

Aetna against Henna and the poetics of Claudian's *De Raptu Proserpinae*

The earliest known literary treatment of Proserpina's rape, the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, places the abduction on the "Nysian plain".ⁱ What is here a setting which is "vague and mythical" (Foley 1994: 36) could be interpreted as being the Nysa in the East, at Caria in Asia Minor.ⁱⁱ In subsequent literary instantiations of the Proserpina myth, there were various candidates for the location of the abduction including Attica, Crete, Oceanus, and Sicily.ⁱⁱⁱ This article focuses upon Claudian's late fourth century CE version of the rape story, the *De Raptu Proserpinae*.^{iv} It is clear that the extant action of Claudian's epic plays out in the Western location of Sicily, a choice of backdrop for the myth which dates back to at least Carcinus in the fourth century BCE.^v This is indicated by the narratorial reference to "Sicilian shores" (*Siculas ... oras*) at *De Raptu* 1.141 and the subsequent description of Sicily's quondam separation from Italy and the island's three promontories.^{vi} However, due to manuscript disagreement over place names, scholarly controversy rages over whereabouts on the island Claudian situated the key plot element of Proserpina's abduction.^{vii} Did he set the rape at Henna or at Aetna (which could encompass both the volcano and its surrounding area)? Henna has considerable purchase in the mythical tradition as the site of the abduction. Whilst it is difficult to judge trends in the face of lost versions, it would seem that it was a popular location in the Republican and Augustan periods: witness Cicero *Verrines* 2.4.107, Ovid's two retellings at *Metamorphoses* 5.341–571 and *Fasti* 4.417–620, and Diodorus Siculus 5.3.2.^{viii} Yet Aetna could also feature as the site of the rape in the ancient literary tradition. Indeed, as can be seen in the case of Ausonius *Epistles* 13.49 (Green), Aetna was a regular choice for those who tackled the myth at a later date.^{ix}

The *De Raptu*, which unfurls in Jupiter's reign at the point at which the Iron-age feature of agriculture is in the process of being established, does not fully deliver the material

promised at the start of the poem.^x It fails, for instance, to cover all of Ceres' wanderings (*DRP* 1.28–9) or to get as far as the inauguration of crop-cultivation which is advertised at *De Raptu* 1.30–1 in terms suggesting it would have served as climatic material.^{xi} When looking for clues as to where Claudian set the rape, we have therefore three books (the last unfinished) which can be scrutinized. These contain four passages which are now textually disputed, where critics can decide to approve adjectival and noun forms of Aetna and hold that the kidnapping occurred in the vicinity of the volcano. In such cases, *Aetna* would be read at *De Raptu* 2.72, understanding Aetna as “parent of flowers” (*parens florum*) and at 2.289, in Dis' reference to Proserpina's upper-worldly meadows. At *De Raptu* 3.85, *Aetnae* would be adopted as the genitive dependent on *roseis ... convallibus* (“valleys filled with roses”) whilst at 3.220 we would read *Aetnaea* as the adjective agreeing with *rura*. The alternative is to substitute noun forms of Henna (or the adjectival *Hennaea* at *De Raptu* 3.220) in these instances and understand Henna to be the place of the abduction.^{xii}

In light of not uncommon scribal confusion over forms of Aetna and Henna, this paper does not focus upon matters of textual criticism.^{xiii} It revisits the question of where Claudian placed the rape through consideration of his literary techniques. The choice of location is one that lends itself to investigation through such a lens, for the variability of abduction settings in use allows texts to engage with mythic tradition and specific mythic versions. Narrative treatments often exhibit self-consciousness about variants of location. When Valerius Flaccus compares Medea to the soon-to-be-abducted Proserpina at *Argonautica* 5.343–9, he gestures towards the rivalry of geographical versions by offering the alternative settings of Attic Hymettus or “beneath the Sicilian rock” (V. Fl. 5.344 *Sicula sub rupe*). And when Statius compares Achilles and Lycomedes' daughters to Diana, Pallas and Proserpina amongst the “nymphs of Henna” (*Ach.* 1.825 *Naidas Hennaenas*) “beneath the rocks of Sicilian Aetna” (1.824 *Siculae sub rupibus Aetnae*), the epithet *Hennaenas* archly

nods to the tradition of placing the rape at Henna. Texts can allude to specific instances of the myth. Hinds has shown how Ovid indirectly invokes the Nysian plain of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* through a reference to Cayster at *Metamorphoses* 5.385–7: Ovid pits this against his own location which is the Sicilian setting of Henna, adopting a combative stance.^{xiv} The idea that places can serve to evoke the versions of their literary predecessors may have precedent in Callimachus’ writings on Demeter. Hunter uses the allusion to Enna at Callimachus *Hymn* 6.30 as evidence that Callimachus assumed that the author of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* placed Persephone’s abduction in this Sicilian location. Taken with the reference to Eleusis in the same line (which the Homeric Hymn had attached great importance to), this appears to symbolize the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.^{xv}

Problems in determining Claudian’s abduction site

As indicated by the adverb *hic*, “here” (*DRP* 1.179), it is at Aetna that Ceres leaves her daughter, in an elaborate metal palace (*DRP* 1.237–45).^{xvi} There are various other clues that Proserpina’s house is close to the volcano. Proximity is suggested by Aetna’s ominous grumbling which attends Proserpina’s departure from the palace at *De Raptu* 2.8–9. Then, at *De Raptu* 3.118–19 the goddess is fearful that *fama* (3.118) has betrayed her hiding place.^{xvii} She is worried about the “too commonly-known celebrity of the region” (*DRP* 3.120–1 *nimum vulgata locorum / nobilitas*). We should understand Ceres as here talking about Aetna rather than assume, with Hinds (2016: 268–9), reference to the area of Henna, for Ceres goes on to mention the “groaning and nearby flames of Enceladus” (*DRP* 3.122–3 *gemitu flammisque propinquis / Enceladi*) which mean that her retreat cannot “be passed over in silence” (3.123 *nequeunt ... taceri*): the fame of the hiding-place is linked to the presence of the giant Enceladus trapped under the volcano.^{xviii} Furthermore, at *De Raptu* 3.186–7, Ceres

asks: “Or has my neighbour Aetna brought forth Enceladus from its shaken openings?” (*an vicina mihi quassatis faucibus Aetna / protulit Enceladum?*).^{xix}

In accordance with Jupiter’s plan, Proserpina goes from the Aetnaean residence to the “plains” (*DRP* 1.221 *campis*) which will be the site of her abduction. Later details reveal these fields to be in full bloom (as we might expect from a myth which features flower-picking from its first extant textualisation)^{xx} and also trees, the specific details of which help establish that the poem is set in the Iron age, after the end of Saturn’s “Golden” reign.^{xxi} However, with the crucial exception of the four instances of a proper place name (or epithet derived thereof), there is little in the descriptions of and references to these fields to easily establish the geographical location. Some of the flower types recall the blooms gathered by nymphs in Vergil *Eclogue* 2 but those plants are from an undisclosed Sicilian locale.^{xxii} Hinds does note that Claudian’s assertion at *De Raptu* 2.112 that the place of the abduction is not far from lake Pergus makes more sense if we understand Henna (7 km away) rather than Aetna (70 km away).^{xxiii} Yet we should be wary of assuming that this offers definitive proof that Claudian placed the rape at Henna. The argument of distance cannot carry much weight given the poem’s geographical inexactitude, which is evident in the way Aetna is said to “extend with burnt rocks in the middle of the island” (*DRP* 1.153 *in medio scopulis se porrigit Aetna perustis*) when it actually lies to the east.^{xxiv} If we place the abduction at Aetna, we must concede that the seventy kilometres distance between there and lake Pergus somewhat stretches Claudian’s claim the lake is “not far off” (*DRP* 2.112 *haud procul*). On the other hand, if we adopt textual readings which support the site of Henna, we are faced with the problem that what the poem presents as an easy trip to the meadows by foot (*DRP* 2.4–10) to gather “neighbouring” (*DRP* 3.221 *vicinos*) flowers does not square with the distance of sixty odd kilometres between the palace by Aetna and that location.^{xxv} The possibility that

Claudian is taking liberties with geography or using terms like “neighbouring” in a loose fashion complicates definitive statements about the location of the rape.

