

## THE SACRIFICE OF PALINURUS

The account of the death of Palinurus at the end of *Aen.* 5 raises to a higher level of importance a figure who has previously seemed very much a minor character in the *Aeneid*. This is achieved partly by the narrative brilliance of Virgil's account of his destruction by Somnus, and partly also by the atmosphere of solemn mystery which surrounds his fate. This solemn note is first struck in the passage which directly prepares the way for Palinurus' death. At *Aen.* 5.779 Venus, anxious that Juno's wrath may still prevent the safe arrival of Aeneas in Italy, appeals for help to Neptune. He reassures her. Aeneas will arrive safely. There is, however, one condition:

unus erit tantum amissum quem gurgite quaeres;  
unum pro multis dabitur caput. (5.814–15)

Neptune's words are deliberately oracular and elevated in tone. Palinurus is not named but is surely the *unus* and the *unum caput*.<sup>1</sup> The book ends with the account of how Somnus descends, overpowers the resisting Palinurus and throws him into the sea. Palinurus disappears at night, unseen by his comrades. Aeneas is unaware of his loss until he senses the ship drifting. In the last lines of the book Aeneas laments the steersman's fate and comments, pathetically inappropriately as it seems in view of Palinurus' earlier indignant refusal to trust the elements (848–51), that Palinurus died through overconfidence in calm sea and sky.

Palinurus' next appearance in the poem is in *Aen.* 6 where in the underworld he gives Aeneas an account of his own death which differs substantially from the one given by Virgil himself as narrator in *Aen.* 5. The problems presented by these discrepancies are well known.<sup>2</sup> I am not, however, concerned directly with these problems, but rather with the issues which arise out of the passage in *Aen.* 5 itself. Two questions in particular are puzzling. First, why is it Palinurus who is chosen to die?<sup>3</sup> Second, why is a sacrifice necessary at all?<sup>4</sup>

In considering whether Palinurus in some way deserves to die one must bear in mind the curious point often noted about the narrative in *Aen.* 5 – Virgil stresses, both by the authorial *insonti* (5.841) and by his account of what actually happened, that Palinurus is innocent, yet Aeneas is made to blame Palinurus for his fate. Commentators put Aeneas' final judgement down to 'tragic' or 'poetic' irony.<sup>5</sup> There may perhaps be more to the matter than that. Virgil seems to raise a question about

<sup>1</sup> The view that two lives, those of Palinurus and Misenus, are meant here goes back to Servius *ad loc.*

<sup>2</sup> For a list of the apparent discrepancies see *Aen.* 5, ed. & comm. R. D. Williams (Oxford, 1960), p. xxv. These have been frequently discussed. See now T. Berres, *Die Entstehung der Aeneis* (Wiesbaden, 1982), pp. 250–81.

<sup>3</sup> C. Bandera, 'Sacrificial Levels in Virgil's *Aeneid*' (*Arethusa* 14 (1981), 217–39) argues (p. 224) that 'in principle it does not make any difference which one among the many is selected for sacrifice ... all individual differences become irrelevant.' He sees a random choice of victim in such cases of sacrifice in the *Aeneid*.

<sup>4</sup> 'It is never clear why Neptune needed a sacrifice ...' (F. E. Brenk, 'Unum pro multis caput, Myth, History and Symbolic Imagery in Vergil's Palinurus Incident' (*Latomus* (1984), 776–801)).

<sup>5</sup> 'tragische Ironie' Berres, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 257; 'poetic irony' Williams *ad loc.*

Palinurus' character which demands investigation. Is Palinurus as innocent as *insonti* suggests?<sup>6</sup> Is Aeneas entirely wrong in his final judgement?

It may of course be argued that Neptune, in demanding the steersman's sacrifice, is asking only a small price for the Trojans' safe arrival in Italy. The sea journey is virtually over and the steersman is therefore no longer needed. His sacrifice can be seen as paralleling the burning of four ships by the Trojan women using fire from Neptune's four altars (*Aen.* 5.604ff.). These ships too are no longer needed since their former passengers and crew are to remain in Sicily. Both the ships and Palinurus are therefore 'sacrificed' to Neptune at the end of the voyage. Their destruction indeed symbolises the end of that voyage.<sup>7</sup> Given that the burnt ships are now superfluous Aeneas' despair at *Aen.* 5.720 lacks any purely factual justification. So too Palinurus' loss has no practical importance and may indeed be contrasted in this respect with the loss of other steersmen in the poem where more serious consequences follow. Thus at *Aen.* 1.113ff. the Lycian ship lost in the initial storm sinks when the steersman is swept overboard. At *Aen.* 5.223–4 Gyas' ship fails in the race precisely because the steersman has been thrown overboard by the impetuous captain. In that case Virgil makes his disapproval of Gyas' action plain – he acts *oblitus decorisque sui sociumque salutis* (5.174). One might also contrast Palinurus' death with that of his Homeric counterpart Phrontis at *Od.* 3.278ff. Phrontis of course merely dies – there is no question of a sacrifice – and this difference in itself would strike a reader of the *Aeneid*. The death of Phrontis, however, delays Menelaus in spite of his eagerness to continue the journey. Palinurus' death in contrast is explicitly said not to delay the fleet – *currit iter tutum non setius aequare classis/ promissisque patris Neptuni interrita fertur* (5.862–3). Can we therefore simply see the sacrifice as comparatively unimportant in practical terms and Palinurus himself as merely some kind of symbol of the past sea voyage, to be discarded once that voyage is over?

Although there is certainly truth in this view it leaves some important questions unanswered. The account of Palinurus' death in *Aen.* 5 makes it clear that he is not to be seen as a steersman and nothing more. He is presented in his role as steersman as one who possesses certain qualities or failings. If the characteristics which he embodies are no longer needed we are still left with the problem of what these characteristics are and how we should view them. Is Palinurus an admirable figure – perhaps one of those sympathetic individuals destroyed in the fulfilment of Rome's destiny – and does *insonti* point to the moral injustice involved in his death?<sup>8</sup> Alternatively is he to be seen as embodying incorrect or outdated values? The question of whether he is guilty or innocent assumes some importance.

