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NERO'S MASKS

Two sources, Suetonius and Dio Cassius, report that Nero performed some of his theatrical roles while wearing portrait masks of himself and his female lovers. Shadi Bartsch, in her recent fascinating study of theatricality under Nero and his successors, calls attention to this remarkable fact, focusing in particular on the narrative in Suetonius as emblematic of the endemic confusion between reality and theatricality in the reign of this performer emperor.[1] A closer examination of these masks against the background of both contemporary Roman stage practice and earlier Roman traditions will suggest that they constitute a significant further dimension to the scandal of Nero's performances. Dio's account at least implies recognition of this scandal.

Both texts are relatively brief and worth citing in full:

> tragoedias quoque cantavit personatus heroum deorumque, item heroidum ac dearum, personis effectis ad similitudinem oris sui et feminae, prout quamque diligeret. Inter cetera cantavit Canacen parturientem, Oresten matricidam, Oedipodem excaecatum, Herculem insanum. In qua fabula fama est tirunculum militem positum ad custodiam aditus, cum eum ornari ac vinciri catenis, sicut argumentum postulabat, videret, accurrisse ferendae opis gratia. (*Nero* 21.3)

> He also sang roles in tragedies, playing heroes and gods, likewise heroines and goddesses, with the masks modeled in the likeness of his own face and that of whatever woman he was in love with. Among others, he sang the roles of Canace about to give birth, Orestes the matricide, the blinded Oedipus, and the mad Hercules. The story goes that in one play a soldier, a new recruit, stationed to guard the theater entrance, when he saw the emperor, as the plot demanded, costumed and bound in chains, ran up to give assistance.

> καὶ τά γε προσωπεῖα τοτὲ μὲν αὐτοῖς ἐκείνοις τοτὲ δὲ καὶ ἑαυτῷ εἰκασμένα ἔφερε· τὰ γὰρ τῶν γυναικῶν πάντα πρὸς τὴν Σαβῖναν ἐσκεύασατο, ὅπως κἀκείνη καὶ τεθνηκυῖα πομπεύῃ. (Dio 63.9.5)

> He wore masks sometimes resembling his roles, sometimes resembling his own face; all his female masks were fashioned in the likeness of Sabina, so that she, even though dead, might tread the stage.

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1. S. Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994) 46–50.

εἷς μέν τις στρατιώτης ἰδὼν αὐτὸν δεδεμένον ἠγανάκτησε καὶ προσδραμὼν ἔλυσεν. (Dio 63.10.2)

One of the soldiers, seeing him in chains, became distressed[2] and running up, freed him.

The account in Suetonius is the fuller and more unified of the two. The anecdote of the brave young soldier dashing to his emperor's rescue that rounds off the discussion of Nero's performances (which seems oddly misplaced in Dio) has often been taken simply as a joke about an unsophisticated viewer confusing theater with reality.[3] Bartsch rightly sees a conflict of frames as the key to this narrative, although she somewhat exaggerates the exclusivity of the realistic and theatrical modes of viewing.[4] In addition, I would argue that there is a third frame, potentially the most disturbing of all—of which more below.

On the most elementary level, the humor turns on the soldier's acceptance of what he sees as unmediated reality. Note the details: he is a young recruit (*tirunculum*) and, since he is guarding the entrance to the theater (*positum ad custodiam aditus*), must be standing at some distance from the stage when he catches sight of the emperor bound with chains. Even so, we might well doubt that even a raw recruit would make such a mistake—were it not for the portrait mask. That mask has fused (and for the recruit more literally than figuratively) with the face of the emperor.

Such a fusion only seems possible, however, if the mask differs considerably in style from contemporary theatrical masks. Not only

[2] Epitomization causes some problems with continuity of thought in Dio. An anonymous referee for *CW* has suggested that the soldier's response is intended to flatter the emperor and win his generosity, for Dio claims in 63.10.3 that the soldiers pray Nero will perform more, so that they will get more money. The sequence is so compressed, however, that it is not clear why the soldiers receive money: Dio does *not* say that Nero gives them money for praising his performance. It seems highly implausible that Nero appreciated the soldier's interruption, nor does Dio's text really suggest this. The verb ἀγανακτέω means to become angry or to exhibit signs of grief and is not normally used for the exhibition of false emotion, so Dio's language does not suggest that the soldier is giving a performance of his own to flatter the emperor.

