

V. The Character of Anchises in the *Aeneid*

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The character of Anchises in Vergil's *Aeneid* — the manner in which he is presented and his contribution to the poem as a whole — has rarely been considered for its own sake. Discussions of the rôle which Anchises plays in the *Aeneid* have usually been incidental to a consideration of the character of Aeneas¹ or have been concerned with the examination of seeming discrepancies and incongruities of the epic in which the character is involved.² It is perhaps this latter aspect and the implication to be drawn from it (namely that little consistency of character delineation is to be expected) that have thwarted a systematic examination of the part played by Anchises in those portions of the poem in which he appears.

The present study will proceed from two basic assumptions: first, that Anchises' function as complement to the character of Aeneas, i.e. as an object for the display of filial piety, is the best-known aspect of the character and need not be dwelt upon exhaustively. This does not mean to suggest that the last word has been said on the matter, nor does it imply that a discussion of Anchises without reference to Aeneas is possible. The second assumption is that the discrepancies observed in the

¹ V. de Crescenzo, *Studi sui fonti dell'Eneide: pius Aeneas* (Turin 1902) 15 ff.; W. W. Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London 1911) 412 ff.; R. Heinze, *Vergils epische Technik* (Leipzig 1915) 55 ff., 145 ff.; E. A. Hahn, "Note on Vergil's Use of Anchisiades," *CW* 14 (1920) 3 f.; "Aeneid 2.781 and Aeneid 3 Again," *ibid.* 122–26; N. Moseley, *Characters and Epithets* (New Haven 1926) 68 ff.; H. W. Prescott, *The Development of Vergil's Art* (Chicago 1927) 328 ff., 402 ff.; G. Howe, "The Development of the Character of Aeneas," *CJ* 26 (1930) 182–93; G. Carlsson, "The Hero and Fate in Vergil's Aeneid," *Erano* 43 (1945) 111–35.

² Particularly the table-eating prophecy. The list of those who have investigated this and other discrepancies, chiefly as a key to the order of composition among the various books, is long. For a full bibliography see A. S. Pease's edition of *Aeneid* IV (Cambridge, Mass. 1935) 56 ff. For Anchises' rôle in the discrepancies, particularly of book III, see M. M. Crump, *The Growth of the Aeneid* (Oxford: Blackwell 1920) 20 ff., and cf. C. Saunders, "The Relation of Aeneid III to the Rest of the Poem," *CQ* 19 (1925) 89 f. (= *Vergil's Primitive Italy* [New York 1930] 203 ff.). Some view the dominant rôle played by Anchises in book III as a major inconsistency: see Crump 36 and J. W. Mackail, *The Aeneid* (Oxford 1930) 91; cf. R. B. Lloyd, "Aeneid III: A New Approach," *AJP* 78 (1957) 133–51.

Aeneid are not so great as to preclude the study of the development of a character over the course of several books. Actually such examinations might throw considerable light upon the question of whether the discrepancies of detail, which do occur in the epic, are in fact matched by alternations of overall design.

To be sure, if we look at the rather pessimistic old man we first meet in Troy, who requires a double and triple display of supernatural phenomena arranged by Jupiter to jar him from a determination to stay and die, and compare him with the exuberant Anchises of the nether world, who is eager not only to tell Aeneas of the wars to be waged and the peoples to be encountered in Italy, but to expatiate on the grand and glorious future generations of the nation he is to found, we are struck by the violent contrast. Has Vergil episodically manipulated this character so as to fit his purpose of the moment? Has he assumed that such a change might be brought about by death alone? Or has he envisaged from the beginning a design of gradual and logical character development to culminate in the dominant and prophetic rôle which Anchises assumes in Hades? The notion of character development is surprisingly recent as applied to the *Aeneid*, or for that matter any ancient fiction,³ but I believe a careful consideration of Anchises' rôle through the intervening episodes will reveal that the design for the presentation and evolution of this character was as carefully worked out as any aspect of the poem.

The character of Anchises is presented in parallel and, as it were, contrasting, panels in the first half of the *Aeneid*: in books II and III, Aeneas' narrative to Dido, he is present in the flesh; in books I and IV, the episode in Carthage, he is virtually absent — a significant absence; and in books V and VI he is present in the spirit. Let us consider each of these in order.

