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## JUTURNA'S LAMENT REVISITED: THE ANXIETIES OF IDENTITY, SURVIVAL AND EPIC CLOSURE

### *Introduction*

Juturna no more needed to be in Book 12 than the swallow needed to flutter into the poem just before the wrath of Aeneas and the cry of Vergil; she is in Book 12 because her usefulness as an engine of suspense, beyond even her ability to elicit some reflected sympathy for Turnus, she creates, in conjunction with the images and themes that surround her, a powerful undersong for the last book of the poem, one that fuses with earlier similar themes and figures to countervail the poem's promise of imperial grandeur and of the theological rationalizations that nourish it. (p. 438)

W.R. Johnson, "Dismal Decorations: Dryden's Machines in *Aeneid* 12", in: R. Wilhelm and H. Jones, eds., *The Two Worlds of the Poet: New Perspectives on Vergil* (Detroit 1992), 433-447.

The Lament of Juturna (*Aen.* 12.869-896) has attracted many readings in the last decades, several among them particularly sophisticated, and most of them focusing, correctly, on the importance and meaning of pathos in this culminating, and in a sense also recapitulative, section of the *Aeneid* for the better understanding of Vergil's structural and narrative choices.<sup>1</sup> Still, deeper study of the themes enmeshed in the texture of Juturna's mourning

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\* The text cited from the *Aeneid* is that of Mynors 1969; all translations are taken from Jackson Knight 1958.

1. On Juturna's lament, see principally the studies of Barchiesi 1978 and 1994; Lyne 1987, 86-87 and 139-144; Feeney, 1991; and Perkell 1997, which among themselves offer full record of all important literature on Juturna's role in the *Aeneid*.

for her mortal brother and the reasons for the lament's placement just before the Aeneas-Turnus combat that closes the whole epic may be subject to a more comprehensive appreciation of the curious relationship between Juturna and Turnus, and prove the narrative value of Juturna's integration into the epic, an aspect of the Juturna episode that has received little study so far. In this paper I suggest that Juturna's integration into the last book of the *Aeneid* problematizes the meaning of epic immortality as means for self-reflection and self-awareness, from multiple perspectives including those of Turnus, Juturna herself, Juno and Aeneas, and naturally Vergil himself. Deprived of his promised bride, and by extension of the opportunity to bear an offspring that would guarantee his postmortem immortality, Turnus is offered an immortal sister, and through her, the possibility of immortality. Jupiter's decision to allow the death of Turnus, however, deprives Juturna not just from her brother, but more importantly, from her mirror, wherein she saw proof of her existence. Juturna, in this respect, evokes Juno and her own anxiety about the precariousness of the literary career of her divinity, while her mourning about the meaning and ends of immortality reaches back to *Aeneid* 1 and the tearful Aeneas as he contemplates the consequences of one's losing control of one's own lifestory. Finally, it is tempting to see Vergil ventriloquizing through the lamenting Juturna, as he comprehends that his epic should end but he is still ridden with the anxiety of insecurity about the definiteness of closure.

### *The Lament*

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| At procul ut Dirae stridorem agnouit et alas,<br>infelix crinis scindit Juturna solutos  | 870 |
| unguibus ora soror foedans et pectora pugnis:<br>'quid nunc te tua, Turne, potest germana iuuare?<br>aut quid iam durae superat mihi? qua tibi lucem<br>arte morer? talin possum me opponere monstro?<br>iam iam linquo acies. ne me terrete timentem,<br>obscenae uolucres: alarum uerbera nosco<br>letalemque sonum, nec fallunt iussa superba<br>magnanimi Iouis. haec pro uirginitate reponit?<br>quo uitam dedit aeternam? cur mortis adempta est<br>condicio? possem tantos finire dolores | 875 |
| nunc certe, et misero fratri comes ire per umbras!<br>immortalis ego? aut quicquam mihi dulce meorum<br>te sine, frater, erit? o quae satis ima dehiscat   | 880 |

terra mihi, Manisque deam demittat ad imos?<sup>1</sup>  
 tantum effata caput glauco contexit amictu  
 multa gemens et se fluuio dea condidit alto.