In short, if we disallow the now disputed manuscript readings, we find that sure geographical indications as to the exact site of Proserpina’s abduction are lacking. This article will first sketch out some current critical approaches to Claudian’s *De Raptu* in regards to the poem’s structure and its relationship to literary models. It will then consider what is at stake in understanding Aetna rather than Henna as the place of the rape and use recent work on Claudian’s literary practices to assess the arguments.

Literary trends in the study of the *De Raptu*

One welcome trend in the study of the *De Raptu* is a willingness to perceive the poem’s narrative structure on its own terms. So Wheeler (1995: 114) has persuasively argued against Cameron’s reading of the opening scenes as a “structural disaster”, challenging a common “governing assumption ... that the poet frequently sacrifices the narrative continuity of his subject matter, and hence artistic unity, to elaborate set piece descriptions and speeches for their own sake”.^{xxvi} The idea that the *De Raptu*’s landscape descriptions are detachable set pieces has been evident in attitudes towards Claudian’s treatment of Aetna. For, prior to mentioning Aetna in the context of lighting a cypress-torch which had been taken from the adjacent grove (*DRP* 3.330–1; 3.382–99), there is a description of the volcano lasting twenty-six lines (1.153–78). This portrayal conjures Aetna’s dominance over the island in terms of its sulphuric emissions (1.156), its earth tremors (1.157–9), and — as suggested by the claim that Aetna will “never be silent” — its volcanic noise.^{xxvii} The passage also explains Aetna’s volcanic activity. This is done initially through a Vergilian-inspired description of the giant Enceladus’ presence under the mountain (*DRP* 1.154–9),^{xxviii} but then Claudian introduces

different explanations of a scientific — rather than mythological — bent; explanations, moreover, which include competing possibilities for the source of the volcanic fire (*DRP* 1.173 *sive*, “whether”; 1.177 *seu*, “or”).^{xxix} Thus, after *De Raptu* 1.153–9 associates Aetna’s flames and land tremors with the giant Enceladus, there appears the counter-perspective of a scientific rationale for volcanic and seismological activity. The idea at *De Raptu* 1.165 that the flames are fed by the flammable detritus which comes out of the volcano, such as lava stone,^{xxx} runs in tension with the suggestion that the flames come from Enceladus, who had been hit by Jupiter’s sulphurous thunderbolt (*DRP* 1.156). We do not need to follow Cameron (1970: 264) in seeing such material as inevitable Claudianic amplitude (“Aetna, of course, is in Sicily: how then can we avoid weighing the various theories on the cause of volcanic eruptions?”) or hold that our author is using the volcano to add “some atmospheric description” and “merely garnering and resuscitating motifs from other poets”.^{xxxi} For Heintges (2021: 430–7) has shown how Claudian’s portrayal of Aetna plays out key themes such as destruction and rebirth.^{xxxii}

Most recent criticism has, however, been concerned with how the *De Raptu* responds to literary texts. There has been interest in the idea that Claudian might be reworking his own material: for example, Cazzuffi (2010: 137) argues for the *De Raptu* as an intertext for Claudian’s *Carmina Minora* 26.^{xxxiii} There are, indeed, striking similarities between the landscape of Aponus and the abduction site, as indicated by a comparison of *Carmina Minora* 26.11–12 (*Alto colle minor, planis erectior arvis / conspicuo clivus molliter orbe tumet*, “Lower than a lofty hill, higher than the flat fields, a slope gently swells with visible round surface”) and *De Raptu* 2.102–3 (*planities ... mollibus edita clivis / creverat in collem*; “the plain ... lofty with gentle slopes, had grown into a hill”).^{xxxiv} However, the uncertain chronology of the *De Raptu*’s composition means the direction of allusion is debatable and it

is perhaps not surprising that the majority of scholars have focussed upon literary models for the *De Raptu* outside the Claudianic canon and the effects of any such intertextuality.

Particular attention has been paid to Claudian's use of Cicero, Vergil, and Ovid. Hinds observes that Claudian's portrayal of the abduction scene recalls Cicero's description of Henna from the *Verrines* in its deployment of shared diction,^{xxxv} whilst also noting how the *De Raptu* gestures towards Henna in this place's Ovidian version through the combined reference to lilies and violets in the meadow (*DRP* 2.128–9) which recalls Ovid *Metamorphoses* 5.392.^{xxxvi} Hinds also sees Dis' depiction of the underworld as bearing "traces of Ovidian language", with *perpetui flores* (*DRP* 2.289 "ever-blooming flowers") picking up Ovid *Metamorphoses* 5.390 *flores*, "flowers" (at the end of the line) and *Metamorphoses* 5.391 *perpetuum ver est*, "perpetual spring is there" (at the start of the next line).^{xxxvii} Critics have pointed out that Claudian often makes changes to his models.^{xxxviii} The detail of the site's proximity to lake Pergus is couched in language that sends us back to Ovid's description of this lake as not far from Henna at *Metamorphoses* 5.385–6^{xxxix} yet, as Moro (2003: 135) comments, Claudian diverges from Ovid in that he makes the scene of the abduction distinct from lake Pergus (although it is said to be "not far", *DRP* 2.112), whereas the Ovidian Proserpina is snatched from the lake's vicinity.

Numerous scholars have discussed Claudian's use of passages from Vergil's *Georgics*, such as the account of the transition from Golden to Iron age at *Georgics* 1.121–59 which is evoked at the start of *De Raptu* 3.^{xl} The Vergilian third-person narration, reworked at what would seem to be the poem's intended midpoint (just as it had been at the start of Book 1),^{xli} is exploited to form Jupiter's personal defence against Nature's complaints: for the goddess has apparently been lamenting that the countryside under his reign is "rough with neglect" (*DRP* 3.37 *horrere situ*), "filled with brambles" (3.37 *dumis ... repleti*), and without produce (3.38), leaving only acorn-fare (3.43).^{xlii} Jupiter claims that he decided to jolt humans out of

their lethargy: “so that their crops should not swell of their own accord in uncultivated fields, nor the wood flow with honey, nor wine run high from the springs and all the rivers roar into wine-cups” (*DRP* 3.24–6 *incultis ne sponte seges grandesceret arvis, / undaret neu silva favis neu vina tumerent / fontibus et totae fremerent in pocula ripae*). As Zanker (2017: 202) notes, Claudian restyles Vergil’s account of Jupiter’s response to Saturn’s reign at *Georgics* 1.121–46 to make the changes more appealing: “[Jupiter’s] violent actions in the *Georgics* — the shaking of honey from the trees (*decussit*) and damming of the rivers of wine (*repressit*) — are refashioned in order to present them as reasonable measures against unreasonable abundance (*ne... undaret... tumerent... fremerent*).” These echoes help establish the poem’s post-Saturnian setting but another purpose of engagement with Vergil’s *Georgics* in the poem is to suggest that a quasi-Golden era could potentially be present within the Iron age (just as Claudian’s political poems show it can exist in contemporary times, under the regime of Honorius and Stilicho).^{xliii} In line 2 of the preface to *De Raptu* 1, “and stirred the waters with rough-hewn oars” (*et rudibus remis sollicitavit aquas*), we have an allusion which serves to gesture towards this possibility. This phrase reworks Vergil *Georgics* 2.503 “Others stir unknown seas with oars” (*sollicitant alii remis freta caeca*), of the blessed farmer who, in a localised version of the Golden age, an “attainable *aurea aetas*” (Ware 2012: 191), rejects the outer world’s Iron-age pastime of sailing.^{xliv}