I

In Aeneas' narrative to Dido we meet Anchises only after hope has been abandoned for Troy and we have witnessed the final tragedy⁴ in the halls of Priam's palace. It is the death of Priam⁵ which provides a bridge to the final scenes of the book, for the slaughter of the aged king, climaxing the ravaging of his household, brings to *pius* Aeneas thoughts

³ See Howe (above, note 1) 183, note 1.

⁴ Cf. N. W. DeWitt, "The Second Aeneid as a Drama," *CJ* 20 (1925) 479-85, and "Vergil and the Tragic Drama," *CJ* 26 (1930) 23.

⁵ Cf. C. C. Knapp, "Some Remarks on the Character of Aeneas," *CJ* 26 (1930) 103.

of his own father, wife, and son (559 ff.). The sight of Helen gives him momentary pause, but the subsequent appearance of Venus assures him that the cause is lost and directs him to home and flight.⁶

It is not surprising that the figure of Anchises should become central at this point. The home is that of Anchises. We have been told this much earlier in the book (300) and we are reminded of the fact again as Aeneas makes his way there (634). He is the *pater familias*, a position which he retains in name and in fact until his death.⁷ The scene in Anchises' house, involving the old man's refusal to depart, is capable of many interpretations,⁸ but I think it is a mistake to dub Anchises "out-worn."⁹ He has suffered a great deal; he is pessimistic for the future, and perhaps there is more than a touch of self-pity as he sees himself *invisus divis* and leading a useless existence since struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt. To say, on the other hand, that he is "reluctant" is an understatement. He reveals strength, in spite of his claim to weariness, in his determination to die, by his own hand if necessary. Since his city is no more, he is no more. He will not flee. This is thoroughly consonant with every precept of courage, bravery, and patriotism that Roman youth ever learned. It touches upon one of the most serious problems Vergil faced in writing this book: how could the legend of Aeneas' departure from Troy be reconciled with Roman military virtue, which taught that retreat was ignoble? We must consider this a moment, for the manner in which the poet has worked out this problem and the scenes with Anchises at the end of book II are directly related.

Vergil has contrived that Aeneas by degrees should become aware that it is destined, it is the divine will, that he depart. (In fact this is only the beginning of a long series of episodes, spanning the first half of the epic, which make the hero's destiny increasingly apparent.) The cause is lost before ever Aeneas awakens on that fateful night. In his sleep he is directed in no uncertain terms by the ghost of Hector (289 ff.) to flee with the Penates and found for them a city — *sat patriae Priamoque*

⁶ Venus' part in directing the departure from Troy was traditional: Sophocles *ap.* Dion. Hal. 1.48; cf. Ennius (Vahlen) *Ann.* 18 ff.; Naevius (Morel) fr. 13a; *Origo Gentis Romanae* 11.1. See also W. F. J. Knight, *Vergil's Troy* (Oxford: Blackwell 1932) 101 f.

⁷ It is interesting to note the use of the epithet *pater* with Anchises some 26 times and Moseley's observation (above, note 1) that it is generally used, with both Anchises and Aeneas, meaning not simply "father" but "sire" or "leader."

⁸ See L. J. D. Richardson, "Facilis Iactura Sepulchri," *Proc. Royal Irish Acad.* 46 (1940) Sec. C, No. 2, 85-101.

⁹ Mackail (above, note 2); cf. Richardson (above, note 8) 90.

datum. Aeneas *must* seemingly ignore this and rush to arms — *nec sal rationis in armis* — in defense of the city; it is the only conceivable action for this prototype of Roman virtue.¹⁰ Again Panthus, who speaks with certainty as the prophetic priest of Apollo, reaffirms the hopelessness of the situation (324 ff.), which only seems to convince our hero of the necessity of joining the fray. There ensue the battle scenes of the band hastily assembled around Aeneas, who are determined to make it a fight to the finish. It is only the shocking demise of Priam and Polites that turns Aeneas' thoughts to his own family. Venus appears as the last in the series of supernatural deterrents, not only to reaffirm his thoughts of Anchises, Ascanius and Creusa, but to convince him that Troy's destruction is the will of the gods, and that it is likewise the will of the gods that he depart. *Pietas in deos* runs seemingly into conflict with *pietas in patriam*, but there is not the slightest hesitation on Aeneas' part. He turns to the rescue of his family. We note further that with Anchises' refusal to depart *pietas in patrem* comes into direct conflict with *pietas in deos*. Again there is not the slightest hesitation: Aeneas, unwilling to abandon his father, redons his armor.¹¹