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And when Juturna recognized afar off the hiss of the demon's wings, with a sister's agony she loosened and tore her hair, and marred her cheeks with her fingernails and bruised her breast with clenched hands. 'Turnus', she cried, 'what help can your sister bring you now? Or what is now left for me, after all my enduring? By what craft could I now prolong your days of light? Can I pit myself against a horror such as this? Even now, at this moment, I leave the field of battle. Foul birds, seek not to affright me, for already I fear. Well do I recognize the beating of those wings, with their note of death; clear to me now is the imperious command of strong-hearted Jupiter. Is this the return which he makes for my maidenhood? To what end did he grant me everlasting life, and why did he cancel mortality's law for me? Else could I at least have set a term to this grim anguish and passed through the shadows by my poor brother's side. Is this my immortality? And shall my life know any joy when you are gone, Brother mine? Oh that somewhere earth might yawn to depths deep enough for me, to let me, divine though I am, descend to the ghosts far below!' So much she said. And she covered her head in a grey veil, and sobbing she dived and hid herself and her divine power to aid in the depths of her stream.

### Who is Juturna?

Juturna was a native Italian deity of springs, well established in the Roman tradition already in the Republican times since her name was given to a spring in the Roman Forum, the *Iacus Juturnae*, some time in the second century BC. According to Servius (*ad* 12.139), however, Vergil's Juturna, the sister of Turnus and a victim of rape and deception by Jupiter, is Vergil's brainchild. Earlier critics have confirmed the originality of Juturna's portrayal in *Aeneid* 12,<sup>2</sup> but the study of her role that culminates on her famous

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2. Ovid's testimony attests to this: in the two references to the nymph in the *Fasti* Ovid records contradictory information, at once borrowing from Vergil, but never following him closely, and denoting his reliance on an earlier but firmly established ritual tradition about Juturna: in *Fasti* 1.463 and 707-8 Juturna is just the "sister of Turnus", with a shrine at the spot of Aqua Virgo, at an aqueduct built by Agrippa in 19 BC. In *Fasti* 2.583ff., however, Ovid claims to reach back to the legend for a story that relates

lament still remains open, and so does the discussion about its interaction with the themes that underscore the closure of Rome's great epic. Her appearance shortly before the conclusion to the epic and the mission tied to her role there have transformed thoroughly the tradition behind her legend. This mission, I believe, emanates from and is determined by Juturna's inextricable relation to Turnus and her devotion to him. Juturna's self-centered lament develops around two key biographical details, her kinship to Turnus and her rape by Jupiter along with the gift of immortality that she received as compensation, both of which influence Vergil's politics of epic closure. The relationship between the two siblings, which has been invented by the poet of the *Aeneid* to tempt the Rutulian hero with access to immortality, is described only from the perspective of Juturna, who perceives her mission in the poem to extend beyond the protection of her brother, to the prolongation of the *Aeneid* narrative; as such then, Juturna seems to share Vergil's anxiety about the appropriate ending to his masterpiece. Partly through physical intervention and partly symbolically, through her association with water, Juturna strives to secure for Turnus, too, a kind of invulnerability, not least because her own postmortem reputation is enmeshed with his staying alive. Thus, upon being ordered in the end to withdraw her protection, her reaction is one of great unhappiness and lack of preparation to accept and rationalize unpredicted closure.

### *Juturna's Presence in the Aeneid*

Juturna, who enters the *Aeneid* narrative early in Book 12, is the last of Juno's helpers in the great goddess' effort to prevent the foundation of Rome, but the only one personally and emotionally involved with the affairs she is directed to influence. The war has now entered its final phase, with both armies on the battlefield just outside the walls of Lavinium, the prized inheritance coveted by the two leading contestants (136-137). At this decisive turn,

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of Jupiter's sexual pursuit of Juturna, which nonetheless proved unsuccessful, because the water nymph was warned on time by another minor deity, Lara/Muta, who in turn paid for this by having her tongue torn out by Jupiter, and subsequently, by being herself raped by Mercury, as she was led to Hades at Jupiter's orders to undergo further punishment; the Ovidian version, along with other literary sources on Juturna, which nonetheless are not very helpful as they lack detail, are reported in Perkell 1997, 273-74; for comprehensive discussion on Juturna's presence in the *Aeneid*, see Mitchell 1991; West 1986, 764-767; on the origin of the probable Etruscan origins of the name and the cult of Juturna, see Wissowa 1890-94; Latte 1919; Simon 1990, 36.



the narrative for one final time zooms onto Juno and her intense emotional reaction as expressed in her direct address to the nymph:

