

ARTICLE

Dealing With Dido: Poetry and History

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SUMMARY

This essay investigates the challenge posed to the Renaissance by the presence of two authoritative accounts of the life (and death) of Dido, Queen of Carthage, one historical, the other poetic. In one she was a chaste widow, in the other Aeneas' lover. Antiquity and the Middle Ages were able to deal with ambiguity and with mutually incompatible accounts by accepting contradictions, allowing them to stand side by side without requiring a decision. By 1552, when Du Bellay turned to the end of Dido's life, translating Book 4 of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Heroides* 7, and an epigram by Ausonius, contradiction was no longer acceptable and yet he seems to have sought it out. Including Ausonius' epigram seems a deliberate choice. While Ausonius was far from unknown, he did not have the same place in the canon as the two Classical poets; his epigram could have been omitted. This essay proposes that the purpose of the epigram at the conclusion of the cycle of Dido translations is to allow Du Bellay to conclude on a Christianizing and moral note: Despite the voices of the greatest poets of Antiquity, the historical Dido was chaste.

KEYWORDS: Dido, Virgil, Ovid, *Aeneid*, *Heroides*, Ausonius, ambiguity, history, chronology, contradiction, Dido's chastity

Intertextuality and imitation are frequently intertwined, and in portraying Dido, Queen of Carthage, these modes are inevitably entangled given the prestige of the disparate versions of the causes and conditions leading to the suicide of Dido Queen of Carthage. Two incompatible accounts of Dido circulated widely. One was disseminated in the Renaissance by the enormous success of Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris*, a collection of short biographies of women forming a historically grounded work of moral philosophy. Boccaccio most likely based his portrait on Justinus' epitome (18.4–6) of Trogus Pompeius lost history.¹ There is no hint of Aeneas in this account, although it can be situated chronologically based on the records of kings of Tyr suggested by Justinus.² Mary Louise Lord provides a catalogue of texts treating the historical Dido. Boccaccio portrays Dido through a cultural, historical, and moralizing lens presenting her as the very type of the resourceful, prudent, chaste, and faithful widow, who ended her life to preserve her chastity. The second version, even more widely familiar, found in Virgil's *Aeneid*, was poetic and also political, but not historical. The passionate queen, having lost both chastity and honor, having been betrayed as she saw it by Aeneas, ended her own life.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, variants of and transformations of these two contradictory accounts abound. When Jean-Claude Carron assessed the power of the related notions of imitation and intertextuality in the Renaissance in a 1988 article, he pointed out that a range of important issues – historical, cultural, political and poetic – tend to be involved (567).

Such is unquestionably the case in the transmission of the variants of Dido's story. Did Dido throw herself onto a pyre to honor her murdered husband Sicheus of Tyr (or perhaps run herself through with a rapier) to preserve her status as *uni-vira*, faithful widow, avoiding a politically imposed marriage to the neighboring King Hiarbus? Or wild with grief, did she kill herself with Aeneas' sword left behind after he had sailed off toward Italy? How to decide between them when both versions were inherited from highly authoritative sources? How were these choices handled by those who undertook the task of presenting an account of Dido's death? Of special interest here will be the three parts making up what Hélène Naïs termed Joachim Du Bellay's "dossier Didon" consisting of his 1552 translations of *Aeneid* 4, *Heroides* 7, and the admittedly incompatible version presented in Ausonius' epigram which completes the trilogy of the French poet's presentation of Dido's death (Naïs 38).

