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THE *AENEID* AS A DRAMA OF ELECTION*

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In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the ultimate demonstration of heroism, by which the heroes win personal renown in life and after death, is their acceptance of death, of their own humanity and mortality. In the *Aeneid*, in contrast, the hero, as is often observed, is the bearer of a divine and specifically national mission, first resisted, ultimately accepted, in which personal glory and fulfillment have no part.[1] In a series of visions and ordeals he gradually comes to terms with the fact that he has been elected to initiate a process that is to culminate in a new golden age of

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[1] The following frequently cited works are referred to by author's name; date of publication is added when needed for clarity. W. P. Basson, *Pivotal Catalogues in the Aeneid* (Amsterdam 1978); Gerhard Binder, *Aeneas und Augustus: Interpretationen zum 8. Buch der Aeneis* (Meisenheim am Glan 1971); Pierre Boyancé, *La Religion de Virgile* (Paris 1963); W. A. Camps, *An Introduction to Vergil's Aeneid* (Oxford 1969); Mario A. Di Cesare, *The Altar and the City: A Reading of Vergil's Aeneid* (New York 1974); Theodore Haeker, *Virgil, Father of the West*, transl. A. W. Wheen (New York 1934; German ed. Leipzig 1931); Friedrich Klingner, *Virgil: Bucolica, Georgica, Aeneis* (Zurich 1967); Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford 1963); Viktor Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil: Image and Symbol in the Aeneid*, transl. Gerda Seligson (Ann Arbor 1962; German eds. Innsbruck and Vienna 1950[1], Darmstadt 1964[2]); id. "Das Zeichen der Venus und die Gestalt des Aeneas," *Hermeneia: Festschrift Otto Regenbogen zum 60. Geburtstag* (Heidelberg 1952) 135–43; Michael Putnam, *The Poetry of the Aeneid* (Cambridge, Mass. 1965); A. Setaioli, *Alcuni aspetti del VI libro dell'Eneide* (Bologna 1970); Agathe Thornton, *The Living Universe: Gods and Men in Virgil's Aeneid*, Mnemosyne Suppl. 46 (Leiden 1976); Gordon Williams, *Technique and Ideas in the Aeneid* (New Haven 1983); Antonie Wlosok, *Die Göttin Venus in Vergils Aeneis* (Heidelberg 1967). References to the *Aeneid* are from *P. Vergili Maronis Opera*, ed. R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford 1969). The translations in the text are my own.

peace and brotherhood and that this entails relinquishing all personal bonds, all mortal hopes and ambitions. His heroic acceptance of this mission will lead to gradual loss of humanity, culminating in godhood. Achilles and Odysseus are, in Seth Schein's phrase, "mortal heroes." Aeneas is a hero destined for immortality.[2]

The spiritual and visionary dimension of the poem grows out of this theme of election, not only to a mission but also to ultimate godhood. Those scholars who see this spiritual and visionary dimension as integral to the action of the *Aeneid* still assume that in some figurative or literal sense the vision of the new golden age will be fulfilled in this world, in the earthly city of Augustan Rome. Not even those most committed to a spiritualized interpretation make the final step taken in this essay of transferring the fulfillment of that vision to the world of the spirit (see below, notes 18 and 24). The theme of election, which provides one of the fundamental contrasts between Vergil's hero and the heroes of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, structures the poem and strengthens its coherence in ways that tend to reinforce this suggestion.

In the tragic mode, "godlike" Achilles accepts his humanity when he sees all the consequences of the series of choices that have led to Hector's death and have made his own imminent. In the romantic mode, Odysseus, after a series of ordeals that are an initiation into the human condition, rejects Calypso's offer of immortality and holds out for humanity, mortality, and his own mortal wife. He then wins his way home and triumphs over the suitors to gain earthly power and "happiness" in the form of his wife and his kingdom.[3]

The *Aeneid* is neither tragedy nor romance, though Dido and Turnus and possibly Juno have tragedies, and the story takes the romance form of a quest which is also an initiation—a quest for a kingdom and a bride. Aeneas is neither a tragic nor a romantic hero. He does not, like Achilles, make a series of irreversible choices leading to acceptance of his own mortality. His ordeals, unlike those of Odysseus, culminate in personal disaster. In the course of the poem he surrenders all personal ties. The bride and the kingdom that he wins are part of a mission

[2] Seth L. Schein, *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's Iliad* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London 1984).

[3] That Aeneas' mission distinguishes him from Homeric heroes is a commonplace of Vergilian criticism, e.g., Pöschl (1962) 38; Otis 219–23; Gordon Williams 108. But the full implications for the poem of Aeneas' *election* to be the bearer of the mission have been relatively little explored. Haeker 60–69, 80–81 and passim, Wlosok 124–27 and passim, Adam Parry, "The Two Voices of the *Aeneid*," *Arion* 2.4 (1963) 66–80 seem to imply election without focusing on it. On the hero's relation to mortality as a central theme of Homeric epic see Cedric Whitman, *The Heroic Paradox* (Ithaca 1982) Ch. 1 and 2; Schein (above, note 2) Ch. 3 and passim; also J. de Romilly, "Perspectives actuelles sur l'épopée homérique," *Collège de France, Essais et conférences* (Paris 1983). For the *Iliad* as tragedy and the *Odyssey* as romance, see Schein 37–38.

which has no relation to his personal happiness in this life. He will never go home, but, in what Otis has called an "inverted *nostos*," he will found a kingdom that others, but not he, will inhabit.[4]

Aeneas' hesitations, his reluctance, his tendency to forget his mission and ignore or misinterpret divine instructions are signs of his clinging to mortality, to the past, to personal relationships, and of his resistance to destiny, to performing a task which precludes human relatedness and will lead as inevitably to the loss of mortality and to godhood as Achilles' actions will lead to the affirmation of human relatedness, even between bitter enemies, and to his early death.[5]

Aeneas begins where Homer's heroes end, embracing his own mortality. His first speech (1.94–101) expresses his longing for death in battle and the human fellowship that that death would have affirmed. To have died beneath the walls of Troy in sight of the Trojan fathers and to lie where Hector and his comrades lie are all he asks.[6] In Book 6, when he is about to be given the twofold vision of the blessedness of disembodied spirit and of the future greatness of Romans in the flesh, he is still reluctant to be alive. When he sees the souls crowded about Lethe waiting to be reborn, he exclaims (721), *Quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido?* "Why do these poor creatures have such a terrible longing for the light?" His gradual acceptance of election coincides with the loss of all human support, all personal goals, Troy and his companions, Creusa, Anchises, Dido, Palinurus, Caieta.

Vergil draws attention to Aeneas' distance even from Ascanius, when he describes him, fully armed for the final battle, taking leave of his son:

> Ascanium fusis circum complectitur armis
> summaque per galeam delibans oscula fatur:
> "disce, puer, virtutem ex me verumque laborem,
> fortunam ex aliis. . . . " (12.433–36)
>
> He enfolds Ascanius in an armed embrace
> and says, as he barely grazes his lips through the helmet,

[4] Otis 224–25, and further comment 232, 252, 311–12. See also Haeker 71–73. For the hero's relation to mortality Achilles and Odysseus provide the central parallels. They are not, of course, the only Homeric heroes to whom Aeneas is compared either by suggestive analogy or, less frequently, direct allusion. See G. N. Knauer, *Die Aeneis und Homer*, Hypomnemata 7 (Göttingen 1964), also Camps Ch. 8 and 9, and J. A. Hanson, "Vergil," *Ancient Writers: Greece and Rome*, ed. T. James Luce (New York 1982) 2.684–90.

[5] On Aeneas' "faltering" in the first half of the poem see G. E. Duckworth, "The Architecture of the *Aeneid*," *AJP* 75 (1954) 1–15; on his isolation and gradual renunciation of earthly goals Wlosok 24, 88, 144. Di Cesare discusses his progressive dehumanization, 236–39, but does not connect this process with the attainment of divinity. See further notes 7 and 56 below.

[6] On this longing for fellowship in death see Thornton 79–81; on the contrast of this speech with *Od.* 5.306–12 Pöschl (1962) 34–36, 42; on its humanness Wlosok 13–18.

"From me, my son, learn the meaning of valor and god-ordained
struggle.
Learn personal good fortune from others."

This speech ends with an admonition to Ascanius to emulate both his father and his uncle, Hector (439–40). Hector's name is a reminder, if any is needed, of the contrast between Aeneas' bleak words and armed embrace (the only one in the poem between father and son) and the warmth and closeness of Hector's exchange with both wife and son, his embrace of his son *after* removing his helmet, his momentary expectation of a happy future for them all (*Il.* 6.466–81).

Aeneas' isolation, even alienation, is repeatedly stressed in Book 1, in the way in which he hides his grief and anxiety from his comrades (208–9), for example, and above all in his anguished protest when his mother denies him her embrace (405–10). This scene seems designed to remind us of the caresses and words of comfort and commiseration with which Thetis responds to Achilles' griefs and grievances (1.348–427, 18.65–137, 19.1–37, 24.120–42).[7] Still mortal, though destined for godhood, Aeneas is equally cut off from his goddess mother and from human companionship. Vergil's presentation of the stages of the hero's progress from mortality and personal involvement to godhood in a series of gradual illuminations that lead to the acceptance of election radically transforms Homer's vision of the hero's relation to mortality.

This contrast between Aeneas' and the Homeric heroes' relation to mortality may not have seemed to Vergil's audience so complete a break with tradition as it does to us. Another very ancient tradition, more familiar to them than to us, is perhaps being evoked and reworked. That

[7] Di Cesare 233–39, also 7, 59, 111–13, comments interestingly on extending the right hand, or both hands, as an expression of humanity and an attempt at human connection. Though he recognizes that the gesture can express prayer, supplication (a special form of prayer), friendship, or love, he lumps together gestures intended to establish physical contact between mortals (handclasp, embrace), and gestures intended to make contact, rarely physical, with divinity (hands raised or extended in prayer or salute), and takes no note of the special significance of Aeneas' desire to bridge the gulf between living and dead (2.790–94, 5.740–42, 6.697–702), mortal and divine (1.405–10), with an embrace. He argues that in the achievement of this embrace at 8.615 (discussed below, 334) Vergil presents Venus not as mother but as arms-bringer with overtones of sex and violence (256). Elizabeth Belfiore, "Ter Frustra Comprensa: Embraces in the *Aeneid*," *Phoenix* 38 (1984) 19–30, to whose comments on Aeneas' parting embrace with Ascanius (27–30) I am particulary indebted, is a detailed and discerning study of the seven embraces between Aeneas and members of his family, with a valuable bibliography. While she sees these scenes as indicating Aeneas' gradual transition from personal involvement to total commitment to a mission and acceptance of a "divine viewpoint" (27), and recognizes that the failed embraces are a sign of the gulf between human and divine (20–21), she does not deal explicitly with Aeneas' future godhood. See further note 56 below. The contrast between Thetis' and Venus' relations to their sons is discussed by Wlosok 110–12. See also 334 below.

is the ancient Indo-European tale in which the dawn goddess achieves immortality for a son who has died in battle—a story known to Greek and Roman readers through Arctinus' *Aithiopis*. Thetis and Venus/Aphrodite share many functions and attributes with the dawn goddess, and in the *Aeneid* Venus, like Eos and Thetis in Arctinus' poem, will help her son achieve posthumous immortality (below, 331–34).[8]

Affirmations of the destinies of their respective heroes structure both the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*. In *Iliad* 1 Achilles' mortality is announced by Achilles (352) and by Thetis (415–18, 505) and implicitly confirmed by Zeus (522–27). In *Aeneid* 1 Aeneas' ultimate divinity is announced by Venus (250) and confirmed by Jupiter (259), and by the end of each poem each hero's destiny is all but achieved.[9] In his climactic speech to Juno in *Aeneid* 12 Jupiter describes Aeneas as already immortal (794–95 and 797) and destined for the stars, and rebukes her for her lack of reverence for his divine status:

> indigitem Aenean scis ipsa et scire fateris
> deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli
> . . . . . .
> mortalin decuit violari vulnere divum?
>
> You yourself know Aeneas is *indiges*, and would concede
> that he is owed to heaven, and by the will of the fates is on his
> way to the stars.
> . . . . . .
> Was it right to desecrate divinity with a deathly wound?

