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**The Mirror's Reflection:
Virgil's *Aeneid* in English Translation**

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Abstract

Virgil's Roman epic the *Aeneid* is one of the canonical works of Western culture. A classic in its own time, it continues to be used as a mirror to reflect on contemporary culture. I examine the history of the *Aeneid* in English translation from 1513 to 2005, specifically the translations of Book VI by Gavin Douglas, Thomas Phaer, John Dryden, C. Day Lewis, Robert Fitzgerald, Allen Mandelbaum, and Stanley Lombardo. Throughout, I discuss how each translator saw and emphasized the reflection of his own political, religious, and cultural concerns in the mirror of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

*Vergil holds up a mirror to us, from which, as we move
from decade to decade, a changing image shines.*

William R. Nethercut, "American Scholarship on
Vergil in the Twentieth Century"

*Man's life as commentary to abstruse
Unfinished poem. Note for further use.*

Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire*

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Introduction
The Reception and Translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*

Virgil's *Aeneid*, an epic poem about the foundation of Roman civilization written in the first century BCE, is one of the fundamental works of Western literature and culture. In the more than 2000 years since it was written, the *Aeneid* and the figure of Virgil himself have been appropriated by different individuals, cultures, and time periods to understand themselves and their relationship with the past. The subject of the story is the journey of Aeneas, a Trojan prince driven by destiny to lead some of the survivors of the Trojan war, along with their gods and culture, to Italy to intermarry with the native Latins and found the Roman race. Throughout the epic, visions of Aeneas's experiences are juxtaposed with prophecies of Rome's future. These prophecies, particularly concerning the early years of the first Roman emperor Augustus Caesar's rise to power, were history and current events to Virgil. To us and those in the centuries before us, they have become prophecies for all of civilization. The *Aeneid* provides for us a poignant reflection on the relationship between past and present, history and mythology, the state, and humanity.

The *Aeneid* has been categorized variously throughout its history as Augustan propaganda, anti-Augustan criticism, Christian allegory, and more. Despite the often strong feelings people have about Virgil's intentions in writing the *Aeneid*, we do not actually know much about Virgil beyond the basic outline of his life.¹ The earliest

¹ There are currently two accepted spellings of the poet's name: "Virgil" and "Vergil." "Virgil" became popular in the Middle Ages because of its resemblance to the Latin words *virgo*, meaning "virgin" (because of Virgil's acclaimed chastity and timidity), and *virga*, meaning "wand" (because of medieval legends that he was a magician). "Vergil" is closer to the Latin form of the poet's name (Vergilius) and is sometimes considered to be the more correct form. I have chosen to use the form "Virgil," save in quotations that use "Vergil," because it is the form that is known most widely in English-speaking countries. In addition, it emphasizes the power of tradition and reception in shaping our perceptions of both the man and his works.

biography we have is the “Life of Virgil” written by Aelius Donatus in the fourth century CE, which is thought to draw much of its information from a lost biography by Suetonius (c. 69-122 CE). From Donatus, we know that Virgil was born Publius Vergilius Maro in 70 BCE near Mantua in Cisalpine Gaul, a region that did not gain Roman citizenship until 49 BCE; *Vergilius Romanus*, the poet of Rome, was not born a Roman citizen (Donatus, Distler 1).² He studied philosophy and rhetoric in Rome and Naples and gained a reputation for being extraordinarily shy and retiring. Despite this, he became acquainted with several powerful political figures, most notably Octavian, the man who later became Augustus Caesar and encouraged his work on the *Aeneid* (Donatus). Although a collection of shorter poems known as the *Appendix Vergiliana* was attributed to him occasionally, Virgil is now known for only three works: the *Eclogues*, published in 37 BCE, the *Georgics*, published in 29 BCE, and the *Aeneid* (Distler 3).

Virgil began composing the *Aeneid* around 30 BCE and worked on it for the next eleven years until his death in 19 BCE. Although he had completed the body of the poem by this time, he intended to spend another three years revising it before he retired to a life of philosophy. Donatus relates that when Virgil realized he was dying, he begged his friend and executor Varius to burn the unfinished *Aeneid*. Varius, perhaps at Augustus’s bidding, refused and the work was edited and published two years after Virgil’s death.³ Why Virgil wanted to burn the *Aeneid* is one of the great mysteries of

² Donatus, Aelius. *Life of Virgil*. Trans. David Scott Wilson-Okamura. 1996. Rev. 2005. Online. March 30, 2006. Available <http://www.virgil.org/vitae/a-donatus.htm>.

³ We do not have any piece of Virgil’s original manuscript. Modern versions of the *Aeneid* are collated from seven major manuscripts dating from about the third or fourth to the sixth centuries BCE (see for example Distler, Geymonat, Morgan). Numerous other manuscripts, including palimpsests and quotations in other sources, may also be used. Paul Distler points out that “There are extant today more manuscripts of Vergil than of any other ancient classical author,” emphasizing yet again the extent of Virgil’s influence (193).

his life, and one that has spurred numerous conjectures as to what he thought about the work itself. Some have argued that he was simply unsatisfied with it, some pose the idea that he regretted glorifying a burgeoning empire and emperor with whom he did not agree. The interpretation of Virgil's life and poetry changes from person to person and culture to culture depending on what they wish to say concerning empire, government and the state, religion, literature, or civilization in general. Theodore Ziolkowski, speaking specifically of scholars in the 1930s, although the same applies across the history of Virgil's reception, writes "Virgil's texts...became a mirror in which every reader found what he wished" (26).

The *Aeneid* is the epic of the Roman empire, the supposed celebration of the new government established by Augustus Caesar. At the same time it is considered to have a universal meaning and importance that transcend its role in ancient Rome. The tradition of the *Aeneid* throughout its existence thus has been tied to the reception of Augustus and the Roman empire, to ideas about politics and the state. The epic often has been used to legitimize the history, politics, religion, and literature of various Western nations and individuals. The mysteries of Virgil's life, death, and motives in composing the *Aeneid* as well as the polysemous nature of the poem itself leave room for multiple and often conflicting interpretations. One of the ways in which an individual may relate his interpretation of the poem is by translating it, emphasizing aspects of the text close to his own heart, glossing over those he does not agree with, and judging others positively or negatively.⁴

Translation is one of the most subtle forms of interpretation because it presents itself as the original work, as the original author's words, rather than as an individual's

⁴ Throughout this paper, I will be referring to translators in general as male because, to date, no woman has translated the *Aeneid* into English.

reading of it. In our English-language-dominant, almost monolingual culture, we have come to trust translation in a way that we trust no other kind of scholarly commentary or criticism. Although the current emphasis on faithful translation in English gives the impression that what we are reading is the original text as the author wrote it, each translator remains an individual who cannot avoid understanding the text from his own culturally conditioned point of view. If we begin to read translations as translations, we find that they are always in some way a reflection of the concerns of contemporary society.

Examining changing theories of English translation and reception over time, I will discuss seven English-language translations of the *Aeneid* in the context of their translators' cultures, time periods, and individual experiences. I will focus in particular on how these translators saw the reflection of their own political concerns in the mirror of Virgil and his epic. I will begin with the Renaissance translations of Gavin Douglas in 1513 and Thomas Phaer in 1573, then move to the most famous English translation of the *Aeneid* by the British royalist John Dryden in 1697. After summarizing the trends of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when English translation was more concerned with literary issues than with political ones, I will pick up again with C. Day Lewis's 1951 translation in post-World War II Britain, then the 1983 American translation by Robert Fitzgerald, a combat veteran of World War II. I will discuss the 1971 Vietnam War-era translation of the American poet Allen Mandelbaum, and end with the most recent English translation of the *Aeneid*, published in 2005 by the American scholar Stanley Lombardo.

I will focus throughout on the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, where Aeneas descends into the Underworld to visit his father Anchises and learn of his descendants who will

be the famous figures of Roman history. Book VI has traditionally been one of the most widely-read and influential books of the *Aeneid*, along with the second and fourth books which recount the destruction of Troy and the suicide of the Carthaginian queen Dido. Book VI not only contains some of the most beautiful passages of the epic, but focuses in particular on prophetic visions of Augustus Caesar and the establishment of the Roman state. The political and religious themes of the book make it eminently suitable for an analysis of how individual translators read and insert their own views into this ancient text. In each chapter, I will first give an overview of the historical context of the translations, including contemporary trends in scholarship as well as the individual translators' backgrounds, political opinions, and personal theories of translation. I will then move to a close reading of each translation of Book VI of the *Aeneid*, discussing specific passages where I have found evidence of the translators' personal interpretations. The final questions I hope to answer are why each translation is different, why these translators interpreted the *Aeneid* as they did, and why the work is so important that it continues to be studied, translated, and read over 2000 years after it was written.

Introduction to Reception Theory

The reception of the *Aeneid*, as of all works of art, involves how people interpret and manipulate its form, images, and themes given both its original cultural context and their own. Reception theory is concerned with how these interpretations are passed on through time and accepted or rejected by individuals or whole cultures. Charles Martindale applies this definition specifically to the study of classical texts:

A reception-theorist would argue that readerly responses, including our own, can be seen as strategies for mediating cultural change and for

negotiating relationships with the past which are deemed significant for the present; moreover our own views of classical works have been affected by later responses and constructed as a further link in the chain of receptions. (8)

Reception is a reaction to a text, whether it is a direct and personal reaction to the text itself, a reaction expected by one's culture, or a reaction against the traditional interpretation of the work. Specific acts of reception involve comparing or differentiating the past and present, one culture and another. Finally, reception is an ongoing process, each reading of the text reacting to past readings as well as to the text itself.

Reception is integral in the canonization of a text, or how a text comes to be considered a "classic" with universal meaning that is fundamental to the understanding of both the past and one's own culture. Authors help to create canons by choosing their predecessors, through any of the possible methods of reception: "allusion, quotation, imitation, translation, homage, at once creating a canon and making a claim for their own inclusion in it" (Martindale 2). A canonized text is perceived as having aspects of both time and timelessness. It is on the one hand the reflection of a specific historical context, and thus a way of understanding that time and culture. At the same time, a canonical text is considered to be timeless, to have a universal importance that transcends history and culture. Charles Martindale notes that "One obvious sense in which a classic like the *Aeneid* could be described as 'timeless' is its capacity (itself a function of its reception) for constant reinscription within new temporal contexts" (9). Canonization is thus a self-propelling process: the place of a work in the canon relies partly on the history of its reception, on how often and how easily it has been adapted to fit the beliefs and needs of various times and cultures. This in turn is a product of the

traditional perception of the work as revealing some unchanging truth about the nature of humanity or the world.

The role of reception theory in studying classical works like the *Aeneid* is controversial. Many classicists argue that the text should be understood primarily as the product of a particular moment in Roman history:

Reception theory...is concerned with the theory of reading, a theory which leads nowhere, or with the history of the reception of texts in later periods. As distinct from general interest, which may be intense, the classical scholar's only duty towards, say, the medieval reception of Virgil's *Aeneid*, is to peruse it for surviving evidence and for medieval insights which help our understanding of the ancient text in its own historical context. Medieval history is for medievalists. (West, "Cast out theory" 16 in Martindale 7)

Is it possible to understand the text's original context, however? Charles Martindale replies, "It is not merely that in practice we cannot read Virgil like a Roman (which Roman?); it would not be desirable if we could, since it would no longer be 'we' who were doing the reading" (8). The *Aeneid* meant one thing to Virgil, another to Augustus, and another to any of their contemporaries. We, likewise, understand the text based on our own culture and personal experiences in addition to our perception of the text's historical context and its long history of reception. We read the *Aeneid* as a first century BCE Roman text, as a text that has inspired countless other works of art in different cultures, and as a text that resounds with our own current ideas of literature, culture, and humanity. John Bernard writes that "To understand what Vergil might mean, what he might be 'saying' to us in the 1980s would require consideration of what he had meant and said to readers in A.D. 90, in 1310, in the 1490s or 1590s or 1690s, in 1882" (3). Our understanding of what the *Aeneid* means to contemporary culture (and what it does not mean) is based on the history of its reception, on how other people in other times

and cultures have read it and shaped it to fit their own needs just as we shape it to fit ours.

The standard textbook interpretation of the *Aeneid* maintains that it is a propagandistic celebration of the renewed power of Rome under the rule of Augustus Caesar. Although this has been the dominant reading since the poem's first publication, it has never been the only interpretation. Richard Thomas in *Virgil and the Augustan Reception* traces the reception of Virgil through history, arguing that it is intrinsically tied to the reception of Augustus and the Roman empire. He argues for the validity of what he terms the "anti-Augustan" Virgil by deconstructing the canonization of the "Augustan" view of Virgil.⁵ He defines the "Augustan Virgil" as the vision of the poet Augustus would have endorsed, one optimistically supporting the achievements of Augustus and the new empire (xii). He argues that this interpretation of Virgil and the *Aeneid* was historically complicated by "European thinking about contemporary political rulers," particularly "European leader-cult" (26, 223). He points out that this interpretation is as much of a cultural construction as the anti-Augustan Virgil; we do not know what Virgil himself, living in the tumultuous early years of Augustus's rule, intended his work to do.

Thomas classifies himself as part of the "anti-Augustan" or "Harvard school" of Virgilian scholarship that gained increasing acceptance in the United States in the 1960s and 70s.⁶ The views of the Harvard school were first put forth by Adam Parry in his influential 1963 essay "The Two Voices of Virgil's *Aeneid*." Parry presents the idea that

⁵ Thomas's thought-provoking, almost conspiracy theory treatment of the Virgilian tradition covers modern and ancient receptions of his works and life, translations (most notably Dryden's), and the role of textual criticism. He cautions that philology (collating and reconstructing ancient texts) is as much an interpretation of the text as anything else, but that its danger lies in its being perceived as "scientific" and in its removal (attempted or successful) of evidence for opposing interpretations.

⁶ Thomas cites as members of the Harvard school such scholars as R.A. Brooks, Wendell Clausen, and Michael Putnam (224).

there are “two distinct voices in the *Aeneid*,” one a “public voice of triumph” and one a “private voice of regret” (121). He touches upon the popularly held interpretation of the *Aeneid* as a propagandistic celebration of Augustus and his new government, pointing out that there is an idea of the “Roman reader” that scholars and readers feel they must impose on the poem. This Roman reader would of course regard the *Aeneid* as pure Augustan propaganda and ignore the emotions and sorrows that infuse the work. Parry asks of this view, “what, on the simple glorification of Rome interpretation, do we make of some of the finest passages of the *Aeneid*? What we find, again and again, is not a sense of triumph, but a sense of loss” (111). He claims that Aeneas is so driven by his destiny to found Rome that he is forced, over and over, to surrender his humanity and even his famous *pietas*: with his desertion of Creusa, his desertion of Dido, and his vengeful killing of Turnus, which ends the epic on a final note not of hope or glory, but of overwhelming anger. Parry acknowledges that the *Aeneid* does “continually [insist] on the public glory of the Roman achievement, the establishment of peace and order and civilization,” but that it “[insists] equally on the terrible price one must pay for this glory” (120). The price of empire which Aeneas pays is honor and freedom. Parry poses the ultimate question: is human suffering worth the price of empire? He concludes, “The *Aeneid* enforces the fine paradox that all the wonders of the most powerful institution the world has ever known are not necessarily of greater importance than the emptiness of human suffering” (123). This debate between imperialism and humanity was a major sociopolitical issue in American society during and after the Vietnam War, and the reception of the *Aeneid* as a canonical work of Western government and society began to reflect the concerns of its modern American scholars and readers.

In opposition to the “European school,” which holds that the *Aeneid* is a positive and optimistic poem celebrating Augustus, the Harvard school reads darker, more pessimistic, or subversive elements in Virgil’s treatment of Rome and the Augustan regime (Cox 334). The Harvard school is identified, sometimes dismissively, with the increased questioning of the government and authority that arose in the United States during the Vietnam War (1954-1975), and is sometimes referred to as the “Vietnam school” of criticism. Thomas admits that he himself was a “Vietnam war protestor” who was discomforted that this might be the source of his perception of Virgil’s “profound qualifications...of the political and cultural worlds that his poetry engages” (xi). He decided to research the reception of Virgil in the past to see if others had shared his own view. He reveals, “I found him here and there, but, more importantly, I found him being suppressed and avoided, replaced by something else, and transformed into what I will be calling the ‘Augustan Virgil’” (xi). However, he explains that he did find precedents for an oppositional interpretation of the *Aeneid* on the margins of Europe, in the voices of the “dispossessed and dissatisfied.” Therefore, the “pessimistic” interpretation held by the Harvard school could not derive only from the cultural changes spurred by Vietnam but was a part of the poem itself (277). Despite his often strident tone, Thomas emphasizes the fact that every reception of Virgil and his works is an interpretation that reflects the personal and culturally conditioned thoughts and experiences of the individual reader.

Thus it is evident that the history of the *Aeneid*’s reception is less a straight chain than an ongoing cycle:

Running through the reception of Virgil is a continual oscillation
between received readings of the poet and direct responses to his works.
The strongest means of resisting a received reading is to return to the

works themselves in order to show that the received image of them is partial or misleading. (Burrow, “Virgils” 88, my emphasis)

Returning to the text in order to challenge its dominant reception is one of the main goals of the Virgilian translators I will discuss. The *Aeneid*'s canonical status has caused it to be used frequently to legitimize government, empire, religion, literature, art, and culture. Those outside of the legitimated areas, the “dispossessed” and “marginalized,” may use the *Aeneid* to thrust their own views into the center of the dominant culture. Translators do this not simply by arguing their different readings of the text, but by writing the text anew, presenting their interpretations *as the text itself*. The sheer number of translations of the *Aeneid* reveals both the range of interpretations it has engendered thus far and its continuing importance to Western culture.

Introduction to Translation Theory

Lawrence Venuti defines translation as the “process by which the chain of signifiers that constitutes the source-language text is replaced by a chain of signifiers in the target language which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation” (17). The most important point here is that a translation is simultaneously an interpretation: the choice of the original (source-language) text and the specific words the translator chooses to use in his translation (the target-language text) reflect his own ideas of what importance the original author has for the target-language audience. This likewise is tied to the translator's perceptions not only of the original author's culture and time period, but of how these relate to his own time and culture.

Despite the practical fact that no translator (or author) works in a cultural vacuum, the current ideal in English translation is that of the “invisible” translator whose voice, culture, and history should not be transmitted in his translation. An

invisible translator is one who creates a “transparent” translation, a translation that reads so “fluently” that only the original author’s meaning shines through the words of the translation (Venuti 1-2). The translation thus is to be understood as the original text, with the only difference being the language in which it is written (Venuti 7). Some translations, especially in English, are even presented as the original, with no translator’s name on the cover or easily visible. Colin Burrow comments that “We have so deeply imbibed the notion that translators should be invisible that we have ceased to confess that they are even there” (“Virgil in English” 35).

However, the invisible translator has not always been the ideal in English translation. Throughout most of the history of English translation, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, a translator was also expected to be an original poet in his own right. Edward Fitzgerald’s *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, an 1859 translation of various stanzas by the twelfth-century Persian poet Omar Khayyam, is perhaps the quintessential example of a translator’s complete appropriation of the original text to create his own beautiful English poem. John Dryden, whom I will discuss more fully later, railed against perfectly faithful translation as “enslavement” to another poet’s meaning that deprived the translator of his own originality. Although they were certainly not the only ones, both John Dryden and Edward Fitzgerald were famous for inserting their own poetic styles and interpretations directly into their translations.

Regardless of the current ideals of invisibility and transparency, translators have always accepted that translation is not a perfect process, and that things - words, meanings, culture - must always be lost and gained in the process. Individual translators differ in the extent to which they allow and admit to this. Most maintain a “compensatory” theory of translation, in which they accept that they will have to omit

some things and add others, but that these should balance out so that the work retains overall the same feeling and meaning as the original.

Wrapped up in all these issues is the identity and originality of the translator. Some translators chose to identify themselves psychologically with the author, following Lord Roscommon's advice in his "Essay on Translated Verse," "chuse an Author, as you chuse a Friend" (Roscommon in Trapp, *Prefacax*). Others prefer to keep a certain amount of distance between themselves and the original author. As Burrow puts it, "the translator's poetic identity depends upon there being some elusive flavour of selfhood or nationhood slipped into the foreign text as it passes to its new cultural milieu. The unconscious identity of the translator is one thing which must always be gained in translation" ("Virgil in English" 33). Translations differ precisely because their translators differ.