### Palinurus and Aeneas

Some light may be thrown on the role and character of Palinurus if he is compared with his 'doubles' both within the *Aeneid* itself and elsewhere in ancient literature (a procedure which may be used to illuminate other characters too in the poem).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 'But was Palinurus guiltless? If, as we suggest, he was tired of the fruitless voyage, horrified by the callousness of Aeneas, by the disasters which he seemed to attract by his rowdy games, by the ultimate burning of some of the ships by the angry women – that act unforgivable in the eyes of a man of the sea, – then was his disappearance as accidental as Aeneas supposed?' Cyril Connolly, *The Unquiet Grave*, Epilogue.

<sup>7</sup> So e.g. W. Kuhn, *Götterszenen bei Vergil* (Heidelberg, 1971), p. 92.

<sup>8</sup> So A. J. Boyle, *The Chaonian Dove* (Leiden, 1986), pp. 120, 161–2.

<sup>9</sup> For characters in the *Aeneid* as 'new versions' of characters in earlier literature see now R. O. A. M. Lyne, *Further Voices in Vergil's Aeneid* (Oxford, 1987), esp. ch. 3.

Palinurus has points of contact with steersmen in Homer and Apollonius. He also owes something to the Homeric Elpenor. Yet perhaps the most important point about him is his close resemblance in some particulars to Aeneas himself. This parallelism is entirely natural in view of the crucial statesman simile at *Aen.* 1.148ff. which directly links Neptune's calming of the sea and the calming of a passionate mob by the *pious* statesman. This significant initial simile should therefore prepare the reader to expect that Aeneas, the budding statesman, may in some way correspond to the *gubernator* who has a close relationship to Neptune – addressed by Palinurus as *pater* at *Aen.* 5.14 and claiming Palinurus at the end of *Aen.* 5. Clearly there will be differences between the two. Palinurus operates in the world of natural elements – storm, calm etc., Virgil is concerned with his competence as a steersman, his technical skill in coping with the sea and the weather signs in the sky. His deeper moral character does not seem to come into question – the issue of his guilt or innocence only relates to his steersmanship. Aeneas, however, operates on a higher plane.<sup>10</sup> In his case it is his moral character and emotional state of mind which are important. Virgil focuses on his emotional reaction to crises. We might therefore expect to find moral failure in Aeneas balancing technical failure or incompetence in Palinurus and moral courage in Aeneas set beside competence and certainty in Palinurus.

That Virgil intends a parallelism of this kind can, I think, be seen from a comparison of the first two appearances of Aeneas in the poem with the first two appearances of Palinurus. Aeneas is first seen in the initial sea-storm at *Aen.* 1.92ff. before the Trojans' landfall in Africa. He is in the depths of despair and wishes he had died at Troy. Following his speech the storm actually worsens. Palinurus too first appears in a storm (*Aen.* 3.192ff.) just before the landing on the Strophades. He is unable to distinguish day from night and does not remember the course to steer. Consequently the Trojans wander blindly for three days and three nights. Thus the *dux* in the first passage and the *gubernator* in the second are alike at a loss. A further link between the two figures is provided by the Homeric antecedents of these two storms. The storm in *Aen.* 1 has correspondences with *Od.* 5.291ff. and 12.407ff. In *Od.* 5 Odysseus is washed overboard from his craft after his despairing speech (299ff.). Aeneas however suffers no harm following his Odyssean outburst (94ff.). Instead the steersman of the Lycian ship perishes and his drowning and the loss of the Lycian ship itself are described in language echoing elements in Homer's account of Odysseus' shipwreck.<sup>11</sup> Here therefore a steersman is substituted for Aeneas himself, since it is Aeneas who would have been washed overboard had the Homeric pattern been exactly followed at this point. The steersman is, as it were, a sacrifice in place of the leader (which in itself suggests a relationship between the figures of *dux* and *gubernator* in the poem). *Od.* 12.407ff. describes the storm following the episode of the Sun's cattle. Odysseus' steersman in the stern is struck by the mast and hurled overboard like a diver.<sup>12</sup> This passage, however, not only contributes to the storm in

<sup>10</sup> Putnam comments 'Fighting for what in his own terms he (Palinurus) thought was right, he must yield to a higher fate and a different world' (M. C. J. Putnam, *The Poetry of the Aeneid* (Harvard, 1966), p. 98). Putnam sees Palinurus as symbolising a need for seafaring which passes with the arrival in Italy. I shall argue, however, that, more importantly, he symbolises a flawed way of life. I cannot see that 'Palinurus... must die *by virtue of* (my italics) the knowledge (of the sea) and loyalty he symbolizes.'

<sup>11</sup> *Aen.* 1.114 *ingens a uertice pontus...ferit*, cf. *Od.* 5.313 *ἔλασεν μέγα κύμα κατ' ἄκρης*. *Aen.* 1.116–7 *illam...torquet agens circum*, cf. *Od.* 5.314 *περὶ δὲ σχεδὴν ἐλέλιξε*.

<sup>12</sup> *Od.* 12.413 *ὁ δ' ἀπνευγῆρι εἰοικῶς | κάππεσ'*, cf. *Aen.* 1.115 *excutitur pronusque magister uoluitur in caput*. The precise description of how the steersman falls *pronus...in caput* seems to reflect the Homeric comparison to a diver.

*Aen.* 1 but is even more closely paralleled by the storm in *Aen.* 3 when Palinurus first appears. Palinurus is not to die yet – but that he should make his first appearance in this ‘Homeric’ storm in which his counterpart, Odysseus’ steersman, drowns is perhaps ominous. Homer thus provides a complex link between Palinurus and Aeneas himself reinforcing the parallelism suggested by the situations and attitudes of the two characters in their initial appearances.

If the first appearances of Aeneas and Palinurus in the poem present the two figures at moments of despair and failure, their second appearances provide a strong contrast. When the Trojans arrive in Africa Aeneas is now more resolute and decisive. He suppresses his inner grief and anxiety. Instead of looking backwards to Troy he encourages his men to look to the Italian future (*tendimus in Latium* 1.205). His positive attitude contrasts markedly with his previous despair. At 3.513 Palinurus too is now on land. He rises *haud segnis*, studies the sky and, seeing the weather signs are set fair, summons the Trojans to put to sea. At 522 Italy is sighted and the significance of the moment is stressed by the triple *Italiam* (523–4). Thus as Aeneas’ more positive mood leads him to look to Italy, so Palinurus confident competence leads directly to the sighting of Italy itself. Palinurus’ clear vision at 513ff. is in direct contrast to the blindness and uncertainty prevailing at his first appearance.