We might well ask why it is necessary to go through all this persuasion a second time with Anchises who, like Aeneas in the earlier part of the book, is determined to die in the noblest way he knows and requires successive divine manifestations to convince him that departure is the best and destined course. At least two reasons can be elicited: 1) Vergil wants to reaffirm the patriotic courage of the legendary founders of the Roman race (we must remember in this connection that he had a tradition of Aeneas as traitor to oppose);¹² and 2) a meek acquiescence in the suggestion of leaving would hardly be consonant with the rôle of leadership designed for Anchises in the account of Aeneas' wanderings that is to follow. It is to the second of these that we must now turn.

The dominant rôle of leadership played by Anchises in book III is well known:¹³ he directs the departures from Troy, Thrace, Delos, Crete, the Strophades, Buthrotum, and Scylla-Charybdis. This aspect of the character in book III has often been regarded as not consistent with the way he has been presented earlier. But is his leadership not already

¹⁰ Cf. Fowler (above, note 1); Knapp (above, note 5) 101 ff.; B. M. W. Knox, "The Serpent and the Flame," *AJP* 71 (1950) 391. None of these acknowledges Aeneas' patriotic duty to fight.

¹¹ On this scene see Prescott (above, note 1) 328 ff.

¹² Menecrates of Xanthus *ap.* Dion. Hal. 1.48.3.

¹³ See Richardson (above, note 8) 88 ff.

apparent in book II? There the decision to depart, as we have seen, rests entirely with Anchises. And even from the shoulders of his stalwart son, at the sound of the enemies' approach, he directs the flight: *nate, fuge, nate*. These words seem deliberately designed to recall the earliest directive from the lips of Hector's ghost: *fuge, nate dea*.¹⁴

A further aspect of Anchises' leadership, and a most important aspect for the subsequent development of the character, is the function almost exclusively assigned to him of interpreting any supernatural phenomena and determining therefrom the course to be followed.¹⁵ Again this quality of the character is apparent from the outset. Let us consider his development in this respect step by step. The appearance of fire about the head of Ascanius causes the greatest fear and trembling on the part of Aeneas and Creusa (685), but Anchises is happy in the sign, recognizing it as an omen, and seeks confirmation in the subsequent thunder on the left and shooting star. It has been pointed out that Anchises is not a very inspired *interpretes* to require confirmation of so clear a *signum*.¹⁶ It should be observed, however, that while Anchises does not emerge at once as a seer, he does nevertheless determine *ex signis* (granted both *oblativum* and *impetrativum*) that they depart under divine auspices. He requires no appearance of the god.¹⁷

In book III all the divine directives are submitted to Anchises for interpretation and action. The *monstrum* at the grave of Polydorus is referred to a council headed by Anchises, and they determine to depart at once. The words of the oracle at Delos: *antiquam exquirite matrem* are interpreted, quite wrongly, by Anchises as indicating Crete. Anchises orders a reconsultation of the oracle, which proves unnecessary because of a vision of the Penates, who reveal that Hesperia, i.e. Italy, is the land they seek. Again the dream is reported to Anchises, who now recalls similar words of Cassandra. Anchises raises a prayer to the gods to avert the evil omen of Celaeno. After a delayed entrance Anchises appears in the final scene of the Helenus episode and receives the specific sailing instructions. The sighting of Italy is hailed by Anchises with a libation aboard ship. He spontaneously interprets the four horses seen

¹⁴ Note also Venus' words (619): *eripe, nate, fugam*; cf. Knox (above, note 10) 391 and note 26. This motif recurs in subsequent directives; cf. the words of Polydorus' ghost (3.44): *fuge crudelis terras, fuge litus avarum*; Achaemenides (3.639): *fugite, o miseri, fugite*; Mercury (4.565): *non fugis hinc praeceps?*

¹⁵ See Hahn (above, note 1) 123 ff.; Richardson (above, note 8) 88 ff.

¹⁶ See H. T. Rowell, "The Scholium on Naevius in *Parisinus Latinus* 7930," *AJP* 78 (1957) 14 ff. He compares the slow reaction of Anchises to the omen of the fire around Ascanius' head with the immediate response of a professional seer to the similar omen involving Lavinia (7.71 ff.); cf. Knox (above, note 10) note 42.

