

Fama and Fiction in Vergil's Aeneid

For my sister, Lydia



*Fama and Fiction in
Vergil's Aeneid*

Antonia Syson



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1

Introduction

Both Aeneas and his enemy Turnus are told “Look!” at pivotal moments in the *Aeneid*. A goddess issues each imperative; each drastically alters its recipient’s mental state and sets the *Aeneid*’s story on a new trajectory. “Look,” his mother Venus instructs Aeneas (*Aen.* 2.604), when she lifts the cloud that normally blunts mortal vision, so that he can see for himself the unrelenting hostility of the gods (*diuum inclementia*, 2.602), who are tearing apart his city.¹ “Look at these!” says the Fury Allecto to Turnus (*Aen.* 7.454), when she throws off her mortal disguise and demands that he look at her Fury’s gear in all its contaminating, snaky force.²

“Look!” is an injunction familiar to novel readers. We are repeatedly asked to look at the world around us, and to blend that world—as we remember or imagine it—into the narrative’s

1. Hershkowitz 1998, 80–85 analyzes Aeneas’ vision of the gods in relation to Turnus’ madness—and Turnus’ moments of clarity. She argues that Aeneas in 2.624ff. and Turnus in 12.665ff. “view the same fundamental chaos and darkness” (85).

2. For detailed discussion of these commands, see chapters 6.1 and 1.2. In 2.604 Aeneas tells the Carthaginians of Venus’ orders: *aspice* is the first of a series of imperatives. In 7.454 Allecto directs Turnus, *respice ad haec*, telling him to “have regard for” the force of her hellish attributes; *bella manu letumque gero* (“wars and death I bear in my hand,” 7.455).

particular creations. George Eliot's *Middlemarch* invites us to visualize this blending in the famous "parable" that reflects Rosamund Vincy's egoistic view:

Your pier-glass or extensive surface of polished steel made to be rubbed by a housemaid, will be minutely and multitudinously scratched in all directions; but place now against it a lighted candle as a centre of illumination, and lo! the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles round that little sun.³

Eliot's "lo!" marks out the almost magical power of the narrator to bring such visions to the reader's inner-eye, as well as the power of the candle's viewer to etch with her gaze the concentric circles that turn the flame into a "little sun."

Over and over again mortal characters in the *Aeneid* are faced with unsettling words and strange visions, and are called to look to these for some kind of divine order. Readers too are invited to see a world structured (and thrown into disarray) by the gods' whims and plans, and a world where humans owe the gods not only their obedience but their interpretive skills. Not all divine communications in the *Aeneid* take the form of grammatical imperatives, of course. But those appeals to "look" at a world infused with the power of the gods—and to yield to that terrifying power—spell out explicitly a rhetorical gesture that permeates the entire narrative, giving a special cast to the fictive knowledge offered by the poem.

Does this rhetorical stance belong uniquely to epic, or is it shared by genres that do not summon the full panoply of divine violence to authorize the fictive knowledge they offer? A flippant version of my answer would be simply, "Yes." Or, to put it less frivolously: the very fact that it is so tempting to frame the question disjunctively points to two distinct advantages of analyzing the *Aeneid's* rhetoric of fiction. We may sensitize ourselves to some of the most salient characteristics of the poem's fictive knowledge, *and* to the ways this knowledge overlaps with that of other genres.

"Fictive knowledge" refers to what imaginative texts and artifacts know, or invite their readers to imagine knowing. It is a pointedly inclusive term, which takes in forms of knowledge not always associated with fiction, like "historical" and "cultural" knowledge. The term's inclusiveness borders on paradox: can one "know" something that is made up? It leaves open the fertile question of what it means to assign the status of "knowledge" to the communications of epic *fama*.⁴

3. Eliot 1994, 264.

4. Figuratively describing an epic as "knowing" something is also a way of acknowledging how

The word “fictive” itself is valuably ambiguous. The adjective in English maintains the breadth that suits its derivation from the Latin verb *ingere*: “shape,” “form,” “contrive,” “imagine,” “simulate,” “make up.”⁵ It is less burdened with generic connotations than “fictional.” The wide-ranging possibilities of what it means to be “fictive” are not—or not only—a historical and linguistic accident. These ambiguities evoke the more fundamental problems involved in setting conceptual, historical, or generic boundaries to the sphere of fiction.

The expression “fictive knowledge,” in its instability and ambiguity, matches the epic’s own central term in Latin for the poem’s capacity to forge links between its story world and its readers’ perceptions of their own world. *Fama* comprises both the memories made and transmitted by the epic (fame, renown, tradition) and the news (sometimes misleading, sometimes accurate) circulated within the story. *Fama* embraces the informative, imaginative, and deceptive possibilities of communication.

The poem repeatedly confronts both readers and characters with questions about how far *fama*’s unstable blend of imagination, information, and commemoration conveys divine knowledge and divine will. The sheer power of the gods often gives manifestations of their imaginative work the force of a uniquely forceful command. Yet even divine commands depend on human understanding for their realization. The gods exploit the communicative freedom of metaphor as a way of moving between the known and unknown.

Aristotle at different points in the *Rhetoric* identifies the moment of recognition of “this” as “that” as key to the pleasures of both metaphor and *mimesis*. The pleasure in *mimesis* is not just pleasure in the object represented: “but a deduction takes place that ‘this is that,’ so that some perception comes about.”⁶ Metaphor—unlike simile—provides the particular pleasure of connecting “this” with “that” which Aristotle ascribes to *mimesis*: “The simile, as was mentioned earlier, is a metaphor differing in the way it’s

texts bring together readers, authors, and varied linguistic and cultural expectations. Others have used the expression “fictive knowledge” rather differently, setting “fictive” against (e.g.) “historical” knowledge as a way to demarcate the work of fiction. My more inclusive use, by contrast, emphasizes the difficulty of drawing lines between different categories of knowledge.

5. The *OLD* entry for the Latin verb *ingere* effectively conveys this semantic flexibility. Hamburger 1973/1993 summarizes lucidly some of the ambiguities of the term “fictive”; they derive partly from the wide semantic range of *ingere*; in French and German “a second adjective, *fictif* (*fiktiv*) was formed (accompanying *feint*, *fingiert*) to denote the positive meaning of *ingere*, and this adjectival form has become more practicable in the theory of fine art than the substantive ‘fiction’ itself” (56). Hamburger advocates a restrictive literary sphere for the “fictive,” but in my inquiry the value of these ambiguities lies precisely in the way they point to the artificiality of any such prescriptive attempt to limit the word’s meaning.

6. *Rhetoric* 1371a–1371b: *alla sullogismos estin hoti touto ekeino, hôste manthanein ti sumbainei.*

stated. Therefore it's less enjoyable, because it's longer. And it does not say that this is that; so one's consciousness does not explore this" (*kai ou legei hōs touto ekeino: oukoun oude zētei touto hē psychē*).⁷ Latin equivalents of this vividly reductive expression pepper the *Aeneid* at decisive moments of discovery and recollection.⁸ I explore in chapter 4, for example, Aeneas' cry of relief when he finds out that he and his followers have fulfilled a terrifying prediction that they would eat tables, "This was *that* hunger" (*haec erat illa fames*, 7.128). But though the direct echoes of Aristotle's pronouns are striking, the pronouns themselves interest me less than the way they pinpoint the extraordinary potency of a perceptual process that we experience routinely. Through this process, recognition becomes transformative—and a transformative perception is experienced as a moment of recognition.

Analyzing the transformative work of metaphor and recognition in the poem's narrative illuminates how the *Aeneid* merges the imagined force of divine power with its own poetic authority. How far are we as readers called upon to share the cognitive changes experienced by the epic's characters? Undergoing imaginatively the combination of violence and verbal power wielded by the poem's gods may illuminate the operations of rhetoric in human society, but this imaginative experience may also be exploited, more troublingly, as a way of mystifying both the material and rhetorical foundations of human power.

Divine communications are not only enacted through the recognition of "this" as "that." They also make full use of the anomalies that people sense when expected pairings of "this" and "that" are ruptured or mismatched. Mary Douglas' work on ritual pollution brings out the full importance of these conceptual ruptures. She has shown the intricacy with which metaphor and materiality are bound together so that the meanings of dirt and cleanliness take substance differently for different individuals and societies. What many cultures (and individuals) share is the impulse to clean things up and put them in order when faced with anomaly and category confusion.

In Roman culture, *pietas* calls for this kind of purification. *Pietas* in the *Aeneid* manifests itself above all through remembrance. The poem makes *pietas* central as the nexus of values that both drive its story and underpin

7. *Rhetoric* 1410b.

8. Acknowledging the potency of *touto ekeino* need not entail full commitment to an Aristotelian view of representation. Such a commitment would in any case involve a necessarily selective and provisional adaptation of Aristotle's diffuse discussions of *mimesis*. Halliwell 1987, 71–73 and 2002, 152 succinctly express some of the complexity with which the term operates even in Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* (let alone its earlier uses in Plato and subsequent history in Western philosophy and literary theory—the bibliography is far too extensive even to begin summarizing here).

the workings of memory and imagination in poetic *fama*. The obligations of *pietas* connect the devoted and unceasing remembrance of fellow-mortals (one of *fama*'s most important functions) with obedience to divine commands (necessary for the enactment of fate).

The impossible demands of *pietas* set in motion many of the crises that call for epic storytelling and yield epic *fama*. Remembering with too much intensity (as Aeneas remembers Pallas in Books 10–12, for example) risks turning attention away from other responsibilities.⁹ Remembering the expectations of the gods, or of one group of humans, may mean forgetting what is owed to others. Aeneas in Book 4 partly replicates Theseus' heedlessness in Catullus 64, for instance, as he first puts on one side the (divinely willed) expectations of his son and his followers. Later, when Mercury has goaded the Trojan leader into *pietas* towards his dependants, Aeneas seems—to Dido at least—to put out of mind what he owes her. Dido's curse in *Aeneid* 4 in turn inverts Ariadne's prayer (Cat. 64.188–201 and 246–48): instead of inducing Aeneas to forget his obligations to his father, as Theseus forgets his, Dido wills that she herself should be remembered by Aeneas and by future generations in their suffering.

But the imaginative role of *pietas* pervades the poem well beyond these moments of extremity. Kenneth Burke, in *Permanence and Change*, uses his gift for aphorism to renew inquiry into a *pietas*-like concept of "piety" as a "system-builder," defining it as "*the sense of what properly goes with what.*"¹⁰ Burke describes a framework for looking at piety in terms of a symbolic order based on analogical thought, "a sense of the appropriate," which establishes moral and material cleanliness through a series of related interpretive processes, making piety "a response which extends through all the texture of our lives."¹¹

9. Though Dido and Aeneas in Book 4 dispute the exact nature of the ties between them, *pietas* clearly creates some obligations for Aeneas towards Dido and Carthage, as well as towards his own people and Troy's posterity. Generations of disagreement over the end of the poem, too, and over the outbreak of uncontrollable emotion that stirs Aeneas to kill the suppliant Turnus, have indicated that *pietas* would both endorse the revenge killing (motivating the *furiae* and *ira* that cause it) and condemn its pitiless perversion of sacrificial ritual. For a highly influential analysis of Augustan *pietas* and revenge, see Quint 1993, 76–79. Putnam 2011, 20–30 carefully explores "the *pietas* of vengeance" (20), observing how "Virgil poises us, and his hero, between two modes of *pietas* whose mutual incompatibility spills over into the contradictory ways in which the poet has us see Aeneas" (20).

10. Burke 1934/1984, 74 (italics in original). I owe to Garrison 1992, 19–20 my awareness of the centrality of this *pietas*-like "piety" in Burke's *Permanence and Change*.

11. Burke 1934/1984, 75. Burke fills out this sketch of "piety" and cleanliness: "If there is an altar, it is pious of a man to perform some ritual act whereby he may approach the altar with clean hands. A kind of symbolic cleanliness goes with altars, a technique of symbolic cleansing goes with cleanliness, a preparation or initiation goes with the technique of cleansing, the need of cleansing was based upon some feeling of taboo—and so on, until pious linkages may have brought all the details

So the symbolic systems at play in the *Aeneid*'s narrative are thoroughly entwined with the symbolic systems that organize—and occasionally undermine—attempts to maintain *pietas* through remembrance and through mourning. *Pietas* aspires to orderliness, urging “this” to be recognized as “that.” But the pursuit of this aspiration also heightens awareness of material dirt and conceptual anomaly.¹² By calling its adherents to attend closely to aspects of existence that threaten an abstract hope of order, *pietas* acknowledges and sometimes even amplifies disorder and transgression.

In the *Aeneid*'s cosmological and ethical terminology, it may be tempting to align *fama* with disorder, and see fate as expressing or maintaining order. *Fama* and *fatum* are both linked with the verb *fari*, “to speak”: *fatum* is its past participle, as many scholars, ancient and modern, have remarked. For Varro in his study of the Latin language the Parcae (Romanized versions of the Greek *Moirai*, the goddesses who spin out and cut off a person's life) produce *fatum* by speaking (*fando*).¹³ The *Aeneid*, however, neither denies nor asserts—except indirectly through verbal play—that the fates (*fata*) amount to the things that Jupiter has spoken. Jupiter is portrayed both as the “author” standing behind the story and as one of the characters who invokes an authorless authority in the impersonal form of *fata*.

These *fata* are sometimes fixed and immutable, but are often open to reinterpretation and revision.¹⁴ Jupiter and his spokespeople present these utterances both as laws ordering the structures of the cosmos and as the stories which gods and mortals enact in their lives and deaths. Yet the poem makes fully apparent the rhetorical foundations of such an “order” and its potential instability.

Fas (“right,” “divinely sanctioned”) and its opposite *nefas* (“wrong,” “abomination,” “sacrilege”) are also associated with the verb *fari*. *Pietas* requires careful appraisal of how to adhere to what is *fas* and avoid *nefas*. It is tempting to class *fas* with *fata* as a form of order that is brought into

of the day into coordination, relating them integrally with one another by a complex interpretative framework.” Burke acknowledges some of the social, ethical, and rhetorical implications of this view, observing that “piety is a schema of orientation, since it involves the putting together of experience. The orientation may be right or wrong; it can guide or misguide” (76).

12. Separating “material” dirt from “conceptual” anomaly creates a problematic distinction that is necessarily provisional: for further discussion, see chapter 3, note 4.

13. Varro, *De ling. lat.* 6.7. See especially Commager 1981. This investigation is further pursued by Lyne 1987, 72–81; Feeney 1991, 139–40; Fowler, 1996, 43; Kennedy 1997, 145–54 at 146–50. Bettini, in his 2008 and 2006 articles, offers a rich account of the relationship between *fari*, *fama*, and *fata*, as well as examining differences between *fama* and *rumor*.

14. The elements of Jupiter's declared (or revealed) *fata* that are presented as most consistently immutable are, logically enough, those parts of Rome's past that are confidently known (such as Rome's Mediterranean conquests in the third and second centuries B.C.E.).

being by Jupiter's speech, or by what he regards as speakable. But as with *fata* and *fama*, the fact that *fas* is a noun rather than a verb separates the speaker from the speech.¹⁵

Through these verbal webs the *Aeneid* weaves its ethico-religious vocabulary together with the language of human imagination and remembrance. Analyzing the fictive knowledge generated by the epic requires us to examine the network of connections between rhetoric, memory, perception, and divine order—as well as divine disorder. Jupiter is imagined as appropriating the energy of *fama*—energy fueled by anomaly, resistance, and even madness—without altogether harnessing it.

1.1 The seams of fiction in epic and novel

The pier-glass parable in *Middlemarch* is quoted so often that its command to see Rosamund Vincy's egoism in the scratches reflected round a flame verges on cliché for students of the traditional English novel. Its exuberant quotability is due partly to the way the passage forms a tangible seam in the fabric of fiction.¹⁶ Here it is once more, in full:

An eminent philosopher among my friends, who can dignify even your ugly furniture by lifting it into the serene light of science, has shown me this pregnant little fact. Your pier-glass or extensive surface of polished steel made to be rubbed by a housemaid, will be minutely and multitudinously scratched in all directions; but place now against it a lighted candle as a centre of illumination, and lo! the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles round that little sun. It is demonstrable that the scratches are going everywhere impartially, and it is only your candle which produces the flattering illusion of a concentric arrangement, its light falling with an exclusive optical selection. These things are a parable. The scratches are events, and the candle is the egoism of any person now absent—of Miss Vincy, for example.¹⁷

There are passages in many or most fictional narratives where a situation within a particular story world is attached perceptibly to a fabric woven from

15. But the gender of the nouns makes a difference: *fata* is neuter plural, *fas* neuter singular, while the feminine singular noun *fama* invites the kind of personification carried out by Vergil in *Aeneid* 4.

16. But see Price 2000 for a subtle analysis of how historical contingencies help decide what counts as quotable.

17. Eliot 1994, 264.

readers' existing knowledge and beliefs. Similes and generalizations typically form seams like this. They not only steer readers to a world outside that of the narrative and invite us to join our experience of that external world with the story world imagined in a given text.¹⁸ Many kinds of figuration may steer us towards some version of this interpretive process. Similes and generalizations, however, also make a point of saying—either more or less overtly—that this is what they are doing.

The imaginative and perceptual interaction invoked by the pier-glass parable works in both directions to generate fictive knowledge. The analogy blends visions of Rosamund Vincy's self-regard as a "little sun" into its visions of candle light reflected in illusorily concentric circles. Many details of Rosamund Vincy's characterization in *Middlemarch* and the whole story of her marriage to Lydgate may become fused with the way we perceive the egoism "of any person now absent," just as our prior experience (not excluding our imaginative experience) informs the ways we respond to these characters and events in the novel.

How fully such fusions entwine themselves in our memories, and how they change us, will vary (of course) among individual readers, and depend on the particular circumstances of an encounter with a story or story fragment. Attention may flicker in and out of a story world while reading, so quickly and repeatedly that the transitions are barely conscious. It is normal for experienced readers to be fascinated to the point of full mental "lift-off" by a text, while at the same time observing analytically the technical devices that carry one away (or that threaten to impede this movement away from the here and now). Sometimes (perhaps distracted by some external situation, or unsatisfied aesthetically) we may find ourselves engrossed in a story world only after many pages of reading, listening, or viewing—or not at all. On the other hand, rereading a familiar text often shortens the journey. Sometimes even the most fleeting recollections may take us to a much-loved

18. "Story world" approximates to Genette's *diégèse*, defined as a "universe rather than a train of events" (so, not the story or *histoire* in Genette's sense), based on the 1948 work of Souriau ("La structure de l'univers filmique et le vocabulaire de la filmologie"), not on Greek *diegesis* as contrasted with *mimesis* (Genette 1988, 17). "Story world" is valuable for its convenience as a way of talking about discursive relationships: it offers a provisional way of distinguishing the worlds that readers enter through texts (verbal, visual, musical) from a world we encounter directly through the senses (though those sensory experiences coalesce cognitively with perceptions based in story worlds). I do not wish to suggest by the term an ontologically discrete universe in which fictions would be self-contained. Keen 2003, 174 gives a clear account of why the English term may be preferable to the terms *diégèse* or *diegesis*. Laird 1993 analyzes Apuleius in terms of "story worlds" to consider how ancient narratives ask for a kind of belief that does not answer to conventional modern distinctions between fiction and "factual" narratives. "Story worlds" can be brought into being by many forms of communication, so the term avoids presuppositions about what "fiction" is or what fictions do.

story world. And these effects are not limited to verbal and visual means of building story worlds: hearing or recollecting a few bars of familiar music may temporarily transport one to the imaginative world of an opera, song, oratorio, or ballet.¹⁹ Richard Gerrig (1993) uses the familiar metaphor of being “transported” into what he calls a “narrative world” to explore some of the variables involved in these processes. Partly through empirical research, he clarifies phenomenologically certain experiences that seem shared by many different kinds of imaginative encounters.

Most importantly, Gerrig explores how and why, after being transported, readers return “somewhat changed by the journey.”²⁰ Gerrig states his aim as being “to make evident exactly how pervasive the experience of narrative worlds can be.” But despite his term “narrative world,” we do not need fully elaborated narratives to take us on these mental journeys.²¹ As Gerrig observes, “It is a rare conversation among adults that does not depart from the here and now.”²²

This pervasiveness is one of the reasons I welcome the ambiguity of “fictive knowledge” as a term. It expresses the very great difficulty (perhaps the impossibility) of keeping apart, as ontologically distinct, the specifically fictional elements of what we learn from any text. Sometimes we separate the particulars of a story world from our vision of reality. We might say, for instance, that the statement “Dorothea Brooke planned model cottages for Sir James Chettam to build” is true only within the story world of *Middlemarch*. By contrast, we could test (outside the story world) the truth of the assertion that if one places in front of a randomly scratched surface “a lighted candle as a centre of illumination [. . .], the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles” round the light. But given the ease of movement between those worlds, the imagined particulars

19. These are just some obvious examples; there are many ways of approaching the question of what kinds of story world (if any) are offered by musical forms that are not explicitly tied to verbal and visual means of storytelling, or whose ties are more allusive and abstract (e.g. programmatically titled tone poems or jazz variations/meditations on familiar songs). Equally interesting problems arise from memories stirred by taste and smell.

20. Gerrig 1993, 16–17. Gerrig rejects “toggle” theories of fiction,” as he calls them, “which have suggested that readers perform some mental act [of switching a toggle] called ‘the willing suspension of disbelief’ that eviscerates the effects of fiction” (17). He argues that “information presented in fictions affects real-world judgments because it is initially accepted as true alongside all other types of information.” Subsequently, Gerrig suggests, “even when readers actively try to discredit fictional information, they may have called to mind other beliefs that will persevere after the fiction itself has been unaccepted” (237). See further Gerrig, 201–41.

21. The term “narrative” in Gerrig’s analysis is perhaps a distraction. Gerrig describes himself as using the term “quite promiscuously” to include representational artworks, television programs, etc., because it is “neutral with respect to the issue of fictionality” (1993, 7).

22. Gerrig 1993, 7.

of Dorothea's life (her cottage planning, for example) may take a full role in the network of beliefs, memories and perceptions that constitute, in some important sense, what we know.

The pier-glass passage is unusual for the explicitness with which it lays out the interaction between different levels of storytelling: "These things are a parable," Eliot's narrator tells us. The text pointedly builds the functioning of this parable into its layering of visual and imaginative perceptions. The "serene light of science," which shows us the illusion, is implicitly likened to the candle, just as the candle reflected in the scratched glass is explicitly likened to Miss Vincy's egoism.

The seams of fiction are important precisely because often it is not so easy to feel or see them. For the most part, narratives fully interweave the two cloths, or join them together so smoothly that readers find the seams only when consciously searching for them. This apparent seamlessness is one reason why it is so hard to understand just what readers do with fictions—how fictive knowledge interacts with knowledge in its various other guises. How do we consciously and unconsciously take up invitations to bring the story worlds of fiction into a world we see as primarily real rather than primarily fictive?

Generalizations and similes are by no means the only places where readers may find such invitations. Comparable problems surround depictions of particular places and people that readers are likely to know in another sphere, either from personal experience or through other forms of representation.²³ Pierre Bezukhov and Prince Andrei in *War and Peace* seem to most readers to have a different fictive status from that of Napoleon and Kutuzov. Beyond the difference in names, does the kind of fictive knowledge we accrue about "Milton" in Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* differ sharply from the fictive knowledge of "Manchester" offered us by *Mary Barton*?

Generalizing assertions within a fictional narrative instantiate in miniature broader problems about how imagined particulars relate to potentially familiar generalities.²⁴ These assertions also highlight uncertainties about

23. Furst 1995, for instance, explores related questions about people, places, and problems of reference in realist fiction.

24. Gallagher 2005 analyzes the relationship between the imagined particular and the referential generality, situating this in the development of fictionality in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English novels. She shows through her reading of *Middlemarch* just how much subtlety there is to be found in these mechanisms for establishing a rhetoric of fiction. For a very different kind of inquiry into "fictive discourse," and a distinction between "non mimetic, theoretical [. . .] judgments" and "the logical singularity of mimetic sentences," see Martínez-Bonati 1981, 24. Walsh 2007, 30 rejects a notion of fictional "relevance" that depends on wholesale analogical thinking, but sensitivity to analogy sits well with Walsh's suggestion that relevance theory can help establish "a view of fiction in which

where readers are to envisage them as originating—in an implied authorial judgment of reality; in the viewpoints of particular characters within the story world; or in some common store of (unspecified) collective knowledge, a modern equivalent, perhaps, to Roman *fama*?

Often the narrative context itself emphasizes such uncertainties. Dickens' narrator in *Our Mutual Friend*, for instance, invites readers to move swiftly in and out of a specifically imagined story world. The recurrent invitations in one short passage raise the question of where these generalizing judgments originate:

When the spring evenings are too long and light to shut out, and such weather is rife, the city which Mr. Podsnap so explanatorily called London, Londres, London, is at its worst. Such a black shrill city, combining the qualities of a smoky house and a scolding wife; such a gritty city; such a hopeless city, with no rent in the leaden canopy of its sky; such a beleaguered city, invested by the great Marsh Forces of Essex and Kent. So the two old schoolfellows felt it to be, as, their dinner done, they turned towards the fire to smoke.²⁵

The present tense of the first two clauses seems to take us away from the specifics imagined by *Our Mutual Friend* and towards a general claim about overlong, light evenings. We are then steered back into the fully individualized story world by the naming of London in reference to a scene in the previous chapter of the novel (“the city which Mr Podsnap so explanatorily called London, Londres, London”). In the next sentence, with its vividly figurative description of how the weather, sights, sounds, and emotional experience of the city interact, the narrative seems at first to take us back towards a generalizing voice. This voice might belong either to the author or to some collective perception of how the city presents itself on these spring evenings. But the vaguely misogynist ears that hear the “shrill city” as a “scolding wife,” the pessimism provoked by the unbroken “leaden canopy” of sky, and the dread of the nearby marshes as hostile military forces, are quickly attributed to the particular “old schoolfellows,” Mortimer Lightwood and Eugene Wrayburn.

Perhaps even more exuberantly quotable (and even more frequently quoted) than *Middlemarch*'s pier-glass parable, is the opening sentence of *Pride and Prejudice*, with its succinct yet multilayered, parodic generaliza-

fictionality is not a frame separating fictive discourse from ordinary or ‘serious’ communication, but a contextual assumption.”

25. Dickens 1997, 147–48.

tion: “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.”²⁶ On one level, the marriage plot of the novel as a whole eventually reasserts this view. But the anonymous collective judgment (remarkably *fama*-like) that proffers this generalizing “truth” is swiftly individualized in the opening pages of the novel.²⁷ The very next sentence locates this judgment in the minds of “the surrounding families” in the neighborhood of “such a man.” In the following sentence, we are with one particular family, the Bennets, beginning to hear the gossip about a “young man of large fortune,” soon afterwards named as Bingley, who has taken Netherfield Park.

In some respects, the *fama* of an epic like the *Aeneid* appears to offer a kind of fictive knowledge quite distinct from that of the traditional English novel. Instead of using generalizing schemas (for example) to invite readers to attend to the parallels between imagined individuals and types who may be instantiated in reality, epics establish communal memories, which carry the cultural authority of myth. They do this partly by refusing to distinguish between worlds new-born from story and knowledge received through the inheritance of tradition.

But both the classical epic and the more recent traditional novel typically claim a privileged relationship with truth and reality. In asserting this privilege, they share a reliance on eluding any attempt to distinguish decisively which elements of the narrative point specifically towards a newly created story world, and which take us to a world (or worlds) outside the text.²⁸

Various traditional European novels of course pointedly intervene in the epistemological, historical, and ontological questions raised by conventions of genre and by a notional opposition between epic and (realist) novel. *Middlemarch*'s “Prelude,” for instance, merges genre, plot, and character in the notion of an epic life (Saint Theresa “found her epos in the reform of a religious order”), which it sets against the lives of the “many Therasas” whose formless struggles have not found a narrative shape: “perhaps only a life of mistakes [. . .]; perhaps a tragic failure which found no sacred

26. Austen 1990, 1.

27. Gordon 1996, 60 discusses this opening line as an example of the “illusion of a common understanding” which enables the “strategic decentering of narrative authority in the production of gossip”; Gordon argues, “Gossip is a kind of mass epic with its own storytellers in Jane Austen, but one which is invariably threatening to other kinds of stories being narrated.”

28. They are not alone in this: several other literary forms make a similar claim (classical tragedy and Pindaric lyric offer two obvious examples), not to mention visual art. Plato's dialogues do this in a perhaps still more provocative way, incorporating the problems of their own fictive/commemorative status into their epistemological inquiries.

poet and sank unwept into oblivion.”²⁹ *Middlemarch* sets in contrast with epic-style individual notoriety the novelistic potential for shedding light on generalities.

The pier-glass simile begins a chapter whose epigraph rejects divine themes: “Let the high Muse chant loves Olympian: / We are but mortals, and must sing of man.”³⁰ But this overt rejection of sacred epic quotes the opening lines of the *Odyssey*, *Aeneid*, and *Paradise Lost*, reminding us that these epics too are as interested in the generality of manhood—perhaps even humanity—as they are in the singularity and godlikeness of an Odysseus, an Aeneas, or an Adam. Conversely, in both preface and epigraph, *Middlemarch* meditates on fiction’s ability to create myth-like memories of individuals and their stories—though Eliot makes impermeable the boundary between human and mortal that both epic hero and epic poet typically treat as porous.³¹ Eliot’s memories would keep “man” mortal and earthbound, rather than lifting him to the stars or to Olympus.

As D. A. Miller has emphasized, gossip helps *Middlemarch* mark out what counts as worthy to be remembered—or created—in narrative.³² The novel examines how a person’s *fama* (or the English equivalent) can define an entire existence. Generalizing outward from Bulstrode, the narrator asks, “Who can know how much of his most inward life is made up of the thoughts he believes other men to have about him, until that fabric of opinion is threatened with ruin?” (Eliot 1994, 688). In Miller’s analysis, talk in the community works normatively. Miller argues that “[the distribution of the narratable] marks the sites where an ideology feels itself in danger and has already begun to counterattack. Characters who are felt to threaten the ideology of social routine enter immediately into the network

29. Eliot 1994, 3.

30. Eliot 1994, 264. Price 2000, 110–14 analyzes the sanctification of Eliot’s secular work. After showing how critics regularly redescribed Eliot’s novels in terms of other genres, Price notes how “by the end of the nineteenth century the tokenism which singled out a few novels by making them poems or tragedies or sermons *manqués* had become a defining feature of the genre itself” (111). Along with Price and with Lanser 1992, Allison 2009 examines maxims and generalizations, but Allison stresses the way these remain embedded in the narrative, so as to bring abstract thought to bear on the particularities that make up Eliot’s fiction.

31. Christopher van den Berg has helped me better appreciate how this works; as he put it in an email conversation with me, it is “a brilliantly arch use of epic’s own subject matter (*andrauirum*) to reject epic itself.”

32. Gallagher 1994 and 2006 give scandal a pivotal role in the whole development of novelistic fictionality. Related readings of gossip in *Middlemarch* may be found in Miller 1981, 110–29; Spacks 1985, 195–202; Gordon 1996, 237–94. Schantz 2008 also discusses the topic. Vermeule 2010 presents the relationship between gossip and fiction from a rather different perspective, building on work in evolutionary cognitive psychology (such as Dunbar 1996) to suggest that even fictive gossip answers an intrinsic human need that explains why “we care about literary characters.”

of chatter and gossipy observation that promotes their eccentricities to a state of story-worthiness.”³³ *Middlemarch* analyzes and at times condemns the imaginative limitations of the community that hedge in the burning passion of a Dorothea or a Lydgate, but the novel uses this chatter to drive its own narrative. It imagines lives as story-worthy just when they enter the intersection between the impassioned excess that generates talk and the conventions that redirect or utterly quench “ardour.”

The protean versatility of Vergilian *fama* has something in common, then, with the rhetorics of fiction found in many realist novels. But generic categories themselves possess just such slippery protean characteristics—metamorphosing before our eyes. Peter Brooks has emphasized the pervasiveness of the ethical and aesthetic extremes of the “melodramatic imagination” within the realist discourses of Balzac, Dickens, and Henry James. Auerbach presented such extremes as fundamental to Balzac’s “atmospheric realism.”³⁴ Margaret Cohen and Sharon Marcus in turn note the problems with grouping together British and French “realism.”³⁵

“Traditional” novel conveys better than “realist” the sense of some shared characteristics of nineteenth-century western fiction against which modernist and postmodernist novelists have conceived their work. On the other hand, “traditional” is a problematic term for a genre that throughout its long history has so assiduously invented its own new traditions. Then there are the frustrations provoked by naive Eurocentric genealogies that leave aside other traditions of narrative fiction, and Anglocentric genealogies that exclude or ignore ancient prose fiction, along with many medieval and early modern romances.

33. Miller 1981, 113. Talk in *Middlemarch* performs an ideological function very like the one assigned to gossip in ancient legal oratory, as Hunter has noted in her reading of fourth-century Athenian legal speeches. See Hunter 1994, especially chap. 4, on gossip as a means by which communities exercise social control and enforce their morality. Kuehn 2003 provides a careful account of *fama*’s legal operation in Renaissance Florence, with a subtly different perspective on legal *fama* from Wickham 2003 in the same volume.

34. Brooks explores the intermingling of sacred and secular spheres of imagination in canonical nineteenth-century novels by Dickens, Balzac, and others: “within an apparent context of ‘realism’ and the ordinary,” Brooks observes, “they seemed in fact to be staging a heightened and hyperbolic drama, making reference to pure and polar concepts of darkness and light, salvation and damnation” (1976/1995, xiii). On this reading, the ethical disorderliness of the everyday is coerced into a more orderly set of ethical polarities; simultaneously, the orderliness that may appear in perceived “normality” is disrupted by the hyperbolic mode of melodrama. Here is Auerbach (1953, 416) on Balzac and the Pension Vauquer in *Le Père Goriot*: “the things and the persons composing a milieu often acquire for him a sort of second significance which, though different from that which reason can comprehend, is far more essential—a significance which can best be defined by the adjective demonic. In the dining room, [. . .] ‘misfortune oozes, speculation cowers.’ In this trivial everyday scene allegorical witches lie hidden [. . .].” White 1999, 92–93 looks at this section of *Mimesis* (Auerbach, 413–17).

35. Cohen 1999; Marcus 2002.

The vocabulary of “imagination,” too, raises potential problems. The English terms “imagine” and “imagination” are central to my questions about the narrative dynamics of the *Aeneid*, but I do not examine the fraught history of this terminology and its relationship with ancient theoretical vocabulary.³⁶ So in this investigation I use all generic and generalizing vocabulary—terms such as “epic” (as noun or adjective), “novelistic,” “traditional novel,” or “realist novel”—provisionally and a bit tentatively. (They are themselves fictions of a sort, though certainly not the same sort as *Don Quixote* or *Great Expectations*.)

Categorizing or subcategorizing almost always means provisionally overstating how far any set can be usefully grouped together, and how far any grouping differs from other categories that are marked out with other labels.³⁷ This holds true also at the broadest level: categories like “narrative” or “not-narrative,” “fiction” or “not-fiction”—nonfiction being something a bit different—readily break down.³⁸ In discussions of relatively recent novelistic traditions, there appears some frustration at how some postmodern theorists have “hijacked” (as Catherine Gallagher puts it) the term fiction.³⁹ Gallagher argues that “the novel is not just one kind of fictional narrative among others; it is the kind in which and through which fictionality became manifest, explicit, widely understood, and accepted.”⁴⁰ But giving careful

36. See, for example, Webb 2009.

37. Ryan 2007, 33 points out that attempts to define terms are useful for clarifying the questions one is asking; but as she says, there is no point in trying to police terminology, though attempting a definition can expose the “genealogy of the metaphorical uses” that “inflate” the term (22–23).

38. The language of fictionality and imagination poses some of the same problems as the language of sexuality, where many misunderstandings have muddied debates over the value of restricting words such as “heterosexual” and “homosexual” to the specific recent cultures in which these terms emerged as categories. It is important to avoid ahistorical accounts that obliterate differences between the questions that take on most urgency in different cultures and groups at different times. But it would be a pity to use linguistic difference to define conceptual continuities out of existence altogether. See, e.g., Halperin 2002, which clarifies a middle ground in these issues for the history of sexuality, reacting to the reception of Halperin 1990. Sedgwick 1990, 44–48 articulates a nuanced position on vocabulary and historicity.

39. Gallagher 2006, 336. Cohn 1999, 1–2 evinces similar frustration, arguing that when people apply the term “fiction” to anything other than a few specific nonreferential narrative genres (such as novel, novella, and short story) they are merely exploiting a homonymy. There are many interesting questions to be asked (though not by this book) about the overlap between genres that show what one might call “strong fictionality” and genres like oratory or historiography (see, for example, Woodman 1988; Moles 1993; O’Gorman 1999; Haynes 2003). See also Ricoeur 1984, who suggests that equating “narrative configuration” with “fiction” is justifiable, “inasmuch as the configuring act is an operation of the productive imagination”; but Ricoeur nevertheless reserves “the term ‘fiction’ for those literary creations that do not have historical narrative’s ambition to constitute a true narrative” (3). To what extent the *Aeneid* has the ambition “to constitute a true narrative” in this sense remains endlessly debatable.

40. Gallagher 2006, 337.

attention to the particularities of this novelistic fictionality (perhaps exemplary in our era) need not mean excluding other genres from the category “fiction.”⁴¹

Acknowledging a spectrum of fictionality may help. Positions on the spectrum may reflect the overlap between the story world of a text and the world viewed as “reality” by its readers. The extent of the overlap depends on the appraisals of reality made by different cultures and by individual readers, and the expectations that prevail among readers for particular texts and genres at the time of writing—as far as we understand those expectations today, at least.⁴² Many ancient and medieval romances, for instance, might be envisaged somewhere near the far end of fictionality (the most emphatically fictive point). Most modern academic historiography and scientific writing, on the other hand, would place itself close to the other extreme, presenting story worlds that overlap as closely as possible with readers’ views of reality. At various points in the middle we might put nineteenth- and twentieth-century realist novels, classical and early modern epics, lyric, satire, didactic, various examples of ancient historiography, oratory, and so on.

Both epic and novel are defined as genres partly by their resistance to categorization. In his famous essay “Epic and Novel,” Bakhtin shows less concern with the ways epic resists categorization, but puts vividly the case of the novel:

the novel is a multi-layered genre (although there also exist magnificent single-layered novels); the novel is a precisely plotted and dynamic genre (although there also exist novels that push to its literary limits the art of pure description); the novel is a complicated genre (though novels are mass produced as pure and frivolous entertainment like no other genre); the novel is a love story (although the greatest examples of the European novel are utterly devoid of the love element); the novel is a prose genre (although there exist excellent novels in verse). One could of course mention a large

41. See Morgan 1993 for a convincing argument that certain kinds of narrative (ancient Greek novels/romances) reveal an implicit but well-formed concept of fictionality even in eras when ancient theorists were not using any direct equivalent to our modern understanding of “fiction” as a label. Payne 2007 locates the ancient “invention of fiction” in the works of Theocritus; his readings of Theocritus’ poems are elegantly persuasive and fruitful, but his view of what constitutes fiction seems unnecessarily restrictive. In different ways both McKeon 1987 and Doody 1996 emphasize the persistence of romance-based conventions in the history of the novel; McKeon limits his inquiry to the English novel, while Doody’s analysis is more expansive in time and space.

42. Readers who are strongly habituated to finding pervasive allegorical equivalences, for instance, may see far greater overlap between a story world and their perceptions of reality than readers whose willingness to allegorize is more tentative or partial.

number of additional “generic characteristics” for the novel similar to those given above, which are immediately annulled by some reservation innocently appended to them.⁴³

Richard Martin contemplates the genre of epic from a comparative, functional viewpoint that would cut across such specific formal markers as meter, and notes the parallels between epic’s dual function as a genre and the dual status of the Greek word *epos*, which has given us “epic” in English. *Epos*, in singular and plural, is “both marked (in literary history) and unmarked (in Homeric diction).” Epic, too, “is as pervasive as everyday speech; [. . .] it can embody any matter and make it significant,” while also serving as “a mode of total communication, undertaking nothing less than the ideal expression of a culture.”⁴⁴ This duality conveys some of the most important characteristics of epic, but it could equally well be said of the novel, though for both genres a lot depends on what is meant by “ideal.”

Both genres use their multilayered fictionality to present narratives that typically exceed what any one human could normally claim to know. Cohn has analyzed a form of knowledge that becomes accessible to an author precisely because it is fictional—knowledge of other people’s minds. This is the “the singular power possessed by the novelist,” whom she describes as “creator of beings whose inner lives he can reveal at will.”⁴⁵ Few—if any—narrators either of epic or novel claim full omniscience either of their characters’ interiority or other mysteries, but the almost paradoxical logic according to which a text’s content is “known” to the author still applies. Whatever the *Aeneid*’s poet “knows” about the underworld, for instance, is known because this underworld is part of the *Aeneid*’s story world.

By a comparable logic of excess, Vergil’s *Fama*-goddess-monster in Book 4 (who is at once a divinity and an allegory for human talk) has as many eyes and ears with which to acquire knowledge and beliefs as she has feathers to carry her in flight and tongues to sing her tales. The uncanny horror of the flying-*Fama* imagined by the *Aeneid* conveys something of the powerful fascination that fictions may exert. *Fama*’s excesses go beyond anything that may be fully realized, yet they are potentially as entrancing as they are terrifying to visualize.⁴⁶

43. Bakhtin 1981, 8–9.

44. Martin 2005, 18.

45. Cohn 1977, 4. This does not amount in any straightforward way to omniscience, of course, for either author or narrator; see Culler 2004. First person narratives (such as Aeneas’ embedded narrative in *Aeneid* Books 2 and 3) raise particularly interesting questions about fiction’s excess of knowledge.

46. Hardie 2009b, 95 emphasizes that despite (or perhaps because of) the precise balance of

Similarly, there seems something almost uncanny in the way that fictions often work their fascination precisely because of their capacity to exceed our everyday experience. Through this excess, fictions may find us (or some of us, at least) all the more willing to be carried away into their story worlds, and all the more ready to integrate those story worlds into our reality.

1.2 What Turnus sees

In *Aeneid* Book 7, we watch a scene of conflict between different modes of understanding that goes far beyond being a seam in the fabric of fiction: this is the Fury Allecto's attack on Aeneas' Italian rival, Turnus. This scene invites readers to confront the ways familiar and newly imagined perceptions may affect one another, and links this perceptual entanglement with unnerving visions of divine power. In chapters 6 and 7 I explore in greater detail the question of how far the poem makes use not only of the gods' power, but also the gods' brutality, for its presentation of fictive knowledge. For now, we will look at the pivotal scene in which Allecto aggressively takes control of Turnus' experience.

After Latinus, the king of Latium, has welcomed the Trojans as settlers in their destined land and has promised his daughter Lavinia in marriage to Aeneas, Juno summons the Fury Allecto from her home in the underworld. On Juno's orders, Allecto kindles war. She strategically spreads madness among those most likely to contaminate the region with her frenzy, including the king's wife, Amata, and Lavinia's leading suitor, the Rutulian hero Turnus. Juno commits herself to prolonging the stuff of story, drawing out and adding delays to the great achievements fated for the Trojans (*at trahere atque moras tantis licet addere rebus*, 7.315). Juno provides a rebirth not so much of Troy as of Troy's self-destruction—a suitable way to remember the city, in her thinking (7.319–22). When Juno stirs up Allecto from her shadowy home in the underworld, it is to assist her in the resolve that her own *honos* and *fama* should not be forced to withdraw in defeat as the Trojans set up home in Italy (7.332–33). She instructs the Fury to unleash to the full her creative powers. The poem connects Juno's personal *fama*, her status among gods and mortals, with the power of its own storytelling—its successful generation of epic *fama*.

correlatives, *Fama's* appearance is very hard to conceive visually: we know the proportions of her eyes, tongues, mouths, ears, and feathers, but not the number. So for the reader *Fama's* prodigiousness lies above all in the fact that this sight is not fully seeable, even in the mind's eye.

Allecto's snakiness and mutability are essential to her power over people's minds. The narrator introduces the *Dira* by calling attention both to the effects of her terrible looks, and to her capacity for altering those looks so as to appear any way she chooses. Even her sister *Dirae* in Tartarus hate her as a prodigy, a *monstrum* (7.328)—something that communicates through sight—“so many are the faces she becomes, so cruel her appearances, with so many serpents does she teem darkly” (*tot sese uertit in ora, / tam saeuae facies, tot pullulat atra colubris*, 7.328–29).

Addressing her with a kind of prayer, which lists the Fury's destructive abilities, Juno delegates to Allecto the freedom to decide exactly how she should shake apart the peace made between Trojans and Latins.⁴⁷ Allecto does this through an infectious madness, poisoning the people and animals whose derailment will have the greatest effect on the Italian and Trojan communities, stealthily mimicking her surroundings so that she can contaminate the area without being noticed. Allecto shares with *fama*—and more specifically with Book 4's personification of *Fama*—her ability to infect communities by stealthily blending in with existing perceptions.⁴⁸

On arrival at Turnus' place, Allecto takes off (*exuit*, 7.416) her Fury-looks.

tectis hic Turnus in altis
iam mediam nigra carpebat nocte quietem.
Allecto toruam faciem et furialia membra
exuit, in uultus sese transformat anilis
et frontem obscenam rugis arat, induit albos
cum uitta crinis, tum ramum innectit oliuae;
fit Calybe Iunonis anus templique sacerdos,
et iuveni ante oculos his se cum uocibus offert:

Here Turnus in his lofty palace
was already enjoying utter peace in the black night.
Allecto takes off her grim appearance and Fury's limbs,

47. 7.335–38: *tu potes unanimes armare in proelia fratres / atque odiis uersare domos, tu uerbera tectis / funereasque inferre faces, tibi nomina mille, / mille nocendi artes*. “You can arm like-thinking brothers for battles and upset homes with hatred, you can strike roofs with lashes and funeral torches; a thousand names are yours, a thousand arts for causing harm.” Feeney 1991, 163 observes the narrative's emphasis on complexity in its imagining of the Fury; for instance, the poem itself uses several of her many names (Allecto, Erinys, *Cocytia uirgo*).

48. See further chapters 2.1 and 7.2. Hardie 2009b, 99–104 has shown in detail how closely related to Book 4's *Fama* is Allecto-*Discordia*, “with the difference that as a Fury Allecto is a fully mythological being tending to act in the mode of a personification, whereas *Fama* starts out as an abstraction, tending towards the mythological” (100).

transforms herself into an old woman in appearance and furrows her brow to make it loathsome with wrinkles, and puts on white hair and a headband, then she twines in an olive bough; she becomes Calybe, the aged priestess of Juno's temple, and presents herself before the young man's eyes with these words:
(*Aen.* 7.413–20)⁴⁹

When Allecto prepares to approach Turnus, and gets rid of “her grim appearance and Fury's limbs” (*toruam faciem et furialia membra*, 7.415), to turn herself step by step into an aged priestess of Juno, we might expect this visual persuasion to complement the verbal persuasion that she attempts on Turnus. Once she becomes Calybe she presents herself *ante oculos* (“before the young man's eyes,” 7.420).⁵⁰ The detail with which her disguise has been recounted suggests that she expects her appearance before his eyes, the furrowing of her face with wrinkles and so on, to be as effective as the words she speaks in getting Turnus to do what she wants.

Why would it be reasonable for Allecto to assume that this disguise will help her? Commentators from Donatus through to Horsfall have suggested that her status as a priestess and her age should call for reverence from Turnus. In that sense, Allecto presents herself as someone who presumably exists in reality (within the story world), and whose words she can expect Turnus

49. Translations are mine, except where noted, but I have taken a magpie's approach; most include borrowings and echoes (conscious and unconscious) from many published translations and commentaries. The historic present poses a special challenge for anyone translating Latin narrative. I have been persuaded by Fagles 2006, 389 that the shifts in perspective and mood created by shifting in and out of the present are too important to obscure by making the tenses uniform in English, though the relationship between tenses in English is so different from Latin.

50. Hershkowitz 1998, 89 n. 55 connects *ante oculos* with Feeney's observation (1991, 170) that the narration of this scene “forces us to keep readjusting to the level of reality we need to inhabit.” As Feeney says, “Most readers, I imagine, assume that Turnus has woken up when he speaks to the disguised Allecto (435–44), but we are then told that he wakes up after having the torch thrust into his chest, so that we must reread the conversation with Allecto-Calybe, and see it as a dream-experience.” Horsfall 2000 ad loc. notes that *Aen.* 2.270 and 3.150, both dream scenes, use the same phrase. Although Aeneas acknowledges his dream of Hector as a dream at the outset, Aeneas' audience needs to know that Hector was (in some sense) there before his eyes—look! *in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / uisus adesse mihi . . .* (2.270–71). Again, when the Penates appear to Aeneas, the tension between dream and reality is expressed by his near-juxtaposition of *somnis* with *ante oculos*: *uisi ante oculos astare iacentis / in somnis multo manifesti lumine* (“They appeared to stand there before my eyes as I lay in sleep, plainly visible in plentiful light,” 3.150–51); after quoting the gods' speech, he tells his Carthaginian audience how overwhelming he found this apparition: *nec sopor illud erat, sed coram agnoscere uultus / uelatasque comas praesentiaque ora uidebar* (“And that was not a mere figment of deep sleep, but face to face I seemed to recognize their features and their garlanded hair and their mouths actually speaking in person,” 3.173–74).

to take seriously.⁵¹ She seems to intend not to use her divine power on him, but to operate within the terms of the mortal world as he knows it. But a manipulative goddess could well anticipate Turnus' revulsion towards the old woman, and his misogynistic scorn for her advice (distaste for the physical marks of old age in women is a familiar theme in classical literature).⁵² In that case his reaction to her initial fiction would all be a part of her authorial plan, with her violent revelation built in from the start. The poem never pronounces whether the Fury designs this change of appearance as a mere precursor to the violent eruption that Turnus' resistance eventually provokes.⁵³ We are left free either to imagine that her original plan may simply be to persuade a perfectly sane Turnus to go to war, or to see her identity as a Fury (that is, as someone who generates *furor*—madness) as essential to the whole operation. The poem narrates Allecto's behavior, not her thoughts.

Even in her human disguise Allecto gives Turnus a chance to respond to a divine command. She pointedly tells him that Juno herself ordered her speech, and implies that this command is supported by the other Olympian gods (7.428, 432). These hints root Allecto's disguise in conventions that make it a recognizable fiction. But (with the irony that many literary disguise scenes employ) these qualities are much more obvious to readers of the poem than they are to Turnus within the story world.

Allecto initially creates as a fiction not only the characterization she adopts as Calybe, but also a characterization of Turnus as listener. In effect, she brings him two kinds of *fama*, telling him of current affairs as well as outlining his own personal reputation; she explains how his public character should direct his response to the latest turn of events. At this point she is telling a story about who Turnus is. Even the vocative at the start marks out this question as an invitation to Turnus to consider himself and what kinds of stories he wishes to be told about "Turnus."⁵⁴

51. Iris in *Aeneid* 5 and Apollo in *Aeneid* 9 use comparable strategies. Athena in *Odyssey* 6 takes on a similar disguise when she wants Nausicaa to do laundry so as to be ready to meet Odysseus. Nausicaa behaves as Athena had expected, so there is no need to find a more forceful and specifically divine way to make her do what Athena wants. On the other hand, in *Iliad* 3 Aphrodite presents herself to Helen as an elderly Lacedaimonian wool worker. Helen sees through the disguise, but at first she resists Aphrodite. This enrages the goddess, who threatens Helen; Helen is duly terrified and obeys. In the *Iliad* episode the disguise becomes almost irrelevant, but the recognition of Aphrodite as a goddess in itself is ineffectual; the crucial shift in Helen's will comes when Aphrodite threatens to exercise violently her divine power.

52. See especially Richlin 1992, 105ff. Horsfall 2000 at 7.416 notes that "inherited expectations are conveniently ambiguous."

53. I owe this observation to James Tatum.

54. Horsfall 2000 at 7.421 refers us to other rare initial vocatives: 9.6 (Iris to Turnus), 320, 390 (both Nisus to Euryalus); 11.502, 12.56, 653 (all addressed to Turnus). Each *Turne* comes from a

Turnus is not the sort to put up with wasted effort and diminished power, she suggests. She constructs his past in terms that set up a distinct, and distinctively reductive vision of his motives: his military achievements have had the goal of purchasing a bride who in turn would bring him a kingdom (*Aen.* 7.421–25). “Go on, then, give yourself to unrewarded dangers, a laughing stock!” (*i nunc, ingratis offer te, inrise, periclis*, 7.426). If King Latinus is not going to keep his word, he should find out what it is like to have Turnus in arms against him (7.432–34).

Turnus takes up Calybe’s invitation, though not in the way that the Fury expects, and responds to Allecto-Calybe’s speech as something to be evaluated according to whether her words fit with the truth of the world as he sees it. As a reader of fiction might do, when deciding how to relate a particular story world to her own beliefs, Turnus treats the fiction he is offered as something altogether separate from his own existence—something that can be experienced without further consequences. Turnus’ reaction to Calybe suggests that he either scorns or is ignorant of the conventions on which her chosen appearance depends, and that he is unwilling to step into the position her speech invites him to take.

If Turnus shared readers’ awareness of his position within the story world of an epic, he would be ready to recognize Calybe’s traditional mythic role. When seemingly marginal characters with marks of age and weakness give advice, they may well be gods merely pretending to be powerless humans.⁵⁵ Recognition of the immortals in mortal guise is nearly impossible, yet at the same time is somehow expected in this tradition. “Gods are hard for mortals to perceive” (*chalepoi de theoi thnêtoisin orasthai*, *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 111), especially when the gods have taken great care to make themselves unrecognizable, but nonrecognition brings terrible consequences. Accusations are hurled at the mortals who fail in this endeavor to perceive the imperceptible. This troublesome expectation is justified—to the extent that justice has any place here—by the familiarity of the pattern in narrative, which reinforces certain social norms. Turnus ignores conventions that, as the poem’s readers understand, should lead him to treat the aging priestess with as much reverence as if she were a goddess.

He counters the warmongering of the supposed priestess by accusing her of overimaginative fear: “don’t make up such terrors for me” (*ne tantos mihi finge metus*, 7.438). His bluster keeps fear temporarily at bay. He refuses to

speaker who is asking Turnus to make a decision at an important juncture. 9.6 is particularly striking, because Iris’ speech is almost a replay of Allecto-Calybe’s, except that that Iris presents herself without disguise.

55. See Murnaghan 1987, 69–70.

allow “Calybe” to bring him news, or to intervene in men’s business. He also refuses to allow her to define the range of emotions to which he may be susceptible.

Hic iuuenis uatem inridens sic orsa uicissim
 ore refert: ‘classis inuectas Thybridis undam
 non, ut rere, meas effugit nuntius auris;
 ne tantos mihi finge metus. nec regia luno
 immemor est nostri.
 sed te uicta situ uerique effeta senectus,
 o mater, curis nequiquam exercet, et arma
 regum inter falsa uatem formidine ludit.
 cura tibi diuum effigies et templa tueri;
 bella uiri pacemque gerent quis bella gerenda.’

At this point the young man, mocking the priestess, retorts:
 “The fact that the fleet is riding on the Tiber’s wave is
 not, as you think, news that has escaped my ears—
 don’t make up such terrors for me—nor does royal Juno
 forget me.

But it is you, mother, whom an old age that’s overcome by decay
 and truth-barren wears out pointlessly with worries and
 mocks as a prophet with deceptive fear amid the weapons of kings.
 Your task is to watch over the statues and temples of the gods;
 men shall deal with war and peace, men, whose job war is.” (*Aen.* 7.435–43)

All in all his rejection of Allecto in her disguise may be seen by readers as a rejection of the persuasive dimensions of fiction.

Allecto reacts to Turnus’ rejection by compelling him to look at her in an altogether new way. Though she enters his sleeping-vision in disguise, Allecto eventually orders Turnus to look at her in all her power. She confronts him with the instantly recognizable attributes of a goddess visiting the upper world from the home of the furies. At this moment of revelation, instead of directing Turnus towards his own familiar experience, she compels him to take in a shocking sight that sharply and brutally changes the way he knows the world. The attack on his perceptions is not entirely visual. Her equipment as a Fury includes not only the loathsome appearance of her snaky hair, but also a firebrand smoking with black light, which she plunges in Turnus’ chest. The violence she employs in this attack is in turn bound up in the words she uses on Turnus.

The onset of Turnus' madness accompanies the acquisition of knowledge. Allecto reveals that "Calybe" was a fiction adopted by a powerful divinity. She teaches Turnus what it means to scoff at so powerful a figure; she shows him *who she is* in the fullest sense.

'en ego uicta situ, quam ueri effeta senectus
arma inter regum falsa formidine ludit.
respice ad haec: adsum dirarum ab sede sororum,
bella manu letumque gero.'
sic effata facem iuueni coniecit et atro
lumine fumantis fixit sub pectore taedas.

"Look, I am the one, overcome with decay, whom a truth-barren old age
amidst the weapons of kings mocks with deceptive fear.
Regard these: I am here from the home of the dread sisters;
wars and death I bear in my hand."
So she spoke out, and hurled her torch at the young man and plunged
deep into his chest the firebrand smoking with black light. (*Aen.* 7.452–57)

Allecto mockingly quotes Turnus' own description of Calybe: he had scorned her attempt at involving herself in the masculine business of war, using language that dismissed her verbal capacity along with her decayed fertility.⁵⁶ She shows him that behind the fictive appearance and words that she had (perhaps) expected to take persuasive effect, there was a power that gave a layer of truth to her words. She has not aligned her fictions successfully with his own preconceptions, but she has been telling the truth about the divine command that must drive him to war. Even the earlier disguise as a frail priestess turns out to have been an aspect of the metamorphic ability possessed by the goddess who changes minds with madness. It has proved counterproductive—or worse—for Turnus to sift through her words and self-presentation and pick out those that suit his view of reality.

Allecto's anger suggests that Turnus' mistake was to dare to judge the *words* of "Calybe" according to his norms of truth, when if he had perceived

56. The gendering of Allecto-Calybe's endowment with truth is intriguing. Turnus associates Calybe's lack of persuasive authority with the inability to give birth: she is *ueri effeta*, barren of truth (cf. 5.396, however, where old age can cause *uires effetae* in a man, worn out strength). Keith 2000, 72–73 emphasizes how Allecto-Calybe upsets the gendered ideology of war epitomized by Turnus' "patronising advice that she confine herself to her religious duties and leave the conduct of war to men" (7.444: *bella uiri pacemque gerent quis bella gerenda*). Allecto neatly reverses that dictum, with her extension of the word *gero* to suggest that she herself carries war in her hands as well as wages it (*bella manu letumque gero*)—her *arma* are far more powerful than those wielded by mere kings.

the complex fictional status of the *speaker* he would have realized that their force stemmed not from the plausibility of the argument but from the power of the author.⁵⁷

The fact that we soon learn that he had remained asleep during the whole conversation (he is awoken only by the intensity of his fear in 7.458) makes the boundaries between reason and irrationality even harder to perceive. The poem regularly uses the vocabulary of madness; it is much less explicit about rationality. *Insania* (“madness,” 7.461) summarizes the full transformation; it does not describe the terror that immediately afflicts Turnus when he first sees Allecto (7.446–47).

But the very act of seeing divinities at work passes beyond the limits of human rationality, as Debra Hershkowitz has eloquently shown.⁵⁸ His physical reaction denotes the transformation of Turnus’ state of mind. As he learns the truth about his visitor, his eyes stiffen, rather than his hair or his blood.⁵⁹ The effect on his eyes is in direct proportion to the sheer horror of Allecto’s appearance as an Erinys (*tot Erinys sibilat hydris . . .*, “with so many serpents does the Fury hiss . . .,” 7.447).

Allecto’s own words, however, suggest that she shows herself to Turnus in order to teach him what she is: *en*, she says, “See!” referring back to his description of her Calybe-disguise, and *respice ad haec*, she instructs him. The imperative *respice* seems to enjoin him equally to take account of what she is about to say, to have regard for her as a goddess, and to look at her and her attributes. The way she represents herself in words cannot be separated from the way she defines herself through her physical revelation: *respice ad haec: adsum dirarum ab sede sororum*—“Take a look at these: I am here from the home of the fearsome sisters” (7.454).

Understanding “who she is” includes grasping the Fury’s capacity for metamorphosis as a way to alter perceptions and memories. With Allecto’s imperatives—and her attack with the pitchy light of her firebrand—the criminal madness of war (*scelerata insania belli*, 7.461) afflicts Turnus. He

57. In terms of Austin’s inquiry into “How to Do Things with Words,” Turnus treats the content of Calybe’s speech purely as a constative utterance to be assessed as true or false—and to be dismissed by him as false; he disregards its performative force as a command. Allecto’s revelation forces him to recognize that the speech’s force could not be measured by its “correspondence with the facts” (see especially Austin 1975, 145–46).

58. See Hershkowitz 1998, 80–85 on Aeneas’ visions in Book 2.

59. Just a few examples of bodily rigidity as a response to divine (or seemingly inhuman) apparitions: the Trojans’ blood congeals at 3.259 after the Harpy Celaeno finishes off the fight between Harpies and Trojans with a strange prophecy; Aeneas’ hair stiffens with bristling dread on seeing Mercury in 4.280, as does Turnus’ when he faces the *Dira*-owl in 12.868. By contrast, when Andromache goes rigid at the sight of Aeneas, the part of her body affected is unspecified—but it happens “in mid-gaze” (*magnis exterrita monstis / deriguit uisu in medio*, 3.307–8).

now adopts exactly the position that she had set up for him earlier when speaking as Calybe. He presents himself as slighted by ingratitude, an Achilles whose worth has been ignored by Agamemnon/Latinus, and an avenging Menelaus whose Helen/Lavinia has been snatched away by an outsider posing as a guest (9.136–42).

Whether Turnus' transformation is wrought *through* the teacherly aspects of Allecto's self-revelation, or whether that didactic enlightenment goes *alongside* the more obviously violent changes carried out by her maddening divine force, is left undetermined by the narrative. We must understand the two kinds of cognitive shift to be inseparable parts of the power wielded by the Fury.

So this confusion on the narrative level reflects the double action of Allecto's torch as both metaphor and weapon. When thrust at Turnus, it evidently embodies the sheer power of the malevolent goddess. The torch works both as a tool for divine violence and as a figure for dangerous knowledge, with its obfuscating light.⁶⁰ Persuasion and force—conventionally opposed in classical thought, but always in danger of assimilation—become completely indistinguishable in Allecto's attack.⁶¹

After a famous simile describing his passion for war and anger in terms of darkly boiling water, the poem narrates Turnus' preparations for attack:

ergo iter ad regem polluta pace Latinum
indicit primis iuuenum et iubet arma parari,
tutari Italiam, detrudere finibus hostem;
se satis ambobus Teucrisque uenire Latinisque.

So a march against the king, since the peace has been polluted, against
Latinus,
he declares to the leading fighting men, and orders preparations for war,
the safeguarding of Italy, the thrusting of the enemy out from its borders;
he is coming, enough to deal with the Trojans and the Latins, both together.
(*Aen.* 7.467–70)

The phrase *polluta pace* (“since the peace has been polluted”) sits in a position in the verse that neither commits it to the rhetoric Turnus uses on the leaders of the soldiery (by 7.470 his orders for war have shifted into a truncated indirect version of a typical exhortatory general's speech) nor

60. Hershkowitz 1998, 93; Johnson 1976, 146.

61. See, for example, Kirby 1990 on *peitho* and *bia*.

situates it firmly as part of the poet's outer frame of narration.⁶² Its interruption of the words *regem . . . Latinum* serves both purposes equally well. If the phrase is part of the outer frame, it would imply that Turnus himself is an agent of Allecto's pollution, and would emphasize as a violation the act of attacking the king with whom he has been so closely allied. If *polluta pace* is part of Turnus' thoughts or speech, it explains the logic justifying (in his Allectified mind) the march against the king—Latinus has allowed the Trojans to defile Italy's peace. Poetic logic allows the ablative absolute, with its ambiguous economy of expression, to do both jobs.

At each decisive moment of Turnus' story thereafter, his awareness that he is generating material for storytelling becomes intrinsic to the *Aeneid's* narrative structure. In Book 10, after being tricked by Juno into pursuing an Aeneas made of hollow cloud, Turnus desperately longs for death as an escape from the reputation he envisages as he floats away ignominiously from battle. Assuming that Jupiter is punishing him, he begs the winds to destroy the ship, to wreck it and take it to a place "where neither the Rutulians nor the awareness of *fama* may follow me" (*quo nec me Rutuli nec conscia fama sequatur*, 10.679). Readers know that Jupiter's role in this turn of fortune has not been to dispense justice and maintain order. Instead, he has been complicit in a renewal of story; he has conceded to Juno a negotiated delay to Turnus' fated death (10.613–32). This reprieve will extend and alter the complexion of Turnus' *fama*, without, as Jupiter affirms, changing the war in its totality.

