

BOOK 6 PROPHECY AND PAGEANT.
(Read Homer -Odyssey book 11 for comparison)

PROPHECY:

TWO prophetic warnings about the immediate future "enclose" the prophetic pageant of Roman history: 1. The Sibyl - tells of the immediate struggle to establish a Trojan foothold in Italy.

2. Anchises - tells of the wars to come, and the way to survive.

In between these Anchises introduces a parade of the great figures of Roman history: this vision gives Aeneas the strength he needs "kindled his imagination with a passion for the glory to be".

But it is a message of "the glory and the grief". (See Griffin -Vergil p.89-91)

PATTERN OF BOOK 6:

1. PREPARATION:

Arrival in Italy.

Aeneas goes directly to temple of Apollo; sees legends of the past depicted -inc. Theseus story. (Significance of Theseus to Romans and Aeneas?); there meets priestess of Phoebus and Diana.

Two rituals follow:

First ritual - sacrifice: > inspiration > prayer for happy end of troubles and home in Italy.

Result = first prophetic warning.

Second ritual - acceptance of hardship, but also plea to see his father.

Conditions for answer to plea: find the golden bough (= passport to Underworld) and bury the dead Misenus (both items linked in narrative)

ritual ends with sacrifice.

2. THE JOURNEY TO VISIT ANCHISES:

A. THE DESCENT: The entrance: full of monsters (1) abstract
(2) "real"

The river: Charon

The unburied eg. Palinurus

The crossing: the meeting with Cerberus

B. THE UNDERWORLD: The entrance - those who died before their time

The Fields of Mourning - victims of cruel love e.g. Dido

N.B. She is silent - Aeneas can do nothing for her

The place of those who died in battle e.g. Deiphobos

C. A PLACE APART -TARTARUS:

This is the place of punishment - the Fortress of the Damned.

The Sibyl Anchises describes the horrors of Hell for those who were not True - ie. those who lacked pietas

(a) the blasphemous, those who attacked the gods.

(b) the destroyers of family morality.

(c) those who betrayed their country.

Note: names of rivers of Hell: Cocytus = wailing; Styx = hate; Phlegethon - fire; Acheron = pain

After this description of the fate of the impious, the golden bough is deposited and the final stage of Aeneas' journey through the Underworld begins.

D. TO THE LAND OF JOY, THE FORTUNATE WOODS, HOMES OF THE BLEST

Aeneas sees Orpheus

Founders of Troy

Those who have been True in their lives -those who have shown pietas.

3. THE MEETING WITH ANCHISES:

A. The philosophical discourse

B. the promise of empire

C. the pageant of Rome's history

(See separate sheets for comments on these points)

4. THE POSTSCRIPT:

Aeneas is reassured and "fired up"- ready, with his followers, to sail to Italy. "He has learnt to leave the ghosts of a past he cannot change and to reach out for a future he must fulfil."

AND A FURTHER P.S. ON THE "VOICE OF VERGIL"

His PUBLIC voice - is optimistic, triumphant, culminates in end of para. at top of p.173.

His PRIVATE voice -ponders the problem of suffering; queries the reason for the suffering of individuals: "It is hard to believe Gods in Heaven capable of such rancour".

Contemporary example in description of pathos of death of Marcellus.

These voices keep contradicting each other throughout the whole poem, as he weighs the cost of glory.

Book 6.

First part of the book is preparation for the great revelations of the second half. In readiness for the visions of past and future to be granted to Aeneas when he visits the Underworld - which is not Hell, but the place of those not physically alive, ie. the dead and the unborn - Vergil creates an atmosphere of religious awe.

To understand how he does this for his audience, we must look at what religion meant to most Romans. Religion was not a matter of faith or creed, but of practice; religion meant ritual and prophecy (or put another way, superstition and fortunetelling); and such practices were closely linked with family, clan, and state, and with particular times and places.

RITUALS:

1. special prayers and sacrifices were established in Rome's early days to propitiate the "spirits" of rivers, trees, fields (eg. Silvanus - the spirit of the wild woods); the propitiatory actions often involved what we would call magic; eg. rain making ceremonies. As Greek ideas were introduced, these spirit gods were given physical forms as the native "gods" became associated with or absorbed into the anthropomorphic imports. Jupiter in particular had many guises depending on the particular place or function he had become associated with.

2. The Penates, the gods of the family household, and Vesta, spirit of the hearth, (which Aeneas had been charged to carry with him from Troy) were enshrined in every home. Prayers and offerings were made daily by the head of the family, the paterfamilias, who was ex-officio the priest of the gods. Again the meaning of the word priest is important; it simply means the one who offers sacrifice, with no modern connotation of special training, vocation, or belief.

For the family was at the heart of the Roman society; by the time of Augustus, the ravages of civil war had caused family loyalties to decline. Augustus was keen to halt this decline - even by legislation; and was trying to instigate a religious revival, building new temples and backing state and family religious practices.

3. Public ceremonies - ie. ritual performances - were important; the sacrifice had to be performed correctly in word and action - otherwise the bargain with the god (the object of the ritual) would be invalid. Sacrifice was the human side of the bargain; the prayers expressed the terms of the bargain agreement; and the future would reveal whether the god accepted the sacrifice.

Processions and festivals accompanied such ceremonies (eg. Saturnalia - which the Christians adapted for the Christmas festival); all probably had their origins in the agricultural life of the early Romans who needed to appease all sorts of "natural spirits"; as Rome grew, so did the festivals into big public events!

PROPHECY:

This means foretelling the future:

1. By the mouth of the prophet - the mouthpiece of a god who is inspired, "breathed on" by the god - this can be a drug-induced, psychological or "real" phenomenon; but it was something accepted readily in the ancient world.

2. By signs and wonders: a. miraculous events - rare.

b. natural events - weather signs in the sky; earth tremors.

3. By interpreting: a. the observation of birds = "taking the auspices"

b. the internal organs, especially livers, of sacrificial victims

SO what does Vergil do, knowing the upbringing of his audience and their literary tastes?

As usual, he has a variety of devices up his sleeve - detail, appeal to imagination, a touch of mystery, a touch of fear, a touch of rhetoric.

THE SETTING:

1. Aeneas lands at Cumae - a real place, with a well-known cave - in a secluded, ie. secret, place; and caves especially famous ones, can be awe-inspiring. N.B. the purpose of art is to stimulate, not satisfy, the imagination.

2. He goes straight to the temple of Apollo, the god who most helped the Trojans, and the god of prophecy.

(Augustus had recently built a new temple to Apollo in Rome, where the Sibylline books of prophecy were kept) in thanks for victory at battle of Actium

? the references to Daedalus and Theseus stories and the link with Crete - why are they included? →

To show off knowledge, to fill in background, to create atmosphere, or because they were popular topics for decorative art - perhaps even on walls of temple built by Augustus = local colour?

3. On entry of Sibyl (i) a sacrifice of untouched, rightly chosen 7 + 7 beasts is duly performed

(ii) the agony of prophetic possession is described

ie. the setting opens with reality, and ends with correct ritual, and high emotion.

THE PRAYER:

Aeneas' prayer to Apollo follows usual format - a moment of quiet before the drama *passim*

- (i) address to god (via complimentary comments on his help and leadership)
- (ii) the problem and the plea to gain a foothold, and to end bad luck and enmity of Juno
(Inclusion of other addressees) to provide a home for his gods
- (iii) promise of reward for answered prayer.
(Link to Sibyl's speech)

THE PROPHECY:

1. Answer not given immediately: a pause for dramatic effect first while Sibyl is "shaped" to divine will.
2. Her actual words, in fine rhetorical language, uses imagery of past events to look forward to the future; all she says comes true in later books of the Aeneid; note this speech with great care.
not only for comparison with the later events but because it is not the answer Aeneas had hoped for - there is still worse hardship to come.

AENEAS' RESPONSE:

1. If he's disappointed, he conceals it well; he accepts his future hardship; he had anticipated it and is prepared in heart and mind. He has thought about it in fact; for he is less impulsive now; he is the True and the hero now N.B. he is already a priest and "king", now he is father too = pater patriae
2. This leads to his special plea - a chance to see Anchises in the world of the dead (with a recap. of the past in readiness for the future (a typical epic device).

In the proper rhetorical style he reinforces his pleas with some practical legendary examples:

eg. Orpheus went down to Hades to fetch his Eurydice; Pollux offered to share his life with his dead brother Castor, spending alternate days in the home of the dead; Hercules went to fetch the dog Cerberus. (not altogether convincing examples, success was in various ways limited for all) So Aeneas adds his final claim; the first time to mention his descent from Jupiter - a sign of his growing confidence?

REQUEST GRANTED:

BUT it is hedged about with ifs and buts; notes of alarm and an air of mystery:

eg. the return journey is difficult

permission given to few

the journey is dreadful

find the mysterious golden bough; which you can only pick, if Fate wills it.

bury your dead comrade (whose death you are unaware of); lack of burial bars way to progress.

THE RITUAL FULFILLED:

1. Misenus is found (digression about him follows - a typical literary trimming of the times)
2. Funeral is set up; Aeneas joins in work, for he is leader not boss (as in book 1 keeps worries to himself)
3. A sign from heaven - the two doves that show him the way
4. A splash of colour when the golden bough is found: "light in darkness".
5. The funeral rites are correctly carried out.
(and Misenus is finally linked with an actual place in Italy - ie. legend is set in real location)
6. Ritual offerings are made to gods of underworld - precise details for precise ritual.
Consequence of following correct procedure occurs at lake Avernus; the earth splits open and Aeneas, now the Bold, has access to the underworld. The preparation is over.
He has done all the RIGHT things.

There follows, in a short pause for breath, Vergil's invocation to the gods as he tackles the next section of his epic - the journey through Hades to Anchises, as if approaching the "holy of holies".

He uses the traditional layout of the underworld as he traces Aeneas' and the Sibyl's route, using a variety of literary devices to hold our interest and to make his propaganda points.

THE ENTRANCE HALL TO HADES:

1. shadows, darkness, a little moonlight - just the setting for monstrous forms. So we have:
abstract ideas: given some life by personification

false dreams

monsters: eg. Centaurs; Briareus with 100 hands; many headed Hydra; Harpies, birds with women's faces.

Note: in a now rare moment of panic, Aeneas grabs his sword, ready to fight, even shadows.

2. the way to the depths of the underworld; with a vividly detailed description of Charon; taken from imagination or a painting?

THE BANKS OF THE STYX:

After the details about Charon, the waiting crowds on the banks are generalised, with a vivid double simile, and a touch of pathos in the arms stretched out "in longing for the further shore".

Note the pity Aeneas feels for all the unburied dead, those he knows and those he does not know.

Note too the glimmer of hope; the unburied are not doomed to wait all eternity.

THE FIRST GHOST:

Aeneas meets his helmsman Palinurus - given an identity by his long account of his fate.

Aeneas is racked with guilt, even though Apollo is exonerated; but he can do nothing to help.

The Sibyl offers comfort to Palinurus - his name will be remembered in a place-name. Again a legendary story is given geographical standing.

CROSSING THE STYX:

1. Charon speaks- recaps on previous mortals whom he has taken across; he is firmly put in his place by the Sibyl and the offering of the golden bough.
2. The crossing described- with detail of leaky boat (taken from experience of river crossing?)
3. Cerberus is pacified by honey cake offering typical of Greeks (whose legend it is) or by lump of food tossed under table to dogs? ie. mixture of Roman custom attached to Greek legend.

THE AREA NEAREST THE RIVER:

Here are the prematurely dead (who were barred from the underworld, it was believed); each group has some physical detail and emotional reaction to identify them:

infants: stolen from mothers' breasts and wailing in sorrow.

the falsely accused: a court scene and finding justice at last.

suicides: imprisoned behind watery barriers, and full of remorse.

THE FIELDS OF MOURNING:

Here a happier environment, though still pervaded by sorrow, for those who died of love:

eg. Phaedra - who killed herself, when her stepson Hippolytus rejected her love.

Procris - who suspecting her husband was unfaithful, followed him and was accidentally killed by him, as he mistook her for a deer.

Evadne - threw herself on her husband's funeral pyre.

Laodamia - begged three hours of life for her dead husband in return for her own life.

SECOND GHOST:

Aeneas meets Dido- too recent a figure to need much identification. But now at last we see how much he loves her.

1. He speaks to her lovingly, with pity and amazement at what she has done.
2. He tries, as before, but with a little more tact, to explain his actions.
3. He is full of remorse for her death, but can do nothing to help- there is no role for him here

Dido is now the one like a block of stone- there is now total rejection of each other. Aeneas weeps out of guilt and sympathy, but he now goes on his way forward, leaving Dido to her happy past, while he recognises that what is done is done and cannot be changed, but the past is over and the future is before him.

THE PLACE OF THOSE WHO DIED IN BATTLE:

A special place for special "heroes".

Aeneas meets his Trojan friends who chatter animatedly - almost as though alive.

He causes the Greeks who died at Troy to flee in terror - like the voiceless ghosts they are.

THIRD GHOST:

Aeneas meets Deiphobus- a brutal set of details are used to identify him.

Again Aeneas has feelings of guilt, but they are not justified here; he was not the cause of Deiphobus' death; that was because of Helen's wickedness (as Priam's oldest surviving son, Deiphobus had married her after Paris' death). The meeting is an excuse for a recap of the fall of Troy from another angle; and provides a pause in the action till Deiphobus sends Aeneas on his way to a "happier fate". Aeneas can do nothing more for Deiphobus either, but his anxiety to right wrongs is not needed here.

But before Aeneas moves on he is reduced to terror by the sight and sound from

TARTARUS:

This is the fortress of the damned; why include this Chamber of Horrors?

1. The subject is attractive, even titillating.
2. Literary tradition of Vergil's time encouraged showing off obscure details of legends - a sort of intellectual challenge to the audience (Roman version of Mastermind perhaps?)
3. The theme is used to point out the consequences of lack of pietas.

The general approach is via judgement and punishment, followed by examples.

(i) those who attacked, insulted, cheated the gods:

eg. Titans giants who tried to get at the Olympian gods by piling Mt. Pelion on Mt. Ossa.

Tityos - attempted assault on Latona, Apollo's mother.

Pirithous and Theseus - attempted to abduct Persephone, bride of Hades.

Tantalus divulged secrets entrusted to him by Jupiter.

Note: in the cases of Tityos and Tantalus, the punishment is the striking thing.

(ii) traitors to their families - murderers, misers, adulterers.

(iii) traitors to their country - no.. names, just hints (might names have set cats among the pigeons?)

Note: Vergil's delight in giving hints to identify the sin, the punishment, the sinner - cryptic question style- get the audience guessing/scoring points.

BACKGROUND TO PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE IN BOOK 6

In Vergil's times, both Epicurean and Stoic thought were popular among the "thinking classes". The influence of both philosophic systems can be observed in Vergil's work, not only in book 6.

Basic Philosophic ideas of Epicurus:

The aim of philosophy is to achieve happiness in life; this is perceived as the pursuit of pleasure. But pain is either part of pleasure or the consequence of it, in physical terms.

Therefore it is "spiritual" pleasure which must be pursued, i.e. the pleasure felt by the soul. It is this which leads to a better life, to the "undisturbed" tranquil life, where nothing disturbs the even tenor of life where there is:

i. no fear of death:

the study of philosophy teaches that when the body dies, so does the soul (both are formed from the same atomic units)

ii. no fear of the supernatural, or any divinity;

the study of philosophy teaches that the gods are quite separate beings, who do not interfere or intervene in the affairs of men.

iii. no fear of failure or jealousy of others' success:

the study of philosophy teaches that competitive actions and outlooks should be avoided.

iv. no fear of feeling emotional distress or pain;

the study of philosophy teaches that all emotional attachments should be avoided

(The poet Lucretius followed Epicurean principles; he had considerable influence on Vergil)

The Philosophic Ideas of the Stoics:

Without knowledge virtue (i.e. living the good life) cannot be.

Men should try to live in harmony with nature

NOTE: to the Stoics Nature is reason "Logos" i.e. the divine;

"god" = fate/necessity, and divine providence

So Stoics are untouched by the "swings and roundabouts" of changing fortune

Stoics are brave, because pain and death are not evil, merely part of life's vicissitudes

Stoics are self-controlled, because pleasure is not a good, simply another aspect of life's changes

Stoics are just, because prejudice or favour cannot influence their emotional "temperature"

(Cicero's philosophic writings convey much of the essence of Stoicism; And Aeneas' pietas and developing character owes much to Stoic thought)

The philosophic ideas presented by Anchises:

His main ideas are based on a theory of reincarnation (ideally suited to the pageant of heroes which Aeneas will be shown); the thought owes much to Orphic and Platonic ways of thinking:

i. "Life" i.e. what makes the soul a living thing has substance and it permeates the whole universe (not merely our world of the living but all creation)

This is an idea of a physical source of life - such as air or fire.

ii. To this idea an ethical idea is added; in mankind the body infects the "soul" with various taints.

Thus when the body dies, purification, in a kind of purgatory, is needed so that the taints can be removed. Once this is done, the soul may drink the waters of Lethe, the River of Forgetfulness, and so re-enter another body.

ie. The body ruins the "soul"; the "pure soul" is tranquil until it is disturbed by the passions of desire and joy (which arise from good things - desire looking to what is to be, joy looking back to what has been, or is) and of fear and sorrow (which arise from bad things - fear looking to what is to be, and sorrow looking back to what is, or has been)

So purification must be done by air, water, fire, - the non-earth elements.

THE PROMISE OF EMPIRE

i. The list of Roman leaders are listed as forerunners of empire

ii. The extent of the empire is described in grandiloquent and geographical terms on p.171- the bounds of Augustus' empire surpass the distances travelled even by Hercules and Bacchus!

iii. The concept of "pietas" especially in its civic meaning is stressed both by the Sybil and Anchises in their choice of examples (both good and bad) for Aeneas to observe or hear about. But the climax of the imperial promise comes with a call to responsibility as well as power as Anchises ends his roll-call on p.173: "But you, Roman, must remember that you have to guide . . . haughty are brought low."

ROME'S PRE-HISTORY (according to Vergil)

1. Aeneas lands in LATIUM; meets king LATINUS.
2. After defeat of TURNUS, Aeneas marries LAVINIA (Latinus' daughter, Turnus' fiancée)
3. Original settlement - LAVINIUM.

THEN;

1. After Aeneas' death, ASCANIUS founds ALBA LONGA.
2. A line of kings is established by SILVIUS, son of Aeneas and Lavinia.
3. Traditionally there were 15 kings of Alba: they include: AENEAS SILVIUS, CAPYS, PROCAS, and finally NUMITOR.
4. Numitor's daughter Rhea Silvia (called ILIA, in the Aeneid) bears twin sons ROMULUS and REMUS, fathered by MARS (the god of war)

Jupiter gives a summary of all the above in book 1; then breaks off to include a panegyric in praise of Augustus and his "Pax Romana."

Later in book 6 Anchises gives a summary of the history of Rome, the city founded by Romulus.

ROME:

The Kingdom: 1. ROMULUS: founder of city; winner of "spolia optima"

2. NUMA: the Roman lawgiver and religious leader
3. TULLUS: the destroyer of Alba
4. ANCUS: the conqueror of the Latins
7. TARQUIN THE PROUD: last king of Rome, driven out by BRUTUS.

The Republic: 1. The consuls - Brutus = aristocratic rule (note his treatment of his sons)

2. Territorial expansion and conquest of enemies >
DECII = plebeian consuls who died in battle
DRUSI = defeated Carthaginians
TORQUATUS = defeated Gauls (also executed his son)
CAMILUS = defeated Gauls and Etruscans.

3. In a jump forward in time we come to JULIUS CAESAR & POMPEY = civil war.

4. The defeat of the Greeks: eg. MUMMIUS sacks Corinth

AEMILIUS PAULLUS takes Argos & Mycenae.

ie. the Trojans are finally avenged.

5. Moral leadership by Romans:

eg. CATO: advocate of austerity and of destruction of Carthage.

COSSUS: second winner of "spolia optima"

GRACCHI brothers: social reformers

SCIPIO FAMILY: great generals, philanthropists; one Scipio destroyed Carthage.

FABRICIUS; an uncorruptible general

REGULUS: a hostage who kept his word.

FABIUS MAXIMUS the "Delayer": who saved Rome by his guerrilla tactics when Hannibal was at the gates.

Then, after these good civic examples, Vergil comments on Rome's role for the world, ie. the task ahead for Augustus, the marks of the Roman empire

6. MARCELLUS: used as the "transition" - and the third winner of the "spolia optima".

He was the ancestor of C. MARCELLUS who married OCTAVIA (Augustus' sister)

They were the parents of the MARCELLUS of the poem who married JULIA

(daughter of Augustus), and who was designated Augustus' successor, but who died, predeceasing Augustus, in 23 B.C. aged 20.

Typically for Vergil's outlook on life, the triumphal procession of Roman heroes ends in grief.

The second half of the Aeneid

The basic plot is very simple: Aeneas lands in Italy, contacts King Latinus of Lavinium with a request for some land on which to settle; ie. he is asking permission to stay. Conflict arises because Latinus decides, on the grounds of an ancient prophecy, to marry his daughter Lavinia to Aeneas instead of to Turnus, prince of the neighbouring Rutulians (to whom she is already affianced).

War breaks out, and Aeneas seeks allies; he goes to Evander, a local king of Greek descent, who promises him aid and sends his son Pallas with Aeneas to join in the fighting against Turnus and his troops. Venus brings a new shield for Aeneas to wear in battle; in the course of the fighting Pallas is killed by Turnus. Eventually a truce is arranged, and broken. The issue is finally settled by single combat between Aeneas and Turnus.

These six books seem to us to draw out the story to an unnecessary length; but to Vergil it was the more important half of his epic: "I now begin a grander enterprise" (p.176) Why is it more important?

The potential audience is the key: this is the Roman half of the story; it is set in Italy; we see the way Aeneas, the founder of the race, the forerunner of Augustus, actually going about achieving not only his own destiny, but establishing the essential background to Rome itself; all the preparations are over; the way is now clear. The prophecies of the past will come true; Juno will be won over; and for the Romans of Vergil's time, there would be many references which would set the legend in real life; geography, history, religious practice, and general customs. Imagination and reality will go hand in hand once more.

Note: it is possible to root around and find discrepancies in the details of the story as Vergil tells it eg. why does Turnus raise the signal for war from the citadel at Laurentum, the chief town of Latium, when he is from Rutulia? Why does Aeneas leave Ascanius in charge while he goes personally to seek an alliance with Evander? Such details are not crucial to Vergil's story or purpose, and he may have ironed them out if he had lived to revise his work.

So now let us look at some of the main points of interest in Books 7 and 8.

1. Aeneas moves towards achieving his destiny:

He comes in peace at the start of book 7, but he is soon, against his will and unknown to him, embroiled in war. He fights with regret "his whole heart distracted by the horror of war" (p.201); he thinks of the suffering not the glory "so piteous, that such fearful massacre hangs over the poor Laurentine people" (p.217); he fights because he has to, for Trojan arms "are hostile only to those men of Latium, who, when we sought refuge with them, contemptuously repelled us, and made war". He fights to win a lasting peace; he represents civilised men (like the Romans) who only have recourse to war if it cannot be avoided against violent men (like Turnus, and Rome's enemies) who choose war as the first option for getting their own way.

2. Vergil's debt to Homer is greater, especially to the masterpiece "The Iliad":

There are few actual imitations, or translations of Homer: what Vergil does is to take the germ of an idea from Homer and develop his own incident in his own way and with his own Roman purpose.

eg. (i) in the Iliad two opponents Glaucus and Diomedes find they have close ties which bind them together as friends (the concept of "guest-friendship"); instead of fighting, they exchange gifts.