The rare and somewhat obscure term *indiges* alludes to the tradition, frequently mentioned by Roman writers, that Aeneas died in battle near Lavinium and was worshiped locally under that title. Unlike Romulus, Aeneas had no cult in Rome. The vagueness of both the literary and the archaeological evidence for Aeneas' divine status, particularly for the cult, suggests that the tradition of Aeneas' deification lacked the official recognition accorded Romulus' deification and worship as Quirinus. To make it a key theme, as Vergil does in the *Aeneid*, seems to have been a new departure, which, of course, reinforced the Julian claim to divine status after death. More significantly, if the thesis of this essay is correct, it transformed the meaning of that claim.[10]

[8] Gregory Nagy has reminded me of this connection. See further his *The Best of the Achaeans* (Baltimore and London 1979) Ch. 9 secs. 23–33, and Ch. 10, also the survey of Greek traditions and beliefs about the immortalized hero in Irwin Rohde, *Psyche: The Cult of Souls and Belief in Immortality among the Greeks*, transl. W. B. Hillis (London 1925; German ed. Freiburg 1898[2]), particularly 55–138.

[9] Both Whitman (above, note 3) and Schein (above, note 2) discuss the way Achilles' death is symbolically integrated into the action of the *Iliad*.

[10] Cyril Bailey, *Religion in Vergil* (Oxford 1935) 195 takes 8.362–65 as evidence that Vergil intended Aeneas to be a prototype of the divinized Augustus. For possible mean-

The many reminders, here and elsewhere in the poem, of the forms of Roman piety as embodied in cult, should not, any more than Socrates' insistence on the observance of religious forms, be taken as literalist acceptance of traditional theology. They are a poet's recognition of the beauty and the emotional efficacy of ancient ways of expressing reverence for divinity.

Divinity, godhood, in the *Aeneid* is sometimes described in traditional mythological terms as acceptance into the ranks of the immortals and recognition in cult (e.g., 1.259–60, 289–90). But it is also presented in less traditional terms as renunciation of the material world in the form of earthly pleasure, pomp, and splendor. Evander proposes a distinctly otherworldly view of what qualifies a mortal for godhood when he welcomes Aeneas into his thatched hut on the Palatine, where he had previously entertained Hercules, also destined to become a god:[11]

> "haec" inquit "limina victor
> Alcides subiit, haec illum regia cepit.
> aude, hospes, contemnere opes et te quoque dignum
> finge deo, rebusque veni non asper egenis." (8.362–65)
>
> "This threshold," he said,
> "victorious Alcides crossed, this is the regal dwelling that
> received him.

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ings of *indiges* see Robert Schilling, "Le Culte de l'indiges à Lavinium," *REL* 57 (1979) 49–68. He characterizes Vergil's use of *indiges* here as "un brevet de divinization" (64). *Indiges*, an "obscure title applied to certain deities," *OLD* s.v., is used by Vergil only here and in *Georg.* 1.498, *di patrii indigetes*. For divinization in general and for the divine connections of Aeneas and his descendants see S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford 1971) 4–18 and passim. Though none of our literary sources for Aeneas' deification and worship as *indiges* is earlier than Vergil it is clear that the tradition goes back at least to the Greek historians of the third century B.C. For a general account of the evidence, both literary and archaeological, see G. K. Galinsky, *Aeneas, Sicily and Rome* (Princeton 1969) Ch. 4, particularly 149–66, also Galinsky, "The 'Tomb of Aeneas' at Lavinium," *Vergilius* 20 (1974) 2–11 and more recently Jacques Poucet, "Un Culte d'Enée dans la région Lavinate au quatrième siècle avant Jésus-Christe?" *Hommages à Robert Schilling*, ed. H. Zehnacker and G. Hentz (Paris 1983) 187–201, for an updated account of the archaeological evidence; also Nicholas Horsfall, "Some Problems of the Aeneas Legend," *CQ* 73 (1979) 372–90, for the sources of our sources; and Bernadette Liou-Gille, *Cultes "héroïques" romains: Les fondateurs* (Paris 1980) for the deification and cult of Hercules, Aeneas, Romulus, Servius Tullius. The tradition, mentioned in Servius Danielis on *Aen.* 1.259, of Aeneas' death, deification, and local cult as *indiges* near Lavinium appears in Varro, *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*, ed. B. Cardauns (Wiesbaden 1976) fr. 214; Livy 1.2.6; Tibullus 2.5.39–44; Ovid, *Met.* 14.581–603; Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.64; Cato quoted by Servius on *Aen.* 4.620. Horace does not mention it, but refers to the deification of Romulus four times, Galinsky (1969) 165. On the theme of deification in the *Aeneid* see Basson 16, 19–20; Binder 273; Wlosok 144–45.

[11] For Hercules in the *Aeneid* and in Augustan ideology as theme, image, and prototype of the savior and ruler who achieves godhood see note 14 below.

> Dare, o my guest, to despise wealth and power. Do you too
> make yourself deserving
> of godhood, and graciously deign to visit a poor household."

Particularly when read in the light of the affirmations of the primacy of spirit in Book 6 (below, 314–23, 331–34) this passage suggests, what should become clearer as my argument progresses, that the world of the immortals for which Aeneas, following Hercules' example, is destined, is to be won by spiritual discipline as well as earthly prowess. Through his struggles, *labores*, the hero destined for divinity is gradually purified of earthly ties and made fit to enter a world of transcendent, immaterial spirit.

In contrast to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, whose outcome is the affirmation of humanity and mortality, the outcome of the *Aeneid* is the achievement of immortality and otherworldly spirituality. The *Aeneid* is a drama of election, of a series of *labores* which entail the gradual shedding of humanity, the anguishing transition from matter to spirit, from mortal to immortal, from human to divine.[12]

Unlike Homer's heroes, however, Aeneas remains to the end *ignarus* of the full implications of his choice (see below, 323). Almost nothing in the poem suggests that he realizes that his acceptance of the mission to which he has been elected by the gods sets him apart as destined to become one of them. The visions of the soul's destiny and the Roman future in Books 6 and 8 do not include foreknowledge of his own deification. His self-dedication is an act of blind faith, a surrender to a divine summons whose ultimate goal he does not fully grasp. Further, he lacks the certainty of being destined for heaven which gives confidence and authority to the words and deeds of Milton's Jesus in *Paradise Regained*. For he is not, like Jesus, an incarnate god. As long as his soul, "on its way to the stars," is imprisoned in the flesh, he is subject to the passions and limited vision of the body.[13]

Seen in the context of this overarching, but relatively unnoticed, element of the action of the poem, both Vergil's apparent ambivalence about Rome and its achievements and his oblique and evocative way of telling his story acquire special significance, and some of the difficulties of interpretation that these occasion are resolved. In contrast to the timeless war and quest of Homer's heroes, Aeneas' war and quest, his

[12] On the fundamental importance of *labor* see Haeker 46–51, 79–80, 89, 109–12. See below, note 14, for Hercules as prototype of the hero who undertakes *labores*. The symbolic, even sacred, aspect of Aeneas' quest is frequently commented on. See particularly the passages in Otis cited below, note 14, and his overview in Ch. 8; also Boyancé, "Le Sens cosmique de Virgile," *REL* 32/33 (1954–55) 220–49; and notes 16, 18, 24–27 below.

[13] On the transition from mortal to divine and the primacy of spirit over matter see below, 315–23, 334.

specifically Roman mission, is to initiate a process which is to culminate in a new golden age of peace and brotherhood, in which *furor* will yield to *pietas*. Vergil presents this process in incidents so laden with overtones and other kinds of ambiguity that it is difficult to determine whether he thought Augustus could or would bring it to fruition, or whether the poet meant to present it as a beautiful but unattainable dream. If, as I have been suggesting, the goal of the hero's *labores* is not in this world but in the world of the spirit, Vergil's paradoxical ambivalence about Rome is less difficult to understand. If spirit is the ultimate reality even historical Rome must take second place and be understood as a symbol, an emblem, not the realization of the new spirit, but the place where it is born and tested. The story of Rome's founding is not a survey of human existence as we know it—as the Homeric poems are—but the record of a spiritual achievement, of the creation of a vision of a new way of life, repeatedly sought but never realized in this world. It is affirmed by the recurrent struggle to realize it of a series of heroes destined for godhood, Hercules, Aeneas, Romulus, Julius Caesar, Augustus. In Sara Mack's words the story though "rooted in time becomes itself timeless."[14]

Pöschl is right, I believe, in his intuition that the descriptions of the Roman order as *imperium sine fine* (1.279), "rule without end," extending *extra sidera . . . anni solisque vias* (6.795–97), "beyond the stars . . . and the track of the sun," where Romulus and Remus give laws together (1.292–93), and of the Romans themselves as excelling men and even gods in *pietas* (12.839), is not mere encomiastic hyperbole.[15]

[14] *Patterns of Time in Vergil* (Hamden, Conn. 1978) 87. See also 67–88 for the dark side of Roman history in the prophecies of the *Aeneid*. The ideas of multiple foundings of Rome, and of deification as a reward for saving the city, were not unfamiliar to Vergil's audience. See Weinstock (above, note 10) 162–91. On Hercules as the prototype of Rome's mythological and historical savior-rulers destined for godhood see G. K. Galinsky, *The Herakles Theme: The Adaptations of the Hero in Literature from Homer to the Twentieth Century* (Oxford 1972) 131–49; also the more specialized discussions in V. Buchheit, *Vergil über die Sendung Roms* (Heidelberg 1963) 116–32; Otis 220, note 1, 302, 317, 330–38, 342; Wlosok 66–67 with her notes 53–55; W. Heilmann, "Aeneas und Evander im achten Buch der *Aeneis*," *Gymnasium* 78 (1971) 76–89; Binder 62–65, 118–22, 137–49, 152, 157–69, 271–73; Basson 70 with notes 134 and 135; Liou-Gille (above, note 10) 15–83.

