

JUPITER AND THE FATES IN THE *AENEID*¹

A. INTRODUCTION

'Vergil lässt keinen Zweifel darüber, dass in Wahrheit das Fatum nichts anderes ist als des höchsten Gottes Wille.' Thus Heinze, apparently following an observation by Servius *auctus*, and in turn generally followed by scholars who have subsequently considered the nature of the *fata* in the *Aeneid*.² But questions concerning the interpretation of the *Aeneid* are rarely simple; and the question of Jupiter's relationship to the *fata* may repay further enquiry.

Passages in the poem which reveal the will of Jupiter are not frequent. The grand design which Jupiter unfolds to Venus at the outset is a matter, not of his *uoluntas*, but of his *sententia*—the word is so used by Venus no less than himself (1.327,260). Jupiter does appear to abet the final destruction of Troy; he does send Mercury to Aeneas at Carthage, and the ghost of Anchises to him in Sicily; and at the end of the poem he does say to Juno, 'ulterius temptare ueto', and in consequence of this exchange with Juno he dispatches the Dira to confound Juturna and Turnus.³ But when Jupiter appears to Aeneas at Troy, he is merely hastening what is quite inevitable anyway—that Aeneas should realize this is exactly why Venus points out Jupiter to him. The sending of Mercury and of the ghost of Anchises might, as is so frequently the case when mortal is visited by immortal in the *Aeneid*, be demythologized; in each case Aeneas might anyhow have been psychologically ready for the actions that Jupiter's emissaries enjoin upon him. The final god-scene of the poem I consider below. These four passages hardly amount to an impressive or comprehensive demonstration of what the will of Jupiter is; and yet they are almost all that we have to go on.⁴

One notes also in the *Aeneid* a number of surely crucial arrangements that are not explicitly connected with Jupiter at all. He does not appear in the poem's introduction; and so it is not to him that are ascribed the arrangements for the future course of history that have enflamed Juno's animosity—'sic uoluere Parcas' (1.22). In unfolding his *sententia* to Venus, Jupiter does appear to assume responsibility with, 'his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono: imperium sine fine dedi'; but he continues with a colourless impersonal expression—'sic placitum' (1.278 f., 283). And when the shade of Palinurus is chided, 'desine fata deum

¹ Throughout this paper I am greatly indebted to Mr. Charles Whittaker, of Southampton University. Mr. D. A. Russell, of St. John's College, Oxford, has also kindly read an early draft of the paper.

² Heinze, *Virgils epische Technik*⁵ (Stuttgart, 1965), p. 293; Serv. *auct.* to 4.614, 'fata: dicta, id est Iouis uoluntas'—cf. Norden to 6. 45 ff. and 376. Cf., e.g. Bailey, *Religion in Virgil* (Oxford, 1935), pp. 215 ff.; Büchner, *Der Schicksalsgedanke bei Vergil*, *Wege der Forschung* 19 (Darmstadt, 1966), pp. 274 f.; Klingner, *Römisches Geisteswelt*³ (Munich, 1956), p. 240.

³ 2.617 f.; 4.222 ff.; 5.726; 12.806 ff.

At 4.110 f. Venus is sometimes taken to be saying, '... uncertain of the fates, as to whether Jupiter wishes . . .',—cf. Boyancé, *La Religion de Virgile* (Paris, 1963), p. 52; Wagenvoort, *Gnomon* 41 (1969), 281. But to take *fatis* with *incerta* like this appears impossible—*TLL.*, sv. *incertus*, cites comparable language only from Tertullian; and an alternative translation is available, which neither strains language nor makes any equation between Jupiter's will and the *fata*—cf. Austin ad loc.

⁴ The council of the gods at the beginning of *Aeneid* 10 I consider below.

flecti sperare precando', the ordinances which he has sought to contravene, those which regulate the passage of the souls across the Styx, have not been ascribed to Jupiter; the expression has again been impersonal, 'nec datur. . .' (6.376,327).

In the face of this general reticence throughout the poem on the subject of Jupiter's will, the proposition that fate is the will of Jupiter requires further investigation if we are to understand what is being proposed. To the passage quoted at the start of this paper Heinze adds a footnote citing seven passages in support of his view; but though *fatum* occurs in all of these passages, none mentions the will of Jupiter.⁵ What may be called the official view, that fate is the will of Jupiter, faces fresh difficulties with a number of passages where the word *fatum* is used and where it is difficult or impossible to imagine that anything is being said about the will of Jupiter. Thus, it hardly seems clear by the official view what Venus means by the expression, 'fatis contraria fata rependens'; Juno flatly opposes the *fata Phrygum*, which presumably, although Juno does not say so, do have something to do with the will of Jupiter, to 'fatis nostris'; and when Euander cries, 'contra ego uiuendo uici mea fata,' one cannot believe that this pious and simple man, distraught by grief though he here is, is calling into question the arrangements of Jupiter.⁶ *Fatum* is connected with the gods, undoubtedly,⁷ and with the king of the gods most of all; but to establish the exact nature of the connection seems to require further enquiry into Vergil's text.

