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GIGANTOMACHY IN *AENEID* 2

by

David R. Youd

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree**

of

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

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**Religious Studies
in the Department of History**

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ABSTRACT

The Gigantomachy, and corollary Titanomachy and Typhonomachy, are battles between cosmic forces striving to establish universal supremacy. Allusions and references to these conflicts appear in various forms of literature, both poetry and prose, throughout antiquity from as early as Homer. Philip Hardie has shown the extensive presence of the theme in the *Aeneid*, predominantly in the final four books of the epic, and demonstrated that its use contributes significantly to a larger cosmological design of linking the struggles of individuals and civilizations to the mythological battle for the control of the cosmos. A similar pattern, hitherto unexplored, is employed in Book 2, where allusions to and echoes of these divine conflicts appear at strategic moments to aggrandize and elevate the destruction of Troy to the cosmic level.

Vergil was commissioned to compose a new creation myth for Rome, yet the origins of their state sprang from destruction, both in the civil wars at the end of the Republic and more distantly in the fall of Troy and destruction of the previous Italian civilizations. The cosmic struggles between the Olympians and the Giants, Titans, and Typhoeus provided a close mythological analogy for Vergil to draw from. In many ways these "de-creationist" forces are seeking a reversal of cosmogony and threaten to turn the cosmos back to chaos before ending in a reaffirmation of order. The Giants' close connection to the cosmogony, both chronologically and thematically, makes them particularly apt for the poem's lofty subject, the creation of Rome. Therefore, Vergil alludes to these mythological passages highly familiar to the reader in order to create a cosmological structure in the epic, one of almost universal destruction leading to renewed creation, for which there is no clear antecedent in the Greco-Roman tradition.

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Gigantomachy in *Aeneid* 2

instar montis equum diuina Palladis arte | aedificant. (Aen. 2.15 f.)

Introduction

The Gigantomachy, and corollary Titanomachy and Typhonomachy, are battles between cosmic forces striving to establish universal supremacy. Allusions and references to these conflicts appear in various forms of literature, both poetry and prose, throughout antiquity from as early as Homer. Philip Hardie has shown the extensive presence of the theme in the *Aeneid*, predominantly in the final four books of the epic, and demonstrated that its use contributes significantly to a larger cosmological design of linking the struggles of individuals and civilizations to the mythological battle for the control of the cosmos.¹ A similar pattern, hitherto unexplored, is employed in Book 2, where allusions to and echoes of these divine conflicts appear at strategic moments to aggrandize and elevate the destruction of Troy to the cosmic level. An investigation of the ways in which other ancient authors have utilized the theme and the methods by which Vergil himself integrates it into his own narrative elsewhere will clarify its significance and purpose in the architecture of the second book.

Vergil was commissioned to compose a new creation myth for the *novus ordo saeculorum*, for Rome and the Principate, yet for the Romans the origins of their state sprang from destruction, both in the civil wars at the end of the Republic and more distantly in the fall of Troy and destruction of the previous Italian civilizations. With no Ragnarok, Apocalypse, or comparable story of eschatological world renewal, the cosmic struggles between the Olympians and the Giants, Titans, and Typhoeus, collectively defined as Gigantomachy by Hardie,² were the

¹ Almost all work on Gigantomachy in the *Aeneid* stems from Hardie 1983 and 1986.

² Hardie 1986 p. 85. For the sake of clarity, I will follow Hardie's usage of the term. Additionally, in this paper I will refer to the gods victorious in Gigantomachic conflicts as Olympian and their opponents as Gigantic.

closest mythological analogy for Vergil to draw from. In many ways these “de-creationist” forces are seeking a reversal of cosmogony, as we shall see below, and threaten to turn the cosmos back to chaos before ending in a reaffirmation of order. The Giants’ close connection to the cosmogony, both chronologically and thematically, makes them particularly apt for the poem’s lofty subject, the creation of Rome. Therefore, Vergil alludes³ to these mythological passages highly familiar to the reader in order to create a cosmological structure in the epic, one of almost universal destruction leading to renewed creation, for which there is no clear antecedent in the Greco-Roman tradition.

Gigantomachy in Ancient Sources

Before discussing the events in the *Aeneid* that follow these patterns and allude to such passages, it is necessary to outline the sources available to Vergil and the primary features associated with Gigantomachy. The earliest extant references to the *gigantes* describe them as hubristic (ὑπερθύμοισι Γιγάντεσσιν, Hom. *Od.* 7.59) and reckless (λαὸν ἀτάσθαλον, 7.60). Their overwhelming strength is a basic feature (κρατερὰς μεγάλους τε Γίγαντας, Hes. *Theog.* 185). They are said to have faced the gods in combat (θεοὶ ἐν πεδίῳ Φλέγρας Γιγάντεσσιν μάχην | ἀντιάζωσιν, Pind. *Nem.* 1.67 f.) and variously to have been conquered by Heracles (Γίγαντας ὃς ἐδάμασας, Pind. *Nem.* 7.90)⁴ or by the thunderbolts of Zeus.⁵ Apollodorus offers a late yet full account in which they are defeated by Zeus and his κεραυνοῖς (*Bibl.* 1.6.1-2).

³ If it is not too cliché to comment on how we speak of authors, I see merit in speaking both of an author who alludes and of intertextuality, nor are the terms mutually exclusive. See Hinds (1998) p. 50: “While conceding the fact that, for us as critics, the alluding poet is ultimately and necessarily a figure whom we ourselves read out from the text, let us continue to employ our enlarged version of ‘allusion,’ along with its intention-bearing author, as a discourse which is good to think with—which enables us to conceptualize and to handle certain kinds of intertextual transaction more economically and effectively than does any alternative.” This view will be followed in the use of ‘author’, ‘intertext’, and ‘allusion’ throughout this paper.

⁴ See also Pind. *Nem.* 1.67 ff.

⁵ See Eur. *Her.* 177 ff.: Διὸς κεραυνὸν ἠρόμην τέθριππά τε | ἐν οἷς βεβηκῶς τοῖσι γῆς βλαστήμασιν | Γίγασιν πλευροῖς πτήν’ ἐναρμόσας βέλη, and Eur. *Ion.* 212 ff.: κεραυνὸν ἀμφίπυρον | ὄβριμον ἐν Διὸς | ἐκηβόλοισι χερσίν.

Typhoeus' strength is similarly emphasized in nearly every account,⁶ and is additionally described as a pain to mortals (πῆμα βροτοῖσιν, *HH* 3.352) and an enemy of the gods (θεῶν πολέμιος, | Τυφῶς ἑκατοντακάρανος, *Pind. Pyth.* 1.15 f., Τυφῶνα θεοῦρον· πᾶσιν ὅς ἀντέστη θεοῖς, *Aesch. PV* 354). He is said to have attempted to overthrow the rule of Zeus by force (ὡς τὴν Διὸς τυραννίδ' ἐκπέρσων βίαι, *PV* 357), and is universally said to have been subdued by his thunderbolts.⁷

Snake imagery is one of the most prominent and frequent characteristics ascribed to Typhoeus and, later on, the Giants. While these attributes are less frequent in literary accounts, Ogden has outlined the gradual appearance of snake elements in artistic depictions of the Giants beginning around the fourth century BCE until it later became a standard motif.⁸ By the Augustan period, Ovid portrays them with “snakes instead of legs” (*pro cruribus angues*, *Fast.* 5.37), and Apollodorus describes them as having “the scaly feet of dragons” (εἶχον δὲ τὰς βάσεις φολίδας δρακόντων, *Apollod. Bibl.* 1.6.1).

Typhoeus, on the other hand, is portrayed with one hundred snake heads as early as Hesiod (ἦν ἑκατὸν κεφαλαὶ ὄφις, δεινοῖο δράκοντος, *Theog.* 825), a constant image throughout classical literature.⁹ The snake imagery is central in the Hesiodic version, where space is given to

⁶ See *Hes. Theog.* 823 f.: οὐ χεῖρες μὲν ἔασιν ἐπ' ἰσχύι, ἔργματ' ἔχουσαι, καὶ πόδες ἀκάματοι κρατεροῦ θεοῦ, *Ap. Rhod. Argon.* 2.1212: στιβαρὰς... χεῖρας, *Apollod. Bibl.* 1.5.3: οὗτος μὲν καὶ μεγέθει καὶ δυνάμει πάντων διήνεγκεν ὄσους ἐγέννησε Γῆ, ἦν δὲ αὐτῷ τὰ μὲν ἄχρι μηρῶν ἄπλετον μέγεθος ἀνδρόμορφον, ὥστε ὑπερέχειν μὲν πάντων τῶν ὄρων.

⁷ See *Hom. Il.* 2.780 ff.: Οἱ δ' ἄρ' ἴσαν ὡς εἴ τε πυρὶ χθῶν πᾶσα νέμοιτο· | γαῖα δ' ὑπεστενάχιζε Διὶ ὡς τερπικεραυνῷ | χροομένῳ, ὅτε τ' ἀμφὶ Τυφωεῖ γαῖαν ἰμάσση, *Hes. Theog.* 820-885, *Pind. Pyth.* 8.16 ff.: Τυφῶς Κίλιξ ἑκατόγκρανος οὐ νιν ἄλυξεν, | οὐδὲ μὲν βασιλεὺς Γιγάντων· δμᾶθεν δὲ κεραυνῷ, *Aesch. PV* 358 ff. ἀλλ' ἦλθεν αὐτῷ Ζηνὸς ἄγρυπνον βέλος, | καταβᾶτης κεραυνὸς ἐκπνέων φλόγα, | ὅς αὐτὸν ἐξέπληξε τῶν ὑψηγόρων | κομπασμάτων, *Ap. Rhod. Argon.* 2.1211-15: ἔνθα Τυφῶνά φασι Διὸς Κρονίδαο κεραυνῷ | βλήμενον, *Apollod. Bibl.* 1.6.3: Ζεὺς δὲ πόρρω μὲν ὄντα Τυφῶνα ἔβαλλε κεραυνοῖς... βάλλων κεραυνοῖς ἐπ' ὄρος ἐδίωξε Τυφῶνα.