Alongside such intertexts from the period of the late Republic to the early imperial age, scholars are increasingly pursuing Claudian’s allusions to works from the later Classical age, like Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica* (an intertext advertised through the preface to the first book).^{xlv} Moreover, there is growing interest in Claudian’s use of writers from the late antique period: we may now appreciate that echoes of Ausonius’ portrayal of the waters of the Moselle follow on from evocation of Ovid *Metamorphoses* 5.385–6.^{xlvi} The result is the detection of a wider set of intertexts than ever before. It is clear that passages can contain

multiple allusions: in the description of Sicily's promontories, for example, Claudian uses language which draws on Vergil, Ovid, and Valerius Flaccus.^{xlvii} And even phrases can be densely allusive. So Ceres' address at *DRP* 1.194 after the deposit of her daughter, *salve, gratissima tellus* ("Farewell, most pleasing land"), takes the *salve ... tellus* from Vergil's *laudes Italiae* (*Georgics* 2.173 *salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus*, "Hail, land of Saturn, great mother of crops")^{xlviii} whilst *gratissima tellus* reworks Ovid's description of Sicily at *Fasti* 4.421 (*grata domus Cereri*, "home pleasing to Ceres")^{xlix} and Thetis' address to Scyros at Statius *Achilleid* 1.382 (*cara mihi tellus*, "land dear to me").¹

Critical investigations of Claudian's use of prior authors have sometimes taken a metapoetical turn. Claudian has been shown to be a poet who is very aware of his heritage: for example, Hartman (2021) has viewed Claudian as responding to a weighty literary tradition by selecting from the old to produce something new.^{li} Hinds (2016) has examined the idea of repetition in the *De Raptu* and argued that the epic displays a self-consciousness about its place in literary history. Ceres' concern about the "too commonly-known celebrity of the region" (*DRP* 3.120–1 *nimum vulgata locorum / nobilitas*) has been interpreted in terms of the fame shed upon the area (Henna in his reading) through its depiction by Cicero and Ovid: "you cannot hope to hide your daughter in one of the most celebrated *loca amoena* in Latin literature" (Hinds 2016: 169). In conjunction with Claudian's self-consciousness about his position with regards to his literary inheritance, critics have detected a self-assertiveness, even an aggressiveness. In the context of his reading of Claudian as someone who situates himself in and against the classical tradition, Pelttari (2014) draws attention to the poem's emphasis on its daring at the beginning of the poem and the appearance of the "bold" spider (*DRP* 3.158).^{lii} Furthermore, an agonistic tone has been detected in Claudian's intertextual practice. So, for instance, Charlet (1987: 41), who reads *sic fata cruoris* at *De Raptu* 2.122 instead of *sic fata doloris* (taking the flower alluded to at 2.122–3 to be the rose

rather than anemone), sees a polemical correction in the reworking of the Ovidian *sic fata cruorem* from *Metamorphoses* 10.732 (of Venus scattering Adonis' blood with nectar, leading to the origin of the anemone). In relation to scenery, Moro (2003: 134–7) discusses changes made to the Ovidian model in the depiction of lake Pergus at *De Raptu* 2.112–17 as an example of Claudian's "rapporto dialettico" (2003: 141) with his Ovidian model.

The stakes

i) The theme of landscape contrasts

It might seem as though the debate is of trivial importance, one of real interest only to textual critics. However, there is more at stake than might at first meet the eye. If we adopt textual readings involving *Aetna* and *Aetnaeus* at *De Raptu* 2.72, 2.289, 3.85, and 3.220, we downplay the presence of Henna in the poem. Indeed, if we also, with the majority of manuscripts, read *Aetnaeae* ("Aetnaean") as the epithet for Ceres at *De Raptu* 1.122 instead of *Hennaeae* ("Hennaean"), we would erase Henna from the poem entirely. Hinds (2016: 257) has argued we would thereby lose a "a pointed *contrast* between Enna and Etna". It is certainly true that the contrast of places is an important motif in the poem, chiming with the poem's interest in rhetorical persuasion and interpretation (for readers are encouraged to assess characters' statements in relation to comments about landscape).^{liii} Speakers regularly draw distinctions between different terrains. Thus, in his message for Jupiter at *De Raptu* 1.93–116, Dis explicitly sets his chthonic kingdom, allotted after the end of Saturn's reign (*DRP* 1.100), against his brother's upper world: he complains of the dark (1.95–6, 1.99) and ugly (1.101) realms he inhabits in contrast to Jupiter's environment which is illuminated by beautiful stars (1.101–2).^{liv} Then, while she is being carried off to Orcus in Book 2, Proserpina forms a clear distinction between her infernal destination as she imagines it and

her upper-worldly habitat: after envisaging her imminent loss of the “common sun” (*DRP* 2.261 *communi sole*), she claims that “daylight” (2.262 *caelumque*) is being denied to her.^{lv}

A particularly combative example of contrasting landscapes occurs at *De Raptu* 2.277–306 where Dis pits Elysium against the upper world. He is responding to the content of Proserpina’s speech (which itself reveals the kind of preconceptions about the underworld its king has to defend it against).^{lvi} Thus, for example, at *De Raptu* 2.282–4, he claims to have the light of “stars” (*sidera*) and a “sun” (*solem*) (indeed, the light in Proserpina’s new home is “purer”, 2.284 *purius*). Dis is also reacting to what he has experienced of the Sicilian scenery during the abduction. So he contends at *De Raptu* 2.287–8 that Proserpina will still have “soft meadows” (*mollia ... / prata*).^{lvii} And he alludes at *De Raptu* 2.288 to underworld Zephyrs, competitively described with the comparative adjective “better” (2.288 *melioribus*): although these breezes have been associated with Elysium since Homer *Odyssey* 4.567–8, Dis’ reference here surely takes into account the fact that the West wind frequents Proserpina’s meadows.^{lviii} Dis follows this up with the assertion that his realms have “ever-blooming flowers, which” (*DRP* 2.289 *perpetui flores, quos*) the site of Proserpina’s flower-picking has not produced. This clearly shows Dis is vying with his bride’s local haunts, whether we follow von Albrecht (1989: 389) in understanding “everlasting” flowers in contrast with upper-worldly “ephemeral” bloom or assume Dis is boasting that Elysian fields have more continual blooming than Sicilian glades, perhaps due to the “better” Zephyrs or the perennial spring weather (this is despite, or even because of, the fact that Proserpina’s meadows have a reputation for a long flowering-period due to clement weather: *DRP* 3.223–5). In arguing for the superiority of Elysium over the upper world, the self-styled “offspring of Saturn” (*DRP* 2.280 *Saturni proles*) exploits a nostalgia for Saturn’s lost environment. He maintains that, instead of experiencing the Golden age “once” (*DRP* 2.287 *semel*) like the upper-worldly dwellers, chthonic inhabitants, a “Golden race” (2.286 *aurea progenies*),^{lix} enjoy it “always”