B. 'Rex Iuppiter omnibus idem: / fata uiam inuenient'⁸

Vergil's use of Homer is part of his apparatus of communication. The evocation of the original provides a way into Vergil's new scene; and, thus awakened, the reader's attention is quickened when, as in his single council of the gods, Vergil has no sooner evoked Homer than he violently departs from him.⁹ The Homeric councils end one and all with a clear and authoritative statement of intent from Zeus; here Jupiter begins by recalling that he had forbidden the war in Latium,¹⁰ but at the end he not only allows the war to continue, but pledges his own impartiality while it does so. What rationale underlies Jupiter's un-Zeus-like behaviour? How are his final two clauses to be interpreted?

⁵ The first three of Heinze's passages are from Aeneas' narrative to Dido, where we would hardly expect to find statements about the will of Jupiter.

⁶ 1.239; 7.293 f.; 11.160—cf. n. 13 below.

For all its powerful emotion, Euander's lament over Pallas is impressive in its simple dignity and statesmanlike wisdom—aspects in which it may be instructively contrasted with the outbursts of parental distress of Euryalus' mother and Mezentius at 9.481 ff. and 10.846 ff. Euander's tears are not to be misunderstood; they ennoble rather than discredit him—see Rieks, in Albrecht and Heck (edd.), *Silvae: Festschrift E. Zinn* (Tübingen, 1970), pp. 183 ff.

⁷ The word is not in the vocabulary of Mezentius, the *contemptor diuum*. A complete catalogue of the problem-passages concerning *fata* should include 8.397 f., where Vulcan appears to profess that he

had been quite at liberty to interfere in the course of the Trojan war had he chosen to.

⁸ 10.112 f. The ensuing discussion will show why I prefer a colon to the full-stop commonly written at the end of 112.

⁹ Theocritus had been used similarly in the *Eclogues*—cf. Skutsch, *BICS* 18 (1971), 26 ff.. For the Homeric originals of Vergil's council, see Klingner, *Vergil . . .* (Zürich—Stuttgart, 1967), pp. 567 f. Different from this *para prosdokian* use of the original is the technique whereby Vergil recalls Homer and allows the reader to supply from his knowledge of Homer details which Vergil leaves out; cf. Knauer, *Die Aeneis und Homer* (Göttingen, 1964), pp. 286 ff.

¹⁰ But, despite *abnueram* and *uētutum* at 10.8 f., Jupiter has foreseen the war at 1.263 ff. Cf. Thornton, *The Living Universe: Gods and Men in Virgil's Aeneid*, *Mnemosyne* Suppl. 16 (Leiden—Brill, 1976), 123 f.

'Rex Iuppiter omnibus idem' is translated by Day Lewis, 'I am king to all, and impartial'. But if that is what Jupiter means here, both his language and thought seem wayward—surprisingly so when one considers the conspicuous clarity of his thought and expression whenever he speaks elsewhere in the poem. If 'Iuppiter' is here subject, and 'rex' and 'idem' both predicates, Jupiter's word-order is strange, and his asyndeton almost bizarre; and as his last verb was in the future, 'ferent', we might expect that tense rather than the present for the verb that he omits here. Furthermore, Jupiter has just said that he *will be* impartial—'Tros Rutulusne fuat, nullo discrimine habebō'. Why then should he continue to talk of his own impartiality at all? We should surely expect 'rex Iuppiter omnibus idem' to be, not a repetition of 'nullo discrimine habebō', but some sort of development from it.

At *G.* 3.244 Vergil had written 'amor omnibus idem'. The procedure must be used with care;¹¹ but can this linguistically similar expression clarify what Jupiter is saying at the council? In the *Georgics* Vergil cannot be saying, 'Love is the same for all'; for the magnificent passage that follows portrays the different ways in which the different animals give expression to their possession by the power of Love. The meaning rather is, 'All alike feel the power of Love'; and so, if there is an analogy with *A.* 10.112, Jupiter might be saying, 'All alike feel the power of king Jupiter', or rather, since this expression is preceded by one verb in the future tense, 'ferent', and succeeded by another, 'inuenient', 'All alike will feel the power of king Jupiter'. But by such a translation 'rex' is otiose. Jupiter is here speaking with great care, as the striking disposition of this line shows. After a full-stop at the penthemimeral caesura, 'rex Iuppiter omnibus idem' fills up the rest of the line with no further caesura, and with diaeresis and coincidence of ictus and accent in each of the last three feet. This is also the only place in the poem where Jupiter makes reference to his kingship. He cannot be using 'rex' otiosely; and I therefore suggest the translation, 'The kingship of Jupiter will make itself felt to all alike'.