There are two main strategies of translation, a "domesticating" one that highlights the similarities between the source and target culture and a "foreignizing" one that emphasizes the foreign text's otherness (Venuti 81). One foreignizing method often used in translations of classical works is archaism, or using an older form of the target language to underline its cultural distance from the source language. Even the foreignizing strategy of translation, however, can be seen as domesticating, as it still involves "an exchange of source-language intelligibilities for target-language ones," relying on the cultural context of the target language (Venuti 203). The difference lies again in the translator: whether he or she chooses to emphasize the similarities or dissimilarities between the original text's culture and his or her own.

The danger of translation is that it presents itself as a neutral paraphrase of the original text rather than an interpretation. The idea of the invisible translator who is

only a vessel for the words and thoughts of the original author masks this to the extent that most readers do not think of the translation as a translation but rather as the original work itself. Richard Thomas warns against the disguised hermeneutics of translation: “Translations...may exert enormous power over the possible meanings of the original, and may control and direct reading with an authority that is not usually conceded by the reader to those other forms of interpretation or commentary” (126-7). Mark Thackeray points out that “Translators were capable of promoting contemporary preoccupations so convincingly that they could create the impression that the original writer had himself been thinking in precisely their terms” (332). Although he is speaking specifically of eighteenth century translators of the *Aeneid*, his statement applies equally well to current translators. A translator’s appropriation of the original work may be so seamlessly complete that it does not seem to be a personal interpretation at all.

Oddly enough, despite the *Aeneid*’s apparent celebration of government, empire, and nation, Virgil and his translators have become associated, whether consciously or not, with exile and marginalization. Burrow claims that modern translators at least seem to turn to Virgil and his works during their own exiles (usually cultural rather than physical) and that “he more usually gives a voice to those who feel that they are on the outside of a dominant culture” (“Virgil in English” 35-6). This is evident in most of the translations I will discuss, particularly those of Gavin Douglas, John Dryden, and Allen Mandelbaum. The *Aeneid*’s status as one of the core texts of Western literature, culture, and even politics allows translators who feel marginalized in their own cultures to write themselves and their opinions literally into the center. It is left to their readers to determine to what extent this has occurred and how they wish to interpret the text themselves.

Virgil's Reception in Ancient Rome and the Middle Ages

Virgil's *Aeneid* provides an interesting study of the many possible forms reception and translation can take. The epic was considered a classic before it was even published in 17 BCE, two years after Virgil's death. Virgil's contemporary Propertius (ca. 50-16 BCE) wrote of the *Aeneid* in his *Elegies*:

*Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graii!
nescio quid maius nascitur Iliade.* (II.34.65-6)

Give way, Roman writers, give way, Greeks!
Something greater than the *Iliad* is being born. (my translation)

Virgil's *Aeneid* was widely known and read in his own time; his works were cited by contemporaries such as Ovid and Horace (Distler 137-8). His poems were perceived to be the height of Latin poetry and were used as school texts in ancient Rome from the time they were first published. In addition to being models of language and literature, they were also used as oracles. One could consult the *Sortes Vergilianae* by taking a book of Virgil's works, opening it and placing one's finger randomly on a line, then interpreting the line as prophecy (Distler 151). This practice was established less than a century after Virgil's death and eventually took precedence over the Sibylline books. The emperors Hadrian and Alexander Severus, among others, consulted them for advice (Mackail 122-3).

In the Middle Ages, Virgil and his works were incorporated into the Christian literary canon. Virgil himself was perceived as an *anima naturaliter Christiana*, a soul who reflected Christian morality and values although he had died too early to be converted. His fourth *Eclogue* was viewed as a prophecy of the birth of Christ and his poems were interpreted as Christian allegories. Bernard of Chartres (1080-1167 CE), for example, interpreted the *Aeneid* as an allegory of human life and Aeneas as the

soul's journey to God (Distler 157-8). The Italian poet Dante solidified the link between Virgil and Christianity by using Virgil as his guide through Hell and Purgatory in the *Divina Commedia*, the *Divine Comedy* (c. 1310-1314 CE). He canonized the role of Virgil as a proto-Christian and the Roman empire as a "prefiguration" of the Christian culture that followed it (Martindale 3-4).

It was not until the very end of the Middle Ages that Virgil's works began to be read for themselves again and not as Christian allegories. Virgil's *Aeneid* was particularly popular in Britain because it was tied to the aetiological myth which claimed that the British royal dynasty was founded by Aeneas's great-grandson Brute. The ninth century *Historia Brittonum* of Nennius and the twelfth century *Historia Regum Britanniae* of Geoffrey of Monmouth parsed London's original name, Trinovantum, as Troynovatum, "New Troy," and traced the lineage of the ruling family from Brute all the way through the Plantagenets (Lally xi).

Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1342-1400 CE) was the first English poet to attempt to "versify Virgil," although he translated only the first two lines of the *Aeneid* in *The House of Fame* (Gransden xix):

I wol now synge, yif I kan,
The armes and also the man
That first cam, thurgh his destinee,
Fugityf of Troy contree,
In Itayle, with ful moche pyne
Unto the strondes of Lavyne. (Chaucer 143-148)

Although he stops here and goes on to summarize and rewrite the rest of the story, these lines represent the beginning of the *Aeneid* in English translation.

The first so-called English "translation" of the *Aeneid* was by William Caxton, who printed his *Eneydos* in 1490. This was not a translation from Virgil's Latin text, however, but a translation of a medieval French adaptation of the *Aeneid*. The first

complete translation of Virgil's Latin text into a form of English was by the Scotsman Gavin Douglas, who wrote his verse translation of the *Aeneid* in the Scots dialect in 1513. Douglas vehemently criticizes Caxton in the prologues to his own translation, listing Caxton's many faults and inaccuracies and saying that the translation makes him "spittit for dispyte" (Prologue I.150). Douglas's work represents the transition of Virgil from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, when an increased interest in learning and a reverence for the classical past spurred the first true translations of Virgil's Latin into the English language.

Chapter One

Virgil in the Renaissance: Gavin Douglas and Thomas Phaer

The Renaissance Mind and Virgil

Although Virgil and the *Aeneid* remained influential through Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the Renaissance sparked a new interest in the literature of classical antiquity. Humanism, the Renaissance focus on science, knowledge, individuality, and classical ideals, strongly influenced the society and art of the sixteenth century. At the same time there was a rise in nationalism that caused a conflict between this reverence of the past and a pride in contemporary culture, particularly vernacular literature.

Burrow notes that “Renaissance epics tended to be gestures of national self-definition, which praised the dynasty of their ruling house, and illustrated the potential of their own vernacular tongue to rival the achievements of Virgil” (“Virgils” 85). Appropriating Virgil, through adaptation of his stories and epic form or through actual translation, was a way for Renaissance authors to legitimize their native languages and cultures.

The European societies of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance centered around Christianity and the ideal of the absolute monarch, sometimes referred to as the “Prince.” Religion and spirituality were considered an inherent part of life: there was no separation of church and state or spiritual and earthly reality. Pre-Christian works such as the *Aeneid* were often interpreted as Christian allegories, or at least as reflections of Christian morality. Kings and princes were viewed as God’s appointed caretakers of the earth, and everything they did for themselves was really for the good of their people. David Coldwell explains that “the main current of political thought in the Renaissance was the assertion of the despotic privilege of kings...at least the figure of the Prince, the terrestrial representative of the Deity, caught hold of the Renaissance imagination” (19).

The *Aeneid* was understood politically as the prince's instruction manual for how to govern his people well, "the process that makes him lose consciousness of the self, or merge the good of the self with the good of the empire of which he is the divinely-appointed head" (Coldwell 29). The Renaissance readers of the *Aeneid* for the most part would have viewed the epic in this context of divine monarchy and Christianity.

Two of the most prominent sixteenth-century translators of the *Aeneid*, Gavin Douglas and Thomas Phaer, played a large part in bringing the classical epic into Renaissance English culture. Neither man was actually English, however: Douglas was a Scottish bishop who translated the *Aeneid* into Scots English, and Phaer was born in Wales. They are two such of Burrow's translators on the margins of society who use the *Aeneid* to bring themselves and their ideas into the cultural center. However, both men's translations reveal how they were rooted in their time, in the transition and continuity of literature, language, and culture from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance.

Gavin Douglas: Political Background and Translation Theory

Gavin Douglas is the first translator of a complete version of the *Aeneid* from Latin to English. He is also one of the only translators who rendered the *Aeneid* into a dialect of English. Despite the occasional characteristic Scots words and grammar, the translation is quite readable and enjoyable. Douglas finished his translation of the *XIII bukes of Eneidos*⁷ in 1513 into Chaucer's iambic pentameter rhymed couplets, referred to as "heroic couplets." His work was not actually printed until 1553, long after his

⁷ Douglas includes in his translation the *Thirteenth Book* of the *Aeneid*, a continuation of Virgil's story written in Latin by Mapheus Vegius in the late fifteenth century. The practice of including the thirteenth book in both Latin editions and translations was a long-held one. Douglas, however, justifies including the book for entirely different reasons. In his verse prologue to the translation of the thirteenth book, he writes that Vegius came to him in a dream and asked him why he had neglected to translate the thirteenth book. When Douglas replied that he had worn himself out on Virgil's twelve books, Vegius proceeded to beat him with a club until he cried mercy and promised to translate the thirteenth.

death, but several early manuscripts exist that likely were circulated among his contemporaries before the translation was officially published (Coldwell 96-98).

Douglas was born around 1474 into the heart of Scottish politics as the third son of Archibald Bell-the-Cat, the fifth Earl of Angus (Coldwell 1-2). His family was tied to the Scottish royal family through the deeds of his father and even more so through his nephew, the sixth Earl of Angus, who married Margaret Tudor, the Dowager Queen of Scotland and mother of James IV (Coldwell 3, 9). The queen supported Douglas for most of his political and ecclesiastical career, encouraging his appointments as Chancellor of Scotland in 1514 and Bishop of Dunkeld in 1515 (Coldwell 11). Unfortunately, he fell out of her favor and died in 1522 before his career could rebound (Coldwell 17). His political career probably did not affect his translation of the *Aeneid*, however, as he completed it the same year he began to rise in politics (Coldwell 19).

Despite this, Douglas undoubtedly translated the *Aeneid* with politics in mind. This period in Scotland was one of intrigue and internal struggle, with the nobles of Scotland campaigning to gain more power and the Dowager Queen attempting to preserve the power of the throne for herself and her son. Douglas's translation thus "must be considered in relation to...the ambition of the feudal magnates ranged against the privilege of a divinely-appointed monarch" (Coldwell 5). In addition, his choice to translate the *Aeneid* into Scots English was itself a political and patriotic act. He translated the *Aeneid* to "dignify and adorn the Scottish language and minister to Scottish patriotism" (Coldwell 45). He demonstrated that the Scots language was suitable for translating Virgil, establishing and celebrating the place of Scottish literature in the Renaissance. Douglas may not have considered his own personal

experiences extensively while translating the *Aeneid*, but he was thinking of his own language and society and his country's problems.

Douglas discusses his various opinions of the epic and its themes in his verse prologues to each book of the translated *Aeneid*. His first prologue explains his views on translation, particularly his insistence on faithfulness to his author combined with his acceptance that he could not translate every aspect of Virgil's work perfectly. He differentiates himself from previous "translators" such as the despised Caxton by his belief in faithful translation of an author's words and meaning at the same time: "Virgillis versys to follow and no thing feyn" (Prologue I.266).⁸ Before Douglas, the belief was that a work was split between its words or stories and its greater meaning; one could translate one or the other but not both at the same time. Works inspired by the *Aeneid* in the Middle Ages were either adaptations of the stories or allegories of the epic's meaning. Douglas, however, did not separate the stories from the greater meaning of the work but translated Virgil's original Latin quite faithfully .

Douglas combines his insistence on faithful translation with an understanding that a perfect translation from Latin into his language is impossible. Part of this is the humble formula found in the prefaces and introductions of most English translations of the *Aeneid* which enumerates the translator's faults and the inferiority of his language when compared to the perfection of Latin:

Quhy suld I than with dull forhed and vayn,
With rude engyne and barrand emptyve brayn,
With bad, harsk spech and lewit barbour tong
Presume to write quhar thy sweit bell is rung

⁸ To follow Virgil's verses and feign nothing (all paraphrases of Douglas's and Phaer's English are my own).

Or contyrfate sa precyus wordys deir?⁹ (Prologue I.19-23)

All thocht he stant in Latyn maist perfyte,
Yit stude he nevir weill in our tung endyte.¹⁰ (Prologue I.493-494)

Douglas's conventional modesty conflicts with his pride in his native language and his defiant challenge to his readers to judge his translation's merits on their own. Coldwell notes that in the Renaissance (and afterwards), "Reverence for Vergil is conventional, an exaggerated modesty is conventional, a patriotic esteem for the vernacular is conventional, and [Douglas] apparently adopts all three conventional attitudes, without trying to reconcile them" (43).

In addition to these standard disclaimers regarding the inferiority of his abilities and his language, Douglas provides a well-considered discussion of the balance between translating an author's words and his meaning:

To follow alanerly Virgilis wordis, I weyn,
Thar suld few undirstand me quhat thai meyn.
The bewte of his ornate eloquens
May nocht al tyme be kepit with the sentens.¹¹ (Prologue I.387-394)

Douglas contrasts Virgil's poetic style, his "wordis" and "eloquens," with the more important meaning of what he is writing, his "sentens." He notes that he must sometimes sacrifice following Virgil's words closely in order to preserve their sense. To solve this inherent problem of translation, Douglas proposes the theory of compensatory translation:

Sum tyme the text mon have ane expositioun,
Sum tyme the collour will caus a litill additioun,
And sum tyme of a word I mon mak thre,
In witness of this term 'oppetere'.

⁹ Why should I with dull forehead, and vain, with rude engine and barren, empty brain, with ugly, harsh speech and lewd barbarian tongue, presume to write where your sweet bell rang or imitate such precious, dear words?

¹⁰ All though he stands most perfectly in Latin, he never stood well when written in our tongue.

¹¹ If I followed Virgil's words as nearly as possible, I think, few would understand what they mean. The beauty of his eloquence may not always be retained with the meaning of the words.

Eik weill I wait syndry expositouris seir
Makis on a text sentens divers to heir,
As thame apperis, according thar entent,
And for thar part schawis ressonys evident.
All this is ganand, I will weill it swa be,
Bot a sentens to follow may suffice me.
Sum tyme I follow the text als neir I may,
Sum tyme I am contrenyt ane other way.¹² (Prologue I.347-362)

Douglas explains that he occasionally had to make additions to the text to make it understandable to his reader, and likewise he had to omit several meanings of a phrase and leave only one meaning because of the differences between Latin and English.

Douglas's explanation of compensatory translation prefigures the currently accepted theory.

Thomas Phaer: Background and Translation Theory

Although Thomas Phaer had a very different background than Gavin Douglas, he also translated the *Aeneid* into the context of his own time and politics. Phaer was born in Wales around 1510 but educated in England at Oxford and Lincoln's Inn. He began his studies in law, but quickly switched to medicine (Lally xiii). In addition to his achievement as a Virgilian translator, he is known as the "father of English pediatrics." Translation was thus more of a hobby for him than it was the focus of his work (Lally xiv). Unfortunately, he did not write any sort of preface to his translation of the *Aeneid*, so we do not have his own commentary on translation and the epic.

Phaer's motives for translating the *Aeneid* are revealed in his approach to medicine. He believed that knowledge should be available to all, not just the highly

¹² Sometimes the text must have an explanation, sometimes the color will cause a little addition, and sometimes I must make three words out of one, for example with the Latin word "oppetere." Often I also find several different explanations that make the text have different meanings, as they appear according to their intent, and for their part each makes clear sense. All this is gained, I well allow that it be so, but to follow only one meaning is enough for me. Sometimes I follow the text as near as I can, sometimes I am constrained in another way.

educated. He wrote medical treatises in plain language, for the benefit of the patients' understanding rather than for the education of the doctors. He regarded Latin as a barrier to the common man's access to knowledge and learning (Lally xv). As in his medical treatises, he translated "to make available the common store of precedents, rather than to advance the state of the literary art" (Lally xvi). Phaer was more interested in educating the public than in adding to the body of classical scholarship. This is not to say that he wrote a translation that everyone could read, but his overall goal was to make Virgil's *Aeneid* accessible to the majority rather than only the privileged few.

Thomas Phaer died after translating only the first nine and part of the tenth book of the *Aeneid*, but the Englishman Thomas Twyne finished and printed it in 1573. Twyne added his own translations of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* as well as explanatory notes to the whole. Phaer and Twyne were almost opposites as translators: Phaer was a traditionalist who translated into the fourteen couplets of medieval ballads, while Twyne was more interested in the innovative use of quantitative meter.¹³ Phaer was a Catholic who dedicated his translation to Queen Mary, Twyne was a firm Elizabethan Protestant (Lally xix). Despite these differences, Twyne did not change Phaer's translation in his publication; he altered only the spelling.¹⁴ The translation of the first nine books can therefore be considered strictly from Phaer's perspective and interpretation, although Twyne's accompanying notes emphasize some of the Renaissance aspects of the text.

¹³ A fourteen is a line of poetry with fourteen syllables, usually in iambic pentameter. Quantitative meter refers to a line of poetry that is based on sound and syllable length rather than syllable stress. Dactylic hexameter, the meter in which Virgil wrote his Latin poem, is a quantitative meter.

¹⁴ Steven Lally's edition of the Phaer/Twyne translation explains Twyne's use of orthography to make Phaer's translation appear more quantitative and modern and less medieval.

Book VI in Douglas's and Phaer's Translations

Gavin Douglas's and Thomas Phaer's translations are remarkable for being fairly close to Virgil's original Latin. Although both translators choose certain themes to emphasize, they do not make extensive additions or omissions. The influence of Renaissance culture is evident in each translation primarily in the Christianization of Roman religion and the interpretation of Roman government in light of the Renaissance ideal of the prince.

Douglas and Phaer imposed Christian readings on their translations to ensure that they would be accepted as meaningful works of literature rather than as folk stories, pagan superstition, or at worst, inspired by the Devil. Douglas acknowledges that Virgil was a pagan, but argues that his beliefs were not so far from Christian teachings:

*Thocht sum his writis frawart our faith part drawis.
Na wondir! he was na Cristyn man, per De,
He was a gentile, and levit on payane lawis,
And zit ¹⁵ he puttis a God Fader maste hie. ¹⁶ (Prologue VI.77-80)*

Virgil, too, believed in a fatherly god, Jupiter, who matched well with the Christian depiction of God. Douglas also points out the general similarities between Virgil's writings and Christian beliefs:

*He writis lyke a philosophour naturall;
Twichand our faith mony clauses he fand
Quhilk beyn conform, or than collaterall. ¹⁷ (Prologue VI.33-40)*

Virgil, though not a Christian writer, wrote such natural truths that his words "conform" and are "collaterall" with the Christian faith. Although Phaer did not write about his

¹⁵ I have inserted a "z" in place of the lowercase letter zeta Coldwell uses in his edition of Douglas's translation to symbolize the Scottish "z" (similar in pronunciation to the French "z").

¹⁶ Some thought that his writings draw close to our faith. No wonder! He was not a Christian man, by God, he was a gentile, and lived by pagan laws, and yet he puts a God Father most high.

¹⁷ He writes like a natural philosopher; he describes many things which readily conform to our faith or are collateral to it.

own Christian interpretation of the *Aeneid*, his actual translation reveals the same interest in syncretizing Christianity and Roman religion that Douglas's does.

Douglas and Phaer use Christian terminology to relate the Roman religion of the *Aeneid* to Christianity, particularly the Catholic beliefs which they both shared. This is particularly noticeable in the scenes concerning the Sibyl and the Underworld in Book VI. Douglas calls the Sibyl a "religius woman," "the nun," and "the sant" (i.62, i.77, ix.8). Phaer refers to her as "the priest" and to the temple she guards as "Apollos church" with its "temple towers" (42, 9). While they do not omit references to the Roman gods and religious practices such as the sacrifices Aeneas and the Sibyl perform, Douglas and Phaer use Christian words to familiarize Roman religion for their Renaissance readers.

In addition to the syncretization of the Sibyl with Christian clergy, the most notable way Douglas and Phaer impose a Christian interpretation on the *Aeneid* is by using Christian language to discuss Roman religious beliefs. This appears both in the translation itself and in the notes or summaries to each section of the book. Douglas gives a couplet introduction to each new section as he divided them and Thomas Twyne provides marginal notes to Phaer's translation.¹⁸ Ironically, although Douglas was a Catholic bishop, his actual translation focuses much less on religion than Phaer's. His chief ploy is to emphasize the similarities between Virgil's Underworld and the Christian view of Hell as described by the poet Dante. His introductory couplet to the descent of Aeneas and the Sibyl into the Underworld reads "The circulyt ways in hell Eneas saw" (Introduction to section vii).¹⁹ He further underlines the connection to

¹⁸ Although the notes are Twyne's and not Phaer's, we can treat them at least as examples of how Christianity was imposed on ancient texts in the sixteenth century.