[3] E.g., B. H. Warmington, *Suetonius: Nero* (Bristol 1977) *ad* 21.3. Compare the possibly apocryphal stories of members of the audience at early cowboy films shooting at the villain on the screen or the story Oliver Taplin relates (in "Fifth-Century Tragedy and Comedy: *A Synkrisis*." *JHS* 106 [1986] 163–74) of the seventeenth-century provincial Chinese spectator who mounted the stage and stabbed the villain in a performance.

[4] The difference in our views is very minor but worth spelling out. Bartsch argues that the story "cannot be understood as a simple engrossment by the 'dramatic illusion'" (49), because if the soldier recognizes the emperor as himself and not an actor playing a part, he would also realize that the chains are theatrical props. This overstates the case. A chain onstage may well be a real chain, and not an obvious prop, and if the soldier has been attending to his duties as a guard (*custodiam*), he has not been following the play narrative but only registers the picture of his emperor in chains—and reacts to it immediately.

was there an elaborate system of masks, carefully coded to distinguish among stock parts, but those masks were highly exaggerated and quite large, including the prominent *onkos* or peak in the hair over the face.[5] Stylistically, masks and portraiture had developed in almost diametrically opposed directions over the preceding centuries. As portrait sculpture evolved from classical idealism toward Roman verism, masks became, if anything, less realistic.

Realism is of course a slippery term, and works praised for their truth to nature in one generation may seem remarkably wooden, even alien to a later generation.[6] Yet I think the punch line of Suetonius' narrative must lie in the relatively marked realism of Nero's portrait mask in comparison to standard theatrical masks such as those of any supporting players.[7] Rather than reading as an acceptable variation within the canon of theatrical masks, Nero's mask read as "real," as his own face.

Suetonius' version of the story ends here. We do not learn what Nero's reaction was to this "rescue" which disrupted his performance. Yet there may be a hint in Dio Cassius. Dio records that the emperor said, did, and experienced everything in his performances that ordinary actors did, "except for the fact that he was bound with golden chains" (πλὴν καθ' ὅσον χρυσαῖς ἁλύεσιν ἐδεσμεύτο, 63.9.6), because, Dio speculates, it was not thought "proper" (οὐκ ἔπρεπεν) for a Roman emperor to be bound with iron chains. Perhaps the golden chains were substituted at Nero's performances as a form of *Verfremdungseffekt* (Brecht's "alienation effect") after his experience with the young soldier.

The two narratives are not quite consistent in their reporting about the masks Nero wore, although both highlight the startling fact that he wears masks modeled on real people (himself in Suetonius,[8]

[5] For the system of tragic masks, see J. Pollux, *Onomasticon* 4. 133–42 (on the *onkos*, 133). For masks at Rome, see W. Beare, *The Roman Stage* (London 1950) 192–95, 309; R. Beacham, *The Roman Theatre and Its Audience* (London 1991) 183–87 (and fig. 26, a mosaic showing a mask with *onkos*); D. Wiles, *The Masks of Menander: Sign and Meaning in Greek and Roman Performance* (Cambridge 1991) 132–33; see also below. Wiles argues (133) that there was no separate system of masks for Roman performances, although the masks may have been even more exaggerated than their Greek counterparts.

[6] It was once pointed out to me, when I had been incautious enough to praise the realism of Attic *kouroi*, that if one of these over-life-sized, planar-surfaced androids lumbered into a room, the occupants would most likely scatter in terror at such an unearthly sight.

[7] It is not entirely clear whether Nero's performances were solo dramatic excerpts or fully-staged versions with other actors. Given Nero's egotism and our knowledge of the existence of solo performances, many assume the former, but the soldier's rescue attempt is again more plausible if there are other performers leading him away.