¹⁷ Heinze (above, note 1) 55-57.

by Aeneas as symbols of war and eventual peace. Anchises is the first to recognize in Scylla and Charybdis the monster foretold by Helenus.

From these actions we should hardly conclude with the ancient commentators, influenced by the treatments of Naevius and Ennius,¹⁸ that Anchises is now a *divinus*.¹⁹ Henry T. Rowell has recently pointed out how undesirable the presence of a true prophet would be in the wanderings of the Aeneadae, motivated as they are in Vergil's poem by gradual revelations of their destiny.²⁰ But we must nevertheless acknowledge that Anchises is somewhat above his fellows in his understanding of the supernatural. With practice his talent progresses from hesitation, through error, to a degree of skill. This can be seen by comparing his relatively slow response in Troy to quite clear omens that indicate an immediate course of action with the quick response to the sign of the four horses in Italy.

We can conclude that the picture of the living Anchises in books II and III of the *Aeneid* is consistent. To him as *pater familias* every major decision is referred, from the departure from his house in Troy until his death in Sicily. The decisions deal most frequently with matters of divine will, to which he seems to be extraordinarily sensitive. This sensitivity, starting from an eagerness to bow to the unmistakable signs relevant to present action, develops into an appreciation of the more subtle indications of the distant future. It is a mistake to let the physical infirmities of the character obscure our view of his real strength, or lead us to any notions of inconsistency between a debilitated Anchises in book II and a rejuvenated one in book III. The rejuvenation of the character is entirely spiritual, as he and the rest of the company become increasingly aware of their destiny. As chief counsellor of Aeneas and his followers the demands of his office are not physical.

It is likewise a mistake to suppose, on the other hand, that Anchises at any point usurps the place of the hero.²¹ The manifestations of divine will, albeit subject to the interpretation of Anchises, are without exception in book III delivered to Aeneas. It is his destiny in particular which is unfolded. The physical weakness of Anchises, moreover, crippled²² and age-weary²³ as he is, fits well with Vergil's plan to have him

¹⁸ Naevius (Morel) fr. 13a; Ennius (Vahlen) *Ann.* 18 ff.

¹⁹ Servius *ad Aen.* 2.687; 3.103, 537 f., etc.

²⁰ Rowell (above, note 16) 16.

²¹ Crump and Mackail (above, note 2) make this error.

²² A traditional element; with *Aen.* 2.647 ff. cf. *Hymn. Hom.* 5.286 ff.; Hyginus 94; Servius *ad loc.* (cf. *ad Aen.* 1.617).

²³ *Fessum aetate* (2.596); *confectum aetate* (4.599); cf. Richardson (above, note 8) 87 and note 7.

die en route. The emotional strain which Aeneas feels in recalling Anchises' death brings his narrative to Dido to a natural close and nicely avoids the necessity of detail as to the circumstances. It is with the *post mortem* that Vergil is chiefly concerned, and this he reserves for later.

II

The necessity for removing Anchises from the scene before the Dido episode is patent. We could hardly imagine his presence in Carthage.²⁴ As Pease has pointed out, Dido is a greater peril than all the physical obstacles which Aeneas has to face,²⁵ and he must face it alone. The episode is of course very crucial for the development of the character of Aeneas. It is significant, however, as has several times been noted,²⁶ that Anchises' absence is immediately attended by unsatisfactory results. The aged counsellor is sorely missed.

Although Anchises is absent in book IV, his memory seems to serve as a symbol of Aeneas' wavering piety. In the middle of the book Aeneas confesses to Dido that his sleep has been disturbed by the *imago patris Anchisae* and of the boy Ascanius (351 ff.). We need not suppose that this refers to specific visions,²⁷ for it seems to happen every night. This is nothing more or less than the troubled sleep of a guilty conscience. The appearance of the boy Ascanius, who is still very much alive, makes this quite clear. To be sure Aeneas had just been reminded of his duty toward Ascanius by Mercury, but we find the names of Anchises and Ascanius frequently yoked in this manner to symbolize Aeneas' piety.²⁸

The remark of Aeneas does not go unnoticed by Dido. Later, when seemingly resigned to her fate she asks Anna to intercede for a short delay, she tells her to explain to Aeneas that it was not she who sent a fleet to Troy, nor she who roused the ashes or ghost of Anchises;²⁹ one is tempted to paraphrase: "If he is suffering from a guilty conscience he shouldn't blame me — any more than he would blame me for the destruction of Troy." Still later Dido, abandoned, cries after the fleeing Trojans (597 ff.): "Is this the faith of one acclaimed for bringing the Penates

²⁴ Richardson (above, note 8) 89, note 14.