If this is right, then 'fata uiam inuenient' ought to mean, 'The fates will find a way whereby the kingship of Jupiter will make itself felt to all alike.' Such an expression needs further clarification; let us test the proposed translation by considering whether it is apposite, first to the scene in which it appears, and then to Jupiter's stance in the poem as a whole.

Jupiter's experience at this council is very much like some of Cicero's experiences in Cilicia. He calls the council in the serene belief that he has only to get the warring parties round the conference-table for a solution of their differences to emerge spontaneously; but in the course of the council this belief is cruelly disappointed. When Jupiter begins by saying of the war 'abnueram' and 'uetitum', it looks very much as though he is thinking of some at-a-stroke solution of the sort that Zeus prescribes in the *Iliad*. But as he hears the goddesses through, he is forced, as the characters of the *Aeneid*, divine no less than human, are so often forced, into a reassessment of the immediate situation. Venus and Juno bring home to him the full extent of the differences that still remain between the Trojans and the Italians; and while they are speaking Jupiter comes to realize that the at-a-stroke solution for which he had originally hoped would be premature. Reconciliation at this stage, the goddesses have caused him to realize, would be at too low a level; were he now, in the style of Zeus, to impose his own solution,

¹¹ Cf. Austin's cautious note to 2.54.

then this solution, in the style of Zeus' imposed solutions, would meet with the most modest and short-lived success. When Jupiter begins his final speech, 'quandoquidem Ausonios coniungi foedere Teucris/haud licitum', he is giving the minutes of the meeting so far—it has not proved possible to effect a reconciliation.¹² And when he continues by pledging his own neutrality, he is not abnegating responsibility, but presenting his constructive policy for the interim situation. His own non-intervention now is the necessary condition for the present differences ultimately to resolve themselves. The human combatants must be allowed to discover for themselves, through their experience of the continuing war, that Jupiter's original view of the war, that it is 'infandum', is the correct one; and thus there will one day be possible the reconciliation that has not proved to be possible at the present stage. When Jupiter says, 'rex Iuppiter omnibus idem', he is talking neither of his will nor of any physical power he may possess; rather he is talking of his understanding, and of how the human characters will be brought by their own experiences to acknowledge and share his understanding—this is how his kingship will make itself felt. And when he says 'fata uiam inuenient', he is expressing his unique confidence in the rationality and ultimate intelligibility of the processes of history. He uses the word 'fata' as, I would suggest, the divine and human characters throughout the *Aeneid* use it, to express his interim understanding of history.¹³

Jupiter is thus very like Kutuzov, Russia's commander against Napoleon, as he is represented by Tolstoy: "Patience and time are my two valiant allies!" He knew the apple was better not picked while it was still green. It would fall of itself when ripe, but if you pick it green you spoil the apple, and the tree, and set your teeth on edge.' Kutuzov has a simple faith in Russia, and Jupiter a less simple one in the ultimately perceptible rationality of the processes of history; and for each this faith gives a higher perspective, which enables them to ride out the day-to-day setbacks that the course of history presents. Like Kutuzov, Jupiter 'knows that there is something stronger and more important than his own will—the inevitable march of events, and he has the brains to see them and grasp their significance, and seeing that significance can abstain from meddling, from following his personal desires and aiming at something else.'¹⁴ The human action of *Aeneid* 10 begins, immediately after the council is over, with Aeneas' entry into the war; and in view of the course which the action takes from there until the end of the poem it is clearly appropriate that it should be preceded by

¹² I would likewise suggest, 'It has not proved possible', as the translation of 'haud licuit' in Dido's notoriously puzzling 'degere more ferae' sentence at 4.550 f.

¹³ When Euander says, 'contra ego uiuendo uici mea fata', he is saying that it is contrary to his experience of history for fathers to outlive their sons; and when Juno speaks of 'fatis contraria nostris/fata Phrygum', she is contrasting her own hopes for the future course of history with the official, pro-Trojan version—cf. n. 6 above. The difficult and disputed 4.696, 'nam quia nec fato merita nec morte peribat', I would regard as Juno's way of looking at things; in her scheme for the

future course of history the premature death of Dido had had no place.