This presentation of contrasting moods (whether inside individuals or in pairs of individuals) can be paralleled elsewhere in the poem. One instance of this which throws some light on the figure of Palinurus is *Aen.* 5.709ff. After the ship-burning Nautes and the ghost of Anchises give essentially the same advice to Aeneas. Nautes, however, focuses on themes such as old age, weariness, loss of ships, fear of danger and the need to leave the weaker Trojans in Sicily. He tells Aeneas:

... quo fata trahunt retrahuntque sequamur;  
quidquid erit, superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est. (709–10)

This advice reduces Aeneas to despair. Yet the same counsel expressed in positive terms – young men, courage, the journey to Italy and the challenge of war which awaits there – has precisely the opposite effect. Aeneas recovers his confidence and offers sacrifice to Lar and Vesta. In particular it should be noted that, as Nautes opened his speech with advice about the need to endure *fortuna* and to acquiesce in being dragged back and forth by *fata*, so Anchises ends with the promise of knowledge about the future:

tum genus omne tuum et quae dentur moenia disces. (737)

Although Palinurus himself does not appear in this passage it can be argued that Nautes’ words are relevant to understanding Palinurus’ relationship to Aeneas. Nautes’ negative and demoralising language – however sensible his advice may in fact be<sup>13</sup> – echoes Palinurus’ own advice to Aeneas at 5.17ff. There in the face of a storm Palinurus advises that the Trojans give up making for Italy and instead seek refuge in Sicily, an easier goal:

... superat quoniam Fortuna, sequamur,  
quoque uocat uertamus iter. (22–3)

Aeneas’ reply acknowledges that they should go where the winds take them (*sic poscere uentos/ cerno* 26–7) and he sees Sicily as the ideal haven for weary ships (*fessas*

<sup>13</sup> When Anchises refers to Nautes’ *consilia* as *pulcherrima* (728) he surely implies only that the advice given is sound from a practical point of view. He says nothing as to the significance of the language in which this advice is couched as an indication of the speaker’s possible attitude of mind.

*naues* 29). Nautes too will stress the weariness of those who are to remain in Sicily (715, 717). Palinurus, therefore, has links with Nautes. His kind of advice may be practical enough from the viewpoint of the pilot. It is, however, less satisfactory in the mouth of Nautes when it is directed to Aeneas as he grapples with the question of whether or not to abandon his destined mission. On that higher plane such counsel drives Aeneas to distraction (*in curas animo diducitur omnis* 720).<sup>14</sup>

One problem must be considered here. Nautes advises following where *fata* drag, while Palinurus talks of following *Fortuna*. Is there a distinction between *fata* and *Fortuna* at this point? Determining the ways in which Virgil uses these terms in the *Aeneid* is a major difficulty. It seems clear that each is used with a variety of shades of meaning. Some commentators such as Bailey and Fordyce<sup>15</sup> see the two as being, at least in some passages, identical. If that is the case here then the positions of Nautes and Palinurus are very similar. It may, however, not be quite correct to identify the concepts completely in such passages. At *Aen.* 8.334 Evander's attribution of his arrival in Italy to both *Fortuna omnipotens* and *ineluctabile fatum* may point to the wanderings on his journey (*Fortuna*) and his destined goal (*fatum*). A passage which is especially interesting in view of Nautes' speech is *Aen.* 3.493–4. Aeneas there contrasts his own position with that of Helenus and Andromache. He describes Helenus and Andromache as those *quibus est fortuna peracta/ iam sua*. He and his companions, however, *alia ex aliis in fata uocamur*. It may be that he thinks of Helenus and Andromache in terms of the sufferings they had endured (*fortuna*) before reaching Buthrotum, while his own mission is seen more in terms of what he regards at this stage as an elusive goal in the future. Nautes' view of *fata* as a force which takes man 'back and forth' seems similar to Aeneas' *alia ex aliis in fata*. Neither sees clearly the fixed goal at the end of the journey. Nautes indeed sees the advice which he offers in terms of a response to the apparent disaster (*fortuna*) of the ship-burning (*superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est*). This is in contrast to Anchises' ghost whose speech looks not to the past, but only to the future. Thus Nautes' limited view of *fata* may indeed prove depressing to Aeneas since his concept of it comes close to the idea of capricious fortune. More depressing perhaps would be the idea that *fata drag* Aeneas since this clearly indicates that he is unwilling to follow his destiny (*Sen. Ep.*

<sup>14</sup> *diducitur* points to the two sides of Aeneas – the one, pessimistic, either looking back with longing to Troy or, as here, prepared to consider abandoning the mission and settling in Sicily, the other, willing to face the challenge of the Italian future. It should be noted that this line occurs at the mid-point of a ring structure beginning at 5.605. This structure opens significantly with a reference to *Fortuna* who intervenes to cause a change, apparently for the worse, in the Trojans' affairs. This change leads to a progressive deterioration in the situation culminating in Aeneas' utter demoralisation at 720. The appearance of Anchises' ghost leads to a reversal of this trend and the new optimism reaches its climax when the fleet sets sail at 834 with favouring winds following Neptune's reassurance to Venus – Aeneas' mind now being moved by *blanda gaudia* (827–8). The arrival of midnight at 835 marks the beginning of the final section of the book (rather than 827 which begins the final paragraph of the OCT text). The central part of the structure is marked by the reference to the onset of night. This structure has similarities to that at the beginning of *Aen.* 1 where the mid-point of the opening section (1–304) focuses on the storm/calm and *furor/pietas* contrasts of the statesman simile. Aeneas' contrasting speeches are arranged in a balancing position within that sequence.

<sup>15</sup> Bailey (*Religion in Virgil* (Oxford, 1935), p. 213) comments '...it may be noticed that *fortuna* is used as the equivalent of *fatum* both in reference to the individual and to the nation.' On 5.709–10 he remarks that this 'is an instructive combination of *fata* and *fortuna* in almost identically the same meaning' (op. cit., p. 237). Fordyce (*Aen.* 7–8, ed. & comm. C. J. Fordyce (Oxford, 1977)) observes (on *Aen.* 8.334) 'Virgil seems to be identifying them (*fortuna* and *fatum*) here as he does in some other places...'. Williams, however (*Aeneidos Liber Quintus*, ed. & comm. R. D. Williams (Oxford, 1960)) sees a contrast between *fata* and *fortuna* at 5.709–10.