(2.286 *semper*).^{lx} One particularly much missed feature of the Golden age, its fertility, is drawn upon in Dis' claim of a tree sacred to Proserpina which will "always" (*DRP* 2.293 *semper*) bestow her with "golden fruit" (2.293 *fulvis ... pomis*). Dis is claiming for Elysium an abundance typical of the Golden age, partly with an eye to the evident fecundity of her Sicilian meadows which had just received a visit from Zephyr.^{lxi}

Comparable in its use of a combative tone to address contrasts between landscapes is Jupiter's divine council speech (*DRP* 3.19–65). As we have seen, the king of the gods has to counter Nature's critique and justify his elimination of the Golden age habitat, which is set against the current environment. Jupiter pictures the Saturnian landscape (also uncultivated but in a different way) in such a fashion as to justify his destruction of it. The sense of plenitude typically associated with the Golden age is magnified: so wood "flows" (*DRP* 3.25 *undaret*) with honey rather than drips as at Vergil *Eclogue* 4.30.^{lxii} The hyperbolic detail of wine raging "into goblets" exemplifies the sloth that had characterised Saturn's reign.^{lxiii} Jupiter's speech goes on to contrast the current landscape with the cornfields which are forecast to come once crops have been bestowed by a grateful Ceres (*DRP* 3.52–4, a markedly more positive presentation of agriculture than that found in Vergil's passage which stresses the toil that comes with farming).

However, argumentation involving Claudian's use of contrasts in the poem does not mean that we must favour readings of Henna over Aetna. If we hold that Aetna was where the rape occurred, we can detect a move which might justly be characterised as "Ovidian" in spirit. Through verbal allusions, such as the recollection of Ovid's reference to Pergus at *De Raptu* 2.112–13, Claudian clearly brings to his readers' minds Ovid's literary Henna. As we have noted, Ovid has been argued to implicitly evoke the Nysian plain of the 'Homeric Hymn to Demeter' in his reference to Cayster. If we argue for a complete lack of textual references

to Henna, we may still see a contrast between Aetna and a Henna implicitly evoked through literary reminiscences.

Awareness of work done on intratextual links within the Claudianic corpus also offers support for reading Aetna as the location of the rape. Poems like *Carmina Minora* 26 reveal Claudian's interest in the potentiality of bringing in oppositional elements into one location, to paradoxical effect: Aponus is, in the words of Kennell (2001: 203), "an oxymoronic landscape of fuming meadow and roasted rock where grass boldly flourishes while stone melts from the heat". This site sends out heat whilst also displaying such elements of a *locus amoenus* like green grass (*CM* 26.22) and a lake (26.28–9). While remaining agnostic on the question of whether *Carmina Minora* 26 was a source, we may note that the *De Raptu* similarly displays a fondness for exploring contrasts *within* a region (that of Aetna). At the start of the *De Raptu*, the volcano is set out to be a place of variety: of ice and fire (*DRP* 1.166–70), of fertility and barrenness (*DRP* 1.161–2; 3.334–5).^{lxiv} If we assume an Aetnaean setting for the flower-picking, the area of Aetna would also have the capacity to contain both the *locus horridus* that is the grove of gigantomachic associations from where a bereft Ceres acquires a torch of cypress-wood (*DRP* 3.334–81) and the *locus amoenus* that is the site of Proserpina's abduction.^{lxv} In addition, it would encompass the oppositional sites of blooming meadows and the nearby metal palace of Ceres (which itself introduces the issue of variance, since this had been built using fiery volcanic energy harnessed in forges by the Cyclopes rather Enceladus' uncontrolled exhalations).^{lxvi}

ii) Accusations of structural incoherence

Of course, if Henna were understood as the site of the abduction, one could still perceive literary force in a contrast between Hennaean meadows with their trees and flowers

and the geographically separate Aetna, as also between the meadows and the metal palace of Ceres.^{lxvii} From that perspective, exploration of Claudian's use of contrasts does not decisively support an Aetnaean or Hennaean setting for the rape: whilst we can enjoy the depiction of a volcanic region which harbours oppositional elements, we could also admire the construction of a Sicily wherein Henna is set against Aetna. Readings which establish Henna as the setting of the rape may, however, negatively impact our appreciation of the poem in other ways. Without the centrality of Aetna to the poem which is provided through having it serve as location for the rape, the depiction of Aetna at *De Raptu* 1.153–78 could be used to support the narrative that Claudian created detachable landscape set pieces for the sake of description. If, however, we read Aetna as the location of rape, we may more readily view Claudian's comments on the volcano as more than automatic and inorganic padding and perceive the attention given to the volcano to be justified.

iii) Claudian's intertextual approach

Also at stake is how we see Claudian's intertextual manoeuvrings. We must be careful not to be swayed by the fame of the Ciceronian and Ovid versions and, hence, pass over the impact of authors who used an Aetnaean location for the rape. Many of these were known to Claudian: indeed, at *De Raptu* 3.84–90 we can even detect Claudian specifically reworking a passage which conjures an Aetnaean setting.^{lxviii} Of course, Claudian does draw on Cicero and Ovid and it is only right for us to be on the lookout for ways in which the poem could be engaging with these authors. At *De Raptu* 3.224–5, Venus is scornful that “the icy months grow red with the buds of other seasons and that the shrubs of spring do not fear the anger of Bootes” (*DRP* 3.224–5 *gelidi rubeant alieno germine menses / verna nec iratum timeant virgulta Booten*). This is part of her mock-refusal to believe that in the meadows the wintry

weather is so mild that plants grow which are not usually found in the hibernal season. Despite the lack of verbal parallelism, the passage may well stir memories of Cicero's assertion at *Verrines* 2.4.107 that Henna had "very luxuriant flowers at every time of the year" (*laetissimi flores omni tempore anni*).^{lxxix} Yet, as we might expect from an examination of Claudian's practice, it is not the only intertext: Venus' disingenuous words clearly recall Vergil's portrayal of an idealised Italy at *Georgics* 2.149 (*hic ver adsiduum atque alienis mensibus aestas*).^{lxxx} We need not assume that just because Claudian does draw on Cicero and Ovid in their portrayals of Henna, it means that this also happened when he chose where to place the rape. Claudian might have been adding elements from the accounts of Cicero and Ovid in the same way that he exploited the landscape descriptions of other writers. We need not be fazed by Claudian's use of the depiction of one place in the portrayal of another. Claudian's failure to set the rape in Italy despite drawing on *Georgics* 2.149 does not cause problems for us if we consider what explanation can lie behind the literary allusion (we can appreciate the way that the positive associations of Italy in Vergil's *laudes Italiae* are utilized in Venus' rhetorical attempt to persuade Proserpina to leave the palace).^{lxxxi}

As we have seen, Claudian regularly makes alterations to his intertexts. In his depiction of the scene of the abduction, he modifies detail from Cicero's description of Henna to fit the landscape of slopes and valleys in the area surrounding the volcano.^{lxxxii} The high plateau of Henna, a "flat-topped hill",^{lxxxiii} as referenced by the accounts of Cicero and also Diodorus Siculus, is not found in the *De Raptu*.^{lxxxiv} Whilst a plain is mentioned, it isn't flat: "the plain, curved in a slight rising and lofty with gentle slopes, had grown into a hill" (*DRP* 2.101–3 *curvata tumore / parvo planities et mollibus edita clivis / creverat in collem*). It would not be out of character for Claudian to evoke the Henna of Ovid and Cicero in descriptive detail but to diverge in the location of the abduction site, in line with his practice of changing his sources. Furthermore, in the *De Raptu*'s allusive incorporations we can

perceive an agonistic tone linked to its epigonal position in a long literary line. In my reading, Claudian has his Aetna supplant the Ciceronian and Ovidian Henna whilst indirectly including some of their elements. Claudian's substitution of Aetna for Henna while drawing on Cicero and Ovid enacts his dialectical approach to imitation on the macro-level.