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| At Iuno ex summo (qui nunc Albanus habetur;          |     |
| tum neque nomen erat neque honos aut gloria monti)   | 135 |
| prospiciens tumulo campum aspectabat et ambas        |     |
| Laurentum Troumque acies urbemque Latini.            |     |
| extemplo Turni sic est adfata sororem                |     |
| diua deam, stagnis quae fluminibusque sonoris        |     |
| praesidet (hunc illi rex aetheris altus honorem      | 140 |
| Iuppiter erepta pro uirginitate sacrauit):           |     |
| 'nympha, decus fluuiorum, animo gratissima nostro,   |     |
| scis ut te cunctis unam, quaecumque Latinae          |     |
| magnanimi Iouis ingratum ascendere cubile,           |     |
| praetulerim caelique libens in parte locarim:        | 145 |
| disce tuum, ne me incuses, Juturna, dolorem.         |     |
| qua uisa est Fortuna pati Parcaeque sinebant         |     |
| cedere res Latio, Turnum et tua moenia texi;         |     |
| nunc iuuenem imparibus uideo concurrere fatis,       |     |
| Parcarumque dies et uis inimica propinquat.          | 150 |
| non pugnam aspicere hanc oculis, non foedera possum. |     |
| tu pro germano si quid praesentius audes,            |     |
| perge; decet. forsan miseros meliora sequentur.'     |     |
| uix ea, cum lacrimas oculis Juturna profundit        |     |
| terque quaterque manu pectus percussit honestum.     | 155 |
| 'non lacrimis hoc tempus' ait Saturnia Iuno:         |     |
| 'accelera et fratrem, si quis modus, eripe morti;    |     |
| aut tu bella cie conceptumque excute foedus.         |     |
| auctor ego audendi.' sic exhortata reliquit          |     |
| incertam et tristi turbatam uulnere mentis.          | 160 |

(Aen. 12.134-160)

*Juno meanwhile looked forth from a high crest, a hill known now as Alban, but in those times a nameless eminence without regard or fame; and she watched the plain, the Laurentine and Trojan hosts, and Latinus' city. Forthwith she spoke to Turnus' sister, a goddess like herself, who presided over the pools and the roaring rivers, an office assigned to her by Jupiter, high King of Heaven, in recompense for a stolen maidenhood: 'Nymph, pride of the rivers, and very dear to my heart, you know how I have preferred you in my favour beyond all other maids of Latium who have been forced to*

mount the thankless bed of strong-hearted Jupiter, and I have gladly given you your place in your own part of the sky. Learn, Juturna, a grief which must be yours; and do not reproach me, for whatever fortune seemed to permit me, and the Fates allowed success to Latium, I have protected Turnus and your walled city. But now I see the young prince engage battle with a destiny weaker than his foe's. The day of the Fates and malevolent force draw near. I cannot look with my own eyes on this truce and on this combat. But you, if you have the daring to give your brother some more potent aid, go forward; for it is meet. It may be that some brighter issue may attend you both – unhappy pair!' She had scarcely spoken so, when the tears started from Juturna's eyes, and thrice, and yet again, she struck her hand upon her beautiful breast. 'This is not time for tears,' said Saturnian Juno. 'Hasten; and, if you can find the means, steal your brother from death; or else, shatter this treaty which they have now devised, and reawaken the war. It is with my sanction that you will dare.' With this exhortation she left her sorely stricken to the heart, and uncertain and perplexed.

In detail and themes, the narrative echoes the appearances of Juno in *Aeneid* 1.34ff. and 7.284ff. amidst similar circumstances:<sup>3</sup> on both occasions, Juno intervenes at the moment when Aeneas and his people approach the end of their labors, and appeals to the assistance of a lesser divinity, respectively Aeolus (*Aeneid* 1) and Allecto (*Aeneid* 7), in order to cause turmoil and force the Trojans to begin anew their quest for *requies laborum*. None of these divine assistants is emotionally involved in the events they are asked to influence: Aeolus' services are bought in advance, even though afterwards he reassures Juno of his loyalty to her; Allecto's voice is never heard, but being a personification of evil she only does what is naturally expected from her. Juturna's case, however, is different: even though her presence in the *Aeneid* is necessitated by the same reason, Juno's persistent effort to stop Aeneas from founding Rome, she is summoned not to destroy but to protect.<sup>4</sup> She is deeply

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3. Scholars who have noticed the close relationship of the two passages to each other, and of both to *Od.* 5.282ff, include Fraenkel 1964[1945] 150; Knauer 1964, 150f., 231ff.; Buchheit 1963, 71ff.; Lyne 1987, 61ff.; Feeney 1991, 162f.; Horsfall 2000, 203ff.; a skillful stylistic study of the lament in full has been done in Barchiesi 1978.