The notion of *translatio studii* might seem to promise to bring more coherence to the two contradictory assessments of the end of Dido's life, but on examination it seems rather to have been used to protect the contradiction, spreading both versions together unhindered, allowing the contradiction to flourish. As a case in point, one may note Christine de Pizan's *Cité des Dames* grappling with the problem. Pizan speaks of Dido twice, first as a historically based figure largely based on Boccaccio, who is a model of prudence, the moral strength that allowed her to escape from Tyr after the murder of her husband Sicheus and sail to modern Tunisia where she founded Carthage. Dido's story ends there in Book 1.³ Then Pizan returns in Book 2 to a Virgilian Dido, now presented as a model of constancy in love while her unfaithful lover sails off to Italy leaving distraught Dido to kill herself with the sword the Trojan had left behind. Du Bellay may not have known the *Cité des dames*, a text available only in manuscript until modern times.⁴ It is even less likely that he knew another text that staunchly includes both the historical and the poetical traditions, the 1483 prose adaptation, *Les Eneydes*. Although connected to Virgil's epic by its title, here the compiler declares himself unable to decide between the two contradictory versions and announces that he will present readers with detailed accounts in turn of both versions of Dido's end. The text leaves readers to draw what conclusions they will from this collision of history and poetry. Antoine de la Sale provides another kind of contradiction by speaking of Dido in the opening pages of *Jehan de Saintré* as one without further interest in love, "car tant avoit aimé et encor amoit son mary tout mort, qu'elle ne le pouvoit oublier" (3), a statement La Salle authorizes by quoting *Aeneid* 4.28–29 in Latin). This is the more surprising at the start of a *roman* telling of the adventures of the young page seduced by a widow, the Dame des Belles Cousines and that lady's further amorous adventures.

The modern reader may be puzzled by such indecision, but it is backed up by a long history of accepting ambiguity. Aristotle recognizes that it has a special function in poetry.⁵ Servius' late fourth-century commentary, *In Vergilii Aeneidem commentarii*, often included in manuscripts and later in printed editions of the *Aeneid* also attempts to anchor events in history when possible, unabashed when this creates contradictions between Virgil's text and historical events. He provides glosses for specific passages, like *Aeneid* 4.5, "nec placidam membris dat cura quietem" [and the pang within withholds calm rest from her limbs], explaining that either Dido was sleepless or she had disquieting dreams. In a world where sleeplessness signaled lovesickness and dreams might be prognostications, the difference is not trivial, nor was such cultivated ambiguity unusual.⁶ Servius' contemporary Jerome, noted that when encountering divergent explanations, it is up to the reader to decide what to accept.⁷ As the editors of the Servius commentary note:

For Jerome (and Servius), weighing conflicting opinions was often, but not always, a matter to be left to the reader. [...] when Servius gives a list of seemingly contradictory possibilities for a line of poetry, he is fulfilling his duty as a commentator, not shirking it. (xvi)

Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologies* continues this tradition, he is also unperturbed to leave readers to make their own choices from among several contradictory explanations. Jean Lemaire de Belges feels the same freedom to embrace ambiguity in the *Illustrations de Gaule et singularitez de Troye* (1511–13), undisturbed at offering the reader overt contradictions (e.g., *Illustrations*, I: 107–08, III: 292–93, 326).

Boccaccio provided another approach. Despite its prestige, he did not hesitate to discard the evidence of the *Aeneid* in his *De mulieribus claris* [Famous Women] where he defends a staunchly historical version of Dido, encouraged by the genre – moral philosophy – within which he places his collection of short biographies. And yet even then he nods to the opposing version found in Virgil, if only to condemn it as historically inaccurate and chronologically impossible. By the very act of mentioning it, Boccaccio recognizes how present it was in his readers' minds as an active alternative. The defense of poetry which constitutes the concluding books (fourteen and fifteen) of his *De genealogia deorum* defends this active ambiguity.⁸ For Pizan, for the compiler of the 1483 *Eneyde*, and for many others, unresolved ambiguity may have enriched the scheme of things. By the mid-sixteenth century such solutions were no longer aesthetically acceptable. How else to deal with contradictions that one cannot accept and yet cannot deny? The fading tolerance of ambiguity viable from Antiquity to the early sixteenth century then demanded other solutions.