[8] While the natural reading of Suetonius suggests that all his male masks were based on his own face, this is not explicitly said. Dio makes no mention of this practice, but I do not take his silence as evidence that Suetonius is wrong about Nero's male masks. It does not seem unlikely that Nero adopted this practice only

Poppaea or other women in Dio and Suetonius respectively). Let us look first at the fact, reported by both writers, that Nero used portrait masks of real women for his female roles. In Suetonius these vary according to the women with whom he is in love (*prout quamque diligeret*); in Dio he always wears a mask modeled on the features of his dead wife, Poppaea Sabina. Dio lays stress on the fact that Poppaea is already dead but nonetheless in this way takes part in the festival. The participle τεθνηκυῖα, coupled with the verb πομπεύῃ, by no means standard for theatrical performance, suggests another, darker connotation to his performances in Poppaea's mask, and by analogy to Nero's performances in his own mask.

David Wiles in his recent book on the semiotics of masks in classical performance differentiates sharply between their Greek and Roman associations thus: "While the Greek who put on a mask created a new form of life, I would suggest that the Roman who put on a mask resurrected a dead being."[9] According to Dio, Nero, in performing his female roles, does just this: he reanimates his dead wife. One assumes again that the mask is rendered in a veristic, rather than a theatrical style: indeed that is key to any audience's recognition of the mask as Poppaea.[10] In donning it, therefore, he calls to mind the traditional Roman practice of parading the images of deceased family members at funerals, as we know it from Pliny, Polybius, and numerous more scattered references.[11] Pliny's account is succinct:

> expressi cera vultus singulis disponebantur armariis, ut essent imagines, quae comitarentur gentilicia funera, semperque defuncto aliquo totus aderat familiae eius qui umquam fuerat populus. stemmata vero lineis discurrebant ad imagines pictas. (Pliny *N.H.* 35.6)
>
> Faces modelled in wax were set out in separate cabinets, to be images to accompany clan funerals, and the whole group of his family who had ever existed was present for a dead individual. Family relationships were traced by lines running to the painted images.

at a certain point, perhaps after some experimentation. Dio is rather primarily interested in the effect of Nero's wearing a mask of his dead wife.

[9] Wiles (above, n.5) 129.

[10] Numerous sculpted portraits of Poppaea would have been on public display before her death as my colleague E. Varner has pointed out to me. Thus she was an eminently recognizable part of the visual "repertoire" of most Romans.

[11] G. Lahusen, *Schriftquellen zum römischen Bildnis*, vol. 1 (Bremen 1984), assembles some sources on ancestor images in general (128–36), their use in funerals (146–48), and particular images which appeared in various known funerals (149–55), but it is incomplete. A comprehensive study of the *imagines* and their place in Roman culture will shortly appear: H. I. Flower, *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture* (Oxford, forthcoming).

Polybius 6.53 gives us many more details, emphasizing that representatives are chosen to wear these masks at the great funerals who most resemble the deceased ancestors "in build and general form" (κατά τε τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὴν ἄλλην περικοπήν, 6.53.6).[12] These individuals are furthermore costumed accurately in the robes and honors appropriate to the achievements of the deceased ancestors. In a funeral procession, this reincarnation of the great ancestors through the masks in the presence of their living descendants did honor to both the living and the dead. What, then, did it mean for Nero to bring the dead Poppaea back to life *onstage*?

We must pause to note that there is no explicit literary evidence for the preservation of female ancestor masks, and so it might be objected that Poppaea's mask need have no funereal connotation. There are obviously no women in the procession of represented generals and magistrates described by Polybius. Pliny depicts the masks, not in use during the funeral procession, but on display in cabinets within the house. His phrase *totus . . . familiae . . . populus* might well include female ancestors. The last line of the Pliny passage is rather puzzling: are these painted images the same as the images stored in the cabinets and carried in funerals? Given that they show genealogies,[13] some of which must descend through the female line, these images should include women. Our texts are thus consistent with the possibility of the preservation of female images within families.

For more positive evidence we must turn to the archaeological record. There are very few surviving early portraits of women, but by the late Republic, veristic female portraits join their male counterparts. While some art historians deny any connection between the existence of funerary masks and the veristic style in Roman sculpture, some such influence seems plausible,[14] and the new style in