4. Critics also have observed that Juturna's deep love for her brother parallels the devoted love of Anna for her own sister, Dido. In this respect, Aeneas' two major enemies and obstacles to the fulfillment of his founding mission share, in addition to Juno's favor, a sister deeply devoted to their respective welfare and best interests; notable is the description of the lamenting Juturna at 12.871 with a line taken verbatim from the description of the distraught Anna at the death of Dido (4.673). On the other hand, the

attached to her brother (as marked by her tears and lamentation as soon as she hears, at 154-155, the grim news about Turnus' approaching death), and this intimate involvement offers Juno the promise of a helper truly devoted to her mission.<sup>5</sup> This commitment on Juturna's part Jupiter's wife bolsters by means of underhanded emotional blackmail and cajoling simultaneously, as she, first, slyly reminds Juturna that her alone, unlike all other mortal mistresses of Jupiter, Juno spared from revenge and persecution, and readily conceded to become immortal, and, second, declares, from the very beginning of her appeal, that she considers Turnus' sister to be her own favorite nymph (12.142-145).<sup>6</sup>

Further, even though Juturna's lament opposes an epic code within the poem her commitment to the protection of Turnus sits at the center of a new set of epic associations.<sup>7</sup> These, enhanced by the nymph's origins as a deity of the springs, cast her as a Thetis-like figure, albeit one who enjoys an intimate relationship not with Jupiter but with Juno. Juturna experiences emotional upset and pathos similar in depth and intensity to Thetis' own, over a plight very similar in many respects and distinguished by the same feeling of powerlessness. This proximity is underlined in an original fashion, by means of different, even contrasting ways of reaction. Thetis in the aftermath of her heartbreaking encounter with Achilles in *Iliad* 1, whereupon she senses the death of Achilles approaching, appeals to Jupiter – a motion she repeats again in Book 16 with another appeal, to Hephaestus – and asks not so much that the great god protect and save, but that he *honor* her son;

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two pairs of siblings develop significant differences as well, mainly because the intimacy of the relationship between Anna and Dido is mutual and as such repeatedly expressed in the poem, while Turnus nowhere appears to express for his sister the depth and intensity of emotion that Juturna confesses about him; cf. the comparative study of the Anna and Juturna in West 1979 and Castellani 1987; also Perkell 1997, 267; on the repetition of lines from *Aeneid* 4 in the lament of Juturna, see Barchiesi 1978, 104-105.

5. West 1979, 14: "Juturna becomes the last of a long line of Juno's helpers and would therefore be expected to share the demonic characteristics of her mistress."

6. Juno's statement, further, that she has done her own personal best with protecting the Rutulians and Turnus but to no avail (146-151), successfully communicates by implication that Juturna is alone in this fight; in this way, Juno slyly manipulates the nymph into engaging into a lonely and desperate effort, which parallels Juturna's mission to her brother's own, who likewise fights a lonely and doomed war against Aeneas.

7. On the non-epic performance of the lamenting Juturna, see details in Barchiesi 1978; the placement of the lament at the close of the *Aeneid*, however, evokes the laments of the Trojan women over the body of Hector, which are also placed shortly before the end of the *Iliad*; see my discussion below on the plausibility of a deliberate association between the epic semantics of the two laments.



throughout the *Iliad*, Thetis herself never personally intervenes in the fighting on behalf of Achilles. The relationship between Juturna and Juno follows the reverse course: Juturna, who unlike Thetis does not have foreknowledge of her brother's death even though she knows that he is mortal, is notified of Turnus' upcoming doom by Juno, at whose urge she intervenes decisively in the fighting. In the course, however, she realizes that her own supernatural protection, like the god-made immortal armor on Achilles' near immortal body, is futile against the mandates of the fate, and that Turnus' immortality is tied to the *honor* the hero will accrue while fighting and dying, not to a prolongation of his biological life. In realizing this, Juturna reaches Thetis' level of understanding the epic code and yields to Turnus' request to let him join the actual fighting and succumb to a heroic death, rather than pretend to fight by staying in the safety of the fringes; and like Thetis, she mourns for her beloved's death in anticipation.