The gap between divine plans and human perception—his own as well as that of the people he has inadvertently betrayed—becomes intolerable for Turnus. Turnus' phantom-led departure in Book 10 is strangely self-contained, but it paints in miniature Turnus' pattern of behavior from the moment of Allecto's attack until his eventual death at the very end of Book 12. Turnus simultaneously drives himself towards a decisive struggle with Aeneas, and avoids that moment of decision. His frequently resurgent *furor* leads him by its own impulses, and is kindled through further beguilement by Juno and her assistants (Allecto, Iris, the cloud-Aeneas, and Juturna).

Turnus is fully characterized for readers only after the Fury's transformation.⁶³ This divinely assaulted Turnus—when he pauses to reflect on his

62. Influential translators of the last half century (Day-Lewis, Fitzgerald, Mandelbaum, Lombardo, and Fagles) are divided between the two options of making it part of the reported speech or part of the poet's outer frame. Surprisingly, all these translators make Turnus the implied agent: either the narrator asserts that Turnus is violating the peace, or the thought is included in Turnus' speech as a willful transgression, as in Lombardo's "peace be damned," despite the fact that in 7.471 he tries to get the gods on his side.

63. Hershkowitz 1998, 94.

actions at all—values *fama* above his own life (or other people’s lives, come to that). Sensitivity to one’s reputation is of course deeply rooted in the traditions of heroic epic. But one effect of the assaults by gods on human minds is to connect this value system closely with the madness with which the gods afflict humans. Dido’s insanity, too, in Books 1 and 4, grows out of control when god-infused poison combines with her understanding of how her own *fama* is being altered.

At the same time, the *Aeneid*’s epic narrative needs this kind of *furor*. With Jupiter’s complicity, *furor* is as deeply involved in the ordinances of *fata* as it is in *fama*. This involvement goes well beyond the fact that epic as a genre looks for extreme situations and heightened responses as the stuff of stories. More importantly, the fictive knowledge that the *Aeneid* offers readers and characters is structured by *furor* as much as by any more orderly force. The poem envisions a world permeated by forms of divine power: experiencing divine forces takes human perceptions so far beyond their everyday scope as to threaten with erosion any boundaries that might be set between madness and rational obedience to the gods.

In the *Aeneid*’s story world, unwanted or unperceived contact with divinity often expands human ignorance into a new form of cognition—knowledge of a sort, though not in any straightforward sense. These encounters repeatedly provoke madness and despair. As its representations of divine power coalesce with its own strategies for augmenting the power of its story, the poem’s expansive rhetoric of fiction becomes as daunting as it is exultant.

The Fury’s fierce mingling of violence with visual and verbal persuasion reverberates through the whole poem. If the *Aeneid* claims Allecto’s power along with Jupiter’s for the imperatives of its mythmaking *fama*—and there are good grounds for suggesting that it does—the epic’s presentation of fictive knowledge is linked with the most terrifying embodiment of polluting madness.

1.3 Classifying *fama*

Though *fama* is a pervasive presence in the epic, it questions as much as it sustains the foundations of epic authority. *Fama* is not a Muse; *fama* is not a poet; *fama* is not a powerful individual of any kind—divine or human.⁶⁴

64. See Hardie 2012, 107 on the invocation to the Muses at the start of the catalog in Book 7. The Muses’ power to remember and inform (invoked in 7.641–45) is contrasted with mortals’ uncertain access to *fama* at 7.646: *ad nos uix tenuis fama perlabitur aura* (“to us the delicate breeze of *fama* scarcely glides”).

The importance of *fama* lies in the hope of communicating some kind of knowledge. On one level the *Aeneid*'s discourse of *fama* suggests indifference as to whether this is transmitted or newly created.⁶⁵ Yet at the same time the poem reveals a persistent fascination with the way *fama* crosses social, temporal, and ontological boundaries by combining many different kinds of “talk,” and many different kinds of story. The knowledge *fama* conveys comes from an unspecified grouping of voices and minds. Through its representations of *fama* the poem articulates many of the problems posed by collective knowledge both within the epic's story world and for epic as a genre.

James Tatum succinctly explains *fama* as “the relationship of the individual to the many.”⁶⁶ This capacious definition is especially valuable because it makes room for the wide array of situations in which we see the relationship between one and “many” working. This relationship can span great stretches of time and place, as well as breaking down distinctions set by status-based hierarchies.

As users of contemporary English we have become alienated from the particular web of ideas that the Latin word *fama* weaves together. This is why I have avoided translating the word. *Fama* in classical Latin is closer to the word “fame” in its earlier and more expansive range of meanings than to any single word available in standard English today. If we think of the English word “fame” as it was used well into the nineteenth century, with its semantic range taking in meanings that are now mostly obsolete, we may grasp what it would be like to hear in one word the concepts of “reputation,” “distinction,” “talk,” “rumor,” “gossip,” “scandal,” “story,” and “news.”⁶⁷ *Fama* could be translated by any of these words and by many others too, depending on the context: “tradition” and “folk-memory” are among the other meanings that recur frequently in Roman narrative.

“Fiction” would not be found in a list of English translations for *fama*. But the discourse of *fama* has plenty to tell us about the *Aeneid*'s rhetoric of fiction. To diminish the risk of arbitrarily overemphasizing some of *fama*'s

65. By “discourse” of *fama* I mean the whole network of ways that *fama* is both explicitly represented and implicitly established in the text. I use “language of *fama*” and “vocabulary of *fama*” in this book to refer to the particular words that explicitly denote *fama*-related concepts and actions.

66. Tatum 1984, 448.

67. See *OED* (2nd ed. 1989, online ed. 2012): “fame” n. 1, definitions 1a, 2a, and 3a. No Greek word has quite the same range as *fama*; *pheme* and *phatis* are akin linguistically, but raise different questions about speech, divine authority, fictionality, and memory; *kleos*, especially in the context of epic, also comes very close to *fama*, but as Nagy 1979, 16 emphasizes, *kleos* boils down to “that which is heard” rather than “that which is said.” See also Nagy 1990, *passim*. For a broad exploration of *kleos* in Homer and Pindar, see Goldhill 1991, 69–166; for the Hesiodic opposition between *pheme* and *kleos*, see especially Hardie 2012, 50–57.

meanings (heroic reputation, for example) at the expense of others (such as gossipy scandal), I will continue to leave the word untranslated in this book. For similar reasons, I rarely translate the vocabulary of *pietas*. Admittedly, *fama* and *pietas* are just two of a vast number of Latin words that have no exact match in contemporary English to embrace the full range of meanings in different contexts. Usually we simply adjust the translation to suit each particular instance. These adjustments bring both gains (elucidating the way context affects meaning) and losses (obscuring the effects of repeated but varied uses of a word); for this project the losses would be critical.

In the vocabulary of *fama* I would include a variety of Latin words referring to memory, renown, and gossip, which are conceptually—though not etymologically—related to *fama*: verbs such as *memoro* (“to tell” or “call to mind”) and *fero* (when it means “say” or “report”); nouns like *laus* (praise, distinction), *gloria* and *nomen* (name), as well as *rumor* and *murmur*.⁶⁸

I find it hard to imagine asking any questions about *fama* and Latin poetry without the benefit of the questions and insights offered by Philip Hardie’s inexhaustible close readings.⁶⁹ These range from *Cosmos and Imperium*, where he carefully analyzes hyperbolic *Fama* as a sustained allegorical “exploration of the ultimate limits, both up and down, of the universe,” through to *Rumour and Renown*, which surveys representations of *fama* in ancient, medieval, and early modern literature.⁷⁰ My project in many ways builds on Hardie’s earlier work, and complements his most recent inquiries. My own close readings in chapters 3–8 focus less on direct representations of *fama*; instead, I treat *fama* as one among a web of discursive threads that constitute what the *Aeneid* knows. *Fama* on one level brings together all these threads, and at times seems to serve as the poem’s term for what I am calling its fictive knowledge. But at times it is explicitly marked out as an element that either threatens or reinforces (sometimes threatens *and* reinforces) the epic’s ability to transmit knowledge.

68. *Murmur* is less self-evidently grouped amidst the language of *fama*, but it is used at a few key moments in Latin poetry for the sound made by unauthorized, muttered, jumbled human talk. In 12.239 among the Rutulians *serpitque per agmina murmur* (“a murmuring sound slithers through the ranks”); cf. the *fremor* (“roar”) of talk likened to the *murmur* of a blocked river channel in 11.296–99.

69. I also owe particular debts to Feeney’s *The Gods in Epic*, Hershkowitz’s *The Madness of Epic*, and not least to O’Hara’s *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy*, with its explorations of repeated mismatches between prophecy and outcome in the *Aeneid*. The issues examined by all three have been vital in raising the questions about recognition, *mimesis*, and divine authority that inform my approach to epic *fama*.

70. Hardie 1986, 267; *Rumour and Renown: Representations of Fama in Western Literature* (2012) was published just as I was finishing this book. It reached me too late to shape my writing significantly, but I have tried to note where I cover the same ground, especially where my observations converge most strikingly with Hardie’s.

If taken literally, the fact that I make the *Aeneid* itself the subject of a number of verbs which more often refer either to an author or a reader (“know,” “imagine,” “try,” and so on) might suggest that I attribute a remarkable level of agency to the text. But deliberately using a metaphor that likens a text to a human subject is a way to emphasize that texts are the meeting grounds for authors, readers, and linguistic and cultural values from different places and historical periods. This figurative approach also acknowledges the indeterminate location of such meeting grounds, and ensures that no single one of those participants in the production of meaning receives undue emphasis.

I envisage the readings that result from this collaboration as formed in part through a dialogue between an imagined Augustan readership (this includes the writer, Vergil, and at least partly delimits the semantic possibilities of the Latin text), and our own contemporary perceptions, priorities, and presuppositions.⁷¹ Ellen Oliensis vividly explains the reasons for thinking in terms of a “textual unconscious” as an enabling postulate: “‘textual,’ because not (simply) personal, and also because it is in the very texture of the text, its slips, tics, strange emphases, and stray details, that one discovers it at work.”⁷² I would apply a similar logic to thinking about the text as the bearer of memory, knowledge, and imagination.

In this book, I do not pursue the “story”/“discourse” opposition made famous in Anglo-American thought by Seymour Chatman and still favored by many narratologists. Instead I use “story” in a more comprehensive sense (common outside the field of narratology), which embraces the telling as well as the abstraction of what is told. “Story” in this everyday usage is well suited to the narrative poetics of the *Aeneid*, where the characters’ awareness of *fata* and *fama* always integrates the potential for storytelling into events as they occur within the poem’s story world.⁷³

71. In my case, for instance, these points of view derive partly from my position as a twenty-first-century Anglo-American reader steeped in the conventions of nineteenth-century English fiction and several other relatively recent representational traditions.

72. Oliensis 2009, 6–7. Although my approach is not psychoanalytic, it shares with Oliensis’ readings in *Freud’s Rome* a preoccupation with confronting what I would call the “both/and-ness” that is central to textuality, where seemingly opposed or even incompatible possibilities are held together in suspension. I would answer “both . . . and . . .” to many disjunctively phrased questions about the workings of the *Aeneid*, given its profound but profoundly destabilized polarization of opposed forces, both on the rhetorical level of the narrative and within the story world.

73. For a particularly clear analysis of the narratologically distinct terms “story” (*histoire, fabula*) and “discourse” (*récit, sjüzet*) and their near-equivalents, see Brooks 1984, 12–13: “We must, however, recognize that the apparent priority of *fabula* to *sjüzet* is in the nature of a mimetic illusion, in that the *fabula*—‘what really happened’—is in fact a mental construction that the reader derives from the *sjüzet*, which is all that he ever directly knows.” Genette 1980 and 1988 emphasize that the terms are

Jupiter both articulates and umpires the discursive authority of *fas* and *fata*, keeping an equivocal distance from both. This detachment is paralleled, to some degree, by a comparable dissociation between the *Aeneid*'s poet and the epic discourse of *fama*. The speaker of the *Aeneid* is presented at times specifically as a poet. Sometimes he presents himself as a *uates* seeking prophetic knowledge (presumably “he,” though this poet-*uates* is not given an emphatically gendered characterization), who looks to a Muse for help with telling the story. At other times, he points to *fama* or some other form of collective speech and knowledge as a source. Often, too, this poet's voice becomes particularly audible through figures of speech, speaking in apostrophe across the centuries to certain characters, or expressing horror or wonder at the sights called forth by the poem. When that speaker becomes most audibly individualized, I use the term “poet” to refer to the epic's principal narrator. The “poet” in this sense partly overlaps with but is not the “implied author” in Wayne Booth's understanding of the “implied image of the artist,” which exceeds and is sometimes distinct from the text's main speaker, “who is after all only one of the elements created by the implied author and who may be separated from him by large ironies.”⁷⁴ The term “poet” (instead of “narrator” or “speaker”) marks out the depiction of that speaker specifically *as* a poet. This is especially important because of the layering of narratives crucial to many epics, such as *Aeneid* Books 2 and 3, where Aeneas narrates in dactylic hexameter but is not presented exactly as a “poet”—in contrast with the poet Orpheus in *Metamorphoses* Book 10, for instance.

Yet this central poetic voice in the *Aeneid* is remarkably disembodied compared with the voices we hear in other Roman literature, or indeed, compared with the fully animated *Fama* of Book 4. Many other Roman works that offer fictive knowledge of some kind are spoken by a precisely characterized author-figure. Sometimes this author-figure is pointedly distinct from the real individual who happened to do the writing—or most of the writing, uncertainties of textual transmission aside. Sometimes he (occasionally she) is closely identified with that writer.⁷⁵ To say that *fama*

relative, promising at the outset of *Narrative Discourse* “not to convert into substance [. . .] what is merely a matter of relationships” (1980, 32). See also Walsh 2007, 52 for a helpful response to this problem.

74. Booth 1983, 73.

75. Such characterizations invite us actively to puzzle over the accessibility (or inaccessibility) of the author's intent, and the relation between the writer and the speaker in the text. On the other hand, many readers hear an invitation proffered all the more urgently in texts where author-figures are relatively obscure or where the main speaker lacks a biographically detailed persona. E.g., Tilg 2010, 241 analyzes Rumor (*pheme*) in Chariton both as deeply indebted to the *Aeneid*'s *Fama* and as an allegory for the novel's authorial voice. Different degrees of embodiment must partly be a matter

itself is the closest the *Aeneid* offers to an implied author (in Booth's sense) would be an overstatement. But even this overstatement touches on the way the epic poet's authorial role is displaced—inconsistently—onto a discursive abstraction.

FAMA both asserts and violates basic categories and modes of classification.⁷⁶ The *Aeneid's* narrative structure never lets it appear a coincidence that the word *fama* can refer to an ordinary report—a report that may be accurate, mistaken, or deceptive, neutral, positive or scandalous—as well as to the crafting of transcendent fame. The word refers to “talk” in all its fleeting evanescence. But it also denotes speech-fueled memories of characters and their actions, which outlive any particular individuals or groups, through which poetry aspires to reach beyond mortal borders and lift humans to the stars. By means of *fama*, epic claims to break through two fundamental human constraints: limits in human knowledge, and the limited span of life enjoyed by any individual mortal.⁷⁷ It is no wonder that it became a genre-defining activity in the Western tradition of epic to seek prophetic insights into the past, present, and future through a visit with the dead.

Just as *fama* stands both for transience and unlimited longevity, so *fama* serves equally well as grounds either for believing or disbelieving something. Citing *fama* or tradition as a source for a particular story can either provide weight for the story in question or distance the poet from any assertion of personal involvement in transmitting that story. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* spells out this ambivalence in a parody of such citations. In the midst of describing how Deucalion and Pyrrha's stone throwing creates a renewed human race, “Who would believe this,” the poet asks, “if it weren't for sheer antiq-

of generic decorum (though that is complicated by questions about where to situate Hesiodic and Ennian traditions in the *Aeneid's* implicit definition of epic). Even without getting into detailed consideration of the poet-figures constructed by—for instance—Catullus' poems, by Horatian (as opposed to Juvenalian) satire, or by Ovid's *Tristia* (as opposed to his *Amores*, say), it is easy to spot sharp differences among Vergil's speakers in different genres. The didactic poet of the *Georgics* takes a shifting set of authorial positions, and the *Eclogues* present many speakers, but both texts characterize these voices far more prominently than the main speaker of the *Aeneid*.

76. Hardie 2012 similarly notes the tendency for “*fama* to structure itself according to a series of unstable contrasts or oppositions” (3); as he puts it, *fama* “speaks with a forked tongue” (5). Hardie, 6–11 lists the most important “duplicities and dichotomies that characterize the structures and dynamics of *fama*.”

77. See Greene 1963 on “expansiveness” as an epic norm. This reveals itself in complex interactions between human ignorance and divine knowledge; Greene's analysis focuses on the descents into human realms by divine messengers.

uity standing in place of a witness?” (*quis hoc credat nisi sit pro teste uetustas?* 1.400).

When *fama* and its verbal kin summon a tradition, the vocabulary of *fama* invites readers to consider what kind of knowledge the poem claims. Phrases articulating the importance of tradition take many forms, including *dicitur* “it is said,” *ut perhibent* “word has it,” *ferunt* “they say.” They occur at many pivotal points of explanation in the *Aeneid*, beginning in 1.15, where we are told that Juno “is held” (*fertur*) to have cherished Carthage beyond all other lands. Expressions like these simultaneously augment and diminish the poet’s authority; they make a point of temporarily delegating the role of speaker to an unnamed source or tradition.⁷⁸

In this way these phrases at once remind readers to assess the potentially fictive status of the story in question, and proclaim its significance as a tradition that belongs to collective memory rather than as the product of a single poet’s imagination. Saying that a section of narrative is based on tradition informs readers that others have found the matter worth remembering. In a culture as self-consciously reverential towards its established customs as Rome’s, the past provides its own weight.⁷⁹ It also serves as a disclaimer: “I’m not the one asserting this,” points out the poet, “it’s *fama*—you can make up your own mind what to make of it.” But regardless of whether they cite talk or tradition as a source of doubt or of authority, these insertions weave the language of *fama* into the whole narrative texture of the *Aeneid*. As the counterpart to this, they also situate the poem in a still broader discourse of *fama*.⁸⁰ The word *fama* may refer to a report that brings fresh informa-

78. Some of these phrases, however, by specifically citing *fama* (*ut fama est, fama est*), more pointedly invite readers to connect questions of fictionality with the weight of collective memory, and with all the complexities of what *fama* is and does in the *Aeneid*. Expressions such as *fertur* and *dicitur* are closer to the anonymous quasi-citations that Roman historians often use when referring to specific written sources. For further discussion and bibliography, see Hardie 2012, *passim*.

79. See especially Heinze 1993, 198 and Hinds 1998, 1–3 for discussions of how such expressions sometimes highlight an allusion to an earlier poem, and more generally express ambivalence about the relationship between creativity and tradition. Romans do not feel fettered by the *mos maiorum*, however: rather this is continually reassessed, or renewed through reinterpretation. For the difficulties of assessing what role tradition plays in fixing knowledge of cult, e.g., see especially Cicero, *Div.* 1.12–13; Ando 2008, 14–15.

80. Heinze finds a stronger pattern in the use of these insertions than I see. He describes this pattern, however, with some ambivalence. He argues that “when [the poet] calls upon the Muse to inform him about some particularly difficult and obscure point, this Muse is none other than *fama* itself,” while also suggesting that “it is as though he is only willing to take responsibility for the truth of his own main narrative, and prefers to shift the responsibility for everything else onto others” (1993, 198). But “difficult and obscure points” often lie at the heart of the “main narrative.” For instance, the poet asks Erato for help with the war narrative beginning 7.37; the situation in ancient Italy and the origins of war certainly count as “difficult and obscure” (contested in the legendary traditions available), but are equally certainly integral to the *Aeneid*’s main narrative. Of course, if we had access

tion to individuals or communities at decisive moments within the story. Sometimes *fama*'s communications serve the needs of characters in the circumstances they face at a particular crisis. In Book 11 when Turnus tells his people how their enemy Aeneas has shifted the position of his troops, he attributes his confidence in the information jointly to *fama* and to the scouts he has sent out (*Aeneas, ut fama fidem missisque reportant / exploratores, equitum leuia improbus arma / praemisit, quaterent campos*, 11.511–13).

The news brought by *fama*-reports is often accurate, though not necessarily welcome. The *fama* that tells Dido of Aeneas' preparations for leaving Carthage is no less *impia* for being true (4.298). What it means for *Fama* to be *impia* (translatable here as “reckless,” “heedless,” or “brutal” perhaps?) can be understood from Dido's point of view: *fama* reports Aeneas' impious ingratitude, as he seems to be abandoning her in three roles at once, all of which demand reciprocity. She has been a generous host, ally, and wife. But *impia* also implies Aeneas' perspective. Thinking in Aeneas' terms, the emphasis would be on its uncontrollability: speech is getting away from proper hierarchies. After Mercury has told Aeneas that he must leave Dido and Carthage, Aeneas tells his lieutenants that he must be the one to work out the most gentle opportunity for speaking (*mollissima fandi / tempora*) to Dido and breaking off their love. Aeneas can give commands for discretion to his subordinates (4.288–295), but he cannot stop word getting round that the fleet is being equipped for departure.⁸¹

So concerns about how verbal authority may be shared between the “one” and the “many” appear even when *fama*'s reports are accurate. Near the start of Book 7 *fama* spreads through Italy the news of Latinus' discoveries about his fated son-in-law: here the poem implies that *fama* is Latinus' messenger (*haec responsa patris Fauni monitusque silenti / nocte datos non ipse suo premit ore Latinus, / sed circum late uolitans iam Fama per urbes / Ausonias tulerat, cum Laomedontia pubes / gramineo ripae religavit ab aggere classem*, 7.102–5). In this scene, where Latinus apparently wishes the gods' will to become widely known, he implicitly delegates his agency to *fama* in a way that foreshadows his subsequent abdications from governing his kingdom in Books 7 and 11.⁸²

to the complete range of Vergil's sources, we would have a more precise grasp of which insertions of *dicitur, ferunt*, etc. work as “Alexandrian footnotes” to signal allusions to other texts.

81. Feeney 1983, 208 highlights the close links between *Fama*'s activities and other problems of perception when he emphasizes the connection between *Fama* (as *tam ficti prauisque tenax quam nuntia ueri*) and Aeneas' *ne finge* (4.338), when he tells Dido (who accuses him of trying to run away from their marriage) not to distort things.

82. The poem highlights the similarities between “the father” Jupiter's complicity in Juno's actions and Latinus' series of abdications from his position as father and king. Later in Book 7 Latinus

There is no overt suggestion in 7.102–5 either that *fama* is either an unreliable or perverted means of communication or that here it generates lasting poetic remembrance. But the possibility of poetic immortality is never far away—the news transmitted by *fama* on Latinus’ behalf includes prophecies of foreign sons-in-law exalting Italy’s name to the stars.⁸³ Instances of accurate and opportune *fama* sometimes evoke directly the lasting remembrance granted by art. When Aeneas meets the Trojan prince Deiphobus in the underworld, he tells him that *fama* brought news of his death, allowing him to carry out the proper rituals and set up a cenotaph (6.502–10).⁸⁴ In *Aeneid* 9 *fama* informs Euryalus’ mother of her son’s death and incites her lament (9.473–75).⁸⁵ Soon after bringing Aeneas’ ally Evander the news of his son Pallas’ success in battle, *fama* warns the father that his son has died (11.139–41). On each of these occasions *fama* brings news—or *is* news—that stimulates mourning and commemoration.

In Book 3, unbelievable yet accurate *fama* fills the Trojans’ ears, the astounding story that Priam’s son Helenus has married Hector’s widow and is ruling a Greek community (3.294–97). Aeneas’ shock at hearing this is repeated for Andromache, like a reflection in a distorting mirror, leaving her so shaken that she confuses life with death when she sees Aeneas (*uerane te facies, uerus mihi nuntius adfers, nate dea?* “Is your appearance real, are you bringing me news as a real messenger, goddess’ son?” 3.310–11). So the discourse of *fama* draws attention to the fallibility of human knowledge and memory, even as it celebrates poetry’s power both to transmit knowledge and to establish new memories.

From the perspective of the aristocratic ideology that informs so much Roman literature, *fama* ushers in some disturbing incongruities. *Fama* can

gives up any attempt to struggle against Juno’s intent or rein back his people’s desire for war (7.591–600). Latinus is named in 7.585; in the next line the pronoun *ille* picks up his name. In the rest of this passage (through 7.600), however, he is referred to simply as “the father” (*pater*, 7.593), a term often used of Jupiter. In 7.616–22, after learning about the “twin gates of war” (7.607), we hear how “Latinus was bid by custom to declare war on the *Aeneadae* and throw open the grim gates,” but with a kind of impious purity “the father held off from touching them and turned away from the filthy duty, and hid himself in obscuring shadows,” leaving the defiling task to Juno (*hoc et tum Aeneadis indicere bella Latinus / more iubebatur tristisque recludere portas. / abstinuit tactu pater auersusque refugit / foeda ministeria, et caecis se condidit umbris*, 7.616–19). In Book 11 the king is both *ipse pater* and *Latinus* in one line (11.469), as he gives up control over events yet again (11.469–75), and the harsh-sounding bugle gives its bloody signal as if of its own volition (11.474–75). But the poem imagines Latinus, unlike Jupiter, eventually claiming full responsibility for the war and its impiety (*arma impia sumpsi*, 12.31).

83. 7.98–99 (see also 7.79–80 on the prophecies about Lavinia *namque fore inlustrem fama fatisque caneabant / ipsam, sed populo magnum portendere bellum*).

84. See Bleisch 1999 for detailed discussion of Deiphobus and his *fama* in Book 6.

85. This *fama* is *pennata*, an adjective that indicates its resemblance to the monstrous *fama* of Book 4, and is *nuntia*, like Book 4’s goddess.

simultaneously denote beliefs sanctioned by tradition or by divine authority, and unruly talk that emanates from the masses. Indeed, the unruly talk of “the many” contributes to the formation of traditions that bridge divine and human spheres of knowledge. The importance of *fama* in epic partly reverses the hierarchies treasured by aristocratic thought.⁸⁶ It acknowledges (directly or indirectly) the weight of communal approbation and disapproval in ordering social and political life.⁸⁷

The claims invoked by epic’s language of *fama* are intrinsically difficult to wrap one’s mind around. Commemorative *fama* demarcates individual excellence but hints at the way such heroic exceptionalism depends on the voices and actions of “the many.” And it reaffirms what it means to be human at just the moment that it aspires to make humans divine. The nymph Juturna, whom Jupiter has made immortal against her will, expresses this paradox when she speaks of her brother’s imminent death: *ille quidem ad superos, quorum se deuouet aris, / succedet fama uiuusque per ora feretur* (“He indeed will mount, through his *fama*, to the gods above, at whose altars he dedicates himself, and will be sustained alive on men’s lips,” 12.234–35). She presents this death both as an act of self-sacrifice and as a means to immortality. Turnus is the subject of the transformation she predicts (*ille quidem ad superos* [. . .] *succedet fama*), but he shares his agency with *fama*. When Juturna elaborates how this *fama* is constituted, we find that Turnus is to be a passenger on the voices of others (*uiuusque per ora feretur*).⁸⁸

86. Though one should be wary of letting the abundance and brilliance of Cicero’s writing overwhelm one into taking him as spokesperson for his era and his—broadly defined—class, he gives some beautifully clear examples of the aristocratic attitude. He expresses overtly his discomfort with the “chatter of the mob” (*sermones uulgi*) as the arbiter of *gloria*, when he writes to Cato about his hopes for a triumph: *si quisquam fuit umquam remotus et natura et magis etiam, ut mihi quidem sentire uideo, ratione atque doctrina ab inani laude et sermonibus uulgi, ego profecto is sum. testis est consulatus meus, in quo, sicut in reliqua uita, fateor ea me studiose secutum ex quibus uera gloria nasci posset, ipsam quidem gloriam per se numquam putauit expetendam* (Letter 110 [(XV.4)] 13, Shackleton Bailey 1977). “If anyone was ever cut off both by nature, and still more (so it seems to me, at least) by reasoning and education, from empty praise and the chatter of the mob, I am surely such a man. As witness there stands my consulship, in which, as in the rest of my life, I admit that I zealously pursued the things from which true glory might naturally be derived; but glory in itself and for its own sake I never thought an object of pursuit.” Clearly one benefit of the term *gloria* over *fama* for Cicero here is that it helps him distinguish what aristocratic ideology regards as true, natural glory from mere reputation among the *uulgus*. This distinction is explicitly theorized in *Tusc.* 3.3–4, which Hardie 2012, 24–26 discusses.

87. The crucial political component of *fama* and its conceptual kin (such as *gloria*, *laus*, Greek *kleos*, etc.) can be seen abundantly in both Roman and Greek literature—Plato on *doxa* is just one place to start—but receives relatively little explicit attention in the *Aeneid*. Book 11 is the great exception; see Hardie 1998, now expanded and significantly revised as chapter 4 in Hardie 2012.

88. I discuss this scene in detail in chapter 8; see also Hardie 2012, 68–70.

A comparable double logic appears in *fama* when the word points towards gossip that has lost its anchorage in any identifiable human or divine source. This “talk” transports knowledge in sometimes unfathomable ways—knowledge which may be mingled indiscernibly with untested beliefs or even outright lies. In their totality as collective *fama*, these human perceptions are sometimes pictured as divine, thanks to their power to exceed what any individual human could either know or communicate.

So perhaps the best remembered *fama* in the poem is the one embodied as a goddess—a foul and terrifyingly swift monstrous prodigy, born of earth, with eyes and tongues in quantities to match the feathers that carry her. Fittingly enough for one who sings her gossip, even this prodigious *Fama* is the embodiment of persuasive efficacy as much as narratorial instability. In the whole story of Dido and Aeneas, *fama* has the power to make things happen in the world, even while it is acknowledged as an unreliable blend of truth, supposition, and fantasy.⁸⁹ The *Fama* embodied by the polluting goddess plays as central a role in the talk constituting epic poetry as the praise-driven *fama* that is envisioned as the way to the stars (literally or figuratively) for mortal men and women.

The segment of narrative in Book 4 that immediately follows our introduction to the feathery *Fama* becomes a kind of rumor itself, just at the moment when the poem shows Dido’s now hostile former-suitor Iarbas wielding gossip as a double-serving tool, of information and insult. She is notorious among scholars as a fiction maker of sorts: *tam ficti prauisque tenax quam nuntia ueri* (“as prone to keep hold of what’s made up and crooked as she is a reporter of truth,” 4.188). This *Fama* conveys a troubling mixture of truth, pretense, and distortion, but at least some of the information she transmits about Aeneas’ stay in Carthage is accurate—useful for Jupiter, though catastrophic for Dido. “She would sing without distinction things done and not done” (*pariter facta atque infecta canebat*, 4.190), we are told.⁹⁰ In the subsequent summary of sordid gossip about Aeneas’ affair with Dido nothing is altogether irreconcilable with what we have heard elsewhere in the narrative.

89. Another acknowledgment of *fama*’s unreliability occurs in 10.510–11, for instance, where it is not *fama* but a surer source that informs Aeneas of his troops’ desperate situation (*nec iam fama mali tanti, sed certior auctor / aduolat Aeneae*).

90. The word “sing” does not adequately translate *cano* here, which is bound up in a complex network of traditions and expectations, and so expresses a far wider range of utterances than the English word. But we lack an equivalent in contemporary English, so “sing” is conventionally used in translations of the *Aeneid*’s first line (*arma uirumque cano*). Habinek 2005, 61 explains that “*cano* and its relatives [. . .] describe *speech made special* through the use of specialized diction, regular meter, musical accompaniment, figures of sound, mythical or religious subject matter, and socially authoritative performance context.”

The *Aeneid* links *fama* with *fata* in several of its god-created works of imagination within the story world, most prominently in Jupiter's prophetic speech to Venus in Book 1, and in the shield Vulcan forges for Aeneas in Book 8.⁹¹ These are among the ways the poem projects its storytelling forward into the lives of the poem's Roman readers.⁹²

Like the gods, humans also build verbal conduits between past, present and future. The poem presents this mortal speech as deeply entangled with divine utterances. Dido's immortal *fama*, for instance, is partly constituted through her condemnation of Aeneas' failure in *pietas*, which she expresses in her prophetic curse on Aeneas and his descendants. The curse outlines a trajectory in which the future of Carthage merges with the Roman past, and evokes in readers' civic memories the series of wars between Carthage and Rome between the third and first century B.C.E. (4.607–29). When Aeneas visits Anchises in Elysium, his father sets him ablaze with passion for the *fama* that is on its way (*famae uenientis amore*, 6.889) by showing and describing figures of legend and history whom readers in Augustan Rome would immediately recognize.⁹³

Scenes like this have raised many questions, of course, about exactly how visions of the *fama* to come in Augustan Rome might have resonated politically for the poem's first readers. These questions have sometimes been grouped into polarized sides of a debate, with reductive labels: "optimistic" vs. "pessimistic," "Augustan propaganda" vs. "further voices," and so on.⁹⁴ Though of course different readers have emphasized different rhetorical and ideological strands in the poem, most have taken positions that are much more subtle and responsive than the caricatures implied by those opposed labels. W. R. Johnson, for instance, describes the poem as "polycentric": "every reader will find the center that suits him or her." As Johnson says, "in closing with evil as it presents itself in human history and in the lives of men, Vergil no more affirms the triumph of unreason and *ira* in the universe and in history than he affirms their defeat."⁹⁵

91. See Hardie 2012, 73 on 1.286ff. (*nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar, / imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris, / Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo*), and 104 on 6.889 and 8.731 (*attolens uero famamque et fata nepotum*).

92. Quint 1993 and Hardie 1993 explore some of the key ways that the *Aeneid* achieves this. Rossi 2004 considers this topic in terms of Bakhtinian polychrony, *enargeia*, and the *Aeneid's* remarkable use of the narrative/historic present (Ennian and un-Homeric) to show how "anachronies within the primary narrative [. . .] bridge the gap between the tale of long ago and the Roman readers' collective experience and forge a continuum between the past retold and the present perceived" (148).

93. Book 8 also notably contains two overtly history-spanning segments: Vulcan's prophetic shield, and Evander's guided tour of Pallanteum (the town presented by the narrative as proto-Rome).

94. Kennedy 1992 explores this polarization.

95. Johnson 1976, 149, 148. See also Spence 1988 (especially chap. 2, "Juno's Desire") for a view

Fama both relies on and helps construct a particular social and political order. But Latin literature—and the *Aeneid* in particular—generally does its utmost to unmoor *fama* from anchorage in the perceptions and values of any one society at one particular moment. *Fama*-memory neither belongs to the workings of an individual mind, nor is it quite “social memory.” I would link *fama*-memory with Alon Confino’s view of memory as the “outcome of the relationship between a distinct representation of the past and the full spectrum of symbolic representations available in a given culture.”⁹⁶ So this is not to say that the *Aeneid* is detached from the language, values, and political problems of Augustan Rome. Rather, these concerns are felt within a rhetoric of fiction that positions itself as belonging to a far more diffuse temporal and cultural blend. My investigation seeks to understand some of the conceptual premises that enable such a blend in this text.

1.4 Chapter previews

In the rest of this book each chapter reads closely scenes in the *Aeneid* where gods and humans are shown together—either in conflict or collaboration—shaping the way things are known.

Chapter 2 (“Monstrous *Fama*”) considers three scenes that implicate manifestations of divine will in the prodigious qualities of *Fama*. The chapter starts with Book 4, where the narrative correlates with extreme precision the attributes that empower the defiling goddess *Fama*, evoking a kind of equilibrium of excess. This reflects the balanced excess in the interaction of *fama* and *fata*, not only in Dido’s sufferings but also in their effect on the course of history for Rome and Carthage. In Book 10 we find another programmatic depiction of *fama*. Here Jupiter responds to Hercules’ grief over the imminent death of a cherished mortal, Evander’s son Pallas. Jupiter integrates the endeavors of *uirtus*, which stretch out *fama*, into the anonymous rule of death. The chapter closes with a brief look at the opening of Book 2, where Aeneas explains how he and his fellow Trojans were beguiled into breaking open their defensive walls for the Greeks’ gift horse. In Aeneas’ account, human talk and divine authority are impenetrably confused through the combined efforts of *fama*, the Trojans as interpreters en masse, the stories

of the forces opposed to reason (instantiated most prominently by Juno) as something considerably more positive than the “necessary evil” Spence sees in Johnson’s readings (23).

96. Confino 1997, 1391. For other recent discussions of the terms and concepts “collective memory” and “social memory,” see the useful bibliography collected by the *Memoria Romana* project at <http://www.utexas.edu/research/memoria/bibliography.htm>.

told by the Greek “Sinon,” and the horrendous serpents that attack the priest Laocoon. All three depictions of *fama* express in some way epic’s quandary as a genre. By articulating a vision of how *fata* and *fama* work together, the poem promises to give voice to the collective knowledge and memories of a society. Yet these discourses of *fama* and *fata* intermingle human and divine knowledge and imagination in a way that overreaches any such social memory.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are grouped around the theme of perceptual and material contamination. For this analysis, I enlist the help of Mary Douglas’s studies in ritual pollution. Chapter 3 explores how epic *fama* blends specific ways of imagining the past with readers’ contemporary perceptions of the Italian landscape. The *Aeneid* embeds its myth in Mediterranean geography through its depictions of the order reasserted through death rituals that are performed for Misenus and Caieta and promised to Palinurus in Books 6 and 7. Rituals of remembrance are needed to clear up “matter out of place”—material “dirt” spread by the unburied bodies of Misenus and Palinurus. *Pietas* demands purification. But when taken to the extremes shown in *Aeneid* 6, even *pietas* risks becoming transgressive, sharing in the category-confusing violations that require expiation.

Chapter 4 builds on this analysis to see what happens when readers and characters recognize “this” as “that.” I focus on the riddles posed and solved by the Harpy Celaeno’s famous “table-eating” prophecy in Book 3 and its fulfillment in Book 7, mulling over the poetic work performed by this moment of recognition. Aeneas washes away the filth of Celaeno and her sisters by replacing Celaeno’s prediction with a similar prophecy spoken by his father, Anchises. But details of the narrative texture make clear that both the material and the verbal “dirt” which the Harpies emit are as intrinsic to the *Aeneid*’s fictive knowledge as Aeneas’ cleansing of that dirt.

Chapter 5 analyzes the fluid movement between metaphor and materiality which belongs to the substitutive logic of *pietas*, and which plays a key role in sustaining *fama*. In Book 9 Nisus, Euryalus, Ascanius, and the Trojan elders imagine measuring in the material form of gifts the *fama* they long to achieve and bestow. Their imaginative evaluation takes on its own creative momentum, and redefines the endeavor undertaken by Nisus and Euryalus. As a result, both young men are killed and their corpses mutilated. The narrative temporarily purifies the remembrance offered the “fortunate pair” in death, but gives the wildly grieving mother of Euryalus the last word. Euryalus’ mother laments her estrangement from the corpse of her son in language that evokes the Trojans’ alienation in the landscape of Italy. In this episode, the poem fulfills the expectations of *pietas*, on one level,

putting matter in its place through its imaginative ordering and reordering of remembrance. Yet the narrative acknowledges the work of *furor*, with its perceptual dislocations, in this ordering, and presents such *furor* as thoroughly entwined with—even intrinsic to—*pietas*.

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 form another group, examining the effects of divine communication and disguise on human understanding in the *Aeneid*. I probe latent analogies between these effects within the *Aeneid*'s story world and the rhetorical work performed by various forms of fiction. J. L. Austin's speech-act theory makes it easier to think through the poetic interactions between the seemingly interpretable force of ordinary language—how people do things with words—and the force of divine communications, unknowable except in the imagination of epic. All three chapters are interested in the contributions made to epic's fictive knowledge by the interplay of revelation and mystification. Divinities achieve their ends sometimes by revealing, sometimes by obscuring the mechanisms of their power. Recognition can operate as a mode of concealment as much as a way of observing authority or obtaining obedience.

Chapter 6 investigates the metamorphic commands given by Aeneas' mother, Venus, in Book 2 and the great mother, Cybele, in Book 9. In Aeneas' tale of Troy's fall, his mother reveals to him the relentlessness of the gods' attack on Troy by means that closely resemble a familiar rhetorical strategy, one that Aeneas himself uses for his Carthaginian listeners. Venus orders her son to look at the gods, and delineates exactly what he is to see. In the second half of this chapter, I turn to Cybele, who speaks her commands in Book 9 when Turnus threatens the Trojan ships with fire. In contrast with Venus' imperatives in Book 2, Cybele's orders rely altogether on divine power for their efficacy. She uses the force that permits gods in the *Aeneid* not only to change minds and perceptions with words but also to make man-made objects—the ships—into living, swimming sea nymphs. Before describing this transformation, though, the poem gives a retrospective account of much earlier negotiations between Jupiter and Cybele. This account explains the metamorphic force of the command by showing the gods carefully parsing the rhetorical logic that defines the status of Aeneas' ships as mortal or immortal. The flashback story of this rhetorical parsing is all the more remarkable, given that the miracle of the ships asks readers to imagine divine commands as endowed with a force that could never be claimed by “ordinary” language.

Chapter 7 turns its attention to the cloud or mist that ensures the obscurity of most divine activity in the eyes of humans, as Venus tells Aeneas in Book 2. How does the *Aeneid* imagine that vapor forming? One way of

grasping this obfuscation is by watching the transformations effected by the shape-shifting deities Cupid and Allecto. They allow themselves to be seen and touched, but in disguised forms that distort recognition. These offer intriguing parallels for the work of tropes in narrative. Metaphor and its kindred tropes may express—and perhaps intensify—the cognitive ruptures that occur in many forms of perception. This fundamental perceptual disorder underlies some of the continuities between the kinds of fictive knowledge offered both by classical epics and by traditional European novels, even when texts in these genres work with sharply distinct narrative conventions.

Chapter 8 asks “how to do things with birds.” Here I feel out the seams of fiction in the nymph Juturna’s machinations in *Aeneid* 12. Juturna shifts not only beliefs but also the sequence of events. She cites conventions that rely on her audience’s sense of recognition to endow her (visual) speech acts with a degree of divine authority that she could not otherwise claim. Her misleading—but partly fulfilled—bird omen provides a fascinating analogy for the genre-blurring through which both epic and novel generate fictive knowledge and, as mythmakers, establish new memories.



2

Monstrous *Fama*

Approving and disapproving talk classifies characters and their actions in a moral and political framework. *Fama* puts people in their place, but it thrives on anomaly and other forms of disorder. This is partly for the simple reason that people who earn either praise or censure need first to step out of order in some way. Both praise and blame, whether expressed through highly wrought song, ephemeral gossip, or some combination, then in turn magnify any forces of disruption.

But *fama* also arises from difficulties of interpretation. Prodigies, puzzles, and dilemmas of all kinds provoke rumors, speculative chatter, and pronouncements which become part of *fama*'s larger commemorative and evaluative discourse. *Fama* itself is in turn imagined as a prodigy (a *monstrum*): the anomalies and excesses of *fama* demand an interpretive response. At the same time, the prodigiousness of *fama* conveys the difficulty of managing this discourse, either at its source or through interpretation.

Many details in *Aeneid* 4's depiction of *Fama* as a horrifying divine prodigy emphasize her role as a scandal monger. Yet the perversity, excess, and sheer power that define the monstrous goddess are as fully incorporated into epic's genre-defining

discourse of remembrance as the utterances of Jupiter.¹ Aeneas in Book 8 lifts on his shoulder the *fama* as well as the *fata* of his descendants (8.731) in the form of Vulcan's shield, and it would be a mistake to draw too sharp a distinction between Book 4's prodigious *fama* and the shining proleptic monuments of the shield.

When Aeneas shoulders the burdens of his descendants' *fama* and *fata*, he takes pleasure in the likeness of events that are wondrously depicted, rather than meaningful to him: *rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet / attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum* ("and ignorant of the events, he rejoices in their appearance, as he raises to his shoulder the *fama* and *fata* of his descendants," 8.730–31).² The act of taking up the shield is itself *fama*-generating, as an example of Aeneas' special form of excellence, celebrated by the epic: from the moment in *Aeneid* 2 when he shouldered Anchises, who will lead him on a circuitous route through exile, Aeneas has taken on the burden of a barely understood future.

Because this future (the *res*) is embodied in a physical object, the *imago* transmitted visually by Vulcan must be put into words if it is to become part of the more widely transmissible discourse of *fama*. This passing of visual images into words forms part of a cycle: Vulcan's authority as artist comes partly from the fact that he is *haud uatum ignarus*—"not ignorant of prophets / inspired poets" (8.627). So the images themselves come from knowledge of a spoken future, though they surpass what this poet can communicate or explain. The poem has already disavowed its ability to put the shield fully into language, referring to the "inexpressible fabric of the shield" (*clipei non enarrabile textum*, 8.625).³ It is worth remembering that Vulcan destroys Aeneas' city (2.311) and threatens his ships (5.662, 9.76), as well as crafting his prophetic armor.⁴ The uncontrollable power

1. Hardie 1998, 259 suggests that the "personification of *Fama* in Book 4 is [. . .] a demonic double of the epic voice and of the epic tradition itself." In his subsequent explorations of *fama* (and *Fama*), Hardie has gone gradually further, first making the case (2009a, 67) for it/her as "a figure for a Virgilian brand of the epic sublime" and most recently (2012, 109) suspecting that "she is not simply the negative Other by which the poet defines his own, positive evaluated, verbal powers, but that she represents another side of the poet's own self." See also Hardie 2012, 90–94.

2. See Hardie 1986, 369–76.

3. This much-discussed phrase is inordinately hard to translate; if a translation gets across the precise disavowal of storytelling, it overemphasizes the *narro* in *non enarrabile* ("inexpressible" by contrast underemphasizes it). See especially Laird 1996, 77–81 for some of the questions raised by the shield ekphrasis.

4. Vulcan at times is fire itself, though at other times he is the craftsman god who uses fire to create art and tell stories visually. The strong connection between *fata*, *fama*, and destruction is reinforced by another item of weaponry created for Aeneas by Vulcan, his *fatiferus ensis*—"fate-bearing sword." This is the sword that will bring Turnus his fated death, and will shorten the lives of many other warriors.

of fire can be linked figuratively to the reach of the imagination, but that figurative connection does not in itself allow such force to be fully harnessed by poetic language. The poetic fashioning of the divine shield is pointedly inadequate, though verbally dazzling. The poem puts itself in a similar position to Aeneas, part way between mortal and divine, weighed with responsibilities to a vision of history that is incompletely understood.

2.1 *Fama's* tongues

The tragedy of *Aeneid* 4 provides the bait with which many of us are lured in high school or college to continue reading Latin literature. At that stage, students are often left with the impression of a Dido who goes mad and kills herself because she just can't stand being *so* in love with a man who has abandoned her. This impression is not wholly misleading, of course: the poem makes clear that Dido's *furor* (frenzy) stems from the special flaming madness of love. We hear in vivid detail how Cupid poisons her soon after Aeneas arrives at Carthage (1.657–722), and Dido eventually finds shelter in the underworld among “those whom unbending love has eaten up with its harsh wasting-sickness” (*quos durus amor crudeli tabe peredit*, 6.442). But the ingredients of Dido's destruction emerge with more distinctness, the more seriously we take the presence of another inflammatory deity in Book 4: the foul goddess *Fama*.⁵

Dido's death and her curse, though they have a complicated network of causes in the poem, result most immediately from the activities of this scandal-mongering *Fama*, who is copiously equipped with means of seeing, hearing, talking, and moving. From the day that Dido and Aeneas are united in their ambiguous cave wedding, surrounded by divine attendants though with no humans to acknowledge the marriage, Dido is unmoved by the look of things or by *fama* (4.170). The moment the poem announces Dido's newfound indifference to her reputation, *fama* gets on the move in the region—or *Fama*, as the word is printed at this point in most editions, now personified by the poem as a divinity.

At first *fama* is described in terms that could refer simply to “talk” itself, without reference to a deity. Most of us would probably recognize our encounters with gossip, either from our lived or textual experience: we are told of its exceptional swiftness, gathering strength by means of its motion;

5. Yet I would not wish to set *amor* and *fama* in artificially polarized opposition—see Reed 2007 for an analysis that brings together the erotic and the commemorative drives of the poem.

it begins small out of fear, but soon enough lifts itself to the breezes, walking on the ground but concealing its head among the clouds (4.173–77).

Only after giving vivid figurative expression to familiar qualities does the poem fully embody *Fama* as a goddess, spelling out the circumstances in which the Earth bore her in anger at the gods as a youngest sister to her Titan children. Yet just at the moment when the poem performs this embodiment, giving a genealogy and fleshing out this daughter of earth with feet, wings, and all the rest, the poet offers a surprising caveat, throwing in a parenthetical *ut perhibent* “so it’s thought” (4.179). As both Hardie and Servius (among others) have noted, this comes very close to saying *ut fama est*.⁶

illam Terra parens ira inritata deorum
 extremam, ut perhibent, Coeo Enceladoque sororem
 progenit pedibus celerem et perniciousis alis,
 monstrum horrendum, ingens, cui quot sunt corpore plumae,
 tot uigiles oculi subter (mirabile dictu),
 tot linguae, totidem ora sonant, tot subrigit auris.

The mother Earth, when the gods provoked her anger, bore
 her as the last—so it’s thought—sister to Coeus and Enceladus,
 fleet of foot and fast-winged,
 a prodigy to be shuddered at, huge, who has, in exact proportion to the
 feathers on her body,
 just so many watchful eyes below (marvelous to say),
 just so many tongues, just so many mouths resound, she pricks up just so
 many ears. (*Aen.* 4.178–83)

The word order is ambiguous, putting weight on the word *extremam*, which might limit the caveat. *Fama* is supposed to be the last sister, but that could just be the popular belief, the tradition; maybe she is really the middle child, or the eldest. But what if *ut perhibent* applies to the whole realization as a goddess? Then instead of undercutting the poem’s description, adding *ut perhibent* would ascribe to the monstrous goddess a share in the poet’s work: *fama* (or *Fama*?) bestows on the poem her own ability to realize the divine force of her activities.

6. Hardie 1986, 275 n. 118. Feeney 1991, 187 also briefly discusses the self-referentiality of this section of the *Aeneid*, noting “the baffled comments of Servius on Vergil’s use of the phrase *ut perhibent* (‘so they say’) to introduce the family connections of *Fama* (4.179).”

The *fama*-monster's excessive number of eyes, tongues, mouths, and ears are all carefully arranged in equilibrium, with unusually precise correlatives.⁷ The Latin language loves using correlatives to show equivalence. Here *fama* is embodied in a strange balance that makes her monstrous appearance match her abilities to travel, observe, and communicate, all in equal proportions. She is a *monstrum* in every sense: the kind of sight that reveals, through its anomalous appearance, something amiss in the relations between humans and gods.⁸ The lines following the description of her monstrous appearance present her as very similar to a bird that communicates terrifying news from the gods (4.184–87)—a near-twin of the *Dira* turned bird that Jupiter sends to terrify Turnus before his death (12.849–64). And as with many god-sent omens, as we see elsewhere in the poem, *Fama* causes action as much as she describes or reports it.⁹

The precision with which *Fama*'s ability to spread news matches her powers of absorbing information points forward to another important pair of correlatives a little later in the passage, when we are told that *Fama* is “as prone to keep hold of what's made-up and skewed as she is a messenger of truth” (*tam ficti prauisque tenax quam nuntia ueri*, 4.188). The balance is important here too: *fama* in the *Aeneid* transmits truth as much as imagined and distorted material (outright lies are not mentioned as a possibility). Hardie, discussing “evil” *Fama* as an “emblem of hyperbole” points out that “she represents the power of the spoken word to exceed the truth while yet remaining anchored to it.”¹⁰ He suggests that one might see this *Fama* “as a perversion of the ideal of the poet: she achieves the horizontal and vertical extension that the poet desires for his works (e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 2.20); she has the many tongues that the epic poet conventionally wishes for (e.g.

7. It is hard to reproduce the force of the correlatives *quot . . . tot* in English, which is much less given to this kind of parallelism than Latin. But the repetition and precision (*totidem*, 4.183) are striking even in Latin.

8. Cicero, *De divinatione* 1.42.93 (see also *ND* 2.3.7): *Quorum quidem vim, ut tu soles dicere, verba ipsa prudenter a maioribus posita declarant. Quia enim ostendunt, portendunt, monstrant, praedicunt, ostenta, portenta, monstra, prodigia dicuntur* (“As for the force of these ideas, this is made clear—as you often say—by the words themselves that our ancestors wisely established. Because they reveal, portend, display, and predict, they are called revelations, portents, displays, and predictions [prodigies]”). Other ancient etymologies connect *monstrum* with *moneo*, placing the emphasis on warning and advising rather than showing.

9. Miller 1981, 114 remarks on a phenomenon in the figuration of talk as social control that suggests an inversion of the *Aeneid*'s monstrously ordered *Fama*. In the perceptions of the community in *Middlemarch*, as Miller puts it, “a social novelty invariably becomes a lapse of nature. Even when the narratable difference is not construed as an unnatural monster, it is taken for a supernatural prodigy” (114).

10. Hardie 1986, 274.

Aen. 6.625); [. . .] like the poet, from at least the time when Hesiod met the Muses (*Theog.* 27f), she utters a mixture of truth and untruth.”¹¹ *Fama* here is an evil (*malum*, 4.174), a filthy goddess (*dea foeda*, 4.195), who brings terror (*territat*, 4.187); later in Book 4 she is called *impia* (4.298): all good reasons to call this figure a “perversion.” The personification dramatizes the most frightening, ominous, and even polluting possibilities of communication.¹²

But this allegorization of *Fama* does not so much pervert an ideal poet-figure as it distills poetry’s reliance on the effects of memory, observation, imagination, and verbal power. This is the reliance that poetry shares with other forms of human and divine communication in the *Aeneid*, including Vulcan’s prophetic shield in Book 8.

We do not have to wait until Book 8 to see *fata* entangled with *fama*. Jupiter and his utterances are already implicated in the out of control activities of Book 4’s monstrous *fama*, which eventually grant Dido a role in speaking out the fates of Aeneas’ descendants. The horrifying divine *Fama* spreads a sordidly judgmental distortion of the love between Dido and Aeneas, claiming that they are both forgetting their kingdoms (*regnorum immemores*, 4.194).¹³ On her rounds, *Fama* makes a detour to Dido’s unsuccessful and resentful suitor Iarbas, “and sets his spirit ablaze with what’s said, and heaps up his reasons for anger” (*incenditque animum dictis atque aggerat iras*, 4.197). Jupiter Hammon fathered Iarbas by raping a nymph, and Iarbas solidifies his filial ties to the god with lavish worship.

In a peculiarly recursive tribute to the power of *fama*, the maddened Iarbas, now “on fire with the bitter rumor” (*rumore accensus amaro*, 4.203), “is said” (*dicitur*, 4.204) to have prayed to Jupiter. By inserting *dicitur* here, the poet acknowledges the importance of *fama*-work in providing the material for narrative, even more emphatically than with *ut perhibent* in the animation of the *Fama*-monster (see above).¹⁴ Iarbas takes the posture

11. *Ibid.*, 275 n. 118.

12. More recently, Hardie (2009b, 100) has noted the extensive connections between *Fama* and Book 7’s Allecto, including Allecto’s final offer (which Juno turns down) to use rumors to extend the war against the Trojans into neighboring cities (7.548–51).

13. The poem indicates that this is indeed a distortion, though not an outright lie; building stops when Dido is uncertainly yearning for Aeneas (4.86–89), but by the time Mercury visits, the works at Carthage have resumed with Aeneas’ help (4.260).

14. Feeney 1991, discussing how “the fiction of the *Aeneid* must be asserted with so much power that it will become a tradition” (186), suggests that the implied agent of *dicitur* in 4.204 is “none other than the poet, the author of the new tradition which is evolving as we read” (187). Iarbas more or less bookends his prayer with the threat that talk of—and fear of—Jupiter will be proved baseless. When he suggests that lightning flashes blindly produce empty murmurings (*caeci . . . in nubibus*

of one praying for help (4.205), but uses that supplication as a challenge, hurling accusatory questions at his father. He imagines provocatively that Jove's thunderbolts emit mere hollow rumblings (*inania murmura*, 4.210), exactly the vocabulary that also describes subdued and anonymous human talk.¹⁵ He describes Aeneas as a Paris enjoying his spoil; evidently in bringing gifts to Jupiter's temples, Iarbas and his people have been cherishing hollow *fama* (*fama inanis*, 4.218).¹⁶

While Iarbas provocatively imagines as "hollow" the power conferred on the supreme Olympian by the human imagination, Jupiter's actions confirm the importance of human *fama* in his methods of wielding power. Jupiter responds to Iarbas' fiery anger by taking advantage of his *fama*-based report and turning his gaze to the lovers in Carthage, whom he sees as *oblitos fama melioris* ("heedless of their better *fama*," 4.221). He reacts by making Mercury, in effect, a vehicle of *fama* and *fata* together, passing on to his messenger the news about Aeneas' indifference to the cities granted by the fates (4.225), and giving him a rundown of what to say. This amounts to the command to get under sail (*nauiget!* 4.237). That final imperative is grounded in a reminder of the beliefs that comprise Aeneas' *fama melior* (apparently Venus has given a pledge for what sort of man he is—Jupiter hints at a bargain over Aeneas' fate during his Iliadic battles, 4.227–28), and an awareness of the *gloria* and *laus* that are due to result from Aeneas' imperial destiny (4.229–33).¹⁷ Mercury fits his own goads into the message—he improvises from the sight of Aeneas at work on Carthaginian building works—but he passes on the essence of what *Fama* has been reporting and what Jupiter has perceived, upbraiding Aeneas for indifference: *heu, regni rerumque oblite tuarum!* ("Ah, forgetful of your kingdom and your achievements!" 4.267). Mercury's reproachful vocative combines the words attributed to *Fama* on the rampage (*regnorum immemores*, 4.194) with Jupiter's perception of the lovers as insufficiently attentive to the quality of their *fama* (*oblitos fama melioris amantis*, 4.221).

ignes . . . inania murmura miscent, 4.209–10), his vocabulary connects groundless human chatter with perceptions of the noises made by the natural world. Macdonald 1987, 27–28 briefly discusses such layerings of *fama* in Book 4. Hardie 2012, 88–92 has now analyzed in detail Iarbas' relation to *fama*.

15. In Ovid's House of *Fama* Iarbas' idea is reversed; the noises there are *murmura* (not an outcry, *clamor*), like the waves—or like the sound made by Jupiter's thunder (*Met.* 12.49–51).

16. Iarbas' hostility, however, focuses more explicitly on common presuppositions about Phrygian "half-men" than on a violation of guest-friendship, which Jupiter might be expected to avenge.

17. That destiny includes conflict between Carthage and Rome, evidently: Jupiter has made efforts to make sure that the Carthaginians will not be hostile to Aeneas, but he wonders what hope drives Aeneas to hang around in a hostile nation (*qua spe inimica in gente moratur?* 4.235).

When Aeneas hesitates over how to find a gentle way to tell Dido that he must leave Carthage (*quae mollissima fandi / tempora*, 4.293–94), *impia Fama* gets in first (4.298). As we saw in chapter 1.3, this *Fama* is *impia* from both Dido’s and Aeneas’ perspectives. For Aeneas, it disrupts the line of command, and throws into disarray his own plans for careful speech. But we are more emphatically directed towards Dido’s reasons for regarding this *Fama* as *impia*. We have just been told that she has sensed the Trojans’ tricks ahead of time (*dolos [. . .] praesensit*); the narrative implies that her sensitivity to the truth results from her state of frenzy.

at regina dolos (quis fallere possit amantem?)
 praesensit, motusque exceptit prima futuros
 omnia tuta timens. eadem impia Fama furenti
 detulit armari classem cursumque parari.

But the queen grasped the deception beforehand (who can escape the awareness of one in love?), and first got wind of the movements to come in her fear of everything, even when safe. To Dido in her frenzy the same reckless *Fama* brought news that the fleet was being equipped and their voyage prepared. (*Aen.* 4.296–99)

This *Fama* perhaps consists of her super-alert perception—or even imagination, at first—rather than a fully articulated report. So *impia* reflects Dido’s view of what *Fama* tells her, that is, the unspeakable treachery of her supposed husband (which she calls *nefas*, a crime against divine law, 4.306).

Aeneas himself, in Book 1, had linked his own memories of Dido with the rewards reciprocally due to her as one of the *pii* (1.603):

‘in freta dum fluii current, dum montibus umbrae
 lustrabunt conuexa, polus dum sidera pascet,
 semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt,
 quae me cumque uocant terrae.’

“While rivers run into the sea’s shallows, while shadows scan the hollows among the hills, while the pole gives pasturage to the stars, always your honor, your name, and your praises shall last, whatever lands call me.” (*Aen.* 1.607–10)

With this set of carefully balanced *dum* clauses, Aeneas exactly aligns Dido's lasting reputation with the eternal forces of nature.¹⁸ Her *fama* is to be underpinned by the imperatives of *pietas*.

Dido's madness then comes to appear as a collapse of the sense of self that had been rooted in her own *fama*. After learning that Aeneas hears the call of other lands more clearly than he hears her pleas, Dido mourns the loss of her identity as ruler. She has aroused the hostility of the neighboring peoples, she tells Aeneas; her *pudor* and *fama* have been smothered (*extinctus*, which continues the fire imagery): *te propter* [. . .] / *extinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam, / fama prior* ("Because of you [. . .], my honor has been smothered, along with my one route to the stars, the *fama* I once had," 4.321–23).

Fama as a blend of news and perception in 4.298 suits the vocabulary of *fama* throughout Book 4, as it brings together all the inflammatory and Dionysian language of *furor*, which readers have already seen raging out of control in Aeneas' account of the Fall of Troy in Book 2. *Fama* in its various permutations sets people on fire—Iarbas (4.197), Dido (4.300), maybe Aeneas (4.361)—and possesses them with Dionysus' wildness (4.300–303), but it also raves like a bacchant itself (4.666). Through a reimagining of the Sophoclean hero Ajax's sufferings, the *Aeneid* acknowledges how both madness and poetic narrative can ensue when a character's sense of self becomes elided with her public *fama*.¹⁹

The history-making force of epic storytelling feeds on the scandalous monstrosity of gossip, when Dido reaffirms her disintegrating identity by

18. In Book 4, as if to preempt being cast in the role of a Catullan Theseus (whose heedlessness of his obligations to Ariadne is extended by her prayer/curse into near-murderous forgetfulness of his father), Aeneas restates in personal terms his commitment to remembering Dido and what she deserves of him (*ego te, quae plurima fando / enumerare uales, numquam, regina, negabo / promeritam, nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae / dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus*; "The many things which you have the power to reckon up in your speech, never, queen, will I deny that you have deserved, and I won't tire of remembering Elissa, as long as I remember myself, as long as breath controls this body," 4.333–36). In Book 1 he emphasized the agency of the gods, and her own intrinsic worth, in making her repute coterminous with the natural world. In Book 4 he says that thoughts of her are locked into his mind and body, along with his breath. Modern English speakers often find inadequate this simultaneously personal and impersonal expression (*nec me meminisse pigebit . . .*) as a response to Dido's grief, but it is hard to know whether the impersonal main verb *pigebit* would have discomfited Roman readers too.

19. The connections between madness, *fama/kleos/timê*, anger, reciprocity, and suicide are deeply woven into the multiple allusions to both Homer's and Sophocles' presentations of Ajax. See Tatum 1984 for an exploration of Dido's *fama* in relation to the intertextuality between *Aeneid* 4 and 6 and Sophocles' *Ajax/Aias*. As Tatum puts it, "*fama* is as central to Dido's view of her role in the world as *timê* is to the mind of Ajax" (1984, 448).

means of her curse and magic-wielding suicide.²⁰ Dido's wild sorrow and its expression in her ritualized suicide give her own angry memory its power to become part of fate. As her grief progresses, we hear a development of her briefly articulated wish that Aeneas should be driven to remember her when he suffers the punishment that must come to him, "if mindful divine wills have any power" (*si quid pia numina possunt*, 4.382).