¹⁹ The circular ways in hell Aeneas saw.

Dante's image of the nine circles of Hell by numbering the first groups of souls Aeneas passes: "In *the* first cyrkill, or *the* vtyr ward," "Nixt *thame*, *the* second place," and "*The* thryd place" (vii.7, vii.13, vii.24).²⁰ Virgil's Latin provides a number for only the first of these instances, and he refers to it as the "first entrance" or "area," *in limine primo*, rather than as a circle (VI.427).

Douglas and Phaer both equate Virgil's three regions of the Underworld with Dante's three regions of the afterlife: Hell, Purgatory or Limbo, and Paradise. Both men consistently refer to the Underworld as "hell," and Phaer occasionally calls it "Limbo." This Christian appropriation of Virgil's Underworld began with Dante, who used Virgil's descriptions to inspire his own portrayals of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. Dante's writings, in turn, became the accepted vision of the Christian afterlife, and Christian translators of Virgil from Douglas and Phaer all the way through Stanley Lombardo reinsert this recycled Dantean/Virgilian imagery and terminology into their translations of Book VI of the *Aeneid*. Although the concordance is not perfect, Tartarus is equated with Hell, the Elysian fields with Paradise, and the rest of the Underworld with Purgatory, particularly the river Lethe with its souls in the process of transmigration.²¹ Douglas introduces the transmigration of souls with this summary:

The seir punition of sawlis in purgatorye,
And quhou *thai* pass²² syne to *the* flude Lythe.²³ (Introduction to section xii)

He makes it clear that the reader should recognize the familiar idea of Christian purgatory here. Twyne's marginal notes denote the same passage as "The painims

²⁰ In the first circle, or the outer ward. Next those in the second place. The third place.

²¹ The transmigration of souls was not an institutional belief of Roman religion, but was introduced by the Greek philosophers Pythagoras and Plato and adopted by Virgil.

²² I have inserted "ss" in place of the lowercase letter beta Coldwell uses to symbolize the Scottish double "s" (similar to the German esstet).

²³ The harsh punishment of souls in purgatory, and how they pass afterwards to the Lethe river.

purgatory” (note to line 779).²⁴ Although he draws attention to the fact that this is not a Christian portrayal of the afterlife, he does equate Virgil’s description of the need to purge the soul of collected sins with Christian purgatory, which served the same function. Phaer’s translation makes the connection even more explicit:

Eche one of vs our penaunce here abides, than sent we bee
To Paradise at last, we few these fieldes of ioy do see:
Till compas long of time, by perfit course, hath purged quight
Our former cloddrid spots, and pure hath left our ghostly spright,
And sences pure of soule, and simple sparkes of heauenly light.²⁵ (781-785)

He interprets the transmigration of souls as a Christian purgatory where one must serve “penaunce” for one’s sins during life before one can reach “Paradise” or Heaven. Here Paradise is the Elysian fields, the “fieldes of ioy.” Twyne again provides clarification by adding the note “Description of Paradise” to the passage where Virgil describes the Elysian fields (note to line 673). Douglas, Phaer, and Twyne’s conflation of Virgil’s Underworld with the Christian ideas of Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory served both to familiarize Roman religion for their Renaissance readers as well as to urge them to reflect on the Christian afterlife as described most famously by Dante.

Politics were as important in the Renaissance as Christianity, particularly the ideals of the knight and the divinely-appointed, beneficent feudal tyrant often called the “Prince.” Douglas and Phaer both treat the characters of the *Aeneid* as though they were members of contemporary English feudal culture. They nobilize leaders such as Aeneas and Anchises: Douglas refers to Aeneas as “*this forcy chyvaler*” and dubs him “full of

²⁴ The pagans’ purgatory.

²⁵ Each one of us endures our penance here, then we are sent at last to Paradise, we few see these fields of joy; until the long compass of time, with perfect course, has purged our former clotted spots, and has left our ghostly spirit pure as the soul’s pure sense and simple sparks of heavenly light.

piete and knyched” (iiii.44, vi.39).²⁶ Phaer likewise titles his characters such as “sir Paris,” “valiaunt noble knight Parthenopee,” and “Dame Sibly” (67, 509, 92). Douglas also introduces Aeneas as the image of the ideal ruler in his prologue to the first book:

For every vertu belangand a nobill man
This ornate poet bettir than ony can
Payntand discryvis in person of Eneas-
Not forto say sik ane Eneas was,
Yit tham by hym perfytey blasons he
All wirschip, manhed and nobilite,
With every bonte belangand a gentill wycht,
Ane prynce, ane conquerour or a valyeand knycht.²⁷ (Prologue I.325-332)

Douglas describes Aeneas as though he were a Renaissance king, referring to his noble virtues of piety, courage, and nobility and calling him both a “prynce” and “valyeand knycht.” This simple use of class terminology in Douglas and Phaer’s translations relates the *Aeneid* to Medieval and Renaissance courtly literature, imbuing the characters with the proper rank and values to make them understandable for sixteenth century readers.

Politics in the Renaissance were also focused on the absolute power and loyalty that a ruler commanded from his subjects. Douglas and Phaer emphasize that the place of traitors who betray their kings is in Tartarus or Hell:

*...quique arma secuti
impia nec veriti dominorum fallere dextras.*²⁸ (VI.612-613)

And *tha* that movyt wrangwyss batall or weyr;
Tha not eschamyt *thar* promyss to forswer,
Brekand lawte plight in *thar* lordys hand.²⁹ (Douglas ix.173-175)

²⁶ This brave chevalier (knight). Full of piety and knighthood.

²⁷ This poet better than any can clearly describe Aeneas with every virtue belonging to a noble man - not to say that Aeneas was such a one, yet Virgil perfectly praises all of these in him: all worship, manhood, and nobility, with every goodness belonging to a gentleman, a prince, a conqueror, or a valiant knight.

²⁸ And those who followed impious arms nor feared to deceive the right hands of their masters (I will provide literal translations of all Latin passages cited in this paper).

²⁹ And those who moved on the wrong side in battle or war; those not ashamed to forswear their promise, breaking the loyalty they pledged to their lord’s hand.

...or reised warres in wrong
Or rebels to their prince, or maisters goods would not discernē.³⁰ (Phaer
648-649)

Douglas emphasizes the breaking of a promise and one's pledged loyalty to one's lord. Phaer, however, is more concerned with the role of the prince as supreme ruler. He further criticizes those who betray their princes in his translation of the passage where Anchises describes Brutus, who deposed the last king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus. When Brutus's sons campaigned to reinstate the monarchy, he executed them himself.

*Vis et Tarquinius reges, animamque superbam
ultoris Bruti, fascisque videre receptos?
Consulis imperium hic primus saevasque securis
accipiet, natosque pater nova bella moventis
ad poenam pulchra pro libertate vocabit.
Infelix! Utcumque ferent ea facta minores,
vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido.*³¹ (VI.817-823)

Wult see the **Tarquin** kings? and stately soule of Brutus brest?
Of **Brutus**, mischief wrecker? and by him the kings suppress?
He first the **Consulship** on him shall take, and first of all,
His onely sons vnto their death, for welth of *Rome* shall call,
Whan they with battailes new against the **Consuls** would rebell,
Himselfe for frédome fayer, with edge of axe shall do them quell.
Vnlucky man, how euer latter age shall praise the same,
His contreys loue him driues, and greedy lust of endless fame.³² (Phaer
861-868)

Virgil does not judge Brutus, leaving his motives ambiguous by saying that it was both love of his country and the great desire for praise that drove him. While Phaer translates

³⁰ Or (those who) raised wars in the wrong, or were rebels towards their prince, or who would not recognize their masters' goods.

³¹ Do you also wish to see the Tarquinian kings, and the proud soul of Brutus the avenger, and the recovered fasces (bundles of rods and axes; a symbol of authority)? He first will receive the authority of a consul and the fierce axes; and the father will call his sons, who moved new wars, to punishment for beautiful liberty. Unhappy! However posterity may extol these deeds, love of the fatherland wins, and an immense desire of praise.

³² Would you see the Tarquin kings? And Brutus's stately soul? Brutus, mischief wrecker, who suppressed the kings? He first will take the consulship upon himself, and will call his only sons to their death for wealth of Rome when they would rebel against the consuls with new battles; he himself, for fair freedom, will kill them with the edge of an axe. Unlucky man, however later ages may praise this, his country's love drives him, and greedy lust of endless fame.

Virgil's words fairly literally, he inserts his own opinion by calling Brutus a "mischief wrecker" and emphasizing that he was driven by "greedy lust of endless fame."

Compare this to Douglas's translation:

Pless the behald *the* Tarquynys kingis two,
And *the* stowt curage of Brutus alsso,
Quhilk can revenge *the* wrang in hys cuntre,
His gret honour gif *thou* lest heir or se...
Before hym born throu all Romys toвне,
In takin of iustice executioun,
Hys awin sonnys, moving onkyndly wer,
To punytioun *and* ded sal damp infeir,
To kepe frensches and souerane liberte;
And thus onsilly fader sall he be,
Quhou sa evir *the* pepil hys fatel dedis
In tyme tocum sal blazon, quha *thame* redis;
The feruent lufe of his kind natyve land,
And excedand desire he bar on hand
Of honour and hie glory to ressaue,
Mot al evil rumour fra his lawd byvaue.³³ (xiii.23-26, 31-42)

Douglas chooses to focus on Brutus's willingness to sacrifice his sons for his country, his "kind natyve land," instead of condemning him as a king-killer. Douglas's country was at the time engaged in a power struggle between members of the aristocracy and the Dowager Queen. Phaer the traditionalist, however, supported the absolute monarchy of Queen Mary. Phaer advocates loyalty for the figure of the ruler over all else, including one's own family, while Douglas prioritizes loyalty to one's country.

Douglas and Phaer also use the *Aeneid* as an instruction manual to demonstrate how the king or prince should govern his country. They present the warlike Roman king Tullus Hostilius as an ideal prince:

³³ If it pleases you, behold the two Tarquin kings, and the stout courage of Brutus also, who can revenge the wrong in his country, if you wish to hear or see of his great honor...Before him borne through the whole town of Rome, in taking just execution, he shall lead his own sons, moving unkindly war, to punishment and death, in order to keep fresh and sovereign liberty; and thus he shall be a not unworthy father, howsoever the people shall praise his fatal deeds in time to come; whoever reads about them, the fervent love of his native land and the exceeding desire he bore to achieve honor and high glory must wave all evil rumor away from his praise.

*...Cui deinde subibit
otia qui rumpet patriae residesque movebit
Tullus in arma viros et jam desueta triumphis
agmina...*³⁴ (VI.812-815)

Quhamto thar sal succed a lordly syre,
Tullus Hostilius, that first of hys land
The peyss and quiet, quhilk solang dyd stand,
He sal dissolue and brek, and dolf men steir,
Quhilk lang hath bene disosyt fra the weir,
To armys and triumphe of victory,
And thame array in hostis by and by.³⁵ (Douglas xiiii.12-18)

He that his contreys ydlenes shall breake, and force of néede
To stur them selues in armes, king **Tullus**, he shal vp reuiue
Their sluggish sprites, and teach to win, and triumphes eft atchiue.³⁶
(Phaer 856-858)

Tullus is a king, a “lordly syre,” who is able to stir his country to war, to organize the “sluggish sprites” of his men and “thame array in hostis.” While Douglas’s translation follows Virgil’s text fairly closely, Phaer is again the more extreme of the two translators, advocating war as a way to “breake” a “contreys ydlenes” and “teach” his “sluggish” subjects “to win” their battles.

Both Douglas and Phaer view the waging of war as a necessary part of a king’s rule. They explain this further in the famous passage where Anchises tells Aeneas that government will be the art of the Romans:

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*³⁷ (VI.851-853)

Bot thou, Romane, ramember, as lord *and* syre,

³⁴ After whom Tullus then will arise: he who will break the leisure of the fatherland and will move the inactive men to arms and troops now unaccustomed to triumphs.

³⁵ To whom will succeed a lordly sire, Tullus Hostilius, who, the first of his land, will dissolve and break the peace and quiet, which so long did stand, and will stir dull men, who have long been dissociated from war, to arms and triumph of victory, and he will array them in hosts.

³⁶ He who will break his country’s idleness and will force them to stir themselves to arms: king Tullus. He will revive their sluggish spirits and teach them to win and often achieve triumphs.

³⁷ You, Roman, remember to rule the people under your authority (these will be your arts), and to impose the custom of peace, to spare the vanquished, and to war down the proud.

To rewle *the* pepil vnder thyne empyre;
Thir sal thy craftis be, at weil may seme,
The peax to modify and eik manteme,
To pardon all cumis zoldin *and* recryant,
And proud rabellis in batale forto dant.³⁸ (Douglas xv.13-18)

Remember **Romaine** thou, to rule thy realmes with empier iust,
Let this thy practice bée. To much on peace set not thy lust,
Thy subiectes euer spare, and stomachs proud downe vanquish plaine.³⁹
(Phaer 901-903)

Douglas and Phaer take this passage as advice to a king on how to rule his subjects.

They both interpret the Latin word *imperium* as “empire,” although it more accurately means authority or the right to rule. They also emphasize the importance of both peace and war as a king’s task: Douglas says that his duty is “The peax to modify and eik manteme,” suggesting that he is to both keep peace and, when necessary, “modify” it, or make war. Phaer likewise has Anchises warn Aeneas “To much on peace set not thy lust:” do not focus exclusively on peace, but seek war as well. Virgil himself speaks only of imposing peace. Both translations underline the idea that Anchises’s words are to be taken as good advice for a ruler. Douglas introduces this section of the sixth book with the couplet

Anchises gevis Eneas gud teching
To gyde *the* pepill vnder his governyng.⁴⁰ (Introduction to section xv)

Twyne’s marginal note to this section dubs it “Good counsell.” This advice to rule one’s people with peace and war, mercy to one’s subjects, and ruthlessness to one’s enemies defined the Renaissance ideal of kingship.

³⁸ But you, Roman, remember, as lord and sire, to rule the people under your empire; there will be your crafts, as well may seem: to modify and also maintain the peace, to pardon all who come begging and humbled, and to overcome proud rebels.

³⁹ Remember, you Roman, to rule your realms with just empire; let this be your practice. Do not set your lust too much on peace, always spare your subjects, and vanquish down proud stomachs.

⁴⁰ Anchises gives Aeneas good teachings to guide the people under his governance.

Douglas and Phaer's translations, as the first two complete translations of the Latin text of the *Aeneid* into English, reflect the growing demand for accurate translation. In conjunction with this, they demonstrate how the *Aeneid* could be translated faithfully and still fit into contemporary Renaissance culture. John Bernard claims that "It is from the Renaissance in particular that we may learn how a culture very different in its informing premises can seek to assimilate an earlier one through the mediate of its strongest voices" (7). Using Virgil's own words, Gavin Douglas and Thomas Phaer tied Roman religious and political beliefs to Christianity and the Renaissance ideal of the prince. Their manipulation and interpretation of Virgil's epic as a work with contemporary significance foreshadowed the most famous and influential English translation of the *Aeneid*: John Dryden's.

Chapter Two
The Revolution in Virgilian Translation: John Dryden

Translation of the Aeneid During the English Civil War and Glorious Revolution

John Conington, writing in the late nineteenth century, remarks of John Dryden's translation: "Standing as it does nearly midway in the history of Virgilian translations, it throws into the shade not only all that preceded, but all that have followed it" (xxiii). Dryden published his translation of Virgil's *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid* in 1697 into the same heroic couplets Douglas used. His *Aeneid* held sway as the most popular and widely used translation in the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth centuries and, much like the King James Bible, is considered to be as much a classic work of English literature as it is a translation. It is the only translation written before the mid-nineteenth century that is still in print for public enjoyment and not merely for scholarly interest.⁴¹ Translators from his time to our own often refer to his translation in their introductions, either simply praising it or authorizing their translations against his by claiming greater faithfulness to the original. Joseph Warton says in the 1740s *Preface* to his and Christopher Pitt's translation, "I have deeply felt how difficult it is to work after so great a master on the same subject" (xvii). He explains that despite Dryden's mistakes as a translator, his "native spirit and vigour" (words frequently used to describe Dryden) overcome them to create a beautiful and powerful English poem (xvi).

⁴¹ The Douglas and Phaer/Twyne translations are also currently available in print, but only in large critical editions with lengthy introductions and copious notes clearly intended for scholars. Dryden's translation has an aspect of the majestic and timeless that makes it eternally popular, although it is not read in Classics courses where translations are expected to be closer to the original Latin.

Dryden was one of the most prominent literary figures of his time, writing plays, poetry, satires, and literary criticism in addition to his translations.⁴² He was very involved in contemporary politics, particularly after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 caused the exile of the Catholic Stuart king James II and Parliament's replacement of him with William III of Orange, a Protestant Dutch prince married to James's daughter Mary II.⁴³ The primarily bloodless change of government was a result of England's struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism and between divinely-appointed, absolute monarchy versus semi-elective, parliamentary monarchy. Protestantism and Parliament won, and the so-called Jacobites or royalists, of whom Dryden was one, fell out of favor. Dryden lost his prized position as England's Poet Laureate in the year of the Revolution, losing at the same time his place in the center of English society.

Colin Burrow comments that "Dryden's Virgil is the greatest offspring of the line of resistant Virgils composed by displaced writers" ("Virgil in English" 28). Dryden used his translation of the *Aeneid* to thrust his recently marginalized royalist politics into the limelight. This was not an innovation, however. Dryden had the examples of Virgilian translators such as Sir Richard Fanshawe (1648) and John Ogilby (1649-50), two frustrated royalists during the English Civil War (1642 -51) which deposed King Charles I and established the Commonwealth and Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell.⁴⁴ Fanshawe, for example, dedicated his 1644 translation to Charles I, and printed it along with his translation in 1648 while Charles was imprisoned by Parliament (Burrow, "Virgil in English" 25-26). Burrow claims that Fanshawe thus

⁴² "Dryden, John." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2006. Encyclopaedia Britannica online. Apr. 4, 2006. <http://0-search.eb.com.clicnet4.clic.edu:80/eb/article-9031281>.

⁴³ "Glorious Revolution." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2006. Encyclopaedia Britannica online. Apr. 4, 2006. <http://0-search.eb.com.clicnet4.clic.edu:80/eb/article-9068046>.

⁴⁴ "English Civil War." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2006. Encyclopaedia Britannica online. Apr. 4, 2006. <http://0-search.eb.com.clicnet4.clic.edu:80/eb/article-9032663>.

“[suggested] a new role for the Virgilian translator, as one who uses the protection afforded by his prestigious Latin original to stand against the tendencies of the age” (25-26). These translators saw the reflection of the English Civil War in the Roman civil wars that were recent history to Virgil in composing the *Aeneid*. They portrayed “a Virgil who had divided political loyalties” to the Republic and Augustus, just as they themselves felt caught between king, country, and Parliament (Burrow, “Virgil in English” 27). Almost half a century later, after the Restoration of the Stuart kings and their final end in the Glorious Revolution, Dryden appropriated this view of the political Virgil in his own translation of the *Aeneid*.

John Dryden: Background and Translation Theory

Dryden explains and justifies his theory of translation, as well as the political role of the poet (and translator), in his long, digressive *Dedication to the Aeneis*. As we saw from Douglas’s prologues, Dryden was not the first to write about how he translated the *Aeneid*, but he was certainly one of the most prolific. His dedication covers the whole range of Virgilian criticism, including the purpose of epic poetry, whether Virgil’s or Homer’s work was more original, the Roman historical context of the poem, what Virgil’s motives must have been in writing the poem, and Dryden’s own goals in translating the *Aeneid*. It is evident throughout the *Dedication* that Dryden regarded Virgil and his poetry with the proprietary air of an accomplished English poet confident of his own ideas and skills.

Dryden begins his discussion of translation by reciting the formulaic list of his own inferiorities and those of his language in translating the *Aeneid*: “what I have already written, either in justification or praise of Virgil, is against myself, for

presuming to copy, in my coarse English, the thoughts and beautiful expressions of this inimitable poet, who flourish'd in an age when his language was brought to its last perfection" (l).⁴⁵ He criticizes the "coarseness" of the English language even more than his own abilities, reflecting the still conventional claim that English was a vulgar and undeveloped language unsuitable for beautiful poetry. In his *Postscript to the Aeneid*, Dryden excuses his translation, "imperfect as it is," by asserting that he was too rushed and ill to correct his mistakes (523). He does not suggest examples of his possible mistakes, however. Like most translators, he challenges the reader to decide whether or not his translation is a good one.