Thetis, however, never joined the fighting at Troy in order to keep danger off Achilles. This part of Juturna's role is modeled on the Homeric Aphrodite and the latter's own physical presence in the Homeric battlefield at the side now of her son, Aeneas, and now of her protégé, Paris, both of whom, on different occasions, she saved from certain death.<sup>8</sup> Juturna, in other words, fulfills in Vergil's condensed Iliadic section a role that fuses together the parts of Homer's Thetis and Aphrodite. Like Thetis, Juturna suffers greatly as soon as she finds out that her brother's death is looming and irreversible. Like Aphrodite, she intervenes physically in the action, and repeatedly keeps death at bay from her beloved. And yet, she is very much her own character, with her own unprecedented type of notable contribution to the fashioning of the epic narrative: she disguises herself as a Rutulian archer and, in imitation of the Homeric Pandaros, takes a shot and wounds Aeneas (*Aen.* 12.318-323).<sup>9</sup>

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8. The closeness of Juturna to Aphrodite is defined more concretely in the Hellenistic literature; specifically, recent critics have argued that Juturna's lament for Turnus resembles that of Bion's Aphrodite over the dead body of her beloved Adonis; cf. Reed 2007, 49-53.

9. The identity of the shooter that injured Aeneas is presented by Vergil as a mystery. The implication that it was Juturna herself that did it, is announced several hundred lines later, when at 12.797 Vergil makes Jupiter characterize the wound that Aeneas received as *mortali* [*vulnere*], 'wound such as would afflict a mortal man', in underlying juxtaposition to the immortal hand of the shooter. In corroboration of the above, one may further produce Juno's refusal at 12.814-815, when chastised by Jupiter, that she ordered Juturna to fight with the bow; cf. full discussion of the issue in West 1979, 18f. n. 17, along with Servius' comments *ad loc.*



In Juturna's portrayal, then, in the light of both Thetis and Aphrodite, the Vergilian reader may recognize the reflection of Turnus' similarly heterogeneous epic image, which, as well-known, combines elements from various sources: in the earlier part of the second half of the epic, Turnus' conduct repeatedly echoes that of the Homeric Achilles (let us not forget that he is introduced as the Italian-born *alter Achilles* in the Sibyl's prophecy in *Aen.* 6.89ff.), and as the epic draws to closure, he progressively resembles the Homeric Hector, and the text clearly stresses this, because the Rutulian's fighting style echoes specifically the Homeric episodes that describe the lost battles of the doomed Trojan leader.<sup>10</sup>

Not least, Turnus' betrothal to Lavinia, and his persistence at holding on to it against the fates, gradually transforms him from a Menelaus parallel to a Paris duplicate – an identification that is underlined by the direct association of both Paris and Turnus to fire: both embody destructive fire, and both become the cause for the conflagration and the spectacular fall of their respective capitals. Numerous are those occasions throughout the *Aeneid* where Turnus is connecting to fire, a connection even toyed on, as in *Aen.* 7.623–631,<sup>11</sup> where the description of Italy burning in excitement in preparation for war against the Trojans is framed by the words *ardet* (opening word of line 623) and *Ardea* (opening word of line 631), the name of Turnus' capital, which in turn constitutes an extension of the king's fiery essence.<sup>12</sup> On his part, Paris embodies destructive fire and conflagration even more explicitly, being the cause of the war that led to the fall of Troy. Besides, widely recorded in the ancient literary sources is Hecuba's famous dream while she was pregnant with Paris, that she had given birth to a firebrand; and that the fire from this brand later spread and destroyed the entire city of Troy.<sup>13</sup> An embodiment of the fire element, then, Turnus naturally poses as the opposite and complementary to his sister, who as a spring nymph is an extension of the water element, in a typical Pythagorean pair of opposites.

10. On the reversal of the Homeric order of power, see Anderson 1957; Quint 1993, 50–96; Grandsen 1984. On introducing both Achilles and Hector as models for Aeneas and Turnus, see Traina 1990, 328; King 1982, 31–55; van Nortwick 1980, 303–314.

11. On the passages linking Turnus and fire, see von Duhn 1957, 64–79.

12. The wordplay is discussed in O'Hara 1996, 70, 84, 192, in relation to a similar wordplay on Turnus, fire (*ardere*) and Ardea, integrated also in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 14.573–580; cf. also Papaioannou 2003, 621.

13. For Hecuba's dream and the exposure of the infant Paris, see Pind. *Pa.* 8; Schol. on Hom. *Il.* iii.325; Tzetzes, Schol. on Lycophron 86; Eur. *Andr.* 298; Cic. *De Divin.* 1.21, etc.