This development culminates in Dido's curse on Aeneas and his race; she adjusts her own wishes for Aeneas' suffering, so as to make the future she speaks out, which will commemorate her own suffering, compatible with the fixed utterances of Jupiter (4.612–14), as *fama* joins with *fata*.²¹ The magic rites surrounding Dido's suicide employ objects that embody memories, to aid her in making her death an act of ritual slaughter, which will add divine force to her words: "this I pour out as my last utterance, with my blood" (*hanc uocem extremam cum sanguine fundo*, 4.621), she declares.²² She prays to the Sun and to *conscia* Juno as forces of knowledge, as well as to Hecate and the avenging Furies (*ultrices Dirae*); she then reenergizes her imprecation, first with a general call to Tyrians to harry Aeneas' stock and the whole race to come with acts of hatred (4.622–24), then to some particular avenger (*ultor*, 4.625) who will pursue the settlers with a fire-brand (*face*, 4.626), just as she had earlier envisaged herself pursuing Aeneas with black flames (4.384). Dido's prayers to the divine forces of knowledge, death, and vengeance, along with her apostrophe to future Tyrians and her command to an avenger to rise from her bones, turn the Punic wars into a manifestation of renewed control over her *fama*, making them a series of struggles that will commemorate and avenge her own suffering with due recompense.²³

A new type of balanced disorder—akin to the balanced correlatives we saw in the goddess *Fama*'s characteristics—marks the conflict to come: *litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas / imprecor, arma armis: pugnent ipsique*

20. Dido resorts to magic language after her attempts at persuading Aeneas with non-supernatural forms of speech have so notably failed; see Allen 2000, 147 on curse tablets in classical Athens as a potential substitute—especially for women—for the power of speech that is exercised by men in the law courts.

21. *si tangere portus / infandum caput ac terris adnare necesse est, / et sic fata Iouis poscunt, hic terminus haeret, / at [. . .]* ("if it is necessary for his unspeakable head to reach harbor and swim to shore, and this is what the fates of Jupiter demand, this boundary-point is fixed, but . . .," 4.612–14).

22. See Graf 1997, 8–19 for a discussion of the problems with anachronistic oversimplification when we try to draw sharp lines between religion and magic in antiquity. Dido's rites mingle the two. We do not need to suppose that either Dido or the poet would expect her actions and words to succeed wholly as rituals. Rather they spell out the figurative force of her prayer/curse. That figurative force is then still more fully embodied within the poem's story in the perverted sacrifice of her suicide.

23. Panoussi 2009, 45–56 assesses the ritual efficacy of Dido's actions in Book 4.

nepotesque (“shores opposed to shores, waves to billows, I call down in my prayer, weapons to weapons: may they themselves and their descendants battle it out,” 4.628–29). The matched pairs of opposing forces listed by Dido convey at an elemental level the extremes of destruction anticipated in a long conflict between Rome and Carthage as competing imperial powers.²⁴

But these matched forces (shores against shores, waves against billows, arms against arms) also express in material terms the reciprocity that Dido has found wanting in Aeneas and the Trojans—the awareness of what *pietas* demands.²⁵ To make up for present forgetfulness, their nations’ histories will provide the remembrance due to Carthage and its queen, in return for the generosity that the Trojans have first enjoyed and then rejected. So Dido’s personal *fama*, in all its manifestations, fuses with epic *fama*, which aligns Rome and Carthage’s past and present with the *fata* of the *Aeneid*.

2.2 Jupiter’s bargain

When Hercules weeps helplessly for the boy Pallas, Jupiter serves up an understanding of death and time so elegantly pithy, and so resonant in its intertextual echoes, that it is tempting to make his short speech into a master-code for understanding epic *fama*. Appealing to the ties his family has established with Hercules, Pallas in Book 10 has been praying not merely to defeat Turnus; Turnus needs to be aware of his defeat and see Pallas taking blood-smeared weapons from his half-dead body. That Turnus should perceive Pallas’ power over him is crucial to the victory Pallas visualizes, which implies a particular vision of *fama* in its need to be authenticated by the gaze of his dying enemy.

But Hercules can give Pallas neither this acknowledged victory nor life alone:

Audiit Alcides iuuenem magnumque sub imo
corde premit gemitum lacrimasque effundit inanis.
tum genitor natum dictis adfatur amicis:
‘stat sua cuique dies, breue et irreparabile tempus

24. Some readers (Hexter 1992, 344; Panoussi 2009, 46) have suggested that Hannibal’s eventual defeat expresses a failure, or partial failure, of Dido’s curse. But she does not call for victory; she calls for reciprocal suffering and for commemorative hostility. And if the *Aeneid* is clear about anything, it is clear that the winners sometimes suffer as much and longer than the losers.

25. Gibson 1999 clarifies some of the complex questions of reciprocity raised by the ethical vocabulary of Dido and Aeneas in Books 1 and 4.

omnibus est uitae; sed famam extendere factis,
 hoc uirtutis opus. Troiae sub moenibus altis
 tot gnati cecidere deum, quin occidit una
 Sarpedon, mea progenies; etiam sua Turnum
 fata uocant metasque dati peruenit ad aeuī.’

Alcides heard the young man and a huge groan
 he presses beneath the depth of his heart, and he pours out helpless tears.
 Then the father speaks to his son with affectionate words:

“There stands as his own, for each man, a particular day; short and
 irretrievable

is the time of life for all. But to stretch out *fama* by doing things,
 this is the task for a man’s excellence (*uirtus*). Under the high walls of

Troy

so many men born of gods fell—in fact there died with them
 Sarpedon, my own offspring; his own fates summon even Turnus,
 and he has come right up to the turning posts of the stretch of life
 granted him.” (*Aen.* 10.464–72)

Jupiter presents *fama* as a particularly human—and perhaps especially male—goal and privilege, but one that is divinely ordained. As is usual with Jupiter, he purports simply to affirm the way things are, but at the same time authorizes the situation he explains. The scheme of things that he describes seems to be brought into being in some unfathomable way by Jupiter’s utterance, as he speaks to (*adfatur*) Hercules of what is fated/spoken (*fata*).²⁶ Yet we are never steered decisively to categorize *fama* as either fully divine or fully human discourse. *Fama*, as a bridge from mortality to story-borne immortality, belongs to humans, but it is also a form of speech that has special links to the divine realm.

As well as obfuscating the borders between truth, fiction, and lies, the connections between the discourses of *fama* and *fata* point to epic’s special task of using both memory and imagination to cross boundaries of time. Perhaps even more than the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid* is interested both in human time, defined above all by the temporariness of human life, and in another kind of time, figured as divine, where knowledge and imagination—even the human imagination—roam unconstrained by mortal fragility.²⁷

26. The verb *adfari* is not reserved for divine speech, however, and its uses in the poem are varied, though it very often occurs at moments of critical importance for fate’s story.

27. For an analysis of time and *kleos*, see Bakker 2002. When in *Aeneid* 8.731 Aeneas raises to his shoulder *famamque et fata nepotum* in the form of Vulcan’s shield, we could understand “the *fama* and

Jupiter lays out plainly for his son the heroic bargain that encapsulates, on one level, the *raison d'être* of epic narrative: “There stands as his own, for each man, a particular day; short and irretrievable is the time of life for all. But to stretch out *fama* by doing things, this is the task for [a man’s?] excellence (*uirtus*)” (*stat sua cuique dies, breue et irreparabile tempus / omnibus est uitae. sed famam extendere factis, / hoc uirtutis opus*, 10.467–69). Jupiter’s words adjust a rhetorical question posed by Anchises to express confidence in the Trojans’ mission, as he displays the Roman future to Aeneas in Book 6. Anchises focuses on *uirtus* itself, rather than *fama*: *et dubitamus adhuc uirtutem extendere factis, / aut metus Ausonia prohibet consistere terra?* (“And do we hesitate still to stretch excellence with achievements, or does fear prevent us settling on Ausonian soil?” 6.806–7). Jupiter makes *fama* the one thing that grants *uirtus* any efficacy, when human time is described from a divine viewpoint.

Virtus cannot meaningfully extend a man’s life, but it can extend his existence in *fama*.²⁸ The tendency of classical epic is to turn this bargain into a question, as the *Iliad* does, and ask whether the deal satisfies those who suffer while they live, die violent deaths, and are celebrated in poetic memory.²⁹ Jupiter, on the other hand, rejects the kind of questions that humans might wish to ask about death and memory. He is teaching his newly immortal

fates of his descendants” as “the *fama* and fates consisting in his posterity” as much as “belonging to” that posterity. The emphasis on the *fama* belonging to and maintained by Aeneas’ descendants bridges those visions of mortality and time that treat *kleos* as an alternative to the continuation or renewal of life (as the *Iliad*’s Achilles sees it in 9.412–16) and those that see *kleos* perpetuated through the birth of subsequent generations, who will renew life both by remembering their predecessors and by replacing them.

28. In some ways the *Aeneid* does claim to speak for humanity as a whole, not just men, defining humans inclusively (in contrast to gods) by their vulnerable mortality. It is hard to tell how consistently or consciously “manliness” would have been heard in the word *uirtus* by a classical audience. Cicero remarks on the gendering of *uirtus* in *Tusc.* 2.43; the very fact that he needs to point it out suggests that the *uir* in *uirtus* would not have been omnipresent in his readers’ minds (but perhaps this is because it is taken for granted as the unmarked, dominant gender). The Roman vocabulary of excellence is deeply bound up in gender and status distinctions; see further, for example, Santoro L’Hoir 1992; Connolly 2007 offers a concise overview of these issues.

29. In my reading, Jupiter implicitly presents the reckoning of death and fame as an exchange; Turnus in 12.49 then makes the language explicit when he demands that Latinus should allow him to make a bargain of death for distinction (*letum [. . .] pro laude pacisci*). This view contrasts with the approach of Coffee 2009, 97, who argues for a more precise, but also more rigidly evaluative, understanding of exchange-based language, which would sharply differentiate between Jupiter’s wording and Turnus’ terms. According to Coffee’s analysis (39–114), the *Aeneid* offers two models for exchange, which are defined through a system of moral evaluation governed by aristocratic ideology. A commodity-based view of exchange threatens to expose the contradictions inherent in the aristocratic model of reciprocity valued by the poem; Turnus and Juno are among the characters who undermine successful reciprocity with their mercantile, transaction-based language.

son to think like a god. *Fama* and *uirtus* become the tools to bring time as mortals experience it into line with a divine temporal scheme.

Jupiter flattens out the problems of life and death that preoccupy mortals, as if they are oversubtle nuances that can and should disappear in the glare of divine reasoning (*breue et irreparabile tempus / omnibus est uitae*). Provided that the fates have had their say, for Jupiter there is no such thing as dying before one's time—no shock to be felt in the awareness that mortal fathers like Peleus, Priam, Evander, or Daunus must mourn the deaths of their young sons.³⁰ He makes Achilles' dilemma—a return to his father and the dismissal of lasting *kleos*, or grief for Peleus but a story worth remembering and lamenting in the *Iliad*?—into an irrelevance, since the lifespan of a Pallas and that of a Nestor look equally skimpy alongside eternity.

The conversation between Hercules and Jupiter is one of those that makes a point of rewriting a moment from the *Iliad*, in this instance the passage where Zeus mourns his son Sarpedon, after being convinced by Hera that he must not alter what is fated. Jupiter's words intensify the effect of this rewriting by directly recalling that earlier scene: "Under the high walls of Troy fell so many men born of gods—in fact there died with them Sarpedon, my own offspring; his own fates summon even Turnus, and he has come right up to the turning posts of the stretch of life granted him" (*Troiae sub moenibus altis / tot gnati cecidere deum, quin occidit una / Sarpedon, mea progenies; etiam sua Turnum / fata uocant metasque dati peruenit ad aeuu*, 10.469–72). In his speech to Hercules, Jupiter borrows what Sarpedon says to Glaucus in *Iliad* 12, where Sarpedon presents *kleos* and *timè* as a substitute for immortality.³¹ Jupiter combines his own version of Sarpedon's view of death with a distillation of the argument Hera gives when Zeus is tempted to rescue his son: Sarpedon is by no means the only mortal son of an immortal god to fight at Troy, she reminds him—what would happen if all the gods started whisking their sons away? Instead, Hera tells Zeus, he should worry about what happens after Sarpedon's death and make sure he

30. Perhaps because of Aeneas' role as father (father of Iulus, father-figure for the Trojans, and in some sense father of Rome), which aligns him as much with the Iliadic Priam and the Odyssean Odysseus as with younger Homeric heroes, we see in the *Aeneid* more sorrow and anxiety over living too long and watching others die than over a memorable, youthful death (examples include Aeneas 1.94ff.; Anna 4.678ff.; Euryalus' mother 9.481ff.; Mezentius 10.846ff.; Juturna 12.879ff.). For a metapoetic discussion of this theme, see O'Sullivan 2009.

31. Hejduk 2009, 301 remarks on this allusion as part of the inhumanity of Jupiter in Vergil's characterization. Hejduk holds a similar perspective to my own on the need to complicate schematizations that would align Jupiter with the forces of rationality and order, in opposition to Junonian chaos and irrationality. Our approaches to Vergilian *fama*, however, are very different; she regards Jupiter's preoccupation with *fama* as uniformly negative and most often translates the word as "adulation."

receives his full privilege of burial by his family in Lycia (*Iliad* 16.441–57). The *Iliad* here uses mourning rituals both to set limits to the gods' powers of intervention and to demarcate different ranks among mortals—this provides divine backing for Sarpedon's point to Glaucus, that since they have to die some time, they may as well make sure that they earn well-deserved *timê* among the Lycians.

The *Aeneid's* rewrite, on the other hand, makes this an issue of time: human lives are short and are more or less interchangeable, except in the span of memory that may be prolonged by *uirtus*. Unlike Zeus, Hercules does not even consider trying to defer death for a cherished mortal; he simply grieves. And in place of the blood-rain with which Zeus honors Sarpedon (*Iliad* 16.459–60), we have “futile tears” (*lacrimas* [. . .] *inanis*, 10.465) shed by Hercules when he hears Pallas' equally futile prayer.

The near-interchangeability of mortal lives and deaths in Jupiter's speech has some strange effects. Far from supplying a simple master code for understanding the forces that drive epic narrative, it turns out that Jupiter's pithy reduction of the logic underpinning the genre simultaneously authorizes epic commemoration and risks reducing it almost out of existence. Even as Jupiter celebrates the power of *fama*, he submerges its ability to honor particular men or women, by drowning the memory of individuals among the collectivity of the dead.³²

Jupiter's notion of *fama*, it seems, presents renown as a kind of anonymity. When Jupiter tells Hercules *sed famam extendere factis, / hoc uirtutis opus* (“but to stretch out *fama* by doing things, this is the task for *uirtus*,” 10.468–69), it sounds at first as if he is proposing *fama* as a way to escape the uniform end that comes to all (*omnibus*, 10.468). Yet in the next sentence, he names Sarpedon and Turnus precisely to show that their deaths make them interchangeable with a whole series of others, including Pallas.³³ No wonder Hercules' tears are futile, and not only because of their inability to save Pallas' life: mourning works only up to a point even in maintaining the remembrance of individuals.

So Jupiter's emphasis on the day that stands fixed for each man (*stat sua cuique dies*, 10.467) elides the day when a man's actions are most *fama*-

32. Of course, another way to look at this would be to say that Jupiter submerges individual sorrows in a broader concern for the “human condition”; the story of a Patroclus or a Pallas would then be memorable for listeners or readers because it is driven by the one thing that anyone would share with those characters—the need to die, sooner or later.

33. As Hejduk 2009, 301 points out, Jupiter provides an oddly denuded version of a standard consolatory *topos*, which grants the mourner companionship in bereavement through a reminder of other deaths.

worthy with the day that assimilates him to all other mortals. Pallas' day of *aristeia* is also the day when his life ends. The day that can make him memorable is the day that makes him one among *omnibus* (10.468), defined communally by a share in death instead of being individualized with personal distinction.³⁴

The prodigious but precisely calibrated equipment of the animated *Fama* in Book 4 mirrors and helps communicate the monstrously ordered excess of Jupiter's *fata* in the *Aeneid*. It is clear that *fama*, according to Jupiter in Book 10, measures extremity; *uirtus* extends *fama* to the degree that it gets people to talk about someone as distinct from the common run. Yet in Jupiter's vision, the will to exceed becomes as regular a part of life as the knowledge that one will someday die. This vision of Jupiter's is characteristic of his role in the poem: he advertises as his chief priority the maintenance of some kind of cosmic order grounded in the prescriptions of fate, but he describes as normal—or prescribes as normative—a kind of excess that simultaneously maintains and threatens that order.

2.3 Sinon's *fama*

At the start of the *Aeneid*'s second book, Aeneas tells of the mountainous wooden horse left outside Troy by the Greeks after their pretended abandonment of the wearying siege. This episode brings together many of the problems posed by *fama* as fictive and collective knowledge. Aeneas first summarizes the persuasive technique that will induce the Trojans to comply with the Greeks' intent: *uotum pro reditu simulant: ea fama uagatur* ("they make out that it is a votive offering for their return: this *fama* roams about," 2.17). Aeneas' summary divides persuasive agency between the Greeks (as the subject of *simulant*) and unanchored *fama*, which wanders free of particular authors, speakers, or listeners. In the more detailed account which follows, Aeneas explains exactly how the Greek who goes by the name of "Sinon" insinuates himself into the Trojan deliberations over the prodigious offering. The repeated *fama* and *fari*-based vocabulary in this

34. This reflects a problem raised by epic battle scenes, which in some ways read as catalogues of death. On one level the attention to details of suffering in battle scenes in the *Iliad* and *Aeneid*—or even in Lucan's hyper-real *Bellum ciuile*—provides a way to duly mourn and remember the lives and deaths of individual fighters, with a range of attention that extends well beyond the central characters whose presence is felt in the rest of the poem. But the variation in names, emotions, relationships, and wounds, packed into a short space of narrative, overwhelms many readers into a generalized awareness of the chaos of battle, instead of creating and perpetuating distinctly delineated memories of individuals.

episode, including the words with which Aeneas marks his speech as a form of lament (2.3 and 2.6), weaves the one-day *fama* of the Trojan horse into the epic's broader discourse of *fama*.³⁵

"Sinon" both individualizes this roaming *fama* through his fictive self-representation, and embodies *fama*'s characteristic anonymity. His peculiar individualized anonymity stems partly from the way he serves as a vehicle for Ulysses' notorious guile, as Ralph Hexter has emphasized.³⁶ He hides behind the notoriety of Ulysses and his plots (and his famous victim, Palamedes, 2.81–82), but nevertheless achieves a kind of Odyssean *kleos* in Aeneas' description of him in 2.62 as ready either for successful deception or certain death.

At the same time, Sinon endows with the authority of a divine imperative the *fama* that explains the horse as a votive offering. He situates his mixture of lies, fictions, and truths in a ritual framework that the Trojans recognize as compelling. Sinon makes the Trojans' interpretation of the horse a matter of *pietas*, and turns Trojan *pietas* into the value that allows the Greeks to tear apart Troy.

Some of the anxieties in the episode, in which the perceptions of the "many" overpower the "one," suggest Roman aristocratic antipathy to popular governance. The role of *fama* as chatter here joins forces with the dangerous simplicity of the Trojans' group identity as *pii* (in contrast with the *impii* Greeks), so that they ignore the wisdom of potential leaders (Cassandra, who is a sort of anti-Sibyl, as well as Laocoon). Yet a straightforwardly polarized ideological conflict between the political authority of "one" and "many" is complicated by the investment of Jupiter—the ultimate "one"—in the *furor* shown by the Trojans en masse.

Sinon starts by characterizing himself as a near victim of the impious piety of the Greeks, who would have made him a human sacrifice. Then Sinon explains that the gigantic artifact has been left as an offering to Athena, to expiate an act of pollution, a grim sacrilege (*nefas quae triste piaret*, 2.184). Diomedes (*impius* [. . .] *Tydidēs*, 2.163–64) and Ulysses, in Sinon's story,

35. This vocabulary (including *fata* and *fas*) occurs (e.g.) in 2.3, 2.6, 2.13, 2.17, 2.21, 2.34, 2.50, 2.54, 2.74, 2.81, 2.82, 2.84, 2.107, 2.121, 2.132, 2.147, 2.157, 2.158. See also Hardie 2012, 74–75 (citing Clément-Tarantino's 2006 Lille dissertation) for further *fama*-related vocabulary not derived from forms of *fari*.

36. Hexter 1990, 110–13. Sinon's Odyssean—or rather Ulyssean—effectiveness in rhetorical manufacturing is further emphasized by interspersing forms of *fingere* into the *fari*-language that abounds in the first section of Book 2, especially in 2.79–84. Aeneas crystallizes this as he describes how Sinon puts the capstone on his self-characterization as near-victim: *ficto pectore fatur* (2.107); literally, "he speaks from his feigned heart." That is, he speaks with simulated emotion and from a carefully fashioned identity.

stole the Palladium from Athena's temple with hands still bloodied from murdering the citadel guards, and so defiled with their touch the sacred effigy and, more specifically, the goddess's virgin headbands (2.163–68). If the immense horse should enter Troy, the Trojans would obtain the divine protection sought through the artifact that the Greeks have created in recompense for their pollution, Sinon tells them—this is the reason why Calchas has told the Greeks to build it sky-high (2.185–86). By contrast, the original act of pollution, Sinon implies, would be transferred to the Trojans if they should violate the offering to Minerva (2.189), and would destroy them.

Aeneas' narrative invites his audience to assume that both Greeks and Trojans remember equally vividly the full scope of the impiety accompanying the violent theft. But the poem also allows readers to see Sinon as exploiting Trojan prejudices against the Greeks as the sort of people who would, of course, defile a sacred object with the filth of men's blood.³⁷ Equally the Trojans see themselves as so eager to obey the will of the gods and reassert divine order that their dedication to *pietas* can be exploited by the Greeks' willingness to enlist divine authority for their lies.

After Sinon's stories have elaborated the *fama* that was first summarized by Aeneas at 2.17, a horrifying divine sign clinches the matter in the eyes of the Trojans: a pair of enormous serpents apparently confirms the sacred inviolability of the wooden horse by rising from the sea and going after Laocoon, the one man who had correctly interpreted the practical function of the horse as troop carrier.

In this account, communications of the gods fuse with human chatter. Word goes round (*ferunt*, 2.230) that Laocoon is being duly punished for violating the offering with his spear. Aeneas, who speaks the whole of Books 2 and 3 to Dido and the other Carthaginians, never settles the question of which (if any) god has sent the omen. The divine sign takes on the kind of authorless authority associated with *fama*, disseminated among the voices of its many interpreters.

Their preoccupation with their own *pietas* makes the Trojans, as Aeneas puts it (and he includes himself in the first person plural here), heedless and insensible, blinded with frenzy (*immemores caecique furore*, 2.244) to the signs of disaster before their eyes and ears (2.242–45); their very *pietas* prevents them from experiencing the horse—even with arms clashing aloud in its belly—as itself a *monstrum infelix* (“an ill-boding portent,” 2.245).

37. Adler 2003, 256–63 makes some similar observations, though these lead to a very different reading for her.

Through the bewildered memories that he shares with his Carthaginian audience, Aeneas grapples with a confused impression that Sinon's use of *fama* to exploit the Trojans' piety provides a conduit for divine will. If the *fata deum* and their intentions were not adverse, Laocoon would have driven the Trojans to foul up the Argives' hiding places and the ultimate counterfactual would have ensued—Troy's survival (*si fata deum, si mens non laeua fuisset / impulerat ferro Argolicas foedare latebras, / Troiaque nunc staret, Priamique arx alta maneres*, 2.54–56; cf. 2.34). Aeneas' term *foedare* suggests a persistent feeling that an attack on the horse would amount to a violation, even as he points out that it would have meant the city's salvation.

The success of the Greeks' ruse, in which they provide a fake offering to expiate what the Trojans recognize as a real violation, communicates the perverse sanctity of Jupiter's intentions.³⁸ The divine plan here turns the capture of Troy itself into the necessary atonement, part of a cycle in which acts of expiation unleash violence and further defilement. This fits the larger pattern in the *Aeneid*, which asserts a Jovian order but repeatedly shows that it is indissociable from the disruptive energy of *furor*.

The gods' *fata* are unrolled through a well-proportioned amalgam of truth, distortion, and imagination—just the mixture to which Book 4's *Fama*-monster/goddess clings.³⁹ As Philip Hardie has recently emphasized, “the close relationship between Sinon and *Fama* in *Aeneid* 4 [. . .] extends to the irony whereby both creatures of the distorted word, for all their destructive effects in the immediate context, in fact collude with the wider design of the plot, the fulfillment of Trojan fate and the realization of Roman glory.”⁴⁰ Another way of looking at this question of agency is to ask how far the poem imagines fate and divine will colluding with *fama* to become part of the fictive knowledge it conveys. *Fama* forms part of the extensive apparatus of remembrance by which Jupiter simultaneously presides over and disrupts the structures that the poem imagines as ordering human experience.

38. Sinon's account of Diomedes and Ulysses defiling Pallas Athena's *uirgineas uittas* prefigures Aeneas' account of the virgin Cassandra being dragged from Priam's temple (2.402–15), an abduction that itself alludes to Iphigeneia's sacrifice in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*—another act of human defilement done in obedience to divine will, as the tragedy presents expiation and defilement blended together in such a way as to trigger further cycles of violence and confusion.

39. The rest of Aeneas' story in Book 2 confirms that in some ways the *fama* summarized at 2.17 is accurate. The horse does serve as a votive offering for the Greeks' return—their return to Troy.

40. Hardie 2012, 77.



3

Matter out of Place I Across the Styx

For much of the *Aeneid* we hear no more about the Trojans' efforts to clean things up in the interests of ritual purity than about their dishwashing or laundry. But at a few key junctures the poem shows how material dirt, if it is not cleaned away, may disrupt the relations between humans and gods. A tidy cosmos requires things to be put in their place.

The *Aeneid*'s narrative becomes most emphatic about the process of cleaning up material dirt just when the Trojans are most concerned with finding their own place in the world—the *sedes* where they may rest.¹ Through its depictions of pollution and the avoidance of pollution, the poem rhetorically aligns geopolitical order with the ritual order that seeks to map in the human realm the proper relations between mortals, gods, and the universe.

1. One reason why questions of purity and pollution rise to the surface of the story at these moments is because the problem of homecoming for the Trojans (losing and finding their *sedes*) is repeatedly linked with figurative visits to the underworld that foreshadow and echo Aeneas' journey in Book 6, as many readers have noticed. These visits occur during the conflagration of their city in Book 2, over and over again in Book 3 (above all in the settlement created by Andromache and Helenus), and in Nisus and Euryalus' sortie in Book 9. See especially Putnam 1965, chap. 1, "Madness and Flight," 3–63, on the connections between Books 2, 6, and 9.

The dirt that most interests epic is the dirt of death: the material facts of decay make themselves felt even while the *Aeneid*, true to its genre, imagines its heroes defying the limits set by mortality through their *fama*.² Mary Douglas has pointed the way to understanding dirt, ritual pollution, and purity in relation to a culture's symbolic systems. She argues for the advantage of "matter out of place" as a "compendium category" that "implies only two conditions, a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order."³ Ways of demarcating material dirt form part of the same conceptual network as anomaly, category confusion, and excess—all the more abstract variants on what we might think of as "actual filth."

Yet a distinction between dirt as "actual filth" and as concept is as artificial as it is necessary. The distinction is artificial in that individual and cultural experience of what counts as "dirty" depends on boundaries that are established conceptually. In that sense material filth and abstract disorder exist on a continuum of transgression. But the distinction is necessary because this continuum extends across a wide range. Acts of transgression are often envisaged as materially "dirty" through a process of perceptual blending that brings together matter and metaphor.⁴

In chapter 2 the focus was on how *fama* is represented in the *Aeneid*—by the poet's voice, by Aeneas, by Jupiter, by Iarbas, and by Dido—and how those representations entwine *fama* with the authority of Jupiter's *fata*. In this chapter I am less concerned with direct depictions of *fama*, and begin to attend more closely to the interplay of imagination and remembrance through which the epic presents its fictive knowledge.

In poetic narrative all "matter" is imagined. Sometimes we are asked to envisage physical contamination (blood and filth), sometimes wondrous transformations (Circe's bewitched animals, or Cybele's ship-nymphs). It is then up to us how we link these imaginative experiences with our material experience outside the story world. In the *Aeneid* the metamorphoses offered by similes and metaphors, however, often take place at one remove

2. We know all too little about pollution ideas in Rome in the late first century B.C.E. Thome 1992, 78 notes the obscurity, adding that "the concept of purification—which as such presupposes the concept of pollution—is of great importance also in Latin, though there is no single central term for it as there is in Greek." Lennon (2010, 427) notes that "a comprehensive examination of pollution in Roman society is still lacking." Bradley 2012 takes a step towards filling that gap. See also Lindsay 2000; and Maurin 1984.

3. Douglas 1975/1999, 109. Douglas points out that in offering this "compendium category," she is not arguing for a transhistorical or transcultural definition of dirt.

4. For a discussion of these problems see Campkin and Cox 2007, particularly their introduction (1–8) and Wolkowitz's contribution (15–24). Parker 1983, 10, notes the difficulty of separating "from pollution any situation where breach of a religious rule has created danger" in Greek thought.

beyond the story world (distinguishing between these layers of fictionality becomes much harder in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*). At the start of Book 6, the narrative describes Daedalus' journey and artwork using category-confusing metaphors that heighten sensitivity to the transgressions communicated through Daedalus' art. Syntax and reading conventions prevent us from understanding Daedalus as transformed into a flying ship (6.16–19) within the same imaginative dimension as some of the metamorphoses described by the *Aeneid*—the story world in which the Fury Allecto becomes the priestess “Calybe,” and the Trojan ships become sea goddesses. Or to take an instance from later in the poem, Aeneas in his blazing armor is not fully metamorphosed into the Dog Star (10.273–75) within the *Aeneid*'s main story world. We are invited to apprehend materiality on a spectrum with greater or lesser degrees of reification, operating in different layers of the fabric of fiction.

The continuity between material and conceptual “matter out of place,” and the interaction between these different imaginative layers, help the *Aeneid* ground its construction of fictive knowledge in representations of ritual. Douglas in *Purity and Danger* traces an intellectual heritage for her inquiry that overlaps in part with Burke's exploration of “piety” as a “system-builder,” governed by “*the sense of what properly goes with what.*”⁵ When Douglas started looking comparatively at ideas of pollution, she built on William James' use of the phrase “matter out of place” to define dirt, paying special attention to the context in which James likens evil to dirt as something to be excluded from a rational order of things, according to the “gospel of healthy-mindedness” that he explains in the passage cited by Douglas.⁶ In contrast with a monistic view such as Hegel's, in which evil must “have a function awarded to it in the final system of truth,” James describes this “healthy minded” thinking first as a careful process of forgetting: “Evil, it says, is emphatically irrational [. . .]. It is a pure abomination to the Lord, an alien unreality, a waste element, to be sloughed off and negated, and the very memory of it, if possible, wiped out and forgotten.”⁷ He defines this pointed forgetfulness as a way of sweeping away the intrusive clutter of evil as “so much irrelevance and accident—so much ‘dirt,’ as

5. Burke 1934/1984, 74; see chapter 1.1.

6. Douglas 1966/2002, 44. But in an essay from 1968 (“Pollution,” reprinted in the collection *Implicit Meanings* in 1975), which both develops and distills some of the arguments of *Purity and Danger*, Douglas attributes “matter out of place” to Lord Chesterfield.

7. James 1987, 125–26. Throughout her work, Douglas pursues this problem of rationality, reversing the terms of the inquiry to put “dirt,” instead of evil, at its center, but with a continued focus on how different cultures and groups conceptualize and manage the problem of evil.

it were, and matter out of place.” The *Aeneid* is far from “healthy-minded,” and presents a world of conflict with plenty of room for anomaly, dirt, and evil, where the *pius* man remembers and at times reenergizes confusion and evil, even while *pietas* aspires to purity and order.

The questions Douglas asks about dirt are deeply involved in the ways the epic melds recognition and imaginative creation for its fictive knowledge. Douglas observes that individuals and groups resist dealing with anomaly and ambiguity, on the whole, and that we find ways to harmonize the things we recognize—and remember—with the patterns we have already begun to establish. Sometimes the pattern is adjusted to accept “discordant cues.” Sometimes we take positive pleasure—aesthetic pleasure, for instance—in confronting and even celebrating ambiguity and anomaly.⁸ The *Aeneid*, too, celebrates aesthetically some forms of anomaly, weaves some forms into acceptably familiar patterns, and marks out others as needing eradication. These processes allow *fama* to turn individual stories of a Misenus, a Palinurus, or a Caieta into collective memories built into the Italian landscape. So the poem builds its *fama* on the sometimes disorderly poetics of *pietas*.

Book 6 links three boundary-crossing scenes of grief with the ultimate boundary-crossing act of remembrance—Aeneas’ living descent into death in search of his father. The first of these scenes of mourning (Daedalus’ sorrow for his son Icarus, evoked through ekphrasis at the very start of the book) makes its imprint on the territory Aeneas encounters in the *Aeneid*’s story world. The others (for Misenus and Palinurus) leave their mark on the topography that the poem’s Roman readers would know in their own time.

Fama has it (6.14) that Aeneas shares his landing place at Cumae with Daedalus, who touched down there after Icarus fell from the sky during their escape from Crete. Daedalus shapes the memories surrounding his son’s death into an incomplete visual autobiography. Amidst a variety of concerns about representational and ethical transgressions, the ekphrasis raises the question of whether the grieving artist may put his son commemoratively in his place.

The Sibyl thrusts Aeneas away from contemplation of Daedalus’ images and towards ritual duties. But she also attaches great urgency to the problem of putting the dead in their place. She alerts Aeneas to the defiling presence of one of his Trojan companions, now an unburied corpse on the shore not far from Apollo’s temple. “Return him first to his own home and settle him

8. This is not to claim synonymy for “ambiguity” and “anomaly,” but as Douglas argues (1966/2002, 47), they pose much the same problems for systems of classification.

in his tomb,” the Sibyl instructs Aeneas (*sedibus hunc refer ante suis et conde sepulcro*, 6.152). The dead man turns out to be the bugler Misenus. Burial and lamentation for his corpse then form the core of the purifying rituals to be undertaken before Aeneas can make his descent.

After Aeneas has entered the underworld, he is confronted with the suffering that ensues when the dead are deprived of ritualized remembrance. He meets his helmsman Palinurus, who died in puzzling circumstances in Book 5, but who has not yet crossed the Styx and so asks Aeneas for help—either eventual burial, or a ride with him in Charon’s ferry: “Give your right hand to a poor wretch and take me away across the waves, so that—in death, at least—I may rest in a tranquil home” (*da dextram misero et tecum me tolle per undas, / sedibus ut saltem placidis in morte quiescam*, 6.370–71).

At the start of Book 7, the poem continues to address the concerns about remembrance raised in Book 6, and follows up on Aeneas’ reascent from the underworld with another burial scene. Here the poem offers a more confident appraisal of how an individual—Aeneas’ nurse, Caieta—may generate *fama* for a particular location. This topographical *fama* in turn marks out the fact that Caieta has found her final resting place (her *sedes*, 7.3).

Tu quoque litoribus nostris, Aeneia nutrix,
 aeternam moriens famam, Caieta, dedisti,
 et nunc seruat honos sedem tuus, ossaque nomen
 Hesperia in magna, si qua est ea gloria, signat.
 at pius exsequiis Aeneas rite solutis,
 aggere composito tumuli, postquam alta quierunt
 aequora, tendit iter uelis portumque relinquit.

You, too, to our shores, Aeneas’ nurse,
 gave in death, Caieta, fame (*fama*) unending;
 even now your honor preserves the abode (*sedes*), and your bones are marked
 in great Hesperia, if that glory means anything, by the name.
 But Aeneas, after devotedly (*pius*) carrying out the rituals in due order,
 when the mass of the funeral mound was piled up, after the high
 seas have come to rest, sets sail on his journey and leaves the harbor.
 (*Aen.* 7.1–7)

The poet brings the memory of Caieta into the community of present-day readers, with an apostrophe that celebrates her for granting eternal *fama* to “our” shores. After the apostrophe to Caieta, when the narrative picks up its account of Aeneas’ labors, the transition emphasizes how Aeneas through

his *pietas* fixes Caieta's *sedes* in unending remembrance. The focus of the narrative shifts at this point: homes for the living, for the gods, and for future generations become a more pressing concern than resting places for the dead. This change in emphasis is reflected in a cluster of vocabulary in the first half of Book 7. Here the noun *sedes* (and related verb forms) will refer not to tombs, as for Misenus, Palinurus, and Caieta in Book 6 and the opening lines of 7, but instead to the existing home of King Latinus, as well as the long-desired Trojan settlement.⁹

At the very start of Book 7, as in the hero's earlier endeavors, *pietas* links past, present, and future. Aeneas is called *pious* for his careful execution of the rituals owed the dead woman just at the point when the poem emphasizes that he leaves this harbor for the next stage of his journey, moving on from the activities of mourning to the next task at hand.¹⁰

The adjective *pious* typically reflects the specific circumstances in which Aeneas is acting at any given moment in the story. Its uses reinforce the way *pietas* demands action driven by attentiveness to memory. Often these show tensions between the competing pressures of *pietas*. Often, too, as at the start of Book 7, the adjective *pious* marks a transition from purely commemorative activity to an action that contributes more directly to the search for a new home—the search which is itself part of a much larger mission to renew the memory of Troy. This narrative shape recurs whenever Aeneas is engaged in ritual acts of remembrance: he is repeatedly driven to new activity while still involved in memories for those who have been lost.

Aeneas is remembered as *pious* chiefly because he so attentively remembers and commemorates others. His capacity for memory sometimes has benign results (properly burying and mourning his comrades and father), sometimes aggressive (a series of pitiless, vengeful killings in Books 10–12 after Pallas dies, culminating in the failure to spare Turnus), and often a mixture of the two. Almost every time the poem employs the quasi-formulaic epithet and noun *pious Aeneas*, Aeneas is in the midst of remembrance or grief for someone, or is involved in some specific commemorative act. The pattern is so strong that even those uses of *pious Aeneas* that do not involve

9. 7.52, 158, 175, 193, 201, 229, 255, 431; chapters 3.1 and 4.3 return to the issues raised by this vocabulary.

10. In 7.5 the not unusual ambiguity between the attributive and predicative force of an adjective is highlighted by the word order, which separates *pious* from Aeneas and links his being *pious* with the *exsequiis* [. . .] *rite solutis*. My translation above brings out the adverbial force of a predicative adjective; we could perhaps interpret the adjective attributively and opt for “but *pious* Aeneas, once the funeral rituals had duly been carried out,” etc. The syntactical ambiguity reflects the importance of how the poem's references to Aeneas as *pious* are contextualized by his activities at any given moment.

specific instances of memory or commemoration—and there are remarkably few moments when *pius Aeneas* is neither remembering nor mourning—help define Aeneas’ entire mission as an act of remembrance for those destroyed along with Troy.¹¹

The normative excess that Jupiter spells out for Hercules in Book 10, as we saw in chapter 2, does not exactly provide a master code for the *Aeneid*, but it does resemble the logic by which the poem turns *pietas* into the theme for an epic. Being outstandingly *pius* means being outstandingly ordinary—or at least, what Roman social norms would define as ordinary.¹² Being really very good at *pietas*, as Aeneas and the Trojans are said to be, means being attentive to the acts, thoughts, and emotions that make people function fully as humans in society, according to Roman thought. It means remembering what one owes all the different people and gods to whom one is connected. This remembrance offers the hope of preserving or restoring order and a state of ritual purity.

3.1 Dirt and disorder

Mary Douglas emphasizes throughout her scholarship that dirt “is a relative idea” and depends on classification.¹³ Anne Carson memorably uses eggs to clarify this observation: “the poached egg on your plate at breakfast is not dirt; the poached egg on the floor of the Reading Room of the British Museum is.”¹⁴ The point of the egg example, of course, is to emphasize

11. Examples of *pius Aeneas* engaging directly in lamentation or commemoration of the dead include 1.220, 5.26, 5.286, 6.175, 6.232, 7.5, and 11.170; more ambiguous designations of Aeneas as *pius* that imply but do not overtly describe lamentation or remembrance include 1.305, 1.378, 4.393 (see especially Farron in Deroux 1992, 260–76), 5.685, 6.8, 10.591, 10.783, and 10.826. At 8.84 Aeneas is primarily concerned with due ritual and the future of his people; at 12.175 and 12.311 the adjective emphasizes devotion to the rituals of the truce. After the violent grief of Book 10 and the great funeral rituals of Book 11, mourning surrounds all acts of war and peace between Trojans and Italians. See Rossi 2004, 89 on the vocabulary of *maestitia*, which comes close to linking “in a string of sorrow all the major deaths in the *Aeneid*.”

12. This is not to say that Roman social norms are uniform, consistent, or easily interpreted, in relation to *pietas* or any other ideal, even as far as we can deduce them from (mostly elite) authors of surviving literature from any particular period. As Garrison 1992, 9 emphasizes of *pietas*, an “ongoing process of redefinition” is seen already in classical Latin, even within a single author’s oeuvre. Cicero, for example, unlike Vergil, presents several explicit definitions of *pietas*, but each definition has a different emphasis. See also Lind 1992, 15–21.

13. Douglas 1966/2002, 44 acknowledges that relatively recent scientific developments have changed conceptions of dirt, thanks to the nineteenth-century discovery of bacterial disease transmission, but argues that most of our dirt-related behavior reflects a much older conceptual system.

14. Carson 1990, 158.

how often what we count as “out of place” depends on context, custom, and memory, as well as imagination. In everyday life as well as in ritual structures, dirt is something we define by the way it disrupts our mentally ordered categorizations, as much as by germs and bacteria, even with our heightened contemporary awareness of *e coli* and the other nasty things that may end up in one’s spinach.

Placing the disruptive egg in the British Museum’s Reading Room, as Carson does, provides a lure to our imagination that in its topographical (and indeed temporal) specificity is particularly relevant to the *Aeneid*’s way of treating “matter out of place.” It is easy to see a practical logic, of course, in preventing egg yolk from sullyng precious books, or preventing library users’ shoes from dirtying an egg that someone intends to eat. But Douglas observes that decisions about where to apply this logic of separation are highly contingent on patterns of thought developed within distinct cultures and by individuals.¹⁵

In Roman thought death, above all, poses a threat to purity. A corpse washed up on the shore is in the wrong place, and it will pollute Aeneas’ fleet until it is properly buried, much as Carson’s poached egg would pose a problem for the British Library until it is put in the right bin. The Trojans’ display of *pietas* in response to Misenu’s death puts him in his place (6.152). Misenu’s name will live on in this location. Concerns with limiting death pollution give us a verbal overlap in Latin that comes close to the play on words in the English phrase “matter out of place.”

“Matter out of place” in English carries its special resonance because it exploits two different senses of what it means for something to have a “place.” The phrase invites one to link concerns about a specific location with beliefs about what counts as orderly or anomalous. In the *Aeneid*, the word *sedes* provides just such a hinge.

Sedes pivots between a ritual and a geographic sense of place. *Sedes* in the *Aeneid* usually means “home” in some sense, often referring to the abode of a goddess or other supernatural being (including *Somnia* in 6.283, the *Dirae* in 7.324 and 7.454, Venus in 1.415 and 1.681). Most often *sedes* is used for the home that the Trojans long for. This home will allow them to

15. Douglas 1966/2002, 44–45, 150. See also Gerrig 1993, 186–87, who gives an anecdote of how nurses in a children’s hospital were successfully deterred from drinking orange juice filched from the children. The juice was served in new urine collection bottles (the children didn’t care). Hygiene is not the issue; being aware that the bottles were clean could not prevent the nurses from associating even the unused bottles with dirt and disgust. Through this example, Gerrig situates in a wider context the ability of fiction to stir powerful emotions. This power of fiction is unhampered by knowledge that might rationally be expected to weaken or prevent such emotions in readers.

rest (they hope) in peace at last, and will establish what the poem presents as the proper place in the world for the people who are not-quite-yet-Romans.

The word *sedes* as “home” for the Trojans crops up over and over again in Book 3 (e.g., 3.88, 3.161, 3.167, 3.190), when they are most confused about exactly where their place is going to be. It is the end that Aeneas promises hopefully to his men in 1.205 after their shipwreck. Palinurus uses the word for the calm home where he may rest in death (6.371), if only he can cross the Styx. The word *sedes* is repeated emphatically in Book 7, referring to the Trojans’ settlement, their lost home at Troy, and to Latinus’ existing home.

But we have seen already that *sedes* also denotes the material resting place provided by burial (6.328), which marks the location of death (Caieta’s in 7.3), and which safely contains polluting matter, as in the Sibyl’s instructions about Misenus (6.152). And it is the word used for where the dead are placed (6.431) after being classified by Minos according to their modes of life and death.

So the *sedes*-vocabulary recurrent in the poem unites the cosmological order (which arranges the relations between living and dead, human and divine, good and evil) with the geopolitical order (which will be established when the Trojans find their proper place in Italy). On one rhetorical level, this convergence aligns Rome’s imperial destiny with order in the universe as a whole. A sequence of events that would keep Aeneas from founding Lavinium, and keep Rome from achieving supremacy, would flout the order of things as much as the allocation of a virtuous soul to Tartarus; it would be as untidy as the pollution of an unburied corpse.

Yet the poetic logic that—on one level—works to assert this sense of order is entangled in the messiness of anomaly and dirt. This becomes apparent already in Books 2 and 3, in which Aeneas takes over the burden of sustaining Trojan *fama* by bringing to life his painful memories for Dido and the other Carthaginians, as well as by materially salvaging the human and divine remnants of Troy. When they leave the family home, Aeneas tells his father to bring the *sacra* and the *patrios penatis*, explaining that it would be against divine law (*nefas*) for him to handle them until he has washed in running water, having come straight from the intensity of war and fresh slaughter (2.717–20). Aeneas’ worry recalls the Iliadic Hector’s awareness of his polluted state when he explains to his mother why he cannot pour a libation to Zeus (*Iliad* 6.266–68), but the Homeric recollection fits the events occurring just at this moment in Aeneas’ story. The explicit mention of battle-dirt in Book 2 reflects the special circumstances: departure from one home, and the start of a search for another. Anchises gives up his determination to die in his home only after he sees compelling signs that

the ancestral gods will preserve their home in a new location.¹⁶ A series of divine communications convince Aeneas and his father that their gods must be uprooted from their place, even while divine order erupts in a chaotic conflagration to bring about Troy's fated end.

In Book 3 Aeneas continues his *fama*-building narration for the Carthaginians, telling of his postwar labors during a confused journey in which the Trojans are relentlessly propelled forward by uncanny portents, which foul their attempted settlements, and even their rest stops. Most of the time in Book 3 they are on the run from pollution, rather than heading towards a clearly identified place. After leaving the Thracian territory polluted by Polydorus' murder, which I discuss further below, they attempt a settlement on Crete, where drought and disease deprive them of food. This time there seems to be no problem inherent in the place, but the contamination serves as a prodigy: Anchises has misunderstood the enigmatic oracular directions they were given at Delos.¹⁷ Next comes their struggle with the filth-dripping Harpies, after the Trojans land on the Strophades and plunder the apparently unguarded cattle roaming there. They achieve a more propitious, if brief, landing at Actium, where they manage to give offerings to Jupiter and hold games (3.278–83). The site of Actium is going to be a good thing for Trojans—or for their descendant Octavian, at least. Following this, they land at Buthrotum, where Andromache is performing a ritual at Hector's empty tomb near a fake Simois. In this ghost town the living are so easily confused with the dead, and the power of mourning so excessive, that Andromache briefly goes mad, *magnis exterrita monstis* (3.307).¹⁸

Finally, rivaling the sheer nastiness of the Harpies' filth on the Strophades is the Cyclopean pollution that the Trojans manage to avoid. They experience this only in the tale told by the Odyssean crew member Achaeonides, who vividly communicates the foulness of the Cyclops' human dinner (3.618–27). All these dirt-filled episodes in Book 3 are in keeping with what we know of Greek and Roman ideas of ritual pollution, though none is more explicit than the brief attempt to settle in the place where

16. Cf. the arguments of Livy's Camillus for rebuilding Rome and against transferring the city's gods to Veii (5.52–53).

17. On Crete the contamination descends on the land from above. Aeneas never asserts directly that Apollo is the one hurling plague-arrows, but the sky-borne disease becomes merged with the land rather than originating in the Cretan earth. Miller 2009, 115–19 discusses in detail whether we should regard the plague as an expression of Apollo's anger.

18. Panoussi 2009, 154 regards Buthrotum, too, as polluted by contagious grief. On Helenus and his Trojans as "too Trojan," beset by nostalgia and regressively devoted to memory, see especially Bettini 1997. Seider 2010, however, corrects any tendency among readers to overemphasize the emptiness of memory at Buthrotum.

Priam's son Polydorus is buried.¹⁹ The prodigies that help the Trojans understand how to set in order the past also direct them to shape their present and future in accordance with divine will. The poem presents this guidance as a material substance through which past contamination intrudes into the present and beyond, part of the territory where their foundation fails.

At the start of Book 3 the dead Polydorus makes his first communication with blood rather than words. In Thrace, where Aeneas lands after leaving Troy, he prepares to sacrifice a bull to his mother and to the gods who look after new undertakings. A shocking portent (*monstrum*, 3.26) interrupts him as he gathers foliage for the altars. The tree he is working on begins to stain the ground with dripping blood. After praying to rustic deities, Aeneas keeps tugging, but a voice warns him that he is on the verge of a hyperbolic act of violation.²⁰

gemitus lacrimabilis imo
auditur tumulo et uox reddita fertur ad auris:
'quid miserum, Aenea, laceras? iam parce sepulto,
parce pias scelerare manus. non me tibi Troia
externum tulit aut cruor hic de stipite manat.
heu fuge crudelis terras, fuge litus auarum:
nam Polydorus ego.'

A tear-filled moan from the depth
of the mound is heard and an answering voice reaches my ears:
“Why do you mangle an unhappy wretch? Hold back from the grave,
hold back from staining pure (*pias*) hands with wickedness. No stranger
to you,
Troy bore me, nor does this gore drip from a stump of wood.
Ah, run from cruel lands, run from a rapacious shore:
Polydorus is who I am.” (*Aen.* 3.41–45)

The speaker quickly explains the riddling *monstrum* of the bleeding bush: *nam Polydorus ego*. Memory is maintained not—or not only—through *fama* and the tears of mourners, but through the dead man's own voice, with its tear-filled moan. Aeneas is breaking up a burial mound, and the death is now renewed in dripping *cruor* (“gore”). A disruptive need to be remembered becomes a material substance.

19. See Johnston 1999.

20. For a recent discussion of Polydorus in relation to tree imagery in the *Aeneid*, see Gowers 2011.

The land itself shares in the memory: a *litus auarum* (3.44), it has taken on the criminal qualities of Polydorus' murderer. No wonder all the Trojans agree to leave the *pollutum hospitium* (3.61) as soon as they have held a funeral for this son of Priam. Polydorus' *monstra* (his flowing gore and his story) communicate both that the Trojans must put Polydorus in his place with proper mourning rituals, and that this is decidedly *not* the place for them to stay and make their home.²¹ The past must be remembered and put in order, if possible. But the permanent defilement of the land and the Trojans' fearful experience of that defilement suggest that no expiation can altogether wipe away the blood spilled here, first by the murderers and then once more by Aeneas.

3.2 Daedalean excesses

Aeneid 6 occupies itself with category-confusing violations from the start, giving both Aeneas and the poem's readers a glimpse of humans acting like birds—or like gods—and mating with beasts. The artwork created by Daedalus for the doors of the temple he has built for Apollo evokes the memory of several transgressive prodigies—the cow-disguise crafted for Pasiphae so that she could fulfill her love for a bull, the birth of her son the Minotaur, and the wings Daedalus makes for himself and his son to escape from Crete.

The narrative does not fully articulate what kind of dedication prompts Daedalus to devote the temple and his commemorative art to Apollo. The poem leaves it up to readers to view Daedalus' work as thanksgiving for his eventual landing in Italy along with the consecration of his wings (dedicated like a seaman's oars, 6.19), as an expiatory offering for his transgressions, or both. In this section of the poem the feats of the imagination are elided with the feats of epic heroism. Together, these are presented both as marvelous achievements, worth remembering through a layering of art forms, and—potentially—as outrageous defilements.

The poem makes the man-bull in the Cretan myth just one monstrous hybrid in a series that we encounter on different planes of the narrative, thanks to a cluster of intriguing metaphors in the first few lines of the book, as William Fitzgerald (1984) and Michael Putnam (1998) have pointed out.²² Even before we hear about Daedalus' portentous wings, Pasiphae's

21. See Dufallo 2007, 106–9, who links Aeneas' defilement by Polydorus' blood with Rome's fratricidal curse (the murder of Remus by Romulus).

22. Fitzgerald 1984, 52 observes, "The metaphor of the first line produces a hybrid horse-ship that is echoed by the journey of the bird-man, Daedalus, whose wings are in turn described as oars

disguise, and the minotaur itself, we find Aeneas speeding on his fleet by loosening its reins (*habenas*, 6.1); when the Trojans arrive at Cumae, an anchor grips the shore with its tooth (*dente tenaci*, 6.3); a blazing group of young men look for fire that grows from seeds (6.5–7).²³ Then we learn that in his novel journey (*insuetum per iter*, 6.16) Daedalus swam (*enavit*, 6.16) to Cumae on his wings, and used oars to fly (6.19, *remigium alarum*, which is Mercury's equipment in 1.301). Alone, none of these figures of speech is unique. Packed so densely in succession they make the Trojans, Daedalus, and their equipment into prodigious hybrids.

Taken together, these hybrids establish a continuum between myth's capacity for tall tales of man-birds and bull-men and the ability of metaphor to join animate and inanimate categories like "ship," "horse," and "bird." The metaphors, along with Daedalus' artwork, prepare the reader for Aeneas' living entry into the underworld, a journey that is itself a kind of category confusion. They draw attention to the possibilities for imaginative transgression that abound in the process of narrating Aeneas' *pietas* in tightly structured hexameters, as they hint at the fissures that give entry to a kind of disorder—even *furor*—in any form of perception.²⁴

The poem's oblique telling of the Cretan myth continues the emphasis on category-confusion. Daedalus' story becomes an art-life hybrid to match the bull-man mix that he helped bring into being. When we learn that Pasiphae's double-shaped offspring is present on the temple doors as a reminder of cruel Venus (or as a "monument to outrageous Passion": *mixtumque genus prolesque biformis / Minotaurus inest, Veneris monimenta nefandae*, 6.25–26), the implication is that the Minotaur's body itself, as much as its representation in Daedalus' artwork, stands as *monimenta* to the sacrilegious horrors Venus can cause. Conversely, Daedalus commemorates Icarus' death precisely by not sculpting it; the poem evokes the fall (*casus*, 6.32) in the failure (*patriae cecidere manus*, 6.33). The artist can recreate his son's death only with the poet's help: *bis conatus erat casus effingere in auro, / bis patriae cecidere manus* ("twice he had tried to express in gold the

(*remigium alarum*, 19). At the heart of the story of Daedalus is that hybrid *par excellence*, the Minotaur, who can be reached only through that most curious of paths, the labyrinth." Putnam 1998, 78 also regards the poet's metaphors as hybrids akin to the fake cow and the Minotaur.

23. See Austin 1977 ad loc., especially on *semina flammae*, 6.6; Lucretian echoes are the most obvious ones here, but both Austin and Servius remind us that the idea is found in Homer, too (*Od.* 5.490).

24. In his exploration of conceptual blending, neuroscientific research, and the "literary mind," Mark Turner emphasizes that "at the most basic levels of perception, of understanding, and of memory, blending is fundamental" (1996, 110). Literary uses of metaphor, parable, and so on merely heighten sensitivity to a central mode of cognition.

falls, twice the father's hands fell," 6.32–33).²⁵ Evidently Daedalus' autobiographical artwork—which seems to help maintain his *fama* in 6.14—has trouble handling the excess of sorrowful remembrance that results from his thrust towards the sky. The poem in one sense tries once more to make the restitution that is out of Daedalus' reach, while at the same time noting the impossibility of repairing the loss.

But as well as blending categories themselves, as they mingle art and life, the images on the temple doors make room for the transgressive excess that generates epic. The Cretan story is obliquely told in terms that point to Aeneas' own mixed parentage: like the minotaur, Aeneas has a *mixtum genus* (6.25), though he mingles human and god rather than human and bull—the poem does not go so far as to fully identify Aeneas' category-confusing birth and achievements with the anomalies involved in Daedalus' flight or in the procreation of the Minotaur.²⁶ Still, in the phrase *Veneris monumenta nefandae* it is hard to believe that metrical reasons alone prompt the word *Veneris* in place of the more abstract *amoris*, especially given the other phrases in the ekphrasis that suggest the relevance of this artwork to Aeneas' own story—the work involved in achieving a home (*labor . . . domus*, 6.27), the wandering (*error*, 6.27), and the “great love of the queen” (*magnum reginae . . . amorem*, 6.28). The narrative does not clarify whether Aeneas manages to contemplate Daedalus' images; we do not know whether to visualize him sharing the readers' experience of this visual quasi-narrative, before the Sibyl orders him away from the viewings (*spectacula*, 6.37) and towards the performance of rituals.

A little later in Book 6, the Sibyl will show Aeneas that even thinking about the descent and reascent necessary for visiting his dead father is an act of imaginative transgression. She has already indicated her intolerance for such transgressions when she cut short Aeneas' examination of the Daedalean *spectacula*. Dying is easy enough, but not a return to the upper air. To describe Aeneas' eagerness for the job, the Sibyl uses the language of outsized passion that often goes with a kind of madness in the *Aeneid*. She calls his desire *tantus amor*, and *tanta cupido*, and then, just in case either Aeneas

25. *Casus* may be a poetic plural, avoiding the elision of *casum*, but the plural suits the repeated failure of expression. Fitzgerald 1984, 63–64 n. 18 connects this doubling repetition with the three-fold failure of the dead and living to touch one another in an embrace—Odysseus and his mother (*Od.* 11.206ff.), Aeneas and Creusa (2.792–94), and later in this book Aeneas and his father (6.700–702).

26. See Spence 1988, 38–42 for a more fully elaborated reading of Aeneas' story as figured both by Icarus and by Theseus in Book 6. Bartsch 1998, 336 suggests that in addressing Icarus apostrophically, “Virgil has assumed the position of an imaginative viewer of his own artwork.”

or we as readers have not yet grasped the point, she describes the work as *insanus*:

‘quod si tantus amor menti, si tanta cupido est
bis Stygios innare lacus, bis nigra uidere
Tartara, et insano iuuat indulgere labori,
accipe quae peragenda prius.’

“But if so great a yearning forms your intent, if you have such a desire to swim the Stygian pools twice, twice to see black Tartarus, and if you like to give yourself to a demented task, take in what must be accomplished first.” (*Aen.* 6.133–36)

But in response to Aeneas’ subtly assertive reminder about Theseus, Hercules, and his own Jovian heritage (6.122–23), the Sibyl admits, well, yes, there is a special group of people who have managed it, and of course Aeneas fits right in the middle of that set: *pauci, quos aequus amauit / Iuppiter aut ardens euexit ad aethera uirtus, / dis geniti potuere* (“A few have been able to, the ones whom Jupiter has justly loved or whose blazing excellence has carried them to the upper air, people born from gods,” 6.129–31).

The category *dis geniti* (“the ones born from gods”) draws attention to the anomalous nature of heroes whose parentage mingles human and god. The phrase *ardens euexit ad aethera uirtus* uses the fiery sky-reaching vocabulary of *fama*.²⁷ This touches on an ambiguity repeatedly seen in classical literature, in which the language of deification, achieved through cultic ritual and through the imagination of myth, becomes almost interchangeable with the language of figurative immortality granted by human memory.²⁸

In this context, the word *aethera* in 6.130 seems pointedly ambiguous: it refers to the ordinary open sky that would be savored by those few people who are permitted to reenter the world of the living, but it also suggests the heights where the Olympian gods live. A Hercules or an Aeneas can descend into and return from the underworld while still alive, because of the same blazing *uirtus* and divine birth that eventually allow these anomalous figures to reach the sky as gods after death. Daedalus himself is remembered in *fama* (6.14) for a daring ascent (*ausus se credere caelo*, 6.15), which mimics

27. See especially Hardie 1986, 267–92 and 2009b, 76–135.

28. *Fama* may be achieved by mythic and cult-based commemoration, but can also be thought of in many other ways, of course. Dido can envisage herself as en route to the stars through *fama* (4.323) without announcing imminent deification.

the skywards motion of deified heroes and those celebrated hyperbolically as reaching the stars through their glory.

Aeneas begins, in fact, by making the death-defeating achievements of Orpheus and Pollux the grounds for his plea, in an elaborate conditional sentence. He closes more abruptly by simply citing—or rather by disclaiming the need to cite—Theseus and Hercules: *quid Thesea, magnum / quid memorem Alciden? et mi genus ab Ioue summo* (“Why should I remind you of Theseus, of great Alcides? My family too comes from Jupiter on high,” 6.122–23). Theseus serves as paradigm of outrage for joining with Pirithous in attempting to rape Proserpina, as much as a heroic example, whose name is worthy of being summoned by Aeneas to justify his own attempt.²⁹ Later in Book 6, Charon remembers the hubristic violence of Hercules, Theseus, and Pirithous as grounds for his assertion that ferrying the living in the Stygian boat is *nefas* (6.392–97).

In her reply to Charon the Sibyl is careful to differentiate Aeneas from these more flagrantly transgressive heroes, on the grounds that his notoriety lies in his *pietas* as much as his strength as a warrior (*pietate insignis*, 6.403). Yet her earlier dialogue with Aeneas emphasizes that his *pietas* generates epic *fama* precisely because it crosses the bounds that she asserts as the limits defining both human sanity and divine law.

3.3 Misenus and the substance of *fama*

Even before we hear of Daedalus’ art-defying sorrow, *Aeneid* 6 begins with tears; the very first words of the book (*sic fatur lacrimans*) look back to the close of Book 5 and Aeneas’ farewell to Palinurus, lost at sea. Aeneas’ mistaken view that Palinurus has drowned because he believed too readily in the serenity of sky and sea (*o nimium caelo et pelago confise sereno*, 5.870) prefigures Daedalus’ entrusting himself to the sky in his numinous flight (*praepetibus pennis ausus se credere caelo*, 6.15).³⁰ Servius’ commentary assumes that the loss of Palinurus deeply affects the way the Trojans investigate the Italian landscape (*inuentaque flumina monstrat*, 6.8): they

29. This fundamental ambivalence perhaps explains what many scholars have perceived as a flagrant contradiction: Theseus provides a positive exemplum for Aeneas, but in 6.617–18 the Sibyl pictures him settled for eternity in Tartarus: *sedet aeternumque sedebit / infelix Theseus*. Charon offers another point of view when he lists his reasons to regret ferrying Hercules, Theseus, and Pirithous (6.392–97), whose transgressive violence in the underworld is one of the reasons why ferrying living bodies across the waters of the Styx is *nefas* (6.391).

30. See Servius and Norden *ad loc.* on the augural implications of *praepetibus*.

need running water so that Aeneas can cleanse himself of death pollution, which Servius argues can be conveyed through memory as much as through contact.³¹ Later in the book, a detailed description of Misenus' funeral will include the *lustratio* in which Aeneas' men are cleansed of death pollution (6.229–31). Not all readers have agreed with Servius that the drowning of Palinurus overlays the Trojans' first actions on reaching Cumae, but we do not need to be convinced by his reading of 6.8 to notice the connection between pollution, memory, and landscape in this part of the poem.³²

The displaced bodies of Palinurus and Misenus will order the Italian landscape through the commemorative place names that are passed down to future generations. The names of both drowned men will remain part of Roman experience, and Vergil's aetiologies derive their firm imaginative grip on the landscape both from the anxieties over their funeral rites and from the disorderliness of their deaths.³³

When the Sibyl tells Aeneas what must happen if he is to enter the Underworld—and to be allowed to leave—her instructions presage the situation in which Aeneas will find the golden bough. They imply that his worthiness to step beyond normal human limits depends on his appreciating the importance of the commemorative rituals needed to cleanse death pollution. So she follows up her information about the golden bough with the warning that a friend lies dead. She does not name the friend, but she warns Aeneas that the body is sullyng the whole fleet with death (6.150, *totamque incestat funere classem*). Immediately after commanding Aeneas to put his friend in his proper resting place (6.152, *sedibus [. . .] suis*) and get him settled in a tomb she gives instructions about the expiatory offerings that need to be made (6.153). The Sibyl makes a sharp transition to this guidance about expiation and then, after a single line commanding the atonement, moves directly to a warning: “This is the only way (*sic demum*) you'll set eyes on the groves of the Styx and the realms that offer no route to the living” (6.154–55). The succinctness of her instructions, followed by

31. Servius comments on 6.8: *flumina monstrat: et sciendum monstrari Aeneae ad expiandum se: nam funestatus fuerat morte Palinuri, non quod eum viderat, sed quod funus agnoverat, id est doluerat; in eo enim est pollutio quod ait “casuque animum concussus,” nam ipsa inpianat quae agnoscimus. unde in Livio habemus Horatium Pulvillum, cum Capitolium dedicare vellet, audisse ab inimico mortuum filium, et, ne pollutus dedicare non posset, respondisse, cadaver sit. hanc autem purgationem Aeneae polluto dat ubique Vergilius, ut paulo post “corpusque recenti spargit aqua.”*

32. Fitzgerald 1984, 51, for instance, describes *Aeneid* 6's first sentence, which begins with tears and ends with the fleet's approach to Cumae, as an “almost brutal turn away from bereavement to the matter at hand.”