⁸ Ogden 2013 83 ff.

⁹ See *Apollod. Bibl.* 1.6.3: Τυφῶνα ἐν Κιλικίᾳ, μεμιγμένῃν ἔχοντα φύσιν ἀνδρός καὶ θηρίου... ἐκ τούτων δὲ ἐξείχον ἑκατὸν κεφαλαὶ δρακόντων. τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ μηρῶν σπειρας εἶχεν ὑπερμεγέθεις ἐχιδῶν, ὧν ὄλκοι πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐκτεινόμενοι κορυφῆν συριγμὸν πολὺν ἐξείσαν.

describe his hissing voice (ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ ροίζεσχ', *Theog.* 835) and sibilant tongue (γλώσσησι δνοφερῆσι λελιχμότες, 826). Indeed the voices of Typhoeus receive ample attention in Hesiod's narration, occupying no less than 7 full lines (829-835). Along with the hissing, he is said to speak at times so the gods can understand (ἄλλοτε μὲν γὰρ | φθέγγονθ' ὥσ τε θεοῖσι συνιέμεν, 830 f.), at others to bellow loudly like a bull (ταύρου ἐριβρύχεω... ὄσσαν ἀγαύρου, 832), a lion (λέοντος ἀναιδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντος, 833), or puppies (σκυλάκεσσιν ἐοικότα, 834).¹⁰

Fire, particularly as seen emanating from his glowing eyes, is one of Typhoeus' basic features (Hes. *Theog.* 826 ff.):

... ἐκ δέ οἱ ὄσσων
θεσπεσίης κεφαλῆσιν ὑπ' ὀφρύσι πῦρ ἀμάρυσσεν·
πασέων δ' ἐκ κεφαλέων πῦρ καίετο δερκομένοιο.

... And out of his eyes
fire shot forth under the brows of the awful heads:
and out of all of his heads fire burned where he looked.

The same image is found in Aeschylus (ἐξ ὀμμάτων δ' ἤστραπτε γοργωπὸν σέλας, *PV* 356), and in Apollodorus (πῦρ δὲ ἐδέρκετο τοῖς ὄμμασι... πολλὴν δὲ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος πυρὸς ἐξέβρασσε ζάλην, *Bibl.* 1.6.3). Fire, as we shall see below, also plays a prominent role in his combat with Zeus and in his association with Etna after his death.¹¹ Indeed, disorder in general seems to characterize him. Aeschylus describes Typhoeus as assaulting Zeus' sacred meadows (λειμῶνα χιονόβοσκον ὄντ' ἐπέρχεται | Τυφῶ μένος, *Aesch. Supp.* 559 f.), and he is also ascribed monstrous offspring in *Theog.* 306 ff., including Ladon and the Chimera. Hesiod later gives an elaborate description of the destructive winds which he begot (*Theog.* 869 ff.) and the havoc they wreak on ships (873 ff.):

αἰ δὴ τοι πίπτουσαι ἐς ἠεροειδέα πόντον,

¹⁰ See West ad loc.

¹¹ See Lovatt 2013 on destructive fire in Titanomachy and Typhonomachy.

πῆμα μέγα θνητοῖσι, κακῆ θύουσιν ἀέλλη·
ἄλλοτε δ' ἄλλη ἄεισι διασκιδνᾶσί τε νῆας
ναύτας τε φθείρουσι· κακοῦ δ' οὐ γίνεται ἀλκῆ
ἀνδράσιν οἱ κείνησι συνάντωνται κατὰ πόντον.

And the winds indeed fall onto the dark sea,
a great distress to mortals, they rage with an wicked whirlwind:
Here and there they howl and scatter ships
and destroy the sailors: there is no help of this evil
for men, who encounter them on the sea.

This scene has striking similarities with the storm of the winds in *Aeneid* 1.81 ff., which has strong Gigantomachic connections, as we shall see below.

Fear inspired even in the gods is another common Gigantomachic theme. The battle of Zeus and Typhoeus causes Hades and even the Titans locked up in Tartarus to tremble (*Theog.* 850 ff.). In the *Seven Against Thebes*, the messenger to Eteocles describing the design of Typhoeus on the shield of Hippomedon admits the sense of panic it inspired in him (ἔφριζα δινήσαντος· οὐκ ἄλλως ἐρῶ, Aesch. *Sept.* 490), and Prometheus does not fail to mention the terror of his hissing (σμερδναῖσι γαμφηλαῖσι συρίζων φόβον, Aesch. *PV* 355). Once more, Apollodorus later gives the fullest account, relating that the Olympians all fled to Egypt and hid in animal forms until Zeus conquered the monster (*Bibl.* 1.6.3), and likewise calls the Giants *fearful* (οἱ φοβεροὶ, 1.6.1).

One of the most common elements found in Gigantomachic narratives is the conflagration and universal upheaval resulting from the Giants' attack on the gods. The earliest mention of Typhoeus is primarily concerned with the destructive nature of this conflict (Hom. *Il.* 2.780-785):

Οἱ δ' ἄρ' ἴσαν ὡς εἴ τε πυρὶ χθῶν πᾶσα νέμοιτο·
γαῖα δ' ὑπεστενάχιζε Διὶ ὧς τερπικεραύνῳ
χωομένῳ, ὅτε τ' ἀμφὶ Τυφωεῖ γαῖαν ἰμάσση.

But the Greeks marched as if the whole ground would be wasted by fire and the earth groaned as stricken by angry Zeus who delights in thunder, when he smites the earth around Typhoeus.

The same sensibility pervades Hesiod's description, where the order of the three major world zones is reduced to chaos: long waves rage against the sea shore, fire consumes heaven, earth, and sea, and the quaking shakes not only the land, but the sky and waters as well (*Theog.* 839 ff.):

σκληρὸν δ' ἐβρόντησε καὶ ὄβριμον, ἀμφὶ δὲ γαῖα
σμερδαλέον κονάβησε καὶ οὐρανὸς εὐρύς ὑπερθευ
πόντος τ' Ὠκεανοῦ τε ῥοαὶ καὶ τάρταρα γαίης.
ποσσὶ δ' ὑπ' ἀθανάτοισι μέγας πελεμίζετ' Ὀλυμπος
ὄρνυμένοιο ἄνακτος, ἐπεστενάχιζε δὲ γαῖα.
καῦμα δ' ὑπ' ἀμφοτέρων κάτεχεν ἰοειδέα πόντον
βροντῆς τε στεροπῆς τε πυρός τ' ἀπὸ τοῖο πελώρου
πρηστήρων ἀνέμων τε κεραυνοῦ τε φλεγέθοντος,
ἔξεε δὲ χθὼν πᾶσα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἠδὲ θάλασσα·
θυῖε δ' ἄρ' ἀμφ' ἀκτὰς περὶ τ' ἀμφὶ τε κύματα μακρὰ
ρίπη ὑπ' ἀθανάτων, ἔνοσις δ' ἄσβεστος ὀρώρει.

This mixture of elements and the removal of their boundaries is essentially a reversal of the elemental separation and organization which took place at the moment of creation.¹² The birth and new life of Γαῖα, Οὐρανός, and Ὠκεανός at *Theog.* 116 ff. is recalled here by their death and destruction, particularly in the universal conflagration at the moment of Typhoeus' death (859-67). Afterwards, the powers and domains are distributed among the Olympians as Zeus' status as *kosmokrator* is reaffirmed.

The Titanomachy is told in the same terms, as the three zones again moan and shake (*Theog.* 678 ff.), the earth and ocean streams boil (695 ff.) and fire imagery is pervasive: ἰερὴν

¹² For such sensibilities in creation accounts, see *Lucr.* 5.772-1104 and *Ov. Met.* 1.5-88.

φλόγα (692), καιομένη (694), θερμὸς ἀντμῆ (696), φλόξ δ' ἠέρα δῖαν ἵκανεν | ἄσπετος (697 f.),
καῦμα δὲ θεσπέσιον κάτεχεν Χάος (700).¹³

Mt. Etna, frequently given as the resting place of Typhoeus,¹⁴ or a giant such as Enceladus,¹⁵ holds strong associations with Gigantomachy. Pindar gives an elaborate description of the volcanic activity in Sicily, emphasizing the wonder of its destructive fire (*Pyth.* 1.21-28):

τᾶς ἐρεύγονται μὲν ἀπλάτου πυρὸς ἀγνόταται
ἐκ μυχῶν παγαί· ποταμοὶ δ' ἀμέραισιν μὲν προχέοντι ρόον καπνοῦ
αἴθων'· ἀλλ' ἐν ὄρφναισιν πέτρας
φοίνισσα κυλινδομένα φλόξ ἐς βαθειᾶν φέρει πόντου πλάκα σὺνπατάγῳ.
κεῖνο δ' Ἀφαίστιο κρουνοὺς ἔρπετὸν
δεινοτάτους ἀναπέμπει· τέρας μὲν θαυμάσιον προσιδέσθαι, θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παρεόντων
ἀκοῦσαι,
οἶον Αἴτνας ἐν μελαμφύλλοις δέδεται κορυφαῖς
καὶ πέδῳ, στρωμνὰ δὲ χαράσσοισ' ἅπαν νῶτον ποτικεκλιμένον κεντεῖ.

Within her [Aetna's] secret depths pure springs of unapproachable fire erupt—her rivers in daytime pour forth billows of glaring smoke, while at night the blood-red rolling blaze whirls the boulders crashing onto the flat plain of the sea. It is the monster beneath, spewing torrents of fire—a wondrous portent to behold, a wonder even to hear of from those who have seen how he thrashes in bonds beneath the black-leaved peaks and sloping sides of Aetna, and his bed, scraping all his back, goads him as he writhes upon it.¹⁶

Aeschylus similarly names Etna and emphasizes the fiery nature of the monster's death (*PV* 363 ff.):

καὶ νῦν ἀχρεῖον καὶ παράορον δέμας
κεῖται στενωποῦ πλησίον θαλασσίου
ἰπούμενος ρίζαισιν Αἰτναίαις ὑπό.