*Juturna and Juno*

Juturna's lament and departure from epic action follows after she has received the epiphany of the fury, the Dira. The mission of the Dira (*Aen.* 12.842-868) comes in the aftermath and as confirmation of Juno's reconciliation with the fates whose voice in the epic coincides with Jupiter's own. The Dira orders Juturna, at 12.853ff., off epic stage, and this causes Juturna to break into a lament, which in the structure and intensity of emotional distress revives Juno's metaliterary anxiety about her epic fate beyond the *Aeneid*, as conveyed, once again, in her two agonizing soliloquies in the respective openings of Books 1 and 7, and no less, in her ruminations prior to the summoning of Juturna in the early part of Book 12 noted above. The Dira scene, further, a Vergilian invention just like the intimate kinship bond between Juturna and Turnus, evokes Allecto and duplicates in reverse a performance of similar function<sup>14</sup>: Allecto was commissioned by Juno to expedite Turnus' decision to declare war, while the Dira is commissioned by Jupiter to signal Turnus' death and the end of fighting. Thus distinctly, the epiphany of a fury becomes a structural marker that signals the beginning and the end of the Rutulian war against the foundation of Rome and the entire 'Iliadic' half of the *Aeneid*.<sup>15</sup>

The stylistic similarities between Juturna's lament and Juno's indignant soliloquies corroborate a comparative approach of their respective reactions.<sup>16</sup>

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14. Several critics argue that the Dirae and the Furies are the same beings, and that their different group appellation connotes their dual functions; thus, when they operate on Jupiter's behalf they are called Dirae, and when against the great god they are called Furies; cf. Mackie 1992. Also for Servius, the Dirae are "similar" to the Furies but inhabit a different space, since the Dirae attend Jupiter's gates and do not inhabit Tartarus like the Furies of *Aeneid* 6 (280, 571). Williams (1972 *ad loc.*), identifies the two Dirae with Allecto and Tisiphone, and the Dira dispatched before Juturna with Allecto; the latter identification is embraced in Putnam 1965, 198, who points out the ring-composition in producing Allecto as the cause of Turnus' madness and Turnus' death alike; cf. overview of the critical debate over the identification of the two Dirae in Perkell 1997, 275 n. 33.

15. Feeney (1991, 152) is persuaded that the mission of the Dira consciously parallels that of Allecto, for both mean evil, they are carried through by creatures of evil (even though he does not explicitly identifies the two), and, most importantly, they receive orders by the two principal divinities who are likely minded ("Jupiter's force is Junoesque, not of a different essence from hers, as his acknowledgment of the kinship marks"), even though Jupiter is usually perceived to represent the forces of order, reason and serenity, which are the polar opposite to Juno's hellish embodiment of evil.

16. On the unconventional structure of Juturna's lament and its dissonance with other laments in the *Aeneid* and in the lament tradition as a whole, see Perkell 1997, 276-277; Perkell 1997, 276 n. 36, notes that the lament is excluded from the first systematic

Each goddess suffers from existential anxiety. Juno fears and clearly states so, that her failure to conquer the Trojans will imperil the future status of her divinity, because it will convey the message that she has less power than expected from a deity. If the Trojans survive against her will and despite her effort to the contrary, then the boundaries that separate the divine universe from the world of the mortals are blurred, and the hierarchical superiority of the former may seem questioned and threatened. This fear that her divine status, her existence in people's rituals, is in peril, is inspired also by literary awareness, about her future survival and role in epic literature, that is, popular memory. Juturna's agony conveys the same anxiety more concretely precisely because she owes her 'existence', her first detailed portrayal as full-fledged character, to Juno who assigns her with the mission to protect Turnus. The death of Turnus will only mean a similar fate for Juturna. As Juno indirectly confesses to Jupiter at 12.813-815, both goddesses' expectations are linked to the survival of Turnus: for Juno, Turnus embodies the forces of resistance of Italy against the foundation of Rome; for Juturna, who lacks a detailed legendary tradition behind her, Turnus is the evidence of a meaningful literary existence:

Juturnam misero (fateor) succurrere fratri  
suasi et pro uita maiora audere probaui,  
non ut tela tamen, non ut contenderet arcum;

*I did indeed persuade Juturna to aid her brother in her helplessness; I confess it; and I approved her daring still bolder deeds to save his life. But I never intended that she should indeed draw the bow and send her arrows flying.*

The cry echoes Juno's expression of similar agony, 'and who will mind of Juno's divinity, and as suppliant pay tribute to her altars' (*Aen.* 1.48-49), which also is subject to similar metaliterary reading as the great goddess sees her triumphant Trojan profile being undermined in Vergil's epic narrative, and her victory in the Trojan war, so conspicuously memorialized on the murals of Juno's temple in Carthage, questioned in the light of Aeneas' Trojans

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categorization of the speeches in the *Aeneid* undertaken in Hightet 1972; the latter study labels Juturna's pathetic address to Turnus an "apostrophe," a characterization given to at least fourteen other similarly structured speeches in Vergil's epic most of which are addressed to a person dead or about to die.



becoming the founders of a new nation that is ultimately destined to conquer the world.

