would fail utterly and become a laughing-stock, if he arrived without any of the right remedies and had to spend several days finding, or buying from local pharmakopolai of unknown reliability, the drugs he would be using. L. Edelstein has well shown the supreme importance of reputation to the Hippocratic physician,[9] and has suggested that the aim of the first part of *Airs, Waters, Places* is to enable him to appear clever on arrival in an unfamiliar city, through knowing, like Sherlock Holmes, all sorts of things about local conditions without having to ask the natives.[10] Deichgräber, I think correctly, has argued that Edelstein has been misled by Rufus of Ephesus and is mistaken here;[11] but of the general importance of reputation to the Greek—not only to physicians—there can be no doubt. The day on which the latest itinerant expert arrived would be a critical day for his reputation, and the psychological advantage of being fully prepared to start work at once would be very great. By studying *Airs, Waters, Places* the wandering physician could ensure such preparation; his success, one might say, would be in the bag.

PETER BRAIN
Durban, South Africa

9. *Ancient Medicine* (Baltimore, 1967), p. 76.
10. Quoted in K. Deichgräber, *Die Epidemien und das Corpus Hippocraticum* (Berlin, 1971), pp. 113–14.
11. Ibid., p. 114.

AENEAS AND THE GATES OF SLEEP

Sunt geminae Somni portae, quarum altera fertur
cornea, qua ueris facilis datur exitus umbris,
altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto,
sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia Manes.
his ibi tum natum Anchises unaque Sibyllam
prosequitur dictis portaque emittit eburna.

[*Aen.* 6. 893–98]

From the time of Servius onward the significance of Aeneas' departure through the gate of ivory has baffled attempts at precise explanation. The most recent commentator, R. G. Austin, concluded a judicious discussion with the despairing words "the matter remains a Virgilian enigma (and none the worse for that)."[1] But Virgil, though often elusive, does not seem to have indulged in gratuitous mystification (discounting places where the unfinished estate of his epic has left questions unresolved). Where it matters most, the import of the *Aeneid* can be clearly made out, and so it is—or so at least it seems to me—with Aeneas' departure from the Underworld. This paper aims first to set out briefly the conditions that appear necessary for understanding the passage and then to offer a new proposal for its interpretation.[2]

The first assumption to be made is that the lines *do* mean something and are not

I am grateful to Sir Roger Mynors and Professor R. G. M. Nisbet for helpful criticism.
1. *P. Vergili Maronis "Aeneidos" liber sextus* (Oxford, 1977), p. 276.
2. Other interpretations are sensibly reviewed by Austin; see, too, B. Otis, "Three Problems of *Aeneid* 6," *TAPA* 90 (1959): 173–79; H. R. Steiner, *Der Traum in der "Aeneis"* (Bern, 1952), pp. 91–94; and A. Grillone, *Il sogno nell'epica latina* (Palermo, 1967), pp. 34–36.

just a tantalizing display of picturesque detail. This assumption gains support from the position of the passage, at the conclusion of the poem's central episode. The internal arrangement of the lines also commands attention: a *descriptio loci* of four lines (893–96) is followed by only two lines of direct narrative (897–98), the unusual proportions throwing added weight onto the final lines. Within this concluding section the postponement of *eburna* increases anticipation even further. Everything about the passage is designed to call attention to it and in particular to its conclusion. The calculated prominence of Aeneas' departure makes it possible to rule out Norden's idea that Aeneas leaves by the ivory gate because it is not yet midnight, the time when true visions first venture forth from the Underworld.[3] A similar objection can be made to the more reasonable suggestion of Austin, that Aeneas, not being a true shade, can only leave by the gate of false visions.[4] If either of these was all that Virgil intended to convey, then he blundered badly by clothing trivial sense in a form that arouses expectations of greater significance. Imputation of failure to the author should be the critic's last resort, and so these approaches may be provisionally set aside. Austin's interpretation raises two further objections. First, Aeneas is no more a *falsum insomnium* than he is a *uera umbra*, so it is, strictly speaking, no more appropriate for him to use one gate than the other, unless one imagines a more rigorous border inspection at he Gate of Horn than at the Gate of Ivory, a touch of realism not alien to other parts of Virgil's Underworld (cf. 373–74, 391–94) but fatally incongruous here. Second, the use of the Homeric gates of dreams as a means of departure from the lower world for living persons seems to be Virgil's own idea; it is not traditional, unless it figured in a lost *catabasis*. Virgil would hardly have introduced it only to paint himself into the corner Austin describes.[5]