It is undeniable that Virgil's was the most familiar version of Dido's life and her tragic death, recounted so movingly in Book 4 of the *Aeneid*. All schoolboys, from Antiquity to the Renaissance and beyond studied the *Aeneid* and knew Virgil's compelling portrait of Dido in *Aeneid*, 1–4. How present the queen of Carthage was in the Renaissance schoolroom has been convincingly documented by Marjorie Curry Woods. Many schoolboys memorized great sections of Virgil's text, so that when they came upon historians' versions, Virgil's Dido was always already present. They learned about the Punic wars (264–146 BCE) that had put Rome itself at risk of destruction and knew that the source of that menace emanated from the very city Dido had founded, coloring Carthage as a lingering political threat. As Virgil composed his epic for the emperor Augustus, promoting the greater glory of Rome, his task required that Dido appear almost irresistible, so increasing Aeneas' moral stature when he does finally tear himself away from her palpably great attraction. Aeneas is able to overcome it and resume his fated mission only after reminders from the gods (Mercury) and from the ghost of his father Anchises. The strength of Dido's appeal allows Aeneas to prove his mettle by leaving, even as the reader's sympathy at the end of Book 4 is largely with the dying queen.

Before she encountered Aeneas, the queen of Carthage arrived on Tunisian shores as a wandering exile to found that great city, her journey foreshadowing Aeneas' destiny. In the *Aeneid* (4.655), echoed in Ovid's *Heroides* 7 (vv. 19–20), she reminds Aeneas that she has already done what he claims he is destined to do. The generic requirements within which Virgil worked meant that he was not constrained by chronology any more than by the absence of evidence of the existence of a historical Aeneas beyond his appearance in the *Iliad* and in Greek and Roman

mythographers and historians, most of whose work has not survived. The nature of the liberties Virgil took is in keeping with what precedent allowed poets, as Boccaccio affirms in chapter 13 of Book XIV of his *De genealogia deorum*.

Aeneas, especially in the first four books of the *Aeneid*, is essentially a Trojan prince, down on his luck perhaps, on his way to better things. This perspective made him especially appealing during the years when European ruling houses like the Hapsburgs, the Tudors, and the Valois gloried in the Trojan origins of their family lines, a tradition that flourished in France from the late Middle Ages to the mid-sixteenth century. The Valois kings traced their origins to a line that stretched back to Francus, son of Hector, grandson of king Priam.⁹ In the early books of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is anchored to the fall of Troy and to the Trojan diaspora which retained enough political appeal at mid-century for Ronsard to embark on the composition of the *Franciade*. Du Bellay's translation of *Aeneid* 4 reinforces this connection by refocusing Virgil's varied references to Aeneas. Where in the Latin text he is termed Dardanian, Teucrican, as one from Ilion, or goddess-born, etc. Du Bellay using a more restricted vocabulary referring to him either by name or specifically as a Trojan, or a Trojan prince.¹⁰ References to Troy are also added, as in *Aeneid* 4.587, where Dido sees simply the fleet bearing Aeneas and his men sailing away from Carthage, in French this becomes "les Troiennes gallés" (v. 1061). By so simplifying and stressing Aeneas' Trojan roots and connections, Du Bellay ties him to the glory of French Trojan origins, even if by mid-century, the historical claims of this conceit were fading. This is the kind of subtle modification by which translation around mid-century appropriated and nationalized Classical texts, as Jean-Claude Carron has suggested (568–69). The argument that Aeneas did not live at the same time as Dido may seem of little weight to a modern eye, dazzled by Virgil's poetic achievement, the weight of tradition, and the vast passage of time, but for many in the sixteenth century it remained troubling, undermining the political and historical presence of the Trojan prince, removing the platform of his performance to the world of rhetoric and poetry. We shall see shortly that despite his unquestionable enthusiasm for Virgil and the Classics, in 1552, historical chronology was a subject which Du Bellay could not quite put aside.