Last but not least, the angst of Juturna comments from yet another perspective on the issue of epic closure that dominates the *Aeneid* in the last three books of the epic. It is well known that Vergil was obsessed with the so-perceived incompleteness of his great epic, by means of which he hopes for immortality, and this agony of his may be reflected on the progressively increasing length of his final books, and culminating on the immortal Juturna's agony. Robin Mitchell-Boyask has captured nicely Vergil's eagerness to voice his own literary concerns through Juturna's agony when he notes that "because Juturna serves as the vehicle for expressing the epic's anguish over Turnus' death and as our eyes for the final events, she symbolizes also the narrator's struggles with the plot." And just as Juturna is frustrated over her inability to use effectively, i.e. in accordance with her desire to save her brother, the unique gift of immortality, similarly Vergil may give the impression that he is at once aware of the uniqueness of his opus, specifically the storyline he produces, and of the burden of anxiety that weights upon his shoulders over effecting the best closure possible, along with a constant sense of frustration of the so-perceived inability to effect the 'ideal' conclusion.<sup>17</sup>

### *Juturna, Turnus and Epic Immortality*

This fraternal epic relationship represents a complex case of interdependence: even though neither of them acknowledges it, Juturna's dependence on Turnus' survival for her own life is as strong as Turnus' dependence on Juturna's powers. On critical occasions throughout the later half of the *Aeneid*, Turnus' life is interlocked with the water element, the natural habitat of his sister, which, on top, was widely acclaimed in historical times for its salutary power.<sup>18</sup> Already in Book 9, Turnus, trapped and isolated inside the Trojan camp following a bloodthirsty killing spree, saves himself only because at the last moment, as he finds himself surrounded by enemies from all directions, he plunges into the water of the Tiber river that flows by the Trojan camp, and lets the current carry him away (*Aen.* 9.806-816). Then, in

17. Mitchell-Boyask 1996, 299-300; the quote comes from p. 299.

18. The so-called *lacus Juturnae* in the Forum furnished, according to Servius, the water for all state sacrifices, while Varro (*L.* 5.71) notes that the waters of this spring were considered to have healing powers and that the spring was venerated in particular by artisans who worked with water; sources and bibliography see in Perkell 1997, 273-274.

Book 12, when Juturna takes the form of her brother's charioteer and takes charge of Turnus' fighting course, she mindfully avoids crossing Aeneas but drives the horses to the outskirts of the conflict, which coincide, again, with the edges of the waterfront (12.614 *in extremo aequore*). It is at the safety of this epically marginalized territory that Turnus is fighting when the wind brings to his ears the cries and laments of his fellow citizens, who in the meantime are under the Trojan attack and a mere step prior to surrendering their city that is by then consumed by flames (617ff.). Turnus is brought back to the epic reality: soon he joins the fighting inlands, and shortly afterwards he confronts Aeneas.

### *Juturna and Aeneas*

Despite their thematic closeness to Juturna's lament, Juno's angry monologues on all three occasions exude deep-rooted anxiety and bitterness, but they are definitely not laments. A closer study of the text which embodies the last expression of extreme emotional suffering in the *Aeneid*, tempts one to consider it along the same lines as the reaction of the tearful Aeneas of *Aeneid* 1 upon his entering Juno's temple at Carthage and identifying the pictorial narratives of the Trojan war on the walls. Perkell affirmatively states that Aeneas' tears "are shed *not for the enemy* but for himself and the other Trojans," because upon comprehending the reality communicated through the mural depictions Aeneas instinctively identifies himself with "the sad vanquished, rather than the sad victor."<sup>19</sup> His tearful reaction to the pictorial narrative, on the walls of the Carthaginian temple, of the sufferings of the Trojan people (1.462 *sunt lacrimae rerum*), projects outwards a similar anxiety for the transmission of the Trojan narrative in the literary memory of posterity, specifically with respect to the image of the Trojan people and also to the image of Aeneas' own, as an individual hero in this narrative image. The Carthaginian murals is the first publicly addressed narrative of the Trojan war following its completion, and as such, it comments on the power of literary/poetic memory and the powerlessness of an agent over attitudes of reception, with respect to a certain action he executed, past the completion of this action and fulfillment of his mission in it. Aeneas, in other words, was a protagonist who directed the course and the outcome of the Trojan war, but once the war reached an end, the survival of Aeneas' contribution in it does not depend on the hero as much as on any narrator of the Trojan war. Dido's