And now a corpse, useless and sprawling,

¹³ The demise of the Giants is similarly a fiery event, as described in Eur. *Ion.* 215 f.: τὸν δάϊον | Μίμαντα πυρὶ καταθαλοῖ.

¹⁴ As in Pind. *Pyth.* 1.17 ff., Aesch. *PV* 365, and Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.6.3.

¹⁵ See *Aen.* 3.578 ff.

¹⁶ Translation here by Nisetich.

he lies near the narrow sea,
weighed down under Etna's roots.

Apollodorus' version concurs with both (*Bibl.* 1.6.3).

Otus and Ephialtes, otherwise known as the Aloadae, are yet another representation of this same pattern.¹⁷ Homer relates their enormous size (μηκίστους, *Hom. Od.* 11.309) and their assault on heaven (οἳ ῥα καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἀπειλήτην ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ | φυλόπιδα στήσειν πολυάικος πολέμοιο, 313 f.) which entails piling the mountains Ossa and Pelion on top of Olympus in order to reach heaven (Ὅσσαν ἐπ' Ὀλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν, αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὅσση | Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἴν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη, 315 f.). Vergil mentions their assault on heaven (*ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam | scilicet atque Ossae frondosum inuoluere Olympum*, *Verg. G.* 1.281 f.) as they attempt to take the throne of Jove by using their great strength (*qui manibus magnum rescindere caelum | adgressi superisque Iouem detrudere regnis*, *Aen.* 6.583 f.), as well as their obstruction by Jupiter (*ter pater exstructos disiecit fulmine montis*, *Verg. G.* 1.283). In Ovid, who syncretizes the stories, they are confused with the *gigantes* (*Met.* 151 ff.):

Neve foret terris securior arduus aether,
adfectasse ferunt regnum caeleste Gigantas
altaque congestos struxisse ad sidera montes.

And lest the lofty heaven would be more free of care than the earth,
Tradition tells that the Giants assaulted the celestial kingdom
and piled up mountains in a heap to the high stars.

This Gigantomachic assault is unique in its focus on the disorder in nature caused by their heaping of mountains to the sky, thereby blurring the lines between the heavens and the earth, while most of the other conflicts focus on fire bursting its bounds.

¹⁷ The earliest and fullest account is given at *Hom. Od.* 11.305 ff.

Allusions and references to the Gigantomachy were popular in many artistic forms during the centuries directly preceding and following Vergil. Innes has shown that the myth held a high place in rhetoric and philosophy, and that numerous Gigantomachies were written or promised which have not come down to us.¹⁸ Hardie has neatly summarized the appearance of the theme in political panegyric, philosophical allegory, hellenistic epic and art, specifically the Pergamene Altar,¹⁹ and the Augustan *recusatio*.²⁰ In all of these, Gigantomachy provides an elevating effect, aggrandizing the subject matter to a cosmic level.

Gigantomachy in Vergil

A peculiar difficulty in the task left to Vergil of creating an epic panegyric of Augustan ascendancy is the frequent presence of two contestants for power in the creation of Rome. In some conflicts there is a clear insider and outsider, and therefore the old civilization vs. barbarians rhetoric can be easily applied, as with the contention between Rome and Carthage. In the *Aeneid*, Dido's court is accordingly bedecked with lavish gold and purple, conventional symbols of the luxury and effeminacy of the east and it is also given the only mention of music. Here an apparent dualism justifies the conflict and winning side, but in many cases both of the rivals have relatively equal claims to dominion, and there is a moral ambiguity in the very

¹⁸ See Innes 1979 p. 169: "We are then, I think, justified in arguing from rhetorical theory not only that natural philosophy might as a literary theme claim great grandeur, more so than moral philosophy, but that the pre-eminent theme will be the nature of the universe and its creation. It is probably no accident that the final example of divine grandeur in Long. 9.9 is an example of god as truly god and in the act of creation—Genesis 1, an unusual example from Hebrew literature, but one which combines the first rhetorical category of Hermogenes with the most sublime theme in the second, the origin of the world. This song of creation is precisely that given to Orpheus in Ap. Rh. 1.496 ff.; compare also the song of Silenus (Verg. *Ecl.* 6.31 ff.) and Iopas (*Aen.* 1.742 ff.). This theme does not then suggest the didactic Alexandrian tradition (so e.g. Austin in his valuable note on *Aen.* 1.742 ff.) but rather the poet's highest calling."

¹⁹ Hardie 1986 139 ff.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 85 ff.

struggle, as with Romulus and Remus, Octavian and Antony, Trojans and Italians, and so forth.²¹ In these instances the victory alone sanctifies the victor, and the *Aeneid* is full of similar examples.

As Hardie has noted, the nature of the genre itself provides Vergil with a *modus operandi* for portraying these clashes, which are a typical feature of epic: "The epic power struggle constantly throws up doubles; the Latin epic greatly extends this innate tendency of the genre, because of the dualities that structure political power and its dissolution at Rome."²² The conflicts so characteristic of Homeric epic are recalled in the depiction of the power struggles in the *Aeneid*, where the heroic contest between Aeneas and Turnus is presented as a new duel of Achilles and Hector. Nevertheless, this does not remove the aforementioned difficulty of moral ambiguity.

Gigantomachy provides an important, and in some ways more appropriate analogy complementing this epic convention and exalting the already heroic conflicts to the cosmic level. Hardie points out that ambivalence is an inherent feature of the myth, "where the distinction between the two types of opponent, gods and Giants, is often weak... both sides are comparable in size and use similar tactics."²³ The cosmic struggle between the Olympians and Titans is a battle between generations where there is no obvious moral difference between the two,²⁴ and other contestants for the throne of Zeus are only morally deficient because they threaten the status quo. Likewise, the battles narrated in Books 7-12 of the *Aeneid* present the war as a

²¹ See Hardie 1993 p. 10: "The founding myth of the city, of the principate and of civil war is the Romulus and Remus story; Rome arises out of the violent replacement of a twosome by a unique founder."

²² Ibid.

²³ Hardie 1986 p. 155.

²⁴ That Kronos devoured his own children can be said to give the Olympians the moral edge, yet Zeus' first act on the throne after the defeat of Typhon is to swallow his pregnant wife (Hes. *Theog.* 886).

conflict between the often morally ambiguous Aeneas and Turnus. Here an appeal to this Gigantomachic pattern varnishes the process of elimination involved in the creation of Rome. It helps to exculpate the Greeks who uprooted Troy, especially since their victory was only temporary, and at the same time absolves the Trojans of the shame inherent in their defeat and of the guilt of their more recent conquest of Greece.

Furthermore, Gigantomachy by its very nature is intimately connected to the creation and maintenance of the world.²⁵ The strife between Odysseus and the suitors or Achaia and Pergamum is centered on retribution, similar to other heroic encounters as in *Mio Cid* or *The Song of Roland*. The revolts of the Olympians against the Titans or Typhoeus against Zeus, on the other hand, are based on a desire to contend with a rival or overthrow the ruling *kosmokrator* to recreate the world under one's own government. Both sides frequently inflict death and elemental confusion in the ensuing conflicts. Destruction is often an essential element of creation, and this principle is well illustrated Vergil's exploration of the theme of sacrifice:

“[Vergil] must establish that utter catastrophe such as the Civil Wars had a power for good. The much-touted ‘ambivalence’ of Vergilian poetry is perhaps just a partial view of a complex attempt to assert the paradox—familiar, above all, from religious practice—that destruction is creative. As Bandera puts it, ‘he [sc. Vergil] discovered that even the most respectable sacrificial order is not only grounded on violence, but in fact made possible through violence. In other words, the social order arises originally out of the same thing that can also annihilate it.’”²⁶

²⁵ As Hardie (1986) puts it, “the specific myths of Titanomachy and Typhonomachy deal with events from the earliest part of mythical time, closely related to the original ordering of the Olympian universe out of chaos.” p. 85.

²⁶ See Morgan 1998 p. 190.

Gigantomachy likewise encapsulates this cosmogonic paradox, that it is essentially a return to chaos before order is restored, and is therefore a well-suited cosmological analogue to the earliest events in Rome's creation.

The construct fits the events of the second half of the epic well. Here destructive wars precede the establishment of order, and as the battles between the Trojans and Italians make a fitting legendary parallel to the more recent civil strife, so the mythological battles between Jupiter and Typhon in their bids for supremacy provide an even earlier precedent. Accordingly, the presence and importance of Gigantomachy throughout the *Aeneid*, predominantly in Books 7-12, have been thoroughly demonstrated by Hardie's seminal work, *Cosmos and Imperium*, in which he identified passages which follow such a pattern: "The *Aeneid* is dominated by scenes which depict conflict, the attempt by the forces of Rome, of order, of civilization, to defeat the forces of barbarism and chaos."²⁷ He sees the theme employed in the storm of the winds in Book 1, the three monsters (Charybdis, Etna, and Polyphemus) at the end of Book 3, the battle between Cacus and Hercules and the battle of Actium portrayed on the shield of Aeneas in Book 8, the duels between Turnus, Pandarus, Bitias, and Mnestheus at the end of Book 9, Mezentius and Aeneas in Book 10, and finally the concluding duel between Aeneas and Turnus at the conclusion of Book 12. His methodology and observations of the means by which Vergil incorporated the theme into the epic narrative provide a foundation for further study, and therefore I shall here outline the main features of the passages he has evaluated before proceeding to an investigation of the theme in Book 2.

²⁷ Hardie 1986 p. 135.

Hardie proposed to approach the theme of Gigantomachy not by looking for explicit references, but for general patterns:

“Virgil, typically, does not present his allegories in a clear-cut, independent form; instead he fuses together the immediate events of the narrative with the structures and motifs from the myths, which thus constitute a kind of internalized allegory of those events.”²⁸

In addition to this there are suggestive keywords and intertextual connections which alert the reader to its presence.