Even if they were neither political nor historical, romantic attachments such as the one Virgil presents between Dido and Aeneas greatly affected readers, clearly coinciding with the tastes of the day. The many collections of sonnet sequences produced in the second half of the sixteenth century are evidence, if such were wanted, of the power and attraction of love's suffering. Du Bellay himself was among the earliest to explore this form with *L'Olive* (1549). This is not the place for a history of the love-sonnet sequence inspired by Petrarch but domesticated in France where its popularity exploded at just this time with Pontus de Tyard's *Erreurs amoureuses* also appearing that same year, as did Ronsard's first collection of *Amours* (for Cassandre), inaugurating a fashion that was to continue for the next three decades.

Understanding this and following his own success in this mode, it is not surprising that Du Bellay turned to Book 4 of the *Aeneid* as an exemplary representation of the passion of love, and consequently as an engaging challenge to the poet-translator. The humanist Jean de Morel, a close friend, provided an opening sonnet to Du Bellay's 1552 translation of *Aeneid* 4, echoing Horace's advice to poets as he praised the "Muse ingenieuse / Du doulx-utile Angevin" (the ingenious muse of the sweetly useful Angevin). Du Bellay himself starts the volume with a long dedicatory epistle to the same Morel, explaining that his present condition (presumably illness) prevented him from writing original verse as he had in the past:

[C]e doulx labour, jadis seul enchantement de mes ennuy: et qui maintenant de jour en jour se refroydist en moy par l'injure de cete importune, qui m'ayant desjà par une infinité de malheurs privé de toute autre consolation, tasche encor' de m'arracher des mains ce seul plaisir, demeuré le dernier en moy, comme l'espérance en la boîte de Pandore. L'occasion de qui ne sentant plus la première ardeur de cet Enthusiasme, qui me faisoit librement courir par la carriere de mes inventions, me je suis converty à retracer les pas des anciens, exercise de plus ennuyeux labour, que d'alegresse s'esprit: comme celuy, qui pour me donner du tout en proye au soing de mes affaires, tasche peu à peu à me reitirer du doulx estude poëtique. Toutefois, pour n'abandonner si tost le plaisir, qui durant mes infortunes m'a tousjours pourveu de si souverain remede, je veux bien encor' donner à notre langue quelques miens ouvrages, qui seront (comme je pense) les derniers fruicts de nostre jardin, non du tout si savoureux que les premiers, mais (peult estre) de meilleure garde, Et afin que le tout puisse rencontrer quelque plus grande faveur, je commenceray, non par œuvres de mon invention, mais par la translation du quatriesme livre de l'*Eneide*, qu'il n'est besoin recommander d'avantage, puisque sur le front elle porte le nom de Vergile. (OC 3: 61–62)¹¹

At this juncture, Du Bellay can do no better to continue his career as a love poet than to French Virgil's depiction of Dido, that is, striving to make of him an "estranger naturalizé":

Je dirai seulement qu'œuvre ne se trouve en quelque langue que ce soit, où les passions amoureuses soyent plus vivement depeinctes, qu'en la personne de Didon. Parquoy si ung poëme, pour estre plaisant, et profitable, doit contenter les lecteurs de bon esprit, je croy que cestuy cy ne leur devra pas desplaire. (OC 3: 61–62).

He details some of the challenges to the translator faced with the differences of structure of French and Latin, and the requirement that French poetry be rhymed. The aim is perhaps a somewhat amplified but basically faithful translation, with the purpose of demonstrating the powers of French and his own poetic powers to express emotion and passion.¹² In contrast to earlier translations, that of Octavien de Saint-Gelais is marked by catch phrases linking the French and the Latin, or Louis des Masures ongoing translation of the entire *Aeneid* that included the Latin text facing the French, Du Bellay published his translations of both Virgil and Ovid as freestanding French texts, thereby implicitly making a claim for the poetic powers of the French language on its own.