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19. Perkell 1997, 270; her emphasis.

pictorially rendered narrative represents a vivid, but most importantly – and terrifyingly for Aeneas –, *permanent*, reception narrative of Aeneas' actual experience. The narration of the Trojan story and Aeneas' epic status as defined through it, seem to be beyond Aeneas' control, even though the latter participated decisively in the formation of the original Trojan story. It rests ultimately upon Vergil alone to revise the Trojan legend: by transforming Aeneas into a new Achilles in the last books of the *Aeneid*, Vergil translates every scene in the series of pictures on Dido's temple into its corresponding one in the Italian war later in the second half of the epic. The only scene that is not replicated in the *Aeneid* is the death and ransoming of Hector (1.483–487) – the *Aeneid* concludes at the very moment Turnus, Hector's ultimate counterpart in Vergil's text, releases his last breath.<sup>20</sup> Juturna's mourning upon looking at the epiphany of the Dira in Book 12, even though unlike other laments in the *Aeneid*,<sup>21</sup> may be understood along lines parallel to Aeneas' reading of the ekphrastic transcription of the Trojan war, because it likewise is motivated by personal concerns of survival, as much as verbalizes, by virtue of its closural placement, a collective sense of pain and suffering for the enforced tragedy approaching – a tragedy that comprises not just Turnus' doom but also Juturna's consciousness of her 'disappearance' as a result of her brother's death, despite her being granted the gift of immortality.

This lament makes the end of *Aeneid* a mournful episode, with Juturna mourning the death of her brother in anticipation. As such, it may be defined as an epic lament even though typically it is not, since Juturna is concerned with the fact of Turnus' death, not the qualities and personality of the (soon-to-be) dead. Its generic characterization is determined by its placement at the end of the poem, because on account of this, Vergil echoes Homer and the end of the *Iliad* that culminates on the mourning of the Trojan women over Hector's pyre.<sup>22</sup> But in essence Juturna laments the memory of her own fate in literary tradition. An instrument at the hands of Juno, so that the great goddess would advance the narrative of her own epic, an \*anti-*Aeneid*\*, Juturna exists only as Turnus' sister; her epic self can survive only through

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20. Although a ransoming of Turnus' dead by his aged father is suggested as potential sequel by the dying Turnus, who thus hastens to suggest it at the moment of his defeat.

21. On the structure and tradition of the epic lament, see Tsagalis 2004, esp. pp. 25–51, that discuss the typology of the genre. Typical laments in the *Aeneid* include: 4.675–685 (Anna over Dido); 6.868–886 (Anchises over Marcellus); 9.481–497 (Euryalus' mother over her dead son); 10.846–856 (Mezentius over Lausus); 11.42–58 (Aeneas over Pallas); 11.152–81 (Evander over Pallas).

22. The epic lament is a typical structural mechanism of closure in the epic tradition; on epic closure, see Folwer 1989; Hardie 1997.



Turnus. And it is along these lines that her recollection of her personal story, her rape by Jupiter and her being granted immortality in compensation, should be read: Juturna received immortality only in order to realize that this turns out to be an epic gift in the absence of literary context; the latter, only Turnus can guarantee for her. What is more, the fact that Juturna's rape by Jupiter and her immortality in compensation for this rape are probably Vergilian innovations, and so, unknown beyond the physical boundaries of the *Aeneid*, renders the biography of Juturna a closed reading, namely a narrative strictly defined within the specific textual environment of *Aeneid* 12. In the light of this confining limitation, Juturna's self-sarcasm at lines 882-883 is conveniently open both to a literal and to an allegorical, metapoetic reading: *immortalis ego? aut quicquam mihi dulce meorum / te sine, frater, erit?* Juturna beyond Turnus does not exist as personality; she may continue to live out her immortal life only in the eternity of her impersonal, albeit eternal, monumental in status, Roman *fons*.

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