A physical return to chaos through the confusion of the elements and world zones is a common theme. This is very prominent in the storm of the winds in Book 1, where they literally threaten to bring about the *caeli ruina* (1.129),²⁹ which is closely paralleled in Hercules' encounter with Cacus (*ingentem... ruinam*, 8.192). Mixing of the elements is often referred to as well, where *caelum terramque... | miscere* (1.133 f.) is picked up again in Book 8 (*commixtis igne tenebris*, 8.255). Again, on the Sicilian shores beneath Etna, the sand mixes with the surge (*aestu miscentur harenae*, 3.557). Hyperbole is another method of intimating elemental mixture.

³⁰ The waves of the storm reach the stars (1.103, 1.106 f.) and amidst the monstrous Charybdis and Etna, the Trojans' ships are lifted to the stars and lowered down to Hades: *tollimur in caelum curuato gurgite, et idem | subducta ad Manis imos desedimus unda* (3.564 f.).³¹ In contrast, control over the elements suggests power over these celestial forces and a connection with the

²⁸ Ibid., p. 90.

²⁹ Compare Hardie 1986 p. 107 “The winds of Aeolus that assault Aeneas are envisaged as Gigantic forces that threaten the cohesion of the cosmos itself; this general conception is exemplified in detail in the description of the storm itself, where traditional topics of the confusion of the storm are used to suggest a small-scale Chaos. It is a storm in which all the elements are involved: air and water are obviously implicated *passim*; fire intervenes in the form of lightning (*ignibus*, 90); earth threatens the Trojan ships with rock and sandbank. It is also a storm that confounds the distinctions between the elements: the water of the sea threatens the fires of the stars (103), and dry land appears fantastically in the troughs of the waves (107).”

³⁰ Ibid., 261 ff.

³¹ See also *Aen.* 3.420-3.

Olympian side of the conflict. Aeneas' association with the storm at the end (*uolat atri turbinis instar | exitium dirum hasta ferens*, 12.923 f.) puts him in control of the forces which overwhelmed him at the outset.³²

Volcanos are often suggestive of a Gigantomachic connection in this respect. Hardie has made clear the connection between Aeolus' mountain of the winds and the Titan-burying Etna, elaborating on Buchheit's linking of it to the imprisoned Titans in Hesiod (*Theog.* 729 ff.).³³ The description of Cacus' fiery cave (8.190 ff.) recalls these, and the monster's volcanic parentage is also emphasized: *huic monstro Volcanus erat pater* (8.198). Beyond their connection to Typhoeus, these violent eruptions act as a threat to the divine order: "Etna, like Charybdis, assaults the heavens."³⁴ Mountains, likewise, feature in descriptions of cosmic upheaval, by their sheer size and their appearance of imposing upon the sky. The storm of the winds gives the comparison *praeruptus aquae mons* (*Aen.* 1.105) and the battle of Actium on the shield of Aeneas contains mountains in a metaphor of the disturbance at sea (8.691 ff.):

... pelago credas innare reuulsas
Cycladas aut montis concurrere montibus altos,
tanta mole uiri turritis puppibus instant.

You would believe that the Cyclades Islands having been uprooted were swimming in the sea or that high mountains clashed with mountains,
With so great a disturbance the men assault the towering ships.

These additionally recall the attempt of Otus and Ephialtes to heap up mountains on Olympus to reach the heavens.

³² Hardie 1986 p. 176: "The action of the *Aeneid* begins and ends with the theme of storm... The structural intent is clear: by a process of inversion, whose stages are marked in the repeated use of storm-imagery throughout the poem, the hero, at first at the total mercy of the elements... ends up in control of the elemental forces, and is therefore aligned with the divinities that (properly) control those forces."

³³ *Ibid.*, 90 ff.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

Their imposing nature is appropriated in comparisons of Gigantic forces to mountains. Polyphemus is described as a sort of volcano in Book 3,³⁵ perhaps drawing from his description in the *Odyssey* as ῥίῳ ὑλήεντι | ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων (*Od.* 9.191 f.). Pandarus and Bitias are similarly called *montibus aequos*, *Aen.* 9.674. All of these suggest the enormous size of Gigantic forces.

Fire is another prominent image of destruction and elemental disarray. In addition to the lightning in the storm of the winds and volcanic eruptions, Gigantic forces are also frequently described as having fiery faces or eyes. Cacus breathes and spits out fire (*illius atros | ore uomens ignis magna se mole ferebat*, 8.198 f., *hic Cacum in tenebris incendia uana uomentem*, 8.259, *spirantemque ignibus ipsum*, 8.304) and fumes from his maw (*faucibus ingentem fumum... | euomit*, 8.252 f.). Flames are described on the shield at Actium (*stuppea flamma*, 8.694) and as twin flames behind Augustus (*geminas cui tempora flammis*, 8.680). The burning eyes of Bitias (*Bitian ardentem oculis*, 9.703) and Turnus (*scintillae absistunt, oculis micat acribus ignis*, 12.102, *ardentis oculorum orbis*, 12.670) evoke the description of Typhoeus mentioned above.

A link can also be drawn to Typhoeus through his monstrous offspring. Turnus' helmet is a prime example of this (*Aen.* 7.785 ff.):

Cui triplici crinita iuba galea alta Chimaeram
sustinet Aetnaeos efflantem faucibus ignis;
tam magis illa fremens et tristibus effera flammis
quam magis effuso crudescunt sanguine pugnae.

Here the Chimaera and Etnaeian fires are obvious references to primordial forces, leading numerous scholars to comment on their Gigantomachic connection.³⁶ The winds of Book 1 are

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 264 ff.

³⁶ See Gale 1997. See also Small 1959: "In telling us that Turnus' helmet erupts streams of 'Aetnaean flames,' Vergil means in bald prose that the bronze helmet flashed in such a way that the beholder might fancy the image of the Chimaera to be breathing forth flames as intense as those of Aetna. But at the connotative level the adjective

also evocative of the ship-wrecking winds described in Hesiod (*Theog.* 873 ff.), and the East Wind plays a role connecting two important passages, the descriptions of Cacus (*fugit ilicet ocior Euro*, 8.223) and Turnus (*fugit ocior Euro*, 12.733) in flight from characters compared to Olympians.

There are other Gigantomachic allusions, as yet unreferenced in scholarship. For instance, Typhoeus' voices which are described in the *Theogony* (829 ff.) reappear throughout the *Aeneid* in passages which are suggestive of Gigantomachy. The winds *roar* around in their cave (*circum claustra fremunt*, 1.56), the Chimaera of Turnus' crest *howls* (*fremens*, 7.787) and Bitias *snarls* in his heart (*Bitian ... animisque frementem*, 9.703). Anubis' barking (*latrator Anubis*, 8.698) recalls the barking puppies. Mooing of monsters, however, is most frequent, which appears with Etna (*immugit Aetna*, 3.674), Cacus' stolen cattle (*mugire boues*, 8.215, *mugit*, 8.218), a bull simile given to fiery Turnus (*mugitus veluti cum... taurus*, 12.103), and his clash with Aeneas (*gemitu nemus omne remugit*, 12.722).

Finally, Vergil occasionally cites the very names themselves of the Titans or Typhoeus, making the analogy to Gigantomachy explicit. After Hercules' tussle with Cacus, he is said to not fear Typhoeus himself: *non terruit ipse Typhoeus* (8.298), and Bitias' fall is also likened to the monster (*Typhoeo*, 9.716).³⁷ More frequently, a general connection is drawn to a

Aetnaeos sets up a three-way comparison involving not only Turnus and the Chimaera but also the fire-breathing Titan Enceladus (or Typhon), pinned under Mt. Aetna by Jupiter... To Vergil as to Aeschylus and Pindar before him, the activity of this volcano seemed to be an archetypal instance of violent but ineffectual rebellion against cosmic order." 246 f. See yet again Hardie's discussion: "Just as the Shield of Aeneas functions as an emblem of the political values for which Aeneas stands, so the figured helmet and shield of Turnus symbolize central aspects of the doomed endeavour of the Rutulian chieftain; the positioning of the two arming scenes, at the ends of the seventh and eighth books respectively, invites comparison between the two" 1986 p. 118, and "*Aetnaeos* will refer us to the monster traditionally pinned under Etna, Enceladus or Typhoeus; we may then recall that the Chimaera is the daughter (or granddaughter) of Typhon-Typhoeus." *Ibid.*, p. 119.

³⁷ For the likeness in his fall and discussion of Pandarus and Bitias, see Hardie 1986 143 ff.

Gigantomachic force, as when Mezentius is compared to the Gigantic Polyphemus and Orion.³⁸

The Egyptian gods fight against the Olympians in the Theomachy on the shield of Aeneas (*omnigenumque deum monstra et latrator Anubis | contra Neptunum et Venerem contraque Mineruam | tela tenent*, 8.698 ff.).³⁹ Reed has also argued that the appearance of the name Osiris, slain in Book 12 (*grauem... Osirim*, 12.458), suggests a miniature Gigantomachy by his slayer's association with Typhocus:

“... the slayer of Osiris in Egyptian mythology is the evil Seth, identified by Greeks and their Roman cultural heirs with Typhon (at least in this myth). An equivalence between Typhon and Thymbraeus is thus embedded in our passage, making the Apollonian Trojan champion on one level, at least, the image of the monstrous son of Earth, enemy of the gods and of order.”⁴⁰

In each of these instances, the name alone is insufficient, but they are employed amidst scenes which fit a consistent pattern, and the prevalence of the theme and prominent place of cosmology from the very beginning of the poem encourages such an interpretation.

Associations with the other side of the conflict are much more limited. For the most part, characters are only connected to the Olympians by their opposition or victory over Gigantic forces, but they are also at times depicted as or linked more explicitly to Jupiter, who is established as the defeater of Titans with his thunderbolt from the beginning of the *Aeneid*: he is said to frighten with his weapon (*fulmine terres*, 1.230), to have defeated Enceladus with it

³⁸ Kronenberg 2005, Hardie 1986 p. 97, Glenn 1971.

³⁹ For discussion on the scene, see Hardie 1986 p. 98 “The supernatural aspect of the battle is most obvious in the central description of the gods at war... It is reasonable to assume that the celestial struggle concerns not merely the future dominance of Roman or barbarian, but also the balance of power in heaven itself; the defeat of the Egyptian gods relegates the Egyptian pantheon to obscurity.”