[15] Pöschl (1962) 23–24, 27. Compare Basson's more literal interpretation (25). A. E. Housman claims, *CR* 10 (1906) 44–45, that *extra sidera tellus extra anni solisque vias* refers not to extraterrestrial regions but to lands on the surface of the earth "south of the zodiac and the ecliptic," and reflects the fact that "the poets . . . do not always remember that the zodiac is oblique." The fact that other poets make this mistake, if they do, does not prove that Vergil does. In the case of a poet as steeped in philosophical learning as Vergil such an error is intrinsically unlikely. W. J. N. Rudd, "The Idea of Empire in the *Aeneid*," *Hermathena* 134 (Summer 1983) 35–50 is a needed reminder of the indispensable role that Vergil assigns to force and power, but disregards these and all other passages that suggest a moral and spiritual dimension to Roman rule.

Where he sees these phrases as referring to a cosmic order which Rome reflects, I see them rather as locating the realization of the Roman ideal of universal brotherhood outside this world in the regions inhabited by gods, in the realm of divinity, which Aeneas and all the other great "founders" are destined to attain. As we learn in Book 6 (730–38), matter obstructs the full realization of the order of spirit. The attempt to found Rome in this world can succeed only partially.

Commentators, beginning with Servius, have had difficulty with the idea of the feuding brothers giving laws together in a new golden age that is to come into existence on earth under Augustus. Various figurative explanations have been proposed.[16] But within the framework of the story the era in which Fides and Vesta will join Romulus and Remus in giving laws is no figure of speech. With its own future indicative verb, *dabunt* (293), this event is part of the climax of the series of events to come all presented by Jupiter in the future indicative. This fated series progresses from the deification of Aeneas to the birth, triumphs, and deification of Augustus, to the coming of the new golden age in which the brothers will be reconciled and *furor impius* will be imprisoned (1.253–96). There is no difficulty about understanding the brothers' participation as "real" for story purposes if, with the other millennial events of the prophecy—the deification of Aeneas and Augustus and the golden age of which the reconciliation of Romulus and Remus is a manifestation—it is understood to occur not in this world but in the world of the spirit. It is not in this world that Romulus and his murdered brother will give laws together. Aeneas will kill Turnus as Romulus killed Remus, Caesar killed Pompey, and, Vergil obliquely reminds us, Augustus caused the deaths of many outstanding citizens, including Cicero.[17] But in the attempt to found Rome, the hero, the

[16] Most editors seem to take the reconciliation as symbolic, e.g., P. Vergili Maronis, *Aeneidos Liber Primus*, ed. R. G. Austin (Oxford 1971) and Virgil, *Aeneid 1–6*, ed. R. D. Williams (London and New York 1972) ad loc. Servius on 1.276 is more literal. He explains the presence of Remus in 292 as an allusion to the custom, begun in obedience to an oracle commanding the propitiation of the murdered brother, of placing a *sella curulis* and all the other insignia of royalty for Remus beside Romulus when he performed in his kingly role. He implies here, and more explicitly in his comment on 1.292, that Vergil tries to avoid a reminder of the fratricide. Basson 31–33 tries to solve the "problem" through allegory. Relying on Servius ad loc. he identifies Quirinus as Augustus and Remus as Agrippa. Like Servius he does away with the allusion to fratricide, i.e., civil war, and with it the idea of universal brotherhood. Wlosok recognizes that for Aeneas idyllic peace is realized only after death (144–45) but sees the Augustan regime as its realization on earth (passim). For different approaches to how and if the vision can be fulfilled see notes 18 and 24 below.

[17] When Cicero is indirectly alluded to in the echoes of Scipio's dream, 6.702–55 (see below, 319), and in the reference to the exposed heads of Cacus' victims, 8.195–96, and to Catiline in Tartarus, 8.668–69, it is hard to avoid remembering that he was one of Augustus' more notable victims.

leader, undergoes a spiritual transformation which entitles him at his death to take his place among the gods.

Vergil's oblique and evocative narrative technique is a function of the fact that the *Aeneid* is a visionary epic, an epic of transcendence, neither tragedy nor romance. The best term for it comes from another epic, of a much later time, that drew a great deal of its inspiration from Vergil, *commedia*.[18] In the Greek tradition the story type that incorporates a vision, not necessarily a vision of transcendence, is at least as old as the fifth century B.C. Who can tell how much older? As far as I know John Herington was the first to point out that *Oresteia* is such a story.[19] In *Oresteia*, and also in *Oedipus at Colonus*, as in the *Aeneid*, tragic action and its consequences for individuals and communities are subor-

[18] The visionary and spiritual aspect of the *Aeneid* is not overlooked by recent scholars. Only Buchheit (above, note 14), though he does not neglect the gods, comes close to disregarding the way Vergil incorporates them in his religious-philosophical scheme. One group, which includes Parry (above, note 3); Putnam; Kenneth Quinn, *Virgil's Aeneid: A Critical Description* (London 1968); Di Cesare; Ralph Johnson, *Darkness Visible: A Study of Vergil's Aeneid* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London 1976); M. Owen Lee, *Fathers and Sons in Vergil's Aeneid: Tum Genitor Natum* (Albany 1979); and Gordon Williams, asserts that Vergil presents the vision of the new golden age as unattained or unattainable, whether because of human nature or the nature of things in general. Another group, which includes Haeker (whose wide knowledge of literature and religion makes him sensitive to aspects of Vergil often overlooked by philologists); Pöschl (1962 and 1952); Boyancé (above, note 12), also (1963), and "Sur le discours d'Anchise (*L'Enéide* VI.724–751)," *Hommages à G. Dumezil* (Brussels 1960) 60–76; Knauer (above, note 4); Otis; Klingner; Wlosok (1967), also "Et poeticae figmentum et philosophiae veritatem," *Listy filologike* 106 (1983) 13–19, and "Vergil als Theologe: Iuppiter-pater omnipotens," *Gymnasium* 90 (1983) 187–202; Binder; Setaioli; Thornton; and Donald H. Mills, "'Sacred Space' in Vergil's *Aeneid*," *Vergilius* 29 (1983) 34–46, though they differ significantly in emphasis and detail, adhere to the more traditional critical view that Vergil presents the story of Rome as in some sense leading to fulfillment of that vision. R. D. Williams, "Virgil and Rome: A Lecture to the Virgil Society," *The Augustan Age* 3 (1983) 95–108, with some qualification, takes his position with this second group. Hanson (above, note 4) 693–97 is illuminating on the question of whether or not Vergil represents Augustan Rome as the new golden age, and sees the poem as ending in ambiguity. R. D. Williams, *Virgil*, Greece and Rome: New Surveys in the Classics 1 (Oxford 1967) is a balanced survey of these and other aspects of Vergil scholarship. Wlosok's survey, also very informative, "Vergil in der Forschung," *Gymnasium* 80 (1973) 129–51, focuses mainly on these two approaches. As noted above (306), none of these scholars, not even Haeker, locates the fulfillment of the vision of the new golden age in the world of the spirit. Friedrich Solmsen, "Greek Ideas of the Hereafter in Virgil's Roman Epic," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 112 (1968) 8–14 and "The World of the Dead in Book 6 of the *Aeneid*," *CP* 67 (1972) 31–41 takes Anchises' affirmation of the primacy of the spirit as representing Vergil's real beliefs, but thinks the poet allows these to be muted by the celebration of the Roman mission in this world. Charles Segal, "Art and the Hero: Participation, Detachment and Narrative Point of View in *Aeneid* 1," *Arethusa* 14.1 (1981) 67–83, especially 81, *perhaps* leaves it to the reader to infer transcendence. See further below 315–20 with notes 20, 24–27.

[19] C. J. Herington, "Aeschylus: The Last Phase," *Arion* 4 (1965) 387–403.

dinated to a vision of a new way of life with cosmic implications. In *Oresteia*, as a result of the interaction of gods and mortals, more constructive relations among gods and between gods and mortals are achieved. In *Oedipus at Colonus*, the hero at the moment of death achieves divine or semi-divine status. It is because the *Aeneid* is a *commedia*, a visionary epic, a drama of election and of the transition from mortal to immortal, that what we think of as the "story," the narrative of events in time from the fall of Troy to the death of Turnus, is so much less immediate than the story in Homeric epic.

In the Homeric poems the boundaries between the different spheres of reality are firmly observed—mortal and god, dream and waking, past, present and future, life and death, image and reality. Though the Homeric gods behave more like mortals than do those of Vergil and though their contacts with mortals are more direct, it is a condition of heroism in the Homeric poems that the transition from mortality to divinity is not made.[20] In the *Aeneid*, with the traversing of the intraversable barrier between mortal and immortal, all other boundaries also break down. Which is primary in the opening episode of Book 1, the "real" events of the story, Venus "storming" to Jupiter, and the subsequent storm in nature which Neptune calms, or the event to which Neptune's action is compared, the statesman in the forum, calming the violence of the mob by force of words alone? The subject matter of the poem, the attempt to master *furor* in human affairs, is more explicit in the simile than in the episodes.[21] Here both the boundary between image and "reality" and the boundary between legendary past and Roman present have been blurred. The figure of speech preempts our attention as having equal or greater reality than the mythological story event, both because of its thematic immediacy and because of its air of contemporary Roman reality. It makes us unusually conscious of a fact some storytellers would like us to forget, though it is true of all stories, that the story itself, like the many kinds of images it incorporates—figures of speech, dreams, visions, descriptions of works of art—is itself also an image, an artifact.

Identification and analysis of the many spheres of reality encompassed in the *Aeneid*, and of their interactions, has been at the heart of Vergilian criticism since antiquity. The critical trends discussed above (note 18) are distinguished largely by whether they treat these spheres as undercutting or as mutually reinforcing each other through symbol-

[20] See Boyancé 23–29, also 305–8 above and notes 2 and 4.

[21] The pervasive technical terminology of Roman government, politics, warfare, marriage, documented by John Sarkissian, "The Idea of Roman *Imperium* in *Aeneid* 1.50–296," *Augustan Age* 4 (1985) 51–56, reinforces the impression that the simile takes precedence over the story. For the possibility that the simile refers to an actual occasion on which Cato prevented a riot see R. D. Williams (above, note 16) ad loc.

ism, allegory, foreshadowing, analogy. In either view the coexistence of many spheres of reality constitutes complication and enrichment. The tendency for the boundaries between them to give way is less frequently remarked on. Otis (226–27), rejecting the idea of a "merely symbolic" supernatural sphere, speaks briefly and perceptively of the "interpenetration" of natural, psychological, supernatural, and cosmic. For Johnson ([above, note 18] 44, 49–134), what he calls "blurring" is the source of the "darkness visible," the incoherence and unintelligibility of experience that he claims to be a central theme of the *Aeneid*. One of his examples of incoherence is 7.456–66 where "Allecto's magic firebrand becomes a real torment that really drives Turnus mad" (53).