In considering the nature of the *fata* in the *Aeneid*, I find Tolstoy's observations on the words, 'chance', and, 'genius', illuminating. These words, he says, 'do not denote anything that actually exists', but 'merely indicate a certain degree of comprehension of phenomena'; their use is forced upon us by our ignorance of the purposes of history—Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, trans. Edmonds (Harmondsworth, 1957), pp. 1342 f.

¹⁴ Tolstoy, op. cit., pp. 1213, 886—cf. pp. 956 ff., 1285 ff.

an affirmation by Jupiter of the ultimate rationality of the processes of history. But how well does the suggested interpretation stand up to examination against the remainder of the poem?

C. THE REMAINDER OF THE POEM

Two passages from *Aeneid* 12 appear at first sight to discredit what has so far been said. When Jupiter says to Juno, 'ulterius temptare ueto', is not this just the Zeus-style laying-down of the law that we have suggested he purposively avoids at the council? And when Turnus says, 'di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis', does this not show that Jupiter has now abandoned the impartiality that he promised at the council?¹⁵ In fact both passages confirm rather than discredit what has been said.

(i) In the final god-scene Jupiter's tone to his wife is one of sympathy and respect. 'Precibus . . . inflectere nostris' is anything but Zeus-like; and when Jupiter says 'ulterius temptare ueto', this is presented, not at all like a Zeus-type ordinance, but rather as a conclusion to be drawn from an assessment of the present situation. Juno has tried all she can, but still events have remorselessly proceeded in favour of Jupiter's interpretation of history, and against her own. Turnus and his men are now *uicti*; 'uentum ad supremum est'. 'Uterius temptare ueto' is a recognition of inevitability; 'fata uiam inuenerunt'.

And this is just how Juno takes Jupiter's words. She talks immediately of Jupiter's *uoluntas*, and addresses him, uniquely, as *magne*;¹⁶ but she does not talk of herself bowing meekly and uncomprehendingly before his will—rather, she says that she has already begun to adjust her position because Jupiter's *uoluntas* has become 'nota' to her. Jupiter's kingship, that is to say, has made itself known to her, in the way that Jupiter had foreshadowed at the Council; and Juno's conversion is a matter, not simply of obedience, but of Juno's developing knowledge—events have proved Jupiter right and herself wrong. The consummation of Juno's understanding-process, and of the divine action in the poem, is this recognition by Juno of Jupiter's kingship.

It is interesting that this recognition occupies almost exactly half of Juno's speech, while the remainder is occupied by a request that Juno begins by describing as 'nulla fati quod lege tenetur'¹⁷—a request that takes Jupiter by surprise,¹⁸ but which he nevertheless readily grants. Vergil's proportions are part

¹⁵ 12.806, 895.

¹⁶ At 10.606 ff., though already *summissa*, Juno is not yet ready to recognize Jupiter's authority. The tortuous word-order of 12.808 f. makes clear what an effort her present recognition is costing her. *Saturnia* in 807 is perhaps meant to direct us to the heart of Juno's difficulty; a child of Saturnus, she has been obliged to watch the collapse of the Saturnian world before the world of Jupiter.

¹⁷ Recognition—808—18; request—819—28. Exact equality would be achieved by the often proposed rejection of 817 (cf. Warde Fowler, *The Death of Turnus* (Oxford, 1919),

pp. 141 ff.), but that is not in itself a reason for rejecting it. Vergil often gives us proportions which are significant without being mathematically exact—cf. Heinze, p. 6, on the divisions of the *Iliupersis*. How far Vergil's proportions are also a function of purely aesthetic considerations of the sort that Duckworth has suggested it is, of course, no part of this paper to consider.

¹⁸ Jupiter's use of *uictus* at 12.833 may be compared with Anchises' use of the same word at 2.699. Anchises, like Jupiter here, has been surprised by the latest course of events and he is forced into a drastic reassessment of the present situation.

of his means of communication; here, Juno's request is no less important than her recognition—the request is the constructive step forward from the recognition. Juno's sympathetic involvement in the human action has enabled her to see, not only Jupiter's *uoluntas*, but also the limits within which the course of events has made future developments inevitable. The request that the Trojan culture should be submerged beneath the native one is no small matter; but Juno realizes that it is perfectly possible within the pattern that events have now begun to assume—'nulla fati quod lege tenetur'—and she no sooner puts her request to Jupiter than he realizes this too. Already Juno is engaged, as Jupiter has been engaged throughout this poem, on the constructive interpretation of history; already she has begun to assume the role that was literally at the heart of Jupiter's original prophecy to Venus¹⁹—

his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono:
imperium sine fine dedi. quin aspera luno,
quae mare nunc terrasque metu caelumque fatigat,
consilia in melius referet, mecumque fouebit
Romanos, rerum dominos gentemque togatam.