Vergil takes the idea of finding a close link between Trojan Aeneas and Arcadian Greek Evander with the idea of joining them in friendship and alliance, not merely exchange of gifts. He does this by establishing a family connection, tracing their ancestry back to Atlas (see family tree at back of book) and by emphasizing the impact of a diplomatic visit (p. 204 -6); note that family links and the use of diplomacy were important in the ROMAN scheme of things.

eg. (ii) Fighting in Homer is usually a wild mêlée or single combats, with the method of death described in gruesome, if unlikely, detail.

When the fighting starts (p.191-2) in the Aeneid, a young man Almo, and an old one Galaesus, are the first victims; we are not told their assailants; Almo is killed by a stray arrow, and dies in Homeric detail; Galaesus is struck down as he tries to prevent war - a Vergilian touch, not Homeric this. And unlike most Homeric heroes, who die and pass for ever from his tale, these two are brought home and are the reason/excuse for escalating war.

eg. (iii) the shield:

In Homer Achilles' mother Thetis asks the smith god Hephaestus for a new set of armour, notably the famous shield of Achilles, to replace the armour lost when Patroclus took Achilles' place in battle clad in his armour, and was killed by Hector who took the armour as his prize. The god greets Thetis as a guest, in almost fatherly fashion; the bellows in his forge do their work, and before we know it

2

Achilles has a new shield depicting scenes from the life of the world, farming, lawmaking, domestic life.

Vergil gives Aeneas, his hero, a new shield too; Aeneas' mother Venus asks not for replacement armour but new armour for his new and difficult task. In addressing Vulcan with this request, she is speaking to the Roman equivalent of Hephaestus, who also happens in myth to be Venus' husband. This gives Venus the chance to reinforce her plea with persuasion by sex; by the time Vergil was writing, the strictly sexless, unromantic and male dominated literature represented by Homer's epic had been replaced with a more romantic view of the relations between the sexes. (This is not to say that women were emancipated, but boy-meets-girl novel actually survives from about these times). In true romantic fashion Vergil describes the activities of Vulcan and Venus by means of simile and suggestion, not blow-by-blow account. Also in typical Vergilian fashion he brings his audience back to earth with a bump with his simile of the hard-working housewife, up before dawn, stirring the fire to life (p.212 -3)

Then too Vergil gives a detailed description of Vulcan's forge; the making of thunderbolts; the concept of the Forge of the Gods was very familiar to Roman myth; it was situated below Mount Etna in Sicily, and when this volcano erupted, the Romans, seeing the smoke and flame, said that Vulcan was at work in his forge.

The shield itself was decorated not with natural scenes, aspects of the world in general, but with famous episodes and personalities from Roman history - the real highlights - the Roman equivalents of the Battle of Hastings and the death of Nelson - culminating in the recent battle of Actium when Augustus, aided by his loyal and very capable admiral Agrippa, destroyed Antony and Cleopatra (not named but obvious from her description).

Note the final paragraph of book 8 - and Aeneas' reaction: "where 'he lifted onto his shoulder the glory and the destiny of his heirs'".

Vergil has taken Homer's shield episode, and "modernised" it in style of writing and "Romanised" it in content and allusion.

eg. (iv) the similes;

This way of highlighting or emphasising or decorating an incident is a common literary device in epic verse; a simple comparison is developed into a little word picture, often with no other points of comparison (though there may be a slight secondary point of emphasis). In Homer most comparisons are with wild animals or natural scenes; Achilles is compared to a lion, rushing armies to rushing winds. There are plenty of this type of simile in Vergil too, but often with an extra imaginative touch or worked together as a pair (like the combination of leaves and birds as similes for the souls waiting to cross the Styx in Book 6). And on the whole, Vergil's similes are often more striking at key points in the story; Amata, mad with fury, is like a spinning top, out of control (p.187) - it will be lack of control that leads to war. Aeneas, turning over his thoughts when war threatens, finds they are darting about his mind like quivering light on water; a striking image for a man who thinks his problems through the leader who cares and worries (like Augustus?)

eg. (v) the Pallas episode:

It is only when Patroclus, Achilles' friend, is killed that Achilles returns to battle; when he meets Patroclus' killer Hector in single combat, it is when he sees Hector wearing the armour Patroclus had worn, that he gives full vent to his rage.

In the Aeneid, Pallas son of Evander accompanies Aeneas to war; he is killed in single combat with Turnus, who took his belt and baldric as spoils of war. It is when Aeneas and Turnus finally meet in single combat too, that Aeneas, seeing Pallas' equipment, gives full vent to his rage and does not show mercy to Turnus.

Vergil takes an act of vengeance from Homer and turns it into a moral issue - when does mercy stop and deliberate destruction of the enemy take over - a question that Augustus often must have had to argue with himself. But Turnus has been proud and violent and there can be no mercy for such men. The Roman skill was "to show mercy to the conquered, and to wage war until the haughty are brought low" Any inconsistency here in Aeneas' reaction to Turnus?

3. The reality of place in Italy:

(i) the description of the place of landing (p.175); the description of the journey up the Tiber (p.203-40)

(ii) the Italian tribes at the end of Book 7 - who are now friends and part of Rome itself.

(iii) the brief description of making camp (p. 179) a typical Roman military camp.

(iv) the palace of Evander at Pallanteum :- on the Palatine hill one of the 7 hills of Rome on which the city was traditionally built; Aeneas' visit leads to descriptions of old customs - the Salii, leaping men, the priests of p.209-10; and the legendary "tourist spots" of Rome (p.211-20) with the old carefully linked with the new. All this Roman custom and usage comes from book 8 which is set in the context of peace. Book 7 is different; it starts peacefully, but soon is all talk and action - of war

(v) Two details of Roman life emerge from book 7 which are worth comment:

p.193. the description of a particular geographical location - the Gorge of Ampsanctus; a place of horror from which Allecto emerges. (Compare the tradition of ghostly gloom which surrounds Glencoe)

p.194 the Twin Gates of War - opened when Rome was at war; when Augustus became emperor, the gates were shut for the first time in generations. A link with the past - Latinus; and the present - the Parthians.

4. The reality of time in Italy:

At the start of book 7 time sequence is observed; the first day the next day.

as Aeneas lands and all looks good. But soon we find that time has no meaning as we enter the real world of Italy lost in timeless legend and history, where present and past overlap.

5. The story within the story:

This device, familiar to us from *Midsummer's Night's Dream*; a common device in Alexandrian literature; forms a mini-epic within an epic (a bit like using flashback technique, but usually without the same strict relevance)

Why this story of Hercules and Cacus, with its detective element, fight scene and triumph of good?

(i) there was a cult of Hercules in Rome - ritual carried out at the Great Altar, a ritual which Augustus duly had performed

(ii) the story provides a religious basis for Aeneas' conversation with Evander - both, like Augustus, were deeply religious, in the Roman sense.

(iii) the story provides a link with the Stoic philosophy much in favour in Rome in Vergil's time - Stoics were men strong in the face of adversity.

(iv) Hercules destroys a Monster - an example of the advance of civilisation overcoming the monsters of uncivilised life? (Notice how keen Vergil is on law-making, here and in Carthage; the law and order question was one of the "planks" of Augustus' domestic policy)

So is the story a suggestion that a new Hercules has arrived - Aeneas? Augustus? Violence is needed as a means to an end - but in the context of the peace and harmony of book 8 Aeneas is shown as a deeply religious, anti-war man of pietas (like Augustus)

6. The intervention of the gods:

(i) Juno in book 7 intervenes with the same sort of indignant outrage as in book 1. Compare her speech on p 184-5 with her speech on p. 28. They are both soliloquies i.e. represent thinking rather than speaking; but this is longer and more impassioned, with more details of the things that have infuriated her. Here though she knows she is beaten; the Trojans have reached Italy; but she is determined to go down fighting; in her last desperate throw she calls up not a storm either literal; or metaphorically, but ALLECTO - the Fury who is the personification of the unreasoning rage or "madness" - frenzy - that finds the excuse to go to war

Juno's intervention in fact enables Vergil to introduce one of his most brilliant and imaginative "anti-war passages: first Allecto works on Amata who has some cause for resentment in that she thinks Latinus should honour the betrothal of Lavinia to Turnus; but then in her fury, Amata uses religion as a way of concealing Lavinia and stirs up the women in her cause. The royal house is divided against itself, the mischief is afoot; and Allecto turns her attention to Turnus, who also has cause for resentment. At first he resists her, asserting his right as a man to dictate when and how wars should be set in motion; then he too "snaps" and his anger cannot be contained; "the accursed lunacy of war" fills his heart, and he sets in motion all the preliminaries for war (p.188)

Allecto has chosen the right victim; they are both people with a grudge, which they consider

legitimate. But though they are both brought to the brink of war, there is still the need for the final spark to set it off; Allecto involves Iulus, his ~~hunting~~ dogs and a pet stag. The incident (p.190-1) "proved to be the principal cause which started the tribulations to come". For Iulus, once again the innocent cause of trouble, wounded the stag; anger at its fate rouses the family, the neighbours and soon the whole countryside; the Trojans rush to help Iulus; a trivial incident has blown up into a major row. Allecto has done her job; she is prepared to do more but now Juno takes over.

But Allecto the Madness of War is a much more real piece of personification than Rumour was in book 4; she comes in various guises; she is not just thrown at us all of a piece; on each appearance to drive war into the hearts of men she becomes a more distinct, terrible, and cunning figure. Definitely a creature worth studying in detail!

On Allecto's dismissal, Juno's task is to bring together all those who are mad for war; the herdsman come, with their martyr victims; Turnus comes, exaggerating the political situation; the women come, demanding war in a religious frenzy (p.193) Latinus resists their demands for wars, but in vain; Juno herself opens the Gates of War. Note: there is no mention of Jupiter at this point -but "Doomed already, the whole nation was insistent for a wicked war, led by some malign Power to defy Heaven's warning and the Gods' destined will".

(ii) Venus intervenes, but it is purely an excuse to introduce a little romantic and descriptive light relief before Vergil gets down to the serious business of the shield- the growth of Rome and the triumph of Augustus.

(iii) the river Tiber intervenes with good advice for Aeneas; - a Roman native and nature god is now having a part in helping the destiny of Rome to be fulfilled.

7. Omens and prophecies:

(i) at the start of book 7 there are crucial omens to confirm Aeneas' role in Latium- the swarm of bees, confirmed by the sign of fire (similar to that which touched Ascanius in book 6); and by the oracle given to the sleeper.

significantly too an earlier prophecy is fulfilled; the Trojans eat their tables as they were told they would do in book 5 (p.178); Iulus is the one to give the clue to Aeneas who catches on at once!

(ii) in book 8 the Tiber tells Aeneas of the sign of the pig and piglets (p.202); this sign is revealed within a page (N.B. alba = white in Latin) ie. prophecies are being fulfilled thick and fast now= the end is in sight! Note that Aeneas the True sacrifices the pigs to Juno, but prays to the new gods of his new homeland (p.203)

8. The contrast between Aeneas and Turnus:

Aeneas is depicted as religious, diplomatic -sends Ilioneus to Latinus, goes himself to Evander; a man anxious to avoid war; a careful and considerate leader; a happier figure than earlier as his future seems more clearly mapped out.

Turnus is not without appeal (p.190) he is young, charming, royal and brave -a bit like Aeneas in fact, few years earlier? But he lacks control, he exaggerates (p.193), he is an angry young man and too ready to resort to violence (but unlike Aeneas he has no goddess mother to curb him and bring him to his senses) but for all his wildness he is not an unsympathetic character.

9. The imaginative details:

eg. the tame stag (p.190)

the woodman with his axe (p.191)

the pictures on the shield - the silver goose, the tambourine that summons Egyptians to battle.

the gilded claws on Aeneas' cloak (p.218)

the descriptions of the country side, harsh and peaceful.

the killing of Cacus

BOOK 7 WELCOME AND WAR

WELCOME

1. ARRIVAL IN ITALY

(a) First Landing:

Aeneas reaches Latium - an immediate geographical link is established with the burial of his old nurse Caieta at the point known to the Romans as "Sinus Caietanus" - the "Bay of Caieta".

He is "Aeneas the True"; as such he carries out the burial with ritual correctness.

(b) He sails on: aided by "favouring breezes" and "favouring winds" he avoids error and trouble, and does not meet the enchantress Circe (who changes men into beasts), as Ulysses did in the "Odyssey"; Neptune is on his side (unlike the scene of the destruction of Troy in book 2).

(c) He moves inland, up the Tiber: the scene is idyllic, the river still, with shading trees full of bird song (very much the Alexandrian view of nature). Moreover he is "happy to be on his way". ie. it looks as if the Trojans' troubles are over; they have arrived at last.

2. BACKGROUND

Vergil skilfully fills in some essential Latin background while the Trojans are sailing up river, thus avoiding unnatural dialogue to elicit the information.

Prelude to this section:

This takes the form of a typical invocation of the muse - here the muse Erato - the muse of love poetry; why does Vergil choose this muse when a tale of war and pride follows? Is it a strange choice or symbolic? There are after all different aspects of love.

Note the reference to a "grander enterprise" and "a graver sequence of events" - Aeneas' destiny is now decided and accepted; the second part of the Aeneid is centred on Rome's destiny. And the state is greater than the individual!

Then we hear about the background links between Trojans and Latins which will shape the rest of the events of the Aeneid - ie. the Latin connexion.

(a) Family tree: Saturnus = god of sowing, agriculture (an Italian god, later linked with Kronos, the father of Jupiter) $\begin{matrix} \nearrow \\ \searrow \end{matrix}$

Picus (= woodpecker) - a god of prophecy

Faunus = god of cattle, founded Rome. relig. practice; still worshipped in Vergil's time. He married Marica a nymph - Fauns and Nymphs - country spirits - were "original inhabitants" of Italy

Hence: Faunus \sim Marica

Latinus m. Amata

Lavinia (who is betrothed to Turnus, prince of the Rutuli)

(b) Signs and portents

i. Typically there is a sacred tree - the laurel was symbolic of the god of prophecy Apollo (and here Vergil takes the opportunity for a bit more etymology and links laurus with Laurentines - link to be taken with a pinch of salt). Prophetic utterance has been and will be important throughout the whole Aeneid: even as we fill in the background here, the voice of the prophet - the interpreter of the signs from heaven, is crucial to the plot.

A swarm of bees is the first sign: a prophet interprets this as the coming of a "foreign warrior" and a conquering one at that (though expressed a little more tactfully)

ii. The setting for the next sign is a sacred altar; the sign is Lavinia's hair catching fire - slightly different but just as dramatic as the burning hair of Ascanius in book 2. Again it is prophets who interpret the sign = glorious destiny for her, for her country "a terrible war".

iii. Here the setting is a visit to an oracle that of "fate-predicting Faunus" no less. The place actually existed; and the description of the actions of the priest could be mirrored in the activities of dream- interpreters.

Latinus, as king and therefore priest, can act on his own account; this time there is a direct voice from the god, not giving warning or miracles, but direct commands which he then expands by explanation: the proposed marriage is forbidden, the future demands the "union" of Trojan and Latin (to the ultimate glory of the two peoples' descendants)

Note the movement of this scene takes us from sacrifice > dream > prophecy > fulfilment.

Each successive sign is more precise in setting and meaning.

Note: the emphasis on religion and religious practice throughout this section.

Then via a short link passage in which Rumour makes a brief appearance linking the prophecy to Latinus with the arrival of the Trojans, we come to:

3. LANDING IN LATIUM

At last the Trojans are on Italian soil secure enough to eat a meal

(a) Happy omens greet their arrival:

(i) Eating their tables - fulfils the earlier prophecy

Note: this is probably the first light-hearted incident in the whole Aeneid?

the whole family is involved - Anchises prophesied, Ascanius gives the reminding clue in the "round-shaped crust of destiny", and Aeneas gets the message!

the reader/ listener is given a recap. of the original prophecy - it's that important.

(ii) ritual prayers accompany plans for action - and bring favourable sign from Jupiter.

Note: the importance of the influence and presence of Jupiter.

the confidence of the Trojans at this point.

(b) Exploration:

(i) to investigate the lie of the land and to find water (again actual locations are mentioned)

(ii) to send an embassy to indicate they come in peace. (with "Minerva's olive-sprays")

(iii) to build a settlement for security (on lines of traditional Roman camp)

ie. things are still looking good for them - have they in fact reached "the limit of our calamities"?

4. EMBASSY

The Trojans and Latins finally meet and talk with each other - but Aeneas as in book 1 is not present for the crucial meeting between the two parties.

(a) The embassy arrives - the excuse for some Roman background and Latin links / parallels.

(i) link with martial sports > link with military training on Campus Martius/Augustus' Games to celebrate his rise to power?

(ii) Latinus' court > link state ritual (the lictors and the fasces) and religion

(iii) religious ambience - a mixture of religious and historical museum pieces

eg. wooden statues; "Janus with two faces"; battle trophies.

The Romans believed in the "spirit of the place" - genius loci - and held ancestors and heroes in great respect.

[The Picus story is a nice touch - typical of Vergil the countryman I think!]

(b) Latinus' welcome:

(i) he promises hospitality - no more and no less

(ii) he declares the Latins' love of justice - ie. of what is right in the absolute sense

(this will be his downfall)

(iii) he recalls link with Troy via Dardanus (essential tying up of ends in all epic verse!)

Note how his speech of welcome compares with that of Dido; for one thing he is the first to speak; he offers less practical help, he does not refer to his own situation directly.

(c) Ilioneus' appeal:

(i) he explains their presence - with some emphasis on their descent from Jupiter
and some confidence that they are not in Latium in error
and some exotic description of their travels

(ii) he makes a formal request for alliance and settlement - refers to reputation and oracles.

(iii) he offers traditional type gifts, relics from Troy.

Note difference between his speech here and that in Book 1:

Book 1

1. formal opening - appeal to Dido, as queen
2. appeal for immediate help
3. explains presence, identity, Aeneas as leader
4. appeals for hospitality - they bring no harm
5. promises reward, if Aeneas lives
6. appeal for specific help to aid departure

Book 7

1. brief formal opening to king
2. statement of arrival - no storm, no accident.
3. explains ancestry, Aeneas' destiny, struggles over.
4. appeals for land - they bring extra strength.
5. promises of good faith - the word of Aeneas
6. asserts rightness of their request; gifts offered

ie. both speeches offer mixture of appeal, explanation and promise >

basic import of book 1 speech is accidental arrival > intention to leave

basic import of book 7 speech is deliberate (destined) arrival > intention to stay.

(d) Latinus' reply: (note the body language again - this is not instant response)

(i) he links the visit with the recent oracle's words

(ii) he offers guest-friendship and exchange of gifts

(iii) he expresses wish to meet Aeneas to confirm agreement > link with destined marriage

Latinus speaks with confidence: "it is Aeneas to whom Fate is pointing".

He immediately organises gifts (horses -the symbol of royal progress) for the Trojans, who ~~can~~ return to base, literally and metaphorically, "riding high".

So the Trojans are accepted; there is "the agreement of peace" -all is well.

Note: 1. Aeneas is not there at this peace-making scene. R.V.Knox points out that Aeneas' importance from this point is diminished (until the final book); the future of ROME is now at stake, and the Roman/Latin connection is the main theme.

2. Compare the Latinus -Ilioneus-Latinus exchange with the Dido -Ilioneus - Dido exchange in book 1. There at the end of Dido's final words Aeneas appears in splendour; here it is Juno who enters - without buildup but with an abrupt and dramatic entrance that dominates the next section.

WAR: is now the theme.

1. PREPARATION FOR WAR.

A. (a) Enter Juno - unnamed - with a dramatic overall view of what is going on, and with a subtle hint of her spite with the reference to the city of Inachus (there for the "educated" Roman audience to pick up on if they wish),

(b) She observes the "jubilant Aeneas", the confidence of the Trojans as they settle down on Italian soil.

(c) Bitter, aggrieved, she launches herself into a series of indignant rhetorical questions all related to the main issue: the Trojans' destiny v. Juno's will > all she has attempted has failed.

She draws comparisons with other gods who have wreaked vengeance - But she has been humiliated -by whom? Aeneas..

(d) She admits defeat in her original aim - to block Aeneas' destiny ; and changes tack: she no longer aims to destroy the Trojans, but her purpose is to inflict delay death and distress upon them > "If I cannot change the will of Heaven, I shall release Hell."

Note: 1. The price of Trojan success will be blood. (Augustus' success was bought with blood too)

2. Aeneas is again referred to a "a second Paris" - why persist in this comparison?

(e) Juno summons Allecto - "the implacable one" the most loathed of the Furies, the Avengers of sin in Greek mythology; this monstrous figure is given substance as she is described by abstract qualities, via mythological references, and by symbolic physical attributes.

Juno lists Allecto's destructive qualities and urges her to "shatter the pact of peace which they have made"

B. (a) Given carte blanche by Juno, Allecto goes into immediate action: she starts by working on Amata's natural misgivings about the situation; she poisons her mind against the fated divine plan.

Vergil uses the extended metaphor/ image of the snake to show the insidious nature of this attack; Amata, in reproaching Latinus for the change of plan, has no idea of the consequences of her appeal.

The effect of the poison then is to send Amata to Latinus:

Note: her appeal is a perfectly natural approach in the circumstances. > she is upset but her indignation is natural rather than purely rhetorical; moreover her argument about the interpretation of the oracle as relating to Turnus not Aeneas is perfectly reasonable. She cannot know she is opposing destiny.

Her appeal has no effect on Latinus: and so the poison works more deeply on her, she is no longer rational; "the unhappy lady gave way".

Her mental and emotional disintegration is well described in two very different ~~similar~~ ^{similes: comparison}

(i) she is sent spinning through the city like a top, no longer able to control her own actions. → simile
(ii) she makes herself like a worshipper of Bacchus, using its wild rituals in her madness as a means to → ^{pretext} hide her daughter to prevent the marriage.

Her ruse is successful, and she follows up this success by urging the other mothers to join her in celebrating the rites of Bacchus - fanaticism is often the source of war. ^{Failure → success}

(b) Meanwhile Allecto turn her attention to Turnus - the other aggrieved party in the new arrangements; she has been successful in upsetting Latinus' plans.

She uses another disguise this time, appearing as a servant of Juno - and we shall learn that Turnus, though "hot-headed", is respectful (pius) towards his gods - she works on his fears of what might happen and his resentment of the way things have turned out.

Her suggestion of vengeance and all-out conflict if the previous status quo is not restored gets a cool response from Turnus. He scoffs at the idea; he is confident in Juno's support, he is fearless and confident of being in control of the situation. (This is his first appearance -impressive you think?)

Allecto angered by this calm response appears in her true form - with snakes and whip - a nightmare apparition > arouses terror in Turnus - "I bring war and death".

This second assault on Turnus brings success; he wakes in a mixture of anger and terror. Under the influence of the nightmare rational calm has given way to subconscious passion?; he is full of "the accursed lunacy of war". The confused imagery of the simile here suggests the chaotic emotions which agitate him.

So war is now imminent - but not for the real reason but to defend Italy from foreigners. And the image of Turnus left with us for the moment? a brave patriotic and personable young man.

(c) Allecto now makes her third move > uses Iulus out hunting with his hounds.

In pursuit of a stag (unknown to the Trojans a tame one belonging to Silvia daughter of Tyrrhus the royal herdsman) Iulus fatally wounds it - its return home ensures instant discovery of the deed. It was Allecto who maddened the hounds to flush out this stag - and "this proved to be the principal cause which started the tribulations to come". The death leads to family, herdmen and Allecto "the voice of Hell" summoning men to arms.

ie. a minor incident pathetic in itself escalates from individual to family to the wider neighbourhood - and becomes a major issue

fighting actually breaks out > this too escalates as the country people led by the axe-wielding Tyrrhus (nothing odd in that - he had been using it when the news reached him) rally round; then the Trojans in their turn rally to Iulus' aid > this is war, though undeclared war.

the first casualties fall: two are named - Almo Tyrrhus' eldest son struck by an arrow; and Galaesus the "good" man struck down as he sought to intercede for peace. Neither "deserved" to die.