Dryden's required self-deprecating stance as a translator of a great author quickly disappears when he moves to a discussion of his methods of translation. He admits that his translation is not perfectly faithful, at least not in reproducing Virgil's own words in their original order. He says instead that he "thought fit to steer betwixt the two extremes of paraphrase and literal translation; to keep as near my author as I could, without losing all his graces, the most eminent of which are in the beauty of his words" (lx). He elevates preserving the beauty of Virgil's poetry over translating him faithfully, claiming that his readers would not enjoy a literal but unpoetic translation, particularly of Virgil. He continues with an explanation of his method of compensatory translation,

The way I have taken is not so strait as metaphrase, nor so loose as paraphrase: some things too I have omitted, and sometimes have added of my own. Yet the omissions, I hope, are but of circumstances, and such as would have no grace in English; and the additions, I also hope, are easily deduc'd from Virgil's sense. They will seem (at least I have the vanity to think so) not stuck into him, but growing out of him. (lix)

⁴⁵ All quotations in this chapter which are cited by page numbers in lowercase Roman numerals are from Dryden's *Dedication* unless otherwise noted. Page numbers are taken from the 1944 Heritage Press edition of Dryden's *Aeneid*.

Dryden admits that he added and omitted things from his translation of Virgil's Latin to make it a more "graceful" poem in English. He also emphasizes that his additions should seem natural, that they "will seem to grow out of" Virgil and his poem like a branch on a tree. He presumes to understand Virgil to the extent that he can add his own words and ideas to the epic as though he were not a translator, but Virgil himself. He writes, "I have endeavor'd to make Virgil speak such English as he would himself have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age" (lx). In other words, he endeavors to make Virgil speak as though he were John Dryden the English poet.

Dryden discusses translation as a contradictory process, where one must strike a balance between literal, word-for-word translation and conveying the sense and beautiful poetry of Virgil's original. Despite this, he also aims to correct Virgil's supposed faults of composition and narrative, dismissing them as things the poet would have corrected himself had he lived long enough to finish revising the *Aeneid*. Dryden's proprietary attitude towards Virgil stems from his pride in himself as an original poet. He translated Virgil for money as much as for anything else, but he balked at being subject to another author's ideas and style. In addition to all the practical difficulties of translating, he says,

there is one remaining, which is insuperable to all translators. We are bound to our author's sense, tho' with the latitudes already mention'd; for I think it not so sacred, as that one *iota* must not be added or diminish'd, on pain of *anathema*. But slaves we are, and labor on another man's plantation; we dress the vineyard, but the wine is the owner's: if the soil be sometimes barren, then we are sure of being scourg'd; if it be fruitful, and our care succeeds, we are not thank'd; for the proud reader will only say the poor drudge has done his duty. But this is nothing to what follows; for, being oblig'd to make his sense intelligible, we are forc'd to untune our own verses, that we may give his meaning to the reader. He who invents is master of his thoughts and words; he can turn and vary them as he pleases, till he renders them harmonious. But the wretched translator has no such privilege; for, being tied to the thoughts,

he must make what music he can in the expression; and for this reason it cannot always be so sweet as that of the original. (lxiii)

Dryden describes translation as enslavement, as drudgery whose success relies on the “fruitfulness” and beauty of the original work. He defies the ideal of perfect faith to the original, saying instead that it is right to add and omit things in translation as he sees fit. He prizes originality, and argues that because the translator cannot be original in his thoughts and ideas, he must be original in the poetic expression of these. His unspoken goal in translating Virgil thus is not to produce an accurate translation, but to write his own grand English poem. In addition to making the expression of the poem his own, he also appropriates the figure of Virgil himself, seeing in him what he desires to see and dismissing as unrevised or nonexistent that which does not fit with his own views.

Dryden appropriated not only Virgil’s poem as his own, but also several of the earlier translations of Virgil. One of his methods of translation, which he only alludes to in his *Dedication*, was his extensive use of previous translations. In all of his translations, he regularly incorporated other translators’ rhyme words, half-lines, whole lines, and words or phrasing, as well as scholars’ commentaries. L. Proudfoot’s book *Dryden’s Aeneid and its Seventeenth Century Predecessors* treats the nature of Dryden’s borrowings and the sources he most likely used, as well as which of his sources used other sources in their own translations. What we would call plagiarism was actually a fairly common practice at this time; Joseph Warton, for example, notes that he borrowed about a dozen lines from Dryden and that his fellow translator Christopher Pitt took about sixty (Warton xxx). Proudfoot claims that Dryden looked at most of the seventeenth century English translations as well as some of the French and Italian ones and the French commentaries of Ruæus, Segrais, and others.

We do not know why Dryden borrowed so extensively from previous translators. Proudfoot mentions the studies of Van Doren and Helene M. Hooker, who argue that Dryden borrowed from others because he was in too much of a hurry to translate the whole thing from scratch, or simply because he hated having to find so many rhyme words. Proudfoot himself disagrees with this, claiming instead that Dryden wanted to create “the best version possible in living English,” that he was “seeking a definitive version, constantly embodying in his own work what he thought had been well done, and constantly measuring himself against the best version he could find of any given passage” (267). According to Proudfoot, Dryden must have used at least eight translations in writing Book Four, and this does not account for those he might have used for other books (266).⁴⁶ Throughout the process, Dryden was consciously choosing which previous phrases and readings he wanted to appropriate or surpass to best convey his own interpretation of Virgil’s style and meaning.

According to both Proudfoot’s study and his own *Dedication*, Dryden relied most upon the translation of his friend Richard Maitland, the Earl of Lauderdale. Lauderdale completed his translation of the whole *Aeneid* and sent it to Dryden before Dryden had even begun his own. Dryden praises Lauderdale’s unpublished translation in his *Dedication*, claiming rather unconvincingly that he referred to it when he was confused as to the sense of the Latin (lxv). He does not admit that he outright borrowed several of Lauderdale’s lines and his rhyme words in particular. Thus he could graciously acknowledge his debt to a fellow translator, who also happened to be an earl, without having to admit how much he had borrowed from him (Proudfoot 169).

⁴⁶ Proudfoot chose to focus his study of Dryden’s borrowings on Book Four of the *Aeneid* because it was the most frequently translated book at the time and thus probably represents the upper limit of how many sources Dryden drew upon for his translation.

Lauderdale himself was influenced highly in style and versification by his friend Dryden, so it would not have been difficult for Dryden to incorporate Lauderdale's words into his own work.

After Lauderdale's death and the publication of Dryden's *Aeneid*, some of Lauderdale's friends published his translation in the hope that it would gain recognition both on its own strengths and because it had so heavily influenced Dryden. In the second edition, the editor even noted in the margins where Dryden had borrowed a whole line or half a line of Lauderdale's translation (Proudfoot 168). However, as his friends and publisher had feared, Lauderdale's translation could not match Dryden's in popularity. The "Preface" to Lauderdale's translation apologizes for publishing another translation after Dryden's, but defensively asserts that it merits recognition because Dryden drew upon it to finish his own translation:

It was not undertaken with any design to oppose or thwart *Mr. Dryden's*, This being done before His was thought of; and there is no Reason the World shou'd be robb'd of the Performance of so Considerable a Man, because another Translation was publish'd before this, whose Author has acknowledged his Obligation to our Copy for the Assistance it has given him in the understanding of *Virgil*... Besides this, our Translator has not taken the Liberty, or very rarely, to Paraphrase upon his Author, a Vice too much in use at this Day; but has endeavour'd to give you his genuine Sense and Meaning in as few Words, and as easie a Turn of Language, as the Majesty of *Virgil's* Stile, and the Interpretation of the Original, wou'd permit. ("Preface")

In praising Lauderdale's translation for its accuracy and conciseness, the writer of the preface criticizes the inaccuracy and length of Dryden's translation, which was much longer than the Latin text and most other translations. By using the word "Paraphrase," the unknown prefacer evokes Dryden's own statement of his goal to "steer between literal translation and paraphrase," and contrasts Lauderdale's translation as the more faithful one. Although Lauderdale's translation has for the most part been forgotten, it is

useful to read alongside Dryden's because Lauderdale was the first translator to cast his interpretation of the *Aeneid* into the context of pro-Stuart politics after the Glorious Revolution (Proudfoot 178). As we shall see in Dryden's translation of Book VI, he directly borrowed or adopted several of Lauderdale's lines which inserted commentary on the Revolution and the ascent of William III to the throne of England.

Dryden, in the same vein as Lauderdale and the Civil War translators, saw in the poem and its references to the Augustan era a reflection of the politics of his own day: a change of government, the old religion attacked, a foreign king, and a poet deeply interested in how it would all turn out. Steven Zwicker states, "Dryden saw in Vergil an image of himself as civic poet: a man of letters sustaining and criticizing the mythology of empire, analyzing political issues, and praising and blaming those patrons, statesmen, and ideologues who shaped and enacted the affairs of state" (287). He goes on to analyze how Dryden used his translation as political commentary through the language of his translation, his dedication, and the engraved plates dedicated to individual subscribers of the translation.⁴⁷ However, in reading Dryden's *Dedication* and translation, it is difficult to gain a perfectly clear picture of what he actually wanted from contemporary politics. All we can tell is that he was angry and dissatisfied.

Dryden introduces his political reading of the *Aeneid* in the *Dedication* through a summary of the fall of the Roman republic and the rise of the new government of Augustus. He notes that "we are to consider [Virgil] as writing his poem in a time when the old form of government was subverted, and a new one just establish'd by Octavius Caesar, in effect by force of arms, but seemingly by the consent of the Roman people"

⁴⁷ Zwicker explains Dryden's (and/or his publisher's) method of assigning plates illustrating passages of the *Aeneid* to his subscribers: by matching complimentary images and passages with patrons, friends, and fellow royalists and putting more offensive or admonishing images and passages with the names and crests of his or James II's enemies.

(xviii). Zwicker claims that “Dryden is describing Roman politics in the century of the Caesars, but the language suggests as exactly the Jacobite reading of the Glorious Revolution” (282-3). The Jacobites held that William of Orange, urged on and abetted by a corrupt Parliament, had usurped the throne from King James II. Dryden uses this description of Octavian’s rise to power to evoke William’s, along with the accompanying ambiguity of whether Octavian (or William) had been elected by the Roman Senate (or Parliament) in the best interests of the people or had won his way to the throne by force.

Tied up in this juxtaposition of force and consent is the seventeenth century debate in English politics between lineal succession and elective kingship. Dryden as a royalist supported the succession of the Stuart monarchy. He criticizes elective kingship in his *Dedication* by connecting it with the “tyranny and maladministration” of the last elected Roman king Tarquinius Superbus (xx).⁴⁸ His opinion is complicated however, by the figure of the hero Aeneas, whom he directly calls an elective king, although he does point out that he could not be Priam’s heir by lineal succession in any case (xxiii). He depicts Latinus as a contrasting example of a “king by inheritance, who is born a father of his country” (xxii xxiii). His reverence for Latinus clearly shows his preference for lineal succession, but he acknowledges that if this option is taken away, elective kingship is the next best option. He claims that Virgil,

who all this while had Augustus in his eye, had no desire he should seem to succeed by any right of inheritance deriv’d from Julius Caesar, (such a title being but one degree remov’d from conquest,) for what was introduc’d by force, by force may be remov’d. ‘T was better for the people that they should give, than he should take; since that gift was indeed no more at bottom than a trust. (xxiii)

⁴⁸ The Jacobites often compared William III to Tarquin.

Dryden asserts that it was better for Virgil to present Aeneas, and thus Augustus, as an elective king rather than a tyrant for fear that a tyrant would be easily removed from the throne by the same force he used to rise to it.

Dryden presents Virgil as a political poet who was very concerned that his work should serve the best interests of his country, even if it did so by supporting a form of government with which he did not completely agree. Dryden writes that Virgil remained a republican at heart, but realized that the senate had “grown degenerate” beyond all hope of recovery and that Augustus was the only possibility for stable government (xix-xx). He interprets Virgil’s motives in writing the *Aeneid* as purely political:

I say that Virgil, having maturely weigh’d the condition of the times in which he liv’d; that an entire liberty was not to be retriev’d;...that this conqueror, tho’ of a bad kind, was the very best of it; that the arts of peace flourish’d under him; that all men might be happy, if they would be quiet; that...he exercis’d more for the common good than for any delight he took in greatness - these things, I say, being consider’d by the poet, he concluded it to be the interest of his country to be so govern’d; to infuse an awful respect into the people towards such a prince; by that respect to confirm their obedience to him, and by that obedience to make them happy. This was the moral of his divine poem; honest in the poet; honorable to the emperor. (xx-xxi)

He maintains that Virgil recognized the benefits of Augustus as emperor - peace, happiness, the common good - and chose to support his government by encouraging the people to submit to him. As a poet, Virgil did this by writing the *Aeneid*, representing Aeneas as an invading foreign king who nonetheless could provide stability through his good character and governance.

In return, Dryden claims that Virgil also used the *Aeneid* to counsel Augustus on how to rule his people. Virgil, in addition to realizing that Augustus offered peace and stable government, also owed his prosperity to Augustus. Thus, Dryden says,

he repays him with good counsel, how to behave himself in his new monarchy, so as to gain the affections of his subjects, and deserve to be call'd the father of his country. From this consideration it is that he chose, for the groundwork of his poem, one empire destroy'd, and another rais'd from the ruins of it. (xxii)

He places Virgil in the position of mentor to Augustus, using the legend of Aeneas's establishment of the Roman race and rule in Italy to instruct Augustus in how to establish his own good and lasting monarchy.

Dryden's interpretation of the *Aeneid* as an instruction manual for kings was shared by his predecessors Gavin Douglas and Thomas Phaer. In addition, it was a firmly-held opinion of the French court of Louis XIV, whose scholars were so influential for Dryden. Dryden notes in his *Dedication* that he read the works of Père René le Bossu (a commentator), Charles de la Rue (Ruaeus, the creator of the Delphine edition of the *Aeneid*), and Jean Regnault de Segrais (a French translator) (Thomas 134-40). The Delphine edition of the Latin *Aeneid*, like the other classical texts in the series, was created to educate the young Dauphin in the art of ruling (Thomas 137). Where Dryden differs from these scholars is in his emphasis on the reciprocal relationship between the king and his subjects that he believes Virgil supported, using the *Aeneid* both to teach the king how to rule and to encourage his subjects to support him so that all might be happy.

Dryden provides one final summation of the poet's role in politics:

To love our native country, and to study its benefit and glory, to be interested in its concerns, is natural to all men, and is indeed our common duty. A poet makes a farther step; for, endeavoring to do honor to it, 't is allowable in him even to be partial in its cause; for he is not tied to truth, or fetter'd by the laws of history. (xxxiv)

Virgil created his legend for the good of his country, bending history and myth to build an epic that would directly influence the political changes of his time. In writing of the

poet Virgil's motives in composing the *Aeneid*, Dryden the poet proclaims his own goals in translating the *Aeneid*. He saw himself as a new, English Virgil living in his own time of political upheaval, a poet/translator whose duty was to criticize the current government and to encourage peace and good governance for his country and his fellow citizens. His pretensions as a politically-driven poet led him to read the same motives in Virgil and his epic, to the extent that his translation is at the same time an interpretation of the politics of the early Roman empire and a commentary on the politics of his own seventeenth century England.

John Conington writes that Dryden rises above all other translators because "while none of them have anything of Virgil's individuality, he alone has an individuality of his own of sufficient mark to interest and impress the reader" (xxxiv). Although Dryden's translation is often criticized for its inaccuracy, its lack of pathos and sentiment, and its narrow-minded political reading of the *Aeneid*, it is as equally praised for its vigor and beauty as an English poem.⁴⁹ What Dryden lacks in Virgilian feeling he makes up for with the power of his own poetry and political convictions. Colin Burrow also maintains that Dryden's translation is still the best to be found because "His is the only English Virgil to be consciously founded on the idea that it is right for a translator to bring his own experience to bear on his original, and his is the only English translation to take fire from the delicious friction between the translator's concerns and those of the original" ("Virgil in English" 36). He attributes the energy and vividness of Dryden's translation to the very thing for which he is most criticized: seeing himself and his own times in the mirror of Virgil and making his translation of the *Aeneid* a reflection of that.

⁴⁹ See, for example, John Conington, Colin Burrow, and K. W. Gransden.

Book VI in Dryden's Translation

Dryden's translation of Book VI of the *Aeneid* vividly demonstrates his appropriation of Virgil's text to assert his own criticism of the Glorious Revolution and the ascension of William of Orange to the English throne. Dryden uses in particular the prophecies of Anchises to discuss the role of fate in monarchical succession. He also uses the contrasting figures in Tartarus and Elysium to criticize those who depose their kings and praise those who support their kings. Throughout his translation, he significantly emphasizes the language of kingship and empire so that the whole book has a more grandiose and powerful tone than Virgil's original text.

The idea of fate after the Glorious Revolution was a much-debated one. Supporters of William of Orange viewed his rule as providential and took this as an excuse to forgo their loyalty oaths to James II. The Jacobites, on the other hand, had believed in James II as a divinely-appointed king and "refused to understand the Revolution as the design of heaven," or at least as the design of a beneficent heaven (Zwicker 297). Zwicker claims that Dryden depicts the gods and fate as rather more malignant than they are in Virgil. However, Aeneas leaves his homeland, leaves Dido, and engages in a long and bloody war in Italy because it is his destiny, because the gods (including both the beneficent Jupiter and avenging Juno) and fate drive him. Dryden appears to sense this ambiguity in Virgil's work and interprets it in his own way.

Whether or not Dryden perceives Virgil's depiction of fate as malignant, he does link kingship with fate and a sense of privilege. Anchises tells Aeneas of his future at the end of Book VI,

*incenditque animum famae venientis amore.*⁵⁰ (VI.889)

⁵⁰ And fired his soul with love of coming fame.

And fir'd his mind to mount the promis'd throne. (Dryden p.189)

The word “promis'd” does not appear in the Latin, nor does the word “throne.” Dryden introduces the idea that Aeneas will not only rule Italy, but that he is *entitled* to rule Italy, that it is “promis'd” to him. Dryden further emphasizes the connection between entitlement and rule through Anchises's prophecy of Julius Caesar:

*...Hic Caesar et omnis Iuli
progenies magnum caeli ventura sub axem.*⁵¹ (VI.789-790)

The mighty Caesar waits his vital hour,
Impatient for the world, and grasps his promis'd pow'r. (185)

Virgil's Anchises merely points out Julius Caesar to Aeneas as one of the descendants of his son Iulus, but Dryden expands this two word description *Hic Caesar* into two whole lines that portray Caesar as a conqueror. He is “mighty” and “impatient” and he “grasps” his power, taking it forcefully even though it is supposedly “promis'd” to him.

Aeneas stakes his own claim to entitled rule in his prayer to the Sibyl and Apollo at the beginning of Book VI:

*...da (non indebita posco
regna meis fatis) Latio considerare Teucros
errantisque deos agitataque numina Trojae.*⁵² (VI.66-68)

Give me what Heav'n has promis'd to my fate,
To conquer and command the Latian state.
To fix my wand'ring gods, and find a place
For the long exiles of the Trojan race. (160)

Virgil has Aeneas ask that the Trojans be allowed to settle their “wandering gods” and “harassed divinities” in Italy, noting that this realm is owed to him by his fate. Dryden exaggerates this idea by turning Virgil's understatement *non indebita*, “not un-owed,” into the definitive “promis'd,” underlining as well that both Heaven and fate are

⁵¹ Here Caesar and all the offspring of Iulus to come under the great axis of the sky.

⁵² Grant (I ask for realms not un-owed by my fates) that the Trojans may settle in Latium their wandering gods and the harassed divinities of Troy.

involved in granting Aeneas his place in Italy. In addition, Dryden's Aeneas does not demand just to settle in Italy but to "conquer and command" it. Dryden connects fate, or at least a sense of entitlement, to conquest. Kingship supposedly granted by Heaven, by the fate espoused by the Williamites, equals not a rightful succession to the throne, but forceful usurpation.