(ii) Turnus' 'di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis' is to be taken in the same way; events have made him aware of what he had not been aware of before. Throughout the action Turnus' vision has repeatedly been blurred—by Allecto's firebrand, by Juno's device of the phantom Aeneas, by the intervention of Juturna. The intercession of Sacas was an important moment in restoring proper vision—'ut primum discussae umbrae et lux reddita menti' (669); and now, with Juturna gone, he sees things as they really are. He recognizes the inevitability of the confrontation with Aeneas that he has been shunning since he killed Pallas, as Juno has recognized the inevitability of the triumph of Aeneas' cause. Events, he sees, are against him; and so, 'di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis'. Turnus is beginning to feel the kingship of Jupiter, because his own experiences are beginning to come together into a pattern in his mind.

Vergil invites comparison of Turnus with Mezentius by putting the deaths of each at the end of the books in which their principal *aristeiai* appear. What Mezentius says is, in its own way, magnificent—'ast de me diuum pater atque hominum rex/uiderit' (10.743 f.); 'dextra mihi deus et telum' (773); and, as he finally faces Aeneas, 'nec mortem horremus nec diuum parcimus ulli' (880).²⁰ But, as the last of these quotations makes clear, the *contemptor diuum* lacks the breadth of view that Turnus comes to as he cries, 'di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis'. Mezentius is almost animal-like in the simplicity and narrowness of his

¹⁹ Jupiter's prophecy is 1.263–96, i.e. 34 lines. The lines quoted in the text are 278–82. It is common to spot verbal similarities between the first and the last god-scenes of the poem—cf. Buchheit, *Gymnasium* 81 (1974), 499 ff.; the understanding of the one is enriched by reference to the other.

²⁰ The whole Mezentius-sequence at the end of *Aeneid* 10 is so fine that it surely deserves more critical attention than it has

yet received. What I find particularly interesting are: the totally different Mezentius that Aeneas finds at close quarters from the simplistic long-range view he had received from Euander at 8.481 ff.; the way in which, as he dies, Mezentius quite puts Aeneas to shame (as, by entirely different means, Turnus also does); and Aeneas' numbed horror at the beginning of *Aeneid* 11 as he ponders what he has done in killing Mezentius.

vision.²¹ Lausus and his horse are all that matter to him; he is totally unaware of the wider issues that the war in Latium raises and of the larger, Olympian figures whom it also involves. Had anyone talked to Mezentius of *fata* he would have neither known nor cared what they were talking about. But Turnus, immediately after the intercession of Saces, cries, 'iam iam fata, soror, superant . . .'²² He is using 'fata' as Jupiter had used it at the council, to designate his understanding of history. And that, indeed is how the word is used throughout the *Aeneid*. The Sibyl chides Palinurus, 'desine fata deum flecti sperare precando' (6.376), because he has failed to understand his position in history. He has died unburied, and so Aeneas cannot carry out the request that Palinurus has just made of him; with 'desine fata . . .' Palinurus is being required to recognize the inevitable, as Juno and Turnus come later to recognize it. Later in the same book Deiphobus, a more princely and wiser figure than the helmsman Palinurus, is asked the cause of his brutal disfigurement, and he replies—

me fata mea et scelus exitiale Lacaenae
his mersere malis . . .

The *αἰτία*, Helen's treachery; the *ἀληθεστάτη πρόφασις* Deiphobus' *fata*. With a simplicity that is stunning in view of his ghastly appearance, Deiphobus accepts, as Palinurus had not, the position that history has found for him;²³ and he brings the scene to an end with the hope that history will be kinder to Aeneas than it has been to him—'melioribus utere fati' (546). Deiphobus has some understanding of history; and so he talks of *fata*, as Mezentius does not.

D. CONCLUSION

What led Vergil to divinities and a divine action of this sort? Consideration of Vergil's own experiences, both of history and of the writing of poetry, may suggest some answers.