⁴⁰ Reed 1998 409 f.

(*Enceladi semustum fulmine corpus*, 3.578). Additionally, Cupid is said to scorn the "Typhoean weapon" (*tela Typhoëa temnis*, 1.665). As Turnus fights with the Gigantic Pandarus and Bitias, he is given the divine weapon (*micantia fulmina mittit*, 9.733), but when he is driven back, he quickly loses this power to Mnestheus (*fulmineus Mnestheus*, 9.812).⁴¹ Aeneas is the last to hold this power as he thunders or resounds when he faces Turnus (*fulminat*, 12.654, *intonat*, 12.700).⁴² Elsewhere, characters resemble Jupiter in the way they yield their weapon or the thunderous noise they make: Hercules' blow makes the aether thunder (*intonat aether*, 8.239), and he hurls his weapons down as if from Olympus (*desuper Alcides telis premit*, 8.249).

This should make it clear that there are numerous devices which work together to convey the theme of titanic forces lying behind the conflicts of mortals in the *Aeneid*. It is also apparent that the Olympian forces receive far less attention than the Gigantic. This matches the Gigantomachic accounts in general, where most of the narrative is devoted to a description of the monstrous opponents and the resultant elemental destruction. Additionally, the research to date on the theme has focused on its presence in Books 1, 3, and 8-12. Yet Gigantomachy, given its pervasive influence on the rest of the work, is also a particularly appropriate pattern for the destructive events of the other earlier books. The entire first half of the *Aeneid* entails a progressive "de-creation" of the Trojan world, beginning with the destructive wrath of Juno and the storm which threatens to confound the cosmos and mix the elements back into Chaos⁴³ ending in a death of sorts as Aeneas descends to the underworld. The second half steadily re-creates the world as a Roman one, beginning with a blaze of light and Anchises' creation

⁴¹ See Hardie 1986 143 ff.

⁴² Ibid., p. 147 "The only other example in the *Aeneid* of the *fulmen* comparison applied to a missile projected by human hand is the last spear-throw of all, that with which Aeneas brings down Turnus; indeed this throw even exceeds the force of the thunderbolt."

⁴³ See discussion above.

narrative (6.724 ff.). The reconciliation of Juno and Jupiter brings the work full circle, and while the poem does not end with Rome itself, the conclusion marks the end of chaotic forces and the final Gigantomachic conflict between Turnus and Aeneas.

Gigantomachy in Book 2

Viewed in this way, the book is centered around the creation or rebirth of Aeneas at the end of Book 6, and in a chiastic pattern found often in Vergil, the struggles fought in order to create following the emergence from the underworld are modeled in reverse off of the struggles leading to the destruction of the Trojan world in the first half. The wars fought in order to found a new city of Rome find their opposite in the great war to destroy the old city of Troy. The same inversion appears in the handling of Gigantomachy: the fall of Troy is not presented as a battle between the Olympians and the forces of chaos, but rather one where the two powers, gods and Greeks, fight on the *same* side. Indeed allusions to the theme in Book 2, as we shall see below, follow this logic and characterize each of the Greek forces which help to destroy the city by connecting them to Typhoeus, the Giants, or the other Gigantic forces outlined above. This pattern is complemented by individual conflicts where the two opponents are given temporary associations which are based on their success or failure at that moment and are independent of their general characterizations. As Hardie and other scholars have demonstrated, this is consistent with the theme's employment in later books.

Gigantomachic imagery is appropriate for the Trojan War in other ways as well. Hesiod claims that the Titanomachy similarly lasted for a full ten years (*Theog.* 635 f.) before Zeus brought an end to the war by enlisting the help of the Hekatoncheires. Vergil has Jupiter recruiting and urging on the various Greek forces to end the war: *ipse pater Danais animos*

uirisque secundas | sufficit, ipse deos in Dardana suscitāt arma, (2.617 f.). Moreover, the theme features front and center in another ancient work about the siege of a city, *Seven Against Thebes*. Here Hippomedon, one of the seven assailers, carries the image of snake-like fiery Typhoeus on his shield. In response, Eteocles sends Hyperbius to compete, fully equipped with a shield depicting Zeus and his thunderbolt. This is taken as a replay of the Gigantomachy, and the victory of Zeus is associated with the victory of the city (Aesch. *Sept.* 517 ff.):

εἰκὸς δὲ πράξειν ἄνδρας ὧδ' ἀντιστάτας,
 εἰ Ζεὺς γε Τυφῶ καρτερώτερος μάχηι·
 Ὑπερβίῳ δὲ πρὸς λόγον τοῦ σήματος
 σωτήρ γενοῖτ' ἂν Ζεὺς ἐπ' ἀσπίδος τυχών.

It is likely that the opposing men will fare thus [as Typhoeus],
 if Zeus is more powerful than Typhoeus in battle:
 by the logic of the symbol, Zeus should be a savior to Hyperbius,
 having appeared on his shield.

The scenario is strikingly similar and here again appears the morally ambiguous pair, the two sons of Oedipus, who fight for a single throne, and the influence is fitting in Book 2 where scholars have noted the preponderance of intertextuality with Greek tragedy.⁴⁴

In addition to the general resemblances between the fall of Troy and Gigantomachy, various scenes in Book 2 can be examined using the same methods which Hardie employed in his investigation of the theme in Books 1, 3, and 8 through 12. They both fit the general pattern of Gigantomachy and are more explicitly connected by verbal echoes and allusions to works and passages within the *Aeneid*. These are most prominent in the passages which Knox identified as demonstrating serpent and flame imagery, where Typhoeus also commands the stage.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ See for instance, among many others, Hardie 1984 and Horsfall 2008.

⁴⁵ See Knox 1950.

The Trojan Horse plays a central role in the fall of the city, and the deception of the Greeks is most emphasized in Sinon's long and dramatic rhetoric convincing the Trojans to bring it within their walls. Its enormous size is salient and constantly reiterated (*instar montis equum*, 2.15, *molem mirantur equi*, 2.32, and *molem hanc immanis equi*, 2.150). The Horse not only comes up against the city walls but scales and overcomes them (*scandit fatalis machina muros*, 2.237). Like Typhoeus who begets monstrous beasts and the destructive winds, it is pregnant with death bearing soldiers (*uterumque armato milite complent*, 2.20, *feta armis*, 2.238) and the hollow of its belly is referred to as a womb (*uteri*, 2.38, *aluum*, 2.51, *aluo* 2.401).

Its association with snakes is made clear when it *glides* into the city (*inlabitur urbi*, 2.240),⁴⁶ the carrier of serpent offspring in its *lair*s (*latebras*, 2.38). As Knox pointed out, it is also referred to as *arduus* (328), a word recalled when Pyrrhus attack's Priam's palace (*arduus*, 2.475). Laocoon senses the Horse's "snakiness" when he claimed that some error *lurks* inside it (*aliquis latet error*, 2.48). The Gigantic size and snakelike features are corroborated as the Horse is carefully connected to other Gigantic forces.

The description of the Horse echoes the description of Aeolus' cave of the winds in the previous book. The hollow body of the Horse is not just a womb and lair for soldiers and snakes, but also referred to as having huge caverns (*cauernas | ingentis*, 2.19 f.) or hollow caves (*cauae... cauernae*, 2.53) in its dark side (*caeco lateri*, 2.19). These recall the enormous cave (*uasto... antro*, 1.52) in Aeolus' mountain which is likewise dark inside (*speluncis... atris*, 1.60), and the dark cave of Cacus (*umbrosae ... cauernae*, 8.242). While the Greeks hiding inside are never referred to as winds, the soldiers lurking within it (*armato milite* 2.20) bring to mind the

⁴⁶ See discussion at Knox 384 ff.

poet's metaphor of the winds gathering like soldiers (*uelut agmine facto*, 1.82) before rushing out to wreak havoc on the ships. This matches Hesiod's description of the Titans marching against Olympus in military formation (*φάλαγγας*, *Theog.* 676). Furthermore, both caves are metaphorically pregnant with these destructive powers (cf. *loca feta furentibus Austris*, 1.51 with *feta armis*, 2.238). The analogy to Typhoeus' destructive offspring is present in both, and, as we saw above, the winds emerging from Aeolus' chasm are strongly connected to the ship-wrecking winds described at Hes. *Theog.* 873 ff.

The description of the Horse also prepares the reader for the Gigantomachic connections discussed by Hardie at the end of Book 3⁴⁷ and throughout the second half of the *Aeneid*. It has long been noted that the passage draws from the depiction of the Polyphemus in the *Odyssey* as a wooded peak of high mountains (*ρίψι ὑλήεντι | ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων*, *Od.* 9.191 f., cf. *instar montis*, *Aen.* 2.15).⁴⁸ Mountain imagery occurs again at 2.328 f. (*arduus...equus*). Later in Book 8, Typhoeus is also given the epithet *arduus*: *non terruit ipse Typhoeus | arduus arma tenens* (8.298 f.). Vergil will continue the assimilation of Gigantic forces to mountains in Turnus' battle with Pandarus and Bitias who are *montibus aequos* (9.674). These are much more explicitly tied to Gigantomachy as they are slain by a Jupiter-like Turnus (9.705 ff.). Mezentius is yet another who receives strong connections to the giant and whose battle with Aeneas, as we saw above, is expressed in Gigantomachic language.⁴⁹

But the Horse gains its most clear association with Typhoeus when Laocoon and Capys urgently attempt to convince their comrades to destroy it. This contention plays out in clearly Typhonomachic terms. In the Hesiodic account only Zeus' perception of the threat Typhoeus

⁴⁷ See Hardie 1986 259 ff.

⁴⁸ See Horsfall ad loc. For Polyphemus' Gigantomachic connections, see discussion above.