So Allecto's work is done; she returns to Juno, boasting of her achievements and her ability to do more to spread the war. But Juno takes over now in person; she does not want world war 1 but Trojans v. Latins.

Note: Of Allecto's activities (a) and (b) are about motive (causa belli) But (c) about opportunity of excuse for war (casus belli)

Allecto appears in various highly visual guises - for imaginative impact?

Dido in book 4 is described as a Fury - a agent of ruin for the guilty - significant?

Allecto's departure is via the Gorge of Ampsanctus - a real place accurately described (apparently) - there is a real link between this world and the evil Allecto represents.

2. WAR IN EARNEST

(a) Juno "supervises" the results of Allecto's work:

i. the herdsman bring home the dead.

ii. Turnus adds his invective to their appeals.

iii. the women and Amata, and relatives, demand war.

ie. the consequences of the events set up by Allecto are reported in reverse order to the actual events.

"Doomed already, the whole nation was insistent for a wicked war"

(b) For a moment we hear the voice of reason from Latinus, who for a short time resists taking the final step, a formal declaration of war, prophesies what will happen and then resigns.

The simile is like a Homeric one; the difference is that Latinus fails to hold out, in Homer the "rock" stands firm.

(c) The Gates of War: the visible symbol to the Romans that they were at war - now opened by Juno herself not Latinus

Note: within the description on the Gates, Vergil includes links with:

Roman customs

Jupiter's prophecy in book 1

various campaigns fought in Augustus' time.

(d) "Italy, the quiet land, . . . was ablaze"

i. a description of the general arming of the peoples - men, weapons, towns, are all being prepared for the fight. Ploughshares are beaten into swords.

Vergil adds local and military colour to the story of the battle to found the Roman race.

ii. a catalogue of the various Italian leaders and their supporters who came to Turnus' aid.

Note: He begins with an invocation to the Muses - parallel to the invocation to the Muses at the opening of the catalogue of ships in Iliad book 2. Such "catalogues" - lists of names but not the equivalent of a cast list, since many of the names do not occur again in their particular story - are typical of epic verse; the audience expected them!

Vergil uses the literary/epic tradition to add historical/cultural background for the Roman/Latin

5.

theme of this half of the Aeneid. For example all the places mentioned would come, during the course of early Roman history, under Rome's "imperium".

First, and the only ones of whom we shall hear much about later in the Aeneid, come the Etruscan king Mezentius and his son Lausus. Father and son are vividly contrasted, and a tantalising statement is added in the final sentence of their paragraph - a hint of things to come?

Note: early Roman history was much involved with the Etruscans; the last king of Rome was Tarquin, an Etruscan reputedly cruel and impious like Mezentius.

As for the others, all the geographical detail, the historical and mythological references would be picked up by the educated, patriotic members of the audience, or might have been!

For us taking a general view of the book, it is enough to note the variety of description, the similes, description of weapons for example (Vergil thus avoiding too much monotony in this very "Roman antiquarian" part of his poem):

eg. Aventinus - from the Aventine - one of the seven hills on which Rome was traditionally built.

his men armed with a variety of weapons, himself dressed like Hercules

Caeculus - providing a link with the town of Praeneste about 20 miles from Rome; his men using sling shot of lead, and curiously shod and covered.

Messapus - leading a miscellaneous collection of men likened in a striking double simile to swans for their singing and migrating birds for their numbers.

Clausus - of the Sabines early joined to Rome by intermarriage - the ancestor of the famous Claudian family.

Then comes a "rapid fire" section with tribes mentioned with one or two distinguishing details until we come to:

Umbro - a priest/magician/herbalist = a kind of witch doctor; but ^{with} typical Vergilian pathos he tells us that Umbro could not heal his own wounds.

Virbius - the son of Hippolytus - a story of divine restoration to life, divine resentment and ultimately the explanation of a religious custom. (a story for the sake of it, an attempt to link Greek and Roman myth, or an error of judgement on Vergil's part?)

Then finally come Turnus himself - the description of his armour and his followers would be important for the audience's mythological and historical interests; Turnus of course is essential for the plot of the rest of the book.

Among his followers is the warrior maid of the Volscians Camilla - a heroine whose exploits will be recored later in the Aeneid and modelled on the post-Homeric Penthesilea queen of the Amazons. Vergil paints a fine picture of this delicately swift of foot warrior maid. But why include her?

BOOK 8 LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

N.B. This is the most ROMAN in content and atmosphere of all the books of the Aeneid.

Para. 1 "Turnus hoisted"

This is the link paragraph with book 7; the threatened war gets under way.

- i. Turnus is in charge - even in Latium
- ii. note comment on the madness of war.
- iii. the captains assemble; Mezentius "scorner of the gods" makes his second appearance.
- iv. Turnus seeks powerful allies, including the Greek leader Diomedes (who had fought the Trojans at Troy) now settled in Italy.

Para 2. "So went matters"

Now at last we meet Aeneas again, and he will be on stage for most of the book, looking, listening and learning about the Rome-to-be.

1. (a) he is unsure of himself and anxious - his mood is depicted via a simile adapted from one by Apollonius of Rhodes - a Greek writer - (his simile is about Medea's mood as she lies sleepless torn between love and revenge)

(b) finally Aeneas sleeps - "his whole heart distracted by the horror of the war".

2. The river Tiber - the river god, the Father Tiber of the Romans, appears to reassure him - Aeneas is now linked with native Italian divinities for the first time - significant?

(a) reassures him thus:

1. Aeneas has returned home, bringing "Troy's city back to us" - great stress is laid on home.

2. Aeneas need not be afraid: the gods are no longer against him

3. This will be confirmed by the sign of the white sow and her young:

the sign is clearly explained: the "site" of the sow > site of Alba (=white in latin)

the 30 young > Ascanius founding Alba in 30 years' time.

(b) goes on to practical matters:

1. Aeneas is to seek an alliance with king Evander and his Arcadians.

[they had emigrated from Pallantium in Arcadia to found Pallanteum on the Palatine mount - one of the seven hills on which Rome was traditionally built > another piece of forced etymology]

2. Aeneas is to offer prayers to Juno.

3. Aeneas will be given safe conduct upstream by the river Tiber himself.

Para 3. "So spoke the River God"

With the new dawn, Aeneas' confidence is restored:

i. he offers prayers to the traditional gods of Italy.

ii. he takes action > sails up the Tiber.

Para. 4 "Suddenly a remarkable and imposing sight"

The sign and the goodwill of the Tiber are confirmed:

1. Aeneas sees the white sow and her young.

[Is it true that the nearer the fulfilment of destiny comes in the aeneid, the more quickly the "signs" are fulfilled?]

He sacrifices them to Juno - the ultimate peace-offering - out of obedience to his "new" Italian river god.

2. He sails on "on home waters" smoothing and easily UP stream; all is calm, fresh, pleasant, and easy progress. Will this again be the typical Vergilian literary ploy of calm before the storm?

And so he approaches Evander's humble city.

Para 5. "It happened that on that very day"

Evander, his son Pallas, and leading Arcadians, are sacrificing to Hercules [whose worship was popular in Rome - the Roman historian Livy says his worship was instituted by Rome's first king Romulus - and a favourite Roman oath was "mehercle" - by Hercules!]

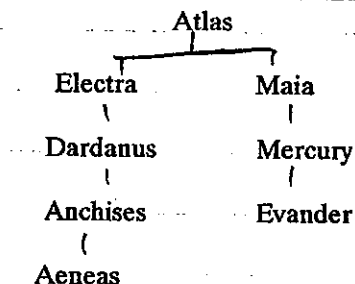
Note that sacrifice and feasting always go together in religious rituals.

Pallas rushes to investigate the strangers' arrival (the same sort of adventurous spirit as Ascanius?) Pallas will later be a key figure - so it is right that he should be conspicuous, as agent of welcome for Aeneas.

Aeneas briefly introduces himself, explains his purpose in coming, and is taken to meet Pallas' father, the king Evander.

Para 6. "Aeneas then spoke"

1. Makes friendly approach - disclaims any fear of Evander as a Greek and relative of the two major Greek leaders at Troy (ie. the sons of Atreus Agamemnon and Menelaus)
2. Establishes links with Evander via common ancestry of families



Hence his personal appearance - to seek mutually beneficial alliance v. mutual enemies - the Rutulians led by Turnus (the son of Daunus - hence the reference to the Daunian race)

Para. 7 "So Aeneas spoke"

Now Evander in his turn establishes a link with Aeneas.

He recalls how as a young man he had seen and admired Anchises (accompanying Priam on a "state visit" to Greece). The gifts which Anchises had made to Evander had now passed to Pallas - these gifts are the visible tokens of "guest-friendship".

The promise of an alliance is sealed by an invitation to the celebratory feast.

Para. 8. "This said, Evander gave command"

The banquet is served- the meat of sacrificial animals plus bread and wine (sacred gift of Ceres and Bacchus respectively).

Para. 9 "When their hunger was banished"

Evander explains why they honour Hercules > duty bound by obligations of men "saved from great danger".

He points out the original cavern of Cacus (providing a real place for the story) and describes the monster - ie. the introduction to the "story within a story" - a popular feature of epic verse. This "St. George and the Dragon" story is a typical example of the defeat of the wicked, or the triumph of the civilised over the savage. Why does Vergil include it here though?

Para. 10 "But time at last"

The arrival of Hercules is described fresh from one of his twelve labours (a favourite one - the killing of Geryon and the theft of his cattle).

Cacus steals some of them, hiding them in his cave and ingeniously(?) hiding his and their tracks.

Hercules prepares to move on, but a well-timed answering "moo" gives Cacus' game away

Para 11. "Then indeed Hercules' indignation"

Hercules goes into the attack; Cacus hides in terror in his cave, behind a primitive portcullis.

Para 12. But look!"

Hercules attacks and flushes Cacus out - a traditional hero v. monster story approach:

note: the "three times he tried" motif

the strong man and a "natural" weapon

a simile calling up a view of the abyss

the attack and counter attack - flying missiles and fire breathing monster

the violent end to the monster

the admiring crowd at the end.

Para 13. "Ever since that time"

The story over, Evander links it with the religious rite and the Roman families in charge of it.

Ara Maxima lay between the Palatine and the river in Rome, in front of Hercules Victor.

Para 14. "Meanwhile, evening drew near . . ."

1. With the evening comes renewed sacrifice, feasting and ritual - a celebration including a "bring and share" meal - typical of many religious rituals, even present day ones!

2. The Salii, the famous "leaping" or dancing priests of Mars, sing the praises of Hercules:

his feat of strength at his birth

a couple of military-style victories (the reference to Troy seems unfortunate)

this famous "Labours" now increased to 1000 (ie. a lot) - some of which are briefly outlined.

Note: Typhoeus is included, not one of the original twelve; legendary exploits grow with the telling!

Finally Hercules is hailed as son of Jupiter - his deeds prove his descent.

Para 15. "So did they celebrate his deeds . . ."

In a final burst of song the Salii add the story of Cacus; the ceremonies are completed; everyone returns to Evander's humble city of Pallanteum - destined to be the site of Rome (Evander's Pallanteum was built on the Palatine hill - one of the seven hills of Rome - where Romulus' original city began, and where Augustus' palace was situated).

Aeneas accompanies Evander and his son; once again Aeneas is to be shown the sights of someone else's city; this time it is he who asks all the questions "attracted" by what he sees and "with much enjoyment".

So Evander explains the past:

1. the uncivilised days of a primitive age when the inhabitants were almost "pre-human".

2. arrival of Saturn - the Latin god of "sowing" (but identified as usual with the old Greek -pre-Zeus- god Kronos; he brings civilised life, epitomised by agriculture, the so-called "Golden Age".

Note: 1. Augustus, or rather his propagandists, liked to claim he was inaugurating a new "Golden Age".

2. A bit more etymology, linking Latium with latent.

3. then comes a decline in civilised life - the "tarnished" Bronze and Iron ages when war and greed dominate men's lives

4. new immigrants arrive - the name of the land changes; and eventually

5. Evander settles there because of "inescapable Destiny" and words of prophecy.

Note: various legends are mentioned to provide links with the various names given to early Italy.

Para 16. "Scarcely were the words spoken"

Now Evander shows Aeneas the present (ie. his own time/city)

1. the sites in his own city which will be famous in the Rome-to-be:

among others the most notable are:

the Lupercal - the Wolf's Cave where traditionally Romulus and his brother were nurtured by a she-wolf who rescued them from being abandoned by their wicked uncle

the Capitol - the site of the temple to Jupiter in Vergil's time.

Note: "Everything connected with Rome is in Vergil of venerable antiquity" (Page)

2. He introduces Aeneas to his own poor palace:

situated near the business/civic centre of Vergil's Rome - the forum

and near the fashionable district of Rome Vergil's "West End" - the Carinae

How times and situation would change from the place where Evander welcomed the "mighty" Aeneas into his humble home.

Note: Aeneas' ally Evander is a very humble ally in every respect compared with those ranged on the side of Turnus.

And so night falls.

What will the next day hold?

Para 17 "But meanwhile Venus . . ."

Venus now enters - in a "divine interlude" ie. the scene is set elsewhere; she is alarmed for Aeneas, as well she might be in the circumstances (comparing the resources of Evander with those of Turnus), and she appeals to her husband Vulcan the smith of the gods, for weapons for Aeneas. [Compare this episode with Iliad 18 428-467 where Thetis appeals to Hephaestus (the Greek smith of the gods) for armour for her son Achilles; Homer may have provided the "model" for Vergil, but it is a model very much adapted and enlarged by him]

Venus uses two ploys in making her appeal to Vulcan:

1. the traditional epic verbal plea:

She reminds Vulcan that she has asked no favours of him during the Trojan war, in spite of her grief for the sufferings of the Trojans, knowing that fate cannot be opposed; but now she does appeal to him, since Aeneas has reached Italy and fate is being fulfilled, though opposed by hostile peoples. Hence she appeals for armour for him.

All this is put across in somewhat exaggerated, but reasoned, language.

2. the more "romantic" Hellenistic literary use of her physical attraction:

In this, the only remotely sexy scene in Vergil, everything, apart from a few vague physical details at the start and end of the scene, is said through suggestion. simile and metaphor (more effective than clinical detail?). Vulcan sees through Venus' tactics, and promises to do whatever she asks.

Para 18 "But after, when night was already receding"

1. Vulcan rises early next morning to get to work on the armour.

Note: is the simile of the hard-working housewife incongruous or effective or merely a distraction)

2. Vulcan makes his way to his forge where the Cyclops work

Note: the forge is given a geographical location on one of the volcanic islands near Sicily near to the coast where the then active volcano Etna is situated.

Para 19 "To this place at that hour"

1. The work of the Cyclops is described

Note: their names

the vivid description of the making of the thunderbolt

the details of their fine workmanship from the aegis of Pallas Athene.

2. Vulcan gives a brisk command for a change of work for a "mortal warrior of high spirit".

3. Work on the shield begins:

Note: the vivid detail of the work in the forge - bellows, tempering, hammering- via direct description, not simile.

NOTE: 1. these last three paragraphs are, even for Vergil, rich in imaginative detail; we are far from Evander's simple and harsh world. This is Vergil appealing to the senses via the sensuous use of language.

2. the violence of the Cacus story, the seductiveness of Venus, the details of the smith's craft, as with the "tear-jerking" farewell of Evander later in the book are examples of accepted ways of relieving the monotony of providing a historical and geographical base for both Rome and Aeneas - not merely light relief in my opinion but far more interesting.

But now back to reality!

Para 20 "While the Father-God"

Next morning Evander rises to the accompaniment of bird-song (A typically Vergilian countryman's touch - a pleasant change from Homer's "rosy-fingered Dawn")

Homely details of dressing and dogs follow, and Evander goes to greet his guest.

Note: how Pallas is always with his father, the only son and heir of an aged father..

Conversation ensues: in modern terms "full, free and frank discussion".

Para 21 "The king began the talk. . . ."

Evander begins with compliment to Aeneas.

then admits his people's ability to help is limited -hemmed in geographically and militarily. suggests possibility of help from elsewhere.

Para 22. "This hope of relief"

Now Evander enlarges on the source of help - and incidentally re-introduces the name of

Mezentius "scorned of the gods" and a wicked tyrant.

Evander explains how the people from Agylla in Etruria had risen against their brutal king Mezentius [the harrowing details of his cruel behaviour are paralleled in pre-Augustan records of the behaviour of Etruscan pirates]; as a result Mezentius had taken refuge with Turnus.

Hence the Etruscans have united in seeking vengeance, and, in modern terms, want the extradition of their king.

However "the Liver-Diviner" (examining the livers of sacrificed animals was a traditional Roman method of predicting the future) warns them that they must "choose a foreign leader".

In response the Etruscan leader Tarchon has asked Evander to be their leader - he was after all a foreigner, being a settler from Greece (as we have been told earlier).

But Evander is too old for the task; his son Pallas would be the automatic second choice, but he is of mixed blood (Sabines were Italians) so is ineligible to fulfil the prophecy.

So that leaves the conveniently arrived Aeneas - he is young enough and foreign enough.

For the first time Italians and Trojans will be united - under Aeneas' leadership.

Evander closes his speech with a promise to give what help he can and to send his only son Pallas under Aeneas' guardianship: Pallas his "one hope and consolation" words that signal coming disaster with ironic certainty.

Para 23 "He had scarcely spoken"

Aeneas with his faithful Achates is still cast down at the thought of war; but his confidence is restored by a sign from his mother - thunder and lightning in a cloudless sky, with a view of armour "glowing red".

Note his reaction: confidence in his mission and its success
pity for the victims

[his final words recall the words of Julius Caesar who surveying the enemy dead after one of his victories, said "They would have it so."]

Para 24 "Having spoken so,"

Final preparations for war are made - Aeneas in charge:

1. initiates sacrifice to the gods of Rome - the home gods whom Aeneas has rescued from Troy.
2. organises his troops: his lines of communication: his contacts with allies.
3. accepts his own "transport" - a striking touch of colour here.

All is ready - we await the signal to go

But:

Para 25 "Rumour now suddenly took wings"

Rumour takes a hand again: close danger brings greater fear to the people and emotions become more intense:

hence this little scene with Evander where he breaks down as he bids Pallas farewell - regretting his own frailty, especially in view of what he once was (Mezentius' name re-occurs) praying for life, even a painful life, if he is to see his son again; or else for instant death.

Para 26 "So prayed the father"

Evander faints and falls - overcome by emotion (or is it only a faint ? is a hint of what is to come?)

Para 27 "And by now the cavalcade"

The cavalcade sets out to join the Etruscans, with Pallas standing out among them like the morning star - brilliant at daybreak but soon to fade (we are constantly prepared for Pallas' unknown fate)

They proceed through traditional Italian countryside, and make camp in a sacred grove, a holy place, near to Tarchon's camp.

Para 28 "But meanwhile Venus had descended"

Venus appears to Aeneas who has "withdrawn" and is alone (with this thoughts/plans/anxieties?) and brings him her gifts of armour.

Aeneas is filled with wonder at the various pieces of equipment - which are briefly but colourfully (literally!) described in a few apposite phrases; at the very end the high point of the armour is mentioned - the shield.

The last section of this book^k is taken up with a detailed description of the shield - the idea is taken from the description of Achilles' shield in the Iliad, and the shield of Hercules in Hesiod (and no doubt such descriptions of divinely provided shields were a regular feature of epic fighting poems!)

Para 29 "On the shield the God"

The theme of the pictures on the shield is historical:

hence they include:

family tree and family wars in the early days of Rome

Romulus and Remus , and the she-wolf that reared them

the rape of the Sabine women and the alliance that followed

the treacherous Mettius and his victor Tullus (and the brutal punishment inflicted)

the defeat of Porsenna, and Horatius' "last stand " on the bridge over the Tiber.

Para 30 "At the top of the shield . . ."

Rome is now established and the threat comes from outside Italy so we have the story of Manlius and the sacred geese who saved the Capitol from the "fair haired" Gauls.

This story, via the geese, links with the religious element introduced at this point:

the priests - Salii and Luperci

the respectable women of Rome

both observing religious rituals in their different but equally correct ways.

Finally on this part of the shield religious and political life are linked:

Catiline - the example of anarchy or the would-be tyrant - is punished in Tartarus

Cato - the example of the just patriotic and morally viruous Roman - is with the righteous.

And so this section on the shield ends its "highlights of history" with a brief description of the decorative element of the shield - a kind of literary "breather" before the "main scene".

Para 31 "In the centre could be seen . . ."

The shield's centre-piece is the battle of Actium -where Augustus defeated Antony and Cleopatra and won sole control of the Roman world.

Note: 1. Augustus has the "gods of home" on his side - the ones rescued by Aeneas from Troy.

2. Agrippa, his naval commander, is there - his "faithful Achates".

3. Antony's role is passed over - except for a brief reference to the shameful "Egyptian wife".

4. The battle is described in non-military, but vivid terms.

5. Cleopatra gets the full obligatory Roman scorn -going into battle with tambourines, and monstrous gods like the "barking Anubis", and then running away.

BUT even when celebrating the moment of Augustus' greatest victory, Vergil still show pity for the vanquished in his picture of the river Nile offering them sanctuary.

Para 32 "Next appeared Augustus Caesar . . ."

Saving the "best" till last, Vergil at last introduces Augustus:

1. seated on his "throne" in the temple he has built in honour of Apollo.

2. watching the "Triumph" - the formal procession through Rome celebrating his conquests

3. receiving the homage of the peoples he had conquered -Africans, men from the Russian steppes, from Asia Minor, from the valley of the Euphrates,western Europeans from bear the Rhine and what is now Calais, Asiatics from beyond the Caspian Sea - ie. from all quarters of the known world

Para 33. "Aeneas looked in wonder . . ."

Aeneas is filled with awe/amazement/surprise? - he lacks knowledge of the meaning of the pictures but he is still happy to take on his shoulders "the glory and the destiny of his heirs" (just as Augustus hoped to do)

Book 9

In this book the fighting really gets under way. In the previous two books the reasons for the war and the preparations for it have been set out; in book 9 there is full-scale war in action.

Book 9 can be divided into three main episodes:

1. The Rutulians under Turnus' leadership - in Aeneas' absence - go onto the offensive: they besiege the Trojan camp, and try to set fire to their ships. These have a "miraculous" escape by being turned into nymphs.
2. The story of Nisus and Euryalus - two friends, companions in arms, leave the camp to try to warn Aeneas about what has happened; they act both heroically and foolishly, meeting their deaths in their endeavour "betrayed by the glimmer of moonlight on Euryalus' helmet" - a sad tale made sadder by the touches of realism which Vergil gives to an epic "motif".
3. The scenes of battle - the siege and the fighting continues. Vergil owes much to Homer, in the single combats for example and in the intervention of Apollo in disguise, but he also owes much to what he has learnt of warfare in the experience of his contemporaries. Turnus is a conspicuous success as a fighter - violently triumphant, in fact.

Episode 1: The Rutulians on the offensive:

Introduction: "While this was happening . . . with his vows" (p225)

This is the "link" with what has gone before. While Aeneas has been equipped with his armour by Venus, as he prepares for battle, Juno for her part has not been idle. She has sent Iris the messenger of the gods to inform and advise Turnus

Note: in book 5 606 ff fire and destruction followed such a visitation too.

The scene develops as follows:

1. Turnus is described as "fiery" - as we have seen in book 7, it does not take much to rouse him to action; and he is in a wood sacred to one of his ancestors - he is devoted to his tribal territory; land (as well as Lavinia) means a lot to him. So in two short sentences Vergil prepares us for Turnus' fire and audacity.

2. Iris (a) points out the great opportunity offered him.

(b) sums up Aeneas' diplomatic activities of book 8

(c) urges him to action - a surprise attack (while Aeneas is out of the way)

ie. she applies the match to his tinder.