(i) *The Eclogues and the Georgics*

It is perhaps unwise to press the proem of *Georgic* 3 too hard for evidence of Vergil's literary intentions at the time:²⁴ but we may safely say that in what Vergil there sketches the absence of any divinities is a remarkable feature when we compare the form that the *Aeneid* finally took. But the absence of divinities from the proem of *Georgic* 3 is not unduly surprising; for, save in a single passage

²¹ From what Euander says of him at 8.481 ff., I infer that Mezentius had grown up in the world of Saturnus. Turnus is younger than this. Mezentius' 'Kill and be killed' morality is the same as that shown by the warriors of *Aeneid* 2—hence, no doubt, the recurrence in that book of similes already used in the *Georgics*. What is here said of Mezentius' limited vision could also be demonstrated for Camilla.

²² 12.676; the whole of this speech is crucial to understanding the change that hearing Saces has wrought in him and how he

is now pointed towards 'di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis'.

²³ Dante preserves these aspects of Vergil's scene in his reworking of it in the Jacopo Rusticucci episode at Canto XVI of the *Inferno*—cf. vv. 43–45.

²⁴ These literary programmes always tend to be shadowy affairs—cf. Ogilvie to Tac. *Agr.* 3.3. On the proem to *G.* 3 see Büchner, *RE* 15.2.1291 ff.; Klingner, op. cit. at n. 9, pp. 278 ff.; Buchheit, *Der Anspruch des Dichters in Vergils Georgika* . . ., *Impulse der Forschung* 8 (Darmstadt, 1972), pp. 77 ff.

to be considered shortly, the three great deities of the *Aeneid* make no significant appearance in Vergil's earlier work at all. Some consideration of why Jupiter, Juno, and Venus do not appear in the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* may be helpful in establishing why they do appear in the *Aeneid*.

Whatever view one may take of the precise dating of the various *Eclogues*,²⁵ it is agreed that the simpler poems, the ones that most nearly retain the idyllic serenity of their Theocritean originals, are early, and that as Vergil goes on things become more complicated. The collection begins with Corydon and Alexis, Menalcas and Damoetas, shepherds who sing their way through to a sort of shepherdly wordly wisdom; it ends with the dispossessed farmers, and with the grotesque rituals of *Eclogue* 8, the outcome of which turns on its head the poem's original. In what is confessedly the final poem of all, the original is again turned on its head, in that it is not now the mythical Daphnis, but Gallus, the man of history, to whom Arcadia is shut and whom the gods of Arcadia, Pan and Apollo, are powerless to help. Like his shepherds, Vergil is made wiser by his poetry; but his wisdom is at this stage no more than a deeper awareness of problems that appear to have no solution. In this respect Vergil's experience of composition is exactly analogous to his experience of history. His hopes of the Peace of Brundisium were clearly high, yet within months these hopes had been dashed, and the political situation seemed more intractable than ever.

The *Georgics* are begun in a flash of enthusiasm. In the work's introduction Octavius, and in the immediately following myth of *labor improbus* Jupiter, appear as persons who solve, or at least have it in them to solve, problems.²⁶ Jupiter, here making his one significant appearance in Vergil's earlier work, is the providential planner, who has deliberately created the difficulties of the farmer's life, that the farmer may by his gathering experience overcome them. It is commonly agreed that in reworking this well-known *topos* Vergil has gone far beyond all earlier versions in the *Arbeitsethos* that he represents Jupiter as having constructed to encompass the whole of the farmer's life.²⁷ Vergil has discovered a rationale underlying the farmer's life, and to describe this he introduces Jupiter. We may say that it is his excitement over this discovery, plus his excitement over the emerging position of Octavius, that gave impetus to the writing of the *Georgics*; solutions seem at last to be beginning to appear.

But the excitement did not last; and, as with the *Eclogues*, Vergil's experience of writing was once more a deepening awareness of massive problems. For all

²⁵ Hardie, in ch. 8 of Levick (ed.) *The Ancient Historians*. . . (London, 1974), seems to me to argue persuasively for the restoration of the conventional dating; one might perhaps add that, when Tityrus sings, 'deus nobis haec otia fecit', there is surely no guarantee that Vergil necessarily agrees with him. With what is here said of the *Eclogues* cf. Büchner, *Vergil: Dichtung und Chaos*, at pp. 461 ff. of *Mélanges Boyancé* (Rome, 1974).

²⁶ Vergil's recurrent search for a *Heilbringer* is emphasized by Klingner in his essay on the unity of Vergil's work—op. cit. at n. 2, pp.

256 ff. (= *Röm. Mitt.* 45 (1930), 43 ff.). Büchner, *RE* 15. 2.1271 f., stresses that G. 1.118 ff. is to be taken with the poem's introduction. The difficulties that have been felt over *improbus*, on which see Richter, *Vergil: Georgika* (Munich, 1957), ad loc., are surely groundless. *TLL.*, sv., lists Vergil's usage at G. 1.146 under the heading, 'de eo, quod modum excedit, i.q. immensus'; this is how his *labor* appears to the farmer.