At the opposite extreme Thornton, rather than connecting this breakdown of boundaries with the vision of a spiritualized cosmos on which she so learnedly and eloquently insists, is inclined to interpret such fantastic occurrences as metaphors for actual beliefs or philosophic dogmas. The snake that enters Amata's heart (7.349–77) must not be conceived "as an actual physical beast," but as "an image of the spirit of Allecto entering her" (109). Allecto's torch is similarly interpreted (111). Johnson interprets Vergil's "credible incredibility" as a sign of the "turbulent unintelligibility" of the cosmos (59). Thornton reduces it to a figure of speech rather than an event in the story. Neither entertains the possibility that the storyteller creates his own reality in which the impossible can be believable.

Gordon Williams does not formulate the question in terms of boundaries. If I understand him, he is saying that though the world of Aeneas and the world of the gods are both fictions Vergil means us to see the first as "the real world of human experience" (242), the second as merely a trope for the pitifulness and helplessness of the human condition. Since he believes that for Vergil religion has no status in reality (131, 161–62, 213), the breakdown of the boundary between the human and the divine could at best represent a hope that is "pitifully vulnerable to the very nature of the human condition" (243). Those of Williams's predecessors who deny that the supernatural level of the poem refers to some kind of ultra-human reality must adopt some version of this view. On the other hand, those who see the vision of heavenly peace and brotherhood as fulfilled in this world, or the next, unless they espouse an interpretation such as Thornton's, should be able to recognize the plausibility of interpreting this device as expressing a view of a more permeable cosmos in which the transition from matter to spirit, mortal to divine, is, if barely, possible. Perhaps this view is implicit in Pöschl's description of the Roman order as "founded in the same divine whole from which it derives its grandeur" (1962, 23).

The contrasting ways in which Odysseus and Aeneas establish contact with the dead provide an illustration of how in the story itself

spheres that Homer keeps distinct tend to interpenetrate.[22] Odysseus, accompanied by his men, goes to the mouth of Hades. He does not enter the realm of the dead, but brings the souls out, and by making them drink blood, temporarily restores them to this world. Then he extorts information from them—information primarily about events of this world up to and including the manner of his own death. Later he narrates the whole story to the Phaeacians. Aeneas, in the flesh, actually enters the world of the spirit. In doing so, he violates the order of nature, whose revulsion is registered by earthquakes and howling dogs, by Charon's objections, and by the groaning of his boat under the weight of living flesh. No companion of Aeneas shares the adventure. Only the Sibyl accompanies him. Like Odysseus he encounters and is enlightened by figures from his personal past and learns about the fate of various types of mortals in Hades, but unlike Odysseus, Aeneas never speaks to anyone of his journey to Hades. The contrast with Odysseus would, I think, not be lost on a Roman reader. What happens beyond the boundary that separates the living and the dead is incommunicable. Election means isolation, loss of community, and surrender of all human ties.[23] Aeneas acquires no practical information about his personal future in Italy. The first part of Anchises' twofold message is a powerful affirmation of the primacy of the spirit—a vision of the soul imprisoned in the body, hampered and contaminated by matter, ultimately, after many incarnations, released forever from the ordeal of rebirth, to become pure ethereal flame. Only after this does Anchises speak about the future—not Aeneas' future, but the future of the souls standing on the shores of Lethe waiting to return to the dark prison of matter—a future of glorious exertion and achievement, but marred by *furor*, and ending on a note of heartbreak, as all achievement in this world must, if we take Anchises' exposition of the primacy of spirit seriously.[24] Information about Aeneas' own future is summarized in

[22] Book 6, both because of its subject matter and because, as Knauer points out (above, note 4) 107, it is the only example of an entire book of Vergil modeled on an entire book of Homer, provides an exceptionally good opportunity for an extended comparison of the two poets' treatment of the boundaries between spheres of reality. My discussion adds another dimension to Pöschl's view that, in spite of the overall parallels with *Od.* 11, *Aen.* 6 is "the most Vergilian" of the first six books, (1962) 28. See also Boyancé 142–74; R. D. Williams, "The Sixth Book of the *Aeneid*," *G&R* 11 (1964) 48–63; Setaioli 7–9; Camps Ch. 9 on the contrasts between *Aen.* 6 and *Od.* 11.

[23] On Aeneas' progressive isolation see 307–8 above.

[24] For the pervasiveness of this gloomy note see Mack (above, note 14) 67–88. Of those who argue that the doctrines expounded by Anchises are to be taken seriously and have meaning in terms of the poem as a whole Solmsen (1968 and 1972; above, note 18) is the most explicit about the primacy of the spirit. However he sidesteps the implications of this doctrine for Roman history and contents himself with pointing out that the end of Anchises' revelation of the future emphasizes the sorrows of this world rather than the joys of

three lines at the end of the encounter (890–92). They mention wars to be fought and *labores* to come, but nothing about his personal fate. In contrast to Odysseus, who remains in this world as he receives practical information about his future and has impressed on him that the only real life for mortals is life in the body, Aeneas penetrates into the other world and receives a few dark hints about his own future in this world; a prophecy of a Roman future in which glory is mixed with tragedy; and a vision of an afterlife, more real, more intense, and infinitely more blessed, than anything life in the body has to offer. Both in the message itself and in the circumstances of its reception barriers between spheres of reality which are absolute in the Homeric poems have become traversable.

To ignore the implications for the Roman story of Anchises' description of the soul's vicissitudes, as most critics do, or to explain them away as Otis does, as merely a literary device for introducing the future Romans, or to claim, with Johnson and Gordon Williams, that Vergil denies or "subverts" the vision of transcendence, seems to me to overlook a principal reason for the poem's enduring poetic power—the complex and subtle integration of disparate, even conflicting, elements into a single coherent vision of a cosmos permeated by *pietas*.[25] Though

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the next, (1972) 41. Klingner; Wlosok (1967) and two 1983 articles (above, note 18); Thornton 60–69 and passim; Mills (above, note 18); R. D. Williams (above, note 18) expand on, refine, and deepen the view of Pöschl (1962) and Boyancé (above, notes 12 and 18), also (1963) that Vergil presents Roman history as the unfolding of the divine will (fate). Though the action is cosmic the goal is realized in the earthly city of Augustan Rome. There is no suggestion of a transcendent goal, or, except in Williams, of a falling short of the ideal, though the cost in human suffering is often dwelt on. Lee, though he emphasizes the reality and profundity of Anchises' description of the cosmos (above, note 18) 152, and argues that it "will be fulfilled in Rome" (64, also 158), still draws an oddly negative conclusion in terms of the poem as a whole. Though the epic represents a cosmic struggle the cosmos is "flawed" (163–67), and the hero "fails" (140–56, 163–64). Lee misreads the review of heroes as a guarantee to Aeneas of immortality in the form of rebirth as Romulus and Augustus (65, 152), taking no account of the fact that each of these heroes is destined for godhood (i.e., exemption from the cycle of births) in his own right (see above, 310–11 and below, 320–21). Haeker does not deal with the details of Anchises' doctrine of the soul. He emphasizes transcendence more than any other scholar, but even he affirms Rome as the fulfillment of the ideal (78).

[25] Otis 301; Johnson (above, note 18) 89–91, 107–11, and passim; Gordon Williams 131, 161–62, 213, 242–43. See also Putnam 192, and 315–16 above. Di Cesare like Otis, but for different reasons, drains the passage of religious or philosophical meaning, 113–17. The view, which goes back to Norden, that this passage has no serious religious or philosophical intent, is explicitly contested by Boyancé (1963) 173–74, also (above, note 12) 247–48 and (above, note 18) 62; Klingner 491; and Wlosok (above, note 18) 14. See also R. D. Williams (above, note 22), and Setaioli 15–16, 37–52. It is somewhat paradoxical that Otis, who sees the heart of the *Aeneid* as an individual and cosmic spiritual struggle, should so emphatically dissociate the vision of the soul's vicissitudes in the cosmos from this struggle. It is more usual for critics who emphasize the visionary aspects of the poem to see this passage as integral to their interpretations. See notes 18 and 24 above.

Vergil, like Plato, makes it clear that his myths of the afterlife are not to be taken literally, must we assume that in this moment of high poetry at the climax of the central element of his poem, Vergil did not mean them to be taken *seriously*? Klingner (492), speaking of Aeneas' question about the *dira cupido* (721) of the souls waiting to be born, perhaps intuits the lurking contradiction in not taking the implications of Anchises' answer seriously when he says that never before has anyone "begun the praise of a state, of a history, in such a way as to question the entire value of earthly existence." In fact Anchises' answer, both his picture of corrupting matter and his prophecy of Roman greatness, puts earthly existence in an even darker light than Aeneas' question. Roman achievement is repeatedly marked by tragedy, violence, and fratricidal strife, and is seen in the perspective of a doctrine that subordinates this world to the world of the spirit.

If Vergil did mean Anchises' vision of the relation of matter and spirit to be taken seriously, the flawed and partial nature of the Roman achievement as presented here and elsewhere in the *Aeneid* is an inevitable effect of contact with matter (6.730–32; cf. also 2.604–6 where the same verb *hebeto* is used), but the vision is not repudiated. The golden age can never be fully realized in this world, but the actions, the *labores*, by which Roman *imperium* is extended are indeed glorious. It is they, not their flawed outcome, that are celebrated and are to serve as an inspiration to Aeneas to undertake similar *labores*.

We should perhaps think of the way the soul of Scipio Africanus, instructing his grandson on the mysteries of the universe, uses the cosmic perspective to belittle all (even Roman) history and earthly dominion and represents life in the body as an obligation, a *munus*, imposed by the gods. The highest form of this *munus* is service to humanity through service to the state, without regard to fame or recognition in this world, its reward blessedness in the next life.[26] Or we might consider Krishna, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, instructing Prince Arjuna, who is shrinking from engaging in a fratricidal battle, on the importance, in the cosmic scheme, of selfless action without reference to its fruits. It is just such action (*labor*) that Aeneas is destined to undertake when he accepts the divine summons to lead the Trojans in a fratricidal war against the Latins. For both Aeneas and Arjuna the most significant outcome of acceptance is a state of soul that qualifies them for the company of the gods (see further 331–34 below). The *labores* of

[26] Cicero *de Republica* 6.19–23, ed. K. Ziegler (Leipzig 1969). See Setaioli 46–52 following R. Lamacchia, "Ciceros Somnium Scipionis und das sechste Buch der *Aeneis*," *RhM* 108 (1964) 261–78. Though both scholars argue that Vergil reflects this Ciceronian view they regard Roman dominion in this world as integral to the performance of the obligation. See also Camps 89–99 for discussion of the many Ciceronian parallels in 6.679–751. He too tends to deemphasize Anchises' spiritual message.

the hero prepare the soul for a golden age that is realized only in the realm of the spirit.