3. Iris departs, actually as the rainbow she represents - a natural phenomenon

(a) simply described by Vergil

(b) described by Turnus in almost visionary terms - like a curtain pulled back across the sky

Note: in this book the framework of natural phenomena forms a backcloth to the cruelty of war (unlike the battle of Homer which takes place in the vacuum of the long-departed "Heroic Scene")

4. Turnus accepts the sign:

i. not knowing the source, only recognising the messenger.

ii. after ritual purification (hence the "handful of water" he offers vows and prayers.

Like Aeneas, he is a "religious" man - in many ways Turnus is the "dark side" of Aeneas.

The Rutulians advance to attack: "And now all his army (p 225) . . . ashes and sparks" (p227)

1. The army advances onto the open plain:

Vergil stresses i. the cavalry element

ii. the central position of Turnus

iii. their united and steady onward progress - and their menace? via a double-headed simile comparing the advance with the advance of the Ganges and the Nile (both are served by many tributaries and are disposed to destructive flooding)

2. The Trojans see them coming - their approach is described in a way much imitated by cameramen shooting similar scenes in Western cowboy films:

i. they look like a cloud of black dust

ii. they appear a threatening mass - which calls for "action stations"

iii. the look-out cries "The enemy is at the gate".

3. The Trojans take up defensive positions as ordered by Aeneas, in spite of their natural instincts to go for their enemies.

Note the foresight of Aeneas here, anticipating problems and leaving suitable instructions obeyed without question. This proper military caution reveals a very different Aeneas from the impetuous,

unthinking and easily-led Aeneas of book 2; by now he has grown into the job (as Augustus had done into his?)

2. Turnus now takes centre stage:

(1) He rides to the front of his troops with a few chosen men; he is swift, conspicuous, and challenges his men to follow his example - a bold, typically "epic" leader of men.

(2) He seeks to initiate battle - hurling spear into air, riding horse into "arena" - an invitation to fight to both sides:

His own men respond with eagerness "terror-striking battles cries"

The Trojans (under orders) with "apparent cowardice"

Note the contrast between the calm Trojans and the violent Turnus and Rutulians.

(3) Rebuffed, Turnus tries to get into the camp; the wolf simile which follows is a common theme in epic (there are three others in the Aeneid alone - book 2.355 ff; book 9 565 ff; book 11 809 ff as well as others in Vergil's models Homer and Apollonius Rhodius); but as we have seen elsewhere, Vergil's epic tale is set among the realities of his own lifetime, and this simile is set among the realities of natural life as Italian countrymen knew them.

Thus the scene is set for Turnus as the uncontrolled and violent enemy - filled with the same "fury" that was so nearly Aeneas' undoing in book 2.

(4) Failing to find a way into the camp, he attacks the Trojan ships with fire. He is a charismatic leader, and soon there are torches and fire everywhere in a scene which Vergil paints with words of deep blackness and glaring light - a suitable verbal backcloth to "ashes and sparks".

A short passage to mark the transition to the next section of this part of the story: "Which god . . . never dies" (p 228)

This invocation to the "Spirits of Song" ie. the Muses, has a slight echo of Iliad 16 112 - just before the Trojans set fire to the Greek ships; it also acts as a signal that we are moving away from the reality of the battle field (at least for the moment) to the magic of legend.

The ships are rescued: "At the time when(p227) . . . he was detailed to guard" (p 230)

1. The background to the rescue:

i. in significantly elaborate and deliberately literary language Vergil takes his audience back to the time of Aeneas' departure from Troy. He introduces Cybele (the lady of Berecynthus - a mountain near Troy where she, the mother of the Gods, was worshipped) She asks Jupiter to grant that her sacred timber which she has given for Aeneas' ships in his need to escape should be indestructible.

ii. Jupiter gives a typically two-pronged response:

a. such a thing as she asks is impossible, since mortal hands have fashioned the timber into ships, and no god could command the fates to allow mortal men avoid danger

b. however - in typical compromise, he promises that those ships which actually make it to Italy shall be turned into "goddesses of the vast sea" and so avoid destruction.

2. The rescue takes place:

The scene switches back to Italy; the time has come for the promise to be fulfilled, and Turnus' intentions to be thwarted.

i. Cybele appears in light, riding over the clouds, a voice from heaven speaks. The use of natural meteorological phenomena is a common way of expressing the appearance of a divinity (cf. the Psalmist's "He rode upon the wings of the wind") - a way of inspiring awe, and here, to underline perhaps the magic of the scene.

ii. Two parallel orders are given: the Trojans are to do nothing; the ships are to go free, "goddesses of the sea" - thus they are given personalities like the Trojans.

iii. The ships are transformed - the change is ingeniously described; they become sentient beings in control of their own parts, they dive like dolphins to the sea bed, then reappear as "maiden forms" swimming on the sea. As in a conjuring trick, we are taken easily from the seemingly possible (breaking hawsers) to the impossible by Vergil's sleight of words (like dolphin. "maiden forms")

3. Aftermath of the rescue:

i. The Rutulians panic (and even the River Tiber is brought to an amazed halt)

ii. Turnus by contrast is not in the least put out by the miracle:

(a) he sees things quite differently - the Trojans are trapped now

ie. their ships have gone, so there's no running away for them this time (and it was Jupiter not Rutulian fire that did it)

moreover the Rutulians and their allies control the land - the Trojans have nowhere to go!

(b) he has no time for oracles - a sign of his arrogance perhaps - the pride that goes before a fall? He adds with some sarcasm that Venus, plus the Fates, have got their way - the Trojans have arrived in Italy (implying that that is as far as they will get)

(c) now it is time for his own destiny - to punish the people who stole his bride. Now at last he mentions the other reason for his "fury" - the loss of his promised bride Lavinia. Is this the real reason for his rage, or is it his desire for power, or love of his threatened country that drives him on? The answer never becomes plain, though Turnus' final words in book 12 provide the best clue.

(d) the mention of the stolen bride however gives him (and Vergil) the chance to draw further parallels with the Trojan War, as he implicitly compares Lavinia with Helen of Troy, the besieged Trojan camp with the besieged city of Troy; (the differences are perhaps more remarkable for the audience than the similarities)

(e) And now Turnus himself follows up a potential difference: the Greeks used stealth and cunning at night after trying ten years in vain to enter Troy; it took the deception of the Wooden Horse to achieve their aim. But Turnus will fight in the open, in daylight, and will clinch the matter more quickly - such is his self-confidence!

(f) he concludes his outburst of somewhat staccato self-confident rhetoric (which is only apparently random - in fact there is a clear train of thought (though not a completely logical one), with a down-to-earth conclusion - practical instruction to his men - to relax that night in readiness for the fighting on the morrow. We are back to the realities of war; the magic is over.

4. The conclusion of the incident:

In a couple of short paragraphs, marking the end of the Rutulians attack, Vergil shows us both sides preparing for the next day.

(i) The Rutulians organise their night duties; sentries are posted, the fires burn bright, the watchers keep themselves awake and/or distract themselves with gambling games (probably dice)

(ii) The Trojans are not idle either; they complete their defences, allot sentries their turns and points of duty. Almost in passing we are reminded that Aeneas is not present - the fact that will lead to the next section of book 9.

Episode 2: The Story of Nisus and Euryalus:

We have met these two friends in Vergil's account of the foot-race in book 5 284ff. Now we meet them in a story of Homeric simplicity, which ends in epic tragedy, the result of their chivalry and bravery.

Note: the theme of older warrior and younger friend/ companion-in-arms is common in classical literature; any possible homosexual relationship between them is passed over/omitted as irrelevant to the story; the ancients in general deplored promiscuity, but had a more tolerant attitude to all aspects of love and friendship than the modern world. If any particular aspect of love had no part to play in the story, it was not mentioned, let alone flaunted.

As with the story of Achaemenides in book 3, or of Hercules and Cacus in book 8, it is difficult to see the immediate relevance of the story of these two men, whose mission ends in heroic failure and does not advance the plot at all, and merely delays the "real fighting" anticipated at the end of the previous episode.

Perhaps, like the other stories, their story forms a kind of interlude - a "natural break" from the sternly moral Roman-orientated tale of Aeneas and his mission. It is a carefully constructed episode in its own right - with a very different quality from the battle scenes to follow.

If the episode does have a moral point to make, as well as telling a tale, it is surely that chivalry and brotherly love are not yet dead - a message of hope for the post-civil war years in Italy under Augustus' guidance?

Introduction: "Nisus, a son of Hyrtacus . . . guarding a gate" (p.230)

We are given a brief picture of the two men: Nisus the hardened warrior, Euryalus the young recruit - in battle the blend of youth and experience, inseparable even on guard duty.

Nisus' plan: "Nisus now said (p.230) . . . in search of their prince" (p.232)

i. For a man of action ("bored by this peaceful quiet") he starts his speech in an unusual way, as he queries the source of lust for battle - is it inspired by the gods, or does the inspiration or desire become the god? a question which lies behind much of the symbolism in the Aeneid, as we are left to wonder whether men's actions are inspired by some impulse from the gods or are the result of their

own impulses which they then attribute to the gods' work.

ii. He has observed the slackness of the Rutulians watch-keeping - hence his plan.

iii. Everyone wants Aeneas recalled; he thinks he could make his way past the Rutulians to get a message to Aeneas.

Note: he expects the reward of gifts and fame - the typical rewards demanded by the Homeric epic hero; but Nisus also wants to share them - fame for himself, the gifts for his friend.

Euryalus' reaction:

i. He is surprised and disappointed that Nisus is proposing to go alone, without him. For he is a young man of loyalty courage and honour; again typically Heroic when he states in his final sentence one of the basic tenets of the Heroic Code - honour is preferable to life itself.

Nisus' reply:

i. He has never doubted Euryalus' courage

ii. But he has reservations about the risks involved in his plan- death is on the cards -

and (a) as a young man. Euryalus has a greater right to life

(b) he would hope his friend Euryalus would deal with a proper burial if he, Nisus, died.

(c) he does not want to cause Euryalus' mother grief (the only widowed and elderly mother not to stay in Sicily - see book 5 717ff)

Euryalus' response:

i. dismisses out of hand all these points mere excuses

ii. declares his firm intention to stick with and by his friend.

And this section of the story ends with the pair of them, first arranging for others to take over their duties, and then going to lay the plan before "their prince"(ie. Aeneas' son) - ie. they are not hot-headed heroes, but responsible soldiers.

The Plan explained and accepted: "All living creatures (p232) . . . gift to the clouds (p235)

1. Introduction:

a reminder that it is night

a reminder of the anxieties of the Trojan leadership.

a reminder of the need to tell Aeneas what is happening.

2. Arrival of the two friends "in eager haste":

though excited, they still go through the proper channels- a further sign of their sense of propriety and responsibility.

3. Nisus explains his plan:

in essence he enlarges on the basic idea he had put to Euryalus.

Note: though this is a meeting of Trojan elders, it is Aeneas' son who takes charge. Youth does not preclude authority (as the youthful career of Augustus had in fact proved in Vergil's own time)

Nisus makes his case in practical terms, by pointing out:

1. the Rutulians are asleep and drunk

2. there is a convenient gap where there are no fires but clouds of smoke from the other fires - ideal for "a surprise raid"

He goes on to add:

1. As we go on towards Pallanteum, there will be plenty of opportunity for slaughter and spoils (again two of the main reasons why Homeric heroes fought!)

2. We shall not get lost, because our hunting trips have made us familiar with the terrain - and the river will act as a constant point of reference for us.

ie. he gives a reasoned argument for an opportunist and potentially successful expedition.

4. The Trojans' reactions to his proposal:

(a) Aletes - an "elder statesman" is moved to tears by the offer:

i. with some hyperbole he declares that Troy can never die while men of such character live

ii. then goes onto the practicalities of reward:

first their own sense of achievement and divine approval

second Aeneas and his young son will remember and mark so "distinguished a service" in the appropriate way.

(b) Ascanius - his father's representative, but some of what he says reveals his youth:

he expresses his confidence in the two men;

then addresses them individually:

to Nisus: asks him to bring his father back -for it will relieve all his worries (and Ascanius has a lot on his young shoulders at present)

promises him the typical gifts of epic story (compare the even more extravagant gifts, though of the same type, offered by Agamemnon to Achilles in Iliad book 9)

Note the way Vergil combines here the picture of Ascanius as a prince of epic times offering gifts to a warrior in return for success in battle and the image of a young man in need of his father.

to Euryalus: he speaks like a young hero-worshipper; he makes Euryalus his "role-model" - the hero in whom he places complete confidence - and so again reveals how young and vulnerable Ascanius is.

5. Euryalus is the one who replies, and in sober terms, making no reference to Ascanius' claims to comradeship; he is aware of the risks as well as the glory - a more mature character than Ascanius? - and he recognises the importance of fortune - both for the success or the failure of their enterprise.

Hence he asks one particular favour - that Ascanius will look after his mother if she loses her son - for he cannot bring himself to tell her what he is planning to do.

Euryalus is as sensitive as well as a brave youth.

6. Ascanius' reply:

Note: once again the Trojans are moved to tears - but of sorrow not pride this time.

Deeply moved himself, Ascanius solemnly promises to care for Euryalus' mother as he would do for his own mother if she were still alive; if Euryalus fails to return, all that he would have had by way of reward will go to her.

Note: the emphasis on the mother motif is deliberate; it will be important later in the story.

7. The final preparations:

- i. the two friends arm themselves for the expedition
- ii. they are seen off by the Trojan elders and the young Ascanius who, burdened by his responsibilities, sends urgent messages for his father.

And this section ends on a note of foreboding; as so often we are warned of coming disaster, but not what it will be. The messages will not reach Aeneas; instead they will be an "ineffectual gift to the clouds."

The Expedition by Night: "The pair made their way (p235) . . . in a welcoming death" (p239)

The action here has the brutality associated with Homeric fighting; comparisons are often made between this section and the night raid described in Iliad book 10. As for Vergil, he tells his tale crisply, adding vivid details to bring the scene to life but without lingering over the background.

i. Into the Rutulian camp:

The two men make their way in the darkness to the camp; the casual slackness of the Rutulians, noted earlier by Nisus, is now all too evident in the disorder of the men and the camp.

Nisus briskly orders Euryalus to keep a look-out while he Nisus literally cuts a path for them through the sleeping Rutulians. There are no philosophical reflections now; not a word is wasted - either by Nisus and Euryalus, or by Vergil.

First incident: Nisus embarks on an orgy of slaughter, killing:

- (a) the sleeping Rhamnes - as he lies snoring on a pile of coverlets.

Note how Vergil adds a touch of pathos - Rhamnes' skill as a prophet could not save him

- (b) various of Remus' retainers sprawled around him, and then Remus himself.

Note how Vergil adds details of the brutality in his gruesome description of the blood-letting

- (c) others, including the young handsome Serranus

Note how Vergil adds a touch of pathos again as he describes what might have been better for him.

The selection of victims is interesting; the powerful king and prophet, the feudal lord, the young and handsome - none escape being put to the sword.

The final simile echoes the simile of Iliad 10 485 ff - another link with the murderous night raid of that book.

Second incident: Euryalus goes into action:

he is not content to merely keep watch, but is just as violent as his senior partner, though more stealthy in his killing

- (a) he catches several unawares, including Rhoetus - the only man awake it seems, and still drinking; and a cowardly drunk, he dies in a welter of blood and vomit.

(b) he heads towards Messapus' group i.e. the cavalry - intending to steal the horses/ cut them loose?

i.e. is this an imitation of Iliad 10 again - where Rhesus' horses are stolen; or is this good military sense - to deprive the enemy of a major, and swift, attacking force? Is Vergil thinking of the legend or Roman tactics?

Third incident: the two heroes move on, with some significant acquisitions by Euryalus.

Nisus, realising Euryalus is consumed by blood-lust (being older, Nisus has greater control of his lust to kill?), calls a halt to the killing - it is nearly day, and daylight brings danger for them. They have achieved their object - the way ahead is clear.

They don't bother about loot at this time (sensibly - they still have a long way to go into and back from enemy territory)

EXCEPT Euryalus takes "the trappings of Rhamnes and his gold-riveted sword -belt" - there is an ominous aside here "vainly enough it proved"; and "the helmet of Messapus" - it fitted him well"; ironically there is no ominous aside here, but it will be this helmet that causes their undoing.

so they leave the camp for the next stage of their journey "for safe country" - or so they think.

ii. The further side of the camp:

A large group of horsemen appear, returning to Turnus' camp; moonlight catches on Euryalus' new helmet in the shadowy light of the approaching day - a detail Euryalus had forgotten - in his eagerness for the helmet, careless from inexperience, or adaptation of an epic theme?

So the leader of the enemy band, Volcens, challenges them; the Trojan pair flee, without a word, into the forest - seemingly a sensible place to find cover.

iii. In the forest:

Note: the pace of the narrative now quickens even more, in a brilliant series of skilful "shots" of both action and mood.

The horsemen know the forest paths and post men at strategic points to intercept the running men as they try to escape through woodland, dense, dark and difficult.

Euryalus now reveals more of his immaturity; lumbered by his loot and confused by the unfamiliar terrain, he starts to panic.

Meanwhile Nisus runs on ahead, not thinking that Euryalus won't do likewise; out of immediate danger, he halts at a point just past some farm buildings, clear of the forest. Realising Euryalus is missing, he instantly thinks of returning to look for him; but even as he tries to find his own footprints in order to retrace his steps, he hears the sound of horses and calling, and then the shouting; and then he sees Euryalus, completely overcome physically and mentally, but still putting up some resistance, being hauled away by the enemy.

iv. Nisus to the rescue:

After a moment of reflection (not philosophic, but about the best course of action to take), he prepares to use his spear to attack as best he can, regardless of the odds against him.

Note: his prayer to the Moon, ironically the cause of their present situation, follows the usual prayer pattern: invocation by various names; reasons for expecting favourable answer (here his own devotional offerings to the Moon); and finally the actual request.

Nisus' first throw brings success; Sulmo dies in a graphically gruesome manner.

Thus encouraged, he throws again; Tagus dies; again the sensory details emphasise the brutality of his death.

v. Rutulian reaction:

Furious at this invisible attacker, Volcens intends to use Euryalus as the "scapegoat" to avenge the deaths of his men; he prepares to use his sword on him.

vi. the end of the affair:

Volcens' action, not his words, shocks Nisus into emerging from hiding; in an attempt to save his friend's life, he owns to the killing, and implies that Euryalus' only fault was excess of friendship (ie. he insisted on coming, but is totally innocent) How far do you think Euryalus deserves sympathy - for he is a killer too. Or perhaps more importantly, how well does Vergil make us want to feel sympathy for him?

But it is too late to save him; the fatal blow is already delivered; the young hero dies, to the accompaniment of one of Vergil's finest similes (compare with Homer's simile Iliad 8 306ff and Catullus in poem 11 21 ff for similar comparison in similar circumstances; note the differences as well as the similarities); the pastoral picture of the poppies with drooping heads is very different from the actual manner of Euryalus' death, but catches the mood well.

Nisus in turn seeks to avenge his friend's death by killing Volcens; bursting his way through the mass of the enemy, in a last desperate he buries his sword in the "shouting face" of Volcens before being killed himself.

And after all the noise and rush and blood-shed, the whole episode ends in a kind of restfulness - as "all passion spent", fallen on his friend's corpse, he "at last found peace in a welcoming death". Is Vergil here talking about epic glory or the waste of youthful life?

Interlude: "Fortunate pair . . . dominion yet" (p. 239)

At this point Vergil includes a short address to the two heroes - a kind of invocation, in which he praises them because they are fortunate in their death

and remembered for ever wherever the Roman name is known.

ie. they are examples to be followed for their loyalty to each other, and their courage on behalf of their people, and they are memories to be cherished - for "in death they were not divided".

The epilogue to their story: "The victorious Rutulians (p.239) . . . laid her down" (p. 241)

i. In the Rutulian camp:

The returning Rutulians and those already in camp now discover the carnage that has taken place during the night; by comparison with the description of the actual events, the description of the aftermath is somewhat strained. "brimming river of foaming gore" is overwritten hyperbole without Vergil's customary details that bring it down to earth.

But the real purpose of this discovery scene is not to dwell on what has happened but to lead to the Rutulians' preparations for battle.

Dawn has already arrived in Homeric style, and in the exact words of book 4 583ff; Turnus sets the example for his men; his commanders spread the word of what has happened. And as a crucial visual signal for what will happen next, the heads of the two Trojans are impaled on spear points, and the Rutulians move out of camp, ready to do battle.

ii. In the Trojan camp:

The Trojans prepare to resist, already sad and depressed because they are under siege and still without Aeneas; they now receive the extra blow of seeing "their friends' faces on the spears" - no more needs to be said; they know their mission to Aeneas has failed.

iii. Euryalus' mother hears the news:

She of course is not present when the enemy approach; so it is Rumour who brings her the news (just as Rumour told Dido of her lost love).

Euryalus' mother faints (in much the same way as Andromache when she hears of Hector's death in Iliad 22 448ff)

Note: Vergil here makes subtle cross-references to the grief of other women who have lost loved ones, Dido her loved Aeneas, Andromache her husband; is he perhaps suggesting that women are as vulnerable to the loss of loved ones as Nisus and Euryalus might have been, had one survived? And they have not the "glory" of war to console them, as the heroes had.

Recovering herself physically, but "with mind deranged", Euryalus' mother rushes off to see things for herself, oblivious of danger, and of social decorum, as Vergil realistically comments.

iv. Her lament:

This is expressed in traditional Roman style as she dwells on;

(a) the loss of support for herself in old age

(b) the loss of any chance to say goodbye

(c) her son's loss of proper burial

(d) her own loss of the chance to carry out the proper personal funeral rites

(e) at this point her lament is more individual in style:

she cannot even use the garment she was making him as his shroud instead of for its intended purpose;

she hasn't even got a full body for burial

(f) and she ends with a final plea for her own death, either at the hands of the Rutulians, or, failing that, by Jupiter's thunderbolt (Compare her final pleas with Dido's words in book 4 631 ff; like Dido, she cannot bear the cruelty of living any longer; but she does not die: she has neither the satisfaction of Dido's death nor the good fortune of dying together like her son and his friend) She is a truly pathetic figure, as is underlined, when it is found that her distress is infecting the whole army and sapping their will to fight. She is gently removed from the scene, as Vergil ends the whole episode on a gentle everyday "dying fall" again, leaving the memory not only of wasted youth but of old age left to grieve. Because his words are rhetorical, this does not make the feelings expressed any the less sincere.

Episode 3: Scenes of battle:

Introduction: "But now afar down the stockade" (p. 241)

The fighting starts in earnest now. Turnus' forces, Italians/Rutulians, try to break into the besieged camp in the time-honoured way of attacking at the weakest point.

The Trojans resist fiercely, with traditional weapons and with stones and rocks, even crushing a "tortoise-shell" formation of men (ie. using shields locked together over their heads for protection), and forcing the enemy to withdraw and use long-range missiles instead of making a direct assault on the walls.

But two individuals persist in close attack - Mezentius with fire, and Messapus with scaling ladders. From a general scene Vergil moves to focus on two individuals once again.

Invocation: "O Calliope power to tell" (p241)

But instead of continuing with a description of their exploits, Vergil breaks off his narrative with yet another "aside" - the invocation of the muse of epic poetry, asking her to inspire him to tell of the exploits of Turnus - the story of his "aristeia"/heroic deeds in battle, something typical of Homeric epic narrative where each major hero has his "hour of glory".

Turnus' exploits (part 1): "There was a tower (p241) . . . upon the sand" "p 243)

i. The scene is set, with the action focused on a single area of the besieged camp - a tower which is set on fire by Turnus, the spearhead of the Rutulian attack. The collapse of the tower, the panic and deaths of the men trapped within it are described with simple realism.

ii. Two men only escape:

(a) Helenor is given some personality by his brief biography (a typical epic device).