The 1552 collection includes two other translations centered on Dido. The "Complaincte de Didon à Enée" is Du Bellay's rendition of Ovid's *Heroides* 7.¹³ Wishing to contrast the "divine majesté" of Virgil to the "ingenieuse facilité" of Ovid, Du Bellay allowed himself more freedom in this second case, where he himself speaks of imitation rather than translation. He deliberately chose a very French verse form rendering Ovid's elegiac couplets in sizains with lines of unequal length. This is a layered endeavor as *Heroides* 7 is itself Ovid's transposition of *Aeneid* 4 from the epic mode to the more intimate elegaic. Translating a transposition, Du Bellay feels less inhibited by his source, freed as well by his invention of a meter he judges suitable to convey Dido's message. As though channeling the song of a dying swan, (the swan evoked by Ovid in the first two lines of *Heroides* 7), the effect of Du Bellay's verse is very lyrical (Molins 124–25). The "Complainte" is the song of the dying Dido, somewhat Christianized, and so focused more sharply than Ovid's original on Dido's choice to sacrifice her honor to her shame.¹⁴ Du Bellay presents the personal voice more as that of a betrayed woman than of a wronged queen. Following Ovid,

as he must since this is a translation, at the end, the epitaph declares Aeneas to be the cause of her suicide. Yet the preceding verse evokes “ELIZE DE SICHE FEMME” (v. 567) (Elissa Sychaei, v. 191), departs from the Latin in that in French it is printed in the same block capitals as the following epitaph, suggesting a continuity. In the context created by Du Bellay, the suggestion is that Dido’s shame at her infidelity to Sicheus, nearly as much as Aeneas’ departure, is the proximate cause of Dido’s suicide.

Although it might well have, having dealt with the two major Classical treatments of Dido, the dossier *Didon* does not stop there. Du Bellay seems to have felt that something was missing. In Dido’s case there was another story, a competing stream of evidence, better anchored in history and quite independent of Troy. Du Bellay is sensitive to the tension. His prefatory letter to Morel declares that he has: “encore adjousté ung epigramme d’Ausone, declarant la verité de l’hystoire de Didon, pour ce qu’il me sembloit inique de renouveler l’injure qu’elle a recue par Vergile, sans luy reparer son honneur, par ce qu’autres ont escrit à sa louange” (*OC* 3: 64). To this end, his dossier *Didon* concludes with a translation of the epigram: “Sur la statue de Didon prins d’Ausone” (*OC* 3: 173–74).¹⁵ The qualification “prins d’Ausone” might lead one to suppose that Du Bellay embroiders on Ausonius’ text, but the reverse is true: his translation, the only part of the dossier printed with the Latin on a facing page, adheres closely to the source text, laying aside poetic license, as befits the context, seeking to restore historical truth. As noted earlier, Renaissance sensibilities might imply a tolerance of ambiguity, but alongside this was the importance of truth and the degree to which the truth of history was couched largely in terms of chronology. It was broadly accepted that Aeneas, in as much as he existed, was not Dido’s contemporary, that Virgil’s tale was a brilliant poetical fiction. This is the founding assumption of Ausonius’ epigram in which the voice of the historical Dido is heard.