iv) The self-conscious literary positioning of Claudian

The final issue at stake involves Claudian's presentation of a poetic self-consciousness. Ceres' departure for Cybele's Mount Ida in Asia Minor without her daughter (*DRP* 1.180–1; 1.201) arguably points up his choice to follow those writers who placed Proserpina's seizure in the West rather than the East. But does understanding Aetna as the location of the rape mean that we are unable to interpret the phrase *nimum vulgata locorum / nobilitas* (*DRP* 3.120–1, "too commonly-known celebrity of the region") metapoetically, as Hinds has done on the assumption that Claudian is referring to Henna? The answer is no. Reading Aetna as the place of the abduction still allows for such interpretation. Ceres' terror is justified, for the meadows are in an area of textual notoriety. The word *locorum* at 3.120 can fruitfully be read by applying the possible sense of *loci* as "passages in literature".^{lxxv} Henna is famous in the literary tradition. However, it is fair to say that Aetna also has artistic renown, through scientific accounts and through mythological stories, whether they be of Proserpina's abduction or Aetna's apparent placement on a giant like Enceladus (a fable dismissed by the Aetna poet at *Aetna* 74: *Haec est mendosae vulgata licentia famae*, "This is the well-known license of incorrect rumour"). Such fame is especially found in verse accounts, as Seneca's reference to Aetna as a "place of awe for all poets" (*sollemnem omnibus poetis locum*) at *Epistle* 79.5 reminds us.^{lxxvi} Indeed, Claudian gestures to a rich heritage of Aetnaean descriptions in his initial portrayal of the volcano. And he is rising to the

challenge of adding to the tradition through his own work. Awareness of the *De Raptu*'s poetic self-consciousness prompts us to read Ceres' uneasiness about the notoriety of her hiding place close to the volcano as a nod towards literary tradition involving Aetna. With our knowledge of the epic's literary assertiveness, we are simultaneously encouraged to appreciate the *De Raptu*'s own individual contribution to the textual legacy of Aetna.

We can similarly take a metapoetic reading of the worries uttered at *De Raptu* 2.73–87 by a personified location (here understood to be Aetna at *DRP* 2.72, rather than Henna). Aetna hopes the Zephyr breeze will increase the abundance of its vegetation (*DRP* 2.78–9) and aid in the provision of enticing scents (2.81–5): it is concerned about having flowers worthy to be plucked by deities (*DRP* 2.86–7). The meadow is shown to have many flowers.^{lxxvii} And Claudian surely expected his reader to experience some surprise that this site is not Henna. Whilst the idea of picking flowers from the fertile area which surrounds a volcano is not itself problematic^{lxxviii} and the presence of flowers at Aetna is attested by, for example, Ausonius' reference to the rape,^{lxxix} prior to Claudian, there is no extant version of the myth with an Aetnaean setting *and* a sustained description of flowers. The (famous) narratives of Cicero and Ovid which do emphasise the flowers are ones which choose to locate the rape at Henna.^{lxxx} Appreciation of the fact that in the literary tradition Aetna is not as well-known as Henna for its flowers helps illuminate the anxiety present in the speech of the personified Aetna to Zephyr (*DRP* 2.73–87).

The motif of competing places is not uncommon in Latin literature, shown in the idea that certain lands are generally superior (as Italy in the *laudes Italiae* of Vergil's *Georgics*) or better for certain things (Gruzelier 1993: 177 on *DRP* 2.79f.). However, Claudian's emphasis on Aetna's desire to improve itself is notable. Aetna's wishes suggest the volcano aims to create a world-beating flower locale and this is reinforced by allusion to Vergil. Aetna wants not only all the fragrances gathered by the Phoenix but also the aromas of Panchaia and the

Indian river Hydaspes, which recalls Vergil's inclusion of Panchaia alongside Indian locations in the *laudes Italiae*.^{lxxxix} Whereas Vergil had suggested the pre-eminence of Italy by evoking renowned places that it is superior to, Zephyr conjures supremacy by gathering all the scents of places famous for their aromas. Aetna displays explicit concern about trumping another part of Sicily, Hybla, famous for its bee-attracting plants: "may you be willing that all the thickets flourish with produce, in order that fertile Hybla may be jealous and not deny that her gardens are defeated".^{lxxxii} Through the highlighting of Aetna's desire to excel, Claudian can suggest that it – like himself – also feels the need to compete with the more famous flowery location for Proserpina's abduction: Henna.^{lxxxiii} The evidence of Claudian's combative stance which scholars have detected in the *De Raptu* lends support to the position that Aetna was where Claudian placed the rape: there is more reason for competition when the site chosen for the deities' flower-picking is not associated with flowery abundance. The successful outcome of the plea, shown in the burst of fertility (*DRP* 2.90–1) and heightened colours of the flowers (2.92–3), suggests that both Aetna and the poet can be satisfied with the result. Claudian's literary assertiveness again comes to the fore.

To conclude, when considering whether Claudian placed the rape at Henna or Aetna without reference to manuscript readings, the balance of evidence weighs in favour of Aetna. We need not then worry about charges that the Aetnaean descriptions are superfluous and a sign of the structural incoherence which some critics have attributed to the poem. We can still appreciate the poem's engagement with Cicero and Ovid but understand this as taking place alongside a range of intertexts. The presence of one or two obvious intertexts should not prevent us searching for others nor should it stop us expecting modifications to the sources, something which we have shown to be part of Claudian's allusive practice. Setting the abduction at either Henna or Aetna would have enabled Claudian to include the kind of contrast involving landscapes which we have shown to be a motif of the poem. However,

adopting *Aetna* or *Aetnaeus* permits us to see Claudian dwelling, in a characteristic literary move, upon contrasts within a region (here Aetna). It also allows us to recognise that the poem, in an Ovidianizing move, plays off its Aetna against a famous place from the literary tradition (Henna) which is implicitly evoked. Assuming Aetna to be the site of the abduction enables us to examine certain passages of the *De Raptu* in a metapoetic light: it makes sense of the anxiety evident in the speech to Zephyr if this is delivered by the personification of a volcanic region (on one level, Claudian) worried about competing with the flowery meadow of Henna (or, its depictions in Cicero and Ovid). If we adopt Aetna, this allows us to better appreciate the self-assertiveness of the poem: Claudian's flowery meadow lives up to Aetna's wishes. Furthermore, substituting Aetna for Henna whilst evoking the literary Henna of Cicero and Ovid is a bold manoeuvre (and a typically Claudianic polemical correction of his sources). The tone of competitiveness sounded in the poem by, for example, Dis' combative pitting of Elysium against Proserpina's meadows can also be detected if we see Aetna as a landscape set up to rival a literary Henna, which is a more self-assertive and aggressive move than if we were to imagine Claudian writing his own Henna in response. The competition motif allows Claudian to aggressively and assertively react to his own belated position as a late antique poet of the Proserpina myth.

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ⁱ *HHD* 17. Literary versions may well have existed prior to the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.

ⁱⁱ See Strabo *Geog.* 14.1.45. Pluto and Proserpina were worshipped here (Str. *Geog.* 14.1.44).

ⁱⁱⁱ Richardson (1974), 148–50 provides a survey of locations.

^{iv} The timing of the *De Raptu*’s composition, which is generally agreed to have stopped before the end of 404 C.E., is much disputed: see Parkes (2021), 320, n.3. This article holds that composition started after the *Panegyric for Olybrius and Probinus* in January C.E. 395 (see Wheeler 2007: 98) and takes the reference to a time lapse at *DRP* 2. *pr.* 51 to indicate

delay in composition and an initial, separate circulation of books. Otherwise it leaves the question open.