33. But, for contrast, see Bleisch 1999 on the ineffectuality of Deiphobus' *fama* in achieving a lasting topographical imprint.

an abrupt silence, suggests that Aeneas' sacrifice of black herd animals is needed both to expiate the particular pollution caused by the corpse on the shore, and to address the larger question of category confusion at stake in this whole section of the poem—that is, a living man's desire to walk among the dead.³⁴

So the Sibyl's speech not only ensures ritual purity for Aeneas (presumably a minimum requirement for being allowed to break a host of other divine laws!), but also prepares readers for the central role played by Misenus' death in the problems of transgression and remembrance that dominate Book 6. When Aeneas and Achates walk away from the Sibyl's cave their conversation does not turn to the first part of her prophecies—her Italian mini-*Iliad* (6.83–97)—though the poem pointedly frames these prophecies as terrifyingly ambiguous, barely human speech produced by Apollo's violently inspired madness.³⁵ The memory of those turbulent words yields instead to the more immediate questions that the Sibyl has raised: which of their companions is dead? What body needs burial?

Until he is named, the death of their friend briefly becomes one of the many problems of knowledge that drive the poem's story; the question temporarily displaces other momentous questions about the struggles that will precede the Trojans' settlement in Italy, though Aeneas and Achates quickly resolve the most pressing part of the puzzle over the dead man's identity.³⁶ The poem makes sure that readers or listeners share the Trojans' moment of discovery, giving us the name, Misenus, early in the sentence, before devoting two lines to the discovery of the body (6.162–65). Then Misenus' name is repeated along with his patronymic; the poem defines his excellence as a bugler in words that suggest a kinship between Misenus' skill and the potentially inflammatory work of poetic song (*Martemque accendere cantu*, 6.165; cf. the *fama* that comes to Iarbas: *incenditque animum dictis atque aggerat iras*, 4.197). As we learn more, Misenus' death is revealed as liminal in a number of ways, beyond the fact that his funeral rites will mingle with Aeneas' preparation for the *katabasis*. His body is found on

34. Norden 1957 *ad loc.* distinguishes the burial and the sacrifice as two distinct prerequisites for Aeneas' *katabasis*; Austin 1977 *ad loc.* goes further, saying that this is a "new injunction, not connected with the burial rites." Norden and Austin presumably base this view on the narrative at 6.236, which does separate the Sibyl's instructions for Misenus' burial from the appeasement of the underworld divinities, though these rituals are not clearly distinguished in the Sibyl's own speech.

35. Within four lines (6.98–101), we hear of the Sibyl as poet/singer, mooring sacrificial animal, and maddened horse.

36. Perhaps because Helenus has already summarized the Sibyl's warnings of war (3.458), Aeneas hears her *horrendas* [. . .] *ambages* (6.99) placidly and tells her that he has already anticipated every facet of these struggles (6.103–5).

land, but only just—it is on the dry part of the shore (*in litore sicco*, 6.162), a striking phrase for the shore just above high water.³⁷

Like his body, recollection of the way Misenus dies seems to have been partly submerged, but not taken wholly out of reach. We are told without reservation that he was crazy enough to challenge the gods to a conch-blowing contest (6.171–72), but the poet hedges the sequel to this folly with the parenthetical reservation, *si credere dignum est* (“if it’s worth believing,” 6.173), before completing the tale of how Triton takes him on as a rival and drowns him. Misenus has followed the pattern of transgressive behavior that is established for this book of the *Aeneid*, confusing the categories of mortal and divine, and has—perhaps—been drowned as a result of setting himself up as another Triton.³⁸

The Trojans’ rituals of lamentation and pyre building for Misenus perpetuate this category-confusing act. To equal or perhaps surpass the spilling over of pollution—the impurity of the body left drowned on the shore—the Trojans’ extreme grief spills over in the sky-reaching funeral pyre they build. The monstrous size of pyre and burial mound appears in words echoing Sinon’s account of the Trojan’s horse in Aeneas’ Book 2 narrative (which Sinon claimed was to expiate the impiety of ritual pollution, *nefas quae triste piaret*, 2.184): *hanc tamen immensam Calchas attollere molem / roboribus textis caeloque educere iussit* (“this, however, Calchas ordered them to raise up as a boundless mass by enmeshing tree-trunks, and to build it up to heaven,” 2.185–86).³⁹

The hyperbole of the funeral preparations directly recalls the discourse of *fama* in its vocabulary. Misenus’ tomb becomes an altar, ready for the offerings that will keep its memory fresh (*aramque sepulcri*, 6.177). The Trojans heap this altar with trees and strive to build it up to heaven (*caeloque educere certant*, 6.178), just as *fama* helps those who are best remembered achieve a kind of figurative divinity—and as Daedalus reached the sky in his boundary-crossing flight. Even as the tomb prevents the corporeal remnants

37. It is hard to know whether *litore sicco* would have struck Vergil’s first readers as remarkable, or if it would have been taken as a neutral way to say “above the high water mark” (as Austin 1977 *ad loc.* glosses it). Similar wording occurs during the boat race of Book 5 (5.180) when Menoetes clammers onto a rock after being shoved overboard from his helm, and twice in Book 3 (135 and 510) when the narrative emphasizes that the Trojans or their ships are just barely out of the water, a liminal position that reflects the uncertainties involved in the various landfalls they make.

38. See Austin 1977 *ad* 6.171 on the *concha* as Triton’s special instrument.

39. The most obvious verbal connections link 2.185–86 with 6.178 and 232, but there are other more oblique resonances: the object of the horse’s size is to prevent *religio antiqua* from protecting the Trojans, according to Sinon, an idea recalled in the movement *in antiquam siluam* (6.179), a wood that is measureless, like the horse (*siluam immensam*, 6.186).

of Misenus from spilling over and polluting the community, in its skyward reach the monument embodies the transgressive power of *fama*.⁴⁰

Throughout the Misenus episode, the threads of poetic memory are woven together with a thickly layered texture. The poem matches the threat posed by the polluting body by using extraordinary materials for putting Misenus in his place. In a section which already more broadly recalls the earlier traditions of Latin epic through its archaizing levels of dense alliteration, the poem tells of a movement into an ancient wood (6.179: *itur in antiquam siluam*).⁴¹ The passage that follows then fulfills this movement in its poetic technique, alluding to lines in Ennius which in turn echo the *Iliad*'s wood-cutting session for Patroclus' funeral (23.110–28).

ergo omnes magno circum clamore fremebant,
 praecipue pius Aeneas. tum iussa Sibyllae,
 haud mora, festinant flentes aramque sepulcri
 congerere arboribus caeloque educere certant.
 itur in antiquam siluam, stabula alta ferarum;
 procumbunt piceae, sonat icta securibus ilex
 fraxineaeque trabes cuneis et fissile robur
 scinditur, aduoluunt ingentis montibus ornos.

So they all made moan around him with a great outpouring,
 mindful Aeneas most of all. Then they hurry on the orders of the Sibyl,
 no delay, weeping, and in rivalry they struggle to heap
 the tomb's altar with trees and to draw it right up to the sky.
 Entry is made into an ancient wood, the deep-set dens of wild creatures;
 prone fall the pitch-pines, the holm-oak rings out with axe-blows
 and with wedges ashen beams and fissile oak
 are split; they roll down huge flowering ash trees from the hills.
 (*Aen.* 6.175–82)

Stephen Hinds has analyzed the “intense reflexivity” of this well-acknowledged allusion, showing how the figuration works in multiple directions.

40. See Hardie 1986, 273–75, who explores the Giant-like description of Book 4's monstrously animated *Fama* treading on the ground while her head plunges into the clouds (4.177).

41. The emphasis on Misenus' prowess with sound (perhaps combined with the emphasis on the inarticulate sounds made by the Trojans' mourning in 6.175 and 177) may explain the marked levels of alliteration in this section, but the alliteration also conveys the sense that this part of the narrative stretches back along a trajectory of memories that have been verbally transmitted with traditional poetic techniques.

There is no need to choose between reading “Aeneas’ intervention in an ancient Italian landscape as a metaphor for Virgil’s intervention in archaic Roman poetry, or Virgil’s intervention in archaic Roman poetry as a metaphor for Aeneas’ intervention in an ancient Italian landscape.”⁴² Readers often comment on the excesses of the Trojans’ response to the death of Misenuus, but the poem itself does not condemn the mourners for their fervor. Instead it shares in that fervor with its own allusive excess.⁴³

Excessive matter is transformed by the poem into a spilling over of grief and of memory. This is sustained across time through the naming of the Italian territory. Human interventions are blended with the natural features of the land, so that human *fama* and the landscape mold one another. In 6.234–35 we are told that the hill above Misenuus’ tomb is called after him, and keeps his name eternal. The hill is *aerius* (sky-reaching); the narrative presents it almost as a naturally occurring large-scale model for the mound of the tomb (the tomb which Aeneas’ men were working so hard to build heavenwards in 6.178).⁴⁴ It is as if the land itself shares the penchant for the hyperbolic metaphors of commemorative immortality that are so prevalent in the discourse of *fama*. The poem shapes the landscape in a way that grafts together the figurative resources of the region with the rhetorical tools at the poem’s disposal.⁴⁵

42. Hinds 1998, 13. Hinds emphasizes the phrase *itur in antiquam siluam*, as well as the competitive activity of the Trojans’ tree-felling, as a “programmatically gesture of reflexive annotation” (12), the result of which is that “the epic project of the poet is seen to move in step with the epic project of the hero” (13). Norden 1957 ad loc. discusses the allusion as an example of rivalry with Ennius.

43. See especially Thomas 1988a, 267–68 on the lurking possibility that Aeneas and his men may be violating numinous trees. Thomas contrasts the austerity of the Sibyl’s instructions with the “excessive action” in response and notes that Aeneas is described as going to war against the forest (6.183–84). Aeneas’ preparations for entering the underworld are depicted as *fama*-generating through precisely the kind of heroizing language that also conveys potentially transgressive violence. So when the bough delays as Aeneas eagerly/greedily breaks it off (6.210–11, *avidusque refringit / cunctantem*), it provides a narrative-worthy (if very brief) struggle for Aeneas, but it also worries readers (e.g., Dyson 2001 as well as Thomas 1988a). Both Thomas and Dyson regard the contradiction with the Sibyl’s words at 6.146–47 (“it will follow willingly and easily of its own accord, if the fates are calling you”) as an indication that Aeneas may be improperly executing the Sibyl’s commands. Another problem arises from the Sibyl’s instruction that Misenuus’ burial needs to happen “beforehand” (*ante*, 6.152); the sacrifice will be the *prima piacula* (6.153). I read the Sibyl’s temporal markers in relation to the larger undertaking of entering the underworld, but Thomas and Dyson argue that they order a specific sequence in which the necessarily preliminaries must be performed; if this is so, Aeneas violates the sequence.

44. The narrative repeats the word *sepulcrum* (6.152, 177, 232) to embrace the whole procedure of putting Misenuus in his place as the Sibyl instructed, bringing together the immensity of pyre and mound.

45. Clark 1977, 70, in an article discussing the topographical challenges posed by Vergil’s Misenuus narrative, remarks that Cape Misenum’s “resemblance to a *tumulus* has often been pointed out.”

But if the landscape has a share in the discourse of *fama*, its commemorative geography also engages with the Trojans' *pietas*. What the poem marks out as memory-worthy in this episode is not so much Misenu's god-rivaling as a bugler. As we saw, the poem more or less invites us to doubt the story of his being drowned by a jealous Triton. We are asked rather to visualize the tremendous efforts *pius* Aeneas and his men devote to their companion's funeral. After making a rare explicit negative judgment on Misenus himself (*demens*, 6.172), which is perhaps hedged by the *si credere dignum est* insertion about the manner of his death, the poem's comments here on the extreme acts of mourning performed by the Trojans are, if anything, favorable. Aeneas is designated *pius* at the moment when he participates with special vehemence in a great outcry of lamentation (6.176).⁴⁶ *Pietas* here doubly generates epic *fama*, assisting in its work of remembrance with a fervor that calls for poetic celebration.

3.4 Putting Palinurus in his place

When the Sibyl overcomes Charon's belief that carrying living bodies in the Stygian ferry is against divine law (*nefas*, 6.391), her justification for the anomaly again links Aeneas' presence in the underworld with Misenus' burial. She tells Charon of Aeneas' distinctive *pietas*, which is taking him to his father (6.403–5). In case Aeneas himself as a visible instantiation of *pietas* should have no effect on the ferryman, she also shows him the golden bough discovered by Aeneas during the funeral preparations, which communicates the authority of fate (*fatalis uirgae*, 6.409). The narrative here leaves it open whether the bough convinces Charon purely by its power as a sign of fate, or if it carries the authority of fate precisely as a token of Aeneas' divinely acknowledged *pietas*, a token that Charon will recognize even if the Sibyl's explanation about the hero's loyalty to his father leave the ferryman unmoved.

A spokesperson for *fata*, the Sibyl uses anomaly and disorder as aids in prescribing the rules for what purports to be an ordered cosmos. The verbal overlap in English between “order” as organized structure and as “command” suits the ambiguity in Latin of *fata* as denoting impartially the structures of destiny and “things spoken”—primarily by Jupiter. Those who have the

46. See Erasmo 2008, 77–91, who notes the contrasts between Misenus' cremation and the funeral preparations made for Pallas. As Erasmo points out, the extremes involved in Misenus' burial are all the more striking because he is a minor character, imagined by the poem only in terms of his death.

power and authority to command are likely to get an outsize role in determining which structures count as orderly.⁴⁷

The lasting commemorative potential of *fama* is an important part of the Sibyl's toolkit, as we see in the scene with Palinurus immediately preceding the conversation with Charon, as well as in her emphasis on Misenus' burial before the descent. Before Aeneas makes the crossing of the Styx, the poem brings home the emotional and ritual significance of that ferry ride by picturing the fluttery wanderings of the unburied dead. Among these sad souls Aeneas sees Orontes, who suffered the death at sea that he himself had dreaded (1.92–101), but Palinurus is the one who comes forward in the hope that Aeneas' astonishing presence may mean help for him.

The parts of the poem that narrate Palinurus' death notoriously contradict one another. Some of this incoherence reflects specific gaps in mortal knowledge of divine action. But not all is easily explained according to poetic logic—though the very fact that the narrative should be fractured so strikingly when reporting the circumstances of his death suitably reflects Palinurus' fundamentally anomalous position as a dead man whose body is unburied.⁴⁸ We hear from Palinurus himself that his body is now in an inverted version of the liminal place from which the Trojans rescued Misenus. Misenus was drowned just offshore, but his body appeared on the dry part of the beach, while Palinurus has had the opposite experience: though killed after barely reaching land, the waves now hold him, and winds turn him to and fro on the shore. He had nearly found safety after being torn away from the ship as he clung to the helm, but was murdered as he clawed his way up the cliffs.

Palinurus' first thought seems attainable in the human sphere—that they should go and put some earth on his body. He makes this sound very

47. Prendergast 1986 enjoys the multivalence of “order” in his presentation of “the order of mimesis,” which is remarkably like the Sibyl's use of Jovian rhetoric: “Mimesis is an order, in the dual sense of a set of arrangements and a set of commands. On one interpretation, the mimetic ‘command’ consists, through a stress on the values of imitation and repetition, in an imperative to submit to the set of symbolic arrangements (the mimetic ‘plot’), as if the latter corresponded to the natural order of things. [. . . T]he logical matrix of mimesis is formed from the combination, and confusion, of three (heterogeneous) kinds of sentences: a descriptive, a prescriptive and a normative. The descriptive says ‘this is how things are’; the prescriptive says ‘you must accept that this is how things are’; the normative says ‘there is an authority validating the two previous sentences’” (5). Even if we do not share so bleak a view of how mimesis issues the commands of ideology, this description applies to Jupiter's representational rhetoric in the *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid* encourages us to envision Jupiter as the speaker of these three sentences; he acts as the “authority,” while invoking it as an external reinforcement for his ordering of persuasive speech.

48. See Feldherr 1999, 118–19 and O'Hara 2007, 92 for recent discussions of these inconsistencies.

easy (6.366, *nam potes*). He gives the exact location and avoids mentioning anything about full burial rites. But another possibility occurs to him, as he correctly deduces that Aeneas would not be about to cross the Stygian waters without help from the gods. Maybe Venus' son can take Palinurus with him? Palinurus makes something approaching a grim joke at this point, referring to the calm resting place (*sedes placidae*, 6.371) that he might hope for at least in death—presumably to make up for the less than tranquil voyages he's shared in, the not at all tranquil way he was killed (though Sleep plays a crucial role in getting him off the ship, in the Book 5 account), and the restless tossing of his body in the waves offshore. *Da dextram misero et tecum me tolle per undas, / sedibus ut saltem placidis in morte quiescam*, he pleads (“Give your right hand to a poor wretch and take me away across the waves, so that—in death, at least—I may rest in a tranquil home,” 6.370–71). Since he will miss out on reaching their destined *sedes* in Italy with his comrades, surely he could at least be allowed to settle somewhere in the underworld. Palinurus clearly realizes that this peace would normally be unobtainable without burial, but he has a perfectly reasonable idea that he might piggyback on Aeneas' ability to break the usual rules.

The Sibyl, however, scornfully reasserts the systems of classification that are about to be flouted by Charon's accepting Aeneas' heavy, living body in his leaky boat:

‘unde haec, o Palinure, tibi tam dira cupido?
tu Stygias inhumatus aquas amnemque seuerum
Eumenidum aspicias, ripamue iniussus adibus?
desine fata deum flecti sperare precando [. . .]’

“How do you come, Palinurus, to have so foul a desire?
You—unburied—will set eyes on the Stygian waters and the stern river
of the Eumenides? Will you really approach the water's edge unbidden?
Give up hoping that the gods' pronouncements (*fata*) can be swayed by
praying [. . .].” (*Aen.* 6.373–76)

She responds with contempt to Palinurus' hope of altering the fates. Earlier in Book 6, the Sibyl called Aeneas' desire to cross the Stygian pools twice *tanta cupido*, but Palinurus' hope of crossing without being buried is something more threatening: *dira cupido* (6.373). It is a “foul desire” to dirty the underworld as his body will dirty the world above until some expiation can be made as a substitute for burial. At the same time, she hints that Palinurus is trying to trespass on the domain of the Eumenides in every sense—

taking it upon himself to cross their “stern river,” and trying wishfully to talk his way into claiming some authority over matters of mourning and burial, like one of the *Dirae*.

The Sibyl puts Palinurus in his place with her rebuke, but consoles him by promising him that his body will be attended to. Her command continues,

‘sed cape dicta memor, duri solacia casus,
nam tua finitimi, longe lateque per urbes
prodigiis acti caelestibus, ossa piabunt
et statuent tumulum et tumulo sollemnia mittent,
aeternumque locus Palinuri nomen habebit.’

“—but instead pay attention and remember my words, as comfort for a hard lot.

Neighboring people, among cities far and wide,
driven by heaven-sent portents, will pay atonement to your bones,
and will build a grave-mound and dispatch solemn offerings to the mound,
and the place will keep Palinurus’ name for ever.” (*Aen.* 6.377–81)

The Sibyl’s consolation presents the taxonomies that give people their proper *sedes* in the underworld as part of a dynamic interaction between humans and gods. Visible anomalies will match Palinurus’ anomalous situation and will mark the fact that there is matter out of place, dirt that needs to be cleansed. Prodigies will be sent by the heavenly powers (and/or will appear in the sky, 6.379).⁴⁹ Local and not so local inhabitants will make expiation, and, as is usual in Roman practice, will honor the tomb with the dues that acknowledge the dead man, so as to give him a lasting—even unending—place in the land of the living.⁵⁰

The Sibyl has already aligned these systems of commemoration with the special recognition—*fama*, in essence, though she doesn’t use the word—which is given to exceptional *uirtus*. This special recognition has allowed Aeneas to enter the realms of the dead because of his remarkable *pietas*. But one of the ways that the Sibyl puts Palinurus in his place, even while consoling him, is to link the dead man’s own attentiveness with the mindfulness of

49. The Sibyl’s adjective *caelestibus* in 6.379 suggests that the signs will come from the sky (rather as Daedalus does on his *praepetibus pennis* in 6.15), not from the earth. But given the confusion of heaven and hell (as Hardie 1993 puts it), there is no telling what means the heavenly powers may use to communicate.

50. See Feldherr 2000; Maurin 1984.

the living who will care for him: she asks him for a kind of commemorative reciprocity. In 6.377 she tells him *cape dicta memor* (“take my words into your mind”), in imitation of the remembrance that the gods will provoke to ensure that the pollution is expiated. He must keep in mind that the landscape itself will end up keeping him in mind, preserving his name forever; the topographical order of things is underpinned by divine order.

The poem hints, though, that Palinurus is unable to match this lasting topographical memory: his pain is driven away only for a little while by the Sibyl’s words (*parumper*, 6.383). He will receive a funeral when prodigious signs alert people to his corpse, much as the bleeding bush alerts Aeneas to Polydorus’ polluting presence in Book 3. But like the still bleeding Polydorus, Palinurus will have to act as mourner for himself.

PIETAS fuses expectations which modern western cultures tend to separate as distinct categories: purity, and the conscientious remembrance of what one owes to individuals, to a community, and to an ordered cosmos. *Pietas* demands a purity poised on the brink between material and metaphorical cleanliness. This instability is intrinsic to a ritual economy in which acts of expiation may wash away both material and figurative “dirt” through a process of symbolic exchange.

Pietas asks that memory should be materialized in a web of substitutions. These displacements make expiation possible through figurative interactions between dirt and purification. The hopes vested in the restitutive capacity of *pietas* negotiate the give and take between aspects of the *Aeneid* that sometimes seem starkly opposed: conflagration and rebirth, vengeful punishment and affectionate benevolence, frenzied lament for the past and careful dedication to the future. Aeneas is supremely *pius* as much in his capacity for intense and potentially contaminating remembrance of the dead as in his obedient devotion to the divine will directing the Trojans’ future. Aeneas’ devoted remembrance of his father is powerful enough to flout the usual rules that govern life and death.⁵¹

Tidying up—whether one is cleaning up conceptual anomaly or material dirt—means involvement in the mess. That is why mourning is both pollut-

51. This logic is emphasized repeatedly in Books 5 and 6 and is summed up by Anchises at 6.687–89, when he joyfully exclaims that Aeneas’ *pietas* has triumphed over the hard journey (*uenisti tandem, tuaque expectata parenti / uicit iter durum pietas? datur ora tueri / nate, tua et notas audire et reddere uoces*). Anchises celebrates the bridging of the normally impenetrable divide between dead parent and living son, in contrast with Venus, who appears to Aeneas in 1.409 to use a mortal disguise precisely to maintain the divide between divine parent and mortal son.

ing and part of a purifying process. Death rituals acknowledge the pollution experienced by mourners, and include specific steps to cleanse that pollution, which comes both from contact with the corpse and from grief-filled memories. One reason that *pietas* makes for stories is that Aeneas' attempts to live up to all his obligations to maintain human and divine order often lead to tumultuous results. But the converse is also true: the poem shows that being *pious* can be memorable and story-worthy by presenting *pietas* as a principle that stimulates transgression.

We have seen how the Sibyl tries to guard the distinctions that order the world of the dead. She links these structures with commemoration above ground, and speaks harshly to Palinurus when he hopes to cross Acheron without burial. Yet when she helps Aeneas descend into the underworld, the Sibyl makes *pietas* itself violate the most basic systems of classification, the order that divides the living from the dead, and mortal from immortal.⁵² Palinurus' hope of getting a ride across the Styx is itself inspired by the anomalous presence of a living man in the realm of the dead (6.363–71). This kind of anomaly, of course, lies at the heart of epic, where lasting *fama* arises from exceeding ordinary human limits.⁵³

When the poem depicts Aeneas' obedient defiance in the visit to his father in Book 6, it draws attention to another kind of transgressive *pietas* on the poet's part. The poet's transgression lies in imagining what it would mean to have Sibylline knowledge of the distinctions that order existence beyond death. The poem marks an awareness of this transgression several times in Book 6, but perhaps most strikingly at 6.563, when the Sibyl warns Aeneas that "it is sanctioned for no pure man to tread the threshold of crime" (*nulli fas casto sceleratum insistere limen*). Aeneas can hear the sounds of suffering from Tartarus, but his vision of the punishments enacted there must be limited to the Sibyl's transmission of what Hecate has taught her. The need to keep purity separate from pollution is here explicitly

52. Discussing the inconsistencies of Vergil's underworld, Zetzel 1989 and O'Hara 2007, 91–95 show how any aspirations to order expressed by *Aeneid* 6 are deeply embedded in disorder, and vice versa. Zetzel 1989, 264 points out that "the poet seems to place almost equal weight on the possibility and impossibility of true historical knowledge, on the uses of memory and on its limitations."

53. We are told that Anchises' guided tour among the unborn Romans inflames his son's mind with passionate love for the *fama* that is coming (*famae uenientis*, 6.889). Austin 1977 *ad loc.* suggests that the present participle *uenientis* indicates that this *fama* is already on its way. The poem elides Aeneas' immediate future, which will be imagined/remembered by the *Aeneid*, with the *fama* that will be won by the city yet to be built (as with the *fama* predicted for Julius Caesar in Jupiter's prophetic promise in 1.287). See Hardie 1998, 251 on the repetition in 6.889 of the first half of 4.197, which tells of the effects of the foul goddess *fama* on Iarbas; as Hardie observes, the second half of that line is repeated in 11.342 to describe the force of Drances' speech.

linked with the question of where knowledge of such inaccessible spaces originates.⁵⁴

One of the most important ways for imagination to cross the normal boundaries claimed by human knowledge is through metaphor. Kenneth Burke sums this up in Aristotelian terms that echo his description of piety: “Metaphor is a device for seeing something in terms of something else. It brings out the thisness of a that, or the thatness of a this.”⁵⁵ Burke’s Aristotelian account presents metaphor as evoking a kind of recognition, but allows space for rupture in the connections made between “this” and “that.”

Shocking metaphors—expressions of anomaly—ask their interpreters to connect categories that would usually be kept separate. *Fama* is sustained not only by forging links of recognition between “this” and “that,” but also by breaking the links that are conventionally accepted. Daedalus’ arts (his inventions and his commemorative door-panels) get into difficulties because they simultaneously forge and break such links. But those arts become incorporated into the *Aeneid*’s poetic *fama* precisely because they are so successful—too successful—in their imaginative transgression.

54. The disquiet caused for readers by the whole poetic journey of Book 6 can be measured by the never-ceasing debate over Aeneas’ exit by the ivory gate meant for the dispatch of false dreams, which underlines Aeneas’ anomalous status as neither a true shade (6.894) nor a dream—deceptive or otherwise (6.895–96). Casali’s recent discussion (2010, 134–37) of the pointed, allusive obscurity of the troublesome ivory gate cites bibliographies in Horsfall’s 1995 Brill Companion and the 1995 article of Molyviatis-Toptsis in the *American Journal of Philology* that indicate the notoriously dense scholarly history of this passage.

55. Burke 1945/1969, 503.



4

This and That

This chapter builds on the analysis of the mutually reliant poetics of *fama* and *pietas* in chapter 3's exploration of "matter out of place." Characters within the *Aeneid*'s story world, in their attempts to hew their lives into the shape of a dimly perceived divine order, are regularly called to translate a puzzling "that" into a newly meaningful "this," as *pietas* demands. Readers are invited to share in the processes of recognition and substitution required by *pietas*, working out "what properly goes with what" and in what sense "this" can be recognized or remembered as "that" in the narrative structure of the *Aeneid*.¹ But as we saw in chapter 3, tidying up—either materially or through figurative substitutions—means getting involved in disorder. The same process of recognition that enables readers and characters to grasp divine authority yields many of the anomalies that are fundamental to the shifting complexities of the poem's fictive knowledge.

Near the start of *Aeneid* 7, a boy's flippant remark turns a meal into an omen for the Trojans. After wolfing down the more obviously enticing food, they find themselves hungry enough

1. Burke 1934/1984, 74–75 and 1945/1969, 503.

to turn to the serving dishes, which happen to be made of wheat. At this point, Aeneas' son Iulus asks, rather frivolously, "Hey, are we eating even the tables?" (*heus, etiam mensas consumimus?* 7.116). This joke provides the clue to an enigma. Aeneas recognizes their meal as portentous and their picnic spot as the site of their new—yet ancestral—home: *hic domus, haec patria est* (7.122). Aeneas goes on to explain to his companions the mysteries of the fates (*fatorum arcana*, 7.122) that he says Anchises bequeathed him: "When, son, after sailing to unknown shores, hunger drives you, after the meal is eaten up, to consume tables, at that moment hope for homes in your weariness, and there remember to place your first roofs with your own hand and to build them up with a rampart" (*cum te, nate, fames ignota ad litora uectum / accisis coget dapibus consumere mensas, / tum sperare domos defessus, ibique memento / prima locare manu molirique aggere tecta*, 7.124–27). Aeneas has struck on a happy solution to a puzzle that he seems to have forgotten until Iulus' flippancy reminds him (*nunc repeto*, 7.123).

Readers of the poem, on the other hand, meet a fresh anomaly in Aeneas' newly recovered recollection of his father's words. We have a nagging memory of hearing from Aeneas on an earlier occasion the story of an extraordinarily similar, but much less heartening prophecy from Celaeno after the Trojans have been fighting off the Harpies, who make their anger felt at the Trojan cattle raid on the Strophades in Book 3. In Aeneas' earlier account, the Harpy Celaeno caps her sisters' punitive defilement of a stolen feast. She adds the verbal category confusion of a riddling prophecy to the material filth spread by the other Harpies: "You will go to Italy and you will be allowed to enter the port. But you will not surround with walls the city granted you until after cruel hunger and the wrong done us in our slaughter impel you to devour with your jaws tables that you've gnawed at" (*ibitis Italiam portusque intrare licebit. / sed non ante datam cingetis moenibus urbem / quam uos dira fames nostraeque iniuria caedis / ambasas subigat malis absumere mensas*, 3.254–57).

This indigestible meal proclaims the endlessness of the Trojans' homeless wandering, even within Italy: eating tables seems hardly possible, and if it could be done at all, it would surely prove a distressing low point among the Trojans' many misfortunes. According to Aeneas' own narrative, Anchises hears Celaeno's prediction, and prays to the gods to turn aside the threatened disaster. So readers have generally found it hard to picture him at some other time presenting a cheerful prophecy that uses the same bewildering riddle as the Harpy's. The moment of recognition in Book 7 solves a problem for Aeneas within the fiction, but his solution presents a new enigma to the poem's readers.

The table-eating scene is one of those moments in the *Aeneid* when the experience of the poem's readers diverges sharply from the experience of characters within the story world. We readers experience the Trojans' meal through the coloring of the poetic narrative, which echoes Celaeno's words, as we shall see later in this chapter. The Trojans themselves, on the other hand, perceive their meal through the playful lens of Iulus' joke, in which "table" becomes a metaphor for "flat bread." When Aeneas hears Iulus' words, he connects what they have just experienced with the perplexing hunger that was foretold by his father. "*This* was *that* hunger," he realizes, in an Aristotelian flash of recognition: he grasps that Iulus' tables match the tables of his father's prophecy.

Aeneas at this point in Book 7 can satisfy the demands of *pietas*, which drives him to work out "what goes with what" in order that he may comprehend and obey the gods' will. But the *Aeneid's* readers have a problem: for us "*that* hunger" refers to a memory quite different from the one that Aeneas has just described, and takes us instead to the prophecy that we heard from the Harpy Celaeno in Aeneas' Book 3 narrative. Solving the riddle set by the tables omen brings a sense of disruption and dissonance for readers even at the very moment when the importance of recognition is most fully felt.

Critical responses to Aeneas' recollection of Anchises' words in Book 7 show that readers have found an episode almost unrecognizable which they thought they remembered from the story that Aeneas told Dido and the other Carthaginians in Book 3. A scholarly yen for coherence reveals itself in uneasiness at the gap between our memory of Celaeno in *Aeneid* 3 and Aeneas' recollection of his father's words. The prediction of table eating seems too remarkable to be anything but a single prophecy, though two wildly different speakers are cited. The shift in speakers as well as the adjustments in the prophecy's emphasis between *Aeneid* 3 and 7 have given birth to a mystery that continues to haunt Vergilian criticism. In earlier days, scholars invested heavily in the poem's incompleteness to ease their discomfort at the gap between our memory of Book 3 and Aeneas' recollection in Book 7.² The change of speaker may be regarded as a slip that

2. See especially Williams 1983, 262–78 on "the peculiarities of Book 3." For further bibliography, see Hexter 1999, 64. A modified version of the "incompleteness" approach can be found in R. D. Williams' commentary, who notes that the prophecy "of the eating of the tables, given to Celaeno in III, is attributed at its fulfillment to Anchises. . . . [This] is a real discrepancy, but represents simply an inconsistency of memory of the sort to be expected in any long work" (1962, 21). He swiftly moves further towards the "death-bed" principle of unity: "A poet's attitude of mind may change over a period of eleven years; he may like episodes such as those of the Harpies and of Polyphemus at the beginning and come to like them less at the end, and be inclined to change them," 22. But see Hardie

indicates the further work that Vergil needed to put in on the poem. Interpretation is beside the point once we have decided that Vergil, the master craftsman, would (of course!) have revised away the inconsistency, had he not unfortunately found himself on his deathbed first. So *that's* why he wanted the *Aeneid* burned! More recently, scholars have been inclined to look for a different kind of unity even in the *Aeneid's* inconsistencies.³

There is no way to settle decisively what originally caused this quirk in the text. It is probably easier to believe that an author had some plot points to smooth out before his death than to surrender fully to a narrative in which Aeneas has heard two prophecies so similar and yet so importantly distinct. But as W. R. Johnson and Denis Feeney have emphasized, the *Aeneid* often challenges our everyday sense of what counts as believable.⁴ So we may agree that writers often change their minds during a long period of composition, and still attend to the jarring inconsistencies of the poem we have.

The category-confusing mingling of furniture and food in Celaeno's threatening prediction serves as a kind of verbal dirt to finish the work that the Harpies have already done with their material filth in their struggle with the Trojans. The Harpies, dripping loathsome emanations from their part-woman, part-bird, part-divine bodies, physically instantiate hunger and filth and category confusion. They use the foulness from their mouths and the terrible sound they make to pollute the Trojans' meal; this is a suitable punishment for the Trojans' violation of the Harpies' territory and theft of their cattle for food. Celaeno, who calls herself "greatest of Furies" (*Furiarum ego maxima*, 3.252), makes a prediction which serves more as a retributive curse (like Dido's in Book 4) than a piece of guidance, though she cites Apollo and Jupiter as the sources for her prophetic authority.

In Book 7, after Iulus diminishes the Trojans' sense of anomaly by solving the riddle of how tables can make the second course of dinner, Aeneas cleans up the prophecy in other ways, too, giving it a new import and—even more crucially—a new speaker. But for readers, the poetic texture of the narrative renews the pollution that was so critical in Aeneas' Book 3 telling. Just when Aeneas' new story of Anchises is tidying things up for the Trojans, making the verbal anomaly into a helpful prodigy—a sign that they have found their place at last—readers of the poem are confronted with Celaeno's dirt again.

(1997, 139–40) on the "radical incompleteness" of Roman epics.

3. O'Hara, in particular, began this work in *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy* (1990) and has more recently extended his program of examining the poetics of inconsistency in Roman epic (2007).

4. Johnson 1976; Feeney 1991.

Just as Celaeno's prophecy in Book 3 relies on category confusion, and verbally extends the disorderliness embodied by the Harpies, so now this disorder is reenacted in the poetic memory of Book 7. Celaeno's presence in poetic *fama* persists anomalously, even after her disruptive voice has partly been drowned out by the voices of Aeneas and his father, Anchises. The renewal of pollution in poetic memory at the table-eating scene becomes a prelude to the process of mental contamination that Celaeno's kindred Fury, Allecto, subsequently carries out, when on Juno's orders she spreads the mad desire for war.

From Book 7 on, the *fama* generated by the *Aeneid* stems primarily from the Fury Allecto's poisoning of minds in Italy. The out-of-control *furor* that Allecto disseminates is both transgressive in its madness and a force that maintains the ordered excess of mourning and memory. In this sense Vergilian *furor* resembles the disorderly order enforced and embodied above all by Aeschylus' Erinyes, though the Aeschylean Erinyes' characteristics are shared between Allecto and the Harpies as *Dirae*. The exceptionally frequent repetition of the adjective *dirus* in various feminine forms is very striking during the Strophades episode: the word describes Celaeno herself (3.211), their speech (3.228), the Harpies collectively (3.235 and 262), and the hunger Celaeno predicts (3.256).⁵ Many readers have noted the difficulties involved in trying to classify in name or function the chthonic—or puzzlingly-not-always-chthonic—goddesses. It is never entirely clear whether or to what extent specific members of the groups *Dirae*, *Erinyes*, *Eumenides*, *Furiae*, *Harpypiae* share an identity in the poem. The topic has proved itself endlessly debatable because these divinities are characterized precisely by their capacity to take on varied tasks in fluid forms and in contrasting spheres—at Jupiter's throne, in Tartarus, or in the mortal world between. Vergil's Allecto has all the Tartarean venom of Aeschylus' Erinyes; like them, she terrorizes her victims both visually and verbally, but she contaminates with poison and through mental disorder, rather than through the filth spread by Aeschylus' polluting goddesses and by Vergil's Harpies.

The personified *Fama* of Book 4 is also in many ways a figurative sibling of the Harpy Celaeno. While the poem describes the Harpies' belly-discharge as *foedissima* (exceedingly filthy), and mentions their *ora* (mouths/faces), endlessly pale with hunger (3.216–18), we learn of *Fama* (4.195) that

5. See especially Harrison 1985, 151–52 on the associations between Harpies and Erinyes, and on the repetition of *diraldirae* in this section of Book 3. The question is also addressed by Panoussi 2009, 88–90. Austin 1977 at 6.605 plausibly regards the *Furiarum maxima* as “unidentifiable,” a judgment echoed by Mackie 1992, 354. But Harrison (1985, 144) reminds us that the Harpies are “the ‘hounds of almighty Zeus’ and under divine protection in Apollonius.”

the filthy goddess scatters her gossip into men's mouths (*haec passim dea foeda uirum diffundit in ora*). When Celaeno wants to punish the Trojans for their treatment of her sister Harpies, she adds speech to her foul effluvia. We are reminded that mouths can spew words as well as ingest food. Philip Hardie has already demonstrated how closely Book 4's *Fama* and the Fury Allecto are associated, verbally and conceptually.⁶ In its varied emanations, the contamination spread by all these divinities works with Juno's memory-filled anger and Jupiter's order, to reach across time and supply the prophetic energy with which epic *fama* incorporates the *Aeneid's* violence and unease into an Augustan vision linking past, present, and future.

4.1 Memories of the Harpy

A trend in *Aeneid* criticism over the past few decades has been to argue that closure is gendered masculine in the *Aeneid*, while feminine forces keep opening up the story and delaying the end.⁷ At first glance the two speakers of the table-prophecies seem to fall into that alignment. Celaeno presents the table eating as an impediment that must necessarily precede the foundation of the Trojans' Italian city. Anchises, by contrast, offers it as a token of hope for the weary that they may begin to establish homes. The omen has effectively the same relation to the Trojans' future in Italy in both versions—that is, the table eating is something that has to happen before the final stages of Trojan settlement. In the event, although Aeneas remembers Anchises' closural spin on the sign, several books of fighting with the local inhabitants follow the portentous meal in Book 7. Still, in Anchises' prophecy table consumption becomes one of the series of markers that enable the

6. Hardie 1998, 249–50 and 2009b, 100–101.

7. See, for example, Feeney 1991, 137–38; Oliensis 1997, 303–4 (but Oliensis 2009 takes a rather different view, closer to Hershkowitz 1998 and to my own argument here). Keith 2000, 74–77 examines the complicated gendering of war and peace in the epic. Mitchell-Boyask 1996, 294 aligns divine characters with ends, humans with delays. The binary of masculine closure and feminine energy/delay breaks down too thoroughly to account for the complexities of how the *Aeneid's* narrative structures are gendered, however. Spence 1988 and Hershkowitz 1998 (and to some extent Hardie 1993) acknowledge the collapse of any notionally polarized opposition of masculine closure/order and feminine *furor* (an acknowledgment partly indebted to deconstructive approaches among Latinists). Fowler 1998, 165 suggests that “one of the ways in which the opposition between male control and female disorder is deconstructed in the *Aeneid* is through the notion of energy. Male power when manifested as control becomes a lack of power, in that it stops things happening, it shuts the gates, whereas female *furor* opens the gates and starts things up: it lets the genius out of the bottle and inspires the poet to further poetry.” But Jupiter is thoroughly implicated in the anti-closural energy that generates epic.

Trojans to grasp both in geographical terms and in terms of their own story that they are within reach of the end. So it might seem clear that, at least for the *Aeneid's* Roman readers, it would cast an entirely benevolent light on the Trojans' Italian settlement for Aeneas to obliterate Celaeno's prophecy and replace it with Anchises' version. Seeing the episode from Anchises' point of view would put it in the category of orderly, masculine closure.

We shall see that the particular details of the episode shake this hope of clarity. We cannot get rid of the Harpy so easily. Aeneas himself may have forgotten his own story of Celaeno's speech, but critical comment on this section of the poem confirms that many readers vividly remember Celaeno's version, and for good reason.⁸ The *Aeneid's* words give us, as readers of the poem, an experience very different from that of the Trojans within the fiction. The poetic narrative paints the meal in colors that clash with the light-hearted conviviality which inspires Iulus' joke.

The narrative lead-in to Iulus' flippant observation is astonishingly violent, especially given that the poem presents the meal as prompted by Jupiter (*sic Iuppiter ipse monebat*, 7.110).

Aeneas primique duces et pulcher Iulus
 corpora sub ramis deponunt arboris altae,
 instituuntque dapes et adorea liba per herbam
 subiciunt epulis (sic Iuppiter ipse monebat)
 et Cereale solum pomis agrestibus augent.
 consumptis hic forte aliis, ut uertere morsus
 exiguum in Cererem penuria adegit edendi,
 et uiolare manu malisque audacibus orbem
 fatalis crusti patulis nec parcere quadris:
 'heus, etiam mensas consumimus?' inquit Iulus
 nec plura, adludens.

Aeneas, his high chiefs, and lovely Iulus
 rest their bodies under the branches of a tall tree,

8. O'Hara has argued that Celaeno's is a "falsely pessimistic prophecy, the fulfillment of which is painless, [. . .] doubly effective in achieving her goal of hurting the Trojans, for she causes them to be worried needlessly now, and optimistic in Book 7 when they are actually on the brink of great trials and suffering in Italy" (1990, 25). Her prophecy may be misleadingly pessimistic in making the tables appear uneatable objects, but it tallies quite closely with the outcome in light of the specific words used by the narrator. O'Hara's perception of Celaeno's prophecy as the one that later creates ill-timed optimism reveals an interesting slippage, which indicates the continued weight of Celaeno's words for readers of Book 7, even though she herself is unmentioned at that moment of joy for the Trojans—their erroneous optimism is Anchises' responsibility at that point.

and set about feasting, and place wheaten cakes across the grass
 under their meal (Jupiter himself was guiding them in this)
 and add to the Ceres-given base with the fruits of the countryside.
 At this point, by chance, once the rest had been eaten, when dearth of
 foodstuff
 compelled them to turn their teeth against slight Ceres
 and with hand and bold jaws to break through the circle
 of the destiny-laden loaf and not spare the spreading pieces,
 “Hey, are we eating even the tables?” says Iulus,
 nothing else, in fun. (*Aen.* 7.107–17)

Desperate hunger drives the Trojans to gnaw and violate the slender goddess Ceres. The expression *penuria edendi* (“dearth of foodstuff,” 7.113) points to the deadly problems that newcomers to a foreign land, perhaps with hostile inhabitants, may expect to find in food gathering.⁹ *Penuria* does not normally mean the nagging hunger that lingers at the end of a meal which is not quite big enough. The figurative substitution of Ceres for grain is perfectly normal, but in this context, surrounded by words such as *morsus* and *uiolare*, it makes the Trojans’ attack on their bread almost brutal—poor little delicate Ceres is ravaged by their teeth.¹⁰ The Trojans take no prisoners, violating the circular trenchers with their hands and aggressive jaws (*malis audacibus*)—there is no mercy for the pieces (*nec parcere quadris*, 7.114–15). If it were not for Celaeno’s words in Book 3, readers would experience the mismatch between the desperation evoked by the narrator and Iulus’ lighthearted comment primarily as a depiction of boyish courage in hard times, a youthful version of the cheerful front Aeneas puts on at the Libyan landfall much earlier in the poem (1.207–9).¹¹

But when we recall the exact words of Celaeno’s speech, the grim attitude of the Book 7 narrative looks familiar.¹² Celaeno uses her speech as a weapon in the fight between Harpies and Trojans after the wanderers land on the Strophades—the Harpies’ islands—and plunder their herds for food.

9. Horsfall 2000, 110 summarizes the characteristics that link this episode with stories of Greek colonization. Stubbs 1998 offers similar suggestions, using Dionysius’ version of the story to suggest “over-population and perhaps [. . .] domestic disturbance.”

10. Compare 1.177–78, where the same metonymy occurs with a different emphasis: *tum Cerem corruptam undis Cerealiaque arma / expediunt fessi rerum. . . .*

11. Another view is offered by Harrison 1985, 157–58, who sees “playful humour behind the picture of mighty heroes doing violence to defenceless little wheat-cakes.”

12. Grassman-Fischer 1966, 39–46 examines several details of the verbal connections and dissimilarities between the “Table-prodigy” and Anchises and Celaeno’s versions of the event.

una in praecelsa consedit rupe Celaeno,
 infelix uates, rumpitque hanc pectore uocem:
 ‘bellum etiam pro caede boum stratisque iuuencis,
 Laomedontiadae, bellumne inferre paratis
 et patrio Harpyias insontis pellere regno?
 accipite ergo animis atque haec mea figite dicta,
 quae Phoebus pater omnipotens, mihi Phoebus Apollo
 praedixit, uobis Furiarum ego maxima pando.
 Italiam cursu petitis uentisque uocatis:
 ibitis Italiam portusque intrare licebit.
 sed non ante datam cingetis moenibus urbem
 quam uos dira fames nostraeque iniuria caedis
 ambesas subigat malis absumere mensas.’

One perched on a soaring cliff-edge, Celaeno,
 ill-boding prophet, and this heartfelt cry erupts:
 “So it’s war you bring in return for murdered oxen and for slaughtered
 bullocks,
 true descendants of Laomedon—you’re getting ready to bring war
 and drive harmless Harpies from their fathers’ kingdom, are you?
 Well then, take and fix in your thoughts these words of mine,
 which the almighty father foretold to Phoebus, which Phoebus Apollo
 foretold to me, and which I, the greatest of the Furies, unfold to you:
 Italy is the place you seek with your journey and with the winds you
 summon:
 You will go to Italy and you will be allowed to enter the port.
 But you will not surround with walls the city granted you before
 cruel hunger and the wrong done us in our slaughter
 impel you to consume with your jaws tables that you’ve gnawed at.”
 (*Aen.* 3.245–57)

The poem itself in Book 7 encourages us to pay close attention to the verbal particularities of the episode’s presentation. When we learn that the prophecy is fulfilled by Iulus’ joke (“Hey, are we eating even the tables?” 7.116), we discover the critical importance of how this event is put into words: “Hearing that expression was what first brought an end to their labors” (*ea uox audita laborum / prima tulit finem*, 7.117–18). It is the way they experience the meal verbally that promises closure to Aeneas and his followers, not the actual eating of the wheat platters.

In Book 7 the narrative colors the Trojan meal with a tinge of brutality that echoes the Harpy's hostile prediction. "You'll go to Italy, and you'll be allowed to enter the port," Celaeno admits. "But you will not surround with walls the city granted you before cruel hunger and the wrong done in this slaughter impel you to consume with your jaws tables that you have gnawed at" (*sed non ante datam cingetis moenibus urbem / quam uos dira fames nostraque iniuria caedis / ambas subigat malis absumere mensas*, 3.255–57). The aggressive onslaught on Ceres described in Book 7, caused by the Trojans' "dearth of foodstuff" (*penuria* [. . .] *edendi*, 7.113), lives out Celaeno's promise of cruel hunger (*dira fames*, 3.256). The verbs that explain the reason for this onslaught in both versions share a root: in Book 7 we hear *penuria adegit edendi*: lack of food "compelled" (7.113) the Trojans to turn on the bread. In Book 3 Celaeno says that they will not found their city before terrible hunger "impels" them (the verb in 3.257 is *subigat*) to eat up their tables with their jaws—*malis* (3.257)—another word echoed by the narrative in 7.114.

Scholars have wondered whether there is some sacrilege involved in the action as well as the language in Book 7: within the story world, are the Trojans perhaps eating a meal that is in some sense sacred? There are good reasons to refrain from positively ascribing a sacrilegious act to Aeneas here.¹³ The very fact that readers have worried about this problem, though, draws attention to the sense of transgression in the poem's language, whether this is figuratively transgressive in a more limited sense, or (less plausibly) denotes an act of sacrilege in the story world.

The violation mentioned in *Aeneid* 7 (*uiolare* [. . .] *orbem*, 7.114) recalls the original trespass that now causes the Trojans' table eating, in accordance with Celaeno's retributive logic.¹⁴ She says that "the wrong done us in our slaughter" (*nostraeque iniuria caedis*, 3.256) will bring about a reenactment of the Trojans' transgressive meal on the Strophades. The Trojans have tried to eat inappropriate food in the Harpies' domain, so they will either be driven to eat still less suitable food, or they will fail to

13. When the *Aeneid's* narrative invokes the possibility of ritual violations, it situates these in such deep uncertainty as to put the difficulty of maintaining ritual purity in the foreground, rather than indulging in a too easy implied condemnation of Aeneas and others as willful or reckless defilers. That would call for a level of clarity about sacred order that is almost always out of reach in the poem. See Horsfall 2000, 117 on the "table" eating. Horsfall 2006, 61 argues more generally against readers who hold Aeneas accountable for following "correct" Roman usage."

14. Horsfall 2006, 204 (on *Harpyias insontis* at 3.249) alludes to the "wrong but wromantic" and "right and repulsive" Cavaliers and Roundheads of Sellar and Yeatman's parodic history *1066 and All That*: "The Harpies revolting but wronged, the Trojans guilty but unwitting; a good, typical Virgilian moral and dramatic complication."

establish their own domain in Italy. The fact that the Trojans' slaying of the Harpies' cattle echoes the *Odyssey's* cattle-slaughtering episode, where the sacred cattle of the sun are expressly forbidden food, reinforces further this pattern of transgression and violation. The impression given by Celaeno that this need to eat unfoodlike food will delay the Trojans' discovery of their future home mirrors the equivalent episode in the *Odyssey*, where their stolen feast denies Odysseus' companions their homecoming.¹⁵

So when Aeneas tells the Trojan prophet Helenus that Celaeno has provided an exception to the general message that they should head for Italy (3.365–67), it is fitting that he should speak of the “obscene hunger” (*obsceua fames*) that she foretells, not of those mystifying tables. Helenus, however, does not respond exactly to the concern Aeneas articulates, but instead tells him not to dread munching on tables (*nec tu mensarum morsus horresce futuros*, 3.394)—we are perhaps to imagine that his prophetic gifts give him access to Celaeno's exact words as well as Aeneas' summary? Aeneas has been more troubled about the implications of the prophecy for his Italian future, whereas Helenus emphasizes its enigmatic presentation and foreshadows the moment in Book 7 when the prophecy will be harmlessly fulfilled, at which point Aeneas will cite Anchises.

Yet the prophecies of Celaeno and Anchises claim the same ultimate source. Celaeno names the *pater omnipotens* as the original author of the words she is handing down to the Trojans, which she heard via Apollo: “Well then, take and fix in your thoughts these words of mine, which the almighty father foretold to Phoebus, which Phoebus Apollo foretold to me, and which I, the greatest of the Furies, unfold to you” (*accipite ergo animis atque haec mea figite dicta, / quae Phoebus pater omnipotens, mihi Phoebus Apollo / praedixit, uobis Furiarum ego maxima pando*, 3.250–52). Aeneas categorizes his father's version as mysteries of the fates, *fatorum arcana* (7.123). This implicates Jupiter *pater omnipotens*, in his role as author-cum-administrator of *fata*. Jupiter uses precisely this expression in his Book 1 prophecy, telling Venus, *fabor enim, quando haec te cura remordet, / longius et uoluens fatorum arcana mouebo*, “For I'll speak out at greater length, since this worry gnaws you, and I'll unroll and stir up the mysteries of the fates” (1.261–62).¹⁶ No

15. Readers may choose, of course, to emphasize the differences between the Homeric episode and what happens in the *Aeneid*, as Stubbs 1998 and Akbar Khan 1996 do.

16. While Celaeno's claim to the supreme paternal authority of Jupiter depends on oral transmission, Anchises seems to have left something solid behind him to be treasured by future Romans. The phrase *fatorum arcana* echoes not only Jupiter's words in 1.261–62, but also Aeneas' promise to the Sibyl regarding the Sibylline books: *te quoque magna manent regnis penetralia nostris: / hic ego namque tuas sortis arcanaque fata / dicta meae genti ponam*, “Great shrines await you also in our realms: for in fact I shall lay down your lots and the hidden fates spoken for my people” (6.71–73). Bailey 1935,

convincing method of arbitrating between these divergent authorial claims suggests itself. The authority for the prophecies, resulting both in benefits for the future Trojan–Italian settlement and in problems for it, must be shared between a whole group of sources and speakers—Jupiter, Apollo, Anchises, and Celaeno. Yet the sharpest division, between Anchises and Celaeno, highlights the role played by the *vehicle* of divine wisdom—it is not only its origin that is important.

Though the table eating is experienced verbally both by the *Aeneid*'s characters and the poem's readers, these experiences diverge in important ways. If we take Book 3 and Book 7 equally seriously as part of the fiction, Aeneas has a memory of Anchises' prophecy, which we readers know nothing about.¹⁷ Unlike the Trojans, however, we have both Iulus' words and the poet's. Aeneas cannot read and reread his own story, recapturing verbal resonances between different speeches and different texts. In noting this difference I do not mean to suggest that the *Aeneid* shows an interest in this kind of verisimilitude. But even if the actual "table" eating is quite harmless—and there seems nothing intrinsically dreadful about munching on plate-like objects made of some kind of bread¹⁸—verbal echoes shape the reader's memories, so that Celaeno projects the portent onto a story of pollution, failed colonization, and the disruption of traditions.

4.2 When "that" becomes "this"

What about Aeneas' memory? Scholars have attributed forgetfulness about Celaeno to both Aeneas and Vergil, but Aeneas describes himself as forgetting his father's words, until jolted by his son into recollecting Anchises' advice.

'heus, etiam mensas consumimus?' inquit Iulus,
nec plura, adludens. ea uox audita laborum
prima tulit finem, primamque loquentis ab ore
eripuit pater ac stupefactus numine pressit.

206 (see also 228ff.) on 1.261–62 asks, "are the *fata* here the 'spoken word' or will of Iuppiter himself, which he now intends to declare, or is Iuppiter here rather in the position of a prophet to the other gods, declaring, like an earthly prophet, the destiny laid up for Aeneas?"

17. Aeneas would have access to both versions, that is, if we take as *part of the fiction* two occurrences that which are hard to reconcile, one where Celaeno speaks a threatening prophecy, which Anchises hears and dreads, another where Anchises delivers an encouraging prophecy of similar content.

18. Commentators are undecided whether these edible flat things most closely resemble pita, pizza, naan, or perhaps matzos.

continuo 'salve fatis mihi debita tellus
uosque' ait 'o fidi Troiae saluete penates:
hic domus, haec patria est. genitor mihi talia namque
(nunc repeto) Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit:
"cum te, nate, fames ignota ad litora vectum
accisis coget dapibus consumere mensas,
tum sperare domos defessus, ibique memento
prima locare manu molirique aggere tecta."
haec erat illa fames, haec nos suprema manebat
exitiis positura modum.'

"Hey, are we eating even the tables?" says Iulus,
nothing else, in fun. Hearing that expression was what first brought
an end to their labors, and his father snatched it from his mouth
as soon as he spoke, and checked him, stunned by the divine presence.
Immediately "Greetings, land owed me by the fates!"
he says, "and you faithful home-gods of Troy, greetings!
Here is our home, this is our country. For in fact my father
Anchises (now I recall) left me just such mysteries of the fates:
'When, brought to unknown shores, hunger
compels you, son, your feast eaten up, to consume the tables,
At that moment remember to hope for homes in your weariness, and there
work to set up your first homes with a mound.'
This was that hunger, this awaited us, to set, at last,
a limit to our ruin." (*Aen.* 7.116–29)

When Aeneas tells us in direct discourse what his father said, he picks up exactly the same verb for "eating" (*consumere*, 7.125) that Iulus chose (7.116). Unlike the hyperbolic, violent terms in which the reader has just experienced the Trojans' hunger, which were also used by Celaeno, Anchises has apparently described the hunger in a more neutral way. It is *fames*, perhaps merely the unsatisfied feeling sometimes remaining when dinner is over (*accisis . . . dapibus*, 7.125); no adjective *dura* is attached. Within the fiction, the Trojans, of course, have no access to the narrator's extreme language—so their experience of what happens seems to match Anchises' presentation.

Anchises' prophecy provides more than one type of closure for the Trojans. As we have seen, it grants them a homecoming: *hic domus, haec patria est*, Aeneas declares. But for the Trojans, Iulus' joke also brings an ending because an event that was incomprehensible in the abstract—what would

it mean to eat tables?—has become meaningful when they see how eating tables can resemble eating flat pieces of bread. The prophecy turns out to have been a kind of riddle, which has now been solved. The riddle's solution depends on understanding its metaphorical structure. Iulus' unwitting explication of the prophecy emerges when he describes a particular action figuratively: eating the bases of their food becomes eating tables for the Trojans once it is *called* eating tables.¹⁹ The sense of a *finis* comes not only from the hope given by Anchises' form of the prophecy, but also from the very fact that a question has been answered.

A joyful resolution takes place for the Trojans when something that was incomprehensible because it was unlike anything in their experience suddenly makes sense to them. If we temporarily adopt I. A. Richards' terms for unpacking a metaphor, we could say that Celaeno and Anchises had both provided a metaphor that was all vehicle, no tenor—they offered an enigma, in other words.²⁰ Iulus unites vehicle with tenor, turning an enigmatic threat into a play on words. Thanks to Iulus, Aeneas can say, "This was that hunger, this, at last, awaited us, to set a limit to our ruin" (*haec erat illa fames, haec nos suprema manebat / exitiis positura modum*, 7.128–29). Aeneas recognizes that "this"—the hunger just experienced—was "that"—the hunger narrated in advance by Anchises.

In this metaphorical operation in *Aeneid* 7, there is more than one sense in which a "this" is joined with a "that." The *vehicle* matters here. In its standard literary-analytical sense the vehicle is "eating tables," while the tenor is "eating flat-bread." But the identity of the speakers brings about a second level of figuration. In a different sense one could also label "vehicle" the means by which—or the speaker by whom—this metaphorical expression is communicated. The interpretative implications of uniting tenor and vehicle (in the usual sense—metaphorical expression), of seeing eating flat-bread as eating tables, will differ depending on whether the speaker for that metaphor is Celaeno or Anchises. This is one reason for the discomfort readers have experienced at the change in speaker between Books 3 and 7.

19. This is why the solution attempted by Stubbs 1998, 3–12 seems to diminish the importance of this episode. Stubbs aims to remove much of the figurative force from the idea of consuming *mensae* by suggesting that this is a perfectly normal concept. But if it were so recognizable a concept, even in the abstract and without Iulus' help, why would Helenus need to reassure them (3.394–95)?

20. The "vehicle" in Richards' sense in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* is a term for the metaphorical expression of literal meaning, while the tenor is the actual idea conveyed by the metaphor; here the vehicle is "eating tables," and the tenor turns out to be "eating flat-bread." Choosing appropriate terms to describe how a metaphor works is difficult; Black 1962, 47 n. 23 points out just a few of the now widely acknowledged problems with "tenor" and "vehicle," the terms introduced by I. A. Richards. However, these labels are still common in discussions of metaphor, and classicists favor them for the ingredients of similes.

The thisness of the that, or the thatness of the this, extends further than Iulus' link between tables and flat-bread. The prophetic resonance of this association comes from the fact that once eating flat-bread is recognized as eating tables, eating tables (now "this") can be seen in terms of a new "that"—either a homecoming, perhaps (if it is associated with Anchises), or a delay in homecoming (if it is associated with Celaeno). The figurative associations of the two prophecies therefore have little to do with the riddle-solving resemblance between tables and edible plates, and much more to do with the paradigmatic function of a father as contrasted with a Harpy. The whole episode recounts a specific foundation legend within the large-scale foundation narrative provided by the *Aeneid* as a whole. So it makes sense to start by assessing Anchises' advantages as speaker of a founding prophecy, quite apart from his more cheerful presentation of the omen.

First of all, there is the fairly obvious advantage that instead of being a terrifying female divinity who associates herself with infernal powers, Anchises is a man, a proto-Roman *paterfamilias*, whose figurative paternity extends to Romans contemporary with Vergil, and whose physical paternity of Aeneas has been made possible by Venus (*Venus genetrix*). The living Anchises, depicted in Books 2 and 3, is privy to little information about divine intentions. He relies on his interpretations of divine signs and prophecies, which he sometimes gets disastrously wrong, and sometimes right.²¹ When faced with doubt or divine hostility, he has recourse to prayers.²² His understanding and authority are limited, so he makes up for his own limitations with pious reliance on the Olympian gods' protection and efforts to understand their will: accordingly, when Celaeno threatens the Trojans, he prays to the gods for protection (3.263–66).

But even at this stage, when Anchises serves as a perceptibly fallible guide, the role of this *pater* is central, and not only as *paterfamilias* with responsibility for religious rituals. Even where Anchises has no special opinion to

21. He gets it right, for instance, at 3.537–43 where he understands that four snow-white horses grazing threaten war at first in Italy but promise the eventual hope of peace. His interpretation of this sign is based on an unfolding of the figurative effects of horses' functions in war and their willingness to submit to the bridle. But obvious examples of Anchises' nearly catastrophic misinterpretations take place during the fall of Troy as well as in the Trojans' subsequent travels. When Aeneas returns to his house, obeying Venus' instructions to take his family out of Troy, Anchises refuses to budge from home. He has inferred the gods' will for him from their destruction of the city (2.641–42), following on from Jupiter's expression of anger in the thunderbolt that lamed him (2.647–49). More immediate and transparent divine signs are needed to convince him of his mistake (2.680–704). His next serious interpretive decision leads the Trojans to settle in Crete (3.102–17), where drought and plague attack (3.135–46).

22. 2.687–91; 2.699–702; 3.263–66. These prayers mark out very clearly Anchises' ignorant mortal status, but they also appear to be highly effective.

offer, Aeneas (who is newly bereaved of his father) emphasizes his advisorial role.²³ And when we return to the main narrative of the poem, after Anchises' death at the end of Book 3, qualifications about his unique status evaporate. Once he takes his place among the *pii* in Elysium, knowledge of the future becomes a bulwark for Anchises' paternal authority, enabling his ghost to help drive Aeneas away from Carthage (4.351) and, by Jupiter's command, to visit Aeneas while in Sicily with advice, a warning, and the instruction to come and see him in the underworld (5.722–39; 6.695–96). By the time we get to Book 7, we have heard Anchises dispensing wisdom about the afterlife and providing a full commentary on the spectacle granted to Aeneas of Rome's future leaders and their *fama* (6.678–892).