⁴⁹ Cf. Hardie 1986 263 f. on *mons* and *saxa*.

poses and his swift action protects the gods and mortals from the monster (καὶ κεν ὁ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἄναξεν, | εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὄξυ νόησε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, *Theog.* 837 f.). Zeus then leaps down from Mt. Olympus (ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο ἐπάλμενος, *Theog.* 855) and strikes him with his thunderbolt (εἴλετο δ' ὄπλα, | βροντὴν τε στεροπὴν τε καὶ αἰθαλόεντα κεραυνόν, | πλῆξεν, *Theog.* 853 ff.) with all of his might (κόρθυεν ἐὼν μένος, *Theog.* 853). Following the same pattern, Laocoon quickly perceives the danger the Horse poses to the city, and rushing down from the peak of the citadel (*Laocoon ardens summa decurrit ab arce*, *Aen.* 2.41) with all of his strength (*uvalidus ... uiribus*, 2.50) hurls his enormous spear (*ingentem... hastam*, 2.50) into the side of the Horse (*in latus inque feri curuam compagibus aluum | contorsit*, 2.51 f.). The attention to the spear's great size and the specific naming of the Horse as a beast (*feri*, 2.51) aggrandize the scene and enhance the comparison to the parallel moment in the Typhonomachy.

Laocoon's descent from the citadel will later be recalled when Turnus runs down from his own citadel to meet Aeneas in Book 11 (488 ff.):

horrebat squamis surasque incluserat auro,
tempora nudus adhuc, laterique accinxerat ensem,
fulgebatque alta decurrens aureus arce.

He was bristling with scales and he had bound his calves with gold,
His temples still bare, having girt his sword to his side
And splendidly running down from the top of the citadel, he thundered.

Again the echoes of Hesiod are thorough and pointed. He not only retains the snake associations (*squamis*, 488) which have tied him to Typhoeus and the Giants throughout the epic, but grabs his weapon and thunders as he runs down from the peak. He is tied to both sides of the Gigantomachy with another recollection of Book 2: his exultation in his own high spirits and ambition (*exultatque animis et spe iam praecipit hostem*, 11.491) recalls that of Coroebus earlier

in the work (*exsultans animisque Coroebus*, 2.386) and of Pyrrhus (*Pyrrhus | exsultat telis*, 2.469 f.), both of whom are liminal Gigantomachic figures, as we shall see below.

A final connection is drawn between the Horse and Typhoeus in the death proposed for it by Capys and the more suspicious Trojans. Aeschylus' narrative in *Prometheus Bound* has Typhoeus burnt to ashes and cast into the sea (ἐφεψαλώθη... κεῖται στενωποῦ πλησίον θαλασσίῳ, 362 ff.). Capys, perceiving that the monstrous Horse is every bit as dangerous as the beast which Zeus subdued, urges his fellow citizens to offer it the same treatment, to wit, that they burn it up and hurl it into the sea: *pelago Danaum insidias suspectaque dona | praecipitare iubent subiectisque urere flammis* (*Aen.* 2.36 f.). Yet the proposed action is not taken, and instead they help the Horse to breach the city walls by placing wheels instead of flames underneath (*pedibusque rotarum | subiciunt lapsus*, 2.235 f.). These lines hold a further connection to Gigantomachy, this time alluding to Lucretius' panegyric for Epicurus who, like a giant, mounted the walls of Olympus and tread superstition under his feet (*religio pedibus subiecta*, *Lucr.* 1.78).⁵⁰ Thus, the victory of the Greeks in surmounting the Trojans' walls recalls the victory of Epicurus over traditional religion.

Despite Laocoon's and Capys' attempts to play the role of Zeus and defend the city walls against the Horse, the gods have sided with the monstrous Greeks. The next force they bring to bear is the pair of snakes, the first explicit and literal appearance of serpents in Book 2, and their description immediately connects them with the other Gigantomachic forces we have discussed above. They pursue Laocoon and his sons in a marching line (*agmine certo*, 2.212) which recalls the immediately preceding destructive forces imprisoned in the cave of the winds and hiding

⁵⁰ See Clay 1997.

inside the Horse. Their hissing mouths (*sibila... ora*, 2.211) and licking tongues (*lambebant linguis uibrantibus*, 2.211) parallel the hissing and licking serpentine tongues of the Hesiodic Typhoeus (ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ ροίζεσχ', *Th.* 835, γλώσσησι... λελιχμότες, *Th.* 826).⁵¹ Furthermore, they are portrayed with his fiery eyes (*ardentisque oculos suffecti sanguine et igni*, 2.210). As we saw above, these are his most prominent characteristics in many ancient accounts.

Laocoon does not only lose his connection with Jupiter, but actively takes on his own connection with Typhoeus. Again, this is typical of Vergil's use of Gigantomachic imagery in the rest of the *Aeneid*, where characters' general monstrous or divine associations are complemented with links to an Olympian or Gigantic role in individual contests in order to present them as *victor* or *victus* at that moment. So Turnus is given Jovian attributes in his battle with Bitias and Pandarus, but soon after loses them to Mnestheus as he is repelled.⁵² This moment of Turnus' transformation echoes Laocoon's own (*bis medium...bis*, 2.218; *bis tum medios... | bis*, 9.799 f.). The transfer is complete by the time the *gemini* consume Laocoon, where he is given one of Typhoeus' voices: *qualis mugitus... cum... | taurus* (2.223 f.), which recalls Hesiod's ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε | τάρου ἐριβρύχῳ μένος ἀσχέτου ὄσσαν ἀγάρου (*Theog.* 831 f.). In light of this, it is possible to add another passage from the last book of the *Aeneid* corroborating Hardie's view, where Turnus preparing for battle is given the same fiery eyes (*oculis micat acribus ignis*, 12.102) and sparks fly from his face (*totoque ardentis ab ore | scintillae absistunt*, 12.101 f.). His defeat is prefigured by another allusion to Typhoeus' voices, which in Hesiod's account occurs just before the narration of his death: *mugitus ueluti... taurus | terrificos ciet* (12.103 f.).

⁵¹ See West's discussion of ροίζεσχ' ad loc.

⁵² See discussion above.

As before, the allusions to Gigantomachy in Book 2 are recalled later in the *Aeneid*.

Laocoon's asphyxiation prefigures the struggle between Cacus and Hercules, or rather they are both made to conform to the same pattern and consciously tied together with keywords.

Amplexus, used twice when the serpents strangle the priest (2.214 and 2.218), is recalled when Hercules grasps the monstrous Cacus (*complexus*, 8.260). Although Horsfall dismisses the repetition as "neither calculated... nor obvious inattention,"⁵³ the close proximity of the two mentions within a few lines certainly facilitates a recollection of the moment when the reader much later arrives at the word in Book 8. Moreover, the story of the young Hercules killing twin snakes (*monstra manu geminosque premens eliserit anguis*, 8.289) firmly suggests the *gemi*ni of Book 2.

The parallel presentation of Hercules and the serpents is strengthened perhaps also by the fact that *angit* (8.260), the word immediately following, sounds like the word for snake (*anguis*), reading something like "and *snaking* his arms around he squeezed his eyes." The connection is further validated by the correspondence of *corripiunt* (2.217) with *corripit* (8.260), and even Horsfall sees a connection between the asphyxiations at *collo* (2.218) and *guttur* (8.261): "We may think of Hercules killing Cacus, 8.260, *corripit in nodum complexus*."⁵⁴ Thus, these echoes of Typhonomachic imagery from Book 2 in scenes in the second half of the epic where Gigantomachy is prevalent show a consistent pattern of use throughout the work which would constantly draw a classical reader attuned to myths about primordial times and creation to think about Gigantomachic imagery.

⁵³ See Horsfall 2008 ad loc.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, under *collo* (218).

The confusion about what side of the divine conflict Laocoon and Turnus are on is also exemplified in the way Vergil affiliates Aeneas with both sides of this conflict. Although the hero is associated with Jupiter and his *fulmen* in numerous scenes,⁵⁵ he is more of an onlooker or victim of Gigantic and divine powers in Books 1-3, except for one short passage when he and his men are able to pass themselves off as part of the serpent-like force assailing Troy by stealing and wearing their *insignia*.

When Aeneas and his Trojan allies first set out to fight the Greeks besieging the city, they run into a band of Greeks whom they slaughter. Androgeos is immediately and unmistakably connected to the late Laocoon by a nearly identical introduction: *Primus se Danaum magna comitante caterua* | *Androgeos* (2.370 f.); *Primus ibi ante omnis magna comitante caterua* | *Laocoon* (2.40 f.). Likewise, Aeneas is connected to the *agmen* of snakes from Tenedos (*socia agmina credens*, 2.371). Although Androgeos himself belongs to the Typhoean Greeks, and he accordingly *glides* into the midst of his enemies (*medios delapsus in hostis*, 2.377), because he assumes Aeneas and his men are on his own side, they gain the ability to act as a Gigantic force, and are therefore assimilated to a group of snakes (2.379 ff.). Furthermore, they take on not only the enemy's armor in order to continue the confusion, but their serpent-like crests (*iubarum*, 2.412) recalling those of the *gemini angues* (*iubae*, 2.206).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ One of the first passages in which Aeneas is connected to Jupiter is in Book 4 when he abandons Carthage and Dido with his lightning-like severing of the mooring cables (*ensem* | *fulmineum*, 4.579 f.). I do not propose to address the appearance of Gigantomachy in Book 4 here, as it falls outside of the scope of this paper, but I expect that further exploration there would be profitable. Dido's love is consistently played as a fiery destructive force which threatens to destroy Rome by preventing its founding, and Aeneas certainly acts as a conquering force against Rome's future enemy. The *fulmineum* | *ensem* (579 f.) seem to answer Dido's earlier prayers to be stricken down by Zeus' thunderbolt before she abandons her loyalty to Sychaeus (4.24 ff.).

⁵⁶ For a connection of Aeneas to Turnus in Book 2, see Mackie 1991 p. 61, "It is a further irony, given such treatment of Turnus in the poem, that Aeneas, his great enemy and his eventual conqueror, should enter the poem as Jupiter's opponent and end it as his harsh architect of order."

The ill-fated deceit comes to a sad end when fellow Trojans begin casting down weapons on them from the tops of buildings (*Aen.* 2.410 ff.):

... ex alto delubri culmine telis
nostrorum obruimur oriturque miserrima caedes
armorum facie et Graiarum errore iubarum.