His predicament as he finds himself in the midst of enemy hordes and his suicidal dash at their lines are highlighted by the splendid simile of the animal at bay, with the instinct of the man and the animal not the details being the essential point of the simile.

(b) Lycus outruns both Helenor and his enemies; he tries to climb back over the wall of the camp, trying to "grip the parapet" and "grasp the hands of his friends".

But there is no escape for him either; Turnus pulls him down (and part of the wall he is clinging to comes with him - another touch of realism) and kills him.

Turnus' taunt at this point, as is much of his personality and the simile comparing him to eagle or wolf, is that of the typical "death or glory" epic hero.

And what looked like escape for two Trojans end in death for them both; the Rutulians are proving themselves no pushovers.

iii. The fighting becomes general again:

Both sides now start to "mix it"; the names of victims are bandied about, again following Homeric example, but this is convention, the names themselves are not important. Turnus however notches up most victims, though we are told no more of them than their names.

But somewhat surprisingly Vergil leaves Turnus and ends the scene of general fighting with another couple of "personalised" incidents:

(a) Capys v. Privernus (who had foolishly dropped his shield to touch his slight wound)

(b) Arcens' son v. Mezentius (who uses a sling-bolt to hit him, David and Goliath fashion, in the forehead)

Ascanius' exploits: "Now it is said (p243)eager though he was to fight" (p 245)

i. Introduction:

This is the opening to the only occasion in which Ascanius plays a real part in the actual fighting; he takes an arrow to kill the boastful and abusive Numanus.

ii. Numanus' speech:

(a) taunts Trojans with cowering behind their walls to avoid fighting, after having the effrontery to take their Rutulian women (exaggeration for effect again!)

(b) compares his people's tough upbringing and hardiness with Trojan effeminacy (the same point as is made by Iarbas in book 4 and by Turnus earlier in this book)- fancy clothes, music and dancing is all the Trojans are good for.

Note: The qualities Numanus boasts of were in fact qualities admired by Roman moralists and were claimed as laying the foundations of Rome's early successes; and they were qualities which Augustus was trying to encourage in his own times. But here Numanus' boasting about them brings instant retribution from the son of the "founder of the Roman race". What then is Vergil's purpose here?

iii. Ascanius in action:

He does all the right things:

his archer's stance

his prayer to Jupiter

his instant reaction when Jupiter gives his sign of approval

even his taunt in the moment of victory is restrained as he merely throw back at Numanus his taunt of "twice-captured Phrygians" and lays stress on the Trojans' chief quality -courage.

iv. Apollo intervenes:

Apollo - or his messengers- intervene frequently in Homeric epic, as he has done already in the Aeneid too.

Almost casually he is introduced here as having happened to see what Ascanius is doing. As a god he applauds his first act of valour, but not to his face. In disguise he warns the excited (indanger of being carried away by his success?) Ascanius not to take any further part in the fighting.

Some of the Trojans (from past experience?) recognise the god as he departs and restrain the eager young Ascanius.

Note: how subtly Vergil makes Apollo slip in and out of his disguise, and in and out of the story.

This Ascanius interlude illustrates one of Vergil's favourite devices- to delay the appearance of an important scene or character, and in doing so provide a contrast with what is to come.

Turnus' exploits (part 2) "Instead they themselves (p246) . . . to his comrades" (p250)

i. Introduction:

General fighting breaks out again - even hand-to-hand fighting as the Trojans advance from their walls. The fighting grows more bitter, and in a weather simile (the kind of simile where Vergil excels in my opinion) the storm of missiles is vividly compared to a rain-or hail-storm.

ii. The giant brothers Pandarus and Bitias now bring the fighting to a head, and the whole scenario becomes larger than life.

Vergil yet again focuses attention on two individuals as these two open the gate where they are in charge - a deliberate challenge to the Rutulians to attack directly.

Note: compare this incident with Iliad 12 127ff for Homer's account of a similar situation.

The two men are impressive guardians of the gate, as the oak-tree simile emphasises. But again Vergil makes his audience wait a little; the fighting is described in general terms again; the list of names is more more than a list of names, there is nothing to give these names personality, as the Rutulians attack, and some Trojans fight to the death, others flee in terror.

But Vergil is gradually building up a picture where even as the Trojans rally and advance, they know they have a real fight on their hands, in numbers and in skill.

iii. Turnus intervenes:

At last Turnus makes his appearance again; having received a message about the situation at the gate, he comes to restore the position "impelled by a giant's fury"; he too will be larger than life.

His first acts are to slaughter his way to the gate in truly Homeric style and language

The climax of this phase of killing comes with the death of Bitias, marked out as something special by (a) the use of a specially powerful javelin

(b) the simile at the close of the description of his death where with Roman imagery the noise and impact of the giant's crushing fall is elaborately stressed.

Then there is a further pause, or delay, in the action, as Vergil uses the epic device of divine intervention, by Mars this time, to describe the way Turnus' men are filled with new courage, while the Trojans have "the demons, Rout and black Panic" unleashed upon them. Is Vergil implying that Turnus is the instrument of Mars here?

And even now Turnus is still sidelined; for the next event described is the way Pandarus, seeing his brother dead, decides to shut the gate again, but only makes the situation worse since he shuts out some of his own side and does not notice that Turnus himself is shut inside "like a monstrous tiger among helpless cattle".

And this is how the terrifying figure of Turnus is reintroduced- everything about him is frightening and larger than life. Pandarus is too angry to be afraid and challenges Turnus by declaring the camp to be no home-from-home for him but an enemy place from which he cannot escape.

Turnus is quite unphased by all this; he calmly accepts the challenge and foretells the outcome, confident enough to regard himself as a "second Achilles".

So at last the single combat between these two massive figures take place; it is really a "no-contest" since Juno uses the wind to divert Pandarus' spear; and Turnus wields his sword with very effective force, splitting his victim's head like a tree-stump.

And the Trojans flee in terror; victory would seem to be in Turnus' own hands.

EXCEPT that Vergil clearly establishes what will be Turnus' downfall - his failure to control his fury and blood-lust (as Aeneas will do with some greater success; for Aeneas is moved to violence by anger on the whole, whereas Turnus is moved by a mad frenzy which he cannot control).

And Turnus misses his chance of victory because he chooses to go on killing instead of smashing the bolts of the gate so as to admit his comrades outside. And so his orgy of killing continues; he is spurred on by Juno, and surprises some victims, meets other head on; again there are no great names - this is wanton killing, not the glory of single combat; only two victims stand out:

Lynceus, whose attack Turnus dismisses "with a flickering sword-slash" that beheads him

Cretheus, the war poet now facing the reality of war in his own death.

iv. Turnus' withdrawal:

Eventually two Trojan leaders, in a series of rhetorical questions, rebuke the Trojans for their failure to stand up to "a single man" - at last bringing this terrifying figure down to size again.

Their words revitalise the Trojans; Turnus is forced to withdraw, like a lion pursued by hunters.

Note: lion similes for heroes are common in Homeric epic; cf. this one with the simile for the retreating Ajax in Iliad 11 544ff.

But Turnus does not give in easily; he charges again at his enemies with some success.

The difference now however is that the Trojans come up to close any gaps; more important still, Jupiter takes a hand, and sends Juno a message forbidding her to go on helping him - or else!

v. Turnus leaves the scene:

Turnus has no major divine antecedents; he is very much "only human"; the picture of his exhausted state must have seemed only too real to the ex-soldiers in Vergil's audience who had survived the terrors of the civil wars.

So, sweaty and grimy, Turnus plunges into the river Tiber, and is carried gently back to his comrades - to fight, refreshed, another day.

Once again at the end of the violence of battle, we have a calm ending for the curtain to come down on - this is a Vergilian, rather than an Homeric trait. And though Vergil may have used Homer for a well, in this book as well as elsewhere in the Aeneid, we can see how he adds his own Roman touches and his own feelings about the waste of war.

Books 10 - 12 SOME INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Books 10 and 12

These are the most bloodthirsty books in the entire poem. In book 10 we see Aeneas at his worst, mad with rage, out of control - the word atrocity comes to mind about some of his actions. In book 12 we see him showing some glimmers of humanity, but in victory, achieved at long last, he does not show Turnus any mercy.

In both books Aeneas is the key human figure, coping with conflict, stress, a broken truce, death and vengeance, all with a background of divine and human "interference". "Such was the cost in heavy toil of beginning the life of Rome" (book 1 p.28)

The Roman/Italian element

1. the Etruscan allies are listed on p.256 -7. Rome had long-standing links with Etruria (situated on the north bank of the river Tiber); at one time Etruscan kings ruled Rome. The places named here are, or were in Vergil's time, real places; Pisae is now the city of Pisa. The people named however are legendary figures. Mantua was traditionally Vergil's birthplace. The details, such as the hairy monster Triton, who gives his name to Aulestes' ship, are as usual introduced to give life to an otherwise rather dull catalogue of names.

2. The oaths taken by Aeneas and Turnus (p 314-5), following the arrangement for sacrifice to ratify the oaths, are typical of the formal Roman oath - calling on every god imaginable, and leaving nothing to chance.

3. In the course of the books there are references to landmarks etc. from time to time eg. Juno watching the situation from the "Alban hill" p 313.

The Role of the Gods

1. From book 10 onwards Jupiter makes his presence felt - for the first time since book 4 he has a major role to play:

(a) He calls a council of the gods (p.251 -254)

A similar council is called in the Iliad, but there Jupiter forbids the gods to take sides. Here he rebukes them for having taken sides. Once again Vergil takes Homer's idea to provide a platform for his own purposes

(i) to introduce debate between Juno and Venus:

Venus is all sweet reasonableness; even agreeing to let Aeneas suffer, provided Ascanius is safe.

Juno is all rhetorical exaggeration: the Trojans are the troublemakers not me.

(ii) to stress Jupiter's impartiality: "The Fates will find the way."

(b) During the Pallas "aristeia" episode (p.262 -5): following some success in battle, Pallas finds himself facing Turnus (a potential David and Goliath act) and prays to Hercules, his father's guest friend and now deified, for victory. Hercules cannot grant the prayer, for Pallas' fate is settled, and weeps for him. Jupiter, Hercules' own father, sympathises, for Jupiter too has been unable to prevent the death of his son Sarpedon,

Vergil makes it clear that Jupiter, however much he sympathises with men's suffering, cannot stand in the way of fate.

(c) Following the end of the siege, Jupiter mockingly calls Juno's attention to the Trojan success; on this occasion she responds not with indignant rhetoric, but with humility and a request for pity for Turnus. Jupiter cannot prevent his death, but allows a "stay of execution" - no more than that. He has a greater realisation of the limits of his powers than she has (p 269 -70)

(d) Aeneas and Turnus finally meet in single combat (p.331). Jupiter takes the scales of destiny; again this is imitation of Homer, but unlike Homer, Vergil does not tell us the result of the weighing; we already know it.

(e) Soon after this Jupiter discusses with Juno a way out of the impasse: destiny is fixed; she implacably resists it. Destiny stands, but a compromise is reached which satisfies Juno: the name of Troy will not continue; it will be Latium, the Latins, and the Italians who will be the moulders and forerunners of Roman greatness. This important linking of Rome with the peoples of Italy is summed up by Jupiter at the top of p.335.

(f) Finally Jupiter acts himself to resolve the struggle; he sends a Fury in a two-pronged attack on Turnus and his sister Juturna; the Fury brings despair, almost a kind of death-wish, as Turnus stares defeat in the face.

2. Juno - apart from her involvement in the Jupiter scenes - acts twice:

(a) she creates a phantom Aeneas to lure Turnus from battle p 270 and sets him adrift in his ship.

(b) she summons Juturna, Turnus' sister, - a water nymph and therefore an Italian deity - to delay the inevitable (p.313)

Note: the first incident is inspired by a similar "phantom" in Homer; the second shows the Olympian goddess combining forces with a native divinity.

3. Similarly Venus - apart from the Council of the gods scene - appears more in the guise of a supernatural aid worker than as a powerful goddess (as in book 2)

(a) she miraculously cures Aeneas' wound (p.321) - with a healing herb

(b) she prompts Aeneas to attack the city (p.326) - producing a new idea

(c) she pulls Aeneas' spear out of the olive tree stump (p.3330) - with superhuman strength

All quite impressive tricks; but Jupiter is really the god in action - Jupiter Optimus Maximus

Note the role of the supernatural in particular: in Italy the supernatural is in the hands of nature spirits, nymphs and river deities, such as the Tiber, or a god of woods and woodland creatures like Faunus. Increasingly their miraculous interventions are linked with those of the anthropomorphic divinities. In addition to the above we can consider the prayer to Faunus, and the nymphs who give Aeneas a helping hand

The Fighting

1. The siege (p.255) a brief general picture, with a few names thrown in; with Ascanius looking especially lovely (= an amazing recommendation in the circumstances!)

2. Aeneas arrives, with Tarchon and his Etruscans; he raises his shield as a signal (p.259); it gives new hope to the Trojans.

Note: the whole battery of descriptive similes; and the brilliant colour of Aeneas' appearance

Turnus is undeterred; he rallies his men with an impressive appeal to courage, patriotism and love of family. Aeneas himself could not have spoken better.

3. The "aristeia" of Aeneas: he kills a number of assorted enemies, most of whom are given a few memorable words of description as their epitaph (largely irrelevant, as in details of local newspaper reports)

4. Young Pallas now comes into the picture, leading his Arcadians by example, as they fight dismounted, though cavalrymen. Again Vergil records some interesting ways of killing and some interesting details about the victims, notably the treatment given to the twins on p.263.

On the Rutulian/Latin side Lausus makes his first appearance; he is given credit for being a magnificent young fighter; it looks as if he and Pallas might meet in single combat, but Vergil swerves aside from this with a hint of what is to come (p.264)

5. The Pallas Turnus fight:

This is very important for the insight it gives into Turnus' character. His first remarks (top of p.265) are reminiscent of the impious Pyrrhus in book 2). Pallas refuses to back down, in a youthful death or glory pose; he offers a prayer, and does his best but can only wound Turnus. Turnus strikes home, and Pallas, pulling the spear from his chest, bleeds to death. Once again Turnus makes a self-revealing comment: a scornful return of the corpse to his father; and crucially he takes as his prize Pallas' sword belt; the significance of this to the plot is underlined by Vergil's words at the bottom of p.266.

7. Aeneas now goes berserk; in sorrow for Evander's loss as much as for the death of Pallas, he behaves with the violence and fury that we expect of Turnus:

(i) he mows down every enemy within reach

(ii) he takes captives for human sacrifice - a barbaric practice (even if derived from Homer's account of Achilles offering human sacrifice at the tomb of Patroclus)

(iii) he ignores a plea for mercy from Magus

(iv) he kills a priest of Apollo Haemonides, he abuses his victims, sneers at Lucagus.

"His rage was the rage of a mountain torrent or black tornado" as he seeks to fight Turnus.

But it is not time to meet him yet; Juno lures Turnus with the "wraith of a nervous Aeneas in flight".

7. The Mezentius episode:

He is compared to a boar, and to a ravenous lion. He is a giant of a man, but Aeneas attacks him and wounds him (meanwhile the gods are watching "sad that men doomed to die in any case should suffer ordeals so terrible").

Mezentius' son Lausus intervenes to save his father; he ignores Aeneas' warning and is killed. The sight of the young boy, dying because of his love for his father, brings Aeneas to his senses. He speaks to the dead boy with compassion, returns him and his armour to his family - unlike Turnus with Pallas. Once again Aeneas is in control of his emotions; the final fight with Mezentius is standard epic stuff!

The final battle:

We look at it through the eyes of Turnus; for it is the last two books that shed most light on his character, through direct description, his actions, and his reactions to what others say (and what they say about him too on occasion)

The preliminaries: In his meeting with Pallas (p.265-6) he shows himself arrogant and impious.

After realising he has been chasing a ghost (p.271-2) he is so ashamed that he attempts suicide: a typically violent reaction to a feeling of personal affront.

The run-up to single combat: the Latins are losing (p.309) but Turnus is undaunted, still spotting for a fight; his words bear out the description of his emotions and the simile which underlines them.

Latinus' speech, with its implied rebuke, and references to prophecies, his own personal weakness of attitude, the heavy losses of the Latins, and the possibility of Turnus' death over a mere girl, does nothing to curb Turnus; he grows even more restive for the fight

Amata's plea that he should not risk his life and Lavinia's blushes have the opposite effect from that intended: immediate single combat is what Turnus wants; he is implacable, and, as is suggested for the first time, driven to distraction by his love for the modest Lavinia. This is who he is really fighting for.

a couple of paragraphs describe them dressing for battle.

Turnus is in a "mad mood" abusive like Iarbas to the "foreigner"; like a bull ready to charge.

Aeneas in contrast is in "grim mood"; angry but still with times to think of others, his commanders and Iulus.

the terms of the single combat are arranged: Turnus has nothing to say about them; Aeneas makes a generous offer for the future, should he win as he hopes; but the truce is broken as the Rutulians are alarmed for the chances of their young leader (bottom p.315). After a brief skirmish, it is Aeneas the True who tries in vain to stop the general fighting, and claiming his responsibility for entering battle alone - and getting wounded for his pains.

With Aeneas out of the way, it is Turnus' turn to go berserk, behaving like Mars, with his dread attendants. But as soon as Aeneas returns, his wound healed, Juturna plays her part, highlighted by the swallow simile, in keeping them apart. So we have an orgy of killing while they are looking for each other.

Further delays to their meeting occur - the attack on the city (complete with simile); Amata's suicide; Latinus' dazed grief; the discovery of Juturna's identity by Turnus.

Note the dignified way Turnus accepts the inevitable; no recriminations; sorrow for lost comrades; no mention of Lavinia; a resolve to die bravely - like a hero in fact.

The arrival of Saces with all the latest news confirms what Turnus already partly knew.. The description of his confused emotions (bottom p.329) sums him up; he resolves to act with honour, but still uncontrolled, as the boulder simile implies. Aeneas on the other hand is solid as a mountain.

At last the single combat:

They are compared to bulls; soon after Turnus' sword breaks - he had grabbed up a poor one because he was over-hasty.

~~But the battle owes much to Homer: the scales of Jupiter; Aeneas chases Turnus as Achilles chased Hector; onlookers can't join in; the prize is for the life of the loser, no less; the loser is like a man in a dream; loser begs for mercy, but does not receive it because he is wearing a piece of armour with sentimental meaning for the winner. Where Achilles was Turnus, Aeneas was Hector - the roles are reversed. Turnus is left numb by the appearance of the Fury; but his reply to Aeneas' challenge (p.336) is dignified, as is the graceful way he concedes victory at the end.~~

It is Aeneas who acts without pity; the reference to Pallas is crucial; we need to remember the way Vergil treated Turnus' treatment of Pallas, with its wilful cruelty, and the way he handled Aeneas' treatment of Lausus. Under stress Turnus cracks, Aeneas cracks less frequently.

THEMES OF BOOK 10

this book may seem to be a mixture of short episodes centred round vicious fighting usually with Aeneas at the centre; but from the confusion of battle certain aspects stand out

1. Vergil's debt to Homer:

e.g. the council of the gods

the epic concept of battle: single combat, with each corpse getting a brief epitaph.

single combat between major figures is always significant for future fights > there an escalation of ranking heroes in battle - lesser figures are gradually eliminated until the Final Battle when the HERO comes to the rescue/ triumphs in the nick of time.

2. Vergil's own contribution to Roman epic writing:

i. the innocence and vulnerability of the young untried "hero".

ii. the national links with Italy.

iii. the conflict of reason and emotion - in men and gods.

iv. the concept of pietas ; no-one lacks it completely (even Mezentius); even Aeneas lapses at times.

For Vergil's characters are not merely "heroic" in the epic sense; they are human.

v. the deliberate leading up to a climax which turns out to be an anti-climax; we have the sucker punches before the killer punch (both on a small scale and as part of the larger plan of the Aeneid)

vi. his own comments on situations and the realities of war - directly by parenthesis, and indirectly by his choice of adjectives/similes/setting.

BOOK 11 A BRIEF SUMMARY

This book is a pause before the final storm; it builds up tension in readiness for the final duel.

1. The burial of the dead takes place - by both sides during a six-day truce; the whole period of mourning is typified by the funeral of one man-Pallas.

His father Evander cries for vengeance; Aeneas offers single combat to obtain it.

2. The debate among the Latins - Turnus wants war; Diomedes and Latinus urge peace; eventually Drances (a minor figure except for this crucial suggestion) suggests single combat - the fight to be a fight over Lavinia. Turnus declares himself willing to fight such a single combat.

3. The exploits of Camilla - "young men and maidens come to dust" - another, and unusual, interlude of fighting which further delays the final show-down. Why include this here - or alternatively, why not? given that Vergil has been introducing similar sorts of passing subplots all through the Aeneid.

4 Eventually Aeneas and Turnus meet - but only to stop the fighting for the night!

In many ways this book sets things up for the final denouement of Book 12.

THE COUNCIL OF THE GODS:

(paras. 1- 5 "Meanwhile the gateway escorted him to the threshold")

1. Jupiter summons a council of the gods (similar is the opening of Iliad Book 8); Vergil presents the council meeting in debate form.

The debate is opened by Jupiter - he is brief and direct:

- i. he rebukes the gods for disobedience to his will that Italians should not fight Trojans.
(general rebuke but intended for Juno and Venus, who have caused the troubles)
- ii. he questions their rebellion and fears -rhetorical questions, and audience knows answers too.
- iii. he reminds them that the coming of the Carthaginians over the Alps will set Italians against Trojans' descendants; their rivalry must wait till then
- iv. he demands that their fighting should stop; the peace he has willed must be.

2. Venus replies at some length in a carefully worked out piece of Latin rhetoric, combining logic and emotion:

- i. Opening invocation - direct address to Jupiter, plus a complement to him
- ii. Set out the facts - Trojans under siege (in Roman style camp "walled earthworks")
Aeneas not there, unaware of what's happening
And still threats from a Greek source.
- iii. Adds reminder of personal danger to herself, Jupiter's daughter
- iv. Sets out argument as to what is the will of Jupiter - this is the crux of her speech:
if it is to destroy the Trojans, then so be it - let them suffer.
if it is to see them in a new homeland, then so be it - let no-one prevent them.
- v. Indignantly recapitulates their sufferings in Sicily and in Italy (she does not mention Africa); brings in the work of Juno and Allecto (all this a useful recap for audience too)
- vi. She makes her appeal - moderate and subtle- appealing not for Aeneas, but for Ascanius' future (thus hoping to wrong-foot Juno?)
- vii. Emotional climax, introduced by rhetorical questions - what has been gained by all this suffering? The Trojans might as well have stayed in Troy to suffer.

3. Juno's reply is all invective and passion spoken without due order in "frantic hate". She makes an angry retort to Venus, forced into revealing her bitterness in words at last. This is not a structured speech; Juno merely picks up some of Venus' speech to make four main points:

- i. Don't blame me for Aeneas' sufferings. (She dwells on his actions in Italy -the place that matters)
- ii. Why shouldn't Turnus defend his country and his rights (Another chance for some recapping with incidents of plunder (the shooting of the fawn) and seduction (Lavinia's transfer from Turnus to Aeneas)-being dramatically exaggerated)
- iii. You help the Trojans; why shouldn't I help Turnus?
- iv. Stop interfering: you have caused enough trouble (goes back to the origins of the Trojan war ie. the first cause of all the trouble but one rather remote from the immediate situation! She does not of course mention her own role in all the trouble making from start to finish)

The speeches of the two goddesses clearly represent the opposition between Reason and Emotion. Neither of them get the better of it, as Jupiter's concluding speech will show.

4. At the end of the two speeches, the council of the gods is undecided - the simile suggests a storm is imminent.

5. Jupiter replies in a great hush - his words will indeed be momentous.

He refuses to take sides "I shall make no discrimination" whatever the background circumstances to the combatants because

- i. there is no agreement either between the men involved or between the gods.
- ii. "To each man shall his own free actions bring both his suffering and his good fortune. Jupiter is impartially king over all alike. The Fates will find the way."