Anchises' table-prophecy offers some positive instructions to bring about an end of the Trojans' travel narrative: *tum sperare domos defessus, ibique memento / prima locare manu molirique aggere tecta* ("At that moment remember to hope for homes in your weariness, and there work to set up your first houses with a mound," 7.126–27). An end of the story of their wanderings means a beginning of the story of Rome.²⁴ So Anchises' imperative *memento*, enjoining them to recognize the location of their future home, strikingly echoes his injunction of Roman self-definition in Book 6, where he reaches beyond his immediate listener to address a future Roman: *tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento / (hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem, / parcere subiectis et debellare superbos* ("As for you, Roman, remember to rule nations with your power—these will be your arts—to set the stamp of custom on peace, to spare the submissive, and to bring down the arrogant in war," 6.851–53).²⁵ The imperative *memento* is in the same metrical position in both commands. Anchises' wording of the table prophecy works at the broadest level to serve a particular conception of epic teleology. He associates the location of their home with the subject position that their descendants will step into as Romans. It is no wonder that remembering Anchises as prophet allows Aeneas to recognize a strange place as the Trojans' *patria*—the land of their fathers (7.122). By contrast, it would

23. 3.57–60, 169–70, 472, 558–59.

24. Book 7, of course, may end their travels but does not end even that part of the Trojan story narrated in the *Aeneid*. Hardie 1993, 12 comments: "Insofar as the *Aeneid* performs in other ways the all-inclusive function of the *Annals* of Ennius, it reasserts its quality as a totalizing epic; but it also manages to leave itself open to continuation. This is partly the achievement of the end of the poem, which as so many have felt is not an ending at all (except for Turnus), merely the beginning of this history of the Aeneadae once they have vindicated their right to settle in the land of the future Rome."

25. Feeny 1998, 36 suggests another link forward to Rome's future offered by Anchises' version of the table prophecy when he notes that Anchises "is using Sibylline language of the same kind used by the Sibylline oracle for the *ludi saeculares*: 'remember, Roman'" (*memnēsthai, Rōmaie*, 3).

hardly be auspicious for Aeneas to invoke, at the very moment of homecoming, Celaeno's prophecy, which represents the Trojans as violators.²⁶

To the extent that Book 7's narrative recalls Celaeno, the table-eating omen links the Trojans' safe arrival with a distressingly violent attempt at colonization, and what is more, an attempt that is unsuccessful. In Book 3 Aeneas, telling the Carthaginians about his wanderings, depicts the Trojans' arrival in the Harpies' territory as a break in their travels, accompanied by a meal, not as an essayed settlement.²⁷ But he admits that this is not how Celaeno sees it. In her view, Aeneas and his followers are trying to displace the Harpies from their fathers' kingdom, their *patrium regnum*. The Trojans' arrival on the Harpies' islands and their slaughter of the herds amount to a disruption of the proper ways that land is handed from fathers to their descendants.²⁸ The Harpies' filth, dirtying the Trojans' food, fittingly punishes what they perceive the Trojans as doing, that is, violating their territory.²⁹ As avengers who maintain due order—who even defend the values of *pietas*—they fulfill the expectations raised by their categorization as Furies, with their Erinys-like manifestation, and Celaeno's self-presentation as a spokesperson for the *pater omnipotens* (3.251).

In the geography of the underworld, however, Anchises speaks as a representative of Elysium, while the Harpy has associations with the pollution of Tartarus. Aeneas introduces the Harpies to his Carthaginian audience by declaring, “No monstrous prodigy grimmer than these, nor any pestilence more fierce or wrath of the gods has emerged from the ripples of the Styx” (*tristius haud illis monstrum, nec saeuior ulla / pestis et ira deum Stygiis sese extulit undis*, 3.214–15). Given that Rome is to hold vast tracts of land under its sway, the state may not want to attribute the origins of its *imperium* to a prophecy associated with the punitive powers of hell. Celaeno would contaminate Rome's origins if she should be strongly associated with the city's foundation.

Throughout the poem, different levels of success in achieving settlements are indicated by the success or disruption of meals that the Trojans

26. See Hardie 1993, chap. 4, “Succession: Fathers, Poets, Princes,” especially 88–94.

27. Akbar Khan 1996, 132–33; he argues against Nethercut 1968, 90 and Kinsey 1979, 118–19, although Kinsey acknowledges that Celaeno's is “a curious description of what the Trojans are doing”; Putnam 1982, 267–87 at 270; Harrison 1985, 150–54.

28. And if we want to connect mythic representations with social practice in first-century Rome, we may note that “descendants” is the operative word—there is not the same emphasis on the transmission of property from father to son that one encounters in the later European system of primogeniture—see Saller 1994, especially 161–80.

29. Panoussi 2009, 86 notes that Aeneas' narrative presents both Trojans and Harpies as defilers, especially by repeating forms and cognates of *foedare*, “to foul.”

eat on their various arrivals.³⁰ This is especially prominent in Book 3, where their disastrous meal on the Strophades is one of a series of pollution-fouled horrors, many of them food-related, all of which mark out their failure to find a home. In chapter 3 we saw that the Trojans' first attempt at a settlement is in a land horribly contaminated by the murder of Polydorus. This filth is not an abstract awareness that pitiful memories taint the region, but a pollution that is renewed materially in Polydorus' flowing gore. Aeneas emphasizes the Harpies' history of disrupting meals when he first narrates the Trojans' encounter with them: the Harpies only moved to the Strophades after they had been kicked out of Phineus' home, leaving their "earlier tables"—*mensas* [. . .] *priores* (the ones they had prevented the prophet Phineus from using, 3.212–13).

Celaeno's prophecy is therefore a verbal development of the Harpies' initial strategy with their unwelcome guests, which is to tear apart their feasts and pollute what they leave. Only after the Trojans use weapons against the Harpies does Celaeno attack her enemies through speech with her threat of famine. Celaeno speaks out words that provide a culmination of the physical pollution spread by her sisters. Her speech carries forward the memory of this violation into the Trojans' future; its riddling ambiguity performs another category confusion, presenting furniture as food. Just as memory itself can convey death pollution, so—for readers, if not for the Trojans within the fiction—the anomalous memory of the Harpy takes her verbal and material defilement onward to the mid-point of the poem, so that recollection of her words pollutes the narrative of the Trojans' arrival in Italy.

4.3 Recognizing divine authority

From a Trojan perspective Anchises' prophecy brings an ending, but from a reader's perspective his presence in this particular section of the narrative opens things up instead of shutting them down. Over the last few years, several scholars who want to slacken the tension around the prophecy's

30. For example, the successful—if unhappy—alliance with Evander is marked by a feast (8.175–84), whereas no food marks the attempted union with Latinus in Book 7; the landing in Libya results in a partially successful—if extremely unhappy—settlement as Aeneas joins in the founding of Carthage, which seems paralleled by the contrasting experiences of the two groups of Trojans: Aeneas finds suitable food on their arrival (1.174–79), but Ilioneus fails even to step on shore without being attacked (1.540–41). Both groups then participate in feasting after being welcomed by Dido: the narrative invites us to toy with envisaging a historically impossible settlement uniting Trojans and Carthaginians.

speakers have tried to untangle the knot through analysis of the poem's narrative technique.³¹ Instead of separating the reader's perspective from that of characters within the epic, some earlier readers assumed that if Vergil had lived longer he would have provided the answer by revising Book 3. The assumption driving such an approach for these critics seems to be that only one prophecy "really" exists, but that a certain fragmentation of the narrative gives this single prediction a double identity by assigning it to two different speakers and by rewriting it slightly.³² Readers whose interpretative expectations have been formed over the last half-century may be less willing than R. D. Williams and others to hypothesize an ideal, unified form of the story existing apart from its narrative discourse.

Yet this earlier approach pinpoints why Aeneas' unexpected reference to Anchises as speaker and the citation of his variant on the tables prophecy is so disturbing. I have chosen to treat the text as it stands, and to examine the jarring discrepancy as a part of how the poem works on its readers. But moments like these make the narrative drive and the fictive continuity of the epic come to a juddering halt. A fragmentation of the narrative comes just when the narrator and Aeneas are emphasizing closure, when they are grasping at a limit to Trojan suffering: *haec erat illa fames, haec nos suprema manebat / exitiis positura modum* ("this was that hunger, this awaited us, to set, at last, a limit to our ruin," 7.128–29). The Trojans can agree that "this"—the hunger just experienced—was "that"—the hunger narrated in advance by Anchises. For the reader "that" hunger has vanished: our own "that" was part of Aeneas' earlier narration, in Book 3, and has been eradicated along with any mention of Celaeno.

The role of recognition in the rhetorical effects of the table prophecy may be understood partly in terms of Aristotelian *mimesis*. We saw in chapter 1

31. For example, Horsfall 2000, 112–13 takes the line (not unreasonably) that we don't need to have had everything narrated to us explicitly. Yet imagining that Anchises "really" did give Aeneas the version of the prophecy that he quotes in Book 7 does not efface his bizarre obliteration of Celaeno's version—the one that we readers know. Block 1984, 234–35 suggests, "Aeneas's apparent lapse of memory at VII 122f can now be seen as a deliberate device used to reveal his state of mind." Harrison 1985 comes closer to my own approach, arguing that we should see Anchises' prophecy not as a textual/narrative contradiction, but as a displacement of Celaeno's prophecy that is achieved through successful attention to ritual and divine will. Another possibility would be to emphasize Aeneas' role as narrator of both versions of the prophecy. Aeneas would have different rhetorical aims when addressing Dido and the Carthaginians in Book 3 from those that would dominate his aims when he speaks to his Trojan followers in Book 7. See, for example, Hexter 1999, 66–67 and 72 on Aeneas' presentation of positive and negative exempla of hosts (the Harpies serve as a negative paradigm), and on Dido as an "interested misreader." Seider 2010 extends this line of thought to argue that Aeneas purposefully tells a lie in Book 7, so as to establish a new memory of the prophecy, relying on his authority as leader to suppress the individual memories of his companions.

32. See Williams 1962, 22.

how Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* expresses the connections between metaphor and mimetic pleasure in terms of the identification between a “this” and a “that.”³³ As Stephen Halliwell argues, drawing on Paul Ricoeur, *mimesis* in the *Poetics* “requires and draws on the preexisting intelligibility of action and life in the world at large: mimetic art may extend and reshape understanding, but it starts from and depends on already given possibilities and forms of meaning in its audiences’ familiarity with the human world.”³⁴ It is these underpinnings that the *Poetics* have sometimes seemed to share with the *Rhetoric*: the notion of the probable (*to eikos*) suggests that listeners’ perceptions of how their world is structured are central to persuasive efficacy.³⁵ Because perceptions of social and political structures depend partly on how these structures are represented, *mimesis* creates as much as it reflects the world of lived experience.³⁶

So the patterns of recognition at work in interpretations of the table prophecy are widely operative in the ability of fictions to shape knowledge, perception, and memory through their systems of figuration. “Thats” and “this’s” recombine in almost uncanny ways even while conventionally established identities and associations are ruptured.

Aeneas’ citation of Anchises results in a tension between several different kinds of recognition, which shape both our experiences as readers and the fictional experiences of characters within the epic. I outline below four

33. *Rhetoric* 1371b: *alla sullogismos estin hoti touto ekeino, hôste manthanein ti sumbainei*. Halliwell 2002, 189–200 emphasizes this common ground between *mimesis* and metaphor and points out that “in both cases it is not that a comparison is drawn or a similarity recorded, but rather that something is seen or comprehended *as* something else” (190). See also *Poetics* 1448b17ff.

34. Halliwell 2002, 174, who depends in turn on Ricoeur 1984, 52–87. On Ricoeur’s *Time and Narrative*, see Compagnon 2004, 94–96.

35. This aspect of the importance of *to eikos* holds despite the fact that the ways to present “the probable” can vary widely. See Eden 1986, 115–16 and Morgan 1993, 181–93, who argue that Aristotle’s probability is to be sharply differentiated from Ciceronian verisimilitude; Morgan convincingly distinguishes an understanding of the “probable” that depends on abstraction, with fiction part way between history and philosophy, and a “probable” persuasiveness established through verisimilitude, located in the elaboration of contingent details. Ricoeur 1977, 13 argues that “the triad of *poiêsis-mimêsis-catharsis*, which cannot possibly be confused with the triad *rhetoric-proof-persuasion*, characterizes the world of poetry in an exclusive manner.” Prendergast 1986, 50–51 attributes the conflation of the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* to semiologists such as Genette.

36. See Barthes 1970/1974, 167, 173, and particularly 184–85, 205–6. Barthes is concerned to highlight the textual underpinnings of literary “reality”: “the artist is infallible not by the sureness of his performance (he is not merely a good copyist of ‘reality’) but by the authority of his competence; it is he who knows the code, the origin, the basis, and thus he becomes the guarantor, the witness, the author (*auctor*) of reality” (167). But we can neither reduce *mimesis* to a naive rhetoric of transparency, nor limit it to a self-contained literary sphere. As Prendergast 1986, 248 reminds us, “the aesthetics of *mimesis* also entail a politics, and more particularly that there are important connections between the political and the literary meanings of the idea of ‘representation.’”

ways that the process of recognition connects the figurative resonances of the episode with the poem's narrative structures, so as to generate the complex effects of the double prophecy that are felt by the *Aeneid's* readers. All four forms of recognition are enacted at the moment when Aeneas recognizes Iulus' "tables." The interaction between these different ways of matching "this" with "that" makes the episode in Book 7 pivotal for understanding how the poetic authority of the *Aeneid* is interwoven with the subject matter of its story. The poem's construction of its fictive knowledge as in some way divine depends on this interplay of memory and recognition both for characters within its story and for readers.

i. One kind of recognition takes place for characters several times within the *Aeneid's* story world: events come true which have been predicted by seers, or by interpreters of divine signs. When this happens, characters are granted a hope that they can understand the divine story that they are living out. If characters in the poem have already met people, seen places, or experienced events through prophetic divine narratives, they are granted some comprehension of a divine plot when they reencounter these people and places in their lived experience. We see this when Aeneas greets the "land owed by the fates" (*fatis mihi debita tellus*, 7.120) after he hears Iulus' revealing joke. Mortals are encouraged to believe that their story is moving towards an already emplotted ending. So recipients of divine communications are able to match a "this" with a "that" as Aristotle's recipient of *mimesis* does—in fact, we could call this form of recognition a back-to-front *mimesis*, as experience comes to fulfill prior representation.

Sometimes the poem's language even echoes Aristotle's demonstrative pronouns in this inverted mimetic recognition, as Aeneas does when he declares, "this was that hunger" (7.128). Another example occurs a little later; at the start of Book 7, we learn how King Latinus receives divine messages warning him against a local marriage for Lavinia and announcing the foreign sons-in-law who will raise their name to the stars (7.96–101). Later, when Ilioneus, as ambassador of the Trojans in Latium, describes Aeneas and the reasons for the Trojans' arrival to Latinus, the king remembers this warning; Latinus recognizes that "this man" (Aeneas, as Ilioneus presents him) "was portended as his son-in-law, that man who had set out in accordance with the fates from a foreign home, and was being called to rule with equal authority," *hunc illum fatis externa ab sede profectum / portendi generum paribusque in regna uocari / auspiciis* (7.255–57).

A similar moment of recognition occurs in Book 3, when on their journey Anchises recognizes the landmarks and dangers which Helenus has warned the travelers about: “Here, doubtless, is that Charybdis: these are the crags, these the fearsome rocks that Helenus sung” (*nimirum hic illa Charybdis: / hos Helenus scopulos, haec saxa horrenda canebat*, 3.558–59). “That Charybdis” is the one described in advance by Helenus; now, as if map-reading, the Trojans match their informant’s descriptions with what they see.³⁷ Helenus’ prophecy serves primarily as guidance on the Trojans’ journey, in contrast with the divine imperative that Latinus confronts, but the inverted *mimesis* of prophecy, and the way the poem marks the moment of recognition with demonstrative pronouns, operates the same way in both instances.

It is no coincidence that many such moments of recognition bring the Trojans at least a semblance of safety or allow them to reach their destination. This is just what happens in the moment when they match up their doughy meal to the tables of Anchises’ prophecy. Even without the emphasis given by demonstrative pronouns, the Trojans’ search for a home—*sedes*—works according to the same logic of recognition throughout the poem. The repetition of the word *sedes* in a variety of senses has a linking effect similar to the riddle-solving element of matching a “this” with a “that.”³⁸ Divine communications have long promised an eventual resting place, and at the start of Book 7 the noun *sedes* and cognate verb forms occur with unusually dense frequency, connecting Latinus’ existing home with the Trojans’ new settlement.³⁹ We are told, for example, that with no male heir Lavinia alone preserved *tantas . . . sedes*, but equal emphasis is placed on the new *sedes* under construction by the Trojans (7.158). These links raise the question of how all these homes will be united as the eventual basis for Rome: the connection between Latinus’ and the Trojans’ *sedes* becomes most apparent when the Trojan representative Ilioneus explains to Latinus that they

37. These prophecies of Helenus also invoke an intertextual sense of recognition, since they list sights familiar because of the fame granted them by the *Odyssey*. Moreover, Helenus’ prophecy strikingly echoes Phineus’ directions in Apollonius (*Arg.* 2.317–407); Phineus is careful to speak out only what is *themis* (*Arg.* 2.311), since he owes his long torment by the Harpies to excessive prophesying.

38. See chapter 3.1 for further discussion of the term *sedes*.

39. 7.52, 158, 175, 193, 201, 229, 255, 431. In the first part of Book 7, *sedes*-vocabulary mostly denotes the Trojans’ or Latinus’ home (or “seat” perhaps in the sense of throne in 7.193), but it also refers to Allecto’s home in the underworld (7.324, 454, 562). Allecto, of course, will continue in a different form the Harpies’ polluting activities and make memories of Celaeno still more vivid. This language marks out the order of things, which locates the Furies in the underworld, but each instance of the term also shows Allecto’s freedom to leave that established place and contaminate the world above.

are requesting just a “scant home (*sedes*) for their ancestral gods” (*dis sedem exiguam patriis*, 7.229).

ii. The successful identification of tables and edible eating surfaces fits into a second category of recognition, closely related to the inverted *mimesis* of prophecy, which also occurs at crucial moments for characters within the *Aeneid*'s fiction. This second category is when puzzles are solved and confusion is corrected. Identities are revealed that were not initially evident. These problems and their solutions unfold in time, when a “this” turns up in a character's experience to match a previously mysterious “that.” So in *Aeneid* 4, Anna finds the unhappy solution to her sister's enigmatic arrangements (4.504–8, 634–40). Dido's suicide explains the meaning of her ritual preparations, and of the pyre that she had built for Aeneas in his absence: *hoc illud, germana, fuit? me fraude petebas? / hoc rogus iste mihi, hoc ignes araeque parabant?* (“Is this what that was, sister? You were deceiving me? / Is this what that pyre, what the flames and altars were getting ready for me?” 4.675–76). Anna had been cozened into seeing only the representational and ritual significance of Dido's preparations. Now she understands that Aeneas' sword is to be used for killing, and the pyre for burning a real human body. This category of recognition works alongside the prophetic recognition that permits the unfolding of the *Aeneid*'s divine story.

On one level, the kind of discovery made by Anna when she sees her sister's suicide naturalizes the flow of divine information in the prophetic recognition discussed above. Divine communications increase their persuasive force because of their resemblance to a normal ebb and flow of information, which works within a purely human framework. But the reverse is also true. The ritual preparations do far more than deceiving Anna. In the *Aeneid*'s narrative, the magic rituals lead towards the powerful language of Dido's curse, and suggest that its force is to be enhanced by her death. We as readers are more alive than Anna to the hints that something other than adherence to a Massylian priestess' advice is happening here.⁴⁰

iii. Both these kinds of recognition, which take place within the story world, are deeply involved with a third kind, which shapes how the poem works

40. 4.500–501: “Yet Anna does not suppose that her sister cloaks her death with her strange rites” (*non tamen Anna nouis praetexere funera sacris / germanam credit.*)

for readers. This third category is one that poems employ to help the story move forward and make sense. It occurs, for instance, when the narrative refers back to an earlier event that readers will remember. New information can be brought in at this point because it will be grounded in a part of the story that is already familiar. Recognition and recollection help us understand a new turn of events, so that we are more likely to regard the new material as plausibly established in the context of the story.

This combination of familiarity and new information helps in Book 12, for instance, at the moment when it is explained how Turnus' sword comes to shatter in his duel with Aeneas: "The *fama* is that in his headlong rush, when he was climbing into his chariot at the start of the battle, he left behind his father's blade, in his pell-mell hurry, and grabbed the charioteer Metiscus' weapon" (12.735–37). The exchange of swords described here is new to the reader, but we know about the moment of turmoil that would plausibly have led to such confusion, when Turnus is ablaze with sudden hope and darts onto his chariot, calling for his weapons and horses (12.324–27). The *fama* that he ended up with the wrong sword merges smoothly with the details that have already been given about this moment in the story.

One reason why it is so jarring for readers when Aeneas cites Anchises' table prophecy in Book 7 is because this category of narrative recognition breaks down here; a recollection is disrupted at exactly the moment that it occurs. We both can and cannot fit this event into the story that we have already been told.

iv. A fourth kind of recognition operative in the "tables" memory works within the social structures that operate both inside and outside the fiction. This is what allows readers to bring to the *Aeneid* their assumptions from outside the text—about the forms of authority wielded by Harpies or Fathers, for example—but it also allows the poem to participate in shaping these assumptions. It is the kind of recognition that helps generate a second level of figuration at the moment when Aeneas matches "this" with "that" hunger. It is not just that the content of the two prophecies differs, but that the two speakers bring with them a layer of signification that derives from assumptions about paternal authority set against feminine speech and defilement.

His son's joke allows Aeneas to match up an event with the prophecy that predicted it (the first category of recognition listed above), when it solves a riddle. This allows the episode to make his own story comprehensible for

Aeneas (the second category), and in doing so reinforces paternal authority (which enters into the fourth category), by confirming that father Jupiter has within his control the train of events on which Aeneas is traveling.

Ancient rhetorical theories (most famously Aristotle's *Rhetoric*) suggest that lucid speech makes listeners less likely to notice how a speaker is contriving to shift our perceptions.⁴¹ Any lack of transparency draws attention back to the speaker. When the solution to the riddle renews his memory of Anchises' words, Aeneas identifies the successful outcome of the Trojans' long search for a home as the successful completion of a protracted mutual obligation between himself, the fates, and the Trojan and Olympian gods: *salve fatis mihi debita tellus / uosque [. . .] o fidi Troiae saluete penates* ("Hail, land owed me by the fates, and you, hail, loyal *penates* of Troy," 7.120–21). Aeneas rounds off his acknowledgment of the omen by ordering libations to Jupiter and an invocation of his father (7.133–34). Subsequent rituals forge ties with the spirits of the place, including the land, Tellus (7.136–38), as well as honoring parents (7.140) and the great parental deities (Idaeon Jupiter and the Phrygian mother, 7.139). The *pater omnipotens* himself (7.141–42) obligingly makes his presence felt, and the thunder and display of light transmits collective knowledge to the Trojans: "right away there spreads among the ranks of the Trojans the rumor that the day has come on which they might lay down the city walls that are owed" (7.144–45).⁴² The conundrum's solution confirms for Aeneas and the Trojans that Jupiter and the fates are the ultimate source of their own story, in one of many moments of recognition that link their immediate experience to divine works of imagination.

So for readers, when Aeneas refers to "that hunger" as spoken by Anchises, the uneasiness provoked by the narrative jolt draws attention to the figurative effects of Aeneas' surprising solution to the prophetic riddle. These figurative effects have relatively little to do with the content of the enigma and the resemblance between tables and edible plates, and much more to

41. See especially *Rhetoric* 1404b: speech must seem natural, not artificial, if it is to be persuasive; otherwise listeners become suspicious, as if someone is scheming against them; Aristotle draws analogies with the suspicions aroused by mixed wines, and with the failure of an actor whose voice is always heard as too perceptibly his own.

42. *diditur hic subito Troiana per agmina rumor / aduenisse diem quo debita moenia condant*. The noise of the talk (*rumor*, not the more abstract *fama*) spreads as if to echo the noise of Jupiter's thunder in the preceding lines. While Aeneas specifies that the land is owed to him by the fates (*fatis mihi debita tellus*, 7.120), the Trojan rumor does not specify in which direction the obligation lies—a tiny ambiguity, given how often pronouns are omitted in Latin, but suggestive of the layering of mutual obligation between gods and men. The land may be owed to Aeneas (and Ascanius, 4.274–76), but the Trojan people will have the work of actually establishing and defending their *moenia*.

do with the many human and divine voices heard in the poem. The table prophecy does at least as much to tabulate divine power as it does to inform the Trojans of their homecoming.

Divine narratives operate with double-layered efficacy, both within the *Aeneid*'s story world and in establishing the force of the epic's rhetoric of fiction. Making sense of the epic's story, for both readers and characters, involves making sense of how cultural patterns and social configurations are freighted with divine authority. That is why the four kinds of recognition summarized above are so thoroughly entangled in the work of the poem. For readers, the interaction of these different kinds of recognition is less than harmonious. The solution of the table riddle bedevils us with still more enigmas as we try to match "this" prophecy (Anchises') with "that" (Celaeno's).

Here is one of those seams of fiction, where Celaeno's contaminating authority mirrors the complexity with which layers of figuration operate on readers. The dirt and disorder associated with Celaeno extend into the instability of the mimetic processes shared by readers inside and outside the story world of the poem. Unlike Eliot's pier-glass parable, the poem does not directly address readers at Aeneas' jarring moment of recognition. But Aeneas' cry calls us to look at the way "this" has become an unexpected "that," and draws attention to the join between different fabrics in the fictive knowledge established by the epic.



5

Matter out of Place II

Nisus and Euryalus

The *Aeneid* makes *pietas* central to the work of shaping *fama* materially as well as verbally, as we saw in chapter 3. *Pietas* valorizes forms of remembrance intense enough to cross boundaries of time, space, knowledge, and mortality. It helps *fama* cross these boundaries partly through a logic of restitution that relies both on ritual and rhetoric—or rather on the rhetoric of ritual. *Pietas* makes room for limitless exchanges between material “this’s” and figurative “thats.” The poem emphasizes how unstable the imaginative substitutions may become in this restitutive process. Chapter 4 examined some of the ways the *Aeneid* draws attention to this instability precisely through its medium *as* a poem, a verbal artifact. For visible and tangible objects to take their place in poetic *fama*, help is required from the minds of readers and listeners.

Ambivalence about what constitutes both *pietas* and *fama*—as well as ambivalence about the interaction of *pietas* and *fama*—emerges within the *Aeneid*’s story world, as well as through its poetic medium. After the madness spread by *Allecto* has permeated *Latium*, and the peace has been defiled (*polluta pace*, 7.467), the difficulty of recognizing (in Aristotle’s terms) a “that” in a “this,” or seeing “what properly goes with what” (as in Burke’s

description of piety), becomes increasingly painful—for characters within the fiction as well as for the poem's readers.

In Book 9, while Aeneas is finding allies at Evander's city Pallanteum, the other Trojans are trapped and on guard in their encampment. Turnus' Rutulian followers have set up a night siege, but one of the young Trojans on watch duty—Nisus—notices that the Rutulians' overconfidence has thrown them into sleepy and drunken disarray, and points this out to his beloved Euryalus. Perhaps now is the time for action? The whole Trojan community, populace and leaders alike (mentioned in the politically loaded formulation *populusque patresque*, 9.192), want Aeneas to know precisely how things stand. "If they promise you what I demand (since the *fama* of the deed is enough for me)," Nisus thinks aloud to Euryalus, "under that hill I see myself being able to track down the path towards the walls and city of Pallanteum."¹

For Euryalus' lover Nisus, when he first conceives the plan that leads to both their deaths, *fama* is to serve as reward. He desires for himself *fama* alone, as an abstraction—and he also wishes this *fama* to take the tangible form of gifts for his beloved (9.194–95). But the boy Euryalus is no less eager to buy *honor* with his life (9.206). Though Nisus lists reasons for him to stay safe (if things should go wrong, Euryalus might perform death rituals for him, and Nisus is anxious to avoid terrible grief for Euryalus' mother), these worries do not change Euryalus' mind.

When they tell the Trojan leaders about their intent, Aeneas' son Ascanius fulfills the hope Nisus had expressed on Euryalus' behalf, and translates *fama* into gifts that will honor the young men risking their lives amid the enemy lines to find his father. He marks out the value of their intentions by carefully imagining the rewards for their success. The prizes that Ascanius lists offer a kind of anticipatory commemoration of Nisus and Euryalus' actions. The gifts are worked out so precisely and so extravagantly as to alter the character of the venture. In the event, Nisus and Euryalus are distracted from the vicarious *pietas* of their mission to Aeneas. Instead they enter into the polluting bloodiness of a crazed attack on their sleeping enemy; eventually they themselves are found out and killed and their bodies are in turn defiled by vengeful dismemberment.

When Nisus and Euryalus come back to the Trojan camp, their bodies have been given over to their enemies' anger. Euryalus' grieving mother is confounded by the need to recognize "this" severed head as her son (*hunc*

1. *si tibi quae posco promittunt (nam mihi facti / fama sat est) tumulto uideor reperire sub illo / posse uiam ad muros et moenia Pallantea*, 9.194–96.

ego te, Euryale, aspicio? 9.481), when she looks out from the battlements of the Trojan encampment to see the young men's grim return from their attempted sortie. This suffering is what *fama* means to the unnamed mother. *Fama* is the messenger that rushes to her on wings and slips into her ears (9.473–75), just in case she should remain comfortably unaware of the news that angry Rutulians are confronting the besieged Trojans with their young heroes' heads on spikes.

The boy Euryalus' death and dismemberment in Book 9 can be cleansed temporarily by epic commemoration—the poet's voice transforms his spilled blood into the color of a poppy. But through his mother's lament, the poem also invites us to visualize a kind of mutual contamination. The fragmented body of Euryalus pollutes the Italian landscape, while that land estranges the body. The boy's mutilation, through which he becomes something so distorted that it is barely recognizable for his mother, also mirrors the unfamiliarity of the land that must become home for the Trojans in their exile.²

Women in classical cultures generally have a special role in memory, because of their particular responsibilities for many of the duties to the dead, including the communication of grief in the ritualized form of lamentation.³ The lament of Euryalus' mother in Book 9 becomes one of the fundamental constituents of the epic's imaginative remembrance and intensifies the displacement of matter out of place, calling into question just what it would mean for the living and the dead to find their home. The narrative of Nisus and Euryalus in Book 9 layers multiple perceptions of the story it tells. It offers readers the possibility of seeing the Trojan presence in Italy simultaneously as invasion and as continued exile, not a homecoming. So the *Aeneid* makes room for competing visions of *fama*, which shake any easy assumption that its heroes will in fact reach their place, either materially or in memory.

5.1 *Fama* evaluated

Nisus and Euryalus initially enter the *Aeneid*'s narrative in Book 5, where Trojan *pietas* takes the form of memorial games for Anchises. The distinc-

2. For comparison with the landscape that memorializes Palinurus, and with Deiphobus' empty tomb, whose recognizability contrasts with the disfiguration of the individuals in death, see Feldherr 1999, 119.

3. Many cultures strongly associate the gossip-borne elements of *fama* with women. It is still an open question, though, whether Roman culture is one of those that characterize rumor generation and scandal mongering as feminine.

tion of each competitor is marked out in tangible form by *pater* Aeneas as umpire and prize-giver. In this situation, such materialized *fama* is valued both as a legitimate end in itself (though the worth of this visible and tangible evaluation is not unquestioned, even here), and as an aspect of the *pietas* displayed by Aeneas and by the Trojan communities who commemorate Anchises' death.

The scenario in Book 5 foreshadows in many ways the story of Nisus and Euryalus told in Book 9. And even in Book 5 we are reminded that a competitive renewal of *fama* is not the only way to commemorate the dead. The Trojan women, away from the games, mingle lament for Anchises with grief over their past and future, as they look out at the sea's vastness and dread its unending prospect. Iris merely heightens and redirects the women's existing emotions and thoughts when she possesses them with Junonian madness and inspires them to set alight the Trojan ships, a spur to action that will direct their own future.⁴ The goddess' intervention precipitates a division between the fighting men who will carry on the quest for their Italian home, and the women who stay in Sicily to form part of Acestes' community.

The poem presents *fama* as a motive for attending and participating in the games.⁵ The narrative of Book 5 looks for continuity between the Augustan present and its imagined past. It helps contemporary Romans trace ancestral names to legendary competitors and project contemporary practices onto Trojan customs. But *Fama* can obscure the past as well as providing access to it. Aeneas promises that no one will go unrewarded in the contest in which Nisus and Euryalus compete; he enumerates the gifts that will go to all, as well as the special prizes for the top three. When the poem lists the runners of the race, however, we learn that there were many more participants than those named, but despite the gifts, shadowy *fama* buries them (*multi praeterea, quos fama obscura recondit*, 5.302). Aeneas' generosity is insufficient, evidently, to overcome the vagaries of time and memory.

Here in Book 5, we get to know Nisus and Euryalus as a Trojan equivalent to an Athenian couple, with Nisus as *erastes* (lover) and Euryalus as *erômenos* (beloved). Nisus is as remarkable for his *pius* love as Euryalus is for his beauty and fresh youthfulness (*Euryalus forma insignis uiridique iuuenta, /*

4. Panoussi 2009, 166–73 emphasizes the role of women's ritual lament in Book 5 and Book 9, arguing that the violence erupting into the memorial games “underscores the fragility of the new civic identity and its ability to stop reciprocal violence” (173).

5. The *fama* and *nomen* of Acestes (the ruler of the Trojan–Sicilian community where Anchises is buried) attract neighboring peoples to the celebrations (5.106); Acestes later provokes the aging boxer Entellus to fight by reminding him of his *fama* (5.392) and the spoils he has previously won; Entellus is drawn, though he pointedly denies being motivated, by *dona*.

Nisus amore pio pueri, 5.295–96).⁶ *Pius* here suggests above all a capacity for devoted remembrance, so Nisus' love for Euryalus is linked with the *pietas* of the games as death honors for Anchises. In this section of the poem, the adjective *pius* points towards the imminent foot race, where Nisus will not forget his love, helping Euryalus even once he himself is out of the running (5.334, *non tamen Euryali, non ille oblitus amorum*). The link between *pietas* and memory established by the race in Book 5 foreshadows the recompense Nisus will eventually make for temporary forgetfulness after he escapes their enemies without Euryalus in 9.386 (*imprudens euaserat hostis*). But *pius amor* also suggests purity unsullied by the gore (*cruor*) with which Nisus and Euryalus will be smeared—first when Nisus falls in a mixture of animal filth and *sacro cruore* during the footrace (5.333), and eventually when both end up as bloody emblems of the sheer destructiveness of battle (9.472).⁷

In Book 5, Aeneas' role as lavish gift giver helps clean up the mess from the race in which Nisus and Euryalus compete. Nisus runs faster than everyone else, but loses his victory when he finds himself face down in the slippery filth left over from the sacrifices that began the celebrations. For Euryalus' sake he carefully fouls the next best runner, who is indignant at losing his prize to Euryalus, but Euryalus' *virtus* is valued more highly for being placed in a lovely body and his becoming tears elicit sympathy all round.⁸ Aeneas

6. The depiction of the pair as *erastes* and *erômenos* does more than evoke debates over the role of erotic ties in strengthening military courage (see, e.g., *Symposium* 178c–179b). It also complicates the function of the memorial games in Book 5, given their obvious intertextual connection with the funeral games organized by Achilles for Patroclus in *Iliad* 23 (Achilles and Patroclus are not presented in Homer as lover and beloved, but are regarded as such in classical Athens, e.g., Aeschines *against Timarchos* 133, 142–50): the games proleptically memorialize Nisus and Euryalus' deaths. Otis 1964, 273–74 emphasizes the links between Book 5 and Book 9.

7. It has been pointed out to me that this sacrificial *cruor* also marks a shift in poetic decorum from the *Iliad's* games, which the *Aeneid* cleans up a little; in the Homeric equivalent to this fall, dung (*onthos*) from the sacrificial animals gets right into the mouth of Ajax, the son of Oileus (*Il.* 23.781), who takes it as evidence of Athena's affection for Odysseus; Nisus falls headlong in a mixture of dirt and blood, but the emphasis is more on the slip than on the filth. This issue of decorum may explain why (unlike Athenian tragedies) the *Aeneid* rarely comments explicitly on smell as one of the senses through which characters perceive material forms of pollution.

8. The Iliadic intertexts are unusually pressing in this scene, partly because the *Aeneid* here comes closer than usual to borrowing Homeric cultural and poetic norms surrounding gifts and prizes as an expression of value and a means of communicating *kleos*. Nisus' experience recalls Antilochus' foul of Menelaus in *Iliad* 23's chariot race as well as Oilean Ajax's fall in sacrificial dung and blood (it is a pity that Latin and Greek do not seem to share the English pollution metaphor of a "foul" for athletic violations). But there are some key differences from the Homeric competitions whose memory blends with the *Aeneid's* footrace: the most striking changes are the outcome of the dispute over prizes and the lack of divine intervention. In the *Iliad*, Menelaus and Antilochus resolve their own problem, as Antilochus admits that Menelaus' horses were faster and presents him with the prize mare awarded by Achilles, which Menelaus in turn gives to Antilochus. Their redistribution of the prizes becomes an opportunity for the participants to show their generosity alongside Achilles,

solves the problem by finding more gifts for both those who have fallen. The playful wrangling over prizes emphasizes the arbitrariness of the rewards given to the runners. The fact that the prizes exceed or bypass their recipients' achievements measures the generosity of Aeneas, who must cement his authority as Trojan *pater*, now that he no longer shares his position as leader with either Anchises or Dido. His arbitrariness expresses in material terms the boundlessness of the *pietas* that celebrates the memory of his own father. But above all, at this point in the poem it becomes a means of eliminating the figurative and actual muck that has sullied the race.

In Book 9, after we are reintroduced to Nisus and Euryalus, the young men's *ardor* is presented from the outset as a problem of knowledge.⁹ Their story begins with Nisus' famous question: *dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt, / Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?* ("Is it gods who give our minds this burning feeling, Euryalus, or does each person's own terrible desire become a god in his eyes?" 9.184–85).¹⁰ Nisus here asks one of the great questions of the epic imagination. As so often, the "either/or" question can be rephrased with a "both/and" answer: an epic's divine framework is both a figurative permutation of human energy and a way to convey how the human imagination reaches beyond the limits of its understanding.¹¹ When Nisus diagnoses his own urge as *dira cupido*, he echoes the Sibyl's rebuke to Palinurus (6.373), which was in turn an intensification of the way she characterized Aeneas' desire to seek knowledge in the underworld (merely *tanta cupido* in 6.133). Nisus implies both that the desire itself is transgressive ("strange," "terrible" — perhaps even "foul"), and that this transgressive quality is precisely what makes it tempting to attribute divine authority to the urge.

whereas in Sicily Aeneas alone acts as donor. Equally striking is the absence of Athena, who fouts Ajax to grant Odysseus victory in the Iliadic footrace. The poetic logic of making Euryalus' success an entirely human outcome works on many levels (he is no Odysseus, and in *Aeneid* 5 the role of prayer is instead highlighted in the boat race) but also looks forward to the explicit absence of the gods from the narrative of Nisus and Euryalus in Book 9.

9. Nisus raises the question of whether humans artificially drive themselves past impassable boundaries by claiming divine influence and divine authority, not so much rationalizing their emotions as externalizing them. Nisus' question points to the kind of imaginative rationalization for which Seneca will a few decades later have her nurse attack Phaedra (*Phaedra* 195–97): the externalization of an emotional drive (in particular *cupido*) as divine intervention. On the other hand, for a careful account of specifically Stoic views of the complex relations between impulse, reasoned knowledge, and moral responsibility, see Graver 2007, especially chaps. 3, 4, and 5.

10. For further discussion of the implications of *dira cupido* (including its parallels in Lucretius' *De rerum natura* Book 4), see Fowler 2000a, 96–97.

11. Lyne 1987, 66–67 calls Nisus' question "over-simple" as it presents the problem "in unreal 'either/or' terms"; as Lyne points out, "when the gods are observable, what happens is a blend of the two alternatives."

The subtlety with which divine agents such as Cupid and Allecto are able to blend their effects into human experience makes Nisus' question a meaningful one for the poem's readers. The energy prompting the sortie is depicted in the language of human desire, but the vocabulary of *ardor* and *cupido* links Nisus and his passions with characters such as Dido (especially 1.695, 4.101) and Turnus (9.760–61), whose emotions, perceptions, and choices are presented explicitly to readers as motivated by gods.¹² The whole episode emphasizes Nisus' restless mind as much as the deeds themselves. The poem connects this restlessness with the uncertainties caused by the limited reach of human perception in a story world filled with imperceptible divine forces.

The transgressive quality that Nisus identifies at the start becomes realized throughout the episode. Its excesses heighten the problems of making tangible the imaginative and commemorative urges that the Trojans experience. In military terms, the main objective is to get information past the Rutulian lines to the absent Aeneas. But Nisus conceives the endeavor less as a solution to the problem facing the besieged Trojans than as an outlet for his feelings and imagination: *aut pugnam aut aliquid iamdudum inuadere magnum / mens agitat mihi, nec placida contenta quiete est* ("to launch either a fight, or something big, my mind has for a while past been driving me, and it's not satisfied with calm repose," 9.186–87).¹³ The thought has its own volition as it springs up in him (*percipe* [. . .] *quae nunc animo sententia surgat*), and he describes the anticipated result with the verb *uideor*, which hovers between a simple supposition ("I suppose that I can . . .") and a visualization ("I seem to . . ."): *tumulo uideor reperire sub illo / posse uiam ad muros et moenia Pallantea* ("under that hill I see myself being able to track down the path towards the walls and city of Pallanteum," 9.195–96).

Nisus justifies the plan inspired by his transgressive desire in terms of its story-generating potential and as a tangible expression of his love for Euryalus. He attaches a proviso when he outlines his intent to Euryalus: "if they promise you what I demand (since the *fama* of the deed is enough for me)" (*si tibi quae posco promittunt [nam mihi facti / fama sat est]*, 9.194–95). And although Nisus wishes to keep Euryalus safe and to use his own solitary

12. The lack of explicit intervention from the gods is generally attributed to the fact that Nisus and Euryalus exist on a different fictional plane from the legendary characters that dominate the poem. Their story seems to be ungrounded in the kind of tradition that anchors the genre's claim to a form of immortal knowledge passed down through the human memory of successive generations.

13. See especially Fowler 2000a, 98: "Nisus feels inspired to launch himself on something great just as a poet—or the poet—is inspired to begin an epic, the genre whose watchword is *magnum* ('big') and whose subject is pre-eminently *pugnae* ('fights')."

achievement to celebrate him, Euryalus' imitative desire to purchase *honorem* with his life (9.206) is in keeping with Nisus' original aim of glorifying his beloved. For Nisus, the significance of the envisaged mission stems equally from its ability to produce his own *fama* and to denote materially the value he sets on his beloved Euryalus.

These are both aspects of the same commemorative aspiration. The Trojan elder Aletes makes a similar distinction to Nisus'; he tries to measure the worth of the young men's courage with tangible *praemia*, but he declares that the finest rewards will be given by the gods and by their own characters (*pulcherrima primum / di moresque dabunt uestri*, 9.253–54). Both Nisus and Aletes closely link the evaluative function of the material gifts with less tangible aesthetic rewards. But Aletes then backtracks somewhat, to add that Aeneas, *pius* as he is, will indeed make good on whatever rewards are not god-given, and Ascanius, too: *tum cetera reddet / actutum pius Aeneas atque integer aevi / Ascanius meriti tanti non immemor umquam* (9.254–56). In this formulation, Ascanius' unending remembrance of the pair's worth directly matches his father's *pietas*. The gifts which Ascanius then begins lavishly to promise (9.263ff.) are designed by him to embody the meaning of Nisus and Euryalus' projected task. Yet his climactic offering is not a thing, but a promise of filial care for Euryalus' mother, for whom Euryalus requests help and consolation once he is gone. With this gift alone is it possible to mirror the tie of parent and child that gives the message-taking from Ascanius to Aeneas the special significance allotted it by the Trojans.¹⁴ Even the posited communicative function of the sortie expresses emotion of this kind; it enacts *pietas* and measures Aeneas' value (9.261–62) as much it serves a strictly military end.

Ascanius clearly hopes that itemizing lavish riches will depict materially the value of the mission, but the list instead alters the nature of that mission. One obvious Iliadic predecessor to this list, Agamemnon's offerings to Achilles, dwells most specifically on objects that have been taken through Achilles' own achievements: the gifts serve to commemorate his past as well as to set a particular value on the role that Agamemnon expects him to play in the future.¹⁵ Ascanius' list, by contrast, perversely memorializes the future, extending Aletes' characterization of Ascanius as *meriti tanti non immemor*

14. The narrative brings home this point by telling how Iulus, described as a kind of mirror image of Euryalus (*pulcher* as he is), sees the resemblance to his *pietas* towards his father, and to his father's own *pietas* (9.293–94).

15. And in *Iliad* 10, the most obvious intertext for this episode, Dolon's hoped-for prize is directly connected with the task at hand.

umquam (9.256, “never heedless of such worth”). The gifts bring their own complex set of evocations: they connect the Trojans’ past experiences with their future hopes, but have little to do with the original aims of Nisus and Euryalus. We are invited to imagine Ascanius’ careful list of gifts as an attempt to replicate what *pater* Aeneas achieves in Book 5 when he steps fully into the paternal role left empty by Anchises’ death. Here in Book 9 Ascanius tries both to communicate with his father and to stand in for him. Aeneas’ sometimes arbitrary generosity provides a flood of cleansing *pietas*. He tidies up the messiness of the athletic struggles through rewards that would reshape the memory of the contests, much as the contests themselves give a new direction to memories of Anchises in Book 5. But in Book 9, Ascanius does not seem to understand that he cannot clean up the filth of war by emulating his father’s gift giving.

Here the pictured rewards, though grandiose, turn out not to be arbitrary at all: they actively shift the direction of subsequent events, as past, present, and future are brought together in the list of objects Ascanius imagines giving. Nisus has already subtly shifted the emphasis of the mission in promising that they will be seen again soon *cum spoliis ingenti caede peracta* (“with spoils and after dealing tremendous slaughter,” 9.242). Ascanius looks to the past for gifts that recall Aeneas’ past conquests (9.264) and Dido’s hospitality (9.265–66). He then turns to the future, imagining the conquest of Italy, and focusing on Turnus’ horse and its splendid trappings: *iam nunc tua praemia, Nise* (“already your rewards, Nisus,” 9.271). He extends his ambitious generosity to Latinus’ lands.

When Ascanius eyes the possessions of Turnus and Latinus, he turns the venture from a message-taking expedition into one of conquest. The Trojans’ attempt to order the *fama* of the sortie by making its worth known in material terms has the effect of producing a recursive cycle of transformed matter and metaphor. Abstract value is translated into material objects, which are themselves remembered or imagined; these have a figurative significance that exceeds the meaning initially intended for them by Ascanius and the other Trojans. That excess of imaginative significance becomes materially realized in the subsequent wild killings of Rutulians by Nisus and Euryalus, which the *Aeneid*’s narrative both imagines and commemorates. This bloody realization of excess on the part of Nisus and Euryalus then inspires further reciprocal violence, which likewise works as a material form of communication. The Rutulians avenge and commemorate their comrades’ deaths, not only killing but also defiling the bodies of the killers, Nisus and Euryalus, and displaying their disfigured heads.

5.2 Dirty fighting

The instability of Nisus and Euryalus' story continues as they begin to murder sleeping Rutulians; the fluid interaction between materiality and metaphor becomes extended in the narrative imagery through which readers experience the attack. Both Nisus and Euryalus unleash a frenzy that becomes a polluted extension of the unidentifiable imaginative longing (*ardor*) that led Nisus to propose the undertaking. As a bridge between Nisus' killings and the madness of Euryalus, the poem likens the fighter to a lion, who chews on sheep, and, like *Furor* itself, roars from a mouth smeared with blood (*fremit ore cruento*, 9.341).¹⁶ As Hardie notes, "the simile is Janus headed."¹⁷ At first it seems to sum up Nisus' violence, but the narrative goes on to compare the Nisus-lion's actions with the slaughter done by Euryalus (*nec minor Euryali caedes*, 9.342). Euryalus is on fire, mad (9.342–43).

As so often in epic, the simile suggests that readers can best grasp *fama*-worthy extremes through category-confusing verbal transformations, which express the bestiality of such violence. While each of these comparisons retains its power to shock, they are frequent enough in epic to constitute a strand of the genre's characteristic normative excess. Tales of battle do not usually explore the possibility that the gore and filth of violence in battle may bring ritual pollution: such fears rarely become overt unless there is a crisis over burial, or if blood-stained fighters handle (or must expressly avoid handling) sacred objects.¹⁸

More often the threat of pollution is submerged into the perceptual transgression experienced by readers. We see men figuratively metamorphosed into lions or wolves, and are asked to imagine in material terms the fighters' mental and moral departure from humanity. Though Neptune has prevented the *pii* Trojans from being made into animals by Circe's magic

16. See Putnam 1965, 52 on the repetition of *fremit ore cruento* from the description of *impius Furor* in Book 1, and its appearance again in Book 12 when Turnus too becomes a lion. Putnam also points out that the decapitation of Remus, with its echoes of Priam and its foreshadowing of what will happen to Nisus and Euryalus themselves, is among the most vividly described of the pair's excesses (9.332–34).

17. Hardie 1994 on 9.342 points to Catullus 68 (in which similes, metaphors, and narrative are fabulously piled up and merged) as a precedent for this kind of two-headed comparison.

18. Turnus' purification in the river Tiber in 9.815–18 provides an interesting exception to this pattern, foreshadowing the self-contained—but this time unwilling—escape of Turnus by water after Juno lures him away from battle with her illusory Aeneas in Book 10. As Putnam 1965, 62 points out, Turnus' escape from the Trojans' fortified encampment contrasts with the experiences of Nisus and Euryalus earlier in Book 9, which in other ways parallel what happens to Turnus. The Tiber welcomes Turnus and sends him back on its soft waves to his comrades, *abluta caede* ("after washing away the slaughter," 9.818).

(7.15–24), the poet’s voice does not let them off so easily.¹⁹ In 9.328 the narrative of one of the briefly individualized deaths recalls the purificatory expiation that augurs assist in when a community attempts to end or prevent a plague: Rhamnetes cannot ward off destruction with augury (*sed non augurio potuit depellere pestem*). Using the word *pestis* to describe the augur’s death at the hands of Nisus hints at the pollution incurred by this kind of slaughter.²⁰

In the great send-off, spoils had been an indicator of due remembrance (*Ascanius meriti tanti non immemor umquam*, 9.256) and of epic’s ability to unite many temporal dimensions. But in the midst of his madness, caught in the present tense of his *cupido*, Euryalus becomes *immemor* (9.374)—heedless of how the objects he has taken may communicate against his will by gleaming in the night’s glow. Nisus tries to recall the pair to their communicative mission. It is too late—Euryalus is being swept away by an excess of killing and desire (*nimia caede atque cupidine*, 9.354), a telling hendiadys.²¹ Euryalus prefigures Turnus’ end by drawing destruction upon himself with his shining spoils. From this point on, the only way to recapture the *fama* sought is in the beauty of death. Once Euryalus has been captured, Nisus realizes that a rescue attempt is unlikely to succeed, and envisages hurrying upon a *mors pulchra* (9.401), which will match Euryalus’ beauty (9.179, 433) as well as his death.

The narrative then emulates this imitative desire. Nisus does not let his gaze linger on Euryalus’ death; instead he immediately seeks to match it (9.437, *at Nisus ruit*), and dies in killing the man who has killed Euryalus.²² The poem does look at Euryalus, but also, in a sense, turns its gaze away as it reimagines the scene with a transformative simile:

uoluitur Euryalus leto, pulchrosque per artus
 it cruor inque umeros ceruix conlapsa recumbit:
 purpureus ueluti cum flos succisus aratro
 languescit moriens, lassoue papauera collo
 demisere caput pluuiam cum forte grauantur.

19. Putnam 1995, 104–12 emphasizes how far Circe’s role reaches into Book 7 and beyond, and observes the Circean characteristics of the metamorphic power that Juno enacts through Allecto’s *furor*.

20. *Pestis* (“plague”) is often a term for “death” in general, but the context highlights the implication of pollution here. Cf. Lennon 2010, 431ff. on Cicero’s use of *pestis* to refer to Catiline and Clodius.

21. The phrase works both as hendiadys and as a full pairing: “desire for slaughter” or “slaughter and desire.”

22. Reed 2007, 28 carefully discusses the question of whose gaze creates the poppy simile.

Euryalus is submerged in death, and along his beautiful limbs runs gore, and his neck rests, slipping on his shoulders: as when a crimson flower cut down by the plough fades as it dies, or poppies with wearied neck have let drop their heads when by chance they are weighed down by the rain. (*Aen.* 9.433–37)

The description admits *cruor* (9.434), before cleaning away the gore by comparing the death to unplanned, chance brutalities inflicted on flowers. Poppies neither bleed nor mete out bloody deaths to others.²³ This cleansing vision is undercut, however, by the grotesque allusiveness of Euryalus' prophetic name, which he shares with the boxer who ends up spitting blood and letting his head loll (poppy-like?) in *Iliad* 23.697–99.²⁴

Moreover, the narrative swiftly returns to the gore that the flower imagery had partly washed away, though only after the poet's famous apostrophe and (conditional) pledge to prevent the two being erased from Roman memory: *Fortunati ambo! si quid mea carmina possunt, / nulla dies unquam memori uos eximet aeuo, / dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum / accolet imperiumque pater Romanus habebit* ("Fortunate, both of you! If my songs have any power, no day will ever drive you from time's memory, while the home of Aeneas keeps its place by the Capitol's motionless rock and while the Roman father holds command," 9.446–49). Long-lived—or perhaps immortal—Roman power is here expressed in an ambiguous formulation, which hovers between a political configuration on the human level and a mythical depiction of divine control. Immediately after the apostrophe, we are directed to another form of commemoration, when a grim recognition scene takes place among the Rutulians. The group of men who had

23. Imagery associating blood, poppies, and fragmented bodies has a special resonance for the generations since World War I, above all in communities that display and renew memories of the armistice and the war's sufferings by wearing poppies made of paper or cloth. "Poppy day" reenacts each winter the blooming of summer flowers, which brought new life to the defiled fields of Flanders and France, with their broken bodies and broken land. The structure of the Vergilian flower simile, however, as it first presents a crimson flower cut down by a plough, then poppies weighed down by rain, emphasizes the disjointed fragility of the damaged flowers and boy, as much as the color of the flowing *cruor*.

24. See also Johnson 1976, 59–62 on the conspicuous artificiality of the flower simile, with its Homeric and Catullan intertexts; "these verses," he suggests, are "in a certain way [. . .] too beautiful even for the climax of the dreamlike adventures of Euryalus and Nisus; they want almost to be excerpted from their surroundings, to be pondered over, repeated" (61). Johnson refers to the Nisus and Euryalus episode as the Vergilian *Doloneia*: the response of some ancient (and indeed modern) critics to the primary *Doloneia* of *Iliad* 10 inverts, in a sense, the temptation to excerpt described by Johnson. One way to clean up the polluting presence of Dolon's story in the Homeric narrative is to discard it as inauthentic.

happened upon Euryalus in the forest, while they mourn the leader whom Nisus has killed, take the bodies and the spoil to the Rutulian encampment; both groups of Rutulians then piece together what has happened when they throng towards “the place fresh with still-warm slaughter,” and find “streams foaming with blood,” as in the Sibyl’s fearsome predictions (9.456; 6.87).²⁵

In the eyes of the Rutulians, the contaminating filth of war expresses the horror of what has been done to their friends by Nisus and Euryalus before the young Trojans were themselves killed. To add to the copious traces of spilled blood, shared narratives give the Rutulians new energy for fighting (“they sharpen their battle-wrath with varied rumors,” *uariisque acuunt rumoribus iras*, 9.464), and they turn their mourning into imitative revenge. They mimic the dismembering foulness of the previous night’s slaughter by fixing the heads of Nisus and Euryalus on spears; they follow these like standards (*quin ipsa arrectis [uisu miserabile] in hastis / praefigunt capita et multo clamore sequuntur / Euryali et Nisi*, 9.465–67).

But as the poem tells of the Rutulians’ anger, even before it has fully revealed how their emotion is horribly rematerialized in this symbolic revenge on the dead Trojans, the narrative begins to turn its attention to the surviving older Trojans who will have to confront the sight, warning, “pitiable to look at!” (*uisu miserabile*). For those well-toughened followers of Aeneas (*Aeneadae duri*, 9.468), the faces of Nisus and Euryalus are all too recognizable (*nota nimis*), even when they are oozing with decay (*atroque fluentia tabo*, 9.472).

Euryalus’ mother, however, sees her son’s decaying face as a kind of riddle. He is changed almost beyond recognition by the visible signs of death pollution and by the experiences that have taken his body out of her reach. The poem asked us to see in the dead Euryalus a flower cut down by the plough, or a poppy brought down by heavy rain. Now the dead are

25. When observing how the *Aeneid* oscillates between filth and beautified glory in its treatment of killing, one becomes especially aware that (as James Tatum reminds us) “until barriers of technology are breached, so that we at last can smell and feel as well as hear and see what happens to human bodies in war, we cannot imagine what people have to endure” (2003, 132). Tatum connects the sensory ignorance of noncombatants with the gradual numbing of both physical and moral sensitivity that so often occurs for those in the midst of the horrors, which he explores in E. B. Sledge’s memoir of his experiences in the Pacific during World War II (*With the Old Breed*). The conclusion of this chapter in Tatum’s *The Mourner’s Song* is worth quoting at length here: “Sledge was outraged by the mutilation and dishonor meted out to his fellow soldiers, and to begin with he was capable of as much disgust at his fellow marines’ similar treatment of the enemy. But by the time his memoir nears its end, in the trench warfare of Okinawa, it is only his own comrades’ deaths that move him; dead Japanese did not bother him ‘in the least.’ Then he too was finally caught in the Yes and No of war, the contradictions that are as impossible for us to untangle as the feelings we have about Achilles strumming away on the lyre from Eëtion’s city” (2003, 134–35).

transformed again, as we are urgently made aware that perceiving youthful warriors as flowers is only one way of remembering them (though the poem will offer another such analogy for the dead Pallas in 11.68–71). Another kind of commemoration is possible, one that distrusts such beautifying discourse. Euryalus' mother does not see her son as retaining his looks in the figurative loveliness of immortal *fama*. Instead she asks, *hunc ego te, Euryale, aspicio?* ("Is this you, Euryalus, that I see?" 9.481).²⁶

Her questions give the story a new figurative turn, partly through the echoes of tragedy that reverberate in this episode as in so much of the poem. Oliensis observes how Euryalus becomes a dismembered Pentheus, with a difference: here recognition becomes difficult for the mother, not because of Dionysiac possession, but because her alienation from her son's body alienates her simultaneously from conventional ways of seeing.²⁷ The logic of the Euripidean recognition scene is inverted. Recovering from her possession by Dionysus allows Euripides' Agaue to recognize the head she holds as something more familiar than the lion that her maddened imagination had seen as a hunting trophy. The *Aeneid's* narrative instead presents increasing disorientation. There is none of Agaue's gradually dawning sanity. Readers, too, are implicated in this metamorphic disorientation, because the poet has earlier given us a vision like Agaue's, when first Nisus and then in turn Euryalus became a lion in 9.339–42.

Nisus finds in death the "calm repose" that he had previously rejected, and for which the unburied Palinurus yearns in Book 6.²⁸ Sophocles provides further tragic intertexts in this episode. Fowler has noted that Nisus' *Liebestod* recalls the death-marriage of Sophocles' Antigone and Haimon (*Antigone* 1238–40).²⁹ But the simultaneous death of Nisus and Volcens (the Rutulian leader) also recalls Polynices and Eteocles.³⁰ When Euryalus' mother sees her dead son's face, detached from the rest of him, she imagines his inaccessible body lying as spoil for dogs and birds. This is hardly a novel complaint for an epic lament, but here it evokes Sophocles' *Antigone* again,

26. And in this sense, of course, she is rejecting a metaphorical transformation that has deep roots in the epic (and lyric) tradition; see especially *Iliad* 8.306–8.

27. Oliensis 2009, 71–72.

28. *tum super exanimus sese proiecit amicum / confossus, placidaque ibi demum morte quieuit*, 9.444–45; cf. 9.186–87: *aut pugnam aut aliquid iam dudum inuadere magnum / mens agitat mihi, nec placida contenta quiete est*.

29. Fowler 2000a, 97.

30. Allusions to the Theban myth are all the more potent, of course, because the *Aeneid's* Italian war is a proto-civil war for Romans, shadowed by the fratricide to come, when Romulus will kill Remus and provide the paradigm for the intrafamilial killings later to taint Rome's future—these are the patterns that will make Statius' *Thebaid* a Roman epic in every sense, despite its Greek setting.

and the fragmented corpses of Thebes' attackers (in particular Polynices, who has invaded his own too familiar land), which soil the altars of the gods when birds drop them after scavenging the unburied dead. The tragedy makes this ritual pollution the material instantiation and summary of all the other transgressions that have defiled the family of Oedipus. For Euryalus' mother, however, her son's body as matter out of place is all the more widely astray because he lies as spoil for animals in an unknown land—the dogs and birds that will eat him (and scatter him still further) are Latin! (*heu, terra ignota canibus data praeda Latinis / alitibusque iaces!* 9.485–86).

She links the horrifying transformation of Euryalus' body into dirt with this territorial alienation. Her job as mother has lost its meaning: she cannot care for his body in death and wrap him in the cloth she has worked for him. With his face in its barely recognizable state of decay, she associates his body with the unfamiliar territory where it lies. We have already heard that she was the only one of the Trojan mothers to pursue their journey through to this point; most of the women have remained in Sicily in Book 5, after the crisis when Iris fed on their resentment of the unending travels so as to instigate their burning of their own ships.³¹ Iris (disguised as the Trojan woman Beroe) had correctly diagnosed the women's frustration that "Italy we pursue—as it runs away" (*Italiam sequimur fugientem*, 5.629). Now Euryalus' mother asks:

'quo sequar? aut quae nunc artus auulsaque membra
et funus lacerum tellus habet? hoc mihi de te,
nate, refers? hoc sum terraque marique secuta?'

"Where I will follow? Or what land now holds your joints and torn-off
limbs
and mangled death? Is this all you bring me of yourself,
son?³² Is *this* what I followed by land and sea?" (*Aen.* 9.490–92)

Instead of pursuing an Italy that flees from her, she reconceives that fated journey as a quest for the shreds of her son. She turns to her dead son for

31. Nisus regards her as unique for her courageous willingness to follow her son in his entire journey; he cites his concern for her potential sorrow as a reason for dissuading Euryalus from sharing his exploit (9.216–18, *neu matri miserae tanti sim causa doloris, / quae te sola, puer, multis e matribus ausa / persequitur, magni nec moenia curat Aestae*).

32. Or "Is this the news you bring me about yourself, son?" The ambiguity of the Latin allows her question to refer simultaneously to the disfigured head as *hoc*, all that Euryalus has left of himself for his mother, and to the news that this head brings her of his end.

guidance as if he were a riddling oracle, like the oracles questioned by Aeneas during their seven years of wandering.

The only recourse left for maternal *pietas* is for her, too, to emulate her son's death. But instead of following Euryalus, she doubles Nisus, for the second time, demanding of her enemies imitative *pietas* that will replicate Euryalus' death so as to match her own sorrow: *figite me, si qua est pietas, in me omnia tela / conicite, o Rutuli, me primam absumite ferro* ("Pierce me, if there is any sense of reverence, against me hurl all your weapons, Rutulians, me first destroy with your blade," 9.493–94).³³ Her plea for death uses many of Nisus' words (as well as echoing Aeneas' prayer in 5.687–92). 9.493–94 come close to repeating 427–28, just as her questions about the location of his corpse in 490–91 repeat the bewilderment that Nisus expressed a hundred lines earlier, when he asked, *qua te regione reliqui? / quae sequar?* ("in what quarter did I abandon you? or where am I to follow?").

The *fama* to which Nisus had aspired (9.195) has become the news-bringing *fama* (*nuntia fama*, 9.474) that slips into the ears of Euryalus' mother. Her lament participates in the poem's acts of remembrance, but she threatens to paralyze the forward movement of the epic, as the men's strength for battle is broken (9.499–500). Her speech is incendiary, threatening to continue the work of the companions she left in Sicily, so she is bundled away before she can set alight more powerful emotions. While in Book 5 Ascanius was told that "the ships were ablaze" (*incensas [. . .] nauis*, 5.665) because of the Trojan women's madness, here the Trojan men grab the mother on the command of Ilioneus and Ascanius "as she sets ablaze grief" (*incendentem luctus*, 9.500).