[12] F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* (Oxford 1957) *ad* 6.53.4, suggests that busts in various materials began to replace the wax masks about 50 B.C. A. Maiuri, *La Casa del Menandro*, 2 vols. (Rome 1932) 1. 98–106, discusses the evidence for *imagines* in Pompeii's so-called "House of Menander," which belonged to the family of Poppaea Sabina. Casts of hollows in the ash revealed the presence of five objects in a niche, three of which clearly were once heads made out of organic materials ("*in legno o in cera*," though of varying size); these are now conveniently illustrated in J. R. Clarke, *The Houses of Roman Italy 100 B.C.–A.D. 250* (Berkeley 1991) 192, fig. 107. The modeling on all was relatively crude, and the largest head was most likely made of wood, but some connection with the *imagines* seems likely. Also found in the house was an extremely fine fresco showing three tragic masks heaped together and with the *onkos*: Maiuri, 1.110 and 2 pl. 13. Ovid and even Juvenal still refer to the wax versions: cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 1.591, Seneca *de Ben.* 3.28.2 and *Ep.* 44.5, Juvenal 8.19–23, Martial 2.90, Vitruvius 6.3.6, and Suetonius, *Vespasian* 19.

[13] The other relevant texts citing *stemmata* or family trees are Juvenal, *Sat.* 8.1, Seneca, *de Ben.* 3.28.2, and Suetonius, *Nero* 37.1. See E. Courtney, *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal* (London 1980) *ad Sat.* 8.1–9, for an excellent discussion.

[14] See the useful comments (and bibliography) of F. Bömer, *Die Fasten: Kommentar*, vol. 2 (Heidelberg 1958) *ad* Ovid *Fasti* 1.591.

late republican female portraiture is suggestive. Pliny, *N.H.* 34.30–31, records both Cato's opposition to erecting statues of women in the provinces and his failure to carry through such a policy, as evidenced by the existence of a statue of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, in Rome itself. The appearance of paired ancestor portraits, usually one male and one female, on curule chairs from the late Republic and onward, is further suggestive evidence for the inclusion of female ancestor portraits in family collections by this period.[15] Finally, we may look to one of the most striking monuments of Roman funerary art, the reliefs from the first-century A.D. tomb of the Haterii.[16] The upper part of the famous tomb crane relief represents the deceased wife of Haterius with her three children, two boys and a girl, who apparently predeceased her, playing at her feet. Behind her and to the right is a shrine surmounted by three masks, which represent the dead children, including the girl.[17]

The existence of female ancestor portraits by the time of Nero, displayed alongside those of male ancestors in the noble Roman household, is thus far from implausible. Such realistic female masks (as opposed to stylized theatrical masks) need not have been worn by living family members during the performance of public funeral rituals for them to have acquired funereal associations. That they were masks, that they represented deceased family members, and that they could be seen in Roman houses alongside male masks that were so worn sufficed to establish the connection.

For a performer to wear the portrait mask of a real, historical individual *outside* the context of the aristocratic funeral had powerful and potentially very destabilizing consequences. David Wiles argues

[15] T. Schäfer, *Imperii Insignia: Sella Curulis und Fasces* (Mainz 1989), *RömMitt. Supplement* 29, discusses several examples (167) including one representation of a curule chair from the very late Republic (no.1, pls. 20 and 21), probably of Cn. Domitius Calvinus. The male portrait on this chair has a hairstyle of the early and middle Republic; it is, according to Schäfer, an ancestor portrait of considerable age and therefore status. If the male portraits on curule chairs are ancestors, the natural presumption is that the female portraits are also. The iconography of such pairings is soon imitated on freedmen's funeral monuments, where the portraits indubitably represent husband and wife; this imitation argues that the Roman audience saw these female heads on the curule chairs as representing real, historical women and not feminine abstractions.

[16] Exhaustively discussed by W. M. Jensen, *The Sculptures from the Tomb of the Haterii* (diss. Michigan 1978). An excellent brief discussion and photographs are conveniently accessible in D. E. E. Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven 1992) 196–99 and figs. 164–68.