As in *Heroides* 7, Dido, or rather in this case, a statue representing Dido, speaks. In Ovid’s poem, her addressee is Aeneas, here, in contrast, the addressee is, from the first word, a “Passant,” the ekphrastic viewer of the statue or the reader of the poem, rooting the exchange in a reality of sorts, suitable to truth telling. Dido’s first concern is to establish the truth of history, to correct the “impudique esprit / Qui feintement par Virgile est descrit” (*OC* 3: 174, vv. 3–4). In strong contrast to the lovely *sizains* Du Bellay invented to translate Ovid, his translation of Ausonius is rendered in more pedestrian rhyming decasyllabic couplets, now observing orderly alternating masculine and feminine rhymes. Dido denies that Aeneas or his Trojan band ever set foot on Libyan shores explaining that her suicide was a rational choice, “Non d’une rage, ou amour offensee” (v. 10). It was the only available protection from the politically imposed marriage demands of the neighboring King Hiarbas, the only way in which she might die with her honor unscathed, her fidelity to Sicheus unblemished. In this 22-line epigram she makes three claims, that before dying: “je n’ay blessé mon nom. / J’ay veu mes murs, j’ay vengé mon Siché” (vv. 12–13). Inevitably, despite the renunciation of Virgil’s “fables notoires,” his influence resonates. From a Roman point of view, and that of the Renaissance reader, the walls of Carthaginian power (“mes murs”), loom over the future. The remainder of the epigram returns to the denunciation of lying poets and their “impudiques Dieux” embodied as though human; they are not to be believed. These themes reappear and are elaborated independently of Dido most strikingly in the “Lyre Chrestienne” (*OC* 3: 207–11) in the same volume, in its second part devoted to “Oeuvres de l’invention de l’auteur.” The undertones of a nearly Christian Dido come to life in this new context where she comes close to repenting that in the creations of Virgil and Ovid she broke her faith to Sicheus.

Du Bellay's dossier Didon succeeds in a new, more sophisticated way at manipulating the contradictory challenges of the two irreconcilable versions of Dido inherited from the Ancients. He domesticates the contradiction by passing it through a Christian lens, adding hints where possible, and a clearer if not direct statement in Ausonius' epigram, that allowed Dido to expect or at least hope for redemption, as Virgil plants the suggestion by bringing Iris to end the suffering of the dying Dido at the end of *Aeneid* 4:

Donques Iris aux ailes rougissantes
Trayant au ciel mille couleurs naissantes
Par les rayons de la flamme opposée
D'ung lointain vol sur le chef s'est posée.
Ce triste vœu de par Junon la grande
Au Dieu d'enfer je porte pour offrande:
Te separant d'avecq ce cors humain.
Elle parle ainsi: puis de sa dextre main
Tranche le poil: la chaleur s'avala:
Et l'ame au vent parmy l'air s'en alla. (139, vv. 1261–70)

Suffering ends when the soul is freed from what has become its bodily prison. Poetic truth in the end stands beside chronological, historical truth, perhaps here purged of contradiction. By closing the dossier Didon with Ausonius' epigram, historical truth frees Dido's reputation by other means.

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Notes

¹ The importance of chronology in understanding the nature of historical fact from late antiquity to the seventeenth century is succinctly laid out in an early article by Anthony Grafton, containing ideas Grafton elaborated through his career. See also “Chronology, Etymology, and Genealogy in the Historian’s Toolbox,” in Rothstein 588–90.

² Antiquity provided the historical account of Dido dying as a faithful widow in Trogus Pompeius’ *Historia Philippicae*, a text preserved only in Marcus Junianus Justinus’ *Epitome* (ca. late 2nd century CE), which includes a full and coherent life of Dido without any suggestion of her encounter with Aeneas (Book 18.4–6). Dido is also treated in passing as a historical figure in Jerome, *Against Jovinian* (Book 1.43) and other Church Fathers, such as Tertullian and Augustine. Often accompanying manuscripts and then printed texts of Virgil’s epic, Maurus Servius Honoratus, *In Vergilii Aeneidem commentarii* (ca. 3rd–4th century CE) repeatedly anchors the *Aeneid* to historical events. The commentary was also read independently of Virgil’s text. Peter K. Marshall remarks on Servius’ ongoing interest in etymology and the ambiguous terrain that cultivates.

³ The two passages focused on Dido are pp.119–23 and 212–13 in the Hicks/Moreau edition.

⁴ The *Cité des dames* should not be confused with *The Trésor de la cité des dames*, a separate work, subtitled *Le Livre des trois vertus à l’enseignement des dames*, which was printed several times between 1497 and 1536.

⁵ See Basset for a discussion of Aristotle and voluntary ambiguity.