107.11). Nautes implies that Aeneas is like Seneca's *malus miles* who follows his commander *gemens*, rather than the *impigri atque alacres* for whom no compulsion is necessary. One may compare Aeneas' own use of the neutral *uocamur* in his speech to Helenus and Andromache and his later statement to Evander (8.131–3) that he came to the site of Rome *uolens* in accordance with *fata*, driven by, among other things, his own *uirtus* (though by that stage his understanding of his mission has deepened). The idea of unwilling compliance is, of course, also present in Palinurus' advice during the storm, as *superat... Fortuna* (5.22) makes clear.

Nautes and Palinurus urge Aeneas to go where *fata* drag or *Fortuna* beckons. In both cases it so happens that the course they advocate is, in practical terms, correct. Palinurus, indeed, at least has the defence that he is dealing with a purely practical problem of navigation. Nautes, however, is attempting to apply the same criteria to much greater problems. That following the lead of what is perceived as chance *Fortuna* is an inadequate yardstick to adopt in coming to moral decisions is made plain elsewhere in the poem. At *Aen.* 2.385 Aeneas and his followers overpower Androgeos' party through luck. *aspirat primo Fortuna labori* suggests here too the idea of the favouring breeze of *Fortuna*. Coroebus immediately urges that the Trojans should follow where *Fortuna* points:

'...qua prima' inquit 'Fortuna salutis  
monstrat iter, quaque ostendit se dextra, sequamur.' (387–8)

He thus declares himself as following the same principles as Palinurus and Nautes. He moreover makes his lack of moral scruples obvious, observing:

'...dolos an uirtus, quis in hoste requirat?'

Coroebus therefore shows that he is aware that he has a choice. He cannot try to justify his decision, as Palinurus and Nautes might, by claiming that he is in the grip of a force outwith his control. For him the following of *Fortuna* is revealed as nothing more than sheer opportunism. It is not surprising then that the ruse which he suggests of putting on Greek armour leads to disaster and that Coroebus himself pays the penalty, slaughtered beside Minerva's altar. The undesirability of following *Fortuna* is further suggested by Venus' words at *Aen.* 10.48ff. She ironically pretends to be willing to abandon Aeneas provided that she can save Ascanius:

'Aeneas sane ignotis iactetur in undis  
et quacumque uiam dederit Fortuna sequatur.' (48–9)

Again the following of *Fortuna* is linked with the idea of a sailor being tossed in unknown waters out of control. It is tempting to speculate that Nautes' name is relevant to his rôle in the ship-burning crisis. His name suggests the seafarer. It is therefore appropriate that he should counsel Aeneas at this crucial moment in his voyage.<sup>16</sup>

Palinurus, then, is by profession a follower of *Fortuna*. When he attempts to struggle against the wind he fails.<sup>17</sup> For him the following of *Fortuna* takes the form

<sup>16</sup> The name Palinurus too may be relevant to its bearer's role in the poem. If Virgil saw in it the idea of a wind which blows the ship back again this would fit the fact that the helmsman urges a return to Sicily and abandons hope of reaching Italy in the face of the storm (5.17ff.).

<sup>17</sup> For a similar connection between storm and *fata* see Latinus' words at 7.594ff. '*frangimur heu fatis*', inquit '*ferimurque procella*' together with the preceding simile and the metaphor (598) of the ship which has all but reached harbour. It is possible that *ferimur* here is intended to suggest a link between *ferre* and *fortuna*. On *Τύχη* and the sea see M. Detienne, 'The "Sea-

of running before the wind. He therefore places a degree of reliance on what is essentially untrustworthy. Palinurus himself admits to Somnus that he has often been deceived by calm sky (*caeli totiens deceptus fraude sereni* 5.851) and indeed he summons the Trojans to sail from Acrocerania because he sees that the constellations and stars remain constant in a clear sky (*caelo constare sereno* 3.518). It is possible, then, that, although on the particular occasion of his death Palinurus was indeed *insons*, recognising the potential treachery of the sea, nevertheless Aeneas' final comment was in general justified. It could be said, therefore, that one reason why Palinurus must die is because he is the embodiment of a way of life – following *Fortuna* – which may be adequate, perhaps inevitable, for the pilot at sea,<sup>18</sup> but which will no longer be sufficient for Aeneas once he reaches Italy. It may seem harsh that the *gubernator* should pay the penalty for following principles which are unsuited, not for him, but for the *dux*. Yet this kind of parallelism, in which the world of the steersman is related to and compared with the world of the *dux*, is consistent with the implications of the initial statesman-simile. Aeneas' further progress must be made on the basis of a knowledge of *fata* to be given him by his father (6.759 *te tua fata docebo*) – a surer guide than *Fortuna*. This knowledge will be given to him in the Underworld. It is therefore quite appropriate that Palinurus should disappear just before Aeneas descends to the Underworld to acquire that knowledge, and that his disappearance should follow the ship-burning crisis in which the inadequacy for the statesman of the advice *quo fata trahunt retrahuntque sequamur* is made plain.

On the final stage of the voyage to Italy Aeneas does not yet possess this knowledge necessary for his ultimate future success. Virgil makes it clear, however, that already he differs from Palinurus on crucial points. These differences ensure that he will be able to continue on his mission while Palinurus, who no longer has a contribution to make, will die. Aeneas is capable of a positive, forward-looking attitude stemming from his *pietas*. Following the ship-burning he is tempted to abandon his mission *oblitus fatorum* (5.703). Yet, after Anchises appears *imperio Iouis*, Aeneas' resolution returns. That this resolution is closely connected with a correct attitude to the gods is made clear by his first action following Anchises' disappearance:

haec memorans cinerem et sopitos suscitāt ignis,  
Pergameumque Larem et canae penetralia Vestae  
farre pio et plena supplex ueneratur acerra. (5.743–5)<sup>19</sup>

This attitude – a willingness to trust and accept the divine plan – is a crucial element in the *uirtus* which Aeneas will claim for himself at a later stage in the poem (12.435). It is this which ensures Aeneas' safety – *pietas homini tutissima uirtus*, as the author of the *Aetna* comments (*Aetna* 633).