^v For a Sicilian backdrop, see Richardson (1974), 76–7.

^{vi} The text is taken from Hall (1969); translations are my own.

^{vii} See e.g. Hall (1969), 200–201, on *DRP* 1.122, with multiple arguments in favour of Aetna, including the idea that Ovid’s contribution to the popularization of Henna helps explain scribal emendations of forms of Etna to forms of Henna (1969: 201); Charlet (1987: 25–9) (arguing for Aetna, a position maintained in Charlet 1991). A Henna location is defended by White (1997). Hinds (2016), 256–60; 263–4.

^{viii} At *De re rustica* 10.268–70 (c. 65 CE), Columella invokes the nymph-witnesses to Proserpina’s abduction: “who gathered the flowers of Sicilian Halaesus when Ceres’ child, intent on your dances, plucked the blooming lilies of the Hennaean plain” (*quae Sicani flores legistis Halaesi / cum Cereris proles uestris intenta choreis / aequoris Hennaei uernantia lilia carpsit*). It is unclear whether Columella uses *Hennaesus* loosely for “Sicilian” (for which see Roosjen (1996) on *Sil.* 14.50, noting especially *Luc.* 6.293–5) and situates the seizure at Halaesus, or whether, in an erasure of the geographical distance between Halaesus and Henna, he places the abduction at Henna.

^{ix} Sampson (2012), 90, n. 19. For an Aetna setting, see further the sources cited at Hall (1969), 201.

^x This is similar to the way that the Iron-age practice of sailing becomes inaugurated in Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica* (a poem which engages with Vergil’s *Georgics* where the focus is upon agriculture as a marker: Fabre-Serris 2017: 191). However, in Valerius Flaccus the invention comes late within the Iron age (Krasne 2018: 366).

^{xi} Although the poem portrays crops as a feature of Saturn’s age, they had then risen without interference: see Jupiter’s reference to corn swelling high “in uncultivated fields” (*incultis ...*

arvis) at *DRP* 3.24. Contrast Ovid's version of the myth at *Metamorphoses* 5.34–61, where despite the invocation of Ceres as giver of crops at *Ov. Met.* 5.342, Triptolemus' mission to spread agriculture seems almost an afterthought (cf. Nagle 1988: 108). The *De Raptu*'s unfinished nature means that its endpoint must remain a matter of speculation but for the assumption that the bestowal of grain and agricultural knowledge, which is promised by Jupiter's words, would have occurred in a fourth and final book, see Ryser (2020), 184–5.

^{xii} There is another instance of textual dispute involving Aetna or Henna in the case of the epithet for Ceres at *DRP* 1.122. Should this be, as the majority of manuscripts read, *Aetnaeae* (“Aetnaean”), referring to the tradition of Ceres' association with the volcano to light her torches (which *faces*, “torches”, at *DRP* 1.11 could gesture to)? One might cite in support Statius' use of *Aetnaeaeque Iuno* for Proserpina at *Stat. Silv.* 5.3.277, with Gibson (2006: 370) *ad loc.*, and note the defence of Moro (1999) 184, n. 38. Or should it be *Hennaeeae*, “Hennaean” (see the ingenious arguments from etymological play at Hinds 2016: 260)? This paper takes an agnostic view: unlike the other instances which are concerned with the location of the rape and hence need to be consistent, the case can be considered separately.

^{xiii} Citing the case of *Stat. Ach.* 1.825 where *Hennaeeas* should be preferred to the manuscripts' reading *Aetnaeeas*, Hinds (2016: 275, n.30) notes textual confusion and hence applies arguments such as geography, literary tradition, and contrasts.

^{xiv} See Hinds (1987), 44–7; Hinds (2016), 264.

^{xv} Hunter (1992), 11, n. 4. Hunter frames this in terms of staged literary antagonism towards the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*: Callimachus is focussing upon another location associated with Demeter.

^{xvi} See Hall (1969), 200 on *DRP* 1.122: “It is of course possible that *hic* refers vaguely to Sicily in general; but the more natural interpretation is to take it as referring to the mountain”.

^{xvii} *Fama*'s meanings of “rumour” (*OLD*, s.v. 2) and “renown” (*OLD*, s.v. 8) are both in play.

^{xviii} Notably, Ceres did not explicitly ask the island for silence in her speech to Sicily (*DRP* 1.194–200), in contrast to the Statian intertext for that speech at *Ach.* 1.386–7 (for use of the *Achilleid*, see Taisne 2001: 301). *DRP* 3.123 *taceri* (“be passed over in silence”) helps draw attention to a possible derivation of Enceladus (1.155 *Enceladi*) from a Greek word meaning “loud noise” (cf. Paschalis 1997: 175). The etymological potential may have been a factor in Claudian’s selection of Enceladus as the giant under Aetna, rather than Typhoeus (found, for example, at *Ov. Met.* 5.346–55). Cf. Garani (2009) 114, linking the *Aetna*’s choice of Typhoeus over Enceladus to the text’s emphasis on sound.

^{xix} Hall (1969), 200 on *DRP* 1.122.

^{xx} Cf. *HHD* 6–16.

^{xxi} By contrast, at *Metamorphoses* 5.388–90 Ovid only refers to trees in a general fashion, in order to conjure the shade expected of a *locus amoenus*. Through his depiction of the trees, Claudian can allude to the Iron-age practices of sailing and warfare: “fir suitable for the seas, cornel fit for war” (*DRP* 2.107 *apta fretis abies, bellis accommoda cornus*); for evidence of sailing in the world of the *De Raptu*, see also *DRP* 2.178, of the sound of Dis’ blow heard by “he who rows an alder-wood boat sent on the Po” (*missam ... Pado qui remigat alnum*). The combination of references to the “oak friendly to Jupiter” (*DRP* 2.108 *quercus amica Iovi*) and “the holm-oak full of honeycombs” (2.109 *ilex plena favis*) encourages us to think of Jupiter’s instigation of an acorn diet in lieu of Golden Age spontaneity which typically (cf. 3.25) included flowing honey.

^{xxii} For the *Eclogues*, see Gruzelier (1993: 189) on *DRP* 2.128ff. *Eclogue* 2 similarly has the narcissus (*Ecl.* 2.48), bilberries (*Ecl.* 2.17 *vaccinia nigra*, “black bilberries”; *Ecl.* 2.50; cf. *DRP* 2.92 *vaccinia nigro*); violets (*Ecl.* 2.47; *DRP* 2.93 and 2.129), lilies (*Ecl.* 2.45; *DRP* 2.128; cf. *DRP* 3.241); privets (*Ecl.* 2.17 *alba ligustra*; *DRP* 2.130 *alba ligustris*; cf. *DRP* 3.240). These are gathered in baskets (*Ecl.* 2.46 *calathis*; *DRP* 2.139 *calathos*; as also at *Ov.*

Met. 5.393 and *Fast.* 4.435). Furthermore, the verb *pingere* is found at *Ecl.* 2.50 and *DRP* 2.93 whilst the verb *intexere* occurs at *Ecl.* 2.45 and *DRP* 2.129.

^{xxiii} See Hinds (2016), 258–9.

^{xxiv} The detail is designed to bring out Aetna’s centrality to the poem: see Moro (2003), 131–2.