²⁷ Cf. Richter, op. cit., p. 136; Ruiz de Elvira, *CFC* 3 (1972), 9 ff.

its *allegro con brio* opening, the *Georgics* are ultimately a 'rhythm of dark and light'.²⁸ Already by the end of *Georgic* 1 we have cataclysm and catastrophe, and the work ends with the monstrous punishment of Orpheus, by human standards quite disproportionate to his crime. The closely observed description of the social life of the bees is surely written with one eye on the contemporary collapse of Rome's social and political institutions; and the only figure in the whole work who has found a solution to the problems of existence is a solitary old farmer tucked far away from the *latifundia* of Italy (4.125 ff.), who resembles the figures Aeneas meets during his wanderings in the 'uobis parta quies' nature of his life, far off the beaten track of history. It is not difficult to see how the ambivalence of the *Georgics* reflects the ambivalence of the times in which they were written. For all Octavius' gathering command of the western empire, no final political solution was possible while Antonius was still at large.

(ii) *The Aeneid*

Jupiter plays little part in the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, Juno and Venus none at all; the three dominate the *Aeneid*. Why this change?

I take it that the *Aeneid* arose out of Vergil's deeper thinking into the battle of Actium. He was excited by the battle the moment it happened; but the *Aeneid* did not take its final shape until Vergil had begun to see the *weltgeschichtliche* significance of Actium. The battle became a point in history somewhat similar to Teilhard's Omega Point—a point towards which the previous events of history were seen to have been leading, and by reference to which they fell into shape, and became retrospectively intelligible. The previous events were seen as the necessary prelude of Actium; and Vergil also saw his experience of the previous events as the necessary prelude to his understanding of Actium—just as, through Jupiter's providence, the farmer's experience of difficulties had been the necessary prelude to his overcoming them. In the *Aeneid* Vergil, it seems to me, aims to convey both the nature of his post-Actium understanding of history and the manner in which he has acquired it. Throughout the poem gods and men alike grapple with the problem of the intelligibility of history;²⁹ the conviction of the potential intelligibility of history is the development in Vergil's thought that enables him at last to introduce the Olympian deities into his poetry.

There is nothing at all simplistic or deterministic about Vergil's approach to the problems of the intelligibility of history. When he asks at the beginning of the poem, 'Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?', and at the end of it, 'tanton placuit concurrere motu, Iuppiter, aeterna gentis in pace futuras?' (1.11, 12.503 f.), these are surely quite genuine questions, ones to which Vergil would dearly like to know the answers. When Anchises surveys the future heroes of history, he finds himself on firm ground only while he sees Aeneas' immediate descendants and the line that leads from them to Augustus—much the same ground, that is, as that covered by Jupiter in his prophecy to Venus. Once Anchises looks further than this, he is confronted by such characters as the first consul Brutus, Pompey and Caesar, and then, through the curiosity of his son, the younger Marcellus—

²⁸ Büchner, *RE* 15.2.1319 f.

²⁹ I hope to write elsewhere on the human characters in the *Aeneid* and the intelligibility of history. Turnus' 'di me terrent et Iuppiter

hostis' is a moment when he begins to understand history as he had not understood it before.

characters where his understanding fails him.³⁰ But Actium has made history potentially intelligible; and it is because of this potential intelligibility that Vergil introduces the *fata* into his poem. When Jupiter unveils the *fatorum arcana* at the beginning of the poem, what he gives is the overall direction of history, the minimum that is necessary for history to become intelligible—hence, Vergil's anxiety to bring it in at the outset; and when characters acknowledge the *fata*, as Deiphobus and Turnus do in passages already considered, they are saying that a portion of history, history as it affects them, has become intelligible to them. A part of history has assumed a pattern for them; and so they use 'fata' to designate their awareness of this pattern. In the case of Deiphobus, who has no future to look forward to—'explebo numerum reddarque tenebris' (6.545)—the pattern comprises no more than his present position as it is the upshot of his previous experience; but for Turnus the pattern has prospective reference as well—his new insight into the logic of his experience so far tells him that it is now time to rid himself of Iuturna.