Crow''' (in *Myth, Religion and Society: Structuralist Essays by M. Detienne et al.*, ed. R. L. Gordon (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 16–42). Detienne argues for a strong link between Athena and the art of the helmsman. It may be significant that Nautes is a pupil of Tritonia Pallas. The builder of the Argo worked under the instructions of Athena (Ap. Rh. 1.18–9).

<sup>18</sup> It is tempting to suppose that when Virgil describes the Trojans as fleeing from the Strophades *qua cursum uentusque gubernatorque uocabat* (3.269) he intends us to link *uentus* and *gubernator* in a more significant way than was perhaps intended in the Homeric original (*Od.* 11.10; 12.152).

<sup>19</sup> For a similar instance of gloom in Aeneas dissolved by a divine revelation with the new confidence being marked by an act of worship see *Aen.* 8.520ff. There Aeneas revives *sopitas ignibus aras* (542–3), just as here he revives *sopitos ignis*. The idea of the rekindling of the sleeping flame on the altar seems to suggest the idea of a revival of morale following a temporary lapse.

### Palinurus and Remus

We have considered some reasons why Palinurus in particular should disappear at this point in the poem. There remains the question of why he should be sacrificed rather than merely dying as Phrontis did in Homer and Tiphys in Apollonius (2.851ff.). The answer to this is, I believe, also bound up in what I see as the close parallelism between Aeneas and his steersman. The key passage is Neptune's reference to the future death of Palinurus. This is couched in solemn, carefully chosen language:

‘unus erit tantum amissum quem gurgite quaeres;  
unum pro multis dabitur caput.’ (5.814–15)

These lines, perhaps more than anything else in the poem, link the two figures. Before considering that, however, we should remember one other point. The lines carry a clear echo of *Aen.* 1.582ff.:<sup>20</sup>

‘nate dea, quae nunc animo sententia surgit?  
omnia tuta uides, classem sociosque receptos.  
unus abest, medio in fluctu quem uidimus ipsi  
submersum; dictis respondent cetera matris.’

There Aeneas and Achates, concealed in a cloud, are surveying the other Trojans who have reached Dido's court safely after the initial sea-storm. One ship only has been lost. In both passages there is a contrast between the safety of many and the loss of one, and 1.584 is strikingly similar to 5.814. The main differences are that in 1.582ff. there is no clear statement that the Lycian ship is *sacrificed* to ensure the safety of the many. Moreover the loss of the Lycian ship and its pilot was clearly seen by their comrades (*quem uidimus ipsi* 1.584) – a point stressed also in the initial account of the shipwreck (*ipsius ante oculos* 1.114). At 5.814, however, *quaeres* suggests, what in fact proves to be the case, that Palinurus' loss will be mysterious. The reference of the 2nd pers. sing. is deliberately unclear.<sup>21</sup>

This echo constitutes one of the many links between the opening of the poem and the end of Bk. 5. It clearly suggests a connection between Palinurus and the Lycian steersman which has important implications for our understanding of Palinurus' rôle in the poem. However, 5.814 echoes not only 1.581ff. Another echo too is of crucial importance – that of a famous line of Ennius:

unus erit, quem tu tolles in caerula caeli  
templa. (Ann. 1, fr. 33 Sk.)

Here the *unus* is Romulus. The occasion is a speech by Jupiter to Romulus' father Mars in the *concilium deorum* in Ann. 1. Jupiter apparently announces that he will save Romulus, Remus and their mother Ilia for the present and looks forward to the future deification of Romulus whom Mars will carry up (*tolles*) to heaven in his chariot.

The similarities between the Ennian and Virgilian lines are surely striking. The identical opening *unus erit*, the relative clause, the Ennian 2nd. sing. fut. echoed in the much less easy 2nd. sing. fut. in Virgil and the *cael-/quaer-* assonance in the final foot. In the general context too there are certain obvious points of contact. Both occur on an occasion when a greater god (Jupiter/his brother Neptune) is reassuring another deity (Mars/Venus) who is the father/mother of a mortal about the future destiny of the son.

<sup>20</sup> Bandera, op. cit. (n. 3), pp. 225–6.

<sup>21</sup> Donatus knew the easier *quaeret* here (also offered by some inferior MSS.).



What is to be made of this clear echo of Ennius? The dangers involved in interpreting such echoes are, of course, well known.<sup>22</sup> How much of the Ennian context should be borne in mind when considering the Virgilian implications? What conclusions can safely be drawn on the basis of resemblances or divergences?

First, it seems clear that Virgil is not here borrowing at random from Ennius. The same Ennian line is echoed twice in the poem in the context of the future deification of Aeneas.<sup>23</sup> At *Aen.* 1.254ff. Jupiter promises Venus that the ultimate destiny of Aeneas is assured in spite of his present trials – *sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli/magnanimum Aenean* (261–2). Jupiter's mind remains the same. The whole context in which *sublimemque feres* etc. occurs seems to be heavily steeped in Ennian echoes. The second echo occurs in Bk. 12. Jupiter tells Juno that Aeneas' future deification is certain:

indigetem Aenean scis ipsa et scire fateris  
deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli. (12.794–5)

The passage in Bk. 12 has many links with the Jupiter/Venus colloquy in Bk. 1. It is, of course, perfectly natural that at the opening of the poem Virgil's Jupiter should promise to Venus the future deification of her son Aeneas in terms which are intended to recall the Ennian Jupiter's promise to Mars of deification for Romulus in *Ann.* 1. It is also natural that at the end of the poem this opening promise should be recalled in Ennian language. Both deifications have in any case common characteristics – mysterious disappearance through the agency of a divine parent and then proclamation as a god. Given the careful placing of these two echoes in the first and last books of the poem, another echo of the Ennian line, coming at the mid-point between the ordeal by sea and the greater ordeals on land, seems carefully placed. Yet it is at the same time disturbingly different in character from the other two. It does not refer to the deification of the *unus*, but to his death. The *unus* is not Aeneas, but Palinurus. His destination is *gurgēs*, not *caelum*.