The council then ends with this striking statement of the position of Jupiter and the Fates.

THE SIEGE CONTINUES

(paras 6-7 "Meanwhile the Rutulians derives its name".

6. The siege is going badly for the Trojans; "pent within their stockade without hope of escape", they resist as best they can.

Various heroes are listed in Homeric style -but to us, and to most Romans?, about as gripping as the telephone directory.

7. However after the tedium of this list of names, Ascanius is brought to our attention, in the thick of battle but looking rather like a fashion plate. The sheer quantity of verse describing his beauty makes him stand out from other other warriors who surround him (and provide occasional links with contemporary Italy).

Why this appearance? He is not fighting (Apollo forbade it in book 9). Is it just another reminder of Aeneas' heir apparent?

BACK TO AENEAS - AND HIS NEW ALLIES.

(paras 8 -13. "So had the two armies cleaving the level brine.")

8. Night falls and Aeneas is on his way back to camp after his visit to Tarchon (link here with book 8).

The background to this visit is rapidly summarised; Tarchon's agreement is briskly mentioned.

So the destined "Foreign leader" gains his allies and they sail for the Trojan camp.

Note: the appearance of the other young man Pallas, all eager curiosity about the stars and Aeneas's adventures - a striking contrast with trouble-hardened Aeneas.

9. A traditional invocation to the Muses as Vergil embarks on a list of the Etruscan heroes(as we have seen before, links between Etruscans and Romans had existed from earliest times)

10. The first section of the list - Massicus and his followers; the list is given a little more than geographical interest by references to weapons and numbers, and the details of a seer's work and "tools".

11. The second section of the list - enlivened by the story of Cycnus' transformation into a swan.

12. The final section of the list - based on the city of Mantua - Vergil's home city.

Yet again the name of Mezentius occurs; and the whole list ends with a couple of vivid word-pictures - the "tree-trunk oars . . . lashing the waves" and the "merman" Triton.

13. Vergil brings the list formally to an end in somewhat strained Alexandrian epic language - artificial and forced, and too clever by half.

AENEAS RETURNS

(paras 14-15 "And now day had withdrawn a menace over all the sky.")

14. We are reminded that it is still night; Aeneas is typically sharing in the work and still worrying about the future; he has always been a "hands-on" leader.

Now he moves centre-stage again; he is brought up-to-date about the situation by one of the nymphs Cymodoce(remember that nymphs "nature-spirits" were the divinities of original inhabitants of Italy)

i. the transformation of the ships

ii. the difficulties faced by the besieged, especially Ascanius.

iii. the need for a rescue act, first from her, and then from Aeneas.

15. Aeneas is mystified, but obedient

His first act is prayer to Cybele (mother-goddess of Asiatic -the Troy area - goddess of fertility, oracle-giver; the protector and destroyer ie. many of the characteristics of the Greek gods combined in one).

By now dawn has broken; and it is time for action.

Aeneas gives the commands that prepare his men for battle mentally and practically.

He signals with his shield to his beleaguered comrades from his ship; their hopes raised, they cast a volley of spears (the accompanying simile is very like Iliad 3 line2 ff)

The Rutulians, presumably with their backs to the oncoming fleet are puzzled until they turn round and see the fleet almost on them.

The section ends with Aeneas dominating the whole scene - bright but dangerous (note the similes)

BATTLE IS JOINED

(para 16 -19 "But the daring of Turnus in the press")

16. Turnus - not unnerved; confident; gives standard type of military pep-talk:

ie. You can win

Remember hearth and home and ancestors

Sieze the initiative

Fortune favours those who dare" (cf. "Who dares wins" -S.A.S. motto)

Cf. his words with those of Aeneas offering encouragement at various times.

Moreover Turnus, Vergil tells us, can think on his feet - an admirable leader in many ways.

17. Now we see what Aeneas is doing - sensibly using gangways to disembark his men; meanwhile Tarchon prefers the symbolic gesture of beaching his ships.

His own ship is wrecked in the process- the first hitch in the allies' plans - and a further chance for Vergil to describe a ship-wreck (wrecks and wrecking at sea seem to have fascinated the ancients- they pop up all over the place)

18. Now back to Turnus -he is "vigourous and quick acting".

But Aeneas leads the charge in counter-attack.

And from the early emphasis on the actions and attitudes of the leaders, we move on to multiple killing, Homeric style: named victims are set up like targets for the "heroes" to cut down,

Vergil adds a little individuality to each victim however, with some detail that sets some mark of personality or memorability on them as they have their five minutes of fame:

e.g Lichas - cut from his dead mother's womb.

Pharus - all mouth and no action.

19. So the fighting continues - the Italians fight back.

The hand-to-hand fighting is summed up pictorially by the simile at the end of the paragraph which then leads to a general statement - as if the close-ups are faded out into a distant picture of the *melee*.

PALLAS v. TURNUS

(paras 20 -24 "Elsewhere on the field vast piles of Rutulian slain")

20. Change of opponents signalled by change of scene - with realistic detail as to the formation of the rough ground (the voice of the countryman's experience?)

The rough ground has forced the Arcadian cavalry to dismount; they are in retreat..

Now we hear the voice of Pallas rallying his men -using entreaties, taunts, and trying to inspire them with his own ambition, his leadership, and sheer necessity to fight their way out of their situation.

21. Pallas is not just a talker; he leads the charge into battle.

This section recalls the way Aeneas behaves a little earlier as Pallas dispatches his victims one by one; each victim carefully made into an individual for his moment of history; note especially the identical twins made pathetically different at last.

22. It is Pallas' exploits, rather than his words, which eventually fire the Arcadians with courage - something strikingly brought out by the unusual simile of a shepherd lighting brushwood at different points until the blaze catches all around.

But Pallas is checked temporally by Halaesus; when Halaesus is killed, he is replaced by a greater man Lausus, who in his turn is to be replaced by a still greater man.

ie, the contest between Pallas and Lausus never takes place; both are destined for death but at the hands of heroes for whom they will be no match in skill or experience.

But their aborted contest prefigures the coming contest between the two great and evenly matched heroes, Aeneas and Turnus; their contest often will appear to be a non-starter; but unlike the Pallas/Lausus fight, it will eventually take place.

All that has happened in this section has been the build-up to the Turnus/Pallas contest. Each little battle is the forerunner of a bigger battle- there are always significant similarities, and equally significant differences, as the personalities involved are more important and the stakes become higher.

23. Turnus now re-enters the scene; and takes Lausus' place (Lausus, you remember is Mezentius's son)

He claims the right to meet Pallas in single combat.

Note: his impious desire to kill son before his father's eyes - a touch of Pyrrhus in him here?

As for Pallas, he is illmatched with Turnus (who is made symbolically huge) - and knows it.

Yet he faces the challenge boldly - like a true Homeric hero, he wants either fame and the spoils of battle or a glorious death (a young idealist perhaps?)

The lion v. bull simile highlights the difference between them - Turnus the lion who "darts down", and the bull "practising for combat".

Sensibly Pallas (he may be idealistic but he's not a fool) tries to take the initiative - knowing he needs luck and nerve if he's to have any chance at all; and true to his religious upbringing he prays to Hercules for victory - a prayer that can't be granted.

24. Hercules is filled with grief that he cannot grant the prayer.

Note the response of Jupiter (Hercules' father) to his grief:

He comments on the shortness of life, but memories exist as the result of deeds.

He can sympathise because he too has lost a son in battle - Sarpedon (See Iliad 16 430 ff)

Pallas' time has come - but Turnus is doomed too.

Then Jupiter turns away and does not look - why?

Now we get back to the actual fighting after this little interlude.

Pallas makes an ineffectual strike; then Turnus delivers the death blow - all with a wealth of realistic detail, particularly the actual death where Pallas makes the mistake of pulling the weapon from his wound and so, bleeding to death.

Note two actions by Turnus:

i. He offers the body for burial - reveals his character but how do you interpret his words "I return to him such a Pallas as he deserves"? Is it admiration or a sneer?

ii. He takes Pallas' sword belt - elaborately described; it matters that we remember it as it is vital to the plot later on.

Unusually at the end of this section Vergil makes two "personal interventions":

i. he comments on men's blindness to fate, the way they let success go to their heads > hubris

ii. he comments of the grief and the pride Pallas' father will feel.

How does all this square with the way Vergil appears to think elsewhere? (very hard question!)

AENEAS v. EVERYONE HE MEETS.

(paras 25 - 29. "And now there came flying up The siege had failed")

25. The news - not rumour this time - reaches Aeneas:

the "bitter blow" of Pallas' death - being Aeneas, he will feel responsible

the Trojans in desperate trouble - they are without him and Ascanius (his "Pallas") is there.

"The news set Aeneas ablaze" > sets off a train of violent killing as he goes in search of Turnus, remembering all the time Pallas and his father Evander.

Aeneas will show no mercy now; this part of the action (if not all the speeches) are very reminiscent of the bloodthirsty parts of the Iliad.

Note: the appeal of Magus to family and status, plus the unimportance of one man's life, is rejected out of hand. Aeneas puts the entire blame on Turnus; and argues that family feeling confirms his attitude. Is this fair comment on Aeneas' part?

26. The slaughter continues; but note a couple of instances where "pietas" seems far from Aeneas' attitude and behaviour:

i. He kills a priest of Apollo - quite deliberately when he trips over.

ii. He jeers at the dead Tarquinius, refusing him burial and ending with the "curse" of non-burial. (compare the wording with Iliad 21 122 ff)

27. The orgy of killing continues: Aeneas is even prepared to take on a four-horse team, but fortunately for them the horses take fright and bolt (note how Vergil does try to introduce a little variety into his killing scenes)

So instead he faces a two-horse, two man chariot, with two brothers as driver and fighter.

The scene is vividly described; as one dying brother is flung from the chariot, Aeneas taunts him in a manner possibly/supposedly "modelled" on Iliad 16 742 ff.

What we have here in fact, though, is "Aeneas the True" completely pitiless, offering unmerited abuse and ignoring pleas for mercy - another side of the hero and a foretaste of what is to come?

28. The rage of Aeneas is uncontrolled and uncontrollable - as the similes imply.
("rage" here is a kind of frenzy - the Latin word "furor" almost means madness)
Meanwhile Ascanius (now grown up?) and his men have broken out of their beleaguered camp.
"The siege had failed."

DIVINE INTERVENTION

(para 29 "During these events to a better end."

The purpose of this short section is I think:

- i. to provide a break from the fighting
- ii. to provide the background for the "will o' the wisp" image which will act as a decoy (a popular theme in epic - in the Iliad Apollo makes such an image of Aeneas)
- iii. to set up a "delay" or hold-up to the eventual meeting of Turnus and Aeneas; in the last part of the Aeneid, they are constantly on the brink of combat; then something happens to prevent it - until the last time!

Jupiter sarcastically calls Juno's attention to Trojan success > an inverted way of saying how brave the Trojans are.

Juno meekly now:

- i. bewails the fact that she cannot persuade him to show Turnus some pity.
- ii. declares herself ready to accept Turnus' death in spite of his virtue, birth, and religious devotion.

Jupiter allows her to engineer a reprieve from immediate death for Turnus - but she has to understand that his death and the outcome of the war are inevitable.

Juno accepts the offer of a reprieve for him - but with yet another "if only".

TURNUS v. THE PHANTOM

(paras 30-31 "Having spoken so . . . his father Daunus."

30. Juno descends to earth and fashions "a wisp of a shadow" "into the shape of Aeneas"; she creates a kind of automaton phantom replica of him.

The phantom lures Turnus on - in "delusive hope"; and takes refuge from his pursuit and jeers, on an Etruscan ship, with Turnus in reckless pursuit.

Once Turnus is on board, Juno cuts the cable and the ship is swept out to sea.

31. After a reminder that Aeneas is still looking for the missing Turnus, we return at once to Turnus himself who is now drifting out to sea.

The phantom disappears; Turnus is left in a state of bewilderment:

- i. He can't understand what has happened to him
- ii. He is overcome with shame at having deserted his comrades.
- iii. He contemplates suicide - "deluded hope" has become despair.

Finally his triple attempts at suicide are foiled by Juno, and he drifts back to his home city.

THE MEZENTIUS EPISODE.

(paras 32 - end of book) "In the meantime . . . upon his arms."

Mezentius has been waiting in the wings for a long time; at last we see the anticipated villain in action. This is the last big single combat before the "top of the bill" one. It's a kind of digression or sub-plot, another "delay" before the big climax fight; the bloodthirsty fighting would appeal to the bloodthirsty in the audience, the echoes of Homer to the literati, and to students of Aeneas it would shed some more light on a character becoming more complex by the page - Vergil is providing something for everyone in this tremendous "set-piece".

32. Mezentius is now involved in the fighting - the target of all who hated him. The similes used to describe him are revealing - he is like a rock in seething waters; he is like a boar pursued by snapping hounds, standing at bay and roaring defiance: he deals death in all directions "dauntless and assured" - a villain but a brave villain

33. More killing here; this time Mezentius is compared to a opportunist lion as he kills Acron and Orodes - courage not cunning his method. And he is indifferent to the warning of his own doom to come - is this pride, presumption, or courage?

34. This paragraph opens with a generalised description of the fighting - again a kind of summary of all the little "close-ups". The gods watch in pity for "the pointless fury of both sides, sad that men,

doomed in any case to die, should suffer ordeals so terrible".

Then the two men prepare to meet.

Mezentius puts his faith only in his own fighting skills (elsewhere he is called "scorner of the gods"); and declares his intention to make his son in Aeneas' armour the "trophy" for his victory instead of offering a trophy to the gods: ie. he is impious towards the gods in words and intention.

The customary exchange of spears follows:

AENEAS'

Mezentius' spear glances off Achilles' shield to hit an unfortunate comrade - the equivalent of being hit by a stray bullet - typical of Vergil to show the innocent suffering by merely being there. He is not even a Trojan, but one of Evander's exiled Greeks who remembers his former home in Greece as he dies - so Vergil, in passing, piles on the pathos and reveals what he thinks of war (in my opinion, anyway).

Aeneas then throws his spear - with greater success; he pierces Mezentius' thick shield and wounds him in the groin, thus impaling him to his shield.

Vergil uses the moment to introduce Lausus; he does not linger on Mezentius' reaction, but tells us of Lausus' concern for the father he loved. We are further prepared for the Lausus v. Aeneas fight by the parenthetical praise of the brave but doomed youth.

35. Mezentius is "hampered and helpless"; but his son intervenes; as Aeneas is about to kill his father, Lausus intercepts the blow.

Their allies then provide "covering fire" with a rain of spears. Aeneas is furious - robbed of his prey and faced with counter-attack; he is forced to take cover, to the accompaniment of a highly appropriate (and typically Italian) weather simile.

Aeneas tries to warn Lausus off with stern words; but "Lausus persisted in his insane challenge". Even more enraged, Aeneas with a single blow strikes him down in the softest most vulnerable area. Lausus stands no chance - note how Vergil stresses his youth and his inadequate armour for such a match.

But the sight of the boy's dying face awakes pity in Aeneas - he can (once the blood-lust is satisfied?) recognise pietas and a son's love for his father.

Thus he refrains from taking his armour, returns the body for burial; by his words and actions shows respect for Lausus' courage (compare the last words to Lausus with his earlier ones to him)

So Aeneas is again - for the moment - the True.

36. Now we return to Mezentius - and see the better side of him.

Though sick with his wound, he keeps sending anxious messages to Lausus to call him back from battle; but when he does return, he is "lifeless on a shield".

His father reproaches himself for causing his death and for ruining his earlier life because of the way he (Mezentius) has behaved)

A brave villain - and one who cares at least for his son.

37. Weakened by his wound, scarcely able to walk, Mezentius sends for his horse his "valiant friend"; and swear that they (ie. horse and himself) will either avenge Lausus' death or die in the attempt.

As he rides off to do battle again, Vergil writes an epitaph for him in the sentence beginning "In that one heart together . . .", Should/can villains have their good points? Vergil would seem to think so.

Mezentius challenges Aeneas to single combat - Aeneas accepts it gladly with an appeal to the gods; but the next words of Mezentius reveal not only his courage but his lack of respect for any god.

The ensuing scene with Aeneas used for target practice with his shield stuck full of spears sounds more like circus than battle. This grotesque - almost fairy tale part of the story (note the repeated "three times") - episode contrasts strongly with the realistic description of the horse's death, with Mezentius pinned under him with a broken shoulder.

38. Aeneas taunts the unconscious man; regaining consciousness, Mezentius makes no apology, asks no pity; he only asks for a decent burial with his son and accepts the death-blow without flinching.

Hated tyrant, scorner of the gods, yet permitted by Vergil to have one redeeming feature - a mutual love and respect between his son and himself - a glimmer of pietas.

You can read the Mezentius episode in many ways - mere blood and thunder or as an allegory. Vergil, I believe, writes for many levels of reader and interpretation. The images come so thick and fast in the Latin that the mind can only pick up a few at a time; given that our thoughts are preconditioned by previous "experience" and that we hear what we want to hear, Vergil provokes ideas.

Aeneid Book 11

This, the penultimate book of the Aeneid, "clears the ground" in readiness for the final conflict, so long threatened, between Aeneas and Turnus.

Book 10 began with a council of the gods which Jupiter concludes by declaring that Destiny/Fate must take its course; the council of human leaders in book 11 will eventually lead to the decision that will enable Fate to take its course, all obstacles at last overcome.

Book 10 is full of death; we see Aeneas at his most brutal, filled with blood-lust at Pallas' death, refusing burial, rejecting pleas, threatening human sacrifice; and we see him deal with the impious villain Mezentius in a kind of "trial run" for his final battle with Turnus. And though we see him momentarily touched by pity for his son Lausus, we feel no surprise when Mezentius facing death addresses him a "pitiless enemy". In Book 11 Aeneas will redeem this primitive and merciless image, and show himself to be a Roman hero who knows how to "show mercy to the conquered" (book 6 p.173), and not a violent Homeric hero in the Greek Epic tradition.

In previous books we have seen how Aeneas has overcome all hindrances to his progress - notably by Dido in Book 4; in the story of Camilla, another woman - a warrior this time, not a lover, - seeks to stop the Trojans' progress; again there is failure; his death is the indirect means of Aeneas' escape from ambush - a parallel to his escape from Africa?

So Book 11 falls into three main sections loosely linked together, with the Italian background to the action a dominant feature of each section:

1. the burial of the dead
2. councils of war
3. the exploits of Camilla.

Section 1:

The burial of the dead: "The morrow's rising dawn a mound of the still-warm earth" p.285

The introduction: The book opens with a new day - the morning after the bloodshed of battle. Aeneas is faced with the aftermath. At once he is revealed in a different light from his furious and scornful treatment of Mezentius. As before at the start of book 8 he was torn by his anxieties "his whole heart distracted by the horror of war", so now too the consequences of that horror burden him. He is anxious to offer the dead the burial that is their due; there is the same preoccupation with proper burial that pervades the later books of the Iliad as Homer brings some sense of human decency to the brutality of the killing scenes of the earlier Heroic tradition.

But though Aeneas' first thought is for the burial of the dead - and its importance had been brought home to him in Book 6, in the Misene and Palinurus episodes -, even more important was the performance of ritual gratitude to the gods for the victory.

Scene 1:

So, faced with two duties, the obligation to bury the dead and the obligation to fulfil his vows to the god, in spite of his own inclinations, Aeneas carries out the latter duty first - as Roman ritual in fact demanded.

He sets up a "trophy" - a memorial or monument formed from the arms of the defeated enemy at the actual scene of battle - to the god of war ie. Mars; he dresses, as it were, an oak trunk in the armour and arms of his recent victim Mezentius.

This is a "physical" and tangible link with the previous book;
and an object lesson for what follows - a "pep-talk" to his captains.

This typically short speech makes three main points:

- i. Success has been achieved - observe the "model" the token of victory.
- ii. Now build on that success - take on the Latins.
- iii. Be prepared, be resolute, be bold, be swift.

These words are a far cry from Aeneas' earlier uncertainties and from the reckless rages of book 2 and book 10. Here again we see another aspect of Aeneas' growing maturity.

The conclusion to his speech moves us on to focus the attention on Pallas, the symbol of "doomed youth", and of paternal grief, whose death will reveal Aeneas both as a man of pity and a man of retribution. Aeneas' words here serve as a link to the next scene - where Pallas' body - and the ritual of mourning - is the focal point.

Scene 2

Part 1: The stage is set. Pallas is "lying in state", watched over by the ^{faithful} ~~family~~ family retainer Acoetes, and representatives of his own people, Trojans, both men and women -there to fulfil the obligations of formal mourning for the dead.

Part 2: Aeneas enters- at once our attention is focused on Pallas - pale in death and youthful innocence, his gaping wound showing he died facing his enemy.

Still focused on Pallas, Aeneas gives the equivalent of the funeral oration; as before he makes three main points:

1. emotionally he speaks of his personal grief, particularly that Pallas does not share in his victory

(Once again Fortune has proved fickle to the long-suffering Aeneas)

2. quickly he moves on to speak of Evander's grief, the failure of his promises to him; the fulfillment of Evander's apprehensions; the thought that Evander may still be praying for his son's safety - as ineffectually as the "ineffectual honour" Aeneas offers Pallas

(Here Aeneas in his sympathy for the bereaved father shows yet again that he is himself a true father-figure. Earlier, in the Lausus episode, he had seen "his own love for his father" reflected in Lausus (p.276); now he sees his own love as a father reflected in his sympathetic words about Evander's grief)

3. He closes his "eulogy" with words of praise for the soldier son who has died with honour, together with reference to the loss felt by his companions.

(the eulogy proper end with a reference to Iulus - Aeneas knows how vulnerable the eager young are; and it could easily have been Iulus lying there - Vergilian irony/sense of mortality?)

The whole speech is formal, yet personal too; fitted to a royal and a family occasion of mourning.

As with his earlier speech in this book, Aeneas' final words here signals the move into the next part of the scene - the preparation for the return of Pallas' body to his father.

Part 3: This part reads almost like an account of a Roman triumph, with the escort of a 1000 men, the captives and spoils of battle, but it is a triumph that is no triumph - only the superficial details suggest triumph; for the details that are highlighted are clearly of a funeral procession:

- i. Pallas lies on a rustic bier - a homely touch (familiar from Vergil's own experience?)

- ii. The simile of the casually plucked flower is a cliché made most moving by Vergil's precise details - he retains the rustic touch here too, and like our expression "nipped in the bud" it suggests life snuffed out, almost before it has started.

- iii. Pallas is wrapped in garments embroidered by Dido - mere coincidence/ a decorative reminder of Dido/ symbolic of the fact that this is the end of another episode which has brought death to one whom Aeneas loved and lost in the pursuit of his destiny?

- iv. Pallas does not ride - his war horse walks behind him "weeping" - a sentimental touch/ a striking image of grief/merely imitation of Homer (Iliad 17 427ff)?

Part 4: The Trojans and their allies escort the procession part of the way as a mark of respect.

Aeneas pronounces the last formal farewell to the dead (See Catullus 101), the words traditionally spoken as the living depart the funeral scene; as always he is aware of more grief to come.

And so it seems, we say goodbye to Pallas; for at this point our attention is directed elsewhere -to the ambassadors of the Latins.

Scene 3

1. The scene begins with their request to bury their dead.

They make two points:

- i. there can be no quarrel with the dead
 - ii. they ask mercy from Aeneas for his former hosts.
2. Aeneas' response is gracious, revealing his essentially humane (rather than Heroic) nature.

But more than revealing his character, his words take the plot a step further- the "showdown" looms more closely.

- i. he willingly accedes to their request.
- ii. he emphasises that he is in their country only as a servant/minister of Fate.
- iii. he points out he is not fighting the Latins as such (important historically and for the plot), but their king who has abandoned their "guest-friendship" (rank discourtesy in most societies in those days) and chosen to trust Turnus (a Rutulian) instead.