Dryden continues his discussion of kingship and ascension in the context of violence and conquest with Anchises's final words to Aeneas that the art of the Romans will be to rule:

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*⁵³ (VI.851-853)

But, Rome, 't is thine alone, with awful sway,
To rule mankind, and make the world obey,
Disposing peace and war by thy own majestic way;
To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee. (187-188)

In the Latin, Anchises tells Aeneas and the Romans to remember, *memento* to rule their people with authority and, most importantly, "to impose the habit of peace." Dryden, however, turns the entire passage into a prophecy of empire and of Rome's future power. He introduces violence into the passage, claiming that Rome will "[dispose] peace and war." This line is no longer advice to the ruler of Rome to impose peace, but a prophecy that he will dispense war and peace alike as he sees fit. Dryden shades the overall language of the passage to evoke the power of empire and kingship, with words such as "awful sway," "majestic way," and "imperial arts." The same connection between rule and entitlement appears here in the idea that the imperial arts of rule are "worthy" to Rome "alone." His depiction of empire and kingship as conquest through

⁵³ For my translation of the Latin, see note 37 on page 32.

entitlement serves as an ironic criticism of the Williamites' proclamation that fate and God determined William's replacement of James II on the English throne.

Dryden inserts his most strident political comments, however, in the descriptions of the souls in the Underworld regions of Tartarus and Elysium, translated in Christian thought as Hell and Heaven. Dryden divides the souls in Tartarus/Hell and Elysium/Paradise into a binary of traitors versus patriots. Those in Tartarus include:

*Hic, quibus invisi fratres, dum vita manebat,
pulsatusve parens aut fraus innexa clienti,
aut qui divitiis soli incubuere repertis
nec partem posuere suis (quae maxima turba est),
quique ob adulterium caesi, quique arma secuti
impia nec veritit dominorum fallere dextras.*⁵⁴ (VI.608-613)

Then they, who brothers' better claim disown,
Expel their parents and usurp the throne...
Hosts of deserters, who their honor sold,
And basely broke their faith for bribes of gold. (179)

Most of Dryden's translation of these lines is his own addition, especially the pointed phrase "usurp the throne" which suggests the royalist view of William III as a usurper of the English throne. "Hosts of deserters" refers to those members of Parliament and the aristocracy who conspired to depose James II and bring William to the English throne. Here Dryden suggests that they were bribed.

Dryden was not the first, however, to use these lines to condemn the instigators of the Revolution. The Earl of Lauderdale, his friend and the greatest source of his borrowed lines, translated this passage even more radically:

Here those who Brothers for a Crown disown,
Turn out their Parents and usurp the Throne,
Deceive the Subjects who are not their own...

⁵⁴ Here, those who hated their brothers, while life remained, or beat a parent, or contrived fraud against a client, or who gloated alone over found riches nor put aside part for their relatives (which is the greatest crowd), and those who were killed because of adultery, and those who followed impious arms nor feared to deceive the right hands of their masters.

These kill'd for lawless Love, bold Rebels there,
Who 'gainst their lawful Prince had level'd War.
Ungrateful Creatures, impious, as unjust,
Contemn'd their Honour and betray'd their Trust. (Lauderdale lines 741-750)

Dryden probably took the line “usurp the throne” directly from Lauderdale’s translation, although after this he follows Virgil’s words more closely. Lauderdale’s passage, by contrast, ignores the breadth of crimes enumerated by Virgil. He turns the entire passage into a blatant political censure of William of Orange and his supporters. He condemns William firmly to Hell as one who “disowned his brother” for a “crown” and “turned out his parents” to “usurp the throne.” The emphasis on betraying one’s family to gain a kingdom applied easily to William, who was James II’s son-in-law.

Lauderdale also insults William’s supporters and puts them in Hell with him: “rebels,” “ungrateful creatures, impious, as unjust,” who lost their honor and trust in warring against their “lawful Prince,” James II. Lauderdale and Dryden do not make a subtle point here, but by their proprietary additions to the text provide an only slightly concealed denunciation of the new English government.

Dryden and Lauderdale take another opportunity to criticize contemporary politics through the souls in Virgil’s Tartarus:

*Vendidit hic auro patriam dominumque potentem
imposuit...*⁵⁵ (VI.621-622)

To tyrants others have their country sold,
Imposing foreign lords, for foreign gold. (Dryden 179)

Here’s one his Country to a Tyrant sold,
Impos’d a foreign Lord, for foreign Gold. (Lauderdale 759-762)

While Virgil’s Latin does condemn those who sold their country for gold and established a lord or master over it, he does not call the ruler a “tyrant” or a “foreign

⁵⁵ This one sold his fatherland for gold and imposed a powerful master.

lord.” Dryden and Lauderdale are again speaking the language of the Jacobites, condemning the supports of William III, the Dutch “foreign lord,” for imposing a “tyrant” because he bribed them with “foreign gold.” Dryden, building on Lauderdale’s translation and their mutual political views, appropriates Virgil’s description of souls condemned to punishment in Tartarus to discuss contemporary English politics and condemn William III and the English his supporters.

Dryden contrasts the usurpers and traitors in Tartarus or Hell with the true patriots in Elysium or Heaven:

*Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi.*⁵⁶ (VI.660)

Here patriots live, who, for their country’s good,
In fighting fields, were prodigal of blood. (180)

Again, while Virgil’s Latin provides the inspiration, Dryden makes his own statement by using the strongly positive word “patriots.” Dryden goes on to present Brutus as his patriotic example just as Gavin Douglas did:

*Vis et Tarquinius reges, animamque superbam
ultoris Bruti, fascisque videre receptos?
Consulis imperium hic primus saevasque securis
accipiet, natosque pater nova bella moventis
ad poenam pulchra pro libertate vocabit.
Infelix! Utcumque ferent ea facta minores,
vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido.*⁵⁷ (VI.817-823)

Next view the Tarquin kings, th’ avenging sword
Of Brutus, justly drawn, and Rome restor’d.
He first renews the rods and ax severe,
And gives the consuls royal robes to wear.
His sons, who seek the tyrant to sustain,
And long for arbitrary lords again,
With ignominy scourg’d, in open sight,
He dooms to death deserv’d, asserting public right.
Unhappy man, to break the pious laws
Of nature, pleading in his children’s cause!

⁵⁶ Here the band of men who suffered wounds while fighting for the fatherland.

⁵⁷ For my translation, see note 31 on page 30.

Howe'er the doubtful fact is understood,
'T is love of honor, and his country's good:
The consul, not the father, sheds the blood. (186)

Dryden's characteristic intensification of the passage is again evident. Virgil only suggests civil war, *nova bella*, and leaves his judgment of Brutus's motives ambiguous, stating that he killed his children for "love of his country" and "great love of praise" without saying which one was the more prominent reason. Dryden, however, openly praises Brutus, writing that he "justly drew" his "avenging sword" and gave his children "death deserv'd" for "his country's good" and his "love of honor" (*not* praise, glory, or any other word that could have a negative connotation). He commends and pities Brutus for his personal sacrifice in service to his country. At the same time he denounces the idea of elective kingship, using the exact Jacobite phrase for an elective king to describe what sort of government Brutus's sons want: they "long for *arbitrary lords*." Dryden uses Virgil's description of Brutus to both condemn elective kingship and praise the kind of patriot who would sacrifice his own children to prevent the imposition of such an unrighteous king.

Dryden's translation of Book VI does not really provide examples of the goals he describes for Virgil and himself in his *Dedication*: to reconcile the people with the new elective king and teach the king how to govern them. It is instead a more vehement criticism of fate, usurpation, betrayal, and empire aimed at William III and his supporters. It seems likely that Dryden translated Book VI before he wrote his *Dedication*, and thus reveals in it a still fresh anger at the recent change of government. By extensively inserting his own phrases and shading Virgil's language, he translates Book VI into a thinly-veiled, powerful commentary on the state of English politics after the Glorious Revolution.

Chapter Three
Translation and Reception of the *Aeneid* in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

A General History of English Translations of Virgil

Several English translations of the *Aeneid* were published throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but few of these survive in print today, nor are they remarkable for their translators' sociopolitical voices. These translators instead endeavored to keep their translations faithful to the original and free of contemporary culture. This appears to have been the result of several factors, including a scholarly reaction against Dryden's very political translation, the popularity of Alexander Pope's translation of *Homer* and John Milton's English epic *Paradise Lost*, and general changes in translation theory. For the most part, translators in these centuries concerned themselves more with the stylistic and poetic issues of Virgilian translation than with political issues. I will quickly summarize these literary trends in translation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, keeping in mind that these were for the most part trends in England. I will then discuss the early trends in translation and reception of the *Aeneid* in the United States.

As we saw with Dryden, seventeenth century translators, particularly in the later half of the century, were interested in making their translations reflections of contemporary culture and politics. Royalist translations of the *Aeneid* abounded during both the English Civil War (1642-1651) and after the Glorious Revolution (1688-1689). Richard Thomas notes that there were almost thirty partial or complete, mostly royalist translations of the *Aeneid* alone during this century (122-3). In addition to their concern with contemporary politics, seventeenth century translators were interested in the

literary aspects of how to translate the *Aeneid* as a poem and what translation could contribute to their own language. Latin was viewed as a more “stable” and “accurate” language than English, which was perceived as still developing at this time (Gransden xx). Translators were much more likely to Latinize English by bringing Latinate words and grammatical constructions into their English translations than they were to Anglicize Latin (Proudfoot 99). Like Douglas and Phaer, they continued to bemoan the inferiority of English to Latin, particularly Latin poetry, while at the same time expressing a conflicting pride in their own native language. In the seventeenth century, poetry was still the most respected form of literature, and verse was the only acceptable way to translate Virgil. Translators often turned classical prose into verse, whereas now we are more likely to translate classical verse into prose (Proudfoot 11).

Dryden’s translation continued to be the most widely read throughout the eighteenth and even the nineteenth centuries. However, later translators reacted against his political appropriation of Virgil’s epic and the inaccuracies of his translation. Poetic ideals began to shift as well, particularly with the growing influence of John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (first edition 1667).⁵⁸ Milton’s epic poem about the fall of humanity made a strong impact on the English language and literature. He drew much of his inspiration from Virgil’s epic poem, most notably developing English blank verse as a literary form. Although Dryden and many of his successors used the older heroic couplets, translators in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries increasingly used Miltonic blank verse in their translations of Virgil, and blank verse is still the most popular literary form for current English translators (Gransden xxvi-xxvii).⁵⁹

⁵⁸ “Milton, John.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2006. Encyclopaedia Britannica online. March 21, 2006. <http://0-search.eb.com.clicnet4.clic.edu:80/eb/article-9108731>.

⁵⁹ See for example the eighteenth century translation by Joseph Trapp.

Only a short time after Dryden's translation was first published, his fellow poet and translator Alexander Pope revolutionized the English method of translation with his translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, published between 1715 and 1726. Pope emphasized the scholarly aspects of translation, using extensive footnotes to interpret and explain the poem. Earlier translators like Dryden inserted explanation directly into the text, a method considered to be less faithful to the original than footnotes (Thackeray 332). After Pope, translators of the *Aeneid* began to adopt his method, translating much more literally and adding notes to clarify the text. Christopher Pitt and Joseph Warton's 1740 *Virgil* consciously follows Pope's example, with half of every page consisting of the translated text and the other half of lengthy footnotes.

The overriding concern of the seventeenth and eighteenth century translators, however, was to create translations that were beautiful English poems. Joseph Trapp in the preface to his 1717 translation reiterates this ideal:

A less literal Translation is very frequently beautiful; but nothing can justify an ill Verse. In This Case, one departs from the Original by adhering to it...For the Version would retain more not only of the Beauty, but of the real Sense of the Original; and so upon the whole, be more like it: If it were a less faithful Interpretation of Words and Expressions. (xxxvii)

Trapp maintains that for a translation to be acceptable, it must be a good English poem. If this causes it to be less faithful to Virgil's actual "words and expression," it renders it more faithful to the "real sense" of his work, that elusive beauty that each translator tries to interpret and capture through his own words and poetry. Trapp demonstrates the same proprietary sense towards Virgil that Dryden showed, translating the Latin works into beautiful but very English poems.

Translators in the first half of the nineteenth century were fairly similar to those of the eighteenth century, still overall concerned with creating English poetry. In the

later half of the century, however, translators began to experiment with different literary forms and meters, often in a conscious effort to break away from Milton, Dryden, and other earlier translators (Gransden xxvii). John Conington, in his 1861 “Essay on the English Translators of Virgil,” gives a thorough critique of the eighteenth and nineteenth century translators as well as presenting contemporary trends in translation. He discusses the relative merits of rhyme, blank verse, and prose in translating Virgil, coming out mostly on the side of rhyme. He does acknowledge that blank verse and prose allow for more faithful translation, though they lack the “metrical ornament” of rhyme (xlviii-xlix). Although the first prose translation of the *Aeneid* was Joseph Davidson’s in 1743, prose translations increasingly appeared in the nineteenth century, including Conington’s own prose translation⁶⁰ and J.W. Mackail’s extremely popular 1885 edition. As a result of the eighteenth and nineteenth century translators’ growing concern for faithful translation and experiments in poetic form, their translations reveal far more about the literary trends of the age than the political trends. This all changed in the twentieth century, when the bimillennial celebrations of Virgil’s birth and the increasing sense of world crisis spurred new political appropriations and translations of the poet Virgil and his works.

Virgil in the United States

While translations of Virgil’s works, particularly the *Aeneid*, abounded in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, no notable American translation appeared until the twentieth century. This is strange given that Virgil, “the poet of frontiers and empire, of restless dreaming and the severe impossible task,” and the

⁶⁰ He later translated the *Aeneid* into rhymed verse, in the meter of Sir Walter Scott’s 1808 border ballad *Marmion*.

Aeneid seem eminently suited to the idea of building a new nation (Bernard 2). Ziolkowski notes that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the discovery and expansion of the United States “were regularly equated with Aeneas’ journey to establish a new Troy in Italy” and that Virgil’s works have “provided dominating images for the American consciousness” throughout its history (ix, 146). The seal of the United States, commissioned by the Founding Fathers in 1776 and completed in 1782,⁶¹ contains three quotations adapted from Virgil’s works: *Annuit Coeptis* (*Aeneid* 9.625 and *Georgics* 1.40, *Audacibus adnue coeptis*), *Novus ordo seclorum* (*Eclogues* 4.5, *magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo*), and *E pluribus unum* (*Moretum* 103, *color est e pluribus unus*) (Reinhold 196). As we can see from this, the history of Virgil in the United States is primarily a history of reception and appropriation. In an effort to create and assert an “American culture,” American scholars and authors championed works written by American authors about American subjects over translations of classical works.

Meyer Reinhold traces the reception of Virgil in early America in “Vergil in the American Experience from Colonial Times to 1882.” He explains that classical texts, including the *Aeneid*, were taught as part of college and college-preparatory curricula in early America, but the *Aeneid* at least was used as a tool to study Latin grammar rather than to appreciate Latin poetry and culture (185). In addition, many Americans were wary of the epic, and of all classical works, as pagan, lascivious, immoral, and not a source of “useful knowledge” (186-7). The Reverend Cotton Mather responded to the pagan *Aeneid* by publishing the *Magnalia Christi Americana* in 1702, presenting a Christian epic along Virgilian lines of the “exploits of the Puritan founding fathers in

⁶¹ MacArthur, John D. “The Great Seal of the United States.” Online. Apr. 5, 2006. <http://www.greatseal.com/>.

New England” (193). His work often references Virgil, usually the *Aeneid*, and often by direct quotation (193). Mather sought, much like Milton in England, to transplant Virgil’s epic model onto a Christian and uniquely American subject.

Most importantly in early America, however, a strong sense of nationalism spurred a rejection of Virgil based on the desire for “an instant indigenous American literature,” “freedom from cultural dependence,” and disparagement of ancient literature as a “[deterrent] to creative originality” (Reinhold 187). American authors deliberately wrote works intended to displace classical works, such as Timothy Dwight’s *Conquest of Canaan* in 1785, proclaimed the American *Iliad*, and Joel Barlow’s *The Vision of Columbus* in 1787, the American *Aeneid* (Reinhold 187-8). Barlow revised and renamed his work the *Columbiad* in 1807 “to foster a new national literature with native didactic-moral-political content,” in Reinhold’s words (188). Classics remained a strong component of American education, however, and American versions of Virgil’s Latin works began to appear in the early nineteenth century (e.g., those by Malcolm Campbell, J.G. Cooper, G.A. Gould). However, these were often criticized for being erroneous and plagiarizing German versions. The first American translation of the *Aeneid* appeared in 1796, a prose translation by Caleb Alexander. Most Americans, however, read John Dryden’s translation of the *Aeneid*, which continued to be reprinted in America into the nineteenth century (Reinhold 190). Regardless of Dryden’s royalist politics, his translation, with its strident criticism of tyranny, particularly “foreign tyranny,” would have meshed well with the thoughts of Revolutionary era and early American readers.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Virgil and the classics began to “fade from the American consciousness” (Ziolkowski 148). The reform of school curricula

rejected the classics as no longer a source of “useful knowledge” of morals, politics, or aesthetics for educated Americans. Instead, “It became a professional field, the province of classical scholars and teachers of the Classics” (Reinhold 199). And there is where Virgil and classical literature arguably remained until very recently.

Throughout the history of the United States, until only recently, the reception of Virgil and his *Aeneid* was concerned with appropriation more than translation. The quest to create a native American literature and culture inspired works such as the *Columbiad* that sought to adapt Virgil’s epic form to a purely American subject. As Ziolkowski points out, “What matters in all of these American examples, from the seventeenth century to the present, is that in every case Virgil has been appropriated and accommodated to the American experience” (154). In all of these cases, it was the imperialistic, nationalistic, manifest destiny interpretation of Virgil that was adopted in America. This view was not widely challenged until the second half of the twentieth century, when the upheavals of the World Wars, the Cold War, and Vietnam spurred a growing mistrust of government and authority that began to appear in both Virgilian criticism and some of the most popular and influential American translations of the *Aeneid*.

The Bimillennial Celebrations of Virgil’s Birth

Interest in Virgil may have waned in the world in the late nineteenth century, but the bimillennium of his birth in 1930 heralded a revival of interest in his works and life that was very much tied to contemporary political concerns. The aftermath of World War I and the political turmoil that preceded World War II, a time known as the *entre deux guerres* period, spurred a “crisis of history” that questioned “traditional culture

and education” and even “historical continuity” (Ziolkowski 6). This crisis was felt more in Europe, recovering from the “Great War” and watching the rise of authoritarian regimes, than in the United States, which reached its major cultural crisis in the 1960s and 1970s. W. R. Johnson summarizes the scholarly problem of this period as “How was Europe to become reunified in the aftermath of what seemed, and very probably was, the most massive disintegration it had suffered in many centuries” (*Darkness* 7)? The social and political chaos of the 1920s and 30s drove people to search for things that would make the world comprehensible again. Partly because of the bimillennium of Virgil’s birth and partly because of the perception of Virgil as an “archetype of the man of letters in a time of political and social turmoil,” people returned to Virgil’s works as a source of reassurance and sociopolitical legitimization (Ziolkowski ix).

Although there was a general increase in interest in Virgil surrounding the bimillennium and World Wars, the specific manifestations of this interest varied widely.⁶² Virgil was proto-Christian in Theodor Haecker’s influential *Virgil. Vater des Abendlandes* (*Virgil, Father of the West*), proto-fascist in Mussolini’s Italy, and anti-fascist in Hermann Broch’s novel *Der Tod des Virgil* (*The Death of Virgil*).⁶³ Each country and individual chose to interpret Virgil and his texts to fit their own political and cultural ideals. A “Roman analogy” between Virgil’s times and modern times became popular in this period, comparing their similar sources of turmoil: the end of a

⁶² See, for example, Theodore Ziolkowski’s *Virgil and the Moderns* and Fiona Cox’s “Envoi: the death of Virgil.” Ziolkowski provides a thorough discussion of general trends and specific examples of Virgil’s reception in the first half of the twentieth century in Europe, the United States, and Latin America (including scholarly criticism, translations, and works inspired by Virgil’s three poems).

⁶³ Broch’s novel is one of the more interesting incidents in the history of Virgil’s reception. Broch conceived the idea of writing a novel about the meaning of art to human existence before he knew anything about Virgil and his works. He came to Virgil by chance and leaped on the cultural importance of the *Aeneid* and the story of Virgil’s death-bed wish to burn it as a setting for his reflection on the death of art in the face of civilization and empire. He paid little attention to the historical or biographical facts of Virgil’s life and works, choosing instead to “[impose] on the Roman poet the problematics of his own consciousness” (Ziolkowski 203-221).

war, the increasing complexity of the world, and drastic social change (Ziolkowski 6, 24-25).