The key to the significance of the Ennian echo in Bk. 5 lies, I believe, in the other figure who was probably involved in the Ennian context – Remus. Skutsch<sup>24</sup> argues that the emphatic *unus* in Ennius makes it likely that some reference to the other brother also occurred. It seems possible that the point in Ennius was that one of the twins would become a god, while the other would die. Further support for this is perhaps to be found, as Skutsch notes, in one of Ovid's allusions to the Ennian passage:

‘redde patri natum. quamuis intercidit alter,  
pro se proque Remo qui mihi restat, erit.  
“unus erit, quem tu tolles in caerula caeli”  
tu mihi dixisti: sint rata dicta Iouis.’ (Fasti 2.485–8)

Here Ovid's Mars refers to the death of Remus just two lines before the direct Ennian quotation promising a very different destiny for his brother Romulus. If Remus appeared in the Ennian context then it is possible to see a much greater similarity between Ennius' reference to the destinies of Romulus and Remus and Virgil's account of the sacrifice of Palinurus. Romulus and Remus are twins. Remus, however, is not destined to be the founder of Rome. It now becomes clearer why Virgil is at pains to create a parallelism between Aeneas and Palinurus. They too in a sense are twins – Palinurus representing a side of Aeneas' character which must be

<sup>22</sup> See e.g. M. Wigodsky, *Virgil and Early Latin Poetry* (Wiesbaden, 1972), p. 12.

<sup>23</sup> Heyne ad *Aen.* 1.259.

<sup>24</sup> O. Skutsch, *Studia Enniana* (London, 1968), p. 131 and *The Annals of Quintus Ennius* (Oxford, 1985), p. 205. So now D. C. Feeney, 'The Reconciliations of Juno' (*CQ* 34 (1984), 179–94, 191 n. 78).

discarded before he can achieve his goal, and performing a function which will briefly be taken over by Aeneas himself on the last stage of the sea voyage to Italy. In both Ennius and Virgil one of the pair goes on to glory – Romulus to found Rome and to achieve deification, Aeneas to reach Italy, to overcome Turnus and ultimately also to be deified – the other dies. The only difference is that the key line in Virgil refers to the doomed figure of Palinurus/Remus, not to his counterpart Aeneas/Romulus. In spite of this switch in roles it is nevertheless striking that Virgil creates similarities between Palinurus' fate and a typical apotheosis. The mysterious disappearance in darkness and the sense of loss and searching implied in *quaeres* are closely paralleled in Livy's account of Romulus' apotheosis (1.16) and in Ovid's account of the same event (*Fasti* 2.491ff.).<sup>25</sup> Romulus too was taken to heaven by his father – *redde patri natum* says Ovid's Mars. Palinurus also is demanded by his 'father'. Palinurus addresses Neptune as *pater* at 5.14 in a passage which unconsciously looks forward to his own death and Neptune is *pater* again at 5.863 as he guides the fleet to Italy. Both steersman and fleet stand in a special relationship to the god of the sea.

Virgil thus seems to be inviting or suggesting a comparison between Romulus and Remus on the one hand and Aeneas and Palinurus on the other. Romulus kills Remus and is subsequently deified. Palinurus dies and Aeneas, now helmsman himself at the end of the voyage – albeit commanding an apparently rudderless ship<sup>26</sup> – reaches Italy. In the end he too will be deified, as Jupiter promises in Bk. 1 and Bk. 12. It is clear, however, that the Romulus and Remus story is blurred and altered in its Virgilian counterpart. Aeneas does not kill Palinurus as Romulus killed Remus. Rather he laments his death which he attributes to Palinurus' own failings. Yet if we wish to see how Virgil could have achieved a much closer correspondence with the traditional killing of Remus by his brother we have only to look at the most prominent contest in the games which precede the ship-burning and the death of Palinurus. In the ship-race Gyas, the early leader, throws the steersman Menoetes overboard (159–82).<sup>27</sup> Aeneas' behaviour in the Palinurus episode must be contrasted with the extreme irresponsibility of Gyas. Aeneas is distressed at the steersman's death but takes control of the ship (*rexit*) successfully in his place. Gyas all but causes Menoetes' death and proves inadequate as a steersman himself.<sup>28</sup>

An explanation for the differences between the traditional story of Romulus and Remus and Virgil's reworking of it in this new context is surely to be sought in

<sup>25</sup> Similar features occur in other instances of apotheosis or change from mortal status. See e.g. (mysterious disappearance) *H. Hymn Dem.* 44ff., *H. Hymn Aphr.* 207ff., *Soph. O.C.* 1656ff., *Paus.* 6.9.6–8; (distress and/or search) *H. Hymn Dem.* 40ff., *H. Hymn Aphr.* 207ff., *Theocr.* 13.55ff., *Hdt.* 7.166, *Ap. Rh.* 1.1261ff. etc.

<sup>26</sup> Aeneas' situation parallels that of Odysseus as he travels on the last stage of his journey in one of the miraculous Phaeacian ships which had neither steersmen nor steering-oars (*Od.* 8.557–8) – unnecessary since the ships themselves instinctively knew the course to follow and had no fear of shipwreck (*Od.* 8.563) (doubtless because of the patronage of Poseidon). Aeneas too is on the last stage of his sea voyage in a ship without helmsman or *gubernaculum*. The fleet proceeds *interrita* in spite of Palinurus' loss. Aeneas, then, is here a 'new version' of Odysseus. He differs, however, from his predecessor in that Poseidon, patron and ancestor of the Phaeacians, was angry at Odysseus' safe arrival and punished the Phaeacians. Neptune, on the other hand, guarantees the safety of Aeneas' ship and promises his unharmed arrival in Italy.

<sup>27</sup> For the political allusion behind the figure of Gyas see my article 'Chasing Chimaeras', *CQ* 35 (1985), 134–9.

<sup>28</sup> The relevance of the Gyas/Menoetes incident in the ship race to the Palinurus episode is discussed by Putnam, *op. cit.* (n. 10), pp. 75ff. See also E. Kraggerud, *Aeneisstudien* (Oslo, 1968), pp. 167ff.