[Aeneas cannot know of Latinus' despair of course but the point he makes serves to introduce
iv. he proposes that the fairest (ie. most righteous) action would have been single combat between himself and Turnus - with God and valour (and by implication destiny) deciding who lived or died.

That response to the ambassadors is the speech of a man confident in his destiny and in command of rhetoric too. Compassionate and direct as well, it leaves his hearers speechless.

Eventullay Drances (who is hostile to Turnus -note that the youth v. age issue appears here)acts as spokesman for their reply:

- i. rhetorical questions mark his appreciation of what Aeneas has said.
- ii. he declares their willingness to restore the Latinus/Aeneas alliance - and even to help build the new Troy.
- iii. Turnus is deliberately "pushed out on a limb" to make his own treaty if he wants.

Unanimous applause follows; a truce is arranged.

For the first time it is clear that Turnus has his enemies within - the apparently universal support he had in book 7 is not now the reality. Again the prospect of the final showdown moves a little nearer.

And so the scene ends with both sides gathering wood for the funeral pyres, in a few lines of simple unemotional description - a break from the emotion and rhetoric for a moment.

Scene 4

Here we have an abrupt change of scene, with Vergil using one of his favourite devices - the personification of Rumour - to bring news of Pallas' fate to the city. We had not heard the last of him after all.

Part 1: the stage is set. The Arcadians form their own procession; the two processions meet. The road is ablaze with light, the city ablaze with cries of sorrow. Fire, literal and emotional, is one of Vergil's favourite metaphors; the depiction of light and shade a mark of his artistry. In dramatic imagery the genral scene is set; then as before the general dissolves to focus on the individual - not on Pallas this time, but on the one who mourns him most.

Part 2: Evander flings himself on Pallas' body; and gives voice to a passionate lament, emotional rather than rhetorical, but retaining the royal dignity that marked the "humble" Evander of book 8.

The main points of his lament are;

- i. recognition of Pallas' desire for military glory - and grief that he had to learn the cost so cruelly -but there are no recriminations or "I told you so" comments.
- ii. acceptance of the gods' refusal to heed his prayers - again no recrimination.
- iii. welcome for his queen's good fortune in predeceasing their son; regret that he has outlived his son; no self pity, only the wish that he might have died instead.
- iv. no condemnation of the Trojans - finds some comfort in that fact Pallas died helping them.
- v. acceptance of his misfortune as a predetermined disaster - fatalist or Stoic?
- vi. pride in what Pallas has acheived - and in what might have been, all things being equal.
- vii. refusal to allow "private sorrow detain the Trojans" - vengeance for his son's sake, not his own, is his final wish.
- ie. personal grief must come second to public duty and to retribution - this is the message from this elder statesman/father figure - an example to Aeneas/Augustus/Romans in general?

Scene 5.

This section closes with another new dawn. Both Trojans and Latins, united in this sacred ritual duty, bury or burn their dead (both burial and cremation were common in early Rome); the due ceremonies and sacrifices are carried out.

How many of Vergil's contemporaries would have witnessed such mass funerals during the warfare that preceded/ accompanied Augustus' accession to power?

Section 2

Councils of war: "But meanwhile it was within the houses (p.285) . . . to his own daughter" (p.295)

Introduction: there is a transitional passage first, Yet again Vergil takes us from the general to the particular - from the rituals of mourning across the whole countryside to the city of Latinus itself, where typically (as in some ways Homer does) he concentrates on the grief of the bereaved unnamed women.

Scene 1: grief turns to anger at the war , specifically directed at Turnus It is the marriage issue which cause their distress; united as if in council themselves, in effect they say - if Turnus wants the throne via the marriage alliance, then let him do the fighting to gain it (not an uncommon sentiment over many issues even today?)

- ie. now it is the turn of the Latins to introduce the idea of single combat.

Drances picks up this demand, and tells them of Aeneas' implicit challenge to Turnus.

So now we have a kind of imitation council of war, with the woman, and others, who are supported by Drances, wanting single combat to decide the issue, while opposed to them are others who don't want to risk Turnus' life (and presumably think his cause is "just" - an opinion backed by the support of the queen and his own reputation).

So we prepare to move on to the next scene, with the arrival of the ambassadors sent to Diomedes earlier. They come with news of his refusal to help the Latins.

Thus 1. another loose end is tied up - the Greek "connexions" are now out of the story; both Evander and Diomedes will have no more to offer the plot.

2. the diplomatic failure reinforces the conviction, instilled by the sight of the grave mounds, that Aeneas was "by divine warrant a man of destiny".

Scene 2. Latinus summons his council, and Venulus the embassy leader, gives his report.

Venulus speaks:

- i. he gives a resume of his meeting with Diomedes
- ii. he describes the reaction of Diomedes - a former enemy of Aeneas, but like him, now a settler in Italy. These are links, which coupled with the fact that Diomedes' actual words are "quoted", mark the deep significance of what he has to say.

Diomedes is quoted as advising strongly against war

- because
- i. the Latins have the benefit of living in peace and have little experience of war.
 - ii. the Greeks have paid the penalty of taking up arms against the Trojans, as the tribulations of various heroes at Troy, and afterwards, prove:
 - eg. exile for Menelaus and Ulysses
 - death for Agamemnon
 - exile and loss of his comrades for Diomedes himself - an expected fate once he had wounded Venus (see Iliad 5, 318 ff) and incurred divine disfavour.

Note: the rhetorical-school trick of giving examples and even extended examples (as with the reference to Venus - which is typical of epic verse too - not that epic lacks rhetoric at times!)

Therefore the Latins should 1. avoid war with the Trojans (as he has done once the Trojan war was over)

2. try to win Aeneas' favour with gifts

because he knows at first hand what a mighty warrior he is - as great as Hector (high praise indeed!) but "inrighteousness Aeneas led" - here righteousness is the translation of pietas, the quality which is at the heart of the moral purpose of the Aeneid, and of which Aeneas the True is the model.

Therefore, in a nutshell he advises - "make peace, not war", as his argument comes full circle.

The report causes consternation among the hearers; but Latinus is the first to speak as is his right.

Latinus speaks:

He introduces his first point by deploring the situation they are in.

Point 1: their position is hopeless

- i. because of the quality of their opponents
- ii. because they have no hope of any allies to help them
- iii. because their own efforts have failed already.

He introduces his second point by assigning no blame to anyone and praising their courage - a tactful and politic approach to a suggestion which he has to make with caution (given the hotheads around him)

Point 2. He puts forward his proposal for a solution, offering two alternatives:

- i. cede an area of land - Latinus' own private property - to the Trojans; make peace, accept them as allies and let them settle.
- or ii. if they choose to move on, build ships for them to enable their departure; this too would be a joint venture; Trojan ship design, Latin material and craftsmen.

Finally he declares his determination to send a distinguished deputation to the Trojans, with gifts, for them to consider his proposals.

Note: how Latinus' confidence grows as he proceeds; the practical sense of his proposals; the closeness of what he suggests to what he has said on the first arrival of the Trojans, except that there is no mention of a marriage settlement and a shared kingdom. A example of the art of compromise? or for the plot, words which will act as a red rag to the impetuous Turnus and to the jealous Drances?

And soon it will be Drances' turn to speak at greater length and in the real council of war; we have already heard his opinion about making peace and about Turnus. Soon we shall hear him speaking with

greater passion, as he makes his personal attack on Turnus (which Latinus had carefully avoided doing).

However before we hear what Drances has to say, Vergil inserts a brief character sketch of the man, suggesting possible motives for his hostility to Turnus.

Rich, eloquent, a respected "political advisor", of noble birth on his mother's side, and obvious candidate for high office and fame but for one thing - he was a bastard; and for a "noble" not to know who his father was meant social and political disaster - he was for ever an outsider. (consider how often "son of" is part of the honorific addresses in the Iliad; the patronymic confers status as well as identification)

Hence Drances can never aspire to a leading position in the state, a loyal following or a great reputation; Iago-like, he allows envy to turn to enmity - some would say spite; his ability to lead becomes a spirit of rebelliousness against the popular leader Turnus - whose lack of success together with general disappointment with the way the war was going, gave Drances his chance to challenge the once popular war-leader, and to provoke him to accept the idea of single combat.

As with so many of Vergil's "walk-on parts", the character of Drances is a rounded personality - very few of his characters who influence the plot are cardboard cutouts?

For here we see the pressure is on Turnus from the disenfranchised women, and the disaffected man who seizes the chance to be their spokesman - the build up to Turnus' acceptance of single combat is psychologically subtle, as well as rhetorically dramatic.

Drances' speech shows once again Vergil's mastery of rhetoric; this is a speech such as might be made in the Senate - or in any political body where accusations fly.

Drances speaks:

- i. a courteous opening - complimenting Latinus on his proposal
- ii. straight into attack - all know the realities of the situation - but no-one dares speak for fear.
No name is mentioned of the source of the fear - but the implication is clear.
- iii. but he Drances will be bold to speak out - demands the right to speak.

Again no name is mentioned, but refers more directly to Turnus, blaming the unnamed leader for the disasters and the deaths, accusing him of "playing at" fighting and running away.

- iv. having established the climate of accusation against the unnamed Turnus, picks up on the king's proposal again - suggesting he adds one further gift - his daughter's hand in marriage to Aeneas.

ie. we are back to where it all started in book 7 - to the original agreement and the original cause of the quarrel; Drances could have made no more dangerous proposal than this, as he recognises when he says "let no man's violence prevail on you . . ."

- v. to preempt (or to provoke?) this violence, and still without mentioning him by name, he suggests making a plea to his patriotism and his tolerance.

So far then his speech has been a model response to the king; with a positive suggestion (even though provoking in some quarters); with accusations but no personal verbal assaults - a typical political speech in fact.

But now the mood changes; he no longer "addresses the chair" but turns on Turnus in person (having softened him up by the indirect attacks)

- i. he charges him with being the cause of Latium's misfortunes
- ii. he declares in effect that Turnus' entire war policy is wrong, but any "peace process" can only begin with Turnus himself.

iii. he takes on the guise of a suppliant - in a fine rhetorical flourish the sworn enemy becomes the suppliant - and (a) asks him to "have pity on your own folk, lay down your pride and accept defeat" - given the revealed character of Turnus, is he likely to do this? Drances, as we do, knows the answer; the suggestion has been made merely to prepare for his alternative proposal

(b) suggests he fights "breast to breast" ie. in single combat, for his royal bride - the crucial issue again - but is this really a fight over the princess Lavinia, or over Lavinia the symbol of the succession to the throne of Latium?

He brings his speech to a conclusion with:

- i. a rhetorical question - should men whose lives are cheap win Turnus' bride for him? This is a challenge to Turnus' rank and personal courage.

- ii. an assumption - that as a man of courage Turnus will wish to "look his challenger in the face"

At last the issue is clearly stated, and in public - will Turnus accept the challenge and offer single combat to his rival Aeneas, for the hand of Lavinia, or for the future of Latium?

Typically Turnus' reply starts violently, in keeping with his uncontrolled nature.

Turnus speaks:

First he addresses Drances directly, forgetting the courtesy of addressing the king first.

Opening attack:

- i. goes straight into attack - Drances is big on talk, big when there's a council meeting, big when there's no danger.
- ii. But let him start to criticise when his deeds match those of Turnus against the enemy.
- iii. There's plenty of chance for him to try to emulate Turnus -
- iv. So let's go into battle;
- ie. he issues his challenge to Drances - which he assumes Drances will reject, since hot air and feet quick to flee are the marks of his courage.

Note: from this opening attack it is plain that there is no common ground in their thinking, and coupled with their personal antipathy to each other, the confrontation is inevitable.

though Turnus lacks the rhetorical polish of Drances, he has his own vivid eloquence, as he contrasts Drances' words with his actions. Then as now the politician and the general rarely see eye to eye, though both are given to exaggeration!

The question of courage marks the transition to the next part of Turnus' speech:

Self-defence:

- i. describes his exploits against the Trojans - an exaggerated version of his actions in books 9/10:
eg. equating Pallas' death with the collapse of Evander's kingdom;
referring to "those other thousands"
- ii. refutes Drances' declaration that "War can never save us" by ridiculing his fear, and his estimate of Trojan strength by sarcastic reference to the new fearsome invincibility of the "twice conquered" Trojans - (tradition held that Troy was destroyed by both Hercules and the Greeks)

His conclusion

Turnus turns the pretended fearfulness of Drances back on him; and dismisses him as being too contemptible for attack. He means nothing to Turnus.

So having passionately and scornfully rejected Drances' argument that victory is impossible, but not having shown any reaction to his alternative plan, Turnus leaves Drances and now at last addresses Latinus. If Turnus appeared a touchy hothead in the first part of his speech, the second half will show him to be a more subtle character, motivated by a mistaken patriotism and a misplaced love - is Vergil presenting here the obverse of Aeneas' divinely directed pietas?

Turnus continues to speak:

He makes no personal attack on Latinus (just as Latinus had made no direct personal criticism of him). He addresses the king with courtesy and reasoned argument, though still with the passion of his convictions.

His argument runs as follows:

- i. If the king thinks there is no hope left, even after just one defeat, then let us sue for peace:
 - ie. a tactful, conditional acceptance of the validity of the king's proposal, but with a hint of disapproval, followed by a passionate outburst of "Death before dishonour" - the cry of the old style epic heroes of the Iliad.
- ii. but if we have some resources left, and some allies, let's not give up so quickly:
 - after all a. the Trojans have had losses too.
 - b. fortune can change very quickly
 - c. even if Diomedes won't help, there are plenty of others who will:
including Camilla - the first mention of her, almost as an addendum, but with enough extra detail to suggest that there will be more to come.
- ie. he puts forward an alternative to the king's plan.

Note: he does not exaggerate or even detail previous exploits, or mention his own part in them; he simply drives home his point that they should continue fighting, and gives clear reasons for doing so, practical and moral, as he itemises their resources and emphasises the shame of giving up so quickly.

- iii. finally he introduces the question of single combat:

again his statement is conditional - if the Trojans want it, if the king wants it, if it is necessary for the good of all, then he is willing to accept the challenge for the sake of all the Latins.

one phrase gives away his carefully concealed deepest motive - as he offers his life to Latinus, "father of my bride"; this will be a duel over Lavinia as well as to decide the issue of the war..

His final words reveal his determination - he alone will accept the challenge - and his awareness of the finality of the contest - death or glory. He does not know it, but he too is now "doomed youth".

At this point the debate is interrupted by news of Aeneas' advance on the city. Faced with this imminent danger, the Latins are thrown into turmoil - a mixture of anger, excitement and confusion (ie. the reality of emotions when faced with danger?). Their reaction reflects the debate itself - with the younger men looking to fight, while their elders "whispered and wept".

Turnus at this point takes charge:

He scornfully dismisses debate as futile with the enemy at the gates, and leaves at once to organise the defence of the city. His orders are crisp and clear; he gets instant obedience and instant support.

This is Turnus, the man of positive action in a crisis; and the theme of single combat is pushed aside - for the time being - in the same way as series of "delays" in book 12 will heighten the tension as we wait for the inevitable duel to happen.

With Turnus' departure, the council meeting fizzles out; Latinus leaves too, but his is a negative kind of departure: his own peace plans must be abandoned;

he can only regret his earlier failure to make Aeneas his son-in-law (he regards it as personal failure, but the audience knows that it was Juno's work in book 7 which wrecked his plans)

And now we move on to the final section of book 11

Section 3

The exploits of Camilla

Here in typical epic fashion we have a "story within a story" - almost a mini-epic in itself, such is the length of this section. Why does Vergil include it? to delay the inevitable outcome of the plot? to pursue another romantic lead? to add more Italian "colour" to his writing? to imitate the romantic Alexandrian mini-epics so popular at that period? (cf. Catullus and his tale of Ariadne?) because he enjoyed writing it? to produce a typical piece of epic writing but with a heroine to make it really original? Questions that might be easier to answer if we knew more of Roman epic style writers of his day!

Introduction: as with the other sections of this book, Vergil takes pains to set the scene:

i. preparations for war - trenches are dug before the gates, even women and children are recruited to help in defence.

ii. the queen and Lavinia, and other women, go to the temple to pray - their proper epic role - and specifically for the defeat on Aeneas - for them, especially for the queen this is a personal issue.

Note: Lavinia is described as "the cause of all this terrible calamity" - (and so she is, but quite unwittingly)

iii. Turnus arms himself for battle; Vergil compares his "high spirit" to that of a stallion. Is it coincidence that the words of the simile that follows are almost identical to those of the simile in the Iliad in which Homer compares Paris to a stallion? Could Vergil be subtly implying that Turnus' love for Lavinia was causing his people's downfall, as Paris' love for Helen ruined Troy?

At this point Camilla herself enters.

Scene 1: we are told a little about her - she is royal, she rides with her Volscian cavalry (the Volscians lived to the south of Latium, and would be one of the first Italian tribes to come upon against the expanding Romans in later years), and she inspires an awed respect in Turnus, as she offers to lead her cavalry against the Trojan cavalry while Turnus remains on guard at the city:

ie. she takes the initiative, and offers to take the leading part in the battle; no wonder Turnus, who has been eager to attack himself is taken aback by her words; his gratitude in fact is expressed as a rhetorical question!

He recognises her courage however; quick-thinking as ever, he takes up her offer of help, but with some adaptation of the role she has suggested for him. For having ascertained the truth of rumours that the Trojan cavalry's advance is really a diversionary tactic to cover Aeneas' true intended point of attack, he decides to use Camilla's men, cautiously adding to this unknown quantity some reliable allies of his own, to engage the cavalry, while he prepares an ambush as a trap for Aeneas (a rather more exciting task than guarding the city, as she had suggested)

Tactfully he offers, in addition to her important but dangerous task, a share in the responsibility of leadership - quite clearly Camilla is no ordinary princess or horsewoman!

In a kind of postscript to the scene, Vergil clears up Turnus' part in the military manoeuvre: he describes the place where the trap is to be set - whether a real or imaginary place we cannot tell, but it is another instance of Vergil's love of the scenic background - cf. the haven in book 1 p.32- to delight the imagination and provide a relief from the action.

Scene 2: We are back to Camilla, with the goddess Diana (Latona's daughter) filling in a few more details about her:

eg. she is dear to Diana - which suggests her chastity and dedication to the hunt.

in early life, with her father, she had been a refugee; her escape across the raging torrent brought about in dramatic fashion her dedication to Diana; in any case escape by spear-shaft makes a splendid imaginative incident for Vergil to describe.

after this she grew up in the wilds, trained to "live off the land" by her father, and to become self-sufficient. Again Vergil adds some imaginative details - "baby spears from her soft little hands" in the romanticising style of the Alexandrian school of verse.

and her chastity is confirmed by her refusal to marry, and by her continued devotion to Diana, goddess of chastity.

Diana herself then ends the resumé of Camilla's upbringing and early life on a note of foreboding: Her prophecy builds up gradually:

- i. she regrets Camilla's challenge to the Trojans.
- ii. she foresees "Destiny now bears heartlessly against her"
- iii. and against Camilla's death, she arranges for vengeance with her acolyte Opis, and for Camilla's burial by herself.

Even in this mini-epic incident, prophecy must play its part.

Scene 3: now we have an all-action scene in three parts:

Part i: consists of two descriptions of general engagements -

A. Trojans & Etruscans v. Latins and Camilla: Vergil highlights the noise, movement and organised confusion, not the actual tactics, of a cavalry engagement, culminating in the violent charge of two individuals at each other:

- Result: (a) the death of both horses and of Aconteus
(b) the Latins panic and flee (with their shields slung over their backs to protect themselves - a nice practical touch)

B. Latins v. Trojans: the Latins halt their flight and the Trojans retire to a safe distance.

Part ii: consists of an extended epic simile, in which Vergil compares the fighting to the ebb and flow of the waves (Note: not of the tides) in one of his most skilfully drawn visual images. Such similes were of course an expected element on any fighting scenes in epic (see Iliad book 16 for example); this is a spectacularly apt one, in my opinion.

Part iii: consists of a triple battle - Etruscans v. Rutulians.

Again there is a typical epic pattern - one incident, a second incident, both minor, followed by a climactic third. So here the first two encounters are dismissed in a single sentence, and we really get our grips with the battle, when they meet for the third time.

The fighting is a cavalry battle on the Homeric scale, and written after the Homeric style:

- i. general fighting described in general terms.
- ii. individual hand to hand combats described with special individualising details - the iron point embedded under the horse's ear, Herminius with "his hair deep gold"; the manner of his death.

And in true Homeric style the end is glory, either with or without death.

Scene 4: reintroduces Camilla riding in the middle of all this carnage, like an Amazon - a warrior-maid, skilled with spear and battle-axe and bow, (and note the Parthian touch as she shoots arrows even in retreat - a skill the Romans had been made only too aware of in their conflicts with the Parthians themselves). Her companions are around her - and Vergil now launches into another simile comparing them to the companions of the Amazon queens Hippolyta and Penthesileia - all fighting leaders who faced distinguished enemies - and eventually lost)

Just as the previous simile heralded a scene of slaughter, so this one leads into Vergil's listing of those whom Camilla slew - almost as nowadays incidental music heralds T.V. disasters?

Vergil's list has all the characteristics of the battle scenes of the Iliad - lists of names, some identified by a patronymic or some special characteristic; scornful speeches made over the dying; details of the manner of dying; all the victims lined up for the "aristeia" of the hero (here of course the heroine) ending with one final victim who will give the hero a run for his money - here it is the unnamed Ligurian who challenges Camilla to fight on foot. Fooled, or provoked by his chauvenistic scorn, into dismounting, she sees her protagonist immediately gallop away. Undeterred, she dismisses his cunning as a cheap trick, sets off in pursuit on foot, overtakes his horse and exacts vengeance on the man himself. This was no match between equals, as the simile of falcon v. dove makes clear.

But for this episode we are not really in the old epic world of Homer - more in the fairy tale world of romanticised legends.

9

Scene 5: Jupiter takes a hand - such divine intervention is something else typical of Homeric epic eg. his protection of Ajax and Hector in the Iliad.

This intervention leads to another typically epic episode - a digression - here a single combat acting as a preliminary "act" to the "top of the bill" duel due to come at the end of the programme. here it is Tarchon the Etruscan leader v. Venulus (leader of the embassy to Diomedes) - relatively important characters but not "top" heroes

The actual duel starts like many another combat scene, with taunting - but Vergil is strikingly original in his approach here; the taunts are directed at Tarchon's own men - for their cowardice, for being only concerned with sex, food, happy omens, - and more food (Etruscans had the stereotype among the Romans of being greedy -cf. mean Aberdonians, "thick" Irish- Vergil is starting to move back to the Italian scene).

So Tarchon charges into battle, not for glory, but to set his men an example of how to fight and be prepared to face death. And in a novel form of attack, he literally carries Venulus off on his horse; the struggle for supremacy is fought out not on the plain but on horseback. Such a scenario may be unusual, but the eagle and snake simile which concludes it is standard epic simile fare in content and position (that is not to say it is not a vivid piece of observed description).

So inspired by Tarchon's success, the Etruscans charge - and this directly leads to the events of:

Scene 6: Camilla meets her end.

Three characters are involved, each brought to life by some defining detail.

Arruns - in a last inglorious attack - tracks Camilla stealthily, waiting for an opening;

Chloereus - a conspicuous figure, a hard-riding, fast shooting show-off-appears. he is described in a wealth of colourful details -almost like a fashionplate (such exotic detail was a favorite device of the Alexandrian school of writers) This vision of splendour and skill attracts Camilla's attention.

Her huntsman's instinct is aroused by the prospect of winning such splendid trophies as his armour (Vergil also subtly suggests a more feminine motive - the desire to "dress up" in them - a touch that makes Camilla fallibly human at last)

Her blind and heedless pursuit of Chloereus gives Arruns his chance; with a prayer to Apollo that he may be the instrument of her destruction he hurls his spear.