J. W. Mackail epitomizes the expression of this Roman analogy in his 1922 book *Virgil and His Meaning to the World of To-day*. The chapter titles alone reveal the nature of his connections between Virgil and the modern world, including “The Divine Poet: the Interpreter of Life for All Time,” “Virgil’s World: Its Meaning for and its Likeness to Our Own World,” “The Human Element, Permanent and Vital,” and “the Italo-Roman Ideal, Created by Virgil and Continuing to Our Own Day, as the Hope of the World.” He expresses the idea of Virgil as a classic, a timeless author whose meaning to humanity remains true through the ages. He calls Virgil the “poet and prophet of mankind” and the *Aeneid* the “epic of civilization and humanity,” emphasizing a sense of historical continuity and worldwide community centered around the ideals of Virgil (85). More specifically, he connects the problems of recent history with those of Virgil’s time: “We ourselves have in recent years seen atrocities as great perpetrated in the daylight by men who called themselves civilized and Christian. So thin is the crust which, now as then, separates mankind from the abyss” (105). Mackail argues that Virgil’s wisdom lies in his depiction of humanity as it has always been, in both its good and bad aspects. Virgil’s importance to the present day, he argues, is not what he can teach us about the Roman past, but what hope he can give for the future:

We stand now as Virgil stood, among the wreckage of a world; he can give light and guidance to us in the foundation of a new world upon its ruins. Mankind is, above all, human; what it above all needs, not in education only but in the whole conduct of life, is humanism; consciousness of its own past, faith in its own future, the sense of truth, beauty, joy. (141)

In times of destruction and rebuilding, Virgil provides the link between past, present, and future humanity, “a golden bough for the journey through the extremes of human

behavior - our impulse to nobility combined with our capacity for evil, the desire for order set against the terror of history” (Ziolkowski 238-9).

Throughout the hope, relief, and continued turmoil of the *entre deux guerres* period, Virgil was seen as a source of humanity, cultural continuity, and legitimization of modern sociopolitical concerns. Ziolkowski perhaps best sums up the feeling of the age:

Although the political readings range from conservative to totalitarian, the religious views from pagan to Christian, and the ethnic stamp from narrowly national to broadly occidental, the response was triggered in every case by the powerful conviction that Virgil in his works offers a message of compelling relevance for the morally chaotic and socially anarchic present *entre deux guerres* - a view that strikes us, in retrospect, as particularly poignant because we know today what followed those hopeful bimillennial appeals to Virgilian *ordo*, *pietas*, and *humanitas*.”
(56)

The desperate search for peace and stability after World War I that Virgil was made to answer did not last long. What followed were the new horrors and crises of World War II, the Cold War, and in the United States, the Vietnam War.

Chapter Four

Virgil and the Second World War: C. Day Lewis and Robert Fitzgerald

Translation in the Twentieth and Twenty first Centuries

Recent translations of the *Aeneid* are much more difficult to interpret than their earlier counterparts. The current ideal of the “invisible translator” whose voice is completely subordinated to the author’s voice, culture, and ideas has decreased the amount of addition and omission translators can do. Translations of Virgil have become more “Roman,” making fewer concessions to the reader’s cultural, political, and religious background. The question of meter and rhyme scheme has disappeared from translation: all contemporary published translations are written either in prose or in blank verse based on a constant number of stresses per line. Both of these forms are considered to be more accurate than rhymed, metered verse. Blank verse currently is preferred to prose because it reminds the reader that he or she is reading epic poetry. In addition, it is considered to be closer to the Latin dactylic hexameter Virgil used, which is itself based on patterns of stress.⁶⁴ Each of the four modern translators I will examine - C. Day Lewis, Robert Fitzgerald, Allen Mandelbaum, and Stanley Lombardo - all chose to translate Virgil into blank verse.

Despite the current emphasis on faithfulness to the original text, translations continue to be interpretations rooted in the time and culture of the translator. While it is not as easy to find instances where the translator has outright altered the text, as we saw in Douglas’s, Phaer’s, Dryden’s, and Lauderdale’s translations, modern translators rely on word choice, emphasis, and tone to bring the *Aeneid* into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. I will discuss four modern translations spanning the 1950s to the present

⁶⁴ Dactylic hexameter is also based heavily on vowel and syllable length, but the modern English language does not differentiate between vowel lengths and cannot translate this aspect of Latin poetry.

day which show the changes in political aspects of translations since the World Wars. C. Day Lewis's translation, first published in 1951, provides insight into post-World War II British readings of the *Aeneid*, while Robert Fitzgerald's 1983 translation reveals the influence of World War II and the Vietnam War on the American cultural perspective. These are two different ways of addressing the same subject, of reconciling modern experiences of World War II by identifying them with the *Aeneid*. Fitzgerald interprets how the Romans would have read the *Aeneid* as similar to how he read it during World War II, while Day Lewis translates the epic to reflect his own views of war and modern government. Allen Mandelbaum's 1971 American translation is representative of Vietnam era scholarship and introduces themes and connections that are accepted almost completely by the time of Stanley Lombardo's 2005 American translation. In all of these, contemporary politics are introduced through word choice and shaded language rather than by actual addition or omission. These translations are notably different in tone from the earlier ones, particularly Dryden's. They are less grandly majestic, darker, more reflective, and sorrowful.

The British Perspective: C. Day Lewis's Background and Translation Theory

C. Day Lewis writes in his autobiography *The Buried Day* that he remembers when the first German air raid of World War I hit London, where he was living as an Anglo-Irish boy of ten (84). Despite the raids, his father's position as an enlisted Chaplain to the Forces, and several of his uncles' service overseas, he says felt a strange sense of distance from the war: "the war never came very near home to me" (84). It quickly became "transmuted...from history to myth" for him, the images and stories of the war seeming more like the classical accounts of battle he read as a boy (85). The

experiences of the boy prefigured those of the man, who found his connection with World War II through literature, particularly Virgil and his own poetry.

If World War I was a distant war for Day Lewis World War II was not. Although he did not fight in the war, he served as a company commander in England's Home Guard and campaigned against fascism as a member of the Communist party of Britain in the early years of the war (98-99, 208-211).⁶⁵ His feelings about World War II were strongly linked to his sense of himself as a poet:

I believe a poet should be involved, so far as his nature and circumstances allow it, in the main stream of human experience. When the Second War came, I *felt* it neither as a Cause (for all that I had worked hard against Fascism), nor a nuisance interfering with the private life...but as a delirium of nations - a fever of which I had already felt premonitory symptoms working in my own blood, as in the blood of many millions, to be endured and if possible recovered from, at any rate to be experienced fully because of the illuminations, the sense of heightened living, the positive feeling of participation in the human condition, which it gave its victims. (86-87)

The war brought to him a sense of personal involvement in the community of nations that were caught up in it. Throughout his autobiography he describes the sense of isolation he felt through most of his life, a distance from his fellows that was finally broken by the upheaval of the war: "To have stood outside the war emotionally, even had it been possible, would have been to exile myself from my fellows and suffer, as exiles do, the worst impoverishment of all" (87). Day Lewis identifies himself as a former exile, in feeling if not in physicality, whose sense of seclusion was dissipated by the high emotions of World War II. Interestingly, he felt not a sense of horror towards

⁶⁵ Day Lewis writes that despite his belief in the ideals of communism, he realized he was really unsuited to be a member of the Communist party. He left the party quietly and peacefully, and largely to spend less time writing articles and pamphlets and more time on his poetry (Day Lewis, *Buried* 224). He was a member of the party from 1935 to 1938 (Ziolkowski 113).

the war, but a sense of excitement, a feeling of being more alive and connected with his fellow men.

His growing feeling of community was also tied to his experiences translating Virgil's *Georgics* in 1940. He writes that Virgil made him feel more patriotic and connected to England, particularly its past:

...just as I had never been consciously a patriot, so I had never had much respect for, much sense of obligation to, the past. The inner disturbances created by the war threw up my own past before my eyes, giving it new value...A heightened sense of the past - both my own and that which, through the European tradition of Virgil, I shared with many - was added to the enhanced awareness of place, of England. (97)

Ziolkowski notes that the *Georgics* were the most popular Virgilian work in Britain before and during World War II (104-119). Virgil's descriptions of farming and rural life were taken to heart by the agriculturally-rooted British as a utopian refuge from the war. This idealization has been challenged recently by American scholars like Gary B. Miles, who notice the same undercurrent of violence and ambivalence in the *Georgics* that others like Adam Parry found in the *Aeneid* (Ziolkowski 115). However, Ziolkowski argues that "If we scrutinize Day Lewis's translation in the light of these interpretations [e.g., Gary B. Miles], we see that he almost consistently, and probably unwittingly, softens the tone in a number of crucial passages" (115). He suggests that Day Lewis brought his own British idealization of the *Georgics* to his translation. Day Lewis softens the *Aeneid* in the same way, giving it not so much a sense of violence as of gentleness and enveloping sorrow.

In his 1953 "Forward" to the *Aeneid*, Day Lewis does not explicitly relate the poem to the recently ended World War II, as he does for the *Georgics*, nor does he provide any sort of historical context for the epic. However, he reveals the same connection between Virgil and England, paraphrasing Dryden's famous claim to "make

Virgil speak such English as he would have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age.” Day Lewis asks “How would Virgil have told the story, if he had been born in England, and in this present age? A good translation must be a satisfactory answer to that question” (“Forward” 9). He did not intend his translation to be a scholarly one: although he aimed for accuracy using a line-by line translation, it was commissioned to be read aloud over radio broadcast. He explains that he wanted to make the translation as unambiguous as possible, so that where there was more than one “interpretation of a phrase,” he chose only one so that the translation would be “explicit” (8). He wanted its phrasing to be understood easily, and even more so its cultural relevance to the people of 1950s Britain who would be listening to it.

Day Lewis reveals that he not only appropriated Virgil’s *Aeneid* for 1950s England, but that he also identified himself with Virgil. He maintains that for a translation to be a good poem, for it to “catch the tone of [the] original,” there must be an “affinity” between translator and author (9). He explains that translation is a way for an author to write a poem of his own by studying one that he admires:

When a translator sits down to translate another poet, he always wants something of him, though he may not be fully aware of this. He is drawn to the original as a medium for his own preoccupations, or to develop his style: he wants, really, to make a poem of his own. (9-10)

Day Lewis implicitly reveals that he himself translated the *Aeneid* in this way, as a “medium for his own preoccupations” and a way to express his own feelings. While he does not state what his preoccupations were, a close examination of his translation of Book VI reveals at least some of these. His translation is much more somber than the earlier translations, with more emphasis on the pathos and human grief of Virgil’s epic. He lessens the focus on religion and monarchy, instead highlighting themes of luck and friendship. Far from glorifying war and death, he treats them sorrowfully and

compassionately. Finally, he introduces contemporary government and military terms that had particular relevance in Britain after World War II.

Book VI in Day Lewis's Translation

Throughout his translation of the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, Day Lewis emphasizes not so much the violence of war as its human toll. The Sibyl's first prophecy to Aeneas is of the wars he must fight in Italy:

*...Bella, horrida bella,
et Thybrim multo spumantem sanguine cerno.*⁶⁶ (VI.86-87)

...Wars, dreadful wars
I see, and Tiber foaming with torrents of human blood. (Day Lewis,
Aeneid 132)

Day Lewis's translation intensifies Virgil's words to convey a sense of the magnitude of people who will be killed. He exaggerates *multo sanguine*, "much bloodshed," into "torrents" of blood, giving the image of a river flooded past its normal bounds with the blood of the dead. He emphasizes that the blood is "*human* blood," that the toll of this war will be vast numbers of human lives. He continues this theme in Aeneas's conversation with Deiphobus:

*...fessum vasta te caede Pelasgum
procubuisse super confusae stragis acervum.*⁶⁷ (VI.503-504)

You had sunk down on a huge indiscriminate heap of dead bodies. (144)

Day Lewis again emphasizes the numbers of human dead. Virgil's "heap of carnage" has turned into a "huge heap of dead bodies," a larger quantity of specifically human deaths. Furthermore, the pile of bodies is "indiscriminate" rather than "confused" or "jumbled," giving the sense that it is so large that no individual body can be identified.

⁶⁶ I see wars, horrible wars, and the Tiber foaming with much blood.

⁶⁷ Worn by vast slaughter of Pelasgians (Greeks), you sank onto a heap of confused carnage.

The phrase evokes images of World War II battlefields or the stacked bodies of Holocaust victims. Day Lewis's focus is on the great cost of war to humanity in general.

Along with emphasizing the human toll of war, Day Lewis increases the presence of death in the epic. He refers to the Underworld as "death's dark kingdom," a gloomier and more poetic phrase than Virgil's simple *Dis* (Day Lewis 133, Virgil VI.127). It also evokes a more universal image of death than that of the specifically Roman god of the Underworld. Day Lewis often takes the opportunity to add the words "death" or "dead" where they are only implied in Virgil's text. For example, Misenu's body is described as "a dead thing," a phrase that does not occur in the Latin (VI.149-151) and which adds a dehumanizing aspect to Misenu's death. He is reduced from a man to a "thing." Day Lewis again emphasizes mortality in Anchises's description of the transmigration of souls:

*...quantum non corpora noxia tardant
terrenique hebetant artus moribundaque membra.*⁶⁸ (VI.731-732)

But they are deadened and dimmed by the sinful bodies they live in -
The flesh that is laden with death, the anatomy of clay. (151)

He uses both "deadened" and "death" to describe human bodies, adding also the phrase "the anatomy of clay," reminding us of Biblical descriptions of human bodies made of dust that will crumble to dust again when they die. Although death is much of the focus of Virgil's sixth book, particularly in the Underworld scenes, Day Lewis emphasizes the theme of human mortality.

Perhaps most evident of all, however, is Day Lewis's insertion of modern terminology into Virgil's discussions of government and the military. The souls punished in Virgil's Tartarus include *quique arma secuti/impia*, "those following

⁶⁸ So far as harmful bodies do not hinder them and earthly joints and dying limbs dull them.

impious arms” (VI.612-613). Day Lewis translates this as those who “took part in militant treason,” giving the line a more modern sound and relevance in the context of World War II (147). He likewise translates Virgil’s *Vendidit hic auro patriam dominumque potentem/ imposuit*⁶⁹ (VI.621-622) as “One sold his country for gold, putting her under the yoke of/ Dictatorship” (148). Day Lewis does not mean here the Roman office of dictatorship, which was appointed during military emergencies, but rather the idea of dictatorship as military takeover that arose in the early twentieth century, particularly in the fascist regimes of Germany and Italy that Day Lewis campaigned against. By using the specific modern connotations of the words “dictatorship” and “treason” to describe the crimes of those in Tartarus, Day Lewis draws the *Aeneid* into 1951, which had faced such concepts in action during the two World Wars.

Day Lewis likewise uses the souls in Elysium to describe modern virtues. He praises the young men who helped to found the first Roman cities:

*Qui juvenes! Quantas ostentant, aspice, viris,
atque umbrata gerunt civili tempora quercu!*⁷⁰ (VI.771-772)

What fine young men they are! Look at their stalwart bearing,
The oak leaves that shade their brows - decorations for saving life! (152)

He is the only translator who explicitly draws out Virgil’s allusion to the *corona civica* in the words *civili quercu*, “civic oak.” The *corona civica* was the second highest military honor in Rome, given to a soldier who saved the life of another Roman soldier in battle.⁷¹ Day Lewis clarifies Virgil’s words, adding at the same time a modern

⁶⁹ For my translation, see note 55 on page 52.

⁷⁰ What youths! See how much courage they show, and they bear temples shaded with civic oak!

⁷¹ Rich, Anthony. “Corona.” *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. William Smith, ed. London: John Murray, 1875. Online. Apr. 7, 2006. http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA*/Corona.html.

relevance in the phrase “decorations for saving life,” referring to military decorations or medals of honor.

Day Lewis also praises the patriotism of Brutus, not for casting out tyrants as Dryden and Lauderdale did, but for his willingness to sacrifice his sons for the good of his country:

*Vis et Tarquinius reges, animamque superbam
ultoris Bruti, fascisque videre receptos?
Consulis imperium hic primus saevasque securis
accipiet, natosque pater nova bella moventis
ad poenam pulchra pro libertate vocabit.
Infelix! Utcumque ferent ea facta minores,
vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido.*⁷² (VI.817-823)

Would you see the Tarquin kings, and arrogant as they, Brutus
The avenger, with the symbols of civic freedom won back?
He shall be first to receive consular rank and its power of
Life and death: when his sons awake the dormant conflict,
Their father, a tragic figure, shall call them to pay the extreme
Penalty, for fair freedom’s sake. However posterity
Look on that deed, patriotism shall prevail and love of
Honour... (153).

There is no doubt that Day Lewis wishes to praise Brutus here: he translates *laudumque immense cupido* as “love of honour,” choosing the positive word “honour” over possible negative words such as “praise” or “fame.” He also gives Brutus the virtue of “patriotism,” and expresses a deep sense of compassion through the phrase “a tragic figure” used to translate *infelix*, “unhappy” or “unfortunate.” He suggests the image of World War II by translating *nova bella* as “the dormant conflict,” as though it were the second war that burgeoned and finally broke forth after World War I. In addition, he does not judge Brutus’s sons as traitors or rebels, but simply portrays them as dying for this new conflict. He evokes the memory of the young men who were sacrificed to the war by their fathers and countries for the greater good. Finally, Day Lewis pointedly

⁷² For my translation, see note 31 on page 30.

does not use the Latin word *fascēs* in his translation, nor does he translate it as “rods and axes” as Dryden does. The *fascēs*, the bundled rods and axes of Rome, were adopted in Italy in the early twentieth century as the symbols of fascism, a political movement Day Lewis strongly opposed. By translating *fascēs* as “symbols of civic freedom,” Day Lewis increases his praise of Brutus’s patriotism and removes any possibility of associating him with fascism.

Finally, Day Lewis renders Anchises’s final words to Aeneas in such a way as to represent his own vision of the ideal government:

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*⁷³ (VI.851-853)

But, Romans, never forget that government is your medium!
Be this your art: - to practise men in the habit of peace,
Generosity to the conquered, and firmness against aggressors. (154)

He translates *imperio* as “government” rather than “empire” or “rule,” lending a sense of civilized guidance rather than absolute power. He emphasizes peace through the “softening” of Virgil’s words that Ziolkowski mentioned: the Romans are “to practise men in the habit of peace” rather than “imposing” peace, and they are to show a civilized “firmness to aggressors” rather than “battle down the proud,” as Fitzgerald more accurately translates *debellare* (1154). Finally, they are to show not merely “mercy” to the conquered, but “generosity.” Day Lewis’s emphasis on peace and government instead of military aggression and violence would have rung especially true after the “war to end all wars,” World War II.

Day Lewis does not treat the original text as freely as did the Renaissance and English Revolution translators, but he does provide his own interpretation of the epic

⁷³ For my translation, see note 37 on page 32.

through the language of post-World War European government. His careful emphasis and de-emphasis of Virgil's language allows him to focus on the themes closest to his own heart, including the vast human toll of war and the power of death. His translation underlines a somber view of war and death and a deeper sense of compassion towards the dead. It is beautifully sad, and made even more so by reading it in the light of two devastating World Wars.

The American Perspective: Robert Fitzgerald's Background and Translation Theory

Robert Fitzgerald's 1983 translation of the *Aeneid* provides an interpretation of Virgil's epic which is more explicit in explanation but more subtle in practice than C. Day Lewis's. As Fitzgerald relates in the "Preface" to his translation, he links his interpretation of Virgil and the *Aeneid* to his experiences serving with the United States navy in the Pacific theater at the end of World War II. Perhaps colored by his combat experience, his interpretation is grimmer and less sentimental than Day Lewis's, as well as less suggestive of contemporary events.⁷⁴ Day Lewis writes of his own more optimistic hopes for the future during the war,

We were singularly fortunate, compared with the young of today, in believing that something could be done about the social and political evils confronting us. Had we seen all the avenues blocked by mushroom-shaped spectres, we might well have thrown in our hands. (*Buried* 208)

Fitzgerald, stationed in the Pacific when the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, was very close to these "mushroom-shaped spectres." He also wrote his translation after the Vietnam War, and his translation resembles Allen Mandelbaum's in its violent sense of war and the fragility of peace.

⁷⁴ For discussions of how combat experience and post-traumatic stress disorder affect veterans' use of language, see Jonathan Shay's *Achilles in Vietnam* and Lawrence A. Tritle's *From Melos to My Lai*.

