, superet modo Mantua nobis,
> Mantua vae miserae nimium vicina Cremonae,
> cantantes sublime ferent ad sidera cycni.

This may be read as a reference either to the star-reaching song of the swans or to their literal flight to the stars as they celebrate Varus; the earth-shunning swan is similarly the vehicle for Horace's poetic apotheosis and fame in *Odes* 2. 20. The musical Cycnus takes off for the stars in the shape of a swan at *Aeneid* 10. 193 "linquentem terras et sidera voce sequentem."[13] Here the motif of poetic ascent is combined with an allusion to a more literal catasterism.[14] The idea that swans are at home (*Aen.* 1. 397 *reduces*)[15] in the upper air is also found in the omen of swans and eagles in Statius *Thebaid* 3. 524–45, obviously modeled in part on the omen in Book 1 of the *Aeneid* (*Theb.* 3. 524–25): "clara regione profundi / aetheros innumeri statuerunt agmina cycni."[16]

So far I am in agreement with Housman. I part company on the issue of the fittingness of this extravagant passage to its setting, taking "setting" first in a very literal sense. We are told at *Aeneid* 1. 314 that Venus meets Aeneas in the middle of a wood; there is no indication in the intervening lines that they move from there, nor is there any gap in the action or dialogue in which such a move could be silently understood. From this vantage-point events in the upper air could be reasonably observed through a gap in the canopy of foliage; but the horizontal lines of sight are usually totally blocked in the middle of a wood.

But the hyperbole has a further aptness. For Aeneas the successful ascent of the swans to the stars is simply an omen of the successful return of his ships to land; but for Venus and the reader the omen works on an additional level. The first half of Book 1 of the *Aeneid* pivots on the contrast between the limited horizon of the storm-tossed Aeneas and the limitless horizons open to the gods

12. Hom. *Il.* 2. 460–63, 15. 690–92; Verg. *G.* 2. 198–99; *Aen.* 7. 699–702, 11. 457–58, 12. 247–50. But note the ἀερσιπόται swans at Hes. *Sc.* 316.

13. With this use of *voce* compare 8. 216 "colles clamore relinqui" (with Fordyce ad loc.); 1. 519 "templum clamore petebant."

14. Cf. Serv. ad *Aen.* 10. 189: Cycnus "longo luctu in avem sui nominis conversus est, qui postea ab Apolline inter sidera conlocatus est." The metamorphosis of Cycnus is given by Ovid in a version which directly opposes the Vergilian account (*Met.* 2. 377–78), "fit nova Cycnus avis; nec se caeloque Iovique / tradit ut iniuste missi memor ignis ab illo"; this seems to have been the version of Phanocles (see G. Knaack, *Quaestiones Phaethonteae,* Philol. Untersuch. 8 [Berlin, 1886]).

15. The force of *reduces* here should perhaps not be pressed; it picks up *reduces* in line 390 and may be analogous to the "transfusion of terms" whereby a term appropriate to the main narrative is introduced into a simile (see D. West, *JRS* 59 [1969]: 48). Note further that the full force of *reduces* is not present in line 390 either: Aeneas' ships have not returned to a starting point, although this inconsistency is softened by *tibi.*

16. With *agmina* cf. *agmine* in *Aen.* 1. 393. Compare also *Theb.* 3. 504 "liquidoque polum complexa meatu" with *Aen.* 1. 398.

and hence to the reader. We see the supernatural machinery behind a storm that threatens the cohesion of the universe; Aeneas experiences the storm only as a natural event that threatens him and his men with death. Aeneas is taken up with the immediate necessities of survival in a strange land; Jupiter, looking down from above on the whole earth, reveals to Venus, and to us, the future glory of Aeneas' race. This disparity of vision is, as it were, embodied in the disguise that Venus adopts in order to meet her son. The irony is particularly heavy in the opening line of the speech in which Venus points to the omen, in the words *haud . . . invisus caelestibus* (387), and above all in line 392 "ni frustra augurium vani docuere parentes."

In this context the theme of a journey to the stars in the mouth of a disguised goddess might well be less than straightforward. This possibility becomes all the stronger when it is noted that this theme occurs more than once in the preceding two hundred lines. The stars are the hyperbolical limit of the future success of the race of Aeneas:

250 nos, tua progenies, caeli quibus adnuis arcem
259–60 sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli
magnanimum Aenean
287 [Caesar] . . . famam qui terminet astris
289–90 hunc tu olim caelo spoliis Orientis onustum
accipies secura

Both fame and apotheosis will raise Aeneas and his descendants to the stars. The motif recurs in the speech of Aeneas that precedes Venus' appeal to the omen, in the notorious words (378–79) "sum pius Aeneas, raptos qui ex hoste penatis / classe veho mecum, fama super aethera notus." There is a double irony here. The first is present to the consciousness of Aeneas, who contrasts his own innate worth with his present destitution; the second is available only to Venus and the reader, who both know that Aeneas has just been discussed by Jupiter and Venus *aethere summo* (223). The extreme hyperbole of *super aethera* is matched by the apparent flight of the swans even above the stars (396).