Euryalus' mother (who is unnamed except in terms of that relationship), reverses the rhetoric predominating in the connections between topography and ritual earlier in the poem, where varied uses of *sedes* linked "home" with "final resting place." We can no longer rely on the logic by which excessive grief embeds Misenus, Palinurus, and Caieta all the more firmly in the Italian landscape through the commemoration granted by their names.³⁴ In Book 3 Polydorus' body became one with the land where his murdered corpse is placed, and drove the Trojans from Thrace. Now, in Book 9, Eury-

33. Hardie 1994 *ad loc.* suggests that the primary sense of *pietas* here is "human pity," and links the inversion of core values here with the more extreme form that such inversion takes in Lucan's epic.

34. Euryalus' mother is remembered only in terms of other names—the "wide sea" of her son, or Ascanius' mother Creusa, who was lost at Troy; Ascanius has promised Euryalus that she will become his own mother, lacking only the name Creusa (*namque erit ista mihi genetrix nomenque Creusae / solum defuerit*, 9.297–98).

alus' body *is* Italy for his mother, but is still out of reach, just as the land had been during those seemingly interminable years of wandering.

Though the narrative refers to the mother as out of her mind with grief (*amens*, 9.478), the poem leaves open the question of which of these competing visions of the dead may be saner: the brief metamorphosis, which removes the stains of war by turning Euryalus' corpse into an image of inhuman beauty? The defiling of the bodies as the Rutulians replicate the violent deaths they mourn? The stern neutrality of the hardened Trojans, who are silently moved and try to contain the force of emotion? Or the mother's agonized riddles?

At any rate, the poem allows the mother to close Nisus and Euryalus' story, so that her words become the final round in a series of transformations in which *pietas* operates through the complex—and at times unharnessed—rhetoric of imaginative substitution. In her wild lament, she expresses her inability to complete the series of exchanges required by *pietas*. Instead she imagines herself gradually extending the recognition of her son's estranged body, to work out in the most horrifying material sense what goes with what, piecing together for proper mourning and burial the missing corpse, which she envisages as scattered in unknown lands.

The *Aeneid* regularly shows rumors flying and grief unmoored among both men and women, equally effective in providing poetic energy. But women's pain is more often depicted in its raw harshness, because the ideological means to channel the excess of their suffering into a celebration and commemoration of *uirtus* ("manliness" or simply "excellence") are not readily available.³⁵ Georgia Nugent has elegantly articulated this difference: "The men seem capable of performing a marvelous alchemy that transmutes the seemingly senseless pain endured and inflicted for an elusive future goal into the fine stuff of heroism and civic virtue."³⁶ As Nugent points out, "women possess no such philosopher's stone. Rather than absorbing and somehow transforming pain, the women of the *Aeneid* very often simply reflect it back into the community." The *Aeneid* repeatedly puts forward oppositions, contrasts, and conflicts marked by gender, and with almost equal consistency undoes its own work in establishing gender-based polarities.³⁷ But the principal norms established for excellence in Roman thought

35. See again Tatum 1984 on the intertextual work performed by Sophocles' *Ajax* in the Dido narrative. *Fama* and its Greek equivalents propel madness and suicide for both, but in Sophocles' tragedy Odysseus is able to make the subsequent mourning rituals into a means of re-establishing some kind of social cohesion, whereas grief for Dido in Carthage makes her madness infect her city.

36. Nugent 1999, 253. See Nugent 1992 for a sensitive reading of the lament scene in Book 5.

37. See, for example, Paul Allen Miller 1989, 58 on the "ambiguous nature of the feminine, implying both the order of continuity and the disorder of passion."

are not overturned. By the end of Book 12, Turnus values *virtus* and his reputation higher than life, and begs Aeneas not for survival but for a proper burial, while his previously human sister Juturna—an immortal with the perceptions of a woman—finds nothing but pain in the thought that she must live forever with her grief.

In the Nisus and Euryalus episode, this difference is voiced through the layering of remembrance offered by the poem for the dead lovers. The poet's voice briefly takes over the potentially purifying work of mourning, but the mother then gives utterance to the inadequacy of that poetic cleansing. If some collective memory is established within this story world or by the poetic narrative, it is neither monolithic nor stable. The poem suggests that reifying *fama* would not diminish its mutability.

The conflict within Book 9's narrative over how to remember the dead crystallizes the difficulties of trying to align ritual and geopolitical order by putting matter in its place. These difficulties are heightened by Allecto's contaminating madness in Book 7, but (as we saw in chapter 3) they are not wholly attributable to Juno's unleashing the forces of Tartarus in the world of the living. Even with the expert Sibyl presiding over the handling of life and death, *fas* and *nefas*, Book 6 has already shown that *pietas* may heighten more than it settles underlying problems in ascertaining what might constitute "order."

The episode imagines the creative force of a series of transactions. Unformed desire is exchanged for decisive action; promised gifts of imagined plunder serve for moral evaluation; immediate killings and spoils stand in for more distant strategic benefit; the death and disfigurement of the killers provide some recompense for the slaughter they have carried out. Epic's commemorative discourse not only acknowledges material dirt but also exacerbates problems of pollution by heightening conceptual ruptures in the ritual economy of *pietas*. Ambivalence about the interaction between *pietas* and *fama* sharpens the contrast between characters who long to see and touch *fama*, transmuted into something recognizable as a substance (gifts or spoil), and those who are brutally confronted with its materiality in the filth of death.

The madness within the story world becomes part of the *fama* generated by the narrative. The work of metaphor, with its ability both to evoke materiality and to offer a substitute for it, gives readers the opportunity to share both the excesses and the limitations of the perceptual blending experienced by the epic's characters. Actions and events have repeatedly been reshaped into heightened imaginative forms. These are then equally steadily beaten back into a painfully inadequate—yet still inaccessible—materiality.



6

The Order of Metamorphosis

In the story of Nisus and Euryalus, readers can determine no more confidently than Nisus whether to envisage his *ardor* as given by the gods, or if his own strange yearning is made a god by his imagination (*dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt / Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?* 9.184–85). The gods' pervasive influence during the rest of the *Aeneid*, often undetected by mortals, licenses us to imagine a story world in which perceptions are constantly subject to divine interference, though the *fama* that Nisus longs for is granted by the poem on an entirely human level. The poet calls for no divine assistance when pledging that—if his songs have any power—no day will banish the pair from the remembrance of ages to come (9.446–49). And unlike so many of the mental disturbances suffered in the *Aeneid*, the grief-filled madness that afflicts Euryalus' mother has no stated cause other than the *fama* which slips into her ears (9.473–78). No gods give her orders; none attack her with blazing torches or with poison. But by this point in the poem it is unclear if we are to conceive of anyone involved in the Italian war remaining unaffected by Allecto's contamination, after we have seen the Fury spreading poison through spoken and unspoken commands—through sight, hearing, and touch—in Book 7.

This perceptual and imaginative confusion between divine influence and human experience underlies the *Aeneid's* claim to divine authority for its human rhetoric.¹ It enables the epic to invoke the knowledge of the gods while acknowledging human ignorance. The poem's fictive knowledge brings to life the past while confronting readers with fearsome doubts about what makes up present experience.

Though the term *fama* takes us to the spoken word, the epic imagines *fama* operating through sight and the other senses, as much as through speech.² The work of *fama* within the *Aeneid's* story is bound up in the problems the poem raises about how persuasive authority makes itself felt consciously and unconsciously. If we examine *fama's* operations in the context of these broader questions, we may better understand the blend of recognizably human persuasion and uncanny divine power that the *Aeneid* summons as the defining elements of its rhetoric of fiction.

Readers of Book 1 have already known Venus to use a strange mixture of visual and verbal communication, both reassuring and unnerving her son as she directs him towards Carthage and Dido (I discuss this scene in chapter 7.1). Then in Book 2, we hear directly from Aeneas of earlier commands uttered by his mother. "Look!" Venus tells Aeneas as Troy burns, "I'm about to snatch away all the cloud which now, blocking your view, dulls your mortal sight and dankly blurs your surroundings; as for you, don't be at all frightened of your parent's orders or refuse to obey her instructions."³

Venus' commands repeat previously ineffectual imperatives spoken earlier by the dead Hector in a dream. Hector tells Aeneas to rescue himself and Troy's *sacra*, but his appearance communicates a very different message, and does so more powerfully than his words. The sight of the dead man ignites blazing grief in Aeneas, which makes him all the more susceptible to the infectious *furor* sparked by the sights of burning Troy once he awakes. Aeneas calls on his listeners, too, to "look" at both the flames and the contagious emotions of that night when he speaks out the unspeakable memories of the city's ruin. It is as if Troy's *fama* demands for its sustenance that listeners share in the same imitative *furor* that Aeneas describes as overwhelming Troy and her people.

1. In *Masters of Truth* Détiennie analyzes the relationship between storytelling, divine authority, and social configurations as changing over time through a process of secularization in archaic and classical Greece; he argues for a shift towards "social ratification" (1999, 105) and away from a concept of the poet's truth in which the "truth" established by poetry is enacted through language.

2. The poem generally avoids directly evoking smells and tastes, but many of its descriptions leave it open to readers to imagine the taste of food and the smells of filth and decay.

3. *aspice (namque omnem, quae nunc obducta tuenti / mortalis hebetat uisus tibi et umida circum / caligat, nubem eripiam; tu ne qua parentis / iussa time neu praeceptis parere recusa)* (*Aen.* 2.604–7).

Although the *Aeneid* asks its readers to imagine the gods reaching far beyond human language or understanding, the poem situates that mysterious force within the recognizable frameworks of human rhetoric. Divine power within the *Aeneid*'s story world makes itself felt through many of the same rhetorical means as the medium in which that divine power is imagined—the poetic narrative. That is no more than one would expect. Yet the poem builds not only its storytelling but also many of the developments in its story around this mutually sustaining entanglement between human communication and imagined divine authority.

This entanglement lies at the core of the ways the *Aeneid* presents *fama*'s poetics. It is not just that *Aeneid* figuratively claims the transformative force of divine imperatives for its *fama*. The poem also raises the question of whether to imagine such imperatives as reliant on the same perceptual and rhetorical foundations as commands uttered in human settings. So in the second half of this chapter, I turn again to Book 9. There I explore an imperative whose metamorphic efficacy is unimaginable in purely human terms, though it is prefaced by a careful, collaborative rhetorical analysis by Jupiter and Cybele.

6.1 *Vidi ipse*

On the night of Troy's fall, when his mother gives him a new clarity of vision, Aeneas has already been intently watching his city's destruction. He punctuates his narrative with invitations to his audience to do the same (*ecce*, 2.270, 318, 403, 526). Throughout Book 2, his storytelling shares with the Carthaginians a sense of wonder—not only his horrified wonder at how his home was destroyed, but the wonder he felt on reaching Carthage, when he discovered that the new city already held visual tokens of his people's *fama* and cried to Achates "look!" at Priam in Juno's temple (*en Priamus*, 1.461).⁴ He stresses his double-role of spectator and participant, as he creates a kind of inverted *ekphrasis*. The artistry of that inverted *ekphrasis* is shared between Aeneas' narrative and the collaborative acts of destruction performed by humans and gods.⁵

4. Putnam 1998, 39–40 also emphasizes the strong continuity between Aeneas' grief-filled viewing of the temple pictures and his own storytelling in Book 2.

5. 2.403ff. is especially striking; Aeneas calls to his listeners to "see" Cassandra being dragged off, an event narrated with intertextual echoes of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (Iphigeneia is already verbally associated with Cassandra in the tragedy). The passage echoes the Aeschylean chorus' similar efforts at *enargeia*, and Aeneas' *ecce* does a job comparable to the chorus'

In his narrative Aeneas both relives his experience and distances himself from it as a work of art: *uidi ipse*, he says: “I myself saw,” or, since Latin makes no distinction between aorist and perfect, “I myself have seen,” an intensified version of the repeated *uidi* asserted by Vergil’s didactic poet-farmer in *Georgics* 1.⁶ He demands of his audience that they share his direct, visual recreation of the past, yet his interjections also serve as reminders that his audience has access only to his words, not to the sights he remembers. His listeners cannot see the Trojan past with the mind’s eye, as he can. They can “see” only newly created memories, the new additions to Trojan *fama* that he brings to them, which will merge with their own perceptions.

Until Venus takes command, Aeneas’ perceptions that night direct him towards two conflicting kinds of behavior: imitative *furor*, and a paralyzing awareness of what the raging violence may mean for his home and family. His reminder to the audience that he himself saw these events, *uidi ipse*, introduces the climactic scene where Neoptolemus pollutes and destroys Troy’s imperial power and sacred hearth:

uidi ipse furentem
caede Neoptolemum geminosque in limine Atridas,
uidi Hecubam centumque nurus Priamumque per aras
sanguine foedantem quos ipse sacrauerat ignis.

I myself saw raging
in slaughter Neoptolemus and, doubled-up on the threshold, the Atridae,
I saw Hecuba and their hundred daughters-in-law and Priam among the
altars,
defiling with blood the flames which he himself had consecrated.
(*Aen.* 2.499–502)

While Aeneas describes Priam as the polluter of his own sanctity, in the tale to come Neoptolemus (Pyrrhus) will be the one to contaminate *pietas*, both (as Priam puts it) by defiling a father’s sight with the murder of his son (*patrios foedasti funere uultus*, 2.539), and by seeking a kind of infamous

explicit comparison of Iphigeneia’s appearance to images in paintings (*prepousa tōs in graphais*, *Ag.* 241–42). On Aeneas’ role as both spectator and participant, cf. Smith’s (2005) use of Merleau-Ponty’s *voyant-visible*.

6. *Georgics* 1.193, 197, and 318. As Thomas 1988b, 121–22 emphasizes, the didactic speaker also uses the first person plural (1.451, 472; 2.32, 186–87), as well as the second person singular (1.365). See also Horsfall 2008 on 2.5, 499, and 554–58 for discussions and further bibliography on autopsy in tragic messenger speeches (Athenian and Roman) and in the historiographical tradition.

fama in the world of the dead, when he instructs Priam to be sure and report the full story of his degeneracy to his father Achilles.

Aeneas' whole narrative shows that *furor* is infectious—indeed, that it contaminates through the gaze, as Priam suggests. After watching Priam's death, at first Aeneas is numbed by the thought of his own father, wife, and son, who enter his mind like ghosts; then *furor* distracts him as he turns from his mind's eye to the sights around him; his gaze falls upon Helen before he has begun to make any move towards his home and family. Venus steps in at this point, and shows her son directly why he must give up on the idea of punishing Helen, stop trying to defend his city, and instead start on the journey towards a new Trojan foundation that will set in motion the *Aeneid's* story.

Venus' orders end by repeating almost verbatim what Hector's ghost had already told Aeneas when the fighting in Troy first started, *eripe, nate, fugam finemque impone labori* ("Snatch an escape, my son, and put an end to your toil," 2.619). Hector's first words were *heu fuge, nate dea, teque his* [. . .] *eripe flammis* ("Ah, run, goddess-born, and snatch yourself from these flames!" 2.289). Venus even fills out the logic of Hector's vocative *nate dea*, first by using the vocative *nate* herself, and then in the following line by promising her protective escort (*nusquam abero et tutum patrio te limine sistam*, 2.620). Her echo marks out the ineffectuality of Hector's commands as commands, not only because Aeneas needs to be told twice to save himself, but also because it takes Venus to impose closure on the *labor* that begins with Hector's appearance.

Hector instructs Aeneas to end his work as a defender of Troy itself and to begin his new labor as protector of Troy's *sacra* and founder of a new settlement. Instead of achieving this fresh start, however, his commands mark a renewal of Aeneas' fighting energy and involvement in his present and past life at Troy. Hector explains to Aeneas the uselessness of fighting at this juncture (2.291–92). His instructions are clearly reasoned—if mildly insulting to Aeneas' military prowess—but this reasoning has no effect on Aeneas.

The vision of Hector signals the beginning of a particular madness, which Venus scornfully notes with her question *quid furis?* (2.595). Aeneas asks his listeners to share his confused, nightmarish encounter with Hector: *in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / uisus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus* ("in my sleep, look! before my eyes, in deepest sorrow Hector seemed [or "was seen"] to enter my presence and to pour out generous tears," 2.270–71). His description dwells on the horrible details of Hector's appearance, with all the wounds that make him material for lament in the

Iliad, and soon enough Aeneas is weeping too: *ultra flens ipse uidebar / compellare uirum et maestas expromere uoces* (“Of my own accord, weeping, I myself seemed to greet the man and to utter sorrowful words,” 6.279–80).

The vocabulary of grief is the same for both the dead and the living mourner. Aeneas uses the word *maestus* and forms of *fleo* to report both Hector’s and his own behavior. Hector’s emphatically described filth suggests that this emotional contamination is just one aspect of the death pollution brought by the apparition. At the same time, Aeneas’ narrative leaves it unclear whether he dreams up the sorrow he sees in Hector to equal his own grief, or if Aeneas’ emotions are instigated by Hector’s appearance. Passive forms of *uideo* are used to make sight itself part of the confusion of that turbulent night; here as so often, Latin makes no firm distinction between “seeming” and “being seen.”

While Hector’s instructions have little or no immediate effect as orders, they do serve a poetic function for Aeneas’ narrative and for the *Aeneid*: as part of the *fama* generated by the *Aeneid* they build a bridge towards a Roman future, while for the poem’s hero they spell out the *fama* he claims for himself as *pius Aeneas* (1.378) and *Troius Aeneas* (1.596), a man devoted to his city’s memories and his city’s gods.⁷ By situating these instructions in a series of sights that provoke in him grief, anger, and madness, Aeneas highlights the most prominent function of his *pietas*, which is to guide him as mourner and carrier of memories for his people.

Although being *pius* means being sensitive to divine commands—including care for ritual purity—*pietas* also, in many ways, characterizes the involvement in his city’s suffering that prevents Aeneas from keeping himself clear of contamination.⁸ This contamination partly results in Aeneas being materially polluted by the slaughter he participates in that night (as we are reminded when he tells Anchises that he cannot handle sacred objects because of this death pollution, 2.717–20). Yet it is above all a mental state, conveyed through a series of metaphors that show how emotions are spread through sensory perceptions.

The immediate impact of Hector’s dream visit is to sensitize Aeneas, even before he fully wakes, to the turmoil in the city. While the Greeks destroy

7. Smith 2005, 61 argues that Hector’s apparition is one of those visions from the past that “provide a rationale for Rome’s existence and for the actions that anticipate or preserve that existence.” He admits that “the vision of Hector disorients Aeneas” (68), but nevertheless argues that “vision surpasses words, pointing towards the hero’s destiny and the telos of Rome’s foundation” (61). It is important, however, to acknowledge that the *furor* of Troy’s last hours becomes integral to that telos.

8. See Grillo 2010 on Aeneas’ forgetfulness in Book 2, above all in the sequence of events leading to the loss of Creusa.

Troy from within, Aeneas' perception of the attack is filtered through grief. Troy becomes a city of lament before the specific sounds of battle become distinguishable to Aeneas: *diuerso interea miscentur moenia luctu, / et magis atque magis [. . .] / clarescunt sonitus armorumque ingruit horror* ("With widely scattered grief meanwhile the walls are mingled, and more and more [. . .] the sounds grow clear, and the bristling of arms comes battering," 2.298–301).⁹ After he shakes off sleep, his stupefied confusion continues. Aeneas helps the Carthaginian audience visualize this confusion with an extended simile. The simile begins with fire attacking a wheat field (2.304–5). At that stage the image seems designed simply to help his listeners grasp what is happening to Troy—a few lines later Aeneas describes the fire raging through the city (2.310–12).

But then the simile shifts to a torrent coming from a flooded hill stream, destroying the work of the surrounding community (2.305–7). The focal point of the comparison pivots around the herdsman listening in ignorant bewilderment to the sound of destruction: *stupet inscius alto / accipiens sonitum saxi de uertice pastor* ("There stands dazed in his ignorance, hearing the sound from the topmost summit of a crag, a herdsman," 2.307–8).¹⁰ In the simile, as in this whole section of the narrative, the emphasis falls on what Aeneas can perceive through the senses, and on the difficulties he faces in turning this into guidance as to how he should act.

Next in his narrative, Aeneas tells how his senses fully absorb the sights and sounds of the city in flames; his mind figuratively imitates what he sees and hears.¹¹ Any remaining rationality is defeated by the impulse to join the fighting; his spirits burn:

arma amens capio; nec sat rationis in armis,
sed glomerare manum bello et concurrere in arcem
cum sociis ardent animi; furor iraque mentem
praecipitat, pulchrumque mori succurrit in armis.

Arms, out of my mind, I grab; and it's not so much that fighting is logical,
but rather that my spirits burn to pull together a group for war and
together with my comrades
make a dash for the citadel; frenzy and anger drive my intent
headlong, and the beauty of dying in arms sweeps over me.
(*Aen.* 2.314–17)

9. See Austin 1964 *ad loc.* on why it is so hard to translate *ingruit* adequately here.

10. West's classic 1969 article explores this as one of his multiple-correspondence similes.

11. See Lyne 1989, 22–24 on the verb *ardeo*.

Once the treachery of the Greeks is revealed to him in the light of the burning city (2.308–12), grief and mental paralysis turn to outright madness; the sound of weapons infects Aeneas with the need to take up arms. We have just been told of a man on fire: *iam proximus ardet / Ucalegon*, 2.311–12. When Ucalegon burns, the man's name evidently stands in figuratively for his home, but the figure of speech highlights the fluid interchange between emotion, metaphor, and material destruction. The implications of the earlier simile shift again. Once Aeneas' numbness has passed, the fire and flood become forces of madness.¹²

Well before Venus directly reveals the gods as agents in the destruction of Troy, Aeneas depicts divine powers as agents prompting him to battle. At first this depiction is oblique; he personifies metonymically as Vulcan the fire raging through the city (*Volcano superante*, 2.311), which begins by taking down buildings, and then overwhelms his perceptions. Then he runs into Panthus, the priest of Apollo. Panthus does the work of *fama* (though the word is not used here); he mingles a simple report of what is happening in the city with commemorative lament, and with a report of divine doings that resembles the imaginative insights allowed to epic narrative. He updates Aeneas both about the physical condition of the burning, defeated city and about the gods' decision: Jupiter has surrendered it to the Argives (2.325–27). Panthus at that moment becomes a kind of stand-in for Aeneas at various stages of the Book 2 narrative; as Aeneas will eventually do, he is taking responsibility for gods and family (*sacra manu uictosque deos paruumque nepotem / ipse trahit*, 2.320–21); like Aeneas just then he is *amens* (2.321).¹³ His speech achieves a persuasive efficacy that Hector's lacked: Aeneas says that Panthus' words work alongside the powers of the gods, the grim Fury (*Erinyes*), and the sheer noise to call him into the fire and into the fight.¹⁴ Just then, the roar of battle reaches hyperbolic heights (*sublatus ad aethera*, 2.338), described in a phrase resonant with the sky-reaching language of *fama*. Aeneas explicitly connects the noise with the call of the Fury, who summons him not only to madness, but also to the remembrance of revenge.

12. The flood in the simile draws the woods headlong (*praecipitisque trahit silvas*, 2.307); frenzy and anger drive Aeneas' mind headlong (*furor iraque mentem / praecipitat*, 2.316–17).

13. To confirm the parallels between the two men, Aeneas commemorates Panthus for his *pietas*, which provides no cover for him, any more than the visible tokens of his priesthood do (2.429–30).

14. *talibus Othryadae dictis et numine diuum / in flammis et in arma feror, quo tristic Erinyes, / quo fremitus uocat et sublatus ad aethera clamor* ("By these words of Othryas' son (Panthus) and by the will of the gods, / into flames and into arms I am swept, where the grim Erinyes, / where the roar calls me, the cry raised aloft to the sky," 2.336–38)

The forces of remembrance and vengeful madness come together again—again following a moment of paralysis for Aeneas—later in the cycles of imitative violence driving the Book 2 narrative, after Pyrrhus' attack on Priam's palace. Now Aeneas sees Helen lit up in the glare of the burning city, and is tempted to exact vengeance from her, perceiving her as the shared Fury of Troy and of her own nation: *Troiae et patriae communis Erinys* (2.573).¹⁵ The phrase again expresses the contaminating madness experienced by Aeneas: he sees her both as a hellish agent of destruction for two nations, and as the Fury who prompts him to punish her. That is the point when Venus—at least temporarily—steps in and puts an end to the appeal of the Erinys' call for revenge.

Venus' revelations are not so much a way to help Aeneas understand the meaning of her commands, though they do that too, as to confront him with the full reality of the gods' power.¹⁶ Her instructions are not benevolent maternal advice—they are the orders of a god whose siblings are using their strength alongside the Greeks to tear apart a city built by gods.¹⁷

The clear vision that Venus grants her son in Book 2 is enacted through her words as much as through any other aspect of her divine power. *Aspice*, she commands, and then goes on to describe what he is to see: *hic, ubi disiectas moles auulsaque saxis / saxa uides, [. . .] Neptunus muros magnoque emota tridenti / fundamenta quatit totamque a sedibus urbem / eruit* ("here, where you see scattered masses and rocks torn from rocks, [. . .] Neptune shakes the walls and the foundations stirred by his great trident and tears up the entire city from its roots," 2.608–12). Describing Pallas' fierce effulgence she commands Aeneas again: *respice* (615). After telling him that the father

15. The twin Atridae and Neoptolemus with his *tristia facta* (2.500 and 548) are visualized by Aeneas as Erinys in human form, but this identification emerges from verbal hints rather than an explicit label (for the *geminos . . . in limine Atridas* of 2.500, see the *geminæ . . . cognomine Dirae* at Jupiter's throne in 12.845). This forms part of the famously disputed passage; the reasons why earlier readers would have wished to bracket it seem bound by a very specific understanding of what it means to be Vergilian (or perhaps Virgilian); Conte 1986, 196–207 provides a particularly convincing argument for retention.

16. Hershkowitz 1998, 80–81 sees this scene as much as the beginning of didactic enlightenment as it is an enactment of Venus' divine control. As a whole, my analysis of *furor* and control in the *Aeneid* is indebted to Hershkowitz; I share her view that "the discourses of madness and of divine order, for which *furor* and *fata* serve as key terms, are not wholly distinct, and at times can only be differentiated with difficulty, if at all" (124), but her analysis perhaps overstates the extent to which these discourses can be separated. For instance, she suggests that Aeneas (unlike Turnus, for instance) is depicted as primarily "sane." But that is not something that we can take for granted, given how much time in the poem Aeneas spends possessed by *furor*, or out of his wits with fear and bewilderment.

17. In particular Aeneas stresses that Neptune is tearing down his own work (2.610–12 and 625).

himself (*ipse pater*) is in charge of all this—but not, apparently, granting him a sight of the father—she instructs Aeneas to snatch an escape (*eripe, nate, fugam finemque impone labori*, 615). Preceding the imperatives that instruct her son to flee the city are imperatives that both order and grant a new kind of sight.

On one level, this is simply a useful poetic technique: within the story world Aeneas too is using words to conjure visions for his Carthaginian audience. There are good rhetorical reasons why Venus should tell him exactly what he is to see. But when these visions are themselves loaded with such particular force, a normal storytelling strategy becomes new and strange—a reminder of just how much narrative techniques of this kind can do even in fictions that leave aegis-bearing gods out of the picture.

After recounting Venus' presentation and commands in direct speech, Aeneas expresses what he sees only through analogy. He compares the collapse of Troy to farmers putting their energies to bringing down an ancient ash tree. He vividly elaborates the simile, and he describes the details of watching the gods bring down Troy only through this comparison and through Venus' commands—other than that we are given merely the sketchiest outlines of Aeneas' own vision.

Apparent dirae facies inimicaque Troiae
 numina magna deum.
 Tum uero omne mihi uisum considerare in ignis
 Ilium et ex imo uerti Neptunia Troia:
 ac ueluti summis antiquam in montibus ornum
 cum ferro accisam crebrisque bipennibus instant
 eruere agricolae certatim, illa usque minatur
 et tremefacta comam concusso uertice nutat,
 uulneribus donec paulatim euicta supremum
 congemuit traxitque iugis auulsa ruinam.

Terrible shapes loom up, set against Troy, the shapes of
 Heaven's transcendent will.

Then indeed all Ilium seemed to me to be subsiding
 into the flames, and Neptune's Troy quite overthrown.
 Imagine a veteran ash tree upon some mountain top,
 when woodsmen are working to fell it, with blow upon blow of their axes
 vigorously hacking: the tree seems always about to fall;
 It nods, and the topmost leaves are shivered by each concussion:
 Little by little their wounds master it, till at last

with a great groan it has snapped off and fallen full length on the hillside.
(*Aen.* 2.622–31)¹⁸

So our most direct experience of the sight of Troy's divine destruction comes from the picture presented by Venus, which is embedded in a series of commands, narrated in direct speech by Aeneas. In his simile Aeneas does for his listeners something very like what Venus has done for him. He too projects images for the mind's eye with his words.

Aeneas seems to tell Dido and the other Carthaginians to look directly at reality to picture the felling of a tree, so that they can appreciate through analogy what he saw the gods doing to his city. In this sense he resembles Venus telling him to look at the sight of Troy's destruction. But as Venus frames this sight in terms of the divine imperative that it endorses, so it is by means of Aeneas' words that listeners are both to see the tree-felling and grasp its significance.

The apparently everyday image of the tree is to be overlaid by the divine destruction of Troy. The competitive work of the farmers, the blows of the axes, the groaning sound made by the falling tree: all these could be summoned through imagination or memory from the listeners' existing stock of experience—which may include literary and other imaginative memories. Now Aeneas' listeners and the *Aeneid's* readers are in turn given the opportunity to join future sights (imaginative or actual) of trees and tree-fellings with visions of gods tearing apart their creation. Aeneas' blended vision of tree-felling and city-felling makes itself available for readers' storehouse of memories, becoming part of a new mental reality. This new fictive knowledge elides the memories laid up for us by the poem with future as well as past experiences.¹⁹

Venus' notion of a cloud obscuring the effects of divine power on human lives informs most of the *Aeneid's* plotting. Almost all the significant human action in the poem takes place—either consciously or unconsciously—in some relation to a set of divine commands. The poem both imagines the cloud and lifts it for readers.

18. This translation is a slightly adapted version of C. Day-Lewis (1986); I borrowed it mainly because I found irresistible his substitution of an imperative ("imagine") for *ueluti* in 2.626, but also because he matches so well in English the contrast between the vivid colors of the tree analogy and the very plain language that precedes the simile.

19. Dido's way of absorbing these memories into her perceptions of Aeneas resembles Livy's explanation of Rome's divine origins (*Ab urbe condita* 1.6–7). Like a sophisticated late first-century b.c.e. thinker (though not necessarily the systematic Epicurean described by Dyson 1996 and Adler 2003), she seems to take the story of his divine birth and visions of the gods as a vivid figurative expression of his status (4.12–13, 376–80).

6.2 Cybele and Jupiter's order

In *Aeneid* 9 the great mother (*Magna Mater*) Cybele changes the shape of the Trojan ships and saves them from being burnt by Turnus and his men. She does this by giving an order: *uos ite solutae, / ite deae pelagi; genetrix iubet* ("As for you, go unmoored, go as goddesses of the sea; the mother orders you," 9.116–17). Cybele's command both describes and transmits the divine power that enables her to turn manufactured wood into swimming goddesses. The poem only partly delineates where readers are to imagine this power originating and exactly how Cybele shares it with Jupiter.

The transformation scene in Book 9 stems from a crisis that recalls the inferno of Troy's conflagration in Book 2, and also resembles another Jovian intervention, when the same ships were saved from fire and from out-of-control *furor* among the Trojan women in Sicily in *Aeneid* 5. In Book 9, as in Book 5, Iris as Juno's aide instigates the destruction; in both scenes the poem's usual fire imagery as a metaphor for emotional flare-ups transmutes itself into physical flame, in a reversal of the movement in Book 2, where blazing houses kindle blazing emotions.²⁰ Turnus does not merely carry flames to set alight the Trojan ships—they emanate from him ("ablaze, he fills his grasp with burning pine," *manum pinu flagranti feruidus implet*, 9.72). When he is foiled in his attack on the Trojans by their determination to stick behind a barricade while Aeneas is away, the poem presents his recourse to fire as the direct enactment of his flaming passion. While Turnus gazes at the Trojan fortifications his anger ignites and his resentment burns (*ignescunt irae, duris dolor ossibus ardet*, 9.66). He and his men equip themselves with black firebrands (*facibus* [. . .] *atris*, 9.72); their smoking pine torches—with Vulcan's help again—carry pitchy light and quasi-volcanic ash to the stars (*piceum fert fumida lumen / taeda et commixtam Volcanus ad astra fauillam* 9.75–76). The attack takes on a cosmic dimension as the Rutulians become human embodiments of the forces of hell unleashed by the Fury Allecto in Book 7, when she thrust a torch smoking with black light in Turnus' breast.

So the poet first prepares readers for the cosmic significance of this crisis by making clear that saving the ships from fire means preserving them from this wild demonic force, then involves the Muses in the flashback account of Jupiter's bargain with Cybele and the subsequent transformation. "Speak," the poet demands, "the source of belief for this event is ancient, but its *fama*

20. See Hardie 1994 on 9.66; he connects this with the more general (Lucretian) tendency in the *Aeneid* for figures of speech to be realized in the events narrated, which is discussed by Hardie 1986, 232–33.

is everlasting" (*dicite: prisca fides facta, sed fama perennis*, 9.79). The invocation promises for the episode a special programmatic role in epic's task of establishing memories as perceptual channels that join present, past, and future.

The poet pointedly demands divine involvement in the continuity of *fama* just before showing how Jupiter and Cybele work out the efficacy that may be achieved by figures of speech; they wield their divine power through careful rhetorical analysis. It is striking, also, that this flashback comes at a moment in the narrative when Turnus' flames have just conflated the violence of emotion and of physical destruction.²¹ The poem here triangulates and partly combines material, rhetorical, and divine modes of change.

The *Aeneid's* readers are told that Cybele's ability to perform her transformation has been won long in advance of this moment. When Aeneas was building his ships, a negotiation between the Magna Mater and her son Jupiter culminated in his promise to order the ships to be goddesses: *magnique iubebo / aequoris esse deas* ("I will order them to be goddesses of the sea's great expanse," 9.101–2). The deal that Jupiter has come up with depends on another kind of ordering: he sets in order the ways that figurative language can present and shape the relations between god and mortal. But when the metamorphosis comes, once the Trojans are at war in Italy, Jupiter and Cybele's shared responsibility makes the fantastic occurrence emblematic of the way authority in the *Aeneid* is wielded. Speech, interpretation (conscious and unconscious), and divine force work together.

Cybele and Jupiter's conversation closely examines the relationship between the sacred and the human in ships that have been made by mortals, but from wood cherished by a goddess. Cybele asks that her trees should have a safe journey. Jupiter interprets her open-ended request as a slippery means to make mortal and divine the same. He draws out the full implications of her speech in such a way as to define more fully what he perceives her as asking, and responds by simultaneously limiting and extending the efficacy of her language.

21. Fantham 1990, 104 suggests that Vergil uses the proem to "set the approaching crisis apart." Like Feeney, I take the proem not as a means to detach this episode from the poem, but rather as a way to give the transformation scene programmatic weight. Discussing this assertion of both *fides* and *fama*, Feeney 1991, 186 links the episode with the *Aeneid's* special epic efficacy in its ability to sustain *fama* across time: "The poem faces head-on the fact that it is a fiction, yet one that has its own achieved power, effect, and truth: [. . .] it can flaunt the implausibility of the transformation of the ships (9.77–122), knowingly conceding that such things are no longer to be 'believed,' but asserting that the *fama* of the event has lasted, and will last, through the ages (9.79)." For Feeney, the flagrant implausibility of this metamorphosis (when judged according to everyday, naturalistic standards) works its own active part in making the poem's fiction into a tradition.

Right after summoning the Muses, the poet takes us back to the moment when Troy had just fallen:

tempore quo primum Phrygia formabat in Ida
 Aeneas classem et pelagi petere alta parabat,
 ipsa deum fertur genetrix Berecynthia magnum
 uocibus his adfata Iouem:

At the time when first on Phrygian Ida Aeneas was giving shape to his fleet and was getting ready to head for the depths of the sea, she herself, the Berecynthian mother of the gods, is said with these words to have addressed great Jupiter: (*Aen.* 9.80–83)

With the word *fertur* (“is said”) the poem continues to use the language of *fama*, embedding in tradition the conversation between the gods. These introductory lines signal some of the key themes to come in the negotiation. The verb *formabat* emphasizes the process of giving material shape to the fleet.²² The interwoven word order *genetrix Berecynthia magnum* / [. . .] *adfata Iouem* gives to Jupiter the adjective *magnus* that is often associated with Cybele, but reminds us of the association with the Magna Mater by placing it alongside *genetrix Berecynthia*, hinting at the complexities involved in the division of power between the mother goddess and Jupiter. The verb for Cybele’s speech, *adfari*, often occurs in the *Aeneid* when someone is speaking the poem’s story into existence.

Cybele tells Jupiter that she has given a cherished sacred grove to Aeneas to make his fleet, but that she is fearful for them. She hopes that their birth on her mountain slopes can protect them from being buffeted or overwhelmed in their journey. In telling Jupiter of the fleet’s origins and requesting help for them, Cybele plays on the relationship of tree to ship as part to whole, and uses language that makes it hard to distinguish between living trees and wood that has been made into a fleet. “Timber,” *trabes*, is the word Cybele chooses for the trees that she wants to help, when she speaks of their original position in the grove she cherished. The synecdochal use of *trabes* for ship is so standard a figure of speech that Cybele’s word choice anticipates the changes that the growing trees will shortly experience, once they are cut down and made into ships by Aeneas and his men. She uses the term once to describe her grove as “dark with maple timbers” (*trabibus* [. . .] *obscurus*

22. Fantham 1990, 108 notes that *formabat* and *formam* (9.101) stress “the transitional nature of the ships’ manufactured form.”

acernis, 9.87), and then re-evokes the noun with a demonstrative pronoun (*has*, 9.88) and feminine plurals (*quassatae*, 9.91; *ortas*, 9.92).

At no point does she call the objects of her protection ships, except in that proleptic synecdoche used of the growing trees: instead she uses vague feminine plurals. The word *trabibus* forms a bridge between tree trunk and ship, while the feminine plural *quassatae* refers indeterminately to their state before and after manufacture. In her final plea, when she asks, “Let it help them to have sprung up on my mountains” (*prosit nostris in montibus ortas*, 9.92), *ortas* gives the impression of naturally growing ships.²³

Cybele elides the identity of tree and ship, but we see what such an elision may achieve only when Jupiter replies to her request. She implies that the grove she once cherished on Ida has never really stopped being a collection of sacred trees. Jupiter denies the validity of Cybele’s elision, insisting that there is an important distinction between a living tree trunk and a ship, although the same Latin word can apply to both. Yet Jupiter extends still further the figurative relationship between tree and ship—he decides that the ships should become sea nymphs. The verbal instability in Cybele’s figurative language is to be embodied in a physical metamorphosis—a shift not from living trees to ships, but from ships to nymphs.²⁴

The Great Mother may be vague about the exact nature of ships made out of a sacred grove, but she is precise about the relations between her and her son that oblige him to listen to her.²⁵ She begins her speech by reminding him both of his filial ties to her, and of his power: *da, nate, petenti, / quod tua cara parens domito te poscit Olympo* (“Grant me my request, son; grant what your dear parent requires, now that Olympus has been tamed by you,” 9.83–84). She suggests that granting efficacy to her speech will both accord with his filial duty and reinforce the power he has achieved. She labels her words as prayers, utterances that aspire to special verbal force, but that are effective only because of the desire and ability of a superior being to fulfill them: *solue metus atque hoc precibus sine posse parentem* (“Dissolve my fears and allow a parent to achieve this with her prayers,” 9.90).

Appealing simultaneously to Jupiter’s awareness of his own power and to his awareness of his subordinate position as a son has mixed results. Jupiter

23. Fantham 1990, 107 emphasizes that Cybele’s appeal “avoids any word for ships, substituting two verbs more appropriate for persons.”

24. But in the light of Jupiter’s response Cybele’s language may appear more slippery. Both Fantham 1990 and Hardie 1987b and 1994 have argued that her own words anticipate the transformation from ships into goddesses.

25. Cybele, the *Magna Mater*, is identified with Rhea, the mother of Zeus. The word *genetrix* also links her with Venus (see Stehle 1989 for an argument that Venus and Cybele performed much the same social function for the Romans).

rebukes Cybele by suggesting that she is trying to use speech to deflect the fates, altering the ordained categories of god and mortal: *O genetrix, quo fata uocas?* he asks. He argues that once manufactured by mortals, even sacred trees are constrained by mortality, which precludes the kind of safety that she wants for them. He asks, *mortaline manu factae immortale carinae / fas habeant? certusque incerta pericula lustret | Aeneas? cui tanta deo permissa potestas?* (“Are keels made by mortal hand to have an immortal right? Is it with certainty that Aeneas is to pass through uncertain dangers? To what god has been entrusted power so great?” 9.95–98). To grant the ships a right that belongs to immortals would be tantamount to granting the same right to the men who have manufactured them and who sail in them.²⁶

Jupiter chooses vocabulary that reflects the change made by manufacturing the trees. Where Cybele had chosen a term for ship that relied on a synecdochal relation to its material, Jupiter uses another kind of synecdoche, the word *carina* (“keel”). Like *trabs*, *carina* is often substituted as part for whole to refer to the entire ship, but instead of focusing on the wood from which the ship is built, this word emphasizes how humans have crafted the vessel so that it can take them through water.

Aeneas himself shares with his ships a metonymic connection with divinity, born to a goddess-mother, and intermittently cared for by his *genetrix*—though perhaps *dilectus* would be too strong a word for the attention Aeneas receives from Venus during much of the *Aeneid*. The manufacture of the ships by mortals becomes equivalent to Aeneas’ possession of a mortal father.²⁷ Though divinely born, Aeneas takes his place among humans, not gods, and will reach a celestial sphere only through transformation after death.

Jupiter’s indignant question about the extension of an “immortal right” employs the word *fas* strikingly. *Fas*, through its connection with the verb *fari*, resembles *fatum* as an impersonal expression of divine will, a form of order that correlates with what Jupiter or some other source of divine authority categorizes as “speakable.” But it is very unusual to pair it with a limiting adjective and make it the possession, or potential possession, of a group of ships; it is far more commonly used impersonally. So on the one hand Jupiter sanctions his sense of what is appropriate for mortals or immortals with an abstract noun that separates from his own voice the authorization granted by what is *fas*; on the other hand, he gives that noun

26. Hejduk 2009, 296 argues that Jupiter sees this as an issue of rank.

27. The parallel Jupiter makes between the position of Aeneas and that of his ships is perhaps heightened by the metrical pattern, which puts *fas habeant* and *Aeneas* in the first foot and a half of consecutive lines.

a far more particular meaning than it usually has—he talks of a special *fās* for immortals.

Jupiter pays a precise, almost pedantic attention to the relation between tree and ship, between divine and human. At this point it appears that by interpreting these relations carefully, he can limit their effects in the world. If he prevents rhetorical figures from being used to obscure slippages; if he makes sure that a figurative expression of participation does not become an assertion of identity, his own verbal interpretations and pronouncements will retain their effectiveness more surely. When Jupiter uses rhetorical niceties to adjust the claim that Cybele makes on behalf of Aeneas' fleet, he claims to employ these rhetorical structures as a manifestation of abstract justice. His appeal to verbal structures that are separate from his own role as top god would then be a way to make sure that his well-ordered kingship improves upon his father's tyranny.

But they are also a way to make his supremacy seem natural, because he justifies his administrative decisions by the functions of language itself. Keeping rhetorical figures in order strengthens Jupiter's verbal authority; but his ability to decide which are the verbal relationships that count depends in turn on his supreme divine power. As we saw, Cybele took care to remind him of that power, basing her request not only on her own status, but also on his victory (9.84). Hardie takes this both as an appeal to filial piety and a hint that Jupiter is in his mother's debt ("apparently an indirect reminder of Rhea's services in saving her son Zeus from being swallowed by his father Kronos").²⁸ *Domito te* [. . .] *Olympo* also reaffirms Jupiter's authority—Cybele points out that he is not merely obliged by the ties of reciprocity and parenthood to do what she asks, he is perfectly capable of it, too.

The narrator reminds us of that power after Jupiter finishes speaking. We hear that he fixes this plan with the Stygian oath *and* makes all Olympus tremble with his nod.²⁹ This double ratification of Jupiter's words recurs at 10.113–15, after Jupiter has proclaimed to the divine council his neutrality in the struggle between Trojans and Rutulians. Both speeches are densely packed with ambiguous claims about the balance of power between Jupiter's will, his speech, and the Fates. Jupiter responds helplessly to Cybele, however. *Cui tanta deo permissa potestas?* ("What god has such great power allowed him?" 9.97) he asks—disingenuously, it may seem.

A reason for skepticism may be found in the narrator's description of Jupiter in the divine council of Book 10. The momentous introduction of

28. Hardie 1994 *ad loc.*

29. Hardie 1994 *ad loc.* points out that this description combines two Homeric signs of divine authority (Zeus' nod, e.g., at *Iliad* 1.528–30; the oath by the Styx, e.g., *Iliad* 15.37–38).

his speech (the speech that he ratifies with nod and Stygian oath) asserts Jupiter's supreme power in words that recall the god's own disclaimer in 9.97: *tum pater omnipotens, rerum cui prima potestas* ("Then the all-powerful father, who holds the chief power over the universe . . .," 10.100). The introduction goes on to emphasize the rapt attention of the elements during Jupiter's speech (*eo dicente*, 10.101).³⁰ His control over the universe is implicitly linked with his words, particularly because he himself picks up the verb *dico*: *accipite ergo animis atque haec mea figite dicta* (10.104). His injunction repeats exactly the words with which Celaeno introduces the table prophecy in Book 3, where she cites the "all-powerful father" as the initial speaker of her oracular words: *accipite ergo animis atque haec mea figite dicta, / quae Phoebus pater omnipotens, mihi Phoebus Apollo / praedixit, uobis Furiarum ego maxima pando* ("Well then, take and fix in your thoughts these words of mine, which the almighty father foretold to Phoebus, and which I, the greatest of the Furies, unfold to you," 3.250–52).³¹ The repetition reinforces how little distinction can be made between Jupiter's *dicta* and the *fata* that he occasionally reveals, or allows others to reveal, through prophecy.

In each case the instruction comes at a moment when the speaker is under attack—physical attack for the Harpy Celaeno, verbal for Jupiter in the council of the gods. For both divinities, their *dicta* are a means of reasserting control. Many commentators have been struck by the contrast between the claims for Jupiter's authority that surround his speech in the divine council in Book 10, and the uncertainties of the speech's content.³² Some have suspected that the impersonality of his invocation of fate is an assumed weakness designed to obfuscate the authorship of the *fata*.³³

But the question is not simply whether the *fata* are simply "things spoken" or whether there is an implied agent, the speaker Jupiter. It is equally important to consider what kind of speech *fata* might be. The language denoted by *fata* is on one level a story—one that Jupiter knows either because he is the storyteller, or because he has read or heard it in advance. But it is also persuasive speech, language that can make things happen in the world, causing the events of the story to unfold.

30. See Hardie 1986, 327–35 for a discussion of 10.100–104, and for a more general consideration of control over the elements.

31. Harrison 1991 *ad loc.* points also to 5.304, where Aeneas, presiding over Anchises' funeral games, instructs the competitors: *accipite haec animis laetasque aduertite mentes*. There the emphasis changes: instead of dwelling upon the nature of the speech, Aeneas stresses how the audience is to respond. See Hardie 1986, 205 for a depiction of Jupiter as the ideal statesman.

32. See Feeney 1991, 144–45 for a useful summary of the critical debate.

33. Lyne 1987, 89 describes the speech as "a combination of teasing opacity, disingenuousness, and, I think, mendacity."

Jupiter's declaration of impartiality in the divine council (*rex Iuppiter omnibus idem. / fata uiam inuenient*, 10.112) may be disingenuous, as R. O. A. M. Lyne says, but it amounts to a commitment to prolong the events that are the stuff of stories. This commitment contrasts with the attitude of Venus, who is apparently willing to sacrifice storytelling to the guarantee of safety for Ascanius and the Iulian line, 10.46–53.³⁴

Jupiter's anxiety in case Aeneas should be granted *immortale* [. . .] *fas* through his ships stems partly from a determination that his hero must enact the story of his life. This is where the ships are distinguished from the Penates, the Trojan gods, who have a strange double status. Carried by the Aeneadae, instead of carrying the Trojans as the ships do, the Penates are dependent on mortals, yet remain immortal, able to raise Trojan descendants to the stars and to promise their city *imperium* (3.156–59) and, more immediately, able to interpret Apollo's baffling explanation of Jupiter's will (3.159–71).³⁵ Guaranteeing the safety of the ships would give certainty to the story's outcome and constrain the ways it may unfold. The Penates, on the other hand, help the tale move forward through their verbal abilities—as indeed the ships will help in Book 10, though only after they have been transformed into nymphs.

Aeneas' story is to be generated by a multitude of responses—human and divine—to divine statements about how and when that tale should or should not end. Jupiter is one of many characters in the *Aeneid* whose ability to make a sequence of events develop depends on an ability to interpret language that has already been uttered: the interpretation constantly reshapes and regenerates the utterance and its effects.

When the crisis occurs, Cybele will bring about the transformation by giving an order. In this flashback discussion, Jupiter claims control over the metamorphosis: “I shall snatch away their mortal form and I shall order them to be goddesses of the great sea” (*magnique iubebo / aequoris esse deas*, 101–2). It is as if Jupiter's precision with rhetorical figures and their implications can strengthen the force of his speech, of his order, to work the transformation he intends. He rejects Cybele's initial request because he claims that his control is limited. But as we have seen, his reshaping of the relation between mortal and immortal in the ships is one way to show his power.

34. But see Quint 1993, 86, who argues that her speech, “with its specter of a historically victorious Carthage,” is not to be taken wholly seriously. The poem refrains from imagining Venus' intentions, but we see the effect, which is—in combination with Juno's counter-speech—to prompt Jupiter to allow the epic narrative to continue. See also Reckford 1995–96, 29.

35. See Hardie 1986, 301.

The lines of opposition (Juno vs. Jupiter, Juno vs. Venus, Turnus vs. Aeneas, etc.) in the *Aeneid* are drawn up through an alignment of sympathies and interests and through the polarities of gender, but no polarities ever sustain themselves consistently in this poem. In the case of Jupiter and Cybele, whose interests in other respects are not far apart, the contest that Jupiter depicts in terms of verbal and cosmological precision is also a contest between forms of power marked out as masculine and feminine. Jupiter's interpretation wins because of the position from which he speaks. He may be the son, as Cybele reminds him, but he is the son who has defeated his father and "spins the stars of the firmament." Fatherhood must now trump maternity, it seems. Aeneas is mortal and his line of descent vulnerable because of Anchises' mortal paternity: the *genetrix Berecynthia* Cybele cannot be allowed to grant excessive power to Venus' role as *Aeneadum genetrix*.

Jupiter is fully aware of the transformatory possibilities of language, whatever we make of the relation between his speech and what is *fas* or permitted by the *fata*. In his view, Cybele would turn ships into immortals by conflating them verbally. Jupiter controls this rhetorical act not by depriving Cybele of the ability to speak, but by emphasizing the importance of precise interpretation in the effectiveness of speech. This is much the same technique that he uses with Juno in the prolonged struggle that energizes the *Aeneid*. By showing equal interest in his own speech and in interpreting that of others, Jupiter remains in control of the fragmentations of the *Aeneid's* narrative. He absorbs opposition, instead of simply crushing or being crushed by it.

So Jupiter continues to ratify the cosmological force of a synecdochal structure shaping the combination of mortality and immortality in the tree-ship-nymphs. He uses expressions evocative of human death and of apotheosis in promising a divine future for the ships. This emphasizes the human, mortal aspect of the vessels. Then in 9.101–3 Jupiter makes equally prominent the potentially divine aspect of the ships; his promise to "snatch away their mortal shape" (*mortalem eripiam formam*, 101) suggests that divinity, in fact, is their core quality, and their appearance as mortal ships merely a temporary disguise.³⁶ The *forma* that is to be removed is the mortality that they temporarily acquired when Aeneas shaped them into a fleet on Ida (*tempore quo primum Phrygia formabat in Ida / Aeneas classem*, 9.80–81). The impression that the divine wood forms a part of the mortal whole is strengthened by the fact that in her *Homeric Hymn* (a key intertext for the

36. But Hardie 1994 *ad loc.* also reminds us that *rapere* and *eripere* are used of the snatching by Venus of Julius Caesar's soul in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 15.845.

Aeneid) Aphrodite tells Anchises that nymphs will look after their son; she explains to him the connection between mountain nymphs and the pines and oaks with whose lives theirs are intertwined.³⁷

In changing potential Dryads into Nereids, Jupiter adds a metaphorical element to complement the synecdochal structure that he adapted from Cybele, introducing the likeness with a word that often introduces a simile: *qualis Nereia Doto / et Galatea secant spumantem pectore pontum* (“just like the Nereid, Doto, and Galatea, who with their breasts cut the foaming sea,” 9.102–3). Jupiter compares the goddesses that the ships will become to particular examples of existing sea-goddesses, who already exist for readers in literary tradition. So Jupiter’s emphasis on crafting the ships takes a new turn, when we find that one reason they are to become nymphs is because once fashioned by mortal hand, the wood begins to resemble divinities.³⁸

The uncertainties involved in Jupiter’s decision about what kind of protection to give the ships form part of the gods’ modes of intervention right from the start of Aeneas’ journey. When Aeneas in Book 3 describes his departure from Troy with all those for whom he is responsible (father and son, allies, and gods) he mentions in passing the building of the fleet, but he leaves it to his Carthaginian audience to deduce that construction materials must come from the slopes of Ida, where his band of exiles are gathered. We have heard Cybele as a local protector mentioned by the ghost of Aeneas’ wife Creusa near the end of Book 2, when she tries to rein in Aeneas’ wild grief at losing her (*insanus dolor*, 2.776) by telling him that the events of the night are not happening without divine intent (*sine numine diuum*, 2.777).

Creusa gives three reasons why she had to die before Aeneas could set forth on his great journey, without making clear exactly how the three explanations interact:

1. It is not *fas* for him to take Creusa along as a companion (2.778).
2. The ruler of Olympus does not permit it (2.778).
3. The great mother of the gods is keeping her on those shores—Creusa implies that Cybele is protecting her (a descendant of Dardanus and daughter-in-law of Venus) from being lowered to the rank of slave among the Greeks (2.785–788).

37. *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 256–72. These nymphs are not immortal, however, but merely long lived. When they die, their trees perish with them. See also Hardie 1994 on 9.101.

38. Hardie’s comment (1994 *ad loc.*) here too reinforces my view of the rhetorical structure offered by these lines. Describing this relation of resemblance as a “new turn” raises old problems, however, about the extent to which we can distinguish the rhetorical operations of synecdoche and metaphor. Gelley 1995, 3, writing on the rhetoric of exemplarity, gives a particularly clear reminder of the slipperiness of these figurative divisions.

Creusa separates from her information about Jupiter's will and Cybele's protection the question of whether her survival alongside Aeneas would be *fas* or not, but the three ideas overlap in ways that give us a preview of the shifting accountability of Jupiter, Cybele, and a more impersonal form of divine law when the ships are rescued.

In the flashback, Cybele has been characterized as concerned mostly for the tree-ships themselves, while Jupiter shifts the emphasis to problems of how the cosmos fits together. When the narrative returns from the flashback to the scene in the main Book 9 narrative, where Turnus' flames threaten the Trojan ships, the promised metamorphosis becomes a *monstrum*, a means of communication between gods and mortals.

Ergo aderat promissa dies et tempora Parcae
 debita complerant, cum Turni iniuria Matrem
 admonuit ratibus sacris depellere taedas.
 hic primum noua lux oculis offulsit et ingens
 uisus ab Aurora caelum transcurrere nimbus
 Idaeique chori; tum uox horrenda per auras
 excidit et Troum Rutulorumque agmina complet:
 'ne trepitate meas, Teucri, defendere nauis
 neuē armate manus; maria ante exurere Turno
 quam sacras dabitur pinus. uos ite solutae,
 ite deae pelagi; genetrix iubet.' et sua quaeque
 continuo puppes abrumpunt uincola ripis
 delphinumque modo demersis aequore rostris
 ima petunt. hinc uirgineae (mirabile monstrum)
 reddunt se totidem facies pontoque feruntur.

So the promised day was at hand and the Fates had fulfilled the due time, when Turnus' wrong prompted the Mother to fend off torches from the sacred crafts.

Then, first, a strange light glistened into the eyes and a huge cloud was seen to race from the East across the sky, choruses from Ida, too; next a shiversome voice falls through the air and fills the ranks of Trojans and Rutulians: "Don't fret about defending my ships, Teucrians, and do not take up arms: Turnus will sooner be allowed to set ablaze the seas than burn the sacred pines. As for you, go unmoored, go as goddesses of the deep; (your) mother orders you." And

at once the sterns each break their own ropes away from the shore and
 like dolphins, dipping their beaks in the water's surface,
 they make for the depths. Then, an astounding prodigy, virgin forms
 in equal number show themselves and head out to sea. (*Aen.* 9.107–22)

Audience perceptions dominate the way the lead-up to the actual metamorphosis is presented. First, it is Turnus' aggression (described as *iniuria*) that prompts (*admonuit*) Cybele to save the fleet (9.108–9). Then we turn to the human perceptions: a strange light glistens in the eyes (*oculis*), a huge cloud is seen (*uisus*), as well as choruses from Mount Ida. Even Cybele's voice is described with an adjective that directs us towards an appropriate response by her audience—the gerundive *horrenda* suggests that listeners should shiver to hear the goddess' words, and the sound of her voice (9.110–13). The poem explicitly labels the metamorphosis itself a *monstrum* (9.120), something that shows or advises.

Cybele's words follow through on the poem's emphasis on the act of communication. The goddess speaks to the Trojans and the ships in turn, but the poem emphasizes that the Trojans' enemies are also listening: *uox horrenda* [. . .] *Troum Rutulorumque agmina complet* (“a shiversome speech [. . .] fills the ranks of Trojans and Rutulians,” 9.112–13). We are invited to think about what Cybele's information could mean for these Rutulian listeners. The goddess first instructs the Trojans, *ne trepidate meas, Teucrici, defendere nauis / neue armate manus* (“Don't fret about defending my ships, Trojans, and do not take up arms,” 9.114–15). What she gives the Trojans is a reassurance as much as an order, and she follows this with an explanation—Turnus will be allowed to burn up the seas sooner than the sacred pines.

The safety of the ships is presented through Turnus' limitations, and Cybele again uses a term that can conventionally refer either to ship or tree—*pinus*.³⁹ The second divine order repeats the same imperative—*ite*—twice: “go unmoored, go as goddesses of the deep” (9.116–17). This time, instead of getting an explanation of the reasons for this command, the audience

39. Pines became associated with the Magna Mater in the Roman world; Roller 1999, 279 notes that votive pinecones found at her shrine show that in the second century B.C.E. her cult was already associated with the legendary origins of Rome. Hardie 1987b argues that “Virgil repeatedly exploits traditional kinds of metonymy and metaphor to suggest the shifting and paradoxical quality of ships: [. . .] Trans elemental imagery is so standard as often to pass unnoticed: ships ‘fly,’ and they ‘plough’ the barren sea” (164). When the poet later adopts boundary-crossing terms (for example, at 10.222, 227, where the nymphs still appear ship-like), the metaphors take on new resonance because of the debate here in Book 9 about the nature of these particular ships.

hears the speech defined *as* a command, and learns the speaker: *genetrix iubet*—“your mother” or “*the* mother orders you” (9.117). The Great Mother’s power is brought into action through the words she speaks and is conveyed by the voice with which she speaks them.

This section of the narrative echoes the Catullan Attis’ calls to Cybele’s followers: *agite ite ad alta, Gallae, Cybeles nemora* (“Go, Gallae, go to the lofty groves of Cybele,” 63.19). T. P. Wiseman has argued that Virgil presents us with a safe vision of a protective goddess, whose power is carefully contained within civic limits.⁴⁰ But another Cybele is invoked by the striking resemblance between Cybele’s language here and Attis’ frenzied cries. Attis, through his cries, strives to stir the other followers to the same level of frenzy that he is experiencing; Cybele’s power can apparently be conveyed through poetic language. This is not the first time the *Aeneid* has evoked the Catullan goddess. When Anchises, wrongly interpreting the instruction *antiquam exquirite matrem* (“Seek out the ancient mother,” 3.96), leads the Trojans to Crete, he follows a description of the ritual practices that originated there with the call: *ergo agite et diuum ducunt qua iussa sequamur* (“Come, then, and where the gods’ orders lead, let us follow!” 3.114). This reminds us again that if divine commands depend on their verbal force, that force will in turn be diminished or reinforced by its reception. Cybele’s importance for Anchises in Book 3 makes him unable to imagine another interpretation for the term *antiquam matrem*—so he both is, and is not, following divine orders.

The question of whether or how far Vergil rehabilitates Cybele lies parallel with the question of how far Cybele takes over control from Jupiter when she orders the ships’ transformation. The verbal echoes of Catullus may show that the dangerous goddess who inspires Attis’ self-mutilation has been incorporated comfortably into a very different kind of narrative. Or they may show that this disturbing presence persists. Different critical predilections will lead readers to different conclusions.

The combination of sheer verbal efficacy and mysterious force in Cybele’s command belongs to the superhuman uses of language explored within myth and fiction, but the difficulties of disentangling the interaction between

40. Wiseman 1984, 119 suggests that “many Romans in Virgil’s lifetime thought of [Cybele] in terms of madness and high camp—a sinister alien goddess served by a priesthood of contemptible half-men.” But he argues (127): “The details of her Augustan rehabilitation are what we see in Virgil. The Phrygian goddess has become the Trojan goddess, protecting Creusa, providing the fleet; the woods of Ida are no longer Catullus’ place of horror, but the means of safety for the destined ancestor of Rome. [. . .] In the most spectacular of her manifestations, the metamorphosis of her fleet into sea-nymphs, no reader in Virgil’s Rome could fail to recognise Cybele not only as a miracle-worker, but also as the august neighbour of ‘Apollo of the ships.’”

verbal power and other forms of authority become just as pressing among humans. J. L. Austin's theory of performative utterances can help us here, though it is worth acknowledging that by "theory" I mean Austin's constantly shifting exploration of the instances in language where "the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which [. . .] would not *normally* be described as, or as 'just' saying something."⁴¹ The provisional quality of each stage of his investigation is carefully marked by Austin even before he reaches the point of showing how constatives (statements that invite assessment as "true" or "false") fall within the broader category of performatives.⁴²

Austin points to the difficulty in separating the force of utterances in themselves as speech acts from the effects on listeners that result from what is said. He concisely summarizes the distinction: "the illocutionary act [. . .] has a certain *force* in saying something; the perlocutionary act [. . .] is the *achieving of certain effects* by saying something."⁴³ But his own explorations make clear how hard it is to distinguish sharply between the illocutionary force of utterances, where the work is done *in* the utterance, and their perlocutionary force, where the effects are achieved *through* speech.

The order serves as an important but troubling paradigm for performative utterances, both in Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* and in later approaches to speech-act theory. One of the ways a performative utterance may "misfire" is in failing to meet the appropriate conventions for the invocation of a particular procedure. Chief among Austin's examples is the case where someone gives an order without meeting the conventional criteria for possessing the authority to command instead of request: "[. . .] on a desert island you may say to me 'Go and pick up wood'; and I may say 'I don't take orders from you' or 'you're not entitled to give me orders'—I do not take orders from you when you try to 'assert your authority' (which I might fall in with but may not) on a desert island, as opposed to the case where

41. Austin 1975, 5.

42. In "With the Compliments of the Author: Reflections on Austin and Derrida," Fish 1989, 67 celebrates the "radical provisionality" of *How to Do Things with Words*: "For Austin, the formal and the pragmatic are neither alternatives to be chosen nor simple opposites to be reconciled, but the components of a dialectic that works itself out in his argument, a tacking back and forth between the commitment to intelligibility and the realization that intelligibility, though always possible, can never be reduced to the operation of a formal mechanism." Miller 2001 also emphasizes Austin's willingness "to bog, by logical stages, down" (Austin 1975, 13).