Fitzgerald's postscript follows no set path or thesis, but treats aspects of the poem and its themes that he found worthy of discussion. Throughout, he makes frequent connections between modern and ancient times. He compares Virgil's experiences to those of his own day: "Things known and felt by Virgil in his lifetime included extremes of experience almost as great as those of our own century" (404). He continues by explaining that these extremes were often negative in both Virgil's time and his own:

Often it must have occurred to men that the forces ruling their affairs from above - or below - are not merely punitive or angry but malevolent on a grand scale. It has occurred to us amid the exterminations and abysses of our century. It must have occurred to the Romans during the terrors and massacres of the first century B.C. (413)

He presents an extremely dark view of human affairs: they are driven by a "malevolent" force that wishes them harm. Malevolence is not so unbelievable in the context of the exterminations that Fitzgerald refers to here, evoking genocide, the Holocaust, and the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He compares this view of the world with what that of the Romans must have been when the *Aeneid* was written, showing that they too would have seen the darkness of the epic. Fitzgerald points out that Virgil's narrative cycles between calmer, "quieter scenes" and scenes of destruction or grief. This would have been understandable to the Romans, whose culture and government had been torn apart by civil wars spanning the "breadth of the Roman world" (407-408). In his praise of Octavian's character and government, Fitzgerald echoes what must have been the feelings of many Romans during the early stages of his rule: relief and cautious reliance on this new, powerful figure. It was a time in Rome when hope alternated with despair and uncertainty about the future.

This same juxtaposition of positive and negative emotion emerges in Fitzgerald's description of his experiences in the Pacific during World War II. His single, long paragraph on the war is treated in the beginning as more of a digression than anything else, and must be read carefully to glean his point. He concludes the paragraph before this with a subtle introduction of his theme. He presents Book VIII as a peaceful and hopeful interlude that ends with the glorious gift of armor from Vulcan to Aeneas, then turns with a sudden downward swoop to grimness: "But now with Book IX war as martial magnificence gives way to essential war, war as combat and slaughter" (414). His description of his experiences in World War II begins equally peacefully. He explains that he first read the *Aeneid* in 1945 while stationed on an island in the Pacific, living comfortably but bored with a lack of action:

There we were on our island in our fresh khakis, laundered and pressed, the little bars gleaming on our collars and caps, saluting the old admiral with his snowy Roman head and the urbane operations officer...The scene could not have been more imperial or more civilized...We played tennis, skipped rope, and worked out on the heavy bag. At night at my neat desk in the B.O.Q. I read Virgil by the light of a good lamp. (414)

This "civilized" scene of order, leisure, and neatness slowly gives way to a realization of what was happening off the island, with Americans "shelling poor junks" in the China Sea and Japanese jets "smash[ing] into flaming junk" picket ships and the men aboard them, while on land "men with flamethrowers were doing what I had heard a briefing officer in San Francisco, with an insane giggle, refer to as 'popping Japs'" (414). This depraved destruction and lack of civilization occurred on both the American and Japanese sides, something Fitzgerald explicitly draws out: "a good many young and brave of both sides were tasting the agony and abomination that the whole show came down to, in fact existed for" (414). His view of war is a dark one of "agony and abomination" masked by the ordered routine of civilized living.

Throughout this paragraph Fitzgerald maintains a sense of distance from actual combat, presenting the horrors of the war as hearsay and events that were happening elsewhere. He shares the same reluctance to speak of his own experiences that many veterans of World War II did and still do, encouraged by the cultural impulse in the United States after the war to forget its horrors and look instead to the future. Fitzgerald ends the paragraph with only a brief allusion to his combat experience: “The next landings would be on Honshu, and I would be there. More than literary interest, I think, kept me reading Virgil’s descriptions of desperate battle, funeral pyres, failed hopes of truce or peace” (414). He refers to the Japanese mainland, where on August 6 and 9 of 1945 the United States dropped two atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing over a million people.⁷⁵ Although he does not speak of his own experience or whether he saw the devastation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki with his own eyes, he reveals what he felt and thought through Virgil’s epic. His view of war is not one of glory or hope, but of the very aspects of the *Aeneid* he describes here: “desperate battle, funeral pyres, failed hopes of truce or peace.” War, fiery death, and despair.

Fitzgerald slightly modifies his view of war later on, even though he leaves behind writing about World War II and moves to a discussion of Roman history. He claims that war, even for the Romans, had “got out of hand” and that people were looking for an answer. Virgil provided a possibility:

If Virgil intended, as he almost certainly did, an analogy between the task of Aeneas and that of Augustus, the hardest and hugest part for both was waging war to end war, to work out settlements so magnanimous as to challenge no more strife but to promote *concordia* and the arts of peace. (414)

⁷⁵ “World War II.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2006. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. Apr. 5, 2006. <http://0-search.eb.com.clicnet4.clic.edu:80/eb/article-53605>, p. 67.

Peace is the ultimate goal, and it is one that could be achieved by “waging war to end war.” He refers once again to World War II, known as “the war to end all wars.” But as Fitzgerald knew looking back at the wars of more recent history in Korea and Vietnam, the promise of “the war to end war” had been a hollow one. He does provide the hope of “magnanimous settlements,” but he presents this as only a tenuous possibility.

Fitzgerald explicitly connects his experiences in World War II with Aeneas’s and the Romans’ experiences with war in the first century BCE. He subtly but deliberately introduces his own views of war through his discussions of how Virgil and the Romans must have viewed war: as a horrible and depraved waste of life. His discussion of World War II goes beyond C. Day Lewis’s allusions, while his translation tends to be more literally accurate and less evocative of modern events. However, Fitzgerald’s translation does reveal some of the same preoccupations as Day Lewis’s, particularly his emphasis on violence and his use of contemporary terms to allude to the World Wars and modern government.

Book VI in Fitzgerald’s Translation

Fitzgerald’s translation of Book VI of the *Aeneid* deliberately brings the events of the story into modern times, although not to same extent as Day Lewis’s translation. Fitzgerald compares the Trojan war to World War I in describing the Trojans in the Underworld:

*hic multum fleti ad superos belloque caduci
Dardanidae...*⁷⁶ (VI.481-482)

...Here too
Were Dardans long bewept in the upper air,
Men who died in the great war... (Fitzgerald 645-647)

⁷⁶ Here (were) the Dardanians (Trojans) who fell in the war, greatly lamented among those above.

The expression “the Great War” refers to World War I, and Fitzgerald uses it here to insert a modern allusion. If the Trojan war is “the great war,” World War I, then Aeneas’s wars in Italy must be the even greater struggle that Fitzgerald himself experienced in World War II.

Fitzgerald reveals his views of the possible purposes of war in his translation of Anchises’s final command to Aeneas on how the Romans are to rule. Every translator we have seen thus far interprets this passage differently depending on his own experiences with war and peace, and Fitzgerald is no different:

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*⁷⁷ (VI.851-853)

Roman, remember by your strength to rule
Earth’s people - for your arts are to be these:
To pacify, to impose the rule of law,
To spare the conquered, battle down the proud. (Fitzgerald 1151-1154)

Fitzgerald translates Virgil’s words accurately but chooses English words that intensify the militancy of the command. Aeneas is “to rule,” “to pacify,” “to impose,” “to spare,” and “to battle down,” all words implying struggle and war. Gone is Day Lewis’s gentle “practising” of peace. War, as Fitzgerald wrote in his postscript, can be “waged to end war” and impose peace, but he demonstrates here a sinister view of peace that must be bought with violence.

More such allusions likely appear in the later books of the epic, particularly in Book IX, which Fitzgerald relates to his own experiences in World War II (“Postscript” 414). Fitzgerald’s translation is more literal and faithful to Virgil’s words than Day Lewis’s, but he explicitly links his own experiences in World War II to Aeneas’s, Augustus’s, and Virgil’s experiences, whereas Day Lewis makes no mention of recent

⁷⁷ For my translation, see note 37 to page 32.

events in his introduction. In the end, what is clear is that World War II had a strong effect on the thoughts of both translators and their treatment of Virgil's Roman poem.

Chapter Five
Virgil and the Vietnam War Allen Mandelbaum

The Oppositional Aeneid

The *Aeneid* began to rise in prominence in the United States after 1950, with a growing number of translations and an explosion in scholarship. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act or "G. I. Bill of Rights" of 1944, which provided returning World War II veterans with financial subsidies for college or vocational education, encouraged nationwide increases in college enrollment and scholarship in the United States.⁷⁸ The new focus of Virgilian criticism was on how Virgil himself would have viewed Octavian's rise to power and establishment of a new form of government. Before World War II, the standard belief was that Virgil was a simple propagandist and Aeneas an idealization of the perfect leader (Nethercut 309-10). The early Americans were not interested in Virgil the imperialist and the *Aeneid*, but in the second half of the twentieth century, new interpretations of Virgil's political program in the *Aeneid* as ambiguous or outright subversive found a place in American thought. Beginning with Adam Parry's groundbreaking essay "The Two Voices of Virgil's *Aeneid*," some American scholars referred to as the Harvard school, including the translator Allen Mandelbaum, began to discuss the darker and more oppositional aspects of the *Aeneid*.

Allen Mandelbaum's Background and Translation Theory

Allen Mandelbaum follows Adam Parry and the Harvard school in reading the *Aeneid*'s darker aspects in the light of the Vietnam War. Although his 1971 translation

⁷⁸ "G.I. Bill of Rights." Wikipedia online encyclopedia. Apr. 9, 2006. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GI_Bill; and "United States." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2006. Encyclopaedia Britannica online. Apr. 9, 2006. <http://0-search.eb.com.clicnet4.clic.edu:80/eb/article-77888>, p. 245.

(written over the six years between 1965 and 1970), comes chronologically before Robert Fitzgerald's translation, it shows a definite difference in tone and concerns. Mandelbaum does not connect the *Aeneid* to World War II, nor does his translation reveal the same qualities as Fitzgerald's and Lewis's. Instead, he links Virgil and the *Aeneid* to the Vietnam War and his own bitterness towards it.

Mandelbaum writes in his "Introduction" that he long felt prejudiced against the *Aeneid* because of its derivative relationship with Homer's epics, but that he eventually came to appreciate it through three paths: Giuseppe Ungaretti,⁷⁹ Dante, and his own experiences. He identifies his own thoughts with Ungaretti's vision of the "promised land" as an elusive thing that cannot be achieved in this world or life, explaining that it was this view more than contemporary Virgilian scholarship that drew him to the *Aeneid*:

Much recent criticism has seen the ache and bite of doubt in the *Aeneid*, ever less - as we read more - a triumphant poem in praise of the *imperium* of Caesar Augustus. But for me, it was chiefly through Ungaretti that I saw in the *Aeneid* the underground denial - by consciousness and longing - of the total claims of the state and history: the persistence in the mind of what is not there, of what is absent, as a measure of the present. (xi)

He reveals the contemporary trend in scholarship to see Virgil's epic as a subversive "underground denial" of *imperium* and imperialism, a painful one that "aches" and "bites." He agrees with this view, but adds the further opinion that the "state" and even "history" are doubtful in their claims that the past reflects the present (or perhaps that the present reflects the past).

⁷⁹ Italian author of several works, including most famously *La Terra Promessa* (*The Promised Land*), published in 1950, with additions in the 1960 *Il taccuino del vecchio* (*The Old Man's Notebook*). Allen Mandelbaum translated and introduced the 1950 version of *Promised Land* and cites Ungaretti's inspiration from Virgil and the *Aeneid* as one of the things that finally drew him to the epic.

Mandelbaum interprets Virgil as being aware of this danger, explaining that “Virgil was never so utopian, he never so deified the present or the future, and, as we shall soon see, he understood better the dynamics of deifying the past” (xi). Virgil did not glorify the events of the present and future, and he treated the past with care. According to Mandelbaum, Virgil was imperialist to some extent: he was a “celebrator of dominion, of the rule of law.” At the same time he displayed a “sense of the lost as truly irretrievable” (xii). Virgil celebrated the coming rule of Aeneas, the Romans, and Augustus, but he also revered the past rule of Latinus and Saturn, the more Edenic, natural rule that “[needed] no laws” (i.e., the Roman Republic or even Italy before the Romans) (xii). Virgil’s longing for the past along with a rather doubtful celebration of the glorious future is an interpretation that has become for the most part accepted in current scholarship.

Mandelbaum relates as well how his own experiences, particularly his feelings about the Vietnam War, affected his translation. He found his own path to the *Aeneid* during a “time of much personal discontent,” seeing in the poem a way to assuage that discontent, at least partially:

I had long contemned any use of the poetic word for purposes of consolation. But pride lessens with the years, and Virgil consoled. The years of my work on this translation have widened that personal discontent; this state (no longer, with the Vietnam war, that innocuous word “society”) has wrought the unthinkable, the abominable. Virgil is not free of the taint of the proconsular; but he speaks from a time of peace achieved, and no man ever felt more deeply the part of the defeated and the lost. (xiv-xv)

This brief reference to the Vietnam war and the current state of the world gives a glimpse of Mandelbaum’s personal relationship to the *Aeneid* and his translation of it. He places in opposition the terms “state” and “society,” saying that the idea of a society, a harmonious community, has been subsumed to the ideas of the state and the

government. He reveals a similarly conflicted view of Virgil: as “tainted” by the “proconsular,” as supportive of an imperialist and overbearing regime, but at the same time writing from a time of relieved peace. Virgil is overall aware of the cost of such a peace and government, as he is aware of those who have lost to them. Finally, Mandelbaum condemns the Vietnam war and the United States as having “wrought the unthinkable, the abominable.”

Mandelbaum’s personal feelings are strongly tied to his vision of Virgil as torn between a gentle past and harsher present, between society and the state. He sees Virgil as having found a medium between these oppositions to express a calmness and hope that he, Mandelbaum, could not find on his own:

his humanity is constant - and vital, not lumbering, not marmoreal. And not shrill; and when, with the goad of public despair, my own poetic voice has had to struggle often with shrillness, the work on this translation has been most welcome. (xv)

The main difference he cites between Virgil and himself, between “antiquity and ourselves,” is the ability to retain humanity in the face of difficulties (xv). It is this humanity that Mandelbaum finds most consoling about the *Aeneid*, a humanity and society that he perceives as having been lost in the United States.

Book VI in Mandelbaum’s Translation

Mandelbaum’s conflicted interpretation of Virgil as both proconsular and yet still human emerges in his translation of Book VI. His vision of Aeneas in the Underworld is even darker than Day Lewis’s and Fitzgerald’s. Where their translations are imbued with a greater sense of sorrow, Mandelbaum’s translation is one of terror, struggle, evil, and despair.

Mandelbaum presents Aeneas as not simply afraid of the horrible things he sees in the Underworld, but as literally terrified by them. For example, Virgil describes Aeneas's reaction to the monsters at the entrance of the Underworld as "alarmed by sudden fear": *Corripit hic subita trepidus formidine ferrum/ Aeneas...*⁸⁰ (VI.290-291). Mandelbaum intensifies Aeneas's reaction, describing him as "shaken suddenly/ by terror" (383-384). Mandelbaum's Aeneas spends more time trying to comprehend what he sees, and apparently failing. When he meets Dido in the Underworld, Mandelbaum depicts his reaction as deeply shocked:

*Nec minus Aeneas casu concussus iniquo
prosequitur lacrimis longe et miseratur euntem.
Inde datum molitur iter...*⁸¹ (VI.475-477)

Nevertheless, Aeneas, stunned by her unkindly fate, still follows at a distance with tears and pity for her as she goes. He struggles on his given way again. (Mandelbaum 624-627)

Mandelbaum uses the word "stunned" to translate the Latin *concussus*, "shaken" or "shattered," suggesting a more intense emotional reaction. More noticeable is his use of the word "struggles" to describe Aeneas again taking up his journey. Virgil's sentence simply states that Aeneas "made" or "accomplished" his destined way. Mandelbaum, however, implies that Aeneas's reaction to Dido is so powerful that it almost incapacitates him, and he must struggle forward on his hard path despite his anguish. The sense of shock and terror Mandelbaum reads into Aeneas's experiences would not have been alien from the thoughts of 1960s Americans, particularly among the Vietnam veterans who codified the term "post-traumatic stress disorder."

⁸⁰ Here, alarmed by sudden fear, Aeneas seizes his sword.

⁸¹ Aeneas no less shaken by her harsh fate followed her with tears from afar (or at a distance) and pitied her going. Thence he made his given way.

Mandelbaum's translation reveals the same preoccupation with death and war as Day Lewis's and Fitzgerald's, but again the tone is darker, more violent, and more immediate. The souls in the Underworld actually seem to suffer in death, such as the infants Aeneas hears:

*Continuo auditaē voces vagitus et ingens
infantumque animae flentes, in limine primo
quos dulcis vitae exsortis et ab ubere raptos
abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo.*⁸² (VI.426-429)

Here voices and loud lamentations echo:
the souls of infants weeping at the very
first threshold - torn away by the black day,
deprived of their sweet life, ripped from the breast,
plunged into bitter death... (562-566)

Mandelbaum emphasizes the violence of the infants' untimely death: they are "torn away," "deprived," "ripped," and "plunged" from "sweet life" into "bitter death." Their afterlife is not a merciful one, but one full of suffering and the knowledge of their loss.

Deiphobus (Helen's second Trojan husband after Paris dies) also suffers in the Underworld and still bears the wounds that killed him in the world above:

*Atque hic Priamiden laniatum corpore toto
Deiphobum vidit, lacerum crudeliter ora,
ora manusque ambas, populataque tempora raptis
auribus et truncas inhonesto vulnere naris.
Vix adeo agnovit pavitantem ac dira tegentem
supplicia, et notis compellat vocibus ultro.*⁸³ (VI.494-499)

And here Aeneas saw the son of Priam,
Deiphobus, all of his body mangled,
his face torn savagely, his face and both
his hands, his ears lopped off his ravaged temples,
his nostrils slashed by a disgraceful wound.

⁸² At once he heard voices and a huge wailing and the weeping souls of infants, whom, in the first threshold, without a part of sweet life and snatched from the breast, the black day carried off and sunk in bitter death.

⁸³ And here he saw Deiphobus, Priam's son, mutilated throughout his whole body, his face torn cruelly, his face and both hands, and his temples stripped of their torn-off ears and his nostrils maimed by a shameful wound. He (Aeneas) scarcely recognized him trembling and covering his awful punishments, and he voluntarily addressed him with familiar speech.

How hard it was to recognize the trembling
Shade as he tried to hide his horrid torments. (651-657)

Mandelbaum again emphasizes the violence of Deiphobus's death and the horror of his wounds, presenting the image of a creature so deformed and destroyed that he is almost unrecognizable. Even the alternate death that Aeneas imagined for Deiphobus is not a pretty one: "you sank/ upon a heap of tangled butchery" (665-666). While this is an accurate translation of *procubuisse super confusae stragis acervum* (VI.504),⁸⁴ Mandelbaum's use of the word "butchery" paints a deliberately dark and bloody image. Although Day Lewis's translation refers to the "huge indiscriminate heap of dead bodies," they are still bodies, even if they are so jumbled as to be impossible to differentiate and identify. Mandelbaum goes a step beyond this and interprets *strages* as inhuman meat.

Mandelbaum correspondingly intensifies the passages on war, at the same time revealing a conflicted vision of the state. Once again it is Brutus's treatment of his sons that allows the translator to express his own opinions:

*Vis et Tarquinius reges, animamque superbam
ultoris Bruti, fascisque videre receptos?
Consulis imperium hic primus saevasque securis
accipiet, natosque pater nova bella moventis
ad poenam pulchra pro libertate vocabit.
Infelix! Utcumque ferent ea facta minores,
vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido.*⁸⁵ (VI.817-823)

And would you see the Tarquin kings? And, too,
the haughty spirit of avenging Brutus,
the fasces he regained? He will be first
to win the power of a consul, to use
the cruel axes; though a father, for
the sake of splendid freedom he will yet
condemn his very sons who stirred new wars.
Unhappy man! However later ages

⁸⁴ For my translation, see note 67 on page 70.

⁸⁵ For my translation, see note 31 on page 30.

may tell his acts, his love of country will
prevail, as will his passion for renown. (1083-1092)

Mandelbaum's translation is again accurate, but his choice of words gives a glimpse of his bias against Brutus as a man willing to kill his sons. Brutus is described by the unflattering word "haughty," and he executes his sons with "cruel axes." However, his actions are motivated by his "love of country" and "splendid freedom," and even his "passion for renown" is not marked as negative. His motives are laudable, but not his actions. His failure is in his role as a parent: "though a father...he will yet condemn his very sons who stirred new wars." The emphasis is that these are "his very sons" he is killing, in fact is "condemning," against the natural order of family. The reference to sons who stir up "new wars" evokes the contrast between World War II veterans, who professed satisfaction with their experiences in war (or at least did not talk about them), and their Vietnam veteran sons, who expressed an increasing dissatisfaction with war and the American government. Mandelbaum uses this passage to illustrate the breakdown of society under the state which he describes in his introduction.