Note: i. he is not looking for fame ; he just wants the kill (no wonder he is ^{compared} ~~compared~~ to a wolf later)

ii. the response of Apollo, the partial granting of his prayer, is a close echo of Zeus' response to Achilles' prayer for Patroclus in Iliad 16. 250 ff: there the circumstances are very different - Achilles' prayer had been for protection of his friend, not destruction of an enemy; but it is useful to note how skilfully Vergil adapts Homer for his own purposes.

Camilla is so intent on her pursuit of Chloereus that she is not even aware of the sound of his approaching weapon; thereafter Vergil spends some time dealing with her death agony; he composes an almost theatrical death scene in the way he intersperses the physical details of her dying with the actions of her comrades, the departure of Arruns overwhelmed by what he has done (with another simile remarkable for the detail of the wolf slinking off with its tail between its legs), and Camilla's last message to Turnus, remarkable for its lucidity and grasp of the situation - it's the city that is at stake now, and it's up to Turnus to save it.

For her death only serves to intensify the fighting; her last words serve to focus the attention once more on Turnus - and the city; we are back to the crux of the matter again.

Scene 7: the stage is cleared of the victims

i. Opis observes Camilla's death, as she waits ready to obey the order Diana had given her earlier.

She laments the hard result of her challenge to the Trojans, the lack of protection her worship of Diana had provided but offers as a kind of comfort the knowledge that the goddess has ensured that she will receive lasting fame, and vengeance for her death.

ii. And vengeance quickly follows. Opis now sees Arruns and shoots him down with an arrow.

Note: the preparation for the shot is more fully described than the death of Arruns itself. He is dispatched and abandoned without ceremony. For in romantic writing the killer of the heroine gets no sympathy and little attention.

Scene 8: The consequences of Camilla's death.

Now we leave the world of the mini-epic, with its combination of Homeric imitation, Alexandrian romanticism, and Vergilian imagination; we return to the realities of war in Latium where we find: -

i. a panic stricken retreat to the city, with the Trojans in such hot pursuit that some of them enter the city together with the retreating Rutulians. The gates are shut; the crush outside them is vividly described, with details that might well have been taken from life not literature.

And reality and legend meet as the women of the city, inspired by Camilla's example, fight from the walls with whatever weapons they can muster. How often, one wonders, had the Romans met this kind of resistance as they overcame walled towns in their pursuit of empire? Had Vergil learnt of it by hearsay or observation, or is the whole scene the product of his imagination or his learning?

ii. Turnus hears the news - the situation is critical - the enemy are at the gates.

So he leaves the hills where he has been lying in wait to ambush Aeneas, to return to the city.

Note: it is Jupiter's "cruel and imperious will" that drives him - words which once more signal Vergil's sympathy for "poor ill-fated mortals".

No sooner has he left than Aeneas arrives and enters the pass now open to him. There has almost, but not quite, their long delayed meeting.

The two armies advance on the city almost together. The two leaders see and recognise each other. The time for combat has come at last - but not quite; for night falls, and we have to wait for another day, and for book 12, to see the end of the matter.

BOOK 12 THE CLIMAX - THE FINAL CONFLICT.

Even at this late stage, the duel is continually delayed

First however we are told the attitudes of the various people involved.

Para 1 -6 deals with the Latin side "Turnus could see . . . skirmishing before the fight."

1. Turnus - holds the stage for the moment - implacable like a wounded lion still roaring and ready to fight. I. full of hot-headed ardour (though the Latins are dispirited)

II. demands a truce and single combat - with Lavinia as the prize.

2. Latinus - summarises the position:

i. situation needs a cool head

ii. no need for all this posturing - Turnus is wealthy and could have his pick of girls

iii. warnings from oracles would make disobedience disastrous.

iv. so fighting over a girl would bring shame for Latinus, grief for Turnus' father.

3. Turnus - even more infuriated by these words- speechless with anger at first

demands i. less concern on his behalf

ii. right to defend his cause with the sword

(adds that mother will not help Aeneas escape in a mist this time - is he still sore at the trick played on him earlier - sensitive to humiliation?)

4. Amata - begs him not to risk his life on which all their hopes rest. Latinus is old and feeble; she refuses to live to see Aeneas her son-in-law.

Note: all depends on Turnus for his people as it did for Aeneas in book 2.

5. Lavinia - weeps and blushes - the simile suggests her pink-and -white beauty - or a flushed face?

Simile based on Iliad 4 141.

Turnus - at last revealed as actually loving Lavinia - he is even more determined not to lose her.

however with a sense of foreboding he declares his challenge - "By his blood and mine alone are we to settle this war. On that field must Lavinia's hand be won".

Lavinia is to be the "reason" for a war over land and authority - the equivalent of the fawn in book 7 ?

6. Turnus makes sure his preparations for battle are in order : in particular

his chariot and horses

his father's sword

his stout spear.

He hurls insults (unheard) at Aeneas - in much the same vein as Iarbas in book 4. Vergil does not model Aeneas on a Herculean figure, but a more "cavalier" type; Augustus was a delicate and slender man - is there a coincidence here?

Turnus' ungovernable rage is compared to that of a bull working up rage in itself and terror among others before battle.

Now Vergil switches the scene - and the mood; he contrasts Turnus' wild rage with the calm Aeneas.

Para 7 "Meanwhile Aeneas conditions for peace"

Aeneas - controlled anger; glad that the end is in sight; calm and confident explains the "hand of destiny" to the concerned Iulus.

He formally accepts the challenge.

Preparations for the duel are finalised

(paras 8 -12 "The dawn of a new day elders of Latium to bear.")

8. A new day dawns - marshals lay out the duelling ground

priests prepare for the necessary rituals

all ready for action- the armies of both sides gather round, and spectators

include the old and the women> this is not just a "glory-fight" but a duel to settle the destiny of many people.

9. Juno then intervenes - seeking human (or semi-human) aid, and using Turnus' sister, the nymph Juturna. Since Juno herself can do no more to hinder fate, she begs her to save Turnus by hindering the proposed duel or to stir up the war.

Juturna (unlike Allecto) is a reluctant helper.

10. Now the preparations for single combat continue, with the leaders present to take their oath and to observe the confirmatory sacrifice.

Aeneas swears by all the gods, Olympic(including Juno) and Italian, that if Turnus wins the Trojans

will withdraw, but if he himself wins, he will not seek empire but an everlasting union of their peoples:
ie. he refers to the union of two nations.

11. Latinus takes a similar oath on behalf of the Latins - he is still their king - he vows that he will never withdraw his word just as surely as his sceptre will never put forth new leaves; this is very much a personal oath - referring to his own will.

12. The agreement is made in front of witnesses, and sacrifice is offered in formal ratification of the agreement.

All is now ready for the duel.

BUT it does not happen ; there is another delay, as general fighting breaks out again
(para 13-16 "But in spite of all . . . -for the everlasting dark")

13. The Rutulians note that the combatants are ill-matched.

Note: description of Turnus p.315 bottom - young, humble, dutiful to gods at time of crisis.

Juturna disguised as one of their warriors intervenes seizes the opportunity offered by their anxiety and change of mood:

i. taunts them with shrinking from enemies inferior in numbers and courage and allowing Turnus to win fame by sacrificing himself on their behalf.

14 ii. urges them to fight, and they begin to feel shame at leaving the fighting to Turnus alone.

iii. then further arouses them with the eagle omen which will mislead them.

15. She displays in the sky an eagle which seizes a swan; the other swans finally drive it away.

The prophet Tolumnius interprets the sign as the intended expulsion of Aeneas; he urges the Rutulians to start fighting again;

16 and hurls a spear at random to start things off. The spear hits one of nine warrior brothers and kills him - this is the "spark" that sets off general fighting - we are back again to flying missiles, Homeric deaths - but this time amid broken altars and sacred vessels. There is no escape from violent and sudden death.

Now Aeneas the True goes into action

(para 17 Meanwhile Aeneas the True . . . from grip of the reins".

He tries to stop the fighting "the truce is already made" but he is too late; he is himself wounded by a stray arrow and forced to retire - yet another "delay" before the final contest can take place.

Turnus now takes his opportunity mounts his chariot and prepares to fight on (note he had not taken an oath personally, but he is breaking the spirit of the agreement which he himself wanted)

So Turnus is "on a high".

(para 18 "Soon he was galloping . . . left the trunk on the road."

Turnus is dealing death and destruction again, using horses, chariot, spear and sword to good effect; it is not surprising he is compared to the god of war, Mars himself accompanied by Dread Wrath and Treachery (are these qualities true of Turnus. now or ever?) Turnus at this point is unstoppable, as Phegeus finds.

But the Trojans have not yet reached their lowest point; this comes now>

(para 19 "Now while Turnus . . . the hard hand of Mars."

We meet Aeneas struggling back to camp (in contrast to the rampaging Turnus); he is anxious to get back to battle and wants to use the "cut the bullet" out method of quick relief beloved of Western cowboy heroes! In spite of all his efforts though, the physician Iapyx cannot grasp the arrowhead by any means; meanwhile the noise of battle and the enemy is coming nearer.

Things look very bad indeed; but this is the ultimate downpoint for the Trojans. From now on, though with fluctuations, things can only get better. But the end is still a long way off.

Now comes some improvement in the Trojans' situation

(paras 20 -22 "But now, shaken . . . claiming him alone for combat."

20 Venus concerned for her son's suffering brings a healing herb from Crete and secretly adds it to the water in which the wound was being bathed; the pain and bleeding stop, the arrowhead comes out easily and Aeneas is restored to full health and vigour

Iapyx recognises that some divinity is behind the cure for Aeneas "to do yet greater deeds"

21. Aeneas is back in the battle

Full of confidence - though he knows he has to win success the hard way via courage and effort - not for him the handy slice of good luck!

His departure from Ascanius could be construed as a final farewell, with its reminders to Ascanius of his ancestors and future demands on him - a sign to the audience, as well as to Aeneas that the final showdown is near. If so, they are going to be disappointed.

22. The armies mass on the field of battle - no single combat yet then!

Juturna, being semi-divine, realises the import of Aeneas' return.

And now Aeneas is not merely confident, but full of menace "a streak of dark menace" - "like some stormcloud" heralding ruin - another effective and typically Mediterranean weather simile.

The armies meet; the Rutulians are routed.

But Aeneas is still single-minded; his target is Turnus alone.

But now comes a down-turn in the Trojan fortunes.

23. Juturna now takes a hand:

She pushes Metiscus, Turnus' charioteer off the chariot and disguised as him, takes his place; and then darts about all over the battlefield like a swallow - is this an appropriate simile, a deliberate contrast, or merely a pretty picture in words? Swerving this way and that, with Turnus on board, she leads Aeneas a merry dance.

He tries to follow "the twisted circles of her course" - but he is on foot, not quick enough, and completely flummoxed.

To complete his discomfort, while he is at a loss and undecided, he is hit on the helmet by Messapus; his helmet plumes are ruined (and his pride presumably hurt)

As a consequence, he goes berserk again, abandons the chase and launches himself at the enemy in general - "he awoke a massacre, ruthless, indiscriminate, and opened all the floodgates of his wrath"

Again the tide turns and things start to go well for the Trojans once more.

24. "What god can now . . ."

In a brief apostrophe, Vergil refers to the horrors of war, ending with a query to the gods - "Did you indeed ordain that nations who were to live together afterwards in everlasting peace should clash in such violence?"

He then embarks on a catalogue of the killing done by both Turnus and Aeneas; like fires, or rivers (both forces of nature which are uncontrolled), they cause havoc among their respective opponents but do not of course meet each other. The truce is forgotten, "as the rage within them grew tempestuous".

25. "Murranus was loudly crying . . ."

The slaughter continues; now everyone on both sides is involved "with never a respite, never any rest".

26. "But then the mother of Aeneas . . ."

Now Venus takes a hand.

She inspires Aeneas to attack the city itself.

He announces the change of plan to his captains and army and explain it:

he is tired of trying to find Turnus in order to fight him.

he is now determined instead to destroy the city "the source of this wicked war" argument by fire will see the renewal of the broken truce.

27. "When Aeneas had spoken . . ."

The assault on the city begins - with the usual sort of Roman equipment to do it.

Aeneas accuses Latinus of a second violation of a truce (the first was in book 7)

There is panic in the city - some want to surrender, others to fight

Note: the bee simile - very different bees from those in the book 1 simile; this one is "borrowed" from Apollonius of Rhodes.

28. "A new misfortune now befell . . ."

Fresh disaster for the Latins: Amata, sees the attack, but seeing no counter-attack, assumes Turnus must be dead. Blaming herself for the entire disaster (should she blame herself?), she hangs herself - a

form of suicide regarded as repulsive by the Romans.

The news of her death spreads - first to her daughter, then to the palace staff, and so to the whole city - all are "wild with grief".

The despair and grief is affectingly personified by Latinus - he is in a complete daze, in shock or break-down perhaps, blaming himself (should he be blaming himself?) for not having been decisive enough about Lavinia's marriage to Aeneas from the beginning.

Turnus now takes a hand

29. "Meanwhile Turnus, . . ."

He hears the tumult within the city walls; his sister tries to distract his attention by urging him to further exploits on the battlefield away from the city - her object is to delay as long as possible the fatal meeting with Aeneas.

Her plan does not work; Turnus replies that he has known who she was all the time, even in disguise; rhetorically he asks who is behind all this - ie. the breaking of the truce and exposing him to death in battle (ironically he will be in more danger when fighting a duel not a battle).

He continues, saying that he has seen so many of this fellow warriors fall - and he cannot see the fall of the city itself without doing something about it. He resolves to turn his back on the enemy no longer; if he has to die, he will not die as a coward bringing shame on his ancestors and family.

Note: from now on Turnus, I think, becomes increasingly fatalistic - he expects to die.

30. "Scarcely had he spoken when . . ."

Saces arrives (in Western cowboy style - wounded and on "a foam-drenched horse")

He brings news of the city's plight, and their desperate need of Turnus' help - Latinus has lost his wits, Amata has committed suicide, there are few defenders left. The enemies' swords "stand bristling like a crop of iron corn" - one of the shortest similes in the book but brilliant, in my opinion.

Saces ends with a jibe at Turnus for playing about with his chariot.

31. "Turnus was struck silent . . ."

Turnus is in complete turmoil at first; Vergil attributes to him the same emotions as he did to Mezentius as he prepares to face his last battle - in exactly the same words.

Is this a literary cliché, or deliberate - to remind us that Turnus for all his youth and outward piety, is still the villain of the piece - to be as despised as Mezentius, or as pitied?

Turnus recovers from this blinding surge of emotions; he looks towards the city, sees the fires, and resolves "to meet Aeneas hand to hand".

He leaps from his chariot, and rushes through all the carnage without pausing towards the city walls. He is compared to a loosened boulder, gathering strength as it goes (cf. Iliad 13 126ff) he is impressive in power and strength, and in lack of control too.

He orders his men to stop fighting and declares his intention to take on himself the full responsibility for the whole affair and its consequences.

This is the last occasion when we shall see Turnus as the proud leader of his people; after this he will gradually slip towards defeat, as his confidence and nerve and will to win disintegrate.

But in these last few paragraphs, before his decline, we have met a Turnus of great dignity, sensitivity, courage, and responsibility. Had Fate and his own lack of self-control (the two qualities so carefully cultivated in Aeneas) not prevented it, he might have been "Turnus the True" - a model of pietas. Or do you see him as a more civilized Mezentius?

The Final Battle:

But even this is not straightforward and clear-cut: it falls into two parts, with a Juno/Jupiter interlude between them - a crucial interlude which settles the original "shall Aeneas settle in Italy" dispute. This leaves the duel almost as a personal affair between the two men ie. over Lavinia.

Battle Part 1.

32. "Then Troy's chieftain, Aeneas . . ."

At last - Aeneas and Turnus meet.

Aeneas stops all military operations, as Turnus has already done, then moves into the "arena" like a mountain. All eyes on on them; even Latinus recovers his wits enough to "stare in amazement" at the heroes "met together at last."

33. "As soon as the two saw"

The single combat fight starts in the usual epic style: they meet on level ground, they throw their spears at a distance, and then use swords at close quarters.

But this fight soon becomes less controlled - chance is as likely as skill to land a blow!

And, within the simile comparing them with bulls, is hidden the real purpose of the fight "which bull is to be emperor".

Then there is a pause in the fighting while Jupiter holds up the scales of Fate. We already know the result, and so does Jupiter - but this little imitation (NOT copy) of Iliad 22 209 ff signals that this fight is the final struggle.

34. "But then Turnus"

So now we go back to the fighting.

Turnus sees an opening and strikes; everyone watching "holds their breath".

But the sword breaks - he is left holding no more than the hilt - and realises that it is not his sword, panics and flees.

35 "It is said that. . . ."

We are given an explanation of his mistake; in his haste Turnus had grabbed not his father's sword, but his charioteer's, which was good enough against ordinary armour, but against Aeneas' divine armour "splintered like brittle ice".

The sight of the broken sword has caused panic in him; he runs wildly round the improvised arena "in aimless circles", hemmed in by Trojans, city walls and marsh ie. by man and nature.

Turnus is in fact beginning to crack.

36 "Aeneas was no less vigorous"

Aeneas goes off in pursuit, though handicapped by his wound. The flight of Turnus was described in physical detail and with a realistic metaphor. The chase is described by an equally vivid and detailed simile (note the red-feather scares) - the hunting dog in pursuit of a hemmed-in stag.

The scene is set for their meeting; the tension is heightened.

37. "And now the shouting rose"

But the chase still continues - amid the cheering of the spectators.

Turnus is in flight desperately calling for his own sword.

Aeneas is in pursuit uttering frightening threats- his wound does not stop him.

Round and back they go five times (note not the usual three - this is not a "fairy-tale" but a kind of reality - "for in very truth they strove to gain no trivial prize in sport, but it was for the life-blood of Turnus that they vied").

For these words compare Achilles chasing Hector in Iliad 22 159 ff.

38. "It happened that once"

At last chance brings Aeneas near the stump of a wild olive tree sacred to Faunus, in which his spear had lodged when he threw it. He struggles to pull it out; meanwhile Turnus prays to Faunus and Earth (Italian gods) to hold it fast so that Aeneas' efforts to pull it out are in vain.

Turnus also gets help from Juturna who, disguised as his charioteer again, brings him his own sword. At this Venus, annoyed at the presumption of a mere nymph (a demi-goddess) retaliates by pulling Aeneas' spear out of the tree-stump for him.

So at this stage of the battle, the two heroes still have not actually met - though they are "panting but ready for combat". So far the honours are more or less even, both have received divine assistance, both are re-armed.

But another "delay" follows, as Jupiter and Juno talk things over.

Now Jupiter takes a hand

39. "Meanwhile however, the King"

1. He makes an appeal:

he begs Juno to stop her opposition to the Trojans' fortunes.

she has done all she can, but she cannot defeat fate and prevent Aeneas' destiny.

she must desist - "This is the moment of final decision".

Finally he implicitly charges her with causing misery among Trojans and Latins, among public and private lives. He puts his foot down to curb Juno's power - "Further effort I forbid".

40 "So Jupiter spoke"

Now Juno reluctantly yields to Fate, even meekly confessing to persuading Juturna to help save Turnus' life (though she also solemnly shunts off some of the blame onto Juturna)

She has just one final request to make:

She agrees to peace, marriage, treaty between Trojans and Latins; but she asks that Latium shall not disappear together with its language and customs; that it should be the Name of Troy that disappears; that the Romans to be shall draw "power from Italian manliness"

(As we have seen, there was a tendency to view Asians as feeble and effeminate (as in the abuse heaped on Aeneas by Iarbas and Turnus); this request gets round that problem.)

41. "Smiling, the Creator

2. He makes a decision.

He gives way to/allows this request from Juno; and foretells the future culture of the Romans based on their Latin heritage:

The Latins shall retain their language, culture and name

The Trojans shall be blended and absorbed into them

He will set to their religious rituals and customs

Hence the mixed-blood Italians (which will include the Romans) will excel in pietas.

(and as a final sweetener he declares that Juno will be worshipped too - as she was, with, among other temples her own special dedication on the Aventine hill in Rome in Augustus' time)

So the future of the Trojans is finally settled, by discussion, not bloodshed after all. After all the strife, the two divinities depart in happiness and concord.

(This could be the cue for the discussion of the problem of suffering, and the role of any divine element in allowing, preventing or stopping it. I'll just repeat here however Vergil's own comment from the early part of book 1: "It is hard to believe Gods in Heaven capable of such rancour.")

But now

42 "This done, the Father pondered"

3. He takes action

He sends one of his two Furies - servants of the wrath and judgement of Jupiter who bring death and vengeance as a sign to Juturna

(usually there are three Furies; Allecto is one. Has she been dismissed after her activities in book 7)

This Fury sent by Jupiter in the form of an ill-omened bird (an owl or an imaginary winged creature?) keeps flying past Turnus' face - he loses his nerve, he is, as they say, "a wreck of a man".

Juturna recognises the fatal sign "the beating of those wings, with their note of death." She knows now that it is all up with her plans for Turnus, and that there is no hope for him.

So praying for a death which as an immortal she can never obtain, grieving for the loss of her brother - (in ancient literature the sibling relationship is often depicted as very close in mutual dependence and affection) -, in despair she disappears into her home in the stream.

So now Turnus is completely deserted - by his sister, Juno, Jupiter, his own innate qualities. His fate has caught up with him at last.

Battle Part 2

43 "Aeneas, on his side"

No more delays now: as Aeneas says, "What new delay can you expect?"

In the verbal exchange here Aeneas taunts Turnus with still shrinking from combat - but now there will be no hiding place.

Turnus in his reply shows some of his old spirit - words he does not fear, but the gods and "the hostility of Jove" - a tacit admission of defeat?

But he tries to take action, but astonishingly for a skilled warrior, does not turn to conventional weapons; he picks up a huge boundary stone "in impetuous haste" - for he is acting on impulse not reason.

We are told the stone would need twelve ordinary men to lift it - a similar incident in the Iliad needs

only two men - is the difference because of the demands of scansion or is Vergil just exaggerating?)

Turnus "freezes" as he hurls the stone - a symptom of his inner terror; Vergil offers the dream simile (adapted from Iliad 22 199ff) to indicate his state of mind.

Turnus wants to fight but cannot; he looks around, he hesitates, he is disorientated - he has already lost; Vergil has presented a brilliant picture of a hero whose nerve has gone - the ancient equivalent of shell-shock or battle trauma. Such a state of mind must surely have existed among those who fought in the long pre-Augustan civil wars in Italy.

44. "While Turnus hesitated . . ."

In contrast with Turnus' ineffectual efforts, Aeneas takes careful aim with his spear; it is so powerfully thrown (unlike the stone) that it pierces Turnus' shield, body armour and thigh.

Turnus sinks to the ground; the cheering all around is now a groan from the Rutulians - the sound of defeat. He concedes defeat with some dignity; formally concedes Lavinia (the alleged reason for the duel). He explicitly asks only one thing - burial among his own people, but in his words, I think, there is an implicit plea for his own life, understated but there nevertheless.

45 "Aeneas stood motionless . . ."

Aeneas now hesitates, but for a different reason; he is about to grant Turnus his life when he catches sight of the baldric and belt which Turnus had so cruelly stripped from Pallas' body.

In renewed rage at the recollection of Pallas' death, he strikes Turnus down without mercy, in a personal act of vengeance for a young man whom he loved (as his own son?)

So Turnus dies; his life leaves him for the Shades (ie. the Underworld), angry and resentful

The debate about the way the Aeneid ends - perhaps stops would be a better word - in this way is endless. The epic story of the origins of Rome has ended with the settlement of a private dispute. What did Vergil intend his audience to make of it? Or is it as many think an unfinished work, not merely an unpolished one? Any thoughts?