^{xxv} Note also *DRP* 3.438–40 where the poem rapidly transitions from a description of the searching Ceres’ movement away from Aetna to a reference to the rape site in a way that does not suggest a long distance such as would be between Aetna and Henna: “from Aetna first she undertakes her way and, cursing the flowers guilty of her ruin and the very place of the abduction” (*et prima gressus molitur ab Aetna / exitiique reos flores ipsumque rapinae / detestata locum*). See the comment of Hall (1969: 201) on these lines: “the clear implication here being that the Rape took place on or near Etna.” Notably Claudian diverges from *Ov. Fast.* 4.462 where Ceres begins her tracking from Henna: “and she begins from your plains, Henna” (*et e campis incipit, Henna, tuis*).

^{xxvi} See Cameron (1970), 265. For this assumption, see also Gruzelier (1993), 182–3 on how Claudian is influenced by the landscapes of Ovid and Statius, which are said to be “marked by the tendency to detach the scene from the context and subject it to ‘bravura rhetorical description’ (Curtius 195 f.)”.

^{xxvii} *DRP* 1.154–5 *numquam ... tacitura*, a phrase which helps bring out the potential etymology of the giant’s name from a Greek word meaning “loud noise” (for which, see above).

^{xxviii} Cf. *Verg. Aen.* 3.578–82 with Duc (1994), 60.

^{xxix} The source of the fire is traced to the activity of either subterranean winds (*DRP* 1.173–6) or waters (1.177–8).

^{xxx} For volcanic flammable detritus. see *Aetna* 386–536.

^{xxx} Gruzelier (1993), 120, on *DRP* 1.160ff.

^{xxxii} See also Parkes (forthcoming, 2023) on ecphrastic landscape descriptions in the *De Raptu*.

^{xxxiii} Cf. also Cameron (1970), arguing that Claudian reworked the infernal council of the *In Rufinum* in his *De Raptu* (negatively interpreted as “Ovidian vandalism”).

^{xxxiv} See Cazzuffi (2010), 137.

^{xxxv} Hinds (2016), 259. Cf. *planities* (“plain”) at Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.107 and *DRP* 2.102; *editus* (“high”) at Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.107 (*edito*) and *DRP* 2.102 (*edita*).

^{xxxvi} Hinds (2016), 261. Flowers from the abduction scene also look to other parts of the *Metamorphoses*. So, for example, at *DRP* 2.132–4, as well as gesturing to the presence of the narcissus in the *HHD* (Hinds 2016: 261), Claudian evokes the Ovidian narcissus of the *Metamorphoses* which had been located in *Metamorphoses* 3 (Hinds 2016: 262). Cf. Claudian’s reference to the hyacinth at *DRP* 2.131–4, the back-story of which is told at Ov. *Met.* 10.162–219.

^{xxxvii} See Hinds (2016), 263; 276, n. 40. Cf. von Albrecht (1989), 389; Ryser (2020), 304.

^{xxxviii} Cf. Clarke (1950-1), 5: “Claudian continually modifies what he borrows”.

^{xxxix} Hinds (2016), 258. Cf. *Met.* 5.385–6 *Haud procul Hennaeis lacus est a moenibus altae, / nomine Pergus, aquae* (“Not far from Henna’s walls is a lake, Pergus by name, of deep water”) with *DRP* 2.112–13 *haud procul inde lacus (Pergum dixere Sicani) / panditur* (“Not far from this spot extends a lake (the Sicani have called it Pergus)”). See also White (1997), 248.

^{xl} See e.g. Duc (1994) 62–3; Ware (2012) 185–6; Zanker (2017), 201–2.

^{xli} Cf. *DRP* 1.30–1 *unde datae populis fruges et glande relictæ / cesserit inventis Dodonia quercus aristis* (“from whence crops were given to people and, after the acorn was abandoned, the oak of Dodona made way for the discovered corn-ears”) with *G.* 1.148–9 *cum*

iam glandes atque arbuta sacrae / deficerent silvae et victum Dodona negaret (“when now the acorns and arbutes of the sacred wood began to fail and Dodona denied sustenance”).

^{xliii} Note also *DRP* 3.43 “wilderness” (*avia*); “forest lairs” (3.44 *silvestribus ... lustris*).

^{xliii} See Ware (2012), 171–2 on Claudian’s depictions of a localised Golden age in his political poems.

^{xliv} The echo is noted at Onorato (2021), 89. Perhaps the establishment of agriculture as advertised by the poem could lead to the opportunity to enjoy a new kind of Golden era which might be akin to the quasi-Golden age enjoyed by farmers in the *laudes Italiae* of *Georgics* 2.136–76 or the idealised farming life portrayed at *Georgics* 2.458–540 (for agriculture as a possible Golden-age feature, see e.g. the presence of agricultural labour at Calpurnius Siculus *Eclogue* 4.117–24 within the contemporary Golden age celebrated in that poem). Another possibility is that the future could involve *ars* of an artistic kind: see Ware (2012), 172 and 185–6 on the *De Raptu* as heralding a future move to a Golden age under Jupiter which involves *ars*.

^{xlv} For allusion to Valerius Flaccus in the preface of *DRP* Book 1, see e.g. Ware (2004), 184–5; Marrón (2011), 47–8. For the *De Raptu*’s engagement with Statius’ *Achilleid*, see Parkes (2015), 472–3.

^{xlvi} Ausonius *Mosella* 55–67: see Onorato (2008), 257, on *DRP* 2.114–17.

^{xlvii} With *DRP* 1.142–8, cf. Verg. *A.* 3.414–19 (Duc 1994: 60) and V. Fl. 1.589–90 (similar idea of water in the middle of mountains; note the use of the verb *rumperet* at V. Fl. 1.588, of the separation of Spain from the African mainland: Kleywegt (2005), 352 on V. F. 1.587b–90). With *DRP* 1.147–52, cf. Ov. *Met.* 5.350–1 and *Fast.* 4.419–20 (Gruzelier 1993: 116–17 on 1.142ff.). See also Duc (1994), 21–3 (on combinatorial imitation of Ovid and Silius at *DRP* 1.142–52).

^{xlviii} Ware (2006), 249, n. 111. In Ware’s view, the echo serves to suggest the Golden-age qualities of the location (which she takes to be Henna). However, it is telling that Vergil’s details of “land of Saturn” and “mother of crops” are omitted: under Ceres’ assurances at 1.197–200, a new Golden age and crops will only come if the land protects Proserpina.

^{xliv} Cf. Heintges (2021), 437, n. 34.

^l Cf. Gruzelier (1993), 128–9 on Claud. *DRP* 1.194ff.

^{li} See e.g. Hartman (2021), 94.

^{lii} See Peltari (2014), 6–7 (on the transgressive figure of the sailor in the preface to Book 1); 163 (reading the spider metapoetically).

^{liii} So, for instance, we compare Dis’ presentation of the underworld to Proserpina in Book 2 against his complaints to Jupiter in Book 1 (Parkes 2021: 330). For rhetoric in the *De Raptu*, see Parkes (2020).

^{liv} See Parkes (2021), 330.

^{lv} Although night seems to have accompanied her abductor’s arrival to the plains (*DRP* 3.235), Proserpina’s concurrent claim that her virginity is being denied (2.262) indicates that she is thinking of Orcus here.

^{lvi} For Dis’ reply, see Onorato (2008) on *DRP* 2.282–4; Parkes (2021), 330. Dis counters her prejudices: darkness will be in the form of tree-produced shade (*DRP* 2.290 *opacis ... lucis*, “shady groves”), a desirable feature of a *locus amoenus*.

^{lvii} Cf. the “soft slopes” (*DRP* 2.102 *mollibus ... clivis*) of Aetna.

^{lviii} See *DRP* 2.77–91 for Zephyr boosting the plains.

^{lix} Cf. *DRP* 2.285–6 *illic pretiosior aetas, / ... habitat* (“there lives a more precious age”).