Mandelbaum presents another ambiguous view of the state in Anchises's lines to Aeneas about Roman government:

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*⁸⁶ (VI.851-853)

but yours will be the rulership of nations,
remember, Roman, these will be your arts:
to teach the ways of peace to those you conquer,
to spare defeated peoples, tame the proud. (1134-1137)

Anchises portrays Rome as an empire here, a "rulership of nations," but adds at the same time a plea for peace and clemency. Juxtaposed are the ideas of "teaching peace"

⁸⁶ For my translation, see note 37 on page 32.

and “conquering.” Mandelbaum emphasizes that conquest is inevitable, that the state must prevail, but he asks for what he believed Virgil provided: an understanding of the losses engendered by conquest and a compassionate humanity towards the defeated.

Mandelbaum’s translation is inherently ambiguous. While he does present a dim and violent view of death and war, his treatment of government and rulership is conflicted. His combination of bitterness and hope epitomizes the oppositional interpretation of the *Aeneid* laid forth by Adam Parry and associated with the actions of the United States in Vietnam in the 1960s and 70s. This ambiguous view of Virgil’s motives in writing the *Aeneid* has become increasingly accepted in recent years, at least in this country, to the extent that it is now almost a necessary part of any discussion of the epic.

Chapter Six
Virgil in the Twenty-first Century Stanley Lombardo

The Contemporary Aeneid

The most recent English translation of the *Aeneid* is Stanley Lombardo's, published in 2005. The translation connects itself immediately with contemporary American politics, even before one opens the book. The cover is a black and white photograph of names on the Vietnam veteran's memorial in Washington, D.C. This is no brief reference such as Mandelbaum makes, but a straightforward statement: the *Aeneid* is to be read in the context of the Vietnam War. The quotations on the back cover continue this modern analogy, most notably Richard Thomas's: "The translation thus sits comfortably with the similarly disruptive and penetrating introductory essay of W. R. Johnson, one of the chief guides for reading Virgil after Vietnam and during Iraq." Lombardo's cover explicitly identifies his translation with the ambiguous and subversive interpretations of the *Aeneid* advocated by Adam Parry, Allen Mandelbaum, and the other members of the Harvard or Vietnam school. The implication is that the *Aeneid* is very relevant to contemporary culture, and that it is to be read differently now that it was in the past because of recent events in American and world politics.

Stanley Lombardo's Background and Translation Theory

Stanley Lombardo's "Preface" reflects his own consciousness and criticism of contemporary Virgilian scholarship. He discusses the two opposing interpretations of the *Aeneid*, the "classical" or "Augustan" versus the "oppositional" or "subversive." He links the terms "classicism" and "Augustanism" with T.S. Eliot, explaining Eliot's view of the *Aeneid* as a work that is "mature, conservative, morally elevated, sure of its

civilized values in language as well as politics” (xi). This is the *Aeneid* of tradition, government, and the state which Mandelbaum refers to so bitterly. Lombardo relates the opposite interpretation to Hermann Broch and scholarship after the Vietnam War that “pointed to oppositional and even subversive elements in the *Aeneid*, a species of pathos that amounts to protest against the Augustan regime, or at least against the expressions of inhumanity that necessarily found their way into the epic” (xi-xii). This is the *Aeneid* that mourns for Mandelbaum’s lost society and the defeated, that pleads for humanity.

Lombardo does not identify his own translation with either of these opposing views, however. Instead, he claims that his vision of Virgil is “contemplative,” “reflective,” and “conflicted” (xii). He places Virgil between the opposing Augustan and subversive interpretations of the *Aeneid*, presenting him as a wise observer of events rather than one who wishes to affect them. Lombardo’s ambiguous stance in his preface suggests that his translation will encompass both conflicting interpretations of the *Aeneid*, a reconciled view that seems to be the emerging trend in scholarship.

Book VI in Lombardo’s Translation

Lombardo’s actual translation of Book VI presents a different tone than the quiet contemplation he claims in his introduction. His translation does not share the sorrowful, dark, or stark poetic tones of Day Lewis’s, Fitzgerald’s, and Mandelbaum’s. His language is deliberately and shockingly modern: his sentences usually span only a line or two, giving the whole work a choppy feeling. It reads in places like a bad detective novel: for example, he translates *gelidus Teucris per dura cucurrit/ ossa tremor* (VI.54-55)⁸⁷ as “Fear seeped like icy water through the Trojans’ bones” (67).

⁸⁷ An icy shiver ran through the hard bones of the Trojans.

Although he conveys the basic sense of the Latin words, he deliberately translates them with a cliché. He writes in a contemporary playful and cynical tone that not only alludes to current events, but also emphasizes the connections between the *Aeneid* and its predecessors and successors, particularly Homer's Greek epics and John Milton's Christian epic *Paradise Lost*.

Lombardo, like many translators and critics before him,⁸⁸ discusses the relationship between Virgil's Roman epic and the Greek epics the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. He himself translated both the *Iliad* (in 1997) and the *Odyssey* (in 2000) before he translated the *Aeneid* (2005). He explains that his translation of the *Aeneid* "necessarily recalls Homer - and, quite naturally, my translations of Homer" (xii). Although this in itself is not unusual, he deliberately highlights the epic form which Homer and Virgil share, most notably the epic similes. Lombardo, in both his translations of Homer and Virgil, draws attention to these extended metaphorical passages by setting them off in their own indented sections and italicizing them.⁸⁹ His emphasis on the epic simile as a convention incorporates Virgilian scholarship directly into his translation just as his cover did.

In addition to alluding to Homer, Lombardo also references John Milton's 1674 Christian epic *Paradise Lost*, itself highly influenced by the language and epic form of the *Aeneid*. For example, Lombardo translates *iter durum*, Aeneas's "hard journey" into the Underworld (*Aeneid* VI.688), as "the long, hard road" (Lombardo 814). He evokes Milton's famous passage "long is the way/ And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light" (Milton II.432-433), a phrase which has become a cliché in contemporary English. Lombardo may also be referencing one of the phrase's most recent incarnations in

⁸⁸ See, for example, Brooks Otis's article "The Odyssean *Aeneid* and the Iliadic *Aeneid*."

⁸⁹ See his *Aeneid* Book VI, lines 259-262, 337-339, 381-384, 837-840, and 929-934.

American culture. In 1998 the controversial goth-rock star Marilyn Manson published his autobiography entitled *The Long Hard Road Out of Hell*. Manson named his book after a song he wrote which was popularized by the “Spawn” movie and soundtrack, released in 1997.

Lombardo alludes to Milton again in his description of Jupiter casting Salmoneus into Tartarus:⁹⁰

*At pater omnipotens densa inter nubila telum
contorsit, non ille faces nec fumea taedis
lumina, praecipitemque immani turbine adegit.*⁹¹ (VI.592-594)

But the Father Almighty hurled his bolt -
No smoky torch - through the thick clouds
And blasted the sinner into perdition. (Lombardo 709-711)

..Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from th’ ethereal sky
With hideous ruin and combustion down
To bottomless perdition... (Milton I.44-47)

Milton’s description of the fall of Satan, the rebel angel who sought to usurp God, itself references Virgil’s description of Salmoneus. Lombardo recycles the word “perdition” into his own translation of this passage, highlighting Virgil’s influence on Milton and Milton’s influence on the English language that is now used to translate Virgil. He also intensifies the Christian interpretation of the passage with the phrase “blasted the sinner into perdition,” a phrase so humorously exaggerated that it emerges as satire. Through these multiple and circular allusions, Lombardo emphasizes the connections between Milton, Christianity, and Virgil.

⁹⁰ For pretending to be Jupiter and demanding to be worshiped as a god.

⁹¹ But the omnipotent father twisted his weapon among the dense clouds, for him neither firebrands nor the smoky lights of torches, and drove him (Salmoneus) headlong with an immense whirlwind.

Lombardo also alludes to contemporary politics, most noticeably in his references to torture. Aeneas calls both Deiphobus's wounds and the sounds from Tartarus "torture":

*Deiphobe armipotens, genus alto a sanguine Teucri,
quis tam crudelis optavit sumere poenas?
Cui tantum de te licuit?...⁹² (VI.500-502)*

Deiphobus, mighty warrior
Of Teucer's high blood, who took delight
In such torture? Who dared treat you like this? (604-606)

*Quae scelerum facies? O virgo, effare; quibusve
urgentur poenis? Quis tantus clangor ad auris?⁹³ (VI.560-561)*

What evil is here, priestess, what forms of torture,
What lamentation rising on the air? (674-675)

In both cases, Lombardo translates *poena*, "punishment" or "penalty," as "torture," a word that has become charged in the United States since the "War on Terror" began with the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. One of the major issues at the start of the war was whether to treat captured members of the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda as prisoners of war (POWs) according to the Geneva Conventions, which provide for the protection and humane treatment of such prisoners. The Bush administration declared that these detainees would not be granted the protection of POW status. The consequences of this decision came to the attention of both the United States and the rest of the world in 2004, when photographs were published of Iraqi prisoners being abused and tortured by US soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad. The US government is now in the process of amending how these prisoners (both those in Iraq

⁹² Mighty Deiphobus, descendant from the high blood of Teucer, who chose to inflict such cruel punishments? To whom was such a thing permitted concerning you?

⁹³ What types of crimes are these? O virgin, speak; or by what punishments are they beset? What such noise comes to the ears?

and those held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba) are to be treated and classified.⁹⁴ The possibility of government-sanctioned torture continues to be a controversial subject, however, and Lombardo's reading of torture into the *Aeneid* charges the epic with echoes of contemporary political debate.

Lombardo exhibits a further awareness of recent political trends in the United States with Anchises's final words to Aeneas:

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(hae tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*⁹⁵ (VI.851-853)

Your mission, Roman, is to rule the world.
These will be your arts: to establish peace,
To spare the humbled, and to conquer the proud. (1016-1018)

Although he translates the second two lines of Virgil's text as faithfully as any other translator, his first line, particularly the use of "your mission," suggests that Anchises is giving Aeneas a military command to conquer the world. The reference again could be to the US War on Terror, or it could be a more general comment on the military, government, and world power.

Stanley Lombardo's translation presents the *Aeneid* as a work with contemporary relevance, particularly for the United States. In addition to the photograph of the Vietnam wall on the cover, his modernizing language and use of words that allude to contemporary political issues place his translation firmly in twenty-first century America. He uses clichéd phrases to create almost a pastiche of previous translations, interpretations, and Virgilian scholarship, including Virgil's connections to Homer and Milton. The strongest impression his translation leaves, however, is a

⁹⁴ "POWs and the Global War on Terrorism." *Britannica Book of the Year 2005*. Encyclopaedia Britannica online. Apr. 10, 2006. <http://0-search.eb.com.clicnet4.clic.edu:80/eb/article-9398670>.

⁹⁵ For my translation, see note 37 on page 32.

playful, satirical tone that has become increasingly popular in recent years in the United States.⁹⁶ Through its cover and language, Lombardo's translation proclaims that the *Aeneid* is still worth translating and reading in the context of our own time and culture.

⁹⁶ See, for example, popular political parodies such as the television shows "The Daily Show" and "The Colbert Report" and the newspaper "The Onion."

Conclusion Faceted Reflections

The translations I have examined, by Gavin Douglas, Thomas Phaer, John Dryden, C. Day Lewis, Robert Fitzgerald, Allen Mandelbaum, and Stanley Lombardo, are seven of the most popular and influential translations of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Some, such as Dryden's, have been criticized for their inaccuracy; some, such as Fitzgerald's, are praised for their faithfulness to Virgil's Latin. Every one of them, however, reveals that translation of the *Aeneid* is always an act of interpretation. Each translation manipulates Virgil's text, whether consciously or unconsciously, to reflect on contemporary political, religious, literary, and cultural concerns.

Translation of the *Aeneid* can be a subversive act, allowing translators who feel marginalized to write themselves and their opinions into the center of the dominant culture. Using Virgil's canonical work of Western literature, these translators challenge the dominant reception of the epic which itself reflects the politics and concerns of the dominant culture. John Dryden criticized William III and the Glorious Revolution, while Allen Mandelbaum challenged the United States government's authority and ideas regarding the Vietnam War. Mandelbaum's translation represents the growth of Virgilian translation and scholarship in the United States in the second half of the twentieth century. Influenced perhaps by World War II, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War, these American interpretations seek to find new oppositional or subversive elements in the *Aeneid* to disrupt the traditional reception of the epic as imperialist propaganda. As Colin Burrow commented, translators such as Allen Mandelbaum and Stanley Lombardo returned to Virgil's original text to challenge its received reading, challenging at the same time the perceptions and ideals of their own cultures and

governments. I would argue that these oppositional or marginalized translations tend to be the most popular, perhaps because the force of the translators' convictions gives their translations a certain beautiful energy and poignancy.

What is evident from a study of the translation and reception of the *Aeneid* is that the epic, not to mention its poet, has a multiplicity of possible interpretations. Poetry and language, particularly Latin, are inherently polysemous. Virgil himself doubtless did not intend every interpretation that has been given to his words (the Christian allegories, for example), but that does not mean that they are not there to be read in the text. Translators and scholars may chose to focus on Virgil's language, historical context, politics, or humanity. In my opinion, this plurality of translations is entirely necessary for the *Aeneid*. Our contemporary culture encourages individual reactions and thinking that can only spur more commentary and translation. Not only does each translation emphasize different themes and aspects of the original, but each resonates with the emotions and understanding of different readers, whether they be professional Classicists, students, or simply readers. In addition, changing cultural ideals, such as of government, politics, women's rights, literature, etc., call for new interpretations of the *Aeneid*, and thus new translations.

It is odd that amongst the dozens of translations of the *Aeneid* into English, not a single one, as far as I know, has been written by a woman.⁹⁷ Although Classics has traditionally been the province of Western, Caucasian males, increasing numbers of women and minority members are entering the field. There seems to be a common perception that the *Aeneid*, called propagandistic, imperialistic, and patriarchal, does not lend itself to variant oppositional readings, although I hope I have shown that this is not

⁹⁷ See the Appendix for a list of English translations of the *Aeneid*. All of the almost eighty translators I found reference to in my research are male.

true. Perhaps the *Aeneid* loses favor among women because of the female figures in the epic and their relationship with Aeneas. I remember reading the *Aeneid* in English in an introductory Roman civilization class and hearing most of the women in the class denounce Aeneas as a cad for abandoning Creusa and Dido. However, with the increasing number of female Classicists and the increasing recognition of the many possible, often subversive, interpretations of the *Aeneid*, I do not doubt that we will eventually see a female translator of Virgil's epic.

What is evident overall is that the polysemous nature of Virgil's *Aeneid*, as well as the mysteries of his own life and political opinions, allows for and even encourages multiple interpretations. After more than 2000 years, after dozens of translations in English alone, Virgil's often ambiguous, always beautiful depiction of humans at their lowest and highest points continues to be relevant and continues to be used as a mirror to reflect the hopes, despairs, concerns, and humanity of contemporary cultures.

Appendix
English Translations of the *Aeneid*

This is doubtless an incomplete list of English translations of the *Aeneid*, but I hope that it may provide a starting point for future scholarship. If nothing else, it gives an idea of the sheer number of English translations of the *Aeneid* that have been printed and published through the centuries. The translators' names and the dates of their translations are drawn from several of the sources listed in my bibliography,⁹⁸ as well as from an extremely helpful online list by Dr. Norman Prinsky of Augusta State University.⁹⁹ I have included both complete and partial translations of the *Aeneid*, grouped by century. Many of these are currently out of print, but may be found in libraries and rare books collections around the world.

1500s

Gavin Douglas (1513)
Henry Howard, earl of Surrey (1557)
Thomas Phaer/Thomas Twyne (1573,1584)
Richard Stanyhurst (1583)

1600s

Sir Thomas Wroth (1620)
“Didos Death,” anonymous translator (1622)
George Sandys (1632)
John Vicars (1632)
Sir Robert Stapylton (1634)
Sir Richard Fanshawe (1648)
John Ogilby (1649)
Sir John Denham (1656)
Edmund Waller (1658)
Sidney Godolphin (1658)
Sir James Harrington (1658)
Sir Robert Howard (1660)

⁹⁸ Primarily Paul Distler, K.W. Gransden, L. Proudfoot, and John Conington.

⁹⁹ Prinsky, Norman. “Notes and Questions on Virgil’s *Aeneid*.” Online, April 27, 2006.
<http://www.aug.edu/~nprinsky/Humn2001/VERG-NQ.htm>.

Luke Milbourne (1688)
Richard Maitland, Earl of Lauderdale
John Dryden (1697)

1700s

Joseph Addison (1704)
Nicholas Brady (1716)
Joseph Trapp (1717)
Christopher Pitt (1740)
Joseph Davidson (1754)
Robert Andrews (1766)
Alexander Strahan (1767)
William Melmoth (1790)
James Beresford (1794)
Caleb Alexander (1796)

1800s

Charles Symmons (1817)
William Wordsworth (1832)
Levi Hart and V.R. Osborn (1833)
J.M. King (1847)
James Henry (1853)
Joseph Owgan (1853)
George Wheeler (1853)
Robert Singleton (1855)
John Miller (1863)
John Rose (1867)
John Conington (1866)
E. E. Middleton (1870)
Christopher P. Cranch (1872)
W. Lucas Collins (1874)
William Morris (1875)
Henry Pierce (1879, 1883)
F. W. H. Myers (1883)
John Wilstach (1884)
John William Mackail (1885)
William Thornhill (1886)
A. Hamilton Bryce (1894)

1900s

John Long (1900)
T. H. D. May (1903)
Charles J. Billson (1906)
Michael Oakley (1907)
James Rhoades (1907, 1921)

Edward Fairfax Taylor (1907)
Theodore C. Williams (1908)
Arthur S. Way (1916)
Henry R. Fairclough (1916 - Loeb)
John Jackson (1921)
Frank Richards (1928)
Harlan Hoge Ballard (1930)
Rolfe Humphries (1951)
C. Day Lewis (1951)
Kevin Guinagh (1953)
W. F. Jackson Knight (1956)
Patric Thomas Dickinson (1961)
L.R. Lind (1962)
James H. Mantinband (1964)
Frank Copley (1965, 1975)
Allen Mandelbaum (1971)
Robert Fitzgerald (1983)
C. H. Sisson (1986)
Seamus Heaney (1991)
David West (1991)
Edward McCrorie (1995)

2000s

Richard S. Caldwell (2004)
Stanley Lombardo (2005)
Robert Fagles (not yet published)

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Postscript

I first came to Virgil as I think many people do: through high school and college Latin. I translated paraphrases of his stories in my high school Latin textbooks, enjoying them without having any idea of who Virgil or Aeneas were. I first read Virgil's poetry in English translation in a Roman Civilization class in college - Allen Mandelbaum's *Aeneid*. The beauty of his translation, which is still my favorite, inspired me to take a Latin poetry class on the *Aeneid*, where I fell completely in love with Virgil's Latin Book VI. After writing about seven English translations of Book VI and reading approximately twenty other translations of it in the past year, I can say with absolute conviction that I still love it. Every time I read the original Latin, or a new translation, or even an old translation, I find some new beauty, some new facet that I never saw before. The richness of Virgil's emotions and tones, his layers of meaning, provide endless discovery and exploration. I like to think that it will always be that way.

As seems only appropriate in a paper that treats reception, I must begin my acknowledgments with the standard phrase: in a project of this scope, there are always far more people to thank than I have space to mention in this short postscript. I want to thank in particular my advisor, Beth Severy-Hoven, for reading my multiple drafts and always providing encouragement exactly when I needed it. I also want to thank my de facto honors advisor for the fall semester and one of my readers, Nanette Goldman, who got me started on my project and helped me both deepen and narrow it. She saw the first outlines and the final draft and knows how much this project has changed in the past year! Thanks also to Professor Theresa Krier, my third reader, who provided great discussion points during my defense, particularly regarding the ever-delightful John Dryden.

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Many thanks to my roommates, who lived through the honors project process at the same time (yes, we're still friends!), and to my other friends, who now all know far more about the *Aeneid*, Virgil, translation, and reception than they ever wanted.

Finally, thank you so much to my family - you helped me get here in the first place! I want to dedicate this paper to my own personal World War II experts and the inspiration for much of my last three chapters: my Dad and grandfathers: Andrew Z. Adkins III, Andrew Z. Adkins, Jr., and Dr. Rufus Broadaway.