43. Austin 1975, 121. For instance, in saying "I promise" in normal circumstances I perform the act of making a promise; this is the illocutionary force of those words. By saying "I promise," I may perhaps persuade the recipient of that promise to act in certain ways or to change her beliefs as a result of that pledge—this would be the perlocutionary effect of my words. But both the illocutionary and the perlocutionary force depend on the position from which utterances are spoken.

you are the captain on a ship and therefore genuinely have authority.”⁴⁴ It is not that orders given by a captain on a ship will necessarily bring different results from those given by an individual on a desert island, of course; mutinous sailors or passengers may disobey their captain’s orders, as one individual may ignore another on a desert island.

These reactions would shape the perlocutionary effects of the imperative. The conventional authority and conventional procedure determine the illocutionary force. So on the desert island an individual will be making an abruptly worded request, whereas on the ship its captain will usually have other means at his disposal to enforce his commands—nonverbal means, but means that are built into the order’s illocutionary force. A sequel to Austin’s desert island conversation could also involve nonverbal means of enforcement: the bossy individual may say, “Oh *don’t* you take orders from me? Well then, take *this* instead,” and land a punch.

But in that case the individual will have passed far beyond the conventional bounds where verbal and nonverbal authority are seamlessly joined. A captain’s ability to appeal to physical backing, on the other hand, is further enshrined in naval law. In the captain’s case, when the performative succeeds fully it does so “to the extent that *it draws on and covers over* the constitutive conventions by which it is mobilized,” as Judith Butler puts it.⁴⁵

A number of theorists argue against applying speech-act theory to imperatives issued by gods, such as “let there be light.” Sandy Petrey, for example, points out a serious problem with John Searle’s extension of the theory to the *fiat lux* category of command: “the Austinian vision of what words do in society becomes a suggestion that they do things all by themselves.”⁴⁶ It is important to distinguish between imagined supernatural verbal power and the performativity analyzed by Austin in human language. But the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effects analyzed by Austin begin to enter the picture when human conventions for granting authority draw upon the supposed force of a divine command.

In a divine command we are asked to imagine the capacity for enforcement as built into the communication itself by supernatural means, rather

44. Austin 1975, 28.

45. Butler 1993, 227.

46. Petrey 1990, 99. Another diagnosis is that the imperative is being confused with the performative; Gould comments tersely that “it is probably worth pursuing the fact that God does not deal in performatives” (1995, 43 n. 5). Gould is reacting here to the imprecision that sometimes brings all the transformatory effects of utterances in Austinian performativity into one umbrella category. These transformatory effects may include perlocutionary results and illocutionary force, which are not wholly separable, but which are conceptually distinct.

than by social and linguistic convention. This blend of sheer power, unknowable in human terms, with verbal authority can sharpen our perception of the troubling interplay between verbal and social conventions, persuasiveness, and more violent methods of bringing words into effect. Within the *Aeneid's* story world, Cybele's metamorphic command becomes a depiction of divine power—both her own and Jupiter's—as well as being an enactment of that power. An epic poem, no matter what figurative claims it makes to divine authority, lacks the supernatural power to bring about bodily transformations. But one of the questions raised by epic as a genre is whether its figurative appeal to divine authority amounts to asking readers to experience the poem as an extended imperative. Are we invited to hear its *fama* speaking for the gods, as the naval captain speaks out the force of naval law?⁴⁷

Conversely, within the *Aeneid's* story world, Jupiter's ability to remain on top of the order of things—and the disorder of things—becomes still more effective because he takes advantage of the anti-closural vitality of fiction. He incorporates Juno's creative delays into his *fata*, and makes his cosmological analysis of Cybele's rhetoric a creative verbal act on its own account. In Book 9's flashback, Jupiter uses his close attention to the effects of figurative language to ensure that his own words would work as vehicles for his power. He promises to give the order for the ships' transformation. Once the time has come, we hear Cybele take up Jupiter's verb *iubeo*; she follows her imperatives (*ite, ite*) with a correction to his speech—it is not the son, but the mother, who is giving the order. Jupiter drew from Cybele's language the potential for the ships to be animate and immortal beings—now she appropriates the command that will realize that potential.

The metamorphic force of Cybele's language resembles the poem's own transformation of the ships through language: “And the sterns at once each broke their own ropes away from the shore and like dolphins, dipping their beaks in the water's surface, they made for the depths” (9.117–20). The dolphin simile itself performs a metamorphosis, producing a figurative shift from wooden object to living creature, like the figurative shifts that lead up to metamorphoses in Ovid.⁴⁸ The poem's power to set impossible marvels before readers' eyes is assimilated to the miraculous power of Jupiter and Cybele to work physical changes that realign the boundaries between (as Hardie puts it) animate and inanimate nature, and between mortality and

47. Lucan's *Civil War* gives this question still greater prominence by pointedly rejecting the Olympian authority assumed by earlier epics, extending hyperbolically the *Aeneid's* concerns about the ultimate inaccessibility of divine knowledge.

48. See Barkan 1986, 8–9, 20–23; Tissol 1997, *passim*.

immortality.⁴⁹ The episode shows how Jupiter bases his interpretation of and control over *fata* on the same rhetorical basis that sustains the *fama* of epic. At the same time it raises further questions about our own position as readers vis-à-vis Jupiter as an arbiter of meaning, who absorbs all resistance and takes every cross-current into the floodtide of his paternal victory.

Cybele's *monstrum* in Book 9 has the power to entrance—to stun—those who see it, and Jupiter's role in the metamorphosis allows him to incorporate that power within his sphere. Still, the most immediate effects of their jointly authored sign depend on the way that Turnus presents his reading of the strange event. For Turnus words are primarily words, not bearers of uncanny power; their force lies in their own persuasiveness, which he derives from the beliefs in communal circulation, not from the position of the individual speaker.⁵⁰ So he milks the sign for its figurative potential in relation to the narratives of Troy and Latium that are already in circulation.

One discomposing element in the narrator's differentiation between the reactions of Turnus and the other Rutulians is that with the phrase *obstipuere animis Rutuli* ("numb in spirits were the Rutulians," 9.123) the poem repeats the language of another portent, the apparition of arms in the sky at the start of the Italian war. In that earlier episode the only audience member not to be confounded is Aeneas, and he is calm because he *knows* more than the others: *obstipuere animis alii, sed Troius heros / agnouit sonitum et diuae promissa parentis* ("Numb in spirits were the others, but the Trojan hero recognized the sound and the promises of his divine mother," 8.530–31).⁵¹ James O'Hara argues that this verbal echo indicates that both Turnus and Aeneas are equally limited—in their knowledge, and in their ability to read divine signs.⁵² But another way of thinking about the repetition is to notice the extent to which the meaning of an omen typically resides in its interpretation. An active interpretation of divine signs (or even thunderstruck bewilderment) in itself can reshape the future. Both

49. See Hardie 1987b, 164, who observes that the peculiarities of this episode are partly generated by ancient worries about what kind of thing a ship is: "the ancient ship is a boundary crosser: [. . . it] confounds the normal categories that limit human existence (land/sea, city/wilderness, animate/inanimate nature, motion/immobility)."

50. This view is implied by his indifference to Cybele's speech, yet his own status as speaker strengthens his persuasiveness. *sed uos, o lecti, ferro qui scindere uallum / apparat et mecum inuadit trepidantia castra?*⁷ he calls in 9.146–47, appealing to the sense of honor that this chosen group of men must feel in joining with him in his attack. And while in 9.127 the narrator asserts that Turnus' words raise men's spirits, in 7.471–75 the various aspects of his person (his beauty, youth, ancestry, and fame) are equally important in stirring the Rutulians to fight.

51. Other aspects of Venus' sign also resemble the ship-nymph *monstrum* (a gleaming, a strange cloud, and so on).

52. O'Hara 1990, 49 and 76.

the divine author of the sign and the mortal author of its interpretation are vested with a kind of creative power within the poem.

Turnus believes that even if he cannot set ablaze the sacred pines, he can decide what this episode will do to his own story. He is confident that he can undo the shattering effect of the sign on his fellow Italians, because he believes that he can direct the meaning of the metamorphosis. He acknowledges only the event of the metamorphosis itself as a sign; he ignores the words spoken by Cybele. We do not know, and we do not need to know, whether his speech makes public his own experience as a “reader” of Cybele’s sign, or whether we should imagine him developing this interpretation entirely for the sake of its rhetorical effectiveness as a *cohortatio*. We know that confidence (*fiducia*) has not left him, but we are left free to imagine that his confidence is unshaken either because, thanks to Allecto’s work, he is deluded enough to think that the sign is not hostile to him, or because he thinks he can avert its hostility with words, just as Cybele used words to avert his flames from the ships. He does show how his speech can have its own force: *animos tollit dictis*, the narrator tells us (“he lifts their hearts with words,” 9.127).

In dispelling the overwhelming fears of his men, Turnus averts any intrinsic hostile power the sign might have had to weaken or terrify. His words become temporarily true; in 10.118–21 the poem repeats Turnus’ comment on the Trojans’ loss of their ships (9.131), to say that Rutulians have the Aeneadae trapped behind their palisade: *nec spes ulla fugae* (“and there was no hope of escape”). Before that, in 9.731–35, an even more striking echo of this scene occurs, suggesting that Turnus’ rivalry with Cybele has been partly justified. When he is trapped within the Trojan gates, Turnus becomes for the Aeneadae equivalent to the *monstrum* from Cybele that terrified the Rutulians earlier in the same book: *continuo noua lux oculis effulsit et arma / horrendum sonuere* (9.731).⁵³ The Trojans recognize him and flee in turmoil.

Turnus’ interpretations are molded partly by his wishes and needs, but also by his prior knowledge and beliefs. We are used to this problem. As readers we meet patterns of resemblance and verbal echoes which do not on their own dictate our interpretations, but which fall into line with our already present individual preoccupations and cultural experience. Readers help generate the power of *fama*, but we do so through structures of perception that are partly out of reach.

53. Compare 9.110, 112–13: *hic primum noua lux oculis effulsit* [. . .]; *tum uox horrenda per auras / excidit et Troum Rutulorumque agmina complet*.

Grappling with this inaccessibility means grappling with the immensely complex accumulation of tradition and imagination through which the operations of human power are mystified. In attempting to strip back these layers of mystification, one risks constructing yet new layers. Don Fowler, discussing paternity in the *Aeneid*, once put forward a prospectus for attempting a “task both necessary and impossible—or, as I should prefer to say, impossible and *necessary*.”⁵⁴ His analysis reminds us of how “the gendered opposition in the *Aeneid* of Jupiter and Juno is framed in terms [. . .] of all those Western binaries, ‘culture/nature, truth/error, inside/outside, health/disease, man/woman, procreation/birthing.’ The task,” he suggests, “is not to champion one against the other, but to try to get behind the presuppositions which underlie these genealogies, to try to get back to the point *before* the father has already won.” But this in turn raises the question of *what it would mean* to get back to that point before the father’s victory. Answers to such a question are as necessary, and as impossible, as the task Fowler sets us.

Can we better understand how verbal power participates in establishing these social hierarchies if we face the apparently unfathomable aspects of persuasion, those aspects that resemble the uncanny mysteries of divine power depicted in the *Aeneid*? Or do such analogies between human and divine rhetoric merely collude with the strategies by which concepts of divinity have so often been used to mystify the material basis of human power?

54. Fowler 1996, 43–44; reprinted in Fowler 2000b, 228.



7

Slithery Changes

In *Aeneid* 2 Venus suggests that human beings usually perceive their submission to divine will through a cloud, which obscures the forces shaping material existence and acting on mortal minds, as we saw in the previous chapter. This chapter explores some of the ways that hellish forces join with Olympian gods to shape this cloud and make it integral to their power.

Demonic and Olympian deities alike work on the imagination of mortals within the *Aeneid*'s story world by exploiting (often deceptively) a sense of recognition linking “this” new perception with “that” familiar experience or existing belief. The *Aeneid* emphasizes how new beliefs are anchored in what people think they already know. As we shall see, Cupid and Allecto in Books 1 and 7 serve Venus and Juno by producing in their victims a hallucinatory—though at times unconscious—heightening of ordinary modes of recognition. Much the same interpretive procedures allow mortals to obey the demands of *pietas*. Characters try to maintain ritual cleanliness by deciding which “this” will match a suitable “that,” and untangle verbal and visual metaphors so as to decode the riddling advice and commands given by the gods in epic. It is by extending the effects of these modes of recognition that the gods warp human minds.

The poem imagines a continuum of irrationality, which is so pervasive that it becomes an ordinary feature of human existence, part of the vapor that protectively and misleadingly clouds mortal visions of the gods. How could a rational mind fully grasp what it means to live in a world buffeted by clashing divine wills? While Dido, Amata, and Turnus suffer the greatest extremes of *furor*, few mortal characters in the *Aeneid* are immune to it.¹ The gods sometimes distort perceptions so completely that they unleash characters from the conventions that are usually regarded as necessary for keeping communities in order, and into all out madness.

The *Aeneid* claims divine authority for its fictive knowledge less through its invocations of the Muses than from the stories it tells, structuring its narrative around god-sent ways of knowing as well as divine imperatives. But readers do not need to believe literally in such divine authority in order to be strongly affected by their encounters with fiction. The potential to change minds and re-order experience claimed by epic is shared by genres of fiction that do not characteristically enlist the authority of the gods—most obviously the novel. The *Aeneid* imagines this potential, at its most extreme, as external to the human mind—as Fury-poisoned *furor*. Rhetorically, however, its force stems from exploiting the subtlety with which verbal and visual means of persuasion (interpreted consciously or absorbed unwittingly) intersect with social and material forms of power. The epic’s rhetoric of fiction affords us the opportunity to explore in heightened allegorical forms some much more general concerns about where the ordering and disordering possibilities of fiction leave the agency of individual readers.

7.1 Venus’ fictions

Book 1 presents in terms of *fama* the changes that Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, and Cupid work on Dido and Aeneas, well before the appearance of the many-tongued deity in Book 4. Human talk and images circulate Aeneas’

1. The subtlety with which characters experience different gradations of *furor* extends in both directions. Many characters (not least Aeneas) are affected at times by *furor*, but without being completely alienated from their surroundings. Dido, Amata, and Turnus do reach the point of losing contact with their communities, estranged by their distorted perceptions, but all three are only temporarily or incompletely estranged. Dido’s passion partly succeeds in drawing Aeneas into her people’s life. Amata incorporates her madness into ritualized alienation in Bacchic rituals that are shared with other Latin women, and only fully removes herself from her people through her eventual suicide. Turnus is repeatedly alienated and then reincorporated into his community, in Books 9 (caught when he fails to open the gates to the Trojan encampment), 10 (when he pursues the cloud-Aeneas), 11 (during Drances’ verbal attack), and 12 (when he lets his disguised sister drive his chariot to the outskirts of the fighting).

reputation among communities around the Mediterranean, but responses to his *fama* are filtered through the machinations of Venus and Cupid. The poem upholds Aeneas' claim to be known through *fama* beyond mortal reach—above the *aether* (1.379)—but it also makes vivid the desperation he expresses almost in the same breath at his current desolation, at being driven out of mortal reach in a negative sense that temporarily deprives him of a known identity (*ipse ignotus, egens, Libyae deserta peragro*, 1.384).

We see from the outset varying degrees of imperceptibility in gods' control over human knowledge. Sometimes divine persuasion seeps into the human mind and body through poison sinuously entwined with easily identifiable people and objects. Sometimes the gods work on mortals by displaying the strange horror of their power; so in Book 7 Allecto displays herself to Turnus, as we saw in chapter 1.2. These problems of cognition are articulated by the narrative in terms that link the persuasive efficacy of gods with the often mysterious operations of human *fama*.

The first we hear of Dido in the poem is an ambiguous statement of how the gods direct her behavior; Jupiter sends Mercury to achieve a peaceful welcome for the Trojans in Carthage (1.297–304). Jupiter's anxiety is that Dido, in her ignorance of fate (*fati nescia*, 1.299), may bar the storm-scattered Trojans from her borders, whom Jupiter has just watched being shipwrecked off Libya.² The emphasis in this passage falls on a shift in perceptions that leads Dido and her people to view things the way Jupiter wills. But this shift is mystified by the poem's ambiguities, with the result that communicative speech merges indistinguishably with nonverbal techniques for enforcing Jupiter's *fatum*.

Haec ait et Maia genitum demittit ab alto,
ut terrae utque nouae pateant Karthaginis arces
hospitio Teucris, ne fati nescia Dido
finibus arceret.

He says this and sends down Maia's son from on high,
so that the lands and the new city-heights of Carthage may be open
in hospitality for the Trojans, in case, in her ignorance of fate, Dido
should fend them off from her borders. (*Aen.* 1.297–300)

2. Since the Mercury passage serves as a scene change back to Libya after Jupiter's prophecy to Venus, 1.299 is one of those moments when *fatum* seems to mean "what has been said by Jupiter" as much as some external "fate." The verb *fari* introduces Jupiter's speech in 1.256; a much-commented-on first person *fabor* in 1.261 explicitly links Jupiter's speech with his knowledge of *fata* in 1.262 (*fabor enim [. . .] longius et uolens fatorum arcana mouebo*); this knowledge seems to be authorial as much as prophetic or interpretive.

Uncertainties cluster in a short stretch of narrative. We are not told whether Jupiter's worry is justified. We learn that the Carthaginians put aside their fierce dispositions, but not whether that ferocity lies in special bitterness against Troy. Later in Book 1, Ilioneus' experience confirms that the Carthaginians are indeed violently wary of strangers (1.525–41), but nothing in the narrative invites readers to imagine Dido as economizing with the truth when she explains this as a general precaution rather than intentional enmity (1.563–64).

We are also not told *how* Mercury carries out Jupiter's orders. The brief narrative in Book 1 looks a lot like an abridgement of the more elaborate presentation of Mercury's role as messenger in Book 4. Both passages show strong affinities with Book 4's animation of *Fama*.³

uolat ille per aera magnum
remigio alarum ac Libyae citus astitit oris.
et iam iussa facit, ponuntque ferocia Poeni
corda uolente deo; in primis regina quietum
accipit in Teucros animum mentemque benignam.

Mercury flies through the sky's expanse
on the oarage of his wings and soon touches down on the shores of Libya.
And he is already carrying out his orders, and the Carthaginians cast aside
their fierce
dispositions as the god wills; above all the queen takes on a peaceful
attitude towards the Trojans, and friendly intent. (*Aen.* 1.300–304)

Readers are left without guidance on whether Mercury uses sheer divine power to change the Carthaginians' thoughts and feelings without their awareness, or whether he softens them by giving them information, acting as a vehicle of *fama* as well as a servant of Jupiter. We might think that the poem's mention of Dido as *fati nescia* indicates that this ignorance is to be remedied by Mercury as messenger—but then in Book 4 it emerges that she still knows almost nothing about Jupiter's plan, and has not fully heard even the little that Aeneas has told her by that time.⁴ The identity of the

3. See Hardie 1986, 276–79, who focuses on Book 4. Hardie pays as much attention to the contrasts between *Fama* and Mercury as to their similarities but provides a useful set of parallels between the two figures, both in the *Aeneid's* text and in the mythological tradition surrounding Mercury. Hardie 2012, 91–95 reemphasizes these parallels.

4. Or we may see a concessive force in *fati nescia*; Jupiter sends Mercury “so that Dido, although unaware of fate, would not fend them off from her borders.” Unlike Juno, Dido has no reason to hate the Trojans, since she does not share Juno's awareness that Carthage is destined to be destroyed by the Trojans' descendants, but Jupiter still fears the defensive precautions she may take for her new city.

deus in the ablative absolute *deo uolente* (“as the god wills”) is left open; the phrase could mean that Mercury’s work is carried out as Jupiter intends, or could indicate that Mercury’s own divine will changes Carthaginian minds without the need of words.

Aeneas’ counterpart to this terse section of narrative comes in the much longer episode immediately after it; Venus meets Aeneas exploring the local territory after being storm-driven to Libya and disguises herself as a virgin huntress to tell Aeneas who Dido is (1.305–417). Venus here in many ways personally embodies the slippery, boundary-crossing attributes that belong to *fama* even in its most benevolent, informative instances. As so many gods in epic do when they talk directly to mortals, she speaks from a position that she presents as both human and divine, and she claims both knowledge and ignorance. Like Allecto in Book 7, Venus combines truth, fiction, and lies. She makes Aeneas aware of her divine power with an emotional violence that comes close to prefiguring the physical violence with which Allecto reveals her divinity to Turnus.

The first part of Venus’ talk with Aeneas begins and ends with informalities, which contribute to Venus’ fictive characterization of herself as a blunt, outdoorsy Spartan/Libyan huntress-type. The virgin-Venus accosts Aeneas and Achates, *heus, inquit, iuuenes* (“Hi! Lads!” 1.321ff.); this part of the dialogue ends with a series of laconic inquiries, *sed uos qui tandem* (“But what about you?” 1.369–70).⁵ Her informalities, combined with her insistence on her mortal powerlessness and anonymity, lend the air of a gossip chat to the narrative she provides, though in its main substance her narrative is shaped as a mini-epic of Carthage’s foundation and Dido’s sorrows and achievements. *Fama* as gossip—or, to put it more neutrally, information sharing—and *fama* as poetic memorialization become one. The huntress then goes beyond the range of purely human information; through an analogical interpretation of visual cues, which she presents as a traditional augural technique, she reports on the lost ships that were scattered out of Aeneas’ view in the storm.⁶

5. In that sense, her *coturni* (1.337) equip her as a stock character rather as a pair of green wellies would in twentieth-century English fiction. See Harrison 1973, 13, who argues for *heus* as a mark of characterization, and for Venus’ footwear as a generic clue that Dido’s tragedy begins with this scene as prologue (the analogy with the discursive function of green wellies breaks down at that point).

6. She interprets the very fact of Aeneas’ arrival at Carthage as a kind of divine sign: *quisquis es, haud, credo, inuisus caelestibus auras / uitalis carpis, Tyriam qui adueneris urbem* (“whoever you are, not, I reckon, at odds with the heavenly powers do you draw the breath of life, since you have reached the Tyrian city,” 1.387–88). She grounds her subsequent instructions on the augural skills that parents pass on by teaching their children (*ni frustra augurium uani docuere parentes*). Humans claim access to superhuman knowledge through memory that spans the generations. The weight of tradition gives this nameless *faux*-human a way to use god-granted information as authority to support the impera-

After Aeneas' courteous guesses at the identity of the huntress, he begins to define his own position. He tries to use his reputation and the familiarity of Troy's name to establish the context for his future goals, his past travels, and his present loss of home, identity, resources, and direction (1.380–85).

nos Troia antiqua, si uestras forte per auris
Troiae nomen iit, diuersa per aequora uectos
forte sua Libycis tempestas appulit oris.
sum pius Aeneas, raptos qui ex hoste penatis
classe ueho mecum, fama super aethera notus;
Italiam quaero patriam, et genus ab Ioue summo.

From ancient Troy—if by chance the name of Troy
has reached your ears—after we were brought across many different seas
a storm drove us by its own luck to Libyan shores.
I am *pius* Aeneas, and with my fleet I convey the Penates snatched from
the enemy
to accompany me, known by *fama* beyond the sky;
It is Italy I seek as a fatherland, and my family line comes from Jupiter on
high. (*Aen.* 1.375–80)

Venus silences her son just at the point when he begins to express his unease at the disjunction between his identity as the divinely guided *pius Aeneas* (transcending the human sphere through his fame—*fama super aethera notus*, 1.379) and the chancy isolation that makes him *ignotus* (1.384) as he roams through the wastes of Libya. Here Aeneas seems to define *fama* in terms of being known among the gods; this divine knowledge is set in striking opposition to the acknowledgement among human communities that he lacks at this point.

His attempt at characterizing his position in terms of *fama* forms part of a fictive exchange whose status Aeneas has misjudged. Once she has finished directing her son, Venus shows herself, running away from Aeneas' troubled cries. On her departure, we learn, “her true self was manifest in her gait—a goddess” (*uera incessu patuit dea*, 1.405).⁷ Bewilderment and indignation prompt the questions with which Aeneas pursues his mother:

tives she speaks, though the irony lurking in her words directs the poem's readers to Jupiter as one of her parents.

7. Heuzé 1985 suggests, however, that in spite of the narrator's emphasis on the huntress's virginal appearance (1.315–16), “De même que la déesse perce sous la jeune fille, de même Vénus transparaît sous les traits de Diane” (331).

ille ubi matrem
 agnouit tali fugientem est uoce secutus:
 ‘quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis
 ludis imaginibus? cur dextrae iungere dextram
 non datur ac ueras audire et reddere uoces?’
 talibus incusat gressumque ad moenia tendit.

He, when he recognized
 his mother, followed her with this speech as she fled:
 “Why so often do you, also cruel, mock your son
 with deceptive likenesses? Why is it not granted to join
 right hands, and to hear and exchange real speech?”
 With such words he accuses her, and makes his way to the city walls.
 (*Aen.* 1.405–10)

Those demands “Why?” have been echoed by many readers of the poem. It is as if Venus adopted her disguise purely and perversely to compel her son to engage in interpretation. Aeneas realizes well before Venus’ revelation that there is an element of fiction in his conversation with the unknown huntress. He has no means of recognizing his mother, but he judges by her voice and appearance, and rejects the possibility that she could be human (1.327–34); even after she has self-deprecatingly turned aside his worship, he continues to call her *dea* (1.372).⁸ Until Venus reveals herself he gets to have things both ways. He knows that her words and appearance intermingle referential assertions with nonreferential communication—evident fictions—but he can take part in a dialogue with her and learn new information without being impeded by this awareness. When he eventually learns that he was right about the huntress’ divinity, he is troubled by a new element to the fiction, however. He had not sensed before that Venus was the one using this human disguise, and using it to withhold herself as his mother.⁹

8. Odysseus’ conversation with Nausicaa in *Odyssey* 6 indicates elaborate courtesy as another explanation for this address, but other scenes of gods presenting themselves as humans in the *Aeneid* suggest that we should imagine Venus as adopting a disguise that includes traces of an immortal identity.

9. Harrison 1973 argues that the disguise makes sense as a precaution for Venus when entering Juno’s territory, but this logic is expressed so obliquely via the Odyssean intertext for the scene that Harrison’s suggestion does not close down the interpretive problems raised by Venus’ disguise. Until Aeneas learns more about the concealment involved, he seems content to notice a divine disguise without worrying too much about it, rather as Odysseus does when a disguised Athena guides him in Phaeacia. But the poet explains why Athena disguises herself (so as not to anger Poseidon), and Odysseus does not comment on the disguise during the episode itself. Then in *Odyssey* 13.322–23 we

Often when things seem most recognizable, there is the least need consciously to unravel the entangled elements of perception. That leap-frogging of interpretation has generated many long-standing fears about the potentially deceptive effects of *mimesis*. By eluding conscious perception and interpretive interaction Cupid tricks Dido in Book 1; in Book 7 Allecto wields her Gorgonian power over Amata and others by similar means, as we shall see later in this chapter. When Aeneas recognizes his mother, however, he miserably batters against his awareness that he cannot escape new interpretation. We are back to that question, “Why?”. By letting Aeneas know who she is just at the very moment when she makes further knowledge inaccessible to him, Venus reinforces his awareness of how much his human fragility, his isolation and his ignorance of the gods’ intentions are at odds with his transcendently divine *fama*.

With its own mechanisms of *fama* at its disposal, the *Aeneid* replicates and confronts the disjunction Aeneas experiences. On one level the epic’s response is to transcend ignorance and other human limitations by appropriating divine intent for its fictions. But the poem also asks readers to share in Aeneas’ swift fluctuations between utter bafflement and the consciousness of being a privileged recipient of more than mortal knowledge. Through these fluctuations the epic acknowledges the impossibility of understanding the very forces that it would harness for its persuasive authority.

The imbalance of knowledge between Venus and her son amounts to an assertion of divine power.¹⁰ So Aeneas’ vulnerability, which Segal, Oliensis, and Reckford, in different ways, have located in incestuous and murderous verbal hints, extends to his lack of control over his own speech and identity.¹¹ Tricked by *falsis imaginibus* (1.407–8), he is prevented from a true exchange of words (*ueras audire et reddere uoces*). Next, Venus even takes possession of Aeneas’ appearance. She hides him in a mist, and picks the moment to lift the mist and beautify him (1.411–14, 586–93); his (visible) entry onto the Carthaginian scene is removed from his own control.

are told that Odysseus had recognized the goddess. This is a crucial difference. In the *Odyssey* Athena’s disguise and Odysseus’ claim that he could read it in full illustrates the close ties between that god and mortal. Here in the *Aeneid*, the disguise becomes a symptom of what it means for Aeneas to exist as the mortal son of a goddess, a survivor with (limited) divine guidance, acting under the gods’ orders, but without the knowledge and security enjoyed by the gods.

10. We could compare this with Achilles Tatius’ narrator in *Leucippe and Clitophon*, as analyzed by Bartsch 1989, 176: “Achilles Tatius undermines the readers’ confidence in their ability to read and compels them to reactualize the text on his terms; thereby he implicitly asserts his will over that of the reader/interpreter.”

11. Segal 1981; Oliensis 1997 and 2001; Reckford 1995–96.

Contrasts between the Odyssean intertexts for this scene and the powerlessness experienced by Aeneas are telling. The *Odyssey* presents Athene's sleight of hand as a way to celebrate Odysseus' own ability to make and remake himself through lies and fictions, while the *Aeneid* portrays Aeneas as a victim of Venus as much as a beneficiary of her wiles. Her mingling of fiction with overwhelming deceit saps Aeneas' agency and casts a shadow over her strategies for shaping his *fama* in Carthage.¹²

The fluidity of that *fama* becomes apparent when Aeneas reaches Juno's temple precinct and discovers that knowledge of Troy has reached North Africa, as he had hoped when speaking to the virgin-Venus (1.375–76). “In this grove for the first time the new circumstance (*noua res*) that met him soothed his fear, here for the first time Aeneas dared to hope for safety and to put better trust in his lowered fortunes” (1.450–52). His optimism turns out to be justified—Dido and the other Carthaginians will recognize and warmly welcome him as “that” Aeneas (1.617), the one whom they all know about.

The whole situation is new and strange (*noua*) in that it offers an unexpected familiarity. Arriving at Carthage, Aeneas finds images of his own experience, when he discovers that Carthaginian artists have depicted the Trojan War as part of their temple decorations.¹³ Even the *labor* of the artistry involved seems to mirror the *labor* endured by the Trojans:

dum quae fortuna sit urbi
artificumque manus inter se operumque laborem
miratur, uidet Iliacas ex ordine pugnas
bellaque iam fama totum uulgata per orbem,
Atridas Priamumque et saeuum ambobus Achillem.

While he wonders about the city's fortune,
and while at the craftsmen's combined endeavors and the toil of their
works
he marvels, he sees Ilium's battles in order
and the wars already bruited about by *fama* throughout the world,

12. See Reckford 1995–96. Discussing Venus' cloud, Reckford builds on Segal's (1981) analysis of “Aeneas' ambiguous position between the godlike (or authorial) observer of events and the confusedly involved participant in a world of blind happenings and violent human passions” (14). Reckford shows how closely this scene echoes the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, with its portrayal of Aeneas' conception and birth as a cause of sorrow (*ainon achos*) to the seductive, destructive goddess.

13. It has been pointed out to me that this uncanny mixture of strangeness and familiarity extends to readers' experience of this scene, thanks to the particular intensity of Homeric allusions in this part of *Aeneid* 1.

the Atreidae and Priam, and—savagely angry with both alike—Achilles.
(*Aen.* 1.454–58)

Aeneas regards the commemoration of their past as providing a shape for the next stage of their story: he moves swiftly from recognition to reasserting the utility of *fama*. “Dissolve your fears,” he tells Achates, “this *fama* will bring some safety” (1.463). For Aeneas, the pictures in Juno’s temple at Carthage demonstrate that a wide-reaching *imperium* of sorrow exists: *quis iam locus, [. . .] Achate, quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?* (“By now what place, Achates, what part of the world is not full of our toil?” (1.459–60). Trojan endeavors have not yet won *imperium sine fine* for the remnants left by the Greeks, but every area of the world is full of the war’s *labor*.

Aeneas dares to hope for safety because he assumes that Carthaginian familiarity with Trojan suffering will make this strange place accessible for them. *En Priamus!* (“Look, there’s Priam!” 1.461), Aeneas cries. The sight of the Trojan king leaps out at him, and his immediate recognition prompts Aeneas’ notoriously perplexing words about the rewards belonging to *laus*, *lacrimae rerum* and mortal concerns touching the mind (*sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi, / sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt*, 1.461–62).¹⁴ The poem continues to emphasize the importance of recognition in Aeneas’ reaction to the images, repeating the verb *agnoscere* in present and perfect tenses (he recognizes Rhesus’ tents 1.469–70, and himself entangled in battle 1.488–89).¹⁵

Some readers have felt that Aeneas takes too much for granted in imagining that these signs of his *fama* betoken sympathy and respect in Dido’s

14. Here is a prosaic translation: “Even here its own rewards belong to excellence; there are tears for things and the concerns of mortals touch the consciousness.” One problem is the vague genitive *rerum*: “thing” is hopelessly inadequate for the chameleon word *res*, but any more colorful choice closes an interpretive question that the poem leaves open. Another difficulty is *laus*: this is both praise and the distinction that merits praise, ideas demanding separate words in English. Wharton 2008 carefully analyzes the challenges presented by this line and summarizes its interpretive history. Among the most influential translators of the last half century or so, consistency emerges in some choices (*mens* as a seat of emotion, the “heart”). But decisions about how to express personal involvement vary greatly in a line where the subjects or implied agents of the (implied) actions and emotions are notably absent. Day-Lewis (1986) goes for “Here too we find virtue somehow rewarded, / Tears in the nature of things, hearts touched by human transience.” Fitzgerald 1983 gives us “Even so far away, / Great valor has due honor; they weep here for how the world goes, and our life that passes / Touches their hearts”; Eagles 2006 has: “Even here, merit will have its true reward . . . / even here, the world is a world of tears / and the burdens of mortality touch the heart.”

15. When Aeneas cries out “look, there’s Priam,” nothing tells us whether to imagine that the image looks like Priam in the sense of being an individualized portrait that closely resembles Priam’s facial features, whether the context of the image identifies him as Priam—i.e., if he is carrying out an obviously Priam-like act, or whether there is some convention in the iconography that Priam images would all share.

Punic city.¹⁶ It has become a widespread view that the images are better seen as gloating over Trojan suffering—an attitude that would please the temple’s goddess, Juno.¹⁷ But given the evasiveness of the narrative whenever it so much as hints at preexisting Carthaginian hostility (in Jupiter’s dispatch of Mercury to prepare the ground for Aeneas’ arrival, or in Dido’s explanation to Ilioneus of their violent reception), and given that the events to come in Book 4 provide an aetiology for later enmity between Rome and Carthage, the point here is surely that the *fama* of Aeneas and his people is malleable.¹⁸

Venus makes the most of this malleability. She alters Aeneas’ appearance, so that his god-like looks will match his sky-reaching *fama*, but she intervenes still more decisively by sending her other son, Cupid, disguised as her grandson Ascanius, whom she temporarily abducts, on an errand to control how Dido will regard her guest Aeneas. Impersonating Aeneas’ son Ascanius does far more than merely enable Cupid to poison Dido at close quarters. The disguise entwines mythic and incestuous resemblances with the poisoning and inflammation in such a way as to embed the divine power of Cupid and his mother Venus in a whole network of perceptual operations, many of which have been thoroughly analyzed by Charles Segal, Kenneth Reckford, and Ellen Oliensis.¹⁹

16. Aeneas nourishes himself (his *animus*) on a hollow image, like the hollow tomb where Andromache performs death rituals for Hector in 3.304, and mourns (*animum pictura pascit inani / multa gemens, largoque umectat flumine uultum*, 1.464–65). Despite being *inanis*, the artwork satisfies Aeneas’ emotional hunger, because *fama* has made it possible to represent the void created by his losses at Troy. Barchiesi in particular has noted how many functions the adjective *inanis* performs; he connects the word with the way the poem renders these images of Troy literally immaterial, by omitting any mention of the medium in which they are crafted, and suggests a range of other interpretations (1994; trans. in Hardie 1999, 336). See also Johnson 1976, 105; Dubois, 1982, 33; Leach 1988, 318.

17. Horsfall 1973 offers the most clear-cut assessment of Aeneas as a misreader. See especially Fowler 1991 and Barchiesi 1994 for nuanced examinations of the hermeneutic problems raised by the ekphrasis; both Fowler and Barchiesi resist assuming a “Roman perspective” that would judge Aeneas as simply wrong in his interpretation. Bartsch 1998, 338 points out that the *pictura inanis* does not so much deceive or mislead as set up “a model for viewing that invites the participation of the viewer in making his own, positive meaning out of art.”

18. Ahl 1989, 24–30 argues that a major rhetorical goal in Books 2 and 3 is to ensure that Aeneas’ reputation, which comes across ambiguously in the temple images, is untainted by any unflattering suggestions.

19. For instance, in an extraordinary passage, Cupid moves to Dido’s lap, after satisfying the great love of his supposed father. She clings to him with her eyes, with her whole heart, and cherishes him in her lap, without realizing how great a god lays ambush to her—a phrase with erotic overtones that will be picked up by *Fama* in book 4 (*ille ubi complexu Aeneae colloque pependit / et magnum falsi implevit genitoris amorem, / reginam petit. haec oculis, haec pectore toto / haeret et interdum gremio fouet inscia Dido / insidat quantus miserae deus*, 1.715–19; cf. 4.193–94: *nunc hiemem inter se luxu, quam longa, fouere / regnorum immemores turpique cupidine captos*). See most recently the analysis of motherhood in the *Aeneid* by Oliensis 2009, 61–72. For Cupid’s Ascanius disguise and its web of incestuous

At Cytherea nouas artis, noua pectore uersat
 consilia, ut faciem mutatus et ora Cupido
 pro dulci Ascanio ueniat, donisque furentem
 incendat reginam atque ossibus implicet ignem.
 quippe domum timet ambiguam Tyriosque bilinguis;
 urit atrox Iuno et sub noctem cura recursat.
 ergo his aligerum dictis adfatur Amorem:
 ‘nate, meae uires, mea magna potentia, solus
 nate patris summi qui tela Typhoea temnis,
 ad te confugio et supplex tua numina posco.’

But the Cytherean goddess is mulling over new devices, new plans, for Cupid, transformed in face and appearance, to come in place of sweet Ascanius, and for him to use gifts to inflame to a point of frenzy the queen and weave flame into her bones. For she dreads the doubtful house and two-tongued Tyrians; she is seared by the thought of fierce Juno, and towards nightfall her trouble haunts her.

So with these words she addresses winged Love:
 “Son, my strength, my great power, you who alone,
 son, scorn the Typhoean missiles of the father on high,
 to you I run for refuge, and suppliant call upon your divine will.”

(*Aen.* 1.657–66)

Doubts surrounding the intervention are heightened by the participle *furentem* in the predicative accusative (1.659). Its position in the narrative suggests a proleptic understanding (as translated above, “to inflame to a point of frenzy”), but without a context to steer one in that direction, one could also read it as “to inflame the queen in her madness”—which would favor what Lyne has analyzed as divine interventions “working with” humanly generated emotions and choices.²⁰

Cupid’s body becomes the vehicle for Venus’ verbal cunning, her *artes*, as she shows with her flattering vocatives, *meae uires*, *mea magna potentia* (“my strength, my great power,” 1.664). A hint of this is given first through a playful jarring of expectations in the word order *ergo his aligerum dictis*

associations, and intertextual connections with different literary instantiations of Medea, see Bowie 1998, 67; Oliensis 1997, 306; Reckford 1995–96, 25–28; and Segal 1981.

20. See Lyne 1987, 67–71. This use of *fallere* appears again in Allecto’s work on Amata; cf. 7.350, *fallitque furentem*.

adfatur Amorem (“so with these words she addresses winged Love,” 1.663)—which associates Love with the “winged words” we might expect Venus to utter in an epic. The language she uses for the sharing of plans and information with Cupid continues this idea: the circumstances are known (*nota*, 1.679) to Cupid, just as the boy will be taking on the “known features” of the boy Iulus (*notos . . . uultus*, 1.684; “known” both to Cupid and to the mortal characters who are to be deceived). Cupid, she informs him, has been pained with Venus’ pain over Aeneas (*nostro doluisti saepe dolore*, 1.669), and she wants Dido to share her emotions, too—to be girt with flame, “so that she may be held with great love for Aeneas, along with me” (1.673–75).

Venus worries about Dido’s potential unreliability not because she thinks the queen fickle (as in Aeneas’ much-quoted dream of Mercury, 4.569–70), but because she worries about verbal doubleness and difficulties in interpretation (1.661)—exactly the qualities she will employ herself. Venus’ other motivation comes from Juno, who scorches her; the same verb, *uro*, describes Dido’s painful love at 4.68 (*uritur infelix Dido*). All this figurative and conceptual mirroring provides a kind of poetic logic for Venus’ choice of action, in which she arranges for her trickery and poison to be breathed through Cupid’s embraces in the recognizable form of Ascanius (1.684, 687–88). The parallels also rule out the possibility of seeing cunning stratagems and mad inflammation as the special preserve of Juno and her agents.

When Dido interprets Aeneas’ *fama* in the light of perceptions affected first by Mercury and then more uncontrollably by Cupid’s poisonous deception, she makes Aeneas’ hopeful words to Achates into a largely accurate assessment of the power of the Trojans’ reputation. The narrative here, as so often, gives no decisive clues about how Dido would see Aeneas and the Trojans if she were free from the gods’ sway. By withholding information about that hypothetically independent, purely human perception, the poem conceives of divine influence as a fundamental part of human experience. Within the *Aeneid*’s story world these imperceptible forces are incorporated into the *famae* through which characters and events are known and interpreted. On a larger scale, this presentation of unseen divine forces becomes a way for the poem to figuratively assert divine authority for its own blend of imagination and remembrance. But by giving such detailed attention to the unseen violence that Venus and Cupid perform, the poem raises the question of whether the poem borrows divine brutality, as well as the power behind it, for the fictive knowledge it brings into being.

7.2 What Amata sees

In Book 7, after Juno has sent Allecto on the rampage in Italy, the Fury's first step is to infiltrate the king's house in Latium. She does not use her powers directly on Latinus, who has been led by a series of convincing omens to take Aeneas for his daughter instead of Turnus. Instead she goes to work on the queen, Amata, as she is already ablaze with anger about the Trojans' arrival, impassioned with extraordinary love for her intended son-in-law (7.57, 344–45).²¹ Like Dido, whom readers get to know only after the gods' machinations (first Jupiter and Mercury, then Venus and Cupid), and like Turnus later in Book 7, Amata is characterized for readers through the depiction of her growing madness.

Allecto's divine inflammation works alongside the social and verbal authority Amata assumes in her attempts to change her husband's plans.²² When the queen is still in touch with her reason, she rationalizes her intense desire to marry Lavinia to Turnus. She adapts her interpretation of the omens to co-opt divine authority in support of her desire. She speaks to her husband Latinus according to what the poem describes as “the accustomed way of mothers” (*solito matrum de more*, 7.357). Amata acts according to the normal conventions of motherhood, and behaves just as mothers usually do. The analogical potential of the wording hints that she is performing motherhood as a role, turning to her rhetorical advantage the conventional expectations associated with maternity. This use of *more* resembles Lucretian wording in comparisons (e.g., 5.932: *uulgiuago uitam tractabant more ferarum*, “they managed their life in the random way of wild beasts”), in that it both describes a practice (the way wild beasts live, in the Lucretius example) and points to the structure of the analogy.

But in the *Aeneid*, *furor* is part of the customary behavior of mothers, and the idea that out of control passion is expected of women serves Allecto's—and perhaps Amata's—purposes well.²³ A similar process occurs when Iris takes possession of the Trojan women with Juno's power in Book 5.

21. See especially Lyne 1987, 13–26 on the eroticism of Amata's sufferings and the parallels between Amata and Dido.

22. Cf. Panoussi 2009, 130–33; she too addresses the social implications of this passage, though she reaches different conclusions.

23. This rhetorical strategy, here shared by Allecto and Amata, works according to the same logic that Allecto applies elsewhere in contaminating Italy with madness. When she spreads *rabies* among Iulus' hunting dogs, it just leads to more intense, uncontrolled doggy behavior. The dogs already participate in one of Allecto's areas of expertise, assisting Iulus in his *insidiae* (7.478 and 326); she touches their noses with *noto . . . odore*, 7.480, just as Venus and Cupid had exploited familiar perceptions when inflaming Dido. A similar technique is only partly successful with Turnus, however.

Verbal echoes in the narrative of Amata's madness, along with its structure, recall the persuasiveness of Iris–Beroe in Book 5, the madness of the Trojan women, and the flames they set raging among the ships. After the Trojan women's outburst in Book 5, Jupiter restores order and saves the flaming ships with a rainstorm which "rages without restraint": *sine more furit* (5.694). That is exactly what a good rainstorm does, it acts *sine more*.²⁴ Similarly, after Amata fails to sway Latinus she rages *sine more* (unrestrainedly or lawlessly) through the city, which is called "boundless," as if her capacity for infecting the local community with *furor* has now become unlimited: *immensam sine more furit lymphata per urbem* (7.377).

Amata at this point becomes identified with the *fama* of her doings (7.387, *euolat*; 7.392, *fama uolat*), when she melds her madness into the ritualized insanity of Bacchic rites, and weds her daughter to the god. A blazing pine—a tool which both spreads fire and figures the spread of madness several times in the *Aeneid*—becomes Lavinia's marriage torch, bringing close to fulfillment Juno's prophecy/command (7.319–22) that Hecuba will not be the only one to give birth to a firebrand.²⁵

The climax of Amata's infectious madness comes in a short speech to her fellow *matres*, where she uses her personal reputation to energize her community, inviting the other women to remember how they are connected with her. She instructs them to free themselves of their usual restraints—to loosen their headbands literally and metaphorically—and join in the rites, "if any sense of obligation towards Amata in her misfortune lingers in their attentively loyal (*piis*) minds, if anxiety for a mother's rightful authority chafes at them" (*si qua piis animis manet infelicis Amata / gratia, si iuris materni cura remordet*) (7.401–2). The poem later confirms the success of this rhetorical move on Amata's part. Her exalted social position, which would normally give her plenty of influence (*gratia*, 7.402) through favors done, has duly strengthened her claim to solidarity among all the mothers, who surround Latinus' palace and confirm his sense of helplessness. A parenthetical comment explains the mothers' motivation in *fama*-related

24. Cf. *Aen.* 10.603–4, where Aeneas spreads death, *torrentis aquae uel turbinis atris / more furens*, "raging like rushing water or a black tornado"; *more* primarily serves to introduce the comparison, but it also reminds us that the *mos* of a whirlwind is to behave *sine more*.

25. When Turnus attempts to burn the Trojan ships in Book 9, the fiery madness inflicted by Allecto turns him into an Allecto-figure himself, as "he, ablaze, fills his hand with flaming pine" (*manum pinu flagranti feruidus implet*, 9.72); his companions follow his lead; the whole group equips itself with "black firebrands" (*facibus . . . atris*, 9.74) and gives off a pitchy light (*piceum . . . lumen*, 9.75). But in 12.554–92, when Venus inspires Aeneas to burn Latinus' city, the firebrands used by Aeneas' companions do not give off this black light; the fire of Aeneas' aggression and divine possession more equivocally resembles the fire that attacks the city.

language, telling readers that “the name of Amata was not lightweight” (*neque enim leue nomen Amatae*, 7.581).

Amata’s madness uses *fama* to tap into familiar perceptions and expectations and alter them as it spreads among the community. This process extends the way Allecto manipulates Amata’s expectations so as to poison her and make her an agent of madness and *discordia*. Shape-shifting allows Allecto (like Cupid in Book 1) to get close to her victim and fire her with divinely kindled passion. Being seen, and at the same time not being seen, is an essential part of both divinities’ work: the disguises form part of the attack. As Cupid and Allecto warp Dido’s and Amata’s perceptions of their surroundings by presenting them with deceptively familiar entities, they skew their visions more drastically by overwhelming them with the emotional state that is each divinity’s essence: mad love and vengeful madness.

Both Amata and Dido are beguiled and changed because they recognize the images produced by Allecto’s snake and by Cupid without realizing that they are images. They are unaware that what they see are the vehicles for overwhelming divine force.²⁶ In these acts of recognition there is no Aristotelian moment of realizing that “this” is “that.” They have no idea that there is a “this” to deal with. Both her appearance and its shiftiness are crucial for Allecto’s approach to Amata: *exim Gorgoneis Allecto infecta uenenis / principio Latium et Laurentis tecta tyranni / celsa petit, tacitumque obsedit limen Amatae* (“Right away, steeped in Gorgon-poisons, Allecto starts by making for Latium and the lofty home of the Laurentian king, and planted herself at the silent doorway of Amata,” 7.341–43). Allecto’s ability to do harm comes not just from her inventiveness, the manifold skills praised by Juno (*mille nocendi artes*, 7.338), but also from the poisons in which she is steeped—being Gorgon-derived, these venoms must work through the eyes.

So the snake turns into objects which are familiar to Amata, and which are close to her body, but which retain snaky shapes and qualities. The snake slithers along without Amata feeling it; it goes unnoticed, and at same time actively deceives her, by taking on a cluster of disguises that are recognizable simultaneously as her personal ornaments and as snakelike in appearance.

huic dea caeruleis unum de crinibus anguem
conicit, inque sinum praecordia ad intima subdit,

26. So their mistake is different from the errors of Ovid’s Narcissus (or Milton’s Eve), and of Turnus when he is led astray by an Aeneas made by Juno out of cloud in Book 10: those images have no intrinsic force or volition, and their power over their beholders comes entirely from the confusion between reality and reflection (for Narcissus) or reality and a particular kind of imitation (for Turnus and perhaps Eve).

quo furibunda domum monstro permisceat omnem.
 ille inter uestis et leuia pectora lapsus
 uoluitur attactu nullo, fallitque furentem
 uipeream inspirans animam; fit tortile collo
 aurum ingens coluber, fit longae taenia uittae
 innectitque comas et membris lubricus errat.

The goddess thrusts at her a single snake from her dusky hair
 and slips it into her breast, near her heart,
 so that, maddened by the prodigious creature, she may throw the whole
 household into chaos.

The snake, sliding between her clothes and her smooth breasts,
 glides without touching her, and breathing on her its viperous breath
 tricks her into madness; the great serpent became the twisted gold
 at her neck, it becomes the ribbon of her trailing headband
 and binds the queen's hair, and meanders, slithery, over her limbs.

(*Aen.* 7.346–53)

The word *fallo* points to the double task accomplished by the snake. In Latin *fallo* can convey simultaneously imperceptibility and active trickery, and it does so here (just as in Venus' instructions to Cupid, 1.684, 688). *Fallitque furentem / uipeream inspirans animam* (7.350–51): “as it breathes its viperous breath into her the maddened queen does not realize what is happening” is another way of translating the line; in English we are forced to choose between a meaning like “deceives” or an expression such as “escapes her notice” for *fallit*.²⁷ In the Latin, the two senses work together; it is fitting that *fallit* should provide the link between words emphasizing imperceptibility, especially through touch (*uoluitur attactu nullo*, 7.350), and lines that describe how the snake looks to Amata (*fit tortile collo / aurum ingens coluber* 7.351–52). Amata both sees and does not see the disguised snake.²⁸ The snake's work on Amata is even harder to discern than Cupid's on Dido. While the sight of Ascanius (as his father's son) carries its own troubling erotic charge for Dido, it is hard to imagine how a ribbon or a torque could intrinsically have any ability to unhinge their wearer.

Allecto's deceptive shape-shiftings seem to lend her control over Amata's cognition, but the slipperiness of the Fury's disguise makes it impossible

27. This is Feeney's choice of language (1991, 165). Horsfall 2000 *ad loc.* has “[The snake] deceives her into madness exhaling its viperish breath.”

28. Similarly, she feels and does not feel it—it does not touch her, but it is *lubricus*: on this duality of representation, see especially Feeney 1991, 165–66.

for either Amata or the *Aeneid*'s readers to be sure just what is happening. While the venom is gradually beginning to do its work, Amata speaks gently to Latinus to dissuade him from joining Lavinia with Aeneas. The halfway state that Amata is in when she addresses Latinus connects Amata's understanding with the physical influence of Allecto's inflammation: [. . .] *pertemptat sensus atque ossibus implicat ignem / necdum animus toto percepit pectore flammam* [. . .] ("it assails her senses and twines its flame into her bones, and her mind has not yet whole-heartedly taken in the flame," 7.355–56). The word *percepit* suspends itself suggestively between "grasp" in the sense of "take fire" (Fantham, for example, translates this line "but her spirit has not yet caught fire with all her heart"²⁹) and "grasp" in the sense of "understand"—her mind has not yet *taken in* the flame. The supernatural flame is to be kindled, but the verb also reminds us that once kindled, it will transform Amata's understanding. It is not exactly that the flame needs to be *perceived* for its power to be felt—it is never clear whether Amata is conscious of her transformation—but the word hints that some cognitive process is involved in Amata's supernatural inflammation.³⁰

On another level, too, Amata's understanding of the situation goes along with the progress of her poisoning by the Fury's snake. Amata descends fully into madness as she sees that her attempt at persuading her husband is ineffectual, that Latinus stands firm against her attempt to re-conceive what "foreign" means and allow Turnus' Greek ancestry to qualify him as a son-in-law (7.373–77). The snake has attacked her *sensus*: the means by which she perceives the world, and her state of mind. We are directed towards a cognitive change in Amata—a change that is wrought through, as well as on, her eyes and mind—by the poem's emphasis on the *look* of the objects whose appearance the snake adopts. So the snake's venom works on Amata partly through her uninterpreted experience of the objects she perceives as ribbon and torque, and partly through her understanding that her attempt at maternal persuasion of the father Latinus has proved ineffectual. This latter understanding results from conscious interpretation of Latinus' response (*his ubi nequiquam dictis experta Latinum / contra stare uidet*, 7.373–74): she sees (*uidet*) that Latinus is standing firm (where *uidet* is both a visual metaphor for something occurring in the mind, and an indicator of her visually-derived interpretation of her husband's physical reaction to her words).

29. Fantham 1998, 140.

30. As a parallel for *animus . . . percepit* Horsfall 2000 *ad loc.* cites Hor. *Ars* 335–36: *quidquid praecipies esto brevis, ut cito dicta / percipiant animi dociles teneantque fideles*. Feeney translates this line "and her mind has not yet fully and wholly taken in the flame" (1991, 165). Hershkowitz paraphrases this moment with the words "At first Amata is unaware of this new passion . . ." (1998, 49).

But as Lyne, Feeney, and Hershkowitz, among others, have observed, we are not told how, exactly, this conscious shift in perception works alongside Amata's unnoticed alteration by the snake's *furiale malum* ("Fury-brought harm"). The two aspects of Amata's transformation are joined by a coordinating conjunction (the particle *que*), which obscures the logical relationship between the two clauses; both are subordinated to the sentence that expresses her wild reaction to the shift:

His ubi nequiquam dictis experta Latinum
 contra stare uidet, penitusque in uiscera lapsum
 serpentis furiale malum totamque pererrat,
 tum uero infelix ingentibus excita monstribus
 immensam sine more furit lymphata per urbem.

When after trying out her words on Latinus in vain she sees him
 stand against her, when the Fury's harm has slipped
 deep into her guts and is straying all over her,
 that is the moment when the unhappy woman, roused by immense
 portents,
 rages lawlessly in her madness throughout the boundless city. (7.373–77)

The *monstra* that work on Amata are powerfully persuasive sights (the ornaments which the snake has become, and her perception of Latinus) and at the same time are strange, horrifying beings, in this case with divine power to rouse Amata to frenzy (the Fury and her serpentine agent, who are *monstra* in the sense from which our word "monster" is clearly derived).³¹

The phrase *ingentibus excita monstribus* echoes Andromache's perception when she sees Aeneas at Buthrotum—a "miniature-golf" rebuilding of Troy, as Reed puts it—during his wanderings in Book 3.³² Aeneas tells the Carthaginians how Andromache reacts to the apparently ghostly sight: *ut me conspexit uenientem et Troia circum / arma amens uidit, magnis exterrita monstribus / deriguit uisu in medio* ("When she caught sight of me coming towards her and wildly beheld Trojan weapons round about, terrified by great portents, she stiffened in mid-gaze" 3.306–8). Here, *magnis exterrita monstribus* refers to Andromache's confusion about what category of experience

31. Like the *multa* [. . .] *uariarum monstra ferarum* in the underworld (6.285), which include at least Gorgons and Harpies and perhaps the Eumenides and *Discordia demens* (i.e., they perhaps include Allecto herself). They are marvels because of the strange horror of their bodily form (still not quite monsters in our sense); as we saw in chapter 4, Harpies and Furies are sometimes identified; both are *Dirae*, categorized by the dread they inspire.

32. Reed 2007, 119.

her sight has granted her. The effect of this confusion is heightened by the fact that her physical reaction occurs *uisu in medio*. Aeneas and the Trojans themselves temporarily become *monstra* for Andromache, while at the same time the word suggests Fury-like demons, who keep the dead present in the land of the living through polluting memories.

The perceptions of Andromache in this scene parallel Amata's experience of Allecto's poison in interesting ways. Andromache is driven mad for a time (*amens*, 3.307; *furēnti*, 3.313) by her inability to discern whether she is faced with reality or with some ghostly simulacrum of Aeneas and his men. Unlike Amata, Andromache is aware of her own uncertainty: she is fully aware of seeing *monstra*; she knows they need interpretation as marvels; she can be calmed by Aeneas' confirmation that the wonders she sees are not of her imagining, and that he is not an unearthly messenger. Amata, by contrast, never receives any explanation of the *monstra* by which she is altered; neither she nor the poem's readers ever know to what extent she is reacting to the situation around her and how far she is driven by forces that lie beyond interpretation.

Once Amata is fully untrammled, no longer following the conventional tracks set for anxious mothers, she dashes out to the woods in something like a Bacchic frenzy, *simulato numine Bacchi* ("pretending that she suffers Bacchus' divine influence" or "under a divine influence that mimics that of Bacchus," 7.385). Later we learn that the queen is afflicted from all sides with the goads of Bacchus, but that it is Allecto, not Dionysus, who harries her with these goads (7.404–5). Amata seems to be adopting her own disguise, impersonating a Bacchant, as a stratagem for taking her daughter away from the city and out of the masculine, civic realm controlled by Latinus. Yet the narrative avoids deciding whether Amata consciously and deceptively takes on the role of Bacchant as a mere cover for her activities, and how far Amata imagines herself as a worshipper of Dionysus.³³ Bacchism is always a powerful metaphor for the kind of madness that prompts women to challenge masculine authority. Here it is as if Amata chooses to live out in actuality a poetic figuration of her wild actions.³⁴

33. See Lyne 1987, 26 n. 50, who uses this as an example of his "working with" hypothesis for the causal aspects of the poem's divine apparatus; authorial responsibility for the false Bacchism is shared between Allecto and Amata. Hershkovitz 1998, 51–52 shows that another way to understand the combination of *simulato numine* with *reginam Allecto stimulis agit undique Bacchi* in 7.405 is that a fiction has gained its own persuasive momentum, becoming real as it makes its impact on life.

34. At 4.469–73 a simile that depicts Dido's imaginings (her dreams, and also her madness more generally) links the Fury-brought madness of Orestes with Pentheus' Bacchic suffering, explicitly evoking theatrical versions of the myths. Clearly the two stories are powerful and familiar examples of madness; since they lead up to Dido's suicide and abdication from her position as ruler, the parallels

7.3 Reading for the novel

One way that the poem emphasizes the role of sight in Amata's poisoning is by inviting the reader to visualize the event. But we are asked to try visualizing something that, as Feeney has carefully delineated, is impossible to see even in the mind's eye. The peculiarities of *what* we are asked to imagine in the *Aeneid's* stories of divine manipulation work alongside the difficulties raised by the *way* we are asked to imagine them. Together, these problems point towards questions about exactly what kind of fiction the *Aeneid* offers.

I have suggested that Allecto's creations and the *furor* they inspire in her victims are as essential to the *fata* endorsed or pronounced by Jupiter as they are to the *fama* established by the poem. We may also draw broader analogies between the ways characters in the *Aeneid* respond to divine manipulations and the ways that readers absorb fictive knowledge into our perceptual equipment. But how unique to this poem—or to epic as a genre—are the connections between such god-sent cognitive transformations (as the *Aeneid* imagines them) and the potentially metamorphic effects of fiction?

Feeney argues that this episode calls us to adopt two conflicting reading conventions. He suggests that our introduction to Amata, *quam super aduentu Teucrum Turnique hymenaeis / femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque coquebant* ("whom feminine anxiety and anger over the arrival of the Trojans and the wedding ceremonies of Turnus, were bringing to the boil," 7.344–45), invites a reading based on realist conventions, which typically use every-day, readily-seen examples of what is known and recognizable.³⁵ Then in the passage depicting the snake's transformations of itself and of Amata, Feeney describes how "[t]he lines present an irresolvable tension between the minutely particularized description of the event and the impossibility of the event."³⁶ In his discussion of both Amata and Turnus' experience of madness, Feeney opposes the "concrete," "naturalistic" and "humanly plausible" to the "supernatural" and "fantastic":

What happens to Amata is understandable and it is not understandable.
[. . .] The palpable images of the slippery snake, oozing wet poison, are

sketch visions of Dido as, like Orestes, a kind of matricide (of herself) and as a Pentheus departing from the civic, masculine realm in which she had acted as ruler. See also Hershkowitz 1998, 27–28 on other theatrical aspects of Dido's madness.

35. Feeney 1991, 164 notes how at 7.343–45 the narrative's "artfully condescending *femineae*, and colloquial *coquebant*, caters to the culture's expectation of what is natural in a woman in such a circumstance."

36. Feeney 1991, 165.

at odds with the calculated plausibility of the tête-à-tête with Latinus, yet this symbiosis of the concrete and the hallucinatory fantastic catches at something central to the experience of madness. [. . .] It is remarkable testimony to Vergil's confidence in his art that he can enmesh us in such reflections on human behaviour even as his technique flaunts the fictionality of the entire episode by continually unsettling us, keeping us dithering between two incompatible reading conventions.³⁷

The seeming incompatibility of these two reading conventions, however, does not stem only from a tension between two categories, realist and non-realist narrative, as Feeney suggests.³⁸ The apparent disjunction between the expression of seeming truths about the experience of madness and the way that the “fictionality of the entire episode” is “flaunted” depends as much on the way that we experience fictions as on the way that we face insanity. Since fictions change our minds partly without our awareness, we cannot shake off the effects of our literary experiences, even should we wish to. For instance, we cannot fully return to a state of pre-realist innocence, if there is such a thing.

Feeney clearly intends “realist” to be understood as a broad category. And in this broad sense the term tells us almost as much about readerly expectations as it does about the texts that are usually categorized as “realist.” He suggests at the start of *The Gods in Epic*: “Classicists tend to be the (unwitting) victims of realistic—indeed, novelistic—conventions of reading.”³⁹ Certainly Feeney has provided a greatly needed corrective to the bemusement that has sometimes greeted the gods of classical narratives.⁴⁰ But though there are important questions to be asked about the experience available to readers in Augustan Rome, that experience is ultimately unavailable to us, with so much literary and material evidence lost, quite apart from more intangible elements. I am concerned here with what it means to read the *Aeneid* as a witting survivor of a narrative addiction fed by the traditional English novel. Instead of trying to become the kind of readers who can

37. Feeney 1991, 168.

38. Johnson's 1976 study, *Darkness Visible*, makes the *Aeneid*'s relation to Homeric *mimesis* central to its inquiry. Mitchell-Boyask 1996 opposes Homeric “realism” to Vergilian “modernism.”

39. Feeney 1991, 2. Perplexity about how to imagine the gods is closely related to the bemusement at heightened rhetorical strategies: tools such as apostrophe and hyperbole ranged outside the comfort zones of many early and mid-twentieth-century readers (translations of Lucan, especially, make this unease clear).

40. Feeney's *Literature and Religion at Rome* (1998) further pursues the interaction between representations of Roman religion and questions about how such representations operate (e.g., in problems of religious and fictive “belief”).