... We are overwhelmed by the weapons cast from the high peak of a shrine, weapons of our own men, and there arises a most miserable slaughter because of the appearance and error of our Greek armor and crests.

Here the death of the snake-like band seems to fit the general Typhonomachic pattern.

Identifying his band as having serpent crests, Aeneas relates that weapons flew down on them from the top peak of a shrine, resembling Zeus' rain of thunderbolts on Typhoeus as he descends from Olympus.

Vergil attaches the next snake simile to Pyrrhus, portraying him as the consummation of the Gigantomachic forces building throughout Book 2.⁵⁷ He is compared to the *gemini* when he entwines Priam's hair with his left hand (*implicuit*, 2.552), recalling the earlier repeated *amplexus* (2.214 and 2.218). He is most clearly tied to the Giants by the description of his shining armor (*luce coruscus aëna*, 2.470) which reflects their radiant arms (κρατερὰς μεγάλους τε Γίγαντας, | τεύχεσι λαμπομένους, *Theog.* 185 f.).

After this initial depiction, in his encounter with Priam these associations are reversed. Pyrrhus' thrust of his thunderbolt-like sword (*coruscum* | ... *ensem*, 2.552 f.) into the side of his opponent (*lateri*, 2.553) is reminiscent of Laocoon's spear-throw into the side of the Horse (*in latus*, 2.51) and Jupiter's thunderbolt. Priam also *slithers* in the blood of his son (*in multo lapsantem sanguine nati*, 2.551), but in his death he is clearly and directly tied to Typhoeus. His

⁵⁷ See Knox 1950 393 ff.

trunk lying on the shore (*iacet ingens litore truncus | auulsumque umeris caput et sine nomine corpus*, 2.557 f.) is all but a direct translation of the description of the defeated giant in *Prometheus Bound*: καὶ νῦν ἀχρεῖον καὶ παράορον δέμας | κεῖται στενωποῦ πλησίον θαλασσίου (363 f.).

The serpent and flame make their ultimate appearance in the portent of Iulus' burning hair (*crinemque flagrantem*, 2.685), where the flames *lick* his curls and *feed* around his temples (*lambere flamma comas et circum tempora pasci*, 2.684). Knox sees in the continued use of the snake imagery in the portent a symbol of rebirth so often connected with serpents. He points to the similar imagery on the Gigantomachic shield of Aeneas:

“On the shield of Aeneas, where the twin serpents appear behind Cleopatra as a sign of her eventual destruction (VIII, 697), the opposing figure of Augustus is seen with twin flames at his temples, *geminas cui tempora flammis laeta vomunt* (680-1). The serpent and the flame, which at the end of *Aeneid* II are united as a double symbol of Troy's rebirth, are on the shield separated and opposed.”⁵⁸

Hardie also noted that the passage finds a clear model in the final book of the *De Rerum Natura*:

“Knox fails to note... the important Lucretian parallel for the association of fire, serpent, and the human body, at *Drn* 6.660 f. (describing a disease), *existit sacer ignis et urit corpore serpens | quamcumque arripuit partem, repitque per artus* (a passage imitated by Virgil at *Geo.* 3.565 f.). With *sacer ignis* compare the *sanctos... ignis* of the Iulus omen (*Aen.* 2.686).”⁵⁹

⁵⁸ See Knox 1950 p. 398 n. 41.

⁵⁹ Hardie 1984 p. 409 n. 19.

Here he is right to see the parallel themes, and they are validated further by the Lucretian intertext situated as it is inside a rationalization and demythologization of Etna's eruptions, an attempt to offer a new explanation for volcanic activity. Horsfall doubts the connection is of any significance, but the two passages have more important parallels which tie the imagery of the fiery omen to the Gigantic power of Typhoeus under Etna.⁶⁰

Lucretius begins the passage with a promise to explain how volcanoes like Etna fit into his atomic scheme (6.639 ff.):

Nunc ratio quae sit, per fauces montis ut Aetnae
expirent ignes inter dum turbine tanto,
expediam;

Now I'll explain what the reason is that fires sometime with so great a whirlwind breathe forth through the jaws of a mountain, as of Etna.

He then gives a general description of Etna's activity (6.641 ff.):

neque enim mediocri clade coorta
flammae tempestas Siculum dominata per agros
finitimis ad se convertit gentibus ora,
fumida cum caeli scintillare omnia templa
cernentes pavida complebant pectora cura,
quid moliretur rerum natura novarum.

For neither with an ordinary destruction did
the storm of fire begin and holding sway through the fields of Sicily
it gathered the faces of neighboring peoples to itself,
when discerning all the smoking circuits of heaven sparking
they filled their fearful hearts with care,
at what new things nature was setting in motion.

⁶⁰ See Horsfall 2008 at 2.686. The study of the Lucretian influence in Vergil begins with Merrill's table of "Parallels and Coincidences in Virgil and Lucretius" (1919). Later, scholars like Bailey (1931) and Wigodsky (1972) began to analyze the meanings behind these echoes. In the last few decades, a mountain of scholarship has shown that the intertexts between the two writers are not only purposeful, but highly sophisticated. Vergil quite often inverts the meaning or importance of the original text in some way to give a sort of reply to the Lucretian view, or to give extra meaning to the characters and events in his own narrative. Some good examples of this are shown in Dyson 1996 and Kronenberg 2005.

To Lucretius, this disorder is no different from any human illness which brings destruction; it simply occurs on a smaller scale. The reason we marvel at natural disasters and not illness, he claims, is their magnitude, and if we only understood how enormous the universe is, we would wonder far less often.

In addition to the parallels listed above by Hardie, the influence of the Lucretian description of Etna on the narrative surrounding the omen in *Aeneid* 2 is deep and pervasive. Lucretius focuses on the fear of those who witness the volcanic explosions, who fill their fearful hearts with worry as they watch (*cernentes pauida complebant pectora cura*, Lucr. 6.645). Likewise, Aeneas and his kin fearfully tremble *with dread* as they watch the portent (*nos pauidi trepidare metu*, *Aen.* 2.685) and Creusa fills (*replebat*, 2.679) the house with a groan. The *cernentes* of the *DRN* is also echoed when the family watches (*cernimus*, 2.696) the fiery comet that impacts Mt. Ida, itself now fuming (*fumant*, 2.698) like a volcano which recalls the smoky sky produced by Etna (*fumida*, Lucr. 6.644).

By connecting his narrative to the Lucretian passage on the Typhoean power of Etna, Vergil invites the reader to compare and contrast the two. Lucretius had claimed that, if one only understood the enormous scale of the universe and therefore the terrible insignificance of natural disasters, one would no more marvel at them than at the heat of a fever (*mirari multa relinquo. | numquis enim nostrum miratur*, Lucr. 6.654 f.). The intertextual passage in the *Aeneid* remythologizes the Typhoean power in the conflagration of Troy, and with characteristic Vergilian inversion even extends the divine cause to the lowly fever (*sanctos... ignis*, 2.686) by deeming it marvelous (*mirabile monstrum | namque*, 2.680 f.). Here the line position reinforces the echo of Lucretius (6.654 f.), which is further corroborated by the similar sounding

namque/numquis and *monstrum/nostrum*.⁶¹ This treatment of the Lucretian material exactly mirrors Vergil's earlier use of the passage as a source for the cave of the winds in Book 1, about which Hardie pointed out that by restoring the supernatural explanation to the volcano in place of Lucretius' attempted rationalizing approach, "Vergil recharges his Lucretian models with the mythological content that Lucretius had striven to dissolve."⁶² That the same approach appears in both Vergilian passages further corroborates their common link to Gigantomachy.

Here also the snake imagery, so destructive throughout the rest of Book 2, is defanged and made atypically benign. In addition to the symbol of rebirth which Knox has suggested, it also indicates that the transfer of Gigantomachic powers from the forces destroying Troy to Aeneas and his descendants is now complete. The answering thunderbolt of Jupiter (*subitoque fragore | intonuit laeuum*, *Aen.* 2.692 f.) finalizes the exchange. Therefore, both the snake and the flame retain their destructive powers, but now only against the opponents of Rome's dominion. Until the world is ready for Romans to rise, their forebears will briefly bring forth the chaos in which Augustus' *novus ordo saeculorum* is gestating. Dido will figure this out all too soon.

Conclusion

The complexity of use of Gigantomachic imagery throughout the *Aeneid* does not lend itself to simplistic equations between Vergil's hero and Jupiter, or the Trojans' enemies and monsters. Nevertheless, there are patterns and an overarching order. In the first books, as Aeneas' world is steadily deconstructed, the hero and his comrades are depicted as the victims of elemental catastrophe and Gigantic forces which assail the walls of Troy with the aid of the

⁶¹ The declaration of the portent as marvelous also evokes the first Pythian ode of Pindar (τέρας μὲν θαυμάσιον, 26).

⁶² Hardie 1986 p. 91

Olympians. This inversion of the normal course of creation both provides Vergil with a framework for his narrative and aggrandizes the tale of Troy's fall by locating it in a larger structure, both in mythological time and the epic at hand. In Book 6, however, as Vergil begins wrapping up the process of reversion to Chaos, signaled by the Hesiodic abstracts which appeared at the beginning of the *Theogony*, the hero descends to the depths of Tartarus to be re-created as a Roman (6.273 ff.). Henceforth, he and his fellow refugees are most frequently associated with the Olympian side, and their enemies the doomed Giants. Creation reclaims its normal order of events.

As we have seen above, however, the imagery occasionally does not conform to this overall pattern when roles are reversed at specific moments in the narrative. Thus Laocoon is compared to Zeus when he prospers, and Cacus when he is conquered. Aeneas and his men take on the power of Typhoean connections when they meet temporary success, which then sets up for their later defeat by divine missiles thrown by their own Olympian-like men. Pyrrhus is clearly associated with the *gigantes*, yet he is also explicitly compared to Zeus slaying Typhon when he faces Priam. The confusion of the two sides does not undercut the pattern; rather it reinforces the sense that, as Chaos reborn approaches, its inherent moral ambiguities infuse both the divine conflict and the creation of Rome itself. Things naturally blur as they merge in unnatural ways.