[17] Fig. 166 in Kleiner (above, n.16). Jensen (above, n.16) 157–58 concludes that the shrine is to be imagined to be inside the tomb, although he also emphasizes the sculpture is not a realistic "photograph" of the interior; I do not think it necessary to further connect the masks of the children with Bacchic cult, as Jensen does (162–63). I am grateful to J. Bodel, who also sees them as masks of the dead children, for discussion of this relief. These masks are not *imagines* in the strictest sense, since the children are no one's ancestors, but their masks are preserved by the family to honor their memory.

for a profound and deliberate differentiation between the two practices which Nero's masks confound: "This cult of the death mask has a bearing upon the theatre. The theatrical mask needed quite a different identity in order to avoid any risk that it might be mistaken for an *imago*, and thus offend a noble family."[18] Quite independently of Wiles, Harriet Flower has recently argued that it is quite unlikely that the *fabula praetexta*, the Roman form of historical drama in which real individuals were represented, was performed at funeral games, and she underlines the tension between the two practices of funereal and theatrical representation.[19]

After Nero, this differentiation begins to collapse with farcical results. According to Suetonius *Vespasian* 19, at Vespasian's funeral a professional actor (the *archimimus* Favor) and not a relative[20] wore the dead emperor's mask. Playing in character (for Vespasian was notoriously tight-fisted), he asked how much the funeral was costing. On being told ten million sesterces, he shouted out "Give me a hundred thousand instead and throw my body in the Tiber" (*centum sibi sertertia darent ac se vel in Tiberim proicerent*).

In their particular Roman context, the paired masks of Poppaea and Nero, both worn by the last Julio-Claudian, constitute both a scandal and a warning. Our sources make plain how upsetting it was to traditional Romans for Nero to appear onstage at all.[21] The realistic portraiture of his masks adds a new and critically important dimension to this outrage. To drag the dead Poppaea back onstage constitutes a mockery of a central Roman ritual which, at least according to Polybius, was meant to inspire and encourage the young in their pursuit of virtue.[22] Yet Dio in particular may be subtly suggesting that the institution will win out in the end: Poppaea haunts her still-living husband, and Nero's perverse tribute to her only reminds his audience of his responsibility for her death.[23]

[18] Wiles (above, n.5) 130.

[19] H. Flower, "*Fabulae Praetextae* in Context: When Were Plays on Contemporary Subjects Performed in Republican Rome?" *CQ* 45 (1995) 170–90, esp. 177–79.

[20] From Polybius' statement (6.53.6) that the wearers of the *imagines* at funerals were chosen for their closeness of resemblance to the deceased ancestors, it is often inferred that family members played these roles (who would be more likely to inherit recognizable family characteristics?), but the text does not explicitly say this. Aristocratic funerals and the *imagines* surely predate the professionalization of acting at Rome, and so the buffoonery at Vespasian's funeral seems to be both a change and a degeneration from earlier customs.

[21] See the discussion in C. Edwards, "Beware of Imitators: Theatre and the Subversion of Imperial Identity," 83–97, in *Reflections of Nero*, J. Elsner and J. Masters, eds. (London 1994).

[22] For the moral force of the ancestor masks, cf. Sallust, *Jugurtha* 4.5, and Valerius Maximus 5.8.3.

[23] Whether accidental or intentional: cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* 16.6.1, Dio 62.27.4, and Suetonius *Nero* 35.3, with the comments of K. R. Bradley, *Suetonius' Life of Nero* (Brussels 1978). Nero also had Poppaea embalmed rather than cremated, a further violation of Roman funeral customs, as Tacitus, *Ann.* 16.6.2, notes: "*corpus non*

In our culture, to wear a mask of oneself seems simply a bizarre kind of narcissism. Nero's own motivation is ultimately unrecoverable. His use of a mask of his own face could simply indicate an ego so great that he chose this method to ensure that no one could fail to know which masked actor performing on the stage was the emperor. Yet this does not explain the use of Poppaea's mask, an act which, whatever its motivation, could certainly be interpreted by its audience as mockery. Ultimately events provide their own commentary on Nero's masks, which the historian may be hinting at in coupling the two masks together. To wear a mask of oneself is to anticipate one's own death, the transition by which one becomes oneself an item in the ancestral portrait gallery. Nero's portrait masks then foreshadow his ultimate destruction and even his infamous exit line, "*qualis artifex pereo*" (what an artist dies in me).[24]

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igni abolitum, ut Romanus mos, sed regum externorum consuetudine differtum odoribus conditur tumuloque Iuliorum infertur." I thank E. Varner for calling this to my attention. Other elements of Tacitus' account surrounding Poppaea's death have curious associations. Tacitus dates her death by placing it after the quinquennial games in which Nero so scandalously competed (16.6.1, *post finem ludicri Poppaea mortem obiit*). He criticizes Nero's *laudatio funebris* for his wife, saying that he praised her gifts of fortune as though they were virtues (16.6.2). Finally, Nero forbids C. Cassius to attend Poppaea's funeral and then sends a message to the Senate, asking for Cassius' removal; one of the grounds is keeping a bust (*effigiem*) of C. Cassius, the tyrannicide among his family *imagines*, displayed with a daring inscription (*duci partium*, 16.7.2). The emperor's devotion to Roman customs or lack thereof and the politics of death are thus very much at issue at the time of Poppaea's passing.