Augustan terms. The murder of Remus was all too readily to be interpreted as an antecedent of the Civil Wars.<sup>29</sup> Augustus' rejection of the title Romulus doubtless reflected this unease over the character of the founder of the city.<sup>30</sup> Both Ovid and Virgil on a number of occasions attempt to shift blame away from Romulus in various ways<sup>31</sup> and to present the brothers as a harmonious pair.. Thus at *Aen.* 1.292 Jupiter prophesies that one day, when *Furor impius* is restrained, Romulus as a god will administer justice together with his brother Remus. On the shield of Aeneas (*Aen.* 8.630–4) the focus is on the harmonious scene of the wolf and twins. Ovid (*Fasti* 4.843, 5.469) attributes the killing of Remus to Celer, not to Romulus (*noluit hoc frater* 5.471) and for Ovid's Mars the deification of Romulus will serve *pro se proque Remo* – a compensation for the death of Remus. I would argue that it is precisely this idea of compensation which Virgil is exploring in the Palinurus episode. He however handles it in an even more subtle way than Ovid. Aeneas/Romulus is not guilty of the impiety of killing Palinurus/Remus. Rather we should see the death of one 'twin' as being a sacrifice demanded by the gods to ensure the future glory of the other. Palinurus, then, sacrificed in this way, actually contributes towards the fulfilment of Aeneas' destiny in a way which would have been impossible if he had merely died without any sacrifice being involved. Palinurus/Remus may be flawed, or rather the art of the steersman may not be a suitable model for the would-be statesman – the idea of the ship of state is no doubt in Virgil's mind here as it was in the earlier ship-race. It should also be remembered that, as Ogilvie points out,<sup>32</sup> one way of minimising Romulus' guilt is to stress the fault of Remus. Yet in spite of this Palinurus is essentially *insons*. Aeneas himself is certainly free from blame and laments the loss of his comrade (just as Ovid's Romulus shows his *pietas* by lamenting Remus' death at the hands of Celer (*Fasti* 4.845ff.)). For an instance of anger leading to a murderous assault on a comrade we must look to Gyas, not to Aeneas.

A final point may be made about the loss of the Lycian steersman in Bk. 1. Virgil does not explicitly state that he is a sacrifice. I would, however, agree with the view that this is how he must be seen.<sup>33</sup> What does his sacrifice achieve? As I have said, the Homeric parallel suggests that he is washed overboard as a substitute for Aeneas himself – his loss, therefore, leads to the safe arrival of Aeneas and the *multi* in Africa. Yet I believe that it is here that Virgil first adumbrates also the even more significant idea of a victim sacrificed in order to ensure the future deification of the leader. Typically, however, the idea is introduced in an oblique and subtle manner. The clue is provided by the comment of Achates to Aeneas at *Aen.* 1.582ff. previously discussed. There the steersman's fate is mentioned in language which recalls yet again, albeit more faintly this time, the famous Ennian line.<sup>34</sup> This reference to the absence of the *unus* is immediately followed by the mimic deification of Aeneas:

uix ea fatus erat cum circumfusa repente  
scindit se nubes et in aethera purgat apertum. (1.586–7)

The words are barely out of Achates' mouth when the cloud which surrounded Aeneas disperses and he appears *deo similis* (589). Surrounded by *aether* he gives forth a divine radiance (*refulsit* 588).<sup>35</sup> I would agree with those who see Augustan

<sup>29</sup> Hor. *Epod.* 7.17–20. Remus is there *immerens*. See R. M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy Bks. 1–5* (Oxford, 1965) ad 1.6.3–7.3. <sup>30</sup> Ogilvie, *op. cit.* (n. 29), ad 1.7.9.

<sup>31</sup> Ogilvie, *op. cit.* (n. 29), ad 1.6.3–7.3. <sup>32</sup> Ogilvie, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Bandera, *op. cit.* (n. 3). The role of the *Arae* makes the point plain.

<sup>34</sup> The obvious link with 5.813ff. makes the ultimate derivation from Ennius clear.

<sup>35</sup> So also of Venus at 1.402.

significance in the details of this passage.<sup>36</sup> Aeneas is transformed into the Augustan god descended from Venus as *Aeneadum genetrix*. It is not surprising that Dido is astounded at his appearance (613). The cloud which surrounded him now appears as not only the Homeric cloud which surrounded Odysseus on his approach to the Phaeacian court (*Od.* 7.14ff.) but also the typical cloud which takes the hero to heaven as in Livy's account of the apotheosis of Romulus.<sup>37</sup> Achates' words not only precede the transfiguration of Aeneas but also, in a sense, bring it about. The passage is, in fact, one of the clearest examples in the poem of the idea of the sacrifice of one for the deification of another.

### Palinurus and Fortuna Caesaris

One final implication of the close association of Palinurus and *Fortuna* remains to be considered. When Palinurus and his *gubernaculum* are lost overboard Aeneas' ship nonetheless sails safely onwards *promissis Neptuni* – a surer, more reliable guide than *Fortuna*. If my interpretation of Palinurus' role in the poem is correct it seems impossible to avoid seeing some connection between Virgil's view of Palinurus and the Augustan concept of *Fortuna Caesaris*.<sup>38</sup>

Julius Caesar was a follower of *Fortuna* – his own personal good fortune seen as a power which ensured his success and safety.<sup>39</sup> *Fortuna*, as he himself saw it, helped his ships in Jan. 48 B.C. on the crossing from Brundisium (*B.C.* 3.26.1). *Fortuna* also played a prominent part in the story of his unsuccessful attempt to return to Brundisium in a fishing-boat.<sup>40</sup> Thereafter coins testify to the role of *Fortuna* holding a *gubernaculum* in Caesarian and Augustan propaganda.<sup>41</sup> Both Caesar and Augustus wished to be seen as the favourites of *Fortuna* in her role as *gubernatrix* and Horace prays to the *Fortuna* of Antium as *domina aequoris* (*Carm.* 1.35.6) asking that she will protect Augustus on his expeditions to conquer foreign peoples at the ends of the earth after the Civil Wars (29–32). If, then, Virgil represents Aeneas, Augustus' ancestor, as reaching his goal in Italy in a ship without a helmsman – a man for whom the following of *Fortuna* is a way of life – and without a *gubernaculum*, it seems likely that he is making some reference to this Augustan idea. Indeed it seems that he may be taking a different stance as regards *Fortuna* from that which was perhaps adopted in official Augustan propaganda. What can he mean by it?

First, it may be argued that Julius Caesar's trust in his *Fortuna* may not have been universally commended. Appian makes some of Caesar's companions criticise his behaviour in the fishing-boat incident as foolhardy – an act worthy of a soldier, not of a general (*B.C.* 2.58) – and, referring to Caesar's attempts to get reinforcements

<sup>36</sup> D. L. Drew, *The Allegory of the Aeneid* (Oxford, 1927, repr. New York and London, 1978). Doubtless not all of the points made by Drew are of equal weight. One would not, for example, wish to press a link with Augustus solely because both Augustus and Aeneas (on emerging from the cloud) were handsome. The use of the term *caesaries* and the pointed reference to Venus as *genetrix* do, however, seem to hint at an Augustan connection. In any case it is hardly improbable that Virgil should wish to suggest a similarity between the 'deified' Aeneas and his god-like descendant.