The constant references to Gigantomachy combine to give the poem a sort of cosmological framework, a sense of the world cycling from destruction and death to re-creation and renewal, which gives the work as a whole structural unity and thematic cohesion. This framework itself is a Vergilian inversion of Lucretius' own architecture for life and death.

Minadeo has noted about the *DRN* that “beginning with its hymn to Venus as the creative force in nature and closing with a long description of the Athenian plague, the work quite evidently sketches at its terminal points the cycle of creation and destruction in nature.”⁶³ While Minadeo argues that this greater cycle which begins and ends the poem is punctuated by smaller cycles of creation and destruction in individual books, and even down to words setting off miniature cycles in individual lines, later scholars have been reluctant to accept such a detailed integration, seeing it as “procrustean”,⁶⁴ “stimulating but a little over schematic”,⁶⁵ or contrived.

Nevertheless, the basic idea has been generally accepted and has been built upon by others, which has led to a renewed acceptance of Lucretius’ current ending as intentional. Fowler corroborates this in her exposition of the final passage of *DRN*, noting that the death and dissolution of the plague is mimicked verbally as words which began the poem “break down into their constituent syllables (*consanguineos* into *cum sanguine*, 6.1283-85; *morbus* into *mors*, 1250-51; *temptaret* into *tempore*, 1251). The poem itself is no exception to the law that all compound bodies... decompose.”⁶⁶

In the *Aeneid*, Vergil reverses this architectural pattern, and instead of following a cycle from life to death he outlines the journey from destruction to world renewal. While his epic concludes long before Rome itself is created, the reconciliation of Juno and the slaughter of Turnus constitute the end of the destructive forces with which it began.⁶⁷ The final lines also

⁶³ See Minadeo 1969 p. 11.

⁶⁴ Penwill 1996 p. 147.

⁶⁵ Liebeschuetz 1968 n. 19.

⁶⁶ See Fowler 1997 p. 135.

⁶⁷ In addition to the intimations of Gigantomachy listed above, it is striking that Turnus’ final futile attempt to kill Aeneas is his throwing of a boundary stone. The removing of elemental boundaries has been a prominent theme throughout the epic, and strongly suggests the disorder of the Typhonomachy and Titanomachy. See Kilgour 2008 p. 209.

connect back to the opening lines, just as in Lucretius, by emphatic word repetition, as the initial *dum conderet urbem* (*Aen.* 1.5) prefigures the moment when Aeneas founds his blade in Turnus' breast (*condit*, 12.950).⁶⁸ A Gigantomachic conflict, therefore, becomes the foundational act in the creation of Rome. Where Lucretius had stressed the cycle of life and death by reference to natural processes in his exploration of Empedoclean physics, Vergil reinforces the Gigantomachic pattern of world renewal through frequent allusions to the cosmic conflict with which it begins and ends.

From Gilgamesh and Genesis to the Eddas and Wagner's *Ring* cycle, such a pattern of world destruction and renewal has often been utilized as the framework for aggrandizing stories about creation. Such a narratological structure was not only a fitting choice for the creation story of Rome and the Principate, but it helped Vergil solve some of the major difficulties inherent in his poetic mission, in particular, the moral ambiguity of its founding. In the Greco-Roman mythological tradition, Gigantomachy provides a uniquely suitable parallel for Vergil's task, and the *Aeneid* accordingly makes extended use of the theme.

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⁶⁸As J. William Hunt (1973) puts it, "The travail of founding is stressed here also by another word of double meaning (*condere*), which stands out at the opening and closing of the epic. Rome's founding (*condere*) is the imperative that originates and propels the entire tale; and the last act of Aeneas in fulfilling this mandate will be the thrust of his sword into the breast of his final adversary Turnus: 'he buried (*condit*) his blade full in Turnus' breast' (12.950). Before the city can be built, a sword is buried in the heart of its opponent; building and burial are curiously fused in the closing scene." p. 5.

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REFLECTION

The honors thesis/capstone is not simply a larger version of a term paper, and in my opinion it should not be treated as such. It is, rather, a unique and special opportunity, for those who will invest the time and devotion, to learn about scholarship itself. For most students, completing an undergraduate degree, even in writing intensive degrees like the humanities, will not truly challenge and push the student to research, thoughtfully analyze, organize, and compose original and substantive pieces of scholarship. Students are typically asked to write various responses, participate in discussions, and even compose papers up to 10-15 pages in length, but these are often completed with passing and even exceptional grades without serious commitment to mastery of and innovation on current knowledge about any given subject. Intense research projects typically include up to 10 sources quoted, yet this is simply insufficient for a student to fully comprehend and respond to the issues at stake in most areas of inquiry.

I approached the capstone confident in my ability as a writer, but painfully inadequate as a scholar who knows how to research. What I did have on my side was a real desire to write an impressive and solid thesis, and a desperate need for a bedazzling writing sample for my graduate school applications. With these expectations, I spent two full years pondering what I should actually write my capstone about. This pondering may more accurately be described as procrastinating, for I took no active role in exploring potential research topics, and assumed at some point a research question would come to me. I started active conversations with Professor Damen in January of 2014, a year and a half before graduating, and after several months of fruitless exploration, eventually I agreed to try studying Vergil's use of the elements in creation and destruction, a theme discussed by Prof. Damen which I held great interest in.

The next great hurdle was learning how to get started and how to approach the research process itself. I made a great blunder by assuming the best place to start was the earliest scholarship I could find on the subject, and assuming that searching JSTOR constituted a fulness of research. What I did not understand was that footnotes and bibliographies are the principal and invaluable guide in research. I had always conceptualized footnotes as the "proof" of scholastic argument, and therefore viewed the footnotes in any given work as a discouraging mound of research I would have to read to engage with the discussion. The natural consequence of this view was that older scholarship became more appealing, where footnotes were drastically reduced, and the assumption that I would have to start at the beginning of scholarship on the topic and read my way forward until the present in order to join the discussion. This is patently false, as theories and ideas long held and treated at great length may be overturned by a single work which subsequently inaugurates a new discussion based on a better understanding of the evidence and issues. Additionally, as I often discovered, many of the ideas you may spend much time developing from older works may have already been pointed out by more recent scholarship. I found dozens of hours of work and sedulous note-taking made irrelevant by Philip Hardie singlehandedly in his *Cosmos and Imperium*.

The better approach, I learned after a great deal of reading mostly irrelevant research, is to start at the very *end* of the discussion: find the most recent works on a subject which contain a bibliography, and trace the development of issues back from the footnotes of the latest publications. This is the sort of thing which students would do well to understand before starting, and I would advise any student to take up issues of approach and the research process with their advisor and experienced faculty members before beginning. Nevertheless, for me it provided a

lesson (learned the hard way) which will change the way I approach scholarship for the rest of my life.

My next stumbling block was the transition from ideas and around one hundred pages of typed notes to an organized draft. At a certain point, I realized I needed to simply start writing and coherently ordering my thoughts before further research would actually do me any good. Boundless research is much less useful than research which is highly focused and directed by a clear understanding of the issues which need to be resolved inside the paper itself. I carefully wrote five or six outlines, more detailed each time, before I realized that many of the problems would only become clear when I had attempted to write the paper itself, carefully thinking through each issue at a time. Therefore I began writing, now with deadlines for submission as a writing sample only a month away. I had written 25 full pages when I discovered that a single subtopic I had hoped to incorporate into a larger paper (the presence of allusions to Gigantomachy in the first few books of the *Aeneid*) was complicated enough to consume the full project alone. Furthermore, I had new ideas on this subject which other scholars had not addressed.

Here again working closely with a faculty member as my project advisor proved to be invaluable. After reading through my ideas and concerns (only 2 weeks now to finish my paper), he proposed a new approach: organize all of my notes on how I would argue that Gigantomachy was used in the first half, and based on that compile a list of important primary sources on how Gigantomachy was used by ancient authors, and how modern scholars had addressed the theme in the *Aeneid*. After collecting and ordering all of my notes and quotes, he suggested, all you

need to do is string together the quotes in this outline and fill in the gaps to transform it into the written paper itself.

With this approach and a few new sources on Gigantomachy, the allusions to the divine conflict in Book 2 alone were sufficient to consume all of the space available. Consequently, the above paper is not the paper I set out to write, nor does it put to use much of my hundred pages of careful notes or the research I tried to master. Instead, it gives a snapshot of a single issue involved in my original area of interest, but treats the issues with much greater care, in my opinion, than would have been possible with a broader focus. In any case, the paper was a great strength on my graduate school applications and was a central element in my acceptance to study Classics at Cambridge and Berkeley. The project as a whole gave me a full introduction to research in an area which may remain with me throughout my career, for which I am deeply grateful. This growth, understanding of scholarship, and deep learning about a specific subject, I feel, is the opportunity which the honors thesis presents to one who gives it the personal investment which it deserves.

BIO

David Youd came to Utah State University in 2008 declared as a Computer Science major. After spending two years in Japan as an LDS missionary, he quickly decided that he preferred a life of learning and intellectual engagement in place of a steady paycheck. This was incited by the two perennial influences on his life: his supportive wife, Molly, and the scholarship and wisdom of the LDS Ancient Historian Hugh Nibley. His undergraduate experience was largely shaped by the fierce dedication and ardent enthusiasm of the Classics faculty at USU. Susan Shapiro dedicated hundreds of hours in order to personally ensure that David find his way in Classics, and to accommodate his unorthodox path in studying Greek and Latin. Mark Damen likewise took on an inordinate extra teaching load every semester to provide him every opportunity for success in graduate school. As an undergraduate, in addition to Japanese, David acquired a reading knowledge of Latin, Greek, German, and French, and a basic understanding of Old Icelandic and Hebrew. His research has centered around literature, including papers on Family in the Odyssey, Early Christianity, and Gigantomachy in Vergil and Ovid. He has been accepted to study Classics at the graduate level at Cambridge and Berkeley, and ultimately hopes to find a tenure-track position where he can share his wonder and admiration of literature and learning with the next generation.