[24] I am grateful to H. Flower, E. Varner, and *CW*'s anonymous referee for a number of helpful criticisms and suggestions, not all of which I have felt able to adopt. The remaining errors fall to my own account.

SCHOLIA

SEPTIMA AESTAS: THE PUZZLE OF *AEN.* 1.755-56 AND 5.626

In the closing lines of *Aeneid* 1, Dido declares that Aeneas is now in his seventh summer after the fall of Troy:[1]

> "immo age et a prima dic, hospes, origine nobis
> insidias" inquit "Danaum casusque tuorum
> erroresque tuos; nam te iam *septima* portat
> omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus *aestas*." (1.753-56)

In book 5, Iris, disguised as Beroe, incites the Trojan women by calling attention to the length of their wanderings, stating that they are now in the seventh summer after the fall of Troy:

> "*septima* post Troiae excidium iam uertitur *aestas*." (5.626)

Yet at the beginning of book 5, Aeneas declares that it has been a year since he buried his father Anchises (5.46–8), whose death occurred before Aeneas' stay in Carthage (3.709–15); there are also pointed references to Aeneas spending the winter at Dido's court (4.52, 193, 309). If Aeneas arrives in Carthage during the seventh summer after the fall of Troy and proceeds to spend the winter with Dido, then the seventh summer cannot still be in progress at the time of Iris/Beroe's statement (and we would expect her, if anything, to *exaggerate* the length of the Trojans' wanderings). This chronological inconsistency has provoked much scholarly response, including defenses of Aeneas' rectitude, Dido's queenliness, and Vergil's poetic integrity.[2] Perhaps that is because this seemingly small point touches the mystery surrounding antiquity's greatest unfinished work, the perennial question of whether Vergil would have corrected the "error" in his final revision. *In tenui labor*: I suggest that the inconsistency intentionally marks the phrase *septima aestas* in order to highlight the theme of sacrificial death.[3]

[1] See A. S. Pease, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus* (Cambridge, Mass. 1935), 58–59: Dion. Hal. 1.63 says Lavinium was founded two years after the fall of Troy, Diod. 7.5 says three, Clement, *Strom.* 1.21, says ten. Clearly the tradition was fluid enough on this point for Vergil to have some freedom.

[2] The controversy is the subject of a lively exchange among F. Potter, "How Long was Aeneas at Carthage?" *CJ* 21 (1926) 615–24 and "*Septima Aestas* Again," *CJ* 27 (1932) 505–08; R. S. Conway, "Two Difficulties in the *Aeneid*," *CJ* 26 (1931) 620–24; and W. P. Clark, "The Duration of the Action in *Aeneid* IV," *CJ* 27 (1932) 497–504. Despite the claim of each to have settled the issue once and for all (and Conway's resorting to "an argument which some may think almost too intimate to be put into hard print" concerning Dido's infertility, 622), apologies for the inconsistency were still thought necessary by R. Heinze, *Virgils epische Technik* (Stuttgart 1957) 349; R. D. Williams, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quintus* (Oxford 1960) xxx; B. Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford 1964), 417; and K. Quinn, "Septima Aestas," *CQ* 17 (1967) 128–29. The *communis opinio* remains that of Servius (*ad* 5.626): the inconsistency is "one of the insoluble problems that Vergil undoubtedly would have emended."

[3] Intentional inconsistencies and sacrificial death are topics too large to be discussed at length here; see the recent work of J. O'Hara, "They Might Be Giants: Inconsistency and Indeterminacy in Vergil's War in Italy," *Colby Quarterly* 30 (1994), 206–26, and P. Hardie, *The Epic Successors of Virgil* (Cambridge 1993) 19–56 ("Sacrifice and Substitution").