<sup>37</sup> Livy 1.16.1. On the cloud in such an ascension see S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 356ff. It is, of course, true that there is no ascension as such involved here – indeed, there hardly could be, since Aeneas does not *actually* become a god at this point. Nevertheless Aeneas disappears into the cloud as an ordinary mortal and emerges as one who is *deo similis*.

<sup>38</sup> On this concept see Weinstock, *op. cit.* (n. 37), pp. 112ff.

<sup>39</sup> Weinstock, *op. cit.* (n. 37).

<sup>40</sup> Plut. *Caes.* 38.5; App. *B.C.* 2.57 etc. See Weinstock, *op. cit.* (n. 37), pp. 117, 121ff.

<sup>41</sup> Weinstock, *op. cit.* (n. 37), pp. 124ff. and pl. 13.

following this episode, Appian observes that Caesar trusted to fortune rather than reason. Dio (41.44.4) comments that Caesar came to learn through subsequent mishaps that his successful crossing from Brundisium was *εὐτυχέστερον* rather than *εὐβουλότερον*. Doubtless one should not make too much of these commonplace observations of historians. Yet it is not improbable that similar comments may have been made by his critics in Caesar's own lifetime. Cicero, though recognising Caesar's *Fortuna*, claims to regard those of his achievements which were based on *sapientia* and *consilium* as being on a higher plane than those involving *temeritas* and *casus*.<sup>42</sup> The fishing-boat incident was in any case a failure. Though the boat was not wrecked it was forced to turn back in the face of the contrary winds.<sup>43</sup> Thus Caesar experienced the same situation as Palinurus at the opening of *Aen.* 5. He had to give way before the storm in spite of his personal *Fortuna*. Yet there is the significant difference that, whereas Aeneas recognises the hopelessness of the position and tells the pilot to alter course, Caesar attempts to encourage his pilot to persevere in spite of the pilot's own desire to turn back and only reluctantly bows to necessity.

Virgil, therefore, if he intends his readers to remember stories such as these, may be discreetly suggesting that, at the lowest level, trust in one's own personal *Fortuna* is unwise in the face of the rather different *Fortuna* represented by adverse conditions. Palinurus' conduct as a steersman at this point is, after all, irreproachable, and Aeneas, as a ship's captain, shows better judgement than Caesar. Aeneas later tells his son to learn *Fortuna* from others (*Aen.* 12.435–6). In that context it sounds as if Aeneas is warning that he cannot be seen as a man whose achievements – such as they are – are founded on any personal *felicitas*. He does not see himself as relying on *Fortuna*, but rather on *uirtus* and *uerus labor*.

It may further be argued that *Fortuna* as a deity ensuring personal good luck can hardly be readily dissociated from *Fortuna* seen in a rather different light. *Fortuna* can also be seen as mere Chance. She cannot, therefore, be relied upon to bring good luck, and good luck, in any case, is not needed by the Stoic – τὸν σπουδαῖον οὐδέν φασι δεῖσθαι τῆς τύχης (von Arnim, *SVF* iii.13.31). *Fortuna* in this role can bring disaster as well as success. Horace's *Fortuna* of Antium comes close to the figure of the *Fortuna* with *gubernaculum*. Yet even in Horace's ode there are traces of the wider, more capricious side of *Fortuna*<sup>44</sup> as simply Chance. The more this aspect of *Fortuna* is stressed the more dangerous it becomes to follow *Fortuna* or to rely on her and it is this apparently random and capricious element which may be imagined as governing human affairs (whatever name it is given) which Nautes has in mind at *Aen.* 5.709–10, as *trahunt retrahuntque* makes clear. It is clearly better to pin one's faith on something more reliable than this unstable goddess.

Aeneas' safe arrival in Italy owes nothing to his personal *Fortuna* nor is it due to blind chance. The last leg of his voyage is accomplished safely because of Neptune's promise. The reasons which Neptune gives for acceding to Venus' request for assistance – her own birth from the sea and the past help he has given to Aeneas – do not at first appear to suggest that Aeneas himself has by any personal qualities justified this help. Yet it would be wrong to regard Neptune's promise as being

<sup>42</sup> *pro Marcell.* 2.7, 6.19. So, of Pompey, *pro Balb.* 4.9. On the superiority of victories won by *cura* rather than with the help of *Fortuna* see also Ovid, *Am.* 11.12.15–16.

<sup>43</sup> On the unsuccessful fishing-boat episode Weinstock comments 'It may be assumed that the incident originally belonged to this [the earlier Brundisium–Greece] crossing and was transferred by a hostile writer to an unsuccessful attempt.'

<sup>44</sup> R. G. M. Nisbet and Margaret Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace Odes Bk. I* (Oxford, 1970), p. 387.

unrelated to Aeneas' character. In the Homeric encounter with Achilles to which Neptune alludes the sea god's assistance is justified by Aeneas' pious attitude to the gods (*Od.* 20.298–9). The idea that Aeneas' piety leads to divine aid is reinforced within the *Aeneid* itself. This piety along with the optimism which accompanies it reasserted itself strongly following the appearance of Anchises' ghost after the ship-burning. In particular Aeneas is careful to offer sacrifice to the sea gods before setting sail (774–6). That Aeneas' *pietas* is indeed an important factor behind Neptune's willingness to help him on this final stage of his voyage is suggested by the parallel with the conclusion of the ship-race earlier in the book. Then the two leaders might (*fors*) have finished *aequatis ... rostris* (5.232). Yet the matter is not decided by chance. Instead Cloanthus' *pietas* results in his vessel being pushed home by *pater Portunus* just as Aeneas' ship is guided home to Italy by *pater Neptunus*. Aeneas' sacrifice to the sea gods before setting sail is deliberately described in language which echoes Cloanthus' prayer. It is *pietas*, not *Fortuna*, which is responsible for Aeneas' safe landfall.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> I am grateful to my colleague Dr D. C. Feeney for advice on this article.