The opening simile and Aeneas' voyage to Hades are two of many possible examples of ways in which Vergil breaks down barriers between spheres of reality which Homer keeps distinct. This breakdown of barriers is, I suggest, one of Vergil's chief means of conveying the timelessness and universality of the struggle to found Rome, a way of showing us that the actual Rome of any particular time is not the subject, but the material of the *Aeneid*. Rome must be founded in each generation. The subject is not the founding of a city that will realize the golden age of peace and brotherhood in this world, but the struggle, the *labores*, of those who undertake the glorious but impossible mission, whose only reward is to become worthy to participate in the golden age in the next world. Not only the story of Aeneas, but Rome itself is subordinate to this struggle.[27]

If the action is to be interpreted in this way how are we to understand the traditional mythological machinery of epic that structures that action? How are the metaphysical and the mythological theology related? It is important to recognize that Anchises' speech is not a philosophical treatise but a Platonizing poetized vision of the transcendent reality of soul—of the cosmos as an organism animated by soul, of individual souls imprisoned in bodies, dulled and corrupted by their contact with matter, of an afterlife in which souls after long periods of purgation are either reborn to undergo another cycle of life in the body or, completely purified, are exempted from the cycle of births and achieve the status of pure spirit in some unspecified, immaterial "heaven" (see above, 317–18 and below, 326–27). The Lucretian language perhaps is intended to make us contrast this spiritualized cosmos with

[27] Though Boyancé 14–15 recognizes that the religious-philosophical aspect of the *Aeneid* might cause "un moderne" to raise the question of which came first for Vergil, the divine or Rome, he argues that this view is anachronistic. Vergil would not have subordinated this world to the next since for the Romans the gods existed only as gods of the city. This underestimates the influence on Vergil of the religious-philosophic tradition that goes back at least to Pythagoras and Parmenides and finds notable expression in Plato and, among Romans, in "Scipio's Dream." The Christianizing readings of J. N. Hritzu, "A New and Broader Interpretation of the Ideality of Aeneas," *CW* 39 (1945–46) 98–103, 106–10, and Haeker 82–91, 109–14, and passim do indeed imply such subordination, but Hritzu does not engage with the details of the text on which such an interpretation must rest, and neither takes sufficient account of Roman religious and philosophical views. Gordon Williams 232–43 also sees all Roman history, including the Augustan Age, as "incidental" to the main ideas of the *Aeneid*—for him not the vision of the soul's vicissitudes and ultimate destination, but the vision of the human condition as painful and ephemeral. For details see 316 and 318 above. Any reading of the *Aeneid* that assigns a secondary role to Roman history implies a cyclical view of history as endless recurrence (though not without progression). See K. W. Grandsen, *Virgil's Iliad: An Essay on Epic Narrative* (Cambridge 1984) 43 and above, 312.

Epicurus' materialistic cosmos, but, at least as important, it is a tribute to a fellow poet who gave Latin poetry a language that could express ideas like those in this passage. The identification of spirit with flame and fire is not a sign of latent Stoic pantheism. Perhaps influenced by Cicero's representation of spirit as flame in Scipio's dream Vergil recognized the poetic effectiveness of this image for his Platonizing vision. Dante in still another philosophical/theological context took his cue from Vergil and rang the changes on souls as flame for the thirty-three cantos of his *Paradiso*. For Vergil and Dante flame is not the actual substance of soul but a means of giving poetic expression to that inconceivable immaterial entity.

Only here in the *Aeneid* is the vision of transcendence that informs the poem presented in explicitly metaphysical terms, but even here, I am suggesting, Vergil gives us not pure metaphysics but metaphysical *poetry*, which we should not press for technically precise philosophic detail. To express his, in literal terms, inexpressible vision Vergil, like Plato and perhaps instructed by Plato's art, resorts to the mythological theology of the poets, to traditional tales of divinized heroes, of Hades, of Tartarus and Elysium, and of a cosmos ordered by a hierarchy of deathless Olympian and Underworld powers, not as a metaphor or an allegory for the metaphysical, but rather, like the flaming souls, as a poetic adumbration of what cannot be communicated directly.

There is, therefore, no detailed correspondence, only a loose similarity, between the mythological theology that structures the poem and the metaphysical theology of Anchises' vision. The cult of deified heroes from Hercules to Augustus with its suggestion of deities to whom the worshipper can relate as persons is not a literal representation of the idea of divinity as pure spirit, purged of matter and exempt from the cycle of births, any more than Vergil's, or Plato's, mythological Hades is a literal representation of what souls must actually experience in the afterlife. Vergil's myths like Plato's resist all attempts to reduce them to theoretical statements. They are not disguised metaphysics but a way of giving fictional reality to the vision that infuses the poem. The myths, which in terms of the central vision cannot be true, nevertheless convincingly actualize that vision as a poetic fiction. The poet's illusionistic skill, which can make things simultaneously true and not true, causes the mythological and metaphysical, like so many other spheres of reality in the poem, to interpenetrate.

The richest support for this interpretation of the *Aeneid* as a visionary poem of transcendence is to be found in the content and technique of Books 5 through 8. Until recently these books have been more studied for their contribution to Roman antiquities than for their contribution to the *Aeneid*, and, with the exception of Book 6, they are generally neglected in the classroom. The reason, of course, is their static effect,

the absence of personal dramas like those of Dido and Turnus, and of events which advance the "story." They contain even more supernatural events and less of what we think of as story than the rest of the *Aeneid*. But, as most contemporary critics would agree, the focus on story is too one-sided an approach to Vergil's many-layered narrative. Through its systems of imagery and symbolism, its integration of myth, philosophy, religion, and history, past and present, art and reality, the poem makes a statement about Rome's place in the cosmos that the story itself could not encompass.[28] In Books 5 through 8 there is an even denser concentration of these and similar devices than in the rest of the *Aeneid*.

In the system of symmetries that divides the *Aeneid* into three tetralogies, these central books constitute both the pivot of the action and its visionary core. Books 1 through 4, the fall of Troy and the wanderings, are framed by the tragedy of Dido. Here Aeneas, resisting election, is reluctant and forgetful of his mission. In 9 through 12 the war in Italy is framed by the tragedy of Turnus. Here Aeneas, having renounced all personal aims, is totally dedicated to his mission. It is in the central tetralogy, between these two major story elements, that in spite of their lack of episode, the pivotal event of the poem gradually transpires as Aeneas makes the transition from reluctant mortal to consecrated future god in a process of progressive illumination and reorientation which culminates in the acceptance of election.[29]

The beginning of Book 5 and the end of Book 8 are an index of the nature of that transition. In the first eight lines of Book 5, Aeneas, as he sails toward Italy, is described as *certus*, steady of purpose, after his earlier vacillations, but still looking back (*respiciens*) as he contemplates the flames of Dido's pyre without understanding what they mean. He takes the advice of Palinurus, who has his hand on the tiller, and goes

[28] On the secondary importance of the "story" in the *Aeneid* generally, see Johnson (above, note 18) 36, 89; on many-layered structure, above, 315–20 and notes 24–26.

[29] Duckworth (above, note 5) and "The *Aeneid* as a Trilogy," *TAPA* 88 (1957) 1–10, provides useful summaries and elaborations on this and other systems of symmetry detected by scholars in the *Aeneid*. See also Otis 227–28, 320–63, 392; Hanson (above, note 4) 697; and Thornton, who provides a convenient survey (149) and her own analysis of the action of the poem as structured by a series of cosmic movements (70–148). Camps Ch. 6 discusses some of the correspondences pointed out below, 322–25, and others which I have not mentioned, and discounts their thematic significance, 58. Pöschl (1962) 59–60 and (1952) 140–41 comments on the transitional nature of the central books and on 8.520–40 as a major turning point in Aeneas' development and in the action. See also Duckworth (1957) 6–7 and "Fate and Free Will in Vergil's *Aeneid*," *CJ* 51 (1956) 357–64; Putnam 101; Klingner 536, 541–42; Wlosok 123–27; Heilmann (above, note 14) 87–89; Thornton 117; Hanson (above, note 4) 694. Otis 223, 308, 313–16 considers the end of Book 6 a major turning point after which there is no change or development in Aeneas, but says Book 8 marks "the moment when the passive spectator or endurer becomes the active possessor of his history," 331–32. See further 331–34, below.

with the wind (the first suggestion that he is no longer going against the order of things) towards his father's grave in Sicily (8–34).[30] The reunion with his father is in stages, first at the grave, then in the dream instructing him to make the journey to Hades, finally in the encounter in the other world. At the end of Book 8 (729–31) Aeneas is no longer reluctant or doubtful, but he is still uncomprehending (*ignarus*) of the future now, as he was of the past in Book 5. He accepts his mother's gift of the arms with solemn wonder and joy, and shoulders the shield with its images of the Roman future as a burden of *pietas*. He has been transformed from the hesitant, still dependent, barely forward-moving person of the beginning of Book 5 to the bearer of the Roman future. He has also gone from his human father to his divine mother.[31] For the rest of the action his purpose never falters.

At the beginning of Book 5 Aeneas, for all his *pietas*, is still in and of this world, but in Book 5, as he commemorates his dead father, he manifests an involvement with the other world that is new and becomes progressively stronger. Signs of this involvement are the celebration of commemorative rites and games in Anchises' honor; the manifestation of Anchises' spirit as a snake (84–93) and in a dream (722–42), where, as in the encounter with his mother (1.406–9) and with the shade of Creusa (2.790–95), Aeneas' longing for an embrace is thwarted; and the establishment of cults of Venus and Anchises near the newly founded city of Acesta (759–61).[32] This is the beginning of a movement of withdrawal and return that is completed only at the end of Book 8.

There is another well-known system of symmetries in which actions, images, and themes of the first half of the poem are paralleled, book for book, in the second half of the poem, with the result that the narrative itself, from the fall of Troy to the death of Turnus, like the larger vision of Rome's multiple foundings which that narrative encompasses, is characterized by rhythmic cyclical recurrence.[33] In addition this

[30] Pöschl (1962) 48 emphasizes the importance of *certus*, and of the winds as symbols of destiny. Thornton 97 interprets the winds as a form of divine guidance.

[31] Lee (above, note 18) 115–18, 152 argues that the fundamental transition for Aeneas is the archetypal one from mother to father. He does not take into account that in Books 7–12 Venus is not only Aeneas' protector, but also his main inspiration and stimulus. See Pöschl (1952) 141 on signs of hesitation in *Aen.* 8.520–24; also Klingner 535–36; Thornton 117.