²⁵ Pease (above, note 2) 4.

²⁶ Fowler (above, note 1) 414; Hahn (above, note 1) 123, note 29.

²⁷ Pease (*ad* 4.351) points out that this was a dream rather than a vision.

²⁸ In Hades Palinurus pleads for burial *per genitorem, per spes surgentis Iuli* (6.364). Magus beseeches Aeneas in the same terms (10.524 ff.). Cf. the death of Lausus (10.821 ff.) and see T. R. Glover, *Virgil*⁶ (London 1930) 223 f.; Hahn (above, note 1) 3 f.

²⁹ See A. E. Raymond, "What Was Anchises' Ghost to Dido," *Phoenix* 6 (1952) 66-68.

with him and bearing his age-weary father on his shoulders?" i.e. is this an example of his celebrated *pietas*?

III

Aeneas returns to good grace and a renewed *pietas* through the rites in honor of the anniversary of Anchises' death in book V.³⁰ But book V is no less crucial for the character of Anchises. His character continues to develop, and plays if anything an even more significant rôle after death. There is a tendency to consider the funeral rites of Anchises as simply an occasion for Vergil to present games in the Homeric style, happily inserted as an interlude between the emotional peaks of books IV and VI. Stated in the extreme this opportunity becomes the "constraint of epic convention."³¹ Now no one could seriously question that the poet has incorporated a conscious parallel to *Iliad* XXIII in the games of *Aeneid* V; but the function of the episode is quite another matter. In the development of the character of Anchises the games mark a sort of apotheosis, and as such their position directly before Aeneas' visit to the shade of Anchises in Hades is obvious.

We have seen that by the time of his death Anchises was not only the unquestioned counsellor of the Aeneadae, but among their company the sole interpreter of divine will, venturing on occasion into long-range prophecy. After death we see him becoming a *divinus* in the full sense, not merely prophetic (after all Hector and Creusa, seemingly by virtue of their death alone, gain some conception of the future), but truly "godlike."

Cyril Bailey, who discusses the rites of the dead in the *Aeneid* at some length,³² has shown that the anniversary ceremony at the tomb of Anchises is the most like a hero cult of any of the tomb rites in the poem, and falls little short of rites to a deity. This is clear from many details. The offering of blood and a double *suovetaurilia* are presented seemingly to Anchises himself. The altars are not *arae* but *altaria*, according to Servius (*ad Ecl.* 5.66; *Aen.* 5.54) used exclusively of the *di superi*.³³ But most significant is the attitude of Aeneas. He refers to his dead father as *sanctus* (80; cf. 603) and *divinus* (47). He vows to him a temple in

³⁰ It should be noted that while religious rites are an integral part of nearly every stop of the Aeneadae, none are performed by them at Carthage. See Lloyd (above, note 2) 138 ff. and 147.

³¹ Prescott (above, note 1) 206-26; cf. Heinze (above, note 1) 145 ff.

³² *Religion in Vergil* (Oxford 1935) 281-301.

³³ On double offerings and double altars see W. W. Fowler, "Duplicated Altars and Offerings in Vergil," *CR* 31 (1917) 163-67; C. Bailey (above, note 32) 299 ff.

the city that he is to found in Italy (60) and before he leaves Sicily he establishes a sacred grove and a priesthood in his honor. We might not wish to go so far as Servius and say that he has become a god, but he has been honored as more than human.

The solemnity of the occasion and the spirit of the departed are kept before our minds throughout the course of the games. Aeneas as *satus Anchisa* (244) proclaims the victor in the boat race, and as Anchisiades³⁴ (407) and *satus Anchisa* (424; neither term is used in the *Aeneid* before book V) he officiates at the boxing match. He awards Acestes, for his miraculous bowmanship, a carved crater which once belonged to Anchises. Our thoughts, moreover, do not move from Anchises even with the shift in scene to the ship-firing episode, for Iris approaches the Trojan women in the midst of their weeping for Anchises (613 ff.). Joining their lament, she performs her treachery as Beroë, who in fact was sick, and distressed that she could not take part in the honors due Anchises (cf. 650 ff.). Finally, it is to the tomb of Anchises that word of the disaster she has caused is brought (664).