The wider significance of the omen, hidden, like so much else, from Aeneas, thus lies in a reference to the future heavenly destiny of Aeneas and the Roman race, whether this is understood as the prize of fame, or as apotheosis, or even as the cosmic destiny of the city of Rome itself and its empire. The birds of Venus have escaped the onslaught of the bird of Jupiter, dropping from the *aether,* and now make their own way to the heavens; in the previous scene Jupiter, at the zenith of the *aether,* had assured Venus that, with his blessing, she would see the promised city and raise Aeneas to the stars. In the light of this one may understand the *augurium* as a kind of foundation omen, comparable ultimately to the twelve (as here) birds that announced to Romulus his throne in Ennius *Annals* 77–96 V.[2]. One might note that in the omen in Book 3 of Statius' *Thebaid,* alluded to above, the swans motionless in the *aether* are, precisely, an image of the city of Thebes.[17] Vergil may also have had in mind an earlier work

17. *Theb.* 3. 528 "has rere in imagine Thebas." The *urbs* at *Aen.* 1. 258 is of course Lavinium, not Rome. The complex of auspices, foundation of Rome, and Rome's heavenly destiny recurs at *Aen.* 6. 781–87.

of his own in which the theme of apotheosis, with probable Roman reference, was central, namely, the fifth *Eclogue* (56–57): "candidus insuetum miratur limen Olympi / sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera Daphnis." Note both here and in Book 1 of the *Aeneid* the vivid image of the downward glance at the stars.[18]

It has justly been observed that the omen of the swans and eagle in Book 1 of the *Aeneid* has a pendant in the omen involving the same birds in Book 12 (247–56);[19] but whereas the omen in Book 1 is (partly) understood aright by Aeneas and points to his future success, that in Book 12 is wrongly interpreted by the Rutulians and leads directly to military disaster. There are other correspondences between the two books, notably the dialogues between Jupiter and, respectively, Venus and Juno, which function as framing elements within the overall structure of the poem. The motif of the heavenward ascent of the race of Aeneas is picked up in the last words of Jupiter (12. 838–39): "hinc genus Ausonio mixtum quod sanguine surget, / supra homines, supra ire deos pietate videbis." The hyperbole of *supra deos* is matched in Aeneas' boast that he is *super aethera notus* in Book 1. The omen of the swans in Book 1, if *stellas* is read, may find another echo in Book 12, which also points up the difference between Trojan and Rutulian destinies. Just before the final duel Aeneas taunts Turnus (892–93): "opta ardua pennis / astra sequi clausumque cava te condere terra." There is a particular irony in the proverbial impossibility of flying to heaven,[20] given that such is, figuratively and literally, the destiny of Aeneas (and the last mention of this theme had been less than sixty lines earlier). The specific detail of *winged* flight points back to and contrasts with the wings of the swans, whose journey to the stars symbolizes that destiny.

We may still, with Housman, dislike the hyperbole, but it is no longer possible to see it as simply a stylistic fault, something that Vergil would have removed in revising. Like so many other Vergilian hyperboles, this can be shown to function within a wider thematic context.[21]

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18. The ambivalence of sky-reaching fame or literal journey to the stars that we saw above in the musical swans of Mantua (*Ecl.* 9. 27–29) is used as a pivot in the structure of *Ecl.* 5: Mopsus' song ends with a quotation of the *carmen* on the tomb of Daphnis, lying in the earth but "hinc usque ad sidera notus" (43); Menalcas then promises that in his own *carmina* "Daphninque tuum tollemus ad astra; / Daphnin ad astra feremus" (51–52; compare *Ecl.* 9. 29 "cantantes sublime ferent ad sidera cycni"); it turns out that his song places the deified Daphnis literally above the stars. In general, the contrast between the dead and the deified Daphnis is similar to that between the shipwrecked Aeneas, faced with imminent death (*Aen.* 1. 91), and the Aeneas whom Venus will raise to the stars. One might reflect further on the suggested identification of the mother of Daphnis, who complains of the cruelty of the gods (*Ecl.* 5. 23), with Venus as ancestor of Julius Caesar; I hesitate to point to the parallelism between *Ecl.* 5. 43 "Daphnis ego in silvis, hinc usque ad sidera notus" and the words of Aeneas *in silva* (*Aen.* 1. 314), who claims that he is "fama super aethera notus" (379).

19. B. Grassmann-Fischer, *Die Prodigien in Vergils "Aeneis"* (Munich, 1966), p. 99. On the conventional motif of the (usually unsuccessful) attack of the eagle on swans, see D'Arcy W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds* (Oxford, 1936), pp. 7, 180.

20. The particular form of expression (flight to sky / under earth) is Euripidean: six examples in Barrett on *Hipp.* 1290–93.

21. For further discussion, see chapter 6, "Hyperbole," of my book, *Virgil's "Aeneid": Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford, 1986).