[32] On the funeral rites, games, and cult see below, 325–26. The involvement with the afterlife is reinforced by a proliferation of words associated with the dead, *ossa*, *cineres*, *animae*, *umbrae* (Boyancé 149, citing J. Bayet).

[33] For discussion and bibliography on this basic structure see Duckworth (above, note 5) 5–7, 11. Buchheit (above, note 14) 173–90 gives a detailed presentation of the correspondences between Books 1 and 7. His view (192) that this twofold division rules out the tripartite structure referred to above, 322, seems unnecessarily rigid and literalist. As Duckworth (above, note 29) 3–5, 9 and Camps 59–60 recognize, different kinds of sym-

structure causes references to the end and the beginning of the poem to be concentrated and juxtaposed in the central tetralogy, as Books 5 and 6 look forward to 11 and 12 while Books 7 and 8 look back to 1 and 2. Book 5 with its funeral ritual, anticipates the funerals of Book 11; the glories of Rome in arms and the untimely death of Marcellus in Book 6 look forward to the glorious battles of Aeneas in Book 12 and the untimely death of Turnus. In Book 7, on the other hand, the landing on a strange shore, the hospitality offered by the Latins, and the opening of the gates of war by Juno, look back to the landing in Africa, to Dido's hospitality, and Jupiter's prophecy of the closing of the gates of war. In Book 8, the visit to the site of Rome, the city coming into life, and the decision to undertake the new *labor*, the war in Italy, that is precipitated by the portent of the thunderbolt and the arms blazing in the sky (520–28) look back to the dying city of Book 2 and the beginning of the *labores*, the decision to abandon Troy, that is precipitated by the portent of the thunderbolt and the shooting star (692–98). And just as Book 8 ends with the shouldering of the burden of the future, *attollens umeris famamque et fata nepotum*, "lifting on his shoulders the fame and destiny of his descendants," Book 2 ends with the shouldering of the burden of the past, *cessi et sublato montes genitore petivi*, "I submitted, and lifting up my father sought the mountains."[34] These systems of symmetries attenuate the narrative in these books and contribute to their atmosphere of timelessness by bringing together in the center the beginning and the end of the poem.

There is still another set of symmetries, that is less often discussed, that of concentric circles, in which 1 and 12, 2 and 11, 3 and 10, etc., echo each other.[35] The echoes in 5 through 8 are concentrated and intensified by proximity. At the absolute center of the poem in Books 6 and 7 are two very different landings on Italian soil, one leading into the underworld and the other leading into primitive Latium. These two landings are framed by the contrasting cities of 5 and 8. In Book 5, Acesta in Sicily is founded by Aeneas for those too old and weary to go on to the struggles in Italy. This city of the past is balanced in Book 8 by the vision of the city of the future, at the site of Rome on the Palatine.

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metries can coexist. Like the many levels of reference they contribute richness and resonance to this most complex of poems.

[34] Klingner 536 and P. T. Eden, *A Commentary on Virgil: Aeneid VIII* (Leiden 1975) xxi, comment on the similar impact of these portents in Books 2 and 8. The parallelism between the endings is noted by Duckworth (above, note 5) 12 and Di Cesare 156.

[35] I have not found any systematic demonstration of this particular structure, which I have worked out in some detail. Framing devices like the two swan portents (1.390–400 and 12.247–56) and Jupiter's interview with Venus in 1.223–96 and with Juno in 12.791–842, with the verbal echo *olli subridens* (1.254, 12.830), are frequently remarked on. Another system of rings that omits Book 1 and has Book 7 as its center is pointed out by Otis 217.

Even more than in the rest of the *Aeneid*, in Books 5 through 8 the many worlds and themes of the poem are brought together by these schemes of symmetry.[36] The story is attenuated, distinctions of time and place, art and life, this world and the next, are blurred as Vergil concentrates his poem's meanings in these central books to create a comprehensive vision of the never-completed process of "founding" Rome.

A principal reason for the static effect of these books is the unusually frequent use of the standard epic device of the list, and of certain other kinds of description which are basically annotated and expanded lists.[37] Vergil uses this device as another means of blurring the boundaries between different spheres of reality. Its concentrated use in 5 through 8 makes it possible to present the vision of the Roman mission simultaneously through richly Italian scenes and incidents and outside time and space.

These lists and descriptions are permeated with a sense of the Italian landscape, history, religion, and folkways, so that, in the central books the vision of Italy, past and to come, is presented in a way that is concrete as well as visionary. Primitive Italy and Augustan Italy coexist as vehicles of a timeless vision. I will give a brief account of the more important of these lists and descriptions and how they work.

First, the funeral games of Book 5, the original *parentalia*, conflate the rites in honor of dead relatives that the Romans celebrated annually in the time of Augustus with those which Aeneas performs in honor of Anchises one year after his death.[38] The games themselves constitute a list of contests of which the outcome in each case involves some kind of miracle or fortunate accident. Each victory is granted by the gods as much in acknowledgment of moral or spiritual qualities involving *pietas*

[36] Camps 57–60 discusses this scheme (in which he includes Book 9) of concentrating themes in the center of the poem. See also Hanson (above, note 4) 694 and K. Reckford, "Latent Tragedy in *Aeneid* VII, 1–285," *AJP* 82 (1961) 252–61, passim but particularly 253–54.

[37] Basson analyzes four principal lists (1.257ff., 6.752ff., 7.641ff., 10.163ff.). He does not deal with the other lists discussed here or the implications of their concentration in Books 5–8. See also Pöschl (1962) 28; R. J. Rowland, Jr., "Books of Lists: Observations on Vergil's *Aeneid*, Books vi–viii," *Augustan Age* 1 (1982) 20–25; Duckworth (above, note 29) 6.

[38] Bailey (above, note 10) 282, 291–95, 301 points out that the ritual performed and the cult established at the grave of Anchises contain not only elements of the *parentatio* but also elements of Greek hero cult. Further, they "are so near to the cult of one of the *di superi*, as Servius observes, that one wonders whether Aeneas' establishment of the worship of his father is not intended to suggest Augustus' cult of the Divus Julius," 294. The miracle of Acestes' arrow (519–28), not referred to by Bailey in this connection, reinforces this suggestion. On the Roman tendency to conflate elements of Greek hero cult with the cult of deified mortals see R. Schilling, "La Déification à Rome: Tradition latine et interférence grecque," *Religioni e civiltà: Scritti in memoria di Angelo Brelich*, ed. V. Lanternari et al. (Rome 1982) 559–75. See also Boyancé 142–51; K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte* (Munich 1965) 98.

as of athletic achievement. The crowning miracle is Acestes' arrow, which, as it glides through the air, bursts into flame and becomes a shooting star, evoking not only the Julian star that punctuates the action of the *Aeneid*, but also the comet that appeared at the games celebrated by Octavian in honor of Julius Caesar and was taken as the sign of his apotheosis.[39] The games also conflate the heroic past and the Roman future—the funeral games in honor of Patroclus and the games established by Augustus to commemorate the victory at Actium. Like the Actian games they are celebrated in the Greek not the Roman manner, and with a boat race substituted for the chariot race.[40]

Within the poem this funeral ritual initiates the series of funerals which frame the journey to Hades—in Book 6 the funeral of Misenus, which precedes the descent; and at the close of the Hades episode the funeral of Marcellus celebrated in Hades almost a thousand years before his birth; and finally at the beginning of Book 7 the funeral of Aeneas' nurse Caieta, his last link with the past.[41]

Book 6 is a series of lists. The description of Apollo's temple at Cumae begins with an account of Daedalus' escape from Crete on wings of his own contriving. It is followed by an ecphrasis—a list of scenes represented by Daedalus on the doors of the temple: the murder of Androgeus; the devouring monster in the maze, the offspring of Pasiphae's bestial love (*Veneris monimenta nefandae*, 26), to whom the Athenian youths are to be sacrificed; Ariadne's redemptive love (*magnum . . . amorem*, 28) that can persuade Daedalus to reveal the means of escape from the maze and the monster. The list ends with an allusion to a scene the artist failed to complete—the flight and fall of Icarus. The maze, the love that dooms mortals to bestiality or rescues them from the beast and guides them out of the maze to freedom, the wings that bear them skyward or fail and let them fall to earth, are thematic images in Plato's descriptions of the soul's ordeals in its struggles to escape the prison of the flesh and become "equal to the gods."[42] At the moment

[39] For the pros and cons of this identification see *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quintus*, ed. and with a commentary by R. D. Williams (Oxford 1960) ad loc. On the comet and its subsequent interpretation and iconography see Weinstock (above, note 10) 370–84.

[40] W. H. Willis, "Athletic Contests in the Epic," *TAPA* 72 (1941) 392–417. The many parallels between Aeneas' games and Augustus' Actian games are discussed by D. L. Drew, *The Allegory of the Aeneid* (Oxford 1927) 42–49.

[41] Di Cesare 123 describes Caieta as Aeneas' "last personal tie to his old world."

[42] R. D. Williams (above, note 16) 459–60, citing W. F. J. Knight, *Cumaean Gates* (Oxford 1936), emphasizes the world-wide association of the maze with the realm of the dead and its use as a means of separating out the elect, but does not consider the implications for the *Aeneid* of the maze image's Platonic associations. Raimund J. Quiter, *Aeneas und die Sibylle: Die rituellen Motive im sechsten Buch der Aeneis*, Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie 162 (Königstein/Ts. 1984) includes a detailed study of the maze as a symbol of the underworld. It has come to my attention as this goes to the printer; I regret that I have

when Vergil is about to show us Aeneas successfully negotiating the underworld maze with its devouring monsters and learning how the soul may ultimately escape the constraints of earth, that, like a maze, bewilder and disorient the soul, he gives us Daedalus, a fellow artist, who holds the clue to the maze and is the contriver of the means of flight. No one, so far as I know, has included the analogies between Plato's description in *Phaedrus* of the experiences of the winged soul and Vergil's version of the story of Daedalus and Icarus among the Platonic echoes to be noted in Book 6. The more obvious Platonic evocations elsewhere in the book make such an allusion probable.

Ecphrasis, here and elsewhere in the poem, has an effect similar to that of the opening simile. It is one of several means of blurring boundaries between different spheres of existence, and, in particular, by blurring the boundary between art and reality it draws attention to the fact that the story itself is only another artifact. This effect is more pronounced here than in the simile, both because the sculpture on the doors is more obviously an artifact and because the role of Daedalus, the artist, is stressed. Like the scene in the Roman forum of the simile, like the scenes from the Trojan war on Juno's temple in Carthage, and, as we shall shortly see, like the scenes on Aeneas' shield, the scenes on the doors of Apollo's temple are as much a part of the totality of events that constitute the *Aeneid* as are the events of the narrative proper, and no more and no less fictive than they. Daedalus' narrative is time-bound in story terms since it connects a recent legendary past with Aeneas' story, but timeless in its intimations of the nature and destiny of the soul and what that implies about Aeneas' mission.