The appearance of Anchises' ghost near the end of the book is thus not an abrupt shift of theme. His interview with Aeneas is brief, but crucial in many respects. Quite obviously we find Anchises in death carrying on precisely where he left off in life: counselling, interpreting the divine will, and directing the course of the Aeneadae. He seconds the words of Nautes, who seems to have served *in loco parentis* in the interval, that the weary be left behind, and only select youths go on to face the wars to be fought in Italy. He further directs, as indeed Helenus had done (3.441 ff.), the visit to the Sibyl, but adds that Aeneas should seek him out in the underworld. But most important is the transfiguration of Anchises. The aura in which he appears is quite different from that of the ghost of Hector or Creusa.³⁵ He comes like Mercury, at the behest of Jove, reporting the god's will consequent to the manifestation of his power in the miraculous fire-quenching rain. He informs Aeneas, moreover, that he is not of Tartarus or of the "sad shades"³⁶ but of Elysium. The apotheosis anticipated in the funeral rites has now been realized. It should be noted that the priest is assigned to Anchises' tomb shortly after the appearance of this vision.

The appearance of the ghost of Anchises provides a neat bridge to the subject matter of book VI: the descent into Hades conducted by the

³⁴ Hahn (above, note 1) 3 f.

³⁵ This may have a bearing on Hahn's observation (above, note 1, 123 f.) that Aeneas does not heed mortals, except Anchises.

³⁶ Reading *tristesque umbrae* in 734; cf. Conington *ad loc.*

Cumaeen Sibyl, and to this we must now turn. There are two major difficulties which affect an estimation of the full development of the character of Anchises in book VI: 1) the use of two prophetic agents within the book, the Sibyl and Anchises, and the problems many see occasioned thereby;³⁷ and 2) the inconsistencies involved in Vergil's description of Hades.³⁸ Since each of these would provide the substance of a separate study of considerable length, we can here only suggest a tenable position with respect to each as they affect the culmination of 'Anchises' rôle in the epic.

Although there are, to be sure, two prophetic agents perhaps embarrassingly "on stage" at the same time in book VI, they are clearly operating on different levels. The key to these levels is perhaps best found in Aeneas' separate attitudes toward them. Here, unlike Odysseus whose motives under similar circumstances are more strictly practical,³⁹ Aeneas' prime concern is to seek out his father. His preoccupation with this desire makes him relatively unconcerned and almost impatient with the practical information which the Sibyl has to offer him regarding the wars immediately to be faced in Italy, if we may judge by his reply (103 ff.):

non ulla laborum
o virgo, nova mi facies inopinave surgit;
omnia praecepi atque animo mecum ante peregi.
unum oro: quando hic inferni ianua regis
dicitur et tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso,
ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora
contingat; etc.

The Sibyl reiterates this concern most succinctly to Charon (403 f.):

Troius Aeneas, pietate insignis et armis,
ad genitorem imas Erebi descendit ad umbras,

³⁷ Eduard Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro Aeneis Buch VI*² (Leipzig 1916) 43 ff.; H. E. Butler, *The Sixth Book of the Aeneid* (Oxford: Blackwell 1920) 275 f.; Crump (above, note 2) 22 and Saunders (above, note 2) 90.

³⁸ See Conington's introduction to book VI; Norden (above, note 37) 1-48; R. S. Conway, "The Structure of the Sixth Book of the Aeneid," *Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway* (Cambridge 1913) 1-26; Butler (above, note 37) 1-46; Glover (above, note 28) 233-72; Prescott (above, note 1) 359-410.

³⁹ Odysseus visits the dead, ostensibly at least, only to discover his way home: *Od.* 11.100 and cf. 10.539. By Circe's instructions he allows none of the dead to draw near the blood until he has conversed with Teiresias. Cf. Denys Page, *The Homeric Odyssey* (Oxford 1955) 27, whose separatist theories the present author is unprepared to embrace.

and again to Musaeus (670):

quae regio Anchisen, quis habet locus? *illius ergo*
venimus et magnos Erebi tranavimus amnis.