The second axiom needed for a proper approach to the passage has been well stated by Austin: "no direct equation is made between such users of the Ivory Gate [*sc.* the *falsa insomnia*] and the travellers who are now sent out by it."[6] The gates exist for the use of two categories of Underworld residents: *uerae umbrae*, the "real shades" of the dead who occasionally appear to the living, as for example the shades of Hector, Creusa, and Anchises appear to Aeneas earlier in the poem (2. 270–97, 2. 771–94, 5. 722–40), and *falsa insomnia*, "deceiving visions" in the shape of persons living or dead, such as the fantasies of Aeneas that haunt Dido (4. 9, 4. 465–66). Aeneas belongs to neither category and no expenditure of critical ingenuity will turn him into a *falsum insomnium* in the literal sense.[7]

It is reasonable to conclude that these lines convey a meaning of some importance and that this meaning is suggested rather than directly asserted. The posi-

3. This view is now generally rejected, but Austin and R. D. Williams (*Virgil: "Aeneid" I–VI* [London, 1972], p. 516) carry skepticism too far in doubting whether this was a common belief in Virgil's day: a belief mentioned by Horace (*S.* 1. 10. 33) and Ovid (*Her.* 19. 195) can hardly have been unknown to Virgil.

4. "Anchises . . . cannot send his living visitants out through the Gate of Horn, since they are not *uerae umbrae*. The Gate of Ivory was his only choice" (*"Aeneidos" liber sextus*, p. 276).

5. These objections (excepting that of faulty logic) can also be made to the view of N. Reed ("The Gates of Sleep in *Aeneid* 6," *CQ* 23 [1973]: 311–15) that Aeneas and the Sibyl leave by the Ivory Gates because they are "false shades," i.e., not genuine residents of the Underworld.

6. *"Aeneidos" liber sextus*, p. 276.

7. For a recent attempt, cf. E. C. Kopff and N. M. Kopff, "Aeneas: False Dreamer or Messenger of the *Manes*? (*Aeneid* 6. 893 ff.)," *Philologus* 120 (1976): 246–50.

tion of the lines makes it likely as well that they bear on Aeneas' journey through the Underworld and in some way clarify its significance. One interpretation that meets these conditions but that cannot be accepted is the suggestion, made most recently by Otis, that Aeneas' experience in the Underworld is itself only a dream, a psychological rather than a physical event.[8] The objections to this are in part formal: the *Aeneid* contains several dreams of Aeneas, but the visit to the Underworld is quite unlike them; it is inconceivable that Virgil, or any ancient writer, would reveal the status of an episode of this kind only in its closing words, and not even then in a clear way. In addition, since Otis explicitly rejects any suggestion that the content of Aeneas' experience is false, nothing seems to be gained by the notion that Aeneas only imagines rather than sees the Underworld.

The oblique connection of Aeneas and *falsa insomnia*, however it operates, must have a negative effect; the associations of deception, illusion, and unreality are disturbing, even ominous. This view of Aeneas' departure might seem to clash with the glorious vision of Roman history which Anchises has revealed to his son, but it is important to recall that Anchises' prophecy does not end with the triumph of Augustus, but with the early death of Marcellus. The fate of the young man is lamented at such length and with such violence of emotion that the rest of Anchises' prophecy, containing the instructions for which the entire journey was made, is thrown into shadow: the book ends in an atmosphere of muted grief (note, for example, the absence of direct speech after 886). In this respect it resembles the four preceding books, each of which ends with the loss of someone close to Aeneas.[9] The phrase *sociosque reuisit* (899) invites backward glances of this kind, recalling two earlier occasions when Aeneas returned from a shattering personal experience to find his ships and men waiting, a visible reminder of his mission and destiny.[10]

W. Clausen has interpreted the conclusion of the sixth book in the light of Virgil's depiction of Roman history as "a long Pyrrhic victory of the human spirit."[11] Rome's achievements are given their full value, but so are the attendant suffering and loss. Aeneas' departure through the gate of false dreams, then, would hint at the limitations imposed by mortality on all individual striving and expectation.[12] This seems essentially correct, but a crucial step still needs to be taken to show how these overtones actually work, since it seems impossible to go directly from Virgil's *falsa insomnia* (especially as part of a pair with *uerae umbrae*) to our "false dreams" in the sense of unattainable hopes or ambitions.

Virgil insists on the distinction between *true* shades and *false* visions and in some way associates Aeneas with the latter. By what criterion is Aeneas appropriately classed with the false or unreal? Put thus, the question finds a ready answer: by the criterion expounded in Anchises' own speech on the soul's purification in the afterlife (724–51). That authoritative account, the central revelation of the entire Underworld journey, speaks of the body, in language familiar from

8. Otis, "Three Problems," pp. 176–77; cf. G. Pasquali, *Orazio lirico* (Florence, 1920), p. 579, n. 1; J. Henry, *Aeneidea*, vol. 3 (Dublin, 1889), p. 457.