“adequately” respond to a nonrealist mode by discarding an inappropriate set of conventions, we may prefer to focus on how hard it is to discern the ways in which our perceptions—and therefore our reading practices—have been changed through our encounters with fictions, realist or otherwise.⁴¹

Feeney’s analysis of the narrative of the snake’s disguises can help re-describe the ways that fiction both overtly persuades and more subtly seeps into our memories. The *Aeneid* demands that the reader imagine the Fury’s snake altering its appearance. Yet it tells of these changes in a way that cannot be fully realized in the mind’s eye—not only because it is a supernatural metamorphosis, inexplicable in human terms, but also because the telling itself depends on imagining metaphors as embodied or reified in impossible ways.⁴²

For Turnus, Allecto becomes the priestess Calybe (*fit Calybe*, 7.419); for Amata, “the snake becomes the huge twisted gold on her neck, it becomes the ribbon of her trailing head-dress” (*fit tortile collo / aurum ingens coluber, fit longae taenia uittae*, 7.351–52). We saw in the previous section of my discussion how the familiarity of the objects whose shape the snake adopts makes the disguise imperceptible for Amata. They are part of her daily existence, and do not call for an interpretive response. The snake turns into objects that do not overtly try to change their viewers’ beliefs. They do not display a persuasive function that could be grasped and perhaps rejected by the queen, as Turnus rejects Allecto-Calybe’s explicit persuasion. Instead, their manipulative poison is soaked into their camouflaging of the madness they bring.

It is equally hard to grasp the relation between the perceptible and imperceptible aspects of fiction’s effects on readers, though fiction’s camouflage is not steeped with the destructive poison of a Fury’s snake. Reflections on concerns like these have entered the core traditions of the European novel. *Don Quixote* and *Northanger Abbey*, to name two key examples, imagine the bewildering effects of investing too heavily in the interpretive conventions of romance (*Madame Bovary* addresses related questions from a very different perspective). *Middlemarch*, too, though it is less concerned with the reading

41. My title for this section, “Reading for the novel,” pays tribute, of course, to Peter Brooks’ *Reading for the Plot*. Brooks uses Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* to inquire into the dynamics of plotting and the ways that “narratives work on us, as readers, to create models of understanding” (1984, xiii), a goal I share—though my approach is not psychoanalytic, and my emphasis is on narrative forms such as epic and novel as *fictions*, so the result is a very different project from Brooks’ inquiry.

42. Many aspects of the contradictory description are explored by Feeney 1991, 165–66: “Does the snake touch Amata or not? Does the snake ‘really’ become a (substantial) necklace and a (fine) ribbon? If Amata does not feel the snake, in what way is it *lubricus* (‘slippery’)?”

of romances, examines the interaction between investigations of reality and imaginative perceptions.⁴³

One of the reasons it becomes hard to identify the effects of fictions on our lives is because fictions encourage readers to perceive life in the same terms that we perceive texts. When fictions shape our perceptions, they do not lie or deceive so much as they become a part of our experience. We find truth in any text—novel or epic, as well as non-narrative and nonfictional genres—less because the text matches some external state of affairs than because of the ways we have learned to understand reality.

In *Allecto's* work on Amata, Amata's contact—or lack of contact—with the snake alters her so that she loses control over the way she experiences the world. This is just the kind of cognitive shift that defines madness in most cultures.⁴⁴ But it is also one way of imagining what happens when fictions work their metamorphic effects on readers. Neither for readers, nor for Amata, is there a single, definable moment of transformation in this process. Although the narrative dramatizes Amata's change of mind, it also emphasizes that her new Fury-brought perceptions merge with her existing thoughts and feelings.

Feeney is right to want to free readers from a dependence on notions of “realism” that would merely discard elements that do not make narrative sense in the most immediately recognizable way. In fact very few texts fit such a narrow understanding of realism. (We only have to dip into the novels of Charles Dickens or Anthony Trollope to see just how schematic these categories are.) But although Feeney shows clearly that the Amata episode challenges a narrowly realist notion of verisimilitude, some version of this mimetic concept remains in the picture here. Thinking about *vraisemblance* (whose terminological history only partly overlaps with “verisimilitude”) can help us get at the similarities between the ways minds may be changed by fiction and the way *Allecto's* snake conceals its work by making itself familiar to the queen.⁴⁵ The *vraisemblable* operates by being recognizable, but one

43. Lydgate, for example, diagnoses the exalted vision of Casaubon that led Dorothea to marry him as a “heroic hallucination” (Eliot 1994, 769).

44. If any definition is possible. Hershkowitz 1998, 13 observes how “madness continually eludes all attempts to define or categorize it in a single, understandable way. [. . .] It is outside the boundaries of comprehension, yet it is also a necessary component of comprehensibility. It is outside discourse, yet can only be understood and described by being placed in some sort of discursive context in the form of models and metaphors.”

45. See Prendergast 1986, 51 for one helpful way of understanding the term: “*Vraisemblance* is a system of conventions and expectations which rests on, and in turn reinforces, that more general system of ‘mutual knowledge’ produced within a community for the realisation and maintenance of a whole social world.”

of the key ways it achieves its effects is through the imperceptibility of the work that it does.

Although the novel—at least in its so-called “classic realist” form—vividly exemplifies this mode, one cannot limit the type of effects brought about by *vraisemblance* to the periods and genres of writing that have most readily been labeled “realist.”⁴⁶ Some such operation pervades any narrative where communication depends on the possibility of recognition, even if this takes place through imaginatively heightened and unconventional figuration, rather than through seemingly transparent representations of a world familiar in everyday terms.⁴⁷ The scenes of Amata’s madness encapsulate the thought that some wild excess always potentially lurks in the process of perceiving the world through metaphor-based imaginings, whether those figurative structures are consciously interpreted, or remain a largely unobserved mode of cognition. This is *not* to say that metaphors make one mad. Rather the poem suggests that the analogical basis of cognitive processes makes an entry point for a certain level of disorder even in the usual activities of the mind. Analogies help us order our experience, as we decide “what goes with what,” and in what sense “this” is “that.”

But the process of assimilating new experience to existing perceptions allows newly imagined and sometimes discordant “thats” to blend with our perceptions of “this.” The poetics of the *Aeneid* unite its generic logic (the ordered excess of *fama* and *fata*) with the way it imagines human perception, by presenting this cognitive dissonance as integral to human experience, as much as—or more than—a literary device.⁴⁸ The *Aeneid* links this figurative excess with two important components of its generic self-definition.

46. This book focuses on fiction, but of course the epistemological questions raised by processes of figuration have been explored in a much wider variety of narratives. (De Man 1978 is an influential example of a deconstructive approach to tropology in philosophical writing.) Hayden White’s essay “Auerbach’s Literary History” (1996) is especially pertinent both to Feeney’s and my own questions about how to historicize problems of cognition in relation to realist expectations. White argues that “Auerbach tends to present the text as a representation not so much of its social, political, and economic milieus as of its author’s experience of those milieus; and as such, the text appears or is presented as a fulfillment of a figure of this experience” (92). Noting that “Auerbach historicizes historicism itself in the same way that he historicizes realism” (97), White observes that “Auerbach is quite explicit in characterizing modernism as a kind of fulfillment of rather than as a reaction to earlier realisms” (99).

47. See Laird 1999, 157. Emphasizing the relevance of theories of realism to the *Aeneid*, Laird suggests that “epic may not only be seen as a type of discourse, but also as a way of configuring the world.”

48. In this sense the poetics of the *Aeneid* may provide a view of metaphor and perception that has a lot in common with the analysis of perceptual blending given by Mark Turner in *The Literary Mind* (1996, especially chap. 6, “Many Spaces,” 85–115).

One is its expression of *furor* as one of the forces that sustain the memory-networks of *pietas* and *fama*. Another is its imagining of divine power as realized partly through different aspects of rhetoric—through words, images, thoughts—which express and feed feelings of powerlessness, grief, anger, love, and the other emotions which motivate both these forms of memory.



8

How to Do Things with Birds

I discussed in chapter 1.1 how generalizations and similes call the reader to look for links between the story world and perceptions originating outside the narrative. These seams of fiction allow us to feel the joins between two different fabrics in the text. In this closing chapter I explore an episode in the *Aeneid* centering on a partly misleading omen. This omen works as another of those seams, allowing readers to feel out the ways that new imaginings are persuasively blended into recognizable circumstances.

In classical epic divine signs (*monstra*) stud the text as characteristically as the generalizations that punctuate the traditional novel—or as the carefully structured similes of epic narrative.¹ Cybele’s imperatives to the Trojans (*ne trepidate*, 9.114) and ships (*ite deae pelagi*, 9.117) do not directly tell their recipients what to see, but just such a command is implied by the transformation (*mirabile monstrum*, 9.120) the goddess effects. Divine signs call out “look!” for characters within the epic’s fiction much as similes and generalizations do for readers of epic and novel. They do

1. Latin and Greek narratives revel in an explicit framework for extended comparisons, with carefully balanced correlatives, but this occurs rarely enough in English prose fiction to be marked as a classicizing device, as in Henry Fielding’s epic parodies.

this even without grammatical imperatives like those through which Venus, Allecto, and Cybele perform their transformatory revelations in Books 2, 7, and 9.

Signs sent by gods not only employ the same analogical rhetoric as similes, and claim an insight into truths that might otherwise go unobserved, as generalizations do. They also resemble similes and generalizations in their roles as boundary crossers. All three break through from one category of experience into another. They invite their interpreters to observe the connections between the different categories, so as to see how “this” is “that”—or could become “that.”

Perceptual boundary crossing is crucial for the fictive knowledge offered by epic, with its vatic visions of the gods. These visions help the poem bring to the present freshly imagined “memories” of the past. But even when narratives actively disdain such vatic authority, this perceptual boundary-crossing prevents fictional worlds from being constructed as self-contained entities; it gives all fictions the potential to take on at least some of the persuasive authority and memory-making efficacy of myths.

AT THE END of the *Aeneid*, Turnus’ defeat is hurried on by his weakening fear, which comes from an omen that makes him face up to Jupiter’s hostility. But Jupiter aims the sign at Turnus’ sister Juturna. He entrusts his communication to an assistant Fury (*Dira*), who appears as an ill-omened bird; she attacks Turnus so as to remind the nymph Juturna of her brother’s mortality, and to show her that Jupiter wills his imminent death.² She recognizes the screech and flap of the *Dira*-turned-owl and speaks a searing lament in acknowledgment of the sign. Facing the Fury’s omen makes brother and sister aware that they are confronting simultaneously the forces of the underworld and Olympus: what terrifies them is the authority of Jupiter, here embodied in the person of the Fury, who is only partly disguised.

The nymph, who was once mortal, recognizes the limitations of her own power—or rather, she defines her divinity precisely in terms of the lack of power it brings her. She can no longer use her art to prolong her brother’s existence, as she has been using it ever since being urged on by Juno (12.138–60). Her own existence is to be unending, a reward and penalty for having been raped by Jupiter. The undying remembrance which Juturna’s

2. See Johnson 1976, 127–34 for a detailed exploration of Jupiter’s use of the *Dira* and the importance of how Vergil “boldly—even recklessly locates [her] at the foot of Jupiter’s throne” (128).

unwanted immortality will confer on Turnus means undying pain for her, as she anticipates a future that will set no limit to her mourning.

This chapter looks in detail at some of Juturna's art, examining how she uses her precarious divine status to try to loosen the bounds set by Turnus' mortality, after Juno encourages her to delay or even prevent her brother's death. I focus not on Jupiter's demonic bird sign, but on the one Juturna contrives earlier in Book 12, which reopens the fighting between Trojans and Italians. In Jupiter's sign, the maddening powers of the *Dira*-owl increase their force when Juturna and Turnus correctly identify the sign as both a command and threat issued by Jupiter. Juturna's bird sign, by contrast, works through a means of persuasion that is fictive in more senses than one: it breaks down any boundaries that divide reality (within the *Aeneid*'s story world) from an imagined past, present, and future; and it does so partly by enlisting Jupiter's supreme authority through its rhetorical structure.

By the end of Book 11, the Trojans and their allies have nearly defeated the Italians; at the start of Book 12 Turnus agrees to a truce and to a single combat with Aeneas, so that they can decide the outcome of the war without any more bloodshed for the armies. During the ceremonials ratifying the truce and leading towards the combat, Juno turns to Turnus' sister for help. Stirred up by Juno, Juturna alters the course of events when she changes Italian perceptions of the coming fight. Her incitement of the Rutulians to forestall Turnus' single combat depends on a perfectly successful piece of visual rhetoric in the creation of her sign.

Juturna employs an analogy that unites so self-evidently the Rutulians' perception of the conflict with what they see in the sky that the analogy itself induces in the spectators misleading assumptions about its authorship. Her bird omen purports to depict what will occur if—or rather when—the Italians break the truce just made by Latinus and Aeneas. Juturna engineers a struggle between a swan, an eagle, and a mass of smaller shore birds, in which the massed birds rescue the swan from the eagle's attack.

First, however, she uses the expectation of poetic *fama* to manipulate the ways that the Rutulians and their allies interpret what they see, so that the birds will achieve what she needs them to. Speaking in disguise as one of the men, she presents Turnus' situation to the Italians in words that lend extra vividness to an analogy showing him as a swan in a cruel eagle's clutches. The poem does not specify exactly how far their sense of recognition, based on what they have already experienced, depends on the preparatory rumors set flying by Juturna in disguise as a Rutulian fighter. But the Italians respond to Juturna's bird imagery with an interpretation that is based on what they believe about Turnus and Aeneas' situation, and on what they believe about

the divine authority supporting bird omens. They are convinced that they will succeed in saving Turnus' life, as the massed shore birds save the swan. They are unaware that the omen has been sent by a nymph—one who has little knowledge of or control over the future, who is putting all her efforts into preventing her brother's death, but who cannot know whether she will succeed in saving him.

The Italians' assumptions about divine authority come more from the figurative structure of the omen Juturna creates than from any sure knowledge about its divine source. The eagle's swooping upon a swan and his defeat by the massing of the other shore birds form a read-it-yourself omen, one so clearly based on a structure of resemblance that any nonspecialist spectator would get the point (and a spectator who had some acquaintance with epic similes could not fail to grasp the message).³

For the poem's readers, the episode provides one of the seams of fiction, but within the poem, Juturna uses the birds to tell a story that seamlessly weaves a newly imagined scenario into a recognizable depiction of events that her audience has experienced. The Rutulians confuse a visual narrative shaped by Juturna's hopeful imagination with a different kind of storytelling, one that would depict an actuality to come. Thanks to the Rutulians' sense of recognition, Juturna's work of imagination takes on a particular rhetorical efficacy, and precipitates events that turn it into, in part, a correct prediction. The force of recognition appears so strong that it can dissolve the line between two different kinds of representation. Juturna's bird sign uses metaphor to achieve this blend.

8.1 Rumors

Before she begins her ornithological manipulations, Juturna makes sure that the Rutulians will notice just how much their situation looks like the events in the story she tells with birds. In Book 7 the Trojans recognized that they

3. This ease of comprehension distinguishes this omen from the bird omen that Halitherses explains in *Odyssey* 2.146–82, for example. When Eurymachus denies divine intent for that eagle, he provides a sure sign that he will come to a sticky end: he's a character in an epic, so *of course* the squabbling eagles are not just any birds having a fight. Here Tolumnius voices the opinion of all the spectators, rather than helping them in their puzzlement as Halitherses does. See also Bushnell 1982, 3ff. Struck 2004, 95 considers these questions of perception within a broader cultural (and epistemological) framework: "a bird might just be a bird, and a chance meeting becomes a coincidence with meaning only when a god's hand is behind it. [. . .] The ancient habit of seeing just these crystallizations of randomness as the ultrasignificant language of the divine dramatically points to a certain willful resistance to nonsense, an assertion of sense where none is by any logical definition possible."

had fulfilled a prophecy dealing with table eating at the point when Iulus put their flatbread eating into words: his joke showed them how they had, in a sense, swallowed tables. Juturna, too, verbally manufactures the Rutulians' recognition of how they stand in relation to Turnus and Aeneas, though she also uses other means to set the stage. To bring about this recognition, Juturna exploits the fluid motion by which human observation and talk become quasi-divine *fama*.

She waits for just the right moment, when Turnus' own men are evaluating the two heroes side by side and see that Aeneas is plainly stronger than Turnus. Turnus stops being the towering giant that he had appeared next to a boy like Pallas. With his youthful cheeks and the pallor of fear visible on his young body, Turnus now joins the series of vulnerable young men who have been killed in the war up to this point (Euryalus, Nisus, Pallas, and Lausus, as well as the young fighters whose stories are told only in passing as they die). By echoing its descriptions of those other dead young men the poem allows their *fama* to elide with the perception of Turnus here, both for the Rutulians within the story world and for readers.

At uero Rutulis impar ea pugna uideri
iamdudum et uario misceri pectora motu,
tum magis ut propius cernunt non uiribus aequos.
adiuuat inessu tacito progressus et aram
suppliciter uenerans demisso lumine Turnus
pubentesque genae et iuuenali in corpore pallor.

But indeed in the Rutulians' eyes this combat has begun to seem
imbalanced
for some time now, and their feelings are affected by shifting emotions,
all the more as they perceive more closely that the men are not equal in
their strength.
This feeling is strengthened by Turnus, as he moves forward with silent
tread and humbly
does reverence to the altar with downcast gaze,
as well as by his youthful downy cheeks and the pallor on his young
body. (*Aen.* 12.216–21)

Coming right after the sacrificial slaughter that ratifies the truce, the view of Turnus walking submissively towards the altar encourages the Rutulians to see him as a willing sacrificial victim—a view that the disguised Juturna will soon voice explicitly in words.

At this point, Juturna notices that pity and resentment at the unequal fight is growing into talk (*sermo*) among the crowd. The crowd is depicted with the shifting indecisiveness familiar from so much literature of the time. Aristocratic ideology demands that dangerously mobile groups of people find a leader (as in the famous storm-calming simile of Book 1). Juturna provides that leadership, but she chooses a persona that will blend into the crowd, as well as giving her authority among the soldiers. She scatters her rumors (*rumores*, 12.228) in disguise as an Italian warrior called Camers.

quem simul ac Iuturna soror crebrescere uidit
 sermonem et uulgi uariare labantia corda,
 in medias acies formam adsimulata Camerti,
 cui genus a proauis ingens clarumque paternae
 nomen erat uirtutis, et ipse acerrimus armis,
 in medias dat sese acies haud nescia rerum
 rumoresque serit uarios ac talia fatur:

As soon as his sister Juturna saw this talk
 grow and the wavering spirits of the crowd shift,
 into the midst of the ranks, after making herself look like Camers,
 whose family, stretching back, was mighty, and who had a name
 distinguished for his father's excellence, and he too was an energetic
 fighter,
 into the mist of the ranks she plunges, and fully aware of the state of
 things,
 she sows motley rumors, and says things like this: (*Aen.* 12.222–28)

She selects a man famous among the Rutulians for his family background and for his courage. Both of these qualities will enhance Camers' speech, as they do Turnus', whose persuasiveness often relies on his glamour as a young fighting man (for instance, 7.472–74, where his looks, ancestry, and military achievements induce the Rutulians to fill out the gaps in his abbreviated oratory with their own mutual exhortation).

At the same time, in changing her gender to make herself resemble Camers, Juturna makes herself just one among the crowd whom she's aiming to persuade. Her version of events will take on its own apparently authorless momentum with the anonymity of gossip.⁴ Although he wields some per-

4. The shift in gender is emphasized by the verse: the same phrase that conveys her knowledge, explaining her success in carrying out persuasion, also draws the reader's attention to her difference from the men she is persuading. The feminine adjective and genitive pair *haud nescia rerum* is in the

sonal authority because of his family's and his own reputation for courage, it is also appropriate for her purposes that within the framework of the poem as a whole Camers is only one step away from being unknown.⁵ When she puts on this disguise, Juturna takes advantage of her divine ability to change her appearance at will and create a quasi-fictive persona, but she immerses herself completely in ordinary human talk. Divinities in the *Aeneid* who disguise themselves as mortals usually set the seal on their communications as divine by revealing themselves on departure. Juturna is unusual in that the poem emphasizes how her talk itself retains its disguise, so that her divine speech mingles indiscernibly with mortal language, the indistinguishable *murmur* stealing through the armed men.⁶

Another difference between Juturna and the other divine characters who actively intervene in the poem is that her identity as a nymph who was once mortal mingles humanity with divinity, even when she is undisguised. Her perceptions and language are strongly colored by this combination; she suffers the emotions of a mortal without the limit set by death. Completely impervious to the starriness of immortality herself, she willingly exploits for her own purposes the paradox-fueled energy of *fama*.

Juturna–Camers crystallizes the fighting-men's expectations of *fama* and their anxieties about how *fama* can be enhanced or damaged by the talk of the community. The forward-looking *talía* in 12.228 (quoted above), though regularly used to introduce speeches, seems carefully imprecise here.⁷ It is picked up by *talibus dictis* in 12.238, because it is important that the particular speech that the narrative presents here should blend in with all the other unspecified talk that is set in motion:

same position as the masculine adjective and ablative pair *acerrimus armis* in the line above, so that the "real" masculine Camers and the female who adopts his identity confront one another in successive lines.

5. Readers receive no hint from the poem as to whether we should think of Juturna as stealing the identity of a Camers mentioned in 10.562, who was last seen being chased by Aeneas—neither his survival nor his death is considered worth mentioning in Book 10. Williams 1973 *ad loc.* is neutral; Harrison 1991, 214 assumes that they are different.

6. Knauer 1964 connects this scene with Athena's disguise and her manipulation of Pandarus when she instigates the truce breaking in *Iliad* 4, though Juturna's means of persuasion are far more elaborate, both in her rumor mongering and in the bird sign. Turnus eventually tells his sister that he recognized her at an early stage in the proceedings (12.632), but the narrative never suggests that any of his people share this recognition.

7. In 12.229 Juturna–Camers employs *talibus* in a very different sense, which is colored by its uses a line earlier and in 12.238; *pro cunctis talibus* expresses confidence in the Rutulians as fighters, of course ("for all such men"), but its position amidst the other uses of *talibus* brings another implication, which is to liken the listeners to Turnus—Turnus is just one such man as all of you, so why are you letting him do your work and appropriate your *fama*?

'non pudet, o Rutuli, pro cunctis talibus unam
 obiectare animam? numerone an uiribus aequi
 non sumus? en, omnes et Troes et Arcades hi sunt,
 fatalisque manus, infensa Etruria Turno:
 uix hostem, alterni si congregiamur, habemus.
 ille quidem ad superos, quorum se deuouet aris,
 succedet fama uiuusque per ora feretur;
 nos patria amissa dominis parere superbis
 cogemur, qui nunc lenti consedimus aruis.'
 Talibus incensa est iuuenum sententia dictis
 iam magis atque magis, serpitque per agmina murmur:
 ipsi Laurentes mutati ipsique Latini.
 qui sibi iam requiem pugnae rebusque salutem
 sperabant, nunc arma uolunt foedusque precantur
 infectum et Turni sortem miserantur iniquam.

“Isn’t it shaming, Rutulians, to thrust forward just one
 life for all, and for such men as you? Are we not equal
 in number and strength? Look—all the Trojans *and* the Arcadians are just
 these ones here,
 and the bands ordained by fate, Turnus’ enemy Etruria:
 scarcely an enemy apiece we have, even if only half of us were to come to
 grips with them.
 He indeed will mount, through his *fama*, to the gods above,
 at whose altars he dedicates himself, and he’ll be sustained alive on men’s
 lips;
 we will lose our ancestral home and we’ll be forced to obey arrogant
 masters, since we now sit around sluggishly on our fields.”
 By such words as these the young men’s judgment was inflamed
 more and more, and a murmuring creeps through the ranks:
 even the Laurentians and the Latins are transformed.
 Those who just now were hoping for a respite from battle and
 for security, now want arms, and pray for the treaty to be
 unmade, and pity the unequal lot dealt to Turnus. (*Aen.* 12.229–43)

Turnus’ self-sacrifice, she says, will make him famous. She speaks of the
 fight as Turnus had presented it in Book 11 and at the start of Book 12,
 a struggle by one man on behalf of them all (unlike Drances in Book 11,
 who saw Turnus as exposing his countrymen’s lives to danger for the sake
 of his own personal ends). She puts this in terms that make the Rutulians

responsible for the arrangement, with Turnus' life merely the object of their decision (*non pudet, o Rutuli, pro cunctis talibus unam / obiectare animam?* 12.229–30). The rituals binding the treaty become rituals of *deuotio*, the altars become figuratively altars for human sacrifice.⁸

The self-sacrifice will give Turnus a form of immortality granted by unauthored *fama*, but associated for readers of Latin poetry with authorial power: *ille quidem ad superos, quorum se deuouet aris, / succedet fama uiuusque per ora feretur* (12.234–35). The Ennian reference (*uolito uiuus per ora uirum*, “I fly alive on the lips of men”), echoed in *Georgics* 3.9, *uictorque uirum uolitare per ora* (“and victorious fly on the lips of men”), exploits the notion that the telling of stories about heroes leads to a new form of heroism through authorship.

The connection between heroism and authorship will now be reversed again, however, as the hero Turnus will live through *fama*. The discourse that will take Turnus up to the gods is one that may be generated by particular authors, but that is sustained in human societies independently of those authors. So Juturna's talk depicts a process that reflects precisely the one that she herself carries out, when she scatters rumors and sets moving among the Italian armies an apparently unauthored utterance—talk that seems to arise directly from the circumstances, rather than from an individual—which glorifies Turnus as sacrificial hero, to be both envied and rescued from the imminent sacrifice.

According to the notion Camers/Juturna spreads, the deeds themselves produce immortal remembrance; heroic reputation does not depend on the art of the particular poet who creates a persuasive representation of the hero's acts. She gets her audience thinking about their own strength as fighting men *en masse*. Encouraging confidence in the transparency of information that comes from looking directly at a scene, she boosts the Italians' awareness of their power to intervene by pointing out how greatly they outnumber their enemies: “Look, all of the Trojans *and* the Arcadians are just these few

8. See Livy *Ab urbe condita* 8.9. Juturna's sacrificial language marks in advance the duel as transgressive regardless of the emotions that will accompany the actual killing of Turnus. She echoes Turnus' own words (11.440–42; see Hardie 1993, 28–29), but when she helps set up the language of sacrifice, she categorizes the human sacrifices as disordered and shameful, not as something that can establish a new order. On sacrifice in the *Aeneid*, see Hardie 1993, 19–35, though he focuses less on how Turnus and Juturna present the significance of the single combat as it approaches, and more on the substitution for the “institutionally sanctioned sacrifice of animals” (at 12.161–215 when the treaty is drawn up) by the sacrifice of Turnus at the very end of the poem. Hardie argues: “As ‘sacrifice’ the death of Turnus represents a reimposition of order; but as uncontrolled rage [. . .] it retains its potential to repeat itself in fresh outbursts of chaotic anger (the dreary catalogue of vengeance-killings of Roman civil war)” (21). See also Putnam 1965, 165.

men here [. . .]: scarcely an enemy apiece we have, even if only half of us were to come to grips with them” (12.231–33). As a concomitant to their ceding control over language by withdrawing from the search for glory, she threatens the waiting Rutulian spectators with a surrender of personal control to the point of becoming slaves to the victors: “He indeed will mount, through his *fama*, to the gods above, at whose altars he dedicates himself, and will be sustained alive on men’s lips; we will lose our ancestral home and be forced to obey arrogant masters, since we now sit around sluggishly on our fields” (12.234–37).

Juturna’s talk sets ablaze the feeling of the troops as it merges with their own conversations, as the murmur slithers its way through the armed men. Not only the Rutulians are convinced, who were already particularly moved by the sight of their young leader, but even the Laurentians and Latins are altered, *mutati* (12.240). Their state of mind and perceptions are transformed.⁹

Readers of the *Aeneid* are not told whether to imagine Juturna’s words adding an entirely new perspective to the pity-driven talk of the Rutulians, or whether the speech mirrors and distills what is already in circulation. Either way, through her identification with the Rutulians, she strengthens both their identification with Turnus, and their sense that he is unique. They no longer want safety; they pity Turnus’ unjust lot (*Turni sortem miserantur iniquam*, 12.243).

The *Aeneid*’s readers have seen something like this before, in Book 2, when Sinon had worked on a mixture of Trojan pity for him as victim and concern for themselves. In 2.199–200 the decisive moment comes when an omen, whose origin is never explained in the epic’s narrative, follows hard upon Sinon’s words and appears to confirm them by destroying Laocoon: *his aliud maius* [. . .] *obicitur*.¹⁰ Although the phrase here in *Aeneid* 12 (*his aliud maius Iuturna adiungit*, “to these Juturna adds something else still greater,” 12.244) almost repeats the line from Book 2, this time the poet has not delegated the role of narrator to the puzzled Aeneas. An active verb (*adiungit*) prominently assigns an author to the omen in question, though

9. *talibus incensa est iuuenum sententia dictis / iam magis atque magis, serpitque per agmina murmur: / ipsi Laurentes mutati ipsique Latini* (12.238–40). The vocabulary here recalls the work of the fury Allecto; her snaky, fiery power steals into Amata’s body and mind (7.346–56), before the Fury inflames Turnus by revealing the full extent of that power.

10. The verb is passive, the agent unmentioned; all we know are the divergent traditions mentioned by commentators. In Book 2, the narrator is Aeneas, who knows more of divine matters than his fellow mortals only at particular moments of revelation, unlike the considerably better-informed poet who speaks into existence the work as a whole.

of course it is only the *Aeneid*'s readers, not the Rutulians, who are made aware of this author.

In the bird omen itself, Juturna exploits the same transparent relation between signs and deeds that she established in her verbal manipulation of the Italian soldiery's desire for fame. After the Italians have been prepared for the omen by the talk they themselves have shared in, they will be all the more ready to be swayed by what she does with birds, both because of the way she has presented Turnus' vulnerability to the violent eagle Aeneas, and because she has encouraged them to regard signs—whether visual or verbal—as providing a window directly onto actuality.

8.2 *Accipio agnoscoque deos*

We have seen how Juturna as Camers has ensured that the Rutulians, Latins, and Laurentians perceive their experience in a way that will match her bird omen and add to its emotional force. The eagle endangers all the birds (248–49), but fastens in particular on the swan, a creature known for its beauty and for its associations with poetry. The spectators' attention is riveted by this part of the action (12.250–52). The veracity of the first part of the analogy is proven, in their view. The next stage of the omen, when the eagle Aeneas will metaphorically take the swan-Turnus in his talons, is occurring now, as Turnus places himself in the more powerful warrior's grip by submitting to single combat. The spectators are accordingly invited to see the final stage, when the smaller birds' large numbers and solidarity defeat the predator, as truth-telling in the same way.

The spectators easily grasp the allegorical positions of Aeneas as “Jupiter's bird,” and Turnus as outstanding swan. Tolumnius, whose position as augur would make him especially alert to the things birds get up to, has been hoping for just such a sign. The message is all the less enigmatic for him because he already has a “that” with which to match the “this” presented by the birds: “‘This was it,’ he said, ‘this was what I have often sought in my prayers. I welcome and I recognize the gods’” (12.259–60).

Truth is so clearly on display here that the spectators expand it to embrace the second stage of the omen, the prediction of the future, which cannot be compared with their own experience. While Tolumnius and the other viewers behave like practiced simile readers, they have not had the opportunities for developing epic-derived expertise which would have taught them the different levels of confidence that are justified for different

divinities. It is not enough to recognize that gods are at work without specifying which gods. A nymph who was mortal before being raped by Jupiter and is supported in her actions by Juno has the divine power to metamorphose herself so that she appears as a Rutulian man, but she is trespassing on the territory of more powerful gods when she directs the movements of eagle and swan. In case we should forget this, the eagle is described as *Iouis ales* (“Jupiter’s bird,” 12.247).

One way to think about Juturna’s work on Turnus’ people and their allies is to return to Austin’s speech acts.¹¹ Her omen is visually equivalent to a speech genre that in its illocutionary force blends statement, promise, threat, and command, much as we saw in chapter 4 that two very similar statements of the future could serve either as a threat spoken by Celaeno or as a promise and command spoken by Anchises.¹²

Juturna’s omen may be understood on one level as an “unhappy” or “infelicitous” performative, which “misfires” for reasons similar to Austin’s unhappy ship naming:

Suppose, for example, I see a vessel on the stocks, walk up and smash the bottle hung at the stem, proclaim “I name this ship the *Mr. Stalin*” and for good measure kick away the chocks: but the trouble is, I was not the person chosen to name it (whether or not—an additional complication—*Mr. Stalin* was the destined name; perhaps in a way it is even more of a shame if it was). We can all agree

- (1) that the ship was not thereby named;
- (2) that it is an infernal shame.

One could say that I “went through a form of” naming the vessel but that my “action” was “void” or “without effect,” because I was not a proper person, had not the “capacity,” to perform it.¹³

11. See chapter 6.2. Her sign steps beyond the normal bounds of Austin’s discussion of speech acts, of course; Austin’s exploration is concerned with the (verbal and visual) utterances of human society, not with the imagined communications of gods.

12. Austin considers nonverbal forms of communication relevant to any consideration of illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, as he shows when discussing conventions, consequences, and effects in terms apposite to Juturna’s story: “Acts of *both* kinds can be performed—or, more accurately, acts called by the same name (for example, acts equivalent to the illocutionary act of warning or the perlocutionary act of convincing)—can be brought off non-verbally; but even then to deserve the name of an illocutionary act, for example a warning, it must be a *conventional* non-verbal act: but perlocutionary acts are not conventional, though conventional acts may be made use of in order to bring off the perlocutionary act” (1975, 121–22). Juturna’s sign is a conventional, nonverbal illocutionary act.

13. Austin 1975, 23.

The bird sign appeals to conventions that imply that its author is a god with the power to know the truth, to fulfill threats and promises, and to enforce commands.

But although we the readers know that as a performative it could be seen as “unhappy,” and that in relation to its author it fully operates only as a wish, its recipients within the epic are unable to evaluate it as such. They cannot separate out the element that is recognizable as constative, that can be assessed as true or false in relation to their previous experience, from the element that brings into sight an imagined future. One of the key differences (apart from comedy value) between Juturna’s omen and the *Mr. Stalin* example is uptake (i.e., the recognition by the audience or spectators of the conventions cited). Austin’s ship naming fails not only because he has not been appointed to name the ship, but because the naming seems to be done in isolation. There is no context or audience to make meaningful the conventions he does successfully cite in smashing the bottle and speaking the proclamation.

The role of citation in Austin’s theory, together with the complex interaction between illocutionary and perlocutionary force, gives room for maneuver. A speech act or its equivalent may be efficacious, even when by some measures it would be counted a “misfire” in that the subject performing the act and citing its conventions has not been granted the authority to do so. Butler has negotiated between Derrida’s and Bourdieu’s readings of Austin to make the most of a space in which citation enables change in the ways power is distributed in a society.¹⁴ Its inherent citationality helps Butler show how the structure of the speech act allows an otherwise marginalized speaker to *claim* authority, as Juturna does, by expropriating “the dominant ‘authorized’ discourse.”¹⁵

One of the important things about the illocutionary force of an utterance is that as speech alone it transforms the state of affairs in the world. Once a statement has been felicitously made, for example, something has happened: its recipients have taken an utterance as an expression of belief about some aspect of the world.¹⁶ In making a promise, a speaker raises the expectation of further action. And the expectations which result from most forms of illocutionary act seem to invite some further response on the part

14. Derrida (1972/1977/1988, 17), Fish (1989, esp. 46–57), and Butler (1993, 226–27; 1995; 1997, chap. 4 *passim*) are especially emphatic about the citational aspect of speech acts, which relies on what Derrida refers to as “iterability.”

15. Butler 1997, 157.

16. It is above all in the illocutionary act of stating that Austin shows the collapse of the categories of the constative and the performative (1975, 140–47).

of the recipient. This is why, although Austin lays out the notion of the perlocutionary chiefly in order to show what the illocutionary *is not*, the perlocutionary force of language is closely bound to the illocutionary.

Because the Rutulians and their allies see the omen as either a statement or a promise of divine intention, they are persuaded to obey its implicit command and act in a way that will blend still more thoroughly what is stated with what is imagined. One cannot normally be “appointed” a powerful god.¹⁷ In this respect divine communications stand outside the social conventions that operate in Austin’s framework. But a nymph can cite the conventions used by Jupiter.

The circumstances of Juturna’s bird story allow for the apparent performance of the act of prophesying. In turn, because the story is *perceived* as prophetic by its spectators, the bird story brings at least some of the consequences that it predicts, and ceases to be merely an apparent prophecy or an “unhappy” performative. Juturna takes on Jupiter’s authority, and although she is not “authorized” she performs her expropriation with at least partial success.

his aliud maius Iuturna adiungit et alto
 dat signum caelo, quo non praesentius ullum
 turbavit mentes Italas monstroque fefellit.
 namque uolans rubra fuluus Iouis ales in aethra
 litoreas agitabat auis turbamque sonantem
 agminis aligeri, subito cum lapsus ad undas
 cycnum excellentem pedibus rapit improbus uncis.
 arrexere animos Itali, cunctaeque uolucres
 conuertunt clamore fugam (mirabile uisu),
 aetheraque obscurant pennis hostemque per auras
 facta nube premunt, donec ui uictus et ipso
 pondere defecit praedamque ex unguibus ales
 proiecit fluuio, penitusque in nubila fugit.
 Tum uero augurium Rutuli clamore saluant
 expediuntque manus, primusque Tolumnius augur
 ‘hoc erat, hoc uotis’ inquit ‘quod saepe petiui.
 accipio agnoscoque deos; me, me duce ferrum
 corripite, o miseri, quos improbus aduena bello
 territat inualidas ut auis, et litora uestra

17. But both Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and Seneca’s *Apocolocyntosis* use epic conventions to explore the mechanisms by which Roman political systems claim some of that imagined power to “appoint” divinities.

ui populat. petet ille fugam penitusque profundo
 uela dabit. uos unanimi densete cateruas
 et regem uobis pugna defendite raptum.’

To this Juturna adds something else still greater, and in the high air gives a sign than which no other more powerfully has shaken Italian minds and deceived them with an omen. For in fact flying into the reddening skies a tawny bird of Jupiter was harrying the shore birds and a shrieking mass of a feathered throng, when, suddenly dropping to the waves he brutally snatches with his hooked feet an outstanding swan. The Italians pricked up their spirits and all the birds with a shrieking sound change the direction of their flight (a marvel to see), and darken the sky with their wings and, forming a cloud, press the enemy through the breezes, until, defeated by force and by their very weight, the bird failed, and cast his spoil from his talons into the river, and fled deep into the clouds.

Then indeed the Rutulians greet the omen with a shout and ready themselves for fighting, and first of all Tolumnius, the augur: “This was it,” he says, “this was what I have often sought in my prayers. I welcome and I recognize the gods; with me, me as leader grasp your steel, unhappy men, whom in war the brutal foreigner terrorizes like feeble birds, and ravages your shores with force. He will make off in flight and set sail far off into the deep. But you, united in spirit, cluster your thronging troops and fight to defend the king who has been snatched from you.”

(*Aen.* 12.244–65)

Juturna, then, cites the conventions of omen-generation, and in getting the spectators to *take up* her story as an omen (with the illocutionary force of statement, promise, and command) she turns it into a partly accurate statement of the future, because of the perlocutionary effects that follow this uptake. She does not have much authority in the divine hierarchy; we discover as we see her act in Book 12 that her power lies in verbal and visual communication. The reality of that power is both revealed and comes into being through the force of her communication itself. The knowledge Juturna communicates bears comparison with the fictive knowledge of epic *fama*. Considering Juturna’s omen in relation to this fictive knowledge raises further questions about what is happening when Juturna’s birds bring about a performative that is both infelicitous and efficacious.

Thinking about *fama* in terms of performativity, however, is a matter of noticing illocutionary acts that help create the discourse of *fama*, rather than analyzing *fama* in itself as a speech act. The versatility of *fama* makes it much more than even a many-layered and multi-faceted act of communication. The language of *fama* in the *Aeneid* does not limit itself to “talk,” but stretches speech-related vocabulary (as J. L. Austin does) to include communication through writing and images. *Fama* can be reckoned as the content of a specific story or, more diffusely, a set of beliefs; and, as Hardie reminds us, at times *fama* is conceived as a narrator.¹⁸ *Fama* may also denote the impact of a story or beliefs on the people who hold those beliefs or hear the story. So it is not just that *fama* avoids separating the creation of truths—or untruths—from reporting beliefs, truths, and lies. *Fama* also melds together particular acts of communication with the cumulative effects of many communications on a society or on an individual.

Illocutionary force emerges from a dynamic interaction between words, conventions, and nonverbal structures of power in society. This interaction itself continually alters the relationship between verbal and social forms of authority. Thinking in terms of Austinian speech acts is useful when investigating the *Aeneid*'s discourse of *fama* partly because the epic's rhetorical stance relies on neither stating nor rejecting referential truth claims.

The inclusiveness of *fama*'s discourse in this sense parallels the variety of ways fictive knowledge can be offered within one text, in different texts, and in different genres of fiction. Like Juturna as the “speaker” of an illocutionary act uttered through the visual language of a bird omen, epic establishes the force of its *fama* partly by citing conventions that it associates with divine authority. But in its versatility and diffuseness *fama* escapes beyond the reach of any analysis that would ascertain a particular source as *auctor*. So the *Aeneid* figuratively borrows the power and authority of gods for its *fama*—yet it does so partly by envisaging divine power as in turn wielded through a mixture of imagination, persuasion, and violence. This combination itself calls into question what it means to situate the basis of epic's fictive knowledge in an imagined divine realm.

The importance of authorship in Juturna's genre blurring is signaled by the word *praesens*, which is applied twice in its comparative form to Juturna's omen. When Juno instigates Juturna's intervention in the truce, she tells her: *tu pro germano si quid praesentius audes, / perge; decet. forsan miseros meliora sequentur* (“As for you, if you dare anything more immediate

18. Hardie 2009a, 555–56. As Hardie points out, *fama* can serve as an intradiegetic narrator, a character (of sorts) within the text, as well as an extradiegetic one.

on your brother's behalf, go ahead. Perhaps for those who are unhappy a better future will follow," 12.152–53). Soon afterwards the narrator introduces Juturna's omen: *his aliud maius Iuturna adiungit et alto / dat signum caelo, quo non praesentius ullum turbavit / mentes Italas monstroque fefellit* ("Juturna gave a sign than which no other more powerfully shook Italian minds and deceived them with an omen," 12.244–46). *Praesens* is a strange adjective to join with the verb *fallo* ("deceive"). Commentators on the poem suggest that *praesentius* should be taken as "more powerful" at 12.245, and at 12.152 as "more effective."¹⁹ If we bear in mind the sense of "bodily present" in the way that *praesens* is often applied to divinities, however, the term *praesentius* begins to combine the senses of "effective" with "divinely powerful" because of the direct involvement of the goddess.²⁰ Juno suggests that Juturna's divine presence in the midst of the battle may help her brother; perhaps she will be able to reshape the future using even her limited divine strength (12.153). In 12.245 the *signum* is both deceptive and loaded with divine authority. Juturna's divine strength, in fact, lies in her ability to disturb Italian perceptions (*mentes Italas*, 12.246) through her sign.

Although this sign tricks the Italians with what it shows (as a *monstrum*), it does so with Juturna's full commitment. She hopes (backed by Juno's encouragement) that changing men's minds will change their actions, and that changing their actions will provide a new plot. Her story can reasonably be regarded as depicting Juturna's honest opinion about what will follow if the truce is broken.

But there is a hitch. Juturna's audience does not regard her omen as truth telling in the ordinary mortal sense. A sign from the gods is not supposed to convey an honest but possibly misguided opinion—that is not what divine intimations are all about, and that is not what the adjective *praesens* would normally suggest. "I accept and recognize the gods," says the augur Tolumnius (*accipio agnoscoque deos*, *Aen.* 12.260), apparently unaware not only that gods sometimes intend deceit, but also that the lower reaches of the divine hierarchy may not have much authority to predict the future.

19. Williams 1973 *ad loc.*; Thilo-Hagen 1986; Conington and Nettleship 1963.

20. See especially Hardie 2002b, 4–5 and *passim*. *Praesentes diui* are, as Hardie puts it, "gods who vouchsafe their presence to help mankind." The term reflects, on the one hand, the power and willingness of a god to benefit mortals, and on the other, the success of the poet in realizing divine presence, of putting divinities before the eyes of readers through *enargeia*. The speaker of the *Georgics* invokes *agrestum praesentia numina* (1.10) among the list of deities who are to bolster his didactic authority: the implication is that the Fauni he calls on will not only help the didactic poet with his verses, but will also make his teachings effective by favoring the actual rural activities presented in the poem.

8.3 Juturna's fictional truth

Michael Riffaterre, introducing a theory of “fictional truth” centered on the nineteenth-century novel, has declared apothegmatically that “fiction is a genre whereas lies are not.”²¹ Riffaterre’s whole investigation has as its premise the idea that there is a certain paradox in the way that readers expect fictions on some level to be true. His elegantly decisive separation of lies from fiction relies nevertheless on limiting the force of this contradiction, equating “truth” with verisimilitude, and distinguishing “fiction” sharply from other forms of persuasive discourse. But the distinction between lies and fiction (like many distinctions between genres) is less clearly marked than this.

Riffaterre sets out to *solve* the paradox of “fictional truth,” while I am interested in understanding whether the paradox may maintain its full power to express the way that fictions not only tell truths, but in some sense bring them into being. Riffaterre argues that fiction “must somehow be true to hold the interest of its readers, to tell them about experiences at once imaginary and relevant to their own lives.”²² His focus on what is recognizable in fiction pinpoints some of the reasons why readers have hailed certain kinds of fiction as “truthful.” Like Barthes in *S/Z*, he locates this persuasive efficacy in the way that a reader matches up the contents of a specific fiction with the language-based codes that have been generated and reinforced by a whole range of cultural artifacts.

But if “truth-in-fiction” is a paradox, as Riffaterre (convincingly) says it is, “truth” must go beyond this kind of relevance-based and self-contained discursive persuasiveness.²³ He expands on his demarcation between fiction and lies: “Being a genre, [fiction] rests on conventions, of which the first and perhaps only one is that fiction specifically, but not always explicitly, excludes the intention to deceive. A novel always contains signs whose function is to remind readers that the tale they are being told is imaginary.”²⁴ Riffaterre in *Fictional Truth* shows how strategies for achieving persuasive verisimilitude in many nineteenth-century novels are among the very same means by which the artifice involved in narrative fiction is put on display.

21. Riffaterre 1990, 1.

22. *Ibid.*, xii.

23. *Ibid.*, xiii.

24. *Ibid.*, 1. His observation hovers between a descriptive statement (many or perhaps most novels do contain such signs) and a legislative assertion (if a text does not contain such signs, we should not treat it as fiction). But diagnosing a need to legislate on what counts as a “novel” or “fiction” is precisely what undermines the attempt to do so. See also Cohn 1999, 3.

I cheerfully follow Riffaterre (and, for example, Barthes in *S/Z*) along one line of thought in this kind of inquiry: references to a “given” that is external to a specific text are verifiable according to an “accepted idea of reality.”²⁵ This would apply to the referentiality we find both in overtly fictional genres and in genres, such as historiography, which aim for a more pervasive kind of reference to a world outside the text. We perceive what we treat as reality through our senses, but these perceptions are mediated by the interpretive framework provided by our cultural experience, which of course includes fictions. However, I am far more interested than Riffaterre in the way that each individual reader has her own specific “accepted idea of reality”—one that is not wholly “grammatical,” that does not fully conform to a “consensus about reality, a consensus already encoded in language.”²⁶

In the famous generalizing simile from *Middlemarch* that I quoted in chapter 1.1, the appearance of concentric circles around a lighted candle’s reflection is likened to a character’s view of her position in the world:

An eminent philosopher among my friends, who can dignify even your ugly furniture by lifting it into the serene light of science, has shown me this pregnant little fact. Your pier-glass or extensive surface of polished steel made to be rubbed by a housemaid, will be minutely and multitudinously scratched in all directions; but place now against it a lighted candle as a centre of illumination, and lo! the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles round that little sun. [. . .] These things are a parable. The scratches are events, and the candle is the egoism of any person now absent—of Miss Vincy, for example.²⁷

Is this truth “fictional,” and if so, in what sense? Where does the imagined world in which we met Miss Vincy leave off? Where does a reader’s perception of actuality begin? When it claims control over the ways that you perceive “your ugly furniture,” the *Middlemarch* “parable” does something very like Juturna’s omen. From now on, we are at liberty not only to notice how light gives the illusion that random scratches on polished steel form circles; we are free not only to compare that illusion with the “egoism of any person now absent”—we are also invited to perceive both polished steel and egoism in terms of the particular imagined character who is being discussed here, that is, Rosamund Vincy. So once we have read the novel, our familiarity with the imagined Rosamund will inform both the way we look

25. Riffaterre 1990, xiv.

26. *Ibid.*

27. Eliot 1994, 264.

at scratches in reflective surfaces and the way we understand egoism. Different individual responses to the novel, of course, will determine how—and whether—these effects occur.

Our encounter with this parable may reshape our perceptions, so that we no longer know for sure how different layers of cognition interact. Are we matching up experience that has been imagined within the novel to our own, clearly distinct, prior experience? Have we been taught something altogether new? Or have we been persuaded to perceive both polished steel and egoism in a particular way, blending new imaginings into our experience, just as Juturna does in manipulating the Italians? We do not need to believe that Rosamund Vincy ever existed as a flesh-and-blood human being outside the world of *Middlemarch* for her story to become integral to our perceptions of what we consider reality.²⁸

Eliot's "serene light of science" is the quintessentially secular and impersonal force of authority that she establishes for her anti-epic/epic novel. In that sense being asked by Eliot's narrator to "look!" may seem quite distinct from receiving the imperative of an epic, which uses its discourse of *fama* to blend poetic creation with the works of imagination and revelation performed by Venus, Allecto, Jupiter, and other divinities within its story world.

Juturna's bird story, instead of offering any "signs whose function is to remind readers that the tale they are being told is imaginary," exploits reading conventions that serve the opposite purpose. Juturna makes sure that the birds' exploits appear unmistakably omen-like in the story they tell for her, with its self-evident likeness to the Italians' present situation. As we have seen, Juturna's omen takes the form of a visual simile. This inverts a narrative simile earlier in the poem, in which readers of the *Aeneid* saw Turnus himself figured as an eagle (*Iouis armiger*, 9.564) attacking a swan during the fighting in Book 9.²⁹ The conviction that they are learning something new from the bird fight depends on the ability of the Rutulians and their

28. Feeney 1993, 230–31 raises questions very similar to those I address here in his epilogue to Gill and Wiseman, *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*: "What do we mean when we say 'Evander, or Chloe, or Little Dorrit, did this or that' [. . .]? What are we doing when we even act upon these beliefs, visiting, for example, the Palatine Hill, or the Cobb at Lyme Regis, or the sights of London or Bath, imagining in all these places the scenes taking place which we first imagined when we read Dickens, Jane Austen, or Vergil? The very existence of a *Blue Guide to Literary Britain and Ireland* is a thought provoking phenomenon."

29. This analogy for Turnus (in isolation, in the midst of his *aristeia*) is one of those protean comparisons that incorporates the shifting perceptions of battle into the narrative; we see his prey first as a hare, then a swan; next the prey turns into a lamb, and Turnus shifts from a Jovian eagle to a wolf of Mars (9.561–66).

allies to match up the sky-borne activity with what they already know about Turnus' situation. At the same time, the kinds of cultural and aesthetic perceptions of swans invoked by the *Aeneid's* earlier simile are entwined with his followers' emotional reaction to Turnus' beauty, vulnerability and potential fame.

The story Juturna tells is deceptive only in as much as it is "generically" (to use Riffaterre's term) blurred. This blurring arises from the nymph's citing conventions that grant her visual language a form of authority apparently sustained by the sheer power of the "speaker." Although the story of the *Aeneid* itself ends with Turnus as a dying swan (so to speak), the story laid out in Juturna's omen does come true if we follow its parallel only up to the point when Aeneas is driven from the battlefield with a wound (12.311–27). Juturna's tale is incomplete, not wholly false. Tolumnius' interpretation makes the end of the bird story more final than is warranted, as he assumes that the eagle's departure into the clouds is equivalent to a departure from Italy, not from the battlefield. The *Aeneid's* narrator, it is true, does not (like Tolumnius) depict Aeneas as running away from the field of battle when his wound incapacitates him, but this is a question of viewpoint. Hardie assumes that Tolumnius misreads the omen, but O'Hara is equally sure that he gets it right and that it is only the omen itself that is misleading.³⁰ Such a sharp difference of opinion nicely illustrates the difficulty of interpretation for readers of the epic as well as in the epic's story world. The nymph makes sure it is transparently omen-like, but as with poetic similes the possible parallels are manifold and therefore ambiguous.

Kendall Walton, who is concerned with what it *means* for something to be fictional, argues that "fictionality has nothing essentially to do with what is or is not real or true or factual; [. . .] it is perfectly compatible with assertion and communication [. . .], yet entirely independent of them."³¹ Coming from a different perspective, to test suppositions that speech-act theory might distinguish fiction from other kinds of discourse, Stanley Fish has argued that "[r]ather than occupying a position of centrality in relation to

30. See Hardie 1987a and O'Hara 1990, 86. Both read the omen in close conjunction with Venus' swan-omen in Book 1.

31. Walton 1990, 102. This conviction that fiction is not to be defined in terms of assertion or the lack of assertion leads him (as well as Fish 1980) to reject the aid of speech-act theories (at least as employed by Searle and others) in addressing "the basic question of what fiction is, how works of fiction are to be differentiated from other things" (Walton, 76). I agree with this verdict; it has helped me see clearly that my own interest is not in ascertaining this "basic question of what fiction is," but rather in exploring how common perceptions about categories such as assertion, truth, and falsehood play a part in allowing fictive knowledge to take a wide variety of forms and wield many different effects on readers.

which other uses of language are derivative and parasitic, constative speech acts are like all others in that the condition of their possibility (the condition of always operating within a dimension of assessment or interpretive community) forever removes them from any contact with an unmediated presence. By Austin's own argument, then," Fish continues, "the exclusion of stage and other etiolated utterances as deviations from ordinary circumstances loses its warrant."³²

Both these assessments are convincing, but (reasonably enough, since they are concerned with different questions) do not address the problem that as readers we often *behave* as if the status of fictions—or the status of particular utterances within a work of fiction—has a great deal to do with what is or is not real or true or factual. Conventional distinctions between the real and the imagined, knowledge and belief, truth and falsehood, the constative and the performative, and the authorized and unauthorized regularly break down under scrutiny. But the ways we view such distinctions as operative in any given utterance may play a crucial role in the perlocutionary force of fictions, as they do in any other kind of discourse. This is why Riffaterre's pithy "Fiction is a genre, lies are not" expresses a familiar strategy. As "readers" (broadly defined, since fictions come in many media) many of us set boundaries around "fiction" and try to keep it epistemologically and ontologically self-contained. But these very attempts at containment may play a vital role in eroding those boundaries.

There is, of course, a long history of fear that fiction, like other forms of persuasion, may deceive its recipients. This is not necessarily a fear that engrossing narratives actually confuse us by making us think that people or events are real when they are not (though in some contexts this fear may itself become quite potent, even without the involvement of a reader who is unusually naive, or who steps so far out of conventional systems of perception as to be categorized "insane"). Although *being* fictional is independent of what is or is not real or true or factual, the *force* of fiction (its ability to reshape experience and give rise to new sequences of events) may depend on how readers decide what we may assess as true or false, real or unreal.³³

Reading fiction allows us to acquire new knowledge and new memories, which are sometimes partly or wholly imaginative creations. We enter into a dynamic interaction with a text: new fictive knowledge is filtered through

32. Fish 1989, 61.

33. I follow Austin in adopting the term "force": the slipperiness of the word builds a bridge between power enacted through violence and a more mysterious power, akin to narrative's ability to fascinate reader and listeners, but also embodied in the world of the *Aeneid* by the power of the gods over mortals.

previous perceptions, but our views of reality are in turn constantly reshaped by this fictive knowledge. Ideologically, the effects of this dynamism are indeterminate. Beliefs may be either reinforced or challenged by encounters with fiction.³⁴ The traditional English novel is sometimes regarded as both distinctive and exemplary in the ways its genre establishes fictionality. But in their abilities to conjure specific new memories that confuse the boundaries between a world regarded as “real” and a variety of story worlds, both epic and novel in different ways may serve as mythmakers.

34. Ricoeur 1984, 79–80 addresses this ideological indeterminacy, arguing that “[. . .] reading poses anew the problem of the fusion of two horizons, that of the text and that of the reader, and hence the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the reader.” Ricoeur continues: “We might try to deny the problem, and take the question of the impact of literature on everyday experience as not relevant. But then we paradoxically ratify the positivism we generally fight against [. . .]. We also enclose literature within a world of its own and break off the subversive point it turns against the moral and social orders. [. . .] A whole range of cases is opened by this phenomenon of interaction: from ideological confirmation of the established order [. . .] to social criticism [. . .].”



Afterword

Swan Song

As we saw in chapter 8, Juturna (speaking in disguise as Camers) presents her brother's prospective poetic immortality as something that makes him worth fighting for, and worth emulating. She follows this up by selecting a swan to represent Turnus in her omen. Setting up Turnus to be seen as a beautiful swan who must be rescued from a brutal eagle consolidates the lesson on *fama* she has just given to the Rutulians and his other Italian allies. The swan visibly embodies the aesthetic rewards of exemplary heroism, and reinforces the notion that in some way the hero himself will create the song that is to immortalize his glory.

Yet the hero cannot guarantee the survival of that song. In *Eclogue* 9, Menalcas ties Varro's swan-song immortalization to the survival of Mantua: *Vare, tuum nomen, superet modo Mantua nobis, / Mantua uae miserae nimium uicina Cremonae, / cantantes sublime ferent ad sidera cycni* ("Varus, may singing swans bear your name on high to the stars as long as Mantua remains to us—alas, Mantua, far too close to poor Cremona").¹ Singing

1. I owe this connection to Malamud 1998, 121 and accordingly adopt her translation of Menalcas' unfinished song in *Ecl.* 9.27–29. Malamud shows in detail how in the *Aeneid* the swan marks the poem's unsettled place in an epic tradition. See also Habinek 2005, 163–77 on warriors as swans.

swans can lift someone's name to the stars, but as with the poet's apostrophe to Nisus and Euryalus in *Aeneid* 9 (though to different effect) the memories shaped by song will be prolonged only if the city that nurtures the poet continues to exist.² *Fama* here, as so often, is at once divinely transcendent and contingent on its perpetuation by a particular human community.³

The hope of *fama* lies in the expectation that the past and present will continue to be meaningful and memorable in the more distant future. This hope relies above all on the transformations wrought by metaphor. It relies on the belief that suffering can be translated into lasting beauty through the poetic imagination, which turns fighters into swans and their battles into song. *Fama* indicates the ways that art can—up to a point—make memory and imagination communal or collective. But through its evident fluidity, and through the interaction in the poem between anonymous collective speech and individual authorship, *fama* in the *Aeneid* also reflects both the limits and extent of what “collective memory” and “social memory” might mean. The discourse of *fama* acknowledges the slipperiness with which newly created story worlds become part of reality through the blending of fictive and traditional memories. This is one of the reasons Vergilian *fama* can sensitize us to important aspects of the fictive knowledge that we find in many other genres, including novels written many centuries later.

Most fundamentally, fictions enter a network of memories which are continuously renewed by the mind's ability to link “this” new perception with “that” previous experience, whether those “this's” and “that's” are categorized as real or imaginary. In this interplay between old and new perceptions, between imagination and memory, its flexibility and inclusiveness allow the *Aeneid* to reconcile the tensions suggested by Richard Martin's succinct functional definitions of epic: both “as pervasive as everyday speech,” and “a mode of total communication, undertaking nothing less than the ideal expression of a culture.”⁴

2. Hardie 1987a would make the connection between swans and the immortality of fame still more emphatic by adopting an emendation of Housman's for Venus' swan-sign in Book 1 (1.395–96 would read *nunc stellas ordine longo / aut capere aut captas iam despectare uidentur*, instead of *nunc terras . . .*).

3. See Hardie 2012, 166–68 on Ovid's exploration of this idea in *Met.* 15.861ff., including allusions to Horace *Odes* 3.30 (which expresses related ideas in copious *fama*-ish vocabulary but does not refer directly to *fama*). As Hardie points out, “In entrusting his eternal fame to the mouths of the *populus* Ovid gives himself up to the *leue uulgus* who come and go in the House of *Fama*. Here we finally realize why *fama* as singular fame and *fama* as unattributable rumour cannot be separated: the pre-eminent poet, like the pre-eminent hero, is condemned to oblivion without the support of the nameless and unaccountable masses” (167).

4. Martin 2005, 18.

The totalizing scope of the *Aeneid*'s fictive knowledge gains from the extent to which the poetics of *pietas* and *fama* interact with *furor*. It is not just that the epic bestows *fama* on *pius Aeneas* and his people through the stories generated by their *pietas* and by the conflicts *pietas* provokes. *Fama* is maintained partly through the restitutive logic of remembrance by which *pietas* both seeks to order existence and acknowledges disorder. With its aspirations to harness emotional zeal in the service of an orderly cosmos, *pietas* is on one level at odds with *furor*. But though *furor* takes many forms, among these is the intensity of commitment to remembrance required by *pietas*. In chapter 3 we saw how central this is to rituals of lamentation in Book 6 (these issues come to the forefront also in Book 11, which I have not discussed). Intense remembrance also makes itself felt in vengeance-killings (above all in Books 10, 11, and 12), and in the whole endeavor of renewing Troy through the promised Italian settlement that Aeneas seeks. And when it reaches the extremes that take Aeneas and other human characters beyond the limits that would usually be set for mortal knowledge, *pietas* itself becomes almost madness.

The discourse of *fama* embeds its metamorphic commands in readers' pre-existing perceptions and memories in such a way as to enable new ways of knowing and remembering. We have seen this process at work on many levels within the poem's story world. At its simplest, this is the kind of conceptual blending through which Aeneas in Book 2 gives Carthaginians a share in the visions of divine destruction granted by his mother, the visions that help anchor his individual *fama* as *pius Aeneas* in the broader *fama* of the Trojan war that he recognized in the Carthaginian temple art in Book 1. The new imaginings Aeneas shapes for his listeners consist of their own mental pictures of an agricultural scene, melded with Venus' descriptive commands to "Look!" at the violence of the gods.

Earlier in his narrative, Aeneas tells how Sinon exploits a comparable process to contextualize and reinforce an anonymously circulated rumor about the expiatory purpose of the Greeks' gift horse. Sinon links his deceptive stories of Calchas' prophetic commands with Trojan perceptions of themselves as a *pius* people and of the Greeks as violators, and with the Trojans' particular memories of Diomedes and Ulysses breaking into Athena's shrine. The epic discourse of *fama* claims to recount a series of past events and to celebrate a familiar set of values. In that sense, *fama* both reveals a lost world to its readers and asserts the continued existence of that world. That continuity is proclaimed most strikingly on Aeneas' shield in Book 8, where the gods fight alongside mortals at the battle of Actium, an event of recent Roman history. Just as Venus in Book 2 shows Aeneas the gods bring-

ing an end to the city of Troy, the *Aeneid* invites its readers to envisage the gods at work in their own times.

Such continuities as these play complex roles in shaping the poem's fictive knowledge. This partly explains the fervor with which critics continue pondering what it might mean to understand the text as "Augustan." Aeneas' commemorative excesses, which incorporate varying degrees of *furor* into his *pietas*, can be—and have been—interpreted as constructing an *apologia* for Octavian's murderous excesses in the name of *pietas* towards his adoptive father Julius Caesar, as shameful reminders of those killings, or as communicating both ideas without resolution between them.⁵ The poem is ideologically complicated by the interaction between new and old perceptions and memories. But this interaction also helps make the poem a characteristically Augustan work of art that neither justifies nor denies the violence involved in founding and repeatedly re-founding Rome.⁶ The narrative dynamics of the *Aeneid* make room for an imaginative excess that eludes simplistic decoding.

Fama does not permanently merge with *fata*, and neither does *furor* become fully identified with *pietas* in the *Aeneid*. But epic *fama* provides the voice for divine *fata*, serving as a vehicle through which the poem's merging of creativity, history, and tradition may be conceived in terms of a collective authorless authority. This authority is imagined as neither entirely transcending the beliefs of a particular society, nor bound by the limits of a given historical moment; neither fully human nor fully divine, instead it reaps the aesthetic rewards of being poised between these spheres.

5. See especially Quint 1993, 76–83.

6. Morgan's contribution to Stahl 1998 expresses a similar view, though he uses the term "propaganda," which I would avoid. The term "propaganda" is too deeply imbued with the associations of twentieth-century totalitarianism to be easily rehabilitated for more nuanced ways of describing political communication, but I agree with Morgan that the poem's rich depiction of the pain and sorrow of civil war should not be taken as intrinsically subversive or anti-Augustan. Showing gods fighting on both sides at Actium, for example, is in itself neither a triumphalist endorsement of Octavian (the Olympians are with him) nor a demonizing condemnation (his wars have unleashed a terror that incorporates the whole cosmos).



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