Further lists or near-lists mark the rest of Book 6. Aeneas' itinerary in Hades is a variation on a list, in which Aeneas encounters his personal past in inverse order, Palinurus, Dido, Deiphobus.[43] At the mouth of Tartarus the Sibyl recites a list of crimes against *pietas*, and of famous sinners and their punishments. Finally, in a non-chronological listing, the unborn heroes of the Roman future are shown. The order of that final list is contrived to juxtapose past and future: Romulus, Rome's first

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been unable to locate a copy. Ronna Burger's *The Phaedo: A Platonic Labyrinth* (New Haven 1984) is the first (I think probably not the final) exploration of Plato's use of the maze in *Phaedo* as emblematic both for the progress of the discussion and for Socrates' imminent journey from this world to the next. For a more general discussion of Vergil's use of Plato's myths of the afterlife in Book 6, see J. Pearson, "Vergil's 'Divine Vision' (*Aeneid* 4.238–244 and 6.724–751)," *CP* 56 (1961) 33–38, and Setaioli 9–15. For bibliography and other connections and implications of the story on the temple doors see William Fitzgerald, "Aeneas, Daedalus and the Labyrinth," *Arethusa* 17 (1984) 51–65; also Eleanor Leach, in a forthcoming book on the "rhetoric of space" in late Republican and Augustan art and literature, and Otis 284–85.

[43] See Otis 290–97 and R. D. Williams (above, note 16) 458–59 on Aeneas' encounter with his own past in Hades.

founder, with Augustus, Rome's latest founder; Caesar and Pompey, the destroyers of the Republic, with the early creators of the Republic; and the third-century B.C. Marcellus with his first-century descendant.[44]

In Book 7 we shift from the no time and no place of Book 6 to primitive Italy. This world is thrown into chaos—a chaos that perhaps suggests the chaos that convulsed Italy in Vergil's own time—by the incursion of a creature from the world that Aeneas invaded in Book 6. Allecto's triple mission, to Amata, to Turnus, and to the Latins has, in its reiterated motifs, some elements of a list. It is soon followed by another list. The Latin catalogue evokes simultaneously the Georgic landscape of contemporary Italy with its cities, fields, vineyards, and gardens, and the primitive Italian world of lands without names, as Anchises had described it (6.776), of woods and streams and wild tribes. It culminates in a description of Turnus and his arms, and of Camilla, each of whom in a different way sums up the process of transformation of the almost idyllic harmony of primitive Italy, which we see in the first third of that book, into the bestial and uncontrolled violence that breaks out under the impact of Allecto. Turnus with the monster chimaera on his helmet flaring with his moods, and Io on his shield, already metamorphosed into a beast, suggests the violence and instability of the Latin world. Camilla, the very last note of the book, in her mixture of freedom and innocence with warlike savagery, is the emblem of that doomed, primitive world that the Trojans have disrupted. Allusions to Circe frame and punctuate this book of bestial transformations (10–20, 187–91, 282, 799).[45]

In Book 8 as in Book 6 we have a walk through a landscape, this time the site of Rome that is to be, the wooded hills and grassy valleys that will become the Capitol, the Forum, the Esquiline, and the Palatine, where Augustus will one day have his dwelling, presently occupied by the thatched hut of King Evander. The boundaries between past and present are blurred as the splendors of Augustan Rome are superimposed on Evander's primitive settlement.

[44] On the structure and rationale of this list see Basson 44–93. R. D. Williams (above, note 22) 59–62 also notes the juxtaposition of Romulus with Augustus and of Republican heroes with Caesar and Pompey.

[45] Circe's functions in *Aen.* 7 are explored by Charles Segal, "Circean Temptations: Homer, Vergil, Ovid," *TAPA* 99 (1968) 419–42, particularly 428–36. He notes the connection of the first three references with the bestial transformations of the Latins but does not mention the fourth allusion (*Circaeumque iugum*, 799) or the beast metamorphosis on Turnus' shield (789–92). Thornton 106 and Buchheit (above, note 14) 76 discuss 7.10–20 only in relation to past temptations of Aeneas and the Trojans. Both writers (Thornton 115; Buchheit 109, 115) see Turnus' shield device as emblematic of his own transformation, but neither comments on the recurrent references to Circe or the transformation of the whole Latin people. Di Cesare 126 sees Circe as introducing the "love-death motif" of Books 7–12. Reckford (above, note 36) 255, 263, 266 sees the Circaean metamorphoses of Book 7 as symbolizing the "dehumanizing passion" that rages through Books 7–12.

This walk, too, like the walk through Hades, is soon followed by a vision that is also a list, presented in an ecphrasis even more extended and detailed than that in which the Platonizing vision at the beginning of Book 6 is presented. It takes the form of scenes from future Roman history in chronological order, on the miraculous shield. They are described as *res Italas Romanorumque triumphos* (626), "Italian events and Roman triumphs." Though all but the first scene have some connection with a Roman victory, only two, the Gauls' attack on the Capitol and the battle of Actium and the triple triumph of 29 B.C., focus on the military aspect of the event. As in the victories in the games of Book 5, in all these victories, including the last, *pietas* has a crucial part. In addition to military prowess each scene commemorates some demonstration of singular devotion, to family, to country, to gods, which saves Rome from some form of violence and destructiveness (*furor*), as Hercules saved Pallanteum from Cacus. Even Actium seems to be won by the gods of Rome, who are putting the Egyptian gods to flight, rather than by the military skill of Augustus, who stands transfigured in the stern of his ship, a living emblem of *pietas*, companioned by his fellow Romans and the gods that Aeneas brought from Troy, with the symbol of filial devotion, the star of Julius, flaming in the sky above him (679–81).[46] The reenactment on the shield of the struggle of *pietas* and *furor* at successive stages of the city's development is a reminder that this struggle, this *labor*, is never finished in this world.

With each scene on the shield, from the wolf in the Lupercal tenderly cherishing her natural foes, two human infants, to Augustus enthroned on the threshold of the temple of Apollo receiving the submission of the peoples of the empire, the scope of *pietas* widens. Devotion to family, the Sabine women's reverence for both the marriage bond and the bond of blood, and their appeal to husbands and fathers in the name of children and grandchildren, as Vergil's audience would have known, was the cause of the union of Sabines and Romans that concludes the Sabine episode (Livy 1.9, 13). The failure to reverence another kind of bond, Mettus' betrayal of the treaty that united Albans and Romans after the conquest of Alba, is the reason for his hideous fate (Livy 1.23, 27–28). Devotion to country causes Rome's defiance of Porsenna and the extraordinary acts of bravery of Horatius and Cloelia (Livy 2.10, 13). Devotion to the gods, the sparing of Juno's sacred geese during the siege-induced famine, saves the Capitol from the

[46] See Binder 150–282 for discussion of almost every aspect of the shield. Di Cesare's interpretation of the shield as a monument to the destructive violence that is a precondition of "achievement," 150–56, overlooks the fact, noted by Binder, that each struggle on the shield saves Rome from some form of *furor*. Binder 224 characterizes Octavian's struggle with Antony as *pius*. See also Wlosok 128–38 and Klingner 540–42 for the way the shield epitomizes this struggle.

Gauls (Livy 5.47), a devotion further illustrated by the rites of the Salii and Luperci, and by the Roman matrons who contributed their gold ornaments to help complete Apollo's promised thank offering (Livy 5.25). This historical section ends with two Roman exemplars of the destiny of the souls of *pii* and *impii*, Cato in Elysium giving laws to the *pii*, and Catiline in Tartarus, like Mettus suffering a traitor's fate. To place Cato, whose struggles on behalf of Rome came to nothing, in Elysium, perhaps awaiting rebirth like the future Roman heroes of Book 6, is another suggestion that the criterion of spiritual progress is the *labor* itself, regardless of its outcome. This glimpse of the afterlife just before the final climactic scenes on the shield puts Roman deeds in this world in the cosmic perspective of Anchises' vision.

In the concluding tripartite section all these types of devotion are summed up in Augustus, confronting in battle under his father's sign the forces of chaos and darkness arrayed against Rome, then fulfilling his vow to the gods of Italy by building or rebuilding their temples in Rome. The assimilation of the vanquished enemy into the Roman sphere, to which the Sabine treaty and the treachery of Mettus refer, is completed in the final scene in which the Gauls (Morini) and all the other conquered peoples acknowledge Augustus' sovereignty. For this theme of reconciliation, which is implicit in every scene, the scene of Romulus and Remus and the wolf, and its verbal reminiscence of Lucretius' Venus instilling peace by subduing Mars (1.31–37), is emblematic. Even this final scene depicts not the golden age on earth but one more precarious triumph in the recurrent struggle of *pietas* and *furor*. Again, in the representation on the shield of the future triumphs of *pietas* the boundaries between past and present become blurred as the poet superimposes the vision of Augustus' triumph on earlier Roman history. In addition, the image of the transfigured Augustus at the same time that it looks back to the transfiguration of Achilles in *Iliad* 18.201ff. looks both forward in story terms, and back in terms of history (for Vergil's audience as well as for us) to the transfiguration of Aeneas on the stern of his ship in Book 10 (260–75).[47] As with the images on the doors of Apollo's temple, Vergil, by repeated verbal reminders, keeps us constantly aware that these events too are images, artifacts, the work of the artist Vulcan, *haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi* (626–27). The merging of art and reality that characterizes Vergilian ecphrasis is particularly marked here, as though to draw attention to the evanescence of the actual events that embody the climactic vision.

In the context of this series of visions and illuminations in the central tetralogy Aeneas' gradual reorientation, his progression from

[47] Binder 224–25. Wlosok 129–31 stresses the way the shield evokes events of the *Aeneid* as well as those of later Roman history.

reluctant to tentative to committed, takes place. Book 5 ends his dependence on Anchises and Anchises' surrogate Palinurus, disposes of the weary elders, and takes the vital youngsters to Italy. In Book 6 Aeneas renews contact with his father and receives the strengthening vision of the next world as well as of this one, the vision of the future of the soul as well as the vision of the Roman future. In Book 7 the activation of the underworld forces that begins with the visit to Hades gathers momentum as primitive Italy's almost idyllic harmony with nature is jarred by the arrival of the civilized Trojans and then thrown into chaos when Juno calls up Allecto.