^{lx} The text leaves it uncertain how such claims stack against a Golden age ideal and how much they will convince Proserpina. Some critics, such as Ware (2011: 26) and Zanker (2017: 201), have taken Dis’ assertion of a chthonic Golden age at face value. It is true that

Golden age elements are suggested by the picture of the celebrating underworld: see, for example, the presence of milk and wine at *DRP* 2.351–3 (Marrón 2007: 285) or the echo of Ovid’s reference to safe flight in the Golden age at *Met.* 15.99 (noted by Ryser 2020: 331) in the comment at *DRP* 2.348–9 that birds could pass Avernus. However, this is a temporary state of affairs.

^{lxi} A constant supply of apples would show the unusual fecundity associated with the Golden age. Cf., with Mankin (1995: 264) ad loc., Horace’s reference to the “bough of the never-failing olive” (*Epod.* 16.45 *numquam fallentis termes olivae*) in the Isles of the Blessed (in contrast to the usual biennial harvest of the olive) and the quasi Golden-age fertility of Verg. *G.* 2.150 (*laudes Italiae*) *bis pomis utilis arbos*, “twice the tree is profitable in its fruits.”

^{lxiii} Verg. *Ecl.* 4.30 “hard oaks will exude dew-drops of honey”, *durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella*. Cf. Claud. *In Ruf.* 1.383 “oak-woods will drip with honey”, *rorabunt querceta favis*.

^{lxiii} Contrast the more positive plenitude of Claud. *In Ruf.* 1.383–4 “everywhere pooling wine will flow”, *stagnantia passim / vina fluent*.

^{lxiv} See Heintges (2021), 433–4 for conflicting elements in Aetna’s portrayal.

^{lxv} For the *locus horridus*, see Guipponi-Gineste (2010), 63.

^{lxvi} Cf. *DRP* 1.237–45.

^{lxvii} Note, however, that the two sites are linked by the fact that the grove on the side of Aetna (*DRP* 3.334–5; cf. 1.161–2), where Ceres sources torchwood, has tree species in common with the plains (see fir at 2.107 and 3.349, cypress at 2.108 and 3.370, and oak, *quercus*, at 2.108 and 3.352). Heintges (2021), 447, n. 65 suggests the grove lies on the opposite side of the mountain to the meadows.

^{lxviii} See Parkes (2015), 484, on the simile of Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 5.343–9. The interpretation that an Aetnaean setting is intended in Valerius Flaccus’ reference to *Sicula sub*

rupe, is given credence by Statius' reworking of the phrase at *Achilleid* 1.824 (*Siculae sub rupibus Aetnae*, "beneath the rocks of Sicilian Aetna").

^{lxi} Cf. Diodorus Siculus 5.2.3, commenting on the blooming of flowers, including violets, at Henna throughout the year. It could also be that Claudian is responding to associations of Aetna with balmy weather, possibly as found in literature: the reference to year-round violets at Aetna at Plutarch *Moralia* 917F might suggest that a reputation for that area's mild climate had seeped into the literary tradition.

^{lxx} Verg. *G.* 2.149 "here spring is persistent and summer is in months that are not her own". Aside from the verbal echoes, Claudian's idea of mild weather even in winter is close to the picture in the *laudes Italiae* of the *Georgics*: Vergil, whilst gesturing to Golden age ideas, is conjuring clemency of weather, rather than suggesting seasons are actually longer (see Jenkyns 1998: 360; seasons could be attributed to the Golden age: cf. Aesch. *PV* 454–6). Hinds (2016: 269), conversely, focuses upon Ovidian engagement: "Venus disingenuously affects to be that unimaginable someone who at this point in literary history is *unaware of* Enna's fame as a *locus amoenus* and as a site of *perpetuum ver* (Ov. *Met.* 5.391)".

^{lxxi} Similarly, if we are prompted to think of the Ovidian Henna from *Metamorphoses* 5.390–1 when we come across Dis' reference to "ever-blooming flowers" (*perpetui flores*) at *De Raptu* 2.289, we might see Claudian pointing up the lasting power of the *Metamorphoses* description. For here Dis is competitively setting the underworld against the meadows experienced by Proserpina and his vision of this latter scenery could be influenced by his memory of the Ovidian Henna. Moreover, at *De Raptu* 2.285–6, just prior to this phrase, Dis has been suggesting that Proserpina will find a Golden age in the underworld and it may be that it is this aspect which could add special resonance to an Ovidian echo: for the phrase *perpetuum ver est* (*Met.* 5.391), which credits Henna with "perpetual" spring, recalls the "aeternal" spring of *Metamorphoses* 1.107 and hence associates Henna with a Golden age.

Cf. Ryser (2020), 304: “Since the “age of greater worth, a golden generation’ now dwells in the underworld, as Pluto states just before (1.285–6), it is not surprising to find its “everlasting spring” in the nether regions as well.” Behm (2019), 336–7 makes a connection between Ovid’s Golden Age and his ever vernal Henna.

^{lxxii} Cf. Hall (1969), 201: “the *herbosus vertex* (II.72) is obviously not the main summit of the mountain (cf. 1.106ff.) but the crest of one of the smaller hills in the vicinity”; *DRP* 2.72 *curva ... in valle* (“in a curved valley”).

^{lxxiii} So Hinds (2016), 257.

^{lxxiv} Cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.107 *est loco perexcelso atque edito, quo in summo est aequata agri planities*, “[Henna is] in a lofty and high place, on the top of which is a levelled plateau of land”; Diodorus Siculus 5.3.2.

^{lxxv} Cf. *OLD* 23, s.v. *locus*; a literary reading is supported by the detection by Hinds (2016: 268–9) of an allusion to Verg. *G.* 3.4 *omnia iam vulgata* (“everything has already been published”).

^{lxxvi} Cf. Ceres gliding down to the “ridges of well-known Aetna” (*notaeque iugis ... Aetnae*) at *DRP* 3.330 (there with especial metaliterary reference to the tradition that the goddess lit her torches in the volcano).

^{lxxvii} Cf. *DRP* 2.92–141; 3.232–3; 3.240–41.

^{lxxviii} Soil from the slopes of a volcano and the valleys at the bottom can be highly fertile once lava decomposes and gives up nutrients such as sulphur.

^{lxxix} Cf. Auson, *Epistles* 13.49, Green: *floricoma ... in Aetna* (“Aetna crowned with flowers”). For further references, see Hall (1969), 201; Charlet (1987), 28–9.

^{lxxx} Cf. Hinds (2016), 258 “[Henna] is where all the flowers are to be found in the mainstream Latin tradition of the myth (Ovid, preceded by Cicero)”. It is, of course, possible that versions dwelling on flower-gathering at Aetna have disappeared.

^{lxxx}i Cf. *DRP* 2.81 *quidquid turiferis spirat Panchaia silvis* (“Whatever Panchaia breathes from her incense-bearing trees”) with *V. G.* 2.139 *turiferis ... pinguis harenis* (“rich with incense-bearing sands”). Cf. reference to the Ganges at *V. G.* 2.137 and “Indians” at *G.* 2.138 (*Indi*).

^{lxxx}ii *DRP* 2.78–80 *nunc omnia fetu / pubescant virgulta velis, ut fertilis Hybla / invidet vincique suos non abnuat hortos*. For Hybla, see *DRP* 2.124–7.

^{lxxx}iii Hinds (2016: 268), commenting on *DRP* 3.118–21, declares “the very tradition of praise for the flowery meadow can now be felt to *invade the plot*.” In my reading, a tradition of praise for the floral plains of Henna affects Aetna’s speech.