But the humans' apprehension of the *fata* is, of course relatively short-term and egocentric. For all the stunning candour with which Deiphobus apprehends his own *fata*, as far as Aeneas' are concerned he can only make well-meaning and well-informed guesses—'i, decus, i, nostrum . . . melioribus utere fatis'. Turnus sees that the logic of events is driving him inexorably towards confrontation with Aeneas, and he has no illusions about the result of such confrontation; but he cannot see the confrontation in its *sub specie aeternitatis* aspects, as Jupiter and Juno can.³¹ What distinguishes gods from men is their broader vision; they have at least the potential ability to grasp the *fata* over a far larger range, both of space and of time. No human would presume to designate anything as 'nulla fati quod lege tenetur'; Juno is able to do so because her sympathetic involvement in the human action has finally driven her to accept the pattern of prospective history that Jupiter enunciated at the outset of this action. And Jupiter, no less than she, is continually obliged to make adjustments in his short-term understanding of history; we have seen how at both the council and in the final god-scene events take him by surprise and force him into a reassessment of the present situation. The distinctive role of Jupiter is to preside over the genesis of the understanding-process among gods and men alike, and his distinctive characteristic is his unique confidence that this process will come to birth—'fata uiam inuenient'. His interventions in the poem are so few because intervention would cut short

³⁰ How far Vulcan understands history it is not possible to say. The shield is made with tremendous speed; and Vulcan's choice of subjects seems to be made on aesthetic grounds—what will make a good artefact—rather than intellectual ones. It is interesting to consider how the tone of the show of heroes and of the shield conforms to that of the books in which they each appear—they are as different from one another as *Aeneid* 6 is different from *Aeneid* 8. The one is to the other, perhaps, as Wagner is to Mozart.

The tortured agonizing of the show of heroes comes across very clearly when com-

parison is made with Justinian's majestic review of history at *Paradiso VI*.

³¹ This is perhaps particularly noticeable when in his final breath Turnus says, 'uicisti et uictum tendere palmas/Ausonii uidere'. That the Ausonians should have seen Aeneas' victory is very important to the Jupiter—Juno scheme of things, as it is a necessary condition of the Ausonians voluntarily accepting the consequences of Aeneas' victory. But that is not at all what Turnus means; he means no more than, 'As the Ausonians have seen your victory already, do not press it home by killing me.'

the understanding-process; Juno etc. must come to understanding for themselves, through their own experience of history—exactly as Vergil came to his own post-Actium understanding. Jupiter intervenes only when the necessary minimum that he had sketched to Venus is in danger of non-fulfilment.³² He sends Mercury to Aeneas at Carthage lest Aeneas fail to reach Italy at all; he sends Anchises to him in Sicily because the spiritual reorientation that Aeneas undergoes in the Underworld is a necessary prelude to the tasks that face him in Italy.³³ But otherwise he leaves the poem's characters to find understanding for themselves; and as they find it so they will acknowledge him. 'Rex Iuppiter omnibus idem: di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis'.

Vergil's divinities are each a rich tapestry of many different strands;³⁴ and at any one appearance one strand may predominate to the exclusion of the others. But the strand that I have here concentrated on may perhaps be regarded as the most distinctively Vergilian one, and the one that exercises the most effect over the *Aeneid* as a whole. That Juno, for example, resembles Hera is surely less central to the poem than that throughout the course of the poem's action she comes to acknowledge and share Jupiter's understanding of history. It is by the divine action proceeding along the lines that have here been considered that Vergil has healed the Aristotelian dichotomy of poetry and history. Vergil is at pains to give his narrative the appearance of historical verisimilitude; and the events of the *Aeneid* have the *τὰ καθ' ἑκαστον* quality which Aristotle predicated of historical events. Nothing could be more wayward, diverse, and confused, for instance, than the sequence of events in which Aeneas is involved after his mad rush into the fray on the last night of Troy. But as these events are received by the divine mind, and are there sifted and interpreted in relation to the long-term pattern of history, so each event begins to assume the *τὰ καθόλου* qualities of poetry.

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³² His first dispatch of Mercury to Carthage at 1.297 ff. may be a precaution that Aeneas come to no harm there. But it follows so immediately on the Venus-scene that it may perhaps be little more than a gesture to Venus (which she fails to accept in the manner intended).

³³ It is interesting to consider how far Aeneas' experiences in the Underworld are intended to direct him towards the same ideals of statesmanship as Tolstoy represents

in Kutuzov. Vergil surely did not write *Aeneid* 6 before he had pondered long over what made Augustus the man that he was. Livy has not thought so deeply in giving his account of Hannibal's leadership at 21.4.3 ff.

³⁴ Attempts to disentangle the different strands have been made, for Juno by Lieberg, *A & R* 11 (1966), 145 ff.; for Venus by Wlosok, *Die Göttin Venus in Vergils Aeneis* (Heidelberg, 1967).