⁶ See Thomas for another reading of ambiguity in Classical texts with emphasis on Virgil.

⁷ See Jerome, *Contra Rufinum*, Corpus Christianorum, cited in *Servius’s Commentary on Book Four of Virgil’s Aeneid*, xv.

⁸ Boccaccio expounds on this further in *De genealogia deorum* 14.13, a chapter entitled “Les poètes ne sont pas menteurs” [Poets are not liars] (56–61).

⁹ Francus is sometimes treated as an alternative appellation for Hector’s son Astyanax. There are several versions in which he is not killed after the fall of Troy, surviving, safely hidden under a new name, Francus, to become in the fullness of time, one of the founders of the Merovingian dynasty and a forefather of Charlemagne. Other versions assume that Hector in fact had two sons of whom only Francus survived to continue the line of French kings. Variants are recorded elsewhere, most influentially in France in Jean Lemaire de Belges’ *Illustrations de Gaule et singularitez de Troye*. This inspired Ronsard to compose his unfinished epic the *Franciade*. Ascanius, son of Aeneas by Creusa, daughter of Priam, also traced his bloodline directly to the ruling house of Troy. He too is known by two names, the second being Jule, the better to tie him to Virgil’s patron, Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, who had added the name Julius in honor of his great-uncle, Julius Caesar, whose heir he was.

¹⁰ Du Bellay, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 3 (1551–53) (henceforth *OC* 3) (362). The translations,

including *Aeneid* 4 edited by Michel Magnien are printed in this edition with Latin on the facing page although this was not the case in the original 1552 edition (Paris: Vincent Certenas). The editors note that Du Bellay's French rendered Virgil's 705 hexameters into 1266 decasyllabic rhymed couplets, nothing like as longwinded as Octavian de Saint-Gelais' earlier translation which nonetheless had been reprinted several times to 1540.

¹¹ The references in this passage suggesting ill-health are all that is known about Du Bellay's condition in 1552. In general, little is known of Du Bellay's life until the last few years except what can be deduced from his own writing and remarks by his contemporaries. He writes of almost uninterrupted illness for two years, presumed to be 1551–52 and also of nearly dying in the fall of 1549 in "lavantreour en France de Monseigneur Reverendissime Cardinal Du Bellay" and in a later Latin elegy to Jean de Morel. See the entry on "Joachim Du Bellay" in *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises* (388–89).

¹² Du Bellay praises the then ongoing work of Louis Des Masures to translate the entire *Aeneid* as "fidele et diligente" (*OC* 3, 62). Only the first two books had appeared by 1552, with Virgil's Latin on facing pages. In the same passage, he implicitly steps back from the position he had taken in the *Deffence* (1.10) three years earlier, favoring paraphrase over translation (62). On the whole, his aim was to translate Virgil, allowing for the latitude demanded by poetry.

¹³ See *OC* 3 for an overview of much of the scholarship on the "Complainte de Didon" (380–84).

¹⁴ Cf. Du Bellay's expansion of *Heroides* 7, vv. 305–07, where she begs the forgiveness of Sicheus, her "cher mary," in tones much warmer than the Latin, as is Sicheus' call, "vien ma chere Elize" (v. 299) rendering the Latin "Elissa veni" (v.100) (see *OC* 3, 157). Molins suggests that this may reflect the influence of Charles Fontaine's translation of *Heroides* 7 (198–99), although she admits to a lack of evidence that Du Bellay had read Fontaine's translation also published in 1552 (201).

¹⁵ Ausonius was a third-century CE Gallic Latin poet, who was born and died in Bordeaux, known as a moderate Christian. His œuvre is extensive, and in the form in which it was disseminated in Renaissance editions, included about 150 epigrams. The first edition of *Opera* was Venice, 1472, with five more Italian incunabula editions, and five Parisian editions 1511–51, suggesting an ongoing general interest in his work.