9. Cf. 2. 730–95 (Creusa), 3. 708–15 (Anchises), 4. 693–705 (Dido), 5. 835–71 (Palinurus).

10. Cf. 2. 795 "sic demum socios consumpta nocte reuiso" (after the loss of Creusa), 4. 396 "iussa tamen diuum exsequitur classemque reuisit" (after his last interview with Dido).

11. "An Interpretation of the *Aeneid*," *HSCP* 68 (1964): 146.

12. This sentence attempts to put into words a thought that seems implicit in Clausen's concluding paragraph.

Plato, as the soul's prison, the source of those emotions that cloud the soul's vision and infect it with vices and impurities; note in particular 730–34:

> igneus est ollis uigor et caelestis origo
> seminibus, quantum non noxia corpora tardant
> terrenique hebetant artus moribundaque membra.
> hinc metuunt cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque, neque auras
> dispiciunt clausae tenebris et carcere caeco.[13]

Commentators have remarked that Anchises' words bear a particularly close resemblance to a passage in the *Phaedo* (66B–C) in which Socrates defines the body as a hindrance to the soul's search for truth, since the body "fills us with all sorts of distractions, lusts and desires, with fears and fantasies of every kind" (cf. 733 "hinc metuunt cupiuntque dolent gaudentque").[14] For both Socrates and Anchises the body is the source of illusion and deception: "neque auras / dispiciunt clausae tenebris et carcere caeco" (733–34); what the souls lose through imprisonment in the body is later called *aetherius sensus* (747). In the light of Anchises' teaching (fully endorsed, it would appear, by the poet), Aeneas' implied connection with phantom *insomnia* makes sense: as a living person, Aeneas belongs to the corporeal realm and is tainted by its false emotions; the world from which he has come and to which he will shortly return is in this respect not more, but less real than that of the blessed spirits. The contrast between illusion and reality was drawn in different terms in the early part of Aeneas' Underworld journey, where it is precisely Aeneas' body that marks him as "real": "et ni docta comes tenuis sine corpore uitas / admoneat uolitare caua sub imagine formae, / inruat et frustra ferro diuerberet umbras" (292–94; so, too, at 413–14). The reversal of values brought about by Anchises' speech is a logical result of Virgil's method in this book of juxtaposing several conceptions of the Underworld in order of ascending sophistication.[15]

It would be wrong to suggest that the outlook of the *Aeneid* is consistently Platonic, any more than it is consistently Stoic or Epicurean; instead, Virgil seems to have found Plato's view of the physical world as a mere shadow of a purer world a useful structure of thought by which to express his own sense of the evanescence of mortal aspirations. This awareness, however, coexists with an equally strong feeling that the mission of Aeneas will have a permanent and beneficent influence on human history. In the passage under discussion, Aeneas appears as a human being with all of man's tragic limitations; elsewhere (particularly in Book 8), the founder of Rome assumes a nearly divine stature. Both views are authentically

13. On the Platonic and Pythagorean associations of these lines, see most recently E. L. Harrison, "Metempsychosis in *Aeneid* Six," *CJ* 73 (1977–78): 193–97.

14. Ἐρώτων δὲ καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν καὶ φόβων καὶ εἰδώλων παντοδαπῶν καὶ φλυαρίας ἐμπίμπλησιν ἡμᾶς πολλῆς. . . . Plato's εἴδωλα may bear more than a verbal resemblance to Virgil's *falsa insomnia:* the εἴδωλα are connected with disorderly emotions, and in Virgil's only other reference to *insomnia* (*Aen.* 4. 9), it is clear that Dido's disturbed emotional state has produced the phantom apparitions. (Note, too, 4. 465–66, where Dido's conflicting emotions provoke nightmare visions of Aeneas, and 4. 556–70, where Virgil seems to hint that Mercury's second appearance is a projection of Aeneas' own guilt and fear at his treatment of Dido.)

15. Cf. F. Solmsen, "The World of the Dead in Book 6 of the *Aeneid*," *CP* 67 (1972): 31–41, esp. 33 (although Solmsen is rightly skeptical of a neat tripartite scheme).

Virgilian, and the success with which the *Aeneid* embodies them both is a mark of its greatness.

The advantage of the reading here proposed is that it draws only upon what Virgil himself has chosen to emphasize; the connection suggested between the manner of Aeneas' departure and Anchises' description of the afterlife helps to explain the mood of reflective melancholy that many readers have noticed in the book's ending.[16] For the purposes of argument it has been necessary to treat as something approaching a proposition what is really no more than a veiled hint, but it is often the critic's task to spell out what poets can leave powerfully implicit.

R. J. TARRANT
University of Toronto

16. Fletcher, for example, aptly compares Prospero's "we are such stuff as dreams are made on."