This is certainly more than just another expression of Aeneas' filial piety. Aeneas was not ignorant of what his father wished to discuss with him. Just as he had been informed by Helenus about the nature of the Sibyl's prophecy (3.458 ff.), so the ghost of Anchises had been specific about what he would learn in Hades (5.737):

tum genus omne tuum et quae dentur moenia disces.

Thus we find Aeneas almost brusque with the Sibyl and anxious to get on with the more important business of the day. Of much greater consequence than predictions regarding the immediate future is the information which Anchises presents to Aeneas in their underworld interview. His words, embodying as they do a panorama of the great and glorious future of the whole nation the hero is to found, stand as the final and grandest of the revelations that Aeneas receives en route.

Just as he is about to bid him farewell, however, Anchises is careful to return Aeneas to the more practical aspect of his settlement in Latium, and expand upon the subject of the wars in Italy (890 ff.) which had been broached by the Sibyl at the beginning of the book (83 ff.). Aesthetically the trip to Hades has thus been framed, as it were, in prophecies of war, certainly not to be dealt with here in detail, for this is the subject matter of the entire second half of the epic. Anchises' final words lead directly to the substance of book VII.

More troublesome are the inconsistencies involved in Vergil's account of Hades. Considerable light has been shed on this by a fairly recent study of Frances Norwood⁴⁰ who finds a tripartite eschatology in *Aeneid* VI: three geographical areas: 1) the banks of the Styx, 2) Tartarus and Elysium, and 3) the banks of Lethe; comprising respectively a primitive, moral, and philosophical conception of Hades to fit man's three basic attitudes toward the afterlife. She does not suggest that Vergil wishes to convey the notion of an historical development of man's thought, but I wonder if such an interpretation would go far from the truth. At any rate it is Vergil's tendency toward such comprehensive and, so to speak, three-dimensional writing that often has led over-precise scholars to call for greater literal accuracy.

Be that as it may, it is the philosophical or rational Hades which

⁴⁰ "The Tripartite Eschatology of *Aeneid* 6," *CP* 49 (1954) 15-26; cf. L. A. MacKay, "Three Levels of Meaning in *Aeneid* VI," *TAPA* 86 (1955) 180-89.

occupies Vergil's chief attention, as indeed it must for the realization of the climax toward which the work has been building. The doctrine of the reincarnation of souls is essential to the introduction of the long line of Roman heroes yet to be born. It is no surprise that it is Anchises who has plumbed this wisdom and acts as interpreter for his son; in fact it is clear that this is the ultimate goal toward which the character has from the beginning been developing. From what has gone before we fully expect Anchises not to become just another of the netherworld shades, and indeed his own ghost had announced that his abode was Elysium (5.733 ff.). In the underworld itself, however, the character has transcended even this level. It is Elysium in which the shade of Anchises is encountered in fact, but in his expounding of the eternal truths on the banks of Lethe he stands omnisciently apart from the whole, beyond any strictly human finality. To quote Mrs. Norwood, "He does not belong to the system he is describing."⁴¹

The Anchises of the end of book VI is indeed far removed from the pessimistic, seemingly weary old man to whom we are introduced in book II. I hope this paper has to some degree demonstrated that this is not a case of Vergil's manipulating the character to fit the momentary exigencies of the plot. The unique position of Anchises in Hades, i.e. as above any strictly human level, is realized as the culmination of a carefully worked-out development of the character over the first half of the epic. We have seen the despairing Anchises of book II roused from a determination to die, and gaining a new perspective on life through a series of personal revelations. From the beginning he assumes a position of leadership in counsel which, ever enhanced by the devotion of his son, increases in authority as the Aeneadae progress across the Mediterranean. Along with this goes a growing ability, albeit progressing by trial and error, to understand and interpret manifestations of divine will. The effectiveness of Anchises' rôle in both these areas is evidenced by the near disastrous results immediately following his death.

The stature of his character grows even greater in afterlife, initially through the extensive and extraordinary devotions performed by his son. The funeral rites in his honor accomplish a kind of apotheosis, signalled by the almost immediate appearance of his ghost in the exalted rôle of messenger of Jove. In Hades we find him occupying a special place even among the Elysian shades, in a philosopher's paradise, having penetrated the great truths of human existence. He is eager to convey to Aeneas some understanding of these abstract truths in the concrete terms of Rome's future greatness.

⁴¹ It is perhaps of some interest to note that in Homer's account of the dead Teiresias is similarly unrestricted; cf. *Od.* 10.494 f.