In Book 8 the transformation of chaos into order begins. At the feast of the deified Hercules at the *ara maxima* Evander recalls how the hero rescued the tiny civilized community of Pallanteum from the underworld fire-monster Cacus. Fire, both destructive and creative, is engaged on both sides of the struggle to achieve order and civilization. Vulcan, repeatedly called *ignipotens*, is both the father of the "half man" (194) Cacus who preys on Pallanteum, and the creator of the shield, the emblem of civilization. Hercules subdues Cacus, *incendia vana vomentem* (259), by letting in the light of heaven (247); and love, described as flame (389) and compared to fire from heaven (lightning 391–92), impels Vulcan to harness subterranean Cyclopean fire to forge the shield on which is depicted Augustus, savior and civilizer, *geminas cui tempora flammas / laeta vomunt* (680–81). Fire epitomizes the force that uncontrolled destroys order but when organized by Hercules, hymned as *non rationis egentem* (299), or Vulcan, the artist, saves civilization from chaos and makes possible the work of art that is its ultimate expression.[48]

Evander links Aeneas with the deified Hercules, civilizer and savior, bringer of light and order, subduer of the fire-monster, and simultaneously signals his readiness for deification, as he welcomes him into his humble hut (see 310–11 above). The climax of this process of deification, the pivot of the whole poem, comes when, as Aeneas hesitates at the prospect of accepting the leadership of a fratricidal war, Venus gives the fiery sign in the form of the lightning bolt in a clear sky (523–29; lightning bolts are also the work of the Cyclopes in their underground forge, 426–32), and Aeneas responds: *ego poscor Olympo*, "I am summoned by heaven" (533). It is to this acceptance of election that all the actions and all the visions of the poem have been leading. By this ultimate act of *pietas*, of surrender to the will of the gods, he

[48] As Binder 267 and Duckworth (above, note 29) 361 point out, fire's two aspects exemplify Horace's *vis temperata* and *vis consili expers* (*Odes* 3.4.65–67). See also B. M. W. Knox's treatment of the creative and destructive aspects of fire in Book 2, "The Serpent and the Flame: The Imagery of the Second Book of the *Aeneid*," *AJP* 61 (1950) 379–400.

becomes their willing, though still uncomprehending instrument. Wlosok compares this moment in the poem to a consecration.[49]

In the Homeric poems Zeus' thunderbolt, with which he enforces cosmic order and implements fate, when not wielded by Zeus himself, is entrusted to Apollo or Athena as his deputies. That Venus should act as minister of fate and communicator of Jove's will is one of several signs of a revolutionized cosmos—a cosmos in which not only does Venus replace Apollo and Athena as Jove's deputy, but Venus herself is radically transformed from Homer's wayward, unwarlike, lawless Aphrodite, to a goddess both of battles and of wifely and maternal *pietas*. In addition in Books 7 through 12 Venus presides over and repeatedly intervenes to facilitate the action as Jove's surrogate and intermediary, the embodiment of *pietas* that is the basis of the *maior rerum ordo* that is coming to birth (7.44). Perhaps her role as implementer of Jove's purpose is the principal reason for the invocation of Erato, the muse of love poetry, in the introduction to Book 7.[50] In Books 1 through 6 her role is more that of personal helper in the manner of Athena to Odysseus, though there are foreshadowings of this later role in the unveiling of the gods at work (2.589–633) and in her bestowal of the golden bough (6.190–211), the talisman that signals divine recognition that Aeneas, through *pietas*, is qualifed to cross the barrier between the living and the dead. If we are to take the invocation to Erato seriously all the battles of the second half of the *Aeneid*, not just those in which Venus participates directly, take place under her sign.

But if the second half of the *Aeneid* is to be conceived as love poetry it is because love and the love goddess have, like so much else in the *Aeneid*, been transformed.[51] And yet she is still the goddess of passionate love, as her epithet *laeta* (*philomeidês*), her intervention with Dido, and

[49] 145 with her note 84. On Book 8 as a major turning point see above 322–23 with notes 29 and 31. Pöschl (1952) 138–40 articulates most fully Aeneas' recognition and acceptance of a divine summons to a war ordained by fate with all the renunciation of personal goals that that entails. See also Putnam 134; Eden (above, note 34) xxi–xxii; Klingner 541; and 311 above.

[50] On Apollo and Athena as traditional wielders of the thunderbolt see Eden (above, note 34) on 8.435 and 522. Basson 98–101 summarizes the controversy over whether Erato is invoked simply as the muse in a generalized sense, as Servius ad loc. suggests, or specifically as the patron of love poetry. In the second case the reference is usually explained by the rivalry of Turnus and Aeneas for Lavinia. See F. A. Todd, "Virgil's Invocation of Erato," *CR* 45 (1931) 216–18 and Reckford (above, note 36) 257. Many scholars feel, rightly I believe, that this love triangle is not prominent enough for this to be the whole explanation. Di Cesare 126, however, sees Erato, like Circe (above, note 45), underscoring the "love-death motif" of Books 7–12.

[51] For Venus' transformation, see Wlosok 145–46, also Thornton 117; for the connections of her maternal and war-like aspects with her role as *genetrix* and *victrix* in Roman cult and in the family cult of the *gens Julia* Wlosok 116–39; Galinsky (above, note 10) 169–241; Weinstock (above, note 10) 15–18, 80–91.

above all the scene of lovemaking with Vulcan make clear.[52] And in that scene, less than 200 lines before she gives Aeneas the sign from heaven, she also, metaphorically, wields the thunderbolt. For the flame of passion which courses through Vulcan is compared to lightning accompanied by thunder coursing through the clouds (8.388–92). In another characteristic blurring of the boundaries between image and reality the simile links the power that enforces fate to the power of passion, not the lawless passion of Greek Aphrodite, but passion in the context of conjugal love and *pietas*. Catullus widened the meaning of *pietas* to include passion (e.g., 58, 72, 76, 87, 109). Vergil, by associating it not only with passion but also with Jove's thunderbolt, transforms this richer notion of *pietas* into a cosmic force. For the fire of the thunderbolt wielded by Venus in the *Aeneid*, unlike the defiant and disruptive fires of Eros' torches and arrows in Hellenistic love poetry, is passion in the service of a creative and evolving cosmos.[53] The simile in the love scene of Venus and Vulcan prepares us to see the sign that Venus gives her son as indicating the integration of *pietas*, which has now coopted and transformed the procreative principle, into the system of the cosmos.

This process of cosmic evolution arising out of the interactions of gods and mortals and gods and gods in the struggle to found Rome, and resulting in the incorporation into the cosmic order of a new, more humane element, is noted by many scholars. Boyancé explicitly calls this element *pietas*. Pöschl speaks of love and a new kind of humanity, Haeker of two orders of passion, one natural, one spiritual, that inform creation. Wlosok refers to a theodicy *among the gods*, and describes Venus as the incorporation and consecration of the humane qualities in the cosmos.[54]

[52] On *laeta* as *philomeidês* see Wlosok 11–12, 95–97; on *Cupido* Thornton 87. Although Lucretius does not use *laeta* as an epithet of Venus its use here may also be intended to suggest Lucretius' Venus, who represents the basic procreative force of the cosmos. This, and the observation on Lucretius in note 54, I owe to a reminder by my colleague Lydia Lenaghan. Vergil himself frequently uses *laetus* in its commonest Lucretian sense of "fertile, teeming" (e.g., *Georg.* 1.1, 1.325, 2.236, 2.252; *Aen.* 2.306, 3.220). Venus' two aspects as exemplar of cosmic generation and of *pietas* are implicit in Haeker's description (39–41) of the two orders of passion, the natural and the spiritual, in Vergil's poetry. See further note 54 below.

[53] According to Plutarch *Alcibiades* 16, Alcibiades disgusted and shocked Athenians of the better sort by sporting, instead of some family emblem, an *Eros Keraunophoros* as a shield device. The transfiguration of Peisthetairos at the end of *Birds* as a winged erotic god casting thunderbolts left and right may be intended to suggest such an outrageous image. William Arrowsmith's demonstration of the pervasive eroticism of *Birds*, "Aristophanes' *Birds*: The Fantasy Politics of Eros," *Arion* n.s. 1 (1973) 119–67, gives credibility to this suggestion. Fire is the traditional implement of Eros, and so of Aphrodite, who often works through him. Both in art and literature however, when he appropriates the weapons of another god they are usually those of Herakles not Zeus.

[54] Boyancé 76–82; Pöschl (1962) 15–16, (1952) passim, particularly 143; Wlosok 83, 144–46. Di Cesare, while he interprets the thunderbolt simile as indicating Venus' connec-

The cosmic power of love in its two aspects as passion and as *pietas* has some precedent in Greek literature. Passion as a cosmic force, personified in Eros/Aphrodite, is a commonplace from Hesiod on, and love also appears as the facilitator of a spiritual process, for example in Euripides' praise of Athens (*Med.* 824–45), Sophocles' Colonus ode (*O.C.* 669–94), and above all in Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*.

After Aeneas' acceptance of the sign of election, as complement and completion of the vision received from his father by a stream in a valley of Elysium, he receives, in the form of a shield forged, under the stimulus of physical passion, in subterranean fires, the *non enarrabile textum*, "the indescribable fabric," of the future, from his mother by a stream in a valley of this world (605–25).[55] Achilles' acceptance of the heroic obligation to return to battle entitles him to receive the divine arms procured by his mother, but also, as both mother and son know, it seals the mortal fate that will separate them forever. Aeneas' acceptance of his heroic obligation to lead the war against the Latins confirms his title to the divine arms and admits him for the first time to his mother's embrace (615). This embrace (the only one between god and mortal in the *Aeneid*) evokes the longed-for embrace that Venus denies him in Book 1 (405–10), and the embraces that the conditions of mortality make impossible between Aeneas and Creusa in Book 2 (790–94) and Aeneas and Anchises in Books 5 (740–42) and 6 (697–702). Though Aeneas himself seems scarcely to realize it (see 311 and 323, above), it validates him as a future god. It is the final sign that by accepting election he has won the privilege of crossing the impassable barrier that separates gods and mortals.[56]

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tion with Jupiter's cosmic power (152), characteristically treats the whole love scene as one of "brutal sex-and-violence" in preparation for "the violence of reality [that] is moving in on Arcadia" (154). Vergil's view of Venus as embodying the *pietas* that determines the evolution of the cosmos may owe something to Lucretius' use of Venus to represent the creative principle of the universe that can overcome violence and destructiveness. See above, note 52.

[55] The parallelism of these two scenes, with the verbal echo, *in valle reducta* (6.703, 8.609), is commented on by Otis 341, Putnam 146–47, Di Cesare 111–12, and most fully by Belfiore (above, note 7) 26–27.

[56] The failed embraces of the *Aeneid* are frequently commented on (see above, note 7, for Di Cesare's and Belfiore's discussions). Wlosok, 86–88, 110–12 points out that the denial of the embrace in 1.405–10 is a sign that Aeneas and Venus belong to different spheres of reality. She is one of the few critics who discuss the granting of the embrace, which she characterizes as an indication of the "accord between goddess and hero that becomes fully evident" in Books 7–12, 144 with note 15. She argues that Aeneas' deification means attainment of fellowship with the gods in heaven and a share in their peace and blessedness through the agency of Venus and as a reward for *pietas*, and that enjoyment of that peace and blessedness can occur only after death. She stops just short of interpreting the embrace as confirmation of Aeneas' fitness to enter that world. On Aeneas' deification see also above, 305–11, 319–20.